

# **Compliance Policy**

## **England Athletics**

**October 2013**

Athlete registration to England Athletics is important for the governance of the sport in England with regard to applying the rules of competition, communication and democracy within the sport. For example, the number of votes a club is entitled to is related to the size of the club in terms of registered members.

Club affiliation and athlete registration generate funds which can be spent in ways to benefit the whole sport.

During our Spring Consultation in 2013, the views of those consulted indicated that the sport believes that athlete registration is important and gave a clear mandate for policing and sanctions to be applied.

Detailed below are the main areas in which we will focus and establish our compliance measures.

### **Identification of unregistered athletes competing for clubs**

Through the Power of 10 database we can identify athletes who have been competing in events for their Club. We will initially, at the end of the track and field season, contact the Clubs of unregistered athletes asking the Club to register these athletes.

An initial letter which highlights these athletes and requests that the club registers them will be our initial contact. Clubs will be given a month to check their records and obtain payment and after that period; the athletes who have not been registered will be added to a remittance to be sent to the Club with a covering letter asking them to pay the amount due and advising that further sanctions will be put into place if this is not acted upon. Should the Club go on to ignore this remittance advice and the individual athletes remain unregistered, then the athletes individual Power of 10 profile will become 'unavailable' on the Power of 10 website (although individual race results will continue to show as the results are posted).

For the Club the consequences of not registering these athletes will be an increased affiliation fee for the 2014 – 2015 affiliation year. The non-payment of athlete registration payments could not be ignored and as a consequence be added to the

following year's affiliation fee. Trinity will be amended to only accept a payment of 'X' (which is their outstanding unregistered fees as a lump sum and a late payment fine of £50) plus their £75 affiliation fee before a renewal of Club affiliation will be accepted.

Throughout this process the Clubs will be encouraged to discuss any issues with the Membership Services Team to enable us to make any amendments which have been highlighted to us e.g. athlete has since left the club without paying the fee.

Initial timelines for the launch of this letter would be:

Letter to be dispatched no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> October. (For 2013 this will be 1<sup>st</sup> November).

Clubs will be given until the 1<sup>st</sup> November (2013 - 1<sup>st</sup> December) to contact Membership Services to query any athlete who has appeared in their communication and/ or pay for the athletes detailed in the letter.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> December a follow up letter will be dispatched. This will contain a remittance advice detailing payment due against names of athletes. We will also detail in this letter the consequences of not paying this remittance, which will be will closure of the individual athletes Power of 10 profiles and Club penalties on their next year's affiliation fee. For the Club this will mean that any outstanding payments are carried forward and increased by a late payment fine of £50 and this will be added to their £75 cost of affiliating for the new affiliation year.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> December (2013 - 6<sup>th</sup> January), any athlete identified through this process who remains unregistered will have their public facing individual Power of 10 profile hidden. In the background the profile will continue to gather information and within a week of payment the profile will be switched back We need to communicate this action fully on the website and ebulletins to ensure that the athletes are aware of this is happening and in this intervening period the athletes can put pressure on the Clubs to pay their registration.

To enable us to capture athletes competing through all of the disciplines be it Track and Field/ Cross Country this whole process will need to be completed on a regular basis and forward timelines for this procedure to follow will be:-

Second Letter – 1<sup>st</sup> February – this letter will carry forward any athletes names still outstanding payment plus any new athletes which have appeared on the database.

Remittance Letter – sent first week of March – which will include the Club Affiliation renewal letter will be sent advising the Club that it is £75, plus any outstanding payment which must be paid before affiliation for the following year will be renewed.

Power of 10 Athlete Profile closure – 31<sup>st</sup> March for any further outstanding athletes.

During the early part of each year, starting from 2014, a letter is to be sent to all leagues and event organisers such as ERRA, ECCA etc. to make them aware of our policy, to engage them and promote our competition checker and advise them that during the course of the year, letters will be sent to them highlighting clubs with high numbers of unregistered athletes.

We will also work with competition providers to carry out sporadic spot checks on competitions during the course of the season.

### **Competition Checker**

England Athletics have developed a competition checker which is provided free of charge to all affiliated clubs and competition checkers. This immediately shows the event organiser who is registered and has a current competition licence/can claim the road race discount currently we are not advised of any of the unregistered entries unless the event organiser chooses to share this information with us.

