

Minutes of UKA Course Measurement Working Party

MCAA Offices, Birmingham, 11 November 2006.

Present:

Midlands: Phil Holland (meeting chair)

South: Mike Sandford (minutes secretary)

North: Alan Ritchie

Northern Ireland: John Glover

Scotland: Alan Young

International and former BAF Measurement Secretary: Paul Hodgson

Apologies:

UKA Road Running WG and IAAF/AIMS Course Measurement: Hugh Jones

Wales: Martin Dyde

Introduction

Phil Holland said that Hugh Jones had indicated that he expected to get be able to get approval by UKA authorities (through the UKA Road Running Working Group) for any policies, which the meeting judged desirable to establish as national policies.

We agreed that we should move to issuing UK Athletics certificates not regional varieties. The wording of the certificate needs to be harmonised and a completely standard UKA certificate should be produced. Paul Hodgson exhibited the new IAAF/AIMS certificate.

(Action Measurement Secretaries: Agree new standard certificate)

(Action Paul Hodgson: Provide copy of new IAAF/AIMS certificate)

Reports from Regions

South

Mike Sandford said he issued about 140 certificates per year, but annual renewals had been recently been handled by the permit secretary. He had recently developed an on-line database of courses and he hoped that in time it would be possible for certificates to be renewed on-line by race directors. Course maps are also available on the website.

In order to reduce paperwork, multi-terrain measurement certificates are only now issued on special request from measurers. These do not certify the distance as accurate.

He had sufficient measurers in most areas but with some lightly covered areas where new measurers would be useful.

He felt that with the reorganisation of English Athletics Administration it was best to look to the UKA committees to oversee and fund measurement administration on the basis of a fee per certificate, which would be about £1, and if this could be agreed nationally it would overcome the problem recording small expenditures spread over a long period.

Midlands

Phil Holland said that he received and filed about 60 measurements per year and issued about 200 certificates. He has agreed a payment by the MCAA of about 30p per certificate printed and posted, and 20p per measurement filed. With the addition of circulars and lists to measurers, the total cost is about £100 per year.

All work was done on the computer with full paper backup in case of failures.

He had sufficient measurers in most areas with some holes, which could usefully be filled.

Multi-terrain certificates are regularly issued.

North

Alan Ritchie said that he issues about 60 new certificates per year. Annual renewals are only issued on request. The annual cost is met by the NEAA is about £100 pa.

The courses are listed on the NEAA website.

Multi-terrain certificates are not issued.

A stock of 10 Jones Counters owned by NEAA are sold at half price.

Scotland

Alan Young had been trained by Raymond Hutcheson who had now retired. Although a "list of trained measurers" had been obtained from SAF, it appears that very few have been active and the only other active measurer had been Adrian Stott. Alan had recently trained 3 new measurers at the request of the SAF. Jones counters were issued free of charge by SAF. More were required to properly cover the Orkneys and the islands and in other areas on account of the large distances. Some measurers from England had been used by various high profile races. Measurement reports are stored by the SAF. Certificates of Accuracy have not been issued, and in fact official measurement has not been required for issue of a race permit.

Alan felt that Scotland would fall in with a UKA wide measurement system, but he did not know how financing would be best done.

Northern Ireland

John Glover said that there was no certification in operation, and there were no other measurers operating.

John said was self trained and in 2006 he had had his measurement of the Belfast Marathon checked satisfactorily by Tony McCormack of Dublin. In addition he had measured 4 major 10k courses in the Belfast area. He would welcome formal accreditation.

There are about 100 races per year. More measurers would be needed if it were to be decided to measure all courses. It was agreed that the first step would be to train more measurers before requiring races to obtain certificates.

Wales

Phil Holland reported that Martin Dyde was retiring as Measurement Secretary for Wales at the end of 2006. A replacement had not yet been found. The responsibility for coordination of the Welsh measurers will be handed back to the WAA office.

International

Paul Hodgson reported that there were 200 internationally certified courses, and there were about 60 international measurers recognised by IAAF/AIMS. One third are Grade A and two thirds Grade B. He said that one of the unique requirements for international races was to travel in the lead vehicle and validate that the course was run as measured.

