



GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR OUTDOOR THROWS COMPETITION

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In the following section you will find generic safety guidance risk assessments which highlight some of the common safety hazards associated with outdoor throws competition and the suggested steps required in order to control the risks.

UKA recommends that every facility and event/competition provider conducts pre event risk assessments and it is important that the following generic risk assessments are not just copied and pasted with your facility/event name added at the top as this would not satisfy the legal requirement and would not protect participants. Every facility is different so you need to think about the hazards and controls relevant to your event and document accordingly. (Click [here](#) for templates and guidance on carrying out a risk assessment).

Even where the hazards are the same, the control measures you adopt may have to be different from those in the examples to meet the particular conditions of your session/venue

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR LONG THROWING EVENTS

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Event organisers, meeting managers, referees should ensure that the long throwing events are programmed so as not to present a hazard to other events. Where long, triple or pole vault runways are located on the infield long throwing events must not take place unless a separate risk assessment indicates that the standard of throwers will pose no risk to jumpers.
2. The meeting manager or organiser should ensure that all personnel who are liable to enter the infield are made aware of all safety considerations.
3. At least one of the event judges should be suitably qualified and [competent](#).
4. If persons who are not suitably qualified are used they must be instructed in the safety procedures by a [competent official](#) before the start of their duties.

EVENT PROCEDURE

1. Prior to the competition all competitors should be made aware of the safety procedures.
2. Competitors should be called up in 2s or 3s i.e. Number 15 to throw, 27 to get ready, nine to follow etc.
3. The event leader must first check that the circle or runway is clear.
4. The event leader must stand with the athlete at the entrance to the cage for hammer and discus; and for javelin the official must stand on the runway while the athlete takes up his/her starting position.
5. The event leader must sound a warning horn to alert the officials on that event a throw is imminent.
6. When all officials and other personnel in the danger zone have acknowledged the sounding of the horn the athlete should be permitted to take up position in the circle or on the runway to commence their throw and the time will begin at this point.

7. Once the throw has been taken and the measurement recorded the procedure is repeated for each athlete throughout the competition.
8. All safety procedures must also be followed during warm up.

IMPLEMENT RETRIEVAL

During warm up and competition, the retrieval of implements will be undertaken by event officials. If there are insufficient officials the athletes will be directed by the event leader to retrieve implements at the end of a round or as appropriate. Any system of implement retrieval must take place under the control of the event leader

THROWING EVENTS GENERAL

HAZARD **Sector**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials, non-associated persons, implement impact injury and/or tripping due to poor condition of in field.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. The central throwing area or the specific safety sector must be roped-off in accordance with current UKA rules.
2. The sector should be smooth and level, in particular ensure that holes in the sector arising from hammer throws or shot puts are filled in to ground level.
3. Ensure that there are no non-associated persons within or in the vicinity of the throwing sector before throws commence.
4. Ensure that grass is not over-long.
5. Ideally grass should be cut the day prior to competition

Shot-put Specific

6. Ash/shale sectors should be raked before and after use.

Control measure responsibilities:

1,2,4,6	Facility staff, officials
3	Officials
5	Facility staff

HAZARD **Circle**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes – slipping due to wet, gritty surface. Injury due to damaged metal rim of circle; Shot-putters - injury due to loose, damaged stop board.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure that circle is in good order and not cracking or breaking up.
2. Examine circle rim to ensure that it is free from protrusions of shards of metal.
3. Ensure that circle is free of extraneous material, grit, dirt or standing water.
4. Ensure that drainage holes are kept clear.
5. Ensure that mats are provided for wiping shoes if ground is wet.

Shot-put Specific

6. Ensure that stop board is firm and stable.
7. Ensure that stop board is not damaged so as to cause a foot injury.

Hammer Specific

8. Ensure that the insert ring for concentric hammer and discus circle is in good order, fits snugly and has no protrusions, especially at the joins where the insert ring is sectional.

Control measure responsibilities	1,2,5,6,7,8	Facility staff, officials
	4	Facility staff
	3	Officials

HAZARD

Cage

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials, public, implement impact injury due to implement escaping due to badly maintained or poorly constructed cage.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure that cage is constructed and erected in accordance with the UKA rule (cages for hammer and discus).
2. Non-traditional cages – ensure that the cage is constructed and erected in accordance with the appropriate parts of the UKA rule (cages for hammer and discus)
3. Check netting regularly to ensure no damage to the net structure.
4. Ensure that netting is secured or ballasted at ground level.
5. Ensure that netting hangs vertically from the gallows arms and is not tied to the uprights, particularly at the mouth of the cage where the width should not exceed 6m.
6. Check that netting tension has sufficient retardation and minimal bounce.
7. During throwing athletes and officials must maintain a safe distance from the cage netting.

