



**UKA**

## **CROSS COUNTRY EVENT ORGANISATION GUIDE**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2012**

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## INTRODUCTION

The management of cross country running falls within the remit of the UK Athletics (UKA) Competitions unit and they have requested this revised edition of the Cross Country Event Organisation Guide. It is designed to offer practical support, guidance and advice to all involved in the promotion of Cross Country events – at all levels.

When presented correctly, Cross Country running is an enjoyable, competitive activity that has something to offer to all – regardless of gender, age and ability. It is essential for the future of Cross Country running that we protect the interests of athletes and help them gain the best possible experience of the sport that is available. This Guide has been prepared with these basic principles in mind.

Thanks are due to all who have been involved in the production of this Guide.

### Structure of Cross Country in UK

The role of UKA in Cross Country running is that of a co-ordinating body that

- 1) establishes standards,
- 2) sets common rules,
- 3) co-ordinates the fixture list, and
- 4) selects and manages teams to represent the United Kingdom in international competition.

Items 1), 2) and 3) are the remit of the Competitions unit and item 4) is managed by UKA Performance staff.

The day to day administration of the sport is the responsibility of the four home country National Associations through their own Cross Country organisations.

**England** – England Athletics manages athletics in England and delegates the responsibility for the promotion of championships and selection of representative teams to the English Cross Country Association (ECCA). The ECCA is affiliated to England Athletics as a competition promoting “Special Association”. Delegates to the ECCA General Committee and Honorary Officers are elected at the annual open meeting of the ECCA.

**Northern Ireland** – Athletics Northern Ireland appoints a Cross Country and Road Running Committee each year at its Annual General Meeting. This Committee deals with all aspects of Cross Country including organising championships and other important promotions, selecting representative teams and issuing permits for Cross Country races.

**Scotland** - The Convenor, Vice Convenor and Secretary of Scottish Athletics Road Running and Cross Country Commission are elected at the Scottish Athletics Ltd Annual General Meeting. The Commission reports to the Board of Scottish Athletics Ltd (SAL) and is

responsible for all matters pertaining to the disciplines of Road Running and Cross Country, including the organisation of SAL Championships, selection of representative teams and issuing of permits.

There are three District Committees covering East, North and West of Scotland with Office Bearers elected by the Clubs from the respective Districts. The District Committees call up to four meetings of Club representatives per year and minutes of these meetings are presented to the Road Running and Cross Country Commission. District Office Bearers are responsible for organising District Championships and the selection of District teams.

The National Endurance Coach for Scotland works closely with the Road Running and Cross Country Commission and is based in the offices of Scottish Athletics. The post is funded by the National Lottery.

**Wales** – Welsh Athletics is the controlling body for the sport as a whole in the Principality. Its main management committee is the Management Board elected annually at the AGM.

Following local authority changes in 1990, Athletics in Wales followed the Sports Council example and adopted a four region structure with the regional boards responsible for the operations of the sport in their area - championships, training of match officials and coaches and permit procedures.

At national level there are functional committees; one of which, Endurance, includes Cross Country together with Road and Fell and Hill Running. Cross Country is directly operated through a sub-committee with particular responsibility for championships, representative matches and teams plus development.

These bodies are the first point of contact for anyone wishing to promote Cross Country events. The relevant addresses are to be found in appendix 6. They will either be able to offer appropriate advice or direct you to the local permit officer.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the National Associations**

- 1 Promote championships
- 2 Issue permits for events
- 3 Maintain liaison with leagues
- 4 Prepare and maintain fixture lists
- 5 Select and manage representative teams
- 6 Recruit, train and develop Officials and Team Managers
- 7 Maintain liaison with UKA
- 8 Promote development opportunities
- 9 Operate within UKA Rules for Competition.

Contact details for all National and other organisations responsible for the management, development and promotion of cross country running can be found in Appendix 5

### **A Brief History**

The earliest records of Cross Country running reveal that the sport as we know it today has developed from origins around 1870. Current clubs with names incorporating “Harriers” and “Hare and Hounds” show that the first ideas centred on similarities with hunting. A typical event at that time would have been a well structured paper chase; the hares would be given a start to lay a trail and the pack would follow. The pack would appoint a pace maker and a whipper-in to keep them together until a pre-determined point when they would be released to race for the finish.

The paper chase continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century but suffered from restrictions on access to land (only the hares knew where the course would be going) and eventually, a litter problem. Variations were tried to find alternatives that would not blow away or leave other long term traces until races more like those we see today became the norm.

The origins of the paper chase, where no obstacle was insurmountable, meant that early courses were imaginative to say the least. Point to point courses were common, some clubs still hold annual events over these traditional courses, and planners were keen to ensure that walls, fences and streams featured along the route. Lap courses were introduced to ease management of races and to reduce the chance of the less scrupulous competitor taking advantage of local knowledge. Awareness of safety issues and fewer opportunities to use farm and open land has led to the disappearance of the harrier type course in favour of open parkland and less arduous farm and pasture fields.

By 1881/1882 several clubs had been formed, races were taking place throughout the country, usually close to urban areas where the majority of participants were found, and national championships were becoming a regular part of the calendar. These clubs came together to establish the first of the associations that were to continue with few changes until the British Athletic Federation restructure in 1991. The purpose for forming associations was to promote championships in the areas concerned - national, territorial or county. Other responsibilities for the associations were added as the sport grew.

International competition followed rapidly, the first International Cross Country Championship was held at Hamilton Park Racecourse, Scotland between Scotland, England Ireland and Wales. The International Cross Country Union continued to control this climax to the season until 1972 when the responsibility was taken by the IAAF.

During the last 120 years many associations and leagues have been formed to offer a wide range of competition which includes championships for all age groups and both genders, regular league events within either a regional or local base, or open races. Some have largely disappeared – the point to point and handicap races - whilst litter laws saw the demise of the

paper chase. Perhaps the time has come to examine some of the ideas from the past and seek ways to introduce variety and fun, particularly for the younger age groups.

Since 1980 a number of Associations have reached their centenary, the majority have marked this landmark with the publication of their histories. Students of the sport may wish to pursue their interest in this subject further by contacting the appropriate bodies.

### **Types of Events**

When planning an event, it is vital that you are fully aware of the purpose of the race, the aspirations of the potential entrants and the outcome you wish to achieve in order to stage an event that satisfies everyone involved. There may be certain constraints on dates available for promotions, the Cross Country season is not defined within specific dates but is generally assumed to extend from October 1<sup>st</sup> until March 31<sup>st</sup>; all championship and league events will be staged within this period. Championship and league dates are determined well in advance of the season allowing promoters to select appropriate points in the calendar. The extension of the road racing season throughout the year however may tempt some to select summer dates for Cross Country races.

The most popular type of Cross Country race, whether for championship, league or open event, is a lap course with competitors defined by age group and gender. The lap course makes matters easier for the organiser as the different distances required for each race can be varied by the number of laps, as well as not requiring as much space and planning. Volunteer help for course building and marshalling is reduced and the whole day can be managed more efficiently.

A key feature that is easily overlooked is the attraction for the competitor. Every effort should be made to avoid a contrived course that maximises a small space by using short straights and tight bends, particularly if using flat playing fields. More detailed guidance is given in the section on course planning.

Relay races are proving more and more popular with competitors as they emphasise the team element of racing. Distances are usually shorter and so can be useful events for working on speed in a competitive situation. A longer day is necessary to fit in races for all ages and may therefore be difficult to staff with volunteers - a typical day catering for ten races can create up to six hours of pure racing without allowing for course building and cleaning up.

Championship and League competitions will usually be under the control of a committee or an association of clubs. These organisations will be responsible for allocating dates and venues for championships but will seek local organisers from amongst their membership – a condition of membership of a league or association may be a responsibility to organise an event from time to time. In all cases age groups and distances will be determined by the parent organisation, taking into account the type of terrain and maximum permitted distances.

If you want to try something different and have the facility to stage a point to point or handicap race that can be safely managed, why not try it? It will be a novelty for all but the oldest participants, but may offer a training competition that will be attractive to many, if staged at the right time in the competition programme. Your Cross Country Permit Officer will be able to advise on a suitable date.

The core of the Cross Country calendar continues to centre on League and Championship events. The calendar offers a progressive range of events culminating in the biannual World Championships in late March for elite athletes and at National and UK Championships in late February or early March for club and school athletes. It does tend to be an extremely full calendar but promoters of events must realise that they have different priorities to competitors – very few competitors will wish to race every week, indeed it may be inadvisable to do so, but options must be offered from which runners may select. If you want to stage a successful event that attracts entrants, then you need to make every attempt to ensure that the race is attractive, enjoyable, rewarding and safe.

### **Planning and Organising an Event**

It is perhaps fortunate that few people will attempt to organise a cross country event without some form of previous experience, either as a competitor or through assisting and observing others. The notes that follow in this section have been checked by a number of extremely experienced organisers and should be used as a checklist at all levels of promotion.

#### ***First Considerations***

Planning a well-organised event will start at least one year before the competition, particularly if it is to be a championship at county, territorial or national level. At this time you should be able to fix a date, estimate the number of competitors by age group and gender, select and book a suitable area for the course in close proximity to changing facilities that should also be secured. Be aware of the costs that will be involved and any requirements to reinstate the course and changing facilities to the state in which you found them. You should also identify a suitable area where an administration office can be sited for results productions and other purposes.

The date of your event will be allocated to you if you are promoting a league or championship event. In all cases ensure that you obtain an event permit and confirm the date with your Permit Officer.

Never assume that you will be able to use an area of land without the permission of the owner/manager. There may, at the very least, be insurance implications if there is any doubt about your right to use what might be perceived to be public common land. The worst scenario may result in cancellation at the last minute. Largely because of the likelihood of damage to land and fences, some venues may seek an advance payment in the form of a bond that could be forfeited in the event of serious problems.

Work closely with the farmer, park manager or other nominated individual to ensure that you plan a course that will not disrupt their work, access to other members of the public or the planting of crops. Your task will be made easier with their support and you may wish to return in the future. They may also assist with unforeseen problems more readily or loan equipment to aid course marking.

You may also have to provide a facility for presentations and catering – usually helpful to the organisers as a fund raiser as well as being an essential service for competitors and spectators. Be sure when you book your facilities that there is a suitable adjacent room and that you will not be contravening any catering rights that have been awarded by the local authority. First aid facilities will also be required – please note the detailed specifications in the relevant section.

Critical to the success of any competition is the need to recruit sufficient volunteers to be able to cover every task. Ensure early in your planning that you will be able to find the right people for each job. Your own club colleagues may be able to manage a league event but if you are staging a championship you will have to cast your net wider. Other clubs within your county will probably be able to help, especially with course building and marshalling. For other roles, such as car park management, why not seek the assistance of scout or ranger troops? If you do, then don't forget to offer a donation to their funds.

### ***Event Permits and Insurance***

You must apply for an event permit at least eight weeks before the competition date. However the issuing of a permit will not necessarily provide the benefit of public liability insurance cover under the UKA policy; affiliation with one of the four national associations is essential for cover to apply – the permit demonstrates that the event is promoted to national governing body standards. Event permits are managed differently by the various national bodies. If in doubt about where to apply you should contact your national governing body.

The UKA insurance policy gives a public liability cover of £50,000,000 that is intended to protect the organisers and participants in the event of accidents and incidents. Many local authorities and facility providers will require confirmation that public liability cover is in place; your Permit Officer will be able to assist with copies of the necessary paperwork. The policy does not include personal accident cover, property insurance (unless damaged in a third party incident) or cancellation insurance. Further details are available at [www.uka.org.uk/governance/insurance](http://www.uka.org.uk/governance/insurance).

### ***Financial Planning***

The level of financial control will be determined by the nature of your event. In all cases you will have local expenses whether they are met by your own organisation or by the association that controls the championship or league.

The Finance Officer will be required to forecast costs and income at an early stage of planning to ensure that all costs can be met from projected income of sponsorship, entry fees and other sources. Entry fees may be limited by external influences in which case you should explore opportunities for other sources of income.



