

# OACT Guidelines for Event Management – Doc 10

## ORGANISING AND COURSE PLANNING FOR MIDWEEK EVENTS

**Revised 11 October 2019**

Midweek events are more informal than other OACT events and are less demanding in terms of organisation for the following reasons:

- The number of competitors is much smaller (typically about 30).
- Fewer courses are set.
- A controller/ vetter is not required (unless requested by the course planner).
- Maps are usually not pre-printed (although it is necessary to prepare master maps).
- SI timing is not used, with competitors timing themselves.

It is nevertheless expected that course planners should endeavour to set courses to an acceptable standard (i.e. no misplaced controls, control sites properly described with international symbols), and that the event is organised efficiently and on time.

If you have the time to spare during the week, Midweek events offer a good opportunity to be introduced gently to course planning at an event which most participants treat as a training run rather than serious competition. Experienced orienteers are often willing to offer constructive criticism after their run. If you are new to course planning, it is worth seeking the advice of an experienced course planner to at least review your courses on paper and possibly to check them in the field.

Usually one person manages all aspects of the event planning and organisation, but there is no reason why the roles cannot be shared. The following advice is prepared on the basis that one person is doing all the work.

### OACT SAFETY POLICY

This policy applies to all events. Prior to the event, the organiser should familiarise her/himself with **Document 14, Safety and emergency procedures**. The event organiser has the discretion to require all competitors to carry a whistle for safety reasons.

### BEFORE THE EVENT

**1. Event Planning Information.** In addition to the general information on the website, there are two sets of information on specific areas which are available to assist the organiser, course planner and controller in the planning of events:

(a) **Event Planning and Management Guidelines.** These location-specific guidelines are being prepared progressively for all areas used for OACT events and, if available, are provided electronically (or in printed form if necessary) from the OACT Office or through Google Drive. They contain information such as location of suitable assembly areas, directions to assembly areas, landholder contact details, comments on map quality and reliability, safety and environmental factors to be considered in planning and conduct of events, and other conditions which are normally specified by the land owner or manager.

(b) **Event Planning Kits.** These are available for most areas and contain most of the above information, plus courses and results from some previous events, which may be useful in providing course planning ideas and identifying typical running speeds for the area. They are large folders which need to be collected from the OACT Office, and returned after the event.

**2. Selection of Assembly Area.** The assembly area is nominated when the Midweek Series program is drawn up but needs to be confirmed before the application for

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permission for the event can be submitted. Because of the small number of competitors and cars, there is more flexibility in selecting the assembly area than for other regular events. Potential assembly areas are identified in the relevant Event Planning and Management Guidelines (if available, see above). The organiser should visit the nominated assembly area location as early as possible and **at least eight weeks prior to the event** to check that there are no issues which may prejudice its use (e.g. new fences, temporary construction works). For some locations, this should ideally be done during a weekday to check that available parking is not occupied by workers. If it is necessary or desirable to change the assembly area, the OACT Office and the Midweek Series Coordinator should be advised at least eight weeks before the event to allow time for obtaining the event approval.

**3. Land Use Permission and Conditions.** The OACT Office is usually responsible for obtaining permission for Midweek events held on public land within the ACT metropolitan area. To assist the Office Manager, the assembly area should be confirmed at least eight weeks before the event. Assembly areas for Midweek events are normally chosen to avoid the need for access through locked gates but, if such access is required, this should be specified when the application is submitted. It is the organiser's responsibility to obtain the key for access.

When permission is granted, which may not be until 1 to 2 weeks before the event (and sometimes later), make sure that all conditions which may have been placed on the use of the area are strictly observed (such as out-of-bounds areas, fence crossings, disturbance to stock, provision of toilets etc.). If you have any concerns about approval conditions, discuss them with the Midweek Series Co-ordinator or the OACT Office Manager.

**Take a copy of the approval to the event**, in case there are any issues with authorities or local residents. Four Canberra Nature Park areas, the approval may include a phone number for contacting a ranger in an emergency.

