

U.S. MASTERS
SWIMMING
OPEN WATER

Safety Directors Clinic

September 12, 2013—Lecture Presentation

September 13, 2013—Interactive Panel Discussion

Presenters



Lynn Hazlewood



Bill Roach



Bob Bruce



Rob Copeland



Jim Wheeler



John Traynor

Open Water Event Management Education

Presenter: Lynn Hazlewood



Open Water Committee Chair. Involved in open water swimming since the 1980s as a swimmer and administrator. Co-founder and developer of the Jim McDonnell Lake Swims in Reston, VA.

Overview

Event Management Education

- Education Resources
- Workshops, Webinars, Clinics
- Safety Directors Clinics

Building Education Resources

- Guidelines & FAQs
- Videos
- Convention education
- Online education
- Education in the field
- Mentoring programs
- Outside resources

Workshops, Webinars, Clinics

- Jim Wheeler Convention Safety Workshops (2010, 2012)
- OWC Meetings (2011)
- Jim Wheeler Safety Webinars (May 5, 2013 video available on Guide to Operations)
- Safety Directors Clinic—Part 1: Pre-Event Planning (2013 Convention)
- Sports Medicine Committee Presentation (2013 Convention)

Future Workshops, Webinars, Clinics

- Safety Directors Clinic—Part 2: Safety Management at the Event (2014 Webinar)
- Event Director Clinic
- Event Referee clinic
- Other Event Officials Clinics

Safety Directors Clinic Goals

- Provide details and "how to" information for implementing safety guidelines
- Develop trained Safety Directors who are able to run safe events, act as safety monitors for events at all levels, and/or mentor and train other safety directors

The Safety Director & Levels of Safety Coverage

Presenter: Bob Bruce



Major developer of open water in Oregon and the Northwest as a coach, swimmer, and event and national championship organizer. Active at the national level as a member of LDC and OWC.

Overview of Safety Director Position

- Safety Director defined
- Relationship between Safety Director & Event Director
- Safety Director time frame for action

Safety Director Defined

- Undefined in USMS rules (for now)
- Safety Director as an official
- Special role
- Special powers

Relationship between Safety Director & Event Director

- Two roles NEVER filled by one person
- Most important relationship on any event team
- A pair continually working together early & often
- Written job description specifying Safety Director responsibilities

Safety Director Time Frame for Action

- Laying the groundwork
- Preparation for on-water set-up
- Execute plans on event day(s)
- Review & prepare for the next event

Levels of Safety Coverage

- Coverage levels should always overlap
- Each swim's plan is situational
- Use professionals as available

Overview of Levels

- #1: Personal emergency plan
- #2: Spotters
- #3: Rescuers
- #4: On-site medical services
- #5: Hospital

Level #1: Personal Emergency Plan

- Am I ready to do this swim?
- Am I familiar with the course?
- Do I understand the safety protocols?
- What should I do if I get into trouble?
- Key concept: Don't let your ego threaten your life.

Level #2: Spotters

- Oversee swimmers
- Role #1: watching water
- Role #2: rescue

Level #3: Rescuers

- Oversee spotters
- Role #1: assisting/rescuing swimmers
- Role #2: transport swimmers in trouble

Level #4: On-site medical services

- Oversee rescuers
- Role #1: provide advanced life support & other first aid
- Role #2: assist transport to hospital

Level #5: Transportation & Hospital

- The unseen level: Ambulances, helicopters and advanced care
- Anchors the whole safety process
- Role: provide extended life support

Integration with Outside Agencies

Presenter: Jim Wheeler



Expert in aquatic risk management, safety and training for venues ranging from waterfronts, beaches, pools and water parks. International water safety speaker and trainer, accident investigator and expert witness.

Possible Agencies that Control Venues

- United States Coast Guard
- Bureau of Land Management
- United States Forrest Service
- National Park Service
- State Parks Department
- County Government
- City Government
- Park District
- Other...

Look the Agency up on the internet to find out how to get permission to hold your event.