These may include:

- car park charges, only possible in limited circumstances where all parking must be off road in a controlled area;
- programme sales, make sure you cover the cost of printing;
- refreshment sales;
- results sheet sales;
- fund raising, if you promote a raffle check that you are not breaking local bylaws, make every attempt to obtain donations of prizes;
- sponsorship, which may take the form of a cash sum, provision of materials or support in kind including the provision of facilities and/or staff free of charge.

### ***Risk Assessment, Medical and First Aid Provision***

A detailed review of emergency planning, risk assessment processes and first aid provision has been undertaken for this edition of the Cross Country Event Organisation Guide. Details of these processes can be found at pages 17 – 19 and appendices 1, 2 and 3.

### ***Awards and/or Prizes***

The nature of the event will determine the nature of awards. Championship and league awards will usually be provided by the host association, if you or a sponsor wishes to add other prizes always check with that association to ensure that it will be acceptable.

Awards for open events are offered at the discretion of the organiser, usually to attract entries. Full details must be provided when applying for an event permit; the permit officer will check that you do not contravene current UKA Rules.

## **Key Roles**

The different levels of the event will affect the number of roles that need filling. A championship event will require an organising committee consisting of chairman/director, clerk of the course, entries secretary, publicity officer, finance officer, officials' secretary, fund raiser, catering manager, changing facility manager, medical liaison, police/car parking liaison, local authority parks representative or land manager as appropriate, volunteer recruitment manager and committee secretary. Other roles may be added dependent on local circumstances.

Similar tasks will need to be undertaken whatever the scale of the promotion but individuals may fulfil more than one role.

If you are staging a championship or league some of the duties may be assumed by a central organisation, for example receipt of entries, preparation of programmes and financial control. In this case, a representative of the central organisation should have a place on the organising committee.

The main duties for each will include:-

***Chairman/Event Director***

- chair planning meetings;
- ensure that all roles are filled;
- oversee all functions;
- be prepared to act on any problems.

***Clerk of the course***

- plan a course appropriate for the event and age groups;
- negotiate use of the land with the owner;
- determine the distance of each race and plan appropriate laps;
- identify and plan a medical area (see medical section - Appendix 1);
- secure sufficient materials for course marking;
- conduct a risk assessment of the course and associated facilities and make adjustments to ensure safety (see Appendix 2);
- prepare the Emergency Plan, in cooperation with other colleagues;
- prepare emergency contact and location information for marshals
- identify locations for marshals and allocate duties (allowing for breaks);
- prepare a map of the course for inclusion in the programme and display, showing the course and essential facilities;
- organise and manage marking the course and accompany the referee around the course to ensure that it is suitable and safe for use;
- dismantle the course markings and return the land to the owner in a satisfactory condition.

***Entries secretary***

- ensure that all potential entrants are aware of the event by appropriate advertising and publicity;
- design and circulate entry forms; receive and scrutinise entries and tabulate into events;
- prepare a programme;
- determine, in conjunction with other key officers, if entries on the day are eligible for awards. If not then any conditions must be clearly shown on the entry form and at the registration desk;
- ensure that the results service has an accurate list of entries in a format suitable for their use.

***Officials' secretary***

- Appoint and invite all Officials at least three months prior to the event;
- Replace any Officials that reject their invitation;
- Submit a list of Officials for inclusion in the event programme;
- Confirm final list of Officials and their duties to the Race Referee and Chief Officials at least two weeks before the event.

***Publicity officer***

- gather information on the event;
- identify press/media outlets that will use press releases;

- prepare and issue press releases in a structured build up to the event with the aim of increasing public awareness and attracting both entries and spectators;
- if the press are present at the event, ensure they receive results and access to leading competitors;
- circulate results and reports after the event;
- produce a report for sponsors.

### ***Finance officer***

- identify all probable costs of the promotion;
- negotiate with all service providers, e.g. results service, programme production, catering services, and place orders as appropriate;
- produce a financial forecast of the costs and advise all involved in spending of their limits;
- ensure that authority is given before costs are incurred by anyone, all expenditure should be approved before commitment;
- recommend and agree the level of entry fees with the organising committee;
- identify other potential sources of income e.g. spectator charges, programme prices, sale of results sheets, sponsorship (in co-operation with fund raiser);
- produce a full financial forecast;
- ensure that secure cash systems are in place at the event;
- bank entry fees;
- collect and bank cash received;
- ensure that all payments are made;
- compile a final account of income and expenditure.

### ***Fund raiser***

- attract assistance – both financial and in kind – to support the promotion;
- work with finance officer to identify level of support necessary;
- work with sponsors to ensure they receive recognition for their investment;
- evaluate success of sponsorship and compile a record for use on future occasions.

### ***Catering manager***

- ensure suitable facilities are available, particularly if fresh food is to be provided;
- estimate numbers attending – officials/helpers/marshals/first aid, competitors, spectators;
- provide food and drink as required by organising committee for officials, etc;
- provide food and drink as required by organising committee for VIP guests;
- provide food and drinks for sale to competitors and spectators;
- purchase and prepare food and drink required;
- fix prices for sale;
- ensure sufficient volunteers are available who are aware of food safety requirements (note local authority/school catering facilities may have specific conditions for use);
- ensure cash is handled securely and transferred to finance officer at regular intervals.

### ***Changing facility manager***

- identify and arrange the use of suitable facilities for changing and showering;
- ensure the finance officer is aware of costs;

- identify separate areas for use by males and females;
- determine whether it will be necessary to provide a secure area for competitors' property – if so identify the room and arrange for staff and a system for checking bags in and out;
- provide signs, to be placed before competitors arrive, to assist movement around the building;
- ensure that sufficient toilet facilities are available both at the changing facility and on the course and make appropriate arrangements to rectify any deficit;
- identify a separate area for officials' changing;
- appoint staff to patrol the facility during use to assist competitors and to protect their property;
- ensure the facility is returned in a satisfactory condition.

***Medical liaison*** – guidance can be found in appendix 1.

***Police/car parking liaison***

- estimate the number of cars and coaches that will arrive on the day;
- ensure that there is adequate parking available;
- determine whether the police will have any particular requirements for the movement of traffic and parking, if so negotiate suitable solutions with the police;
- determine if it will be necessary to provide support to cross busy roads and make suitable provision;
- identify and secure space for parking coaches, it may be necessary to provide space off site and if so, arrange a recall system for coach drivers after the event;
- arrange for staffing of all car parks;
- provide a separate section for officials and helpers;
- starters carrying guns may require a space adjacent to the course;
- if parking charges are to be made ensure a secure system is in place to collect fees and move vehicles in as quickly as possible avoiding delays to passing traffic;
- pass cash regularly to the finance officer.

***Radio manager***

- identify the number of hand held radios that will be required for communication between the various officers and officials;
- secure sufficient radios;
- advise costs to finance officer;
- allocate different groups to different wave bands;
- issue fully charged radios to users with instructions for use;
- collect radios after the event and return to supplier.

***Local authority parks representative or land manager as appropriate***

- assist all aspects of planning ensuring that care is taken to protect the course area from unsuitable use;
- act as liaison between the organisers and the land owner.

***Volunteer recruitment manager***

- estimate the number of helpers that will be required;
- identify sources of volunteers for specific tasks, e.g. scouts for car parking, athletic club helpers for course building and marshalling;
- recruit helpers and ensure they are aware of all information necessary to fulfil their roles;
- say thank you!

### ***Committee secretary***

- co-ordinate all activities in co-operation with the Event Director;
- call and minute meetings of the organising committee;
- deal with correspondence;
- liaise with other organisations when promoting on behalf of other bodies;
- assist post holders where and when necessary;
- assume other responsibilities as they arise.

After the event all volunteers responsible for specific duties should submit a written report on their area of responsibility for consideration by the organising committee. This exercise is especially helpful in the planning of future events to identify any problems that may have arisen.

## **Choosing a Venue**

The main criteria to consider when selecting your venue are:-

- Is the course suitable for the event?
- Are there changing facilities within safe walking distance?
- Is the location suitable, accessible and unlikely to create problems for local people?
- Can we park all vehicles without obstructing the highway and neighbouring properties?
- Is the course accessible to emergency vehicles?

### ***The Course***

The course must be safe for competitors, spectators and officials – conduct a risk assessment as described in appendix 2. Whilst safety is of paramount importance there are other basic requirements for a successful event.

It is not usually desirable to seek manicured lawns for the running surface but, on the other hand, try to avoid fields where animals have been roaming in wet conditions as if the weather deteriorates and the ground is frozen the surface will probably be hazardous. Parkland will normally be an acceptable compromise but do not necessarily rule out farmland. Wherever you use always ensure that you have the full permission of the landowner before planning the course. This applies most strongly on farmland if the farmer intends to plant crops before or shortly after the event.

There are no rules about whether you should include hills or avoid an entirely flat course – everyone appreciates that each course will have its own character. Try to avoid a course that is squeezed into the smallest area possible – it may be great for watching but think of the runners

who have to cope with frequent short straights and tight bends. It is vital that you give the runners every chance of enjoying their race – they are your main consumers.

When planning a course be aware of issues that may arise should an emergency vehicle need to gain access to the course and ensure that any potential restrictions can be eliminated on the day of the event..

### ***Laps and Distances***

The lap length should not be so short that slower competitors are lapped more than once but it may not be possible to create a lap that avoids lapping entirely; note that too much lapping will be confusing to runners and spectators and on some courses may be dangerous. Spectators may not be the first consideration when planning your course, but equally they should not be ignored.

You will probably have to plan a number of variations to the main lap in order to create the distances required for each race on your programme. If this is the case then the course map and directions to athletes should clearly indicate which lap is to be followed. The usual way to achieve this is to mark each significant point on the course with a letter and describe each lap with the appropriate letters. Measurement of the lap length is more difficult to achieve than for a road race where a calibrated wheel is necessary and a bicycle can be used. A Cross Country course can usually be measured with a surveyor's wheel.

The organising body will usually determine the distance of the course as described in Rule 508.

### ***Measuring the Course***

Measuring a Cross Country course is not as exact a science as for a Road Race course. It is essential to be reasonably accurate when planning the laps and distances to ensure that the distance covered is approximately that intended. It is not acceptable to set a course that is either too long or too short – aim to be within 5% of the advertised distance; it may be necessary to consider reducing a distance if a course is particularly severe. There is always the possibility that minor changes will have to be made when marking the course because of circumstances on the day – ensure that they are acceptable to the race referee, especially if the course has been approved in advance.

The best way to measure the course will be with a surveyor's wheel. They are not always readily available but it may be possible to borrow one from your local authority – use your contacts in Leisure Services to investigate their network. An experienced organiser can usually assess distances quite accurately and distances at a lower level competition may be guessed, but take great care, particularly if children are competing, not to lay out a course that is too long.

### ***Start and Finish Areas***

The start and finish areas are vital to the success of any race and must be considered carefully when identifying your probable course. More detailed requirements are given in the next section concerning preparation of the course on the day. The start should be wide enough to permit each team a space on the line for at least one runner and sufficiently far from the first

corner to allow each runner to negotiate that corner without being impeded by other competitors. A downhill start is not usually desirable, especially if the distance to the first bend is relatively short. The start straight should be tapered gradually to the first bend when the actual width of the course is reached.

The finish straight should be either flat or slightly downhill to encourage runners to keep moving away from the finish line rather than stopping immediately. A full description of the recommended design for finishing funnels is included in appendix 3. Funnels will not be required when “chip” timing systems are employed.

Most competitions consist of more than one race catering for different age groups. The timetable is usually fixed so that the next race may start before all runners in the previous race have finished. Take care when siting the start and finish that the two races will not be on the same part of the course at the same time.

It is strongly recommended that the finish is sited on the outside of the course adjacent to a road to ensure that emergency medical services are able to have easy access to the area without having to cross the course. There is an additional practical benefit of placing the finish outside the lap and away from the start straight. Multi-race events often run to a tight timetable and there may be a need to start a race before all the runners in the previous race have finished. It is easy to overlook when planning a course and impossible to correct once the races have started.

### ***Nature of the Course***

When designing a course you should also take into account the age and ability of the competitors and the distance they will have to run. It is not desirable to include features that may cause athletes to be in a distressed condition or will make the competition unfair. Bearing in mind earlier comments that courses may be flat, it is acceptable to include obstacles such as straw bales to increase variety but these would probably not be included if natural features are included. Short stretches of ploughed land may be used where available if there are no hills.

