

## Aquatic Leisure Centres – Usage Policy

**Date** 22 August 2019

**Council Resolution Date** 24 August 2020

**Clause Number** CCL20/133

**Responsible Position** Aquatic Leisure Centre Manager

**Branch** Recreation and Open Space

**Division** Liveability

**Version** 2

**TRIM Reference Number** ED20/171545

**Review Period** Annually

**Review Date** 9 July 2021

**Consultation**

Document Revision History	
Description	Date
Version 1	22 August 2019
Version 2	9 July 2020
<b>Notes</b>	

## **POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

The objective of this policy is to determine a set level of hierarchy of access to the Dubbo Regional Council Aquatic Leisure Centres for all users, and to protect the integrity of the 'aquatic industry business' that is being conducted by Dubbo Regional Council at their Aquatic Leisure Centres.

### **BACKGROUND AND RELATED LEGISLATION**

The Aquatic Leisure Centres were developed primarily as community recreational facilities as such facilities must be available for community recreational use during most operational hours.

When considering requests for lane hire for regular structured activities, consideration must be given to ensure space is available for the community recreation during peak times (morning and evening) and during extreme hot weather events.

However whilst community consideration remain foremost when considering lane hire requests, business considerations, (including large events which have the capacity to bring significant economic benefit to the region) may see community access being limited for a specific period of time (for example during a swimming carnival event), with appropriate notification.

Access to all patrons can be restricted due to safety concerns with no notification, against industry peak body, legislative or Work Health and Safety consideration.

### **SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to all users of the Dubbo Aquatic Leisure Centre, Wellington Aquatic Leisure Centre and Geurie Swimming Pool.

### **POLICY**

Pool space will be available for community use during all facility operating hours, except when an approved event is occurring in which instance access for community may be altered for a specific period of time. In general, a minimum of 3 lanes in the 50m pools will be available for community use (which may include Learn to Swim classes) at all times during operational hours, and specifically during peak times. Other facilities will be available during operating hours in accordance with operational requirement, patron demand or as previously advertised (ie waterslide access)

Lane allocations will be based on the Category Hierarchy outlined below.

Special events deemed to provide significant regional economic benefits may be approved upon individual application, and in this instance the community will be given no less than 7 days' notice of reduced access, which may include no general public access when safety is compromised.

### **Aquatic Centre User Categories**

All users of Dubbo Regional Council Aquatic Leisure Centres will be grouped into the following categories:

- Category 1 - Community Use Including Dubbo Regional Council Learn-To-Swim Classes
- Category 2 – Council approved and Swimming NSW affiliated Swim Clubs and State Sporting Organisation Clubs with an aquatic component, currently these include
  - Dubbo Aquatic Leisure Centre (Dubbo City Swimtech Swimming Club; Orana Aquatic Swimming Club.)
  - Wellington Aquatic Leisure Centre - Wellington Amateur Swimming Club,
  - Dubbo Water Polo Club
  - Dubbo Triathlon Club
- Category 3 - Other Community/Sporting Groups, schools and special needs groups requiring a regular, recurring booking, or a one off booking for a carnival or special event (ie school rewards day).
- Category 4 – Private bookings for a ‘one off’ special event.

### **General Principles or Guidelines for Facility Use Allocation**

- All groups seeking to utilise an Aquatic Leisure Centre will be required to sign a written agreement and operate in accordance with Council’s Aquatic Leisure Centre User Agreement.
- The overall lane allocations provided in this policy will be reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the ongoing demand and utilisation at the Aquatic Leisure Centres, in accordance with strategic direction.
- Where available lane hire cannot accommodate the requests of the two swimming clubs and where competition for morning or afternoon lane hire allocation exists between the two swimming clubs, preference of allocations will be based on
  - Mutual agreement after appropriate negotiation, or
  - The number of registered Swimming NSW member and applied as a ratio to lane hire allocations available.
- Council staff may reduce lane allocations to any Category 2, 3 or 4 group in favour of community users at the discretion of the Aquatic Leisure Centres Manager or designated staff member in charge of the individual facility at the time. Such a decision is to be made on the basis of meeting the needs of the greatest number of users of the Centre, and prevailing circumstances could include, but not be limited to:
  - Days of extreme hot weather where there is extensive use of facilities by the general community in the afternoons and additional public lanes should be provided for the community rather than for organised swimming activities.
  - Days where the number of swimmers in attendance with an organised group is low and there is a large demand for community swimming, and a reallocation of lanes will result in a safer allocation of lanes amongst all swimmers
- Such changes to lane hire allocations will be discussed with the user groups involved, and as much notice provided of these changes as possible.

