**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE ECCA AND THE AREAS**

The ECCA and the three area competition providers in the Midlands, North and South continue to oppose the equalisation of distances for cross country and this view has been supported by an overwhelming majority at grassroots level who know our sport well alongside many eminent athletes and coaches. We understand the recent UKA survey has now supported our position which was also validated through extensive surveys carried out by all three areas.

The recent statement by UKA states there are some “fundamental challenges” for cross- country but this seems to be at odds with the evidence we have, namely that cross-country has had considerable success over a number of years and substantial increase in numbers taking part over the last 10 years. It is a part of our sport that is thriving in its current format led by our local leagues, counties and areas through to national events.

A fundamental challenge for us is for UKA & EA to move from a “top down / directive” style of management and to move to one where the grass roots are consulted and supported in delivering what they do. This unwanted style was particularly evident on this issue of equalisation driven via UKA by a vocal and fringe minority group.

We understand that all viewpoints need to be considered, but regret that UKA were initially  
so influenced by what we all know and understand to be a vocal minority.  
We hope that in future UKA will talk to the sport and ask those who know cross country at  
grassroots level, taking into account the current growth and success that we are delivering.