Work on the interface between the agency that controls the venue and local agencies that might provide assistance for your event.

- Police/Fire
- Paramedics
- Hospitals
- Lifeguard Agencies
- Search and Rescue
- Department of Public Health

Get phone numbers of the response agencies, hospitals and/or clinics.

- Laminate and have around the event site
- Program numbers into key event staff phones

Remember when planning your event to always plan with controlling agency requirements and USMS requirements and recommendations in mind.

Safety Plan Development

Presenter: Bill Roach

Safety director for Noblesville 25K and 10K National Championships. Certified Safety Director for USA Water Ski tournaments for the past 20 years. Experience as a life guard instructor and aquatic director.



Develop safety plan cooperatively with event director, drawing on:

- Past Experience
- USMS requirements/recommendations/
best practice
- Review with outside personnel

Past Experience

- Lifeguard - Pool Manager-Aquatics Director
- Open water swimmer - Triathlete
- Boater
- Safety Director for other aquatic events

USMS requirements/recommendations/ best practices


- Requirements— Prop Guards, Proof of Insurance, Certificate of Insurance
- Recommendations—communication system, course maps, water quality, water temperature, swimmer accountability, observers, evacuation plan, emergency action plan, medical services
- Best Practices—know your body of water, common sense, plan ahead

Review safety plan with outside personnel

- Local hospital, EMT's, Dept. of Natural Resources, Police and Fire, Coast Guard, Parks Dept., Lifeguard Agency, Beach Patrol, Board of Health, USMS

The Safety Plan

Comprehensive, with all the details:

- Planning the event—months, weeks, days before the event - day of the event
- Who is responsible for safety-appointments, responsibilities, planning, follow through
- Applying for the sanction online
 - Draft Safety Plan Template  Document
- Flexibility-getting it right

Imagine the worst and plan for it

- Weather, currents, tides, temperatures, marine life
- Missing participant
- Medical emergency
- Mass evacuation-event delays-who makes the call

Safety communiqué for public education

- Signage-postings-meetings-PA system-signals (whistles, flags, horns, hand)
- Spectator education

Safety Communication Plan

- Who communicates to who
- Communications among other safety groups

Who communicates to who

- Types of communication
- Communication equipment available
- Distance to be covered
- Training-practice

Communications among other safety groups

- What communication is each group using
- How to contact and communicate to other safety groups
- Emergency action plan practice-what to do if
- Who makes the tough decisions

