



TERMS OF REFERENCE
OF THE
ATHLETICS ONTARIO OFFICIALS'
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(AOOEC)
AND OF
ATHLETICS ONTARIO OFFICIALS
(AOO)

January 27, 2015 (date of approval by AO Board)

BACKGROUND

At the Annual General Meeting of Athletics Ontario Officials held November 13, 2010, the membership voted to suspend the Constitution of AOO and accepted a draft of the following document, with the understanding that certain changes, as discussed at the meeting, would be incorporated, and that the effective date of the new document would be April 1, 2011, in order to coincide with the fiscal year of Athletics Ontario, April 1 to March 31. It was further agreed that, until that date, AOO and the AOOEC would continue to have complete control over the monies held by AOO in its own bank account, and would continue to manage those monies as deemed appropriate by the AOO.

It was also agreed that:

1. Once approved by both the AOO and the AO Board, the document would remain in place, without changes, for at least one (1) year.
2. Any changes after that time would only be made by consent of both parties.

Discussions between the sub-committees of both AOO and AO regarding the changes, as discussed and suggested at the 2010 AGM, continued during 2011. The document was finally approved by the AOO membership at the AGM November 19, 2011, and by the AO Board November 19, 2011.

AMENDMENTS: From November, 2012 and going forward, proposals for changes may be made by either the AOOEC or the AO Board, and must be approved by a simple majority of both the AOOEC and the AO Board.

INTRODUCTION

Officiating is a key component of athletic excellence. Athletics Ontario Officials (AOO) are persons duly registered with Athletics Ontario (AO) as Athletics Technical Officials. Athletics Ontario officials are trained and are responsible for judging and supervising the competition at sanctioned athletics events within the Province of Ontario according to the rules and technical regulations that govern the sport of athletics. Athletics Ontario officials volunteer their expertise and time to ensure the quality and fairness of competition in all areas of athletics.

The Athletics Ontario Officials' Executive Committee (AOOEC) is a committee elected by the Athletics Ontario Officials.

Note: Throughout this document, all references to "Athletics Ontario official(s)" or "official(s)" mean "Athletics Ontario Technical Official(s)", as defined above.

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE ATHLETICS ONTARIO OFFICIALS' EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Purpose

The Athletics Ontario Officials' Executive Committee (AOOEC) shall organize and coordinate the recruitment, education, training, certification, upgrading, and retention of Ontario officials, and represent them within Athletics Ontario (AO).

2. Composition

The AOOEC shall consist of seven elected members:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Director of Seminars and Upgrading
- Director of Availability
- Director of Awards and Incentives
- Treasurer
- Secretary

To be eligible to serve on the AOOEC, a candidate must be a member of AOO, as defined in the Introduction, must have been a member of AOO for at least two (2) years, and must have achieved a minimum of Level 1 certification as an AO official.

3. Meetings

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Membership. Such meeting shall normally be held on the Saturday following Remembrance Day.
- b) Notice of the date, location and time of the AGM shall be communicated to Members by the Secretary at least 30 days prior to the meeting.
- c) The Chair may call Special Meetings of the Membership.
- d) Notification of meetings of the Membership shall be by the most appropriate method, based on the urgency of the message and the facilities available to the recipients (i.e. electronic mail, facsimile, personal phone call, or Canada Post).
- e) Meetings of the AOOEC shall be held at the call of the Chair, who shall also inform AO.
- f) Four (4) Executive members shall constitute a quorum for any AOOEC meeting.
- g) All meetings and meeting procedures shall be conducted under "Roberts Rules of Order", unless otherwise stated.
- h) Members must be present to vote.
- i) The Chair shall vote only to break a tie vote on motions. The Chair may vote as any other member in elections.
- j) Minutes shall be recorded for all meetings.
- k) Minutes of the AGM and summary minutes of AOOEC meetings shall be posted on the Officials' page of the AO Web site. Members without Web access may request a hard copy from the Secretary.

4. Elections and Terms of Office

All members of AOO (as defined on page 2 of this document) are eligible to vote at the AGM.

