

# Pre-event planning

Plan for the organisation of your event in phases; details within each phase will be dependent on the event venue, scale, duration and planned activities. Any event will involve elements of each phase and you should identify those issues, which are relevant to your event and plan accordingly.



Figure 1: Event phases

In all phases the establishment of a safety culture in management and operational practices is essential. Safety should not be seen in terms of rules and conditions imposed from outside, but as a goal to which all parties to the event are fully committed. Regardless of the nature of the event general planning questions to be addressed include:

- Which organisations and groups of people need to be involved or kept informed?
- Are tickets required? How, where and when will tickets be sold?
- How many people are likely to attend? What are the capacity limits?
- What kind of audience will it be?
- How will they behave? What will their mood be?
- Have similar events taken place, which may give useful pointers to problems and solutions?
- How long will the event last?
- What facilities will need to be provided?
- What are the required staffing levels for different types of personnel?
- What different arrangements may be needed:
  - In the build up to the event?
  - During the course of the event?
  - During the wind-up phase?

A wide range of venues can be used for events; in all cases it is good practice to ask the following questions:

- How will people get there? What planning issues are involved?
- What arrangements are needed for managing people outside the venue?
- What will be necessary for managing people inside the venue?
- How will they view the activities? Sitting? Standing? Festival Seating, circulating from one activity to another?
- What are the safe capacities? For the venue as a whole? For different sections?
- Is the venue already authorised to run a particular kind of event?

## Managing the risk

Every event has attendant risks; the first step in managing those risks involves examining all areas of your event to determine where losses can occur. This examination is not limited to safety issues, but can ensure that the event is conducted in the safest possible manner and if something unfortunate does occur that the loss does not further impact the organisation either financially or through adverse publicity. There are four general areas of losses associated with events:

- Personnel
- Property
- Income
- Liability

By examining all areas where losses could possibly occur, you can identify where you may need to purchase additional insurance.

Although the process may not guarantee that you have identified every possible risk factor associated with the event, the exercise will assist with demonstrating your diligence in attempting to identify those you can manage and control and could be a factor in reducing your obligatory insurance costs.

For events the combination of individual risk factors is extremely important in establishing the degree of risk. Changing one aspect of an event may greatly increase the risk factors. Some examples include: if free admission is allowed as a last minute decision that will change the whole nature of risk for the event. If the event is transferred from one location to another with less capacity you may have a serious problem of not being able to seat everyone. If the weather suddenly changes you may have risks for which you are not prepared.

## Risk assessment

In compliance with health and safety law there is a legal requirement to undertake a risk assessment of those hazards, which could cause harm to your staff and/or members of the public attending the event. A risk assessment is a systematic approach to the control of hazards and should be done in relation to the physical characteristics of the venue, likely audience behaviour, technical installations, nature of performance etc. It involves the identification of foreseeable hazards, evaluating the risks associated with them and considering what needs to be done to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. The process should be comprehensively documented and recorded. Write down all the activities and attractions, which make up the event and identify ways in which people (employees, the public and any contractors) could be harmed.

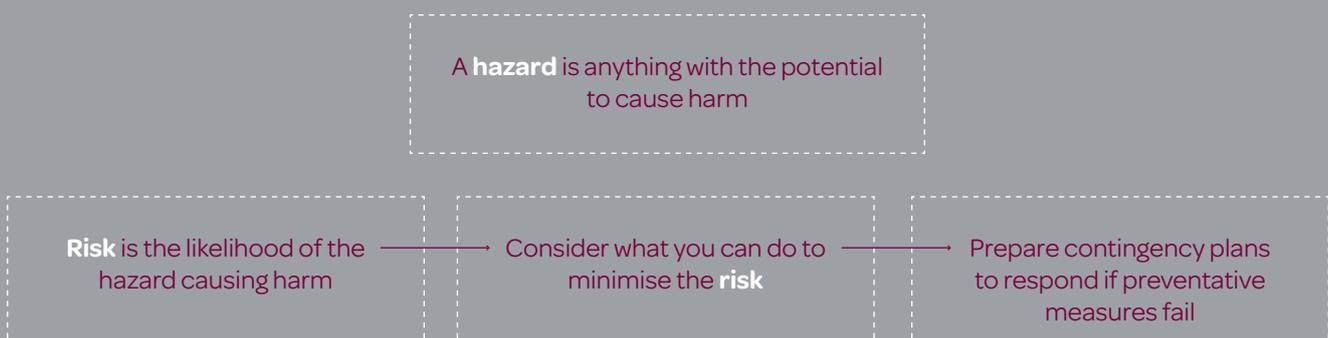


Figure 2: Steps of a risk assessment

The risk of a hazard causing harm is a measure of the likelihood or probability of an accident coupled with the severity of the injury or loss. The simplest form of a risk assessment uses the common categories of High, Medium and Low. Risk assessments can be undertaken in various ways, the following example sets out the methodology in its simplest form:

Severity		Likelihood		Risk rating	
High	Fatality-major injury causing long term disability	Low	Very seldom or never	Low Risk	1
Medium	Injury - an illness causing short term disability	Medium	Reasonably likely	Medium Risk	2
Low	Other injury or illness	High	Certain or near certain	High Risk	3

Table 2: Risk categories

Where the likelihood of an occurrence is identified as high or medium you will need to put measures in place to minimise the likelihood of accidents actually occurring, these measures are listed as controls. Where the probability of an occurrence is Low, but the severity is High, contingency plans should be prepared. The following table shows the documentation of an identified hazard:

Assessment of risk and control measures	
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Slips/Trips</b>
Summary of risk to be assessed Persons at risk Nature of risk	a) Risk of injury to all persons traversing the venue b) All participants, staff and patrons admitted to the event site c) Risk of muscular skeletal disorders, broken limbs, bruises and cuts
<b>Likelihood: High - 3 Medium - 2 Low - 1</b>	<b>2</b>
Preventative measures for Risk Control	a) Maintain pedestrian routes in a safe condition b) Provide and maintain clear signage on all routes c) Provide and maintain adequate lighting on all routes d) Maintain a good housekeeping regime e) Monitor crowd congestion
<b>Likelihood Post - Control</b>	<b>1</b>
Maintenance	a) Constant checking and subsequent action is required

Table 3: Hazard assessment

Your completed risk assessment should be written down and the necessary control measures should be included in the safety section of your overall event plan (it may be necessary to obtain professional advice in the conduct of a thorough risk assessment).

During and after the event, continuously evaluate your risk assessment to determine the effectiveness of the measures and procedures that were put in place.



## Contractors and suppliers

Dependent on the scale of your event, it is likely that you will be engaging the services of contractors and sub-contractors to undertake such tasks as the construction and tear-down of temporary structures and the installation and maintenance of services to the site. The set up and take down of major event sites can be extremely hazardous and all the necessary precautions need to be put in place by the contractor and event organiser. The following documentation should be requested from all contractors:

- A copy of their company's health and safety plan
- Proof of insurance
- A specific risk assessment of the work they will be carrying out on your behalf
- Work method statements for any construction activities
- Certification for materials used e.g. fire certificates for carpeting etc.
- Site plans and specifications where required
- Structural engineers certificates
- Documentation as required under the construction regulations

For events that require significant build up you should appoint and involve an event safety officer in the selection of contractors to ensure they adhere to safe working procedures on the site and a structural engineer to ensure any temporary structure is built to specifications.

In respect of staff employed by you on construction and installation activities, the event safety officer should not only devise safe systems of work but should supervise this work. This should include ensuring that staff are trained appropriately in the use of equipment or to drive fork lift trucks.