

## Risk Management Guidelines

## American Volkssporting Association 1008 South Alamo San Antonio, TX 78210



Risk Management is the process of identifying, assessing, prioritizing, and the mitigation of threats, both potentially and real. The guidelines in this document are a resource for AVA Clubs to provide strategies to manage risks that walkers could potentially face during walking events.

This document is meant to provide member AVA clubs with basic guidelines on managing risks associated with Volkssporting. Each geographic area of the United States faces a different set of potential environmental hazards: heat, rain, snow, freezing conditions, etc.

AVA members are encouraged to use the guidelines in this document as a starting point for developing skills and a basic understanding of emergency situations, no matter the hazard, for adequate mitigation for the protection of walkers.

The AVA Risk Management Guidelines will be reviewed <u>at least annually</u> by the AVA Training Committee for accuracy and completeness.

#### **Document History**

Date	Revision #	Description of Change(s)	Training Committee
Nov. 2019	0	Guideline development	Training Committee
May 10, 2021	1	Updates to address	Training Committee



## **CONTENTS**

	Page #
First Aid and CPR	4
Heat Related Injury/Illness	5
Cold Weather-Related Injury/Illness	11
Incident / Accident Report Requirements	16
Appendices	17
A. Operational Plan	18
B. Medical Plan	20
C. Basic First Aid Supplies	21
D. AVA Incident Report Form – AVA Form 403IR	22



## First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation, CPR

While not a requirement of the American Volkssporting Association, it is a good idea to have several members of AVA clubs that are training in basic first aid and CPR. These skills can, and will save a life in an emergency until emergency response personnel arrive at the scene.

First aid, and CPR classes are offered in any number of places. First aid and CPR classes may be found through your local Red Cross, Continuing Education Departments at Community College and University, some hospitals, and even local fire departments.

The ability to provide first aid services to an injured person is not included in this document. Training should be received through a reputable provider as outlined above. The purpose of this document is to provide a basic guideline only.

It is highly recommended that first aid kits are available at the starting point of any event and at each of the check points. A list of basic supplies can be found in the Appendices of this document on page 20. Clubs may purchase fully stocked "family size" first aid kits from Walmart or other retail stores.

#### Walk Medical Plan

Each AVA Traditional Event should have a Medical Plan as part of the planning process. It is critical that emergency medical needs are identified early on in the planning process. Plans are to be noted on the *Operating Plan for Walks Form*. A copy of the *Operating Plans for Walks* and the *Medical Plan* are included as Appendix A of this document: see pages 16 and 18.

Copies of the Operating Plan and Medical Plan are to be provided for each Checkpoint on walks, and should be familiar to all assisting with the walk.

Walker safety is the prime factor!



## **Heat Related Injuries**

The following information was obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The following information is the American Volkssporting Association, (AVA), guidelines for Clubs and members use.

REMEMBER: IF IT IS TOO HOT, CANCEL OR RESCHEDULE THE WALKS! IT IS BETTER TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION THAN TO HAVE SOMEONE INJURED.

#### Prevention

Heat-related illnesses can be prevented. Prevention requires event sponsors and walkers to recognize heat hazards. Walk sponsors should commit to:

- Take extra precautions to walkers.
- Train walk volunteers and walkers to control and recognize heat hazards.
- Determine, for each walker whether total heat stress is too high, both from the conditions of that day and recognizing carryover effect possibilities.
- Implement controls to reduce heat stress: more frequent check point/water stations along the walking route, providing fans for cooling at check points/water stations. It is very important to provide walkers with sufficient places to rest, with shade, and fluids.
- Nothing beats cool water, nothing. Sports drinks with electrolyte are good, but should Cooling neck wraps and other items used in industry to combat for walkers are readily available at lumber yards, and many sporting goods stores.

#### **Special Note on Water**

Provide cool water for walks. Avoid electrolyte containing sports drinks, however, if you do provide them limit walkers to only one per person. Nothing beats cool water for beating the heat, nothing.

Avoid caffeinated drinks, and drinks with a high sugar content. Consumption of these drinks may lead to dehydration. Energy drinks should be avoided completely. Energy drinks have a extremely high sugar and caffeine content: think of them as "Heart Attack in a Can". Alcohol should also be avoided.

