



MASTERS SWIMMING ONTARIO

August 16, 2016

MAJOR CHANGES FOR MASTERS SWIMMERS FOR 2016-17 SEASON

As the summer draws to a close, Masters swimmers and clubs look forward to a new swimming season starting in September. This notice is to bring your attention to two very important matters from the MSO board.

First, all club administrators or registrars should immediately ensure that their club is registered as an MSO member club for the coming season, using the online registration system at <https://ms.mastersswimmingontario.ca/>. Once your swimmers start to return or new members join, please register your swimmers promptly. The new swimming season begins September 1st (not January 1st) and in order to ensure that your swimmers and coaches are covered by our MSO insurance, they need to be registered as MSO members. If you have any difficulties with online registration, we can help out. Please send an email to the registrar at msoreg@mastersswimmingontario.ca describing the assistance you need.

Second, the Annual General Meeting of MSO members and clubs will be held on October 16th, 2016 at 1 p.m. in the Varsity Room of the Holiday Inn Yorkville, located at 280 Bloor St W, Toronto.

This meeting will be far more important than any AGM we have held in years. Just in the last few months, it has been made clear to us that Swim Ontario and Swim Canada intend to make fundamental changes to the way MSO has always operated. Many of the services and operations traditionally handled by MSO entirely on its own will soon be required to be integrated into and directed by Swim Ontario. For example, Masters meet sanctioning will now be directed and controlled by Swim Ontario. We have also been told that our swimmer/club registration system must be synchronized with that of Swim Canada. Attached is a copy of a letter just recently issued by Swim Canada to Swim Ontario describing the process to implement these changes in MSO operations. The 2016-17 year is described as a "transition year" during which all changes are required to be implemented. It is clear that once all these changes are implemented, there will be a significant reduction in the extent to which MSO and its clubs can govern their own policies and operations. This impacts both competitive and non-competitive swimmers.

Considering the significance of these changes to MSO, many MSO clubs and swimmers will naturally have questions about the implications. The MSO board urges as many clubs and swimmers as possible to attend the meeting on October 16th. We will discuss these issues there and try to respond, if we can, to questions raised.

Finally, many of the current members of the MSO board will be retiring from the board at this meeting. Their fixed board terms are expiring and/or they are retiring after many years on the board. If you and your club want to have a say in the future direction of MSO, this is your opportunity. The new board will be elected at the AGM. The incoming new board members will determine how MSO evolves to serve our swimmers and clubs in the coming years. Please complete the attached Nomination / Consent to Serve Form found in the 2016 AGM documents, and submit them to the MSO secretary at c_herbert@mastersswimmingontario.ca.

Attachments

- SNC Letter dated August 8, 2016
- MSO's Summary
- Nomination / Consent to Serve Form



August 8, 2016

Dear Eric,

In reference to our conversation regarding Masters Swim Ontario and sanctioning, Swimming Canada is comfortable with the recommendation Swim Ontario put forward as to utilizing the 2016-17 season as one of transition. While the sanctioning policy is in effect this will act as our agreement in principle.

Masters Swim Ontario and Swim Ontario working together to bring about the changes required to adhere to the sanctioning policy will meet our expectations. For clarity, expecting a start date of September 2017 would not be acceptable. I expect Swim Ontario will define a list of deliverables/objectives and a schedule for achievement for the coming season. We do recognize your leadership and direction in this matter and will feel better seeing tangible results and progression through the season.

In short,

- Swimming Canada will work with Masters Swimming Ontario to create an API for the MSO/Swimming Canada systems. We estimate that with concerted effort and support we can have this done within 4 to 6 weeks.
- We are comfortable with anyone you name as being the Master's sanctioning officer so long as they are responsible to the Swim Ontario Executive Director.

Should you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Ahmed El-Awadi
CEO

Summary

What is the issue?

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Swimming Natation Canada (SNC) and Masters Swimming Canada (MSC) was signed on May 6, 2016 and affirms sanctioning authority for all meets, including Masters meets, lies with SNC. The MOU also establishes guiding principles of mutual trust and respect.
- Swim Ontario (SO) has informed Masters Swimming Ontario (MSO) that a newly issued SNC Sanction Policy henceforth prohibits Swim Ontario from delegating the sanctioning authority for Masters meets to MSO.
- SO has informed MSO that “without system change MSO will not have sanctioned competitions after the 2015-2016 swimming season” which ends August 31st, 2016.
- SO has provided MSO a planning outline identifying the work required to give effect to the SNC Sanction Policy, as applicable to the sanctioning of Masters meets in Ontario.
- SNC has allowed one year for the transition to the new procedures, provided that progress is being made.

What is MSO doing?

