

A practical guide for technical officials returning to athletics following the strategic framework for Scotland's COVID-19 restrictions.

This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with **sportscotland** and UK Athletics in line with government guidelines, outlines the specific measures **scottishathletics** recommends that technical officials take to ensure a safe return to athletics activity.

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Introduction

The safety and wellbeing of athletes, coaches, officials and the wider athletics community is at the heart of any guidance that **scottishathletics** produces and distributes. We are aware that a number of athletes, coaches, technical officials, event organisers and athletics venues are eager to resume athletics competition as soon as possible. However, competition should not take place until it is safe and appropriate to do so and **scottishathletics** aims to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in athletics, facility provision and the wider community of the sport is prioritised. We look forward to welcoming Technical Officials back to competition and appreciate that lockdown has been difficult for many members. Officials should feel no need to rush back to their volunteer roles and are not expected to return until they feel prepared and comfortable doing so.

The guidance that follows provides competition-specific advice within the confines of the government framework. This guidance has been published on the understanding that it is an interpretation of government guidance relevant to athletics competition. Technical officials should check for updates regularly and respond to altered competition plans accordingly as an event date approaches.

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1. Appointing Officials

UKA licensed officials are required at all events in line with licensing standards and UKA rules. Officials and volunteers should be approached prior to the competition license application to ensure that sufficient volunteers are available to help the event organiser to stage the event. It is understood that the availability of graded officials may be limited under current circumstances, and so additional volunteers may be recruited to work under the supervision of a UKA Level 2 official should sufficient graded officials not be available. The numbers of graded officials and additional helpers must ensure that the event complies with the [Safe Athletics: Track & Field Safety Guide for Competition](#)

Officials' Allocations

The **scottishathletics** Officials Commission coordinate the allocation of officials prior to the Summer competition season for **scottishathletics** events. Any officials who need to withdraw, or officials who become available as the event date approaches, should contact events@scottishathletics.org.uk at the earliest opportunity to amend their availability. Withdrawals within two weeks of an event date should also be communicated to your Referee/Chief for that event to allow duty sheets to be updated.

Event Organisers should contact and invite suitable officials and volunteers to cover all roles required at their event. Event organisers should contact officials as soon as possible to confirm their availability. Officials who are available for non-**scottishathletics** events that are going ahead on the **scottishathletics** online fixture page may also contact the event organiser directly to provide them with their availability.

2. Health, Safety and Hygiene

The safety of all event participants is key, and event organisers must ensure that measures are in place to mitigate risk at their event. Competition providers must appoint a COVID-19 Officer to hold overall accountability for the competition. This should be a named person from the organisation who will work closely with the organiser, the venue and the officials to ensure that the event can be delivered safely. All competitions must take account of local conditions, and any risk assessment for normal activities must be undertaken with government guidance around COVID-19 considered.

All event organisers are expected to reinforce good hygiene practices prior to, during and after their event, as participants may be asymptomatic. No one should attend any events if they:

- Have Covid-19 symptoms.
- Someone in their household has Covid-19 symptoms.
- If they have been asked to self-isolate at home by the [Test and Protect system](#).
- If they are returning from a country outside the UK you must follow the Scottish Government guidance on quarantine.

Event Organisers will link with facility operators to ensure that usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained. As there is no access to indoor athletics facilities allowed, consideration should be made to house first aid equipment externally. Event organisers will ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID pandemic and first aiders are aware of COVID-19 specific first aid advice <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>.

General Cleaning Advice

- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.
- Cleaning protocols may differ between facilities, therefore individual facility guidance to cleaning must be followed at all times.
- High Jump and Pole Vault beds should be sprayed with a suitable disinfectant solution before and after each session (in competition, this may mean a morning and afternoon session). A high mist sterilising fluid should be used on the landing beds.
- Sand pits should be cleaned with sterilising fluid spray of a suitable concentration to neutralise the virus, dug/turned and raked before and after each session. Pits should be raked as normal between athletes' trials.
- A drying time should be timetabled after the treatment of landing areas.
- Cleaning of mats will usually be conducted by venue staff, but event organisers will confirm the arrangements for their specific competition. Officials may be asked to assist with digging pits at the start and end of each session (morning, lunchtime and at the end of the day).

