



**TRACK:  
PROTOCOLS  
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES  
SAFETY**

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# TRACK EVENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome and congratulations on your appointment as a Track Official.

This document describes the protocols, roles and responsibilities of the various track officials and safety issues associated with the roles.

As track officials we are appointed to ensure that:

- The competition is conducted within the IAAF/IPC rules of competition in an impartial and unbiased manner;
- Events are conducted at the scheduled times;
- The safety of all concerned is paramount;
- We enjoy ourselves and are willing to learn from and share our experiences in a friendly environment;

## PROTOCOLS

### Pre-competition

All Track Officials must report to the Assistant Manager (Officials) on arrival at the Stadium.

Presentation is important and officials will comply with the standards as set out in the bulletin issued prior to the competition. As a minimum, this means that the correct uniform should be worn at all times and personal attire (such as shoes) should not conflict with sponsor insignia. If you are issued with an all-weather jacket, wear it only at the direction of the Competition Director.

Umpires will obtain their umpire's folder from their Assistant Chief Umpire. This will contain vital information such as track layouts and Track Umpire's positions, the competition program, Umpire's Roster (usually in tabular format), Umpire's Report Forms, and any briefing notes deemed relevant to the competition. It is recommended that Track Umpires use a hi-lighter to mark their track positions on the roster to avoid confusion.

All Track Officials will be in attendance for the meeting conducted by the Competition Director.

### Track Team Meetings

Members of the track team (Referees, Umpires, Chief Track Judge and Manual Timekeeper) will meet at a time designated by the Chief Track Umpire before each day of competition to discuss rosters, timetable changes, protocols and receive feedback and information on various aspects of the previous day's competition if it is warranted. It is also an opportunity for all members of the track team to ask questions, seek clarification, etc.

**These meetings are compulsory. They make for a better track team by building camaraderie amongst all track officials while providing an important forum for the exchange of ideas.**

## Movement of Track Umpires onto and from the Track

Track Umpires and Assistant Chief Umpires will assemble at a designated area **20 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of their event**. The assembly area will be designated by the Competition Director at each meet.

For all events, Track Officials must be in position on the track at least **10 minutes prior to the start of the event**. It is important to note that the track diagrams indicate an approximate position only. Umpires should move to a position within their designated area where they have the best view.

The Referee, Assistant Referee(s), Chief Umpire, Chief Track Judge, Manual Timekeeper and (where required) lap scorers, lap board operator and lap board counter will move to their positions around the finish line after the remainder of the officials are in place. The Assistant Referee(s) may then move to strategic track positions around the track as directed by the Track Referee.

Track Umpires and Assistant Chief Umpires will move out in a single file to the edge of the track in the correct order and carrying their rolled-up umpire's folder in their left hands with the white side showing. Umpires who have the furthest to travel will be at the front. The group will move around the track in unison, stopping at their allotted position.

The inside Umpires will move across to the other side of the track to take up their final position.

When all Umpires are in position they will sit on the direction of their Assistant Chief Umpire. Umpires will stand at the direction of their Assistant Chief Umpire, or at the end of the announcement of the event.

### 100M, 110M & 400M HURDLES

Umpires allocated a flight of hurdles will position themselves opposite the hurdle in lane 1 if designated as "inside" and opposite the last hurdle of the flight if designated "outside".

### LEAVING THE TRACK

Umpires and Assistant Chief Umpires on the inside of the track move across to the outside. Those furthest from the exit point on both sides will move to the next Umpire who will join onto the back of the line as it passes by. The Umpires will then move in single file to join the next Umpire and so on. Officials situated at the Finish Line will follow, then the Referees.

### UMPIRES ALLOCATED TO THE CUT IN/BREAKLINE FOR 800M AND RELAYS NOT RUN IN LANES

Umpires allocated to the position known as 10c/i should place the bottles/markers correctly on the breakline at the appropriate time for the event being run. In 800m wheelchair events the breakline should be designated by one large cone (or lollipop) on either side of the track.

After the runners have passed the breakline for the first time and athletes have converged **in the 800m**, the Umpire allocated to this position should signal the **ALL CLEAR or otherwise** to the Assistant Chief or the Chief Umpire. They should then remove the first three inside bottles/markers from their lanes and place them with the fourth marker.

**If there is an infringement at the breakline** - signal the infringement first, remove the bottle/markers as above and then start writing the infringement report.