#### **Heat Index**

Heat Index is referred to as the apparent temperature. It is a measure of how hot it feels when relative humidity is factored in with the actual ambient temperature.



As the heat index rises above 103°F, there is a **high risk** for heat-related illness, so additional measures to protect walkers are needed. Increase the number of check point/water stations along the walking route where water, rest and shade are provided. Remind walkers to drink plenty of water every 15 to 20 minutes. A Heat Index Chart from the U.S. National Weather service is on the following page.

#### Temperature (°F) **NWS Heat Index** 80 82 80 81 80 82 Relative Humidity (% 101 106 95 100 98 103 83 86 100 105 112 84 88 103 109 84 89 106 113 85 90 86 91 86 93 87 95 112 121 Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure or Strenuous Activity Caution Extreme Caution Danger Extreme Danger

#### **National Weather Service Heat Index Chart**

The above Heat Index Chart should be referenced on the days leading up to the walking event. If relative humidity and ambient temperature are too high its best to plan accordingly. Cancel, reschedule, or start the event earlier in the morning.

The Club sponsoring the walk should ensure all volunteers know the procedures for responding to possible heat related illness. It is a good idea to incorporate a quick briefing of all volunteers assisting with the walk before the walk begins. Take five-minutes to discuss all safety related issues that the walkers may or may not encounter. Never underestimate the "little things" that get overlooked that can cause big problems.

#### **Plan Ahead For Hot Weather Checklist:**

- Have a list of hot weather supplies: ice-chest, bottled water, water coolers, shade, and chairs.
- Have an action plan for heat related illness: who will provide 1<sup>st</sup> Aid, and who will call emergency services.

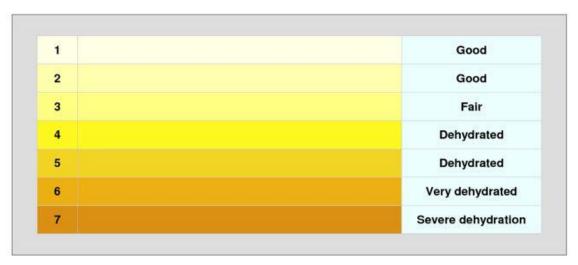


- Have a means of accessing current "real time" weather information before and during the walk. Volunteers at the "turn around point, and check points should have this available as well.
- Have a pre-walk safety briefing with all volunteers.
- Have a pre-walk safety briefing with all walkers.

#### **Urine Colorization Chart**

The **Urine Color** Chart allows anyone to assess the **color** of their **urine**. Ideally, **urine** should be pale yellow or 'straw-colored', corresponding with a state of optimal hydration. The darker the **color**, the more concentrated the **urine** and the more dehydrated the patient.

#### HYDRATION CHART



Any drinks that contain high levels of caffeine, salt, or alcohol will increase your rate of dehydration. On days of high ambient temperatures avoid drinking alcohol, soda's, coffee, or high energy drinks.

## First Aid for Heat Related Injury and Illness

**Heat rash**, also known as prickly heat, is skin irritation caused by sweat that does not evaporate from the skin. Heat rash is the most common problem in hot environments.

**Heat cramps** are caused by the loss of body salts and fluid during sweating. Low salt levels in muscles cause painful cramps. Tired muscles are usually the ones most affected by cramps. Cramps may occur during or after completion of a walk.

**Heat exhaustion** is the body's response to loss of water and salt from heavy sweating. Signs include headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, irritability, thirst, and heavy sweating.



**Heat stroke**, the most serious form of heat-related illness, happens when the body becomes unable to regulate its core temperature. Sweating stops and the body can no longer rid itself of excess heat. Signs include confusion, loss of consciousness, and seizures. Heat stroke is a medical emergency that may result in death! Call 911 immediately.

The following chart is from the <u>Center for Disease Control</u> shows symptoms and first aid measures to take if a walker shows signs of a heat-related illness.



ess Severe

Severe

#### **Risk Management Guidelines**

## Heat illness can strike quickly—learn to recognize the symptoms. Things you need to know: **HEAT STRESS** Workers with heat illness should stop working, get cool, and First Aid for • Altered mental state can be a sign of heat stroke and requires Heat Illness • When treating severe heat illness, cooling is the first priority.

