



**Policy Name:** Risk Management Resource for Centre and Clubs  
**Responsibility:** Ridgewood Little Athletics Centre  
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## **Policy**

RLAC is mindful of the risks associated with conducting Athletics and activities at Centre and Club level. RLAC has developed a basic risk management tool (for use by non-Risk Management professionals) with a view to providing a safer sporting environment and experience for Centre and Club athletes, volunteers and spectators.

## **Background – duty of care**

Centre and Club officials owe a duty of care to participants in athletic activities where there is a reasonably foreseeable risk of harm or injury to participants and spectators as a result of their actions. In exercising this duty of care, the law requires officials to take reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of injury to participants and spectators as a result of those risks which are foreseeable.

This is the rationale which underpins any risk management program – in this case, the process of identifying risks involved in conducting athletic competitions and activities, and then adopting strategies and actions designed to reduce these risks wherever possible.

## **Objectives of Risk Management**

To reduce the incidence of injury to participants, officials and other persons associated with Centre and Club competitions and activities.

To provide a fun, healthy and safe sporting environment for individuals to participate and enjoy the sport of athletics.

To minimise potential Centre and Club liability as a result of poorly managed athletic competitions and activities.

## **What is Risk?**

At its simplest, risk is the possibility of an injury or damage resulting from an activity.

## **What is risk management?**

Risk management is the process of systematically avoiding, eliminating or minimising the adverse impact of all activities which may cause injury or damage. This process is a framework within which risk exposure can be identified, monitored and controlled.

Risk management is a tool by which persons involved in sport can use to meet their duties of care and thus avoid liability and injury or damage to others.

Risks which can be covered by a Risk Management Process include:

### **Legal risks –**

Losses and costs arising from legal actions for breach of a common law or statutory duty of care;

### **Physical risks –**

Injuries to participants and the public;

### **Financial risks –**

Increased insurance premiums, costs associated with injuries for business reasons, loss of financial stability and asset value, replacement costs and earning capacity and increased external administrative costs;

### **Moral and Ethical risks –**

Loss of quality of participant experience and confidence, adverse publicity and damage to image or reputation.

### **Environmental risks –**

Damage to the environment (atmospheric / flora / fauna) resulting from Centre or Club activities.

### **Governance risks –**

Loss to the Centre or Clubs as a direct result of inappropriate management processes or decisions.

## **Which risks need to be managed?**

The law does not require Centre's or Clubs to provide a completely risk free environment. Indeed, by agreeing to participate in athletic activities, participants will be taken to have consented to those risks, which form an inevitable aspect of the activity. Center's or Clubs will not be required to take steps to counter risks where it would be unreasonable to expect a Centre or Club to do so in the circumstances. Clubs will however be expected to adopt reasonable precautions against risks which might result in injuries or damages which are reasonably foreseeable.

## **The Australian Standard and this Manual**

The approach adopted in this Manual is based on the Australian & International Standard on Risk Management AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009. Modifications to the Standard are designed to assist non-professional Risk Managers use this Manual.

As such this Manual has sought to simplify the steps set out in the Australian Standard, and includes the following stages in the Risk Management Process:

- Risk Identification
- Risk Analysis
- Risk Treatment (action plan)
- Monitoring and Review
- Communication

This Manual is not a “be-all and end-all” resource, which will make the Centre or Club litigation proof or completely fail safe, however if followed, it may serve as a useful defence to claims of breach of duty of care.

Risks will vary from Centre to Centre and Club to Club depending upon the circumstances and the ways in which each Centre or Club operates. It is up to the Committee and key people in the Centre or Club when using this Manual to think about other risks not identified here, and plan for their treatment accordingly.

All risks, whether generic or specific to a particular centre / club / environment should be included in the Risk Register for subsequent assessment and treatment.

## **Who should be involved in the Risk Management Process?**

It is important that all “key” people, from the Committee to Officials and Volunteers, are involved in each step of the risk management process. Key people such as Centre and Club Coaches, Arena Managers etc have the training and knowledge that is required when risk questions regarding athletics and activities are asked. Do not try to complete the risk management process in this Resource without involving other key people in the organisation. This may result in the responses being flawed.

