Samoa Aquatics Strategic Plan

2025 - 2030

SAMOA AQUATICS

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Introduction

Samoa Aquatics (SA) is the governing body for aquatic sports in Samoa, working under the auspices of Oceania Aquatics (OA) and World Aquatics (WA). As a National Federation member of the Samoa Amateur Sports National Olympic Committee (SASNOC), SA is committed to developing and promoting swimming at all levels nationwide. This strategic plan outlines the vision, goals, and actions required to grow the sport of swimming over the next five years, as it is the fundamental component in developing the other aquatic disciplines in Samoa.

This plan focuses on expanding participation, improving water safety, supporting athlete development, and strengthening organisational capacity. By enhancing media and communication efforts, SA aims to raise the profile of swimming in Samoa, attract new participants, and secure necessary funding for sustainable growth.

Given the nation's strong connection to the ocean and water-based activities, ensuring every Samoan has access to quality swimming education and safety programmes is a priority. This strategic plan will focus on the following key areas:

1. **Expanding Participation**: Introduce programmes in schools and communities to increase engagement in swimming at all levels, from grassroots to competitive.
2. **Water Safety and Education**: Enhancing water safety through education and training will ensure that all Samoans have the skills to swim and stay safe in aquatic environments.
3. **Athlete Development, Coaching, and Technical Officiating: Creating structured pathways for athletes to progress from beginner to elite levels, supporting overseas-based swimmers, and improving performance in regional and international competitions. This process is also designed to include coaches and TOs on a development pathway**.
4. **Building Organisational Capacity**: Strengthening Samoa Aquatics' administrative and operational capacity will ensure effective management, sustainability, and growth of swimming programmes.
5. **Media and Communication**: Raising the visibility of swimming in Samoa by improving media engagement and building partnerships with local media outlets to promote the sport and its athletes.

Through this plan, Samoa Aquatics aims to build a strong, vibrant, and sustainable swimming community that empowers individuals, improves public safety, and achieves success on the global stage. By focusing on these areas, we are committed to creating a pathway for all Samoans to become water-safe and competent swimmers while fostering the development of elite athletes who can compete regionally and internationally.

Vision Statement

To inspire and cultivate swimming literacy for every person in Samoa and provide the opportunity for international excellence in swimming.

Mission Statement

To promote and provide swimming literacy programmes that are accessible for all Samoans and to nurture young talent and athletes for regional and international excellence.

Main Objectives and Details

Objective 1: Develop a Comprehensive Primary School Swim Programme

Key Objective:

To implement a sustainable primary school swim programme that builds foundational swimming skills and promotes water safety awareness.

Description:

Water safety and swimming skills are essential for every individual, especially in an island nation like Samoa, where water-related activities are integral to daily life. Despite the high exposure to water, a significant portion of the population lacks basic swimming proficiency, increasing the risk of drowning and water-related accidents.

Currently, Samoa faces challenges related to water safety, with many children and adults unable to swim competently. This lack of swimming ability poses safety risks and limits opportunities for personal development, health benefits, and competitive potential in aquatic sports.

Introducing a primary school swim programme is critical in addressing these issues. By teaching foundational swimming skills early in life, the programme ensures that all students gain essential water competency, fosters personal safety, and promotes a culture of swimming throughout the nation. Early swimming education also has the potential to improve overall public health, encourage physical activity, and increase water confidence from a young age.

Implementing this programme in schools will also provide a foundation for future competitive swimmers, ensuring Samoa develops a sustainable talent pipeline for regional and international competitions. Moreover, by integrating water safety lessons into the curriculum, the programme will significantly reduce the risk of drowning, which remains a leading cause of accidental deaths in the country.

Ultimately, achieving this objective will have long-term benefits for Samoa, enhancing both the health and safety of its citizens and creating opportunities for success in swimming at all levels.

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Tasks:

1. **Design and pilot a swimming curriculum**: Develop a standard primary school curriculum tailored to local needs.
2. **Collaborate with the Ministry of Education**: Integrate swimming lessons into school schedules.
3. **Organise transportation for schools**: Partner with providers to ensure safe and reliable transport to facilities.
4. **Onboard schools into the programme**: Introduce schools incrementally to scale up the programme.
5. **Establish swim clubs**: Create swim clubs to sustain participation and build community engagement.

