

Potomac Valley Swimming  
Equipment Management and Rental Operations  
January 5, 2009

Overview

The following discussion paper is intended to provide an assessment of PVS's equipment operations and to make recommendations for a material redesign of the program. The goals of the redesign are to improve reliability and reduce long-term costs.

Current Status

PVS owns electronic timing equipment and other equipment necessary to conduct championship level swim meets under USA Swimming rules and regulations. The LSC endeavors to own and maintain, in good working order, equipment necessary to simultaneously conduct competitions at up to three separate competition sites. This equipment is available for use by various local governing organizations in the following priority order:

Priority Level	Conditions
1. PVS	Host club pays for setup/takedown if done by Equipment Manager
2. PVS Member Clubs	Club pays equipment rental charge plus delivery, setup and takedown charges
3. Other Local Governing Bodies	Pays same charges as PVS club for use of equipment

The equipment is managed by a paid independent contractor who is charged with responsibility for all aspects of PVS's equipment operations including the following:

- Maintain equipment in good working order so as to provide a high degree of reliability.
- Deliver, setup and takedown equipment used at swim meets.
- Provide on call services during swim meets to deal with potential equipment problems and to provide technical support.
- Review equipment needs and make recommendations for purchases of new equipment and retirements of obsolete equipment.
- Maintain technical competence in all aspects of equipment setup and use including applicable computer software.
- Prepare invoices for rental charges

When not in use PVS equipment is stored in a semi-secured room at the Overlea Swim and Racquet Club in Arlington Virginia. This is a temporary location that is being used until a more permanent facility can be acquired.

Providing the above referenced services represent substantial costs to the LSC. The following table provides some relevant statistics that were developed by reviewing rentals and costs over the 2006 – 2007 and 2007 – 2008 PVS fiscal years.

Description	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008
Number of PVS Clubs Renting equipment	10	11

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Description	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008
Number of times PVS equipment rented to PVS clubs	29	29
Number of Pools where PVS equipment was used by PVS Clubs	9	13
Number of rentals to non-PVS entities (high school, summer leagues)	9	7
Number if pools used by non-PVS entities renting PVS equipment	9	7
Gross cost of PVS equipment operations	\$43,924	\$43,125
Rental income	\$14,695	\$14,155
Net PVS subsidy for equipment operations	\$29,229	\$28,970

*(The above cost figures include equipment manager contract payments, cost of non-capitalized equipment and supplies, repair and maintenance, storage rental and depreciation on capitalized equipment. The figures do not include the annual cost of new capitalized equipment purchases. The above statistics also do not include the number of times PVS equipment is used at PVS meets.)*

Problems

1. **Storage of equipment:** Past and present storage arrangements for equipment when not in use have been deficient. Currently equipment is stored in a room at the Overlea Swim Club. The room is not for the exclusive use of PVS and the equipment may not be stored in its present location during the summer months. The location makes it difficult to appropriately safeguard and work on the equipment.
2. **Transport to rental sites:** Since all of the equipment is stored in a single location that is some distance from the equipment manager's residence, transporting the equipment to rental sites is problematic. Often the equipment must be transported during rush hour traffic. This is especially difficult when equipment is being used at multiple sites on the same weekend. Furthermore, the equipment manager does not have a vehicle appropriate to transport a complete set of equipment including scoreboard, which often necessitates multiple trips from the storage site to the rental facility.
3. **Timing of equipment delivery to rental sites:** Delivery of equipment must be scheduled to coincide with willingness of rental sites to make the pool areas available for setup and the schedule on which the renting entity would like the delivery or setup to take place. This problem is exacerbated when multiple rentals or sites are being used over the same weekend.
4. **Pickup of equipment after rental:** Equipment is often not picked up immediately at conclusion of a meet. This results in the equipment being left on a pool deck or in a pool storage room which makes it accessible to pool staff and patrons using a facility after a swim meet concludes.
5. **Reliability:** Equipment reliability is impacted by many factors including; overuse due to the number of meets at which equipment is used, less than optimum means of transport, less than optimum facility for providing maintenance and repairs,

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and inexperience in using the equipment by club personnel all degrade the reliability of sensitive equipment.

6. **Losses:** PVS incurs significant cost every year to replace lost or damaged equipment. This is especially true for stopwatches and lap counters. PVS spends approximately \$12,000 per year to replace watches, lap counters, printers, cables and other small items that are not capitalized equipment. Clubs renting equipment are not held accountable for these losses so there is no incentive for clubs to take extra care of equipment when it is in their possession.

