

Off-Track Athletics Event Risk Assessment - Example

Event Name	scottishathletics Open Cross Country					
Name of organisation	scottishathletics					
Event type (delete as appropriate)	Cross Country / Hill Race / Road/MT Race / Virtual Race					
General description of the event	Open cross country event for athletes in U20, Senior and Masters age groups taking place in Example Park, Exemptown. Afternoon event consists of 6 races (3 male and 3 female in each age group).					
Number of attendees	300	Athletes	50	Staff/Officials/Volunteers	500	Spectators
Description of the area to be included in the risk assessment	This risk assessment includes the designated car park for the event, as well as the park itself. The park includes areas for warming up, declarations, changing/toilets and competing.					
Any other relevant information	Event set-up and clear up will take place on the day with no equipment left onsite overnight					
Date of risk assessment	27/09/2021	Date of event	10/10/2021	Assessment completed by (name)	A. N. Example Event Manager	

Remember, you do not need to cover everything in just one risk assessment. A complex event may need several separate risk assessments; and 2021 events may wish to have a separate COVID-19 risk assessment produced by/with the event's COVID-Coordinator outlining specific hazards and controls.

Category	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	What controls are already in place?	What further controls/actions are required?	Timescales for further actions	Responsible Person (Role)
This could be categories of types of hazard (eg. all hazards relating to work at height) or categories relating to areas of the event space or people/equipment affected (eg. car park risks or risks to runners on the course)	A hazard is a specific thing that could cause harm. This ranges from vehicle collisions in the car park to collisions between runners to a fire in the registration building. Hazards will have different levels of likelihood and severity.	Consider who could be affected by a hazard and what could happen to them. This could be general (all runners) or specific (the Starter), and consequences could vary from bruises and strains to major injuries or fatality in worst case scenarios. Consider members of the public, as well as those directly involved in the event.	Are any controls already in place at the event venue? If your event requires a complete build, this column may be fairly empty, but even measures like speed-limit signage in the car park could be an existing control	What else can you do to reduce risk? 1. Can the hazard be eliminated? Is the piece of equipment, for example, essential? 2. Can you substitute a risky piece of equipment for another with less risk? 3. Can you isolate the risky area (eg. fence off the area to spectators)? 4. Is there any signage in place to warn of the hazard? 5. Can you provide PPE to reduce risk?	When will you put your control measures in place? This could be X weeks or months in advance (eg. delivery of training to volunteers), during event set-up or even ongoing throughout the event (eg. regular checks for good housekeeping)	Many actions will be down to you as the event organiser, but will others in your team be able to help? Use the person's role/title (eg. project manager, health and safety officer, COVID-Coordinator) to allocate duties

Categories

Every event is different and will contend with its own hazards and risks. Some risks will also have their own regulations to consider (eg. COSHH, noise, etc.)

Categories to consider whilst carrying out a risk assessment may include, but are not limited to:

- Safe movement of people and vehicles: collisions within the car park, collisions between runners and spectators or cyclists within the park, etc.
- Medical considerations: dehydration or exhaustion, sporting injuries, underlying health issues
- Course issues: course width, start line width, access to areas in case of emergency
- Venue considerations: has the landowner highlighted any issues, eg. will a race on forestry land coincide with planned felling nearby?
- Manual handling: movement of equipment both during the event and whilst setting up/clearing up
- Slips and trips: uneven ground, wet/muddy conditions
- Equipment hazards: cones, tape, barriers, etc. could all serve as trip hazards
- Fire risks: potential causes (eg. generators), indoor areas, evacuation routes
- Electrical equipment: from PA systems to portable devices
- Weather conditions: rain/flooding, snow, ice, strong winds, lightning, low temperatures, high temperatures, strong sun
- Specific equipment: gantry, marquees/gazebos (some equipment provided by a contractor/external company may come with its own risk assessment – check with the supplier)

