**INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for agreeing to control an event. Orienteering is very labour intensive. This information will help you work towards a successful day with the Planner and Organiser.

This is not so much a comprehensive guide as a checklist and a reminder of responsibilities.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Controller carries responsibility for everything that happens during an event. The Controller is the representative of the competitor. He/she makes sure the event is correctly run and is fair in every way, so that no person or group has any advantage. Controllers should have previously planned and organised events and be reasonably experienced orienteers.

**SPECIFIC DUTIES & TASKS**

The Controller’s duties cover the checking of all aspects of the event: before, during and after. There are two aspects to the role - the technical side, (regarding the courses themselves, the layout and technical correctness of the maps) and the Health and Safety / logistics side of the event, which the Organiser also helps with.

Note that the Controller doesn’t have to check everything personally, merely satisfy themselves that other people know what they’re doing. Remember that the Planner and Organiser may be relatively new at their tasks and may need active, rather than passive, support.

**Early Planning Stage**

Before an event, the Planner should send you his/her courses. These need to be “desk checked” for length, degree of difficulty and suitability for competitors, bearing in mind the type of event. If necessary, ask the Planner to rethink some aspects, but try to be diplomatic and justify your reasons for the change with sound arguments from a competitor’s point of view.

**Field checking**

Arrange with the Planner to go around the courses they have planned, either with them or by yourself. Probably the latter is best as you then see the courses through your own eyes and may see things the Planner has been unaware of. In any case the Planner should provide you with master maps and control descriptions for you to check the course. Things to check:

1. MAP ACCURACY Make sure that all relevant features appear on the map, that any corrections have been made, and that a new version of the OCAD file has been saved with a relevant date. Ask one of the Committee to make changes in OCAD if you are not confident yourself.
2. EACH LEG of each course. Are they fair? Is there route choice? Check each course separately. Don’t skip from controls on one course to another. You must get an impression of each course in its entirety to evaluate it.
3. CONTROL PLACEMENT. Is the control description accurate? Is the control in the correct place (the Planner should have marked each control site with a bit of coloured tape in the exact position of each control stake). Is it in the correct place for a competitor coming from any direction?
4. START. Is it in a good place?
5. FINISH. Will the competitors be required to navigate to the finish or will there be tape to guide them in?
6. SAFETY. You may decide that a course should be changed if you think it too dangerous, bearing in mind competitor fitness and experience. Beginners’ courses should certainly avoid any potentially dangerous areas. Dangerous and out-of-bounds areas should always be marked on the map (at least on the noticeboard at registration) and ideally be taped off whether courses go near them or not. The Planner should provide a safety bearing and simple instructions for competitors to follow if they get lost.

**Final Planning Stage**

1-2 weeks before an event, the Planner should send you his/her final agreed courses with written and pictorial control descriptions. These need to undergo final scrutiny for accuracy. In particular check all the courses have been drawn up correctly, the control feature is in the centre of each circle, and the various scales are correct (you may need to cross check with an expert on this one!).

**Prepare a Health and Safety form.**

For major events, organise a jury to deal with any official complaint about the correctness of the event.

**Ascertain an appropriate course closure time.** It needs to be the right amount of time after the last start, to suit the terrain type and course lengths, to allow the average person who starts last to finish in time. If the area and courses are long and hard, put in your event email that goes out the week before something like "slower competitors are asked to start in the first hour of the start window", or something like that, to encourage those people to start early. Course closure time is the time that people MUST abandon their course and return immediately to the finish. After that time, the Controller may expect that people who are not back could be injured, and will commence organising a search party for them. Competitors should not expect controls to still be out on their course after course closure time. Ensure competitors know to wear a watch, so they can make sure they are back by course closure time.

**On the Day**

Check that the organisation of the event is going smoothly and advise where necessary. Ask the Organiser to report regularly on the progress of the event. Do not do any of the Organising jobs during an event (e.g. registration, start or finish). You may be called upon for your own duties at any time.

1. You may be required to help put out the controls, though strictly speaking this is the Planner’s job.
2. Whatever else happens, you must be able to check all the controls are in place and ready (location, code numbers, flags, punches work) before the first start time.
3. Be back at the start in order to check that everything is as it should be before the first start time. Have the Planner or Organiser forgotten anything? Where are the maps? Are the start and finish in the exact places as shown on the maps?
4. Is the correct procedure being followed at the Start and Finish? Clear and Check? Are competitors being timed accurately? Can you ensure that every single person registers at the computer, or is registered as departing the start - this is how you know who is out there, so it is very important that every competitor has "checked in".
5. If a control marker goes missing it is your job to replace it as soon as possible.
6. After course closing time, you must check that all competitors have reported in. For Sport ident events, the computer can let you know who is still out on a course - IF they remembered to register at the computer prior to going out. If not, why? Have they gone home or are they lost or injured? Is their car still there? If you think someone is still out on a course it is your decision as to what to do (e.g. wait, organise a search party, call police).
7. The collection of controls should only commence with your permission, once you are satisfied everyone is finished.
8. Either the Planner or the Controller should remain at the Event Centre whilst controls are being collected, and keep track of who is out collecting which controls. All the controls need to be checked in, so that none are left out.
9. Give any feedback to the Committee.

**Cancellations**

**On the day**

Events should not proceed in situations of bad or dangerous travel, weather and/or course conditions. Cancelling or postponing an event is the sole responsibility of the Controller, though he or she may consult others to come to a decision.