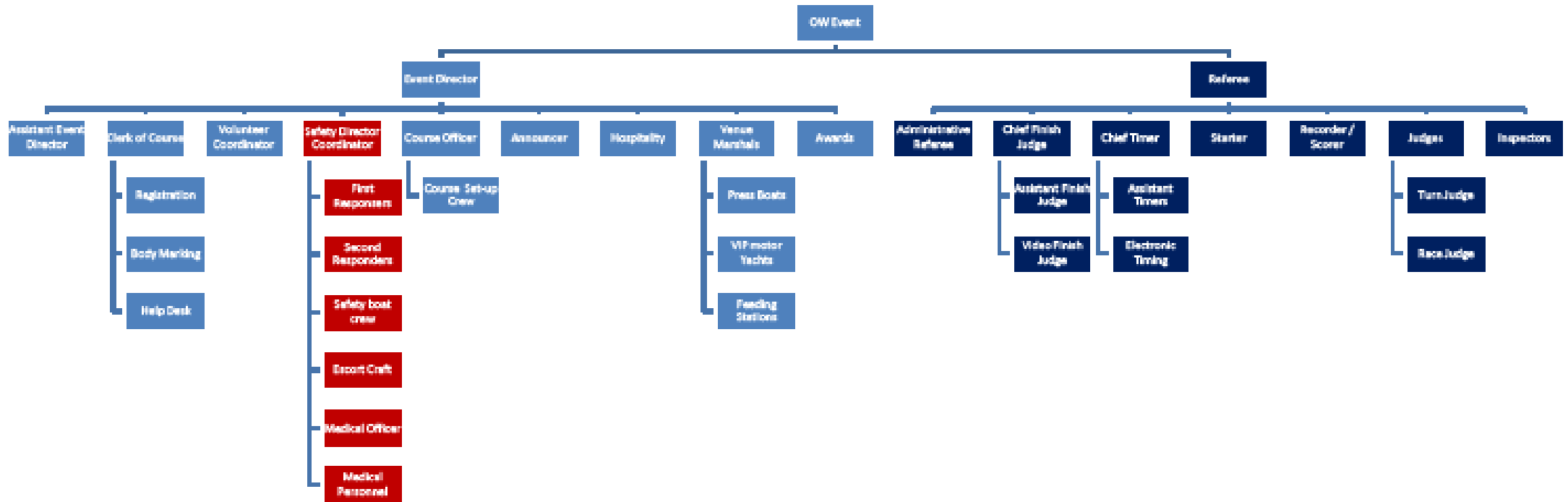
Safety Staffing

Presenter: Rob Copeland

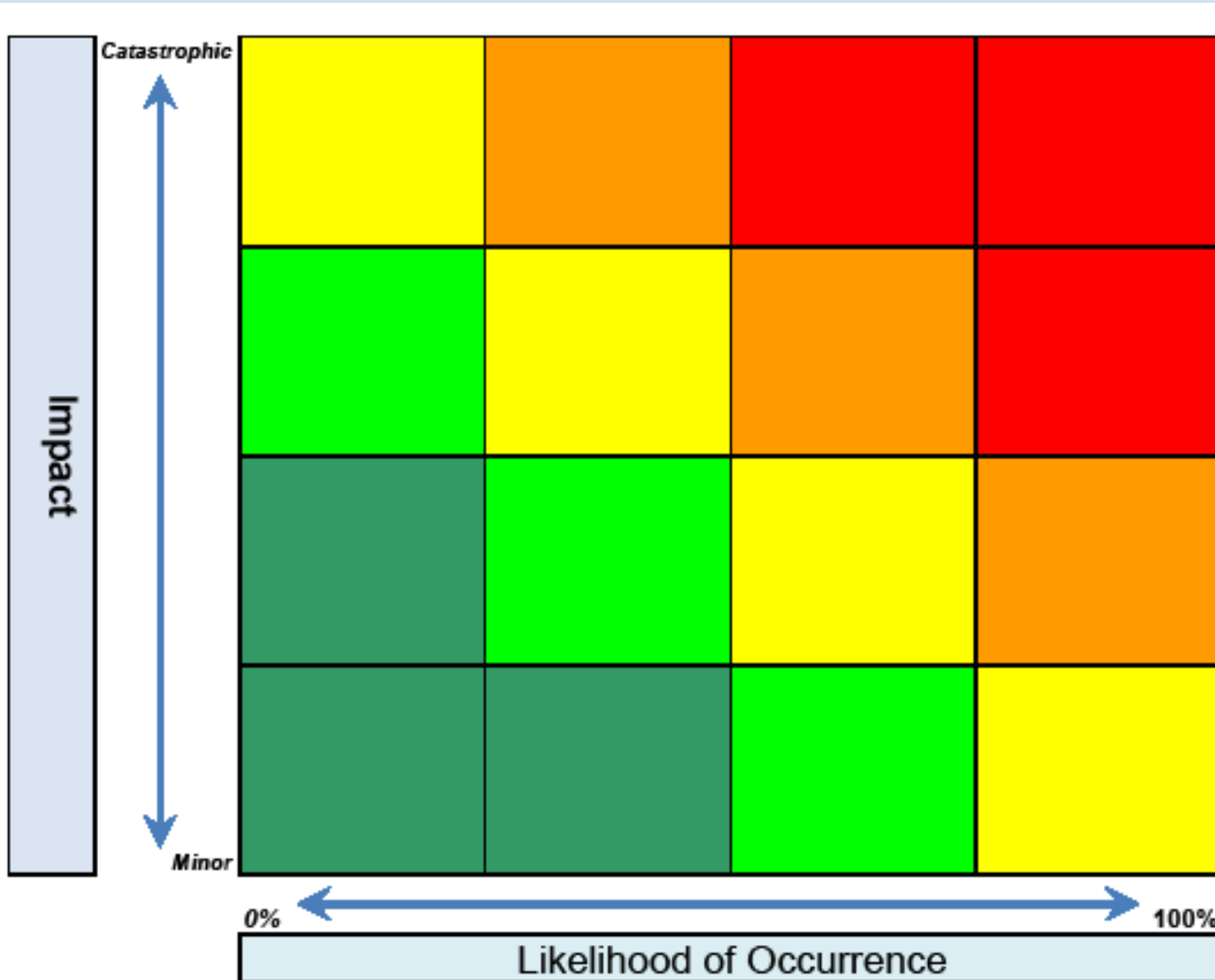
Vice Chair OWC and Past President of USMS.
Broad experience in open water swimming as a swimmer, coach and event administrator. Swam the English Channel on 7/26/2000.



