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31 Oct 17

GUIDANCE FOR THE ASSURANCE OF SQUASH IN THE ARMY – THE ARMY SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION (ASRA) SPORT SAFETY MANAGEMENT PLAN (SSMP)

References:

- A. Army Sport Control Board Directive 2016/17.
- B. FRAGO 01 TO OPO 14/002 – The Army's Approach to Risk to Life Sport and Adventure Training (dated 3 Sep 2014).
- C. AGAI Volume 1 Chapter 5 Sport (updated March 2017).
- D. Guidance for the Assurance of Army Representative Sport¹ (through Army Sports Associations and Unions) dated 27 Apr 17.
- E. The Army Squash Rackets Association (ASRA) Charter dated July 2017 (Version 1).
- F. JSP 375 Pt.1 (V1.0 Jun 17) – Management of Health and Safety in Defence: Directive (Jun 17).
- G. JSP 660 – UKAFSB Guidance and Direction.
- H. Land Forces Standing Orders (LFSO) 3216 – Organisation and Arrangements for Safety in Land.
- I. England Squash Technical Information Sheet Number 12 – Guidelines for Safety on Squash Courts (Rev Sep 13).²
- J. England Squash Technical Information Sheet Number 13 – Safety Code for Players (Rev May 11).²

Introduction

1. Ref A, provides direction for the conduct and delivery of sport in the Army. This includes the assurance, compliance and governance of sport in accordance with Refs B and C. Ref D provides further guidance and specifically tasks the Chairman of the Army Squash Rackets Association (ASRA) to:

- a. Ensure the delivery of the Squash, through the ASRA Committee, is in accordance with the policy and guidelines stipulated by England Squash³ together with the direction in Ref D.

¹ Representative level includes Corps and Army representation.

² [England "Squash Maintenance" webpage provides all the necessary health and safety guidance.](#)

³ England Squash is the National Governing Body (NGB) for squash.

- b. Ensure that squash has an effective assurance mechanism to provide a safe environment.

Sports Safety Management Plan (SSMP)

2. This document provides a framework SSMP for squash within the Army and identifies key roles and responsibilities for those personnel involved in the delivery, assurance and governance of squash, within their organisation. This is a supporting document to the ASRA Charter (Ref E) which is the primary governance document for Army Squash.

Unit Level Squash

3. In common with other sports, the Chairman of ASRA is not accountable for the conduct of unit level squash, which remains a Chain of Command responsibility. This document will, however, provide guidance and direction to assist those who are responsible at unit level. ASRA will endeavour to ensure that any specific guidance on safety from the NGB is cascaded down through the ASRA structure to Corps and Units in order to assist them with meeting their responsibilities.

Risk Assessment

4. All squash activity is to be risk assessed and, where necessary, recorded by the nominated / appointed person managing the activity. Appropriate control measures must be implemented before any activity takes place utilising Chapter 4 to Ref F as guidance (if required). A risk assessment considers what could cause harm to people, in order to assess whether enough precautions have been taken in order to prevent or reduce the likelihood of any harm occurring. Risk assessments need not be complicated, and provided a few simple steps are followed, are relatively straightforward to complete. A generic risk assessment for squash is at Annex A and must be completed / used for all Corps and Army level tournaments.

General Provisions

5. The following provisions apply to all representative squash matches:

- a. One nominated person has overall responsibility as the OIC (this will normally be the Team Captain or Manager or the Tournament Referee).
- b. Wherever possible there should be at least one qualified emergency first aider at the venue. Where this is not possible then the OIC should be aware of the procedures for contact local assistance.⁴
- c. All fixtures and overseas visits are to be authorised by ACOS ASCB and the Chain of Command in accordance with Ref G.

Chairman's Safety Commitment

6. The Chairman of ASRA will, on an annual basis, account for safety performance, measured against JSP 815 (Defence Health, Safety and Environmental Protection – HS&EP) criteria. This will encapsulate all safety activities such as meetings and assurance visits, and also forms the basis for the following safety commitments:

⁴ It should be noted that most representative fixtures will take place in a sports hall or squash club, many of which are likely to have on-site first aid support.

- a. To prevent fatalities and to minimise injury to personnel playing squash in authorised ASRA events.
- b. To manage and update (as necessary) the ASRA SSMP.
- c. To comply with higher-level safety regulations from Defence and England Squash.
- d. To supervise and control ASRA safety related activities.
- e. To investigate and learn from any incidents and accidents.

