



ASSOCIATION OF RUNNING CLUBS

EVENT PLANNING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this document is to inform and promote best practice for organisers of ARC permitted races.

Consideration of the following information will benefit the organisers, competitors, marshals and the general public.

ARC requires a written Risk Assessment to be generated prior to the date of the race. The responsibility for carrying out an effective Risk Assessment, for all races, lies with the Race Director/Organiser

The following document is an excellent reference point and should be studied and acted upon.

The Home Office 'Good Practice Safety Guide - for Small and Sporting events taking place on the Highway, Roads and Public Places' 2006 (Good Practice Safety Guide).

NOTE The Minimum Race Standards for an ARC permit are defined at: www.runningclubs.org.uk > Races/Permits > ARC Minimum Standards forms ARC 004 (Road) and ARC 004 (Trail/XC)

RACE MANAGEMENT TEAM

It may be beneficial to delegate responsibility for certain aspects of the race to several individuals or groups. For example:

The Race Route:

Marshals
Signage

Race HQ:

Toilets
Changing
Catering
Information

Liaison:

Local authorities
Emergency services

THE RACE VENUE and PLANNING THE ROUTE:

One of the most important factors contributing to the success of a race is the chosen route and venue.

There are a number of criteria and guidelines which should be considered to ensure the safety and the suitability of the chosen route.

- Where will the race HQ venue be? Consider, parking, changing, toilets.
- Will the start and finish area be large enough to cope with the planned number of competitors?
- Is the course safe for the competitors and the marshals?
- Are road closures required?
- Is the surface suitable?
- Are there any road crossings? (Left hand routes are often the safest)
- Is the course wide enough for the planned number of competitors?
- Does the course cross a railway level crossing or a swing bridge?
- Will the route need to be accurately measured?
- Is the finish line wide enough to accommodate peak flow of runners?
- How many drinks stations and where are they to be positioned?

Once a route has been finalised it will be possible for you to define:

- Road closure schedule (where required)
- Time and date of event
- Timetable including start, last competitor to finish, times of highway use required for road closure applications.
- Consider stipulating (on the entry form and race instructions) a reasonable time limit for your event so that marshals and other officials know when they can expect to stand down and clear the course. This is usually after the 'Sweep' marshal has passed.

Where significant traffic levels, or speed limits over 40mph, or poor sight lines or narrow carriage ways are anticipated, the highways authority will expect the race organiser to apply for formal road closures.

CONSENTS and PERMISSIONS:

In order to organise a race effectively, and before advertising the event or making entry forms available, advanced planning is necessary.

You will need to obtain the agreement of the landowner(s) for the use of their land and facilities for your route, race HQ, car parking etc.

You should approach your Local Highways Authority to establish their support for the race and any requirements in terms of road closures.

The LHA will advise if there is Safety Advisory Group (or its equivalent) in place.

The purpose of a SAG is to bring together representatives of the Emergency Services, Police, Highways Authority, Local Councils etc to review, with the organiser of an event, the controls and procedures planned to be in place so as to uphold reasonable standards of public safety at all public events.

If there is no SAG in place, the various groups will be required to be contacted independently:

Police
Local Highways Authority
Landowners
Emergency Services

SAFETY ADVISORY GROUPS

Increasingly, local councils have formal notification procedures for unlicensed public events through their SAG or equivalent. Many SAGs require submission of a Notification form, with a Management Plan, describing general arrangements for the race, Risk Assessment, Insurance details, Contingency plans, Race Route etc, 3-6 months before the event.

The SAG will circulate your notification and co-ordinate responses from all relevant council departments, emergency services, statutory undertakers, public transport providers etc.

For new or larger races, or where issues have arisen from previous years, you may be asked to attend a meeting of relevant agencies to discuss your proposals, and the responses received, in more detail.

SAGs do not normally formally 'approve' plans for an event.

ARC would not approve a permit application for a race where public safety concerns have been raised by a SAG and these issues remain unresolved.

Some authorities require the SAG consultation process to be completed before an application for a road closure order can be considered.

If a local council is also the landowner for your assembly area, race HQ or start/finish area you may also be required to apply for a separate Rental Agreement or Licence, governing the terms of your use of their facilities. Temporary structures such as gantries, stages, walkways, seated stadia, or equipment towers placed on the highway or within public areas, will also require a licence, risk assessments etc.

