

POLICY STATEMENT

Orienteering Tasmania (OT) is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of participants at OT sanctioned orienteering events.

OT will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

- **prior to and at an event**, adequate safety precautions are in place to minimise the safety risk for all participants; and that
- **at an event**, if required, a set of search procedures is followed and implemented efficiently.

CORE PRINCIPLES

In implementing this policy, OT will ensure the following:

- that course organisers are appropriately selected, trained and supported
- that hazards are recognized and removed at the course design stage as far as practicable
- that all participants are made aware of potential hazards as far as practicable
- that participants know what to do if they get lost or have an accident
- that organising personnel know what to do in the case of an accident

RESPONSIBILITY

BOTH organisers and participants are responsible for safety!

For steps leading up to an event the Course Planner and/or the event Controller is/are responsible for the implementation of this policy. However, the **Controller has the final responsibility**. With major events, specific officers might be appointed to implement specific parts of the policy, but again, the Controller must satisfy himself/herself that the policy is being implemented.

COMMUNICATION

All Organisers should be given a copy of this policy document or made aware of its existence on the web site. It should be a compulsory topic at OT's Controller and Course Planning workshops.

CONTENT

Part 1. Management of Safety at Orienteering events.

- Checklists for Organisers

Appendix 1 - Participant Registration and Event Registration Sheet

Appendix 2 - "Safety Instructions" notice

Appendix 3 - "What to do if lost" notes for newcomers.

Part 2. Search Procedures.

- Details of emergency, search and rescue procedures to be adopted if and when required.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy is based on that originally developed by John Brammall for OT for the Veteran's World Cup in 1992, with assistance from Tasmania Police, Search and Rescue Division. Information has also been adapted from the policy developed by the ACT Orienteering Association. The material was re-arranged into its present format by Peter Hall, Director Events, in 2001 and edited by Bernard Walker, Vice President, OT, July, 2002. Updated by Peter Hall, Director Technical, and Paul le Fevre, Safety Officer, July 2006.

Part 1 - Management of Safety at Orienteering Events.

Checklist for Organisers - Prior to the event:

- 1 Ask the landowner if there are any hazards that they know of.
- 2 Consider the suitability of the assembly area, particularly for access in bad weather and flooding.
- 3 Identify any hazards unique to the area, e.g. busy roads, big cliffs, slippery slab rocks (eg granite), mine shafts, electric fences etc that could occur on a participant's route choice. Communicate these specific hazards to the participants through "out of bounds" areas (map and/or on ground), notices and control descriptions.
- 4 Ensure out of bounds areas on the ground (eg deep pits, mine shafts) are taped.
- 5 Plan for the provision of adequate drinking water in accordance with Orienteering Australia recommendations (200ml {a disposable cup!} every 20 minutes above 20°C, otherwise every 30 minutes). ([See rules at link](#))
- 6 Prepare an Event Information Sheet which, along with other event information, details at least:
 - course hazards
 - safety bearings
 - course closure time
 - reporting back to registration on course conclusion (whether completed or not)
 - need to carry a whistle
- 7 Consider under what extreme weather conditions you would cancel the event. For example, excessive cold, snow, high winds. Also consider cancelling the event where a total fire ban has been declared and seek advice from the authorities and land owners/managers that it is safe to proceed.
- 8 If an event has been cancelled, the organisers must make every effort to advise competitors and any other people involved.
- 9 Ensure a supply of Non Member Registration Cards (see Appendix 1).
- 10 Ensure there is a copy of the most recent OT Membership Directory at registration.
- 11 Ensure the first aid kit is fully stocked. Ensure any items used are recorded and/or replaced.
- 12 During control site vetting etc, ascertain what mobile phone reception is available.
- 13 For search and rescue purposes, have a copy of the local 1:25,000 Tasmap at the event.
- 14 Print the safety bearing for the day on the control descriptions or on the map.
- 15 Ensure the Course Planner has given particular emphasis to the safety aspects of the 'moderate' navigation courses (usually course 6); e.g. course NOT near edge of map.
- 16 Consider who would be the Search Co-ordinator in the event someone was lost.
- 17 Prepare a "What to do if lost" summary (see Appendix 3) and have copies available for use by newcomers.
- 18 Nominate a suitably qualified first aid officer. Doctors and First Aid Officers are listed in OT's membership Directory.
- 19 Nominate an instructor to help beginners. Instructor must check that all personal details have been provided via a Non Member Registration Card (Appendix 1). Instructor must explain course closure time, safety bearing, and need to report back to registration and hand in control card whether course finished or not.