Overall responsibility for the Risk Management process is the Centre and / or Club Committees.

## **What activity should be subjected to the Risk Management Process?**

All Centre’s and Clubs have activities that are regularly conducted (e.g. weekly) and others that are infrequently conducted (e.g. annually). Many risks will be generic across all Centre and Club activities while some risks may be specific to a particular activity.

The Centre or Club Committee should determine how best to proceed in this regard do they undertake a Risk Management process for each individual activity or do they undertake the one process and trust that all risks will be identified.

**Note** – one consideration in making this determination is ‘focus’. Generally when the ‘focus’ is placed on a single activity all relevant risks associated with that activity are more likely to be identified. There will be duplication of risks identified but there will also be a low likelihood of missing risks.

## **Documentation**

Each phase of the Risk Management process should be documented in order to:

- Record what and how decisions were made for future justification
- Demonstrate that the process has been undertaken in a planned and systematic manner
- Communicate outcomes of the process
- Provide an audit trail
- Provide evidence of the due care undertaken for the process in the event a legal defence is required.
- Form an important part of the Centre’s or Club’s compliance memory
- Educate incoming Committee members
- Monitoring progress of Treatment plans
- Review the risks on a regular basis and ensure the controls and treatments are operating as intended
- Facilitate continuous process improvement

## What documentation should be maintained?

The documentation maintained should provide the audit trail (story) of the Risk Management process at the Centre or Club. Attachments to this document provide templates for minimum levels of documentation.

**Risk Register** identifies the Risks, associated existing controls, assessment of the Risk for effectiveness, Treatments to be undertaken, Action Plan for the Treatments, responsibility for actions, timelines for treatments and resultant Review of the Risks.

**Incident Register** records any safety Incidents that have occurred including any immediate actions undertaken, recommendations for treatment and when the matter was discussed by the Committee.

**Decisions** of the Committee relative to the Risk Management discussions of Incidents and identified Risks. This documentation is generally contained within the Committee Minutes. **Communications** to members and others should provide enough information to enable members to understand the safety issues and provide for a mechanism for members to report safety issues / incidents. Every member of the Centre or Club should be aware of whom to make a report to of a safety Incident or Risk.

**Monitoring & Review** documents should record the process undertaken and the results of the review.

The documentation should justify the Committee's response to such questions as ---

- i. Why was this risk identified as LOW and not MEDIUM?
- ii. Why did the Committee accept this Residual Risk level?
- iii. Why did the Committee decide on Treatment A rather than Treatment B?

## How should documentation be maintained?

Process documentation can take any form with the following provisos:

- It must be complete such that future Committees will be able to follow and understand decisions and actions taken
- It must be accessible to all people who are authorised
- It must be in a format that is readily transportable ---if a computer file format then at least 1 hardcopy should be printed each year and retained as a backup.
- If a computer file format then regular backups should be maintained in a secure place away from the main computer resource
- Responsibility for the storage of and access to any and all documentation associated with Risk Management rests with the Centre and Club secretaries.

## How long should documentation be kept?

Generally a retention period of 7 years for Risk Management documentation is appropriate. It is the responsibility of each Committee to ensure that documentation is retrievable throughout the retention period. Therefore, it would be best practice, for example, to ensure that where computer systems are upgraded, documentation is converted to be accessible by the new system and appropriate backups made.

## The Risk Management Process

### 1. Risk Identification

The first step in our risk management program is to identify what risks exist (or may exist in the future) within our athletic programs and competitions. It is important that people who are regularly involved in the sport are involved in identifying risk areas. Officials, coaches and even participants should be consulted. There is no substitute for actual practical experience in working out why accidents occur, or what presents a potential problem. There are a number of things that must be considered in identifying risks:

- The age of participants;
- The type of activities conducted;
- Injury history (including type of injury and cause);
- How operational procedures are conducted and whether there have been any previous problems.

