

# **Slinn Allstars - Guidance on the Management of Risk**

## **Introduction**

Whilst Slinn Allstars has no specific legal responsibility in respect of the Health and Safety of club members, the club acknowledges that it wishes to provide guidance to members so that they may make risk based decisions whenever they choose to take part in any club activity.

## **Background**

Runners have a responsibility to do their best to prevent harm to themselves, their running partners or members of the public. It should be acknowledged by all club members that they as individuals owe a duty of care to not willfully injure themselves or others by their negligent acts or omissions.

Club members should consider if they require civil liability insurance on a personal level, and are recommended to check the existing level of cover afforded by household or other insurance policies.

All activities entered into by members are made purely on a voluntary basis, and whilst the club will do everything within its control to assist in the management of risk, by being a member of the club it is essential to acknowledge that no specific members should be held responsible for any acts or omissions leading to personal injury or damage to property.

Running however safely organised, carries a certain amount of risk and those taking part in any running or associated activity (e.g. cross training) need to be aware of those risks in order to minimize and accept them. Equally, the long-term benefits of running even when balanced against the risks should not be underestimated with increased fitness, health, well-being and longevity just to mention a few.

Experienced runners will already be aware of many of the possible risks but novices may not, and it falls to the more experienced runner to take on the responsibility to mentor those with less experience.

## **Risk Management Process**

Risk assessment is something we carry out many times each day, for example when making a judgment about whether to cross a road. In making a risk assessment we are evaluating the chance of injury and likely severity against the likely benefit.

## **Hazard**

A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm

## **Risk**

A risk is probability of the harm occurring and the severity of the consequences

## **Risk Management**

Personal risk management during running needs to be a dynamic process. Due to the ever changing environment which makes running so exciting and enjoyable, much can be done in preparation before running to ensure that risks that are foreseeable are appropriately managed. For example when running at night on or near roadways wearing something white or reflective and looking left / right and left again before crossing a road.

The risk assessment process when running is often dynamic i.e. ever changing relative to the changing environment. For most people risk assessment is conducted so subconsciously, that many people do not identify they are actually making risk based decisions.

The dynamic risk assessment process involves:

1. Recognizing and identifying the hazards;
2. Assessing the Risk / who might be affected by them and the potential level of harm
3. Making a judgment about the level of risk and whether the risk is acceptable
4. Taking a deliberate course of action to mitigate the risk when the risk is not considered acceptable
5. Constantly reviewing the process
6. Identify and pre planning the steps to be taken in a emergency

## **Using the hierarchy of control**

The hierarchy of control is a process by which we should make decisions to select the most effective control measure to control risk, the most effective controls are at or near the top of the hierarchy with the least effective or easiest to defeat at the bottom.

Hierarchy	Example hazard	Example control
Eliminate the hazard	Slipping on black ice on paths	Don't run
Substitution of the hazard	Slipping on black ice on paths	Run on grass verge

Segregate from the hazard	Being struck by vehicles at night	Run off road or on paths separated from vehicles
Procedures	Being struck by vehicle when running on road with no path	Run towards oncoming traffic and prepare to move
Personal Protective Equipment	Being struck by vehicles at night	White clothes or clothes with reflective strips

### **Guidance before running**

The club meets on private premises and assembles 15 to 30 minutes before runs commence. Attendees should familiarize themselves with their surroundings and the layout of the building including fire escape locations and comfort facilities. At the Tuesday night location facilities are provided to make hot drinks. The hot water boiler in particular together with hot taps have the potential to scald and should be treated accordingly. The kitchen or WC's can have liquid spills which should be identified and mopped up forthwith.

Both venues have steps and particular care should be taken entering or leaving the buildings especially with changing light levels and wet/dry conditions.

The lane leading to the Thursday night venue is not lit when dark. It contains two speed humps and members are advised to wear a head torch and walk over the humps, not run. Head torches are held by the club and are free for runners to borrow on request. Traffic also uses this entrance – always give way to it and in particular stand aside.

### **Guidance when running**

The guidance produced below is intended to aid members in their personal risk assessment process and their strategy to control risk (i.e. the things that make you safe). It should be recognised that in providing this guidance the club and its members are not responsible for the accuracy of the guidance or the risk based decisions made in its use.

### **General**

- Where a group includes a session leader or nominated person a short pre-run briefing should be carried out before each session starts, including details of the route to be taken, approximate effort and total distance of the session. The session leader should ensure that runners within the group are aware of the session they are about to undertake so that they

can ensure adequate preparation/ ability. The duration of the briefing session should be proportionate to the ability level of the group.