20 Newcomer instructor should strongly encourage any newcomers to tackle the easy courses before doing the 'moderate' course, and certainly not attempt a 'hard' course.

Checklist for Organisers - At the event

21 Ensure appropriate signs are placed on roads (eg runners ahead)

22 Ensure the Event Information Sheet is displayed and make all registration personnel familiar with these requirements.

23 Ensure Orienteering Safety Instructions (Appendix 2) is prominently displayed.

24 Nominated registration helpers should:

- Ensure accurate lists of all starters and their start times are maintained.
- Ensure accurate details of all finishers are maintained, and matched against the start lists.
- Before course closure time, determine which participants have yet to finish.

25 Ensure the Starter is given a list of important safety issues to stress to all participants just prior to their start. e.g. safety bearing, course closure time, need to carry a whistle.

26 With pre-entry events, the Starter must check off all starters **and** note all non-starters.

27 Ensure that sufficient experienced persons remain at an event should a search be required.

28 Clearly designate a "search co-ordinator" in the event someone is lost.

29 Concerns for people, especially newcomers and less experienced juniors, out for more than 2 hours should be recognised early and preliminary enquiries made from other people on the same or similar courses.

30 Initial searches carried out by doing the course in reverse should be considered even before course closure time.

31 If, after these steps, concerns for a possible lost person continue, then follow the Search and Rescue Procedures – see Part 2.

32 If and when police are called, quote the name/ number of the appropriate 1:25000 Tasmapi, and if necessary, arrange a time to meet at an agreed grid reference point.

33 If and when an event has been cancelled just prior to an event, the organising Club must ensure a manned checkpoint on the access road to the event is maintained on the day of the event to provide advice on the cancellation.

34 Should it be necessary for an event to be cancelled whilst in progress (eg bush fire flare-up) then a systematic plan must be implemented to identify and locate all persons in the event area and ensure that they are found and evacuated from the area.

APPENDIX 1 - Participant Registration

As part of the registration procedure organisers must obtain, from all participants, sufficient minimum details to ensure emergency procedures can be carried out.

Information is obtained from three sources:

1. Non Member Registration Card (this page)
2. Start Time Sheet (next page)
3. Control cards (non Sportident events)
4. OT Membership directory

Generally, there is no problem obtaining information about members. However, it is extremely important that information be obtained from Non Members.

The following registration card must be filled in by all Non Members prior to accepting their entry money or providing them with a blank map.



Orienteering Tasmania Non Member Registration Card In the interest of your safety, please complete and hand in to registration (One card per individual or group doing a course together) (OT does not disclose this information to other individuals or organizations)		
Full Name(s) - all names for group	Year of Birth	Sex
Eg Willy Comeback	1961	M
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
Car Registration Number:		
Address:		
Contact Phone Number:		Email Address:
Who introduced you to orienteering (if applicable) ?		
Would you like information sent to you about upcoming Orienteering Events? Yes / No		
Agreement: I (and on behalf of the other members of my family listed on this form) accept the risks inherent in participating in orienteering and acknowledge that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Orienteering can take place in bush areas with rough or broken ground and rocks, and may also include roads and streets, 2. Communications and access in some areas is sometimes difficult and in the event of an accident, rescue and medical treatment may not be immediately available. 3. In order to take part in events, I/we must be medically and physically able and fit to participate in orienteering. 		
Name:	Signed:	Date:

EVENT: COURSE
:

DATE:

Name (s) If running as a group, all names please.	Age Class	Car Rego.	Start time	Finish time	Elapsed time
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			04		
			06		
			08		
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			14		
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APPENDIX 2 - Safety Instructions

To be displayed prominently at all orienteering events as part of OT's safety policy.

