



# Pool Events

## Coaching Manual 6th Edition

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## Preface

Pool rescue-based competitions are conducted in swimming pools by most member federations of the International Life Saving Federation (ILS).

Pool rescue competition may be either a stand-alone competition or be included in a suite of events conducted in a competition. An example of this is the ILS World Life Saving Championships that are conducted every two years in youth, open and masters age categories in a swimming pool, in the ocean, and on a beach.

The conduct of pool rescue competitions also provides a further avenue, outside of the ocean environment, for SLSA competitors to develop and to demonstrate their lifesaving skills.

The rules for pool rescue competition events are contained in the ILS Competition Rulebook and also in the SLSA Surf Sports Manual (for general rules, unique SLSA pool rescue events, and other participation requirements). The documents can be referenced and downloaded via the ILS and SLSA websites at [www.ilsf.org](http://www.ilsf.org) and [slsa.com.au](http://slsa.com.au).

**Please note that the SLSA Pool Events Coaching Manual is designed to provide coaching guidance for beginners through to national competitors. The Coaching Manual is not a competition rulebook.**

**Please regularly refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book and the SLSA Surf Sports manual for specific rules and for any rule changes.**

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## Introduction

Pool lifesaving events combine the skills of still water swimming with lifesaving techniques. There are numerous pool lifesaving events and techniques that, for the purpose of this Manual, have been broken down into eight core skills:

- Swimming without fins
- Swimming with fins
- Swimming under obstacles
- Carrying a manikin with fins
- Carrying a manikin without fins and carrying a Lifesaving Brick without fins (bricks are used in SLSA U13 and under events)
- Towing a manikin with fins and towing a live patient
- Starting and changeover techniques
- Rescues using a Throw Line

This Coaching Manual focuses on these core skills required, training, competition preparation and also provides an overview of the events that comprise pool lifesaving competition.

**Note:** For the Simulated Emergency Response Competition (SERC) please refer to the ILS Competition Manual.



# Technique

## Pool Rescue Skills

Pool rescue lifesaving events are skills (and fitness) oriented. The skills require practice for a competitor to develop good technique and to become proficient in pool rescue competition. This section will focus on the specific lifesaving skills rather than stillwater swimming techniques.

### Swimming

The skills for swimming without fins and equipment are similar to those for still water swimming. Coaching information on swimming techniques can be obtained by accessing specific swimming manuals.

### Swim Fins and Swimming with Fins

Kicking techniques using fins can be divided into two styles: freestyle kick, and dolphin kick. The technique used is dependent on the individual's leg strength and leg speed.

**Freestyle kick** – A fast shallow kicking action where the movement of the fins comes from the ankle.

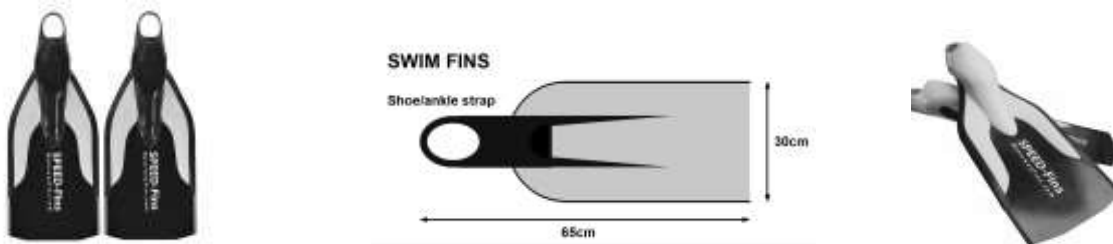
**Dolphin kick** – A dolphin kicking motion where the movement comes from the hip so that the fins are an extension of the body. This is a more powerful technique and is usually the fastest technique for skilled competitors.

Swimming with fins is used in the Super Lifesaver, 100m Manikin Carry with Fins, Manikin Tow with Fins, Manikin Lifesaver Medley, as well as in legs of the Medley Relay, the Mixed Pool Lifesaver Relay, the Rescue Tow Relay, and the Patient Tow with Fins events.

Competitors in U13 and under aged events use soft/flexible swim training fins in competition. These fins may measure up to 50cm in length and 25 cm in width. The full specifications are contained in SLSA's Surf Sports Manual.



For U14 and above aged competitors the approved fins can be highly technical and provide significantly more propulsion than everyday swim training fins. These technical fins may measure up to 65cm in length with a maximum width of 30cm with rigid blades that can be used to create powerful propulsion both on the surface and beneath the water. The specifications are detailed in the SLSA's Surf Sports Manual and also in the ILS Competition Rulebook.



Manufacturers of these fins also provide further options within specification in design, construction, size, foot or strap options, and blade stiffness to best suit the event in which the fins are to be used and a competitor's strength and kicking style. Competitors who have a lot of leg strength may use fins with a wider blade and also more rigid construction, as they are able to use their strength to generate greater propulsion. For example, competitors who use a rapid kicking technique may choose to use fins that have more flexibility allowing them to generate greater kicking speed and in turn greater speed through the water.



The type of event to be contested may also play a role in selection of the size and rigidity of the fins to be used. In shorter and faster races, such as the 50m with fins legs in Relays or the 100m manikin carry and tow events, a competitor may choose to use larger and stiffer fins so that maximum power can be generated over the shorter distance.

In longer events such as the Super Lifesaver, which require sustained leg drive over 200 metres, (and, in particular, over the last 100m metres where the competitor tows a rescue tube to the 150 m mark and then tows a manikin a further 50m to the finish), may require more flexible fins so that the competitor does not overload their muscles early in the event.

Further, when competing in races where the competitor starts wearing fins, a competitor may choose to use full shoe fins that are more difficult to put on but certainly maximize drive and speed.

When competing in the 200m Super Lifesaver where it is required to put on the fins at the 100m mark of the race, a strap type fin is usually used. The inners of these fins may be lubricated with liquid soap or similar so that they are easier and faster to put on during a race.

### Coaching Tips

Train to be able to swim 50m underwater (or as far as possible) underwater with fins adopting a streamlined position with hands in front of the body to maximise speed.

Also, trial swimming underwater with fins while wearing a rescue tube in the first lap of a race and compare overall times and energy used with swimming on the surface.

**Note:** It is imperative that coaches carefully monitor the distances and duration of these hypoxic exercises to ensure the safety of competitors.

### Common Mistake

Competitors often use whatever fins are available to them on the competition day. These fins may not be optimal to the competitor's strength and skills, or the event being contested. This may result in increased effort and slower times.

