INTERNATIONAL SURFING ASSOCIATION

For a Better Surfing Future

STANDUP PADDLE AND PADDLEBOARD EVENT PROCEDURES GUIDE- 2013 EDITION

CREATED BY

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Dear ISA Members,

I would like to introduce you to the ISA StandUp Paddle and Paddleboard Event Procedures Guide. Here you will find a detailed document with the best practices to organize an SUP and Paddleboard event, and to help you in the further development of these surfing disciplines in your country.

The growing popularity of SUP Surfing and Racing have created a higher demand for competitions. It is crucial to establish the proper foundations and base for how such events should be organized and executed.

Through this guide, you will be able to explore a wide variety of concepts that touch many aspects of putting on an SUP and Paddleboard event, including general rules for SUP Surfing, SUP Racing, and Paddleboard, plus race courses, course design, race protocols, safety, staffing and more.

Additionally, you can contact the ISA Head Office, Summer Nelson (summernelson@isasurf.org) for any further inquiry or feedback.

I wish you success in all of your future events and hope that this guide helps your organization in the planning and execution of SUP and Paddleboard events.

Sincerely,

Fernando Aguerre
ISA President

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INTRODUCTION

This guide has been produced as the primary reference document for any SUP and Paddleboard event organizer and the concepts and procedures set out may be expanded and customized to meet your local situation. It is not intended to be the final word on SUP and Paddleboard events, but will provide a framework to develop event protocols to meet the individual needs of officials and event managers. It has detailed risk management considerations that are essential for proper and responsible delivery of SUP and Paddleboard events.

The guide should be used in conjunction with the ISA Official Rulebook, which provides additional information. Additional event procedural guideline references can be made to other National Governing Bodies (NGBs) such as:

1. Spain- http://bit.ly/18Og9Pj
2. Australia- http://bit.ly/153SNQx
3. South Africa- http://www.supsa.org.za/
4. France- http://bit.ly/12iCHAx

I would like to acknowledge the important contribution to the content of this guide made by Barrett Tester and Marcos “Bukao” Esmanhoto.

Sincerely,

Alan Atkins
Vice President and Technical Committee Member
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1. Rules and Reminders for SUP Competitors

a. General Information for Participants
   i. Pay attention to Schedules and Start Times
   ii. Check the Official Beach Notice Boards often. Alterations to schedules and timing may be made by the Contest Director or Race Director
   iii. Flags – follow directions carefully. RED flags indicate FINISH line, GREEN flags indicate START line, YELLOW flags indicate course turning point.
   iv. Buoys – follow directions carefully. RED buoy to be kept on left shoulder / turn, WHITE buoy on right shoulder/ turn.
   v. It is the **SOLE RESPONSIBILITY** of the competitors to know the course details. At no time during a race may the competitor[s] rely on course directions from any contest official or water patrol.
   vi. CONTEST OFFICIALS AND WATER-PATROL are instructed NOT to give direction or guidance with respect to the course, under ANY circumstances.
   vii. Water starts and /or finishes MAY be used depending on the situation.

b. All results announced by Beach Announcers when events initially finish are “unofficial” and must be indicated as such when made. The “official confirmation of results” announcement will follow after a review of check sheets for accuracy.

c. All competition will be adjudicated under the clauses within the ISA Official Rulebook 2013 version, which is available to all competitors.

d. Protests and videos: non-official videos cannot be used as evidence in protest situations. Official protests must be in writing and on an official form and submitted by the affected party or representative within 15 minutes of the conclusion of a race competitor crossing the finish line.

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e. FINAL DAY PROGRAM - Please note that there may be a number of events on the final days including SUP Distance Races plus Relays and Point-to-Point racing events
f. Beach Announcers – will be primarily required to provide information to competitors

2. SUP Surfing

a. Horns and timing disks will be used as per normal surfing event rules [see ISA Rulebook]
b. The rules about water and beach starts should be placed in writing with the Beach Marshall for required viewing for all competitors. Contest Director may choose starting method.
c. Paddling interference rules – refer also to ISA Rulebook for "Tactical Paddling Interference" rules and buffer zone rules, if applicable.
d. Contest Vests – colors: red, white, yellow and blue [for surfing]. Competitors must personally collect their contest vests, place them on in the presence of the BM and only remove them when they are back with the BM after their heat. It is an important media matter, and penalties apply if this protocol is not followed.
e. The specific SUP surfing judging criteria is set out in the ISA Rulebook.

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3. SUP Racing, Team Relay & Paddleboard

a. Starting – A critical time/area for potential penalty. Athletes must work to have an even start at the direction of the Beachmaster (BM). In the case of **False Starts** – With the first false start, the field will be brought back. A second false start results in the actual breaking racer's disqualification.
b. No individual athlete support boats are to follow the field during racing.
c. If a racer enters two divisions, no special consideration in the scheduling will be made.
d. Safety "Sign-Out" System for racing divisions to be used. [See Figure 1]

Fig. 1: Example of entry documentation provided to competitors in SUP Racing Events

		Signature	Signature		
#	Name	Check-In	Check-Out	Placing	Time

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e. Timing System: May be chip timing or manual timing and may time just the winners or all of the participants. Chip timing using bracelets is typically used in triathlons and is applicable.
f. 5-Stroke rule & knee paddling are applied to racing events [see ISA Rulebook]
g. Paddling interference rules – unsportsmanlike conduct in racing situations results in disqualification [i.e. intentional physical contact to interfere with an opponent's free passage or drafting].
h. Team Relay and Individual SUP and PB events: Finishes & Finish Line protocol – leave board at waterline, MAKE CORRECT TURN AROUND BEACH FLAG OR BEACH MARKER, finish with paddle in hand (SUP), body finish (paddleboard). Front of chest is the deciding point for selecting the winner.
i. Board handlers – teams are allowed (1) board handler to retrieve boards at the finish. They must follow the Beachmaster's instructions in the transition/finish area to avoid interference with another competitor. A board handler is regarded as an extension of the board's owner and may incur an interference on behalf of the competitor.
j. Relays – The team must follow rules on exchanges. The actual tag of each teammate must occur whilst the next starter is still behind the start line or marker. In relay transitions, the board may be left at the waters edge and repositioned by a board handler.