- a) Members of the AOOEC shall be elected by secret ballot at the AGM of the AOO.
- b) Candidates shall be allowed sixty (60) seconds to outline their qualifications and intentions prior to the vote.
- c) Election to an Executive portfolio shall require a majority (more than half) of votes cast by those present at the time of the election.
- d) In all cases in which there is no candidate with a majority AND two or more candidates are tied, the voters shall be advised of the tie and the vote shall be held again.
- e) Should there be more than two (2) persons stand for election to an Executive position and the vote does not provide any of the candidates with a majority, as defined above, the candidate with the least number of votes shall be dropped from the ballot and another vote held. This process shall be repeated as necessary.
- f) Only the name of the elected member will be announced, not the full ballot result.
- g) Members of the AOOEC shall be elected for a term of two (2) years.
- h) The Chair, the Director of Seminars and Upgrading, and the Director of Awards and Incentives shall be elected in odd calendar years (in that order), and the Vice-Chair, the Director of Availability, the Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected in even calendar years (in that order).
- i) Should an Executive member resign or be unable to complete his or her term, the AOOEC shall appoint a replacement until the next AGM, when an election will be held. The replacement candidate must fulfill the eligibility requirements outlined in section 2 above. If a resignation is submitted at an AGM, however, the election to fill that vacated position will take place at that same AGM.
- j) Any Executive member who wishes to stand for election to a vacant or vacated position must resign his/her Executive position prior to the AGM being called to order.

5. Key Responsibilities

The Chair will ensure that these responsibilities are distributed appropriately among members of the AOOEC each year at the first meeting after the AGM, based on the skills and interests of the executive members. Some responsibilities may be shared by two or more executive members.

- a) Ensure all active AO officials have a current AO membership.
- b) Maintain a registry of all AO officials, including their disciplines and levels.
- c) Develop programs for the recruitment and retention of AO officials.
- d) Develop and coordinate programs for the education, training, certification and upgrading of AO officials.
- e) Organize and coordinate the mentoring of AO officials.
- f) Organize and coordinate upgrading clinics for Levels 1, 2 and 3, and facilitate clinics for Levels 4 and 5 as may be required.
- g) Coordinate the processing and approval of upgrading applications for Levels 1, 2 and 3, and the processing of upgrading applications for Levels 4 and 5 prior to forwarding them to the National Officials' Committee (NOC).
- h) Organize and coordinate the training of mentors and clinicians.
- i) Coordinate out-of-province travel for AO officials.
- j) Coordinate requests from other provinces for mentoring opportunities at meets in Ontario.
- k) Communicate with AO officials on a regular basis.
- l) Recommend and/or nominate AO officials for provincial and national awards.
- m) Develop and administer a recognition program for AO officials.

- n) Monitor and oversee the financial records of the AOO.
- o) Ensure that information pertinent to AO officials is provided to the AO Web master, through the AOOEC Chair, in a timely manner for posting on the AOO pages of the AO Web site.
- p) Organize and conduct an AGM for the AOO prior to the AGM of AO, to discuss matters of interest to officials, to elect AOOEC members for the following year, to receive an interim financial statement and review the proposed budget for the following year, and to conduct such other business that may be required.

6. Key Relationships

- a) Liaise with AOO
- b) Liaise with AO's Board of Directors and staff
- c) Liaise with NOC
- d) Liaise with meet directors

7. Duties and Responsibilities

- a) The Chair shall:
 - i) coordinate the activities of the AOOEC
 - ii) represent AOO to AO
 - iii) represent AOO at NOC meetings
 - iv) prepare the proposed agenda for all meetings of AOO and the AOOEC and preside over those meetings
 - v) submit to NOC all AOOEC-approved applications for upgrading to Levels 4 and 5
 - vi) submit to NOC all AOOEC-approved nominations for NOC awards or other national awards for which AO officials may be eligible
 - vii) coordinate the preparation and distribution of "Officially Speaking", a newsletter for AO officials, and other mailings that may be required from time to time
 - viii) appoint sub-committees as may be necessary
 - ix) sit as an ex-officio member of all AOOEC sub-committees
 - x) forward information pertinent to AO officials to the AO Web master in a timely manner for posting on the AOO pages of the AO Web site, ensuring that updates are provided as required.
- b) The Vice-Chair shall:
 - i) assist the Chair and assume the position of Chair should the Chair be unavailable
 - ii) assume the duty, while the Chair is challenged, of chairing a meeting
 - iii) ensure that an up-to-date list of registered AO officials, including their levels and disciplines, is maintained
 - iv) coordinate the recruitment program for new AO officials
 - v) ensure that information regarding AOO recruitment and recognition programs, and any other information relevant to the portfolio, is provided to the AO Web master, through the AOOEC Chair, in a timely manner for posting on the AOO pages of the AO Web site, and that it is updated as required
- c) The Director of Seminars and Upgrading shall:
 - i) facilitate all aspects of clinics and seminars for the purpose of recruitment, training and upgrading, using AOOEC-approved clinicians when possible
 - ii) receive all applications for upgrading

