

INTRODUCTION

From time to time Council needs to make decisions on matters not covered by the Constitution and By-Laws in carrying out its responsibilities. Decisions made by the Assembly and by Council are recorded in the minutes of their meetings; however, it is often difficult for council members or delegates to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of decisions made without constant reference to past minutes and other documents.

Council has adopted formal Policy Statements on issues not covered by the Constitution or By-Laws, which enable policies to be followed consistently and enable affiliates and associates to be aware of Council policies. The following Policy Statements follow the major overhaul by Council of the OMA Constitution, By-Laws at its meeting in Papeete, Tahiti on July 2010. These Formal Policy Statements were adopted at the OMA Council Meeting at Tauranga, New Zealand on 8-9 March 2011.

The Council meeting in Tauranga on 8-9 March 2011 resolved to operate under the name *Oceania Masters Athletics Inc. (OMA)* rather than *Oceania Association of Masters Athletes Inc. (OAMA)*, as a prelude to formally changing the name in the Constitution at a General Assembly. Consequently the abbreviation OMA will be used in these Policies instead of OAMA.

POLICY - No. 1.1 - OMA REPRESENTATION ON WMA COMMITTEES

BACKGROUND

Certain aspects of WMA administration are carried out through Committees, and the WMA Regions are entitled to nominate a representative to the Records, the Anti-Doping & Medical and the Women's committees, and may be invited to nominate representatives for other WMA committees. The following policy statements only relate to those WMA Committees for which OMA is entitled to nominate a representative or OMA is invited to nominate a representative.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Any OMA representatives to any WMA Committees will be nominated by the OMA Council.
2. Affiliates, Associates and OMA Council members may propose OMA representatives for WMA committees for consideration by the OMA Council at any time.
3. Nominees must be prepared to attend meetings of their Committees held at WMA Championships and at other times and places if practical.
4. The OMA Council shall decide the final OMA nominations for WMA Committees.
5. Appointees should undertake to submit a formal report on each of their meetings to the OMA Council not more than two months after the meeting date.
6. The OMA Council may require any nominee to submit details of their qualifications, experience and other relevant information and confirm their understanding of the requirements of their nomination.
7. OMA will **not** reimburse expenses incurred by Oceania representatives in attending committee meetings held at WMA Championships.
8. Where WMA Committee Meetings are held at other times and places, **and** where WMA will not reimburse expenses, the OMA Council may if considered appropriate, reimburse expenses incurred in attendance by OMA representatives. Such expenses must be approved in advance by the OMA Council, if OMA is requested to reimburse those expenses, with the level of any reimbursement to be consistent with Policy No. 2.1.

POLICY - No. 2.1 - TRAVEL EXPENSES – OMA COUNCIL & ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

BACKGROUND

Council Meetings are held at Regional Championships, and also at other times as determined by Council, subject to any instructions given by the Assembly.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. This statement refers to reimbursement of expenses incurred by the elected members of Council as defined in the Constitution.

Council and Assembly meetings held at OMA Regional Championships

2. For attendance at Council and Assembly meetings held at OMA Regional Championships, OMA will reimburse Council members 50% of necessary travel costs based on the most efficient and economical form of travel. It should be noted that travel could be by plane, bus, private car or rental car etc., and such costs include travel insurance and required overnight transit stays.
3. OMA will reimburse Council members accommodation costs incurred at Council and Assembly meetings at the rate of \$80 Australian or \$90 New Zealand (as appropriate) for up to eight days.
4. Meals, entertainment and similar expenses will not be directly reimbursed, however, in lieu of this an Incidentals Allowance of \$25 Australian or \$25 New Zealand (as appropriate) per night will be paid for up to three nights.

