Updated 2010

INTRODUCTION

The RRCA is NOT a regulatory body and we do not sanction events. The RRCA National Organization does not provide direct oversight for the conduct of local events. RRCA member events are locally governed, owned and operated. The RRCA does issue guidelines, not rules, for the conduct of safe events and provides a general liability insurance policy that covers certain activities for running clubs and running/walking events. Review our Insurance FAQs to understand coverage. All events insured by the RRCA are encouraged to follow these Guidelines for Safe Events. Risk management is one of the primary responsibilities of a race director and following the RRCA Guidelines will help ensure a safer event for participants. Furthermore, the RRCA insurance program is a group policy and poor planning and decision making by one can affect the program for all. It is a shared responsibility of race directors to ensure that they are doing everything possible to deliver a safe, well-planned event for their participants.

The following guide was originally prepared by the Houston Area Runners Association and subsequently updated by the Road Runners Club of America. This has been prepared for use by race directors and committees to use to ensure organized, safe and enjoyable races. RRCA member clubs and events should be familiar with the topics presented in this guide.

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1. SCOPE

Any person or group that is contemplating staging a road or trail race must realize the potential for personal injury and damage associated with racing on the roads or trails. A club or fun run is not fun if human tragedy is involved.

What follows are safety and planning considerations for each step involved in the organization and directing of a road or trail race. This guide is meant to be used as an aid in making a race safer, and is not intended as a substitute for the use of common sense under existing circumstances. Those persons using these guidelines must understand that they are ultimately responsible for the conduct of a safe event. This guide is not all-inclusive. It is intended to provide basic information for potential race directors tasked with organizing a race of moderate size and distance, as there are several books, on-line tools and publications that go much further into detail on race management. Feel free to copy the checklists and forms throughout the guide and tailor them to your needs.

The majority of the guide pertains to road races and trail races, however when we have included specific advice for trail races, there will be a ☺ symbol before the item. We have also included ways in which to "green" your race to be more environmentally friendly.   These ideas are presented in green lettering throughout.

2. GUIDELINES

Planning: All phases of the event will benefit from adequate advance planning. In particular, the safety of the participants, volunteers and spectators can best be served by addressing the following matters well in advance of the race start date. Allow a minimum of 6 -12 months advance time to plan the event. In addition to the items listed below, you may need to devote time to obtaining race sponsorship and advertising.

- Budget. Keep in mind that putting on a running event costs money. Before committing to directing a race, create a budget to determine if expenses will be covered by registration fees and sponsorships. Cost s to consider include t-shirts, awards, race timing, advertising, insurance, bib numbers and pins, refreshments, portable toilets, sound system, entertainment, water station supplies, permits, facility rental and banners.

- Date Selection. Select a date which does not conflict with other events in the area, either running or non-running related, and may try to schedule around the "bad" weather months. To check for conflicting events be sure to review the event calendars printed in local running publications and your local running clubs' calendars. Do not take for granted that you can get the same date year after year. Each year always select your date as early as possible. If your event date does fall on a day that another local running club has an event, consider a courtesy call to that organizer.

- Site Selection. In determining a site consider whether shelter from possible weather conditions will be needed, whether there is adequate parking, whether the site is safely accessible or will participants be required to cross busy streets thus requiring additional traffic control. Also consider existing sites of other road races that are already certified at the distance you plan to hold. (Visit www.USATF.org to view current certified courses) Avoid crossing rail road tracks and major intersections, and contact local police and park authorities to obtain permits for your race. Good options for races include office parks, which generally have a lot of empty parking spaces on weekends. Beginning an early morning race at a subway station or an indoor shopping mall also provides good parking opportunities on the weekends. Consider where the port-a-johns and registration tables will go and also where participants will line up for the start. ☺ Limit the total number of participants in the trail race to the number of runners a trail can safely accommodate with limited environmental impact. Consider car pooling by giving preferential parking to those who arrive with multiple participants in their car. ☺ Select a trail race course that uses officially designated open public trails.

- Course Design. Site selection works hand in hand with a safe course configuration. Consider the fact that the local authorities may have plans that would turn what you see today as an acceptable race course into the center of a major street repair tomorrow. Check with the local authorities as you begin planning for the event to avoid this problem. When contacting your local authorities contact all relevant authorities. See below for more detailed information on course design. ☺ Think about spectator, crew and medial movement around the course and post signs to direct spectators to other course sections via established paths.

- Meet With Local Authorities. Any required authorization from local authorities must be obtained long before the event date. As noted above, the local authorities should be made aware of your date, site selection, and details of your course design. They should be asked specifically about plans they have that would impact these items. Arrangements with local authorities for traffic control should be among the initial steps taken in planning the event. When contacting your local authorities contact all relevant authorities   For example, contact the parks and police departments and the local County Commissioner's office. Permits may be required with associated fees.

- Meet With Key Race Personnel. Meetings should be scheduled far enough ahead of the event to allow for proper coordination and planning. These key persons should be experienced in the area of which they are assigned or in turn be well instructed in their duties prior to the event. Examples of key race personnel include; Race Director, Lead Course Marshall, Volunteer Coordinator, Marketing and Communications Director, Start/Finish Line Director, Packet Stuffing and Packet Pick-Up Coordinator. Also consider assigning a "Green Team Leader" who is responsible for the placement of recycling containers, and sweeping the course post-race for trash.

- Medical Director . One of the primary considerations in the planning of the event should be the selection of a Medical Director. Even in a small race, there should be one person assigned as the go to person if someone is injured. The Medical Director should be accessible via the race communication systems at all times during the event and positioned so that s/he may be contacted immediately upon the occurrence of an incident, accident or injury and then be able to go directly to the scene. All race volunteers should be instructed that in the event of a medical incident, the Medical Director should be among those persons to be contacted immediately.

