



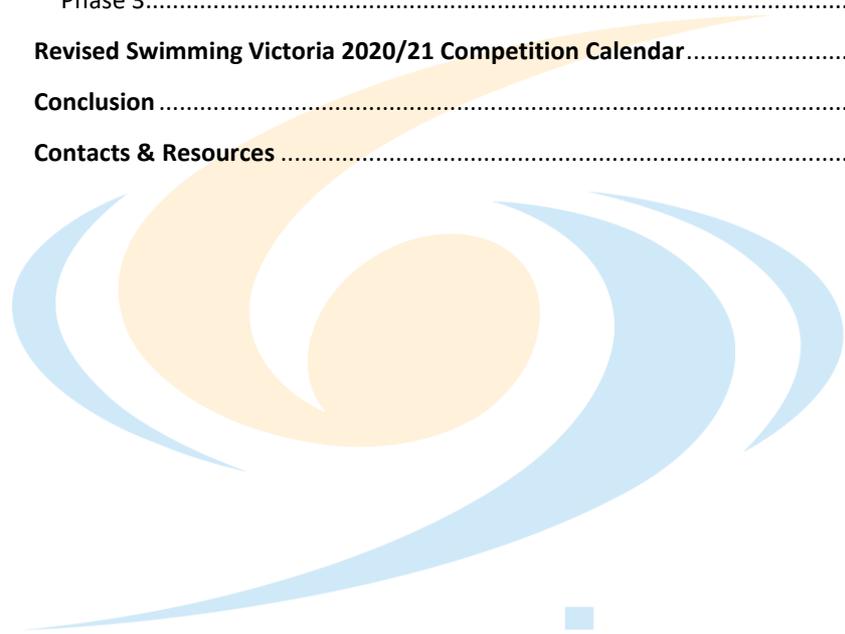
# VICTORIAN RETURN TO COMPETITION PLAN

2020/21 SEASON



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## INTRODUCTION

Swimming Victoria is working closely with the Victorian Government who are committed to helping community sport return to play as soon as possible.

Metropolitan Melbourne & Mitchell Shire are currently back to Stage 3 Stay at Home Restrictions where pools are closed, and club training is suspended for a six-week period.

Regional Victoria can continue to get back to the sport and recreation activities, however it is important we stick to physical distancing restrictions to slow the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Various information within this document may not be able to be put into practice by all clubs/members at the time of publishing however as we move through the coming months, we will adjust the recommendations as required to ensure the document remains useful for all members across the state.

Please visit [Club Resources](#) on the Swimming Victoria website for the latest updates and information.

## BACKGROUND

The upcoming 2020/21 Swimming Victoria Competition season has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The restrictions on public gatherings, spectators, training numbers and pool deck access has effectively prevented the season from commencing as originally scheduled in August 2020.

Return to competition is subject to clubs being able to return to training. Whilst we remain confident that our clubs will be back to full pool access over the coming months, we recognise the varying speed of return throughout Victoria and the impact this is having within our community. In particular, the return to training and competition of Metropolitan Melbourne & Mitchell Shire will now be delayed as Stage 3 Stay at Home Restrictions have been re-introduced. As such, Swimming Victoria has been reviewing the competition calendar as well

as mapping out recommendations for clubs for a fair and safe return to competition. In considering this return, we have also been mindful that many of our members have spent considerable time out of the pool and the risk of injury by returning to training & competition too quickly is much higher than normal.

The Swimming Victoria Return to Competition Plan has been put together to provide some certainty and structure as to what the 2020/21 competition season may look like. It also provides guidance to clubs and districts on how they can introduce competition/race practise (be in traditional or non-traditional formats) as access to pools increase over the coming months.

## RETURN TO SWIMMING HUB

Swimming Victoria have created a '[Return to Swimming Hub](#)' on Workplace for clubs and/or coaches to share their experiences as our members slowly return to training. This is a central point and bulletin board for information sharing that clubs and coaches can access and where SV will provide the latest updates. All Clubs are encouraged to access the Hub.

Contact [sv.admin@vic.swimming.org.au](mailto:sv.admin@vic.swimming.org.au) for information on how to join.

## QUALIFYING TIMES

Qualifying times (where applicable) for competitions will remain unchanged from the previous 2019/20 season. The qualifying period in which times can be used will be extended from 12 months to 24 months from the entries closing date. The closing date will also be moved to Monday, the week of the competition, to allow maximum opportunity to achieve qualifying times and to enhance the opportunities for our Clubs & Districts to host approved qualifying meets.