For the purposes of the present project, we have identified four **Risk Categories**. We have also identified a number of common risks which fall within these categories. Your task is to assess and treat (where necessary) these risks in the context of the Centre or Club and its activities.

#### **Risk Categories:**

##### (a) **On Field**

This category includes all of those risks associated with the conduct of athletics and the various activities once the participants have entered the active field of play. On---field risks will vary depending upon the nature of the activities, experience of participants and organisers and the location(s) in which they are conducted.

##### (b) **Pre and Post Event/Activities**

This category refers to the risks involved in activities, which immediately precede and follow the events. Ground maintenance organisers should all be considered in this regard.

##### (c) **Environment**

The physical environment in which Centre and Club events are conducted will include risks to personal safety and property damage. This category is not concerned with the on---field environment, rather focuses on the Club and surrounding environments which are utilised by members, participants, and in some circumstances, the general public --- e.g. club house facilities, parking facilities etc.

##### (d) **Personnel**

This category includes Centre or Club members, officials, participants, parents, minors and spectators who may be involved in athletic activities. The Centre and Club owes a duty of care to those people who may be affected by its actions and therefore should ensure that it takes steps to manage the risks which may confront Centre and Club personnel, in addition to those risks which arise as a result of their conduct.

## 2. Risk Analysis

Having identified the risks involved in athletic activities they need to be assessed in terms of their likelihood to occur and the seriousness of the consequences arising from their occurrence.

Each identified risk must be rated. These ratings describe:

- i. The likelihood of the risk occurring (likelihood); and
- ii. The loss or damage if the risk eventuated (consequence);
- iii. The priority, or degree of urgency required to address the risk.

In order to systematically assess the risks identified in the first stage of the process, we apply the risk rating scales set out below in Tables 1 – 3. The risk rating scales will allow you to rate identified risks and then identify risk management priorities.

### 2.1 Likelihood

The likelihood is related to the potential for a risk to occur. How often could the Risk eventuate? Is there a history at the Centre or Club for this Risk?

**Table 1: Likelihood Scale Rating**

Likelihood	Description
Likely (A)	Is expected to occur; almost inevitable (> 95%)
Probable (B)	Will occur in most circumstances; not surprised if it happens (66 – 95%)
Possible (C)	Might occur in some circumstances (26 – 65%)
Improbable (D)	Occurrence conceivable, but only expected on a few occasions (5 – 25%)
Rare (E)	May occur but only in exceptional circumstances; may happen but it would be highly unexpected (< 5%)

### 2.2 Consequence

The consequence of a risk refers to the amount of loss or damage which may result from the risk's occurrence. Is the consequence an injury to someone, a financial loss, a loss of reputation etc?



**Table 2: Consequence Scale**

Consequence	Definition
Catastrophic (5)	Safety: Many fatalities Environmental: Long term large scale damage Capability: Indefinite loss Financial: Bankruptcy Reputation: Widespread public condemnation of RLAC
Critical (4)	Safety: Few fatalities Environmental: Long term damage to habitat or environment Capability: Long term degradation Financial: Significant loss (>\$10,000) Reputation: Widespread public discontent of RLAC
Major (3)	Safety: Serious injury which may result in permanent disabilities Environmental: Severe impact requiring remedial action to environment. Capability: Temporary loss Financial: Significant loss (>\$5000) Reputation: Negative reaction by public
Moderate (2)	Safety: Injuries which may result in temporary disability Environmental: Moderate impact, no long term or irreversible damage. Capability: Substantial temporary degradation Financial: Marginal loss (>\$1000) Reputation: Local prolonged attention
Minor (1)	Safety: Minor injuries requiring medical attention Environmental: Minor breach of environmental policy. Negligible impact. Capability: Temporary degradation Financial: Acceptable loss (<\$1000) Reputation: Local short term attention

**Note:** Centre's and Clubs should consider the Consequences above to suit their individual circumstances. Generally Financial Consequences will differ from Centre to Centre or Club to Club. For instance, for a small Club a financial loss of \$1000 could be 'Catastrophic' or 'Major' while for a larger Club the Consequence of a financial loss of \$1000 could be 'Low'.

