

Best Practices for Sanctions Chairs

Karen Harris - Pacific

Linda Chapman – Pacific Northwest

Phyllis Quinn - Pacific



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Welcome!

- **Karen Harris**
LMSC Development Committee
Pacific Masters
- **Linda Chapman**
LMSC Development Committee
Pacific Northwest Masters
- **Phyllis Quinn**
Long Distance Committee Chair and
LMSC Chair
Pacific Masters

Introduce yourself to your neighbor!

- Name
- Club
- Location (City, State)
- Role in your LMSC
- Experience as Sanctions Chair
- Why you are here



Meet your hosts:

Karen Harris – is the former board president of Richmond Swims, the non-profit that runs Richmond Plunge Masters and the USA swimming age group team. The Richmond Plunge Masters is also host to the only Open Water event held in San Francisco Bay, the Keller Cove Swim for Kids' Sake. Karen is a certified ALTS instructor and Level 2 Coach. She is a Dorothy Donnelley Service Award recipient and Pacific Masters Contributor of the Year (2020). She is a current member of the LMSC development committee and former member of the Rules committee.



Meet your hosts:

Linda Chapman has served on the LMSC Development Committee since 2014 specializing in LMSC Standards, webinars, sanctions education and USMS role descriptions. She was sanctions chair in the Pacific NW LMSC for 10+ years, LMSC Chair from 2021-2023, and currently serves in three roles for the PN LMSC: Membership Coordinator, Club and Team Development Coordinator, and Coaches Coordinator. Prior to becoming involved in the Pacific Northwest LMSC, Linda was a meet director for years in USA-S, served on the PN LSC Technical Planning Committee, and has been the meet director for the Northwest Colleges conference meet since 2014.



Meet your hosts

- **Phyllis Quinn** - is the current Chair for the Pacific LMSC. (2019-2023)
She served as the Open Water Sanction chair for the Pacific LMSC for several years prior to being the Chair. Phyllis is the current Chair of the USMS Long Distance Committee and have been on the LDC for several years.



Agenda

- Introductions
- New Sanctions Chairs vs Experienced Sanctions Chair
- Pool vs Open Water Sanctions Chair
- Why Sanction an event?



Why Sanction an Event

- To ensure sanctioned meets throughout USMS follow the same technical and administrative rules providing consistent competitive, facility, and safety conditions across all meets.
- To ensure swimmers have a fair race and earn a valid official time.
- Times achieved at sanctioned events are considered for World Aquatic Masters records, USMS records, and USMS Top 10 times.
- Meet hosts of USMS sanctioned events are provided liability coverage for their event.



Who is involved?

- LMSC Sanctions Chair/Coordinator
- Event Host
- Meet Referee
- USMS Safety Coordinator (Open Water) - David Miner
- Club Assistant
- Online sanction tool
- LMSC Top Ten Chair/Coordinator
- National Swims Administrator– Mary Beth Windrath



Pool Sanctions

Summary of Differences Between USMS-Sanctioned and USMS-Recognized Events	
USMS-sanctioned event (pool or open water)	USMS-recognized event (pool only)
All participants must be currently-registered USMS members	Participants are not required to be USMS members
Participants are covered by USMS liability and participant accident insurance	No insurance coverage from USMS
Times swum by USMS members are eligible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• USMS Top 10• USMS national records• AQUA Top 10 (SCM & LCM meets)• AQUA world records (SCM & LCM meets)	Times swum by USMS members are eligible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• USMS Top 10• USMS national records



Pool Sanctions – Dual USMS+USA

- Dual-sanctioned - both USMS and USA Swimming held by the USA Swimming host organization.
- Participants in the event must be members of one of the two organizations. Those that are members of both must select one organization with which to compete for the entire meet.
- A dual-sanctioned event must still meet the relevant USMS requirements in order for insurance coverage to be in effect.



Let's sync up - Glossary of Terms

- **Meet Announcement**
 - AKA the Meet Sheet, Meet Information, Event Announcement
 - The document that sets forth required information about the meet, starting times, order of events, entry procedures, swimsuit categories (cat 1, cat 2) and other meet procedures as required by rules and regulations
- **Course – designated distance over which a pool competition is conducted**
 - LCM long course meters = 50 meters
 - SCY short course yards =25 yards
 - SCM short course meters =25 meters



Sanction Chair Role

- **LMSC Sanction Chair is the gatekeeper to ensure that:**
 - Sanctioned meets are planned to follow applicable USMS rules
 - Meet announcements for sanctioned meets are complete and correct
- **Four phases for each meet:**
 - Early meet planning - is the event possible?
 - Meet announcement - review input from event host
 - Approval of sanction in USMS system
 - Post meet activities - export of results, reports, paperwork



TIMING	EVENT HOST	SANCTION CHAIR
No later than 6 months	Determines event Locates Facility Submits date request to LMSC Obtains Meet Referee	Advisory Role
No later than 4 – 6 months	Drafts Meet Announcement	Reviews Meet Announcement Corrects and confirms as necessary Answers questions from event host
	Registers event on USMS.org and uploads Meet Announcement to USMS	Approves sanction request which generates USMS sanction number Host or Sanction chair can add sanction # to meet announcement and upload final version to USMS
After event	Submits results to LMSC Top 10 chair or another designee Saves meet paperwork for 2 years (Some LMSCs have paperwork mailed to Top 10 chair)	Reviews meet with Event Host, makes suggestions for future meets or changes to make to meet the following year.



1. Early Meet Planning Checklist for Sanction Chair

- See bottom of page 6 of Overview document
- These are the first steps to take when a meet host is starting to plan their meet.
- Main areas:
 - Pool: Measured, in USMS database, meets length requirements
 - Facility: does it meet facilities standards?
 - Timing system: confirm timing system to be used. Explain impact on official times to meet host as appropriate.
 - Confirm timeline to prepare meet announcement and template.