It is advisable to have access to fins that are suited to the competitor, the event being contested and that they have trained with them.

## Carrying a Manikin

The skill of carrying a manikin is vital, as it plays a role in many pool rescue events.

For the 50m Manikin Carry, 50m Brick Carry, 100m Rescue Medley, 200m Super Lifesaver (half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 50m), 4 x 50m Mixed Pool Lifesaver Relay (third leg), the 4 x 25m Manikin Relay (all legs), and the 4 x 25m Brick Relay (all legs), manikin carries are effected without fins.

For the 100m Manikin Carry with Fins, 200m Super Lifesaver, 4 x 50m Mixed Pool Lifesaver Relay, and 4 x 50m Mixed Pool Lifesaver Relay (final leg) manikin carries are effected with fins.

In events where the manikin is carried, the manikin (as victim) is presumed to be non-breathing. Water over the face is not a judging criterion.

As such, the rules state manikins do not need to be carried with the face of the manikin facing towards or above the water surface **but**, if the competitor **and** manikin are both fully "below the surface" of the water during the carry, competitors will be disqualified.

**Note:** If the competitor and manikin are both below surface as the result of the competitor's final stroke/lunge to touch the turning or finish wall/edge or for a relay exchange, it shall not be a disqualification.

Other carrying criteria include:

- Competitors must carry the manikin with at least one hand always and must always be in contact with the manikin.
- When in the carrying position, the manikin may not be "pushed" – a push is defined as the manikin's head is forward of the competitor's head.
- Competitors must carry the manikin with the head of the manikin facing the direction of the carry i.e., the manikin cannot be carried with the bottom end of the manikin facing the direction of the carry.
- The manikin must not be gripped by the sealing plugs.



The manikin carry judging criteria applies only when the top of the manikin's head passes the 5m or 10m line.

**Note:** The 5m and 10m distances are dependent on the event being conducted.

In addition, in the 5m start zone and in the changeover zones of the Manikin Relay and the Lifesaver Relay event, competitors are not judged on carrying the manikin criteria. However, competitors need to maintain contact with the manikin with at least one hand at all times including during the manikin exchanges.

**Note:** As with all events, the standard "carrying the manikin" criteria (defined in this section) applies to the final relay competitor at the finish of the Manikin Relay and Lifesaver Relay events.

The key to faster carrying is ensuring the manikin remains horizontal in the water (no matter the axis of the carrying technique) and streamlined through the water.

There is no "best" carrying technique. The most appropriate technique will be dependent on an individual athlete's swimming ability, strength, fitness, and age. Athletes should trial a number of methods to determine what best suits them.

Whatever method is chosen, competitors should always use the arm that they consider their dominant arm to pull themselves through the water and hold the manikin with the other hand and/or arm.

In competition the fastest carry technique used by elite competitors using both fins and no fins is to use a single arm front crawl freestyle stroke and to hold the manikin behind the neck or head with the other hand. There are a number of legal methods using this technique being used including:

- Carrying the manikin alongside the competitor's body.
- Carrying the manikin against the competitor's thigh.
- Carrying the manikin under the competitor's body.

An original and generally slower manikin carry technique is to swim on the back using combinations of breaststroke, freestyle, or dolphin kick, and to hold the manikin with one arm or hand and utilising the free arm to pull through the water. This technique is more often used by older competitors and by novices as it is easier to master.

When learning to carry a manikin, competitors will stop and start in training because it is a difficult skill to learn. Once the manikin is moving, the momentum of the manikin and the buoyancy of the water make it easier to keep the manikin on an even plane. Every time the competitor stops, the manikin sinks in the water and an extra effort is required to get the manikin back into the optimum carrying position.

#### **Coaching Note:**

**It is illegal for competitors to put any sticky substance or tape on fingers to assist with grasping a manikin (or brick). If in doubt refer to the referee for clarification prior to the competition commencing.**

**Note:** It is advisable for athletes to avoid moisturisers or sunscreens on their hands prior to competing in carrying events. It is permitted to use water free (alcohol based) hand sanitisers to ensure that any sticky or oily substances are removed from hands.

## **Coaching Tips**

### **One Armed Freestyle Carry**

- The competitor is positioned horizontally in the water as if swimming standard freestyle.
- Grasp the manikin by the back of the head or behind the neck using the non-favoured arm. The exact location of the grip can depend on the strength and the size of a competitor's hand.
- The carrying arm should remain in a fixed streamline position as close to the competitor's bodyline as possible.
- Alternatively, the carrying arm is extended with the manikin pulled in at right angles against the competitor's thigh and held in that position.
- Using the free arm and a strong freestyle kick the competitor swims with a modified freestyle technique. The shoulder reach is taken out of the swimming technique and the stroke is short with a high stroke rating.



The optimum carrying position is often difficult to maintain as the competitor tires.

When using the bent arm approach with manikin located at the midline, the manikin may drift away from the body creating a greater surface area to push through the water. This is because being further from the body is an easier position to maintain as it places less stress on the towing arm, but it also results in a loss of speed.

Carrying the manikin next to or under the body requires strength and energy, but the advantage is a technically more streamlined position.

Similarly, carrying the manikin against the thigh requires energy but also achieves a more streamline position. The disadvantage with this method is that it requires hand and arm strength to prevent the manikin turning and losing the right-angled position against the thigh.

As with all races it is important to race hard to the end and into the finish wall. It is important to remember for all manikin carries that if a competitor relaxes and speed is lost, the manikin will sink, and it takes a huge effort to get it back to an optimum carrying position and maximum speed.

## On Back Carry

- The competitor is positioned on their back.
- The carrying arm (non-favoured swim arm) is extended over the body.
- The competitor holds the manikin by the back of the head, behind the neck, using either a grip on the chin and face, or with one arm over the manikin's chest. The exact location of the grip may depend on the strength and size of a person's hand or arm.
- The non-towing arm is used to swim utilising a backstroke arm movement.
- If no fins are used in the event the legs are kicked vigorously utilising either a breaststroke or a freestyle kick depending on the athlete's strengths.





- If using this technique when carrying a manikin with fins the competitor has the choice of doing either a freestyle or dolphin kick.



### **Brick carry**

Brick carry events are conducted by SLSA for U13 age and under events. These events conducted by SLSA are the 50m Brick Carry and the 4 x 25m Brick Carry Relay. Both events are conducted without swim fins.

The techniques employed are either the one-armed freestyle (fastest technique) or the on back carry with the exception that the brick is usually carried against the competitor's chest or upper abdomen because of the smaller size of the equipment.