- iii) summarize each upgrading request and notify the applicant within thirty (30) days of any missing criteria or documentation
 - iv) have the authority to approve applications for Levels 1, 2 and 3 throughout the year
 - v) advise candidates of the outcome of their applications promptly
 - vi) liaise with the Chair to ensure that all required documentation for upgrading to Levels 4 and 5 is in place before such applications are forwarded by the Chair to NOC
 - vii) report on all upgrading applications approved and clinics/seminars held during the year
 - viii) ensure that information regarding clinics, seminars, upgrading criteria, application deadlines, and any other information relevant to the portfolio, is provided to the AO Web master, through the AOOEC Chair, in a timely manner for posting on the AOO pages of the AO Web site, and that it is updated as required
 - ix) assist the Chair as required
- d) The Director of Availability shall:
- i) prepare an Availability form for each indoor and outdoor season, based on the Calendar of Events posted on the AO Web site
 - ii) receive all completed Availability forms submitted by AO officials and prepare a summary of their availability;
 - iii) update the Availability list on an ongoing basis, as new information is received and new officials join AOO
 - iv) advise meet directors of officials' availability in a timely manner
 - v) work with meet directors or officials' coordinators to develop roster of officials for each AO championship meet
 - vi) collaborate with the officials' coordinator for each AO provincial championship to ensure compliance with AO meet policies, as outlined in "*Policies & Procedures for the Staging of Provincial Championships, Appendix 1*" which can be found on the AO Web site.
 - vii) ensure that information relevant to the portfolio is provided to the AO Web master, through the AOOEC Chair, in a timely manner for posting on the AOO pages of the AO Web site, and that it is updated as required
 - viii) assist the Chair as required
- e) The Director of Awards and Incentives shall:
- i) coordinate, in consultation with the Chair, a recognition program of awards and incentives, specifying the items and the criteria each year
 - ii) process applications for such awards and incentives
 - iii) liaise with AO and other such provincial bodies to facilitate the application process for other provincial and national awards for which AO officials may be eligible
 - iv) assist the Chair as required
- f) The Secretary shall:
- i) record the proceedings of all AOOEC meetings and of the AOO AGM, and forward said minutes to the members of the AOOEC within twenty-one (21) calendar days of the date of such meetings
 - ii) expedite, through the AOOEC Chair, the posting of all such minutes on the appropriate page of the AO Web site
 - iii) assist the Chair as required

- g) The Treasurer shall:
- i) develop and monitor a budget request annually, in consultation with the AOOEC Chair, taking into account the anticipated annual requirements of the AOO with regard to travel, training, and awards and incentives
 - ii) maintain financial records of the AOO, the expenditures of the AOO being accounted for separately within AO's books of account and financial statements
 - iii) receive monthly financial reports from AO listing all expenditures relating to AOO
 - iv) in consultation with the AOOEC Chair, have oversight approval of all AOO-related expenditures
 - v) prepare, in consultation with the AOOEC Chair, an interim financial statement for presentation to the AOO AGM
 - vi) assist the Chair as required

8. Authority Limits

- a) The Chair shall report directly to the AO Board of Directors on any matter relating to AO officials and officiating. Any recommendations to the AO Board of Directors shall be in writing.
- b) The AOOEC may act as advisory to the AO Board of Directors.
- c) The AOOEC shall establish *ad hoc* committees as necessary to accomplish its mandate.