3. **scottishathletics** Competition Structure

As restrictions allow, **scottishathletics** Track and Field Championships will take place in Summer 2021. However, the format and numbers both competing and in attendance may be restricted.

In order to manage numbers in attendance at events and flow around the venue, the following restrictions will be in place:

- All events will be limited to a maximum number of entrants.
- Where events require multiple rounds (e.g. Heat to Final) all entered athletes will be placed in a single competition bubble. This bubble will reduce in size over the duration of the competition. Whilst not in their competition bubbles, athletes should minimise any unnecessary contact with others and are encouraged to maintain 1m physical distancing until they return to their competition bubble.
- For both track and field events, athletes will report to officials at the assembly area as per the published call up schedule ready to compete. Most other event organisers will also utilise an assembly area, but details will be provided.

Although physical distancing is no longer required within a COVID-secure outdoor environment, **scottishathletics** still recommends that all event attendees remain 1m apart where possible.

Track Events

- Track events in **scottishathletics** Championships will consist of a maximum of 8 athletes in sprint events, 10 athletes in 800m heats, 16 athletes in 1500m heats and a maximum of 24 athletes in longer races. Other event organisers should follow similar numbers of athletes (dependent on facility and number of lanes available).

Field Events

- Field bands will be seeded to a maximum of 24 athletes.
- Groups will be allocated time to complete all trials. All trials will be taken per the seeded band card, i.e. athlete 1, athlete 2, then athlete 3, etc. to complete the round.
- At the conclusion of each field event, there will be a 'Cleaning Break' to allow for cleaning of equipment and for officials to rest.

To manage numbers in attendance at off-track events and flow around the venue, the following restrictions may be in place:

- Wave starts as per published guidance for maximum bubble sizes.
- An arrival, call up, race and departure schedule may be drawn up, and adhered to by all attendees.

Due to government restrictions, it was not possible to offer a full championship season for Road and Cross Country events in 2020/21. Championships in these disciplines will be allocated, where feasible, to events taking place during the 2021-22 competition year (beginning 1st September 2021).

4. General Practical Guidance for All Technical Officials

The following guidelines will apply to all **scottishathletics** events. Other licensed-event organisers will be expected to have similar protocols in place, but officials should clarify exact expectations directly.

Attending the venue

- Officials are reminded that they should avoid unnecessary car sharing with anyone from another household. If individuals or groups do car-share, Transport Scotland advice should be followed.
- A one-way system will be in operation at each facility wherever practical. Information on proposed routes will be published on the **scottishathletics** website, and the link sent to officials in advance. The one-way systems must always be strictly adhered to, including entrance and exit.
- It is recommended that all officials to meet outdoors in a designated area, with group meetings/briefings to be conducted outdoors. However, indoor officials' areas may be provided in appropriate venues to allow for storage of belongings or shelter in adverse weather.
- Toilet facilities will be available only with physical distancing measures in place.
- Each official should ensure that they have brought with them ALL of their officiating equipment for the day. No sharing of individual equipment is permitted.
- All personal equipment and items required for the specific duties being undertaken are to be kept with the official at all times. No equipment or items are to be left unattended within the venue.
- Personal bags are to be left in the official's vehicle. If this is not suitable, bags may be stored in a stadium/club locker (if available) or within the designated Officials Area of the stadium. All personal belongings will be left at the owner's risk.
- Officials should note that refreshments will not be provided at all events this season. Officials are encouraged to bring their own packed lunch if attending a full-day event. If suitable catering can be provided at an event, details will be circulated in advance.
- The officials' information for each event will contain full details of facilities available.
- Although physical distancing is no longer required within a covid secure environment, **scottishathletics** recommends that officials should remain 1m apart where possible, including within the officials' meeting area, and maintain strict hygiene protocols. It is recommended that officials supply and bring their own personal hand gel for use throughout the day. Officials must wear a face covering indoors, but it is not required outdoors.

- Sanitising and hygiene equipment will be available to officials, dependent on their duties:
 - o Anti-bacterial sanitising spray.
 - o Rolls of kitchen paper towelling/anti-viral wipes.
 - o Black rubbish bin liners to collect contaminated items.
 - o Replacement disposable face masks.