When in the carrying position, the brick must not be "pushed" – a push is defined as the brick being held forward for the competitor's head. This is a disqualification.

### **Manikin and Patient Tows**

The skill of towing a manikin is also vital, as it plays a role in three pool lifesaving events: the 100m Manikin Tow with Fins, the 200m Super Lifesaver and 4 x 50m Medley Relay (which uses a live patient for the tow).

In all manikin tow events competitors wear swim fins and either tow a manikin with the tube wrapped around a half-filled manikin, tow a live patient grasping the rescue tube, or with the tube wrapped around the patient.

### **Placing the tube around the manikin and towing**

In the 100m Manikin Tow with Fins and the 200m Super Lifesaver the competitor is required to swim with a tube before placing it around a manikin and then towing it to the finish. The manikin is positioned by the competitor's handler at the end of the pool in an upright position. The manikin is partially filled with water so that when supported in its upright position, it floats naturally with the top of the transverse line equal with the surface of the water. The manikin is positioned anywhere within the lane to suit the competitor and is held facing the wall with at least one hand. The manikin handler may let go of the manikin after the competitor has touched the turning wall but must release contact with it immediately the competitor has deliberately made contact with the manikin to secure it for the tow.

There are various ways to attach the tube around the manikin:



- One main method is that the competitor, after touching the wall, firstly grasps the manikin and lays it on their chest, then gathers the tube with the other hand and places it on the manikin's chest, moves your hand from the manikin and takes the end of the tube and clips it together.
- The second main method is that the competitor, after touching the wall pulls the tube by the rope towards themselves. They place the tube around the manikin by either placing it over its head or around the side. The clip is fastened, and the competitor commences swimming.

Competitors may move away from the turn wall while clipping the manikin into the tube provided that the manikin is secured correctly, and the tow line is fully extended by the time the manikin's head reaches the 10m changeover zone.



### Common mistakes

- Competitors not looking (including looking underwater) when securing the clip.
  - The rescue tube line becoming looped around the manikin thereby shortening the line that may result in disqualification.
  - Competitors not giving the rope a slight tug as they begin swimming after clipping the manikin (this helps to pull the manikin securely in position to effectively tow).
  - The tube not being positioned evenly under the arms of the manikin resulting in the manikin being twisted in the tube and being towed with the manikin's face underwater beyond the 10m line. This will result in disqualification.
  - The tube not being secured correctly, and the tube falling off the manikin beyond the 10m line. This will result in disqualification.
- Note:** Some or all of the above mistakes may occur when the competitor is rushing to begin swimming the return lap.
- Competitors not having their manikin secured correctly and the tow line is not fully extended by the time the manikin's head reaches the 10m changeover zone.

### Manikin Handlers

For both the 100m Manikin Tow with Fins and the 200m Super Lifesaver, and the 100m Manikin Lifesaver Medley the competitor will require a handler to assist by holding their manikin for pick up. A handler is to be a member of the competitor's team or have referee approval to act as a handler. Handlers:

- Must wear the same competition cap of the competitor or their own cap.
- Use at least one hand to position and hold the competitor's manikin upright and facing the turning wall floating at its natural buoyancy position anywhere within the allotted lane.
- May let go of the manikin after the competitor has touched the turning wall but must release contact with it immediately the competitor has deliberately made contact with the manikin to secure it for the tow.
- Not intentionally enter the water during the event.
- Comply with all race instructions given by officials.

### Common mistakes

- Handlers not being ready to assist immediately after the conclusion of the previous race.
- Handlers forgetting to be properly attired with a competition cap.
- Handlers not properly holding the manikin in position at the start of the race.
- Handlers not placing the manikin in the correct position for the competitor to grasp.



- Handlers impeding the competitor's performance by releasing their grasp on the manikin too early.
- Handlers not releasing their grasp on the manikin when the competitor deliberately grasps the manikin.
- Handlers not reporting to officials that manikin is too heavy (because of water ingress) prior to the start of a race.

### **Towing a Patient Holding a Rescue Tube**

For the 4x50m Medley Relay the patient obtains and maintains a secure, firm grasp on any part of the rescue tube or clip and maintains a streamlined position either on their back or stomach (the most common technique) and kick vigorously for the entire length to the finish of the race.

For the rescue tube swimmer who is wearing fins, it is essential to maintain a powerful stroke and a strong kick as they swim the 50m towing a manikin to the end of the pool (see Swimming with Fins).

### **Placing the tube around the patient and towing**

In the 100m Manikin Patient Tow the first competitor is required to swim 50 metres with fins towing a rescue tube before placing it around the second competitor then towing the patient to the finish.

It is permitted for either or both the rescuer or patient to wrap and secure the tube around the patient and often it is the patient who effects the clip in process. The most effective way to develop the skill is for both team members to practice their changeovers in part and in its entirety to perfect processes.

For the rescue tube swimmer who is wearing fins, it is essential to maintain a powerful stroke and a strong kick as they swim the 50 metres towing a manikin or patient to end of the pool.

The patient is towed on their back in the rescue tube. They assist the rescuer as much as possible by lying back into the tube to streamline their body with their arms above their head above the water and by kicking vigorously to the finish of the race.

**Note:** It is permitted for patients to scull under the water, but this can be a slower technique dependent on the speed of the rescue tube swimmer.

### **Common Mistakes**

- Competitor not determining who wraps and clips in the patient at the changeover.
- Competitors not having the clip-in completed prior to the 10m pick up zone (judged at the top of the patient's head). This is a disqualification.
- The patient not achieving an optimal streamline position and assisting the rescue tube swimmer by kicking vigorously.
- If a sculling technique is preferred by the patient, their arms not remaining underwater. This is a disqualification.
- Patient releasing contact with the turn wall or starting block prior to the rescuer touching the wall. This is a disqualification.

## **Swimming under Obstacles**

Swimming under obstacles is a core skill for three events, the 100m with obstacles, the 200m with obstacles and the 4 x 50m obstacle relay. Obstacles are placed 12.5m from either end of a 50m pool. Each obstacle is submerged 70cm and cannot be passed through or over the top. The objective of obstacle events is for the competitor to swim under the two obstacles in each 50 metres in the fastest possible time.



The most efficient way to negotiate obstacles is to employ a 2-3m arc to go under the obstacle and to use a highly engaged dolphin kick under the water whilst maintaining a streamlined body position with hands and arms stretched in front of the body to approach, pass under, and to ascend from the obstacle.