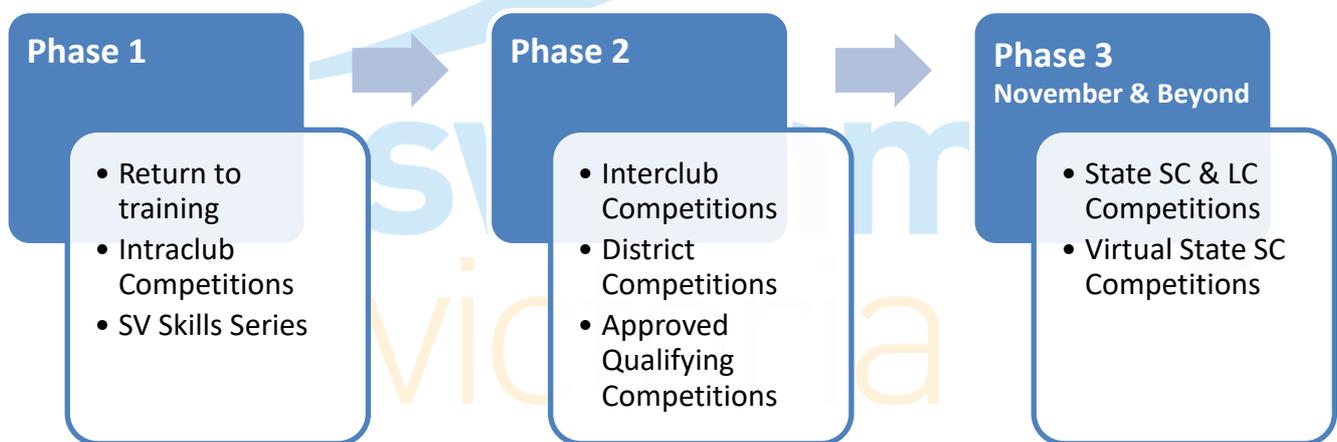
Swimming Victoria are also working towards accepting short course times for entry into long course competitions. More information on this will be released closer to the commencement of the long course season.

Swimming Australia have also provided some reassurance that athletes from affected areas will not be disadvantaged when qualifying for National Championships. Statement can be located [HERE](#)

## SWIMMING VICTORIA RETURN TO COMPETITION PLAN

A phased and cautious return to competition over the coming months is important. We believe this approach will allow swimmers to return to training as and when they can, reconnect with their swimming friends and enjoy racing again without the pressure of immediate Championship competitions. Swimming Victoria will support clubs and districts where possible and encourage cross collaboration and idea sharing between coaches, clubs, and districts.

The current restriction differences between Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne/Mitchell Shire suggest that each Phase (particularly Phase 1 & 2) will be implemented by clubs at different times in the coming months with those in Regional Victoria able to commence Phase 1.



### PHASE 1

During this phase, we recommend that clubs are creative with training goals, or ways to motivate their swimmers. As training sessions increase, clubs are encouraged to run competitions within their club/squads, aimed at increasing participation and fun. The focus here is to get back into the water, encourage fun and social activities and to connect with

teammates. Non-traditional events or distances are encouraged to reduce the ability of swimmers to compare their times pre and post their significant time out of the water.

Examples include:

- **Relayathon** - Have the club break up into teams and race to increase and encourage teamwork.
- **Club Championships** - A typical meet for club athletes where the focus is centred on returning to racing. Emphasis should be focused on performing skills in a race situation and executing race plan. Clubs can structure the Championships based on points of each race rather than time based. Entries/program of events may be staggered to ensure restrictions are maintained or it may run over several sessions/time slots with results collated, shared, and celebrated.
- **SV Skills Series** - Over a period of 6 weeks, Swimming Victoria will run a skills-based challenge for athletes and coaches to complete in their home program. Coaches will have one week to complete the challenge and submit the results to Swimming Victoria (more information to be provided).

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## PHASE 2

This is an opportunity for swimmers to return to racing against swimmers outside of their club. This could be competitions between clubs or districts, either virtually or in-person. There should still be an emphasis on fun and socially connecting with swimming friends outside of their own club. Racing could include a combination of traditional and non-traditional events. Towards the end of this phase, if capacity restrictions allow, clubs and districts could commence traditional club competitions (Approved Qualifying Meets) in preparation for the State SC Season.

Examples include:

- **Virtual Racing** - Two clubs organise to host a competition at their home pool following the same program/event listing. Results are then collated and released, announcing winners and placegetters. These meets can be hosted at the same time and broadcast via Zoom.

