

# RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ROAD RACES

## 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. Many of those involved in road running will have carried out risk assessments informally in the past - both in designing courses and the general planning of events.

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.

Road races (as for other public events) are increasingly being subjected to Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs). These are convened by the local authority in whose area the event is to be held. The Police usually play an influential role within SAGs and the other emergency services are also often involved.

Neither the Police nor a SAG actually have direct power to prohibit an event, but they can make life extremely difficult for the organisers where they are unhappy about race arrangements. However, providing UK Athletics are satisfied about the safety of competitors and others, they will still be prepared to issue a race permit.

## 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

In road races event promoters and others involved in the organisation of the event have a duty of care to competitors taking part, and all of these have duties to other road users. However, other road users also have a duty of care in return - especially to drive with consideration when they know that an event is taking place.

UK Athletics provides public liability insurance cover for damages claims resulting from permitted events organised by affiliated organisations. Many clubs also have their own insurance policies, some of which provide cover for club members involved in club activities and events. Individuals may also find that property or house contents insurance gives them cover against any 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 UK Athletics, to carry out a risk assessment in order to get a permit to hold a road race.

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. Road runners should expect to encounter the following (up to a point):

- hard physical effort
- adverse weather conditions e.g. cold, wet, wind, snow, heat
- possible unevenness in road or footpath surfaces
- jostling, particularly at larger events
- presence of other road or footpath users, particularly vehicles.

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.

## ROAD RACE RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Race Title / Location \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Assessment \_\_\_\_\_

1.	EVENT FACILITIES	Details of arrangements and precautions
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.	THE COURSE	
	Course type (e.g. 'offroad', quiet roads etc.)	
2.1	Start - position / straight *	
2.2	Finish - position / layout *	
2.3	Route - significant risks e.g. right hand turns, major junctions, narrow sections etc. *	
2.4	Relay changeover layout *	
2.5	Need for warning signage, no parking arrangements *	
2.6	Police assistance	
2.7	Lead vehicle	
2.8	Sweep up vehicle	
2.9	Drinks and sponge stations *	
3.	PERSONNEL / EQUIPMENT	
3.1	First Aid provision *	
3.2	Police liaison	
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:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- course layout (inc. start/finish)</li> <li>- barriers, cones etc.</li> <li>- location of traffic warning signs</li> <li>- positions of course marshals</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- location of first aid provision</li> <li>- drinks and sponge stations (if any)</li> <li>- on-course temporary structures (if any)</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

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

## **GUIDANCE ON USE OF THE ROAD RACE RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

*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/or 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 arrange 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 may be necessary if coaches are expected to attend. 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 the coaches parked 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 (a safely parked vehicle may be adequate for small events). 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 not always possible to find 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 it may be necessary to provide some form of cover 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 some 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. In wet conditions, to prevent damage to flooring or the possibility of slipping, temporary floor covering (e.g. cardboard or dust sheets) may need to be used. 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 barriered 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'. Facilities for any disabled competitors should be available and disabled officials and spectators may need to be taken into account. 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.

## **1.7 Refreshments**

If off-course 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 having 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 itself and main 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**

Road races can involve various people in handling significant quantities of cash (particularly entry fees, but also possibly from parking charges, sales of refreshments, programmes, result sheets etc.). Such people should not be situated in locations 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

- **Introduction**

The Police should normally be advised well in advance about any road race taking place on public roads. See page 1 about Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) and the powers of the Police and SAGs.

- **General Principles of Course Design**

**'Off road'** - It may be practicable to hold races on courses free from motor vehicles e.g. in public parks or on cycleways and paved footpaths - an approach often favoured by the Police. However, this will not always be safer, either for runners or members of the public, due to the presence of pedestrians (including children), cyclists, prams, skateboards, dogs, waterfowl etc. Usage of parks will increase considerably in good weather and there may be other events taking place at the same time. All of these factors must be considered in deciding whether to use an 'off road' course.

**Quiet roads** - In many cases it will be safer to use quiet roads e.g. in rural areas or on industrial estates. Many types of roads will be much quieter for events held at weekends, particularly in the morning, or during the evening on any day. Timing may be particularly important in ensuring an adequate degree of safety on traditional road race routes where an 'off road' course is impractical.

**Busier roads** - Increasing traffic volumes create more potential problems for race organisers, particularly on traditional routes. Use of cones to separate runners from traffic may be necessary on tight corners or narrow sections. Signs to warn traffic of the presence of runners will be essential (as should be the case for quiet roads too). For events attracting limited fields this may be all that is required - the runners will be at no greater risks than cyclists using the road in normal circumstances.