Council approved meetings held in the Oceania Region (not at OMA Championships)

5. For attendance at other formal Council approved meetings held in the Oceania Region (outside of OMA Championships), OMA will reimburse Council members fully for necessary and approved travel (based on the most efficient and economical form of travel) and shared accommodation costs incurred by them provided that funds are available and that the total amount to be reimbursed does not exceed budget allowances. If full reimbursement is not possible, partial reimbursement will be made as determined by Council resolution. Meals, entertainment and similar expenses will not be directly reimbursed, unless approved by Council, however, in lieu an Incidentals Allowance of \$25 Australian or \$25 New Zealand (as appropriate) per night will be paid to each Council member for up to three nights.
6. OMA will not reimburse expenses incurred in attending informal Council meetings held in association with WMA Championships or elsewhere.
7. Expense claims should be submitted to the Treasurer with supporting documentation preferably by the close of the meeting, with the President to approve all claims, however, the Treasurer is to also approve claims made by the President.
8. Expenses will normally be reimbursed in the currency of the claimant's country of residence; however, if this is not practical, the claimant will be reimbursed in the currency of the country where the OMA bank accounts are held.

POLICY - No. 2.2 – COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDANCE - COUNCIL & ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

BACKGROUND

Council and General Assembly meetings are held annually for the conduct of OMA business. Given the widespread geographic nature of the Association, such meetings require considerable effort and cost to organize and to provide occasions for face to face meetings. It is therefore vital that elected Council members attend all meetings to ensure proper consideration of the issues and effective decision making.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Elected Council members have a responsibility to attend all Council and General Assembly meetings.
2. Non-attendance at all Council and General Assembly meetings held at a specific location may result in a reduction in the reimbursement of the authorized full or partial travel and other costs.

POLICY - No. 3.1 – COMMUNICATION OF TOPICAL MASTERS INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Most OMA Island Affiliates and Associates are isolated from the mainstream of masters athletics and do not have regular publications dealing specifically with masters athletics issues or results in the Oceania Region.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Each OMA Affiliate and Associate is to be provided with a free posted subscription to the quarterly New Zealand masters magazine, Vetline.
2. Each member of the OMA Council is to be provided with a copy of Vetline.
3. New Zealand Masters Athletics is to be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$2,500 annually for providing these subscriptions.

POLICY - No. 4.1 –VOLUNTARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

BACKGROUND

The Constitution provides for voluntary financial contributions from larger Affiliates to OMA to assist in the running of the Association.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Australian Masters Athletics Inc. has agreed to make a voluntary contribution of AU\$1100 and New Zealand Masters Athletics Inc. has agreed to pay a voluntary contribution of NZ\$550 annually to OMA to assist in the running of the Association.
2. The contributions have been agreed to be paid after the start of the OMA financial year commencing on 1 September on the issuance of an invoice to the Australian and New Zealand affiliates by OMA.
3. The method of determination and method of the payment of the voluntary financial contributions is to be determined from time to time by Council in consultation with Australian Masters Athletics Inc. and New Zealand Masters Athletics Inc., and specified in the OMA Policies.

POLICY - No. 4.2 – CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION FEES

BACKGROUND

The Constitution requires the Affiliate or Associate member hosting the OMA Regional Championships to charge each masters athlete competing in the Championships an OMA Participation Fee. The amount of the Participation Fee on each athlete competing at the OMA Championships shall be determined from time to time by Council and specified in OMA Council Meeting minutes and/or Policies.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The Participation Fee is currently set at \$40 Australian or New Zealand (as applicable) per athlete competing at the Championships net of any Goods and Service or equivalent tax.
2. The per capita Participation Fee may be varied at any time by the OMA Council.
3. The due date for payment is 30 days from the end of the Championships.

POLICY - No. 4.3 – CHAMPIONSHIP SANCTION FEE

BACKGROUND

The Constitution enables OMA to require the payment of a Sanction Fee payable to OMA for the hosting of the Oceania Regional Championships. The amount of the Sanction Fee or the circumstances where it would not be required for any particular Championships will be determined by the OMA Council and specified in OMA Council Meeting minutes and/or Policies.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The Sanction Fee is currently AU\$4000 (for an Australian host of the Championships; NZ\$3000 for a New Zealand host of the Championships; and AU\$2000 for any Island Affiliate or Associate hosting the Championships).
2. The Sanction Fee may be varied at any time by the OMA Council and specified in Council Meeting minutes and/or Policies.
3. The due date for payment is 30 days from the end of the Championships.

