

7 October 2021

Swimming industry applaud NSW Government early indoor pool opening

The NSW Government's decision to fast-track the opening of indoor pools from 1 December 2021 to Monday 11 October has been applauded by the swimming and learn to swim industry as a life-saving decision.

ASCTA, Swimming NSW, Swimming Australia, and Swim Australia together with other aquatic industry organisations have pushed hard for an earlier re-opening based on a number of factors.

The move will see indoor pools opened for Swimming lessons, squad training, lap swimming, and rehabilitation activities. It will also mean that indoor pools in regional NSW that are currently open will not need to close.

ASCTA CEO Brendon Ward, said the re-opening could ultimately save lives as swimming lessons would recommence in time for some skill acquisition before the summer holidays.

"We know the Government has been concerned about community health and wellbeing associated with the spread of COVID. They have also been aware of the impact restrictions have had on the mental and physical health and social cohesion of communities with indoor pools being closed.

"We recently conducted community research, which revealed over 84.5% of Australians believe learning to swim should be considered an essential service. This is further supported by close to 50% (47.3%) of parents believing children's swim safety should be a priority throughout the pandemic. Families want this service available to them and community safety and wellbeing are our primary concern." *

Mr Ward noted the aquatic industry delivered \$9Billion in economic and social benefits to the nation and employed 67,000 people. **

"The industry has been reeling, and the early re-opening of indoor pools will be welcomed by the whole industry and by the community at large.

Swimming NSW CEO, Mark Heathcote welcomed the changes "This announcement gives the aquatic industry a much clearer re-opening plan and means all of the swimming community can get back in the pool. We can now look forward to a great Summer of swimming"

The Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association (ASCTA) represents swimming coaches and teachers throughout Australia. Our community consists of 44,000 people who work in aquatic facilities and who access our professional development and member services.

Swimming Australia is the national sporting organisation for competitive swimming.

Swimming NSW is the State Swimming Association for competitive and club-based swimming in NSW and ACT.

Swim Australia is the peak body for swim schools in Australia with 500+ swim school members, swim teacher qualifications/accreditations. Water safety campaigns are run throughout the year including Swim Safer Week (15-19 November) and the Swim it Forward campaign which assists families with the cost of learn to swim lessons.

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* 1000 sample online research conducted in September by Pure Profile on behalf of Swim Australia/ASCTA

** Royal Lifesaving Society Drowning Report 2021 <https://rlssq.com.au/Downloads/NDR/RLSS-National-Drowning-Report-2021.pdf>