

Swim England East Region

Minutes of the Swimming Officials' Leadership Group Meeting

Thursday 21 May 2026 @ 7.00pm

Present	David Metcalf (DM)	Manager – SEER SOLG
	Gerry Metcalf (GM)	Regional Director
	Louise Mackie (LM)	Bedfordshire
	Sarah Nooteboom (SN)	Cambridgeshire
	Jane Howell (JH)	Essex
	Jonathan Pope (JP)	Hertfordshire
	Darren Peck (DP)	Norfolk
	Stephen “Podge “ Christian (SC)	Suffolk - Left the meeting at 7.45pm

Also Present: no one

26/17 Apologies

26/17.1 Apologies received from Chris Galer (Norfolk).

26/18 Declarations of conflict of interest

26/18.1 None declared.

26/19 Previous minutes

26/19.1 The minutes of the 21 January 2026 were circulated and approved following the meeting. Minutes agreed. The date of the next meeting was changed from Wednesday 29 April 2026 until today due to clash of dates with national course delivery.

26/20 Matters arising

26/20.1 None

26/21 Ratification of items agreed since last meeting

26/21.1 None.

26/22 Activities completed since the last meeting

26/22.1 **Regional LC Championships**
Three consecutive weekends, two in Luton, one in Norwich

26/22.2 **WA/WPS Rules Updates 2026**
There has been 5 presentations by Zoom within the region with future dates as and when required. The National Regional Coordinators were requested to deliver the CPD together with members of the new National Technical Officials Working Group. Five courses have already taken place in our region with over with 450+ attendees. Currently we have 862 licensed officials in the Region.

26/22.3 **Aquatics GB Para Swimming Officiating CPD**

There was a presentation by DM and Tony Ward on 14 May 2026, The course was open to all technical officials from within GB and quickly became full. It was open to Regional Officials first, then open advertisement, 98 officials attended, although 156 signed up.

26/23 Activities planned before the next meeting

26/23.1 WA/WPS Rules Update 2026

Additional WA/WPS Rules Updates, 9th June 2026 (JH and Vicki Law) and 16 July 2026 (DM & GM) at 7pm.

Action: DM to update the Regional Website and advertise

26/24 AquaticsGB/Swim England Updates

26/24.1 Swim England SOG Restructure

The Swim England restructure is starting to take shape, we are still experiencing long delays with replies to email enquiries.

26/24.2 Swim England Swimming Officials Training and Development Working Party (Swim England Officials Training Working Group)

Meetings and work continue to take place.

26/24.3 Swim England Regional Officers Group (Old SE SOG) - February 2026

It was agreed that members of the group will present the WA/WPS Rules updates together with members of the above group, to ensure a constant message is given and not diluted.

DM again raised the issue following applications of JL2 online application process, asking for the applicant to be copied into the email sent to regional coordinators. The applicant would then know if there was a delay in processing the application within regions due to holidays etc. In the East, the applicant would then receive my out of office email notice informing them who to contact whilst I am away. This has been ongoing since December 25. DM also reported numerous incidents of delays in receiving the SE email following applications, due to it being sent to the wrong regional coordinator. The issue is it is up to the applicant to type in their own region, which many officials do not know and type in the wrong region. DM asked again in December 25 for this to be rectified if the region is automatically selected by software following the entry of the club. Claire Coleman is aware and I wrote to again in February 26 emphasising this problem.

Post Meeting: DM reported that he had spoken with Emma Langham at SE, and the request was being actioned.

26/25 Regional Radios

26/25.1 JH reported that during the recent Swim England East Region Long Course Championships, a number of communication issues were identified with the current two-way radio system. Jane was a Technical Director, she found that the reliability and clarity of communication between officials was significantly below the standard required for the effective running of the event.

The main issues experienced were:

- Poor audio clarity, making it difficult to clearly hear and understand transmissions.
- Intermittent communication between the AOE room and deck referees, with some officials able to hear messages while others could not.
- Inconsistent transmission and reception, resulting in important information not always being received by all intended parties.
- Disqualifications (DQs) were missed due to failed or unclear radio communication:
 - Two DQs at the start of races were not received by the AOE room.
 - A further DQ call from a referee was not heard by the AOE room.

These communication failures have a direct operational impact. Results are declared immediately both in-venue and on the live results feed. When DQs are not communicated promptly, incorrect results may initially be displayed or announced, leading to confusion for swimmers, coaches, spectators, and officials.

Although corrections can later be announced, these may be missed by those following remotely or within the venue.

Given the importance of accurate and immediate communication during championship events, The meeting believed the current radio equipment is no longer fit for purpose. Upgrading to a more reliable and higher-quality radio system would significantly improve communication between officials, reduce the risk of missed information, and support the professional delivery of Swim England East Region competitions.

It should also be noted that there had been similar issues at weekends 1 and 2.

It was recommended at the meeting that DM submit a report requesting the board consider replacing the old radios with digital versions similar to which are used at National events. They have very limited blackspots and the public are unable to hear any conversations, making the conversations secure and private. This is unlike the current open versions. The radios suggested could also be used for Open Water, Masters and Para competitions.

It should be noted that several officials have purchased their own radios.

Action: DM/GM submit a report to the Board

26/26

Aquatics GB Referee Training

- 26/26.1 2026 Cohort of Trainee Referees – the application process and subsequent administration has been taken up by Swim England staff members. There have been delays in acknowledging applications following the closing date and sending out information.

