Safe Sport and the National Officials Committee have strongly suggested using the following guidelines when working with athletes during Open Water pre-race preparations:

- Explain what the process is and why it is done
- Ask permission from the athletes before starting to number/tattoo their arms, back, hands
- For minor athletes, have a coach or guardian present to observe
- Officials work with gender-like athletes (i.e. Male-male)
- Work in pairs (2 officials, 1 watching while other numbers)