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k. Hydration & Nutrition – the racer is personally responsible unless informed to the contrary by the Race Director, especially in a Distance Paddle Race. Please prepare accordingly. ISA recommends notification to competitors in advance of the actual "hydration/ nutrition" situation so that they have the opportunity to plan their race strategy and supplies.
l. Bib #'s – in all events, racers should wear a provided bib # on the chest. It must be fastened with (4) safety pins and clearly visible. Racers without bib #'s will be disqualified. The alternative or additional option is to provide permanent marker race numbers on both shoulders [and calves if necessary] of each racer so as to be recognized by officials.
m. Footwear should be considered if transition areas are uneven [the option should be available].
n. Team Relay heat entries may be taken on the morning of the event [details in the Daily Event Newsletter] and at a designated check-in time before the final. All team members must be part of the

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registered team, however, the athletes may be changed between heat and final.

o. Leashes are recommended for all racers (mandatory for risk management reasons in the Distance Race and at the Race Director's discretion in other races).
p. Accountability & Check-in: all racers must sign-in before each race and sign out at the completion of the race on the official form provided.
q. Warm-ups are not allowed on the main course during heats/racing.
r. Distance Race "sweep rule" – race management will "sweep" the course of remaining racers 2 hours after the time of the first finisher. Racers must oblige and board the trailing vessel(s). The Race Director may vary this time limit. If the race is part of a team event, then the racers "swept from the field" will all be credited with equal points and equal place.
s. Distance Race Course – may change due to conditions of the day and is finally decided on by the Race Director [see Course Selection Considerations at point 7 below].

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t. In the early stages of developing SUP events, it would be best to include both 14' and 12'6" classes of boards in the program. This can most easily be done in the Technical Race by using an "open" field and letting all racers compete together but using separate number series to then determine the winners, or otherwise by running heats and finals. In the Distance Race a "centurion start" can separate the classes [i.e. groups start 30 seconds apart].