PLEASE READ

Orienteering Safety Instructions

- Please fill in all required details at registration and on Start Time Sheets.
- In cold, wet and windy conditions, wear or carry appropriate thermal clothing and jacket.
- You must carry a whistle, for use ONLY in an emergency. If injured or seriously lost - 6 short whistle blasts, pause, listen, then repeat. If possible, move to the nearest high point then stay put.
- At course closure time you MUST abandon your course and report to registration. Course closure time is noted on the Event Information Sheet.
- If you are lost, follow the safety direction noted on the Event Information Sheet.
- ALWAYS report to registration, even if you don't complete your course, so we know you are safely back.
- If a friend or family member is late returning, DO NOT go searching by yourself. Tell the organisers, who will take the necessary action.

APPENDIX 3 - Safety Instructions : "WHAT TO DO IF LOST"

These notes are primarily for use by newcomers, and not for more experienced orienteers who may choose to use 're-location' techniques prior to abandoning their course and following a safety bearing.

WHAT TO DO IF LOST

If you have found no controls or seen no other competitor for more than an hour, or you have been on the course for more than 2 hours and don't know where you are, then you should follow these steps:

- 1. Orient or point your map to North carefully and follow the safety bearing.**
- 2. If you see a control, see if its number matches ANY of those on your course.**
- 3. If the control is on your course, you are no longer lost!**
- 4. If the control is not on your course, either continue to follow the safety bearing, or if it is close to or after course closure time, stay at the control until it is collected.**
- 5. If you come across a well used vehicle track, stay on it. See if you find it on your map and where you are on it.**
- 6. If all the above fails, go to the nearest hill top or open area and stay put. Keep out of deep gullies and dense bush.**
- 7. Blow your whistle 6 times (short blasts) every minute or so, and listen out for and respond to other people calling or blowing whistles.**

Part 2 : Search Procedures

A copy of these procedures should be laminated and made available at all events.

It is essential that ONE person coordinate a search. If there is no pre-determined "search coordinator" the Event Organiser, Controller and/or Course Planner should designate one as soon as the possible requirement is recognised.

It is important that as soon as someone is reported to the organisers as being out for an extraordinary length of time, the organisers begin to gather the information below as soon as possible, thereby getting any search moving at the earliest possible time. Many of our events occur in winter when daylight is limited.

If any participants have not returned when its nearly course closure time, the Search coordinator must

1. Ensure that sufficient experienced persons remain at the event should a search be required.
2. Advise people designated to collect controls of any people known to be still out after course closure.
3. Ascertain and check that the participant has not returned, and a search is warranted by:
 - a. Double checking start lists with finish lists
 - b. Checking with family, friends and colleagues
 - c. Calling participant's mobile phone if available
 - d. Checking whether car has gone
4. Gather as much information as possible about the participant:
 - a. Course
 - b. Age
 - c. Fitness level
 - d. Experience and competence
 - e. Any known/perceived medical conditions.
 - f. Clothing the participant is wearing, watch?, whistle?,
5. Obtain a copy of the course and compare actual completion times and estimated completion time for the participant.
6. Narrow the possible search area by asking if anyone has seen the participant while competing.
7. Consider likely points or error/hazards and estimate likely distance travelled.
8. Consider likely perimeters that the participant might have made their way to if lost-bordering roads, tracks etc.

9. If SportIdent is being used, it is possible to establish from the SI units on their course which controls were last visited. Retain the services of a SI expert to carry out this task once SI stations have been collected.
10. Consider daylight remaining

Essential Preparations for Search

11. Locate a search base (eg. event tent, vehicle) to which all searchers will report.
12. Plan search (See Preliminary Search Section).
13. Search personnel identified and assembled (preferably six).
14. Appoint search team leaders (preferably three).
15. Brief leaders and other search personnel. (see Briefing section)
16. Record names of all searchers.
17. If mobile phone reception is available, set up a mobile network (swap numbers) between the search base and as many of the search teams as possible.
18. Ensure base remains staffed.

