

# INTERNATIONAL LIFE SAVING FEDERATION

World Water Safety



## **GUIDELINES for WATER SAFETY AND SWIMMING CERTIFICATIONS**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The International Life Saving Federation (ILS) approved the International Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines as given below.

The ILS has identified a set of water safety and swimming education guidelines, which it has established as an international education standards framework. This framework is essentially a learn to swim and water safety programme formatted with achievement levels. Each level requires mastery of the ILS specified core knowledge and skill competencies.

The International Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines concept serves two purposes:

- First, it establishes an international set of criteria that can be used by member organisations that have no or little own system for the teaching of swimming and water safety.
- Second, it gives a possibility to serve as an international standard or a reference, against which existing learn to swim and water safety education systems can be endorsed as meeting ILS water safety and swimming education standards framework, or not.

This document includes information on the ILS international learn to swim and water safety standards framework. Interested persons are urged to carefully read all text and to follow the guidelines.

In this document, some of the following questions are answered:

- What is the application procedure?
- How can I obtain endorsement by ILS?
- What should be basic contents of a Member Organisation's Water Safety and Swimming Education programme?
- What endorsement does ILS issue?
- What if a Member Organisation has no Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines or System?
- What is the validity of the ILS endorsement?

### **2. STATEMENTS**

- 2.1 The ILS water safety and swimming education standards framework simply provides an international benchmark of achievement, an indicator of potential performance level. It can be used to help determine at which level to slot appropriately into the programme of any member organisation.
- 2.2 The ILS standards framework can demonstrate successful completion of approved knowledge and skill objectives. However, every national organisation retains the right to test for other skills and knowledge, to re-test the skills and knowledge of a particular level, and to request other training. The ILS standards framework is not intended to supersede existing national Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines or systems.
- 2.3 The primary focus should be placed on the successful completion of knowledge and skill objectives, and only a secondary focus be placed on the time needed to acquire the knowledge and skills at each level.

### 3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

#### 3.1 I have in my country a Water Safety and Swimming Education system; how can I obtain endorsement by ILS?

All Full Member Organisations that have existing National Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines or Systems can apply for the ILS minimum standard. This means that the Member guidelines or system include the key components of the ILS International Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines.

Hereunder we outline the steps that shall be followed.

- Step 1. The Member Organisation submits to the ILS Secretary General a written request for endorsement. The written request must be accompanied by:
  - A completed copy of the ILS Endorsement Form (APPENDIX 1)
  - A copy of the content of the National Water Safety and Swimming Education guidelines or system in English.
  - A copy of the reference book(s) or manual(s),
  - A copy of any certificates or badges or similar for each level within the system
- Step 2. The Secretary General reviews the application and asks for more information if the files are not complete.
- Step 3. The Secretary General forwards the application to the Education Committee Chair who will conduct a review before consulting with the Members of the Committee. The Committee Chair will ask for more information if the files are not complete.
- Step 4. The Education Committee (dis)approves the accreditation. If necessary, the Education Committee can propose additional tests.
- Step 5: The Education Committee Chair advises the Lifesaving Commission of the decision of the Education Committee to grant or not grant accreditation.
- Step 6. The Secretary General informs the Member Organisation of the decision of the Rescue Commission. Members are also informed that they are endorsed, however if the Member Organisation's criteria change, ILS must be advised and vice-versa.
- Step 6. The endorsement by ILS of the Member Organisation's programme is added to the General Endorsement Table kept in the ILS Headquarters in order to be able to quickly handle the applications.

### **3.2 What should be basic contents of a Member Organisation's Water Safety? and Swimming Education programme?**

The minimum ILS requirements for water safety and swimming education are given in APPENDIX 2. Countries are invited to comply as precise as possible with these guidelines.

Should there be significant variations to the Member Organisation's programme against the ILS Guidelines, the Member Organisation should provide supporting rationale for these variations.

### **3.3 What endorsement is issued by ILS?**

On receiving endorsement of the Member Organisations National Water Safety and Swimming Education Guidelines, System or Standards Framework, ILS will issue an Endorsement Certificate and a unique ILS Seal/Logo both of which can be used by the Member to promote ILS endorsement.

### **3.4 What if a Member Organisation has no Water Safety and Swimming education programme?**

In countries without any education programme or certification system, the ILS International Water Safety and Swimming Education standards framework could be adopted as a recognised system. The Member Organisation is encouraged to fully take over the ILS programme and to adapt it to local needs, if necessary.

### **3.5 What is the validity of the ILS endorsement?**

ILS would be very pleased if the Member Organisations could do their utmost to ask to their governmental institutions that they officially recognise the ILS International Water Safety and Swimming Education standards framework. This can only be beneficial for all our lifesavers and for the spirit of "friendship through lifesaving" worldwide.

## **4. FINANCIAL ASPECTS**

The costs of the ILS Endorsement are currently fixed by the Board and can be obtained by request.