



Audax Australia Cycling
Club
Big Ride Guide

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1 ABOUT THIS GUIDE

1.1 PURPOSE

Big rides are often the signature events which present Audax to the wider cycling world. Rides such as the Audax Alpine Classic, Great Southern Randonée, Perth-Albany-Perth and more recently the Gran Turismo series, provide opportunities for riders to challenge themselves and meet other like-minded riders.

The **Audax Australia Big Ride Guide** has been prepared to assist **Ride Organisers (ROs)** to successfully plan, organise and conduct long or complex Audax rides.

While it includes information intended for use by organisers of the longest Audax rides (1000km+ rides) and rides with large rider numbers, the Guide is likely to be of interest and useful to all ROs as it draws on the knowledge and hard-won lessons of our most experienced Audax ROs.

It brings together in one document the key matters that ROs need to address before, during and after the ride to run a successful event. As well as covering key steps and logistical requirements, the Guide includes tips and hints for ROs to make their job easier and the events more successful.

This Guide has been written to help ROs plan and manage a Big Ride. All rides are conducted under the Ride Rules of Audax Australia. This Guide does not reproduce and should always be read in conjunction with those rules and any Rider and Ride Organiser Guidelines. [TO BE UPDATED – NOVEMBER 2012]

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Big Ride Guide has drawn on the knowledge and experience of our most experienced and successful ROs in Audax Australia and elsewhere, including Audax UK.

They have generously shared their experiences in successfully organising and running long and/or large Audax rides. We thank them all for their contributions.

1.3 *AUTHORITY*

The Audax Australia Big Ride Guide (Version 1 dated November 2012) is authorised by the National Committee of the Audax Australia Cycling Club (AACC). Intended as a Guide, not all aspects will be relevant to all types of Big Rides. However, it contains information critical to the design and running of a successful Big Ride and all ROs of such should be familiar with it.

1.4 *REVIEW AND UPDATING*

It is anticipated that the Audax Australia Big Ride Guide will be updated and revised from time to time to incorporate additional or updated material. Changes are required to be authorised by the National Committee. Suggestions for amendments or inclusions should be sent in the first instance to Secretary@audax.org.au.

1.5 *ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS*

This Guide has been written to help ROs plan and manage a Big Ride. All rides are conducted under the Ride Rules of Audax Australia and this Guide should always be read in conjunction with those rules and the Rider and Ride Organiser Guidelines, which are available on the Audax website www.audax.org.au

These include:

- Ride Rules and Information;
- Ride Organiser Guidelines;
- Other Ride Organisers Resources including forms and reporting tools; and
- Constitution, Regulations and Guidelines.

1.6 *ABBREVIATIONS*

AACC Audax Australia Cycling Club

ACP Audax Club Parisien

BRM Brevet Randonneur Mondiaux

LRM Les Randonneurs Mondiaux

RA Ride Adviser/ Mentor
RO Ride Organiser
UAF Union des Audax Francais

1.7

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Audax/ AACC Audax Australia Cycling Club

Audax Cycling long distance cycling events which are not races and which have their foundation in the style of events promoted by Audax Club Parisien, Les Randonneurs Mondiaux and Union des Audax Français. (Consistent with the Audax Club Constitution)

Audax Ride Ride conducted under the auspices of the AACC

Big Ride Audax rides that are long, complex or have large rider numbers

Brevet Card carried by each rider to demonstrate progress through each checkpoint of the event. Includes rider and RO details and opening and closing times for checkpoints

BRM Ride Ride 200kms to 1000kms recognised internationally by ACP and LRM

Checkpoint/Control nominated places where riders are required to have brevets signed within a nominated time period

LRM Ride 1200km or longer ride recognised internationally by LRM

National Committee National Committee of the AACC

Nationally Significant Events - Audax Cycling event involving complex organisation, financial commitments well prior to the event, and / or participation by comparatively large numbers. In particular, it may be a calendared 1000 km or 1200 km Audax Australia ride, or a Gran Turismo series.

Partially Supported Ride Limited organised support is provided by the RO team only at key points eg. sleep stops or in locations or at times when commercial support is not available eg. remote locations or late at night

Randonnée Ride conducted under the auspices of the AACC

Randonneur Participant in a Randonée

Region area of Australia having boundaries as defined and approved by the National Committee under the Constitution and Regulations

Regional Committee committee established to represent a Region to perform any functions, powers or duties that have been delegated to it by the National Committee under the Constitution and Regulations

Supported Ride - Support is provided by the RO team at most controls during a ride

Unsupported Ride - Organised support is not provided by the RO team at controls. Riders are self-sufficient, arranging for their own food, and having their brevet signed.

The Ride Organiser (RO) has ultimate responsibility for the event and the organising team (RO Team) before, during and after the ride.

This includes responsibility for organising, resourcing, team/ people management, negotiating, financial management, public representation, troubleshooting and liaison. The RO needs to be contactable throughout the ride planning, conducting and evaluation processes.

Big rides provide opportunities for ROs to extend themselves, from the setting of a long route with a large number of checkpoints, which may go well beyond what they have planned before, through to managing a successful multi-day event for a large number of riders, who may have travelled long distances to participate in the event.

While the nature of events and the level of support offered can vary greatly, what all good rides share is that the RO gets the basics right, such as:

- an interesting and scenic route, bearing safety aspects in mind;
- an accurate routesheet;
- a good RO team appropriate to the size and nature of the ride;
- a level of support appropriate to the size and nature of the ride;
- careful and comprehensive budgeting;
- sound risk management and safety planning;
- clear and extensive information available to prospective riders well ahead of the event;
- good communication maintained between the RO team, the Regional Committee and riders before, during and after the event;
- post-event paperwork, completed accurately and quickly sent back to the Regional Brevet Secretary;

To help you on your way, here are some key suggestions to get you started.

- Read this guide, and keep a copy for reference. This will give you plenty of information about how to plan and organise your event.
- Read the AACC ride rules, regulations and guidelines. They provide detailed information that you need to know.

- Work closely with your Regional Committee and co-opt a Ride Adviser/ Mentor and RO Team as early as possible. Start planning early.
- Keep your RO team informed and establish clear roles and guidance early. Use your team to help plan, organise and run the ride. No RO can run a big ride on their own. It's a big job!

