

## Risk Assessment

### Introduction

Risk Assessment means taking a systematic approach to looking at what could cause harm to people. By assessing risk, you know where potential problems and dangers lie, and can, therefore, take measures to prevent them.

Organisations have a duty of care towards their people, whether paid staff or volunteers. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 also places a duty on employers to assess risk to those who may be affected by their activities, which includes volunteers!

### Undertaking your own Risk Assessment

The first step is to isolate an activity and identify who and what would be involved. From this you can then create a list of risks and hazards. It helps to involve the people actually engaged in, or experienced in the particular activity.

One way to do this is to produce a table with the following 8 headings and information:

	Heading	Information	Example
A	<b>Situation or Activity</b>	The activity being risk assessed	Hosting a Competition
B	<b>Potential Hazard(s)</b>	The hazards or risks that might occur and to whom it might apply	A volunteer or official may get injured
C	<b>Score likelihood of risk happening (scale of 1-4)</b>	The more likely the risk is to happen the higher the score	If few volunteers have been injured in the past – score low. Look in your own Accident report book or ask people involved in the past.
D	<b>Score possible seriousness of consequences (scale 1-4)</b>	Score how serious the likely consequences could be. Low risk of serious injury would score low	Do this from experience or from records of past competitions
E	<b>Multiply risk factor</b>	Multiply your scores from C and D to get a level of risk. The higher the score the more serious the risk	A score of 1 would be very low the maximum (and most risky) score would be 16.
F	<b>Measures to take</b>	What measures you have taken or will take to eliminate or minimise the risk (there may be many)	Ensure sufficient First Aiders are booked for the event.
G	<b>Method of actioning measures</b>	How you will implement the measure(s) to eliminate or minimise the risk	Budget and book First Aiders at least 1 month before the competition date
H	<b>Date measure put into action</b>	Record the date you have taken the appropriate measure	Booked 4 First Aiders on 20 October 2008

### Risk Assessment

Finally, you should decide when a review of the risk assessment should be undertaken. For example that could be immediately following a competition and/or two months before the next competition takes place.

It is likely that for any given situation, more than one potential hazard (see B above) will need to be listed, and that multiple measures may have to be taken. Some measures will be short term (like booking First Aiders for an event) and others will be longer term (for example introducing an injury prevention module into your coach training). Measures could be put in place using one or more of the following methods:

- ❖ **Information** – providing adequate information on the risks and the measures taken. For example, put up posters providing information on where First Aiders can be found.
- ❖ **Training** – providing additional training to volunteers, stewards etc. to enable them to deal with the potential risks. For example, train volunteers in the use of certain safety equipment.
- ❖ **Change the activity** – or the way you undertake the activity. For example introduce safety equipment or increase supervision levels.
- ❖ **Avoid the activity** – if the risk factor is very high and the measures that can be taken cannot avoid or minimise this, you may have to consider avoiding the activity altogether

Even if you prefer to not use a points table as described above, you should keep a written record of how you have listed the hazards, prioritised them and what steps you have taken to lessen the risks. This record should be kept by your organisation as a written record of the actions you have taken and why.

#### Further Information

The runningsports website ([www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)) has other useful resources along with other downloadable resources Top Tips (including “Health and Safety of Volunteers”), Role Outlines and information on training including workshops and workbooks. Alternatively telephone the runningsports Hotline on 0800 363373.

#### Other organisations worth checking out

Name	Telephone	Web site
Volunteering England	0845 305 6979	<a href="http://www.volunteering.org.uk">www.volunteering.org.uk</a>
Health and Safety Executive	0845 345 0055	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>
Club Mark (for sample Risk Assessment form)		<a href="http://www.clubmark.org.uk">www.clubmark.org.uk</a>

These Top Tips are intended as a general guide, based on legislation at the time of publication. Neither runningsports, its staff, the authors, reviewers can accept any liability for any loss arising as a result of reliance upon the information contained herein. Readers are strongly advised to obtain professional advice on an individual basis.

End.