ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

A GUIDE TO ORGANISING MAJOR EVENTS
Association manual 5.9

1. INTRODUCTION

This Guide was prepared especially for the "first time" or relatively inexperienced major event organiser by providing sufficient details to minimise the chance of difficulties.

The type of events for which the guide is intended are pre-entry events such as NSW State League and similar events. These events will:
- be conducted over approximately a 3 hour start period (Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning)
- also provide entry on the day of the event to a limited range of courses.

It assumes that the event organiser has assisted in administrative aspects of previous events. While it is not essential for the Organiser, familiarity with the functions of the other principal members of the organising team may assist in working with and selecting those personnel.

It is not intended to be a rigid organisation prescription as more experienced organisers will adapt or devise organisation ideas to suit their own particular needs and style. There are a number of resources which may also be referred to by an Event Organiser. These include various books on Orienteering, the IOF website and the Orienteering ACT website.

2. THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGANISER

The Organiser is normally appointed by the relevant Club or association when it is decided to stage the event. Their job is to plan and manage the event and to coordinate the organising team. Depending on the size of the event, the organiser may also take on the administrative functions. It is the organiser's responsibility to ensure the success of the event by preventing problems from arising.

Each event will have an Event Controller appointed by the OANSW who is an experienced orienteer assigned to assist the Organiser and ensure that the event meets with the requirements of the Association. They are available to give advice and to, basically, act as a consultant when required.

A successful event, large or small, results from careful and thorough preparation An 0rienteering event can be seen as a project which is comprised of many tasks and requires proper management, which can be facilitated by following established Project Management principles. The time schedule suggested will allow adequate time to deal with most unforeseen problems.

The nature of the Event is defined when the organising club applies to the OANSW (Manual Item 5.1) and is governed by the Event Regulations (Item 4.1 – 4.16) which provide clear guidelines to assist the Organiser.

3. PLANNING

Good planning is fundamental to a well-run event. Take the time to sit down and think about what is required, and how you're going to run things.

1. **What** has to be done ?   Identify Tasks   [Work Breakdown Structure]
2. **Who** will do it ?   Identify Team   [Resource Allocation]
3 **When** will it be done ?   Create Timeframe   [Schedule]
4 What will it **cost ?**   [Budget]

3.1   Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
WBS is simply a logical breakdown of a complex activity into easily understood and manageable tasks. The WBS often has multiple levels where a larger task on one level is broken down into smaller sub-tasks on the level below. Think of it as an organisation chart.

3.2   Resource Allocation
The WBS will have a list of tasks (eg. Draw up Invitation, Collect maps from Printer, Program SI units, Set up Finish Tent, Direct Parking, etc.). You need to allocate a person to each task. Obviously On the Day tasks don't have to be allocated to specific people in the initial planning, but they must still be identified.

You may have several people on one task, or one person doing several tasks; it's up to you. But allocating people to tasks will help you identify how many helpers you will need, and what skills they will need.

3.3   Schedule
An extension to the WBS would be the estimation of the effort required for each task (ie. how long will it take?). The simplest approach is to estimate the number of days each task will take. Some smaller, related tasks can often be grouped for this purpose. Now decide the order in which tasks should logically be done (ie. which must be done first, which tasks depend on another task having been completed, and so on). This will allow you to string together logical sequences of tasks (it may be possible to conduct several things concurrently). By then allocating dates to key tasks, you will have prepared a schedule. If you've planned it well, all tasks will have been completed by the due date (the event).

Typically, you would only need to make a high-level (key and major tasks) schedule for an orienteering event, although you need to be confident that you have all the little things covered in some other way

(ie. that you don't forget anything). A sample schedule is attached at **Appendix 3**????. You can use this as a guide.

One technique for scheduling is to construct a Gant or horizontal bar chart depicting the length of time for each task and the date of completion. This enables you to easily see how the tasks relate in time and set deadlines where needed. This can also be done using project management software programs, which make it easy to add in even the smallest jobs and see when they need to be done.

3.4   Budget

Preparing an event budget is a simple, but fundamental, part of the planning process. The Association sets a ceiling on entry fees for different events, and approval must be sought to exceed the ceiling. For the NSW Championships and National Events a detailed budget is needed and must be submitted to the Association if a loan is required toward the event or if a variation in fees is desired. Identify all the likely income and expense items. Unless you have sponsorship, income is likely to be restricted to entry fees. In the case of an event on a new map, the entry fee is generally set to recover event costs and then to recoup the cost of the map over the expected lifetime of the map.

 The preparation of an event budget is discussed in Manual Item 2.2.

