

INCIDENT AND FATALITY FRAMEWORK



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PURPOSE OF THE FRAMEWORK

This framework is designed to guide event organisers, clubs, and event officials on the procedures to follow if a participant associated with Australian Sleddog Sports Association (ASSA) sanctioned events becomes injured or if a fatality occurs. Each situation that arises will be different and medical or police direction and current local legislation advice may override this framework.

This framework extends to participants (mushers), officials, volunteers, paid staff, contractors, sponsors, and the media.

CONTACT GROUP

The key contacts for event organisers and Race Organising Committees (ROC's) are:

- Race Marshal
- Representative/s of ASSA
- Local Paramedics
- Police
- Medical Provider
- President of ASSA
- Local Government or Landowner (if applicable)

SERIOUS INJURY AND/OR FATALITY

IMMEDIATE PROTOCOLS

If a serious injury and/or fatality occurs within a race, the following steps should be implemented immediately:

1. The person closest to the incident (member of the ROC or event officials) uses their radio or phone to announce the location and nature of the incident to all key personnel (Race Marshal, ASSA Representative, and Medical Provider: as applicable to the discipline and size of event).
2. The person making the announcement ensures that the Medical Provider* has acknowledged the call.
3. Seek the support of the closest person or event personnel (e.g. ROC or event volunteers) to:
 - a. Take charge of the scene to ensure the safety of people at the scene while awaiting medical assistance
 - b. Call 000 if it is clear that the incident is critical.
 - c. Ensure the scene is made safe (e.g., direct traffic, secure dogs, and that no public are allowed into the area).
 - d. Ensure that other participants in the race are not in danger at this location and do not cause danger to personnel at the scene.
 - e. Ensure the scene is not disturbed (e.g., no cars/bicycles moved, unless unsafe).
 - f. Ask witnesses "What happened?"
 - g. Take note of times, who contacted, who you gave what duties to, witness details & what they saw.
4. The Medical Provider attends to the patient and assesses the condition.
5. If the Medical Provider deems the participant unable to continue with the race, then they must be removed from the event and the event organisers, ROC's and Race Marshal should be notified.
6. If the participant is fit to continue and chooses to continue, the Medical Provider must advise the event organisers, ROC's and Race Marshal (or delegates) via radio.
7. If the participant is deemed unfit to continue or chooses not to continue, the Medical Provider advises the event organisers, ROC's and Race Marshal (or delegates) via radio.
8. If the participant requires critical treatment (ambulance or hospitalisation), then refer to procedure 3.b.
9. The event officials complete an Incident Report Form and submit to ASSA at the completion of the day/event. The Medical Provider should be asked to complete the Incident Report Form or provide a copy of their report (the ability to do this will vary between providers).
10. The Incident Report form is provided to ASSA as soon as possible.

* A Medical Provider is defined as the onsite first responder for the event. Depending on the nature (size, discipline, location) the level of qualifications and scope may vary.

SERIOUS INCIDENT WITH EXTERNAL MEDICAL SUPPORT REQUIRED

If the Medical Provider determines that the patient requires hospitalisation or ambulance, the following protocols should be undertaken immediately:

1. If immediately onsite the Medical Provider to call 000. If not immediately at the incident site the first event official onsite to call 000.
2. Make the scene as safe as possible with the resources available. Considerations are to include:
 - a. Safety of those attending the scene
 - b. Safety of the injured rider
 - c. Safety of the general public and /or other participants
 - d. Safety of the dogs
3. The ROC, in consultation with the Race Marshal, determine if the event needs to be paused until the scene is cleared. Follow the ASSA Risk Management Policy and Temperature and Humidity Reference Guide when considering if the event should continue.
4. In the event of a serious incident the ROC has a duty of care to limit access to the scene to protect other volunteers, participants, and members of the public from any unnecessary trauma. This should include ensuring that all non-essential individuals are kept away from the individual – this may include having shade cloth, blankets, or towels to protect the privacy of the injured participant.
5. In the case where the Police are in attendance or attend the scene, they may take responsibility for the scene. If the medical provider determines the situation is non-life threatening and stable, then proceed to the **Hospital Transport Required procedure**.
6. If the medical provider determines the situation is life-threatening or has confirmed a fatality, proceed to **Confirmed Fatality Pre-Transportation procedure**.

Resource: [ASSA Incident Report Form](#)

AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATION

While a patient may initially present to the event medical provider, the decision may be made to take the patient to a hospital either by ambulance or other transport means. This decision will be the responsibility of the appointed medical provider in consultation with the injured person.

For serious or life-threatening illness or injuries, the ambulance service will be responsible for transporting all patients (unless otherwise designated by the State/ Territory ambulance service). For some non-emergency situations, it may be appropriate for the individual to be transported by private vehicle.

HOSPITAL TRANSPORT REQUIRED

1. The ambulance transports the patient to hospital. The medical provider is to ensure that the ambulance has the contact details of the ROC (or nominee) to provide to the hospital.
2. The Medical Provider contacts the ROC (or nominee) to advise that transportation has been facilitated.
3. ROCs/ Race Marshal (or nominees) to ensure all volunteers who attended the scene can continue in their roles. If the role is deemed necessary and they can't continue and aren't able to be replaced, the Race Marshal and event organiser must ensure that the event can continue in a safe manner.
4. The Medical Provider returns to their original location.
5. The ROC is responsible for ensuring any equipment left by the participant is accounted for and returned to the participant.
6. The ROC is responsible for contacting the participant's emergency contact and confirming where the participant has been transported to. In the case that the emergency contact is not available or cannot attend immediately, the ROC should assign one person to remain with the participant.