Safety Staffing - Big Picture



Plan and Staff based on Impact & Probability



- Staff and Deploy to mitigate high impact and most likely first
- Plan the event to minimize risk
- Proper planning, staffing and training can greatly reduce the likelihood and impact of an incident
- Resources (people and money) are a scarce commodity – don't staff for Sharknado

Professional versus Amateur Safety Staffing

- Professional and paid are not synonymous
- Consider professional and/or paid staff to mitigate high impact and highly likely scenarios
- Everyone needs training – even the professionals
- Where do I find these people?
- How do I keep them coming back?

General Safety Planning, Staffing & Training

- Safety Director/Coordinator
- First Responders
- Second Responders
- Other safety boats and crew
- Chief Medical Officer
- Medical Personnel

Venue Specific Safety Planning, Staffing & Training

- Ocean Swims
- Lake Swims
- River Swims
- Point to Point / Loop /Cable
- Shoreline / Off-Shore
- Open/Closed Course
- Escorted Swims
- Cold/Hot Swims
- Easy Access / Wilderness

What's wrong with this picture?



Water Craft

Presenter: Bob Bruce



Major developer of open water in Oregon and the Northwest as a coach, swimmer, and event and national championship organizer. Active at the national level as a member of LDC and OWC.

Determine safety coverage needs, based on anticipated...

- Number & spread of swimmers
- Conditions on the course
- Emergency rescue/evacuation possibilities
- Available safety personnel

Power boats (moving)

- Meet USMS & state requirements
- Driver's experience & training
- Other safety staffing in boat
- Dependability & power of craft

Power boats (stationary)

- Meet USMS & state requirements
- Safe positioning
- Role: Spotting/rescue/Aid station?
- Other roles: safety check station, officials?

Personal Water Craft (i.e. Jetskis)

- Meet USMS & state requirements
- Driver's experience & training
- Primary role: Spotting
- Secondary role: Rescue (supplemental only)

Non-power boats

- Meet USMS & state requirements
- Primary role: Spotting
- Secondary role: Rescue (very limited)
- Staffing
- Training required

Personal safety of safety personnel

- Watermanship capabilities
- Time & conditions on the water
- Required personal gear
- Safety equipment
- Communication equipment

Safety Tools & Equipment

Presenter: John Traynor

Vice Chair of LDC. Coordinator, developer, and founder of open water events at the local level. National Championship liaison. Lead Coordinator, Great Lakes Zone Open Water Swim (GLOWS) Series.



Pre-plan & Implement

- Prepare event pre-planning checklist
- Procure—borrow, gift, donation, rent, and/or purchase
- Sample checklist overview – venue considerations

Checklist Overview – Venue Considerations

- Venue Swim Course and Maps
- Safety Water Craft
- Trained Lifeguards & Monitors
- Dive Rescue Team Responders
- Transport Ambulance
- Communications
- Incident Command Post
- Event Speaker Sound System
- First Aid Station / Medical Tent
- Hydration Fluids & Nourishment
- Accounting of Swimmers
- Environmental Monitoring
- Swimmer-Supplied Safety Items
- Other...

