

Gippsland Swimming Inc.

Strategic Plan

2023-2028





Introduction

Gippsland Swimming Incorporated (GSI), also known as District 21, held its first Annual General Meeting in 1957 and the Association has been involved in the development of swimming for the people of Gippsland ever since. GSI strives to administer, promote and encourage learn to swim, water safety and competitive swimming.

The Incorporated Association is made up of seven swimming clubs across south eastern Victoria. GSI works as a team to provide professionally organised events throughout the year so swimmers of all ages have the opportunity to improve and compete in the sport. Additionally, the association supports local club meets with officials and the use of the Gippsland Swimming Trailer and equipment. GSI trains and qualifies officials across the district, enhancing and maintaining their level of skills and knowledge.

Making use of the best resources the state and district has to offer, GSI also provides an extensive Swimmer Development Program, which provides clubs opportunities to develop coaching and swimming skills. It has a proud record of achievement in Country Inter District Competition - having won the 8-11 Victorian Country Junior District Competition (formerly 7-10 Encouragement Meet) for several consecutive years.

As a District, GSI aims to provide an environment that will provide members with the ability to reach their goals. This includes working closely with Swimming Victoria to host Country Championships and other events and programs to develop the sport.

Currently there are seven Affiliated clubs in Gippsland District 21: East Gippsland Water Dragons, Moe, Morwell, Sale, South Gippsland Bass, Traralgon and Warragul. Each of these clubs are represented and have voting rights on the Gippsland Swimming Committee.

Acknowledgements

Gippsland Swimming Incorporated would like to acknowledge GippSport Community Solutions for coordinating this strategic planning process and members who have supported the project.

The committee also acknowledges the staff at Swimming Victoria, Gippsland Swimming Clubs and other important stakeholders for providing background information and support for this Strategic Planning project.



Gippsland Demographics

Gippsland is a rural region that makes up the southeastern part of Victoria. It covers an elongated area of 41,556 km² located further east of the Shire of Cardinia and is bounded to the north by the mountain ranges and plateaus/highlands of the High Country, to the southwest by the Western Port Bay, to the south and east by Bass Strait and the Tasman Sea, and to the east and northeast by the Black-Allan Line (the easternmost section of the Victoria/New South Wales state border). The Gippsland region is generally divided by the Strzelecki Ranges and tributaries of the Gippsland Lakes into five statistical sub-regions – namely West Gippsland, South Gippsland, Latrobe Valley, Central Gippsland and East Gippsland. There are six Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Gippsland.

The Estimated population of Gippsland in 2022 was 300,664, with the principal population centres of the region, in descending order of population, Traralgon, Warragul, Drouin, Bairnsdale, Moe, Sale, Morwell, Wonthaggi, Leongatha, and Phillip Island. Gippsland is best known for its primary production such as mining, power generation and farming as well as its tourist destinations – Phillip Island, Wilsons Promontory, the Gippsland Lakes, Walhalla, the Baw Baw Plateau, and the Strzelecki Ranges.

Gippsland population change from 2001 to 2021

Council area	2001 population	2021 population	Change	Percentage change
Bass Coast	23,971	40,789	16,818	70.16%
Baw Baw	34,632	57,626	22,994	66.40%
East Gippsland	37,792	48,715	10,923	28.90%
Latrobe	66,819	77,318	10,499	15.71%
South Gippsland	24,524	30,577	6,053	24.68%
Wellington	39,158	45,639	6,481	16.55%
Gippsland total	226,896	300,664	73,768	32.51%

Source: ABS census data, 2001 and 2021

There have been major aquatic redevelopment projects in recent years with a Regional Standard facility at Warragul (including a 50m outdoor pool), Gippsland Regional Aquatic Centre at Traralgon (50m indoor pool and other aquatic areas) and another redevelopment project is underway at Sale at Aqua Energy which will include the continued provision of the 50m outdoor pool and updated 25m indoor pool facilities and other aquatic areas. There are high quality 25m indoor aquatic facilities in Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, Morwell, Churchill and Leongatha. There are poor quality indoor facilities at Wonthaggi and several older outdoor pools throughout Gippsland that are also used to some capacity for swimming events or training.



Strategic Support

Swimming Victoria (SV) is the Peak Body for Swimming in Gippsland. Gippsland Swimming is affiliated as a District and is required to comply with SV's affiliation requirements.