  The Medical Director should have the following duties in the event of an occurrence:

  - To make timely and direct contact with the person(s) involved in the incident and witnesses;
  - To assure any injured person that they will receive proper medical or other required attention;
  - To remain with or arrange for persons associated with the event to remain with the injured person, to insure that the injured person receives proper attention;
  - If not already contacted, to contact medical personnel to attend to the insured person;
  - To gather necessary information in order to report the incident to the police, and if necessary, to the liability insurance carrier. The information to be gathered should include details as to how, where, when and why the incident occurred, names, addresses and phone numbers of the injured parties and witnesses, and if possible, photographic documentation of the scene..

- Communicate With Residents of the Race Area. Maintaining good public relations with businesses and residents impacted by the event should be a high priority. Make sure that affected persons and entities are informed well in advance as to what they may expect on race day, (i.e. specific street closings, length of the event), so they can take the steps necessary to alleviate any inconvenience to themselves, their customers, guests or families. It is suggested that churches, hotels, theaters, and other businesses be contacted directly. Residential areas can be forewarned by placing signs in the community in advance of the event. Many events go door to door along a race course to leave flyers or personally talk with residents. This can go a long way to prevent an angry resident from complaining to the authorities and jeopardizing the following year's event.

- Insurance Coverage. Contact the RRCA at membership@rrca.org, to secure insurance for your event early in the planning process. Occasionally a municipality will request a Certificate of Insurance for the event prior to assigning a permit for an event.

Course Design: A course design that takes into account the following factors should help maximize the safety of the race participants:

- Avoid Narrow Lanes At Start. Narrow lanes at the start are hazardous. This is where the race is most congested and runners may end up running into each other, running on medians, running over curbs or up and down sidewalks, all of which increase the chance of physical injury. Consider "seeding" runners based on finishing time and starting runners in "waves" in order to keep the start less congested. This works particularly well in races using some type of "chip" timing system. The number, age and experience of participants will drive the space needs.

- Avoid Abrupt and Sharp Turns. Abrupt turns at the start and sharp turns within the course can be hazardous. Making the turns "too tight",or having too many turns within the course can increase the risk of physical injury to the race participants and also increases the need for additional course marshals. It is a best to have only adult volunteers in safety vests with a flags directing runners on the course, and keeping traffic from participants.

- Avoid Busy Streets and Intersections if Possible. This will cut down on the amount of traffic control needed, lessen the exposure of the runners to someone disobeying traffic control and reduce the number of "irate" drivers. If the race is near or crossing train tracks check the train schedule to ensure a passing train will not interfere with the race.

- Avoid Areas of Potentially Hazardous Footing. Hazardous or poor footing can be the result of construction in progress, bad road conditions, dirt surfaces which become muddy, uneven railroad crossings, curbs and roads with unusually high crowns which slope to an undesirable degree. Some of these conditions can be observed beforehand by driving or walking the course, while others must be anticipated due to projected changes in the weather or planned construction by the local authorities. In the days before the race, mark potholes, hazards or other things that may trip runners. Always check with public works BEFORE marking any public roadway. When marking, use environmentally friendly "chalk" sprays that will wash away after the event.

- Make Course Markings Visible. It is recommended that each mile be marked so runners may visually see the mark well in advance. Locate the marker so that it is not a hazard to the participants or the spectators. Do not place the markers at water stops as this causes an inconvenience to runners recording splits on their watches. Clearly mark all turns on the course with orange cones, chalk, and/or a course marshal holding a flag to ensure runners do not get lost or run into traffic. A real "plus" of any race, especially half marathons and marathons, is to use "Water Ahead" signs. This gives runners who use power gels a chance to down their gel then grab the water needed to wash it down.

- Employ Trained Persons For Proper Course Measurement. Proper course measurement is a matter for persons with the proper training, certification and knowledge. It is a disservice to the race participants and a possibly fatal mark against your event to have an inaccurately measured course. It is highly recommended that you employ a USATF certified measurer to measure and certify your course.

Volunteers: The recruiting, coordinating and instructing of volunteers in a race event is essential in maximizing the safety of the race participants. Factors involved in volunteer coordination include the following:

- Designate a Volunteer Coordinator. Assign a volunteer coordinator to gather and assign volunteers to specific jobs. The volunteer coordinator can supervise the pre-race organization of the volunteers and on race day will be the person who will inform volunteers where they are to go. The volunteer coordinator can also make sure that each volunteer has signed a volunteer waiver

- Recruit Volunteers well in advance of race day. Determine how many volunteers you will need and in which areas you will need them. This will depend on the size of the event, the course itself; i.e. busy streets with many intersections will require more adult volunteers or police presence, and whether or not your race will have an "expo" or festival associated with it. Recruit high school students, or youth groups to volunteer. Plan for more volunteers than are needed, and use age-appropriate volunteers. For example, only adults should be part of the course marshal group. Teen volunteers can assist with packet stuffing or handing out water and food at the conclusion of the race.

- Volunteer Waivers. Ensure all volunteers have signed a waiver and ensure the guardians of minors have signed a waiver on behalf of minors volunteering for the event.

- Meet With Key Volunteers In Advance of Race Date. Organize key volunteers to lead various areas of the race and make sure they fully understand the needs of their group. These key volunteers are then tasked with carrying out their duties along with the other volunteers assigned to the group. Make a check list for each key area containing duties and information to be passed onto the volunteers.   Make sure volunteers are instructed as to a specific time of arrival on race day, and advise them of predicted weather conditions to ensure they dress appropriately.

