

# Swimming WA Competition Policy Technical/Performance Race Suits

**8 March 2019**

In the interest of athlete development and retention, Swimming WA in consultation with Swimming Australia, the SWA High Performance and Competition and Planning Committees, instituted a new Policy pertaining to the use of technical/performance race suits at Swimming WA sanctioned competition which came into effect on May 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

Technical/Performance suits can be very expensive and thus provide a potential barrier to entry for families looking to start out in swimming. In the view of Swimming WA and other State Swimming Associations, there are no proven performance benefits for young swimmers using technical/performance suits. After consultation with coaches across the State, feedback indicates that much of the benefit of wearing a technical/performance suit **is not relevant to young swimmers** who have yet to physically develop.

The move to limit the use of technical/performance suits for young swimmers is another initiative from Swimming WA to remove the competitive pressure on young swimmers at a crucial development phase of their swimming journey.

SWA Members are reminded that the SWA Technical/Performance Race Suits Policy is **in effect**.

## Who Will the Change Apply To?

### Swimmers Aged 13 Years and Over:

Will be permitted to wear swimwear in line with the FINA by laws 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

### Swimmers Aged 12 Years:

Will no longer be permitted to wear technical/performance swimsuits at any Swimming WA sanctioned competition. The only exception to this rule is when the swimmer is competing in a 13yrs/over event at a State Championship; then they will be permitted to wear swimwear in line with the FINA by laws 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

### Swimmers Aged 11 Years and Under:

Will no longer be permitted to wear technical/performance swimsuits at any Swimming WA sanctioned competition

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## What is a Technical/ Performance Suit?

Technical/performance racing suits are manufactured using scientifically advanced materials. Materials of this type are normally comprised of [spandex](#) and [nylon](#) composite fabrics with features to reduce “[drag](#)” against the water. The fabrics include features which are highly compressive and increase the swimmer's glide through water and reducing absorption of water by the suit as opposed to regular swimsuits.

Traditional one-piece race suits for females as well as briefs and trunks for male swimmers are not technical/performance suits and will be permitted. Knee length suits and “jammers” will also be permitted provided they do not feature the key components of a technical/performance swim suit will also be permitted.

The key component of a technical/performance suits which should be identified when differentiating what is and isn't permitted are the following

- Bonded/ Sealed Seams
- Meshed Seams
- Kinetic Tape



The above photographs are examples of seaming which will continue to be **permitted** for swimmers aged 12 years and under, note the stitching is raised on the outside of the fabric.

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The above photographs are examples of swim suit seaming which **will no longer be permitted** for swimmers aged 12 years and under. Note the bonded/sealed seams and use of kinetic tape.

If you have any further questions about this policy please contact Mr. Zac Acott, Competition and Pathways Manager on (08) 9328 4599 or at [zac.acott@wa.swimming.org.au](mailto:zac.acott@wa.swimming.org.au)

Thank you for the role your Club is playing to ensure that swimming is an essential part of the Western Australian way of life.



**Carolyn Morrison**  
General Manager Performance and People

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