2.2

RIDE ADVISER/MENTOR

When developing ride calendars, each **Regional Committee** needs to be confident that a RO has the ability, experience and resources to successfully organise and conduct the proposed ride and may require that a **Ride Adviser/ Mentor (RA)** be nominated and approved by the Regional Committee. RAs should be experienced ROs and possess sufficient interpersonal skills to enable them to work together effectively with the RO and to provide an effective resource/advice/checking function.

For any new ride or big ride, it is prudent that a RA be appointed, and for the RO and RA to work together from an early stage. For a ride organised by a committee (eg Audax Alpine Classic, Great Southern Randonée), the RA may be an active member of the ride committee. The RA may be a member from outside the Region.

The primary resources for RAs are their own knowledge and experience supplemented by this Big Ride Guide and the other resources available on the Audax website, particularly the Ride Organiser Guidelines and Ride Rules.

The primary purpose of the RA is to support and assist the RO to achieve a successful, safe, high quality Audax ride by providing advice and acting as a sounding board to test ideas and plans. The RO and RA will decide together their preferred ways of working, usually a combination of meetings, telephone and email.

Generally, a minimum level of involvement of the RA would be:

- At the time the ride is first considered and approved by the Region for inclusion in the ride calendar, the RO nominates a RA for approval by the Regional Committee;
- The RO and RA work together to develop a budget and program for the ride;
- The RO and RA work together to develop, finalise and review the ride route and identify any risk and safety concerns and required permissions eg. Traffic Authority, Emergency Services, National Parks or Local Authority may require a permit application;

- At least 1-2 months before the ride, the RA checks and provides feedback on draft maps, route sheets and other ride information;
- The RO and RA work together throughout the leadup to the ride to make sure that issues have been addressed and the ride organisation is on track;
- After the ride, the RO and RA discuss the outcome of the ride and check that post-ride processes have been followed and that any lessons learnt have been documented for future events.

The RA has no decision-making power. If issues cannot be resolved between the RA and RO, they should be referred to the Regional Committee. A RA who believes that a proposed ride cannot be run safely or effectively and cannot resolve it with the RO should refer this to the Regional Committee.

2.3

THE RIDE ORGANISING TEAM

Planning a big ride involves a range of tasks. However keen you are, it is highly unlikely that you can organise a big ride on your own - you need a team. This usually starts off being an informal grouping but as soon as the team starts to make decisions and handle money then a formal statement of roles and responsibilities and decision-making becomes necessary.

Successful RO Teams recognise why people became involved, and bring together the best combination of organisational skills and an understanding of the members. Leaving everyone to do what they like doing might feel appropriate when working with volunteers, but it is not necessarily the way to ensure the team runs efficiently. As RO, you need to explore the skills of the people on the RO Team and match them to the jobs which need doing. Remember that the RO Team members need to get something out of their role too, whether it is an increased sense of ownership and belonging to Audax, a sense of accomplishment or “giving back”, social networking or new skill.

The size of the RO Team will vary with the length and size of ride but may need to cover:

- Programming including selection of a ride date and start time;
- Should there be a qualification requirement for entry (like PBP or ACE)?
- Route planning including start location (and what facilities and transport are available to and at start);
- Safety and risk management;
- Checkpoint venues and organisation (including sleep stops and washing facilities);
- Catering;

- Water points;
- Budgeting and financial management;
- Volunteer management;
- Emergency and incident management;
- Communications;
- Start and finish logistics including registration;
- Transport (including bag drops and managing riders who withdraw);
- Signage;
- Marshalls;
- Brevets and medallions;
- Information for riders (before, during and after the ride);
- Publicity;
- Merchandising.

Establishing a RO Team early, assigning roles and developing a program will give you the best opportunity of running a successful event (see example Event Management Plan in *Appendix A* for ideas).

The structure of your RO Team will reflect the character, size and needs of your particular ride.

For an unsupported, locally focused 1000, the RO Team might consist of the RO and RA. For partially supported rides, extra volunteers may come in the form of several partners or family members or friends.

For a fully supported, large rider number, multi-day event, you will need a larger RO Team to cover all responsibilities effectively. While the RO will maintain overall responsibility for the ride and may take on individual responsibility for some of the components, it is important that the RO does not take on too much and that there is more than one point of contact at key times when decisions need to be made.

Members of the RO Team may take on more than one role in the Team depending on the size and type of the Big Ride. However, broadly speaking, the roles that should be assigned include:

- Ride Organiser - primary responsibility for ride planning, route selection, RO Team management, contact with Regional (and, if required, National Committee). It is important that a second person on the RO Team be kept informed as to the overall situation so that they can step into the RO role if required;
- Permits and Approvals - any required permits or approvals from authorities;

- Volunteer Coordinator - primary responsibility for overall management and coordination of volunteers and selection/ co-opting and briefing of Checkpoint Captains;
- Checkpoint Captains - For big rides with large rider numbers, it is recommended that a Checkpoint Captain be assigned for each checkpoint control, including the Start/ Finish. They have responsibility (with the help of the Volunteer Coordinator) of assembling a Checkpoint Team, coordinating arrangements with the venue/ checkpoint location (unless this is being taken care of centrally), planning and organising catering (within the budget established by the RO and Financial Manager), managing the control (including any sleeping and washing arrangements); rostering and managing the Checkpoint Team during the event (including provisions for and fatigue management of volunteers as well as riders), managing rider movement and documentation, communicating with the RO and RO Team and maintaining a cool head and calm disposition;
- Financial Manager - working together with the RO to establish a comprehensive budget, including setting entry fees, establishing payment timing and cancellation policy; establishing a system for authorising and documenting required payments and reimbursement of expenses; and managing and monitoring the finances before, during and after the ride, including reporting to Regional and, if required, National Committee;
- Communications and publicity - communication of ride information to prospective riders before the event and fielding of queries (for big rides, this can be a major task and can be required well ahead of the event as people need to make advance travel and leave arrangements); communication with the RO Team, riders, emergency services, authorities, interested others (riders' families, locals, media) during the ride; documenting of riders registered, completed or withdrawn; and communication with riders, volunteers and others after the event;
- Transport and marshalling - transport of gear and, if required, bag drops between controls; erection and removal of signage; organisation of ride marshals (if planned); transport of riders (and bikes) after any withdrawals;
- Start and Finish logistics - planning and organising the Start and Finish including pre-ride registration, lighting checks, issuing and collection of brevets, route sheets and maps, frame plates (if used), merchandise (if any), information about the local area and any planned functions or events pre- or post-ride, lost and found, information about communications during the ride; any timing equipment; special arrangements for different components of the ride or ride lengths (eg.