**4. Courses.** At Midweek events, two Moderate courses of approximate lengths 5 and 3 km are normally offered. For events held during school holidays, an Easy course (2.5 to 3 km) is also offered, and may be provided at other events at the discretion of the Organiser or if there has been a firm arrangement for a school group to attend and compete at that level. (In the latter case, OACT may arrange extra assistance).

The shorter Moderate course should be set with particular regard for the needs of older or less fit competitors to avoid steep, rough terrain as far as practicable, while still offering an appropriate level of navigational challenge.

Further information on course planning is contained in **Document 2. Successful Course Planning.**

Coloured flagging tape for marking control sites is available from the OACT storage shed at Giralang or from the OACT Office.

**5. Maps.** Maps for course planning are available from the OACT Office as existing printed maps, or in electronic format from Bob Allison or through Google Drive. If existing printed maps are used, check that they are the latest version (i.e. as will be used for the event), as maps are periodically updated. If current printed maps are not available and you do not have the resources to use an OCAD file, current maps for course planning can be printed at the OACT office.

If you see a need for map updating for your event, please consult with Bob Allison, [allisonr@grapevine.com.au](mailto:allisonr@grapevine.com.au), to arrange this. Course planners who are competent at field mapping and OCAD use may undertake their own updating, but should consult with Bob

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with regard to retaining this updated information for future use. Alternatively, significant map corrections may be drawn by hand on the master maps. If maps are updated on OCAD or by hand, please forward the corrected map to Bob Allison, as well as a separate map highlighting where the corrections have been made in OCAD.

For Midweek events, it is acceptable for the organiser to prepare two master maps for each course and provide blank maps for competitors to copy their own controls from the master maps. The master maps may be prepared using OCAD, Purple Pen or other suitable software, or drawn by hand. See **Document 13** for information about Purple Pen software which is free and easy to use, and is recommended for anyone without access to OCAD. Include an emergency contact number on the master maps for competitors to copy.

Alternatively, organisers who are experienced in using OCAD or Purple Pen may prepare pre-marked maps with control descriptions and emergency contact number added and forward them to the OACT Office as PDF files for printing, preferably about a week before the event. Pre-marking of at least some of the maps can save time queueing for master maps if competitors are in a hurry to start. Some additional blank maps should also be printed in case the number of pre-marked maps has been underestimated.

**6. Control Descriptions.** Control description sheets should be provided as separate loose sheets, even if pre-marked maps have been prepared. For Moderate courses, control descriptions are normally in international symbols only. If an Easy course has been set, the control descriptions should be in both international symbols and English to assist new orienteers in learning the symbols.

**7. Control Flags and Stands.** Midweek events use hanging flags with punches. Two sets of flags with numbers 31 to 50 are available. Flags may be hung from stands (no punch required) if there is no suitable location for hanging a control flag. Flags are normally passed directly between organisers. As there are two sets, these can be obtained from the organiser of the event held two weeks previously. A small number of stands may be supplied with the controls for use where there is no convenient feature for hanging the flag. If additional stands are required, these may be obtained from the OACT storage shed at Giralang. The shed is located in Coree Place, which is off Tucana Street. The keys to the storage shed can be obtained from the OACT Office or from Anita Scherrer (0457 584 459) or Pat Miethke (0428 830 201, [pat.miethke@live.com.au](mailto:pat.miethke@live.com.au)). There is no lighting at the shed so a torch is needed if visiting at night.

**8. Event Equipment and Stores.** The equipment is normally passed between successive organisers unless otherwise arranged. The equipment should be checked a few days prior to the event by the organiser and replenished/ reconditioned as required. Ensure that you have sufficient registration/ punch cards in appropriate colours, that the water containers are refilled with fresh water, and that you have plastic cups and bags for the disposal of rubbish. Additional punch cards can be obtained from the OACT Office or the Midweek Series Co-ordinator. Cups and bags can be replenished from the OACT storage shed.

The equipment should fit into the boot of a typical car.

