

SWIM AUSTRALIA VISION

All Australians

water safe and actively involved

in swimming for lifelong

health, fun and fitness.

SWIM AUSTRALIA is a national community service project of the Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association Inc (ASCTA).

ASCTA is a non-profit organisation with the charter of developing swimming in Australia, primarily via swimming teachers and coaches. In effect, SWIM AUSTRALIA is the Learn-to-Swim Promotion and Swim School Development division of ASCTA.

SWIM AUSTRALIA is 100% owned and operated by ASCTA for the benefit of its members and the Australian community in general.

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FOREWORD

The Hon Warwick Smith MP

Minister for Sport, Territories and Local Government
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games

I am pleased to be able to offer my support to the Australian Swim Coaches and Teachers Association (ASCTA) for the initiative Swim Australia. This programme has been professionally developed and demonstrates the commitment of the ASCTA to promote swimming instruction in an environment which is safe, skilled and enjoyable.

Our island home has long drawn our people to the water enhancing the need for Australians to learn to swim. Swim Australia seeks to encapsulate the health, fitness and safety benefits that follow from learning to swim in a programme which emphasises the joy of swimming.

I congratulate ASCTA for taking the initiative with this programme as it complements the Federal Government's Active Australia campaign.

Working in partnership with the Australian Sports Commission, Swim Australia offers the potential for a truly national quality assurance programme for learning to swim.

I wish the ASCTA well in their endeavours.

Terry Buck

Chairman, Australian Swimming Coaches & Teachers Association

Australian swimming teachers and coaches have long served the community in both the amateur and professional ranks, giving their own valuable time to swimming. In the early years it was left to the State and District Associations who had a dedicated band of officials who taught and coached swimming each Saturday at local watering holes, be it coastal rock pools, the Council pool and, of course, the country connection that used rivers and dams.

Swim Australia has been professionally developed to promote learn-to-swim in Swim Schools that meet industry standards. A flow-on into organised swimming activities is an essential feature. The support of the Federal Government, and organisations such as the Royal Life Saving Society, Australian Swimming and Austswim have given teeth to this exciting venture. As Chairman of ASCTA, I have a great deal of pleasure in supporting Swim Australia.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin the Swim Australia framework and are based on those of the Australian Sports Commission's Active Australia program.

Access and Equity. All Australians should have access to a comprehensive range of quality participation opportunities, in this instance – swimming, to enable them to fulfil their potential and realise the physical, social, mental and spiritual benefits regardless of socio-economic status, race, age or gender, ability and geographic location. Individual satisfaction and personal achievement leading to long-term involvement in physical activity should be emphasised.

Targeted assistance may be necessary for a range of groups and individuals in order to achieve equitable outcomes.

Lifelong Involvement. Participation should be lifelong and not limited by age, but the degree and form of involvement may vary at different stages of an individual's life cycle.

Enjoyment. Participating provides opportunities for individuals to enjoy the experience and excitement of physical activities, to develop skills, interact socially, achieve goals and meet personal challenges. Participants who enjoy and are satisfied with their experience are more likely to repeat and continue their involvement.

Water Safety. Being able to swim, particularly when coupled with survival skills, is a principle drowning prevention measure.

Diversity and Choice. A variety of participation options enables individuals to make a choice relative to their own needs and interests. Diversity and choice from an early age will increase the likelihood of long-term adherence to a quality aquatics program.

Quality. Continuous improvement in the delivery of participation opportunities in supportive environments will enhance the quality of the experience.

Safety. Participation should allow for personal challenge in the safest possible environment while recognising the level of physical risk associated with each particular activity.

Community Benefits. Participation should contribute to the health and well-being of the community and minimise adverse individual and environmental impacts.

Health Benefits. To generate health benefits, it is recommended that every Australian should accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity on, at least, most days of the week. Physical activity can be categorised in various ways, including by type, intensity and purpose, and can include both structured and incidental activity. Swimming is a highly recommended form of physical activity.

Swimmers should be encouraged to gradually obtain this level of participation.

AIMS

1. To **promote** learning-to-swim on a national basis, with an emphasis on the **life-long** health, safety, fun and fitness benefits of swimming.
2. To **recognise** programs teaching swimming that meet prescribed **guidelines**.
3. To aid in the **development** of the teaching and management **expertise** of such programs.
4. To enhance the **viability** of such programs.

To Swim Well is an Asset for Life

OBJECTIVES

1. To increase the awareness of the many benefits of swimming.
2. To direct people enrolling in a learn-to-swim program to a Centre certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA.
3. To provide educational opportunities for the further development of teaching and management expertise; with particular consideration being given to country areas.
4. To use strategies aimed at encouraging learn-to-swim 'graduates' to maintain an involvement in swimming.
5. To assist ASCTA in formulating guidelines for use by Centres certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA.
6. To develop high quality material for use by Centres certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA.
7. To maintain an effective quality control mechanism.