different start times or locations); documenting of riders registered, completed or withdrawn;

- Risk and safety management- undertaking risk assessment well ahead of event and reviewing immediately prior to ride; establishment of policy for cancelling or stopping ride (due to weather, temperatures, emergencies such as fire/ flood/ storms, etc); emergency and incident management; liaison with emergency services and first aid;
- Catering - this may be the responsibility of individual Checkpoint Captains but it is useful to nominate a member of the RO Team to coordinate, advise on and review catering plans for each Checkpoint, and to coordinate any opportunities to reduce costs by bulk buying, etc or transporting unused items from early checkpoints to later checkpoints to minimise purchasing needs;
- Stores and equipment - some regions and events have equipment owned by Audax and used for rides. Some rides, such as Alpine Classic, have built up a store of equipment over the years and manage it for use each year. The nomination of a Stores and Equipment Manager may or may not be required but should be considered in the planning of the ride;
- Merchandising - all successful riders on Audax rides have the option of purchasing a medallion or patch for the distance ridden. Some events or series (eg. PBP, Gran Turismo series, Perth-Albany-Perth) offer specific medals for successful completion and some may offer ride jerseys or other clothing items (eg. Alpine Classic, Sydney-Melbourne 1200). The RO Team has a responsibility to ensure that the cost of merchandise is adequately budgeted for in entry fees or item sale prices.

2.4

PLANNING THE ROUTE

The RO Team needs to consider the following issues when designing and planning a ride:

- Route selection and planning considerations including start location, start time and time of year (this will affect the number and type of controls required, location of sleep stops, volunteers needed, etc);
- Length options - one ride distance or multiple options;
- Nature of route - Loop/s, out and back or one way route;
- Safety - traffic, road conditions, season, likely weather, heavy vehicle usage, major traffic generators, likely size of field, previous rider experience;
- Scenic / enjoy-ability factor;

- Timing – prevailing weather in that area at that time, other possible competing events around same time;
- Supported, unsupported or partially supported at critical points or times (compare the Stargazers’ Guide to the Solar System 1000 with support only at a single sleep spot control and minimal other support, and the fully supported Western District Wanderer 1000 – each equally valid Audax ride offerings);
- Deciding on the appropriate number of riders considering the ability to manage, provide volunteers, manage front end costs and on the road management of the ride including risk mitigation;
- Potential for future events if the ride is successful (will the route and checkpoint locations be suitable if the ride grows significantly?).

2.4.1 *Selecting Checkpoints*

When selecting checkpoint locations and venues, the following matters should be taken into account:

- Number of riders – the larger the field, the more facilities that are likely to be required;
- Overall ride length – the distance between checkpoints should probably increase with ride length (otherwise too much time can be “lost” at controls);
- Distance from the last checkpoint and riding terrain (for hilly stages, checkpoints could be closer);
- Time of day and year (for night checkpoints and in colder times of the year checkpoints should be sheltered/ inside);
- Availability of commercial food premises in the local area that will be open at the time that riders are passing through (if good commercial options are available, the RO may choose to provide a control with very limited support); and
- Whether the checkpoint is a sleep stop.

2.5 *DATE AND SIZE OF EVENT*

The Audax year runs from 1 November to 31 October and the calendar for the following year is finalised in September. Some big rides (like Alpine Classic) are run each year while others are run every two, three or four years (Tasmanian Giro, Great Southern Randonée, Perth-Albany-Perth) or each year but in a different location (Gran Turismo). Some are one-offs reflecting the RO’s and local riders’ desire to explore new areas. Planning needs to take into account other rides planned for the season, not forgetting major international events such as PBP.

Most Audax rides will draw riders predominantly from the local Region but some big rides have the potential of attracting riders from across Australia and internationally. Also, many rides, if repeated in subsequent years, will grow in size over time, and an important consideration is whether a limit should be placed on the number of riders, particularly the first time or times the ride is run to enable the ride (and any “teething problems”) to be properly managed.

Equally important is setting a reasonable “breakeven point” for budgeting and costing. Setting the required number of riders to cover costs too high can lead to “organiser stress” and substantial losses being incurred if the actual number of riders is not sufficient to cover the fixed costs of the rides (venue hire, support costs, authority requirements such as traffic management and emergency services, etc).

The type of big ride planned will affect planning. A local “big ride” such as an unsupported 1000 will generally attract a smaller field and involve a much lower level of risk and financial outlay than a supported “signature event”. In turn, this will influence the decision as to date of the ride and the “lead time” involved in scheduling and planning the ride.

When considering timing, don’t forget to factor in other matters that will influence cost and availability of venues and accommodation (such as seasonality and public and school holidays) and other events that may be happening in the area (such as sporting events and festivals).

Don’t forget to factor in authority requirements when planning the size, route and date of the ride. Some state or local authorities require traffic or police permits for the start or route if numbers exceed a nominated threshold. Others have requirements or limitations on signage on roads and public areas. Some require provision or payment for particular emergency services and/or first aid. Permits may be required for usage of parks or other public areas, particularly if they are to be used for any length of time.

Check with:

- Local government (Council) for the area of the start and any proposed controls;
- State/ Territory roads and traffic authority;
- Emergency services department or individual services (police, ambulance);
- National parks or similar agency if route or controls in any National/State Parks, Forests or Reserves;

- Health Department – in relation to any food or health permits required; may also have requirements for require permits for portable toilets and showers.

2.6 *SETTING THE RIDE ENTRY FEE*

The ride entry fee needs to be sufficient to cover the costs of organising and running the ride. It should be based on a conservative (low) estimate of likely rider numbers and take into account:

- Level of support to be provided;
- Venue, catering and transport costs;
- Ride organisation and communications costs;
- Authority permits and approvals and emergency services costs;
- Volunteer accommodation, sustenance, and any commemorative shirt (and possibly transport subsidy);
- Audax Regional and National brevet fees;
- Cost of providing Bag Drop (could be optional extra);
- Ride jersey or t-shirt (could be optional extra);
- Medallion or patch (could be optional extra).