An alternate, but slower method for younger or older swimmers or those with a weaker dolphin kick or limited breath is to swim up close to the obstacle, take a final stroke to go under the obstacle then quickly return to the surface and resume swimming.

### **Approach to obstacle**

- Swim towards the obstacle as normal.
- Swimming speed should be maintained on approach to the obstacle.

### **Descent to obstacle (for competitors using the advanced/faster technique)**

- At approximately 2-3m from the obstacle take a final stroke.
- On the entry of the hand after the last stroke adopt a streamlined position and using a dolphin kick to dive towards the bottom of the pool to go under the obstacle.

### **Descent to obstacle (slower but for competitors with a weaker dolphin kick or limited breath)**

- At approximately 0.5-1 m from the obstacle take a last stroke.
- On the entry of the hand after the last stroke dive steeply towards the bottom of the pool.

### **Going under the obstacle**

Continue to adopt a streamlined position and use a strong dolphin kick and as required, pull through with both arms (as in the underwater section of a butterfly stroke) to swim under the obstacle.

A strong dolphin kick should be maintained for the duration of the underwater section.



## Ascent from the obstacle

A powerful dolphin (or 6 beat) kick and momentum is used to propel the competitor towards the surface. The arms and hands remain in a streamlined position until breaking the surface at the ascent after the obstacle similar to the technique a competitor employs after a dive start and after turning.

The angle of ascent is very important. If the ascent is too steep the competitor will be in a near vertical position on breaking the surface. This will decrease momentum and make it more difficult for the competitor to accelerate back to swimming speed. For competitors using an advanced technique it is preferable to continue the entrance arc to return to the water surface about 2-4m from the obstacle.

Just before breaking the water surface the competitor may use one arm to commence their first stroke so they can resume their freestyle quickly on reaching the surface.

Upon breaking the water surface, a strong kick is continued to increase speed. If the competitor does not take a breath immediately after surfacing it may also assist a faster return to swimming speed.

## Common mistakes

- Competitors often attempt to swim under the obstacles by going under the water too late e.g., 1m or less away from the obstacle. This means the arc taken under the obstacle by the competitor is too steep meaning a loss of momentum. In addition, in an attempt to make a fast/steep descent under the obstacle, a competitor may go too close and hit, or become caught on the obstacle. This can slow the competitor and disrupt the competitor's rhythm.
- Surfacing too steeply will cause the competitor's body to be in a vertical position rather than being more horizontal on breaking the surface. A more horizontal position will create better streamlining, allowing the competitor to maintain greater momentum and therefore return to their optimal swimming speed more quickly and efficiently.

## Can competitors push off the bottom when negotiating obstacles?

**Yes.** Competitors are permitted to push off the bottom of the pool when negotiating obstacles. The rules for sanctioned events state that a pool must be a minimum depth of 1.8 and the bottom of the obstacle is 70cm deep. However, the pool can be deeper than 1.8m and is often around 3.0m deep, so the extra time and energy taken to swim to the bottom of the pool may make it inefficient and often difficult and slower. Some competitors may push off the bottom when the pool is at about minimum depth but, when deeper, very few will use the bottom of the pool as they pass under an obstacle.

## Can competitors stay submerged after the dive to negotiate the first (and subsequent) obstacles?

**No.** Competitors must break the surface after the dive before negotiating the first obstacle and must also surface in between obstacles and after each turn.

**Note:** Some stillwater specialist competitors who remain underwater for up to 15m at the start and turns of races may need to modify their dive and turns as they must surface and submerge at the 12.5m mark to go under the first obstacle nearest to the start and turning walls.

## Dive Starts

Starting in still water lifesaving events is a skill, which many swimmers work on in their early development as a swimmer, but don't continue if they focus primarily on surf lifesaving ocean events. It is essential that the competitor has practiced their starts and starting techniques prior to competition.

The pool rescue start variations to a regular swimming start are starts with a rescue tube and/or swim fins.

The base start techniques mirror those with swimming including the "track start" which is used in pool rescue competition even when swimming with swim fins. This section will not go into detail on starting techniques as they are detailed in specific swimming specific manuals.



### Coaching note:

The one start rule applies in pool rescue competition from the U12 and older age categories. A two-start rule applies to younger age groups (should events be conducted).

### Starting with Fins

- A similar starting technique to stillwater swimming applies when swimming with fins. This includes the preferred track start or more traditional starts.
- Place as much of the fin(s) over the edge of the block so that the competitor almost feels off balance.  
**Note:** The competitor's toes, despite being inside the fin(s) would be over the leading edge of the block. This assists to avoid any slipping.
- Dive off the block in a streamlined position and then bend the knees so the fins enter the water with a clean entry for the fins.
- Aim for a minimal surface area of water being broken by the entry of the fins.
- Do not be surprised by the noise the fins make as a competitor leaves the starting block.

### Starting with a Rescue Tube

#### Rescue tube on the competitor's back

- The rescue tube lanyard may be worn over one or two shoulders or over the shoulder and across the chest.
- The lanyard is worn to suit the competitor and event being conducted e.g., in the 4x50m Medley Relay the third competitor usually wears the lanyard over one shoulder for a quick changeover to the fourth competitor who wears the tube for the last leg of the relay.
- The rescue tube may be carried with the tube placed vertically on the back of the competitor and the rope is gathered around the competitor or tucked into the swimsuit (the fastest technique).
- On the starter's instruction the competitor mounts the starting block.
- On the command "take your marks" ensure that the tube remains laid vertically on the competitor's back. At this stage the competitor is in a bent over position that the tube can be balanced.
- On the starter's signal the competitor dives into the pool. To minimise drag the tube may remain on the competitors back as they swim down the pool.



- As the competitor nears the turning wall and taking care to maintain the tube as close as possible to their reach, the tube is released from competitor's back to gather the tube to effect manikin or patient tow (as appropriate for the event).



#### **Rescue tube held by the competitor's side**

- The rescue tube lanyard may be worn over one or two shoulders or over the shoulder and across the chest.
- The lanyard is worn to suit the competitor and event being conducted. e.g., in the 100m manikin the competitor may choose to wear the lanyard over one shoulder and across the chest, so it is secure for the whole event.
- On the starter's instruction mount the starting blocks with the rescue tube held in the competitor's hand at their side.
- On the command "take your marks" the competitor adopts their starting position.
- On the starter's signal the competitor dives into the pool. The competitor either lets the tube fall as they dive into pool taking care not to have it catch on the starting block or they may push it front of them taking care that the tube remains in their lane.
- The tube is then towed behind the competitor as they swim down the pool.
- The tube is regathered when the competitor touches the turning wall and then effects the manikin or patient tow (as appropriate for the event).