Cooperation between regions

This is at present mainly over training. A Wales/Midlands training course was held in Cardiff, and a Midlands/South upgrading exercise was held in Abingdon. (*Action all: propose future joint training courses*)

Policy issues

It was agreed that, to some extent, different practices can operate in different areas. The meeting intended to explore to what extent uniformity was desirable and could be agreed upon.

Measurers' Expenses/ Fees

Current practice

Midlands: Based on old BAF scale of up 30p/mile travel, Max £10 for administrative costs, + meals etc.

South: 30p/mile for travel + meals etc. For administrative costs an increase was agreed in 2001 since £5 per measurement did not cover costs. A charge, at the measurer's discretion, of between £20 and £30 per day spent measuring was introduced. Thus races that required visits by the measurer on several days would contribute a greater amount towards the expenses. This applies to courses measured for affiliated clubs and is often appropriate for non-affiliated bodies, although for commercially organised races no objection is made if the measurer sets a higher scale of charges.

North: No guidelines. Measurers are told they are entitled to out of pocket expenses.

The point was made that measurers need to make clear when first contacted by race directors that there will be a charge. The costs were usually equivalent to just a few entry fees for a course which if unchanged could be used for up to 10 years, and no one could recall complaints about the above charging levels from affiliated clubs. However, concern about cost is occasionally expressed by charity organisers.

All agreed that a rate per day was preferred to a flat rate or a different rate for distances.

Where an affiliated club has a big sponsor onboard, a market price may be appropriate. It can be helpful if measurers provide an itemised invoice detailing mileage, meals, and other expenses.

Because situations vary it was felt important to give measurers discretion, but that it would be very useful to have a guideline document to which race directors can be referred.

Guidelines Agreed (See appendix for finally agreed wording to be published on web site)

Travel to be reimbursed. Car mileage payable up to a maximum rate of 40p/mile.

Bicyclists may also claim an appropriate rate to cover expenses.

Necessary meals and accommodation are to be reimbursed, subject to prior agreement.

For affiliated clubs the measurer is entitled to claim up to £30 per day to cover other expenses and administration.

For commercial and non-affiliated promoters the daily rate is negotiable.

Website

Mike Sandford handed out a flier on the contents of the website he had constructed over the last 8 months, coursemeasurement.org.uk. and asked all to think how it could be made useful. It had areas where information could be placed by each measurement secretary. (**Action all: send information to be included and propose further uses**)

For the South it held an up-to date on-line database of certified course. Indeed, measurers in the South can now submit their measurement data using on-line forms which is then used for the database from which the certificates are printed. It also contains maps of all courses measured since 2004.

The site receives 20 to 30 visits per day, but it has not yet been widely publicised outside the measurers in the South.

Insurance

UKA Insurance covers a measurer for claims by third parties for accidental damage caused by the measurer, but this insurance does not cover personal claims by the measurer for damage to his bike and injury to himself or in extreme cases loss of earnings as a result of an accident.

On international assignments the measurer is covered by IAAF insurance. We agreed we should investigate the terms of this insurance (**action Paul Hodgson, or Hugh Jones**)

John Glover reported Personal Accident insurances are available at modest cost for road traffic accidents and this includes bicycling. It was pointed out that if UKA will not provide cover, it could be open for measurers to individually purchase such insurance. The cost could be treated as a legitimate measurement expense. (**Action John Glover: provide details** – it's a RAC Legal Care policy – note from JG 17 Nov)

Training Courses

The present training method in the Midlands and South is to deliver Theory by correspondence and to assess understanding through remote tests and tutorials. A one day practical is carried out comprising taping a calibration course, calibrating, riding on a short loop, measuring and preparing a report for a realistic short course.

Some measurers have done their training by joining a measurement secretary for one or more real measurements.

In the South measurers were currently being only offered the web-based training course, and concern was expressed that this would rule out those who were not computer literate from becoming measurers. Mike Sandford said that he intended that all future measurers in the South should be prepared to operate using computers. He would continue to provide all facilities for existing measurers operating on paper. The meeting did not agree a uniform policy on this, and agreed to differ.

In North as well as using the traditional two day theory/practical courses, and one on one training sessions, a mentoring arrangement by grade 1 measurer followed by a practical supervised by Paul Hodgson or Alan Ritchie, is being used.

In Scotland the format recently used by Alan Young was an evening of theory followed by a one day practical.