- Volunteer Control on Race Day. The volunteer coordinator should meet volunteers at the designated volunteer check-in location and direct volunteers to their posts. It is helpful if all volunteers wear an special "race volunteer" shirt, or a vest to indicate they are helping with the event. Let the volunteer know that someone will come by to relieve them of their duties or let them know when it is ok to leave their post. There have been several incidents when volunteers have left their posts and accidents have occurred. Ensure volunteers have a cell number or contact process if they need to leave their post early.

- Thank Your Volunteers. Allow volunteers to partake in the post race festivities, including refreshments. Ensure you have a good list of all volunteers who worked the event. After the conclusion of the event, send a thank you to each volunteer and solicit their feedback. Pave the way for next year's event.

Entry Forms, Pre-Race Information and Packet Pick-Up: The pre-race sign-up procedures offer a substantial opportunity to communicate safety and related information to the race participants. The following are considerations concerning race entry forms and packets:

- Online Registration and Paper Entry Forms. It is suggested that the entry form should, at a minimum, communicate the following information to the runner:
- The name of the event
- Date and time of the event
- Race logo, RRCA logo and sponsor logo(s)
- Participant name, address, email address and emergency contact information
- The course length, and, if the course is USATF certified, then the USATF certification number should appear on the entry form.
- Course description
- Location of the start and finish
- Shirt size (if shirts are being given to participants)
- Entry fee, late fee if applicable, and whether there is race day registration
- Location, date and time of packet pick-up
- Overall and age group awards to be presented
- Type of timing device being used

- A waiver and release form (see below)
- Warnings against baby strollers, roller bladders, skates, head sets, and pets.
- Parking Information
- Extras: How many water stations (and port-a-johns) to expect on the course and where they will be located; what type of fluid replacement will be available; the type of medical assistance available; the type of post race activities planned; course map; and the name of the charity being benefited (if applicable). The more information provided to the runner the greater the chance that proper judgment regarding entry of the race and the method and manner of running the race can be exercised, thus maximizing the safety of the runner.

Waivers: The entry form should contain a waiver or release of liability to be signed by the race entrant or if a minor, his or her guardian. The suggested wording of this waiver or release is provided as an attachment to these guidelines. It is suggested that each individual sponsor, local authority or club be specifically named in the waiver or release. It would be a good idea to include the name of the entity hosting the packet pick-up as well.

Pre-race Information: Race packets provide a great opportunity to communicate vital information to the runner. Alternatively, send information and sponsor coupons via email to participants. In the packet include information concerning possible adverse weather conditions so the runners can hydrate and dress accordingly. Also include information involving the course layout, spacing of water stations, availability and location of electrolyte replacement drinks, and placement of medical personnel and distance markers. The appendix includes information concerning cold and hot weather conditions, which could be used in the race packet.

Packet Pick-Up: Packet pick-up dates and location are usually a consideration of the race sponsors and associated charitable entities. Runners come to the packet pick-up to receive a bib, timing device, and/or t-shirt. Safety needs of packet-pickup include having ample parking available, and enough volunteers to keep the lines moving. Packet pick-up is also a good time to involve your sponsors with display tables, handouts and/or banners.

Start Line: The start line provides an important opportunity to communicate safety information to the race participants. Safety considerations to review at the start line are as follows:

- Water Providing water at the start of the race will assist   participants in maintaining hydration. This should be a priority for all races, not just those occurring on hot and humid days.

- Communicate with Participants at the Start Clearly mark or identify the start line so that the runners know where it is located. Use a public address system or megaphone to amplify the starter's voice to ensure the participants in the back can hear the announcements. Pre-race instructions should include how the race will start, ie: waves according to seeding approximately 30 seconds apart. Address any warnings concerning runners sharing the road with moving traffic, course conditions, hydration, weather, etc. Give a reliable countdown starting several minutes before the start to make sure the participants are given ample time to assemble for the start.

- Congestion. If you have done your homework, you have designed a course that is not too narrow at the start and is without sharp turns in the beginning. Therefore you do not have to be concerned about runner congestion at the start. However, in large races there seem to always be slower runners in front of faster runners at the start. This situation can in part be addressed in the start line instructions as well as with posting pace markers, from fast to slow from the start line back, at various spaces leading back from the start line. Be sure that any walkers are reminded to start in the very back; otherwise they could get run over. Have a volunteer review the start for small children or persons disregarding the prohibition against baby joggers, roller bladders, skaters, head sets and pets.

- Wheelchairs and Hand Cycles. Start any wheeled participants well in advance of the starting time for runners. It is suggested that a 10 to 15 minute advance start be used. The Appendix contains additional information with considerations relevant to wheelchair and other physically challenged participants.

Traffic Control: Traffic Control is essential to safe racing. If you utilize the following information you can enhance the safety of the race participants:

- Police. Persons both on and off the course will recognize the authority of the police over that of race officials or volunteers. Police should be used to control all stop-light intersections, and any other significant traffic intersections on the course. The course should be reviewed with the police as one of the initial steps in planning the race. It is a good idea to remind the police several times in advance of the event of the start date and of the specific duties that will be required of them. Prior to race day the race director, or other knowledgeable race personnel should ride the course with the law enforcement officer(s) assigned to the race to make sure s/he knows the course. Make sure that the police understand that motor vehicles are not to be allowed on the race course. Also, be sure the police are careful about allowing cars to cross on cross streets in front of runners.

- Communication Systems. Have your communication system set up so that you are in communication with key race personnel, police, and medical personnel . Inform all these parties when the race has started, and when the last runner returns. The use of a sweeper, who remains the last person to cross the finish line, is an effective way to know all runners have returned and no one is left out on the course. The sweeper(s) can also act as the "Green Team" and collect trash the runners leave behind.