9. Finances

- a) The annual budget for the AOO shall be prepared taking into account the mandate and the key responsibilities of the AOO.
- b) AOO expenditures shall be accounted for separately within AO's books of account and financial statements.
- c) The Treasurer will meet at the beginning of February each year with the AO Managing Director to look at the expected budget that will be required to service AOO during the next fiscal year. The Treasurer will receive monthly reports from AO listing all officials' expenditures.
- d) All expense claims shall be paid by AO in a timely manner, with such payment not to be unreasonably withheld for items that fall within the approved budgeted amounts.
- e) AO shall be responsible for the payment of the following, once authorized by the AOO Treasurer:
 - i) AO officials' mileage for AO Championships meets, as per the AO Travel Policy and the Officials' Expenses section of this document. Accommodation, meals and out-of-pocket expenses for AO meets [e.g. parking, starters' shells] are a meet responsibility.
 - ii) all AO officials' training and development costs. These include out-of-province travel for upgrading purposes and costs for clinics and seminars.
 - iii) the AO officials' recognition program costs
 - iv) expenses related to meetings involving members of the AOOEC and/or any of its sub-committees, i.e. the AOO AGM, AOOEC meetings, and AOO committee meetings. This does not extend to expenses of the Membership to attend the AGM.
 - v) costs for travel, accommodation and meals for the Chair to attend NOC meetings

10. Role of AO Staff

- a) To provide administrative support to, and to act as a resource for, the AOOEC
- b) To distribute relevant technical information and communications to all AO officials
- c) To distribute expense cheques to all AO officials
- d) To update and maintain AOO pages of the AO Web site on a regular basis using content provided by the AOOEC.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Hosting of and Liaison with Officials

Officials are unpaid volunteers. Their primary responsibility is to conduct the actual competition(s). Officials will generally act in a leadership role, occasionally directing and training local volunteers, as required, to act as junior officials.

Officials' expectations:

- timely invitation(s) for officiating services and timely confirmation as to whether or not their services are required
- sufficient and necessary technical and junior competition officials to coordinate, assist with, and undertake the competition event(s) in an expeditious and timely manner
- sufficient time to carry out the competition event(s) to which they have been assigned, taking into account requisite event marshalling times, warm-up times, other events, number of athletes competing, breaks, etc.
- sufficient event-approved competition equipment and implements to conduct the event(s)
- competition area laid out per applicable (IAAF, AC or AO) rules and ready for a safe competition to be conducted
- regular and sufficient breaks between events and for meals
- complimentary meals or an agreed-upon per diem in lieu of meals
- complimentary hot or cold beverages on a frequent and regular basis during the meet, depending on weather
- reimbursement for travel
- complimentary accommodation or payment of the actual cost of accommodation
- complimentary parking or payment of the actual cost of parking
- compensation for all legitimate out-of-pocket expenses
- the same protection under health and safety regulations and public liability as paid employees
- a clear indication of their tasks and responsibilities

Officials' responsibilities:

- respond in a timely manner to request(s) for officiating services
- honour any commitment made to the best of their abilities, notifying the meet director or the officials' coordinator in good time should they be unable to keep that commitment
- do what is reasonably requested of them, to the best of their ability
- arrive at the venue with sufficient time to prepare for their event
- wear the accepted uniform for the meet, i.e. Athletics Ontario, Athletics Canada, or as provided by the host organizing committee
- recognize the right of the meet organizers to expect quality of service
- recognize that they represent the AOO and therefore, that they must act in an appropriate manner at all times and strive to meet reasonable expectations of meet organizers
- adhere to the Athletics Ontario – Member Conduct Policy “Code of Conduct” which can be found on the AO Web site; a hard copy can also be obtained from the AO office.

Membership Benefits for Officials

- free Insurance Coverage for registered AO officials.
 - “AO officials are covered by AO Insurance in 2 ways.
 - 1) *Liability insurance up to \$5,000,000. – If you are sued by another AO registered member for an occurrence that takes place during an AO sanctioned activity, e.g. an athlete trips over a rake left near the long jump pit where you were officiating and sues the official who was there when the accident happened.*
 - 2) *Sports Accident Insurance – If you were the person who was injured while officiating at an AO sanctioned meet, certain medical expenses (over and above what OHIP covers) [see current Insurance documents on the AO Web site] would be paid, e.g. an official trips over a rake left near the long jump pit where that official had been officiating, and breaks an ankle. (This would include ambulance fees, prescription drugs and some physiotherapy as well as up to \$1,000 for ‘fracture coverage’).*” (statement from Athletics Ontario, 2011)
- free membership with Athletics Ontario and, therefore, with Athletics Canada
- access to AO-funded programs for officials’ development
- protection under the Athletics Ontario Harassment Policy, which can be found on the AO Web site; a hard copy can also be obtained from the AO office.