Preliminary Search

Suggested search pattern:

- Team 1: Perimeter and road search (by vehicle) - maintained until an agreed time unless advised.
- Team 2: Sweep of course of missing person in direction of course following likely route choices and 'possible' areas. Report back to search base on completion.
- Team 3: Sweep of course of missing person in reverse direction and 'probable' areas. Report back to search base on completion.

Briefing

Details to be covered:

19. Information relevant to the missing person –name, age, sex, clothing, fitness, medical conditions, time out on course, experience
20. Area to be searched – have maps prepared
21. Recommended search pattern.
22. Allocated time for initial search.
23. Command and communication system.
24. Any special instructions.
25. Searchers must be advised that any effects found and suspected of belonging to the lost participant must not be touched or relocated but their position carefully noted and reported (should search dogs be used at a later stage).

26. Searchers should be instructed to pause frequently, looking ahead, back and side to side while using voice, calling out person's name. Searchers should not use whistles to avoid confusion except as directed in the two points below.
27. Instruct teams that, in the event of finding participant and requiring further assistance, use normal whistle call for help: 6 one second whistle blasts at one second intervals; repeated at one minute intervals. (See next section: Upon Locating a Lost Person.)
28. If search over, called off, then use 10 short whistle blasts every minute.
29. Each team must carry water, extra clothing or and an emergency first aid kit containing a compression bandage, triangular bandage and space blanket, and a torch.
30. If participant is found and cannot be moved, at least one searcher remains with participant, and one reports to the search base.
31. All searchers must return to the search base by the predetermined time.
32. The recommended signal for searchers to return to base is 10 short blasts of a car horn every 1 to 2 minutes.
33. The search procedure remains in place until the lost participant is accounted for and all searchers have reported back.

Upon Locating a Lost Person

.1 If the person is injured.

The administration of first aid/management of the patient must only be performed within the limitations of the training / qualifications of the attending person.

If further treatment is considered necessary, assistance should be requested from other providers such as a First Aide, Tas Ambulance paramedics, St Johns or Police'

A decision should be made whether the injured person can be assisted to the nearest point accessible by vehicle without further unnecessary aggravation of any injuries / suspected injuries

If this is not considered possible, recovery assistance should be requested from other providers such as Tas Ambulance, Police or the SES.

.2 If the person is uninjured

Proceed to the assembly area with the found person.

Termination of Search

The search will be terminated on the recovery of the missing person and the return of all search personnel to the search base.

If the initial search fails to locate the missing person, the search co-ordinator must re-assess the situation and decide to extend the initial search and/or inform the police.

Extension of Search

The Search Co-ordinator shall take the following into consideration when determining when to contact the police:

1. Daylight remaining
2. Amount of time search has taken so far.
3. If the participant has been found and is injured.

If the Event Search Co-ordinator decides to take this step, (s)he shall:

1. Notify the police that a search is required.
2. Notify an available emergency contact for the missing participant (eg. home telephone number)
3. Ensure that all information is on hand and up to date for the briefing of the police
4. Support the search as required by the police.

Police Search

1. On arrival of the police, the Search Co-ordinator provides all recorded information and gives a verbal report to the police.
2. Police assume full control of search from that point.
3. Co-ordinator co-operates with police, and if requested helps organise search personnel and resources from orienteering members.

Contact Numbers

In the case of serious injury or the need to organise a police search the following phone numbers are used.

Continued over...

Contact Numbers

In the case of serious injury or the need to organise a police search the following phone numbers are used.

.From Landline: **Dial 000**

From a GSM Mobile: **Dial 112**

From a CDMA Mobile: **Dial 000**

You will be directed to the emergency service you require. Be ready to provide VERY CLEAR directions on how to get to the area. Consider arranging for an experienced Orienteer to meet emergency service personnel at an easy place to find if there is any possible confusion where they should go.