To ensure that this tool is user friendly there will be no action required by the event organiser to advise us if an entry is from an unregistered athlete. As soon as an entry is made by an unregistered athlete a report is generated and automatically informs the Membership Services Team. The team can check Trinity to see if any subsequent payment has been made and if not contact with the Club will be made via a template email advising them that 'X' athlete has attempted to enter a competition without a licence and payment is due to ensure their future entries are accepted. This will be real time policing without any need for additional work by the event organiser. This is a new functionality which is being developed during the first quarter of 2014 and once ready needs to be fully communicated to Clubs, event promoters both individually as well as on our website.

### **Website Athlete Search**

We aim to have on the website an athlete search functionality which if clicked on, takes the user through to a search engine, which harnesses Trinity to enable the user to search for athletes and find out if they are registered. This is a method utilised by other NGB's such as the Amateur Swimming Association. This is a quick search for individuals

to see if they appear, see if they are registered or not (they may have paid their funds to their club and can instigate peer pressure to ask them to register them) and if they so wish look at their opponents.

The Search facility will be fully data protection compliant. If the search confirms that the athlete is unregistered then a text box will appear enabling the user to complete, if they wish, more information to highlight this athlete is competing. This will be a whistle blowing function which can be policed internally by checking out the facts presented using Power of 10. If the checks are conclusive the Membership Services Team will email the Club Membership Secretary using a template email.

We have considered that people will automatically check if elite/UKA funded athletes are registered and we will default these to registered, whilst liaising with the clubs concerned in the background.

### **London Marathon Places**

The registration of Club athletes to dictate the number of club places they have for entries for the London Marathon is a tool that we can harness to encourage clubs to register their athletes.

Promotion of this will be incorporated in the club affiliation documentation. There will also be enhancements to the Club Portal which will highlight to the Club secretary the number of places they have achieved through registration of their athletes as encouragement to register more to achieve more potential places are planned and it is thought we can also enhance this to show how many votes the Clubs have at AGM too.

### **2014 Application Form**

The 2014 Club Affiliation Application will be revised to have stricter wording with regard to the registration of athletes which will be developed through consultation with David Jeacock and this will help us enforce penalties on Clubs who choose to affiliate but not register any athletes.

Previously not all Clubs have filled in our Affiliation Application form and either send a cheque or BACS a payment against a remittance. Trinity is to be amended so that on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 the first time the Club Secretary logs in to the Club Portal, they have a mandatory application form to fill in which will contain wording that they agree to register all competing athletes. If a completed form has been posted to us we will

remove this form from their portal to avoid a need to duplicate this form by the Club Secretary.

We should also be incorporating penalties on Clubs who are not renewing their affiliating in a timely manner. Other NGB's incorporate this within their policies to ensure timely payments. For example we are still receiving Club renewals for this affiliation year and to stop this happening next year I propose that once three months has elapsed, Club affiliation fee should increase to £85 as a penalty and after six months £95 to affiliate to England Athletics. Trinity can be amended to only accept this payment from the Clubs that hit these timelines and remain unaffiliated. For any new Club that affiliates during the year, the three month penalty will not apply until the third month anniversary of them joining and Trinity will be configured to reflect this.

We should also stipulate that clubs cannot claim affiliated discounts on courses unless they are affiliated for the current affiliation year, we will be able to control this upon the onset of our online booking system which will be obtaining information directly from Trinity and we can stipulate that the option of a discounted price is not available unless the fee has been paid.

## **Networks**

Our generic network requirement / criteria states:-

Only clubs who affiliate all affiliated competing athletes to England Athletics can be a member of an Athletics Network.

Wording needs to be corrected to say who 'register all competing athletes' and this needs to be enforced.

The Area Teams are supplied information on a monthly basis regarding the clubs in their areas and need to utilise this information during talks with Networks. It is important that all Network Clubs account for a rise / fall in registered athletes and discussion is held around these figures. Penalties which include withdrawal of Network funding and coaching support will need to be considered at a local level.

## **Implementation of System Changes**

Included in this policy are a number of changes to Trinity/Competition Checker and athlete website searches which will need to put in place for the 2014 affiliation year.

Subject to a full specification and timelines being forthcoming from our I.T. Department these changes have been estimated to cost no more than £30,000 and whilst this has financial implications, the Membership Services Financial budget for 13-14 are on target to make cost savings in excess of this figure.