

# National Aquatic Industry Committee Position Statement

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

## Note:

- This position is current as at 27 July 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” by a range of providers
- 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 in 2020.

## Background and context

At the time of writing:

- On 25 June in NSW, after 22 new cases of the delta variant brought infections linked to the Bondi cluster to 65 total, a lockdown was announced for four Sydney LGAs. The City of Sydney, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra are the affected places. At 6:00pm on 26 June the lockdown area in NSW was extended to Greater Sydney, the Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong, until 11.59pm on 9 July.
- On 27 June, at 1pm, Darwin went into a 'snap' lockdown, until 2 July.
- On 28 June, at midnight in Western Australia, a 4-day lockdown was declared in the Perth and Peel regions after a third case of the delta variant was detected. Residents were required to stay home except for essential work, shopping, an hour of daily exercise, or medical appointments. Community sport was not permitted. Schools and day care centres remained open. Restaurants, bars, hotels and similar venues remained open for takeaway food only.
- On 29 June in Queensland a 3-day lockdown was announced for Brisbane and all of South East Queensland plus Townsville city, Magnetic Island and Palm Island.
- With lockdowns in Sydney, Darwin, Perth and Brisbane, on 29 June more than 12 million of Australia's population was in lockdown.
- On 15 July in Victoria, Premier Daniel Andrews that the state would enter a snap lockdown for 5 days from 11:59pm on 15 July (Thursday) until 11:59pm on 20 July (Tuesday). This was the third Victorian lockdown in 2021, and the fifth since the start of the pandemic in Australia.
- On 20 July, from 6pm, South Australia will go into lockdown for 7 days. Victoria has extended its lockdown for a further 7 days.

It is known that lockdowns frequently require aquatic facilities to close, face-to-face aquatic training to stop and can leave the potential for employees of aquatic facilities to lapse in their qualifications. This creates uncertainty for employers and regulators on the effect of staff ability to carry out their duties safely.

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 lockdowns.

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 whose ongoing re-accreditation and licensing requirements have been or are due for renewal during a lockdown period and the date from which aquatic facilities are able to be reopened or are able to recommence the applicable programming and/or training relevant to the role of the individual employee type.

## **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 pool lifeguard reaccreditation and/or license due for renewal during a lockdown period:*

- of up to 4-weeks should be extended by 4-weeks (28 days); or,*
- greater than 4-weeks should be extended by 8-weeks (56 days);*

*from the date facilities can reopen, 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 swimming and water safety teacher licence due for renewal during a lockdown period of at least 7 days, should be extended by 4-weeks from the date facilities can, under applicable health restrictions, recommence swimming and water safety programming. ‘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 relevant legislation.*

*Payment plans and/or flexible payment arrangements for affected swimming and water safety teachers are encouraged to be applied by licensing organisations as applicable to support industry recovery.*

*Licensing organisations should apply extensions, in line with the timing above, to licenses for affected swimming and water safety teachers.*

*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"> <li>• BSBRSK401 Identify risk and apply risk management processes</li> <li>• HLTWHS001 Participate in workplace health and safety</li> <li>• SISCAQU002 Perform basic water rescues</li> <li>• SISCAQU008 Instruct water familiarisation, buoyancy and mobility skills</li> <li>• SISFFIT008 Instruct water-based fitness activities</li> <li>• SISFFIT022 Instruct aquatic sessions for specific population groups</li> <li>• HLTAID003 Provide First Aid</li> </ul>
Helicopter Underwater Escape Training	PMAOHS214B Undertake helicopter safety and escape and a current TAE40116 - Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

**Position:**

*“Any aquatic program instructor due for a qualification and associated CPR renewal during a lockdown period and the date from which aquatic facilities are able to be reopened, should be extended by 4-weeks (28 days) from when facilities can reopen. ‘Working with Children Checks’ or their equivalents are still required to be kept up-to-date.*

*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.”*

**Conclusion**

The NAIC will continue to monitor the pandemic and may provide further advice accordingly.

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

ENDORSED