

2013 British Athletics Facts

ABAC Fact File 22

Coach numbers updated by Sport England

Background. On the 4h February 2013 Sport England emailed Simon Hart of the Daily Telegraph in response to his request for athletic coach numbers. They stated *“Figures from England Athletics show that there are 42,465 qualified coaches in England, 14,111 of which are licensed. This is an increase from 2008 in which there were 25,000 coaches with just over 10,000 licensed. England Athletics have informed us that those who were unlicensed essentially just need to update their CRB status to receive their renewed licence.”*

New data. Since February ABAC has sought to clarify coach numbers as the figures given to Simon Hart appeared implausible. Following receipt of athletic coach numbers supplied by Sport England in May 2013 and their publication in FF 20, ABAC requested a more detailed breakdown of numbers by category. This information was received from SE’s in-house solicitor on the 18th June 2013 and provides a clearer picture of the decline in coach numbers since 2008.

Due to the limited information sent by SE in May 2013, FF 20 required some interpretations and calculations to be made. The latest information does not require any processing and provides clear data.

Coach numbers. Here are the Coach numbers for 2008 and end 2012. See FF20 for coach grade definitions for both the present and previous courses.

	2008	2012
Level 2	3597	2253
Level 3	1250	988
Level 4	439	327
New Club Coach (=Level 2.5)	-----	<u>355</u>
Totals	5286	3923 (25.79% drop)

To these numbers may be added the Assistant Coach grades (which hitherto were not entitled to coach unsupervised.)

Level 1*	8361	1714
Assistant Coach	-----	<u>2131</u>
Totals	8361	3845 (54.01% drop)

The total for all Coaches and Assistant Coaches are therefore

Total. All Levels

13465

7768 (42.31% drop)

Level 1*. Note in the 2008 funding request by UKA the number of Level 1 Coaches is listed as 8361. In 2008 the CRB process for new Level 1 Coaches was in its final year, and a third of Coaches renewing at this level had not yet been required to go through the then CRB process. The number of level 1 Coaches **who had CRB** checks in 2008 was 5494. The 5494 figure does not include all level 1 Coaches for the reason stated and should not be used to calculate 2012 reduction levels.

Comments. In the latest communication from Sport England there is a statement **“that all licensed coaches are insured by UKA to coach unsupervised”** (this includes level 1 and assistant coaches). Whereas up to now Assistant Coaches needed supervision this indicates a radical policy change which has yet to be publicly clarified and confirmed. ABAC believes that allowing Assistant Coaches to practice unsupervised has been introduced at this time to justify the claimed large coach numbers previously put into the public domain.

While it may be appropriate for some experienced Assistant Coaches to work unsupervised, their 2 day course **with no assessment** at the end is not adequate for most to be permitted to work unchecked. We note most of the athletes they will be allowed to coach unsupervised will be the very young.

There is a further potential problem in that by allowing Assistant Coaches to work unsupervised the incentive to study further and move up to full Coach status will be reduced. So in the end Coach numbers may decline further.

Conclusions

These new and more detailed figures are more reliable than any produced previously. The **7768 licensed coaches and assistant coaches** now claimed are a far cry from the **42,465** figure released by Sport England to the press just 5 months ago.

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