#### **Starting/changeovers in the water**

This skill is required for the 4x25m Manikin Relay where the first competitor starts in the water and is not wearing swim fins.

The skill is also required for the third and fourth legs of the 4x50m Pool Lifesaver Relay and the final leg of the 4x50m Medley Relay.

Please refer to the relevant events for the skills and coaching notes for effective in water starts and changeover techniques.

### **Manikin Pick Ups**

Picking up the manikin is a skill used in a number of pool rescue events. A mistake in this area could result in a poor result or event disqualification. There are two different manikin pick-ups in pool rescue competition.

#### **Picking up manikin from the centre of the pool i.e., away from the pool ends.**

- This skill is required for the 50m Manikin Rescue, 100m Rescue Medley and 200m Super Lifesaver where the competitor is not wearing swim fins.



- Prior to the commencement of a race the manikin is positioned on the bottom of the pool, face up with the head pointed in the direction that the competitor is swimming.
- After a start a competitor swims in freestyle towards the manikin.
- At approximately 2-3m from the manikin the competitor takes their last stroke and whilst maintaining a streamlined body position with hands and arms stretched in front of the body and using a powerful dolphin kick (or (6 beat kick) dives in an arc towards the bottom of the pool aiming for the middle of the manikin.
- When the competitor arrives at the manikin, they should firmly grasp it by the throat or head with one or two hands and give it a short, sharp lift to start the manikin moving from the bottom of the pool.
- The competitor pushes off the bottom of the pool with the manikin pushed in front and under their body toward the finish line. If not holding the manikin with two hands, the non-carrying arm should be in the streamlined position in front of the body.
- The competitor then continues to use a powerful dolphin kick (or (6 beat kick) and maneuvers the manikin into their preferred carrying position as they surface. A powerful kick will also assist lift the tail of the manikin reducing drag when carrying the manikin. The competitor should take their first stroke with their non carrying arm just before they break the surface of the water.
- The manikin must be in the correct carrying position within the 5m pick up line judged at the manikin's head.



**Note:** A similar technique is applied for the Brick Carry event where the brick is picked up at the centre of the pool.

### Common Mistakes

- The angle of descent and ascent is very important and can be misjudged.
- If the competitor descends too early, they may be slower and/or expend too much energy.
- If the competitor ascends too steeply, they will be in a near vertical position on breaking the surface and the manikin will be in a poor carrying position and make it more difficult to get to their optimum speed.
- Likewise, if the competitor's return to the surface is too shallow, they risk disqualification by surfacing beyond the 5m pick up line and/or will lose speed and expend greater energy by being underwater for too long.
- Competitors must maintain speed right until they touch the wall, as any reduction in speed will cause the manikin to sink, making it more difficult and slower to carry.
- The competitor must not lose contact with the manikin at any time outside of the 5m pick up line – otherwise disqualification will result.

### Picking up the manikin at the end of the pool

- The second type of manikin pick up is used in the 100m Manikin Carry with Fins where the competitor is wearing swim fins.
- In this event the manikin is positioned at the 50m mark, face up with the head pointed towards the finishing wall with the base of the manikin against the pool wall (or equal to the vertical plane of the turning wall if the pool's turning wall is a pontoon that does not extend to the bottom of the pool).
- The competitor may swim the first 50 metres underwater entirely or surface and again submerge to pick up the manikin. In both cases the manikin is approached with speed.
- The competitor does not need to touch the turning wall before grasping the manikin.





- As the competitor turns around towards the finish end of the pool, they firmly grasp the manikin by the throat or head with one or two hands and give it a short, sharp lift to start the manikin moving from the bottom of the pool.
- The competitor may choose to push off the turning wall or the bottom of the pool with their feet or simply use their fins (which is usually the faster technique) pushing the manikin in front and under their body toward the finish line. If not holding the manikin with two hands, the non-carrying arm should be in the streamlined position in front of the body.
- The competitor then continues to use a powerful dolphin kick (or 6 beat kick) and maneuvers the manikin into their preferred carrying position as they surface. A powerful kick will also assist lift the tail of the manikin reducing drag when carrying the manikin. The competitor should take their first stroke just before they break the surface of the water.
- The manikin must be in the correct carrying position within the 10m pick up line judged at the manikin's head.

### Common mistakes

- If the competitor ascends too steeply with manikin, they will lose advantage of employing the manikin "push" and the subsequent speed underwater.
- Likewise, if the competitor's return to the surface is too shallow, they risk disqualification by surfacing beyond the 10m pick up line.
- Competitors must maintain speed right until they touch the wall, as any reduction in speed will cause the manikin to sink, making it more difficult and slower to carry.
- The competitor must not lose contact with the manikin at any time outside of the 10m pick up line – otherwise disqualification will result.

## Training / Drills

Historically the majority of Australian pool rescue competitors have been surf-based athletes with strong swimming skills who trained irregularly to prepare for pool rescue events that are conducted at biennial ILS Lifesaving World Championships (LWCs). These jobbursts of training do not create optimal skill development or best possible results for themselves or their teams.

As with all sporting activities, regular skill development and training is required to excel. As a result, SLSA, in collaboration with RLSSA, now provides opportunity for high performance squads, more regular events, and international team opportunities for competitors choosing to focus on pool rescue competition and for cross over athletes that are essential for LWC teams.

The fundamental skill required to be successful in pool rescue competition is the ability to swim well. However, in order to become proficient in pool rescue events, it is not only essential that a competitor swims well but also can perform the specific lifesaving skills under the pressure of race conditions. This therefore places a greater emphasis on event specific training, and in particular race simulation. Both the individual skills in isolation and in combination with full events need to be practiced.

There are two training options for pool lifesaving skills. The first option is to combine practice into a regular swimming program. That is, the coach may design lifesaving skill practice into swimming sessions. This would be rare, as there are only a small number of swimming coaches who have experience in pool rescue competition. Alternately coaches and competitors should undertake specialised sessions for pool lifesaving events where the focus is solely on pool rescue competition skills.

### Swimming with fins

The use of competition fins requires specific development of muscles to accommodate the workload that is placed on them. Competitors who do not undertake sufficient specific training with fins prior to competition will find it extremely painful to finish the events at the required intensity due to a rapid and large buildup of lactic acid. Therefore, it is essential to incorporate training with fins into a regular training session. As with any program the training load should be progressively increased. As this may be a skill that is new to a competitor or not practiced on a regular basis, the coach needs to be careful not to overload the muscles and joints which are placed under increased stress during this skill, particularly if using competition fins in training.