2.7 *ROUTE AND EVENT INFORMATION*

Information on the proposed route (including the terrain, likely prevailing weather and amount of climbing) should be provided to prospective riders as early as possible to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether the ride is suitable for them and to assist them to prepare.

It is suggested that as a minimum, information should be made available as early as possible about:

- Date/s and timing of the event;
- The proposed route and terrain via a web-based program such as bikeroutetoaster and GPS routes eg. for Garmin; and
- Proposed checkpoints and timing, and
- Information about the level of support to be offered and what is likely to be available at each control.

Newsletters and information booklets can be used to provide ride information to riders and prospective riders (see *Appendix @@* for examples from Audax Alpine Classic, FNQ Gran Turismo, LEL and Stargazers' Guide to the Solar System 1000)

2.7.1 *Route Sheets*

An accurate and easily-read and understood route sheet is crucial to a successful event. Some examples are provided in *Appendix @@*. While ROs and some regions may have different preferences, most route sheets will include:

- Riding instructions (Turn left, etc) often including information on landmarks or signs;
- Cumulative distance ridden;
- Distance between each instruction/ decision point;
- Checkpoint locations with opening and closing times;
- Warnings or any particularly hazards or easy to miss points;
- Contact details for RO or communications centre during ride;
- Locations where water and food are available on or near route (and hours of opening if relevant).

Route sheets should be prepared and tested well ahead of the ride, and reviewed on the route by someone not involved in their preparation.

2.8 *LEVEL OF SUPPORT*

2.8.1 *Determining the Level of Support*

The RO Team should determine the level of support to be offered on the ride early in the planning/ organising process as it will directly affect the nature of the ride experience, organisation required, budgeting, entry fee to be charged, number and timing of volunteers required and so on.

The level of support should be clearly communicated in all ride information. It is important that riders are aware of the extent of volunteer support throughout the event so they can plan their ride accordingly.

It is especially critical that riders understand the level of support available in the event they decide to abandon - will they need to make their own way to the start, have a friend or family member collect them, or will a lift be available from a RO Team member, and if so, are the numbers that may be assisted this way limited? (EG PBP does not provide assistance back to Paris and LEL makes it very clear that a rider will not be collected if they abandon. If injured or ill, riders are to contact emergency services.)

2.8.2 *Unsupported Rides*

If it is determined that a ride will be unsupported or partially supported, the RO Team should give specific consideration as to availability of water and

food along the route, and the hours of opening of businesses and particularly if they will be open for those riders close to the ride time limit. An option may be to provide water stops or checkpoints with minimal support in critical locations or at times when no businesses will be open.

The RO should also monitor weather conditions and give consideration to any additional measures that may be used in extreme heat or cold eg. additional water stops, requirements for riders to “check in” with the RO at certain points or times.

Explicit procedures and triggers should be prepared, communicated and implemented for cancelling or stopping rides in extreme conditions.

If the RO is also riding the event at the same time as other riders, it is important to provide a communications contact from the RO Team who will be available at all times during the event in case of incident or emergency.

2.8.3 *Supported Rides*

The Volunteer Coordinator and Checkpoint Captains should establish volunteer teams early and communicate potential roles, locations and timing which can be refined closer to the ride day.

2.9 *VOLUNTEERS*

For some big rides a Call for Volunteers is made and potential volunteers provide information on preferences, skills and timing (see examples for Alpine Classic and LEL in *Appendix @@*). Be aware that circumstances can change and volunteers may not be able to attend the event. If possible, allow for some contingency with volunteers who can be allocated to fill gaps that may arise close to the event.

Volunteers generally fall into one of three categories:

- Audax members or partners or family of Audax members who are available for the whole event;
- Partners or family of riders who may have a preference for a particular location or only be available at particular times during the event (as well as supporting their rider); and
- Volunteers who are happy to help for a particular task or time slot eg. pre-ride registration, preparation of rider packs, at a checkpoint during a busy period etc.

All are potentially useful members of the RO Team but care needs to be taken to ensure that task and team planning allows for personal preferences and needs so that unexpected gaps do not occur.

Clear policies need to be determined at the outset of planning for the ride so that all are clear on the rules to be applied and the procedures for approval and reimbursement of any expenses. A threshold should also be established for when volunteers “qualify” for a shirt or subsidies for accommodation or travel. This could, for example, require a minimum time commitment of 8 hours during the event.

Planning and budgeting for the ride needs to allow for accommodation, vehicle fuel or transport and sustenance for volunteers during the event. Some rides will also budget for payment of or contribution toward volunteers’ travel to the ride start. Some events will budget for volunteers’ shirt or tshirt (Alpine Classic shirt is long sleeved polo shirt with a collar for sun protection) and some have a “thank you” event such as a pre-ride bbq or free entry to a future ride or function.

For large events, consideration should be given to the identification of volunteers during the ride. This could be by way of a special shirt, coloured name tags or hats. Checkpoint or team leaders should be readily identifiable, by way of a specifically coloured name tag or cap so that people can locate them easily and the role can be readily transferred during the roster.

It is essential all Volunteers are given plenty of notice as to when and where they will be required; what their duties will be. Newsletters and information booklets can be used to provide information to volunteers and they should also be provided with any information sent to riders about the event (see *Appendix @@* for examples from Audax Alpine Classic, Great Southern Randonée and LEL).

2.10

FINANCIAL MATTERS

You may have a great idea for a big ride, but you need to make sure it is financially viable. The following issues need to be considered when planning a ride and preparing a budget:

- Fixed costs and those that will vary depending on the numbers of riders - these are critical to identifying the ride’s breakeven point - how many to plan for;
- Timing of cash flow - When to take deposit moneys or require full payment and when costs will be incurred;
- How much to charge;

- When is a refund – full or partial – possible for withdrawal;
- Terms and conditions of entry;
- Banking such as account establishment;
- Financial reconciliation;
- Bill payment;
- Post-event audit;
- Financial reporting to Regional or National Committee
- Whether there is a need to consider NC involvement to provide ‘seed’ funding or to underwrite a major event. See 2.10.6.