CONFIRMED FATALITY PRE-TRANSPORTATION

If the patient is declared deceased by paramedics prior to transport, the following protocols should be undertaken:

1. The event must be cancelled immediately. If there are further days of competition this should be considered further with ASSA and key authorities (police, sponsors, road authorities).
2. The Paramedics notify local Police via normal non-event protocols.
3. Event Medical to advise the ROC and Race Marshal.
4. The ROC should contact the State/Territory Worksafe agency who will determine whether the incident is reportable under Worksafe legislation.

State/Territory Contacts:

WorkSafe ACT - 13 22 81

SafeWork NSW - 13 10 50

NT WorkSafe - 1800 019 115

Work Safe Health & Safety Queensland - 1300 362 128

SafeWork SA - 1300 365 255

WorkSafe Tasmania - 1300 366 322

Work Cover WA - 1300 794 744

WorkSafe Victoria - 1300 852 562

5. The ROC to contact the Local Government or Landowner (if applicable)
6. The Paramedics/ event medical to remain with the patient until the arrival of Police but may be called away to attend to and transport other patients during this time.
7. The Police will begin an investigation into the incident and notify the Coroner's Office in accordance with the State/ Territory legislative requirements. Police will arrange the collection and transportation of the deceased. The following should be noted:
 - a. Investigations may include the requirement to make any individual involved in the event to be available.
 - b. Scene preservation.
 - c. Evidence gathering including site visit, bicycle/equipment/vehicle location, debris, witnesses, mobile phone footage, CCTV/course broadcaster footage and documentation.

Fatality Pre-Transportation – Contacting Nominated Emergency Contact

If the patient is declared deceased prior to transportation, Police are required to notify the patient's stated emergency contact.

1. Police contact the ROC to advise the fatality and request emergency contact details of the patient.
2. ROC to obtain the relevant contact.
3. ROC issues the contact details to the Police.
4. Police arrange notification of the fatality to the nominated emergency contact.
5. ROC assists Police in facilitating any transportation arrangements of the nominated emergency contact.
6. ROC notifies ASSA as per the following procedure:
 - a. ROC to call the ASSA President - Zahra Goldsmith on 0431 064 955
 - b. ROC will leave a message with a return contact number if the call does not go through.
Please ensure the number used is not blocked/set to private
 - c. A message will be sent to the ASSA President who will return the call on the nominated number.
 - d. An ASSA Critical Incident Team will be convened.

CONFIRMED FATALITY AT HOSPITAL

If the patient is declared deceased at the destination hospital the following protocols should be undertaken.

1. Hospital representatives advise Police and next of kin via normal non-event protocols.
2. Police or next of kin to contact event organisers (should they choose) (whose details have been previously supplied).
3. Police will begin investigation into the incident and will notify the State/Territory Coroner's Office in accordance with the requirements of State/Territory legislation. Police will arrange collection and transportation of the deceased to the State/ Territory Coroner's Office. The following should be noted:
 - a. Investigations may include the requirement to make any individual involved in the event to be available.
 - b. Scene preservation.
 - c. Evidence gathering including site visit, bicycle/equipment/vehicle location, debris, witnesses, mobile phone footage, CCTV/course broadcaster footage and documentation.
4. The event organiser to contact the Local Government or Landowner (if applicable)

Confirmed Fatality at Hospital – Contacting Nominated Emergency Contact

If the patient is declared deceased at the hospital, the Police will required to notify the patient's stated emergency contact (unless the next of kin is onsite). If next of kin is not onsite, the following process should be followed:

1. Police and ROC liaise regarding the emergency contact details of the patient.
2. ROC obtains the relevant contact details.
3. Hospital arranges notification of the fatality to the nominated emergency contact.
4. ROC assists Police in facilitating any transportation arrangements of the nominated emergency contact.
5. ROC notifies ASSA as per the following procedure:
 - a. ROC to call the ASSA President – 0431 064 955
 - b. ROC to leave a return contact number if the call does not go through.
Please ensure the number entered is not blocked/set to private
 - c. The message will be received by the ASSA President who will return the call on the nominated number.
 - d. An ASSA Critical Incident Team will be convened.

ACTIONS FOLLOWING THE EVENT

If the patient is declared deceased, ASSA will meet with the ROC and police to establish the facts of the incident and prepare a Media Statement.

The ROC will assist ASSA with gathering as much information as possible about the incident, including witness reports to assist with any impacts of the event and enable ASSA to provide continuous improvements.

ACTIONS IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE EVENT

ASSA and the ROC will work collaboratively with the family/next of kin as appropriate/requested and can assist in any of the following areas:

1. Be on hand to provide welfare support to next of kin.
2. Be on hand to provide support to other participants or event officials and volunteers.
3. Assist where necessary, with the arrangements for the body once released by Coroner.
4. Provide practical help with the return of any effects belonging to the deceased.
5. Assist with travel and accommodation needs.
6. Provide support with the ASSA insurance claim.

ACTIONS IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE EVENT

After the event, the following administration arrangements should be carried out:

1. Ensure that no name is included in any post-event mailshots (e.g. results, photographs).
2. Liaise with the official photographers to ensure that pictures of the deceased are not made available to the media, or on the website and that they are forwarded to ASSA if the family requests the picture.
3. Any pictures that may be used for evidentiary purposes are forwarded to the investigating Police.

HANDLING THE PRESS

Under no circumstances should anyone associated with the event release details of the circumstances of the incident, such as the name or event number of the deceased. ASSA will not comment on the situation until the next of kin or Police or the Coroner has released the relevant confirmation.

It may well be that the next of kin do not wish for the details of the deceased to be released to the press for a period, so that all relatives can be informed via direct family. The organisers will always respect this wish but should advise that the Police have primacy in this matter.

ASSA may release a media statement once authorised to do so.

Note: Everyone must follow the above procedures to ensure proper handling of serious incidents or fatality.