Other features, such as streams, may be practical for small numbers of runners but as the size of the field increases then the opportunity for these features decreases for safety reasons. Your risk assessment will be the deciding factor if you have any doubts about the design of your course.

Be imaginative and think what sort of a course you would enjoy running on but also be realistic. You may have to consult other agencies for approval, especially if you are promoting a championship or league event. The event referee should be kept informed about the nature of the course.

### ***Planning a Timetable***

The cross country season covers the whole of winter when daylight hours are short. It can be difficult to fit in a full range of races for male and female across all age groups so care is needed when fixing start times. Don't forget that even after the last runner has finished you will still need daylight to complete the cleaning up process. There are no recommended limits, for

example the last runner should finish at least one hour before lighting up time, because weather conditions can have an effect on the actual time of darkness

It is customary for the younger age groups to race first - if only to avoid them having to run on a surface that has been subjected to the multiple lap senior men's race. It is acceptable to start a race before all the runners have finished the previous one but under no circumstances should it be possible for runners in both races to be on the same part of the course. It will therefore be necessary to ensure that the start and finish areas do not cross.

If the course has been measured accurately it will be possible to accurately estimate finishing times, if not then build in a cushion to allow for errors in estimates. You do not have to follow the age groups, why not mix them so that longer boys' races alternate with shorter girls' events to help officials and the results service avoid a backlog and to provide variety to spectators.

It is possible to set a time for the first race and then follow with other events as the course clears. This should only occur in circumstances where the athletes are fully aware of the system. It is far too easy for runners to miss a start with this type of arrangement and preferable to work to a timed structure.

### ***Relays***

Planning a course for a relay event will generate slightly different requirements. Management of the race will be made easier if runners have to negotiate a single lap. Lap lengths up to 5000 metres are frequently needed which may limit the choice of course. However as the number of runners on the course at any one time will be less than in a standard race, you will not be as restricted by features such as the length of the start straight. There are few differences between relay courses and open races, with the exception of the finish. You will probably not need a multi-funnel finishing system for a relay but there are special considerations for the changeover zone. Always consult the race referee when planning this, as this is the area that will cause most difficulty if you get it wrong!

### ***Support Facilities***

In a sense all races start and finish in the car park and changing facilities. You may discover the most wonderful course that can be imagined - but it is of no use at all if the necessary support facilities are not in place.

It may be possible to overcome some deficiencies by, for example, parking competitors and spectators at a distance and hiring buses to transport them to the course. Such arrangements are never ideal but may be necessary when working with large numbers of runners and spectators. Always make arrangements for officials and helpers to park at the venue, as they will usually arrive early.

The minimum levels of support facilities that you will usually need are:

- Parking for volunteers, competitors and spectators - in both cars and coaches;



- An administration centre for reporting by Officials and Competitors and housing the results service. It is not usually necessary to have an event director's office, as he/she will spend most time out on the course.
- Two way radios to enable effective communications;
- Changing facilities for competitors and officials (separate) for both genders. It is helpful to provide showers, but often may not be possible;
- A first aid centre;
- Free refreshments available for volunteers, if possible with continuous hot drinks;
- Refreshments for sale to the public - a chance to raise income.
- Programme and results sales points;
- Announcer/commentator facility on the course with a clear view of the finish;
- An area for presentation of awards
- Sufficient toilets.

### *Medical Considerations*

The greatest influence upon the number of injuries, and the ease with which they are treated, is the design and layout of the course.

For smaller events the Start and Finish can be in one place, with the medical care at that spot. For major events problems with changing areas, vehicular access, car and coach parking, dictate much of the course layout. Whilst the scale of the competition will determine certain aspects of the scale of medical provision, there are certain basic principles that are 'non-negotiable' as far as medical requirements are concerned. They are:

- The Medical Facility has to be at the Finish, and open onto the inside of the fenced off finishing area, at the far end of that area from the finish line.
- The Finishing Area must not be enclosed within a loop of the course, such that an ambulance is unable to drive to and from the Medical HQ without crossing the course .
- There must be a clear unobstructed exit from the Medical HQ to the roads leading to the local A&E Dept.
- The distance from the Start to the first corner shall be as long as is possible and the first corner as gradual a bend as possible.

The organising body has a duty of care to all participants and spectators but the weather is a variable that cannot be controlled. It will not be possible to forecast the weather conditions with any degree of certainty and it has been known for conditions to deteriorate rapidly during the course of an event. All athletes, and especially younger age groups, may be vulnerable to hypothermia in severe cold and wet circumstances, especially if their clothing is inadequate

If your course is on an exposed site or the weather conditions are likely to be severe, then you should attempt to advise athletes, coaches and team managers of the potential hazard and provide an area where runners can be taken to recover, possibly in addition to the medical facility.

Whatever the perceived risks it is essential that you contact the paramedic ambulance service and nearest hospital emergency department to let them know that the event will take place and seek their guidance on any arrangements that should be implemented.

Guidance for the provision of medical services can be found at appendix 1.

### ***Emergency Planning***

In addition to the normal Event Plan organisers should give due consideration to the creation of an Emergency Plan. The organiser must work on the basis that things do not always go according to plan and therefore a number of contingencies should be considered and planned for. These issues will include:

#### **Venue / Site Suitability:**

Many aspects must be considered for staging an event;

- Access to and from the venue / site – for athletes, spectator's, vehicles and emergency services
  - Show directional flow for access and egress (for people and vehicles)
  - Creation of Emergency vehicle access and egress route, to include post code, grid references, map, event contact telephone number
- Congestion caused by vehicles trying to enter venue / site – although the event is not being staged on the public highway if it has an impact you may require a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order
- Topography of venue / site – This will impact on the types of vehicles your medical provider brings to the event in order to reach the casualty
  - If the site is remote then consideration should be given to access by helicopter in cases of emergency and identification of a suitable landing area
- A set of keys to any barriers, bollards or gates should be acquired from the landowner before the event and tested. Such barriers should be open on the day of the event before commencement of event programme. These should be identified as manned positions

#### **Marshal / Medical Provider Instruction:**

Contained within the Marshal / Medical Providers Instruction should be the following;

- Emergency Telephone Number
- Nearest medical provision at venue in relation to each position
- Details of nearest accident / emergency hospital
- Precise directions to the venue and to each part of the course with address, post code, grid reference
- If more than one access point is available identify as above

Overall Course Map that outlines;

- Includes Marshal Positions
- Shows Medical Provision
- Shows access route for Emergency Vehicles
- Identifies any gated access, these are to be manned

Communications:

- Identify the method of and procedure for communication – Mobile Telephones, Two Way Radios. These methods should be checked prior to staging the event to test for signal coverage of the whole course
- Contact prior to the event with nearest hospital and emergency department providing the above details along with numbers of participants, spectators and timings of the event/s

Volunteer Briefings:

Pre-event briefings must be held where written instructions incorporating the above will be issued. A briefing will be conducted covering these aspects to ensure that marshals and medical providers fully understand.

### **On the Day and Course Preparation**

On the day allow plenty of time for marking the course and recruit as many volunteers to help, as you are able. The standard of marking will depend on the event. The start and finish areas should be roped off to ensure that spectators know where they are permitted to stand for all events but the nature and status of the event will usually determine the marking on the course. The event referee will need to be assured that the course is safe and clearly marked before the first race starts; he/she should be able to walk the course in time to make any necessary adjustments.

You may have to modify your original plans when you arrive to mark the course - usually for safety reasons caused by weather conditions or recent work.

You may have to build your course on the previous day and provide security on site overnight. Whether you provide security or not, check every aspect on returning the next day - well before the first race.

On arrival at the course ensure that all entry points to the course are accessible to emergency service vehicles. Checks will include ensuring that if any gates are locked or if height restriction barriers are in place then you have obtained the keys and they are available to course marshals in the proximity of the restricted access, prior to the arrival of competitors and spectators. All gates must be unlocked prior to the first race – if there is a danger of unauthorised vehicles entering the course then ensure that the gate is controlled by a marshal.

### ***Markings and Marshals***

Marshals fulfil a critical role in ensuring that runners follow the correct course and they should remain alert to any instances of runners not following the correct course. They are also the first

point of contact should any competitor suffer an injury or collapse during a race. For this reason all marshals:

- Must be briefed on what to do in the event of an emergency;
- Must be given a course plan that shows their location on the course and the location of first aid points;
- Must be given details of emergency access points to the course including the postal address and post code;
- Must carry a mobile telephone to contact emergency services and/or a radio for contact with course first aid personnel and event administration.

A championship event should be marked by tape on both sides for the full length of the lap. Appropriate crossing points will be built in and staffed during races. Lower level events may only require flags placed at significant points but ensure that runners are left in no doubt about which side they should pass on. It may also be necessary to tape bends to keep runners on the correct course – ensure that possible errors by runners are avoided.

You will need a sizeable stock of posts, tape and ropes to mark the course, don't wait until the last few days to pull the stock together. Local Authority Parks or Highways departments may have most of what you will need but they may have to charge. Tapes are usually available from athletics equipment companies, often for their marketing purposes, but they will have limited supplies – place your order early.

You may wish to have a supply of spray paint, sand and/or sawdust available for emergency markings or ground repairs. Paint is often necessary for marking the start and finish lines. Any paint that is used should be biodegradable or water based so as not to create a health hazard to animals or humans.

Stationing marshals at critical points on the course is essential but often limited by the number of volunteers available. The first priority will be at points where the course divides for different laps. Tapes must be moved between races and marshals should be on hand to ensure that runners are clear about the route to follow. Other sites to station personnel will include potential hazards and areas where spectators are permitted to cross the course.

Marshals who are sited close to course access points that may be used by emergency service vehicles must be aware of potential issues in respect of access and be able to open any gates or height barriers that are closed to the general public and spectators.

There is always a chance that marshals will be sent out on the course before the first race and then forgotten - hot drinks are welcome during the day if at all possible. They have an essential role to fulfil in helping to ensure safe and fair competition. Key marshals should be equipped with radio equipment to help report problems to the Clerk of the Course and the Referee.

### ***Clearing Up***

Don't let any helpers forget that their jobs do not finish at the same time of the last race. Enlist as much help as possible to clear all of the course markings and any litter that may have been

left. You may wish to return in the future and that will be made easier by leaving the right impression. The condition of the land will depend on the number of feet passing over the course and the weather before and during the races. Nature will return the course to its usual state in a few weeks and you should be able to give assurances about this to landowners who have never staged an event before.

### ***The Start***

The design of the start area will have been determined when planning the course with features fixed according to the nature of the event and the number of runners in each race (see Start and Finish Areas in the Choosing a Venue section). When marking the course on the day you will need to address each feature in detail to ensure fair competition and safety.

Most Cross Country races are team races and runners are accustomed to lining up on the start line in team order. Each club should be allowed enough space on the start line for one runner (approximately 60cms). When a draw has been made for places on the line, it should be marked with the draw (pen) numbers, either on posts or strung above the line. Open individual races will not require draw numbers. If weather and course conditions are poor, you may have to remark the start line for each race, make sure that you have sufficient paint or sawdust available.

Each side of the start straight should be taped or fenced to keep spectators back and it should narrow from the full width at the start down to a running width by the first bend. In a mass start runners may not be able to look far ahead and see where they will be planting their feet. Ensure that you walk the full start area and check to ascertain that there are no holes in the ground, no sharp objects and no posts or markers in the running line. On occasions you may have to use a start that contains one or more trees - if so tape them clearly and think about stationing a marshal in front of the tree.

### ***The Finish***

The approach, finish line, funnel area and exits will have been arranged when course planning. On the day ensure that there are no safety hazards - runners may not notice potential problems in their rush for the line. What may seem like minor dips in the ground may throw a runner off stride in a sprint, if you have doubts move the finish line a few yards forwards or back. If conditions are wet and muddy there is a danger of skidding when coming to a sudden stop, you may wish to have a supply of sand available for emergency ground repairs

Take care not to underestimate the length of the area needed for the finish and funnels. A full description of the number of funnels needed and their design can be found at appendix 3. It is important to allow a reasonable length of funnel to ensure that runners do not back up in front of the finish line - there is also a responsibility on judge/recorders to stand well down the funnel and avoid stopping runners who must be able to exit the funnels unimpeded.