The RO Team needs to:

- establish a comprehensive budget;
- set appropriate entry fees and any merchandise pricing;
- establish policies for entry (possibly requiring a deposit), payment timing, and cancellation of entries (and any refunds);
- establishing a system for authorising and documenting required payments and reimbursement of expenses;
- manage and monitor the finances before, during and after the ride; and
- report to Regional and, if required, National Committee.

2.10.1 Budget

A budget is needed for every big ride.

This should include projected Income and Expenditure to demonstrate that your budget will balance, and your event will be financially viable.

Use a spreadsheet to draw up a budget of projected income and expenditure for the ride, taking into account all stages of planning, running and follow up after the event.

Income is primarily earned from ride entry fees and purchase of merchandise two main sources. Very occasionally, some signature events may receive donations or sponsorship from individuals or organisations.

Audax may also provide contributions although rides are expected to be self-supporting.

Expenditure may be incurred for a wide variety of items, depending on the ride type and need:

- Venue costs - hire of checkpoint premises, accommodation, timing equipment; computers; lighting, signage

- Catering and checkpoint supplies – food and drink for checkpoints, sunscreen, cleaning products, toilet paper, etc
- Transport – vehicle hire, fuel, insurance
- Volunteer costs – transport and accommodation, shirts, nametags, hats
- Ride materials – printing of event-specific brevet cards, route sheets, maps etc
- Souvenir production - jerseys, reflective vests, medallions, photography, certificates
- Audax costs – Regional and National brevet fees
- Permits and approvals – Authority application and permit costs and compliance requirements
- Emergency and support services - police, ambulance, first aid
- Marketing costs - printing of leaflets/flyers/programs, mailouts, graphic design
- Overheads - administration costs, office rental, telephone and communications, IT

When balancing your budget the total of your income should be equal to or greater than the total of your expenditure. If your expenditure is higher, you need to look at cutting some of your costs, or finding additional sources of income until they balance. If your income is greater than expenditure, you should make a profit or surplus on your event. Always allow a contingency for unexpected costs such as additional ice in hot weather, need to hire extra vehicles if some are not available and payment for repairs or damage occurring during an event.

2.10.2 *Managing Expenditure during the Event*

The period of highest activity is immediately prior to and during the event. Clear direction needs to be provided as to who is allowed to authorise expenditure and in what circumstances.

A budget and expenditure authorisation should be determined together with or provided to each Checkpoint Captain and Team Leader, together with clear guidelines for document and reporting requirements.

For unexpected expenditure, consideration should be given to nominating RO Team members who have authority to authorise. This should be at least two people, potentially the RO and Financial Manager but could be more, to allow for times when the RO is unavailable, asleep or busy dealing with other matters.

2.10.3 *Financial Records and Reporting*

You must ensure that you keep receipts and accurate financial records for preparation of your Ride Report at the completion of the event.

The Ride Organisers' Reporting Tool on the Audax website is a useful spreadsheet for simpler rides. For more complex and larger rides, an accounting spreadsheet should be established early in planning (see *Appendix @@* for example – **example needed**)

2.10.4 *Accounts and Handling Money*

Consideration should be given to whether a specific bank account is to be established for a big ride and the appropriate procedures for signatories and authorisation of payments.

If a specific bank account is not going to be used, procedures need to be put in place to accurately track all income and expenditure.

2.10.5 *Insurance*

Managing a big ride includes ensuring the safety of organisers, riders, volunteers and the public. Audax has insurance cover for Audax rides but it is prudent that, as part of the risk management strategy (see following section), coverage be checked to ensure that it covers all aspects of big rides. Insurance cover should also include vehicles, property and equipment. Where hire vehicles are used, only nominated drivers should be permitted to drive them.

2.10.6 *Budget Advances and Underwriting*

The costs of running a big ride can be considerable and require outlays before any income is received. Under Regulation 18 of the Regulations – Regional Annexure, Regions or ROs may request 'seed funding' from the National Committee to cover initial outlays or funding to cover any loss on the event. Any advance is to be repaid in full once income from the ride or event is received. For either request, the National Committee may impose reasonable conditions including being satisfied with an appropriate event budget, management plan and any arrangements to limit possibilities for shortfalls.

2.11 SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

2.11.1 Risk Analysis

In planning a big ride a thorough Risk Analysis needs be conducted to identify the key risks associated with the conduct of the ride.

Some risk factors to consider in planning a ride are:

- Route planning, including dangerous intersections and road characteristics, likely traffic conditions (eg. avoiding high traffic areas during peak hours), road conditions, season and likely weather conditions (try and avoid riding into rising or setting sun), heavy vehicle usage and major traffic generators, likely rider numbers, previous rider experience, etc.;
- Weather events likely at the time of year e.g bushfire, floods, storms;

2.11.2 Risk Management

It is essential that key risks in a ride are mitigated by proper planning to prevent accidents and to ensure the safety of all participants in the event including volunteers.

Some of the areas of planning which need to be considered carefully as risk mitigation strategies include:

- Entry forms - liability waiver etc;
- Rigorous bike lighting and reflective clothing checks (consider whether, as in ACE, riders should be given and required to wear reflective vests), should riders be required to take space blankets?;
- Accident and incident management ;
- Planning of control placement and level of shelter, food and drink offered;
- Whether riders should be required to pre-qualify for the ride eg. as happens in PBP and ACE;
- What level of extra support should be offered - extra water stops, secret controls with hot drinks/ soup in very cold stretches, bag drops, etc
- Liaison with responsible authorities: Police; Road authorities, Hospitals, Ambulance and Fire Services, local Council, National Parks.

2.12 *PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY*

Consider the optimal number of riders for your ride and whether it should be promoted widely to achieve this level. This includes consideration of:

- who may be interested in the ride (including whether it is likely to be attractive to interstate or overseas riders);
- what methods of communication can be used eg. Audax website and chatlist, Checkpoint, cycling internet forums, regional Audax emails, cycling magazines, other cycling organisations;
- direct emails or mail to riders in previous events and current Audax members.