- Traffic Barriers. Barriers will be needed for traffic control. Make sure it is understood in advance who will provide the barriers and when they will be set out on the course. Also ensure someone is specifically designated to pick them up.

Spectator Control: In maximizing the safety of race spectators consider the following matters:

- Spectator Barriers. Fencing will be needed to keep spectators off the race course and out of the flow of traffic.. This is particularly important at places where the crowd is large and open streets are nearby. It's best to have a solid barrier that cannot be inadvertently moved by persons leaning up against it. Where an area needs only to be designated for non-access, cones may be appropriate in place of a solid barricade.

- Finish Line Area. The finish line area is most likely to encounter large crowds. Be sure to allocate sufficient barricades and flagging for use in this area. Be sure spectators don't stand in front of the clock and that they don't crowd the finish line so participants can freely cross the finish line.

- Volunteer Instruction. Volunteers should wear some type of identification, such as an orange safety vest, or special t-shirt so they can be easily identified by spectators and participants.

- Police. For especially large races, having police presence at the start and the finish where the crowd will be the biggest can help gain the attention of spectators who fail to heed the barriers and requests of the volunteers.

Participant Control: Problems to be avoided concerning runner control include runners going off course and unauthorized vehicles coming onto the course. The following are components of runner control that should assist in addressing these and other potential problems:

- Lane Size. Be sure that the course lanes are wide enough to accommodate the number of runners in the event. This is of extreme importance if the race course will be on a road where there will be one lane designed for runners and the other lane will remain open to traffic.

- Marking the Course. Place cones along the course for runners to follow. In addition to police presence at road intersections, utilize adult volunteer course marshals to direct runners at pivotal turns on the course.   Properly

placed and astute course marshals will cheer on runners as well as ensure safety by noticing any participants in distress and communicating this to medical personnel. Make sure vehicles do not enter the race course. This is of the utmost importance to the safety of the runners and can be avoided by properly placing cones, police, and volunteers at crucial road intersections.

- Water Stations. Advise participants in advance as to the location of water stations as far as distance (i.e.: every two miles) as well as which side of the road they are located on. This will make for a more orderly approach to and use of the water stations.

- Pace Vehicle. If using a lead pace vehicle, have a knowledgeable and reliable volunteer operating the vehicle or directing the driver. It is not advisable to use the police for this function as they may not know the course. Consider having a second pace vehicle (or bicycle) in the event that the lead runners lose the pack and those behind lose their way. The pace vehicle should be marked in the front and back "Pace Vehicle" so that an over zealous road guard or police person does not try to divert the vehicle from the course. The pace or lead vehicle should always have at least 2 people in it. The driver needs to focus on the road and the observer can focus on the runners and route.

Communications: A reliable communication system is essential to the coordination of all aspects of a race in progress.

- Aid Stations. All medical aid stations as well as water stations should be coordinated through hand held communication devices in order to address any emergency that may arise. This assures that runners are no further away than an aid station or water station when informing a volunteer of a problem and requesting assistance.

- Key Personnel. All key personnel should be on the communication network during the course of the event.

- Radio Operation. All personnel connected with the race, in any capacity, should know where the radios are located and where the radio operators are stationed. All persons who are to use the communication system should be made familiar with its operation prior to the start of the event. The radios should be tested and the power supplies checked in advance of the race date.

- A note about using cell phones as a means of communication. Cell phones can be a great way to communicate before and after a race, but should not be relied upon as a primary means of communication during a race. Walkie-talkies (with fresh batteries) are the preferred form of communication, as all key race personnel can be alerted at once if a problem should arise. This will result in more expeditious problem solving.

Water Stations: Considerations with regard to water stations include:

- Distance Between Water Stations. Consider the time of year, the weather conditions, the length of the race and the number of participants when making the determination about how many water stations to have in your race. Make sure the runners are well informed in advance of the start as to their location. In a colder weather 5k it is acceptable to provide water at the end of the race. In a summer hot weather 5k, it is recommended that water is provided at mile 2 and the finish. In races longer than 5k, hydration should be provided at least every 2 miles. Many events choose to provide hydration every mile, and always at the finish.

- Location. Do not locate the water station on a downhill. It is important as to place the water station at a point where there is sufficient room for runners to slow and get the water while other runners who chose to bypass the station can run unobstructed past the slowed or slowing runners. Also consider the tangent of the course when selecting the water station location. If the course is making a turn to the right and you locate the station on the left, the runners are more likely to bypass the station in order to take advantage of the tangent. The water stations should not be located exactly at a mile marker but either before or after the actual marker as the attention of many of the

runners will be diverted to their watches instead of watching for runners who have slowed to drink. Avoid intersections or high traffic areas and remember the trash factor. All those empty cups will get tossed.

- Staffing. Water station volunteers should arrive several hours before the start of the race in order to fill enough cups before participants begin to arrive. People with obvious signs of sickness should not be handing out water, and everyone handling water should wear plastic gloves.

- Cups. As a rule of thumb have, at a minimum, one cup per entrant at each water station. If a hot and humid day is predicted have as a minimum two cups per entrant at each water station (anticipate that the runners will drink one cup and dash the other on themselves to help cool off). In order to minimize the amount of spillage use a smaller cup, 7-8 ounce cups are recommended. Always try to use paper cups in place of hard plastic cups or Styrofoam cups. The hard plastic cups and Styrofoam cups tend to break when grabbed by the runners and are not biodegradable. Be sure that the water station volunteers have been instructed in proper cup handling. Cups should be filled no more than ¾ full, and placed on the palm of the hand or held gently on the sides of the cup when held out to passing participants.