However, for large events or where traffic is heavy, consideration must be given to lane closures or road closures for all or part of the course. Liaison with the local authority, the highway authority (if different) and the Police will be essential in such circumstances.

### 2.1 The Start

The start should be of adequate width for the anticipated numbers of runners. The starting straight should be sufficiently long for the field to spread out before any tight turns are encountered. At least 100 metres of straight will be necessary (longer for larger numbers of runners) and any early bends should be gradual. Steep downhill starts should be avoided as also should low level 'street furniture' e.g. bollards, waste bins, signs (alternatively it may be possible to protect or clearly mark such items so that their presence is obvious above groups of runners).

Where races take place on 'live' roads, runners should assemble off the road prior to the start. For large events competitors should be encouraged to line up with the faster runners at the front - signs indicating anticipated finishing times will assist in this process. Barriers will be required at larger events to keep spectators off the course during the start.

## **2.2 The Finish**

The finish should preferably be off road or at least on roads with low levels of traffic. Use of a closed car park, lay-by or footpath may be practicable and UKA rules also allow grass or other surfaces to be used. Steep downhill finishes must be avoided, as also should tight turns shortly before the finish (when competitors may be sprinting for the line).

Where a finish on a 'live' road is unavoidable, competitors may need to be separated from the traffic (by metal barriers, cones or tape dependent on the volume and speed of traffic). Similar criteria must be applied to protecting finish officials where they cannot carry out their duties from off the road. Officials in vulnerable positions should wear clearly visible clothing e.g. bright coats or tabards.

Particularly at larger events, use of barriers, cones or tape may be necessary to keep spectators and runners who have finished out of the way of the finish area and the straight leading up to it.

## **2.3 The Route**

Circular courses on 'live' roads should normally be anti-clockwise, thus allowing predominantly left hand turns. Aspects to try to avoid when planning a route are:

- right hand turns, especially across busy roads
- crossing major junctions or roundabouts
- crossing entrances to large premises which will be open
- very narrow roads, particularly those with blind corners or hills
- heavily used bus stops
- areas where parked vehicles are likely to be present
- level crossings
- bridges which can swing or rise.

However, risks from these sources may be reduced to an acceptable level by measures such as:

- the use of warning and no parking signs (see 2.5)
- Police assistance (see 2.6)
- presence of course marshals (see 3.5)
- short diversions of runners off the road (e.g. onto footpaths)
- coning off corners or short sections to protect runners

- temporary road closures
- temporary bus stop closures
- assurances from rail operators or other authorities re. level crossings or bridges.

Surfaces of the roads (or footpaths) to be used should be of an adequate standard, free from major potholes etc.

Where events are to be held during hours of darkness, particular attention must be paid to the following:

- lighting on all parts of the course
- road surface imperfections which may not be visible
- the possible need for additional warning signs and/or warning lights
- the wearing of high visibility clothing by those connected with the event organisation
- use of vehicle hazard warning lights.

## **2.4 Relay Changeovers**

The guidance provided on 'The Finish' (see 2.2) is also applicable to relay changeovers. At larger events the number of outgoing runners present in the actual changeover area can be minimised by announcing the numbers of incoming teams as they approach the finish. Where outgoing athletes must run in the opposite direction to incoming runners, it will often be necessary to physically separate them to avoid collisions. Where incoming and outgoing athletes run in the same direction, incoming runners must be diverted off the course as soon as they have crossed the finish line. At larger events it will often be necessary for outgoing athletes to start on instruction from an official rather than on a touch of hands.

## **2.5 Signage**

Where races are run on 'live' roads, signs will normally be necessary to warn oncoming traffic of runners on the road. These will usually be required at major junctions, narrow sections of the course, blind corners or hills, or where runners enter a major road from a minor one. In some situations, particularly on narrow roads, signs on both sides of the road will be necessary, rather than just the side that athletes are running on. Signs must be placed high enough to be seen by drivers and be of adequate size. (Various specialist commercial printers can supply suitable signs.)

Actions may be necessary to prevent parking where parked vehicles may force runners out into a dangerous position or could obstruct the vision of oncoming drivers. This may be achieved by putting signs in place requesting 'no parking' (these would not have any legal force). Where risks are more significant the Police should be asked to put 'no parking' cones in position (see 2.6).

## **2.6 Police Assistance**

Whether Police assistance is necessary will depend on a variety of factors including the design of the course, the density of road traffic and the size of the event. Where a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is involved, the nature of the Police presence is likely to be determined as a result of the SAG's deliberations. Police forces do not have a statutory right to charge for police on duty on public roads but some 'invite' contributions from race organisers, particularly for larger events.

A Police presence is most likely to be required at higher risk road intersections and start and finish areas. Assistance from the Police in providing 'no parking' cones may also be appropriate (see 2.5). The level of Police involvement should be clarified in advance and arrangements made for liaison between race organisers or marshals and police personnel (see 3.2).