- MSO is in dialogue with SO to fully understand the issues and the changes being required of MSO under the SO plan.
- MSO has already ensured that MSO insurance coverage is in place for MSO clubs and members so that the 2016-2017 swimming season can begin on September 1, 2016.
- MSO will continue to accept applications for meet sanctioning in the 2016-2017 season and make every effort to ensure that Sanctioned Masters competitions will continue through the year
- MSO will provide updates to member swimmers and member clubs as this issue develops over the coming year.

Is this only an issue for competitive Masters Swimmers?

- No. This impacts all Masters Swimmers in Ontario whether or not they compete.
- Part of the MOU and the SO plan suggests that all MSO registered swimmers must be in the SO database.
- Other SNC-SO registration requirements impact clubs and their coaches. MSO does not yet have a complete understanding of the full impact of the MOU or the SO Plan on Masters registration.

Background

- In the summer of 2015, Swim Ontario (SO) suspended Masters Swimming Ontario's (MSO) sanction authority. Following mediated discussions involving SO, supported by

Swimming Natation Canada (SNC), and MSO, supported by Masters Swimming Canada (MSC), the sanction was returned for the 2015-2016 swimming season. A detailed account of these events was summarized in a letter to MSO members in April 2016.

- On May 6, 2016, MSC and SNC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining how the two organizations work together. The announcements of the MOU cited the guiding principles of mutual trust and respect, good communication and open dialogue, and seeking of opportunities to share services.
- On June 28, 2016 MSO received a PowerPoint deck from SO stating that the MOU confirmed that sanctioning authority rested with SNC and its' Provincial Swimming Organizations (PSOs). According to the deck, SNC has made clear that the sanctioning could no longer be delegated beyond PSOs. The deck stated that "without system change MSO will not have sanctioned competition after the 2015-2016 season". It also outlined a number of issues that needed to be addressed as SO assumes responsibility for the sanctioning of masters swimming competition in Ontario.
- MSO participated in a teleconference with SO on July 26, 2016. MSO observed that parties affected by such a significant policy have to be given reasonable notice and a reasonable period within which to implement the changes. SO agreed that the policy would need time to be implemented in Ontario. SO has now received the attached letter from the SNC CEO agreeing that the 2016-2017 season will be treated as a transition year.

Issues

The following issues are key to resolve:

Systems

- In 2015-2016, MSO started migrating masters registration to a new computer system that could more efficiently manage swimmer and club information, and be the platform for masters sanctioning. MSC is also implementing the same system nationally.
- Clause 5.5 of the May 2016 MOU requires - "All persons must register or appear in the SNC database to be considered a member of SNC."
- The MSO registration system is not currently connected to SNC data base

Registration & Membership

- Masters swimmers are currently registered with MSO and MSC in accordance with their respective bylaws.
- Registration with MSO-MSC is required for swimmers to compete (Masters Swimming Rules).
- **In Ontario, club and swimmer registration with MSO is required in order for clubs and swimmers to have insurance coverage.**

- SO and MSO Membership rules for clubs and swimmers are different. For example, SO Member clubs must have certified NCCP coaches on staff. Masters swimming has long recognized that this requirement is not practical. Few MSO clubs have certified coaches.

Who and what is impacted?

- Sanctioning is a competition issue.
 - Masters swimmers must be registered with MSO to compete in Ontario, and with MSC to compete in other provinces or internationally. MSO currently provides that service.
- At most 10-20% of MSO membership competes. Most MSO swimmers do not compete, even though they pay the full MSO fees. The vast majority of our members are motivated by fun and fitness only.
 - Current MSO membership registration fee is \$35. Of that \$35, \$25 is sent directly to MSC which sends \$2 to Swim Canada; MSC retains the rest. MSO retains only \$10 of the \$35 and \$2 of that is sent by MSO directly to SO.
- Registration of Master's swimmers and clubs with MSO provides insurance coverage through the MSO insurance policy. This will continue into 2016-2017.



NOMINATION / CONSENT TO SERVE FORM

NOMINEE: _____ (PRINT)

NOMINEE'S CLUB: _____ (PRINT)

BRIEF MONOGRAPH:

(Description of nominee's interest in / experience in / contribution to the Masters Swimming Programme, and any other pertinent comments)

I,, certify that I am currently a registered Master in good standing, and consent to stand for election, and to serve, if elected, on the Board of Directors of Masters Swimming Ontario.

NOMINEE'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

NOMINATED BY: _____ (PRINT)

SIGNATURE: _____

CLUB: _____ (PRINT)

SECONDED BY: _____ (PRINT)

SIGNATURE: _____

CLUB: _____ (PRINT)