



# **M o u n t a i n B i k e A u s t r a l i a**

## **Volunteer Guide Book**

**Mountain Bike Australia 2011  
2nd Edition**

Additional or replacement copies of this booklet may be obtained by sending a request with a SAE to Mountain Bike Australia.



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## **Thank You and Welcome**

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this event as one of the many dedicated volunteers.

MTBA is committed to providing the highest standard of organisation for competitors, officials and spectators.

The delivery of a successful event and achieving that high standard depends, in no small part, on your dedication, effort and talent.

We hope that this guide will assist you in your job and that you will find it useful.

We hope that you find your time volunteering for this event an enriching experience and that you will a great time.

Thank you so much for your time, your expertise and your enthusiasm in volunteering for this event.



**Tony Scott**  
Executive Officer, MTBA

## **MTBA Mission Statement**

*Lead the development, promotion and governance of mountain biking in Australia for the benefit and enjoyment of all mountain bikers*

## **How to Use This Guide**

This guide is to be used as a pocket reference for most of the aspects of your volunteering at this and subsequent MTBA events.

This guide will provide a variety of information that may be required from time to time during your volunteering efforts. Make sure you bring it along to all the events at which you volunteer.

If you have any suggestions that will help this guide be more meaningful in the conduct of your volunteering duties please send them into MTBA at the address below or speak with the event manager.

Enjoy this experience. This event could not happen without you.

## The Volunteer Team – Your Team

You are part of a much larger group of people – a team if you like – who have offered to give their time and energy to help make this event a success.

There are some things that will help the whole team be the success that we all hope for.

- ◆ Learn from each other and share ideas and information;
- ◆ Be flexible and be prepared to help out in other tasks when needed;
- ◆ Treat your fellow team members with the respect and courtesy that you would like them to extend to you;
- ◆ Be considerate, and punctual;
- ◆ Smile;
- ◆ Be prepared for different weather. Bring a water bottle with you. Bring sunscreen or warm clothing as appropriate; and
- ◆ Know your limitations.

There are some procedures that will usually be followed when you take up your rostered duty times.

**Check-in:** When you arrive at the venue control centre sign onto the roster with your volunteer manager. Collect meal vouchers if applicable. At this time you may also be issued with a radio.

**Transport:** Plan your transport arrangements so that you have plenty of time to check-in and to be placed at your designated location.

**Briefing:** You will be briefed by your volunteer manager as to the location for your rostered duty. This is a good time to clarify any questions you may have about your duties.

**Personal property:** Leave valuable personal items at home. The event organisers cannot be responsible for such items. An unsupervised storage area may be available for your use. Please check with the event manager.

**Smoking:** Since most MTB events are conducted in bushland settings smoking will usually be prohibited. Please make sure that you check with event management as to their position on this.

## **Mountain Bike Facts**

MTBA, as the nation's largest mountain biking association, serves as the national governing body for mountain biking, creating and maintaining standard rules and rider categories.

Mountain biking began in Marin, California. Recreational mountain bikers must be prepared to reach their goal self-contained and return on a functional bicycle. The sport of mountain bike racing evolved from recreational mountain biking. To enhance the continuing evolution of the mountain bike, MTBA competitive events place an emphasis on equipment reliability and individual ability. It is in



the spirit of self-contained, self-reliant backcountry cycling that MTBA competitive events are conducted.

Since the birth of this sport in America, it has grown to have international stature. This is most clearly demonstrated by the inclusion of the Cross Country Mountain Bike discipline into the 1996 and subsequent Olympic Games.

There are many mountain bike formats that are regularly staged in Australia. The main ones are: Olympic Cross Country (XCO), Short Track Cross Country (XCC), Cross Country Point to Point (XCP), Cross Country Marathon (XCM), Downhill (DH), Four Cross (4X) and Bike Trials. This event may have one or more of these disciplines being conducted.

Here is a brief description of each of these disciplines and how the race is conducted. The exact way in which this event is conducted may vary from these descriptions so please make sure that you are aware of any particular variations that may be in place by talking to your volunteer manager.

### **Cross-Country.**

An individual or mass start competition, which is held on a circuit course, composed of forest roads, forest or field trails and unpaved dirt or gravel roads (a minimal amount of paved road may be necessary). The Cross Country course will normally be about 5 - 6 kilometers in length. Race times are set by the event organisers but generally the Elite men will race

a specified number of laps of the course taking between 1.5 and 2 hours. The Elite Women race over a lesser number of laps but usually take about the same time. All other age categories are scaled down from the Elite Men distances and race times.