4. Racing Course

Fig. 2: Example of SUP Technical & Paddleboard Course

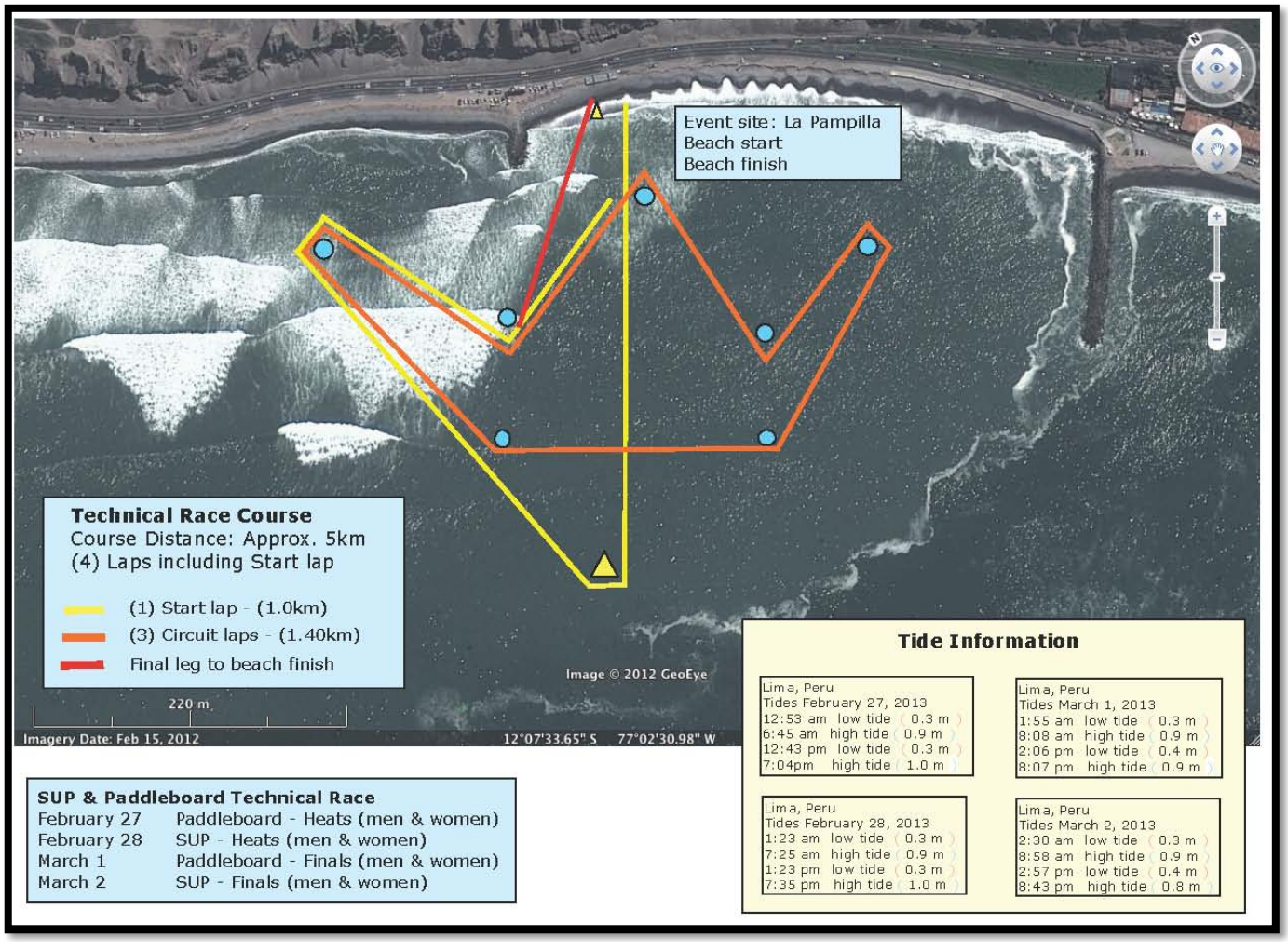

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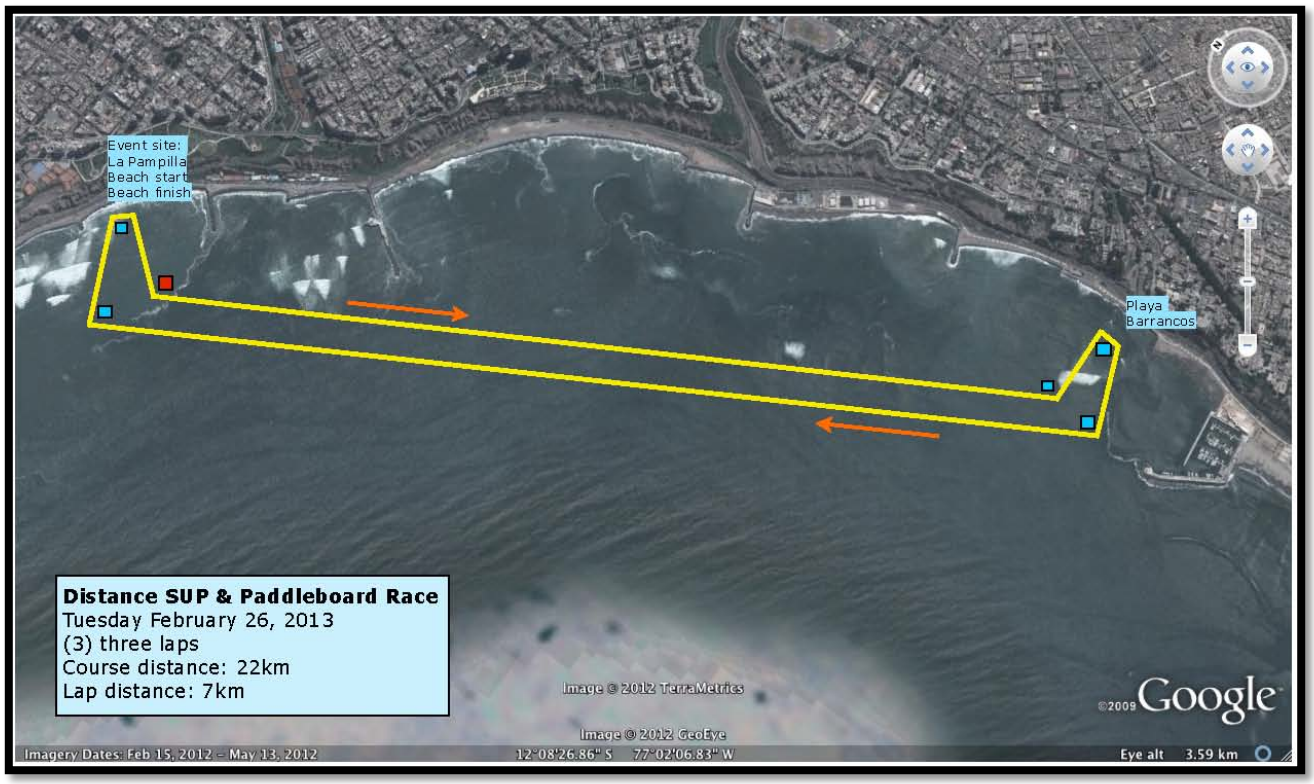
Fig. 3: Examples of SUP Distance Course