SV Vision – Swimming 2028: Inspiring Victoria to swim will be delivered by living our values and working together as one swimming community



FUN SWIM

Swimming & Sport Participation Trends

Current sport participation trends that have informed this Strategic Plan include:

- Growth of social programs as well as new and exciting formats
- Member/parent expectations are higher than ever before
- Use of technology platforms (social media, registrations, competition management, etc.)
- Youth Drop Out is a challenge all sports are facing
- It is harder to retain and attract volunteers, officials and coaches
- Gender Equality is a priority of the Victorian Government
- Facility limitations or access to lane space can be a real challenge for swimming clubs who compete with Learn to Swim Programs
- Victoria has around 120 swimming clubs and more than 14,200 members which is a new record level
- Competition sizes have grown which makes them run for longer time periods which is not ideal
- A range of models for how swimming clubs and districts are run
- The SV re-affiliation process is setting a standard to clubs and districts
- Hawkeye Development to include online officiating options at larger meets
- SV Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategy launched
- Swimming is a lot for new parents/families to understand and is an expensive sport

OUR PRIORITIES



SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SWIMMING ENVIRONMENTS



QUALITY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOR ALL MEMBERS



STRONG AND COLLABORATIVE ORGANISATION

OUR ROLES



WE SUPPORT



WE INFORM



WE EDUCATE



WE UNITE

WE SUPPORT the development and continued delivery of enjoyable and engaging competitions for all swimmers and fans.

WE SUPPORT clubs and districts to **SUPPORT** them to achieve their goals and provide great service to their members.

WE INFORM swimmers and families to help them effectively navigate the sport at all levels of competition.

WE SUPPORT the **EDUCATION** for our coaches, technical officials, staff, volunteers and swimmers, so they can be their best.

WE UNITE the Swimming Community – including clubs and districts, members, families, coaches, volunteers, officials, facility owners, Swimming Australia and other partners.

OUR VALUES



COURAGE

We are bold, decisive and resilient. We are committed to having crucial conversations and acting in the best interests of members and the swimming community.



UNITY

We act with honesty, authenticity and integrity. We are proud and inclusive. We collaborate with purpose for the benefit of Swimming.

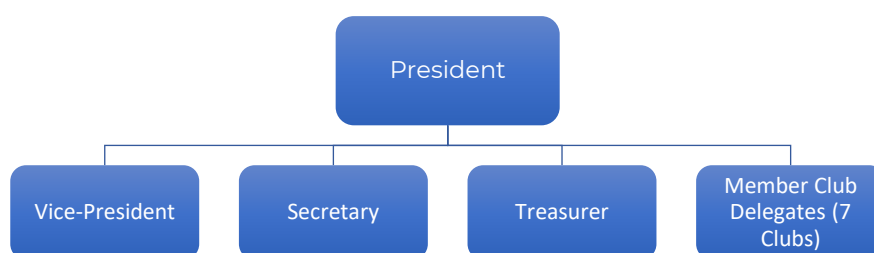


EXCELLENCE

We do what we say. We are professional and respectful in all we do. We fuel the passion for swimming.



Organisational Structure



Other Roles:

- Child Safe Officer
- Team Selection
- Fixtures
- Camp 21
- Records
- Announcing
- Communications/ Publicity
- District Referee
- Recording/ Entries Officer

Current Offerings

Gippsland Swimming is a very active District with a comprehensive range of meets across the annual fixture. GSI also supports the winter club meets by providing access to the GSI Club trailer and equipment and through the rostering of qualified technical officials.

Each year the highlight of the calendar is the Gippsland Championships, the hosting of which is rotated across Gippsland's 50m pools. Gippsland also has a proud history of hosting the Country Championship on behalf of SV and in 2024 will host the Long Course and Short Course Championships meets at the Gippsland Regional Aquatic Centre in Traralgon. Over the years, GSI has hosted junior development programs in the form of Camp 21 and the Gippsland Sports Academy talent program. Each year the association also sends teams to participate in the Inter-district competition.