Briefings

- It is recommended that briefings are carried out in advance, either by e-mail or call. If a briefing is required on the day, this is to be carried out in a clear outdoor space, away from other disciplines, athletes, coaches and other attendees.
- Duty sheets should not be handed out on the day of the event, instead being emailed to officials prior to the event by the relevant Chief/Referee. Each official may bring a personal printed copy or should be able to access it electronically on their own phone or tablet on the day.
Note: athletes and officials will be allowed to use mobile devices on the field of play, but a common sense approach to their use must be maintained. No calls, games or social media, but athletes and officials are encouraged to check for timetable and seeding updates regularly.
- If an official is unable to provide their own copy of their duty sheet, duties can be dictated to them.

Equipment

- At the beginning of each session and prior to the first event, teams of officials in each discipline will be required to ensure all equipment they will use is wiped down with anti-viral spray & paper towelling/wipes, under the direction of their Chief/Referee and the Technical Manager.
- Disposable paper towelling and/or anti-viral wipes will be available for wiping down equipment. After use, all towels/wipes must be disposed of in suitable refuse bins.
- It is essential that each official maintains strict hygiene protocols throughout the event, especially when handling equipment. Hand washing and/or use of hand gels should be repeated, together with regular changing of disposable gloves if used.
- At the conclusion of each session, cleaning and disinfecting of equipment must be repeated by the officials involved in the concluded event.
- It is important to remember that face coverings/masks, if worn, might become moist due to exertion or weather conditions whilst officiating. If this happens any official wearing a face covering must change it regularly and ensure safe disposal of the old mask/covering.
- **scottishathletics** radios will be allocated in advance and will be cleaned with anti-viral wipes before collection. Any official returning a radio should wipe it down with anti-viral wipes prior to putting it on charge. Clean earpieces will be distributed to officials for the full season and should be kept for their own personal use. This will include any official in a Management, Referee or Chief role who will be required to use a radio at any **scottishathletics** meeting during the season. Earpieces should be cleaned and returned to **scottishathletics** by the official after their last duties of the season.

During Competition

- All officials are to ensure that they maintain strict hygiene protocols during competition both for themselves and the athletes under their care, especially where equipment is being handled.
- Athletes will be expected to report to events ready to compete, bringing only the equipment required for that event. Bags should not be brought into the competition area unless required during competition.
- Water bottles and any other personal items brought into the competition area will be kept with each athlete and not handled by other athletes or officials.

- As always, no coaches, parents or spectators are permitted on the field of play. Only competing athletes and officials are permitted access onto the field of play.
- New UKA Supplementary Note: **CR18.5 Unsporting or Improper Behaviour (125.5)** - Spitting (or similar) in warm up, call room, field of play or any other public area may be treated as a conduct offence and will be dealt with by a warning or disqualification (yellow card and/or red card). Officials who issue a conduct warning must complete the relevant paperwork and pass the information verbally to their Chief/Referee who will alert the Meeting Manager for further action.

Post Competition

- Officials are to ensure that there is no contact such as high fives, shaking hands, etc. by athletes post-event.
- All equipment used during the competition is to be sprayed using the anti-viral spray and wiped down using paper towelling/wipes before returning to the facility.
- During any post event de-brief within the venue after the close of competition, officials should continue to follow strict physical distancing and hygiene protocols. De-briefs may also be held via e-mail or call post-event and comments submitted to events@scottishathletics.org.uk

5. Discipline-Specific Practical Guidance

Admin – Seeding and Results

- All admin areas will be set up according to current physical distancing guidelines. Laptops, tablets, keyboards, mice, printers and all associated equipment will be cleaned before and after each session and will be used by one official only throughout the competition. Additional anti-viral wipes will be available if required.
- As much paperwork as possible will be published online in advance of the competition day and circulated for officials to print an individual copy. Paperwork circulated during events will be limited.
- Withdrawals on the day will be confirmed with seeding.
- Events will be pre-seeded, where possible. Any changes to seeding will require communication to the officiating team.
- Seeding officials will have their own personal copy of paperwork to manually note any withdrawals/non declared athletes. Seeding will be completed on the day and will allow time for electronic sharing and printing of the final lane draws and competition orders.
- Neither results nor start lists will be posted within the facility. They will be available online only.
- Completed field cards will be brought to the admin area for results officials to input.
- Track results will not be printed but will be electronically shared.
- Where events require multiple rounds (e.g. Heat to Final) all entered athletes will be placed in a single competition bubble, this bubble will reduce in size over the duration of the competition. Whilst not in their competition bubbles athletes must minimise any unnecessary contact with others and maintain physical distancing until they return to their competition bubble.

