



Master Agreement & Permissions Procedure

Orienteering Events on the National Forest Estate

This Master Agreement explains the standard procedure to be followed by all orienteering event organisers seeking to gain permission to hold orienteering events on FCS land.

[Forestry Commission Scotland \(FCS\)](#) is the government agency responsible for the management of 665,000 hectares of state owned forests and woodlands in Scotland in line with standards set out in the UK Forestry Standard.

FCS has joined in partnership with the [Scottish Orienteering Association](#) (SOA), the national governing body of orienteering in Scotland, to coordinate the procedure for holding orienteering events on FCS land.

Event Organisers, along with all other forest users, should comply with the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) at all times.

1. When is permission required?

According to the SNH publication '[Outdoor Events in Scotland: guidance for organisers and land managers](#)', permission is likely to be required for those events where any of the following criteria apply:

1. The event would need new or temporary facilities and services.
2. The event is likely to unreasonably hinder land management operations;
3. The event is likely to unreasonably interfere with the other people's enjoyment;
4. The event is likely to unreasonably affect the environment.

[The guidance](#) recommends liaison with the land owner (in this case, Forestry Commission Scotland), even when permission is unlikely to be required.

1.1 Operating under SOAC means 'Leave the land as you find it'. In practice, this also means taking the forest as you find it.

Some people, organising smaller or less formal events and training, aim to operate in accordance with the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#), acting responsibly, but without seeking permission from FCS.

This is possible, when the organiser is confident that the above criteria do not apply and when the organiser accepts that there is **no guarantee that the chosen location will**

be available for use on any chosen day or time. They will have access to the same information, through the same channels, as any other visitor to the forest – no more, no less.

If wishing to use a particular location on a particular date (whether or not your event meets any of the criteria in paragraph 1), or by entering into any discussion or formal agreement with FCS, organisers become part of this permissions process.

This guidance, and the support provided by FCS as part of the process, aims to ensure a safe and successful event.

1.2 Protected Areas, Habitats & Species (including Capercaillie)

Organisers should first seek advice from the latest edition of [the Agreement Between the Scottish Orienteering Association and the Capercaillie Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group](#) and any other relevant sources of information. This starts a responsible event process, which is required even if the event is planned under SOAC.

Once approached formally with a clear idea of event area, Forest District staff will advise or confirm if there are any potential seasonal restrictions (due to sensitive species or habitat e.g. capercaillie, raptor nests etc) which may limit use of the area.

Under the terms of the FCS/SOA Concordat, staff will, if necessary and where possible, offer alternative location suggestions. Early and careful course planning, in discussion with the forest district, will, in most circumstances, avoid conflict with sensitive flora and fauna.

2. Disciplines

The Master Agreement covers Foot Orienteering and Trail Orienteering.

3. The Application Procedure

The application ([Schedule 1](#)) must be completed and submitted to the Forest District (FD) where the event is to take place (see [Schedule 2](#) for FCS contact information).

3.1 Event types & time limits

If an event organiser hopes to hold an event at a specific location on a specific date, it is sensible to approach FCS as early as possible, to avoid possible clashes with other events or land management activity.

It is expected that events at BOF Level A and B (including Scottish O League) will be scheduled at least nine months in advance, with the area to be used chosen and outline permission sought from FCS.

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There are certain minimum time-limits which require to be adhered to in the application process, to allow a responsible and effective approach to planning, by both the event organiser and FCS. These time-limits vary depending on the nature and size of the event, as per the following table 1:

Event Type	Definition of Event Type	Minimum time limit for application
Major Events	Events with over 750 senior participants and the World Orienteering Championships.	20 Weeks prior to proposed event date. Likely to be 2 years.
Large events	Events with 301 – 750 senior participants.	20 Weeks prior to proposed event date
Medium events or small non-SOAC events	Events of 151 – 300 senior participants or smaller events (up to 150 seniors) where criteria in para 1 apply.	12 weeks prior to proposed event date.
Small events, Social or Training Sessions	Informal club/group outings or smaller competitions with under 100 senior participants, normally organised by a local group, where the group will exercise responsible access under SOAC (i.e. where none of the criteria in paragraph 1 apply)	As part of taking responsible access, the organiser should check if there are any other events or forestry operations which may conflict with their plans. The organiser does not have to (but may choose to) inform the FD of their plans – see para 1.1.