- Runners must inform the session leader or other person within the group if they are taking an alternative route or leaving the group. Ideally this should be agreed in advance of the start of the run.
- Runners should be split into ability groups. Where the group includes a session leader or nominated person they should be aware of the numbers in their group, keep watch for back markers and check all are coping with the session. Members are expected to look out for each other at all times
- Runners should not use MP3 players
- Runners are expected to note the condition of surfaces and to warn other runners of any trip hazards or obstructions as the session progresses. For example, kerbs, unevenness and dips in pavements, potholes, raised service covers etc.
- Runners should warn other runners regarding traffic.
- Runners are advised to ignore any verbal abuse from pedestrians and any confrontation should be avoided.

However, members have a legal right to defend themselves if absolutely necessary, using only reasonable force. If the group is accompanied by a session leader the group should be moved away from any incident, before deciding whether to report the matter to the Police. The incident should be recorded in writing on return to the training base and held in club records.

## **Terrain**

In town be aware of and where possible avoid:

- Dark shaded areas where visibility will be reduced.
- Areas that can be slippery in wet weather due to vegetation etc
- Tree roots raising the pavement, especially when racing
- At night areas with poor / broken lighting

Roads:

- Avoid running routes that cause you to cross roads
- Select a safe route to cross roads using bridges or underpasses, or use crossings or traffic islands
- Don't assume that car drivers can see you, just because you can see them
- Wear something visible when running on or across traffic routes, at night white clothes or clothes with reflective strips or a head torch will help you be seen. High visibility clothing whilst good in daylight conditions is not visible under most streetlights.

- On roads with no path, run towards oncoming traffic so you can take evasive measures if necessary

#### Cross Country:

- Wear appropriate footwear
- Assess the terrain as you run and plan ahead, choose a route to avoid holes, rocks or tree stumps
- Run with high knee lift and thus reduce the risk of catching your toes
- Wear a head torch at night or in poor light conditions
- Avoid running alone in remote places
- If running alone let someone know your route
- Carry a charged mobile phone with adequate credit
- Be aware of higher than usual risk from pollen, stinging insects and allergic reactions from plants with associated risk of anaphalactic shock

#### **Environmental conditions:**

##### Heat:

- Hyperthermia and heat stress give few warning signs
- Avoid running in the hottest part of the day or if you have been unwell
- Hydrate properly before, during and after running

##### Cold:

- Is unlikely to represent a hazard whilst running except when extreme winter conditions prevail
- Use a layer approach to clothing to protect against the cold, so layers can be removed as you warm up, or be replaced as you cool down
- Wear a hat - up to 35% of body heat is lost through the head
- Protect the extremities
- Post exercise, change into dry clothing
- In very severe cold conditions do not run
- The greatest risk – hypothermia- occurs if injured whilst running alone in a remote place
- If asthmatic, consider whether it is prudent to run. If you choose to do so notify and run with a partner.

##### Fog:

- In the day wear high visibility clothing
- At night wear white clothes or clothes with reflective strips or a head torch
- Run away from traffic routes and avoid running alone

## **Personal Limitations:**

Always be aware of the location of first-aid and how to summon a first-aider

Lady runners should run with a partner at all times.

Fitness:

- Know your limits
- Following illness or injury take a conservative approach to resuming training

Pre-existing health conditions:

- Seek medical advice from your Doctor if you have a pre-existing medical condition that you think may place you at increased risk when running
- Notify coaches of any specific medical condition or when returning from long term injury or a debilitating illness
- Make others aware if you carry a SOS talisman for any specific medical condition
- Carry inhalers or any other treatments you might need, ensure your running partner is aware.

## **Dealing with Emergency Situations**

Tips how to deal with emergency situations:

### **Medical Emergency:**

- Relax - don' t be afraid
- Call for help - carry a mobile phone dial 999
- Don't leave an injured person alone
- Establish what is wrong with the person and instill calm
- Learn and remember the key first aid principles, when dealing with a medical incident and use the following hierarchy:

1. Call for help!
2. Breathing - ensure a persons is breathing and their airway is open
3. Beating - ensure and when necessary assist the heart with beating
4. Bleeding - Control bleeding with direct pressure on the wound

## **An aggressor, either animal or human:**

- Avoid situations and environments that you feel put you at risk
- Avoid direct conflict - be passive but assertive
- Keep an object or space between you and the aggressor
- Be calm and confident
- Call for help loudly
- Remember you are a runner and you can run away
- As a last resort use "Bash & Dash" tactics to defend yourself and aim for vulnerable areas

Slinn Allstars

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