

Dubai Charter

on FINA requirements for swimwear approval

As the world governing body for aquatic sports, FINA has the authority and responsibility to issue regulations applying to its five disciplines. This includes the determination of the specifications applying to sport equipment.

In the context of the discussion in connection with swimsuits development and their alleged impact on sport, FINA reaffirms that it will continue monitoring the evolution of the sport equipment with the main objective of keeping the integrity of the sport.

In doing so, FINA wishes to recall that the main and core principle is that swimming is a sport essentially based on the physical performance of the athlete. This is the fundament which FINA has and will continue to preserve as its main objective and priority. FINA brings together athletes from around the world to compete on equal conditions and thereby decides the winner by the athlete who is physically the best.

This does not however imply that swimming, like all other sports, should not integrate the natural progress and improvements in technology where this helps, bettering the conditions under which the athletes compete and optimising their athletic performances.

FINA also acknowledges the significance of the contributions manufacturers are bringing to the sport at all levels, including to the federations, athletes, coaches and event organisers. This co-operation is essential to continue to develop and remain a major sport worldwide.

In a rapidly evolving world, regulations need to progress as well to address new emerging issues. Before any discussion arose, FINA had initiated a process in view of adapting the equipment regulations. To improve their quality and credibility, FINA has not only consulted the manufacturers but has also sought the support of independent scientific experts of worldwide reputation who will notably assist in the determination of meaningful tests.

With the support of independent experts, FINA will set up a long term monitoring project with the mid/long term objective to allow an ongoing control on equipment development.

The FINA Bureau, after considering the conclusion of the meeting with the Swimsuit Manufacturers held in Lausanne (SUI) on February 20, 2009, where the full support from the FINA Athletes, Coaches and Legal Commissions was also received on this matter, has decided to revise the requirements for swimsuit approval with the aim of making them more clear, simple and transparent.

1. Amendments to existing FINA requirements for swimwear approval (valid until December 31, 2009)

- a. **DESIGN:** The swimsuit shall not cover the neck and shall not extend past the shoulders nor past the ankles.
- b. **MATERIAL:**
 - i. When used, the material shall follow the body shape;
 - ii. The application of different materials shall not create air trapping effects.
- c. **THICKNESS:** The material used shall have a maximum thickness of 1 mm. The measurement method is in accordance with ISO Standard 5084 for textiles.
- d. **BUOYANCY:** The swimsuit shall not have a buoyancy effect of more than 1 Newton (100 gr).

The value to be observed applies to all swimsuits sizes.

- e. **CONTROL:** FINA has established its own independent control/testing programme. Scientific testing on thickness and buoyancy will be conducted by a neutral team led by Prof. Jan-Anders Manson, from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) and Laboratory of Polymer and Composite Technology.
- f. **CONSTRUCTION:** Any system providing external stimulation or influence of any form (e.g. pain reduction, chemical/medical substance release, electro-stimulation, or others) is prohibited.
- g. **CUSTOMISATION:** All swimsuits of an approved model must be constructed in an identical fashion with no variation/modification for individual swimmers from the samples submitted for approval. Any modification before use is prohibited; it is clarified that an adaptation of size does not constitute customisation.
- h. **USE:** The swimmer can only wear one swimsuit (FINA Rule GR 5.3).
- i. **SWIMSUITS TO BE SUBMITTED:** All swimsuits to be used during the period of application shall be submitted, even if previously approved. The only submission deadline under these rules is March 31, 2009.
- j. **APPROVAL:** Approvals issued under these rules remain valid until December 31, 2009. Manufacturers must indicate the approval on the product in use through a method to be implemented by FINA. The purpose is to check that the swimsuits used in competition are approved models.

In addition to the amendments valid until December 31, 2009, the FINA Bureau approved the following:

2. FINA requirements for swimwear approval (valid from January 1, 2010)

- a. **SWIMWEAR SUBJECT TO APPROVAL:** Any swimwear used in FINA competitions and Olympic Games shall comply with these new rules and shall be a model approved by FINA in accordance with these new procedures. It is further clarified that results achieved in other competitions may only be recognised as world records by FINA if approved swimwear has been used.
- b. **PERMEABILITY:** In addition to the thickness and buoyancy scientific independent tests already included in the previous requirements, FINA will define the use of non-permeable materials based on a 'permeability value' test. The non-permeable material can only be used for a maximum 50% of the total surface of the swimsuit for full-body models. For these models, the maximum surface of non-permeable material to be used on the upper and lower part of the swimsuit shall be respectively 25% on each part. Non-permeable material shall be distinguishable.
- c. **SUBMISSION DATES:** The first submission deadline under these rules is November 1, 2009, followed by a submission on August 1 every year (example: August 1, 2010; August 1, 2011). Submission to approval 12 months in advance of the forthcoming FINA World Championships or Olympic Games. Moreover, the approved model shall be available on the market at least 6 months prior to the forthcoming FINA World Championships or Olympic Games.
- d. **LIST OF APPROVED MODELS:** FINA will publish a list of approved models. The publication is without prejudice to the fact that criteria and conditions of approval must be effectively met by products in use.
- e. **APPLICATION:** These new rules are applicable from October 1, 2009. They are applied to swimwear to be used in competition from January 1, 2010. Further amendments, if necessary, shall be issued by the FINA Bureau.

3. FINA Monitoring Programme on swimwear

FINA will continue monitoring the evolution of the sports equipment and watch innovations in shape, material and other elements which may need to be addressed.

FINA will consult with its National Federations, its Athletes, Coaches and Legal Commissions, Swimming Committee and manufacturers on any further developments in this respect.

FINA will consolidate the independent scientific support from Jan-Anders Manson and his team, from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) and Laboratory of Polymer and Composite Technology.