## **2.7 Lead Vehicle etc.**

A vehicle with hazard warning lights on, or a motor cyclist or cyclist in high visibility clothing should lead the runners round the course. As well as showing the route, on 'live' roads this will provide a clear indication to oncoming traffic that the event is in progress. Consideration must be given to safe arrangements for the lead vehicle to turn off or park at the finish.

## **2.8 Sweep Up Vehicle**

On point to point or large circuit courses a 'sweep up' vehicle should be provided to collect runners who have dropped out. Such a vehicle should preferably carry someone to provide first aid treatment (see 3.1) and may also be used to collect course marshals when their duties are complete.

## **2.9 Drinks and Sponge Stations**

UK Athletics Rules require drinks stations to be provided for races of 10 km and above at 5km intervals and at the finish. For some events sponge stations may also be provided. For races on 'live' roads these should be positioned off the main carriageway (e.g. on footpaths or in lay-bys or gate openings) and away from higher risk parts of the course (see 2.3). Suitable standards of cleanliness and hygiene must be in place for water containers and sponges. Arrangements should be made for collection and disposal of litter (discarded bottles, plastic cups or sponges). These may create a risk of slips or trips as well as an environmental nuisance.

### **3. PERSONNEL / EQUIPMENT**

#### **3.1 First Aid**

The level and nature of first aid cover must relate to the numbers of runners, the capabilities of participants (an event attracting a high proportion of novices would justify more cover than a predominantly club race), anticipated weather conditions and the length and severity of the course. Cover should be arranged (and confirmed) well in advance. Many events use the services of the Red Cross or St. John Ambulance, but some organisers may have adequately qualified persons within their own ranks (e.g. club members or local authority employees). Such persons may be qualified doctors, nurses or paramedics, or have attended relevant training courses e.g. First Aid at Work or First Aid in Sport. There will need to be liaison between the event organiser and the provider(s) of first aid services on the level of coverage necessary, particularly for larger events. Separate UKA Guidance is available on levels of medical cover for road running (this is normally supplied with permit applications).

Normally at least one first aider of each gender should be available. The start and finish areas are suitable locations for the first aiders but, dependent on the course layout, others may be stationed around the course. A first aider should also be carried in the 'sweep up' vehicle (see 2.8). Alternatively, an ambulance or dedicated first aid vehicle or motorcycle could be placed at a strategic location or follow at the rear of the field. First aid personnel must be able to contact the emergency services where necessary.

Effective communications must also be established between the event organisers and first aid personnel - use of mobile phones, radios and any public address system may be necessary depending upon the size of the event and layout of the course. Course marshals, who may be the first to become aware of casualties, should also be able to summon first aid assistance (see 3.5). A serious incident may require the attendance of a public ambulance or even the air ambulance and arrangements may need to be made for them to get to the casualty (this may be a problem on events held 'off road' or on closed roads). Further detailed guidance on first aid and the possible need for other medical support is available (see 'References').

#### **3.2 Police Liaison**

Where Police assistance is provided at events (see 2.6), the event organiser will need to make arrangements for liaising with them and ensuring that the Course Director and relevant marshals are aware of what the Police role will be. In some cases police officers may be working in conjunction with course marshals (see 3.5) at critical points on the course.

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

At larger events, organisers are likely to need to provide their own (adult) marshals to control traffic, parking 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 Course Equipment**

Equipment such as posts, tape, cones, signs, barriers etc. is particularly likely to be needed at the start and finish areas and may also be required at other locations on the course. 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 any 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 where posts need to be driven into the ground.

### **3.5 Course Marshals**

Adult marshals should be provided at any critical points on the course, particularly significant road intersections. Their duties will include some or all of the following:

- placing (and recovering) warning and directional signs
- preventing competitors following the wrong route
- acting as an additional means of warning drivers
- requesting drivers to slow down or stop
- liaising with and assisting police officers e.g. in controlling traffic
- controlling spectators and other pedestrians

- directing competitors at or close to the finish
- summoning first aid assistance.

Marshals 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 event and be fully briefed on their duties (see the checklist at Appendix B of this document).

Written instructions for marshals are always useful, particularly at major events. Some marshals may need to be equipped with some form of communication e.g. radios or mobile phones, particularly those on more remote parts of the course, in case any casualties or other problems occur. The Course Director must have a list of marshals' phone numbers and they in turn must know how to contact the Course Director.

Marshals must remain in position until the last runner has passed or any cut off time has been reached. For longer events marshals may need to be provided with hot drinks and possibly food, if they are to be outdoors for long periods.