2.13 *USING TECHNOLOGY TO ASSIST WITH RIDE MANAGEMENT*

Technology is advancing rapidly and ROs should consider what technology is available to assist with ride management. Currently, maps and route sheets suitable for uploading into GPS would be considered usual. Additional options used for some larger / signature events which may become more commonplace include:

- Use of rider progress spreadsheets with public access via Google docs or similar;
- Provision of a number of spot trackers to enable ROs to track rider progress;
- Bar code readers for checkpoints (AAC formerly used this system).
- Use of chips attached to bicycles for tracking of rider progress (as used in PBP and Alpine Classic);
- Automated SMS alerts to nominated phone numbers when chips register at checkpoints (trialled with variable success at Alpine Classic);

2.14 *RIDE MERCHANDISE AND SOUVENIRS*

If the budget allows (or costs can be recouped or covered by the supplier at no cost to Audax), ROs may consider the development of ride-specific materials and merchandise. These could include:

- Specially designed and printed brevets;
- Ride or series medallions or patches;
- Route Markers or Signs;
- Jerseys and other clothing;
- Ride jerseys and t-shirts;

- Merchandising/ Event Souvenirs such as water bottles;
- Professional photographer at key points of the ride;
- Souvenir/thank you shirts or hats for volunteers.

Issues to consider when deciding whether to order merchandise include:

- RO Team's ability to manage the procurement/ production process and the organising time involved;
- Scope of merchandise to supply - how many items and what type;
- Cost - will it be part of the entry fee or optional extra, and if optional, how to commit to numbers (is there a minimum number required by the manufacturer);
- Sizing - how to determine and provide the right range of sizing and numbers for rider jerseys or volunteer shirts or other clothing
- Lead time to manufacture; and
- Whether to break even or profit take (and how to avoid a loss).

3 *DURING THE RIDE*

3.1 *REGISTRATION AND BIKE CHECKS*

For most big rides, registration of riders and conduct of bike, lighting and reflective clothing checks are undertaken on the day prior to the ride.

Matters to consider are:

- Separate registration, bike check and bag drop areas so that they can happen independently and concurrently;
- Provide weather protection for both registration and bike checks;
- Allocate team members for one job only ie. don't nominate people for bike checks if they are going to be needed elsewhere;
- Have rider kits (brevets, route sheets, registration summary of what has been ordered, reminder of Road Rules and Ride Rules, any area information or ride souvenirs such as jerseys, water bottles, timing chips if being used, etc) collated ahead of time – don't try and do it on the spot, it takes too much time;
- If rider numbers are large, divide registration into separate tables by alphabetical groupings;
- Have a trouble shooting and information table you can direct people to if registration is not in the system or there are issues, so it doesn't hold up the queue;
- Provide people with a copy of what they entered for and what they ordered in their registration information (it's often a lengthy period from when they entered and they may have forgotten their order);
- Where is the nearest bike shop/ mechanic etc – people will have forgotten items or have problems when assembling bikes after flights (maybe one will set up on site)?

3.1.1 *Storage/Parking while the Ride is on*

For multi-day rides, consider nominating or offering a location where cars, suitcases, bike boxes, bags can be stored at reasonable cost.

3.2 *THE START AND FINISH*

Have water available at the start/ finish.

3.2.1 *The Start*

Consider whether local food/coffee vendors are available and will be open around start time. If rider numbers are large enough, consider asking shops to open early or a mobile coffee van to attend at the start.

Stick to nominated starting times, particularly if riders are leaving in spaced groups. Consider some form of identification to distinguish between different groups eg. coloured frame plates, wrist bands, different vests, stickers.

Have a policy regarding late starters and communicate it ahead of time. Keep track of how many riders actually start on the day.

If there are different start locations for different ride distances, have marshalls to make sure people are in the right place and have signs up. If needed, have marshalls or signs to direct people out of town.

At the Start, remind riders of the requirement to following Road Rules and Audax Ride Rules.

3.2.2 *The Finish*

Have a single location for people to hand in their brevets. If necessary, have RO Team members to direct people where to go.

Finishing a long ride can be an anti-climax, particularly if there are few people around when you finish. It is important that the RO Team congratulate the rider on their success! Where a special medallion has been struck for the event, this could be given out at the finish or at a celebratory function soon thereafter in immediate recognition of the rider's achievement.

If possible, have food provided or available for purchase close to the finish (particularly for riders finishing through the night).

3.3 *MANAGING CHECKPOINTS*

3.3.1 *What Facilities are Needed*

Smaller Rides/ During the Day

The type and extent of facilities required at a checkpoint depend on the number of riders, stage of the ride and distance ridden from the last checkpoint, time of day and year, and whether or not sleeping facilities are required.

For smaller rides in comfortable riding conditions, checkpoints may or may not be staffed by RO Teams. Evidence of passage through particular points may be obtained by signature or stamps from local shop proprietors or by use of secret questions.

Staffed controls may be established in parks or community areas. Consideration does need to be given, however, to how the checkpoint will be managed in bad weather ie. where shelter can be found if needed.

At all checkpoints, water should be available and food provided or available for purchase.

The RO Team should be alert to the riding conditions on the day.

If a day is very hot, consider providing ice, ice creams, cold watermelon or other fruit and certainly shade.

If very cold or at night, consider the availability of warm drinks (soup, tea, coffee, milo) and shelter. For staffed controls, have some blankets in case riders are very cold or hypothermic

Larger Rides/Night Checkpoints

For larger supported rides and checkpoints that will be operating through the night, the following facilities are desirable:

- Good lighting, clearly visible from the ride route or very well signposted;
- Bike storage area/s;
- Separate water point;
- Easily accessible toilets enough to deal with rider numbers;
- Handwashing facilities (and soap);
- Checkpoint desk at arrival point (easy to find) – also a good location for notice board, first aid kit, ride information and checkpoint communications (laptop/ phone/ etc)
- Kitchen facilities including cooking (microwave, stove and urn/kettle) and washing up facilities;
- Eating areas with chairs and table so riders can sit down/ rest;
- Food appropriate to the time of day and stage of the ride (see later section);
- Somewhere quiet for riders who need to rest or recover before proceeding (and for volunteers on a break).