Hammer Specific

8. Ensure that the ends of the hammer wires are securely taped to avoid damage to the netting.

Control measure responsibilities	1,2	Facility staff
	3,4,5,6	Facility staff officials
	7, 8	Officials, athletes

HAZARD

Cage Gates

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials, public, implement, impact injury due to wrongly positions gates or over tensioned netting.

Officials – back injury due to poorly maintained gate hinges and wheels.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Check that the gates can move freely and be secured in both their open and closed positions.
2. Check that gate netting is not holed and appears in good condition.
3. Check that gate netting tension has sufficient retardation and minimal bounce.
4. Ensure both gates are correctly positioned and locked before each throw in accordance with UKA rules, in particular that the gates are correctly set for right and left handed hammer throws.

Control measure responsibilities	1,2,3	Facility staff, officials
	4	Officials

HAZARD Time of Day**WHO / HOW AFFECTED:**

Athletes, officials – injury from inability to see well enough.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Check that enough daylight/flood lighting to ensure safety

Control measure responsibilities	1	Officials
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HAZARD Scoreboards**WHO / HOW AFFECTED:**

Athletes, officials – injury from falling scoreboard

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure that scoreboards are not less than 2m from officials' judging positions, or from athletes waiting to throw.
2. Ensure that scoreboards are well ballasted or secured at ground level.
3. Decide whether or not the wind strength has increased to such a degree that scoreboards are no longer safe to use.

Control measure responsibilities	2,4	Facility staff, officials
	1,3	Officials

HAZARD Lack of Concentration**WHO / HOW AFFECTED:**

Athletes, officials

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Athletes and officials must be aware at all times for the need of concentration on the event in hand and must not be distracted by other events.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Athletes, officials
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SHOT PUT**HAZARD** Implements**WHO / HOW AFFECTED:**

Athletes, officials – hand injury due to damaged surface of shot.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. All implements must be checked for surface damage that may cause injury.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Facility staff, officials, athletes
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HAZARD **Competition**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials – implement impact injury

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure all throws and practice throws only take place from within the circle and in the direction of the sector.
2. During a trial, officials should stand outside the sector lines and face the thrower.
3. Ensure that only officials are allowed forward of the throwing circle, except when athletes are allowed to retrieve under supervision.
4. Implements must only be returned by hand or mechanical device.
5. When rotational throwers or those using non-traditional techniques are competing ensure all officials are within a safe distance from the potential flight of the implement.

Control measure responsibilities	2, 5	Officials
	1,3,4	Officials, athletes

HAMMER THROW

HAZARD **Implements**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials, public – hammer should be serviceable to avoid unforeseen and uncontrolled failures and likelihood of injury

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Implements must be checked before commencement of throwing to ensure they conform to UKA rules (reference UK Athletics Handbook "Rules of Competition") and that they are serviceable, particularly the handle, and the wire and swivel assembly.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Facility staff, officials, athletes
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HAZARD **Gloves**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes – injury to hand

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Gloves if worn should give adequate protection, alternatively if optional protection is used it should provide sufficient protection and not become a hazard.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Officials, athletes
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HAZARD **Competition**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials, public, implement impact injury

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure both gates are correctly positioned and locked before each throw.
2. Ensure all throws and practice throws only take place from the circle. Within the cage, and under supervision of an official.
3. During a trial, officials should stand outside the sector lines, and must face the thrower. The warning horn must be sounded to warn that a trial is due to commence especially for the officials within or in the proximity of the throwing sector.
4. Throws must not commence until the supervising official signals to the athlete that it is safe to throw.
5. It must be emphasised to the athletes that the warning horn is to warn those within or in the vicinity of the throwing sector that a throw is about to commence and is not a signal for them to commence throwing.
6. Implements must only be returned by hand, or mechanical device.
7. Ensure that only officials are allowed forward of the mouth of the throwing cage, except when athletes are allowed to retrieve under supervision.
8. Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions.