3.5   Planning Meeting

A meeting of the organising team should be held to discuss the plan and clearly state objectives. Each team member should be given a copy of their schedule and its deadlines and agree to them.
All possible aspects of the event should be covered, including access, parking, layout of the assembly area, the possibility of spectator controls and the need for a media/spectator/sponsor attractive finish.

It is useful at this stage to discuss the initial jobs to be organised including notification of the event to the Association for inclusion in the Newsletter, and preparation and distribution of the invitation. Details of the information required for this can be found in the Major Event Rules (Manual 4.8), Event Information Regulations (Manual 4.10) and Event Organisers' Information (Manual 5.7). A closing date should be set not more than 4 weeks prior to the event, but bear in mind that the majority of entries come at the last moment, usually in the week after the closing date.

It is also important at this stage to obtain access permission from the landowners (personal contact always helps here) and to find out what special arrangements may have to be made (portaloos, etc).
If mapping has to be carried out or updated, the organiser needs to keep in close contact with the mapper and the Event Controller to ensure that this work progresses according to schedule so that course planning can commence on time.

A dedicated bank account for banking monies and paying accounts is a good idea, if it can be easily arranged.

Entries should be input into a database soon after being received. Even if Sportident is not used for the event, OE2002 or the other SI programs are ideal for handling entries.

3.6   Publicity

To attract more than the "faithful few" the event will need to be extensively promoted in a variety of ways.   This should be arranged with the Club Publicity Officer. The basic information required is:-
- Date - area - times
- Event Organiser and phone contact
- Courses available
- How to get there
- Facilities
- Special features of the day, in particular, novice instruction.

Most local papers will publish a well written press release (they may use journalistic licence to meet the paper's editorial policy). A press release must contain the obvious points (eg. where, when, what is happening, how to get there). If a human interest story can be added (eg. interview with leading competitor, top junior, etc) there is always a good chance of getting top billing. Do not forget radio.

4. EVENT NOTICES

There are several notices essential to every event:-

4.1 Newsletter
An entry in the Coming Events newsletter is usually the first notice given of the event. The Organiser must provide the OANSW Secretary with basic details as follows:
- Date
- Venue and directions to the event
- Map & scale
- Type of event
- Courses on offer
- Organiser's name and contact details
- Course Planner's name
- Controller's name
- Club hosting the event
- Entry fees
- First start time

4.2 Entry Form
Includes the same information as above, but more detail is required (eg. lengths of courses available). Also include special information about the venue or locality for out-of-towners (eg. accommodation, points of interest). Include closing date for entries and fees for late entries.

4.3 Event Information
Expands on information in Entry Form if needed. Includes start list, directions to the event, setter's notes (eg. special mapping features, suggestions regarding clothing if thick vegetation is involved), and control descriptions. Also, specific instructions regarding certain courses, prohibited or dangerous areas and any other relevant information. Note should be made here if map corrections have been made and also course closure time.

4.4 Enter on the Day
Sufficient information should be provided for the newsletter (4.1 above) to enable an enter on the day competitor to find the event and entry times should also be provided as many may not receive the entry form or event information.

On the day there needs to be a clearly marked entre on day tent where the following information is available:
        Registration Procedure - A brief description of how to enter a course. Stress the need to check in at the finish whether or not the course has been completed. Also stress need to hand in card after they cross the finish or bring Sportident printout back to enter on the day tent.
        Control Descriptions and Code Numbers

5. COURSES

The range of courses for State League Events must comply with OANSW guidelines (see Association Manual 4.11), and may be further influenced by the requirements of the event, the suitability of area and map, the wishes of the event organiser and the course planner and club policy.

Some important considerations however are:
- A course should be challenging to the orienteer at the appropriate grade, but courses should be too easy rather than too hard.
- Every event should include a course suitable for novice orienteers which must be very easy.
- Every marker must be sited in the field before the event is finalised. The site should be marked with tape or stake and control description written while at the site.
- Unless the course is simple and the area is familiar, each course should be run at least once by the course setter or controller before the course is finalised.

- If possible, sites should be checked when the markers have been put out to check visibility from various approach directions (where practical the best visibility should be from the most direct/difficult navigational route).
- Courses should be vetted by the controller to check site, control flag, control code and punch before the course is opened.
- Control descriptions should state the course distance **and climb**.
- The time of course closure, at which the markers will be withdrawn, should be clearly stated in the event information.

6. MAP

6.1 Existing Map
Where the map has been offset printed it is necessary to confirm that the number available exceeds the likely entry. For digitally printed (OCAD) maps the area should be checked for corrections and updated.

6.2.1 New Map
The fieldwork and cartography must have been arranged at least two years in advance. Offset printing is currently only required for Group A Events such as the Australian Championships and Australian 3 Days. These maps require that courses are plotted, manually printed or printed using an overlay. All other maps may be digitally printed which means that courses may be plotted directly on the map using OCAD.