BACKGROUND

ASCTA is proud of SWIM AUSTRALIA. In short:

1. it has been conceptualised and instigated by ASCTA.
2. it is developed and fine-tuned by ASCTA, and
3. it is run by ASCTA for the benefit of its members and the Australian community.

The ASCTA Executive Director, Michael Ursu, ‘started the ball rolling’ upon returning from his study tour of the ASCA (USA) operations. They operate a Swim America program. This program is significantly different in approach and very “Australian”.

The ASCTA Board adopted a proposal in principle to start SWIM AUSTRALIA at its meeting in December 1996 and formed a Steering Committee to start ‘putting the nuts and bolts together’ and ‘add the meat’.

Input was sought from the National Learn-to-Swim Committee at its Meeting in January 1997 and the Steering Committee met in February 1997 to begin formalising many aspects of the ‘package’ for members, sponsors, government and the community.

ASCTA then started discussions with government and other kindred organisation. The purpose was to inform of SWIM AUSTRALIA’s agenda and look for ways to enhance each other’s operation. ASCTA is careful not to assume the legitimate roles of other groups. ASCTA believes that SWIM AUSTRALIA will have many valuable ‘spin-offs’ for other swimming organisations.

In April 1997, ASCTA appointed Ross Gage to be the inaugural SWIM AUSTRALIA Director. The extensive consultation and development process was now in full swing.

SWIM AUSTRALIA led the nation when it was granted Active Australia endorsement by the Australian Sports Commission in August 1997.

With the Federal Minister for Sport, Territories and Local Government, the Hon. Warwick Smith MP, performing the national launch of SWIM AUSTRALIA in September 1997, it’s all systems go ... Centres registering from 1st October 1997.

THE OFFICE AT WORK

The SWIM AUSTRALIA Office, headed by the SWIM AUSTRALIA Director will manage the program. Initially, the Office will focus on the following core areas:

1. **National promotion of learn-to-swim; featuring directing ‘take-up’ responses to Centres certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA.**

The campaign will feature the many positive benefits of swimming, while still highlighting its contribution to drowning prevention. It will point out that age, sex, race and ability is no barrier.

An integral component of the media campaign will say, in effect; that Centres certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA are recognised by authorities because they meet standards - the teachers are accredited and members of their professional association and the Centre management has agreed to meet relevant guidelines.

2. **Centre Development.**

Centres certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA will have exclusive access to a comprehensive education campaign.

An unmatched network, both nationally and overseas, will ensure the highest standards are maintained. A specialty stream at the National Convention, regional seminars and workshops and the SWIM AUSTRALIA Bulletin form the core of this aspect of the program.

3. **Self-Help Facilitation.**

Being part of a large national group has many other benefits.

SWIM AUSTRALIA can produce promotional material for use in local areas and help gain access to shopping centres and educational/child care institutions for same. Imagine the effect of costumed characters and supporting videos and props promoting learning to swim, while Centres distribute general and specific information.

SWIM AUSTRALIA also has first-class materials such as certificates and colour-ins for certified Centres wishing to use them.

4. **Quality Control**

Monitoring of standards is a vital element of the SWIM AUSTRALIA program. This essential element is based on a number of factors outlined on page 9.

5. **Supporter Services.**

SWIM AUSTRALIA is most conscious of the need to keep government agencies, kindred organisations, supportive corporations and interested individuals well informed of its progress. This is one of the dedicated functions of the Office.

CERTIFICATION OF CENTRES

Centres wishing to be certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA must meet defined criteria and consent to allow inspections and follow prescribed guidelines.

