

Circular 023:07:18



To: Club Presidents
Team Managers
Club Secretaires
Club Coaches

Cc: Junior Coordinators
Aquatic Sports Executive
Officials
M&LD Executive

From: Aquatic Sport Department

Date: 18 July 2018

Subject: **U14 Competition Restructure FAQ Sheet**

Action: Note information and circulate as required

For additional details on this Circular please contact:
Aquatic Sports on 03 9676 6957 or email sport@lsv.com.au
Circulars are available at <http://www.lsv.com.au/circulars>

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) have been developed following one of the key decisions made at the Aquatic Sport Council meeting held on Monday, 18 June 2018. Delegates and Members of the Aquatic Sports Council (ASC) voted in favour of the following recommendation from the Aquatic Sport Executive (ASE);

- The ASC endorsed the proposed re-structure of U14/15 competition for the 2018/19 Season. *Please note this means for the 2018/19 season, U14 competitors will compete in Youth/Senior carnivals.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) – U14 COMPETITION RESTRUCTURE

BACKGROUND

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) have been developed following one of the key decisions made at the Aquatic Sport Council meeting held on Monday, 18 June 2018. Delegates and Members of the Aquatic Sports Council (ASC) voted in favour of the following recommendation from the Aquatic Sport Executive (ASE);

- The ASC endorse the proposed re-structure of U14/15 competition for the 2018/19 Season. *Please note this means for the 2018/19 season, U14 competitors will compete in Youth/Senior carnivals.

The briefing paper outlining the proposal can be viewed [HERE](#).

FAQ

1. What decision has been made regarding U14 Competition?

The U14 competition age group has moved from Junior carnivals and will now compete only at Youth/Senior Carnivals. The U14 Competition age group will compete in a 'Youth Arena' within their own age group for all individual events, alongside U15s competing in their individual age group. This aligns to the successful 'Youth Aussies' format and competition changes implemented by Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA).

2. Why was this change recommended?

This decision has been made for several reasons;

- After successful implementation of the Youth Arena format at the Australian Championship for the past 5 years, LSV have decided to now conduct our carnivals in this same manner.
- We currently cater for U14s in both Junior & Senior Competition, this will now provide one streamlined competition in a Youth/Senior Carnival.
- SLSA will implement a 'Double Dipping' rule, disallowing U14 competitors to compete 'up' an age group, and therefore remove any possibility of competing at Senior carnivals in the previous structure.
- A review of the 2017/18 season showed that on average, 42% of U14 Competitors also competed in Senior Carnivals, this means these athletes also made teams in the U15 age group.
- The change will enable more efficient event management at both Junior and Youth/Senior Carnivals.

3. How does this affect our club's Nippers Program?

This change will have no impact on your club's Nippers program and how you conduct activities at your club. Nippers is a Surf Education Program which caters for children 5-14 years. This National program is designed to teach kids the basic lifesaving skills required to be safe around an aquatic environment.

The change only affects U14s in relation to the Surf Sports (competition) component of Surf Life Saving, which will see them compete in Youth/Senior Carnivals. The same opportunities to compete exist.

Your club is encouraged to conduct your Nipper program in the way it best works for you, the only difference will be that U14s will compete within the Youth/Senior carnivals, essentially on a different day.

4. How will LSV assist clubs with retention strategies and the transition of U14s into Youth/Senior Carnivals?

We acknowledge the concerns by members and are keen to work with clubs on managing retention and transition. The following strategies are proposed, and additional ideas are welcome and can be discussed with the Aquatic Sport team.

