



**TRACK:  
PROTOCOLS  
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES  
SAFETY**

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# OFFICIATING PHILOSOPHY

The aim and responsibility of every official should be to ensure that each athlete is given every possible opportunity to achieve their best performance in a safe and fair competition in accordance with competition rules.

## QUALITIES OF A GOOD OFFICIAL

- To understand that they are there to assist all athletes and to treat them all equally and fairly
- To ensure the safety of athletes, officials, and other persons on the Field of Play
- An up to date knowledge of the IAAF and WPA rules and requirements of the competition
- An awareness of where the events fit into the program, (i.e. be aware of the total picture) and act accordingly
- The ability to maintain concentration for long periods in all conditions
- A firm but friendly approach to all persons
- Common sense, tact and understanding, as well as listening with compassion and empathy
- Well organised and in possession of all required equipment
- Neat and tidy and arrive on time
- Proactive rather than reactive
- Able to react quickly and to help to ensure that the competition runs to time
- Able to relax and enjoy the experience and to encourage others to do likewise
- Provide advice to athletes when asked questions but not engage in coaching whilst officiating

# TRACK EVENTS

## INTRODUCTION

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/WPA 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.

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 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.

**NOTE: Different venues will have different entry or exit points. Your Chief Umpire will advise the umpiring team of the suitable protocol for entering and exiting the competition area at the beginning of the competition.**

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 umpire folder with the white side showing and any personal items in the hand facing the inside of the track. 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.

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 HURDLES**

Umpires allocated to the outside of a flight of hurdles will position themselves at their allocated hurdle. Umpires allocated to hurdle positions 3, 5, 7 and 9 on the inside of the track will position themselves at their allocated hurdle. Umpires will move in two groups, one on the outside of the track and the other on the inside until they reach their allocated hurdle.

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.

**During the 100m and 110m hurdles, if a long throw is being contested, umpires sitting on the inside of the track, may turn their chairs around to watch and move should the implement be in danger of landing nearby.**

### **200M, 400M HURDLES**

Umpires allocated a flight of hurdles will position themselves together at their allocated hurdle. When the event is introduced umpires at each hurdle will position themselves so they have a clear view of the lanes allocated to them.

### **LEAVING THE TRACK**

Those furthest from the exit point 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 and for wheelchair athletes where the bottom of their rear wheel which is touching the ground 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. For wheelchair races there are no bottles/markers placed on the track.

**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.

## 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 at the direction of their Assistant Chief Umpire, or at the end of the announcement of the event. Umpires will sit after the last competitor in the event has crossed the finish line;
- For track events of 1500m and longer umpires will sit during the running of the event;
- Umpires allocated behind the start of the 100m or straight hurdles will stand behind the athletes until the race commences. Once the athletes have started the Umpires will safely move around the blocks by walking down the lane line and position themselves approximately three metres past the start line and remain there until they have signalled to their respective Assistant Chief Umpire. They will then move back behind the next group of athletes preparing to compete;
- Umpires allocated to Penalty Zone where there is a split start will assist in the setup of the area once the athletes have passed for the first time;
- Umpires may seek medical/ first aid assistance for an athlete in distress but **MUST NOT TOUCH** an athlete. Umpires should signal by waving their folder above their head from side to side – yellow side showing towards the finish line;
- During victory ceremonies/national anthems all Umpires will stand facing the flag poles with your hat/cap removed. These ceremonies will only take place at International events. The only time this protocol will not be followed is if you are involved in umpiring a continuing distance event while the presentation ceremony is being conducted. In this situation all umpires will stand for the duration of the presentation ceremony and then resume your seat at the end of it while at all times monitoring the 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 make 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;
- Decide, with Competition Management, the placement of drink stations as required.

## 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;

## 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.
- Assist umpire performance as required;
- Monitors well-being of umpires.

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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:

- Issues lap scoring sheets to allocated umpires;
- Keeps start lists;
- Takes note of reports;
- Keeps all paperwork in consultation with Track Referee ;
- Records Did Not Start (**DNS**) and Did Not Finish (**DNF**) information for each race;
- Provides information to Photo Finish:
  - Order of finishing in non-laned events if needed;
  - “Missing” hip numbers conveyed to photo finish via the Track Referee;
  - Unusual finishes conveyed to photo finish (e.g. 2 runners in same lane);
  - Collects data from Manual Timekeeper;
  - Assists 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;
- Break from lane before the breakline;
- Voluntarily leave the track;
- Receive 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;
- Report, if for any reason, the track is not ready for competition.