2022-23 Participation Data

Attendance by meet:

Meet/Date	Venue/Host	Att.	Notes
Meet 1 9/10/22	Leongatha/SGB	184	SC
Meet 2 16/10/22	Morwell/MWL	189	SC Con Amalos
Meet 3 29/10/23	GRAC/TRL	303	LC
Meet 4 12/11/22	Warragul/WGL	266	LC
Meet 5 26/11/22	Sale/SLE	207	LC Tom Osborne
Meet 6 3/12/22	Sale/EGWD	167	LC Camp 21
Meet 7 7/01/23	GRAC/TRL	303	LC Camp 21
Meet 8 26/01/23	Moe/MOE	299	LC Don Coupe Memorial Sprint Meet Skins
Meet 9 04/02/23	Sale/SLE	134	LC Andy Barnes Memorial
Meet 10 11/02/23	Warragul/WGL	413	LC All Junior
Gippsland Champs 24-6/02/23	Sale/SLE-GSI	452	LC
Average Att.		265	

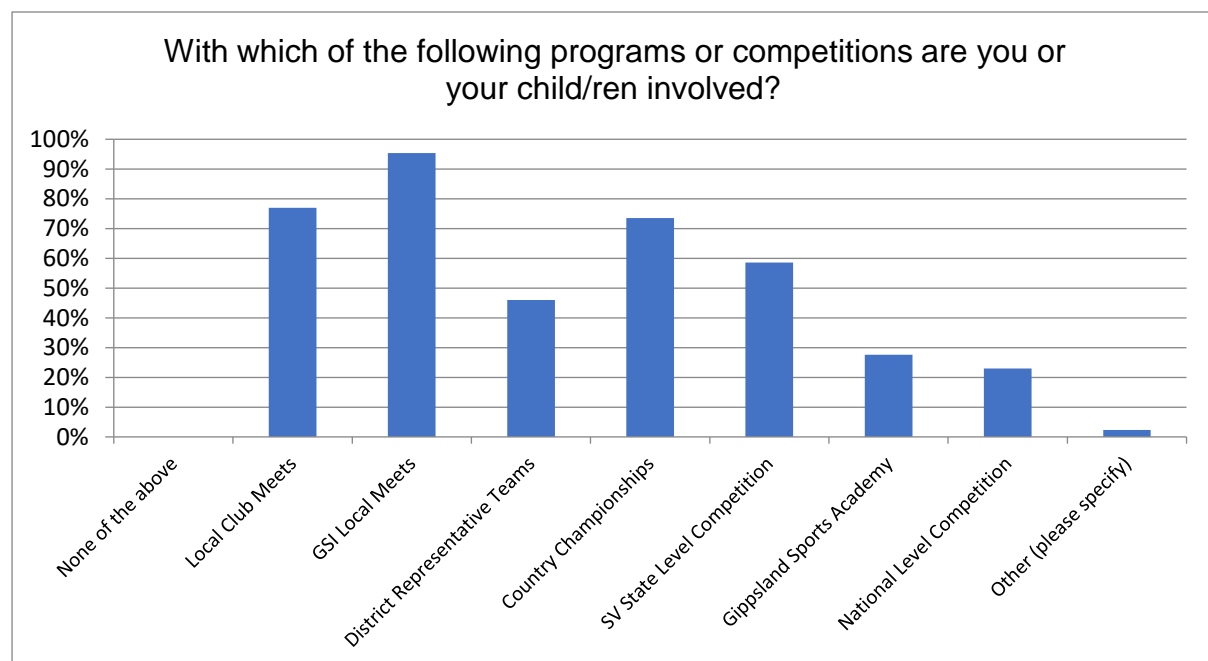
Attendance By Club/By Meet

MEET	EGWD	MOE	MWL	SLE	SGB	TRL	WGL
1 SGB	3	6	0	7	117	26	25
2 MWL	7	8	15	22	52	62	23
3 TRL	28	11	12	21	57	115	58
4 WGL	20	7	2	15	69	69	84
5 SLE	19	7	0	55	41	67	18
6 EGWD	27	3	3	49	33	33	19
7 TRL	29	10	5	28	69	105	57
8 MOE	6	27	4	16	21	24	18
9 SLE	20	0	1	51	6	37	19
10 WGL	27	13	12	62	97	110	92
Gippies	32	8	11	62	113	132	94
Average	20	9	6	35	61	70	46



