

Sanctions Chair Report
Mark Moore

Until further action by the SPMS committee all OW sanctions will be placed on hold.

Background Information:

USMS faced a significant increase in the premium for comprehensive general liability insurance. The increased insurance premium was primarily related to and impacted open water events. The insurance premium includes a charge of \$135,000 that covers 75 sanctioned open water events per year (\$1,800 per event). Furthermore, any additional open water events sanctioned by USMS, with its 58,000 members, will incur an additional premium of \$1,800 per event.

In addition to the inflated costs, the new insurance policy requires certain conditions to be implemented by race directors in order to conduct a sanctioned USMS open water event. The insurance underwriter requires that all open water sanction submissions must be registered through the USMS online system, and a further second-level review to ensure that each race complies with the new sanction requirements.

As the requirements for USMS open water swimming event sanction are more comprehensive, more costly and more difficult to meet than before, there are consequences to non-compliance. USMS has hired a new Open Water Compliance Coordinators to confirm that the sanctioned adhere to the new safety requirements.

The purpose of the surcharge is to cover part of the \$1,800 per event premium under the new insurance policy. The Board of Directors decided that USMS will fund \$800 of the per-event premium. An open water insurance surcharge of \$1,000 will be charged to Local Masters Swimming Committees (SPMS) for each open water sanction that the SPMS issues. SPMS will be billed by USMS monthly for any open water events sanctioned by SPMS. SPMS can determine how much of the insurance surcharge it will charge to the event host. The national office will pay for \$800 per event, but SPMS will be billed \$1,000 per event.

But there are exceptions to the open water insurance surcharge. Solo swims such as crossings of the Catalina Channel, previously considered to be individual USMS-sanctioned events, are now required to pay the full \$1,800 insurance surcharge, without any USMS contribution. Although USMS will cover the surcharge of its Open Water National Championships, if an Open Water National Championship also hosts additional open water swims in conjunction with the National Championship event, the surcharge will not be waived.

SPMS is now responsible to follow the new Open Water Sanctions Guidelines and will determine which open water events it will sanction for 2013 and the amount of the insurance surcharge, if any, it will charge to open water event hosts.

Highlights of the sanction guidelines are:

1. Each motorized boat operator that is in support of the event or a participant in the event must provide to the USMS National Office a certificate of insurance for \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate naming USMS, LMSC, event host, volunteers, and sponsors. The Certificate of Insurance is required 24 hours prior to the event.
2. Each volunteer boat operator that is in support of the event or a participant in the event must provide to the USMS National office proof of insurance. The proof of insurance is required 24 hours prior to the event.
3. All propeller driven motorized boats, regardless of hired or volunteer, that are supporting the event must have a propeller guard or prop guard. The Event Director must inspect all watercraft prior to the event.

The specific sanction guidelines can be found at

http://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/owgto_sanctions.pdf

Recommendations

1. SPMS require an OW surcharge per swimmer for all OW races.
2. Surcharge per swimmer TBD (somewhere \$5.00-\$10.00)
3. Solo and relay swims are subject to the \$1800.00 sanction fee.

Open Water Sanction FAQs

<http://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/content/owsanctionfaq>