For checkpoints that are also nominated sleep stops, the following facilities are desirable:

- Storage area for bag drop – accessible but away from sleeping area;
- Showers and bathroom areas;
- Sleeping areas away from the communal areas (but not requiring a long walk or lots of stairs). A system needs to be in place for numbering beds and arranging/ monitoring wake up calls;
- A separate sleeping area for Volunteers is a good idea if possible;
- RO Team room where wake up calls can be monitored, rosters are available and can be updated; team can rest when on a break, etc;
- Food at sleep stops needs to cater for riders arriving and leaving ie. meal on arrival and breakfast equivalent after sleep.

3.3.2 *Checkpoint Team*

It is essential all Volunteers are given plenty of notice as to when and where they will be required; what their duties will be. On arrival, Checkpoint Volunteers should be welcomed, briefed and provided with an updated roster (which should be in a central location so it can be updated as needed). If shirts and nametags are to be provided, hand them out. A useful tip is to attach the nametag to a shirt of the size nominated by the volunteer ahead of time, so that there isn't a mixup on the day.

A thorough briefing, including key points in writing, is important. An example briefing from the 2009 LEL (a ride with 600 riders) is at Attachment X.

3.3.3 *Managing Rider Arrival*

On arrival, the rider should store their bike and be directed to the Checkpoint Desk to have their brevet stamped and time recorded in the rider management system (could be a paper or electronic spreadsheet or on-line system).

For night controls and at colder times of year, it is important to have the Checkpoint Desk inside out of the weather.

Have some blankets handy in case riders are very cold or hypothermic, in which case you should monitor them to ensure a reasonable recovery before continuing (you may decide to "hold" their brevet until satisfied they are in a suitable condition to continue). First aid supplies appropriate to the ride should also be available at each checkpoint.

If a rider indicates that they do not plan to continue on the ride, their brevet should be retained at the Checkpoint and the decision notified to the Checkpoint Captain and RO and entered in the Rider Management System. (Sometimes, it is useful to suggest that a rider have a rest and something to eat first before making a final decision.) What to do when riders withdraw is dealt with in a later section.

Water should be available in an easily accessible location, preferably in two locations - one near the bike storage area and one in the eating area.

Eating and sleeping areas should be clearly visible and/or signposted from the Checkpoint Desk (otherwise you will spend a lot of time answering the same question).

3.3.4 *Looking after Riders*

The physical (and psychological) condition of riders will vary greatly depending on individual fitness and riding experience as well as stage in the ride and time spent on the bike.

Some riders will seem to breeze through a ride while others will need lots of TLC. Some riders want food immediately while others just want to sit for a while gathering their thoughts, the Volunteer must judge this and try not to be too pushy while at the same time make sure each rider is catered for.

3.3.5 *What to do when Riders Pull Out*

If a rider indicates that they do not plan to continue on the ride, their brevet should be retained at the Checkpoint and the decision notified to the Checkpoint Captain and RO and entered in the Rider Management System.

Management of withdrawing riders will vary depending on ride type. Traditionally, Audax riding has involved a high level of self sufficiency. For some partially or unsupported rides, little or no assistance may be available, and a rider will need to make their own way back or seek external help to go to the Start or to a train station.

There should be no expectation that transport for bikes and riders will be available through the RO Team. As previously noted, PBP does not provide assistance back to Paris and LEL makes it very clear that a rider will not be collected if they abandon.

For some supported rides, arrangements may be available to transport the rider and bike to the Finish. Larger rides may have a "sag wagon" to do this. Riders may be able to wait until the checkpoint closes and travel back with one of the Checkpoint Team. The bike may be transported separately with checkpoint equipment and supplies or with the rider. Depending on their condition, riders who have withdrawn from the ride may offer to become part of the volunteer team.

On the other hand, if injured or ill, arrangements must be made as appropriate for the rider to contact emergency services.

3.3.6 *Looking after the Checkpoint Team*

This is a big one! By definition volunteers sometimes have to work all night and there need to be enough of them to be able to roster rest breaks.

There also need to be enough to handle the rush hours (arrivals and breakfast which tends to be in a rather concentrated block).

Finally, thought has to be given to how volunteers are to return home in one piece. Leaving at 10.00 because the accommodation has to be vacated and driving for several hours when you have not had much sleep is a recipe for an accident!

3.3.7 *Food and Drink*

The type of food and drink to be offered should be based on:

- Whether the checkpoint is designated as a fully supported, partially supported or unsupported checkpoint;
- The stage of the ride ie. how far riders will have ridden at that point;
- The time of day that the checkpoint is open;
- Whether the checkpoint is also a sleep stop (if so food needs to be available both before and after sleep).

While all riders are different, most will eat the equivalent of full meal at each checkpoint. At later stages of the ride, some riders will not feel like eating and may have difficulty deciding what to eat (or articulating it). One tactic, used to good effect by Ronnie M, is to show them the various types of food on offer and let them point to what they want! Some riders will want only savoury, salty food; other only sweet food or milk-based drinks.

Food should be easily swallowed, not so hot that it will burn, and of sufficient variety to provide a choice for tired riders.

Examples of some checkpoint menus and checklists of necessary equipment are provided in *Appendix @@*.

Food Preparation

One of the key areas which must be considered is safe food handling and the need to develop risk management in this area. The regulations for Victoria can be found at: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/home/community.htm>

Further guidelines on safe food handling are provided in *Appendix @@*.

3.3.8 *Managing Beds and Wake up Calls*

The Checkpoint Team at a sleep stop needs to keep track of riders, beds and when people want to be woken up.

Various systems can be used for this but the basic requirements are:

- Numbered beds;
- A managed check-in system with central board/ worksheet identifying beds and wake-up times;
- One volunteer in control at any time with a hand-over to the next volunteer.

3.3.9 *Managing Bag Drops*

Bag drops are sometimes offered on longer rides and need to include:

- Clear instructions to riders on size of bag allowed and labelling with rider name and bag drop location (if there is more than one);
- Location and time for accepting bags at rider registration;
- Transport of bags to and from checkpoint;
- Bag drop area at checkpoint in accessible location;

- System for riders to take bag to despatch area when they are finished with it (for return to Start/ Finish).

3.4 *INCIDENT REPORTING*

Incidents and accidents that occur during a ride must be appropriately managed and reported.

Some guidelines and examples are provided in *Appendix @@*.

4 *AFTER THE RIDE*

4.1 *RIDE REPORTING*

Prompt processing of brevet homologation is important for everyone associated with the ride.