The number of maps required is determined by the entry on the various courses with an allowance for late entries and class changes. Sufficient blank maps should be printed to allow for entry on the day.

7. SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

The OANSW Information Sheets on Safety (Manual 4.7, 4.13) should be read.
A safety plan must be prepared for each event.
In all orienteering events competitors compete at their own risk. However, courses should not require participants to cross dangerous or hazardous areas. All such areas should be clearly shown on the map.
The Event Organiser should close the event only when all competitors have checked in.
The participants must be informed of the necessity to check in at the finish.
The registration all participants in the field can be readily determined.

8. AREA MANAGEMENT

8.1 Landowners
As access to and continued use of areas is dependent on good relationships with landowners or authorities, this is an important consideration. Personal contact is usually the best approach. Ensure that all landowners or authorities have approved the use of the area before detailed planning is commenced. Check with property owners 3 or 4 weeks before the event as there may be specific requirements regarding certain areas or stock.

Determine Gate Closure requirements and ensure that they are followed when visiting the area as well as during the event.

Ensure that prohibited areas are clearly shown on the map and that these and specific instructions to participants are made known clearly before the start.

8.2 Facilities
Orienteering has a large number of family members and this adds some special considerations:
Toilets should be available at all events. These may be already available at or near the assembly area, or portable toilets may need to be erected.

With young children, adequate and safe off-road parking should be available at, or near to the assembly area.

Dangers such as water-holes, cliffs, pits and rubbish should be avoided.

Shelter, particularly in case of wet weather is a great asset if available on site, otherwise tents may need to be erected.

The assembly area must be inspected before the event day and the specific layout of Start, Finish, Registration, location of various signs, Parking etc. planned in detail (preferably with an event assistant). Organise the start to promote a flow of people from car-park > registration > start > finish, so there is no cross traffic.

8.2   Afterward

After the Event ensure that the area is cleared up and all rubbish is removed . Thank the landowner personally, or if not possible, then by mail. Some land owners, including Government departments, require payment of a fee for the use of their land, generally on the basis of the number of competitors.

9. EQUIPMENT

It is the Event Organiser's responsibility to ensure that equipment is collected from, and promptly returned to, the responsible person in the Club. For major events, the Organiser may employ an Equipment Officer to manage this responsibility.

Equipment which may be required includes:-

    Sportident units
    Computer + battery inverter
    Split printer
    stands punches & flags
    money till with change
    pens for entry
    start, finish & orienteering signs
    first aid kit
    garbage bin
    road signs
    tables
    clocks
    EOD master map boards / red pens
    streamers & bunting
    result display
    miscellaneous items (texta pens, staples
    masking tape, rubber bands, rope, folding chair)
    "ask me" armbands

There will be some necessary items for which the event organiser will need to arrange provision (Finish and registration tents, additional tables and chairs, beach umbrellas for sun or rain, cords for hanging some markers, tarpaulins, ropes, poles and pegs in case of rain).

After the event the organiser should check that all of the equipment is collected and any damaged equipment repaired, or the equipment person advised of what cannot be readily repaired .

10. THE CREW

The size and job requirements of the crew needed to run an event depends mainly on the size of the event (number of courses and anticipated crowd, the latter being notoriously unpredictable).

10.1   Key Personnel

Organiser - Overall responsibility, but in particular for getting competitors to the start, and processing them at the finish.

Setter - Responsible for everything out on the course

Controller - Responsible to OANSW for ensuring event is run according to guidelines

Finish - Typically, one person is appointed to manage all activities in the finish tent. If this person is also competing in the event, a backup person is required. The finish manager should have a crew of 6-8 people (on a rotational basis).

Start - One starter and one assistant with backups as required.

General helpers - Parking, toilets, setting up, packing up, collecting controls

There are three basic aspects:
  # Setting up
  # Operating the courses
  # Packing up.
What is necessary to ensure a successful event is:
  # That for each aspect there are adequate helpers - it is better to have more than required (their work times can be shortened).
  # Each person has a specific task and knows beforehand exactly what is required.
  # Each person knows at what time they will be required and for how long. Keep this in mind if you change times or durations if there is a surplus of helpers.
  # Have at least one person available to back up in a key area. This can often be done by the Event Organiser, but in a big event an additional person would be advisable.
  # Have at least one experienced orienteer available to asist newcomers.

Don't forget backups in case someone can't do it. To bring it all together, draw up a Helpers Roster, and distribute copies before the event to all the helpers on it. You should allocate early start times to some helpers, and late times to others.