Category	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	What controls are already in place?	What further controls/actions are required?	Timescales for further actions	Responsible Person (Role)
Safe movement of people and vehicles	Vehicle collisions within the car park	Athletes, spectators, event staff, volunteers, officials, members of the public using the car park Vehicle collisions can cause, often severe, injuries to people involved, as well as damage to vehicles, property and equipment	The car park is not open to the public: it is only accessible to event attendees. Speed limit signage (5mph) is in place in the event car park, as well as a signposted one-way system.	The car park owners will be asked to ensure that car park lights are switched on prior to the arrival of officials and staff early in the morning. Two event marshals in identifiable clothing will be on duty in the car parking area to direct cars on arrival.	Request made with event booking 2 months prior; reminder e-mail 1 week prior Marshals to be appointed 2 weeks prior and briefed on the day	Event Manager Chief Marshal

Category	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	What controls are already in place?	What further controls/actions are required?	Timescales for further actions	Responsible Person (Role)
Safe movement of people and vehicles	Collisions between vehicles and event attendees	Athletes, spectators, event staff, volunteers, officials, members of the public using the car park Collisions with vehicles can cause, often severe, injuries to people involved, and damage to vehicles, property and equipment	The car park is well lit with designated crossing points. The car park is closed to the public, so all car park users should be aware that the event is taking place and wary of pedestrians.	Two event marshals in identifiable clothing will be on duty in the car parking area to assist. Event signage will encourage arrivals to make their way straight to the event area, rather than meeting their clubmates in the car park.	Marshals to be appointed 2 weeks prior and briefed on the day Signage to put up on the day, prior to athletes' arrival	Chief Marshal Event Manager
Medical considerations	Slips, trips or falls on uneven/muddy terrain	Athletes Slips and trips can be serious, leading to cuts, bruises, sprains and strains or even broken bones	Appointment of a suitably qualified first aid team Safety briefing e-mailed to participants in advance reminds of the importance of wearing suitable footwear	Course walk on the morning of the event will identify areas of particular concern. Certain points may be flagged up to runners, or cordoned off and the route redirected if severe.	Course walk carried out on the morning of the event	Event Safety Officer and Race Referee
Medical considerations	Bumping, jostling or trips whilst overtaking	Athletes Trips and falls can be serious, leading to cuts, bruises, sprains and strains or even broken bones	Appointment of a suitably qualified first aid team Race numbers capped to ensure that the number of participants is suitable for the course	Briefing on start line to remind athletes to take care whilst overtaking	Athlete briefing at the start of each race	Race Referee
Medical considerations	Asthma and other medical issues	Athletes Serious underlying medical issues can have serious consequences and may require immediate attention.	Appointment of a suitably qualified first aid team Runners will be asked for details of any medical conditions on the entry form. Any required medication should be carried by the athlete during the race.	First aiders on duty will be made aware of the bib number of any athletes who provided details of a medical condition so they are prepared to respond appropriately	Information sent to first aid provider in week prior to event	Event Manager
Fire	Fire in registration building	Athletes, spectators, event staff, volunteers, officials, members of the public	Park staff on duty will have responsibility for evacuating the building in the event of a fire. Officials and volunteers will be briefed in advance to	None required – hazards controlled by park staff	N/A	N/A

