

# Terms of Reference for the SOA Competitions Calendar Review

Document History:

Version	Date	Author	Comments/changes
0	30-Apr-2019	K. Roberts	Initial version for review and feedback
1	20-May-2019	K. Roberts	Incorporate operations / board feedback

## Introduction

A number of sources have identified the need for a review of the SOA Competitions Calendar:

1. The 2017 Junior Development Conference
2. The 2018 SOA Strategy Study
3. The challenge in getting clubs to host and the scheduling of Scottish Orienteering League (SOL) events
4. Anecdotal input that there are “too many events”

The SOA board has agreed that a Competitions Calendar Review be undertaken as a packaged piece of work that can be undertaken by a suitably qualified individual. This document sets out the Terms of Reference for the review.

## Objective

The objective of the review is to ensure that the SOA Competitions Calendar is ‘fit for purpose’ in meeting the needs and expectations of the SOA membership. Specifically:

1. The calendar provides an appropriate balance of Major, National, Regional, and Local events for SOA members of all standards and levels of experience
2. The number of events in the calendar is consistent with the number of events that SOA clubs are willing to organise and put on, either as individual clubs, or as a joint effort by a number of clubs
3. The events in the calendar meet the timing and event quality requirements to support the selection of the SOA Junior (ScotJOS), Senior, and Veteran teams
4. The calendar supports a clear performance development pathway for our aspiring and elite athletes (i.e. offer a natural progression from local, through regional and national, to major events)
5. The calendar fairly distributes national and major events around the West, East, and North Areas commensurate with the SOA membership numbers in the areas
6. The calendar aligns with the BOF competitions calendar, and ideally the timing of Scottish Championship events should precede the corresponding BOF Championship events to provide athlete event experience progression
7. The calendar takes account of the timing of major international events in which SOA members are likely to participate, e.g. Jukola

## Scope

### Events

Included in scope:

- Scottish Championships events
  - Scottish Individual Championships
  - Scottish Relay Championships
  - Scottish Middle Distance Championships
  - Scottish Sprint Championships
  - Scottish Night Championships
  - Scottish Score Championships
  - Scottish Inter-club Championships
- Scottish Orienteering League (SOL)
- Scottish Orienteering Urban League (SOUL)
- Jamie Stevenson Trophy
- Scottish Junior Inter Area Championships
- British Orienteering Championships events as and when they fall to the SOA
- British Orienteering Junior Inter Regional Championships as and when they fall to the SOA
- British Orienteering Home International events as and when they fall to the SOA
- The Jan Kjellström International Festival of Orienteering when it falls to the SOA

Excluded from scope:

- European Orienteering Championships events
- World Orienteering Championships events
- The Scottish Six Days, which it is assumed will continue to be organised on a bi-ennial basis, and which it is recognised makes a considerable draw on the SOA club resources
- Scottish Regional (formerly level C) events, and Scottish Local (formerly level D) events, however the events in scope of the review should be spread to allow room for an appropriate number of regional and local events, activities and training.

### Number of events

The review should determine which events the SOA membership wish to have organised in future. No assumption should be made that all the events listed as in scope above have to be held just because they have always been held in the past. Similarly, historically there have been seven SOL events each year, but this has been increasingly difficult to sustain. If the membership continues to support the Scottish Orienteering League then how many events should be part of the league, or could other events, such as selected championship events, be deemed part of the league (analogous to the way the UKOL works).

The number of events in the calendar needs to be consistent with the number of events that SOA member clubs are willing to organise.

### Event quality

Basic event quality expectations are set out in the [British Orienteering Rules and Competition Rules](#), specifically in the requirements set out in section 17 “Event structure and level requirements” in the

[Rules of Orienteering](#) - note that these documents still refer to levels A, B, C, D rather than Major, National, Regional, and Local respectively. It is in the scope of the review to determine at which level the various events should be organised.

The review should also consider additional elements of event quality, such as how the event is presented.

### Event 'rota'

The Scottish Championships events are organised in turn by clubs in the East, West, and North areas on a defined rota. In contrast the SOL events are bid for by individual clubs and co-ordinated by the SOA Fixtures Secretary, and SOUL events are arranged and co-ordinated by the SOA Urban League Coordinator. The Jamie Stephenson Trophy and the Scottish Inter Area Championships have historically been coordinated by the ScotJOS team manager.

The review should test the above and should consider different approaches to determining which clubs organise which events on the calendar. This should include the option of making all events 'biddable' even if this would mean some events would not be organised if no club or clubs wished to take on the organisation.

### Timing of events

The review should explore the timing of events during the year. For championship events there is benefit from the Scottish Championship event (e.g. Scottish Individual Championships) preceding the corresponding British Orienteering Championship event (e.g. British Long Championships) to provide athlete event experience progression.