**In 4 x 200m, 4 x 400m, Medley and Swedish Relays**, bottles/markers should be placed at the appropriate time for the event and removed completely from the track when the competitors have passed the breakline. Infringements should be signalled before removing the bottles/markers and the report form completed after the bottles/markers have been removed.

If numbers permit and 2 umpires are allocated to the breakline, one umpire can remove the bottles while the other completes the report.

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## Umpiring General Protocols

- **Umpires need to be proactive in their actions. If you can foresee a problem, act on it;**
- **Umpires need to bring their own pens, pencil and spare paper (to write notes on);**
- Umpires will stand for events run wholly or partially in lanes (including 800m) and for the Relays. **Umpires will stand as a group once the final athlete in an event has been announced or as determined at the pre competition meeting;**
- For track events of 1500m and longer umpires will sit during the running of the event;
- Umpires will be issued with chairs to be carried in the left hand along with umpire folders, gear and other items;
- During victory ceremonies/national anthems you will stand facing the flag poles with your hat/cap removed. These ceremonies will only take place at International event.

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## Track Referee

### Prior to competition:

- Checks competition site for security and safety of athletes;
- Ensures that all equipment and fittings are secure and functional;
- Reports any concerns to appropriate officials.

### During competition:

- Shall ensure that the Rules (and Technical regulations) are observed and shall decide upon any matters which arise during the competition and for which provision has not been made in these Rules (or any Technical Regulations);
- Shall decide placings in a race when the Judges of the disputed place(s) are unable to arrive at a decision;
- Will not act as a Judge or Umpire but may take actions or decisions based on his/her observations;
- Shall rule on any protest or objection regarding the conduct of the competition;
- May reconsider a decision on the basis of available evidence;
- Has the authority to warn or exclude from competition, any athlete guilty of acting in an unsporting or improper manner;
- Shall have no jurisdiction over matters within the responsibility of the Chief Judge of walking events;
- Has the authority to declare the event void and decide whether it shall be held again;
- Advise the Competition Director if an event is “all clear” or that there is/are report(s);
- Decide on the suitability of having a split start for large entries in track events of 3000m or longer.

## Chief Umpire

- Allocates umpires to teams under the Assistant Chief Umpires;
- Prepares the umpiring roster for the competition;
- Updates Umpires on information specific to the event;
- Liaises with Athletics Australia Administration for the production of the umpires folders;
- Acknowledges the signals received from Umpires/Assistant Chief Umpires for an event;
- Collects Umpire Report Forms from Umpires/Assistant Chief Umpires;
- Advises the Track Referee if an event is “all clear” or that there is/are report(s);
- Is responsible for dealing with Umpires who are “not performing” their duties;
- Monitors performance of umpires;
- Monitors well-being of umpires.

## Assistant Chief Umpire(s)

- Are Team Leaders to their allocated Umpires;
- Acknowledge the signals received from their Umpires and in turn signal the Chief Umpire;
- Help their Umpires with completion of Umpire Report Forms in a correct and timely manner.

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## Chief Track Judge

The Chief Judge acts as:

- Chief Place Judge as per Rule 126;
- Chief Lapscorer/counter – ensuring that Rule 131 is complied with.

**Note:** It is worth keeping a record for all lap events as this can be used to assist the Track Referee in dealing with a protest. Ensure lap score sheets are delivered to Administration.

In addition, the chief track judge:

- Keeps start lists;
- Take notes on reports;
- Keep all paperwork;
- Record DNS and DNF's;
- Link to Photo Finish:
  - Order of finishing in non-laned events if needed;
  - "Missing" hip numbers conveyed to photo finish;
  - Unusual finishes conveyed to photo finish (e.g. 2 runners in same lane);
  - Collect data from Manual Timekeeper;
  - Assist if required with relay changes at finish line.

### PROCESSES:

- Collect start sheets from Administration (approximately 10 minutes before race);
- Judge race;
- Check with Chief Umpire/Track Referee for reports;
  - If "Yes" take notes of report.
  - If "No" then:
    - ✓ Communicate with photo finish if required;
    - ✓ Collect data from Manual Timekeeper;
    - ✓ File papers.

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## Manual Timekeeper

Keep a manual record of all times as a backup to photo finish.