Take care to build funnels that are not too wide and enable passing and make sure that ropes and tapes are pulled as tight as possible. Considerable wear and tear takes place during the

course of an event and it may not be practical to reconstruct the area. You may have to remark the finish line during the day - ensure that you have paint or other suitable material available.

When “chip” timing systems are used funnels are not required but sufficient space must be available to allow runners to remove and return their “chip” whilst leaving the finish line clear.

If your event is sponsored you may be required to provide a finish gantry. This has serious safety implications and accidents have occurred, particularly in windy conditions. If you do need to provide a gantry then ensure that it is built professionally - you should not try to build one yourselves. A safety certificate may be required before use and you should check the requirements of the Risk Assessment section.

### ***Changing Facilities and Toilets***

It seems that fewer athletes require changing and shower facilities every year but you should make every effort to provide the best available facility. There will always be a demand for toilets and the basic provision should be linked to the changing facilities. Bigger events and championships should provide toilet facilities on the course; where possible these should be located at more than one place on the course to facilitate ease of access and avoid heavy footfall in limited areas. If you have to bring portable toilets on to the course, you should ensure that you provide enough to avoid long queues in the minutes leading up to a start. The consequences may be significant if neighbouring property owners are given cause for concern, and runners often create these concerns!

Portable toilets are expensive when organising an event on a limited budget. The hiring company will give you a guide on the number you will need based on the number of runners and spectators expected. These estimates will not take account of the particular circumstances of a race. The minimum number of units necessary will be 1 to 100 competitors and spectators, if you provide a separate men’s urinal. Without a separate urinal, it may drop to 1 to 75. The majority of the units should be located close to the start area.

The number of competitors expected will also determine the nature of the changing facility. Current practice ranges from the traditional take-over of school classrooms or gymnasium to a marquee on the course. The days of the tin bath in a schoolyard are long gone and many competitors now prefer to go home for a shower or bath. This does not remove the need to provide changing and showers wherever possible.

When planning changing facilities, be aware that you may have to provide security for runners’ belongings if they are left unattended. It is rare for anyone to leave items in a changing room but you may feel it is appropriate to offer a storage room for bags using a cloakroom ticket system.

When using a school, sports centre or similar facility, you should ensure that signs are placed around the building to help the flow of people by removing doubts about where they are meant to be. Minimum requirements will be directions to men’s and women’s changing and toilets,

officials' reporting and refreshments. Don't highlight the location of the results room to avoid unnecessary visits and pestering.

If you are hiring a public facility or school, try to work closely with the caretaker, you may wish to arrange for a party of volunteers to help clean up afterwards – it could reduce the costs.

Many clubs now provide their own tent for shelter for their own members. It is advisable to identify and clearly mark an area where these tents may be erected to ensure that they do not obstruct the course or access routes.

### ***Briefing Volunteers***

The Event Director and Clerk of the Course have a responsibility to ensure that everyone is fully aware of their duties and particularly where their responsibilities start and finish. A briefing meeting should be held at which all concerned can have the opportunity to raise any questions they may have. The best time will be on the morning of the event as it is likely to be the only time when everyone will be available but there will be obvious restrictions on time as there are many other pressing tasks to complete. The alternative is to select an evening a few days prior to the event and encourage all to attend, possibly with the attraction of refreshments.

Either the Referee or their respective chiefs will brief officials who are appointed to technical roles, such as judges, recorders and timekeepers.

The briefing must include guidance on what to do should a medical emergency arise. All course marshals must be aware of their locations and the locations of other marshals and first aid points. They must also have access to facilities to call the emergency services and give an accurate location of the casualty.

### ***Results Service***

The results service you employ will be determined by the nature of the event. When acting on behalf of another organisation and promoting a championship or league event, they will usually provide the results service. If you do need to provide the results then make sure that the service will cope with the event.

Most results are compiled on a computer by entering the competitors' numbers in finishing order and adding times - competitors' details will have been entered prior to the event. The software should then produce individual and team results for the Referee to check and confirm. They may then be printed for sale.

Take care when employing a computerised result service that the software has been fully tested and will not let you down. There are now many useful options available.

Many races still use manual systems by compiling from judges and timekeepers sheets and typing up sheets. In this case you may use the disc system by issuing a disc showing the finishing position of each runner; these are then collected by team managers and returned showing team scores for checking. Sufficient sets of discs, made from metal, plastic or

cardboard, must be available for each race but this system is extremely slow, often holding competitors in the funnels for long periods. There are frequent instances in the past where discs have been dropped by the distributor with obvious consequential problems.

If the number of runners in each race is small it may be worthwhile using hand written adhesive labels showing the runner's name, club, time taken and age group (if applicable) which can be posted in finishing order on to a polythene covered board.

### ***Chip timing***

Where significant numbers of competitors are taking part in a race, the promoter may decide to use one of the forms of "chip timing". The employment of such a service will necessitate a different method of operation – particularly in respect of the preparation and distribution of competitors' numbers and timing chips. The service will incorporate the preparation of the programme of entries and the production of comprehensive results but the cost will be greater than simple computerised results services.

Two systems are in general use:

- Ankle chips secured by a Velcro strap or secured to the shoe lace that record a time when passing over a mat. These may be either returnable or disposable. It is not advisable to use chips that are secured to the shoe lace in cross country races; the risk of losing a shoe in muddy conditions is too great. Costs will be greater for disposable chips; returnable chips must be collected immediately after the finish by a team of Officials. The service will charge for lost returnable chips.
- Loops secured to the reverse of the competitor's number that record a time when passing a circuit at the finish line. These chips are usually disposable.

The use of chip timing will replace all manual finish recording systems and the need for finishing funnels, although it may be advisable to employ a Finish Line Judge who records the leading finishers to resolve any potential disputes. When using chips it is possible for the order of finishing to change after the line if a runner is not recorded at the first of the capture traps.

### ***Communications***

A frequently overused and misunderstood term! Good communications between all involved in the organisation of an event are essential for a successful promotion - it is perhaps the central factor in good teamwork. The only problem is "how does it work?"

All cross country promotions are different and each will present its own problems and solutions. The common theme is to ensure that you make use of all available means to keep everyone informed through the use of briefings, PA announcements and two-way radios. Information, like communication, needs to flow two ways, always be prepared to listen to what your volunteers are saying. You have appointed them to do a job and you must accept and act upon their advice. Make full use of all strengths and opportunities available to you through your volunteer team.



### ***Public Address System***

You will probably only require a PA system if you are staging a championship event, for other events a loud hailer or an official with a loud voice may be appropriate. Hiring a system can be one of the most expensive items on the budget so you should ensure that full benefit is obtained but, as well as being a benefit, it can also create problems.

The nature of cross country races makes coverage of the full course extremely unlikely, unless you are operating on a short lap. The priority areas for coverage by speakers are the start and the finish where most spectators will congregate and to assist effective communication with runners. The commentary point should not encourage access by spectators but it must offer a clear view of critical sections of the course, particularly the finish and its approach.

Problems may be caused by the positions of the speakers – to neighbouring houses and officials working at the finish. If there is a possibility that speakers may affect neighbouring houses, check that they are directed away from them. Similarly do not direct speakers at the finishing funnels where judges and recorders are compiling the order of finishers. There is a strong possibility that they will be distracted and unable to hear their caller clearly if the commentary is too loud in their area.

At least two announcers or commentators will be needed, as it is necessary to maintain contact with sources of information as well as to use the microphone. We have all heard commentators who are more concerned about continuing to speak rather than the quality of the information presented – say too much and the audience will stop listening. Ask your commentators to keep information relevant and commentary reasonable – be clear about their roles.

### ***Awards and Presentations***

A feature to be considered for championship events, open races and possibly for final league matches. The occasions when the majority of the competitors stay until after the last race and congregate in a convenient hall are less and less frequent. It is now usual to make presentations on the course as quickly as possible after the event.

Whatever arrangements you make for presentations, you must make every effort to attract as large an audience as possible to give award winners the praise they have earned. Too often the presentation is over before spectators are aware that it has started. You must have effective announcements, preferably over the course PA system, and create a facility, such as a stage, which offers a good view to spectators.

Where presentations are made in an enclosed area, such as a marquee on the course, it is appropriate to provide a PA system dedicated to that area, but make sure that all on the course are aware that presentations are taking place. The provision of a marquee for presentations may also offer shelter in the case of bad weather conditions - a feature that may be desirable but not usually a priority.

If you are promoting an event for a league or championship, you will be advised on the organisation's requirements for presentations.

### ***Refreshments***

Provision of refreshments should be considered on two levels: for free issue to officials and helpers and for sale to competitors and spectators.

Volunteers do not always expect to be fed and kept supplied with drinks but if you can do it, you should - it is evidence of your appreciation for the time and commitment freely given by your helpers. A full programme of cross country events can take a considerable time and helpers may be posted out on the course for the full duration. The best way to feed them is to issue a packed lunch when they report, hot drinks may be provided at a central point on the course.

The sale of refreshments to the public can bring a substantial income to help the local organisers meet their costs and possibly make a profit for club funds. You should be aware of local health and hygiene requirements when selling food and drink, particularly if you are using a school or other local authority facility. If you are using a public building or park, check also that you will not be breaching catering rights that have been allocated by the local authority - you may have to use the contracted caterer.

The most important consideration is the site of the sales point. You may find that you do not achieve reasonable levels of sales if the course is a considerable distance from the sales point.

A note of caution – if you do sell refreshments on the course, ensure that litter can be disposed of effectively and be prepared for a litter pick as part of the clearing up operation.

### **Does It Ever End? - Final Duties**

It is always helpful, particularly if you may be repeating the promotion in the future, to hold a debrief to determine what was good and what went wrong, if anything! Invite all of the key helpers and ask each to produce a brief report on their area of responsibility. Discussion will usually concentrate on how to improve matters in the future by sharing experiences and learning from mistakes.

It is always easy to criticise and constructive criticism should be encouraged, what is often overlooked is saying "well done" and praising success.

### ***Don't Forget to Say "Thank You"***

In the process of promoting a cross country event you will have received help from many different people or bodies. These will range from members of your own club to commercial organisations, landowners and local authorities. The majority of the support will have been in the form of goodwill - a priceless benefit that you will probably need again in the future.

Whatever the nature of support, whether in the form of goodwill or financial, never be afraid or forget to say thank you. In some cases you will need to write formal letters, in others you may decide to hold a social event in conjunction with your debrief meeting.

Our sport cannot operate without volunteer help, many may not return if they feel that their efforts are not appreciated. Make sure that you do not fall into that trap!

### **Officials' Duties – A Brief Summary of Responsibilities**

The level of the event, the number of runners expected in each race and the nature of the results service (manual, computer or chip timing) will determine which and how many of the officials listed here will need to be appointed. Be realistic about the duties that are required for your event – not all events are championships. These job descriptions will help you to decide which are required for your event.

#### ***Event Manager*** (optional)

- Responsible for the planning, ordering and delivery of all infrastructure requirements.
- Construction of the site infrastructure, excluding the course.
- Act as liaison contact during the planning stages.

#### ***Meeting Manager*** (optional)

- Ensure that all aspects of the competition are conducted correctly.
- Confirm that all Officials have reported for duty and appoint substitutes where necessary.
- Remove from duty any Official who is not conforming to required standards as defined in the UKA Endurance Officials' Pass and Licence.

#### ***Referee***

- Referee the event and settle any points of dispute submitted to him/her.
- Place the runners under Starter's orders.
- Declare the result of the race and winners of team and individual awards.
- Instruct chief officials about any particular conditions for the event.
- Instruct Assistant Referee (if appointed) on his/her role.
- Ensure that any vacancies in the Officials' team are filled.
- Ensure that the course is laid out satisfactorily before races begin.

#### ***Assistant Referee*** (optional)

- Assist the Referee as required.

#### ***Starter***

- Control the start of each race. (All questions concerning the start shall be at the absolute discretion of the Starter, whose decision shall be final.)