Cooling is key. Know the symptoms and treatment of heat illness.

#### Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms can occur in any order. For example, a person will not always experience heat cramps before they suffer from heat exhaustion.

#### What to Do

## Heat Rash/Prickly Heat • Red cluster of pimples or small

- blisters, usually on neck, upper chest, groin, under breasts, and in elbow creases
- · Extensive areas of skin that do not sweat on heat exposure, but present gooseflesh appearance that subsides with cool environments
- · When possible, a cooler, less humid work environment is the best treatment
- · Keep rash area dry
- · Powder can be applied to increase comfort
- Do not use ointments or creams, as they may impair cooling—warm, moist skin can make the rash worse

#### **Heat Cramps**

- · Muscle cramps, pain, or spasms in the abdomen, arms, or legs
- Drink fluids every 15 to 20 minutes and eat a snack or sports drink
- Avoid salt tablets
- Get medical help if the worker has heart problems, is on a low sodium diet, or if cramps do not subside within 1 hour

#### **Heat Syncope (Fainting)**

Fainting, dizziness, or lightheadedness after standing or suddenly rising from a sitting/ lying position

- . Sit or lie down in a cool place when beginning to feel faint or dizzy
- . Slowly drink water or clear juice

#### **Heat Exhaustion**

- · Headache
- Nausea
- · Dizziness, weakness
- · Irritability
- ·Thirst, heavy sweating
- Elevated body temperature
- Decreased urine output
- · Call for medical help or take worker to a health facility for evaluation and treatment
- Stay with worker until help arrives
- · Remove worker from hot area and give liquids to drink
- Remove unnecessary clothing, including shoes and socks
- · Cool worker with water, cold compresses, an ice bath, or fans
- Encourage frequent sips of cool water

#### **Heat Stroke**

- Confusion, altered mental state, slurred speech, loss of consciousness
- ·Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- Seizures
- Very high body temperatures
- Fatal if treatment delayed
- •This is an emergency! Call for emergency care immediately!
- Move worker to a cool area and remove outer clothing
- Cool worker with water, cold compresses, an ice bath, or fans
- · Circulate air around worker to speed cooling
- Place cold, wet cloths or ice on head, neck, armpits, and groin
- Stay with worker until emergency medical services arrive

#### **Prevention**



Prevention of heat related injury and illness is key. You can walk in hot weather, however, there are certain preventative measures you must take.

Heat-related illnesses can be prevented. Prevention requires walkers to recognize heat hazards. The Club sponsoring the walk should commit to:

- Take extra precautions to new walkers, and older walkers. Ensure there is plenty of available water for everyone. Walking in extreme heat requires consumption of at least a couple of cups of water, or a 16 ounce bottle every fifteen or twenty minutes.
- Clubs conducting walks should ensure that volunteers are knowledgeable and know how to recognize heat hazards and to deal with them. Mitigation is key.
- Determine, for each walker whether total heat stress is too high, both from the conditions of that day and recognizing carryover effect possibilities of the previous day's activities.
- Implement engineering and administrative controls to reduce heat stress.
- Provide sufficient rest, shade, and fluids.

## **Hydration**

Proper hydration throughout the walk is one of the single most important action to be done. This <u>will prevent</u> a heat related illness. For those walking for two hours or more, also provide access to additional fluids that contain electrolytes (sports drinks).

Walkers lose salt and other electrolytes when they sweat. Substantial loss of electrolytes can cause muscle cramps and other dangerous health problems. Water cannot replace electrolytes; other types of beverages are needed. Water or other fluids provided by the Club sponsoring the walk should not only be cool, but should also be provided in a location throughout the walk with easy to access, and in sufficient quantity for the duration of the walk.

An effective heat-related illness prevention program should include a walker acclimatization, an understanding of the heat index and heat advisory from the National Weather Service. Also, having club members trained in basic first aid and CPR can aid in mitigating the risk of heat related injuries during walks.