OFFICIALS' RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The AOOEC shall establish, with the support of AO, an “Athletics Ontario Technical Officials’ Recognition Program” to recognize the dedication and work efforts of officials during the year. The program shall be renewed and reviewed, on an annual basis, prior to the AOO’s Annual General Meeting.

Program

- i) All officials who are registered with AO for the current year, and who earn a minimum of 12 officiating credits (4 of which must be at AO championships) in the current year are eligible to receive a recognition award. (*one credit is up to 4 hours of work; maximum 3 credits per day*)
- ii) The Meet Record card will be used for verification of credits.
- iii) Provisional officials (i.e. not yet having achieved Level 1) are not eligible to receive a recognition award.
- iv) Each official may claim only one recognition award from each level (i.e. one name tag, one golf shirt, etc.), regardless of the number of Level 3, 4 or 5 qualifications he/she may earn.
- v) Only one recognition award per person may be claimed in a calendar year.

The following items will be provided to each eligible official meeting the above criteria.

Level 1 official

- new Level 1 officials will receive an AO officials’ nametag

Level 2 officials

- an AO officials’ golf shirt

Recognition awards for **Levels 3, 4 and 5** will be determined by the AOOEC on an annual basis.

Application

Eligible officials shall complete and submit an Athletics Ontario Technical Officials’ Recognition Program Claim Form, which can be found on the AO Web site, together with a photocopy of their Meet Record card for the applicable year, to the AOOEC Director of Awards and Incentives.

Presentation

Recognition awards shall be distributed at the AOO AGM.

OFFICIALS' EXPENSES

Athletics Ontario officials shall be compensated for all out-of-pocket expenses whilst engaged in Athletics Ontario business. Travel for AO Championships is the responsibility of AO. Accommodation, meals and out-of-pocket expenses [e.g. parking, starters' shells] for AO meets are a meet responsibility. Travel for meets other than AO Championships, for meals, accommodation, parking, and miscellaneous items such as starter's shells, are the responsibility of meet hosts.

Travel

AO officials shall follow the guidelines laid out in the AO Travel Policy which applies to all AO members. Officials' claims for travel expenses to and from meets shall be submitted on the form, *Technical Official's Travel Expense Claim Form*, which can be found on the Officials' section of the AO web site.

The following provisions apply:

- Funding for officials' travel to AO championships at the AO-approved rate is restricted to registered officials who are Level 2 or higher.
- Registered Level 1 officials are eligible for funding to a maximum of 50km each way. (NOTE, if the meet is within 'commuting distance', funding is available for each day of the meet [e.g. Oshawa to Toronto for 2-day meet = funding for 200 km; Toronto to Ottawa for 2-day meet = funding for 100 km])
- Registered Provisional officials receive no funding for travel unless approved in advance by the AOOEC.

Meals

If meals are not provided free of charge by the meet organization, then meals shall be reimbursed for each day, or part thereof, that the official is required to be at the meet as per the AO Travel Policy.

Accommodation

If accommodation is not provided free of charge by the meet organization, then the actual cost of overnight accommodation, including all taxes, but excluding items of a personal nature, and based on standard shared accommodation, with a maximum of two (2) people per room, shall be paid.

For meets of more than one day's duration, each official should have the option of commuting each day, or of staying at the accommodation being provided by the meet organizers.

- The official must declare his/her decision within one week of receiving the initial meet schedule, to allow meet organizers to prepare an appropriate rooming list.
- Reimbursement will be the lesser of the commuting travel cost (as per the AO Travel Policy) and the accommodation cost (as per Accommodation section above).
- The official is responsible for paying the difference, should he/she choose the more costly option (e.g. if he/she chooses to stay at the hotel, and the hotel charge is higher than what the commuting travel cost would have been).

Parking

If parking at the approved accommodation or at the meet venue is not provided free of charge by the meet organization, and if transportation is not provided to the meet venue from the approved accommodation free of charge by the meet organization, then the actual cost of parking, including all taxes, at either or both locations shall be paid.