Safety Assurance

7. ASRA will strive to improve safety performance and to minimise the risk of an accident or injury as far as is reasonably practicable. There are two elements that enable ASRA to meet this intent:

- a. **Planning.**
 - i. **Representative Fixtures.** Team Managers / Captains are responsible for planning and arranging formal representative fixtures whilst also ensuring that the appropriate safety measures are in place. All fixtures are to be authorised by either the Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS) Army Sports Control Board (ASCB) or the Chain of Command (normally the Commanding Officer).
 - ii. **Major Events.**⁵ The ASRA Secretary is responsible for planning the ASRA major events, in conjunction with the committee, and ensuring that appropriate safety measures are in place. Where there is a nominated Tournament Referee they will be responsible for overall safety.
- b. **Delivery and Execution.** Those responsible for the planning of events are responsible for the safe delivery. Where the match is played at a non-military establishment, the event organiser is to ensure that appropriate Health and Safety measures are discussed with the host and put in place. During the match the event organiser is responsible for managing and addressing any potential safety issues which should be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

8. ASRA will conduct 1st party sports safety assurance by completing a Self-Assessment Questionnaire on at least an annual basis, or as directed by the ASCB. The Self-Assessment Questionnaire will be reviewed yearly by the ASRA Chairman.

NGB Insurance Liability

9. The NGB do not provide any insurance liability as part of the affiliation; this is the responsibility of clubs and individuals.

Managing Risk

10. ASRA will use the following five steps to assess risks prevalent whilst conducting on-duty squash activities:

- a. Identify the hazards.

⁵ Major events include the Inter Corps Championships, Army Individual Championships, Inter Unit Championships and UKAF events when hosted by the Army.

- b. Decide who might be harmed and how.
- c. Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing control measures are adequate or whether more should be done.
- d. Record the findings.
- e. Review the assessment and revise it if necessary.

11. While the generic Risk to Life (RtL), for squash activities is LOW, there are 2 potentially HIGH risk areas; significant injury to a competitor and heart attack. These risks will be managed by ensuring that:

- a. All activities are fully risk assessed.
- b. Ensure all players are fit to play the game (physically fit and injury free).
- c. Appropriate medical provision is in place (on and/or off site). Note that England Squash advocates the availability of Automated External Defibrillators (known as AEDs or Defibrillators) within all Clubs and facilities although these may not always be available.⁶
- d. Referees, captains, managers and / or players should inspect the court prior to play to ensure that it does not present a hazard. Inspection of the playing surface reduces the possibility of that being the cause of the injury but does not remove it entirely.
- e. Referees control the game and ensure that dangerous play is not permitted.
- f. Players act within the rules (and spirit) of the game and do not cause injury to others or themselves due to reckless behaviour.

ASRA Safety Management Responsibilities

12. **Chairman.** The Chairman ASRA is responsible for safety within Army Squash including the endorsement of the SSMP. Specifically he / she is to:

- a. Ensure that all personnel involved in the organisation, management and participation of Army Squash sponsored events comply with the extant Defence and NGB guidance and, specifically, to this SSMP.
- b. Ensure a review of all dynamic risk assessments and post-accident reporting is undertaken at least annually.

13. **Event Organisers, Team Managers / Captains.** Event organisers, Team Managers / Captains are to:

- a. Ensure that a venue specific risk assessment has been completed.
- b. Brief all participants using the venue specific risk assessment alongside any additional hazards identified in the risk assessment.

⁶ Guidance on the use of AEDs can be found at: <https://www.englandsquash.com/get-involved/play/squash-maintenance>

- c. Ensure communications are available for contact with emergency services and first aid equipment is at hand commensurate with the activity being undertaken.