Objective 2: Establish and Expand a National Water Safety Programme

Key Objective:

Enhance water safety through education, stakeholder collaboration, and the implementation of a lifeguard programme.

Description:

Water safety is a critical issue in Samoa, with a high rate of drowning incidents recorded each year. According to local statistics from the Samoa Ministry of Health, drowning is one of the leading causes of accidental death in the country, particularly affecting young children under the age of 15. Many drowning incidents occur in natural water bodies such as rivers, lakes, and coastal areas, where the risks are not immediately visible to the public. The Samoan National Water Safety Report (2023) indicates that most of these incidents occur in areas not monitored by lifeguards, which increases the likelihood of accidents.

In addition, the Pacific Islands Health Survey (2019) reports that only 30% of Samoans are proficient swimmers, leaving a large portion of the population at risk. The absence of formal water safety education and limited access to trained lifeguards further heighten these concerns.

Implementing a national water safety programme is essential to address these challenges. This programme will focus on educating the public, training lifeguards, and creating safety awareness in schools and communities. By establishing a Water Safety Council, identifying high-risk areas, and deploying trained lifeguards, Samoa Aquatics aims to reduce the drowning rate and promote safer swimming practices.

The programme's success will save lives and empower communities to take ownership of their safety while engaging in aquatic activities. Furthermore, integrating water safety lessons into school curricula ensures that water competency becomes a lifelong skill, helping children grow up with a solid understanding of how to stay safe around water.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Establish a National Water Safety Council by Year 2.
- Train and certify 20 lifeguards by Year 5.
- Deploy lifeguards to at least five key beaches or pools by Year 5.
- Train 50 water safety instructors by Year 5.
- Integrate water safety lessons into 50% of schools by Year 5.

Tasks:

1. **Create a National Water Safety Council**: Form a body to oversee water safety programmes and regulations.
2. **Identify high-risk areas for lifeguard deployment**: Assess and prioritise locations for lifeguards.
3. **Train and certify lifeguards**: Establish a programme to train and deploy qualified lifeguards.
4. **Introduce water safety lessons into schools**: Develop and integrate lesson plans into curricula.
5. **Build partnerships for water safety initiatives**: Collaborate with local organisations to expand water safety reach.

Objective 3: Develop Elite Athlete Pathways, Technical Officials, and Coaching

Key Objective: To develop pathways for athlete progression, support overseas-based swimmers, develop technical officials and coaches, and raise Samoa's performance in competitions.

This objective aims to elevate the overall standard of swimming in Samoa by creating structured pathways for athletes, providing support to overseas-based swimmers, and implementing strategies to enhance the skills of technical officials and coaches. This holistic approach will ensure that athletes, officials, and coaches have the opportunities and resources to excel at the elite level, contributing to a stronger, more competitive presence in regional and international swimming events.

Description:

Samoa has a small but dedicated pool of competitive swimmers, with many talented athletes currently based overseas or having limited access to world-class training facilities. However, there is a need to build a more structured and supportive pathway for athletes to progress from grassroots swimming to elite-level competitions. Without such pathways, there is a risk that talented swimmers may not reach their full potential or be able to compete internationally.

This objective is essential because it focuses on creating sustainable development pathways that support athletes, coaches and technical officials at every stage of their journey. By identifying and nurturing junior athletes, Samoa Aquatics can create future champions to elevate the nation's competitive standing in regional and international swimming events. Moreover, the same identification process can be used for TO and Coach development.

Further, many of Samoa's best swimmers are overseas, training in more advanced environments. Providing adequate support and ensuring their inclusion in international competitions is crucial for keeping these athletes connected to their roots and maintaining Samoa's presence in global swimming. Developing partnerships with regional training centres and opportunities for international competition is critical to ensuring that Samoa's athletes compete globally.

Additionally, by reintroducing local swim meets and events, Samoa can foster greater sports participation and offer a platform for young swimmers to test their abilities and progress. Coach development and Technical official development locally to qualify regionally will raise the standard of competition and build a stronger swimming culture within Samoa.

Achieving this objective will improve performances in regional competitions and potentially greater representation in major international events, such as the Pacific Games and the Olympic Games. It will also help establish Samoa as a competitive force in swimming, providing recognition and inspiring future generations of swimmers.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Establish structured pathways for 10 junior athletes by Year 5.
- Reintroduce local swim events by Year 3.
- Send four local athletes to regional competitions by Year 5.
- Achieve top-eight placements in three regional competitions by Year 5.