- Water and other replacement Fluids. Arrange for water and any replacement fluids (i.e.: Gatorade) to be delivered to the water stations several hours before the start of the race. Be sure any concentrate, coolers, and stirring sticks are also delivered along with mixing instructions. Pay special attention that water is placed in a different cup than the electrolyte replacement drink and is located in a different section of the water station. I.e.: water should be offered at the first table, and Gatorade at the last. Make sure concentrated mixes are mixed correctly with the proper ratio of water to product. For each water station, have rakes on hand so that cup debris can be cleared from the road as soon as possible. Make sure that specific volunteers are assigned to the task of continually removing the debris from the course. This is imperative on a course where the same water station is used by participants more than once during the race. Locate trash receptacles strategically at the end of the water tables and a few yards past the water tables to encourage runners to discard the cups there. Make sure to provide plastic trash bags for clean-up, and recycling of the paper cups.

- A Special Note, for races held during winter months One potential hazard of a water station in a freezing location is the water left on the ground from spilled cups can freeze causing runners to slip and injure themselves. Plan to supply these water stations with salt or sand to toss on the ice if this occurs.

Medical Assistance: Available on-site medical assistance is a mandatory requirement regardless of the race size or distance:

- Heart Attack victims need Advance Life Support in 4-6 minutes. If a race participant suffers illness or injury, how fast can you get EMS to that person? The foundation of your medical coverage is communication.

- Space for Medical Team and Ambulance. Provide a convenient area for the medical team and ambulance (if deemed necessary) to set-up at the finish. If your race is large, consider having a second ambulance available at the half-way point of the race. Plan ahead so that if the ambulance must leave the race area it will be able to do so quickly and efficiently and will not need to cross the path of the participants.

- Quantity and Quality of Medical Team. Make sure that medical personnel are appropriate for your event. Contact local community medical providers such as EMT's operating out of fire stations, private ambulance services, local hospitals, or private consultants. Make sure that you provide a sufficient amount of medical personnel to attend to the needs of the participants. This determination will be based upon the number of race participants, anticipated weather conditions, type of course and training of the medical team. When determining the proper quantity of medical personnel, consider the scenario where two emergency situations arise and the only medical team or ambulance has already left the event due to the first occurrence.

- Communication with the Medical Team. Remind the medical team prior to race day of the time at which they needed to set-up. Include them in the communication network you have set-up and make sure that they have been informed as to the proper operation of the communication equipment you are using. Consider in your plans how accessible each part of the race course will be for the medical team in case of an emergency and make sure to go over this plan with the medical team in advance so they will know what to do should a medical emergency arise.

- Supplies. Review with the medical team those supplies they will provide and what they will need that you will provide. Always arrange to have ice available to the medical team prior to the start of the race.

- Identification. Make sure that the medical team and medical tent are marked in an obvious way. Inform all volunteers as to the location of the medical teams and how best to communicate with them if they are needed.

- Medical Emergency. Make sure that the volunteers are also instructed as to what actions they are to take in the event of a medical emergency. Such common sense matters as not moving a person who has sustained head, neck or back injury need to be reviewed at the volunteer meetings in advance of the race date. A hand-out entitled "Steps to Take In the event of An Accident or Incident that May Involve Personal Injury" is included in the Appendix for use in instructing and reminding volunteers of emergency procedures.

- Privacy & Confidentiality. Have a plan; your medical team coordinator needs to be aware of the HIPAA Privacy and Confidentiality of medical information. Volunteers should not speak to the media or answer inquiries about a participant's condition or treatment.   A specific person should be designated as the spokesperson..

Weather: One of the most crucial factors involving any road race event is also the least predictable: the weather. The following is a list of considerations involving weather:

- Plan Ahead. As the race date gets nearer, the weather conditions will become more predictable. If it is going to be extremely hot, additional water stations and ice should be considered.   The location of the finish line medical team should be moved as close to the finish line as possible. As a rule of thumb, plan with the thought in mind that the conditions will be more extreme than predicted.

- Medical Team. If extreme weather is predicted make sure to contact the medical team so that they are able to prepare in advance for any additional material or personnel they will need.

- Lightning. An electrical storm within the race course area within 1 hour of the start time should be considered potentially life threatening to runners. A determination should be made at the time as to whether the race should be continued as scheduled, delayed until the storm has passed or cancelled altogether.

- Dehydration and Heat Exhaustion. In extreme heat conditions, the possibility of dehydration and heat exhaustion are increased dramatically. Adjustments can be made in advance of the race date by making sure that the runners are warned to maintain their hydration before, during and after the event, and also by making sure that water is provided at the start of the race. Under extreme conditions, the distance and time of the event must be considered. If the combination of the length of exposure of runners to extreme conditions presents a life threatening situation, cancellation of the event must be considered. Consult with your medical director or other health officials. Included in the Appendix are information sheets concerning cold and hot weather racing which should be included in the race packets if applicable.

- Shelter. In both hot and cold extreme conditions, shelter from the elements for the runners becomes important. Obviously shelter is something that must be arranged well in advance and therefore must be considered as part of

your initial planning. If it is pouring or freezing at the start of an event, runners will want and seek shelter. It's the same at the end of the race. Runners will want shelter while waiting for the awards ceremony.

- Start Time. If a race is held in an area where extreme heat is common, then a start time earlier than 8:00am should be planned.

- Course Conditions. If the general condition of the course has become extremely hazardous due to the weather, then a decision to delay or cancel the event must be made. Common sense should prevail. Consult with local authorities in making your decision.

Finish Area: The following are matters which should be considered for the finish area of the event:

- Wheelchairs and Handcycles. The finish line should consider the width of the wheelchairs and handcycles finishing the race. It's important that they move quickly through the finish line process and not cause a delay or bottle-neck of finishers.