Consultation

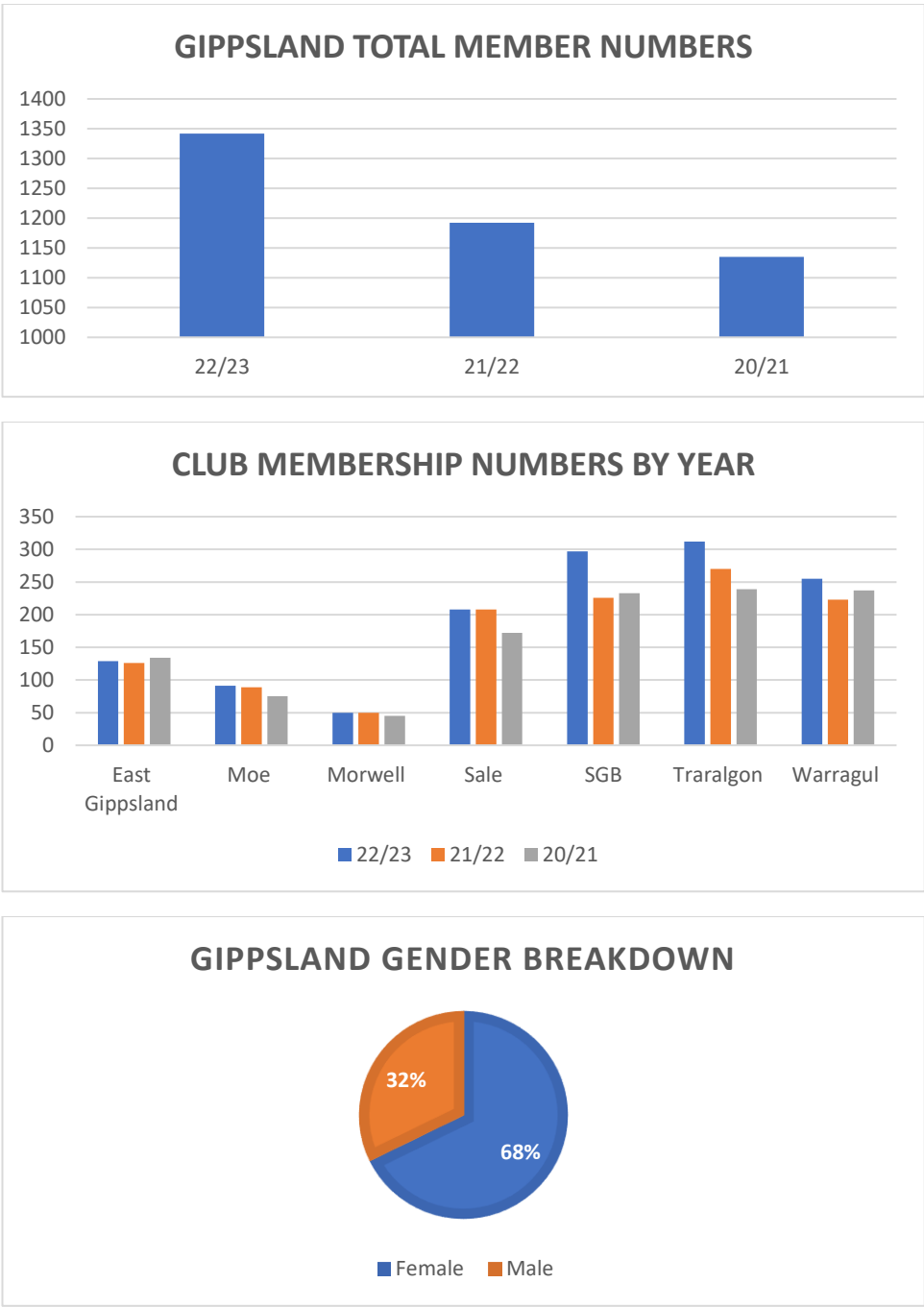
Surveys were undertaken of both clubs and the swimmers/ parents to inform this plan.





Club Membership Trends

Swimming Victoria has recently reached record total membership numbers and have provided the breakdown of membership data by club in Gippsland.





SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis was developed in consultation with the Gippsland Swimming committee after review of the survey results and stakeholder feedback.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment- Welcoming, family-friendly, inclusive, etc. • Access to high quality facilities • Gippsland Reputation, especially Technical officials • Experienced Executive Committee • Our role is quite large compared with other districts • Very successful and large clubs • Equipment Trailer - available for club use • Gender Equality throughout all levels of the sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Technical officials from all clubs • Youth dropout • Visibility of the sport across Gippsland • Traditional sport more broadly is changing • Reliance of clubs for communication and leadership • Policies/procedures/governance could be improved • Support for smaller clubs/ sharing of resources to ensure all remain strong
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth- particularly Bass Coast and Baw Baw Shire • Event capability- what new formats could be try • Further facility development • Sport participation has been increasing • Embrace Technology opportunities • Financial sustainability- sharing back to clubs where possible • Create new youth/ recreational/ open water swimming programs • Increase the amount of paid staff resource • Support to clubs- through governance training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSI Exec Succession Planning • Volunteer burn out/ volunteers no longer feeling supported or valued • Health of smaller local clubs • Facility access or cost changes • Lack of policy/documentation which may result in an issue, i.e. Child safe incident • Financial sustainability • Not enough officials to run events • Unprepared to take opportunities due to a limited volunteer base



Strategic Plan

Gippsland Swimming Purpose (Constitution): GSI is solely formed to promote and develop swimming

Gippsland Swimming Vision:

To create a welcoming and inclusive community that enhances a lifelong love of swimming

Gippsland Swimming Mission:

To provide events, programs and support to Gippsland clubs that allow the whole community to access and enjoy swimming in a safe and fun local competition environment

Gippsland Swimming Values:

The values important to Gippsland Swimming are:

- **Gippsland Proud** – being welcoming and inclusive of all people across Gippsland, we help those who need it to ensure there is an opportunity to swim right across our region and at all levels
- **Gratitude** – we value and recognise all the volunteers that ensure our sport and clubs thrive.
- **Positive Environment** – providing a fun, safe and friendly atmosphere where people can participate in a range of ways.
- **Partnership** – we work closely with all our partners, including Swimming Victoria, clubs, councils, facility managers and sponsors to run high quality programs and events.

Goals:

Gippsland Swimming will strive to:

- 1:** Raise the profile of swimming throughout Gippsland and ensure effective communication
- 2:** Facilitate a range of swimming competitions and programs across Gippsland so everyone has a chance to swim competitively
- 3:** Provide the swimming community with leadership and support to empower them to succeed
- 4:** Deliver ongoing support for and investment into aquatic facilities and equipment so clubs and GSI can provide swimming opportunities



Implementation plan

The following is a series of actions that have been developed in line with GSI's goals and values, to be implemented over the coming five years. Some of these goals may be ongoing in nature.

Actions have been given a priority ranking scale using a phased approach; High within 1-2 years, Medium within 3-4 years and Low within 3-5 years or beyond.

A separate monitoring document has been developed to read in conjunction with this plan that allocates responsibility for tasks and progress made.

1: Raise the profile of swimming throughout Gippsland and ensure effective communication

#	Goal	Priority
1.1	Present the GSI's Strategic Plan to SV, Sponsors and Stakeholders and demonstrate GSI's capacity to run large events and cater for swimmers across Gippsland.	Very High
1.2	Regularly update the GSI website with all relevant information and diverse images	Very High
1.3	Participate in social awareness campaigns that support local issues i.e., Support for youth mental health or Orange Round	High
1.4	Create a pathway flow chart that explains the swimming options for new parents. Also, how-to guides for meets; venue maps, how to scratch, self-marshall etc.	Very High
1.5	Use social media channels to acknowledge and celebrate club and GSI events, programs and success stories. Create a profile template for simplicity/consistency.	Ongoing
1.6	Create a formal agreement with event photographers to utilise images for marketing and potentially generate revenue for GSI.	Medium
1.7	Continue to align with sponsors who can build the brand and reputation of swimming in the region. Identify a sponsorship and partnerships role and maintain high quality relationships.	Very High



2: Facilitate a range of swimming competitions and programs across Gippsland so everyone has a chance to swim competitively

#	Goal	Priority
2.1	Consider the use of new technology platforms to make it easier to run events, communicate or help clubs operate more efficiently.	As needed
2.2	Develop new criteria to help guide the annual fixture meeting. Find new ways to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The calendar is not overcrowded with swimming events. All clubs have a chance to host events and raise income. Meet sessions do not exceed five hours - for swimmers and officials. Qualification to Gippsland Championships is achievable. Travel is minimised for entry level swimmers. Consideration is given to separating age groups of swimmers. Competition entry fees remain affordable. 	Very High
2.3	Review the Gippsland Championship allocation policy/process to ensure fairness across Gippsland.	High
2.4	Host SV events i.e., Country Championships where there is support as a way to ensure opportunities for Gippsland swimmers.	As needed
2.5	Target specific areas for membership/participation growth i.e., women, social, youth, and design information and options to better meet their needs. Consult with key groups/clubs to better understand specific motivations and barriers. Utilise SV programs where possible.	High
2.6	Continue the ongoing partnership with the Gippsland Sports Academy and SV talent development programs to ensure local opportunities to try the swimming pathway.	ongoing
2.7	Consult with young people about social events and programs that may improve retention and connection to clubs/Gippsland Swimming. Support young people to engage with SV youth leadership programs.	Medium
2.8	Ensure GSI appointed coaches provide high quality coaching and child safe practices at all times.	Very High
2.9	Enter and subsidise SV District Competitions to support opportunities for the Gippsland swimmers	High