Proposed Solutions

1. Recommend that PVS stop renting meet boxes. Clubs renting PVS equipment will be required to provide their own meet boxes including watches, clip boards, forms, writing instruments, lap counters and other supplies typically included in a meet box. PVS will act as the purchasing agent for clubs in order to insure the lowest prices. As such, the LSC will stock an inventory of DQ slips, reseed forms, deck entry forms, relay-take-off slips, stopwatches, lap counters and other paper products requiring a PVS logo. Clubs will be responsible for purchasing their own generic office supplies such as printer paper, ink cartridges, clip boards, etc. Meet boxes will continue to be provided for PVS meets. Recommended effective date: February 1, 2009
2. Recommend that PVS stop renting laptops and printers. Clubs running swim meets should be required to use their own laptops, software and printers. PVS will provide cables necessary to connect laptops to the timing console. PVS laptops and printer will continue to be provided for PVS meets. Recommended effective date: February 1, 2009
3. While PVS will continue to rent the major timing equipment necessary for meets, encourage clubs to purchase their own set of touch pads, harnesses, timing consoles, starters and scoreboards. It is recommended that PVS offer to pay the lesser of 50% of the cost up to \$5,000 to any club that purchases it's own set of equipment. The subsidy will be one time only for one set of equipment per club. The subsidy would be paid by waiving the PVS splash fee on future meets run by the club until the waived splash fees equals the amount of the subsidy. Effective date: Immediate.
4. Revise the PVS equipment rental rates to more accurately reflect costs. Currently a package of equipment is rented to a club at a set price regardless of the length of the rental. Rental of equipment for a one-day meet is the same as for a four-day meet. Recommend revising the rental rate schedule to charge a daily rate with the first day rate being higher then subsequent days. A formal rental contract will be required for rentals. Contained in the contract will be specific requirements for care of the equipment. It will also clearly stipulate that the renting club will be required to pay any repair cost for damages to equipment or loss due to any cause including theft while under the control of the renting party.
5. Require clubs renting equipment to do their own setup and takedown of the equipment. This will lessen the burden on the equipment manager and allow clubs to have more control over the timing of the setup and takedown.

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6. PVS will conduct semi-annual clinics on Meet Manager, HyTek and equipment setup and takedown.
7. PVS will purchase up to three trailers to be used for transport and storage of equipment. Price quotes on suitably sized trailers have been obtained. The trailers will be purchased from Horton Truck and Equipment Company located in Manassas Virginia. The trailers will be retrofitted with custom tie downs and cabinets so that equipment is properly secured during transport. The trailers come in various sizes. In order to accommodate one-line scoreboards, a trailer with interior dimensions of 5 feet wide, 8 feet deep and 6 feet tall will be required. The trailers will have interior lighting and possibly electrical outlets. Smaller trailers may be purchased and used in cases where a one-line scoreboard does not need to be delivered. In this case the trailers would be 4 feet wide, 5 feet long and 5 feet tall. The larger trailer can be towed behind any SUV. A family sedan can easily tow the smaller trailer. In cases of a rental, the trailers can be delivered to the rental site and parked outside the pool building. The renting club can be given the combination to the trailer lock and basically setup the equipment at any time convenient to them and the pool. At the conclusion of the meet, the renting club will takedown the equipment and places it back inside the trailer. This will allow PVS to deliver equipment to the renting site well in advance of the start date for a meet. Equipment could be delivered on a Wednesday afternoon for a meet that starts on Saturday. It would also allow PVS to pickup the trailer on Monday or Tuesday afternoon after a meet. This will significantly lessen the burden on the equipment manager, especially when multiple rentals are occurring at the same time. I will also avoid PVS equipment being left unsecured on a pool deck after a meet.

When not in use, the three trailers can be stored at three separate sites around the Beltway. It may be possible to locate one at Fairland, one at Oak Marr and a third at Overlea or some other strategically situated location. Use of trailers to transport and store equipment will also make it easier to move the equipment to a location where maintenance can be performed.

The cost of the larger trailer, not including tags and insurance is \$2,600. The smaller trailers will cost slightly less. Magnetic artwork of PVS's logo will be produced and placed on the sides of all trailers along with the caption:  
"Governing Body for Competitive Swimming in the Washington DC Area.  
Check out our website: [WWW.pvswim.org](http://WWW.pvswim.org)".

If approved, the above recommendations will greatly improve the PVS equipment operations. Reliability and costs will be reduced due to elimination of equipment losses and lower utilization of PVS equipment at club run meets. The burden on the equipment manager will be reduced due to the ability to deliver and pickup equipment at more flexible times. If they elect to purchase their own sets of equipment, clubs will ultimately see a reduction in their cost of running a meet. They will receive the PVS purchase subsidy and eliminate future equipment rental fees. The above actions essentially

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provide a “win win” situation for all parties having an interest in promoting a high quality, cost effective equipment operations program.