- Lead Car. Make sure that the lead car turns off the race course prior to entering the finish area. Ensure there is a safe method to do this as finish areas are generally congested with spectators. Make sure there are race personnel stationed at the turn-off point to direct the lead runners into the finish line area. The finish line should be clearly marked and visible from a distance.

- Anticipate Mid-Pack Surge. The work of the finish line volunteers will intensify and be tested as the middle of the pack comes in. The volunteers should be warned of this from the beginning so that they are not caught unaware and can avoid a pile-up at the finish.

- Persons Present In Finish Line Area. Make sure that only those persons essential to the finish line operations and associated with the finish line medical team are in the finish line area. All others should be kept back behind barricades or flags.

- Water. Have water readily available for all finishers in close proximity to the finish line.

- Runners in Distress. Have the finish line workers instructed in the necessary procedures to contact the medical team in the event that a finishing runner is in distress.

- Equipment. Make sure that the volunteer in charge of the finish line equipment has sufficiently secured the equipment to prevent it from being blown down in high wind. Make sure that finish and start banners are placed high enough to allow trucks to pass underneath without hitting them.

- Special Considerations for Children's Events: Children's running events are gaining greater popularity, and, when held in conjunction with a community race can help promote running for fitness. Consider holding a special non-timed start after the official start of the race for distances of 5k or less. A Children's event can also increase sponsorships, and greater community acceptance of your event. Untimed, non-competitive, medals/ribbons should be given to all participants. Consider having all runners wear bibs #1.

- Etc. Do a thorough job of cleaning the start-finish area and ☺ repairing and restoring the trails used in an event. Pick up all course markings immediately after your event. If your event has been financially successful, consider

making a donation to your local running group or the RRCA. When you do this, send a press release announcing your donations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND DISCLAIMER

The RRCA is grateful to all of the persons who have contributed in anyway to the preparation of these guidelines. Persons using these guidelines do so with the express understanding that the guidelines are the result of the contributions of many individuals and as to the whole or as to any particular part thereof the guidelines are not necessarily the option or representation of the persons listed hereafter. The RRCA acknowledges the Houston Area Road Runners Association (HARRA) for the original guidelines. HARRA acknowledges that in preparation of these guidelines, it has used written material originally prepared for the Long Distance Running Committee entitled "Recommendations of Standards Committee July 23, 1990" and written material originally prepared by, and for the Road Runners Club of America. The trail race information contained in this guide was adopted from ATRA's paper on Trail Race Etiquette – For the Race Director and Competitor.

CONCLUSION

The safety of the participants and spectators involved in a road racing event should be foremost on the minds of all persons planning and putting on an event. As stated in the beginning, these guidelines should be used as an aid in making road racing events safer. These guidelines are continually evolving and being updated. Therefore, if you have suggestions, additions or corrections to the guidelines please submit them to the RRCA.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Sample Waiver

The following is a sample waiver to use on race registration forms and on-line registration.

Race waivers that have been altered in any way may be rejected by the race director. A club may also reject an application where incorrect information or signatures have been supplied.

Participant Waiver for Race Registration

I know that running a road race is potentially hazardous activity which could cause injury or death. I will not enter and participate unless I am medically able and properly trained, and by my signature, I certify that I am medically able to perform this event, and am in good health, and I am properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to any aspect of my participation in this event, including the right of any official to deny or suspend my participation for any reason whatsoever. I assume all risks associated with running in this event, including but no limited to: falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, traffic and the conditions of the road [insert any specific risks here, e.g. "*the alligators who bask in the sun at the corner of 4th and Sunset St…*"], all such risks being known and appreciated by me. I understand that bicycles, skateboards, baby joggers, roller skates or roller blades, animals, and headsets are not allowed in the race and I will abide by this guideline. Having read this waiver ad knowing these facts and inconsideration of your accepting my entry, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the _____ [Name of event], the city of _____, and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in this event, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver.

Signature   **Date**

Parent's Signature if under 18 years   **Date**

Optional Clause:

I grant permission to all of the foregoing to use my photographs, motion pictures, recordings or any other record of this event for any legitimate purpose.

When to Cancel/Postpone/Modify a Road Race due to Adverse Weather Conditions

(*) A road race should be cancelled, postponed, modified or shortened by an appropriate amount when:

1. Heat and Humidity - The dew point is 80F or above at the start time. This information is available on the weather channel and from your local weather service. The RRCA Sports Medicine committee is making this recommendation due to the ease of accessibility of dew point information compared to Wet bulb globe temperature (WBGT) as a heat stress indicator. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends canceling or modifying a road race when the WBGT is 82F. To figure out the WBGT requires the measurement of dry bulb, black bulb and wet bulb temperature. Of these, only the dry bulb is announced regularly on local weather stations. If your club would like further information on WBGT as a heat stress indicator, please request ACSM position stand on Prevention of Thermal Injuries during Distance Running.
2. Lightening is present. Send runners home if there is not adequate safe shelter for everyone to wait out the storm. Remember, trees are not safe shelter and lightning can strike up to 10 miles away.
3. Hazardous footing on a race route, caused by ice, snow, mud, etc. Detour the race route from these areas.
4. Snow storms. Many runners will want to run. Get input from local police. As mentioned above, it's not just hazardous footing. There is significant danger from vehicles and snow removal equipment if the race course is shared with traffic. Visibility and safety of volunteers should also be considered.
5. Cold. When the combined temperature and wind chill is below 5F, there is the risk of flesh freezing and hypothermia.

