

EVENT SAFETY POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Orienteering Tasmania Inc. (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:

- 1.1. prior to and at an event, adequate safety precautions are in place to minimise the safety risk for all participants; and
- 1.2. at an event, if required, a set of search procedures is followed and implemented efficiently; and that
- 1.3. critical incidents are identified and dealt with appropriately.

2. CORE PRINCIPLES

In implementing this policy, OT will ensure that:

- 2.1. course organisers are appropriately selected, trained and supported
- 2.2. hazards are recognized and removed at the course design stage as far as practicable
- 2.3. all participants are made aware of potential hazards as far as practicable
- 2.4. participants know what to do if they get lost or have an accident
- 2.5. organising personnel know what to do in the case of an accident, search, or other critical incident.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1. BOTH organisers and participants are responsible for safety!
- 3.2. The OT Director Technical shall take all practical steps to ensure that Appendices to this policy are readily available at all events and are kept up to date.
- 3.3. 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.
- 3.4. 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.

4. COMMUNICATION

- 4.1. All event organisers, planners and controllers should be given a copy of this policy document or made aware of its existence on the web site.
- 4.2. This policy should be a compulsory topic at OT's Controller and Course Planning workshops.

5. CONTENT

This policy applies to the procedures, processes and documents included in the following FIVE appendices.

CHECKLISTS FOR ORGANISERS

APPENDIX 1 CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISERS – PRIOR TO THE EVENT

APPENDIX 2 CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISERS – AT THE EVENT

SEARCH PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 3 DETAILS OF EMERGENCY, SEARCH AND RESCUE PROCEDURES

NOTICES

APPENDIX 4	“SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS” NOTICE
APPENDIX 5	“WHAT TO DO IF LOST” NOTES FOR NEW PARTICIPANTS.
APPENDIX 6	REMINDERS FOR ORGANISERS

6. POLICIES

All organisers should be familiar with the following OT policies and documents:

- [Event Cancellation](#)
- [Competitor Search procedure](#)
- [Orienteering Risk Assessment](#)

APPENDIX 1: 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 (e.g. deep pits, mine shafts) are taped.
5. Plan for the provision of adequate drinking water in accordance with Orienteering Australia recommendations. ([See 2.1 Competition Rules](#))
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 and seek advice from the authorities and land owners/managers that it is safe to proceed. See OT's [Event Cancellation policy](#).
8. If a total fire ban has been declared for the area in which the competition is to be conducted, the event must be cancelled.
9. If an event has been cancelled, the organisers must make every effort to advise competitors and any other people involved.
10. Ensure a supply of Casual and Full Member Registration forms are available to register participants who have not yet registered for the year. OT policy requires compulsory registration for all events. (See 1.12 Registration, Membership and Event Fees Policy).
11. Ensure that the [OT waiver](#) is clearly displayed at the event.
12. Ensure the first aid kit is fully stocked. Ensure any items used are recorded and/or replaced.
13. During control site vetting etc, ascertain what mobile phone reception is available.
14. If the event is remote from major urban centres:
 - have a copy of the local 1:25,000 Tasmap at the event, for search and rescue purposes;
 - Ensure there is a copy of each course map retained for search and rescue;
 - Ensure you have the phone numbers of the nearest Police, Ambulance and Medical centre;
 - 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 and easy navigation courses; e.g. course NOT near edge of map, suitable collecting features, traffic dangers etc.
16. Ensure the Course Planner has given particular emphasis to the requirements of courses for older experienced orienteers; e.g. maintain navigational difficulty with reduced physical demands.
17. Prepare a "What to do if lost" summary (see Appendix 3) and have copies available for use by new participants (particularly at TOS and State league events) .
18. Nominate a suitably qualified first aid officer.

19. Nominate an Instructor to help beginners. Instructor must check that beginners have completed registration details. 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. The instructor should strongly encourage any new participants to tackle the easy courses before doing the 'moderate' course, and certainly not attempt a 'hard' course.