Venue Swim Course and Maps

- Buoy Marks & Boundary IDs
 - Start, Turns, Guides, and Finish
 - Boundary Barriers
 - Cautionary for submerged objects
 - Exclude non-event watercrafts
 - Physical and/or Virtual (patrolled)
 - Water access (controlled, limited)
 - Course feeding stations (if need)
 - Large, spaced, and visible for sighting
 - Distinguish by size, geometry & color
- Swim path direction/distances
- Designated safe warm up & cool down areas
- Positioning & ID of ALL event watercraft
 - Motorized & Non-motorized
 - Moving—Engines ON
 - Anchored—Engines OFF

Venue Swim Course and Maps *(continued)*

- Evacuation routes
 - From water
 - Venue site shelter
- Maps (with legends)
 - Accessible online at event website
 - Venue hardcopies—Large, laminated, conspicuously posted

Safety Water Craft

- Function: Emergency, rescue, police patrol, course monitoring
- ALL Boats — pre-assigned visible number ID, color flag ID, essential safety equipment, registration/permit, & insurance
 - Motorized water craft
 - Propeller-driven
 - Non-propeller-driven (wave runners, jet skis, other)
 - Non-motorized water craft
 - Kayaks (& paddles/oars)
 - Rowboats (& paddles/oars)

Trained Lifeguards & Course Monitors

- Sample list of tools, equipment & supplies
 - Trained Lifeguards
 - Course Safety Monitors (Spotters)



Emergency Dive Rescue Team Responders

- Trained professional experts usually operating motorized watercraft for emergency rapid response situations
 - Primary function: In-water rescue or recovery of injured or distressed swimmers to medical attention on land
- Professionals fully ready-equipped to perform
 - Some examples: “Dive pack” gear, CPR kits, first aid kit, blankets, 2-way radios, binoculars, personal floatation devices, fog/bull horn
 - Number depend on venue size, venue course design, participant size, environmental conditions, water depths, etc.

Transport Ambulance

- Advanced Life Support (ALS) and/or Basic Life Support (BLS)
Transport Ambulances stationed at start/finish land areas.
- Aircraft Ambulance (MEDEVAC), if venue location capability is required, needed, or anticipated

Communications — 2-Way FRS/GRMS Radios

- Pre-assigned operators, portable, & verified fully battery-charged
- Venue — Land to land, Land to water, water to water, water to land
- A main method of communications among the Referee, Aquatics Safety Coordinator, and Lifeguards and other in-water and on-land safety monitors, and emergency treatment and rescue resources
- Pre-assigned, pre-set channel/frequency AND one channel/frequency reserved for emergency, law enforcement, and offsite communications
- Cell Phones - Consider if/when part of communication plan


Incident Command Post

- Event safety communications command (onsite & offsite)
- Distributes and accounts for assigned communication devices (e.g., 2-way radios, etc)
- Monitor weather for changing venue conditions

Event Speaker Sound System

- Clearly audible to swimmers, officials, volunteers, and spectators at:
 - Registration, body-marking, rest rooms, boat launch ramps, start/finish areas, and warm-up/cool down areas
 - Athlete mandatory pre-race course briefing
- Electrical power supply - see equipment examples in “Miscellaneous” slide

First Aid Station / Medical Tent

- Venue based and non-transport
 - Highly visible station/tent signs
 - Strategically located near water in/out access points
- Staffed by professionals – e.g., EMS first responders
 - Number depends on swim course layout, participant size, distance
- Medical supplies stocked by professionals
 - Sample list of tools, equipment & medical supplies 
 - Examples: Large cooling and/or heating canopy tents (optional side panels),
 - Examples: Misting Fans, water hose, water supply, exam chairs, tables or gurneys
- Medical treatments using established protocols
 - CPR, AED, scrapes, cuts, hot & cold emergencies, etc
 - Prescription meds & treats by qualified ALS EMTs or medical doctor

Hydration Fluids and Nourishment

- Available to athletes, officials, volunteers, & spectators
- Food, hydration fluids, paper drink cups
- Potable water, ice, and drink coolers
- Escort or swim course station feeding
 - Athlete determines and supplies nourishment needs based on swim course design, distances, training, etc.

