

National Aquatic Industry Committee Position Statement

Position on ongoing reaccreditation and licensing requirements in Victoria for key aquatic industry positions considering recent COVID-19 restrictions and associated lockdowns in Victoria mandating the closure of public and public-access swimming pools.

Note:

- This position is current as at 4pm, Thursday 7th June, 2021.
- This position must be considered against the remit of the National Aquatic Industry Committee (NAIC) as a steering committee for national industry guidelines and their responsibility in creating business operating certainty with safety as the foundational principle.
- Although published by Royal Life Saving, this position represents the collective opinion of the aquatic industry across Australia, through a considered development and review process undertaken by the National Aquatic Industry Committee (NAIC).
- At the time of writing, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) courses are being provided “@Home” currently by Life Saving Victoria and other providers.
- At the time of writing, “in-house” Pool Lifeguard courses are able to be delivered in regional Victoria and are planned to be delivered in metropolitan Melbourne aquatic facilities as of Monday 14th June 2021. As such employers are able to ensure their affected staff are able to renew their qualifications.
- It is noted that affected employees, affected employers and affected Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are operating in a more difficult and constrained financial landscape than from previous lockdowns.

Background and context

Victoria commenced a stage 3 lockdown from Friday 28th May which included the closure of aquatic facilities.

The National Aquatic Industry Committee (NAIC) is providing specific advice in relation to lifeguard re-accreditation and swim teacher licensing in response to the ongoing lockdown.

The NAIC advises that with reference to the applicable sections of the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations an extension will be put in place for Swimming and Water Safety Teachers, Pool Lifeguards and Aquatic Program Instructors that live and work in the state of Victoria whose ongoing re-accreditation and licensing requirements have been or are due for renewal between Friday 28th May 2021 and the date from which aquatic facilities are able to be reopened within their respective area as determined by the Victorian Chief Health Officer’s restricted activity directions.

Pool Lifeguards

Reference:

GSPO Aquatic Supervision SV9.7.1: "Pool lifeguards are required to be assessed every 12 months to demonstrate currency of their knowledge and skills."

SV9.7.2: "Assessments should be conducted by an Assessor who is either employed by an RTO or acting under the registration of an RTO."

Position:

"Any Victorian pool lifeguard reaccreditation expiry which was or is due for renewal between Friday 28th May 2021 and the date from which aquatic facilities are able to be reopened, shall be extended by four (4) weeks' from which the lifeguard's place of employment (aquatic facility) is able to be reopened, after which time, the usual industry standard process outlined in the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations SV9.7.1 and SV9.7.2 comes back into effect.

Aquatic facilities should consider the length of closure and lapsing of reaccreditation on the employees' ability to competently execute their duties and consider providing in-service training for affected employees in line with the employer's risk appetite.

Employees should be aware of their own skills and limitations and give consideration to their own in-service training should their employer not make provisions for employer-provided in-service training."

Swim Teachers

Reference:

GSPO Swimming, Water Safety and Aquatic Exercise Programs

SV2.8.1: "All swimming and water safety teachers should be licenced no more than every 3 years by process of verification of skills assessment and ongoing professional development."

SV2.8.2: "Licensing of swimming and water safety teachers should include but not be limited to:

- Requiring and citing evidence of training and assessment including CPR and basic water rescue techniques
- Requiring evidence of on-going professional development in both water safety and teaching techniques
- Requiring an assessment that the swimming and water safety teacher remains a fit and proper person to perform their duties."

Position:

"Any Victorian swimming and water safety teacher licence which was or is due for renewal between Friday 28th May 2021 and the date from which aquatic facilities are able to be reopened, should be extended for four (4) weeks from which the swimming and water safety teacher's license has expired. 'Working with Children Checks' or their equivalents are still required to be kept up-to-date for any active swimming and water safety teacher in line with Victorian legislation.

Licensing organisations should apply extensions, in line with the timing above, to licenses for affected swimming and water safety teachers, and in line with their licensing provider's policies and procedures.

Aquatic facilities should consider the length of closure and lapsing of licensing periods on the employees' ability to competently execute their duties and consider providing in-service training for affected employees in line with the employer's risk appetite.

Employees should be aware of their own skills and limitations and give consideration to their own in-service training should their employer not make provisions for employer-provided in-service training."

Aquatic Program Instructors

Reference:

GSPO Swimming, Water Safety and Aquatic Exercise Programs

SV3.4.1: "To perform the duties of an Aquatic Program Instructor, an individual should hold a:

- a) Current Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certificate issued by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO); and a,
- b) 'Working With Children Check' or equivalent as required by relevant State or Territory Legislation; and a,
- c) Recognised minimum qualification for instruction of the programmed activity (as per the table in SV3.4.4)

SV3.4.4

Code	Competency
Swimming Coaching	Swimming Australia Ltd Bronze Coach Licenses or Equivalent Qualification (as recognised under the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme).
Diving Coaching	Australian Coaching Council / National Coaching Accreditation Scheme Level 1 or Equivalent Qualification.
Pool Lifesaving Sport	Royal Life Saving Society Australia Level 1 Coach Licenses or Equivalent Qualification
Scuba Diving	Dive Instructor qualification from a recreational scuba training organisations or the equivalent industry qualification
Hydrotherapy	Hydrotherapy Aquatic Safety Certificate, or the equivalent industry qualification
Lifesaving (RLSSA Bronze Star, Medallion, Cross)	Current Royal Life Saving Society Australia Teacher of Lifesaving or Bronze Medallion Examiner accreditation
Water polo	Australian Water polo Association Coaching Qualification or the equivalent industry qualification
Aqua-Instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSBRSK401 Identify risk and apply risk management processes • HLTWHS001 Participate in workplace health and safety • SISCAQU002 Perform basic water rescues

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SISCAQU008 Instruct water familiarisation, buoyancy and mobility skills • SISFFIT008 Instruct water-based fitness activities • SISFFIT022 Instruct aquatic sessions for specific population groups • HLTAID003 Provide First Aid
Helicopter Underwater Escape Training	PMAOHS214B Undertake helicopter safety and escape and a current TAE40116 - Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

Position:

“Any Victorian aquatic program instructor who was or is due for a qualification and associated CPR renewal between Friday 28th May 2021 and the date from which aquatic facilities are able to be reopened, should be extended for four (4) weeks from which the aquatic program instructor’s place of employment (aquatic facility) is able to be reopened, after which time, the usual industry standard process outlined in the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations SV3.4.1 and SV 3.4.4 comes back into effect.

Licensing or reaccreditation organisations should apply extensions, in line with the timing above, to licenses for affected aquatic program instructors.

Aquatic facilities should consider the length of closure and lapsing of qualification periods on the employees’ ability to competently execute their duties and consider providing in-service training for affected employees in line with the employer’s risk appetite.

Employees should be aware of their own skills and limitations and give consideration to their own in-service training should their employer not make provisions for employer-provided in-service training.

NB: ‘Working with Children Checks’ or their equivalents are still required to be kept up-to-date.”

Conclusion

The NAIC will continue to monitor the situation in Victoria and may provide further advice accordingly.

The members of the NAIC will communicate this position statement to their respective constituents as applicable.