#### ***Start Area Coordinator***

- Liaise with the Starter to support efficient start processes.
- Allocate duties to members of the Start Team.

- Ensure, as far as practicable, that all competitors are wearing their club vest with race number securely fastened and not disfigured in any way.
- Ensure, as far as practicable, that all competitors are wearing their club vest with race number securely fastened and not disfigured in any way.
- Ensure that all Start Team members have a list of allocated pen positions and verify that athletes are in the correct area for their club.
- Appoint a team to work at the entry to the start area who will check that club vests, race numbers and transponders are worn correctly.

### ***Chief Starter's Steward***

- Liaise with Starter.
- Allocate duties to the Starters' Stewards.
- Liaise with Referee to fill any vacancies in the start team.

### ***Starters' Stewards***

- Work under the direction of the Chief Starter's Steward.
- Place competitors in their allocated pens behind the start line.

### ***Line Judge***

- Place the runners in their order of finishing.

### ***Chief Timekeeper***

- Receive from the Event Director (or prepare them themselves if so arranged) the recording cards and distribute them to the Timekeepers.
- Designate duties to the Timekeepers and their Recorders.
- Ensure that the completed recording cards are passed to the Results team.
- Liaise with Referee to fill any vacancies in the timekeeper's team.

### ***Timekeepers and Timekeepers' Recorders***

- Record the times of competitors.
- Pass the completed cards to the Chief Timekeeper.

### ***Chief Chipping Steward***

- Responsible for all aspects of athletes' chips and numbers during the competition including confirming that chips are correctly placed for efficient operation and returned after the race.
- Manage the teams of Chipping Stewards working at the start and finish.

### ***Chipping Stewards – Start***

- Ensure that all competitors are wearing their number and chip correctly.

### ***Chipping Stewards – Finish***

- Ensure that competitors remove and return all returnable chips before they leave the finish area.

### ***Finish Area Coordinator***

- Supervise all aspects of the finish area including recovery of transponders and dispersal of athletes.

### ***Chief Funnel Recorder*** (Chief Judge)

- Receive from the Event Director (or prepare them themselves if so arranged) the recording cards and distribute them to the Funnel Recorders.
- Allocate the Funnel Recorders to their respective positions on the funnels.
- Ensure that the Funnel Recorders are at their stations in time for each race.
- Ensure that the completed recording cards are passed to the Results team.
- Liaise with Referee to fill any vacancies in the funnel recording team.

### ***Funnel Recorders*** (Judges)

- Record the order of finish of all competitors in their allocated funnel.
- Pass the completed cards to the Chief Funnel Recorder.
- To achieve the level of efficiency required the Judge reading the number cards should face the approaching competitors and the Recorder should face the Judge with his/her back to the competitors, looking only at the recording board.

### ***Chief Vocal Tape Recorder Steward*** (Optional – usually used as a back up to recording cards)

- Agree the position in the funnel of each Operator with the Chief Funnel Recorder.
- Ensure that tape recorders have new batteries and tapes are clean prior to the event.
- Ensure that each Operator is conversant with their duties and the operation of the tape recorder.
- Allocate a funnel to each Operator.
- Issue a tape recorder and sufficient tapes for every race to each Operator.
- Liaise with Results Team in the event of any query.
- Liaise with Referee to fill any vacancies in the vocal tape recorder team.

### ***Vocal Tape Recorder Operator*** (Optional)

- Record clearly on tape the number of each competitor passing through their allocated funnel.
- Ensure the information recorded is readily available for use without confusion – state at regular intervals which funnel and batch number is being recorded.

### ***Disc Stewards*** (Optional)

- Ensure that sufficient disks are available for each race and sorted into order for issuing.
- Issue one disk to each competitor in the order that they leave the funnels.

The organiser will have made suitable arrangement for team managers to collect the discs and return them to the results team for calculation of results.

### ***Chief Rope Controller***

- Decide when to open each funnel and direct the movement of Rope Control Stewards.
- Liaise with Referee to fill any vacancies in the rope control team.

### ***Rope Control Assistant***

- Work under the direction of the Chief Rope Controller.
- Direct the competitors into the appropriate funnel before they reach the Rope Stewards.

### ***Rope Control Stewards***

- Work under the direction of the Chief Rope Controller.
- Move across with their guide ropes as directed by the Chief Rope Controller.

### ***Chief Funnel Steward***

- Allocate duties to Funnel Stewards and ensure they are at their stations before the finish of each race.
- Direct the operation and ensure that problems are dealt with efficiently without hampering progress in the funnels.
- Liaise with Referee to fill any vacancies in the funnel team.

### ***Funnel Stewards***

- Report to the Chief Funnel Steward at the start of each race.
- Ensure that the funnels are kept clear of spectators.
- Ensure that competitors flow through the funnels as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that the Recorders can carry out their duties unhindered.
- Assist the smooth passage of competitors through the funnels and, if necessary, be prepared to assist any competitor in distress to maintain their position in the funnel until recorded.
- Remain within the confines of the funnels and do not enter the finish area.
- Duties should be allocated, whenever possible, to avoid male stewards having physical contact with female competitors and vice versa.

### ***Chief Funnel Stopper***

- Allocate the required number of stoppers to each funnel – ensure that a stopper is available in the event that the previous batch of runners has not been cleared before the next arrives.
- Ensure that Stoppers are fully aware of their role and responsibilities for each.

### ***Funnel Stoppers***

- Place themselves behind the last competitor in each batch in their respective funnel and remain in that position until they reach the end of the funnel.
- Ensure that no competitor from behind passes them in the funnel.
- Retain the segregation between the two groups of competitors.
- Ensure that the Recorders are aware when one batch finishes and the following batch starts.

### ***Clerk of the Course*** (See also Local Organising Committee Roles)

- Responsible for the correct marking of the course and assigning stations to each Course Marshal.
- Supervise the Course Marshals.
- Ensure that the start and the approach to the finish is under proper control.
- Move around the course during the progress of the event to ensure that all stations are manned and course markings stay in place.

- Report any infringements notified by Course Marshals to the Race Referee.

### ***Course Marshals***

- See Appendix 3 for Health and Safety Guidance for Marshalls
- Man the station allocated by the Clerk of the Course.
- Ensure that all competitors follow the course, any infringement to be reported immediately to the Clerk of the Course.
- Remain at the allocated station until the last competitor of the last race has passed and then report to the Clerk of the Course.

### ***Lap Scorers***

- Ensure that all competitors complete the number of laps required.

### ***Results Team***

- Use the method determined by the Organising Committee – manual or computer – to produce accurate results from Funnel Recorders' and Timekeepers' cards.
- Resolve any queries that may arise.
- Pass the provisional results to the Referee for confirmation and release.
- Print copies of results sheets for sale.

### ***Other Duties***

There are many other duties that may need to be fulfilled, particularly in a Championship event. These will include Registration Officer, Technical Delegate, Funnel Dispersal Stewards, Club Colours Stewards, Announcer and Walkie Talkie Operators, Dope Testing Officers and Press Liaison. If these posts are required then full details will be available from the Championship Secretary.

## APPENDIX 1

### MEDICAL SERVICES AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL UK CROSS COUNTRY EVENTS

#### **Introduction**

This appendix is written as a guide to the provision of medical services at local, national and international cross country events. It is designed to provide information for race organisers and medical officers to assist with pre event planning and event medical coverage. It is incumbent upon the event organisers to follow the guidelines when organising medical cover.

#### **Pre Event Planning**

The Taylor Report into the Hillsborough disaster in 1989 stated that a thorough medical risk assessment must be conducted prior to a sporting event. This was reinforced in 2011 following an inquest into the death of a young athlete at a cross country event. For a cross country event this risk assessment should consider:

Venue

Course and terrain

Access for emergency services

Potential fire hazards

Safety of stands or seating for spectators

Spectators

Number expected

Access to course

Previous Records

Previous injury and illness profile: while this can be a good indicator it should be noted that preparation must be made for medical incidents such as cardiac arrest which although they happen only rarely there must be provision for managing.

Weather Conditions

Preparation and education for event first aid staff, competitors and spectators should be considered if adverse weather conditions (extreme heat or cold) may occur

Permit

Has a UKA Permit been granted?

Medical Insurance

Is Event Insurance in place? Is your medical insurance up to date and enable you to provide cover?

**The planning of medical services outlined here must be considered along with the Medical and Emergency Planning sections contained in pages 17 - 19**



## **Staffing**

Staffing levels should be dependent on the number of competitors, spectators, event duration, risk assessment and the possibility of adverse weather conditions. The following staffing suggestions are appropriate for regional and national events; open events, leagues and county championships may determine that the attendance of suitable first aiders is adequate.

### **Doctor**

Doctors providing medical care at sporting events should be appropriately qualified with skills in cardiorespiratory resuscitation, airway management, emergency care and acute injury management. A qualification in Sports Medicine would be desirable to enable the provision of appropriate injury assessment, management and rehabilitation advice. For most regional and national cross country events one event doctor is appropriate but it would not normally be necessary to appoint a doctor for local events.

### **Physiotherapists**

For national events and championships event physiotherapists should be present to assist athletes with pre-event preparation, injury assessment and management. They can be based at the medical HQ.

### **First Aid**

There should be liaison between the event medical officer and the first aid team prior to the event to discuss numbers and previous experience and training of the first aid team. First aiders should be present and deployed at suitable locations at the discretion of the event medical officer. Consideration should be given to the number of competitors and the risk assessment as to the number of first aiders required. If no other medical cover is planned then you should determine the number of first aiders required with your provider.

### **Paramedics**

An ambulance with qualified paramedic staff should be considered for cross country events with a significant number of competitors and spectators

### **A&E Staff**

The local A&E Dept should be noted well in advance of the event if the event can be expected to impact on their attendances. The local A&E telephone number should be known to the event medical officer and event organisers.

## **Equipment**

Suitable equipment must be available and, subject to the level of cover provided and the qualifications and experience of medical and/or first aid staff, should include:

- Airways and Oxygen
- Cervical Spine Collars
- Spinal Board
- Stretcher
- Defibrillator
- Facilities for iv access and fluids
- Emergency Drugs including asthma medication, hypostop/glucose gel, anaphylactic management,

Commonly prescribed and required drugs to be brought and prescribed at the discretion of the event medical officer. This should include vaseline, NSAIDS, Paracetamol, anti-histamines, decongestants, Salbutamol, Nebuliser, Beconase, dressings and betadine or equivalent cleaning fluids and ideally suture kit material.

Doctors should have walkie talkie contact with event organisers, stewards, first aid lead and ambulance staff. Mobiles can be used as back up.

## **Medical HQ / Event Layout**

### **Medical HQ**

The location of the Medical Headquarters should be clearly marked on the course map. It must be close (within 100m) to the finish line and accessible for ambulances – both the finish and the medical HQ must be situated outside the running lap to avoid the need to cross the course in an emergency. Ideally it should be inside a building. If in tented accommodation then warm heaters, lighting and artificial flooring would be desirable. Warm blankets and towels are essential.

It should be composed of a treatment area with a number of examination couches depending on the size of the competition. There should be a couch for each doctor and physiotherapist in attendance. A separate private room for consultations, if required, should be available.

### **First Aid Stations**

The Medical HQ is only required when appropriate staffing is available; at lower level events the First Aid provider will set up their base in a location that reflects the instruction for a Medical HQ. The number of first aid stations around the course will depend on the course layout and accessibility. They should have fluids, glucose and blankets at the station. First aiders should be present at the finish line to assist with those finishing the race and directing of injured or ill athletes to the medical head quarters if appropriate.

### **Car Parking**

Car Parking for the event medical officers and physiotherapists and massage therapists should be provided close to the medical headquarters to enable the easy transport of equipment to the medical headquarters.

## **On the Day**

### **Pre Event Briefing**

A pre-event briefing for the entire medical team should be held around 1-2 hours before the event. This will cover the deployment of staff, communication between staff, exchange of mobile numbers and protocols for dealing with casualties. In particular, roles should be designated for the emergency management of casualties. A role play scenario can be extremely useful to focus minds on roles and responsibilities and communication pathways and should be led by the event medical officer.

