

OACT Guidelines for Event Management – Doc 13

PREPARING PRE-MARKED MAPS

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Maps with courses pre-marked on them are provided at most OACT events with the exception of Midweek events, when pre-marking is at the discretion of the organiser and is the exception rather than the rule. Pre-marking of courses saves the organiser and competitors some effort and improve the presentation of events, but adds to the cost of putting on events. In order to limit the printing costs, and avoid wastage of paper, course maps are printed at A4 size if possible. This is usually adequate for Metro and Runners Shop Twilight events, as well as shorter courses on Classic events. Longer courses at Classic events are printed at A3 size if required.

The event map is commonly an extract from a larger OCAD map file held by Bob Allison, who maintains the current versions of maps used for most OACT events. The event map is supplied to the course planner who normally prepares the course maps using OCAD Course Setting (OCAD CS), Purple Pen or other suitable software, then returns to the finished courses to Bob for checking, forwarding to the OACT Office for printing, and forwarding the XML file of the courses to the person responsible for loading them into the event computer. In some circumstances, the finished courses and the XML file may be forwarded directly by the course planner to the OACT Office and the person loading the course file respectively.

The key steps in preparing pre-marked maps are as follows:

1. Selection of map area. As soon as the area proposed to be used for the courses is known, advise Bob Allison who will prepare an appropriately sized and formatted event map in the preferred version of OCAD. The event map will contain the name of the event, appropriate logos and other peripheral information, which can be rearranged if necessary. This map file can be forwarded directly by Bob Allison or accessed through Google Drive. It can be opened for viewing and printing using full OCAD, OCAD CS, OCAD Viewer (free download) or Purple Pen (free download, recommended for anyone without OCAD).

2. Planning the courses. Course planning is facilitated using OCAD, OCAD CS or Purple Pen. Such course planning software enables trial courses to be planned and adjusted very easily by computer, but supports rather than replaces the need for thoughtful planning and careful field checking and controlling.

- OCAD is primarily a map drawing program, with course planning as an additional component. It is relatively expensive software and the cost is not warranted purely for course planning.
- OCAD CS is the course planning component of OCAD and is relatively cheap. OACT has several OCAD CS licences which are installed on OACT laptops which members can borrow – contact the OACT Office for further information.
- Purple Pen is free software, which anyone can download. It is not difficult to use and a tutorial on its use can also be downloaded. It comes with a suggestion that users may like to make a donation to its developer, but OACT members need not feel obliged to donate.

While the end product is similar, the ways in which these programs operate are somewhat different. The choice between OCAD/OCAD CS (if accessible) and Purple Pen comes down largely to personal preference and what one is used to.

Some members are familiar with the CORPSE program, originally developed by an OACT member, the late Rex Saye, before OCAD CS became available. While this was a valuable tool in the past, it operates somewhat differently. This can lead to problems for

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inexperienced users. It is not recommended for routine use unless one is very familiar with it.

3. Printing the courses and control descriptions. When the course planner has finalised the courses, these should be added to the map together with the control descriptions. The control descriptions should be in international symbols and, for Green and Blue courses, also in English, if there is space on the map without obscuring the courses. Having both international symbols and English descriptions can help introduce the symbols to less experienced orienteers.

In Purple Pen, the international and English control descriptions are printed side by side, while in OCAD they need to be added separately, which provides greater flexibility in locating them on the map. Both OCAD and Purple Pen can automatically translate from international symbols to English, but this sometimes results in odd terminology (e.g. ant hill rather than termite mound). The descriptions can be customised for Australian English, however.