2. Meet announcement

The meet announcement is the official sanction document for a meet.

- **USMS rules describe required elements which must be in the meet announcement**
- **Resources:** The first three are at: USMS.org.→Guide to Local Ops→Sanction Chairs
 - [Overview and General Sanction Information document](#)
 - Early meet planning checklist – page 6
 - Meet Announcement Checklist – page 7
 - [Meet Announcement template](#)
 - [Glossary and Guidance – Meet Announcement template](#)
 - Course description and timing system description have specific language which must be used!
 - [USMS Rule Book](#) – Articles 102, 103, 108, 202



Breakout: 15 mins

- Small groups of 2-4 people
- **Task 1:** Locate and open the three resource documents on USMS.org to be used when reviewing a meet announcement
 - Overview and General Sanction Info
 - Meet Announcement template
 - Glossary and Guidance – Meet Announcement template
- **Task 2: Scenarios:** discuss issues, decide how to handle



Table Talk 1: Pool Event Scenarios

Meet host wants to include 'family relays' at the end of the USMS meet.

The assumption is that the relays will largely be made up of USMS and currently registered USA-S swimmers. Non-USMS swimmers allowed in the family relays only.

Meet host has included a clause that all non-USMS swimmers must be current USA-S members.

Can meet be sanctioned by USMS? Recognized? Issues?



Table Talk 2: Pool Event Scenarios

Meet host wants to include 25y events in their sanctioned meet.

Is this allowed in a sanctioned meet?

What happens to results?



Table Talk 3: Pool Event Scenarios

Meet host wants to provide one 200y event for any 200y individual event to be swum.

Is this allowed in a sanctioned meet?

What happens to the results of this event?



Table Talk 4: Pool Event Scenarios

Meet host wants to allow an Olympian to race in an exhibition swim at their upcoming USMS meet to attract interest in the meet.

The Olympian isn't a USMS member and doesn't care about getting an official time.

Is this allowed at a sanctioned meet?

What are the issues?



Table Talk 5: Pool Event Scenarios

Meet host mentions that they might offer Time Trials at the end of their meet if there is interest and time on the day of the meet.

Does this need to be in the meet announcement?

If so, what information is needed?



Open Water Sanction - Differences

- The sanctioning process also requires detailed safety plan.
- Since every venue for an open water swim differs, factors such as course, currents, accounting for all swimmers, safety personal on the water and evacuation plan must be thought out.
- Some LMSC's have a specific person assigned as Open Water sanction chair.
- Safety plan must be reviewed by David Miner, USMS Open Water Coordinator

[USMS OW Event Resource Information](#)



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Open Water Safety

Addendum A: Mandatory Safety Regulations

Regulations Summary

Requirement	Verified By	Documentation	Required By
Safety Plan	OWCC	Plan uploaded with sanction application	When sanction is applied for
Use of Safety Plan Application	OWCC	Safety plan uploaded using the Safety Plan Application	All events
Propeller Guards or on-board Swimmer monitor	Event Director, LMSC and ISM	Boat Operators Checklist report to be retained for 1 year	Morning of the event
Safety meetings for event workers, boat operators, swimmer monitors and swimmers	Event Director, LMSC and ISM		Pre-event for event workers; pre-swim for boat operators, swimmer monitors and swimmers
Conformance to water temperature regulations	OWCC, LMSC and ISM	Cold water event checklist, enhanced thermal plan	Enhanced thermal plan when sanction is applied for; Checklist on day of swims.

Table Talk: Open Water Scenarios

1. What to do if the water is too hot?
2. What to do if the water is too cold?
3. Swimsuit categories – what is allowed & when?



3. Approval of Sanction in USMS System

- Event host submits meet information to USMS system, uploads meet announcement to USMS
 - Tip - sanction chairs should work with event hosts to fix errors and omissions in the meet announcement before uploading to the USMS system
- If there are any changes to the meet announcement after initial upload to USMS, the new version must be reviewed by the sanction chair before uploading the revised version.



Add'l tasks often done by Sanctions Chair

- Assist meet host in locating forms for pool measurement of bulkhead course, split forms, record forms
- **New standards coming in 2024:**
 - Revised LMSC Standards require Articles 101 and 103 be sent to meet directors. Recipients must confirm receipt.
 - Revised LMSC Standards require Articles 102 and 103 and Officials' Briefings be sent to meet referees. Recipients must confirm receipt and their intention to brief other officials at meet.



4. Post Meet Activities

- **Remind Event Host to submit required reports and export files**
 - Results
 - Top 10
 - Records forms
 - Pool measurement form
 - OEVT spreadsheet
 - Printed results in publication order
- **Evaluation form (some LMSCs)**



Wrap up / Talking Points – Pool Meets

- The Sanction Chair is the gatekeeper
- Know the Rule Book!
- Be familiar with the required elements of a Meet Announcement
- Work collaboratively with the Event Host
- A well written Meet Announcement reduces questions and problems and is the Event Host's best friend!



Wrap up / Talking Points – Open Water

- Plan for the worst, hope for the best!
- There will be weather, just plan for it.
- Be ready to pivot, have a Plan B
- The paramount goal is always the safety of all swimmers. Ensure the same number of swimmers enter and exit the water.



Q&A



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Resources

Website links:

- [Sanction Chair page on USMS.org](#)
- [Sanction Chair Overview and General Sanction Information](#)
- [Online Sanction Tool Tutorial](#)
- [Meet Announcement Template](#)
- [Glossary and Guidance for USMS Meet Announcement Template](#)
- [Open Water Event Management](#)
- [Rule Book](#)
- [USMS](#)



Appendix



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