



## MEDIA RELEASE

### RE: The TALE of it all – Ban Mermaid Tails

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The TALE of it all – Ban Mermaid Tails

AUSTSWIM has joined the call for a ban on mermaid tails in public aquatic facilities.

CEO Jennifer Schembri-Portelli said the mermaid tails greatly restricted natural movement of the body and impacted on the ability to gain and maintain a position of safe breathing.

“Drowning does not occur due to a lack of swimming skills, but results from a lack of ability to gain and maintain an effective body position for breathing,” Mrs Schembri-Portelli said.

She urged parents to consider what it might feel like to have your legs tied together, with movement restricted in the fluid and unstable environment that is water.

“Consider the very short amount of time it takes for drowning to occur and how panicked and traumatised your child would be if they could not breathe or recover to a safer standing position,” she said.

AUSTSWIM, the Australian Council for Teaching Swimming and Water Safety, trains, accredits and licenses 10,000 aquatic teachers a year. Competent and professional, AUSTSWIM teachers deliver lessons based on safe water practice to thousands of children in all states of Australia.

The essence of learning swimming and water safety hinges on students gaining knowledge and understanding of aquatic environments (beyond the confines of a swimming pool) and how their body may react in a variety of water conditions. The final element in education is competency in physical skill to enhance safety when in, on or near water.

Being safer in water demands:

- Knowledge of general and local conditions
- Understanding the impact water has on body balance, movement and control
- A healthy respect for aquatic environments
- An ability to make correct judgements in risk situations.

“AUSTSWIM teachers provide students with the opportunity to make good decisions in lessons under guidance and supervision,” Mrs Schembri-Portelli said. “AUSTSWIM’s appeal is for parents to also make safer decisions for their child’s health, wellness and happiness in water and refrain from the temptation of mermaid tails.”

For more information about AUSTSWIM and its courses, go to [austswim.com.au](http://austswim.com.au)

**There’s more to water safety than swimming**

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