## INCIDENTS

Umpires may 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.

**The Umpire's Racing Incident Form should only be completed if the Track Referee requests information about the running of an event.**

If the Track Referee receives a protest and has not received an infringement report on the race he/she may ask for information that Umpires have noted as racing incidents. These observation notes should be transferred to the **Umpire's Racing Incident Form**. The completed forms should then be given the Assistant Chief Umpire so they can be passed on to the Track Referee.

## HURDLES

Umpires should:

- Place chairs in line with the hurdle you have been allotted;
- 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 instant of clearance;
- Watch for significant displacement of hurdles in another lane;
- Report if an athlete ran outside of the lane leading up to or after the hurdle (200m & 400m events);
- Watch for any interference.

### 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.

### Setting up and moving hurdles for sprint hurdles

Assuming that there are 10 complete sets of Hurdles

**80m.** 9 flights on their marks, 1 flight level near the 80m start line and 2 trolleys near the 3<sup>rd</sup> last hurdle flight (no 7).

**Change to 90m.** Third last flight placed on trolley and moved to near the 90m start line. Flight near the 80m start line moved on to their marks and all other flight move to their nearest mark (Flights 1, 8, 9 towards the start and Flight 3, 4, 5, and 6 towards the finish)

**Change to 100m.** Flight near the 90m start line moved on to their marks and all other flights move to their nearest mark (Flights 1,2,3 towards the start and Flight 5,6,7,8,and 9 towards the finish)

**Change to 110m.** Third last flight (Flight 8) placed on trolley and moved to become the first flight near the 100m start line. All other flight move to their nearest mark (Flights 1,9,10 towards the start and Flight 2, 3,4,5,6 and7 towards the finish)

If there are 11 complete sets of hurdles the 11<sup>th</sup> set is placed near the 100m start and the shift of the third last flight is not required.

### **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 take-over zones at their designated change;
- Supply tape to athletes at each change as required;
- Watch that outgoing competitors start their run 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 that for wheelchair relays (T33-34, T51-52 and T53-54) and amputee relays (T42-47) that the incoming athlete touches any part of the body of the outgoing athlete within the take-over zone;
- 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. Due to the change in length of the changeover zone many teams will use a THUMBS UP (OK) signal or THUMBS DOWN (infringement noted). The leader of your team will advise what signalling is required. The Assistant Chief/Leader at the Change will then advise the Chief Umpire whether the change is CLEAR or whether an infringement has occurred;

- If there is an infringement **ALL** umpires who witnessed the infringement should **independently** fill out an infringement report form;
- 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 power 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. Advise the head of your team where you are moving to so they know where to look for your signal;
- Are required to ensure that the relevant IAAF/WPA 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 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 the hand facing the inside of the track; and
- When sitting on chairs sit up straight, no slouching or crossed legs. If standing, no leaning on hurdles, walls etc.

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## Lap Board

The umpire allocated to operate the Lap Board (LB):

- 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;
- Assistant Lap Board Operator (ALB) (where appointed) 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;
- LB and ALB will work as a team to cancel the laps on the board and allow the LB operator to ring the bell for the last lap of each competitor;
- 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 in lane seven at the commencement of an event then move to lane four once the athletes have passed the finish line for the first time;
- 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 Chief Judge will read finishing order 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;
- Lap Scorers will record the laps completed, and times, of all competitors in races of 5000m and above or as directed by the Competition Director;
- Assistant Chief Umpire or Chief Umpire will assist if you cannot find your competitors during the running of the event;
- It is a good idea to have a pencil (as well as a pen) in case of rain.

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## Lap Counters

- 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;
- The Track Referee will be responsible for the correct placement of the wind 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.
- All umpires allocated to operate the manual wind gauge should be aware of the number of seconds to set for the event and when they should activate the gauge in the race.

## SAFETY

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

- Allow only competitors, officials and other accredited personnel onto the Field of Play;
- Always look in both directions before crossing the track;
- Do not cross the grassed areas at any time (go around the track);
- If you think conditions are unsafe for the conducting of the event notify either the Assistant Chief Umpire or Chief Umpire immediately; and
- Always take care when lifting objects, especially heavy ones

**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**