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## Umpires

### ALL EVENTS

Umpires shall watch for infringements, in particular competitors who:

- Push, obstruct or jostle so as to impede progress of other competitors.
- Run out of lanes or on the inside line particularly around the curve.
- Run on inside of kerb or line.
- Broke from lane before the breakline.
- Voluntarily leave the track.
- Received other assistance or coaching.
- Any infringements need to be reported immediately. Do not wait until the end of the race.

Umpires should watch athletes as they approach, pass and move away from their position.

Pick up any rubbish that may blow onto the track.

## INCIDENTS

Umpires may also notice incidents that do not constitute an infringement of the rules but nevertheless may impact on the race or cause a competitor to protest to the Track Referee. In these circumstances a written note of the details should be taken and retained in the umpire's folder. If required by the Track Referee transfer the written note to the Umpire's Racing Incident Form.

## HURDLES

- Place chair in line with the hurdle you have been allotted;
- Before the start of the race all umpires will stand together and take two steps beyond their flight of hurdles towards the finish line so as to clearly see the athletes as they attempt to clear the hurdles. **Umpires should line up with the umpire who is opposite them on the other side of the track;**
- Watch for deliberate knocking down of hurdles with hand or foot;
- Watch that both legs go over the hurdle – report if either the trailing/leading (left/right) leg was below the horizontal plane of the hurdle at the point of clearance;
- Athlete ran outside lane leading up to or after the hurdle (200m & 400m events);
- Watch for any interference.

**During the 100m and 110m hurdles, on the approval of the Competition Director/Meeting Manager, when the Hammer is being contested, umpires sitting on the inside of the track, may turn their chairs around to watch and move should the hammer be in danger of landing nearby.**

**Technical Rules Update February 2014 Note: Rule 168.6** – athlete must jump each hurdle.

- It is clarified that this rule be interpreted in accordance with the same principle as Rule 163.3 and 163.4. That is, an athlete should not necessarily be disqualified for jumping a hurdle in another lane provided they cause no obstruction and it was either in the straight or in a lane to his outside on the bend.

### Hurdle Hints for Track Umpires

While on the track, Umpires **may be** requested to assist with hurdle duties as follows:

- Assist “laying down” flight 3 and other requested hurdles for athlete warm-ups and in their repositioning if necessary.
- Assist in picking up and realigning hurdles knocked down during races.

**If hurdle crews are available at an international meet, umpires, unless requested, should remain seated.**

### Correct Alignment

The approach face of the hurdle cross-bar should be in the same vertical plane as the approach edge of the colour mark on the track. Hence the base of the hurdle may or may not be actually on the mark for this alignment to occur.

The hurdle base should be within the lane lines, particularly flights 2, 3, 4 in sprint hurdles where curved lane lines intersect with straight-line flight across the track.

There should be one finger width of space between the cross-bars when hurdles are in a straight-line flight across the track.

### Hurdle Removal and Stacking

Umpires **may be** requested to assist with a quick removal of hurdles prior to moving to their next position. Hurdles are stacked exactly one on top of another in groups of four facing the same direction as when on the track. When stacking, hurdles must be placed on the stack **ONLY** from the approach side of the hurdle.

Where technical officials and/or hurdles teams are provided there may be times when the hurdles are stacked directly onto trolleys.

## Steeplechase

- Stand beyond the steeple so as to clearly see the athletes as they attempt to clear the steeple or water jump.
- Watch to ensure athletes jump each steeple and water jump.
- Watch that both legs go over the steeple – the trailing leg or leading leg must not go below the horizontal plane of the steeple at the instant of clearance.
- Watch that the athletes clear the water jump correctly and not step on either side of the water jump.
- Check that cones are correctly placed for the entry and exit of the water jump.
- Watch that athletes do not run on the inside of the designated track while entering or exiting the water jump.

## **RELAYS**

- Accept responsibility for athletes when they come from the call room;
- Ensure that athletes are correctly placed in lanes and are aware of acceleration and take over zones at their designated change;
- Watch that outgoing competitors start their run within the allowable acceleration zone or within the take-over zone for that event;
- Watch that the batons are changed within the take-over zones—the baton position determines compliance;
- Watch to ensure athletes are not wearing gloves or using a substance on their hands to get a better grip of the baton;
- Ensure that only one piece of tape (as supplied) is used by each outgoing runner and that the tape is placed wholly within the lane;
- If a baton is dropped watch:
  - That it is picked up by the competitor who dropped it;
  - That no other competitor's progress is impeded;
  - That after passing the baton, no competitor impedes the progress of another by leaving their lane;
  - That there is no shortening of the distance that the baton is to travel in the event;
- Show a white indicator (yellow, if infringement has occurred) immediately to the Assistant Chief or leader at the Change once all outgoing competitors have taken the baton. The Assistant Chief will then advise the Chief Umpire whether the change is CLEAR or whether an infringement has occurred;
- Remove any tape from the track after each race and at the end of the relays.