- Establish partnerships with two regional training centres by Year 5.
- Send at least 1 Technical official per year to a regional or international training or competition
- Send at least 1 coach per year to a regional or international training or competition

Tasks:

1. **Identify and develop junior athletes**: Create pathways to support athlete progression from grassroots to elite levels.
2. **Reintroduce local swim meets**: Organise events to rebuild participation and competition readiness.
3. **Support overseas-based athletes**: Facilitate access to competitions and coordinate representation.
4. **Establish partnerships with training centres**: Form agreements with regional facilities to enhance athlete development.
5. **Advocate for swimming infrastructure**: Push for the reopening and maintaining key facilities.

Objective 4: Enhance Media, Communication, and Organisational Capacity

Key Objective:

To promote Samoa Swimming through strategic media efforts while strengthening administration with appropriate human resource and financial support

Description:

Effective media and communication are essential to raising the profile of swimming in Samoa and beyond. Samoa Aquatics struggles to highlight its achievements and attract sponsors without a dedicated communications team, limiting growth and engagement.

Samoa Aquatics can increase awareness, inspire participation, and secure necessary funding by enhancing media strategies and partnerships with local media outlets. Social media, press releases, and public relations campaigns will be key in promoting the sport and its events.

Additionally, strengthening organisational capacity by appointing dedicated staff will improve administrative efficiency, event management, and financial planning, ensuring the sport's long-term sustainability.

Achieving this objective will boost visibility, attract new participants, and create a solid foundation for Samoa Aquatics to continue promoting swimming and supporting athletes.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Establish active social media platforms by Year 2.
- Publish six promotional campaigns annually by Year 5.
- Increase public engagement by 30% by Year 5.
- Partner with two media outlets by Year 3.
- Secure sponsorships to cover 50% of operational costs by Year 5.

Tasks:

1. **Use digital platforms for outreach**: Launch and maintain engaging social media campaigns.

2. **Build partnerships with local media outlets**: Collaborate to enhance visibility and coverage.
3. **Share achievements through media**: Highlight milestones, events, and athlete successes to the public.
4. **Engage volunteers for support**: Recruit and train volunteers to assist with communications and administrative tasks.
5. **Appoint a dedicated staff member**: Secure funding to hire a media or administrative professional.

Budget Summary

Implementing the Samoa Aquatics Strategic Plan (2025–2030) will require a total investment of **$40,000** over five years. The budget allocation for each objective is outlined below:

Objective	Annual Budget	Total Budget (5 Years)
Objective 1: Develop a Comprehensive Primary School Swim Programme	$2,500	$12,500
Objective 2: Establish and Expand a National Water Safety Programme	$2,000	$10,000
Objective 3: Develop Elite Athlete Pathways and Competitions	$2,500	$12,500
Objective 4: Enhance Media, Communication, and Organisational Capacity	$1,000	$5,000

Grand Total:

- **Annual Budget**: **$8,000**
- **Total Budget (5 Years)**: **$40,000**

Key Budget Priorities:

1. **Programme Development**: Allocating resources to establish sustainable swimming and water safety programmes for schools.
2. **Lifeguard Training**: Developing a robust framework to improve water safety in high-risk areas.
3. **Athlete Support**: Ensuring pathways for athlete progression and representation in international competitions.
4. **Media and Communications**: Enhancing visibility and operational capacity to promote swimming in Samoa.

The budget will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with strategic goals and financial sustainability.