There was a national meeting being held on 20 May 26, chaired by Tom Baster, who gave a comprehensive presentation, which answered many questions for this year's trainees. All applicants and course leaders were encouraged to attend, if they could not attend, a recording was made and circulated.

The date of the 2026 examination is 7 November 2026, the same weekend, as previous years.

- 26/26.2 **Regional Referee Training.** (Podge left the meeting)

DM reported 17 Referee trainees have attended various of the 3 theory training days being held at Chippenham VH, this includes 3 from London Essex clubs. The final theory refresher is being held on 11 October 26.

26/27

County Matters within SE East Region

- 26/27.1 **SEER Technical Official's Newsletters**
DM reported the number of subscribers to the newsletter has increased from 661 currently to 711 regional officials for the latest newsletter.

- 26/27.2 **SOLG Zoom Account**
Positive feedback continues how useful the facility is and the ease of access, flexibility in having meetings or direct contact with regional officials, without the need to travel. All agreed it is a useful tool in continuing to help with their roles.

26/28

County Updates

- 26/28.1 A discussion took place by County coordinators as to what was going on within their own Counties and future planning.
- 26/28.2 **Problems /Issues/Good Ideas encountered generally etc:**
Bedfordshire
Louise had received enquiries from officials asking for more WA/WPS Rules update dates.
- 26/28.3 **Cambridgeshire**

Sarah reported a County development gala on 20 June at Whittlesey and some development camps. No date yet for the pool at Peterborough. Whittlesey pool closing at the end of the year refurbishment work.

26/28.4 Essex

Swim mobility meet at Braintree on 5 September 26. A discussion took place about Essex Open Water competition taking place, which is being split between London and East Region competitions.

26/28.5 Hertfordshire

Jonathan reported that he had set up a “WhatsApp Community” for the County Championships to broadcast information to officials attending. The response was very good regarding signups and assisted in the delivery of information in a timely manner.

26/28.6 Norfolk

Darren reported a couple of County meets and Masters gala.

26/28.7 Suffolk

Nothing to report

26/28.8 Judge and Starter Theory Course Opportunities

A reminder was made for course presenters to provide some further dates to present theory courses. DM to send the up-to-date course list to all, so that decisions can be made on availability.

[Action: ALL](#)

26/29 SEER Regional Development Plan 2026

26/29.1 No issues, working to the plan.

26/30 Starters Acting as Referees Training Day

26/30.1 DM thanked those who came forward with offers to assist on the day. A initial planning meeting took place on zoom and agreed the following statement which was published in a previous newsletter.

“The SE Swimming Officials Leadership Group are planning to run a training day for regional qualified starters who act as referees at galas within the region, next year. The day will cover various topics that will assist them carrying out the role and make them fully aware of their responsibilities as a referee.”

Further information will be available Spring 2026. The date of the training is on Sunday 13 September 2026.”

DM reported that He had been recently appointed as the WPS Technical Delegate at the WPS European Championships in Türkiye in September and was now not able to attend. Gerry had also been appointed at the same meet as a Starter. Jane was also now not available.

Two options were discussed, keeping the same date or changing the date to Saturday 19 September 26. Freckenham VH was available and we could change the booking. It was agreed to change the date to the 19 September 26.

Action: DM to confirm the booking and advertise the opportunity

Aquatics GB Para Swimming Officiating CPD

- 26.30.2 Additional CPD on Tuesday 15 September 2026 @ 7pm, to be circulated GB wide, with Regional advertisement in the first instance.

Action: DM to confirm the booking and advertise the opportunity

26/31

Any other business

- 26/31.1 GM reported that Tom Baster had recently been appointed as the Swim England President, which was well received by the meeting.
- 26/31.2 GM reported that 6 regional officials had been appointed to the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. They are Craig Hunter Technical Delegate, Tom Baster, Stewart Murray, Louise Mackie, David Metcalf and herself.
- 26/31.3 The meeting discussed a recent announcement by the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, that the HMRC mileage rate for the first 10,000 miles of qualifying business journeys will rise from 45p to 55p per mile, with the change backdated to 6 April 2026. The meeting asked that this be brought to the attention of the Board to consider a change in the mileage rate going forward.

Action: GM to take to the next Board meeting

26/32

Issues/Recommendations to the Regional Board

- 26/32.1 A report to be submitted to the Board requesting the upgrading of the person radios we use within the region
- 26/32.2 HRMC Mileage rate increase consideration.

26/33

Confidential items

- 26/33.1 None

26/34

Next Meeting

- 26/34.1 The next meeting is scheduled take place by Zoom on Wednesday 16 September 2026 @ 7pm

County representatives were reminded to notify DM of the details of the substitute if they could not attend a meeting.

Abbreviations used in swimming

AGB	AquaticsGB (British Swimming Ltd)
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CTK	Chief Timekeeper
Judge Level 1/2/2S	Judge Level 1 – Judge Level 2- Judge level 2S (Starter)
SE	Swim England
SE STOWG	Swim England Swimming Technical Officials' Working Party
SE SOC	Swim England Sport Operations Committee
SE ROG	Swim England Regional Official's Group (Old SE SOG)
SEER	Swim England East Region
SEER SLG	Swim England East Region Swimming Leadership Group
SEER SOLG	Swim England East Region Swimming Officials Leadership Group
TK	Timekeeper
WA	World Aquatics (AQUA)
WPS	World Para Swimming