There was a particular issue in parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland of the need to train more measurers. The meeting recommended that funds should be sought through the UKA RRWG for training new measurers in these regions to make it possible for the measurement of races to be brought more in line with the availability in the rest of the UK. It would be desirable for a senior measurer to travel to Northern Ireland to conduct a measurement training seminar; several present offered to help. (*Action Hugh Jones in collaboration with John Glover and Alan Young: seek funding for measurer training courses in Scotland and Northern Ireland in order to enable more courses to be measured and help harmonise these regions with the rest of the UK.*)

Upgrading experienced grade 2 measurers to grade 1.

Joint Midlands/South session funded by the UKA RRWG was held at Abingdon in June, upgrading 12 measurers. Further such exercises funded by UKA will be required, and similar joint sessions should be considered. (*Action All*)

Suitability Of Courses For Wheelchair Competitors

This is presently addressed by measurers in the North but not in the South or Midlands. It was agreed that there was no requirement from a measurement point of view for this.

Number Of Measurements To Be Made

The recommendation is two measurements which agree reasonably well. This is what is always taught to new measurers. Usually at least two measurements are required to settle the start/finish points and the mark the mile/km points. However, we recognise that it may sometimes be necessary for very experienced measurers to measure only once, for example if there are too many calls on their time. A single measurement is

acceptable for certification by IAAF/AIMS where the approved international grade A and B measurers have a high level of experience. We agreed that a single measurement by measurers with equivalent experience would also be acceptable for UK course certification. The critical factor is that the measurer should have demonstrated to himself and his certifier sufficient consistency when measuring courses twice that he is prepared to guarantee that the risk of an error in a single measurement is negligible.

Matching of measurers' grades into UKA officials' levels

Phil Holland said that he had checked the requirements expected for the UKA levels 1 to 5 in other areas of athletics officiating. Level 3 required that the candidate had sat an examination, and level 5 allowed officiating at international events.

It was agreed:

All UK Course measurers grade 2 should be classed as UKA Official level 3.

All UK Course measurers grade 1 should be classed as UKA Official level 4.

All UK measurers holding IAAF/AIMS grade A or B status should be classed as UKA Official level 5.

These changes are for UKA purposes only. The existing grade 1 & grade 2 terminology will continue to be used within measurement circles to avoid confusion and unnecessary change.

Appendix:

MEETING AGENDA

11:30 to 13:00 Organisation, Administration and Objectives

1. Introduction - Why are we here and what do we want to achieve?
2. UKA measurement system - administration and funding.
3. Organisation within regions.
4. Connection and cooperation between regions.

LUNCH - 13:00 to 13:30

13:30 to 15:00 Policy Issues

5. Charging - expenses or fees.
6. Measurer training and upgrading.
7. Measurement Website
8. Any other items.

Measurement Charges & Expenses – Affiliated Clubs

Charges and expenses for measurement services are a matter for agreement between race organisers and the measurer, and should be discussed at the first contact.

The following new guidelines have been agreed for measurements in the UK by the UKA Course Measurement Working Party, and apply to races organised by affiliated athletic and running clubs. They apply from 1 January 2007.

Daily Measurement Charge

The measurer may charge a maximum of £30 per day or part day of measuring. This charge should be set by the measurer to cover average administration costs of a measurement (stationery, printing, postage, telephone, etc), a contribution to the costs of the measurer's equipment and consumables, and other incidental costs. (Where an affiliated club has a big sponsor onboard, a market price, as for other organisers, may be appropriate.)

Travel

Travel by car will be charged at a rate depending on the car used, up to a maximum of 40p/mile. Travel by public transport will be charged at cost. Use of taxis should be agreed with the race organiser in advance. Measurers travelling to and from the measurement by bicycle may claim a contribution to the maintenance costs of the bicycle.

Subsistence

Where the location, duration or timing of the measurement requires, the measurer may claim the reasonable cost of meals and accommodation. Alternatively, the race organiser may provide these.

Measurement Charges & Expenses – other organisers

This includes commercial race organisers, local authorities, voluntary bodies and charities.

Measurement Charge

The measurer will negotiate the fee with the race organiser to cover his costs and professional services. (This is likely to vary considerably, depending on the financial position of the event.)

Travel & Subsistence

Travel and subsistence will be charged as above.

Note:

It can be helpful if measurers provide an itemised invoice detailing mileage, meals, and other expenses.