FCS will retain a degree of discretion to accept applications outwith these time scales in exceptional circumstances. However, an additional charge of £1000 plus VAT may be charged to the Event Organiser in such cases. It is therefore strongly recommended that contact is made with the relevant FD to check date and location availability prior to commencing the application process.

3.2 Application process timeline

Table 2 below details the typical application and general procedure for a large event (minimum 20 weeks notice). This should be adapted for smaller events.

For major events, a lead-in time of around 2 years would be expected, including permission in principle from FCS.

Minimum number of weeks before event	Action
20 weeks pre event	Application made by submitting form in Schedule 1
19 to 16 weeks pre	FCS recreation staff consult FD diary, other district staff, contractors &

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event	interested bodies for potential conflicts (see paragraph 10). Provided no conflict is discovered (or after potential conflict resolved), provisional date is logged in district diary and organiser informed.
16 weeks pre event <i>(12 weeks medium/small)</i>	Site visit to take place with Event Organiser and FCS. Discussion likely to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping provision • Evacuation Procedure; • Events village/trade pitches, including licensing and plan; • Health & Safety; • Insurance Requirements; • Intended event area including start and finish points; • Medical provisions; • Overall Event Management Plan; • Promotions & notifications; • Special facilities involving FCS work; • Signage, marking, diversions; • Traffic/car parking management; • Vehicle access requirements. • Waste management, including toilet requirements.
13 weeks pre event <i>(9 weeks medium/small)</i>	Event Organiser submits paperwork for elements discussed and agreed during site visit, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessments
12 weeks pre event	FCS responds with any queries on plans and paperwork
11 weeks pre event	Event organiser responds to FCS queries
10 weeks pre event <i>(6 weeks medium/small)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCS provides two copies of a permission to the Event Organiser for his/her signature, a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the event, along with an invoice for the permit fee. Once signed, no alterations can be made, unless formally agreed and signed-off by both parties. • The Event Organiser is required to sign the permission and return one copy along with the permit fee to the FCS. When this is received the event date will be finalised. Cancellation charges of £100 will apply from this point onwards (para 10.4). • The Event Organiser and FCS activate any joint marketing/promotion of the event.
0 – 2 weeks pre event	Course marking and event village set up takes place by Event Organiser and any other additional facilities set up on site, as agreed with FD and subject to course availability.
Week of event	Event takes place. Event Organiser reports any serious incidents/accidents to duty District representative immediately (Schedule 3). The duty contact number will be given in advance and is also on the FD answering machine.
Week 1 post event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Organiser dismantles event village and restores all areas to pre-event condition in accordance with timescale agreed at pre-

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	<p>event site visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Organiser to send FCS reports on any event accidents/incidents requiring on – or off-site medical attention (schedule 3). • Event Organiser to send record of final participant numbers to FCS with 2 working days of event conclusion.
Week 2 post event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-event site inspection between Event Organiser and FCS • Event Organiser and FCS to set date for event de-brief, if desired • If major issues have occurred during the event or event process evidence-based reports should be sent as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Event organiser to Professional Officer at SOA ◦ FD CRT Manager to Forest Tourism Development Manager.
Week 8 post event	Event Organiser settles invoice within 49 days of being invoiced.

4 Event Health and Safety

Events will be subject to safety procedures laid out in the [British Orienteering Rules of Orienteering](#) and [Appendix E: Event Safety](#) and any event specific manual e.g. [Scottish 6 Days Day Organiser Manual](#)

Failure to follow these procedures will lead to the cancelling of events and future permissions being refused by FCS.

As detailed above, risk assessments for each event must be carried out and submitted with each application. An example of a British Orienteering Risk Assessment can be found [here](#). As it is a living document and may change over time, an updated risk assessment must be given to the Forest District immediately before the event.