Remember:
1. When races are being held in extreme temperature conditions, either hot or cold, try to make an effort to educate the running community on proper dress, hydration and medication precautions. Refer to the RRCA hot and cold weather guidelines for further information.
2. When holding a race in the heat, always provide adequate fluids at the start, finish and frequent stops along the course.
3. Whenever holding races in a cold environment, make sure that shelter, space blankets, and hot liquids (i.e. bouillon, sugared tea) are made available for after the road race.
4. Be aware of local weather conditions for your area, such as tornadoes and advise runners accordingly.

(*) It is the race and medical director's discretion whether to modify the race to a "fun run" and give out prizes randomly. Sponsors should be made aware ahead of time about complications due to weather conditions that could change the race format.

Appendix B
Guidelines to Facilitate Participation by Athletes with Disabilities

In 1979 the Road Runners Club of America published "Guidelines for Wheelchair Athletes". Although a valuable resource in its time, changes in law, technology and the amount of information available to athletes and event directors require that the guidelines be updated and expanded to meet the needs of today's event directors and athletes with disabilities.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information for event directors and athletes. It is hoped that these guidelines will facilitate the inclusion of athletes with disabilities in road racing events. The guidelines are not intended to cover all events or situations. Hopefully, the guidelines will foster discussions among event directors, members of the disabled community, law enforcement and public safety personnel and others involved with a particular event.

While the safety of all participants in a running event remains the paramount concern of any event director, these guidelines will help event directors focus on real safety concerns related to a specific disability and not concerns based on false perceptions, stereotypes or generalizations about athletes with disabilities.

Special thanks are due to the Physically Challenged Athletes Community of the Potomac Valley Association of USATF for providing a significant beginning for these guidelines and to Barbara Chambers, Helene Hines, B. Michael Scrivens, Carl Sniffen and Jack Todd for their contributions to these guidelines.

Wheelchair Athletes

Application Form
1. If a separate wheelchair division is planned, it should be identified on the race entry form.
2. On the race entry form, state that athletes with disabilities are encourage to register early (prior to race day) so race officials can make necessary preparations. Consider making this mandatory.
3. Provide a telephone number which athletes may call to obtain information about the race, including course terrain, elevation, conditions, time limitations and availability of an early start.
4. If a course is deemed by the event director to be unacceptable for specific disabilities, the application form should state, "This course is not recommended for athletes with disabilities".

Accommodations
1. If toilet facilities are provided, provisions for wheelchair athletes should also be made. Wheelchair accessible porta johns should be available.

Safety and Special Considerations
1. State that it is the athlete's responsibility to maintain his/her own equipment.
2. Additional safety or other concerns should be disclosed as far in advance of the event as possible. A separate telephone number for athletes with disabilities can facilitate the dissemination of this information as can well written pre-race instructions.

Course Terrain
1. Unacceptable surfaces for wheelchairs to race on: long distances on grass, uneven pavement (i.e. curbs, potholes, cross country trails) and narrow bike paths.
2. Undesirable surfaces which can still be used by wheelchair athletes: roadways with railroad tracks, speed bumps, and similar obstructions.
3. Desirable surfaces: smooth pavement (i.e. roadways, wide bike paths, track surfaces); small hills are tolerable.
4. Elevation: Most courses do not present a problem in this area. However, hills with severe elevation changes (greater than 10%) might be difficult for some wheelchair athletes to negotiate. This information can be given to the athlete in advance either verbally (i.e. athlete may call a telephone number listed on the application) or by use of an elevation profile displayed on the event website in the race entry form.

5. No sharp or abrupt turns at the bottom of hills
6. Well marked turn-around points. This is especially true with U-turns around cones.
7. Avoid finish lines at the bottom of a hill.
8. In the event of wet weather, wheelchair athletes and the event director should discuss whether to proceed. The determination of the event director is final.
9. Event directors should consider consulting with athletes with disabilities in the planning stages of the event to provide a safe and manageable course.

Race Day

Pre Start: In determining the amount of an early start, consider all relevant factors including police scheduling, the length of time the course is open, course terrain, and number of participants. An early start should be provided for the safety of both wheelchair athletes and runners. The following guidelines are recommended:

5K – 2 to 3 minutes
10K – 4 to 5 minutes
Marathon – 10 minutes

1. Provide pre-race instructions to update information concerning course changes, weather and other changes which may impact the event.
2. Use a separate timer for the wheelchair division or carefully note and add time elapsed between the two starts to the finish time of the wheelchair athletes.
3. Chute(s) for wheelchair and handcycle athletes should be clear and at least 32' wide. A separate chute devoted to wheelchair athletes may be considered.

During the Race
1. Generally, lead wheelchair athletes need some form of lead vehicle whether car, motorcycle or bicycle at least until the lead wheelchair has been taken over by able bodied runners. Whether or not a lead vehicle is available, course monitors should be notified that wheelchair athletes may precede the rest of the field. Monitors should be familiar with course direction to properly direct athletes along the race route. Monitors should also be alert to direct wheelchair and able bodied athletes in such a manner so as to avoid collisions at turn around points.
2. Wheelchair and handcycle athletes who are involved in mishaps may be assisted in remounting. While remounting, the athlete can't impede the progress of other racers. No forward assistance may be provided.
3. A wheelchair or handcycle racer can be disqualified for causing a crash or a spill as a result of unsafe racing tactics or inadequate maintenance to his/her racing wheelchair components.
4. Wheelchair or handcycle athletes may not compete for a prize/award using an illegal wheelchair or handcycle. Formal documentation on legal racing wheelchair specifications can be found in the National Wheelchair Athletic Association Handbook or in USATF's 1993 Competition Rules.
5. The winner of the wheelchair division and or the handcycle division will be determined when the front wheel of the chair or cycle breaks the forward plane of the finish line.