### **Downhill.**

A time trial of sustained descending occurring between a start line and a finish line which is located at a lower altitude. Competitors typically depart the start line in timed intervals (i.e. 30 seconds). The minimum length of course will be 1.5 km and the maximum will usually be less than 5 km. The course consists of a mixture of rapid and slower technical sections, be composed of single track, wide track and rocky tracks. The emphasis is placed on the technical skills of the rider.

All riders race on the same course and the winner is the rider in a class with the fastest time. The fastest Elite and U19 men and women may also have their final placing determined by a second race that will determine their final position.

### **Four Cross.**

An event where four riders race together on a short course consisting of bermed corners, jumps and flat-out pedaling in a race to the finish line. Average race time is between 30 seconds and 1 minute. Riders may contest a qualifying race first to set race positions or may race each other in preliminary heats. The fastest 8, 16, 32 or 64 riders in qualifying

progress to the elimination rounds. The fastest qualifying riders races against the slowest qualifying riders and so on. The fastest 2 riders of each elimination round progresses to the next round.

### **Bicycle Trials.**

Events conducted over an obstacle course including such natural hazards as mud, rocks, logs, water, etc., and can have any number of sections. The riders attempt to negotiate each section without putting down a foot or hand (dab). Each dab (foot or hand) adds a point to the rider's score. The rider with the lowest score wins the event.

### **Competition Schedule**

The competition schedule for this event will be posted near the registration area for each day of practice and competition. Please make sure that you note the times and type of activity that will be occurring during your time of duty as a volunteer.

### **Accreditation**

If your volunteer manager issues you with an accreditation pass please ensure that you wear it as required. It will usually provide you with access to free food and refreshments during your rostered duty. The pass may be as a badge or special event clothing. Either of these will also enable the general public to recognise you as someone associated with

the event and will lend weight to any request that you may make.

## **Safety**

As a volunteer you are asked to keep a watch out for anything that may present a safety concern for the event staff, competitors or the general public.

Look out for:

- ◆ Loose cables, low slung wires or ropes;
- ◆ Frayed electrical wires;
- ◆ Poorly stacked equipment;
- ◆ Protruding sharp objects; and
- ◆ Trip hazards.

If you notice anything that you think should be checked and/or fixed please contact your volunteer manager or event manager and make your concerns known. If you are easily able to rectify the problem then please take the time to do so and then inform the volunteer manager or event manager of what you have done.

Dogs may be allowed at the event at the discretion of the event organisers, however they must be restrained always. If you see dogs that are not a leash please request the owners to restrain the animal explaining that a loose dog and fast traveling bikes presents a safety and health concern for both the animal as well as for the bike rider.

## **Event Emergency Procedures**

We all have a responsibility to assist in the promotion and maintenance of a safe event.

Despite all the best efforts and organisation of the event organisers an emergency may still occur.

When such situations happen people will look towards you for advice and direction. How you handle the situation will greatly affect the possible outcome any emergency.

Emergency situations can range from an injured competitor or spectator to fire in or around the event. More broadly speaking an emergency or incident is any occurrence that could result in a loss (financial or otherwise) or a significant disruption to the event. This includes situations that result in:

- ◆ Harm, injury or illness to people;
- ◆ Damage and loss of property and the environment;
- ◆ Disruptions to the operation of the event; and
- ◆ Near misses.

### **When an emergency occurs**

If an emergency occurs contact your volunteer manager or event manager and:

- ◆ State your name and location;
- ◆ State the nature of the emergency clearly and calmly;
- ◆ State the exact location of the emergency;
- ◆ Describe how the emergency occurred and the consequences; and

- ◆ Listen to any advice given and be prepared to act on it.

Please be proactive and take any necessary steps to prevent a similar incident occurring if they only require simple actions on your part. If more significant actions are required please advise your volunteer manager or event manager of what you think needs to happen to prevent a similar incident occurring again.

### **Do not admit fault**

Take particular care when talking to the general public about the incident. It is not your role to express an opinion on what went wrong or to apportion fault or admit liability.

In particular, it is a consequence of the MTBA Public Liability insurance cover that no admission of fault is made to any person at any time during or after the event concerning an incident at the event.

### **First Aid**

In the case of a medical emergency:

- ◆ Contact your volunteer manager or event manager unless you have direct access to medical staff in which case contact medical first and then contact the volunteer or event manager;
- ◆ Clearly provide the facts and location (see the previous section);

- ◆ Assess the scene. If possible remove the danger but do not place yourself at risk;
- ◆ Stay with the injured person and keep calm;
- ◆ Ensure that an injured competitor will not be further injured by following competitors by enlisting the help of spectators to warn following competitors of the incident;
- ◆ NEVER move a person if you suspect a back or neck injury;
- ◆ Only provide first aid if you are suitably qualified. Otherwise, wait for qualified support; and
- ◆ Assist the medical team as required.