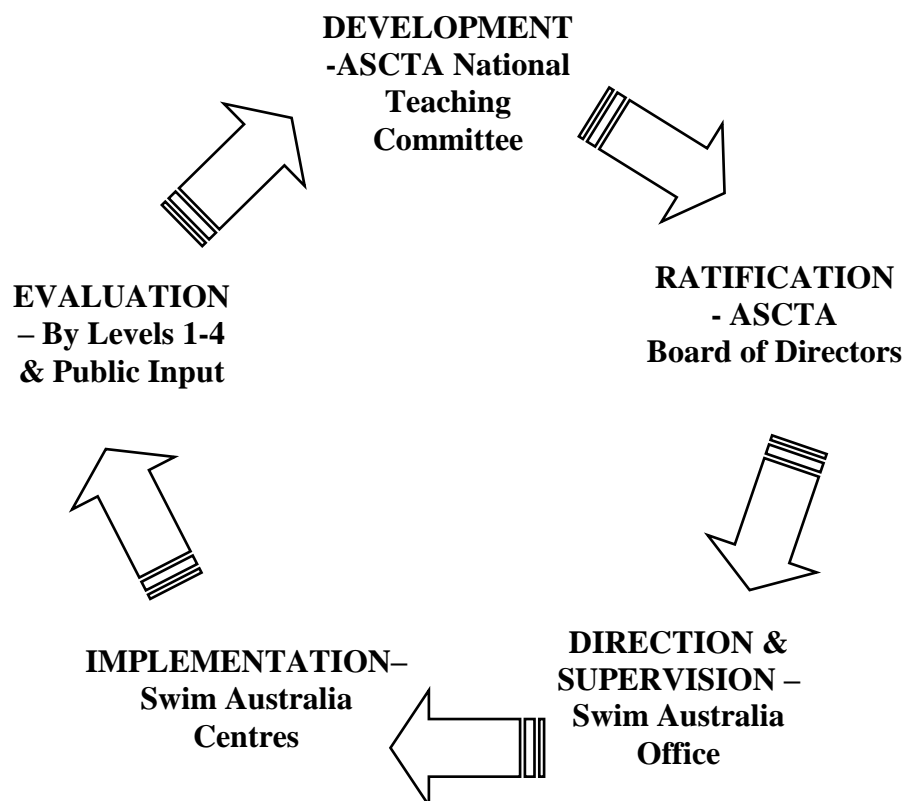
The criteria is based on:

- (a) approval by relevant government authority,
- (b) teacher accreditation by ACSTA or equivalent, and
- (c) current Public liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance.

Guidelines for centres to follow are formulated by the process outlined in the diagram at the bottom of this page.

Certified centres pay an annual registration fee as determined by ASCTA.

GUIDELINES FORMULATION



QUALITY CONTROL

SWIM AUSTRALIA view an effective quality control mechanism as essential to the success of the operation. Quality control measures are as follows.

1. As part of the registration process, each Centre to be certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA must:
 - (a) provide verification that they have consent from their relevant government authority to operate as a swim school
 - (b) provide verification of the accreditation and professional status of their teachers.
 - (c) consent for any SWIM AUSTRALIA representatives to inspect the Centre at any reasonable time (this process to be based on a standardised checklist), and
 - (d) consent to abide by any rules and guidelines that Swim Australia recognise from time-to-time. Guidelines that Centres are to follow are those developed and/or endorsed by the ASCTA National Teaching Committee (verified by the ASCTA Board). They include, by way of example, AUSTSWIM's Teacher-Student Ratios Policy and Teacher Code of Behaviour, the Guidelines for Infant Aquatics (also endorsed by AUSTSWIM) and relevant sections of RLSSA's Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation.
2. A complaints mechanism, designed in accord with legal advice, is in place to deal with complaints from members and the general public. The ASCTA Disciplinary Committee can hear complaints where necessary.
3. A team of consultants, from within the industry and external to it, have been assembled to provide advice.
4. The education process - primarily the National Convention, local workshops and the SWIM AUSTRALIA bulletin – is an important aspect in enhancing the quality of Centres certified by SWIM AUSTRALIA.
5. A confidential evaluation form available for clients at each Centre.