POLICY - No. 5.1 – ISLAND AFFILIATE & ASSOCIATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

The Objects of OMA as provided for in the Constitution are to develop masters athletics and to foster the participation of masters athletes aged 30 years and over within the Oceania region. The isolated nature of most island affiliates or associates means that the cost for island masters athletes attending OMA Championships can be prohibitive. OMA has agreed to provide some financial support for island athletes to offset travel costs in attending the OMA Championships.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Financial support may be provided to masters athletes and officials from island Affiliates or Associates (i.e. specifically excluding Australian and New Zealand athletes), who have to travel by air to attend OMA Regional Championships.
2. The support excludes those athletes and officials resident on the island that is hosting the Championships, but does include those athletes or officials from the host country who need to travel considerable distances to get to the island where the Championships are being held.
3. The support will be provided to the participating athlete and officials in the currency of the Country in which the Championships are being held, at the start of their arrival at the Championships as a partial offset of expenses.
4. The support will be determined on a per capita basis and may be subject a cap for an Affiliate or Associate, or an overall cap.
5. As a guide to the level of support, in 2008, AU\$200 was provided to each athlete with a cap of AU\$800 per Affiliate. In 2010, all 29 masters athletes from the island affiliates (other than those from Tahiti where the Championships were held) were provided with AU/NZ\$100 for each athlete or official.
6. The financial support will be subject to the availability of funds, and the amount and nature of support and its calculation may be varied at any time by the OMA Council.

POLICY - No. 6.1 – RECOGNITION OF CHAMPIONSHIPS OFFICIALS

BACKGROUND

The conduct of a successful OMA Championships involves many individuals, organizational and technical officials, as well as sponsors. The OMA Council considers it fitting that the work and support provided by such individuals is appropriately recognized, however, it considers that this token of recognition should be different to and separate from Championships medals.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Championship place medals awarded to athletes must be reserved for athletes only and should not be used as a token of appreciation for officials or others.
2. A separate commemorative medal can be produced for the recognition of officials and others.
3. The OMA Council may also separately, where appropriate, present token gifts to key officials and dignitaries.

POLICY - No. 6.2 – CLEM GREEN TROPHY

BACKGROUND

The Clem Green Trophy is a perpetual trophy for the best 1500m performance at an Oceania Championships and is named in appreciation of Clem Green's efforts in founding the Association. Giving a perpetual trophy to an athlete runs the risk that the trophy is lost or forgotten and not brought to the next OMA Championships, thus preventing or diminishing its awarding to the next winner.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The Clem Green Trophy is to be displayed at each OMA Championships and at the General Assembly at Championships.
2. The Clem Green trophy is to be awarded to the individual, male or female, based on the best performance (based age-graded percentage) in the 1500m at the OMA Championships.
3. The Trophy is to be presented at each OMA Championship, but is to be retained by the OMA Secretary who will arrange engraving.
4. A suitable certificate and/or token trophy is to be presented to the winner of the Clem Green Trophy at each Championship.

POLICY - No. 6.3 – OFFICIATING AT WALKS

BACKGROUND

Some older masters athletes walk with a "soft knee" on contact with the ground because they have a physical difficulty in meeting the technical requirement to lock knees as required by IAAF rules. The role of judges is to enforce the rules of race walking with the purpose of preventing athletes from gaining an unfair advantage. Judges nevertheless need to recognise when an older athlete is straightening their leg as far as possible, but without full compliance, through applying the concept of "no advantage" when officiating at OMA track and road walks. Furthermore, strict adherence to IAAF rules relating to the makeup of the judging panel cannot be implemented at OMA Championships because a lack of qualified international walk judges. The following policy statements seek to address both these issues.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. OMA encourages athletes of all ages and abilities to participate in the sport of race walking conducted under its auspices whilst seeking to maintain the technical challenge of the sport (see also Policy 7.2).
2. Walk judges should use their discretion in applying a "*no advantage*" consideration when judging masters walkers particularly in the older age categories, where it is clear that the athlete cannot lock their knees.
3. All OMA Championship walk judges are to have an ANZOES qualification and there is to be at least one A-grade judge at each OMA event.
4. In OMA race walks two red cards are permissible from walk judges from the same country but not three, except where the third is from the Chief Judge in the last 100m of the race.