## **Dealing with the Public**

Everybody is welcome to participate in and enjoy the mountain bike event you are volunteering for. The diverse range of people who will come out to see the event provides a vibrant atmosphere that will be remembered for a long time. The very diverse range of people also provides challenges for both the event organisers and the volunteer staff – YOU!

The public will see you as the 'face of the event'. They will expect you to be knowledgeable about what is happening and when it will happen. Some of the general public will be mountain bikers themselves but most will be people who have heard or seen something about the sport and are trying to find out more and to see for themselves what it is all about.

The public will also look towards you for advice and direction in times of emergency.

You have a significant opportunity to influence the public's experience and impression about our sport.

Here are some ideas on ensuring that the public takes home the very best impression on what the sport of mountain biking can offer.

- ◆ Say 'hello' or 'welcome';
- ◆ Smile;
- ◆ Respect others – show concern and be prepared to lend a hand where you can;
- ◆ Treat people like guests of yours;
- ◆ You can't afford to not use your initiative. There is always something that can be done for someone;
- ◆ Be involved and the time will pass quickly;
- ◆ Make an impact;
- ◆ Be aware and show you care; and
- ◆ Follow through with situations. Never say 'no' or 'I don't know' or 'it is not my job'. Get into the habit of trying to find out the answer to a question or finding a person who can find it out.

Despite all of your best efforts you will occasionally be confronted by a disgruntled patron. In such circumstances:

- ◆ Listen to the complaint – put yourself in their shoes;
- ◆ Try to understand what the issues are;
- ◆ Keep a professional distance from the issue;
- ◆ Breathe;



- ◆ Keep your sense of humor;
- ◆ Use phrases such as 'I understand', 'I appreciate...' or 'I want to help you.';
- ◆ Know your limits. If you feel threatened or in danger call for help;
- ◆ Do not engage in an argument. Conflict is a no-win situation; and
- ◆ Don't place yourself in danger.

### **Crowd management**

The size and behavior of crowds changes constantly. Be watchful for anything out of the ordinary.

Seek assistance if you see things are getting out of hand. It is essential to act quickly to contain a situation. Do not, however, place yourself at risk – know your limits and don't take any action that is beyond your control.

If you are at peak viewing position try to ensure that the crowd stays at a manageable level. You must ensure that the crowd does not impinge on the racecourse at any time. If there is race bunting or fences erected make sure that spectators stay behind them.

### **Evacuation Procedures**

All events will have an emergency evacuation plan. This plan will cover the actions that will be taken under the threat of fire or a medical evacuation needs to occur.

The exact details of the evacuation plan will, of course, be event location specific but some generalizations can be made.

### **Evacuation Alert**

If an incident occurs that requires an evacuation you will be alerted to the pending evacuation by:

- ◆ An instruction from your volunteer manager or directly from the event manager;
- ◆ An instruction made over the public address system;
- ◆ An instruction from a member of the emergency services (e.g. police, fire, state emergency service members)

If you are instructed to evacuate, move quickly but calmly and assist others to the designated evacuation points and await further instructions.

If in doubt, look to your volunteer manager or event manager for further instructions.

### **When Evacuating**

- ◆ Only take personal items that are with you;
- ◆ Make yourself familiar with the evacuation point closest to your position;
- ◆ Maintain radio silence unless specific information is requested from you or if you are a designated fire warden;
- ◆ At the evacuation point help to calm and contain spectators in the designated area;

- ◆ Direct the public in a safe and orderly manner; and
- ◆ Remain CALM

## **Radio Procedures**

You may be given a two-way radio while you are on duty at the event. If you are given a radio it is important that it be used appropriately to minimise 'traffic' and chatter so that official radio messages can be transmitted when required.

Please take a little time to look over these instructions for the use of the radio. Needless to say, consistent and accurate communications are vital to provide good emergency contact.

At some events you will radio the event manager or your volunteer manager directly. At some larger events you will call a radio operator who will log all calls and redirect the call to the appropriate person.

You will be allocated a 'call-sign' which in smaller events may be simply your name while in larger events may be descriptive of your location. You must remember your call-sign so that your volunteer manager, radio operator or event manager will know exactly where you are calling.

Your radio will be preset to a particular channel or talk-group. Do not change the setting unless

instructed to do so by the radio operator, your volunteer or event manager.

### **Making a radio call**

Follow these six steps:

1. **Think** – about what you need to say;
2. **Listen** – to ensure there are no existing conversations on your channel;
3. **Press** – and hold the *press to talk* button;
4. **Breathe** – take a breath and listen for the talk permit tone;
5. **Speak** – hold the microphone or radio about 5 cm from your mouth. Speak across the microphone. Do not SHOUT;
6. **Release** – the *press to talk* button. No one can transmit when you have the button held down.