14. **Referees.** It is important that squash matches are controlled and managed by a qualified referee⁷ where possible. Unqualified referees are to be provided with guidance by the senior referee at the event to ensure that, as a minimum the safety rules are fully understood. Referee's duties, in relation to the safe delivery of sport are:

- a. **Court Assessment.** The referee is to ensure the court is fit for play by confirming that:
 - i. The floor is clean and not slippery.
 - ii. Walls are dry and free from grease.
- b. **Player Assessment.** The referee is to ensure the player is able to safely participate in squash by assessing:
 - i. The players physical condition (free from injury) and general fitness, where there is concern the player should be asked about fitness ability (PFA standard), fitness training history etc. If the referee is concerned the matter should be raised to the event organiser/team captain.
 - ii. Players' shoes and racket. The racket must be free from cracks / breaks, shoes must be squash specific and non-marking. Outdoor general training shoes will increase the risk of a player slipping on court and/or injuring an ankle.
 - iii. Ensure the player is hydrated and has the means of remaining hydrated throughout the match, this is particularly important in hot courts.
- c. **Player Safety.** The referee is to ensure that players are safe at all times and understand the key safety rules for squash, specifically:
 - i. **Turning.** Where a player 'turns' and intends to play the ball the referee is to immediately stop play (by shouting 'stop') and remind the player that a let is to be played in all instances where turning is necessary.
 - ii. **Interference.** Squash is a non-contact sport. Where a player blocks the opponent from access to the ball reasonable efforts are to be made to get past the player. Players making undue contact in these circumstances are to be controlled by the referee. Referees are to warn players followed by stopping play for continuous offenders.
 - iii. **Access to Front Wall.** Where an opponent is in the way of the swing or directly between the ball and the front wall the player is required to stop and ask for a let, players hitting the ball in a dangerous manner are to be warned followed by stopping play for continuous offenders.

Note: England Squash guidance for players and squash courts is available at References I and J. These should be printed before each event to ensure the most up to date information is available.⁸

15. **Accident Incident Reporting.** In the event of an accident/incident leading to injury of a participant in the activity, or a member of the public as a consequence of the activity, the event organiser is to ensure

⁷ The minimum standard for a referee is 'Club' - courses are run annually through the ASPT.

⁸ <https://www.englishsquash.com/get-involved/play/squash-maintenance>

post-accident reporting is undertaken in accordance with Annex H to Ref H, all reportable accidents, injuries and near misses (sporting or otherwise) are to be reported to the Army Incident Notification Cell (AINC) using Army Form 510. If an incident is reported to an activity OIC, then it is the OICs responsibility to generate the AF510. Otherwise, it is an individual's responsibility to ensure that an AF510 is completed when they return to their unit. In the case of serious injury, initial notification is to be made with AINC without delay using one of the means below:

- Telephone: 96770-3661 or (+44) 03067 703661
- Fax: 94393-6889 or (+44) 01264-886889
- DII: Army LF-CESO-AINC-mailbox (MULTIUSER)
- E-Mail: ArmyLF-CESO-AINC-Mailbox@mod.uk

16. Copies of all Army Form 510s are to be forwarded to the ASRA Secretary where they will be retained. The forms will be used as part of the annual review.

17. **Individual Competitors.** All individuals participating in Army Squash have a responsibility for their own personal safety, together with that of their fellow competitors and the general public. Although all reasonable steps will be taken by event organisers and team managers to mitigate any associated risk there will always be a residual risk of injury. Individuals are therefore to comply with the following:

- a. **Personal Fitness and Medical Conditions.** Personnel with pre-existing injuries or medical conditions that may impact on their ability to take part in the training or match must declare that condition to the event organiser or their team captain.
- b. **Personal Equipment.** All equipment and clothing worn or used by personnel playing squash must be in good condition and fit for its purpose.

18. Ensuring that Army Squash is carried out safely is a significant responsibility. ASRA requires all personnel involved in the playing and administration of squash to play their part in delivering a safe environment; both on and off court. Ultimately, safety is not about prohibiting enjoyment of the game but about enhancing it. The direction contained within this SSMP is to be adhered to with immediate effect by all those involved with Army Squash. Corps representatives are to ensure it is cascaded down through the Chain of Command to their units and individual players.

{signed electronically}

MT Thornley
Lt Col (Retd)
Secretary ASRA

Distribution:

ASRA Committee
ASRA Website
Corps Squash Chairman / Secretaries
ASCB – Director & ACOS

Annex A. Generic Risk Assessment for Army Squash.