A course map should be available for all members of the medical team and should be divided into sectors which are designated by a code letter to enable swift identification of the location of an injured athlete. Ambulance access points must be marked.

### **Common Presentations**

Asthma

Exercise Associated Collapse

Ankle inversion injuries

Blisters

Spiking injuries

Contaminated cuts and grazes

Normal range of acute and chronic soft tissue injuries

### **Doping Control**

At UK and international events the UK Sport Doping Control Team may be present. They are best located in an adjacent building and will require exclusive use of their facility. The location should be well sign posted, and its position shown on the map in the programme. Occasionally an injured elite competitor who has been selected for Doping Control may have to be seen urgently and treated before they go off for testing and the Doping Control Officer (DCO), accompanying the athlete should be informed. The DCO will remain present during the course of treatment.

## APPENDIX 2

### RISK ASSESSMENT IN CROSS COUNTRY

#### INTRODUCTION

Risk assessment is something that we carry out every day of our lives - each time we cross a road or decide whether to go out without a coat or an umbrella. Those involved in the sport of cross country will have carried out risk assessments informally in the past - both in designing courses and planning events and also in deciding whether it is safe to continue with an event in severe weather.

This document aims to remove much of the bureaucracy from the process of risk assessment by providing a simple one page form for organisers to use, together with detailed guidance on the topics covered by the form. Much of that guidance will be familiar to experienced organisers, although we can all find we've overlooked something! However, the guidance will be particularly useful for those relatively new to organising events.

Information is also provided on the legal position of those involved in the sport - often a source of worry and confusion, even to experienced practitioners. Some references are also given at the end of the document - these are particularly intended for organisers of major promotions but may also contain information of use for more modest events.

Some larger events (e.g. major championships) may require the establishment of a Safety Advisory Group (SAG). These are convened by the local authority in whose area the event is to be held and involve the Police and other emergency services.

#### THE LEGAL POSITION

Confusion often exists between the **criminal law** and the **civil law**.

Under the **criminal law** employers and individuals at work may be prosecuted for breaches of the Health and Safety at Work Act and associated regulations:

- Governing bodies (e.g. UKA, England Athletics)
- Event promoters who employ people (e.g. local authorities, private companies)
- Facility providers (e.g. local authorities)
- Contractors
- Employees of the above (whilst at work)
- Self-employed persons at work (coaches, professional athletes)

all have duties under the law and could be liable to prosecution for breaches of such duties.

However, those who are not at work:

- Volunteer officials
- Unpaid competitors
- Unpaid club officers, coaches, team managers

**do not** have any such duties and cannot be prosecuted.

The **civil law** is a term used to describe the process by which those who have suffered injury or loss as a result of someone else's negligence can claim damages from those responsible. Claims are often reduced considerably (or are unsuccessful) because of the injured person's negligence. Most claims in athletics would be based on the common law '**duty of care**'.

Every UK citizen has a duty to take 'reasonable care' to avoid acts or omissions which can be reasonably foreseen to be likely to physically injure their 'neighbour' or cause harm to their property.

A 'Neighbour' is anyone who ought reasonably to be kept in mind in the circumstances.

In athletics the following all have a duty of care to each other:

- Event promoters
- Facility providers (and their staff)
- Contractors
- Officials
- Athletes
- Coaches
- Clubs
- Other volunteers
- Spectators

UKA provides public liability insurance cover for damages claims resulting from permitted events organised by affiliated organisations. Club insurance policies also will often provide for club members involved in club activities and events, whilst individuals may find that property or house contents insurance gives them cover against personal liability claims.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Health and safety legislation requires employers to carry out risk assessments in respect of their employees and others who may be affected by their activities. In most cases those risk assessments must be recorded. For those in the voluntary sector there is an obligation, imposed by UKA, to carry out a risk assessment in order to get a permit for a cross country event.

In any case, conducting a risk assessment is good practice - a good risk assessment should minimise the risks to competitors and others involved in the event. Once carried out the assessment should be valid for the same event in future years, although it should be reviewed each time the event is held in case there have been any important changes.

## **RISKS ATHLETES SHOULD EXPECT**

A degree of risk is inevitable in almost all sports - e.g. from hard cricket and hockey balls, or being tackled to the ground in rugby. Cross country runners should expect to encounter the following (up to a point):

- hard physical effort
- adverse weather conditions e.g. cold, wet, wind, snow
- rough, uneven ground
- mud and other slippery surfaces
- trees (including roots and branches)
- water hazards e.g. streams, puddles
- tight turns
- jostling
- possible contact from spiked shoes

Athletes should both bring and wear suitable clothing and footwear. However, the ages, abilities and experience of athletes must also be taken into account by event organisers as part of the risk assessment process.

## CROSS COUNTRY RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Race Title / Location \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Assessment \_\_\_\_\_

1.	<b>EVENT FACILITIES</b>	Details of arrangements and actions taken to reduce risks
1.1	Traffic approach routes	
1.2	Parking (cars and coaches)	
1.3	Registration & Enquiries	
1.4	Covered accommodation	
1.5	Toilets (Base and/or Course)	
1.6	Route to Course	
1.7	Refreshments	
1.8	Handling of cash	
2.	<b>THE COURSE</b>	
2.1	Start - straight / layout *	
2.2	Finish - position / layout *	
2.3	Layout (width, tight turns, cambers, dips, lap length) *	
2.4	Surface problems (bricks, stones, tarmac, hoofmarks, deep mud) *	
2.5	Obstacles * (tree roots, low branches, tripping risks)	
2.6	Risks from animals	
2.7	Risks from vehicle access *	
2.8	Other nearby activities e.g. ball games	
2.9	Water risks (course & nearby) *	
2.10	Other risks e.g. cliffs, barbed wire *	
2.11	Persons crossing the course *	

<b>3.</b>	<b>PERSONNEL / EQUIPMENT</b>	
3.1	First Aid provision * (inc. on-course access)	
3.2	Police assistance	
3.3	Traffic / Parking marshals	
3.4	Erection / dismantling of course (tape, posts, barriers, signs etc.)	
3.5	Course marshals *	
3.6	Erection of temporary structures * e.g. gantries, stands, marquees	
3.7	Other equipment e.g. PA system, generators, cabling, lighting	

- \* A map should be prepared which shows:
- course layout (inc. start/finish)
  - barriers, taped areas
  - positions of course marshals
  - water, obstacles
  - location of first aid point
  - on-course temporary structures (if any)
  - designated crossing points (if any)
  - specific on-course risks e.g.
- (and details of associated control measures)

Person carrying out the Assessment \_\_\_\_\_ (Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

**COMMENTS**

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## **GUIDANCE ON USE OF THE RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE**

*Additional details should be provided on separate sheets if there is not enough space on the form. This will often be the case for major events.*

### **1. EVENT FACILITIES**

#### **1.1 Traffic Approach Routes**

Consideration must be given to how traffic should approach the venue. Coaches may need to be routed differently to avoid narrow openings or tight turns. For larger events, liaison with the Police, the local authority and the AA or RAC is likely to be necessary. Checks should be made to avoid possible conflicts with other events taking place in the area.

For all but local events travel information (including maps) must be provided to clubs (and any individual competitors), officials and any VIPs using post and/or readily available websites. Clearly visible signs should be provided on approach routes and marshals (wearing high visibility clothing) are likely to be necessary, particularly at the entrances to parking areas (see 1.2). Local authorities (the Highways Agency on major roads) may need to be consulted about signs on the highway, although the AA/RAC may do this for the organisers.

#### **1.2 Parking**

An early consideration of any event must be where those attending will park. Locations should be chosen to be as close as practicable to the race base and course. Separate parking arrangements are likely to be necessary for coaches. Where space for coaches is limited, areas may need to be identified for them to drop off passengers and collect them after the event, with them parking elsewhere in between. (Maps or clear signage will be necessary for the coach drivers.)

Hard surfaces are clearly preferable for parking areas. Where grassed areas are used it may be necessary to cover over areas which will experience heavy traffic e.g. entrances/exits. Arrangements may need to be in place for towing out bogged down vehicles, particularly if bad weather is expected.

The parking layout should be planned in advance - a separate entrance and exit may be necessary. Parking marshals will be necessary at most events. They must be provided with high visibility clothing and may need to be equipped with suitable communication equipment e.g. radios or mobile phones.

Separate parking for officials (particularly starters transporting guns), the disabled and any VIPs, may be appropriate.

#### **1.3 Registration and Enquiries**

A suitable location must be clearly identified for taking entries and/or the collection of race numbers. Whether this should be on the course or at a separate base will be a matter for local consideration. Wherever is chosen, it is essential that those providing this service are suitably protected from the elements. If separate locations are used for dealing with enquiries, they also must be protected. Clear signage is important, particularly at larger events.

#### **1.4 Covered Accommodation**

It is becoming increasingly difficult to find cross country courses with suitable buildings close at hand to provide changing rooms and other facilities. If no suitable buildings are available or the event base is some distance from the course then temporary accommodation (e.g. marquees) must be provided near the course. Accommodation must be sufficient for all those athletes and officials who may need to use it in the event of severe weather. (At major events programmes can last several hours and club coaches may be parked a considerable distance away).

Where marquees are to be used for changing, separate male and female accommodation must be available.

Suitable signage should be provided and, at larger events, marshals may need to monitor the condition of permanent or temporary accommodation, or to take appropriate action in the event of excessive congestion. To prevent damage to flooring or the possibility of slipping, temporary floor covering (e.g. cardboard or dust sheets) may need to be used, or persons entering buildings may need to remove dirty footwear. Mops and other cleaning materials may need to be kept available. Areas of buildings not to be used for the event should be kept locked or barred off.

## **1.5 Toilets**

Sufficient toilet accommodation should be available close to the course (preferably near the start) and at any separate buildings used. Most competitors are likely to use the facilities shortly before their race. For larger events this is likely to require the provision of 'portaloos'; if this is the case then consider locating them in separate groups to cover different areas of the course. Facilities for disabled, officials and spectators may also need to be available. Adequate supplies of toilet paper should be provided - it is easy to underestimate the need for both paper and toilet accommodation. At larger events marshals may need to be made responsible for monitoring the condition of the toilets. Signs should indicate where the toilets are if this is not readily apparent (See 'References').

## **1.6 Route to the Course**

Where the event base and/or parking is a long way from the course, the route should be clearly indicated by suitable signs or maps (e.g. in information sheets or programmes). Routes should be chosen to avoid potentially dangerous road crossings. If major roads do have to be crossed then crossing points should be clearly designated and staffed by marshals (with high visibility clothing). In exceptional circumstances Police assistance may be necessary.

For some major events consideration may need to be given to providing shuttle buses.

## **1.7 Refreshments**

If refreshments are to be provided by the event organisers then suitable hygienic facilities, safe equipment (e.g. kettles, water boilers) and competent staff must be used. Some authorities insist on those using their facilities have food hygiene certificates. If contractors provide refreshments from mobile units the positioning of these must be chosen so as to minimise risks to the course and pedestrian routes (See 'References'). Contractors have a legal duty to carry out their own risk assessments and organisers may ask to see these together with details of staff's food hygiene certificates (certificates are also often displayed within their mobile sales units). Suitable litter receptacles should be provided by the event organisers and/or contractors.

## **1.8 Handling of cash**

Cross country events can involve various people in handling significant quantities of cash (entry fees, parking charges, sales of refreshments, programmes, result sheets etc.). Such people should not be situated in areas where they are alone and vulnerable to robbery. Risks can be reduced by removing cash periodically to a more secure area. The provision of radios or mobile phones to staff handling cash will allow anyone feeling threatened to call up support.

# **2. THE COURSE**

## **2.1 The Start**

The start should be of adequate width for the numbers of competitors. At some events competitors must line up in team 'pens', at others they should be encouraged to line up with faster runners at the front. The starting straight should be sufficient for the field to spread out before any tight turns are encountered - any bends early on should be gradual. Steep downhill starts are to be avoided as are the presence on the course of sudden dips, trees, posts or other obstructions.

## 2.2 The Finish

The primary concern in designing the finish will be to ensure that competitors' positions and times can be recorded correctly (see 'References'). However, steep downhill finishes are to be avoided, as are tight turns shortly before the finish (when many competitors would be sprinting for the line). At larger events marshals will often need to be provided to separate lapped competitors from faster runners who are finishing.