If there is a serious accident please **DO NOT** mention the name or race number of the competitor involved over the general discussion radio band – request that the event manager or First Aid services move to a private band. Many spectators will be within earshot of radios and this information must be handled in a sensitive manner.

### **Radio protocols**

- ◆ **Making a call** – say ‘*other call-sign, other call-sign, this is your call-sign, come in*’
- ◆ **Receiving a call** – say ‘*your call-sign, receiving*’;
- ◆ **End transmission** – ‘say ‘over’ to indicate that you expect a response;

- ◆ **End conversation** – say ‘*your call-sign* out’, to let your channel know that you have finished your call;

### **Making a radio check call**

Your first call of the start of your duty should be a call to the base to check that the radio is working properly and to let other people on your channel know that you are there.

To make a radio check call say ‘base, base, this is *your call-sign*, radio check, come in’. You should expect a response like ‘*your call-sign*, you are loud and clear’. End the call in the usual way.

### **No response to a call**

If you don’t receive a response after initiating a call, wait 15 seconds and call again saying the other users call-sign three (3) times. If you still don’t get a response call and say ‘nothing heard, *your call-sign*, out’.

### **Responding to a call when you are busy**

If you receive a call and you can’t answer straight away call and say ‘*other call-sign*, this is *your call-sign*, standby five’ to indicate that you will respond to the caller in 5 minutes.

### **Priority calls**

If you need urgent or emergency assistance call the radio operator or your volunteer manager saying ‘base, base, this is *your call-sign*, **priority**, come in’. If you hear a call that is a **priority** call you must

refrain from making calls until the channel has been cleared for normal transmissions.

## **Volunteering in Practice.**

At larger events you will be given flags (yellow and red) and a notebook and pencil. Their use is described below. You may also be given a whistle.

### **Flags**

The two flags you have are very important in cases of an emergency and each has a distinct use.

**Yellow flag.** The yellow flag is to be used as a caution to warn riders of potential danger further along the course. Such situations would be if an accident has occurred further down or if the medical team are on the course below your point. It is expected that riders will take heed of the yellow flag and adjust their riding appropriately.

**Red Flag.** The red flag is the flag to display when the course is closed and all practice or racing is to cease. Such situations would be when an injured rider is blocking the track and waiting for evacuation. Riders are expected to obey, without question, the red flag and slow right down and stop riding if necessary.

In the competition phase you should record the race numbers of riders who are affected by a red flag; yellow flags are not used in competitions! They are

eligible for a rerun (in the DH competition) if they request one. You may be asked to verify the legitimacy of their request.

Blow the whistle when competitors are arriving and leaving your position. This lets spectators down the track know that a rider is 'on course'.

### **Accidents**

If an accident occurs at your position you should first make sure that the participant is OK.

- ◆ Is the participant up and about? Allow them time to gather themselves up.
- ◆ Will they continue after some breathing time or do they want to be transported to the Race Village? If so call the Event Manager or Volunteer Manager for guidance.
- ◆ **Is the participant still lying down?**
- ◆ **Is the rider moving at all or groaning?**
- ◆ **Are they up but complaining of being hurt?**
- ◆ **Ask him or her if they want to be looked at by medical personnel.**

**If the answer to any of the last four questions is yes you should call for expert help straight away.**

### **Procedure for calling for medical assistance**

Please refer to the sections above on priority radio calls for how to call in an emergency call.

Contact your volunteer manager and request him or her to change the radio band to a private channel.

Inform him of:

- ◆ Your marshal location.
- ◆ The exact position of the accident (by map grid location if possible).
- ◆ The race number of the competitor.
- ◆ The extent of injuries if known and request that the paramedic team be deployed to assist.
- ◆ Request that all marshals above your location display their yellow flag or red flag if appropriate.

Make sure that if the rider is lying on the track that you have your red flag displayed to warn following riders still on course of a closed track. If necessary co-opt bystanders to assist.

Make sure the injured rider is comfortable, but do not move the person until expert help arrives.

When the accident has been dealt with and the tracks are clear radio your volunteer manager and inform him or her that the accident is resolved.

## **Your Rights**

Volunteers are not covered, at this time, by awards or workplace agreements. However, in return for you following the guidelines set out in this guidebook the event manager is obligated to giving you the right to:



- ◆ Work in a safe and healthy environment;
- ◆ Be treated in a fair and honest manner;
- ◆ Be adequately covered by insurance;
- ◆ Have a job description and have agreed working hours;
- ◆ Be provided with an orientation or briefing session for your allotted tasks;
- ◆ Be provided with sufficient training to do your job; and
- ◆ Be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses.

## Notes

## Signatures

## Contact Details for MTBA

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