

PRESS RELEASE

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SOUTH AFRICAN WATER POLO EMBARKS ON A NEW ERA: A GAME-CHANGING MOVEMENT FOR THE SPORT

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA – 12 March 2025 – In an historic move to revitalise water polo in South Africa, a transformative step has been taken to ensure the sport's growth and inclusivity. With the backing of the vast majority of the water polo community, a new governing body, **South Africa Water Polo NPC (“SA Water Polo”)**, has been established as a **not-for-profit entity** dedicated to advancing the game at all levels. This initiative marks a **significant shift** from past practices and signals a future of **transparency, governance, and excellence**.

For decades, water polo in South Africa has faced challenges, particularly in areas under the influence of **Swimming South Africa (SSA)**. Despite SSA's efforts, the sport has struggled to fully transform and meet diversity objectives set by national policies. Recognizing this, the majority of the water polo community—including key regional leaders, Masters representatives, and passionate supporters—have united to **take control of the sport's future**.

ALIGNING WITH NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION OBJECTIVES

The South African government has long prioritized the transformation of sports to reflect the nation's diversity. The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture's Strategic Plan emphasizes the need for sport and recreation to contribute towards transforming South Africa into a democratic country that truly reflects the diversity of its people in all sporting codes. SA Water Polo is committed to aligning with these objectives, ensuring that the sport becomes more inclusive and representative.

NEW STRUCTURE, NEW FUTURE

The establishment of SA Water Polo ensures that governance is placed directly in the hands of those who **live and breathe the sport**. The organization's initial **non-executive board** features respected professionals with elite sporting, legal, financial, and administrative experience. Additionally, an interim executive committee composed of **highly qualified and dedicated volunteers** will oversee operations until formal elections take place within six months—**ensuring a democratic and accountable leadership**.

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NEXT STEPS: TAKING WATER POLO TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The Interim Exco has determined that as a key priority, it will establish the participation related structures required to **properly prepare** our players across the age groups for **world class competition**, including:

- **Player, coach, and referee registration** through a new streamlined system (Revolutionise Sport) to establish a clear mandate.
- **Appointment of top-tier selectors and national coaches** to guide the future of South African water polo.
- **Elite training camps and high-performance structures** to nurture talent from U14 to elite levels.
- **Provincial tournaments and international tours** to foster competitive excellence.
- **Transparent financial structures** to ensure every rand invested directly benefits players.

This is **not a breakaway** but rather an **empowered evolution** of water polo in South Africa, undertaken by the sport's true custodians. The goal is clear: **to prioritize players, coaches, and officials**, securing a sustainable and independent future free from restrictive external influences.

A CALL TO ACTION: UNITE FOR A STRONGER WATER POLO COMMUNITY

SA Water Polo calls on all clubs, players, coaches, and referees to **register and be part of this historic movement**. With unified action, South African water polo will thrive **both domestically and on the world stage**.

Should existing SA governing bodies fail to recognize the legitimacy of this transition, SA Water Polo will **engage directly with World Aquatics** to secure recognition as the rightful representative of the sport in South Africa.

“This is the moment South African water polo has been waiting for. We are taking control, building the future, and ensuring that our athletes have the opportunities they deserve. The time for change is now.” – Robbie Taylor, Interim CEO, SA Water Polo

CURRENT COMMITMENT

Gauteng Waterpolo, Western Cape Waterpolo, Buffalo City Waterpolo, SA Masters Waterpolo, as well the players, coaches, parents and leaders within these various officially registered waterpolo communities.

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Registration

Details pertaining to the registration will be forwarded in due course.

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