Having assessed each risk in terms of its likelihood and consequence we are in a position to prioritise the risks to assist in the decision making of what action is warranted to manage the risks (where possible).

### 2.3 Risk Matrix

The Risk Matrix determines the priority of action required for the risk.

E.g. -- there is a risk that if the discus sector is facing the track discus could land on the track. The Risk is rated a "Red" "Extreme", requiring immediate action.

**Table 3: Risk Matrix**

	Consequences				
Likelihood	Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Major (3)	Critical (4)	Catastrophic (5)
Likely (A)	M	M	H	VH	E
Probable (B)	M	M	H	VH	E
Possible (C)	L	M	M	H	H
Improbable (C)	L	L	M	M	M
Rare (D)	L	L	L	L	L

L: Low	Manage by routine procedures. Controls must be implemented within 1 month.
M: Medium	Management responsibility must be specified. Controls must be implemented to reduce risk to a reasonable level within 1 week.
H: High	Management attention needed. Controls must be implemented to reduce risk to a reasonably practicable level within 1 day.
VH: Very High	Priority action required. Controls must be implemented to reduce risk to a reasonably practicable level by end of the day, or task / event is stopped.
E: Extreme	Immediate action required. Task / event stopped. Controls must be implemented to reduce risk to a reasonably practicable level before task / event can commence.

Once a risk priority has been determined the committee can consider the level of risk treatment and action required for each risk. EG does the Committee want to completely eliminate the risk or just reduce its likelihood or consequence to an acceptable level?

**Note:** The Committee must formally decide, what is an acceptable level of risk?

## 2.4 Existing Controls

To make an appropriate analysis of Risk the Committee must understand what existing controls are in place and how effective they are in managing risk.

The effectiveness of existing controls may make further treatment of the risk superfluous.

## 3. Risk Treatment (action plan)

There are a number of Risk Treatments including:

Avoid the risk - e.g. eliminate the activity before the risk arises  
Share the risk - e.g. insurance against the risk occurring  
2. Reduce the likelihood - insert controls that limit the ability of the risk occurring - e.g. Using wireless timing systems reduces the number of cables on the field and therefore reduces the likelihood of trips on the field

3. Reduce the consequence --- e.g. incorporating Clubs minimises the financial liability to individual members.

4. Accept the risk --- do nothing to treat the risk, this also means accepting the consequences should the risk eventuate. Monitor the risk annually and modify treatment if necessary.

The amount of risk that remains after treatment is the Residual Risk. Treating the Risk means understanding all the issues related to the Risk. Why is the Likelihood considered 'Probable'?

Why is the Consequence considered 'Critical'? What are the existing controls?

Are the existing controls effective in minimising the Likelihood or Consequence? What is the level of Residual Risk that is acceptable to the Committee?

Ideally officials will work together to brainstorm a variety of treatment strategies and then consider each strategy in terms of its effectiveness and implementation. This will involve some "reality testing" of risk treatment strategies as officials determine what reasonable steps they may take to reduce the impact of the risk arising.

If the Centre or Club has assessed a risk and the risk has rated highly they will need to carefully consider necessary policies, procedures and strategies to treat the risk. These will include what is needed to treat the risk, who has the responsibility and what is the timeframe for risk management. These elements will comprise your action plan.

**Note** - Centre's and Clubs generally operate with volunteer labour, therefore the Centre or Club must consider HOW the new or modified controls are to be implemented.

**Note** – Can a Risk be completely eliminated? Generally there is no way to eliminate all risks associated with an activity unless the activity itself is eliminated.

**Note** - The treatment of similar risks may vary from Centre to Centre or Club to Club based on the resources available to each Club.

## 5. Monitor and Review

The risk management plan should be a fluid document which is regularly updated to take account of changes within the Centre or Club.

It is very important that officials review the risk management plan at the end of the each competition, activity, program or season. This review can form part of the overall activity review.