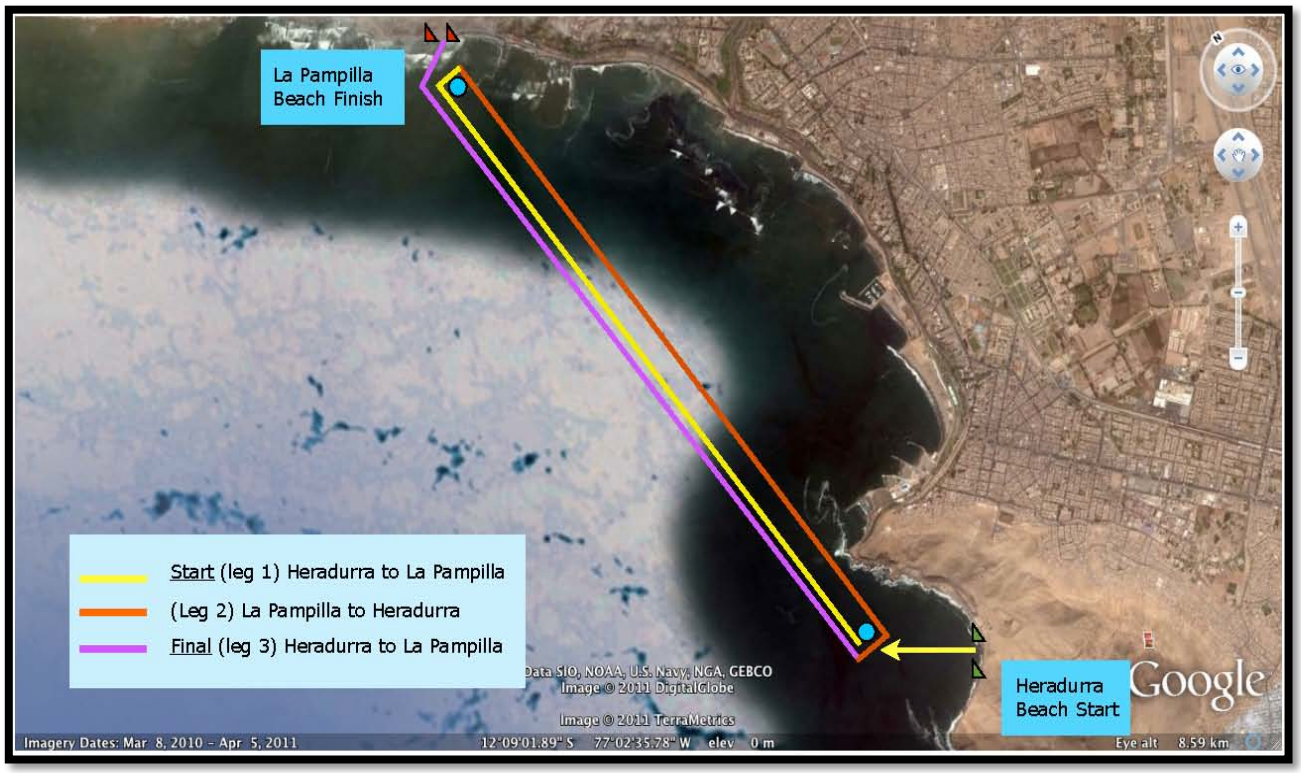


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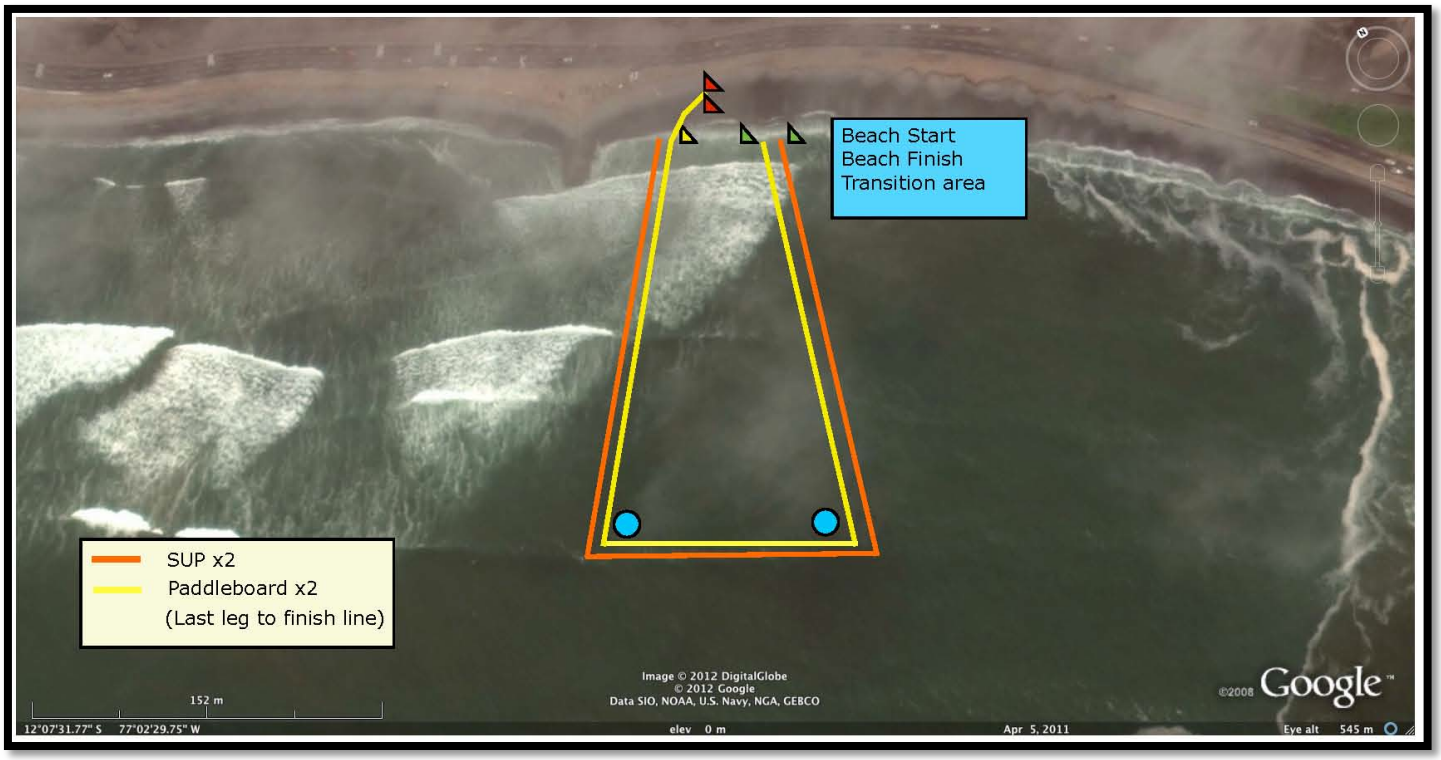
Fig. 4: Example of Team Relay Course



5. Course Design / Selection Considerations

a. Visibility: From a safety perspective the course should be divided into risk management sections that have individually allocated safety personnel. Where a course is designed with three or four laps of a parallel course between two buoys, then the course may be divided up into zones and positioning the main large, safety boat in the middle, with one zodiac on either end. The jet skis can also be divided up into zone coverage. Good visibility is essential for each of these management sections at a minimum. From a public perspective, land-based viewing will provide the biggest audience over the course. Event media need progressive results, which can come from craft placed in parts of the course or from the land or following the craft. In any case, visibility for identification of racers is essential.