As soon as possible after the completion of the big ride, the ride report should be prepared and submitted to the relevant Region, together with entry forms and brevets, in accordance with the requirements of the Region.

Where possible, the full ride report, including the financial report, should be submitted at the same time. You must ensure that you keep receipts and accurate financial records for preparation of your Ride Report at the completion of the event.

The Ride Organisers' Reporting Tool on the Audax website is a useful spreadsheet for simpler rides. For more complex and larger rides, an accounting spreadsheet should be established early in planning (see *Appendix @@* for example – **example needed**)

4.2 *COMMUNICATION*

4.2.1 *RO Team and Volunteers*

As soon as the ride is completed, the RO should contact the RO Team and volunteers to thank them for a job well done, and to confirm that no outlays and expenses are outstanding. Suggestions should also be requested for improvements to the event.

4.2.2 *Riders*

Riders should be contacted to provide an update on the ride and let them know the program for homologation, medal or certificate provision, and any future plans. Suggestions should be requested for improvements to the event.

4.2.3 *Audax Australia*

The ride report should be submitted to the relevant region.

4.3 *ACCOUNTS*

Where a ride bank account has been opened for a one-off event, this should be closed when financial reporting is complete.

The Regional Committee or National Committee may require that an audit be undertaken of the ride accounts and financial reports.

Full financial reporting and evidence of expenditure will be needed in situations where National assistance has been obtained for seed funding or sought for reimbursement

BIG RIDE EXAMPLES

This section contains some examples used in the planning, conduct and evaluation of big rides.

The following extract was prepared by Danial Webb, the Thorne Checkpoint Captain for While not all may be relevant for all checkpoints, it gives a very good flavour of what volunteers need to know:

“What the riders need from us

Most riders will have the same needs. They’ll need:

- *Their ride cards stamping and their arrival logging on our database*
- *A hot meal and drinks*
- *Their water bottles filling up*
- *A sleep*
- *The loo*
- *A wash/shower*

They may also need:

- *Bike repairs*
- *First aid*
- *Information about other riders*
- *Help in getting home (if they’ve packed)*
- *To buy something from our temporary shop*

- ***Their ride cards stamping and their arrival logging on our database***

When the riders arrive at the control, we’ll need to stamp their card, write the time of arrival on their card, and enter their details on our database. I’ve built a database to help with this. If I’ve emailed this guide to you, I hope I’ve remembered to attach a copy for you to have a look at, with some sample data. Feel free to have a play on it, to see if you feel you can use it. If not, then please email me at lel@danialwebb.com for a copy.

- ***A hot meal and drinks***

In theory, all food during the event is free. In practice, our budget is so tight, we need to be strict about portion control. We’ll be offering a choice of two soups, two main meals and two puddings during the day. At breakfast we’ll be offering a choice of three cereals, three breakfast items, roll and jam, and a snack. The portions will be generous, but there will be no seconds until we’re confident we’ve got enough food to go round. There will be limitless coffee, tea, squash and water available. To police this, I’m going to give riders meal tickets. They get one meal ticket each, plus an additional ticket if they sleep over. I’ve yet to work out how to make this work properly!

I’m also going to control the handing out of food for hygiene reasons. There will be no shared serving spoons, teapots, urn, jugs etc. All cutlery and crockery will be disposable. With the best will in the world, most of the riders will get pretty scurfy. During Paris Brest Paris in 2007 there were a lot of cases of gastro-enteritis. I’m going to do everything I can to make sure it doesn’t happen on our watch.

- ***Their water bottles filling up***

Again, to maintain hygiene, I’m going to try and insist that any water bottles we refill are washed in hot water first, then sterilised in Milton fluid. In practice, I appreciate that this may be a luxury we can’t afford.

- **A sleep**
The riders will start the event at between 8am and 2pm on Sunday. I anticipate that many of the outbound riders who start late will want to sleep for a few hours. Many more, happily, will be looking to make up some miles by riding through the first night. On the return, I imagine a lot more people will sleep, and sleep longer. This presents an extra challenge, as those people who sleep will then want some breakfast!
Riders can sleep wherever they like. We'll be providing beds and blankets, for a small charge of £2 per bed and £1 per blanket.
- **The loo**
Probably the most onerous job we need to do is keep the loos up to scratch. I imagine they'll get bad quite quickly. I'm going to set up a loo cleaning rota, so that they're cleaned out every hour during peak times. Sorry folks!
- **A wash/shower**
There are 2 communal showers, each for eight people. There is also a single shower, which I'm going to reserve for volunteers and women riders. We'll need to clean these out too, though hopefully less often than the loos. We'll be selling towel hire, together with a guest bar of soap, for £1.
- **Bike repairs**
Some of us have some knowledge of bikes, so I'm going to do this on the fly. I'll pull together a supply of spares to sell during the event.
- **First aid**
Our insurance does not permit us to administer first aid. There is a first aid box, which we can make available to riders. What you choose to do as a private individual is your own business. If you're not comfortable with helping a rider with an injury, then that's perfectly fine. If you feel a rider is unfit to carry on, but looks likely to do so, then let me know. We have the right to remove a rider from the event if we think they've become a danger to themselves. Anything serious warrants an ambulance or a trip to A&E.
- **Information about other riders**
This is where the database will come in handy. As I hope you can see, it includes a lot of reports you can pull off, to see who has passed through the control, when they did so, and who is yet to turn up. We'll also be getting limited information from other controls through our communications system. Happily for us, that communications system will be run from Thorne. By me, in theory!
- **Help in getting home (if they've packed)**
We will need to take any rider who packs, to the nearest mainline station to get back to London. In our case, this is Doncaster. If riders are capable enough, I'll direct them to Thorne station, which is 2 kilometres away and has an hourly service to Doncaster during the day. Tandems, recumbents and other such exotica will get a lift from the sag wagon down to London. The rider, however, may still have to make their own way down.
- **To buy something from our temporary shop**
I'll be running a small shop to sell bits and bobs, including:
 - Bed hire - £2

- *Blanket hire - £1*
- *Towel hire - £1*
- *Internet use - £1 for 10 minutes*
- *Cakes - £1 each*
- *Bike spares''*

Other examples are provided in *Appendix @@*.