Officials' Expense Forms

Copies of the *Technical Official's Travel Expense Claim Form* will be provided by the meet organization or by the officials' coordinator. The form is also available on the AO Web site. Forms must be fully completed and submitted within thirty (30) days of the end of the meet to the AO office, to the officials' coordinator, or to the AOO Treasurer, who has final approval for all claims.

OFFICIALS' DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Welcome

New recruits to AOO shall receive a 'Welcome Kit'.

Training and Upgrading

Athletics Ontario provides a program of training and upgrading through courses and mentoring from Level 1 up to and including Level 3.

Training courses are intended for technical officials. Other AO members, such as meet organizers, coaches or athletes, may enroll out of interest. Clinic/training requirements are outlined below.

Athletics Ontario Officials Upgrading Requirements

All officials requesting upgrading must hold a valid Athletics Ontario membership.

*Credits: One event credit is earned for working up to and including 4 hours in one day.
Two event credits are earned for working over 4 hours, up to and including 8 hours in one day.
Three event credits are earned for working more than 8 hours in one day.
The maximum number of credits that may be claimed in one day is three.*

To be promoted to Level 1 in Ontario, an official must:

1. Have earned 6 event credits, some in track and some in field.
2. Have written the Athletics Ontario Officials Level 1 Quiz and achieved at least 80%.
3. Have both parts A and B of an *Athletics Ontario Officials Level 1 Report* signed.

To be promoted to Level 2 in Ontario, an official must:

1. Have earned 12 event credits, ideally some in track and some in field, since upgrading to Level 1.
2. Have completed 6 months of service as a Level 1 official.
3. Either have attended an **Athletics Ontario Officials Comprehensive Clinic**
OR
have written the Athletics Ontario Officials Level 2 Assignment and achieved at least 80%.
4. Have received one *Provincial Mentoring Report*. The mentoring can be in any discipline in which the official has worked, and must be done by an official Level 3 or higher in the discipline in which the official is being mentored.

NOTES:

1. *A provisional official who attends an AOO Comprehensive Clinic may 'save' the clinic credit, i.e. will not have to take it again to be promoted to Level 2.*
2. *A Level 1 official who attends, or has attended, a clinic without attending sessions on all disciplines (or a clinic at which all disciplines were not offered) must write the AOO Level 2 Assignment and achieve at least 80% to be promoted to Level 2.*

To be promoted to Level 3 in Ontario, an official must:

1. Have earned 16 event credits.
2. Have completed one year of service as a Level 2 official.
3. Have written the NOC Open-book exam and achieved at least 80%.
4. Have received two *Provincial Mentoring Reports*.

For further details of requirements for promotion to Level 3, and to Levels 4 and 5, please refer to the document, 'NOC Upgrading Criteria' of the National Officials' Committee, which can be found on the AO Web site and on the Athletics Canada Web site. (above criteria for Levels 1 and 2 in Ontario supersede those outlined in the NOC Criteria)

To Achieve Level 4

Promotion to Level 4 requires attending a National Clinic in a specific discipline. National clinic are usually presented at Championship events. See the full NOC Upgrading Criteria on the AO or the AC Web site for complete requirements for Level 4.

To Achieve Level 5

There is no clinic requirement or assignment to achieve Level 5. See the full NOC Upgrading Criteria on the AO or the AC Web site for complete requirements for Level 5.

Once the requirements for upgrading to the next level have been met, the official should complete the appropriate Application for Upgrading and forward it to the AOOEC Director of Seminars and Upgrading. Questions, or requests related to credits, clinics, and/or evaluations or mentoring reports needed to complete upgrading requirements should also be directed to the Director of Seminars and Upgrading.

The AOOEC is responsible for managing and awarding Levels 1, 2 and 3. Applications for upgrading for Levels 1, 2 and 3 may be submitted at any time to the AOOEC Director of Seminars and Upgrading.

The AOOEC processes applications for National Levels 4 and 5 and forwards them to the National Officials' Committee for decisions at their annual Spring and Fall meetings. Deadlines for submitting Levels 4 and 5 applications to NOC are March 31 and September 30 of each year. Submissions, therefore, must be received by the AO Director of Seminars and Upgrading no later than March 15 and September 15 in order to be processed and forwarded to NOC.