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b. Ability to extract a racer in an emergency should be planned for. Time needed to reach emergency assistance must be calculated and considered in setting the course.
c. Clear visibility from the start line to the first-turn buoy and likewise from the last-turn buoy before approaching the beach to the beach-turning flag and finish line is essential for safety and management.
d. The course must be designed to ensure that the racing skills required actually match the skills of your entrants. Buoys should be placed in positions that do not endanger the racers via incoming racers approaching the turn buoy potentially crashing into racers who have slowed to turn or by having extensive course legs across the surf line more parallel to the wave faces rather than a more direct route out to a turn buoy.
e. A four-leg course will allow a start and finish from the same point. A three-leg course can start at a remote point and go to the event site, return to the start vicinity, then back to the event site to finish. If the course legs are virtually parallel or triangle, the racers are more easily monitored by event staff. A “point to point” race will require virtually parallel or a triangle, the racers are more easily monitored by event staff. A “point to point” race will require the safety staff to accompany the field and spread out as the field extends over distance.
f. An important feature, especially of the Distance Race, is to have dependable communication with land HQ to inform the water patrol how many racers are left in the water [i.e. not yet over the finish line] and what their race numbers are. 100% monitoring is followed until all racers leave the water.
g. Geography of the finishing area sometimes provides difficult features for the athletes to manage, especially where the Technical Race demands surf elements. It is possible to use synthetic carpets, astroturf or mats in the case of uneven surfaces and stones, etc on the beach where people are running.

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6. Safety Team

a. Jet Ski Operators and Procedures: Should be specialized paramedics with sled attached to all PWCs.
b. Zodiacs and Coast Guard Boat, as needed, especially as a major trailing safety boat. Oxygen [and defibrillator if possible] should be available on the water for immediate response to athletes.
c. Lifeguards at Contest Site should always be ready to enter the water.
d. Medical Tent at Contest Site to be well sign-posted. Defibrillator and oxygen facility should be available with qualified operator, especially where distance races are to be conducted.
e. Ambulance located at Contest Site.

7. Start / Race / Finish Protocols

START PROTOCOL:

a. BM will call racers to the line, which is designated by two green flags, one situated at each end. If racers have a seeding then the BM can ask them to come to the line by seed number and take their personally chosen place starting with the highest seed. BM will direct racers into line and immediately start the race.
b. Alternatively a ballot can be taken using numbered marbles to decide priority of line selection.
c. Adequate distance between flags must be provided for starter numbers to provide a safe entry to the water and forward progress if there is a surf situation.
d. Where a start location does not have visibility to the first major course buoy or finish point, it may be advisable to set a "turning buoy" directly out from the start line at a point where such visibility exists. This will keep the racers together and generally in line. This racing formation is better for risk management purposes than a broad front of racers, which will spread the safety craft. [See Fig. 4]

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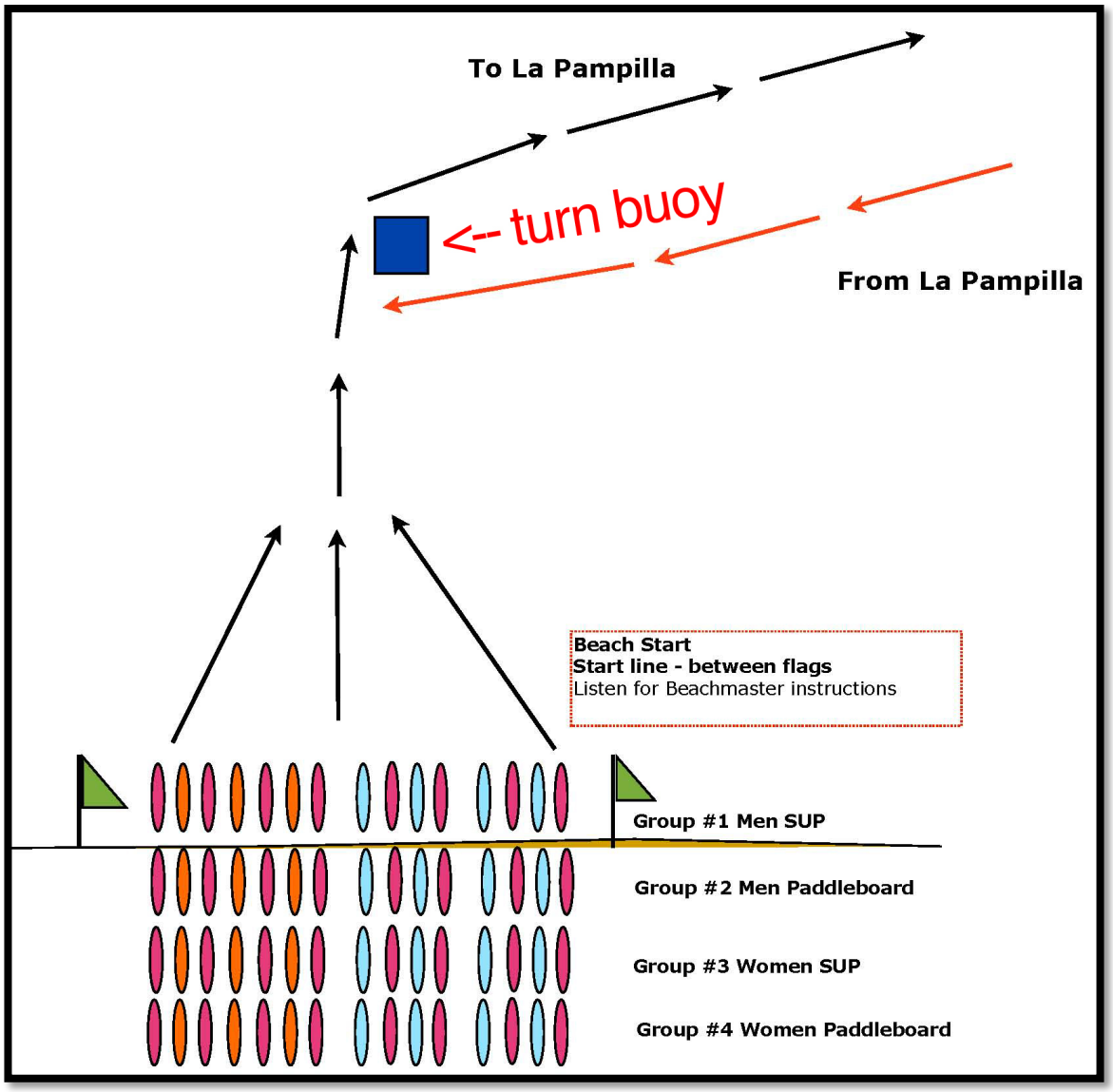
Fig. 5: Example of turning buoy