Points for the course planner or controller to check in preparing the courses and control descriptions for printing include the following:

- Control circles are accurately centred on the control feature.
- Control circles, numbers and connecting lines do not obliterate (or are obscured by) map features that are important to navigation. The software enables these to be cut where necessary. Lines along straight tracks etc. should be offset slightly.
- Control numbers are positioned so that they relate unambiguously to their correct control circles.
- Control descriptions match the map symbol, e.g. if the map symbol is a brown dot for a control which is a rocky high point, the control description symbol should indicate 'high point' (black dot), not 'boulder' (black triangle).
- All relevant information to describe the control (e.g. size, position of flag in relation to the feature) is included.
- Descriptions are complete in distinguishing the control feature from other similar features within the circle (e.g. northern boulder). This description can sometimes vary according to the map scale.
- Control descriptions (international or English) are at an appropriate scale (i.e. not so small that they are hard to read or so large that they intrude unnecessarily on the map area). Where possible, symbolic control description blocks should be at the standard row size of 6 mm, but may be reduced slightly if space demands it. Text descriptions should be 12 pt (the OCAD default font) where possible, but may be slightly reduced if space demands it.
- Out-of-bounds areas and compulsory routes are shown on the map (i.e. not just advised to competitors or marked in the terrain).
- If appropriate, the amount of climb on the optimum route has been estimated and inserted at the start of the control description list.
- Courses are listed in the course file from hardest/ longest to easiest/shortest. This is necessary for preparing the XML file for the event computer.

In addition to the course information, pre-marked maps should include an emergency contact number (usually the organiser or course planner). That contact person should be available at the assembly area throughout the event and until the last competitor has returned. The emergency contact number can be added in OCAD or OCAD CS using one of the text symbols (edited if necessary) at the bottom of the symbol menu. Purple Pen has a similar facility.

4. Forwarding the map for printing. When the courses have been prepared to the satisfaction of the course planner and controller/vetter, forward the map file to Bob Allison for final checking. This should be done **at least two weeks before the event** to enable adequate time for checking by Bob and consultation with the course planner if

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needed. Bob will make any necessary corrections or layout adjustments and forward the map files as PDFs to the OACT Office for printing. He will also check that the courses are listed in the correct order and forward the XML file to the person loading the courses onto the event computer.

5. Collection of pre-marked maps. Provided that the course file has been supplied to Bob Allison in time, map printing is usually undertaken a few days before the event in the OACT Office. Contact the Office Manager to confirm when maps will be available and arrange for their collection. The normal office hours are from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

If You Don't Have Suitable Computer Access

Experience has shown that most course planners are able to prepare pre-marked maps using the above procedure. If, however, you do not have the necessary computer skills or facilities to do so and cannot get assistance from other club members, the alternative is to provide Bob Allison with a hand-drawn set of courses and he can prepare the maps himself for you to check. In this situation, you should advise Bob as early as possible (e.g. when obtaining the event map in Step 1), and allow a longer lead time for submitting and checking the courses.

If You Want to Do It All Yourself

If you are suitably experienced in course planning and the use of course planning software **and** the final maps are reviewed by an experienced controller, it is not essential to work through Bob Allison in Step 4, i.e. after checking by the controller, the courses with control descriptions can be sent as PDFs directly to the OACT Office, and the XML Version 3.0 file can be sent directly to the person loading the courses onto the event computer. If you intend to do these tasks yourself, please consult with Bob Allison beforehand, and check well in advance who will be loading the courses onto the event computer.

Map Corrections

If map corrections have been noted for the event, these can be advised to Bob Allison who will correct them on the final event map. Depending on the experience of the person noting the corrections, the master map file may also be amended. Alternatively the reported corrections may be checked by an experienced mapper before doing so.

If you have access to OCAD (full version) and are experienced in its use, you can make the map corrections yourself. If doing so, please forward the corrected map to Bob Allison, as well as a separate map highlighting where the corrections have been made.

Mountain Bike Orienteering Maps

For MTBO events, the supply of maps and preparation of pre-marked maps is managed by Andrew Slattery, following a similar procedure to that described above. See **Document 17** for further information.

Contacts

Bob Allison: 6281 4529, allisonr@grapevine.com.au
OACT Office (Paul de Jongh): 6162 3422, office@act.orienteing.asn.au

Downloads

OCAD Viewer: www.ocad.com

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Purple Pen: <http://purplepen.golde.org/>

Here is a short instruction video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRMByZhgspI>

And here are some screen shots to help:

<http://nwoc.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Purple-Pen.pdf>