APPENDIX 2: CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISERS - AT THE EVENT

1. Ensure appropriate signs are placed on roads (e.g. Runners On Road)
2. Ensure the Event Information Sheet is displayed and make all registration personnel familiar with these requirements.
3. Ensure Orienteering Safety Instructions (Appendix 2) is prominently displayed.
4. 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.
5. Use the 'Safety Check' feature of SITiming to ascertain whether all starters have returned.
6. Ensure that sufficient experienced persons remain at an event should a search be required.
7. Clearly designate a search co-ordinator in the event someone is lost.
8. In the event that inexperienced orienteers or juniors have not returned after two hours, initial searches carried out by doing the course in reverse should be considered even before course closure time.
9. If, after these steps, concerns for a possible lost person continue, follow the Search and Rescue Procedures – See APPENDIX 3: SEARCH PROCEDURES
10. 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 or GPS coordinate.
11. In the event that Tasmania Police and/or Search and Rescue, and/or the Ambulance Service is called, the incident becomes a critical incident under the Orienteering Australia Critical Incident Policy, and the OA nominated critical Incident officer should be informed immediately and provided with all necessary details.
12. In the event that clause 5.2.13 is activated, the organisers and all other orienteers involved should refer all media requests for information to the OA nominee who has been informed
13. Should it be necessary for an event to be cancelled while in progress (e.g. 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 3: SEARCH PROCEDURES

A succinct version of these procedures is available on the Organisers's Toolkit and in each club trailer.

[Competitor Search procedure](#)**1. COORDINATION OF A SEARCH**

- 1.1. 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 after the requirement for a search is recognised.
- 1.2. It is important that when 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.

2. SEARCH COORDINATOR TASK LIST

If any participants have not returned at course closure time, the Search Coordinator must ensure the following process is followed:

- 2.1. Ensure that sufficient experienced persons remain at the event should a search be required.
- 2.2. Advise people designated to collect controls of any people known to be still out after course closure.
- 2.3. Ascertain that the participant has not returned by:
 - (a) Double checking start and finish data
 - (b) Checking with family, friends and colleagues
 - (c) Calling a participant's mobile phone number if known
 - (d) Checking whether the participant's car is still at the event.
- 2.4. If a search is deemed necessary, gather as much information as possible about the participant, including:
 - (a) Course
 - (b) Age
 - (c) Fitness level
 - (d) Experience and competence
 - (e) Any known/perceived medical conditions.
 - (f) Clothing the participant is wearing and whether he/she has a GPS watch and/or whistle
- 2.5. Obtain a copy of the course and compare actual completion times and estimated completion time for the participant.
- 2.6. Narrow the possible search area by asking if anyone has seen the participant while competing.
- 2.7. Consider likely points of error/hazards and estimate likely distance travelled.
- 2.8. Consider likely perimeters that the participant might have made their way to if lost; bordering roads, tracks etc.
- 2.9. 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.

3. ESSENTIAL PREPARATIONS FOR SEARCH

- 3.1. Establish a search base (e.g. event tent, vehicle) to which all searchers will report.
- 3.2. Plan search (SEE 2.4 PRELIMINARY SEARCH).
- 3.3. Identify and assemble search personnel (preferably six).

- 3.4. Appoint search team leaders (preferably three).
- 3.5. Brief leaders and other search personnel. (See Briefing section)
- 3.6. Record names of all searchers.
- 3.7. 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.
- 3.8. Ensure base remains staffed.

4. PRELIMINARY SEARCH

- 4.1. Suggested search pattern:
 - a) Team 1: Perimeter and road search until an agreed time, unless advised
 - b) Team 2: Sweep of course undertaken by missing person in direction of course following likely route choices and 'possible' areas. Report back to search base on completion.
 - c) Team 3: Sweep of course of missing person in reverse direction and 'probable' areas. Report back to search base on completion.

5. BRIEFING

- 5.1. Details to be covered:
 - a) Information relevant to the missing person –name, age, sex, clothing, fitness, medical conditions, time out on course, experience
 - b) Area to be searched – have maps prepared
 - c) Recommended search pattern.
 - d) Allocated time for initial search.
 - e) Command and communication system.
 - f) Any special instructions.
- 5.2. 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).
- 5.3. 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.
- 5.4. 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 2.6 UPON LOCATING A LOST PERSON)
- 5.5. If search over, called off, then use 10 short whistle blasts every minute.
- 5.6. Each team should carry water, extra clothing, basic first aid supplies and a torch.
- 5.7. If participant is found and cannot be moved, at least one searcher must remain with the participant while one reports to the search base.
- 5.8. All searchers (excluding as noted in 5.7) must return to the search base by the predetermined time.
- 5.9. The recommended signal for searchers to return to base is 10 short blasts of a car horn every 1 to 2 minutes or mobile phone call or UHF radio.

