



6.3.09

We have heard from several athletes, coaches and parents of USA Swimming who have brought forth comments or questions about the amendment to Rule 102.9 regarding swimsuits. We are listening, and we recognize that this rule change and the timetable have created some unintended difficulties for some USA Swimming families. We also realize that many swimmers have made significant financial investments in new suits which have not been approved by FINA, on its [current list](#).

However, with the immediate impact of FINA's suit legislation affecting competition at the highest levels of our sport, and the focus USA Swimming places on maintaining an even playing field for all competitors, we felt it was vital that [our rules](#) remain in line with those of our international governing body.

We continue to await changes to the [FINA-approved list](#), as some swimsuits have been re-submitted for potential approval. FINA's intent is to release its final list of approved swimsuits for 2009 on June 19, and USA Swimming will adopt that list. FINA has indicated that these approvals will remain valid until December 31, 2009, with the next round of swimsuit evaluations to take place by January 1, 2010.

There are a number of suits, especially older models, which were not submitted to FINA for approval, and therefore do not appear on the FINA-approved list. This presents a practical problem in how to distinguish these suits from those that were rejected by FINA. We do not, and likely will not, have access to the list of suits that were actually rejected. For this reason, we have included exception criteria in the amendment, stating:

*Swimmers will, until otherwise directed by FINA, also be able to wear traditional swimsuits not on the FINA-approved list as long as the swimsuit meets the following criteria:*

- 1. For female swimmers, the swimsuit shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulders or past the pelvis, and*
- 2. For male swimmers, the swimsuit shall not extend above the navel or below the knees.*

The exception criterion is intended to provide an easy and clear-cut method of identifying acceptable suits that are not on the list.

We recognize that the FINA ruling and subsequent amendment to rule 102.9 are complicated matters, and ask for your patience as the international governing body for our sport (FINA) works to establish final guidelines for competition suits. For questions about specific suit models or manufacturers, you may consult the [FINA-approved list](#), or contact the suit manufacturer directly. For more information about FINA's rules and swimsuit evaluation process, please see the [Dubai Charter](#).