Declarations

As usual, athletes will be expected to arrive at the venue as per the published schedule to declare for their event. Timed declaration-windows for each event will be drawn up, with athletes advised to declare for their event individually, without any accompanying coaches or parents, at the time specified. For team events, one Team Manager is to declare on behalf of each age group team, rather than athletes declaring for themselves. The time-window for each event will be within 75-45 minutes of the event start time. Bib numbers will be distributed at declarations, and hip numbers at assembly

if required. Safety pins will **not** be available. The official(s) on duty will be asked to record the attendance of each athlete and to report any no-shows or withdrawals to assembly and seeding. Each declarations official will be allocated a set of events which they will have the sole responsibility to manage. Paperwork should not be shared between officials.

Call Room/Assembly

Assembly

Where Call Rooms are not in operation, call up schedules will be available online detailing when athletes are expected to report directly to the assembly area. Athletes should not report early to ensure that space is maintained between each heat/band/group. Athletes in track races of 800m and above will collect a hip number from assembly. Officials at assembly will be expected to conduct basic call room checks, such as bib number, vest and footwear.

Call Room

Where Call Rooms are in operation, extended call up times may be implemented allowing additional time for final warm up prior to reporting to the Call Room. Access to the Call Room will be limited to athletes and officials only.

Assembly and Call Room officials must ensure:

- Athletes remain in their competition bubble and do not mix with other competition bubbles.
- Athletes do not leave the zone once checked in/arrived.
- Non-competing athletes, parents, coaches and team managers are not permitted in this area and must maintain 1m physical distancing from athletes at all times.
- Athletes are moved on from the assembly / Call Room area as per the schedule to prepare for the next group's arrival.

Track and Field - Field

- Field Cards will be pre-printed. There will be no circulation of new paperwork during the event.
- Officials should be allocated a duty for the entirety of the event and will be solely responsible for that function, e.g. pull through, spike, bar replacement, raking, plasticine repair, call up etc.
- Retrieval of implements will be completed by allocated officials only. On retrieval, the implement will be returned to the Equipment Officer for cleaning prior to the next throw.
- Athletes who supply their own implement must check it with declarations for weighing and measuring. Non conforming implements will be rejected for competition use.
- Scoreboards (if used), uprights, bars, tape measures and all other equipment should be disinfected before and after each competition by the official using it.
- Sand should be lightly dug and raked over after each athlete (including warm up trials).
- All valid long and triple jumps will be measured by an official wearing appropriate PPE.
- Flags may be used for validity and should be sanitised before and after use. Alternatively, verbal calls of no jumps and/or arm signals should be used.
- A tape measure will be placed along the run-way for measuring run ups, but runway markers will not be provided.
- Hammer cage doors should only be moved by designated volunteers, with hands sanitised before and after movement. Groups of athletes should be seeded so that all left or right-handed athletes compete in order.
- Officials handling hammer inserts must disinfect their hands before and after movement.
- On the conclusion of an event, the field card should be checked and verified verbally by the Chief. There is no current requirement for the card to be signed, but the names of the judges must be noted on the card by the official responsible for keeping the card.

- Completed paperwork should be put in the appropriate place, not handed to another official.
- During Cleaning Breaks or breaks in the programme, officials should disinfect all equipment used – tape measures, EDM, spikes, wind gauge, cross bar, uprights – with anti-viral wipes
- At the beginning of any breaks, sand pits should be cleaned with sterilising fluid spray of a suitable concentration to neutralise the virus, turned and raked.

Track and Field - Timekeeping

- Timekeepers on the stand should maintain 1m physical distancing wherever possible. Additional timekeepers can be placed either side of the stand.
- Paperwork will not be distributed during the event. The Chief Timekeeper will be able to access results either online on their own mobile device, or electronically post-event.
- Results will be collected by the individual timekeepers and relayed to the Chief Timekeeper verbally. The Chief is then responsible for noting the results.