All Event Organisers must also conform to the requirements set out in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. See www.outdooraccess-scotland.com and [Outdoor Events in Scotland Guidance](#) for further information.

Event Organisers should refer to the [Health & Safety Executive \(HSE\) website](#) which contains specific information and advice, and [the Health & Safety at Work Act](#).

4.1 Recording Accidents and Incidents

Event Organisers are required to have in place a formal mechanism for recording event accidents and incidents. If a serious accident/incident takes place during the event the Organiser must immediately notify the Forest District Duty officer (or nominated representative). Contact details for the Duty officer will be provided directly by FCS and are also available on the FD answering machine.

Forestry Commission Scotland's incident report form is attached in [schedule 3](#) (details can be input directly into this PDF). All incidents should be reported to the Forest District within 7 days of the end of any event.

4.2 Insurance Requirements

Effective management and organisation should be carried out with the aim that each event is safe and successful.

However, the Permit Holder will also maintain an insurance policy for the pre and post event set up and take down activity as well as the actual event itself, with a reputable insurance company, to an amount of not less than £10 million in respect of any one claim. The amount of such insurance shall not limit the liability of the Permit Holder to the Commission. The Permit Holder will produce the insurance certificate on the signing of this Permission.

British Orienteering provides Public Liability insurance cover for events and Professional Indemnity cover for members of British Orienteering trained to stage events. Proof of this will be sufficient evidence to satisfy FCS' requirement of insurance cover.

While FCS requires proof of this insurance, we remind clubs and organisers that insurance cannot replace a sensible and responsible approach to event management.

5. Event Management

The event should run in accordance with the process provided for in [table 2](#) above (subject to the timescale modifications for each type of event). This section outlines further conditions which apply to all events.

5.1 Promotion

The Event Organiser will recognise FCS' role in hosting the event in any promotional material, websites and news releases e.g. display of FCS banners/flags on the event course, FCS logo in event promotional material. Similarly, FCS will also endeavour to promote the Event through any FCS promotional material and press if desired by the Event Organiser. This joint promotion should be agreed and managed between the Event Organiser and the Forest District liaison officer.

5.2 Waste and Minimising Damage

For environmental and site sustainability purposes, event organisers are required to and will be responsible for managing all aspects of waste (water, litter, human etc) in relation to events which they hold. Further information and guidance on this aspect is detailed in the Forestry Commission Operational Guidance Booklets (OGB) 35, copies of which are available from District offices. Further, if it is intended to fix notices or markers to trees on no account shall nails, staples, wire or anything liable to damage trees be used. The recommended method is to tie with string (not nylon or similar fibre) in such a way that tree damage is avoided.

5.2.1 Toilet provision

In discussion with the Forest District, the organising club will assess the requirement for temporary toilet provision. This may apply even where there are existing FCS toilet facilities, if the event's use of these facilities would cause disruption to other visitors to the forest.

Where the event organiser wishes to use existing toilet facilities run by a private tenant business (e.g. at an FCS visitor centre), they must negotiate use of these facilities with the business in advance. The Forest District will provide contact details for the business, when required.

At sites where there are no toilet facilities nearby, FCS' experience has shown a requirement for portable toilets on site for events with over 75 participants or lasting more than 3 hours.

5.3 Vehicle access

If motorised vehicles are required pre, post or during the event (e.g. for planner, controller, organiser, first aid), a vehicle access permit must be obtained from the Forest District and permit charge paid (currently £50 + VAT). Under this Master Agreement, one vehicle access permit will cover up to 5 identified vehicles.

A sample vehicle access permit, including terms and conditions (e.g. provision and return of gate key/s), is available from the Forest District.

Emergency vehicles requiring access during an event are exempt.

5.4 Other Land users

If FCS' tenants or any other persons having an interest in the land are likely to be affected by an event or their permission/notification is required, then arrangements to notify these persons or obtain their permission shall be made between the Organiser and FCS. FCS shall give the Organiser the names and addresses of those persons likely to be affected, where possible.