- LSV is focusing on improving culture on the beach. A key focus for the 2018/19 will be on creating an inclusive Youth Arena environment whereby all U14 and U15 competitors feel comfortable. This will be through appointment of appropriate officials, targeted programming and use of mentors. Specifically:
 - Improved and targeted event promotions, including use of social media.
 - Programming for Youth/Senior Carnivals will be managed to ensure team and individual events in the Youth Arena do not clash.
 - Email with information and expectations sent to U14 and U15 competitors and their parents via SurfGuard.
 - Implementation of U15 & U17 'Ambassadors'.
 - Creating 'all age' club events at selected carnivals to increase comradery.
 - Applying a 'case by case' common sense approach during the transition phase, particularly linked to U14's use of MALs (racing boards). We anticipate working closely with coaches and officials to modify events for U14s where required.

5. How will the SRC Award be affected?

There will be no changes to the SRC Award. U14 competitors will still be required to obtain their SRC Award prior to competing at the Victorian Youth/Senior State Championships. The Youth Arena will have additional water safety as is currently implemented at Junior Carnivals.

6. How do U14s compete in team events? What will happen to Belt & Reel, R&R and March Past Events?

- U14 and U15 age groups will compete in combined team events as per the SLSA Youth National Championships.
- Belt & Reel events will continue to be scheduled at selected Junior and Youth/Senior carnivals as team events and run within the Beach Arena.
- R&R will continue to be scheduled at both Junior and Youth/Senior Carnivals in the R&R Arena.
- March Past Events will continue only at Junior State Championships, with all U14s invited to participate should they wish.
- If clubs would like to see the return of March Past at Senior State Championships, this can be requested through the Aquatic Sports Council.

7. How does this impact Senior Competition?

- Fundamentally there is **no** change to the structure of Youth/Senior Carnivals.
- A review of the 2017/18 season showed that on average, 42% of U14 Competitors also competed at Senior Carnivals season.
- LSV will change the terminology of a 'Senior' Carnival to 'Youth/Senior' Carnival. The U14 age group will compete in a Youth Arena with the U15 age group.

- LSV acknowledges the concerns of members that U17, U19 and Open competition age groups will be impacted with the inclusion of U14s. However, U14s have been eligible to compete 'up' at Senior Carnivals for many years. This change will enable a more targeted approach to cater for the U14 and U15 Youth Arena and associated risk will be managed accordingly.
- Venue selection for Youth/Senior Carnivals will include, where deemed necessary, additional water safety measures to ensure all competitors are adequately catered for in the Youth Arena.

8. How do I become involved in Aquatic Sport decision making?

Each year, clubs nominate an 'Aquatic Sport Club Delegate' of whom receives direct communication relating to sport topics and is allocated voting rights on behalf of their club at Aquatic Sports Council meetings. This person is strongly encouraged to proactively circulate all information and gather any feedback from all club members prior to casting any votes.

All members are invited to attend Aquatic Sports Council Meetings as guests, held quarterly at Life Saving Victoria HQ in Port Melbourne (or via dial-in options). The meeting is a great platform for feedback and open conversation between Aquatic Sports Executive, LSV Staff and Life Saving Clubs. Meeting dates are posted via Club Circulars and on the LSV website.

Club Circulars are released each Wednesday and contain essential information and announcements for clubs and members from Life Saving Victoria. LSV encourages all members to sign up to receive Circulars and share relevant information within their club. Subscribe via <https://lsv.com.au/mail-subscription/>

Feedback is also encouraged through [feedback.lsv.com.au/](https://lsv.com.au/feedback) or via sport@lsv.com.au.

9. What can I do about my Junior Victorian State Championship accommodation?

LSV appreciates that some members have booked accommodation in Lorne for the weekend of Junior State Championships. Should you wish, please contact sport@lsv.com.au for a referral letter to your accommodation unit if you are unable to obtain a refund. We encourage members to review the 2018/19 calendar (to be released shortly), as there may be opportunities to swap dates as an alternative option.

We recognise this will be a change for clubs and their members, particularly those impacted for the 2018/19 season. We appreciate those clubs who are playing a role in positively promoting the change and reviewing how they will implement at a club level. We will continue to add to these FAQ as further questions arise.

For further information, please email sport@lsv.com.au.

Date: 18 July 2017

Prepared by: LSV Aquatic Sport Executive