Feedback from the Scottish Middle Distance Championships was that there is a preference for weekends that combine two or more events. The review should consider combinations of events.

### Delivery of events

The majority of events are currently put on by SOA club volunteers. Third party event support may be engaged for some major events, for example for timing/computing/results or for the provision of event marquees, barriers, generators, etc.

In understanding what commitment SOA clubs are willing to make to organising events, the review should also consider the possible greater use of commercial services in putting on events, which would reduce the burden on the SOA club volunteers, but which would result in higher event costs.

## Deliverables

The deliverables from the review are described under each of the phases described in the review process below.

## Review process

It is proposed that the review be undertaken in three sequential phases, and that moving to the next phase is conditional on successfully delivering the previous phase.

### Phase 1 – Data gathering

Whilst there are documented reasons that identify the need for a competitions calendar review, such as the feedback from the junior development conference, there is also much anecdotal input that would benefit from being addressed by a competitions calendar review, such as “too many events”, “not enough forest events”, “too many urban events”, “variable event quality”, “events at wrong time of year”, “SOL participation falling”, ...

The first phase of the review should gather some hard data that can be used to inform the request for membership and club input in phase 2 and the recommendations in phase 3.

Hard data should include:

- a) Number of in-scope events at each level (Major/A, National/B, Regional/C, Local/D) over each of the past 10 years
- b) Participation levels by Junior / Senior at each of the events identified in a)
- c) Number of events at each level over each of the past 10 years that have been put on by each SOA affiliated club

The above data can be obtained by an analysis of the [British Orienteering Results](#) and/or [British Orienteering Event Participation](#) (noting that not all events are captured, particularly relay events).

British Orienteering are also undertaking their own Competitions Review. This SOA Competitions Calendar review should determine the current status of the BOF Competitions Review and any implications that has on the SOA Competitions Calendar.

Deliverables:

1. 10 year data analysis, including data trends
2. Status of BOF Competitions Review and implications for SOA Competitions Calendar.

### Phase 2 – SOA membership and club input

It is proposed that a survey be made of the SOA membership that should include, inter alia:

1. For each of the in-scope events the members’ interest in participating in the event, the preferred timing of the event during the year, and the level at which the event should be organised. In addition, for the SOL and SOUL, the number of events that is desired each year.
2. The desire to combine events into multi-event weekends
3. Suggestions for how to improve the competitions calendar

It is further proposed that a survey be made of the SOA affiliated clubs (via the club secretaries) that should include, inter alia:

1. Willingness of club to put on different level events
2. Ability of club to put on different level events, with particular reference to numbers of planners, controllers, and organisers qualified to do so

3. Feedback on current competition rota process for Scottish Championship Events and on current bid process for SOL and SOUL events, and suggestions for how they would like to see this work in future
4. Feedback on event delivery, in particular the balance between all volunteer effort in delivering events (assumed to be less costly) versus use of commercial service providers to deliver part or all of events (assumed to be more costly).
5. Suggestions for how to improve the competitions calendar

Deliverables:

1. Design of surveys
2. Execution of surveys
3. Analysis of survey results:
  - a. Common themes
  - b. Consistency between SOA members' desires, versus what SOA affiliated clubs are willing to put on

### Phase 3 - Recommendations

Phase 3 should combine the trends identified over the past 10 years, along with the SOA membership's desires and expectations, with the willingness and ability of clubs to put on events to create a template annual competitions calendar, that meets the objective of the review.

Deliverables:

1. Template annual competitions calendar
2. Supporting rationale for the template annual competitions calendar that can be communicated to the SOA board, and the SOA membership

### Proposed timing and duration of review

The review should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. It is anticipated that each phase should take:

- Phase 1 – Data gathering	4 days
- Phase 2 – SOA membership and club input	8 days (exc. time survey is live for input)
- Phase 3 – Recommendations	<u>3 days</u>
Total	<u>15 days</u>

### Available Resources

The following resources will be available to be consulted:

- Colin Matheson            SOA Events Manager
- Paul Caban                SOA Fixtures Secretary
- Pat Squire                 SOA Urban League Coordinator
- Trevor Hoey                SOA SOL Scores Coordinator
- Stephen Moffatt           SOA Equality, Welfare & Diversity Director (to provide cold eyes review)
- Keith Roberts              SOA Operations Director

## Variation of Scope, Deliverables, and Duration

These Terms of Reference are a proposal. The SOA Operations Director would welcome an open discussion with individuals interested in undertaking the review as to any enhancements to the scope and deliverables that would benefit the review.