## **Cold Weather Injury**

Cold weather and environments pose many hazards to Volkssporters in these conditions. A cold environment forces the body to work harder to maintain its temperature. An environment that is considered "cold" depends on the region of the country and the individual. Each unique situation needs to be analyzed and addressed individually to keep walkers safe.

Cold stress and its effects can vary across different areas of the country. In regions that are not used to winter weather, near freezing temperatures are considered factors for "cold stress." Increased wind speed also causes heat to leave the body more rapidly (wind chill effect). Wetness or dampness, even from body sweat, also facilitates heat loss from the body. Cold stress occurs by driving down the skin temperature, and eventually the internal body temperature. When the body is unable to warm itself, serious cold-related illnesses and injuries may occur, and permanent tissue damage and death may result. Types of cold stress include: chilblains, trench foot, frostbite, and hypothermia.

#### **Cold Stress Health Hazards**

**Chilblains** are caused by the repeated exposure of skin to temperatures just above freezing to as high as 60 degrees F. The cold exposure causes damage to the capillary beds (groups of small blood vessels) in the skin. This damage is permanent and the redness and itching will return with additional exposure. The redness and itching typically occurs on cheeks, ears, fingers, and toes.

#### Symptoms include:

- Redness
- Itching
- Possible blistering
- Inflammation
- Possible ulceration in severe cases

#### First Aid

A person suffering from chilblains should:

- Avoid scratching
- Slowly warm the skin
- Use corticosteroid creams to relieve itching and swelling
- Keep blisters and ulcers clean and covered

**Trench foot** also known as immersion foot, is an injury of the feet resulting from prolonged exposure to wet and cold conditions. Trench foot can occur at temperatures as high as 60 degrees F if the feet are constantly wet. Wet feet lose heat 25 times faster than dry feet. To



prevent heat loss, the body constricts blood vessels to shut down circulation in the feet. Skin tissue begins to die because of lack of oxygen and nutrients and due to the buildup of toxic products. First aid for trench foot: Remove any wet socks or boots. Dry feet and do not walk on them as this can cause more damage if already affected.

Trench foot, also known as immersion foot, is an injury of the feet resulting from prolonged exposure to wet and cold conditions. Trench foot can occur at temperatures as high as 60 degrees F if the feet are constantly wet. Injury occurs because wet feet lose heat 25-times faster than dry feet. Therefore, to prevent heat loss, the body constricts blood vessels to shut down circulation in the feet. Skin tissue begins to die because of lack of oxygen and nutrients and due to the buildup of toxic products.

#### Symptoms of trench foot include:

- · Reddening of the skin
- Numbness
- Leg cramps
- Swelling
- Tingling pain
- Blisters or ulcers
- Bleeding under the skin
- Gangrene (the foot may turn dark purple, blue, or gray)

#### First Aid

A person suffering from trench foot should:

- Remove shoes/boots and wet socks.
- Dry their feet.
- Avoid walking on feet, as this may cause tissue damage.

**Frostbite** is an injury to the body that is caused by freezing. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in the affected areas. It most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. Frostbite can lead to permanent damage or amputation of the affected areas. First aid for frostbite: Get the victim into a warm area immediately. Do not walk on frostbitten toes or feet. This will cause more damage. Use warm water to warm the affected areas up. Hot water can burn the affected area.

#### Symptoms of frostbite include:

- Reduced blood flow to hands and feet (fingers or toes can freeze)
- Numbness
- Tingling or stinging



- Aching
- Bluish or pail, waxy skin

#### First Aid

A person suffering from frostbite should:

- Get into a warm room as soon as possible.
- Unless absolutely necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes-this increases the damage.
- Immerse the affected area in warm-<u>not hot</u>-water (the temperature should be comfortable to the touch for unaffected parts of the body).
- Warm the affected area using body heat; for example, the heat of an armpit can be used to warm frostbitten fingers.
- Do not rub or massage the frostbitten area; doing so may cause more damage.
- Do not use a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove, fireplace, or radiator for warming. Affected areas are numb and can be easily burned.

**Hypothermia**— When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body's stored energy. The result is hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature. A body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well. First aid for hypothermia: Alert a one of the walk volunteers and get medical help on the way. Move the victim into a warm area. Warm the center of their body first-chest, neck, head, and groin areausing an electric blanket, if available; or use skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets. If the victim is not breathing begin CPR until the paramedics arrive on scene.