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DURING THE RACE:

e. The race official marshals will be placed at critical points, such as turning buoys, to ensure the course is followed. Racers' numbers will be taken for any course infractions and rule infringements allocated by the Race Director at the immediate conclusion of the race. [DSQ for course infractions and time penalties for rule infractions.] Wax [grease] pencils can be used on SUPs in the water by race marshals if necessary [note race numbers on board and transfer to forms after the race when returned to the beach]. Course officials positioned along the route should understand rescue protocols and have the ability to call in water patrol [signal, radio, flag] in the case of a serious injury where the racer affected cannot call for assistance for him or herself.
f. Rescue and distress signal diagrams / description should be part of the race briefing and be provided in all competitor packs.
g. Safety craft are an important part of race management. Their positioning is dependent on the type of race, number of racers and the number and type of craft at your command. [See Fig. 5 & 6]. An important issue is the ability of safety craft to sweep the field in an emergency and their ability to remove racers from the water. Safety craft should always be aware of the effect their wake may have on competitors and move at the slowest possible speed whilst keeping well clear.

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Fig.6: Example of SUP & Paddleboard Marathon Race Safety Fleet Plan

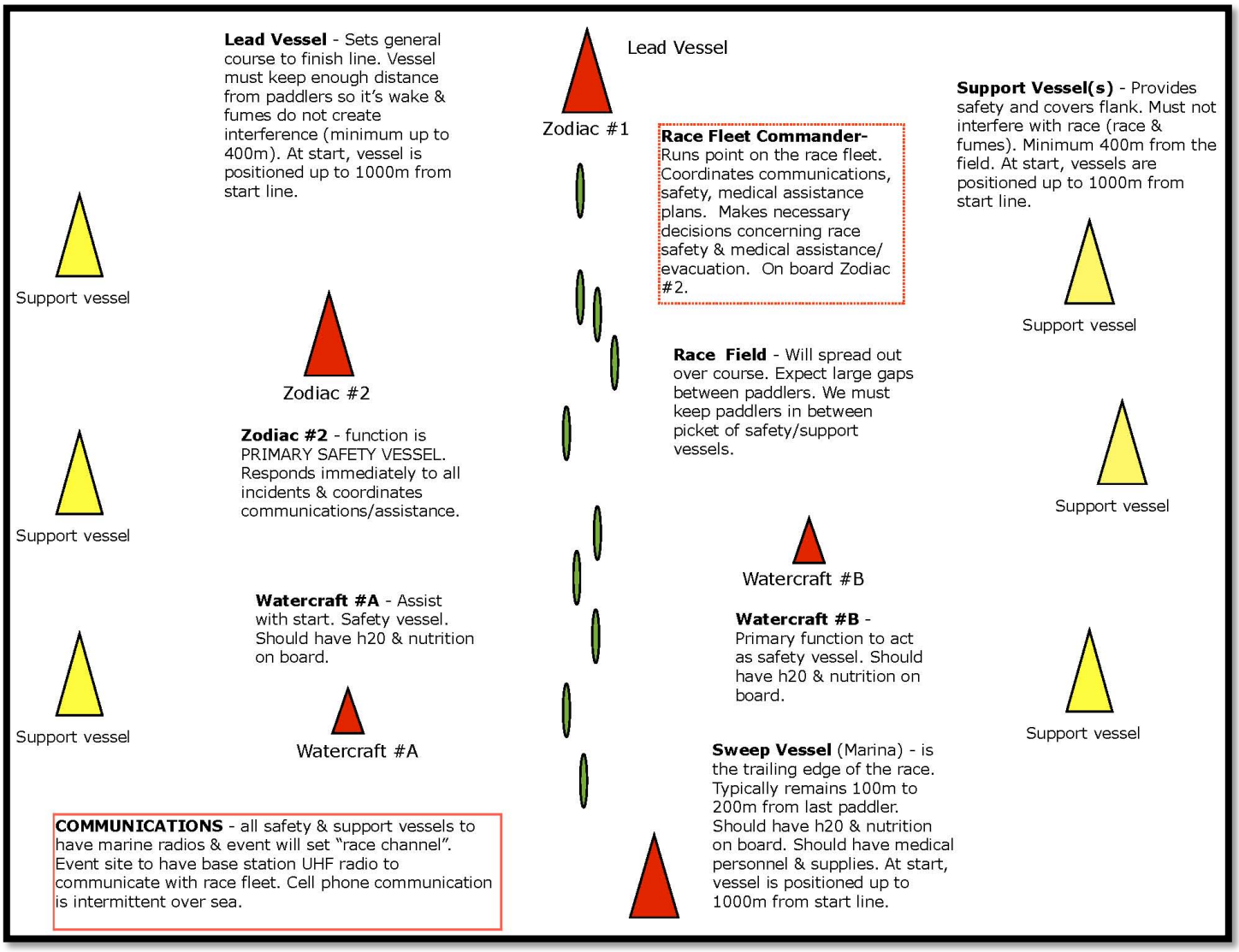

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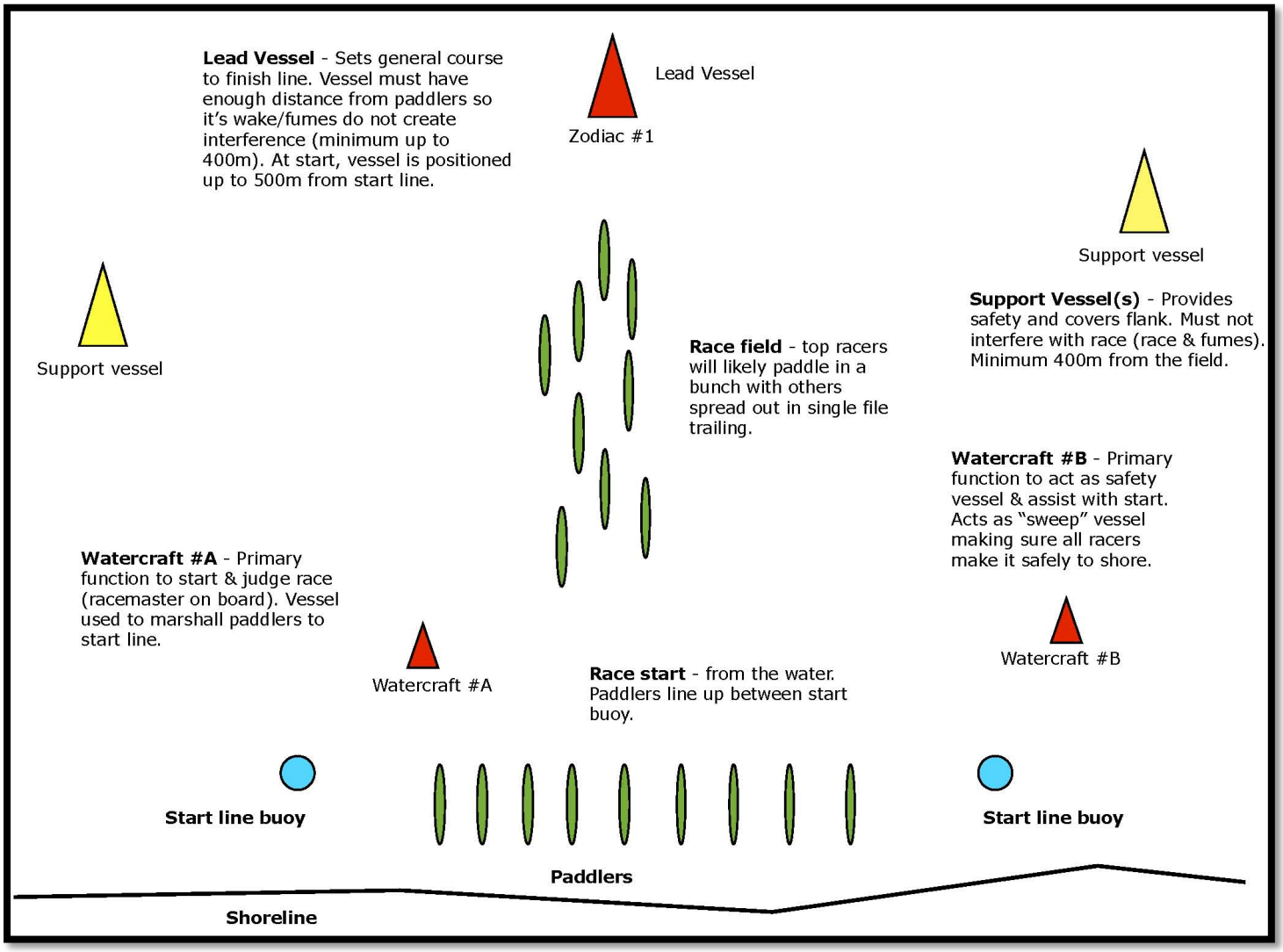
Fig.7: Example of SUP & Paddleboard Race Safety Fleet Plan



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h. 5-Stroke rule & knee paddling is allowable in safety situations and after a racer falls from the board. No penalty will apply if the racer regains his/her feet immediately after 5 strokes. The five strokes allowed are guide strokes to regain composure and position to allow the paddler to stand again and proceed with the race.