As events that contain swimming with fins vary from short intense efforts such as 50m underwater, to efforts which come at the end of 200m such as in the Super Lifesaver, it is essential to utilise the principle of specificity. Competitors should perform training sets which replicate the type of event they will be competing in. 25m and 50m efforts to simulate the short events or 200m repetitions building the pace to maximum effort in the last 50m to simulate the effort in a 200m Super Lifesaver.



In addition, for the 200m Super Lifesaver it is imperative that the skill of putting on fins and rescue tube at the 100m mark is perfected for the execution of a successful race. Competitors must determine the best way for them to place fins and the rescue tube at the 100m turn mark and then undertake rote learning and continually practice in order to minimise the time taken to don the equipment. Many seconds can be shaved off time in competition if these skills are perfected.

## Carrying a manikin

As noted previously there are a number of techniques, which can be used to carry a manikin. Once the competitor is happy with the method that suits them best, it is essential to practice this technique. The most effective way to develop the skill of carrying a manikin is to practice the skill in its entirety, including the pickup of manikins. At first the training may consist of sets of 10-15m intervals of carrying the manikin. With refinement of the skill these intervals can be increased to 25m and longer. In addition, as the skill develops, simulation of actual events can be introduced e.g., both fin and non-fin carry events, the swimming, pick up and carry portions of events to make the training more race specific.

## Towing a manikin in a rescue tube

As also noted, there are a number of techniques that may be used to clip a manikin into a rescue tube. Once the competitor has decided on the method that suits best, it is essential to practice this technique. The most effective way to develop the skill is to practice the skill in its entirety. It is also essential for the third and fourth competitors in the Medley Relay event to practice their changeovers in part and in its entirety to perfect the processes.

For the rescue tube swimmer who is wearing fins, it is essential to maintain a powerful stroke and a strong kick as they swim the 50m towing a manikin to the end of the pool (see Swimming with Fins).

## Towing a patient holding a rescue tube

For the 4x50m Medley Relay it is essential that the patient obtains and maintains a secure, firm grasp on any part of the rescue tube or clip and maintains a streamlined position either on their back or stomach (the most common technique) and kick vigorously for the entire length to the finish of the race. It is also essential for the third and fourth competitors in the Patient Tow event to practice their changeovers in part and in its entirety to perfect the processes.

Practicing kicking using a board and restricting breathing is a suitable training skill to be practiced.

For the rescue tube swimmer who is wearing fins, it is essential to maintain a powerful stroke and a strong kick as they swim the 50m towing a manikin to the end of the pool (see Swimming with Fins).

## Towing a patient clipped into a rescue tube

The most effective way to develop the skill of clipping a patient into a rescue tube is to practice the skill in its entirety and for both team members to practice their changeovers in part and in its entirety to perfect the processes.

For the rescue tube swimmer who is wearing fins, it is essential to have maintain a powerful stroke and a strong kick as they swim the 50 metres towing a patient to the end of the pool (see Swimming with Fins).

The patient is towed on their back in the rescue tube. They assist the rescuer as much as possible by lying back into the tube to streamline their body with their arms above their head above the water and by kicking vigorously to the finish of the race.

**Note:** It is permitted for patients to scull under the water, but this can be a slower technique dependent on the speed of the rescue tube swimmer.

## Swimming under obstacles

The skill of swimming under obstacles requires training sessions to be undertaken in the pool. Training or drills will consist of sets, which are specifically the drill of swimming under the obstacles and sets, which combine swimming under obstacles within repetitions of set distances e.g., 10 x 50m with obstacles or 8 x 100m with obstacles.

It is also advisable to practice techniques to dive and surface before going under the first obstacle at the 12.5m mark. Similarly, it is also advisable to practice techniques for surfacing and submerging to go under an obstacle after completing a turn.



## Line Throws

This is a team event where the thrower in particular does need not be a strong swimmer.

There are a number of different methods of retrieving and throwing the rope including under and overarm (which is the quickest) techniques. Accuracy and speed are essential to win because a missed throw almost guarantees a non-podium finish for a team and perhaps a “Did Not Finish” result.

If a win is sought a higher risk throw technique may be employed but if a team is focusing more on a point score result, they may sacrifice some speed for accuracy particularly to secure a result within the event time limit.

One advantage for training for this event is that the throw does not to be practiced at the pool. All that is needed is a throw rope and an area about 20m by 3m in which to perfect the throw technique. To be successful a competitor should throw the rope regularly and undertake some strength training to ensure they have the power to pull the patient to the finish edge in competition.

The rescuer undertakes a very rapid and strong underarm action (similar to an R&R technique) to pull the victim to the finish wall. Practicing and perfecting this technique is also important.

For the patient it is essential that they are able to quickly grasp a legal rope throw by either:

- Catching the thrown line either in the air within the lane or as it lands within the lane.
- By using their feet to stretch and bring in a rope that is further than arm’s length away while maintaining contact with the crossbar.

In the event of a poor throw, the patient and rescuer should communicate quickly and verbally so that the rescuer can pull in the rope and attempt another throw.

When the rope is caught or gathered the patient then grasps the rope and is pulled to the finish wall by the rescuer. The patient adopts a streamlined position and kicks vigorously attempting not to take a breath, and then reaching to touch the wall to record a finish result. Practicing kicking using a board and restricting breathing is a suitable training skill to be undertaken.

To complete training both the thrower and the patient should also practice the skill in its entirety as a team at a swimming pool.

### Common mistakes

- Patient not swimming the rope out to the throw line prior to the race causing the thrower to throw. (If the rescuer throws the rope, it may be regarded as a practice throw which could result in disqualification)
- The rescuer not keeping the rope holding hand still while the rope is being coiled causing tangling and foul throws.
- Patient not communicating to the thrower when the rope has been grasped or is unable to reach the rope.
- The rescuer deliberately walking backwards with the line during the haul in.
- Patient letting go of the crossbar when grasping the rope.
- Impeding any other team. In the event.
- Stepping outside the designated throw zone at any time prior to the end of race whistle.

## Competition

### Warm up

Unless there is a secondary pool at the competition venue warming up and maintaining a state of readiness can be very challenging for pool rescue competitors. In many cases the competitor is only able to warm up prior to the commencement of the competition session and then has to wait until it is time for their event.

If this is the situation, it is important that the competitor tries to retain their readiness by performing light exercises/stretching between the conclusion of their warmup and the commencement of their race. If there is a secondary pool that can be used for warmup, it is preferable to time a warmup so that there is minimal time between warming up and commencing the event.