POLICY - No. 7.1 – PRIVACY

BACKGROUND

OMA, its Affiliates, Associates and Local Organizing Committees from time to time collect or receive personal information relating to athletes, officials and volunteers in the hosting of the OMA Championships.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. OMA respects the confidentiality and security of personal information supplied to it, its Affiliates and Associates and Local Organizing Committees involved in hosting OMA Championships, and is committed to protecting it at all times.
2. OMA acknowledges that differing Privacy Policy legislation and regulations operate in member countries or states affiliated or associated with OMA.
3. The Association will not interfere with an individual's privacy rights in the way it collects, uses or disseminates personal information.
4. OMA will only collect such personal information as is necessary to facilitate and promote participation in OMA events and to communicate with individual athletes and individuals in relation to such events.
5. OMA expects Affiliates and Associates and Local Championship Organizing Committees that collect or receive personal information on OMA's behalf to also respect the privacy of such information, to ensure its security, and to only use it in relation to the facilitation and promotion of such OMA events.

POLICY - No. 7.2 – DISABILITY

BACKGROUND

The Objects of OMA as provided for in the Constitution are to regulate and develop, masters athletics, and to foster the participation of all mature-age athletes aged 30 years and over within the Oceania region. This includes masters athletes with disabilities.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. OMA supports the right of people with disabilities to be involved in all facets of mature-age athletics.
2. OMA recognizes its social and moral obligation to provide for people with disabilities at its championship events.

POLICY - No. 7.3 – ANTI-HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

BACKGROUND

The Oceania region is characterized by different cultures, racial groups, religions and languages, while the sport of masters athletics is by its nature open to all mature-age athletes regardless of age, sex or sexual preference, ability or disability. Individuals - athletes, officials, volunteers and others - participate in masters athletics because of the love for the sport and the enjoyment gained from their participation in it. Ensuring an encouraging and supportive environment for all participants that is free from discrimination, harassment and abuse is essential for fostering and developing masters athletics in the Oceania region.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. OMA supports non-discrimination in relation to racial, cultural, religious, sexual, disability, ageist or any other characteristic of any athletes, officials, volunteers and others engaged in the conduct of masters athletics.
2. OMA is committed to providing an environment where athletes, officials, volunteers and others engaged in competition and other activities under its charter can enjoy the sport and their participation in it free of harassment, prejudice, unfairness, abuse and discrimination on any grounds.
3. OMA recognizes that the above two policy statements should be applied in accordance with relevant legislative requirements and local customs in each competition host country.

POLICY - No. 8.1 – RISK MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

The conduct of any masters athletics activity, in particular the OMA stadia and non-stadia Championships, involves organizational, financial and personal risks to OMA, its Affiliates and Associates and Local Organizing Committees as well as athletes, officials, volunteers and spectators. OMA has a responsibility to safeguard itself and organizations operating on its behalf, and to ensure a safe environment for all participants, officials, volunteers and spectators at its Championships.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. OMA is committed to providing a sporting environment which is safe, stable, and free of discrimination or harassment, and in which risks to athletes are minimized through proactive management.
2. OMA accepts risk management as one of its prime responsibilities and will ensure it is an integral part of any planning and decision-making processes, and recognizes that risk occurs not only within the conduct of the sport of athletics, but also within the broader environment in which OMA operates.
3. OMA is mindful of the full range of risks which may impact on the viability of the organisation, and in turn on the current and future operation of its Affiliates and Associates who host OMA Championships.
4. To protect the organization, its Affiliates and Associates, masters athletes and the wider community, OMA will incorporate in its governance documents a Risk Management Plan aimed at reducing the likelihood and potential impact of risk. Where risk cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level, OMA will ensure that the risks of its operations are clearly identified, minimized as much as possible, and covered by relevant guidelines, and where appropriate, insurance.