Accounting of Swimmers

- Body-markers (or ink stamps) for athlete BIB ID #s
- Swim caps (optional)—BIB ID # and distinct bright cap color for gender, age groups, and/or wave starts
- 1-way IN and 1-way OUT of water (*normal conditions*)
- Computer timing pads and uniquely assigned computer chips
- Manual backup: Paper checklists by alphanumerical and BIB ID #
 - Registered swimmer name, BIB ID, and cell phone number(s)
 - Day of event emergency contact name(s) and cell phone number(s)
 - Athlete medical/health info (*for professional medical access*)
 - Video and check-off swimmers and others in/out of water
 - Officials on the water – paper & ink markers, 2-way radios (call-in to land)

Environmental Monitoring

- Surface Water Temperature
- Water Quality Testing
- Venue Conditions

Surface Water Temperature

- Thermometers
 - Digital and/or Analog (°F, °C)
 - Submersible, up to depth of 0.5-Meter (or 18-Inches)
- Determine if meets established USMS limits to conduct event
 - Too warm? Too cold?
- Determine if USMS Category II swimwear (e.g., wetsuits) is permissible

Water Quality Testing

- Verifying water quality when not timely done/reported by controlling authority
- Sample collection containers / bottles
 - New, unused, non-contaminated
 - > 100 mL sample bottles (e.g., E-Coli, Fecal Coliform, Enterococcus analyses)
 - Larger samples may be required for other bacteria/chemical sample analyses
- Labels & Marker - affix to sample bottles
 - Sample date, time, and unique ID (e.g., number)
 - Specific sample collection location ID and water depth
 - Requested sample analysis
 - Contact ID of person collecting sample(s)
- Ice & Ice cooler (for delivery to qualified Lab within sample analysis time limits)

Venue Conditions

- Access to Weather.com, controlling authority, & fishermen reports
 - Weather forecast and real-time monitoring
 - Air temperature (°F, °C)
 - Relative humidity (%)
 - Visibility
 - Wind direction and speed
 - Water current direction and speed
 - Tides (date, time)
 - Extent of water chop, waves, etc.
 - Other...

Swimmer-Supplied Safety Items

- Mirrored swim goggles
- Sunscreen
- Repellant lotions
- Personal O-T-C & medical prescription substances or treatments
- Food and hydration fluids
 - For longer, ultra, or solo distance swims
 - For escorted and/or feeding station swims
- Other...

Miscellaneous

- Sufficient electrical power supplies
 - Note:** For First Aid Station/Medical Tent, Event Speaker Sound System, Registration, Timing, Computer Backup, Food & Drink Hospitality
 - Available Outlets, GFCIs, & wattage capacities
 - Electrical cable extension cords (outdoor, safety-rated)
 - Surge protection devices
 - Anti-trip hazard installed
 - Electrical tape
 - Backup portable generator
- Sufficient Hose and Available hose water supply outlets
 - For First Aid Station/Medical Tents, Food & Drink Hospitality
- Laptop computers (with Internet access capable)
- Printer and paper
- Cell and/or Smart Phones (with Internet access capable)

Miscellaneous *(continued)*

- Fog/Bull Horns
- Air Horns
- Whistles
- Fire Extinguishers
- Flare Kits
- Binoculars
- Spare Black Markers – for Indelible ID body-marking
- “China” Markers
- Ink Pens
- Pencils
- Duct Tape (Rolls)
- Other...

Questions?