A comprehensive warmup program can include:

- Stretching/flexibility exercises.
- Loosen up in water.
- Skill practice.



- Aerobic swimming to promote increased blood flow.
- Short/intense efforts.
- Warm down.
- Massage.
- A further brief “dip” in the warmup pool before racing.

### **Warm down**

Whether it be between events, or at the conclusion of a day’s competition, warming down can assist in the competitor’s recovery for either their next event, to prepare for the next day’s competition or to get back to normal training.

A warm down will assist the competitor to remove any buildup of lactic acid and is more efficient than a sedentary recovery, assisting to decrease post event soreness.

## **Relays and Change Overs**

### **4 x 25m Manikin Carry**

To be successful at this event the competitors need compatible changeovers in terms of carrying technique and the hand each competitor uses to carry. Legal, fast, and efficient changeovers are essential to the success of a team.

The order of each competitor’s position in a team is a mix of event tactics and also consideration of the hand in which each of the competitors carry the manikin.

#### **Coaching and Event Notes:**

- The starting position for the first competitor is in the water in contact with the finish wall or starting blocks and requires support of the manikin in a horizontal position using one leg as support under the manikin.
- One hand touches the wall or starting block while the other grabs the manikin in the position of the carry. The manikin’s head does not need to be held above the water surface for the start.
- The changeover between the first and second competitors involves the first competitor, on their last stroke, thrusting the manikin firmly towards the second competitor.
- The second competitor is waiting at the 25m mark on the side of the lane that is compatible with each other’s swimming arm.
- The first competitor slightly lifts the tail of the manikin as the second competitor takes the manikin. The first competitor may push the manikin within the changeover zone.
- The second competitor may come from under the water’s surface to affect a smooth, fast changeover.
- The changeover must take place between 23m to 27m or 73m to 77m markers. The stronger of the two at carrying should try to carry longer, where possible.
- As the second competitor touches the wall, they push the head of the Manikin towards the third competitor.
- The third competitor must remain in contact with the wall or starting block until the second competitor touches the wall but may touch or grasp the manikin before the second competitor touches the wall.
- The third competitor keeps the end of the manikin in a horizontal position by pushing its tail up with one hand and may push the manikin within the changeover zone.
- The third competitor then grabs the manikin in the correct head position for their leg of the race and carries the manikin to the middle of the pool.
- The third competitor effects a changeover to fourth competitor in the same manner as the changeover between the first and second competitors.
- The fourth competitor carries the manikin to the to the end of the pool to finish the race.

### **4 x 25m Brick Relay Carry**

This event is conducted for SLSA U13 and under aged competitors. It is a similar event as the 4x25m Manikin Relay (above) with similar procedures but using a lifesaving brick instead of a manikin.

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.



## 4 x 50m Medley Relay

To be successful at this event coaches need to determine the fastest combination of competitors based on their individual times for each of the four legs. Legal, fast, and efficient changeovers are also essential to the success of the team.

### Coaching and Event Notes:

- With a dive start the first competitor swims 50m freestyle.
- With a dive start the second competitor swims with fins. They may swim the whole 50m underwater (adopting a streamlined position and employing a dolphin or freestyle kick).
- With a dive start the third Competitor swims 50m in freestyle without fins towing a rescue tube with the lanyard worn over one shoulder. The rescue tube may be carried on the back with the rope gathered around the competitor or tucked into the swimsuit or may be towed behind the competitor.
- Care must be taken by the third competitor to touch the turning wall with the hand on the opposite side to the shoulder with the rescue tube strap.
- The fourth competitor is permitted to touch or grasp the rescue tube, harness, or line with one hand before the third competitor has touched the turning wall but cannot release contact with the wall or starting block until the third competitor has touched the wall.
- The fourth competitor, who is waiting in the water wearing fins and in contact with the wall or starting block puts the strap of the rescue tube on or over their shoulder and starts swimming.
- The third competitor lunges forward to obtain a secure hold on any part of the rescue tube or clip, but preferably grabbing it halfway along the tube to provide some security if the tube slips in the hands to re secure it.
- The line must be fully extended by the time the third competitor's head reaches the 10m changeover line.
- The third competitor is towed on their stomach or back, with their head in a streamlined position as much as possible and kicking vigorously to assist the fourth competitor swim to the finish.

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.

## 4 x 50m Pool Lifesaver Relay

As advised by the Organisation Committee for an event this event may be conducted in male, female and/or mixed categories. To be successful at this event coaches need to determine the fastest combination of competitors based on their individual times for each of the four legs. Event tactics as to the order of competitors is also important to consider, as well as legal, fast, and efficient changeovers that are essential to the success of the team.

### Coaching and event notes:

- With a dive start the first competitor swims flat out 50m freestyle without fins.
- With a dive start the second competitor swims 50m with fins. They may swim the whole 50m underwater (streamline with dolphin kick) and pick up a manikin at the end of the pool and surfaces the manikin to handover the manikin to the third Competitor who is waiting in the water.
- The second competitor does not need to touch the turning wall.
- The third competitor may touch or grasp the manikin with one hand before the head of the manikin breaks the surface of the water, but the manikin must not be released by the second competitor until the third competitor has grasped it (i.e., the hand of at least one competitor must be in contact with the manikin at all times)
- The third competitor must remain in contact with the wall or starting block until the manikin's head breaks the surface of the water.
- The second competitor may assist in the 5m changeover zone by turning the manikin and lifting it into a horizontal position by pushing its tail up with one hand and may also assist by pushing the manikin within the changeover zone.
- The third competitor must have the manikin in the correct carrying position within the 5m changeover zone.
- The third competitor then carries the manikin 50m without fins and hands over the manikin to the fourth competitor who is waiting in the water wearing fins.
- As the third competitor touches the wall, they may push the head of the manikin towards the fourth competitor.
- The fourth competitor may touch or grasp the manikin with one hand before the third competitor touches the turning wall but must remain in contact with the turning wall or starting block until the third competitor touches the turning wall.
- The manikin must not be released by the third competitor until the third competitor has grasped it (i.e., the hand of at least one competitor must be in contact with the manikin at all times).
- The third competitor may also assist in the 10m changeover zone by turning the manikin and keeping the



manikin in a horizontal position by pushing its tail up with one hand and may also assist by pushing the manikin within the changeover zone.

- The fourth competitor then takes control of the manikin who must have the manikin in the correct carrying position within the 10 m changeover zone and then carries the manikin 50m to complete the race.

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.