It is important for employers to know the wind chill temperature so that they can gauge walkers' exposure risk better and plan how to safely conduct the walk. It is also important to monitor walkers' physical condition during tasks, especially new walkers who may not be used to walking or exercising in the cold.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information from the nearest NWS office. It will give information when wind chill conditions reach critical thresholds. A Wind Chill Warning is issued when wind chill temperatures are life threatening. A Wind Chill Advisory is issued when wind chill temperatures are potentially hazardous.

# Symptoms of hypothermia can vary depending on how long you have been exposed to the cold temperatures. HYPOTHERMIA IS LIFE THREATENING!

# AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

#### **Risk Management Guidelines**

#### **Early Symptoms**

- Shivering
- Fatigue
- Loss of coordination
- Confusion and disorientation

#### **Late Symptoms**

- No shivering
- Blue skin
- Dilated pupils
- Slowed pulse and breathing
- Loss of consciousness

#### First Aid

Take the following steps to treat a walker with hypothermia:

- Alert the event organizer(s) immediately and request medical assistance.
- Move the victim into a warm room or shelter.
- Remove their wet clothing.
- Warm the center of their body first-chest, neck, head, and groin-using an electric blanket, if available; or use skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets.
- Warm beverages may help increase the body temperature, but do not give alcoholic beverages. Do not try to give beverages to an unconscious person.
- After their body temperature has increased, keep the victim dry and wrapped in a warm blanket, including the head and neck.
- If victim has no pulse, begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

## **Safety Practices for Cold Environments**

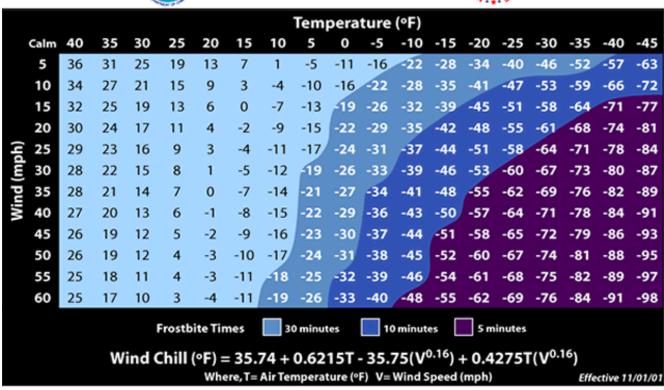
- **KNOW the weather forecast!** Organizers should monitor weather forecast well before the day of the event.
- Eliminate, postpone or limit walking as much as possible when extreme cold temperatures are present.
- Allow for acclimatization to cold environments or weather. If the weather is extremely
  cold for the area or time of year, you will not yet be used to it and are more susceptible
  to succumb to a cold related illness.
- Layer up on clothing and keep clothes dry. It is important to remove any wet clothing or boots and put on dry items when walking in a cold environment.
- Take breaks in warm up areas, such as inside buildings or vehicles as needed.



- Drink warm beverages to help warm up your core temperature.
- Monitor the condition of other walkers around you. If you notice something could be wrong get them into a warm area and notify one of the walk volunteers.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages.

# The following chart shows windchill based on ambient temperature and windspeed.







## **Incident / Accident Reporting**

Incident reporting guidelines are addressed in Section 4.08 Event Liability Insurance, of the AVA Policy Manual. Section 4.08D specifically addresses reporting requirements.

Anytime an incident or accident occurs on a walk, the AVA National Headquarters in Universal City is to be notified within ten days of the incident. Ideally, any accidents that requires an emergency room visit, ambulance response or hospitalization shall be reported immediately or as soon as practical, by an officer of the club.

Henry Rosales is the primary contact for reporting incidents and/or accidents.

**AVA Office Telephone Number is 210-659-2112** 

Additional, the AVA Incident Report is to be completed and submitted to AVA Headquarters within <u>ten days</u> of the incident. A copy of the report is included in the Appendices of this document.