FCS will endeavour to arrange for temporary cessation of planned operations by contract holders (and any subcontractors) on FCS land affected by an Event for the duration of the Event. If agreement cannot be reached with a contractor, FCS may require the Event to be re-routed or cancelled. FCS shall not restrict normal public access over areas where an event has been agreed.

Other forest users' access to event areas must be managed as agreed in advance with FCS.

5.5 Car parking

At locations where car parking charges are in operation, these apply as usual, for event organisers, participants and spectators. The event organiser is expected to encourage payment at any onsite meters.

If an Event Organiser wants/requires the exclusive use of a car parking facility where charges are usually levied, this will be agreed in advance and calculated on the basis that the car park was operating at full capacity.

Where a SOAC club event involves the temporary placing of a gazebo/similar in the car park, the appropriate car parking fee for the space used by the gazebo must be paid.

Reasonable charges may be levied for parking within the forest outwith usual car parking facilities e.g. forest roads.

5.6 Sales Points

Sales outlets selling, for example, confectionery, drinks or snacks will be allowed at events, subject to agreement between the Organiser and FCS as to the number and siting of outlets. FCS retains a discretion to make reasonable charges for facilitating sales outlets, if any existing tenant business is not the chosen provider; the sum due (if any) will be a matter that will be negotiated between the Event Organiser and the Forest District Manager, when a refreshment/other sales concession permission is issued.

Any national sales concession agreement published by FCS will be shared with SOA as soon as possible.

6. Post Event Requirements

The Organiser shall be responsible and liable for ensuring that all areas used for the event, including trails, car parking areas, toilets, areas of the forest used for trade stands, camping, catering, competitor changing and additional toilet facilities are left in the same condition as at the pre-event site inspection. If such areas are not left in the same condition within a timescale agreed with the forest district, FCS reserves the right to undertake reasonably required reinstatement or repair work and charge any incurred costs to the Organiser.

7. Area Restrictions

It may be necessary to apply reasonable restrictions to orienteering in forests or over parts of forests at certain times in order to protect forest operations or environmental interests. FCS shall use its best endeavours to notify the Organiser of any restrictions at the time of application for permission for an event.

8. Refusing/Revoking Applications

FCS retains the option to refuse an application/approach for an event if it is deemed inappropriate or presents an unacceptable business risk involving financial and reputational liabilities which cannot be accommodated. Some examples include: clashes with other events, unavoidable forest operations, environmental conflicts e.g. using an area identified as a capercaillie breeding site, or events which undermine FCS' brand values and identity etc. FCS reserves the right to revoke permission for an event at any time by notice given to the Organiser of the event in writing. This right will only be used exceptionally and where possible, a suitable alternative area will be provided.

In such circumstances the FD will issue an evidence-based report giving clear and reasonable reasons why the event will not go ahead, sending it to the SOA Professional Officer, the event organiser and FCS Forest Tourism Development Manager.

9. Arbitration

In the event that agreement cannot be reached between FCS and an Organiser over any matter relating to this Agreement, an Event Organiser, SOA or FCS may request that the National Representatives meet with all parties to consider the matter.

10. Charging

Reasonable charges will be made by FCS for partial cost recovery of the administration, time and services provided by FCS before, during and after the event, as part of FCS' aim to ensure events go as safely and smoothly as possible. These cover services such as internal and external consultations to identify and minimise any potential areas of conflict, time and support from one or more designated Forest District staff, including attendance at site inspections before and/or during and/or after the event.

All charges are exclusive of VAT which is applicable at the prevailing rate.

Event Type (as clarified in section 3.1)	Cost recovery charge	Notes
Major Events (over 750 seniors and WOC)	£500	Second & subsequent days £200 per day
Large events (301 – 750 seniors)	£275	Second & subsequent days £100 per day
Medium events (151 – 300 seniors)	£170	Second & subsequent days £50 per day
Small non-SOAC events (up to 150 seniors)	£50 permit fee plus £0.80 per senior	Second & subsequent days £50 per day
Small events, Social or Training Sessions (SOAC)	free	

All charges are exclusive of VAT which is applicable at the prevailing rate.