FINISH PROTOCOL:

i. The finish location needs to be reviewed for risk management purposes and also for clarity and simplicity for competitors. Remember that even the elite racers will be fatigued at the end of a race and confusion may occur. A good option is to set a turning buoy within a reasonable distance offshore but directly adjacent to a turning flag on the beach, which then sets up a straight run to the finish line [See Fig. 7]. So the scenario is: racers round the buoy, which tends to line them up and prevent a "broad front" approaching the finish line. They then discard their craft and run for the beach-turning flag [yellow], round the yellow flag, which again sorts them into a single file and then they go straight to the finish line.

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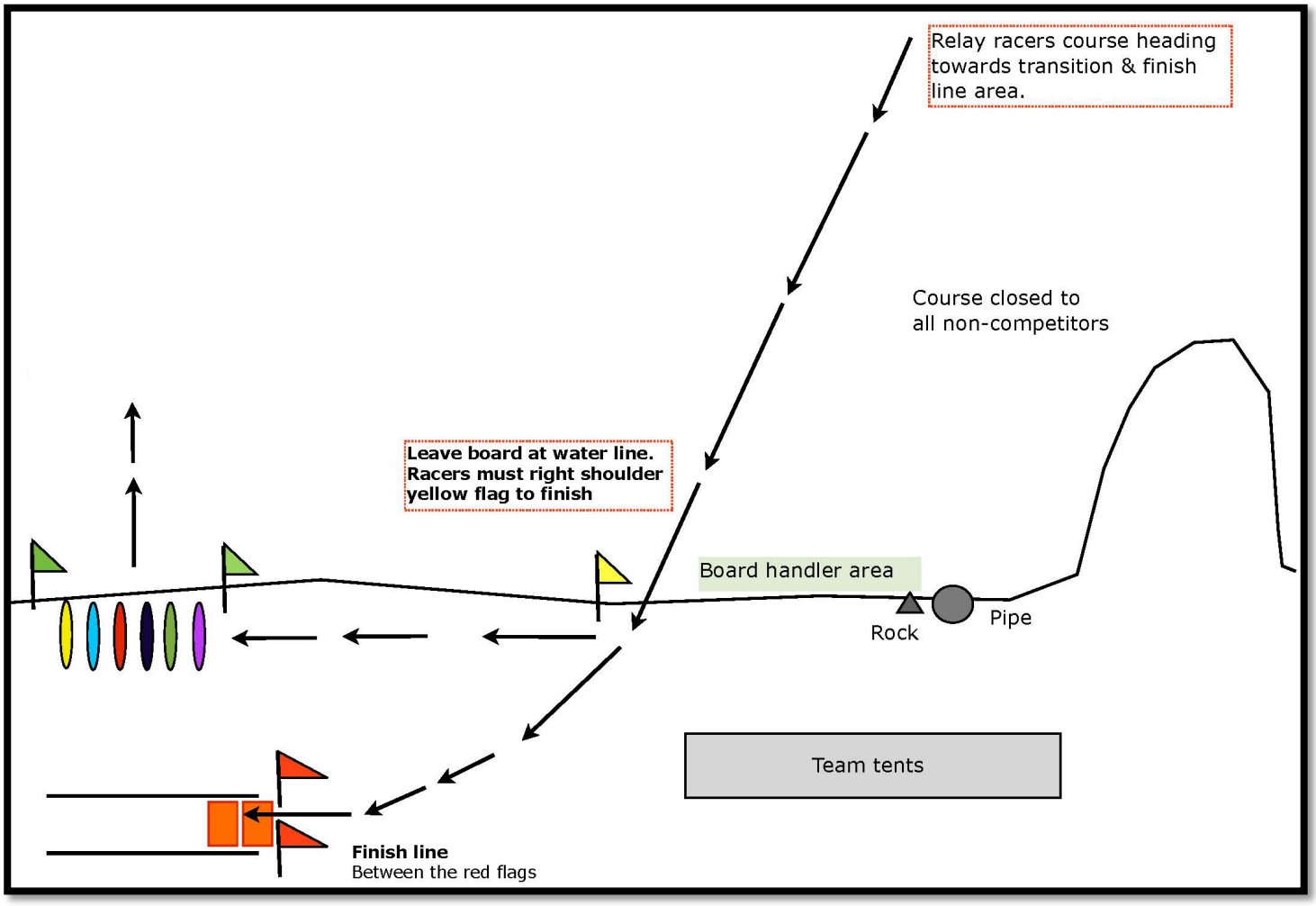
Fig. 8: Example of finish protocol



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j. The finish line area should be constructed as a chute, which will bring the racers into a line after they cross the finish. Red flags indicate each end of the finish line. If timing mats are used, they are placed immediately inside the finish line and must cover the whole length of the line. If guide timing is to be provided, two officials need to work: 1.) as the timer/ number caller and 2.) as the scribe. It is advisable to have both systems working in case the electronic timing fails. A method to accurately access the start time for finishing officials is essential [this may be by radio contact with the Beachmaster at start time]. There also needs to be a sufficient number of officials/security at the entry point to the finishing chute 1.) to keep spectators clear of the course/finish line and obstructing competitors as they approach the chute and 2.) to keep spectators/friends/family members from entering the chute behind a finishing competitor and obstructing or interfering with race competitors and officials.

k. The sign-on / sign-off process is essential to ensure all competitors are accounted for. Sign-on acknowledges holding the correct number, understanding the waiver conditions and the race briefing details, whereas sign-off indicates race completion and checkout without issues. The form can be transferred from the start line to the finish line and have all individual details on the one line for easy checking [See Attachment 1].

8. Staffing

a. When conducting events that contain both surf and race events, traditional judging staff may be used as officials for all racing activities.

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