3: Provide the swimming community with leadership and support to empower them to succeed

#	Goal	Priority
3.1	Further develop the GSI organisational structure and create up-to-date role descriptions, in line with industry standards and Association needs. Spread the load across more volunteers.	High
3.2	Formally recognise, thank and value the contribution of all volunteers and officials.	Very High
3.3	Consider engaging with a part-time resource to take on GSI administrative tasks (in addition to bookkeeping) by the end of 2025 to reduce volunteer workload. Review and increase this role by 2028. This will be an important part of the succession planning. The GSI budget will need to be reviewed to invest into this role.	Medium
3.4	Continue to utilise sub-committees for special projects. Re-form a youth sub-committee with at least 7 members by the end of 2024.	Medium
3.5	Utilise SV current policies and procedures to update the Code of Conduct, Child Safety, Member protection, Heat Policy etc. to ensure everyone is safe and any issues are dealt with promptly and with clear and documented processes.	Ongoing
3.6	Have succession planning as a standard agenda item in GSI meeting to inform clubs of the expectation that each club needs to take on important GSI roles over time.	High
3.7	Ensure GSI is investing in training and upskilling of committee members and volunteers. This includes hosting workshops that the clubs can also benefit from i.e., Good Governance	High
3.8	Continue the great work of the district referee to build technical official numbers and development. Each club to nominate and support technical officials to conduct their own meets. Host a district training session for officials.	Very High
3.9	Gippsland should continue to be actively represented at SV Council meetings to inform decision making.	High

GIPPIES 2023

4. Deliver ongoing support for and investment into aquatic facilities and equipment so clubs and GSI can provide swimming opportunities

#	Goal	Priority
4.1	Provide continued support and advocacy for the development of new Aquatic Facilities across Gippsland. Support clubs also that may experience access issues for lane space for training or events.	High
4.2	Provide input into all Council facility master planning/community consultation projects with justification to help advocate for the development of future facilities for specific competition design advice i.e., starting blocks or AOE rooms	High
4.3	Maintain the GSI Trailer and a set of appropriate equipment that can be used to host swimming competitions both for GSI and to support local clubs.	Very High
4.4	Contribute GSI funds or apply for grants where possible to invest in facility/equipment purchases that make it easier for clubs to host swimming competitions and programs.	Medium
4.5	Maintain GSI laptops and software licences to support meet manager and the timing of meets.	Medium
4.6	Conduct all meets to the required level that ensures the rules of swimming are met and that safety is a priority.	Very High
4.7	Assist smaller clubs to be able to run or afford to conduct their own meets, or meets at their venues to assist with equity across Gippsland.	High

Success will look like:

- A strong GSI Board with good governance practices and all clubs represented.
- Improved marketing and story telling
- More state-of-the-art and well-maintained facilities where competitive swimming is well serviced.
- An increased number of Technical Officials across Gippsland who enjoy their role.
- Great relationships between all clubs that work together to develop the sport.
- Young people staying involved with the sport in a range of ways.



Disclaimer of liability

The information contained in this report is intended for the specific use of the key stakeholders that have provided input into this planning project. All recommendations by GippSport are based on information provided by or on behalf of the GSI committee, Swimming Clubs and Swimming Victoria, it has relied upon such information being correct at the time this report has been prepared.

Readers should note this report might include implicit projections about the future, which by their nature, are uncertain and cannot be relied upon. They are dependent on potential events or technical assessments, which have not yet occurred.

References

The following references have been used in the development of this report:

Government websites - Planning scheme data and maps, grant information.

- Relevant Council website and relevant planning documents
- Id Profile - Population data
- Swimming Victoria resources
- Other Recreation studies and strategies as identified in the document.