Where marshals use vehicles to gain access to their position on the course they should park with consideration both for competitors and other road users. A well placed vehicle with hazard warning lights can often act as an additional warning to oncoming traffic.

### **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 also likely to be necessary for this equipment. Cables should be positioned to minimise tripping risks and prevent possible damage to the cables - use of overhead gantries or cable covers may be necessary.

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. The Risk Assessment Checklist identifies various items which should be shown on organisers' maps.

### **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 (affecting access to the course or the course itself)
- 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** e.g.
  - surface condition (ice, snow, flooding)
  - general visibility (e.g. fog, heavy snow)
  - unexpected road works
  - road traffic accidents
  - traffic congestion and/or diversions
  - unexpected events taking place affecting the route
  - fallen trees.

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

- provision of additional warning signs
- additional marshals or other personnel
- provision of additional or alternative equipment or facilities
- course redesign e.g. missing out problem sections
- programme changes e.g. putting back or bringing forward start times
- giving 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 road traffic accident
- flooding due to sudden heavy rain
- a major medical emergency
- a fire in premises close to the course
- public disorder (e.g. attacks on competitors by local youths)
- a fire at a fast food outlet at the event (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 Course Director / Clerk of the Course) will usually need to be involved in the decision making process.

## **REFERENCES**

**The Event Safety Guide** published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - reference HSG 195 £20 (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.

### **Road Running Handbook** (UK Athletics)

This handbook provides technical guidance on a wide range of aspects of the planning and organisation of road races. Whilst this document supercedes the handbook in respect of Risk Assessment (the handbook contains some technical inaccuracies), the handbook provides useful guidance in several key areas, particularly first aid and medical provisions, drink and sponge stations, start and finish design and relay changeover design. It should, however, be noted that the 'Event Safety Code' referred to in the handbook has not been formally accepted by UK Athletics.

The Handbook is expected to be replaced by web-based guidance.

### **Road Running : Levels of Medical Cover** (UK Athletics)

This document sets out three levels of medical cover that may be provided for road races. Provision equivalent to Level 1 is necessary for the issue of a UKA Road Race Permit.

## ROAD RACE COURSE - DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT

EVENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

	TOPIC	Ref. No.*	Comments / additional precautions needed?
a)	Start arrangements	2.1	
b)	Finish layout	2.2	
c)	Any changes to planned course	-	
d)	New risks on route	2.3	
e)	Underfoot conditions (e.g.ice, snow, flooding)	-	
f)	Road works / traffic issues	-	
g)	Other unexpected events	-	
h)	<u>Severe</u> weather	-	
i)	Lead vehicle	2.7	
j)	Sweep up vehicle	2.8	
k)	Drinks and sponge stations	2.9	
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 Road Race Risk Assessment Checklist'

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

**UK ATHLETICS**

**CROSS COUNTRY & ROAD RACES**

**HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR MARSHALS**

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

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

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

**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 on car park and traffic control duties and by marshals and lead motorcycle or cycle riders on 'live' roads
- Communication equipment should be readily available to you (e.g. radios or mobile phones)
- You should know how to contact those in key positions (Course Director, 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?

**CAR PARK / TRAFFIC CONTROL (contd.)**

- 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

**ROAD RACE COURSE MARSHALS** (Wear high visibility clothing on 'live' roads)

- Place warning and directional signs as instructed \*
- Select a safe and clearly visible position (preferably off road) \*
- Give clear directions to runners on the route to follow (using hand signals and verbal instructions)
- Where necessary, request drivers to slow down or stop (use hand signals and, where possible, verbal explanations)
- Where necessary, request spectators and other pedestrians to keep clear
- 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 warning and directional signs as instructed \*

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

**CROSS COUNTRY COURSE MARSHALS**

- Place directional signs, posts and tape etc. as instructed \*†
- Select a clearly visible position, off the route the runners will follow \*†
- Give clear directions to runners on the route to follow (using hand signals and verbal instructions)
- Where necessary, request drivers to slow down or stop (use hand signals and, where possible, verbal explanations)
- 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 \*

**CROSS COUNTRY COURSE MARSHALS (contd.)**

- 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)*

## UK ATHLETICS

**CROSS COUNTRY & ROAD RACES****HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR OFFICIALS 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 in particular may be muddy and uneven)
- Sun protection cream may be needed for sunny days
- 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)

**FOR EVENTS ON 'LIVE' ROADS**

- Timekeepers, judges and recorders must not stand in the roadway  
(unless protected by substantial barriers)
- Officials working close to the road must wear bright or high visibility clothing
- Ensure that adequate warning signs are visible to traffic
- Assemble runners off the road at the start
- Ensure that the finish design leads finishers away from the roadway

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