Consultation with the local authority will establish their requirements for licences and approvals etc.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

A management plan for your race provides a summary of information for all aspects of the event, for the benefit of those involved in its organisation and delivery. This includes details of the race programme and supporting events together with event management personnel, site plans, routes, necessary planning documents, production schedules, risk assessment and the cover provided by the police, stewards and emergency services.

Maps and plans of the course and start/finish should be included to provide reference on the day for stewards, police and event control.

A management plan should be a working document that is a useful tool for you and your colleagues in planning and delivering the event. Many local council SAGs require an initial management plan to be provided at the time of notification. Event planning is flexible and documents will need to be updated.

It is recommended, a final version is in place in sufficient time to allow for circulation to key personnel and to give them time to read and digest it. Below is a list of headings which may need to be included in the plan, expanded to include all the relevant detail

MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTENT

1. Statement of Intent
2. Event Management
3. Communications
4. Event Day Programme Information
5. Risk Assessments
5. Technical Information
6. Stewarding & Security
7. Lost Children
8. Emergency Procedures
9. Contingency Plans

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Home Office 'Good Practice Safety Guide - for Small and Sporting events taking place on the Highway, Roads and Public Places' 2006 (Good Practice Safety Guide), states:

“Every organiser of an event must ‘make suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks’ to the health and safety of the people connected directly with his event i.e. participants, organisers, stewards and spectators, and to persons who are indirectly connected with his or her event; i.e. residents, pedestrians, shoppers, motorists etc.”

This requirement for you to carry out a risk assessment applies regardless of the size of the event or whether it takes place entirely on the public highway.

Why carry out a risk assessment?

The risk assessment procedure aims to ensure that your race will:

- Be safe for the general public, spectators, competitors and officials
- Not cause undue nuisance to the general public
- Come up to at least a minimum standard of race organisation
- Meet legal requirements

The risk assessment is a necessary requirement in meeting the ARC permit standards and should accommodate the requirements of the Good Practice Safety Guide referred to above.

It is recognised, however, that runners ought to expect to encounter some risks e.g. physical effort, jostling in larger races, (especially at the start), adverse weather conditions and road traffic on the open roads.

What is a risk assessment?

“Risk assessment is a careful examination of what is likely to cause harm to people, followed by an explanation of managed contingencies to mitigate such risks. In reality it is identifying hazards and recording actions taken to reduce the risks.” (Good Practice Safety Guide)

A risk assessment document has to identify:

- Each perceived hazard – a hazard is anything which may cause harm to persons or property associated with the event – traffic, people, surfaces, street furniture.
- The persons at risk from that hazard – ‘Risk’ is the chance, (high medium or low), somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with analysis of how serious the harm could be. Only risks with a medium or high rating need to be recorded.
- The degree of injury those people might suffer from the hazard.
- Measures to reduce the severity of the risk.
- The severity of the risk after preventative measures have been taken and if anything more can be done to reduce that risk even further.

When carrying out a risk assessment inspection this should:

- Be undertaken at the same time and on the same day of the week as the event, so you have a better appreciation of typical traffic flow etc.
- Have good quality, detailed maps of the course available.
- Involve walking or driving round the course in the direction of the event.
- If there are difficult features, the information should be recorded to a plan, to be included in the risk assessment, and should include, signing requirements, marshal positions and their duties.

Risk assessments should be made on the subject of

- Situations which can be seen at the time of the assessment e.g. physical features such as a junction with limited visibility
- Situations which cannot be seen at that time but where circumstances may develop, such as traffic conditions or other users of the road.
- Implications of other events happening on the day.

Areas to be considered in the risk assessment

- Race Headquarters – traffic, car parking, toilets, registration office and getting to the start
- Start - Segregation of runners, spectators and traffic and safety from hazards of street furniture
- Course –Traffic management requirements at every turn, junction, narrow roads. Running surface, Street Furniture, Positioning of marshals, Position of signage, cones and barriers, Positioning of drinks stations
- Finish area
- Traffic management
- Medical services

- Set up and break down (contractors' works), erection and taking down marquees, barriers etc
- How marshals will be briefed to ensure awareness of the risk assessment and their responsibilities?

The safety of competitors, marshals and other road users in all of the above should be considered.