## 2.3 Course Layout

Cross country by its very nature must include varying terrain, gradients etc. However, there are some safety considerations in planning a course:

- It must be of adequate width for the numbers expected.  
Potential bottlenecks (e.g. gateways) should be avoided early in the race.  
Removal of gates, posts, fencing may be necessary where there are large numbers of competitors;
- Severe dips should be avoided, particularly if competitors will be closely grouped;
- Running on severe cambers should be avoided  
(especially if underfoot conditions may be slippery);
- Any steep downhill sections should not have potential dangers immediately at the bottom  
e.g. walls, fences, ravines, deep water;
- Turns must not be too tight, taking into account the number of runners; The lap length must be suitable for the numbers and capabilities of competitors. Negotiating lots of lapped runners can be dangerous as well as frustrating for faster runners;
- The course must be clearly marked with tape, marker posts and appropriate use of marshals. Going off course is never satisfactory and could introduce real dangers for very young competitors or in remote areas.

## 2.4 Surface Problems

Unsuitable surfaces can present risks, particularly when runners are closely grouped and cannot see the ground clearly. Risks to consider are bricks, large stones, tarmac areas, contaminated land, significant holes and hoofmarks (which may become frozen). Options in reducing such risks include avoiding them, removing bricks, marking large stones (with biodegradable paint or tape), covering tarmac (e.g. with earth, sand or matting) and flattening hoofmarks. Where large areas of tarmac are involved it may be necessary to designate a course as 'not suitable for spikes'.

The possible presence of some mud is an integral part of cross country, but excessive mud can create risks with competitors less able to control their direction, particularly on steep inclines. Younger competitors (who sometimes will not have spikes) will be more at risk. Very muddy areas may need to be avoided or restricted to appropriate competitors. Warnings about particularly muddy sections may need to be given prior to the start.

## 2.5 Obstacles

Obstacles on the course (tree roots, low branches, low marker posts etc.) will create more of a risk if competitors are unable to see them or take avoiding action e.g. when running in large groups. Where the obstacles present significant risks they should be avoided (it may be possible to prune some branches). Obstacles presenting lesser risks should be clearly marked with biodegradable paint or tape if visibility is a problem. Exceptionally some obstacles (particularly at the start of races) could be clearly marked by a marshal (with high visibility clothing) standing in front.

## 2.6 Animals

Possible risks from hoofmarks were referred to in 2.4. Other risks from animals could include droppings, stampeding stock or aggressive animals. Liaison with those responsible for the animals will be essential in ensuring that they are suitably separated from runners, where necessary.

Arrangements to minimise fouling of the course and/or for a pre-event clean up may be necessary, particularly in public areas where dog excrement may be present.

### **2.7 Risks from Vehicle Access**

The course itself should avoid any roads that may be in use. Where spectators etc. may be at risk from active traffic routes near the course, use should be made of appropriate warning signs to vehicles (and possibly of marshals) to control vehicle access. Access by vehicles connected with the event e.g. officials, contractors, mobile refreshment units, may need to be restricted to certain times or controlled by marshals. Marshals may need to be used to clear routes for access by emergency vehicles.

### **2.8 Other Nearby Activities**

Other activities close to the course (e.g. ball games) could create risks to competitors. Where areas are accessible to the public (e.g. in public parks) there may be risks from dogs, informal games and other activities. Liaison with the 'owners' of the course will be essential. It may be possible to plan the course to avoid other conflicting activities. Alternatively problems may be avoided by agreeing compatible start times.

### **2.9 Water Risks**

The possible presence of streams or puddles to negotiate is an integral part of cross country running. However, risks from deep or fast-flowing water must be avoided. In planning courses consideration must be given to how deep or fast the water may be after a period of heavy rain. It may be necessary to restrict water features on courses to those competitors who are capable of coping with them safely. Warnings to competitors may also be appropriate in some circumstances.

### **2.10 Other Risks**

In planning courses (and in carrying out inspections shortly before events) other risks may need to be taken into account. These could include:

- Barbed wire or protruding nails - avoid, remove or cover with suitable material;
- Cliffs or other steep drops - keep the course well away from them, provide suitable barriers or mark them with suitable signs and/or tape.

Event organisers should be alert for other possible risks.

### **2.11 Persons Crossing the Course**

For many events this will not be much of a problem but, at major Championships or other races where competitors are closely grouped, competitors and spectators (and members of the public) need to be protected from each other. Courses should be planned to minimise the need for the course to be crossed. Crowd barriers are likely to be necessary at critical points, particularly at the start and finish areas. Tape can be used elsewhere to clearly indicate the route of the course.

It may be necessary to designate 'approved' course crossing points which will need to be controlled by a marshal.

## **3. PERSONNEL / EQUIPMENT**

### **3.1 First Aid**

Adequate first aid provision must be arranged (and confirmed) well in advance of the event. First aiders should be located on or close to the course and their location indicated prominently. Where the race base is some distance away, additional first aid provision there may also be necessary. First aiders of both genders will normally need to be available. Effective communications must be established between the event organisers and first aid staff - use of

mobile phones, radios and the public address system may be necessary depending upon the size and layout of the event.

At least one member of the first aid team should be physically capable of accessing all parts of the course to deal with potential casualties, and provision should be made for possible emergency access to the course by ambulance. There should be liaison with the first aiders about suitable access to the course for their own vehicles. Consideration should also be given to identifying a suitable landing spot should an air ambulance need to attend - there could be significant danger from the downdraught if the wrong location is chosen.

First aiders should have ready access to water supplies and other facilities (e.g. a private area to treat casualties) may also be required. Further detailed guidance on first aid and the possible need for other medical support is available (see 'References').

### **3.2 Police Assistance**

Liaison with the Police is likely to be necessary for larger events in respect of traffic routes, parking and pedestrian routes to the course (see 1.1, 1.2 and 1.6). Assistance from the Police in actually directing traffic may be necessary at some events, although some Police forces seek to make charges for such services. (See the Introduction on page 1 re. the possible need for a Safety Advisory Group.)

### **3.3 Traffic / Parking Marshals**

Event organisers are likely to need to provide their own adult marshals to control traffic and pedestrians (see 1.1, 1.2 and 1.6). However, it must be noted that marshals do not actually have any legal powers to direct traffic. Marshals should be advised to bring warm and waterproof clothing and be provided with high visibility clothing e.g. jackets, vests or tabards. They should also be equipped with suitable forms of communication e.g. radios or mobile phones.

Marshals must arrive well in advance of the expected time of arrival of the first competitors and officials and be fully briefed on their duties (see the checklist at Appendix B of this document). Some marshals may need to be deployed to direct coaches or control the use of shuttle buses. Where marshals are expected to be outdoors for long periods, they may need to be provided with hot drinks and possibly food.

Someone will also need to be made responsible for erecting (and removing) signs which are intended to direct traffic, pedestrians etc. As well as providing suitable means of attaching signs, organisers should ensure that safe equipment (e.g. stepladders in good condition) is available if signs need to be positioned at height. Normally two persons should be allocated where work at height is involved and high visibility clothing should be worn close to roads. (Where this work is contracted out, the contractors have a legal duty to carry out their own risk assessment.)

### **3.4 Erecting / Dismantling of Course**

All courses are likely to need some form of marking involving posts, flags, tape, cones, signs, barriers etc. A sufficient number of physically fit people will need to be allocated to marking the course and then removing equipment after the event. (Some of these staff may also act as course marshals - see 3.5.)

Where heavier items such as crowd barriers or large numbers of posts are to be used, suitable vehicles (possibly with trailers) will be needed to transport these items close to where they are required. Those involved should be instructed in safe techniques for handling and stacking crowd barriers and other heavy items and should wear substantial footwear (preferably safety footwear). Suitable gloves may also be necessary for handling rough items. Broad-faced hammers should be provided for driving posts into the ground.

Sufficient time (and people) should be available if it is intended to dismantle the course before dark - this may involve putting a time limit on competitors. Torches or other temporary lighting may be required if time is short.

### **3.5 Course Marshals**

Marshals should be provided at any critical points on the course e.g.

- to prevent competitors following the wrong route
- to identify any poorly visible obstacles on the course (particularly near the start)
- to oversee water crossings, where appropriate
- to separate out lapped competitors (particularly at the entrance to the finish straight)
- to control course crossing points
- to seek emergency assistance when required.

They should be advised to bring warm and waterproof clothing and be provided with high visibility clothing e.g. jackets, vests or tabards. Marshals must arrive well in advance of the first race and be fully briefed on their duties (see the checklist at Appendix B of this document).

Please refer to pages 18 – 20 (Emergency Planning) for detailed instructions on the marshals' roles and responsibilities in respect of emergency incidents. The Clerk of the Course should have a list of marshals' phone numbers and they in turn should know how to contact the Clerk of the Course. Marshals must remain in position until the last runner has passed. Marshals may need to be provided with hot drinks and possibly food, if they are to be outdoors for long periods. Marshals in exposed positions may need to be rotated in bad weather and, exceptionally, some form of shelter may need to be provided.

### **3.6 Erection of Temporary Structures**

For larger events the erection of temporary structures (such as start/finish gantries or inflatables, stands, marquees, commentary points etc.) may be necessary. Competent, specialist contractors must be engaged for this work and unauthorised alterations to equipment must not be permitted. Contractors must provide a certificate of inspection for scaffolding-type structures once they have been erected. Consideration should be given to possible fire risks within marquees and whether any fire precautions are necessary. Signs prohibiting smoking must be displayed in marquees.

Positions of equipment should be planned to minimise tripping risks (particularly from tent or marquee guy ropes) and to minimise the impact of strong winds. An area may also need to be set aside for club tents. Where bad weather is anticipated (particularly strong winds), additional means of securing structures may need to be provided e.g. extra guy ropes.

Where structures are to be left in position prior to and after the event (particularly overnight), it may be necessary to make arrangements for their security.

### **3.7 Other Equipment**

Equipment such as public address systems, generators, lighting and associated cabling may need to be provided for larger events. Specialist contractors are likely to be necessary for this equipment also. Cables should be positioned to minimise tripping risks and prevent possible damage to the cables - use of overhead gantries or cable covers may be appropriate and in some cases cables may need to be buried.

Diesel generators are preferable to petrol-fuelled ones. Generators must be situated outdoors with barriers fitted around and suitable fire extinguishers provided nearby (dry powder or carbon dioxide types). Fumes from generators must be directed so that they do not create a risk or

nuisance. If refuelling of generators is going to be necessary then stocks of fuel must be kept in a secure place, preferably away from the generator and other possible ignition sources. The generator must be switched off for refuelling.

Any other electrical equipment used (e.g. portable PA systems, computers and printers, copiers, catering equipment) must also be in good condition. Cables, plugs etc. should be checked prior to use. Where multi-socket adaptors must be used these should be of the fused type - care should be taken not to overload electrical circuits in any case. Residual current devices (RCDs) should be used to provide additional safety, particularly where equipment is used outdoors.

### **COURSE MAPS**

Organisers are recommended to prepare a map (or maps) of the course showing key features. Whilst this will inevitably involve some initial work, it will provide an invaluable point of reference on the day itself. It will also be extremely useful for those who have to organise events at the venue in the future.

### **DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT**

Despite considerable attention being given to advance planning, problems can still arise and have to be addressed. On or close to the day of the event consideration may have to be given to the effect of:

- severe weather conditions
- road traffic problems
- other unforeseen difficulties.

This process is often called **Dynamic Risk Assessment**.

These problems could impact particularly on:

**the venue** (base) e.g.

the approach for road traffic

parking arrangements

availability of key facilities e.g. toilets, changing accommodation.

- **the course**

- water obstacles (depth, flow, ice)

- surface condition (hoofmarks, ruts, cambers, mud)

- visibility of tree roots, obstacles etc.

- fallen trees

- general visibility (e.g. fog, heavy snow).