6. UPON LOCATING A LOST PERSON

- 6.1. If the person is injured
 - a) The administration of first aid/management of the patient must only be performed within the limitations of the training / qualifications of the attending person.
 - b) If further treatment is considered necessary, assistance should be requested from other providers such as paramedics, St John Ambulance or Police.

- c) 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
 - d) If this is not considered possible, recovery assistance should be requested from other providers such as Ambulance, Police or the SES.
 - 6.2. If the person is uninjured, proceed to the assembly area.
- 7. TERMINATION OF SEARCH**
 - 7.1. The search will be terminated on the recovery of the missing person and the return of all search personnel to the search base.
 - 7.2. 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.
- 8. EXTENSION OF SEARCH**
 - 8.1. The Search Coordinator shall take the following into consideration when determining when to contact the police:
 - a) Daylight remaining
 - b) Amount of time search has taken so far.
 - c) If the participant has been found and is injured.
 - 8.2. If the Event Search Coordinator decides to take this step, (s)he shall:
 - a) Notify the police that a search is required.
 - b) Notify an available emergency contact for the missing participant (e.g. home telephone number)
 - c) Ensure that all information is on hand and up to date for the briefing of the police
 - d) Support the search as required by the police.
 - e) Notify OA's nominated critical incident person.
- 9. POLICE SEARCH**
 - 9.1. On arrival of the police, the Search Co-ordinator must provide all recorded information and give a verbal report to the police.
 - 9.2. Police assume full control of search from that point.
 - 9.3. Co-ordinator must co-operate with police, and if requested help organise search personnel and resources from orienteering members.
- 10. CONTACT NUMBERS**
 - 10.1. In the case of serious injury or the need to organise a police search dial 000 and ask to be directed to the emergency service you require. Provide VERY CLEAR directions on how to get to the area and arrange for an orienteer to meet emergency service personnel if necessary.

APPENDIX 4: SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

To be displayed prominently at all orienteering events as part of OT's EVENT SAFETY POLICY.

PLEASE READ

Orienteering Safety Instructions

- Please ensure you are registered and your start time is properly recorded (this is done automatically for punching starts).
- In cold, wet and windy conditions, wear or carry appropriate thermal clothing and jacket.
- You are strongly encouraged to 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.
- You MUST abandon your course and report to registration prior to, or as close to, course closure time as possible. Course closure time is noted on the Event Information Sheet.
- If you are lost, follow the safety direction noted on the Map or Control Description Sheet.
- However, if you are lost or injured and come across a control, remain at the control until an organiser or another competitor is able to provide assistance (NOTE:

competitors are required to provide assistance when necessary).

- ALWAYS report to registration before leaving the event, 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 4: SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS: "WHAT TO DO IF LOST"

These notes are primarily for use by new participants, 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, stay at the control until it is collected or you are able to seek assistance from another competitor.
5. If you come across a well-used vehicle track, stay on it. See if you can 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.

APPENDIX 6: REMINDERS FOR EVENT ORGANISERS

REMINDERS – HAVE YOU COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING?

BEFORE THE DAY (More details in the Organisers’ Checklist)

- Have a trained official (Controller/Planner/Organiser) in charge of the event
- Become familiar with the OT Safety at Events Policy
- Obtain permission and up-to-date information from landowner
- Ensure course safety (Planner has avoided edge of map, traffic, hazards, OOB areas)
- Ensure courses are suited to skill levels (C7-9 are easy/moderate. C6 requirements met)
- Check mobile coverage across the map area
- Acquire a Tasmap 1:25000 of the area and copies of maps of each course (for search and rescue)
- Know the phone numbers of emergency services
- Plan for adverse weather conditions, access and escape routes
- Ensure safety bearing is printed on map and in Information Sheet
- Ensured road safety at and near the assembly area and along access roads
- Ensure sufficient signage is prepared/available
- Obtained the up-to-date members list

ON THE DAY (More details in the Organisers’ Checklist)

- Check weather details and forecasts
- Place suitable road signage (for directions and safety)
- Display safety notices (appendices) and Information Sheet
- Brief Registration personnel re safety issues to be passed on to participants
- Brief Start officials re safety information, taped routes, safety bearing, potential hazards
- Appoint and brief an Instructor for Beginners
- Designate search coordinator for the day if required
- Ensure qualified orienteers remain on site to assist with search if required
- Be aware of emergency services phone number - 000
- Bring to the event OT Search and Rescue procedures and TASMAM of area