- Community Sporting clubs including water polo and triathlon require specific access to conduct competitions. In such instances special access conditions may be negotiated to facilitate these competitions. For example Water Polo requires approximately 60% of the 50m pool, across all lanes, however public access can still be maintained for free swimming at this time by using the shallow end of the pool at this time. Triathlon events include considerations related to running and cycle legs and access to Victoria Park, , in this instance special consideration may be given to conducting an event outside regular hours to reduce risks for participants and for other patrons.
- Groups of swimmers who give the appearance of 'regular' and planned attendance (even if as a social group) will be encouraged to seek lane access as a Category 3 group to ensure they can secure dedicated lane space without impacting upon, or competing with, general Aquatic Centre users for lane access.
- For major events such as swimming carnivals Aquatic Leisure Centre management have the authority to restrict community access for a period of time (ie during the event) based on a risk assessment. At such times a minimum of 7 days' notice will be given to inform the community of reduced access conditions.
- To maintain the business integrity of Council run programs (including Learn to Swim), private coaching will only be considered and approved when
  - Participants are ranked above Dubbo Regional Council Learn to Swim program level;
  - Dubbo Regional Council cannot provide a program service due to lack of appropriate coaching qualifications (ie Disability Learn to Swim, Adult Learn to Swim) or lack of available staff. This consideration will be given on a case by case basis upon application.
  - The 'club level' swimmers benchmark is set as 'individuals engaged in club based activities must be able to swim a minimum 50m freestyle with a consistent, continuous and fluent technique and unaided'. Special consideration may be given to a swimmer who would be significantly disadvantaged by this rule due to family constraints (ie travelling with siblings to club training) would not be able to access a Learn to Swim program. This consideration must be applied for in writing and will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Any other request submitted in writing (and not covered in this policy) to be considered by the Aquatic Leisure Centres Manager and a recommendation provided to the Manager Recreation and Open Spaces for final approval.

## Hierarchy of Access

The priority order for access to pool space is:

### Category 1

1. Community members – recreational or lap swimming, leisure, non-structured exercise (minimum of 3 lanes available at peak times or 4 lanes available at non peak times)
2. Dubbo Regional Council run programs including
  - a. Learn to Swim
  - b. Transition (or mini squad) programs
  - c. Aqua Aerobics

- d. Any other program as developed by facility staff and approved by Dubbo Regional Council

#### Category 2

1. Sporting Clubs with an Aquatic component approved by Council and registered with a State Sporting Organisation.

#### Category 3

1. Community user groups requiring access to water space to run programs that provide a significant community contribution for inclusive access for disadvantaged groups. This group includes schools requiring access for carnivals, learn to swim, sport or PE;
2. Events sanctioned by Swimming NSW or other State bodies (Waterpolo etc.) for the purpose of conducting a Country, Regional or State Event

#### Category 4

1. Registered swim club - swimming out of other aquatic facilities in the region without a 50m pool, or with limited access to a 50m pool due to, for example to reconstruction/repairs. Limited access available for the purpose of athlete competition development or refinement of specific skill sets.
2. 'One off' bookings for an individual or specific purpose group. This could include a Private Coach bringing a group to the facility. Recommended 'access' – no more than 4 lanes and no more than 4 times per year and subject to availability, never in peak times.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibility for enacting this Policy will lie with the Aquatic Leisure Centres Manager.