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ARMY SQUASH

MOD Risk Assessment Form		MOD Form 5010	
Establishment /Unit/Ship: Army Sport Control Board		Assessment Ref: Army Squash at AGSC	Date:
Section/Department: Army Squash Rackets Association (ASRA)		Assessment Type (Note 1) tick as appropriate	
		Specific <input type="checkbox"/>	Generic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Activity/Process: There are usually up to 8 – 10 players at each Army fixture and League matches throughout the season. The other main squash events usually take place at the Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre (AGSC) or at a recognised civilian club; both of which will have their own Risk Assessments. The total numbers involved over the season is approximately 420. A Tournament Coordinator will be appointed to run major competitions and each match has a marker / referee who will oversee all aspects of the match.		Who is at risk:	
		All staff: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Operators and/or maintenance staff: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Visitors, vulnerable groups, public, etc. : <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Ref	Hazard	RA Required	
1	Impact injury by racket, ball, player or court. Players falling, tripping, injuring themselves in courts.	X	
2	Squash Courts	X	
3			
4			

Likelihood		Risk Matrix			
Common, regular or frequent occurrence.	3	3 Med	6 High	9 High	
Occasional occurrence.	2	2 Low	4 Med	6 High	
Rare or improbable occurrence.	1	1 Low	2 Low	3 Med	
Severity		1 Minor injury or illness.	2 Serious injury or illness.	3 Fatalities, major injury or illness.	
Hazard Ref	RISK Associated with Hazard (How people may be harmed – type of injury or ill health)	Existing Control Measures (Note 2)	Risk Rating	Additional Controls Required (Note 2)	Review frequency (Note 3)
1	Players, Referees, Markers and spectators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisers/Team Captains will apply the England Squash Rackets (ESR) playing safety regulations and brief accordingly at the start of each Tournament or Fixture. Captains to brief players that they may wear protective clothing in line with ESR guidelines. Ice to be made available for impact injuries. First aid box to be made available at the game. Seats for spectators available outside the court. Courts will have been serviced and cleaned each day. Players check kit especially grips, soles of shoes and any protective clothing. 	2 x 2 (Med)	<p>Overall control by the Team Captain.</p> <p>All players are experienced at this level and should be at the appropriate level of fitness to play.</p> <p>Injuries are dealt with via emergency services 999 call. Ambulance normally arrives within 10 mins. First aid until ambulance arrives.</p> <p>Spectators view from outside the court. No one accesses the court during play, other than the players.</p> <p>Players to wear correct clothing and equipment.</p>	
2	All	Correct lighting in the Courts, dry surface, clean, exit signs clearly marked, fire escapes appropriately marked, warning of slipping and regulations in case of fire.	2 x 2 (Med)	All risks associated with being in a building from stairs,	

				lighting, fire and hazards and all should be aware of the AGSC RA.	
Assessor			Manager (Note 4)		Overall Activity/Process Risk Rating
Name:		Name:			
Rank/Grade:		Rank/Grade:			
Line Manager Assessment Review (Note 3 and 4)					
Date:		Date:		Date:	
Name:		Name:		Name:	

Notes:

- 1 If using a 'Generic' risk assessment, Assessors and line managers are to satisfy themselves that the assessment is valid for the task and that all significant hazards have been identified and assessed. If additional hazards are identified they are to be recorded and attached to the Generic assessment.

- 2 Only a reference or simple description of the control measures is required. If the risk assessment identifies the need for additional control measures, the hazard will need to be reassessed once the additional controls have been implemented.

- 3 Risk Assessments are to be reviewed:
 - at a frequency proportional to the risk (e.g. high risk – 6 monthly; medium risk – annually; low risk – every 2 years)
 - where required by local instructions/procedures;
 - if the safe execution of the activity relies on stringent supervision and/or adherence to a safe system of work;
 - if there is reason to doubt the effectiveness of the assessment.
 - following an accident or near miss.
 - following significant changes to the task, process, procedure, personnel or line management.
 - following the introduction of more vulnerable personnel.

- If a “Generic” assessment then prior to use.

4 Line managers are to note that they are responsible for production of the risk assessment and that they are signing to indicate that the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient and they consider the risks to be acceptable.

High	Common, regular or frequent occurrence.	3	3 Med	6 High	9 High
Medium	Occasional occurrence.	2	2 Low	4 Med	6 High
Low	Rare or improbable occurrence.	1	1 Low	2 Low	3 Med
Risk Matrix Likelihood X Severity			1	2	3
			Minor injury or illness.	Serious injury or illness.	Fatalities, major injury or illness.
			Low	Medium	High

High	Improve control measures; consider stopping work. Conducting work at this level of risk is to be reported up the Line Management / Command chain.
Medium	Review control measures and improve if reasonably practicable to do so, consider alternative ways of working.
Low	Maintain control measures and review regularly or if there are any changes.