

Officials' Chair's report
May 1, 2022

The major restructuring of the Officials' Committee that was approved at the September 2021 HOD has had the desired result of enabling the Committee to function more effectively and more transparently. As part of the restructuring, three new positions were created and in addition to the Chair, the Committee now includes a New Officials' Training Coordinator, an Advancement and Certification Coordinator, and an At-large Member. The Metro Administrative Vice-Chair also has a voice, but no vote, on the Committee, and in keeping with USA Swimming guidelines, the Committee also has two voting Athlete Representatives. The Committee members have been working diligently not only to fill, but also in many ways to define their positions' responsibilities, and the fruits of their efforts can be seen in a number of quarters, including the frequency with which clinics for new officials are being offered, the steady progress being made by apprentice Starters and Referees, and the already greatly improved officials' section on the website which, in its current state, is but a precursor to the far more robust section that is currently being developed.

With the aim of distributing our limited funds most equitably, the Committee has made major changes to the background check reimbursement policy: while all requests must still be made within the 30-day reimbursement window, reimbursements are no longer made on a first-come-first-served basis but will be allotted by the Committee at the end of the fiscal year. In an attempt to improve the advancement of apprentice Starters and Referees, the Committee has established and posted lists of Metro mentors/evaluators who are able to conduct final observation reports on apprentice Starters and Referees. The Committee is also working to establish minimum requirements for those wishing to serve as Meet Referee for Senior Mets and at the next quarterly meeting, the Committee will be reviewing and potentially revising the officials' travel reimbursement policy. There is always much to do, but the Officials' Committee is committed to working collaboratively to address current and future issues.

The Committee has formed or is in the process of forming several working groups led by Committee members, that will, among other things: undertake reviews of our wet- and dry-side training materials and suggest standards for trainers; review, refine (in some cases, define) and suggest potential revisions to the LSC's certifications; consider whether clinics should be established for Starters and Referees; review and continue to improve the officials' link on the homepage; and establish an official social media presence for the Committee. The proposals that emerge from the working group will be brought to the full Committee for consideration and action.

The New York Times reported in the past week on the dramatic decline among officials of all youth sports that has taken place over the past few years, something that is unsurprisingly reflected in our current membership numbers. While our numbers have not yet returned to their pre-COVID levels, the state of Metro officiating remains, overall, in very good shape. We continue to welcome new members to the Metro officiating team and we are fortunate in that our certified, volunteer officials continue to demonstrate the highest levels of commitment and dedication by staffing all the many time trials, team- and LSC-run meets that we hold throughout the year. That Metro

currently has more officials with national certifications than it has ever had, including many people who have recently acquired their first, and one hopes not their last, national certification, is yet another indicator of the positive direction in which Metro officiating is moving. In addition, many senior officials continue to represent Metro, more and more frequently in assigned positions, at four- and five-star national meets.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Amodio
Officials' Chair