10.2   The Helpers Roster
It is the responsibility of the event organiser to approach club members to assist him/her on the day. Each crew member must know what they are required to do and at what time they are required. A job roster for the event should be drawn up and, preferably, distributed to helpers before the event.

10.3   Sportident
Use of Sportident introduces a saving in personnel and the following listing indicates the minimum requirements for Sportident and Non-Sportident events.

	Sportident	Non-Sportident
Timing	No personnel required	Timekeeper Time writer Card Collector
Calulation	Computer operator Thermal printer operator	At least 2 or 3 Result calculators
Result Display	Two persons to transfer result from computer screen to display slats	Two persons to transfer result from control card to display slat
Control checking	Not required Note: If SI is used for timing only, control card checking is still required.	Two persons checking control cards

10.4   Enter on the Day
Registration - SI Registration cards should be filled out by all EODs. The registation person should allocate a SI card, if required, enter the details on the regsitration card, and give the Start section of the card to the EOD to be taken to the Starter. The EOD may receive their map at Registration or, if a it is new map, at the actual Start.

Start - The Starter should check the SI details, retain the registration card and direct the EOD to the Master Maps at the appropriate time and cross the names of persons who HAVE STARTED off the list. One additional person is required to give Start Instructions and supervise maps.

11. SETTING UP

11.1 General
What you need to set up will depend on the unique requirements of your event, but in general, you will need the following:
- Direction signs on approach roads, generally at all turning points.
- Signage at the event site (eg. "To Start 300m --->")
- Parking
- Toilets at Assembly Area and possibly at Start
- Registration/Information/Enter-on-day Tent
- Availability of Control Descriptions
- Public Address System
- Start
- Clothes transport from Start to Finish (When dictated by weather)
- Finish Tent and chute
- Water at Finish
- Clearly signed First Aid Point
- Results Display
- Catering

Items of Special Note
- # Synchronise all clocks (and have backups on hot standby)
- # Map boxes at start and finish
- # Prepare a procedure for processing finishers
- # Have an up-to-date start list at the start and a copy at the finish
- # Have several sets of master punch codes in the finish tent

11.2 Putting Out SI Units
The course planner is responsible for this operation and should have ensured that all stands and flags are in place prior to the day of the event, however, the SI units will need to be put out on the previous afternoon or on the morning of the event. The Organiser should consult with the Course Planner and the Event Controller as to how many people are required to assist in putting out the SI units.

11.4 Packing Up
When the stated final start time has passed, the start materials can be taken down and returned to the Assembly area. At the control withdrawal time, or earlier if all competitors have finished, control collection may be commenced. When all competitors have returned the finish may be taken down. If there are still participants who have not checked in by the control withdrawal time, it should be ascertained if possible, if these participants have in fact failed to check in.   If they are still in the field, a search could be considered.   It may be feasible to try a preliminary search while collecting markers in the short time possible for check in after withdrawal time.   However, the safety of the participant is the first priority.

The Course Planner should provide a master map of all control locations.

The organisation of the collection of controls is the responsibility of the course setter unless delegated to the event organiser or some other person and the event organiser has been informed.

In the Packing Up process the Event Organiser should:-
      # See that the Assembly area is left clean and any damage or problems reported to the relevant person
      # Check in all equipment, noting any damaged equipment and return promptly to the club's equipment officer

Thank all crew members for their help (this may need to be done during the event as some may leave early and the pack up stage is usually a busy time)
Thank property owner/s in person, or by mail, for their assistance and co-operation.

12. POST EVENT

12.1   Results
Some major events, such as QBIII, require results to be mailed out to competitors after the event. This is the responsibility of the Organiser or Event Secretary, as appropriate. Include any notices such as lost property if needed.

Also, collate results and give to a designated person to phone to AAP Sports Results (02) 9232 8000

12.2   Finances
Account for all monies and forward these to the event treasurer.

13. CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this guide will help you to organise your event successfully. It is a task which is frequently more involved and exacting than it appears, but is most rewarding. Not only does it broaden your experience and appreciation of the sport, it brings great enjoyment to the participants, for without the event organiser the sport would not exist.

This guide only covers the basics and it is strongly recommended that every event organiser be familiar with the Orienteering Australia's Competition Rules (available on the OA web site) and organise the event as close as practical to these standards, particularly with regard to control placement and course setting.

TYPICAL EVENT TIMELINE

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
TASK																										
Map Fieldwork	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→																		
Cartography										→	→	→														
Course Planning											→	→	→	→	→	→										
Control Siting																→										
Prepare Descriptions																→										
Trial run courses																	→									
Map printing																										
Package maps																										
Publicity	→	→																								
Produce Invitation				→																						
Distribute Invitation													→													
Entry Closing Date																						→				
Produce Start List																							→			
Print Program																							→			
Post Program																								→		