10.1 Discounts

- Up to 10 events, taking place in the same financial year (1st April to 31st March) can be booked at the same time by the same Event Organiser, across different Forest Districts, at a discounted permit fee rate of 20% for 2014 and 2015. This discount reflects the reduced level of FCS administration. To book multiple permissions, email all relevant Forest Districts with your planned schedule, copying in the Forest Tourism Development Manager (fiona.murray@forestry.gsi.gov.uk).
- Where only part of an event footprint is on FCS land, a pro-rata reduction of the scheduled charges will be made. For example if 80% of the entire event is on FCS land, then the organiser will be charged 80% of the fee. The FCS District representative should be supplied with course/route maps when applying for event permission in order to agree the correct proportion.

10.2 Fees for additional services

Reasonable charges will be made by FCS for the granting of any special facilities that involve FCS in extra expense. These charges will be discussed at the pre-event site visit and agreed in advance between the Event Organiser and the local Forest District Manager. Examples may include extra facilities such as marshalling for cars attending

the event, siting of toilet/catering facilities (paragraph 5.2 and 5.2.1), temporary trail construction for an event, the provision of camping facilities, in-forest parking or the use of forest buildings for changing or other purposes.

10.4 Cancellation Charges

Cancellation by the Organiser: FCS may charge a £100 fee if less than 6 weeks notice (major/large events), 4 weeks notice (medium events) and 2 weeks notice (small non-SOAC) is given and an alternative date is not agreed.

Cancellation by FCS: no permissions charge shall be paid by the Organiser unless cancellation has been due to failure by the Organiser to meet documentation submission timelines, resulting in FCS potentially missing event revenue from another booking.

10.5 Validity & VAT

The above charges are valid to end December 2015. Charges are reviewed every three years (or at anytime with two months notice by either FCS or SOA).

All FCS charges will be subject to VAT at the percentage rate valid when an event permission is agreed.

11. Invoice Settlement

Invoices should be settled within 49 days (7 weeks) of the date of issue.

Schedule 1: APPLICATION TO HOLD AN ORIENTEERING EVENT

Name of applicant: (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr/Other)
Name of Club or Event Organiser:
SOA/BOF activity number:
Address of applicant: (Please include postcode) Telephone: Email: Website:
Date(s) of Event:
Title of Event:
Event Category (see para 3.1.):
Vehicle access required (separate permit applies): Yes/No
Estimated participant numbers (Senior/Junior):
Actual participant numbers (supplied post event):
Proposed entrance fee:
Location of Event: (Please attach OS map in addition to/instead of an orienteering map)
Time of Event:

I apply for permission to organise the above event, and confirm that I have read and understood the notes below. I agree to be bound by the conditions set out in this Master Agreement between Forestry Commission Scotland and the Scottish Orienteering Association, which apply from 1 March 2014 to December 2020.

Signed: Date:

On behalf of:

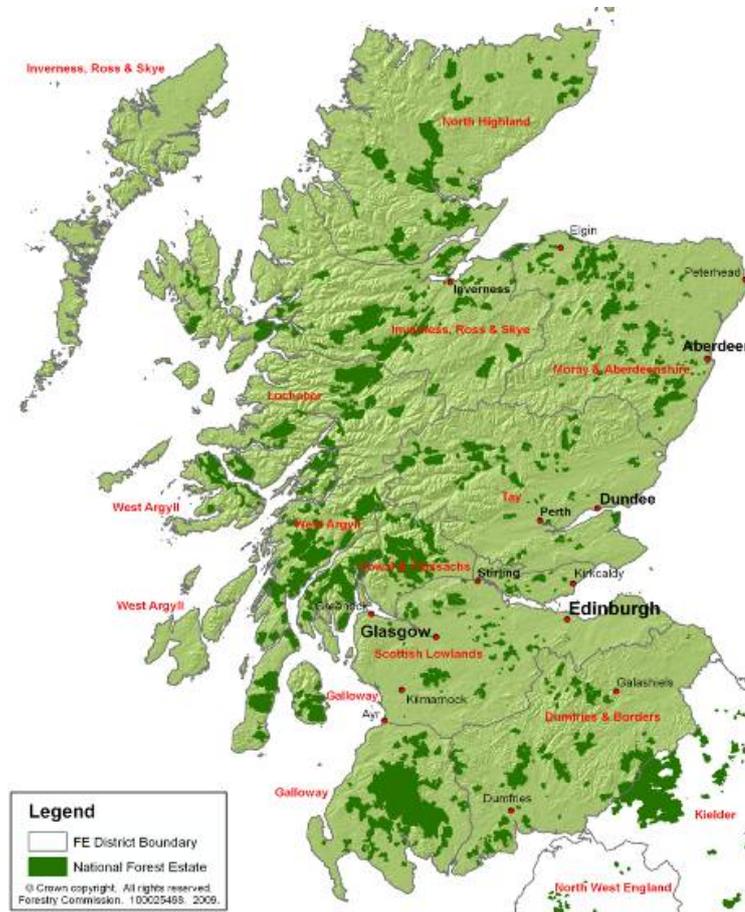
Name:

Address:

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Schedule 2: FOREST DISTRICT CONTACTS



Forest District	CRT Manager	Email address	Address	Telephone
North Highlands	Hazel MacLean	northhighland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	The Links, Golspie Business Park, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6UB	01408 634063
Inverness, Ross & Skye	Jack Mackay	Invernessross&skye@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Tower Road, Smithton, Inverness, IV2 7NL	01463 791575
Lochaber	Craig Millar	Lochaber@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Torlundy, Fort William, Inverness-shire, PH33 6SW	01397 702184/5
Moray & Aberdeenshire	Calum Murray	Moray&Aberdeenshire@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Portsoy Road, Huntly, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4SJ	01466 794161
Tay	Hamish Murray	tay@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Inverpark, Dunkeld, Perthshire, PH8 0JR	01350 727284
West Argyll	Helen Watt	westargyll@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Whitegates, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RS	01546 602518
Cowl & Trossachs	Liz Walker	Cowl&trossachs@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Aberfoyle, Stirling, FK8 3UX	01877 382383
Scottish Lowlands	Stuart Chalmers	scottishlowlands@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Five Sisters House, Five Sisters Business Park, West Calder EH55 8PN	01555 660190
Dumfries & Borders	Hugh McKay	Dumfries&borders@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Ae Village, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 1QB	01387 860247
Galloway	Keith Muir	Galloway@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Creebridge, Newton Stewart, DG8 6AJ	01671 402420
* CRT: Communities, Recreation & Tourism				

SCHEDULE 3

JI SHE

ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

DETAILS OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM

Name:
Job Title:
Department:
Signature:
Date:

INJURED PERSON'S (IP) DETAILS
Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)
Address:
Post Code:
Tel No: Home
Mob
Sex: Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Birth: _____ (Age)
Is the IP a : Member of Public <input type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor <input type="checkbox"/> Sub Contractor <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (specify)
If IP is a customer
If IP is an employee
Accommodation Address if applicable :
Pay Band
Department
Manager/Supervisor

TIME AND LOCATION DETAILS
Date of Accident:
Time of Accident:
Weather conditions:
Light conditions:
Location Name

INJURY DETAILS
Injury Type
Body area affected
Cause of injury
Description of incident (continue on reverse, if necessary)

Was first-aid treatment given?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, what treatment was given?	
Name(s) of first-aider(s)	
Was the injured person taken to hospital?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of hospital	
Were the emergency services called?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Which ones?	
Was injured person detained in hospital?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, for how long?	
If the injured person was an employee, did they resume normal work after the accident?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Witness details (if applicable)
Name.....
Address
Witness Statement (continue on reverse, if necessary)

REMEDIAL ACTION What remedial action was taken immediately to prevent a recurrence: (continue on reverse, if necessary)