### AT THE EVENT

**9. Direction signs.** Direction signs are available with the event equipment if these are needed to guide competitors to the event. Erect the 'Orienteering' banner at the assembly area.

**10. Assembly Area.** The assembly area for Midweek events is very basic with one table used by competitors to fill in registration cards etc. It can also be used by the

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organiser for collecting entry fees and handing out maps, but some organisers prefer to do this from the back of their car. Event information is displayed on the master map boards for each of the courses. A shelter is available for protection from rain if required. Toilets are not provided, although proximity to public toilets may be considered in selecting the assembly area location.

**11. Event Registration.** Competitors fill in a registration/punch card before entering. Check that they have filled in the necessary information on both parts of the card and that a telephone number and car registration number are included on the registration card. Payment is by cash only. Pens are provided for competitors to complete their cards.

At Midweek events, all participants are charged members' rates, i.e. adult \$10, junior \$7, family \$27.

Orienteering Australia Competition Rules, rule 6.2 permits the refusal of an entry on a course, if the organiser considers a person is trying to compete on course beyond their capabilities.

**12. Water on courses.** As the courses are relatively short and the Midweek Series is conducted during the cooler months of the year, water controls are normally not provided on courses. If, however, the organiser feels that the course lengths or weather conditions warrant it, a mid-course water control may be included. It may be necessary to obtain an additional water container from the Giralang shed or alternatively use a couple of 2-litre plastic bottles.

**13. Start, Finish and Timing.** The Start and Finish are in the same location and competitors time themselves by writing their start and finish times on timesheets on a clipboard, which is placed on a chair at the start. Competitors are on trust to record their times honestly and accurately. Two copies of the timesheet are normally sufficient for an event. Spare sheets are kept in a concertina file in the equipment box.

**14. Cash Box.** The cash box should contain a float of \$50. Check before and after the event to ensure that the float is correct and consists of the correct denominations as indicated in the lid of the cash box.

### AFTER THE EVENT

**15. Missing Persons.** Very occasionally a competitor fails to return to the Finish by course closure time. This can be usually verified by checking the finishers recorded on the Start/Finish sheets. From the information on registration cards, check whether the competitor's car remains in the assembly area and/or call the competitor's phone number. For further information on Safety and Rescue Procedures see **Document 14**.

Because Midweek events are usually managed by one person, if it is thought that someone has not returned, the organiser needs to ask for help from participants who are still present. If the organiser goes out looking for the missing person and the missing person returns to find nobody at the assembly area and goes home, this can lead to much confusion and waste of time and resources. If there is serious concern about a person's safety, it is appropriate to contact other experienced OACT members for advice and assistance.

**16. Compass Count.** At the end of the event, check against the registration card that any hired compasses have been returned.

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- 17. Control Collection.** At Midweek events, the organiser usually undertakes the control collection but may enlist help from others if necessary. Numbered control flags should be checked and placed in numerical order in the backpack supplied.
- 18. Equipment Pack-up.** The equipment is usually passed on to the next organiser at the end of the event unless otherwise arranged. If any items are damaged or missing, please advise the Midweek Series Coordinator. There are two sets of control flags which alternate between events, so the next organiser does not have to wait for the controls used on that day to be collected.
- 19. Registration Cards, Event Takings and Unused Maps.** Cash takings from the event should be counted (with a float of \$50 in the correct denominations left in the cash box) and the amount noted by the organiser. The registration cards, the event takings and unused maps are to be delivered to the OACT Office, unless they have been collected at the event by an OACT official.
- 20. Results.** The results are usually processed by an OACT official. If the official is not at the event, arrangements will be made to retrieve the data from the start/finish sheets.
- 21. Event Folder.** If an event folder has been borrowed, this should be returned to the OACT Office soon after the event. Feel free to add any relevant new information.

**REMEMBER - If not sure, ask someone.** For clarification of any of the above points, don't hesitate to contact the Midweek Series Co-ordinator or alternatively the OACT Office at 6162 3422. There are also many experienced members in your club who are able to give you advice and help.