Consideration should also be given to the hazards to competitors, spectators, volunteers and other road users, motorists and pedestrians during the race:

- Traffic levels and speed limits
- Sight lines, junction layouts
- Carriageway width
- Access to properties – residential, business, institutional, churches etc
- Access for emergency services and statutory undertakers
- Practicality of implementing road closures
- Availability of alternative diversion routes

For Off Road and Cross Country Events the following should also be considered in the risk assessment

- The Surface, stones, dried hoofmarks and ruts, deep mud.
- Obstacles, tree roots, low branches, tripping risks.
- Risks from animals.
- Other nearby activities e.g. ball games
- Water risks (course & nearby)
- Other risks e.g. cliffs, barbed wire
- Other persons crossing and using the course
- Layout (width, tight turns, dips, lapping)

NOTE

1. The above lists are not exhaustive and should be used as a guide a second pair of eyes may identify risks which you may have overlooked.
2. The degree of risk has to be balanced against the outcome and the difficulties of reducing the risk.

Emergency Action Plan

The likely emergency scenarios in the various phases of the race must be thought through and relevant people consulted so if an emergency/accident occurs, the race organisation will be able to cope.

The Risk Assessment Process

This is a very simple step by step guide

1. Where and what is the risk?
2. Who is at risk?
3. Assess the risk High (H), Medium (M) , or Low (L).
Is the risk is H or M? If so.....
4. What mitigation can be put into place to reduce the risk level to Low?

Apply this to a person crossing the road

1. Where and what is the risk?
 - a. On the road , passing traffic
2. Who is at risk?
 - a. The person crossing the road and maybe other road users
3. Assess the risk High (H), Medium (M) , or Low (L).
 - a. The risk is High. injury likely caused by passing traffic
4. What mitigation can be put into place to reduce the risk level to Low?
 - a. Teach the person the Green Cross Code and ensure it is used
 - b. Tell them to use a zebra crossing or pedestrian crossing

Example of a Course Risk Assessment

Persons at risk (other codes can be added)

PERSONS AT RISK CODES
A. COMPETITORS
B. SPECTATORS
C. ORGANISERS/MARSHALS
D. ONCOMING TRAFFIC
E. PASSING TRAFFIC
F. TRAFFIC FROM RIGHT
G. TRAFFIC FROM LEFT

Mitigation codes (other codes can be added)

MITIGATION CODES
1. APPROACH SIGNS
2. ROAD CLOSURE
3. MARSHAL
4. ADDITIONAL MARSHALS
5. ADDITIONAL SPECIAL MEASURE or SIGNAGE
6. TRAFFIC CONES

Below is an example page from a risk assessment it shows where the risk is, who is at risk, the level of assessed risk, and the actions which will be put into place to reduce them to low.

The layout in the "Good Practice Safety Guide" is different but the process and recording of the detail is generic

There is no mandatory layout

See following page for an example layout

PERSONS AT RISK CODES				MITIGATION CODES		
A. COMPETITORS				1. APPROACH SIGNS		
B. SPECTATORS				2. ROAD CLOSURE		
C. ORGANISERS/MARSHALS				3. MARSHAL		
D. ONCOMING TRAFFIC				4. ADDITIONAL MARSHALS		
E. PASSING TRAFFIC				5. ADDITIONAL SPECIAL MEASURE or SIGNAGE		
F. TRAFFIC FROM RIGHT				6. TRAFFIC CONES		
G. TRAFFIC FROM LEFT				7. DIRECTION SIGNS		
MARSHAL POSITION	SECTION MARSHAL	LOCATION DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF MARSHALS	RISK & LEVEL	PERSONS AT RISK	MITIGATION TO REDUCE RISK TO LOW or MAINTAIN AT LOW
1	SC	Outside School Gate Bowling Rd	2	TRAFFIC M	A,B,C,E,	1, 3, 4
2	A	JCT Bowling Hill / Culverhill Rd / Rounceval St Right Turn	4	TRAFFIC H	A,C,F,G,	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
3	A	JCT High St/Wickwar Rd Left Turn	2	TRAFFIC L	A,C	1, 3, 7
4	A	JCT Wickwar Rd/St Johns Way Right Turn	3	TRAFFIC M	A,C,F,G,	1, 3, 4, 7
MILE 1		By the bus stop Rugby Club				
5	A	JCT St Johns Way/Golf Course Lane Left Turn	1	TRAFFIC L	A,C,F	1, 3, 7
6	B	Cattle Grid in Golf Course Lane Straight On	1	TRIPPING L	A,C	3, 5 Open gate to side of grid
7	B	Start of hedgerow Right Turn	1	RUN ON GRASS L	A,C	3, 7
8	B	End of hedgerow Left Turn	1	RUN ON GRASS L	A,C	3, 7