- **Multi-Club Relayathon** - Several clubs competing at various pools to achieve the highest number of laps/greatest distance etc.
- **Dual Meets** - If capacity restrictions allow, two clubs come together to compete in a participation focused competition, where a mix of alternative and traditional events are hosted. If capacity allows, these competitions can act as qualifying meets, with officials and verified times.
- **Club Championships/Time Trials** - A typical meet for club swimmers where Technical Officials can be used, and times are verified in Swim Central. To ensure possible capacity restrictions are adhered to, competitions/racing could be hosted over various weekends where U13, 14 & 15's compete at various times on one weekend and, U16, 17 & 18's another weekend.
- **Traditional Club Meets** - Clubs host approved qualifying competitions open to SV members as in previous seasons with approved and verified times in Swim Central. Session lengths, event listings and entry numbers may need special consideration.

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### PHASE 3

This phase will see State competitions return, beginning with the short course season. While removing the short course season was considered when reviewing the 2020/21 calendar, the Competitions Committee, and the Plan Ahead Team, endorsed by the SV Board, acknowledge that the short course season forms an important part of the competition pathway. Our first preference is to be able to provide this opportunity for members rather than cancelling all together. It is important to note that if in the coming months restrictions are not eased then the calendar will be re-evaluated to ensure we can provide a meaningful and purposeful competition season.

#### **Revised 2020/21 Competitions Calendar** (see below)

- Short Course (SC) season to commence in November 2020
- Long Course (LC) season to commence from January 2021

Should capacity restrictions not be lifted by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, Swimming Victoria may move towards a virtual competition option for the SC season.

### Virtual Competitions (dependant on government restrictions)

- The SC season may be run virtually over a two-week period where various pools throughout the state are utilised and each district is responsible for running the same program. SV would collate results and announce winners, placegetters and rankings for Country SC Champions, Metro SC Champions & combined Age/Open SC Champions. The program may include both traditional and non-traditional events.
- Minimum numbers of officials for a qualifying meet would be required at each location.
- Awards may be presented/announced virtually.

### REVISED SWIMMING VICTORIA 2020/21 COMPETITION CALENDAR

Please note, all dates are subject to government restrictions and based on the assumption there is an easing of restrictions that will allow for these competitions to proceed.

#### [Complete Swimming Victoria 2020/21 Competition Calendar](#) (correct as of July 2020)

Month	Date	Competition	Venue
November 2020	7 - 8	Victorian Country SC Championships	Ballarat
	14 - 15	Victorian Metro SC Championships	Outdoor Pool, MSAC
	26 - 29	Australian SC Championships	Outdoor Pool, MSAC
December 2020	12 - 16	2020 Victorian Age & Open SC Championships	Outdoor Pool, MSAC
January 2021	23 - 25	2021 Victorian Country LC Championships	Mildura
February 2021	13 - 14	Victorian Qualifying Competition	Outdoor Pool, MSAC
	18 - 21	2021 Victorian Open LC Championships	Outdoor Pool, MSAC
March 2021	4 - 8	2021 Victorian Age LC Championships	Outdoor Pool, MSAC

## Notes

- Victorian Metro Short Course Competition has been changed to a Championship.
- **Country & Metro Junior District Competitions** (may run virtually in 2021)
- **Victorian Sprint Championships** will be moved to an alternate date in 2021
- **Victorian Metro Long Course Championships** will be moved to a new date in 2021

## CONCLUSION

Swimming Victoria recognise the importance of competition and the desire for swimmers to use competitions as motivation for training. However, with significant time out of the water and the acknowledgement that some clubs are still yet to gain access to their pool space, and Stage 3 restrictions having been re-introduced for Metropolitan Melbourne/Mitchell Shire, a phased approach and delay in the start of the traditional competition season is required.

In this uncertain time, it is important to create some certainty knowing that there is no need to rush back to full training and competition. Clubs and coaches are encouraged to collaborate and look for alternative options to traditional competitions.

While the restrictions and proposed phases are correct at the time of publishing, we are living in a very fluid environment and the 2020/21 Competition Calendar may need to change again.

Swimming Victoria will continue to review and make amendments when required and appreciate the understanding from our members as we all navigate this time together.

## CONTACTS & RESOURCES

### CONTACTS

Swimming Victoria Competitions

[events@vic.swimming.org.au](mailto:events@vic.swimming.org.au)

### RESOURCES

[Club Resources \(Competition Updates & Advice\)](#)

[Club Resources \(COVID-19 Return to Pool Information & Templates\)](#)

[Sport & Recreation Victoria](#)

[Department of Health & Human Services Victoria](#)



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