Action Plan

Objective	Key Objective	Task	Action Step	Timeframe	Budget
Objective 1: Develop a Comprehensive Primary School Swim Programme	To implement a sustainable primary school swim programme that builds foundational swimming skills and promotes water safety awareness.	Task 1: Design and pilot a swimming curriculum	Develop a detailed curriculum that includes swimming techniques, water safety education, and physical fitness. Include both theoretical and practical sessions. Pilot the curriculum in selected schools, collect feedback from teachers and students, and refine the programme based on results.	By Year 1 Mid-Year 2	$1,000/year
		Task 2: Collaborate with the Ministry of Education	Meet with the Ministry of Education to gain approval and support for the programme. Coordinate with curriculum planners to ensure integration. Develop a training manual for teachers and instructors that outlines curriculum guidelines, safety protocols, and teaching strategies.	By mid-Year 2 By Year 3	$500/year
		Task 3: Organise transportation for schools	Identify and secure transportation providers who offer safe and affordable travel options for students. Establish partnerships with local businesses or organisations to subsidise transportation costs for schools in remote areas.	By Year 2 By Year 3	$500/year
		Task 4: Onboard two schools by Year 2, scaling to five schools by Year 5	Introduce the programme to selected schools and conduct an orientation session for staff, parents, and students. Expand the programme to additional schools, offering ongoing training and monitoring to ensure quality delivery.	Between Year 3 and Year 5 Between Year 3 and Year 5	$500/year
		Task 5: Establish swim clubs in participating schools	Set up after-school swim clubs in participating schools, providing access to training sessions and community events.	By Year 5	$500/year
Objective 2: Establish and Expand a National Water Safety Programme	To enhance water safety through education, stakeholder collaboration, and the implementation of a lifeguard programme.	Task 1: Create a National Water Safety Council	Establish the Water Safety Council to oversee water safety initiatives, coordinate efforts, and advise on policy development. Develop a framework for water safety education and training, ensuring it aligns with international standards and local needs.	By Year 2 By Year 3	$500/year $300/year
		Task 2: Identify high-risk areas for lifeguard deployment	Conduct a national assessment to identify and evaluate high-risk areas for water-related accidents. Prioritise areas and develop deployment plans, including lifeguard placement and training.	Mid-Year 2 By Year 3	$300/year
		Task 3: Train and certify lifeguards	Develop a lifeguard certification programme that includes training on CPR, rescue techniques, and water safety protocols. Deploy trained lifeguards to five high-priority beaches and swimming locations.	By Year 3 By Year 5	$1,000/year
		Task 4: Integrate water safety lessons into school curricula	Develop water safety lesson plans and educational materials for schools, incorporating practical skills and knowledge.	By Year 5	$300/year

		Task 5: Build partnerships for water safety initiatives	Collaborate with local organisations, government bodies, and international partners to expand water safety programmes and resources.	By Year 4	$200/year
Objective 3: Develop Elite Athlete Pathways and Competitions	To develop pathways for athlete progression, support overseas-based swimmers, and raise Samoa's performance in competitions.	Task 1: Identify and develop junior athletes	Develop selection criteria and establish regional talent identification events for junior athletes. Provide mentoring and coaching for identified athletes to develop technical and physical skills.	By Year 1 Ongoing, starting Year 2	$1,000/year
		Task 2: Reintroduce local swim meets	Organise bi-annual swim meets for different age groups to provide competition experience.	Starting Year 3	$500/year
		Task 3: Support overseas-based athletes	Coordinate logistics, including travel and accommodation, for overseas-based athletes to attend major competitions.	Annually, starting Year 1	$500/year
		Task 4: Establish partnerships with regional training centres	Establish partnerships with regional training centres to provide athletes with access to advanced training facilities.	By Year 5	$300/year
		Task 5: Advocate for reopening and maintenance of infrastructure	Work with local authorities to advocate for the reopening of swimming pools and the maintenance of training facilities.	Ongoing, 2025–2030	$200/year
Objective 4: Enhance Media, Communication, and Organisational Capacity	To promote Samoa Swimming through strategic media efforts while strengthening administration with appropriate human resources and financial sustainability.	Task 1: Use digital platforms for outreach	Create and launch a social media strategy to highlight athletes, events, and community involvement. Maintain regular updates and engage with the community on digital platforms. Ongoing content updates to build a larger following.	By Year 1 Ongoing, starting Year 1	$300/year
		Task 2: Build partnerships with local media outlets	Negotiate partnerships with local TV, radio, and print media to regularly feature swimming events and athlete achievements.	By Year 3	$200/year
		Task 3: Share achievements through media	Develop content highlighting successful competitions, swimmer progress, and water safety initiatives. Distribute press releases to media outlets every quarter, ensuring coverage of all major events and milestones.	Ongoing, quarterly updates Quarterly, starting Year 1	$200/year
		Task 4: Engage volunteers for media and admin tasks	Recruit and train volunteers to assist with media coverage, event management, and community outreach efforts.	By Year 2	$200/year
		Task 5: Appoint a dedicated staff member	Secure funding to hire a part-time or full-time me	By Year 3	$300/year