The organisers should always ensure that someone (e.g. the referee or clerk of the course) is given responsibility for checking the course shortly before the event starts. A checklist is provided in Appendix A of this document which could be used to assist in checking the course on the day of the event. Alternative arrangements or approaches may be needed to control new risks which have arisen. These might involve:

- provision of additional signs;
- additional personnel;
- provision of additional or alternative equipment or facilities;
- course redesign e.g. missing out dangerous sections;
- programme changes e.g. putting back or bringing forward start times;
- warnings to competitors.

If risks cannot be controlled to an acceptable degree then consideration may need to be given to cancelling the event, but this should always be a last resort.

Someone must also be identified as being in overall charge should a major incident arise during the event. Such an incident could relate to the event itself or the area in which the event is being held. Examples include:

- a major medical emergency
- flooding due to sudden heavy rain
- public disorder (e.g. attacks on competitors by local youths)
- a fire at a fast food outlet (many carry gas cylinders).

What action is necessary will depend on the nature of the incident. For most events the organiser is likely to take charge but others (e.g. the referee or clerk of the course) will usually need to be involved in the decision making process.

### **REFERENCE**

**The Event Safety Guide** published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - reference HSG 195 (HSE Books 01787 881165) includes sections on:

- Planning and management
  - Emergency planning
  - Communication
  - Crowd management
  - Transport management
  - Structures
  - Barriers
  - Electrical installations and lighting
  - Food, drink and water
  - Amusements, attractions and promotional displays
  - Sanitary facilities
  - Medical, ambulance and first aid
- and a variety of other topics.



## CROSS COUNTRY COURSE RACE DAY CHECKLIST

**EVENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**VENUE** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>TOPIC</b>	Ref. No.*	Comments / additional precautions needed?
a)	Start (width, early turns)	2.1	
b)	Finish layout	2.2	
c)	Any changes to planned course	-	
d)	Narrow openings / tight turns	2.3	
e)	Surface conditions (e.g. frozen hard, excessively slippery, flooding)	2.4	
f)	On-course obstacles	2.5	
g)	Risks from animals	2.6	
h)	Water risks (depth, flow, ice)	2.9	
i)	Course crossings (vehicles, pedestrians)	2.7 & 2.11	
j)	<u>Severe</u> weather	-	
k)	Course marking	-	
l)	Availability of - course marshals	3.5	
m)	Availability of - first aid cover	3.1	
n)	Availability of - technical officials	-	
	Any other topics?		

\* Relevant section of 'Guidance on use of the Cross Country Risk Assessment Checklist'

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Duty at event \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR MARSHALS AT CROSS COUNTRY RACES**

This guidance is intended for marshals at cross country races carrying out the following duties:

- Car Park and Traffic Control
- Cross Country Course Marshals.

It can be used to brief marshals or be issued directly to them with appropriate parts highlighted.

#### **BRIEFING**

The Event Director must arrange for a briefing for marshals before the first race at which:

- Each marshal is issued with a course map showing his location, the location of other marshals and first aid points,
- The address and post code to be given to Emergency Services in the event of an emergency,
- Details of access points to the course for emergency vehicles,
- Confirmation is given that each marshal has immediate access to either a mobile telephone or radio communication,
- Marshals located at or close to emergency access points are able to ensure that access to the course is available at all times for emergency vehicles.

#### **GENERAL GUIDANCE**

- Arrive in plenty of time - at least 30 minutes before your duties commence
- Always have warm and waterproof clothing available with you
- Wear suitable footwear for the conditions (cross country courses in particular may be muddy and uneven)
- Sun protection cream may be needed for sunny days
- High visibility clothing (jackets or tabards) must be worn
- Communication equipment should be readily available to you (e.g. radios or mobile phones)
- You should know how to contact those in key positions (Clerk of Course, Team Leaders, First Aiders etc.)
- Ensure you fully understand what your duties are
- Although you have no legal powers to control traffic, most drivers will respond well to a polite but clear approach

## **CAR PARK / TRAFFIC CONTROL (Wear high visibility clothing)**

- Plan the parking layout in advance; ensure vehicles have adequate space to manoeuvre when leaving
- Could an overspill parking area be needed?
- Are adequate signs in place?
- Consider the underfoot conditions if using soft surfaces
  - additional cover may be needed for some areas e.g. entrances and exits
  - will arrangements to tow out bogged down vehicles be necessary?
  - could the weather deteriorate during the course of the event?
- Give clear signals to drivers entering and moving within parking areas
- Be alert for and considerate of other road users
- Control vehicles leaving parking areas if they will be joining busy roads

## **CROSS COUNTRY COURSE MARSHALS**

- Place directional signs, posts and tape etc. as instructed \*†
- Select a clearly visible position at which to stand, off the route the runners will follow \*†
- Give clear directions to runners on the route to follow (using hand signals and verbal instructions)
- If controlling a course crossing point ☒
  - when runners are passing close the crossing using a tape or rope
  - watch for gaps in passing runners
  - when a gap appears, open the crossing giving verbal instructions to spectators etc.
  - give clear verbal instructions before closing the crossing
- Speak to any runners who appear to be in difficulties
- If necessary, seek first aid assistance \*
- Stay in position until you know all runners have passed (or you are replaced)
- Remove directional signs, posts and tape etc. as instructed \*

*\*You should receive specific instructions on these points*

*† On some courses obstacles may need to be identified by other means (e.g. flags, paint or a static, clearly visible marshal)*

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE AT THE START & FINISH**

Experienced officials will be familiar with most (if not all) of this guidance but remember we also need to make sure that those with less experience are also aware.

- Always have warm and waterproof clothing available with you
- Wear suitable footwear for the conditions (cross country courses may be muddy and uneven)
- Always stay alert, particularly if you are crossing the course
- If you are handling equipment (e.g. crowd barriers, posts etc.)
  - get vehicles to bring it as close as possible
  - don't exceed your own capabilities (we're none of us as young as we were)
  - get help if you need it
  - wear suitable gloves to protect against splinters and sharp edges
- Position the feet of barriers to minimise tripping risks
- Place posts carefully  
(‘bendy’ posts are best at the head of funnels)
- Ensure finish funnels are of adequate width
- Never interfere with structures erected by specialists  
(start/finish gantries, marquees etc.)
- Suitable gloves may be necessary when handling used timing chips  
(particularly if contaminated with blood and other materials)

**COMMUNICATE ANY CONCERNS TO THE ORGANISER OR A SUITABLE SENIOR OFFICIAL**

## APPENDIX 5

### CROSS COUNTRY FINISHING FUNNELS

In most cross country races, unless an automatic timing system is employed, the accepted method of controlling the finish of cross country races is by use of funnels. These help to obviate the possibility of the line of finishing runners extending beyond the actual winning post.

The number of funnels will be determined by the anticipated number of finishers. When six or less funnels are provided, it will not be necessary to divide the area into two halves. Funnels, which should be 40 - 50 metres long and 61cms wide, and pens are constructed with ropes. Guiding ropes are fastened to the entrance and taken back over the finishing line and about 10m down the course. These ropes, which should be strong but not heavy, are held and operated by the Rope Controllers. A Chief Controller will take full charge at the finish and will assemble the Controllers at points "B" and "D" (see diagram). The entrance to funnel No 1 will be seen to be a clear run in for competitors. Each funnel is constructed to hold batches of 60 runners. The whole finishing area should be enclosed, if possible, with chestnut fencing or like. Funnels are numbered from 1 upwards.

#### *Method of Operation*

As the runners finish the end of each funnel shall be sealed by Stewards (Stoppers) in rotation who will not let the runners out of the funnel until each runner's number has been recorded by a judge and judge's recorder who shall be stationary in the pen. This is essential if discs are being issued in finishing order, as each funnel will be released when the Disc Distributor is ready.

Since the funnels are designed to hold 60 runners the Chief Controller shall, when approximately 45 have passed, look down the field of competitors and choose a suitable gap in the line of runners to give the order to "change". When the order "change" is given, Controller No 1 shall proceed from point "B" through the gap to point "A". When between 50 and 60 runners have passed into funnel No 2 the Chief Controller shall repeat the drill and on the order "change" Controller No 2 shall proceed from point "B" to "A" and this is repeated until, as displayed in the diagram, the first five funnels are used. This is repeated for funnels 6 to 10. Whilst the Chief Controller is viewing the field for a suitable gap to order the change, the Rope Controller should watch the funnel. Should a hold-up occur he will advise the Chief Controller who will order a change.

As each funnel is filled Stoppers Nos. 1 to 10 will follow the last runner and remain in that position until the runners in front of him are clear and the recorders are ready to accept the runners behind him. Funnel Stewards should encourage the runners to keep moving and the funnel closed tight, on no account should runners be told to slow down. If a runner should collapse in the funnel, Stewards should move the runner into the Stewards' pen and ensure that his number is carried forward in his finishing position and that the position is recorded on the board.

After five funnels are filled the Chief Controller shall give the order "change" and funnel controllers shall return from point "A" back to point "B" thus leaving a clear funnel No 1. After ten funnels are filled the Chief Controller shall give the order "change" and the second four Controllers shall return from point "C" back to point "D". If funnel No 1 has not been cleared, Stoppers will be in a position to segregate the outgoing and incoming runners.

A board check of the finishing order is made in each funnel and to avoid holding up the runners, the judge and recorder should walk from the far end of the funnel towards the finishing line recording as they go. The recording sheets should be made out as follows: Funnel and Board number, order of finish, Competitor's number.

For a ten funnel system, in funnel 1 the boards will be numbered at the top 1, 11, 21, etc.

In funnel 2, the boards will be numbered 2, 12, 22, etc.

Where less than ten funnels are used, boards will be numbered pro rata.

Each board will have space for sixty numbers.

Minimum personnel required for ten funnels: Referee - 1, Judges at finish - 2, Judges' Stewards - 2, Chief Rope Controller - 1, Rope Control Stewards - 9, Judges/recorders -20, Funnel Stewards - 12.

Guide to the number of funnels required, based on the size of the race with the greatest number of runners:

100 runners	2 funnels
200	3
300	4
400 - 600	5
700 - 900	6
1000 - 1200	7
1300 - 1400	8
1500 - 1600	9
Over 1700	10



## **APPENDIX 6**

### **UKA RULES FOR COMPETITION**

#### **CROSS COUNTRY**

UKA Rules for Competition are published every two years and can be found at <http://www.uka.org.uk/competitions/rules/>.

Rules 1–24 apply to all competitions held under UKA Rules and those rules that apply specifically to Cross Country can be found at Rule 501 to 515.



## APPENDIX 6

### CONTACT ADDRESSES

- UKA and England Athletics      Athletics House, Alexander Stadium, Walsall Road, Birmingham, B42 2BE  
Tel. 0121 713 8400
- English Cross Country Association      Mr I Byett, Hon Secretary, ECCA, 22 Denham Drive, Berg Estate, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG22 6LR.  
Tel & Fax: 01256 328401, e-mail: [ianbyett@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:ianbyett@ukonline.co.uk)
- Midland Counties AA      Alexander Stadium, Walsall Road, Perry Barr. Birmingham, B42 2LR.  
Tel.:0121 344 4201, Email [athletics@mcaa.org.uk](mailto:athletics@mcaa.org.uk)
- Northern Athletics      7a, Wellington Road East, Dewsbury, WF13 1HF.  
Tel. 01924 457922, e-mail: [judith@northern-athletics.org.uk](mailto:judith@northern-athletics.org.uk)
- South of England AA      Crystal Palace National Sports Centre. Ledrington Road, London, SE19 2BB.  
Tel. 0208 778 7167, E-mail: [seaacompetition@gmail.com](mailto:seaacompetition@gmail.com)
- Athletics Northern Ireland      The Secretary, Athletics Northern Ireland Cross Country & Road Running Committee, Athletics House, Old Coach Road, Belfast, BT9 5PR.  
Tel: 0289 060 2707, E-mail: [info@niathletics.org](mailto:info@niathletics.org)
- Scottish Athletics      Caledonia House, South Gyle, Edinburgh. EH12 9DQ.  
Tel.: 0131 539 7320, E-mail: [admin@scottishathletics.org.uk](mailto:admin@scottishathletics.org.uk)
- Welsh Athletics      Cardiff International Sports Stadium, Leckwith Road, Cardiff. CF11 8AZ.  
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