## **IMPROPER CONDUCT**

- Report improper conduct (Rule 145) on the appropriate Umpire infringement form. This also includes any warm-up or warm-down relevant to the event when an athlete has engaged in conduct that is considered to be insulting, improper or likely to bring the sport into disrepute. The type of conduct may be but not limited to:
  - Racial comments;
  - Foul or abusive language;
  - Foul or indecent body language or acts.

## **UMPIRING GENERAL TIPS**

### All Umpires:

- Are assistants to the Track Referee **with no powers to make decisions**;
- Should report to Chief Umpire/Referee any coaches or spectators who are on the field of play;
- Are positioned as shown by the relevant event diagram or as the Referee shall specify;
- Should use discretion when sitting in allocated positions. If you can't see track, e.g. speaker or jump bags are in the way, move to a place nearby where you have a clear view of your part of the track;
- Are required to ensure that the relevant IAAF/IPC rules are observed in all track events;
- Shall indicate rule infringements by raising a yellow card immediately. If there is no infringement a

white card is shown to the respective Assistant Chief Umpire when athletes have moved away from the Umpire's allotted position;

- Should take note of racing incidents that do not disadvantage athletes. If requested by the Track Referee an Umpire's Racing Incident Form should be completed by the umpire noting their observations of the incident that occurred. The completed form should be given to the Chief or Assistant Chief Umpire who will then pass it onto the Track Referee;
- Should not leave your position or congregate in groups when writing reports or waiting for the next event;
- Shall report any infringement to the Assistant Chief Umpire or Assistant Track Referee who will approach them at their position;
- Should not sit in front of signage, or if the wind gauge is being used, blocking the wind gauge;
- Remain standing until the last athlete crosses the finish line;
- Keep the yellow page of the umpire's book covered and not showing when sitting as this can be mistaken for a report, or a report that has been missed;
- Carry all items in your left hand;
- When sitting on chairs/stools, sit up straight, no slouching or crossed legs. If standing, no leaning on hurdles, walls etc.

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### Lap Board

- Will keep the lap board operating in line with the leader of the race and the number of laps they have to complete. The lap board is changed as the leader enters the home straight;
- Will sit prior to the race and stand at the same time as the other umpire's rise;
- Will remain standing for the entire event up to 10km;
- Will use a lap book for runners who are not on the lead lap to indicate the number of laps they have to complete to finish the event;
- Will watch all athletes (as an umpire) prior to and past the finish line.

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### Lap Scorers

- Will be seated near the finish line on the outside of the track;
- The Manual Timekeeper shall read the running times to the Lap Scorers who will then note them on the lap scoring sheet for each of their competitors;
- The number of Lap Scorers may vary for each event with a maximum of four athletes scored by each Scorer for track events and a maximum of six athletes for walks events;
- The Chief Track Judge will allocate duties;
- Lap Scorers will record the laps completed, and times, of all competitors in races of 5000m and above;
- It is a good idea to have a pencil (as well as a pen) in case of rain.

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### Lap Counter

- At some events an umpire(s) may be appointed to assist the Chief Track Judge in ensuring that all competitors complete the number of laps designated for an event;
- Umpires appointed to this position will note the hip numbers of each competitor as they complete a lap by crossing the finish line. Hip numbers of all competitors will be recorded on a suitable lap counting sheet.

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### Wind Gauge

- Will be in operation for the 100m, 200m, 100m Hurdles and 110m Hurdles;
- Wind readings will be recorded automatically and transferred to the results network;
- An Assistant Technical Manager will be responsible for the correct placement of the gauge at the start of each session;
- In the event of an equipment malfunction, or in a stadium where there is no automatic wind gauge

available, an Umpire will be allocated the task to operate a manual wind gauge for the above events. At the end of each event s/he will radio the reading to the Photo Finish Judges and keep a log of the wind readings recorded for each event.