Track and Field - Photofinish

- Track events will be seeded electronically and transferred to photofinish. Paperwork will not be distributed during the event.
- If possible, the Read Operator should be placed away from other officials to aid distancing.
- In laned races athletes will be wearing bib or hip numbers as normal. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that they are in the correct lane.
- Results should be transferred electronically to the results team. No paperwork should be printed, but electronic records kept only. Radio communication may be used to confirm when results are final should any races require further checks.
- Mice, keyboards and other equipment must not be shared, and will be used by one person only for the duration of the meeting. All computer equipment will be wiped and cleaned as per approved hygiene measures before and after use. Anti-viral wipes should be used.

Track and Field - Start Team

- Besides their normal preparation duties prior to the start of the first event, the Start Co-ordinator and Chief Starters Assistant should ensure that all equipment required by athletes and officials is suitably sanitised using anti-viral spray and disposable paper towelling/wipes. This might require other members of the start team to assist to ensure the job is completed in good time.
- Any cabling and transponders required by the starter will first be sprayed and wiped. Once the task is complete, the starter will sanitise their hands with hand gel.
- Starters must provide their own starting equipment and blanks. It is not recommended that officials share equipment.
- Sound systems will not be used unless each starter has their own headset & microphone.
- Start podiums are to be sprayed with anti-viral spray at each change-over between starters.
- If there are any false starts or any issues at starts, the duty starters should maintain physical distancing whilst conferring, where possible.
- Athletes will typically use stadium starting blocks, although some may use their own if passed by the Technical Team. Athletes and officials handling blocks must sanitise their hands both before and after handling the starting blocks. Stadium blocks will also be cleaned/sprayed by a designated person(s) from the Starter's Assistant Team at regular intervals.
- The preferred method of communicating lane draws will be electronic. Any late changes to the lane draw will be verbally communicated to the CSA by Seeding.
- Athletes will be visibly checked by the Starter's Assistant Team and allocated lanes. Hip numbers, if required, should be allocated at Assembly/Call Room rather than on the track.

Track and Field - Track

- Track judges on the stand should maintain 1m physical distancing wherever possible. Further judges may be placed on ground level.
- Additional umpires can be assigned their usual positions around the track.
- All races up to and including 400m will be run in lanes. Races of 800m and above will be run as normal with athletes breaking into lane 1 at the appropriate point.
- Hip numbers will be distributed at Assembly or Call Room.
- Lap board & bell may be used, and must be suitably cleaned between users.
- Track judges and umpires should not share equipment such as clipboards or coloured cards.
- Hurdles and barriers may be used if the facility and the event organiser have assessed the risk and put in place measures to ensure it is safe to do so. Hurdles and barriers should be cleaned using antiviral wipes/spray before and after use. One official/volunteer should be allocated responsibility for one flight/set during competition, under the supervision of the Track Referee and Technical Manager.

Track and Field - Technical Team

- Storage and Equipment Cupboards are unlikely to be suitable for physical distancing. Therefore, equipment should be moved to an open area for checking. If no alternative area can be identified, then ONE member of the Tech Team only may be in the store at any single time.
- Where physical distancing guidelines cannot be met members of the Technical Team must wear appropriate face coverings.
- Members of the Technical Team should sanitise their hands before and after touching any equipment.

Track Guidance

- Athletes are encouraged to provide their own personal starting blocks which will only be handled by them personally. These will be collected by the athlete at the conclusion of their race.
- Stadium blocks, if supplied, will be cleaned by a designated person(s) at the start and end of each session. If stadium starting blocks are used athletes must sanitise their hands before and after use.
- Lap board & bell may be used in track events subject to suitable cleaning.
- Hurdles and barriers may be used if the facility and the event organiser have assessed the risk and put in place measures to ensure it is safe to do so. Hurdles and barriers should be cleaned using antiviral wipes/spray before and after use. One official/volunteer should be allocated responsibility for a set of hurdles during competition, under the supervision of the Technical Manager and Track Referee.