Category	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	What controls are already in place?	What further controls/actions are required?	Timescales for further actions	Responsible Person (Role)
		People near a fire could suffer burns and/or smoke inhalation injuries. Being trapped with a fire can be fatal.	follow their instructions in the event of an evacuation.			
Electricity	Portable electrical equipment used for timing/results short circuiting	Event staff or volunteers using faulty or unsafe equipment. Electrical equipment can lead to electric shock, resulting in fibrillation or electrical burns. Electrocutation can even be fatal in extreme cases.	All portable equipment is checked annually by a competent electrician, or as an issue arises. All equipment shall be protected by a residual current device (RCD) and anti-surge device to protect both users and the equipment in case of a problem.	Additional checks to be carried out on the day should weather conditions be wet. If the equipment cannot be used safely on the day, races will be hand-timed and results typed up post-event.	Monitored on the day	Event Safety Officer and Timing Team
Adverse weather conditions	High winds on event day affecting temporary structures (eg. gazebos, gantry, etc.)	Athletes, spectators, event staff, volunteers, officials, members of the public High winds could affect temporary structures in place for the event, potentially leading to damage to equipment or injury to those standing nearby.	The manufacturer's guidance for each of the temporary structures to be used at the event provide maximum safe windspeeds for that piece of equipment. No equipment shall be used if the windspeed on the day exceeds that maximum.	Wind speeds shall be monitored throughout the day, and equipment taken down if speeds approach the maximum safely allowed.	Monitored on the day	Event Safety Officer
Adverse weather conditions	Heavy rain on event day	Athletes, spectators, event staff, volunteers, officials, members of the public Heavy rain can lead to difficult conditions underfoot or, in extreme cases, flooding. Wet conditions increase the risk of slips and trips, as well as to lapses of concentration or	The registration building is large enough to provide some shelter in case of extreme precipitation (eg. hail). Should parts of the course be flooded due to rain in advance of the day, the route may be re-directed and sections of the park cordoned off	Any areas of concern shall be highlighted to runners on the start line, including information about any points where the course has been redirected due to flooding. If the race cannot be run safely due to the extent of the rain, the race shall be cancelled.	Athlete briefing at the start of each race Decision to be made as soon as possible in advance based on forecast or on the day	Race Referee Event Safety Officer

Category	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	What controls are already in place?	What further controls/actions are required?	Timescales for further actions	Responsible Person (Role)
		discomfort due to being outdoors in wet weather, or even the risk of frostbite or hypothermia.	If rain is forecast, pre-event information will remind participants to bring suitable footwear and spare clothes			
Welfare Facilities	Illness due to cleanliness of facilities provided	Athletes, spectators, event staff, volunteers and officials Facilities, although temporary, should be of an acceptable standard to prevent the spread of illness.	Hired toilets to be monitored for cleanliness throughout the event. A member of park staff shall be responsible for facilities within the registration building during the event.	Marshals, wearing event high viz, will be advised to report any issues communicated to them by event attendees. Issues to be dealt with as they arise.	Marshals to be appointed 2 weeks prior and briefed on the day As soon as possible after an issue has arisen.	Chief Marshal Event Manager
Planned review date/period		To be reviewed during the post-event de-brief process and revised before the next edition of the event. As this is an annual event, the next review date is provisionally set as 12 months from now, but this may change if the 2022 event date is earlier/later in the year, or as plans are changed if sooner.				

A completed risk assessment for an athletics event should, on average, cover at least 10 hazards from at least 5 categories. A complex event may identify more, whilst a very small-scale event may involve fewer hazards. Not all hazards will be able to be completely controlled (eg. it would be impossible to eliminate the risk of slips and trips on a muddy cross country course!) but your risk assessment should demonstrate your acknowledgement of a hazard and the measures in place to reduce the risk of harm. Also remember that the level of hazard should be appropriate to the event: acceptable terrain for a highly competent senior hill runner will be different to that of a track race for juniors.

For a complex event, you may require more than one risk assessment. This could include load in, build up, delivery, break down and load out, covering all stages of the event cycle where different people will be involved. Considering the different phases separately allows you to better-evaluate the risks affecting different groups, eg. staff during set up may be lone-workers, whilst risks to spectators and the general public should be considered during the event.

Event organisers should note that the above risk assessment is **an example**. Every event will face different risks and so each risk assessment will be specific to that event. The above is intended to help event organisers to get started, but there is still some work required on the event organiser's part to consider hazards specific to their event and how they can be controlled. Controls will also vary by event, depending on personnel, time, budget and other resources available. The above controls are not the only way to control a hazard, and event organisers may take different approaches to control the same hazards under their own circumstances. **Remember, the risk assessment is not just a paper-exercise – the controls you identify MUST be implemented at your event.**