## **APPENDICES**

	Item	Page #
A.	Operating Plan for Walk	17
В.	Medical Plan	19
C.	Basic Medical Supplies (First Aid)	20
D.	AVA Incident Report Form – AVA Form 403IR	21



APPENDIX A	Date:			
OPERATING PLAN FOR:				
This operating plan is hereby i	incorp	orate	d as a part of the authorizations in	
accordance with the Americar	า Volk	sspor	t Association, AVA, rules and regulations.	
Facilities	Yes	N <sub>o</sub>	If yes please identify provided an explanation.	
Facilities Provided: i.e. tents, canopies, booths, benches, chairs, etc.				
Overnight areas required.				
Provisions for drinking water.				
Signage: ribbons - trail markers.				
Sanitation Plan - Restrooms and garbage cans available.				
Accommodations for disabled visitors.				
Power supply requirements.				
Means of communication between walk organizers.				
		_		
Parking and Vehicles	Yes	Š	If yes please identify provided an explanation.	
Is parking readily available.				
Is parking sufficient in size to accommodate the expected number of walkers?				
Is shuttle service required?				
Is access for emergency vehicles open at all times?				
Safety Communications and Medical	Yes	N <sub>O</sub>	If yes please identify provided an explanation.	
Medical Plan attached?				
Number and location of 1st Aid Kits.				
Number of 1st Aid Provider(s).				
Availability of cellular telephone service.				



If no cellular service is available what means of communication will be used?			
Start Cards to be used to track walkers.			
Permits and Permissions	Yes	Š	If yes please identify provided an explanation.
Are any permits required? If yes, list name of Permit Issuing Entity.			
			or any additional information.



## **APPENDIX B**

## **Medical Plan**

Date:	Location:
Emergency Services Contact Nu	ımber (if other than 911):
Name, address and telephone in Emergency Clinic:	number of the local Emergency Room or
Organizers Cellular Telephone I	Number:
Number of event workers with	formal 1 <sup>st</sup> Aid / CPR Training:
	e,, and the location of each 1 <sup>st</sup>
	person has been designated to contact 911: Yes nse).
<del>-</del> -	person has been designated to lead the the scene: Yes or No - (circle the correct



#### **APPENDIX C**

## **Basic First Aid Supplies**

The Red Cross recommends that all first aid kits for a family of four include the following:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 1 emergency blanket
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of nonlatex gloves (size: large)
- 13 in. gauze roll (roller) bandage
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- 5 3 in. x 3 in. sterile gauze pads
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- First Aid Kit 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- Emergency First Aid guide





#### INCIDENT REPORT FORM

AVA # Club Name:	Date:
Event Point of Contact:	
Phone: Email:	
Reporting Person:	Title:
Address:	
Home Phone: Work: E	
Event Date(s): Event Number:	Event Type:
Co-Sponsor: Poir	nt of Contact:
Co-Sponsor Insurance (if any):	
Date of Incident: Time: Injured F	Person:
Address of Injured Person:	
Phone: Email:	
Гуре of Injury:	
Signed Waiver Form Attached: YES N	0
f no, where is form?:	
Nitnesses: Name/Address/Phone/Email	
Nas injured party taken to the hospital?:	rted by Ambulance?: Other:
Name and Address of Hospital:	
Physician:	
Use page 2 to report De	ails of Incident

#### ---- p...**9**- \_ --- --p----

- 1. Report actual circumstances of incident.
- 2. Report all actions of event workers/witnesses, other people.
- 3. Report on any follow-up and/or suggestions made to person.
- 4. Report on any other action/activity relating to incident.
- 5. Attach event brochure, individual's start card, waiver, and witness statements.
- 6. Submit report to AVA National Office.

#### **American Volkssport Association**

1008 South Alamo St. San Antonio, TX 78210

Form 403IR (March 2001) Revised for web site November 2019



1. Report actual circumstances of incident:			
2.	Report all actions of event workers/witnesses and/or other people		
3.	Report on any follow-up and/or suggestions made to person:		
4.	Report any other action/activity relating to the incident:		
5.	Attach event brochure individuals start card, waiver, & witness statements.		
6.	Submit the report to the AVA National Office.		
	m 403IR (March 2001)  American Volkssport Association  1008 S. Alamo St.  San Antonio, Texas 78210		