Control measure responsibilities	1,2,3,4,5,6,8	Officials
	2,4,6,7	Officials, athletes

DISCUS

HAZARD **Implements**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes – hand injury due to damaged discus

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure that surface, including metal rim is not damaged in such a way as to cause injury.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Facility staff, officials, athletes
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HAZARD **Competition**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials, public, impact injury

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Ensure both gates are correctly positioned and locked in accordance with UK Athletics rules.
2. Ensure all throws and practice throws only take place from the circle, within the cage and under supervision of an official.
3. During a trial, officials should stand outside the sector lines and must face the thrower. The warning horn must be sounded to warn that a trial is due to commence, especially for the officials within, or in the proximity of the throwing sector.
4. Throws must not commence until the supervising official signals to the athlete that it is safe to throw.

5. It must be emphasised to the athletes that the warning horn is to warn those within or in the vicinity of the throwing sector that a throw is about to commence and is not a signal for them to commence throwing.
6. Implements must only be returned by hand or mechanical device.
7. Ensure that only officials are allowed forward of the mouth of the throwing cage, except when athletes are allowed to retrieve under supervision.
8. Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions.

Control measure responsibilities	1,2,3,4,5,6,8	Officials
	2,4,6,7	Officials, athletes

JAVELIN THROW

HAZARD Runway

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, officials – slipping, tripping, due to wet, worn, damaged surface, or encroaching measuring tape or obstructive check markers

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Examine runway to ensure no worn or damaged areas.
2. Regularly clean any drainage ducts around runway.
3. Regularly clean porous surfaces to allow drainage.
4. Sweep runway to remove excess water and/or grit, dirt.
5. Ensure that no obstructive check marks are placed on the runway.
6. Ensure that throws are supervised to ensure athletes throw only when the runway is clear.
7. Ensure measuring tapes do not encroach on the runway.

Control measure responsibilities	2,3	Facility staff
	1, 4	Facility staff, officials
	5,6,7	Officials, athletes

HAZARD Implements

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes – injury caused by loose or damaged grip;

Officials - implement impact injury caused by abnormal flight characteristics of bent/bowed javelin.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Implements must be checked before commencement of throwing to ensure they conform to UKA rules (reference UK Athletics Handbook “Rules of Competition”) in particular that they have serviceable grip and profile.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Facility staff, officials, athletes
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HAZARD **Competition**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes, official, public – implement impact injury; Athletes, officials – implement impact injury caused by athletes using implements for loosening-up exercises; Athletes – tripping over track kerbing.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Where track kerbing is in the run up line, ensure that it is removed before the event, placed in a safe area, and replaced after the event.
2. All throws must only take place from the runway in the direction of the throwing sector.
3. During a trial, officials should stand outside the sector lines, and must face the thrower. The warning horn must be sounded to warn that a trial is due to commence, especially for the officials within, or in the proximity of the throwing sector.
4. Throws must not commence until the supervising official signals to the athlete that it is safe to throw.
5. It must be emphasised to the athletes that the warning horn is to warn those within or in the vicinity of the sector that a throw is about to commence, and is not a signal for them to commence throwing.
6. When approaching a thrown javelin to mark the point of landing, or retrieve it, officials must approach the javelin from the side and not from the pointed tail end of the implement.
7. Implement must only be returned by hand, held vertically, or by mechanical device.
8. Ensure that only officials are allowed forward of the throwing line except when athletes are allowed to retrieve under supervision.
9. Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Facility staff, officials
	3,5,6,7,9	Officials
	2,4,7,8	Officials, athletes

HAZARD **Weather**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Officials and others within proximity of sector – implement impact injury – caused by wind strength effect on implement.

CONTROL MEASURES

1. Be aware of the effect of strong winds on the flight characteristics of a javelin in flight.
2. Be positioned upwind of flight during trials.
3. Ensure that any non-associated persons within proximity of the throwing sector are upwind of the flight path of the implement.

Control measure responsibilities	1,2,3	Officials
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HAZARD **Scoreboard Revolving**

WHO / HOW AFFECTED:

Athletes – impact injury from scoreboard revolving in wind

CONTROL MEASURES

1. When revolving scoreboards are used, ensure they do not revolve over or are sited close to the runway, and are well ballasted or secured at ground level.

Control measure responsibilities	1	Facility staff, officials
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