## OTHER TRACK AREAS

### The Photo Finish

The Chief Photo Finish Judge is responsible for the set-up, testing and operation of the photo finish equipment and for the initial determination of the result. This also includes the conduct of the zero test at the commencement of each session and the verification of the official result including all placings and times.

### The Start Referee

The Start Referee plays an important role at all starts. Rule 125.2 requires the appointment of a Track Referee, who is then designated the Start Referee to oversee the start area.

The Start Referee fulfils several obligations, specifically they:

- Are not a member of the start team;
- Work alongside the start team;
- Do not interfere or comment on starts, except when issues need addressing;
- Are required to keep an accurate record of all starts;
- Ensure the Starter carries out an initial check of the false start equipment and a zero gun test;
- Monitor the operation of false start equipment;
- Communicate with athletes only as a result of an official protest about a start or a warning/disqualification. In this context and in accordance with Rule 146.4(a), the Start Referee can allow an athlete, who immediately protests, to run the race, subject to the protest being considered afterwards;
- Impose and notify the imposition to the athletes of a “disciplinary” warning. The Start Referee must also be aware of any previous disciplinary warnings given to athletes.

When considering protests, the Start Referee’s judgment is critical.

The Start Referee must:

- Allow athletes to “run under protest” (Rule 146.4(a)) if the false start equipment indicates an illegal start and there is good reason to suggest that the information is inaccurate, or there is an equipment malfunction. No protest will be allowed if the false start equipment is working correctly and a false start has been indicated. Other irregularities at the start can merit an “allowable protest” i.e. blocks slipping or crowd disturbance;
- Retrospectively disqualify an athlete for a false start (Rule 146.4(b)) when a race is completed, a protest is lodged about the start and it is upheld. The false start equipment (where available) must be considered;
- In the need for justice, declare a race void and order a re-run when the false start detection system is faulty and a false start appears to have been committed, and
- When no false start equipment is in place, make a decision judgement on the legality of a start.

### The Starter

The starter must ensure that:

- All athletes have a fair start within the rules of the competition, especially Rules 129.2, 129.3 and 129.6;
- They are the sole decision maker regarding false starts including occasions when an offence has been committed and the race is recalled by him or any recallers. Consultation between team members on such decisions is vital. Such consultation should be done as quickly as possible in order to restart the race without undue delay;

- They are positioned so that he can see all athletes in a similar, narrow angle of vision;
- The start and any recall signals are heard simultaneously by all athletes;
- They personally consults the information produced by the false start equipment and uses that to confirm a false start.

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## The Recaller(s)

- Are deployed to specific positions to give an alternative and enhanced view of a race start. Their role is to support the starter and identify any offence or technical fault at a start that the Starter may not have observed.

If there is any doubt about the legality or fairness of the start, the Recaller must recall the race. Discussions within the team will determine the subsequent action (if any). After due deliberation, the Starter will decide if an offence has occurred.

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## The Starters' Assistant

Starters' Assistants play an important role in the management of the athletes, particularly in the preparation for the race. They must ensure that Rules 130 and 162.8 are fully implemented and check that:

- Athletes are in the correct heat and lane;
- Bib number and hip number identification are correct and correspond with the start list;
- Starting blocks shall be used as defined in Rule 161;
- Batons are ready for relay races;
- Batons are distributed to competitors before each race start and collected at end of each race.
- Rules 162.3 and 162.4 are observed;
- Athletes are assembled correctly before the Starter takes control of the start.

The Starters' Assistant ensures that, on the instructions of the Starter, correct warnings are given and that all athletes understand the condition under which subsequent starts will occur i.e. the recall did not warrant a warning (green card shown) or a disqualification has been made for false start (red and black card shown) or a warning was for a specific conduct offence (yellow card – or red if there has been a previous warning for that athlete – shown by the Start Referee) or in the case of Combined Events or for events conducted in the U14 age group or below, the next false start will accrue a disqualification (yellow and black card shown to all athletes). Any disqualified athlete must immediately leave the area of competition and will be escorted to the Post Event by a designated official.

# SAFETY

Safety is an important element of our role. Be vigilant and aware of potential health and safety issues.

**If you see a potential risk on the track act in a pro-active manner to protect the person(s) who are threatened.**

## NOTE

The latest umpire forms are available on the Athletics Australia website. To access these forms:-

- On the Home page go to **Officials** section
- Click on **Resources** in the drop down menu
- Click on **Generic Forms**