OUTCOMES

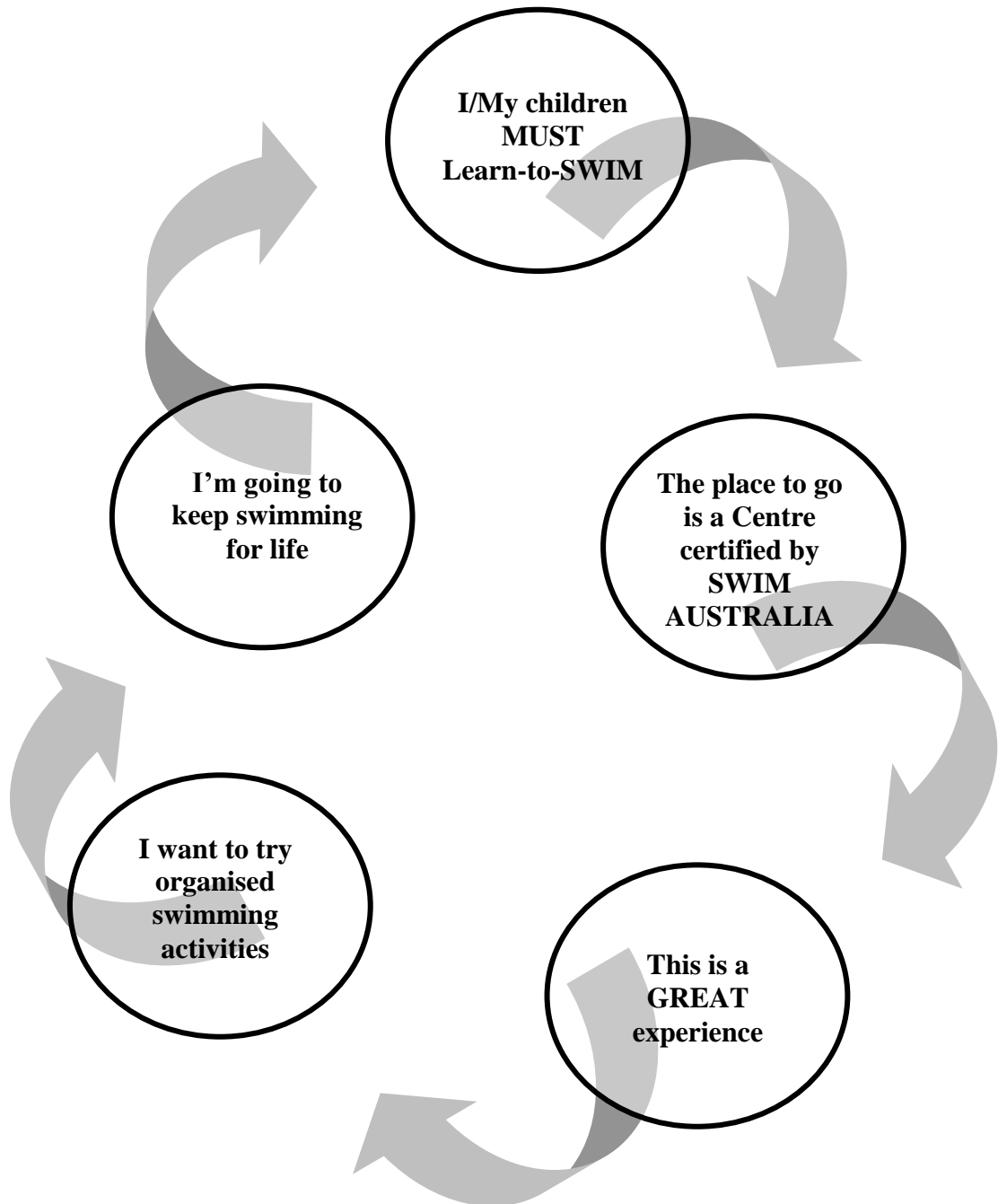
1. Greater awareness of the benefits of swimming
2. More learning to swim.
3. All quality Centres certified.
4. Poor quality Centres are eliminated.
5. Ever-improving Teaching and Management standards.
6. More safe, enjoyable, skill-developing learning to swim experiences.
7. High flow-on rate to other organised swimming activities.
8. More people swimming as a lifelong activity.

*More than Water Safety
More than Learn-to-swim
A PASSPORT to a WAY FOR LIFE!*

SWIM AUSTRALIA is committed to becoming:

1. *the most effective and respected campaign in the world, in terms of getting people to learn a physical skill for a lifetime of health, safety, fun and fitness.*
2. *The premier promotional vehicle for swimming in Australia, outside of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games period.*

THE SWIM AUSTRALIA STORY



ENDORSEMENTS

Australian Sports Commission

The Federal Government's Active Australia program, aimed at increasing and enhancing lifelong participation in physical activity, is proud to endorse the SWIM AUSTRALIA initiative. Australians and swimming will be the winners.

Australian Swimming

Australian Swimming welcomes SWIM AUSTRALIA's endeavours to get all Australians learning to swim well in an enjoyable program. We would encourage 'graduates' to try our highly rewarding Club experience.

AUSTSWIM

AUSTSWIM applauds ASCTA in endeavouring to promote the teaching of swimming and water safety. As the national teacher accreditation authority, we are pleased SWIM AUSTRALIA recommends the employment of AUSTSWIM qualified teachers.

Royal Life Saving Society Australia

The Royal Life Saving Society Australia is very pleased to be associated with SWIM AUSTRALIA. We believe that SWIM AUSTRALIA is a very exciting concept and we wish you all the best in establishing a most successful program.

AUSSI Masters Swimming

AUSSI swimmers, regardless of age or ability, swim regularly in order to improve their fitness and general health. AUSSI Masters Swimming therefore fully supports the "principles" adopted in the SWIM AUSTRALIA framework and welcomes the initiatives.

Forbes Carlile MBE, Swim Australia Ambassador

This is an excellent initiative and will contribute strongly towards the health and well being of young Australians.

Laurie Lawrence, Swim Australia Ambassador

The birth of Swim Australia ensures that quality swim centres throughout Australia will, with the guidance of Swim Australia, become even more professional. It is a professional organisation that will benefit all Australians.