## 4 x 50m Rescue Tow Relay

To be successful at this event coaches need to determine the fastest combination of competitors based on their individual times for each of the four legs. Legal, fast, and efficient changeovers are also essential to the success of the team.

### Coaching and Event Notes:

- With a dive start the first competitor swims 50m freestyle.
- With a dive start the second competitor swims with fins. They may swim the whole 50m underwater (adopting a streamlined position and employing a dolphin or freestyle kick).
- With a dive start the third competitor swims 50m in freestyle with fins towing a rescue tube with the lanyard worn to suit the individual swimmer. The rescue tube may be carried on the back with the rope gathered around the competitor or tucked into the swimsuit or may be towed behind the competitor.
- The fourth competitor is waiting in the water with one hand on the turning wall or starting block.
- The fourth competitor is permitted to touch or grasp the rescue tube, its harness or line with one hand before the third competitor has touched the turning wall but cannot release contact with the wall or starting block until the third competitor has touched the turning wall.
- As soon as the third competitor has touched the turning wall, the fourth competitor may release contact with the turn wall or starting block and the clip in of the patient into the rescue tube can commence.
- Either or both of the third competitor (the rescuer) and the fourth competitor (patient) may secure the rescue tube around the patient's body under both arms and clipped to an O-ring.
- The patient must be clipped into the tube and the line must be fully extended by the time their head reaches the 10m changeover line.
- The patient is towed on their back in the rescue tube. They assist the rescuer as much as possible by lying back into the tube to streamline their body with their arms above their head above the water and by kicking vigorously to the finish of the race.

**Note:** It is permitted for patients to scull under the water, but this can be a slower technique dependent on the speed of the rescue tube swimmer

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.

## 2 x 50m Patient Tow with Fins

This event is a two-person team event conducted for SLSA U13 and under aged competitors. It is a similar event to the 4x50m Rescue Tow Relay but without the first two legs. To be successful at this event coaches need to determine the fastest combination of competitors based on their individual strengths. Legal, fast, and efficient changeovers are also essential to the success of the team.

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.

## 4 x 50m Obstacle Relay

To be successful at this event it is essential that the competitors need to be effective at negotiating obstacles and to execute a legal, fast, and efficient start and changeovers.

The order of each competitor's position in a team is a mix of event tactics.

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.

## Line Throw

The rescuer stands on edge of pool holding one end of the supplied throw rope. The patient is in the water in contact with the throw line with one hand and the 12.5m or crossbar (a rigid bar or taut rope between the lanes) with the other hand. On the start signal the patient releases the throw line while the rescuer retrieves it and throws it back to the patient, who grabs the line and is pulled through the water to the edge of the pool. There is a 45 second time limit for the event.



**Note:** For SLSA U13 and under aged competition the throw distance is 10 metres.

### Coaching and Event Notes:

- The rescuer must stand to attention with rope held in one hand for the start.
- On the signal, the rescuer puts one leg forward and rests their wrist that is holding the rope on their thigh.
- The wrist is kept still as it receives the loops from the other hand, which is pulling on the rope.
- The loops are quite loose – usually four loops for accuracy and three for speed. (It is easier to throw the smaller coils accurately).
- If the decision is made to throw overarm, concentrate on throwing the coils with a straight arm action. If an underarm action is taken, the throwing arm is lightly bent.
- At the start the patient must still be holding the crossbar anywhere within the lane and must be grasping the crossbar when reaching for and taking hold of the thrown rope. The patient may catch the rope in the air or take the rope on the water's surface with their other hand. They are also permitted to use their feet and/or submerge to gather and grab the rope but must at all times stay within their lane.

**Note:** It is recommended that the patient maintains their grasp on the crossbar continuously from the start of the race until taking hold of the thrown rope.

- For the haul in the patient may be positioned on their stomach (most common), or back and holds the rope with both hands, and kicks vigorously. The patient may reach out with one hand to the wall to record a finish result. If being towed on their stomach the patient keeps their head down as it may be preferable for them to wear swim goggles to aid their underwater vision.
- The rescuer hauls in (pulls) the patient to the finish wall using their arms.
- The rescuer cannot deliberately walk backwards with the line during the haul in.
- Care must be taken for the rescuer not to impede any other team in the event or to not step outside the designated throw zone and or the patient to leave the water prior to the end of competition signal.

Refer to the individual event coaching notes for skill details.





## Pool Rescue Equipment

Pool Rescue competitions are similar to surf swimming and require very little equipment to be provided by a competitor other than their SLSA approved (FINA stillwater compliant) swimsuit, goggles, swim fins and team cap (either the traditional SLSA competition cap or a swimming cap (i.e., rubber or silicone type).

Competitors in pool rescue event often use FINA approved technical swimsuits for stillwater swimming to maximise speed.

**Note:** Refer to the SLS Surf Sports Manual for swimsuit and swim cap specifications.

All other equipment is standardised and, unless otherwise advised, will be supplied by the competition organiser i.e., manikins, rescue tubes and obstacles. However, it is essential that a competitor has access to this type of equipment for training purposes.

**Note:** Refer to the ILS Competition Rulebook for specifications for Obstacles, Manikins, Throw lines and to the SLS Surf Sports Manual for Rescue Bricks.

The competitor's equipment should be checked prior to competition. Competition caps (if to be worn) should be checked to ensure they are in good repair and that straps will not break. Swimming caps (rubber or silicone) should be checked to ensure they are not perished or likely to tear.

If wearing goggles, they must have a good seal, provide a clear view, and the strap or nose piece should be checked to ensure that they are not likely to break. It is suggested that you do not utilise new goggles for the first time in a race. Goggles should be used in training to ensure a suitable fit, and to ensure that they do not leak. If using swim fins these should be checked to ensure good fit, that there are no fractures in the blade and that the foot strap is not perished or likely to break, liquid soap or similar to be put inside fins (if required) for ease of fitting.

| Equipment Checklist   | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| Swimsuit meets SLS (or FINA stillwater) specifications  |     |    |
| Competition caps (if to be worn) are in good repair, and that the straps will not break   |     |    |
| Swimming caps are in team colours and are not perished or torn  |     |    |
| Goggles have a good seal, provide a clear view, and the strap and nose piece are not likely to break  |     |    |
| Swim Fins have a good fit, and the blade of fins do not have any fracture that may cause the fins to fail, and that the foot straps of fins are not perished and likely to break. |     |    |
| Liquid soap or similar is available (if required) to assist with donning fins.  |     |    |
| Any required handlers are correctly attired with team   |     |    |