Field Guidance

- Athletes who supply their own implement must check it with declarations for weighing and measuring. Non conforming implements will be rejected for competition use.
- Scoreboards (if used), uprights, bars, tape measures and all other equipment should be disinfected before and after each competition by the official using it. This means the technical team should wipe down all equipment delivered to the competition area once checked for use; officials on the event will then be responsible for maintaining hygiene during the event; and the technical team should wipe equipment down against when it is returned to the store.
- During competition, pole vault and high jump beds should be sprayed down before and after each group of athletes, using a high mist sterilised fluid. Officials on the event will be responsible for this during the competition, but the technical team should spray beds ahead of the event during their pre-event checks.

- Sand should be lightly dug and raked over after each athlete (including warm up trials). Officials on the event will be responsible for this during the competition, but the technical team should ensure that this is carried out pre- and post-event.
- Flags may be used for validity and should be sanitised before and after use. Alternatively, verbal calls of no jumps and/or arm signals should be used.
- A tape measure will be placed along the runway for measuring run ups, but runway markers will not be provided.
- Both the technical team and the field judges on the recently-concluded event will share responsibility for the tasks undertaken during the scheduled 'Cleaning Breaks', under the direction of the Technical Manager:
 - o During the scheduled 'Cleaning Break' between field groups, officials should disinfect all equipment used – tape measures, EDM, spikes, wind gauge, cross bar, uprights – with anti-viral wipes.
 - o At the beginning of the 'Cleaning Break' sand pit should be cleaned with sterilising fluid spray of a suitable concentration to neutralise the virus, turned and raked.
 - o At the beginning of the 'Cleaning Break' landing beds should be treated with a high mist sterilised fluid.

Off-Track - Start Team

- It is vital that all races start exactly on time according to the published wave start time. This is to ensure consistency with times recorded manually by timekeepers.
- Besides their normal preparation duties prior to the start, the Starter and Starter's Assistant(s) should ensure that all equipment is suitably sanitised using anti-viral spray and towelling/wipes.
- Starters must provide their own starting equipment and blanks. It will not be possible to share equipment.
- Sound systems will not be used unless each starter has their own headset & microphone.
- If there are any false starts or any issues at starts, the duty starters may confer whilst maintaining physical distancing.
- Competition bubbles should be collected from their call up zone ready to race and escorted to the start pen. It is important that the competition bubbles do not mix with each other.

Off-Track - Manual Timekeeping and Recorders

- Manual timekeepers and recorders should form an officiating bubble within their discipline and limit interactions with other bubbles.
- Waves will start as per the published start time on the official race clock, with time of day being recorded for each athlete within a wave as they cross the finish line.
- Completed recording sheets must be placed within the supplied envelope and dropped off at declarations at the conclusion of each session.

Off-Track - Place Callers and Recorders

- Place Callers and Recorders should form an officiating bubble within their discipline and limit interactions with other bubbles.
- Completed recording sheets should be placed within a supplied envelope and dropped off at declarations/admin at the conclusion of each race.

Off-Track - Line Judges and Funnel Control

- Line Judges and Funnel Control volunteers should form an officiating bubble within their discipline and limit interactions with other bubbles.

- Finishers should be dispersed quickly away from the finish line back towards the call area for their wave as quickly as possible.
- Unless in the case of medical attention, athletes must not sit or lie down within the finish area.
- Team managers, coaches and parents must not congregate in and around the finish area and should be directed away from this area and around the course.

Off-Track - Marshals

- Race marshals may be asked to work alone, ensuring physical distancing between marshal points. Marshals manning the same marshal point should be from the same household wherever practical.
- A clear system of communication should be explained to marshals prior to the first race to ensure that any incidents can be reported back efficiently and effectively.

Often, marshals are also athletes, coaches or team managers assisting on the day. During these restrictions, we ask that all volunteers hold only one role on any **single event day** to ensure that they do not form, or interact with, multiple bubbles on the same day. Volunteers may, however, hold different roles on separate days of a multi-day competition.

6. scottishathletics Staff Contacts

Any general event queries should be directed to events@scottishathletics.org.uk in the first instance.

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All other staff contacts can be found at the following link:
<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/about/people/staff/>

Contact details for the Officials' Commission can be found at:
<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/officials/officials-commission/>