The keeping of records, and the continued evaluation of the risk management plan in the light of such records is crucial. The risk management procedures should include the documentation of any accidents, as well as information on the effectiveness of the risk management plan. Statistics on continuing injuries or accident occurrences should be used to determine whether there are specific activities that require either increased precautions or supervision.

The risk management plan cannot remain static. Risks can change according to changes in the law, development of safe practices and techniques, and developing technology in the sport of athletics. Constant evaluation and updating must be done to take account of developing trends and the organisation's own experience.

How often should a Centre or Club review its Risk Register, Controls and Treatments?

The period for review is generally recommended as 1 year as a minimum. An annual review should be completed during the first full Board / Committee meeting held post the AGM, at this time new committee members will be made aware of the current risk strategy and the appropriate mitigations for the accepted risks. However, it should be noted that the review period is set by the Committee and should consider:

- The level of the Risk
- Incidents associated with the Risk Changes to Centre or Club circumstances
- Changes to Laws

The Committee may decide that:

- Risks with a RED Risk Matrix outcome are reviewed each month
- Risks with an AMBER / YELLOW Risk Matrix outcome are reviewed each 6 months
- Risks with a GREEN Risk Matrix outcome are reviewed annually
- Risks with a BLUE Risk Matrix outcome are reviewed biennially

Risks that have eventuated (despite the Risk Matrix outcome) are reviewed each month for a minimum of 3 months before the review period returns to the Risk Matrix outcome basis.

## **6. Communication**

It is essential that all Centre and Club members and participants in Centre or Club programs are aware of the risk management program and are consulted in its development, implementation and evaluation.

Membership of Centre's and Clubs is constantly changing and as such the Centre or Clubs should ensure that new members are introduced to the Risk Management Policy and Obligations as part of their induction into Centre, Club life. Similarly, entrants in competitions who are not members of the Centre or Club should also be made aware of the Centre's and Club's risk management procedures and any rules with which they must comply.

Communication between Centre's and Clubs is essential to ensure a broader sharing of ideas in the identification and treatment of risks.

There will be circumstances where risks which are particular to the Centre's or Club's activities may not have been addressed -- these must be addressed by the Centre or Club to ensure that a valid risk assessment has been undertaken.

**CENTRE / CLUB NAME**

**INCIDENT / POTENTIAL INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

<b>Event:</b> (outdoor / indoor, social event)		
This Report is for (cross out that which is not applicable)		
An INCIDENT that has occurred; or A POTENTIAL SAFETY INCIDENT		
<b>What Happened / Could Happen?</b>		
<b>How did it / could it happen?</b>		
<b>THIS SECTION COMPLETED FOR ACTUAL INCIDENTS</b>		
<b>When did it happen?</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Were injuries sustained?      Yes / No</b>		
<b>Who was Injured?</b>		
<b>What action undertaken? (circle one)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Aid	Ambulance
	Hospital	Doctor
<b>Incident Reported to:</b> (Committee Member (Name))		
<b>Incident Reported by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Signed:</b>		
<b>Action undertaken to investigate cause / remedy</b> (attach investigation report & recommendations)		
<b>Reported to Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	

<b>Risk Management Assessment</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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### **CENTRE / CLUB NAME RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

Risk Identified					
Incident History for Risk					
Describe the Consequences of Risk Occurring					
Consequence Rating	Minor	Moderate	Major	Critical	Catastrophic
	Justification:				
Likelihood Rating	Rare	Improbable	Possible	Probable	Likely
	Justification:				
Describe Existing Controls:					
Risk Matrix Rating	Low	Medium	High Very	High	Extreme
	Justification:				
	Yes	No			

Additional Treatment Needed?	If "No", why?		
Treatment Actions	Actions	Priority	Timeline
Priority (High, Medium, Low)  Timeline for Completion	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
Responsibility	Action	Who is Responsible to Complete Actions?	
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
Residual Risk Level (after Treatment)	Low	Medium	High Very High Extreme
Is the Residual Risk level Acceptable?	Yes		No
	If "Yes", why?		If "No", where to from here?
Communication Plan			

Date of Review		
Approved	Name:	Position:
	Signature:	