POLICY - No. 8.1 – CRISIS MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

From time to time emergency or crisis situations may occur at an OMA Championships. These may be simple situations such as a fractured arm or distressing personal situations such as the sudden and unexpected death of an athlete, official or spectator at the Championships, or it could be extreme weather conditions that disrupt the Championships. OMA, the Local Organizing Committee and key officials have the responsibility to sensitively manage and communicate such situations, to ensure the safety of all competitors, officials and spectators, and to ensure the situation result in the least disruption to the majority and the Championships. Because of the diversity of crises that may occur at a Championship it is not possible to simply distill actions and responses into a few policy statements.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. OMA has developed Crisis Management Guidelines based on the New Zealand Masters Athletics Guidelines (and now adopted by WMA), which should be used to guide action in relation to the management of crises at OMA Championships.

OMA CRISIS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

These guidelines are for event-organizers managing an emergency or crisis situation at an OMA Championships. They address situations such as sudden death, severe accident, a distressing unexpected disruption. It could be as “simple” as a fractured arm or as distressing as a sudden and unexpected death of an athlete, official or spectator present at the Championships, or even extreme disrupting weather conditions.

Some emergency or crisis situations will automatically necessitate the involvement of local emergency services, who may be the primary incident manager. Nevertheless even where local emergency services are involved, management of an emergency or crisis situation within the athletics community at the Championships is still required.

These OMA crisis management guidelines assume that:

- Relevant emergency services, Police, First Aid, Ambulance, Fire or Recue services etc. have been contacted where and as appropriate.
- There is ongoing liaison with relevant local emergency services where necessary.
- The requirements of local emergency services have been taken into account when following these guidelines.

INITIAL ACTION

1. Verify the accuracy of information and obtain all relevant details relating to the incident.
2. Determine what information is to be shared, and with whom, within the athletics organisation and local organising committee.
3. Relay information of the emergency to the Competition Director / Meeting Manager as soon as possible.
4. Schedule a meeting of key personnel as soon as possible.

Points to consider should include:

- management of the situation that will result in the least disruption to the majority whilst respecting those most closely involved;
- the necessity to advise all present at the Championship of the situation;
- whether or not rescheduling, postponement or even cancelling of events is necessary;
- the ongoing safety of those present; and
- the need for a press release.

ROLES

Meeting Manager

1. To convene a meeting with key athletics personnel this should include the Safety Officer and may include, relevant officials, select personnel from the local organising committee, and members of the OMA Council.
2. To inform family members, team manager and team members of the situation, and if deemed appropriate, all present at the event or Championship of the situation.
3. To prepare an initial short written statement e.g. “A medical emergency has occurred and the person(s) involved are receiving the best possible care”.
4. To appoint a designated spokesperson to be the sole point of contact with the media. Where a press release is proposed all key personnel should view and be aware of its contents prior to its release.
5. To release any officials from their posts if they so request or they are stressed.
6. To ensure that any replacement officials are appointed as necessary.
7. To liaise with the Safety Officer prior to recommencing the program.
8. To advise athletes and officials if a special ceremony of respect is to be held.
9. To arrange a debriefing meeting for key personnel.

OMA CRISIS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES (cont.)

Safety Officer

1. To ensure that adequate measures are taken to avoid any further dangerous situation.
2. To make a written report if the emergency situation arose under the officer's jurisdiction to allow safeguards to be put in place for the future.
3. To ensure all actions are consistent with details in the WMA Handbook.

Organising Committee

1. To meet with the Meeting Manager, OMA Council members and other key individuals.
2. To assist those closest involved in the emergency with transport / victim support etc.
3. To provide appropriate counselling, clerical personnel for family, fellow athletes, officials and others involved in the incident where required.
4. Where appropriate make available a "crisis room" which should have an official continually present to respond to enquiries.
5. To liaise with the family if a mark of respect is to be made at the meet.
6. To keep sponsors informed if any major changes as necessary.
7. To compile signed documentation of the incident from everyone involved.
8. To collect and secure all equipment and materials involved in the incident.
9. To contact insurance providers.
10. To prepare a post-incident report for the OMA Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the event or Championships should be continued as scheduled provided due consideration has been given to:

- safety;
- respect for those closely involved;
- the number of other persons who are affected; and
- the time of the emergency within the Championship program, i.e. day-1, rest day, closing ceremony, etc.