



***Policy Document:
Accounting for National Events
(July 2006)***

1. General Guidance

This Policy Document should not be used as a guide, but as standard for organising a national event, every rally however is different and hence any costings should be used only as examples and not as a fixed proposal. The aim is to produce a budget that balances with perhaps a small surplus to allow flexibility.

The treasurer for a national event needs to have a strong personality in order to say no to the rest of a committee if their ideas are financially unfeasible. Ideally, event treasurers should have some experience of budgeting and calculating costs and a good working knowledge of Excel (or other spreadsheet package). Included in the documents 'How to Run a Rally' and 'How to Run a Ball' are more detailed financial guidelines regarding what people should expect to pay for each component of an event and some sample budgets.

The second point to note is that communication is incredibly important, not only between the members of the organising committee themselves, but also to the SSAGO National Executive. The treasurer of a national event **MUST** communicate regularly with the SSAGO Treasurer. This is vital, as SSAGO underwrites national events, and even if a loan is not taken, if a loss is made, SSAGO may foot the bill. As SSAGO has a very low membership fee, that covers insurance, as well as many other important costs, and no other means of income, any loss that SSAGO makes is undesirable for the upkeep of the organisation. The SSAGO Treasurer is there to help you out with advice, to tell you where there are problems with your budget, and make suggestions or where you could improve. No matter how experienced you are with budgeting, it always helps to have a second eye cast over it to spot any mistakes. To this end, the Event Details Form to be provided by the SSAGO Treasurer must be completed at the AGM where the event is bid for; a copy of this is included with this document.

It is then the responsibility of the event treasurer to complete and return the relevant budget as per the examples available within 6 WEEKS from this date. This will allow the experienced SSAGO Treasurer to have a look over it and discuss it with the incoming SSAGO Treasurer Elect at handover. Because of the timescale of this deadline, it is not intended to be in any way an accurate budget for the event, but ensures two things, 1 that communication is happening and 2 that the SSAGO Treasurer can begin to make suggestions on where you could cut down. If it is left until 2 months or less before the event for budgets to be seen, it becomes very difficult for suggestions to be implemented.

This initial budget may fall into the red (i.e. show a loss). This is ok, as prices can be negotiated on future purchases reducing cost. For a rally initial budget should include a rough price of a band, venue for the barn dance and campsite, as researched by the rest of the committee. If you have two or more possibilities, include these on separate spreadsheets.

It is vital that ongoing correspondence with the SSAGO Treasurer is maintained, provision of initial budget and then no correspondence until just before the event is unacceptable.

It is not the purpose of SSAGO events nationally to make a profit, however a loss is unacceptable. Every effort should be made to bring an event in at breakeven.

2. SSAGO Loan

You are entitled to a loan of up to **£300** from SSAGO funds, to help cash flow problems and to ensure deposits can be paid for campsites and the barn dance venue. **PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A LOAN AND MUST BE PAID BACK.** Do not forget to include it in the expenditure section for it to be paid back, if you have included it in the income section. The loan for an event can be requested at any time in the run-up to the rally and the Rally Treasurer should approach SSAGO Treasurer to request a loan before any money is outlaid for the event. No event should be funded using personal money and no club money without the consent of the Club Executive and the National Treasurer.

The issuing of any loans is subject to the state of the SSAGO bank account, a completed Event Details Form and a satisfactory budget. The National Treasurer shall work with event committees to ensure that loans are available as early as possible. Remember that budgets may have to undergo several re-writes so finalising budgets early is in everyone's interest.

To request a SSAGO loan, a Loan Request Form needs to be completed by the event Treasurer and signed by the requested persons. This must be returned by post as signatures are required.

If your budget does not balance at least a month before the event, you will not get a loan. If you have already received a loan, and refuse any suggestions the SSAGO Treasurer makes to reduce your expected loss, the Exec may hold you responsible for any loss that is made.

3. Financial Requirements

For all events there must be a minimum of three signatures on any account of which two must sign each cheque. Plastic bank cards are not to be requested from the bank or used on the account.

Use of a Union account is appropriate as long as copies are taken of any receipts submitted and a printout of account transactions can be obtained.

Any payments made of over £15 must be pre agreed with the event treasurer.

When claiming expenses, the claimant must not sign a cheque to themselves even though the cheque is to be countersigned.

Those that sign cheques should not have a romantic involvement with the claimant or co-signer.

The SSAGO Treasurer is required to audit the accounts of each national event, unless the SSAGO Treasurer has been involved in the organising of the event, in which case the accounts are to be audited by a nominee of the SSAGO Chairperson.

To facilitate loans for other events, all accounts should be submitted within 3 months of the event along with all receipts and bank statements.