Post Race
1. Equity should be observed when issuing prizes and awards.

Athletes Using Crutches

When competing, people using crutches need a two or three foot wide area. A minimum of five minutes early start will provide a level of safety for both the athletes with disabilities and the able-bodied runners. Some athletes may need more time. The early start should be calculated by subtracting the length of time the course will be open by the anticipated finish time of the athlete. Athletes needing an early start should be advised that athletes are responsible for their own safety until the course is officially opened. If the course is on a roadway, athletes can participate on the sidewalk or the side of the road. The sense of competition and accomplishment is much greater if the athlete finishes when the course is still open.

Visually Impaired Runners

1. Visually impaired runners should supply their own guides. Alternatively, race officials could request a volunteer guide from the pack of runners. In most cases, it's not hard to find a volunteer guide who can run at the athlete's pace. Consider contacting the Achilles Track Club FMI, http://www.achillestrackclub.org/
2. If the course requires everyone on the course to have a number, the guide should be issued a free or special number since the guide is not competing. Event directors may choose to provide a finish line and place for the guide to avoid confusion in the results area.
3. Visually impaired runners are generally capable of starting with the pack and will complete with other members of their age group. A separate division for visually impaired runners may be considered whenever a large number of visually impaired runners participate in the event.

Additional Considerations
1. Each event is different. The needs of athletes with disabilities will also vary depending on the event and the athlete. Race officials and athletes with disabilities should consult with each other as well as city and police officials to determine what accommodations may be required and whether or not the accommodations can be provided in a particular case.
2. Often, no award categories are provided for athletes with disabilities other than wheelchair athletes. Consideration should be given to announcing the names of the top ten finishing non-wheelchair athletes with disabilities, even if no award is presented.

Resources and Reference List:
For additional information, contact the resources and references listed below.

Achilles Track Club
American Athletic Association of the Deaf
Wheelchair Sports, USA
United States Association for Blind Athletes
United States Cerebral Palsy Athletic Association

Appendix C

RRCA Guidelines on Headphones in Events

The Road Runners Club of America does not usually dictate rules to our members; we offer guidelines on general safety that race directors and club leaders are encouraged to adopt as guidelines, rules or policies for their local events.

Since the mid 1980's the RRCA has maintained a long-standing guideline against the use of headphones in running events and group training runs. This is a safety precaution and a risk management responsibility for race directors and run leaders. As such, race directors and group run leaders are encouraged to ban or strongly discourage the use of headphones in races and group runs.

Advising participants to leave headphones and audio devices at home or in the car is part of the risk management responsibility of a race director. Many participants do not understand or respect the awesome responsibility a race director shoulders to ensure the safety of every single participant in an event. Respecting an event director's choice to prohibit headphones in an event or a group run is a shared responsibility of every participant to ensure the safety of all runners, the future success of the event, and the sport as a whole.

The RRCA understands that enforcement of a headphone ban or discouraging headphone use can be a challenge for race directors, especially for races that exceed several thousand runners. Because of this, the use of headphones in events and group runs are not excluded from the RRCA insurance policy. This means that if a race director promotes that headphones are not allowed or their use is discouraged in the event, but a participant shows up, runs the race in headphones, and has or creates an incident, the race director is still entitled to have the insurance company fund the defense or negotiate settlement in a legal case.

While the insurance policy does not exclude headphones, and the RRCA does not have an outright ban on their use during events, this does not mean that RRCA members taking advantage of the group insurance program can actively encourage runners to run while wearing headphones. That practice could jeopardize the integrity of the insurance program that benefits thousands of events and group runs every year.

On January 17, 2009, the RRCA Board of Directors met in open session to discuss the practice of active promotion of headphone friendly events. Under the advisement of the RRCA Insurance broker, and on behalf of the insurance underwriter, the RRCA Board of Directors unanimously passed a policy stating that RRCA members taking advantage of the group liability and Directors & Officers insurance program may not actively promote that headphones are welcome at RRCA insured events. Meaning RRCA members utilizing the insurance program should not engage in marketing campaigns that invite people to and run in events or group runs while wearing headphones.

To assist members, the following information outlines sample language that may be included in a race entry form or on a website relating to headphone use at an event:

Sample Language I – Voluntary Banning of Headphone Use:

The use of personal music devices is strictly prohibited on course at this race. (Include your own language explaining your enforcement plan).

Sample Language II – Race Guideline Against Headphone Use:

The use of personal music devices is strongly discouraged at this race. To enjoy all that our race has to offer and for the safety of all participants, (YOUR RACE NAME) encourages a headphone-free environment during the running of (YOUR RACE NAME).

We believe your race experience and those around you will be greatly enhanced by leaving the headphones at home or in the car. Running headphone-free allows opportunities to develop camaraderie with your fellow runners and to enjoy everything the race has to offer. Plus, volunteers and spectators will be on course cheering you on and providing directions to help get you to the finish line.

Runner safety has always been, and will continue to be, a top priority for our event. Please be mindful of the other participants and respect the race personnel to ensure a safe and enjoyable race for everyone.

Appendix D
RRCA Guidelines On Baby Jogging Strollers in Races

The Road Runners Club of America voted at its annual business meeting on June 10, 1989, to recommend a guideline against the use of baby joggers or strollers in road races.

The Road Runners Club of America strongly recommends against the participation of baby strollers/joggers in road races and against race organizers creating baby stroller divisions. The reason for this recommendation is that the inclusion of strollers in races increases the potential for injury to race participants and children.

The RRCA has no objection to and does not discourage the safe and prudent use of strollers or baby joggers in individual training situations. If allowed in a race, stroller or baby joggers or similar devices should be started in the back of the runners and walkers.