

Health and Safety Policy Annex M: A guide to organising safe events

Contents

Introduction	1
Planning the event	2
First steps.....	2
Invite attendees.....	2
Assessing the risks	2
Organisation	3
Organising committee.....	3
Event manager	3
Safety Officer	4
Who to contact	5
Public liability insurance	6
Emergency planning	7
Site preparation and facilities	7
Crowd management plan.....	12
Control room.....	12
Event communication plan.....	12
Transport infrastructure plan.....	12
Staff safety	13
Welfare facilities	13
Food safety plan	14
Barbecues and hot food outlets	14
Weather conditions.....	14
Community safety	15
Contact telephone numbers	15
Recommended reading	16
Event checklist before and during event.....	17
Stewards' duties	19

Introduction

As the event manager, the following guidance has been laid out to ensure your event runs successfully and safely.

Please remember that this is only a guide and, if you need further advice, you will find a list of useful contact numbers at the end of this guidance document.

Planning the event

First steps

Decide on the venue, the size and contents of the event and the dates and times it will be open, whether admission will be free, by pre-sold tickets or by payment at the gate and estimate the approximate number and the profile of the people expected to attend the event.

Invite potential traders

Send out invite letters to potential event traders. The letter should highlight requirements for attending the event. This would include:

- event conditions including minimum standards (4* minimum food standard rating)
- stall, activity risk assessments, method statements
- gas certification
- potable appliance test (PAT) certification
- firefighting equipment
- employee and public liability insurance (see insurance guidance on page 6).

Assessing the risks

Make a short, written assessment of each of the attractions and/or activities that make up the event. Identify all the possible hazards that could occur. Remember any materials, structures or machinery on or around the site that might add risk to the event, such as ladders, water features, gas or other fuel containers.

When you have listed the possible hazards of each activity, decide how you will reduce the risks in each case and the precautions you intend to take. Ask anyone supplying or operating attractions, activities or equipment to provide you with their own written assessments and include these with your assessment (note: risk assessments should be checked for suitability, signed and dated within the past 12 months).

When listing possible hazards, consider:

- older people
- people with disabilities
- children (who may be unsupervised)
- excitement generated by the activity
- approximate number of people expected
- animals
- alcohol being sold and consumed.

The following is a list of attractions and activities which should have a written assessment and certification of declaration of operational compliance:

- bouncy castles and children's amusement rides
- karting and fairground equipment

- bungee jumping, hot air ballooning and helicopter rides
- stands or stalls (especially those involving weapons, guns, darts and so on)
- displays and parades involving animals, vehicles, weapons, flames, special effects, parachuting.

Each attraction or activity will have its own special hazards. Providers of such attractions and activities must be asked to provide qualifications of competency and details of experience in the invite letter. A percentage of the qualifications and experience will need to be verified via the qualification provider and organisers of previous events that the provider has attended in the past.

Entertainment such as concerts, performances, dancing, laser or fireworks displays will present hazards that require specialised guidance.

Further advice can be obtained from various sources – please see page 15.

The completed assessments will form part of the event safety plan. This is evidence that you and your fellow organisers have taken all reasonable precautions for a safe event.

Organisation

Start organising several months before the event. This will give you time to carry out your risk assessments and obtain specialist advice where necessary.

It will also allow time for the statutory authorities (police, fire and ambulance services and local authority) and the voluntary organisations (first aid societies and so on) to make their arrangements, especially if they need to attend the event. This is important during the summer months when there may be several events taking place on the same day.

Organising committee

Form a committee, no matter how informal, and allocate responsibilities for the safe operation of the event.

Event manager

The event manager has overall responsibility for the event – this includes safety, resources and third parties in collaboration with the emergency services and other agencies.

Responsibilities include the following:

- writing the event safety plan which must:
 - be completed at least two weeks prior to an event
 - include all relevant risk assessments and method statements
 - be distributed, read and understood by all key personnel (this includes outside agencies such as emergency services)

- arranging a pre and post event briefing:
 - an event briefing must be held prior to the event. All stewards and key personnel should be in attendance. The brief must include the event safety plan (including last minute amendments) and any other specific duties that need to be carried out
 - a list of those attending should be compiled and each attendee should sign this list to indicate that they were present and understand their role
 - handover briefings for new shifts of stewards, for a prolonged event
 - at the end of the event, a debrief should take place involving stewards and outside agencies, to capture issues not already highlighted or dealt with during the event
 - ensure everyone having a specific responsibility before, during and after the event is named, has their responsibilities clearly identified and is appropriately trained
 - ensure everyone assisting during the course of the event is properly instructed in their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency. This should be confirmed in writing and minutes of all meetings should be recorded

- build-up, during event and break down inspections:
 - during the event, stalls, displays and activities should be checked for general health and safety compliance. Gas certification, portable appliance test (PAT) certification and firefighting equipment should be checked where necessary
 - if necessary, refer to risk assessments and method statements that have been provided by the people running the stalls, attractions and displays to ensure they are operating as stated.

Safety officer

A suitably competent person should be appointed to act as the safety officer for the event with overall responsibility for safety matters (though overall responsibility for the event remains with the event manager).

This person should be suitably trained and/or have experience or knowledge of safety matters appropriate for the event having regard to the size and nature of the event and the possible level of risk.

Personal experience and knowledge may be adequate for a small indoor event. For large or complex events, you may need professional help and advice (see page 15).

During the event, the safety officer or a nominated deputy should:

- be on site, easily identifiable as the safety officer and in a known location (that is, the control room)
- not be engaged in any other duties or activities which would prevent this responsibility being carried out
- have the means to communicate with the people responsible for activating any part of the contingency arrangements
- have the authority, if necessary, to close the event or part of it at any time
- arrange for a check of the safety arrangements to be made before the event is opened and for monitoring the continuing safety of the site throughout the event, including structures, barriers, electrical supplies and installations or other equipment provided. A specimen checklist can be found on page 17.

Note: Depending on the event, the safety officer could have a dual role. However, safety must take priority over any other issue.

Who to contact

You should contact the under mentioned organisations at an early stage and, if necessary, keep in touch with them as your plans proceed. Their experience and advice or help may be invaluable.

Police

Contact the police station local to the site and confirm the details of the event in writing, including layout, with entrances and exits, and the number of people expected. They will give advice and may assist with crowd control, public order, emergency access and local traffic management and parking. (The responsible local authority department (see page 15) may also provide advice and assistance with local traffic management for the event.)

Fire Service

The Fire Service will give advice on fire safety matters, including how the emergency services will be called, marshalling of spectators in emergency conditions, local access for emergency vehicles and provision of on-site fire precautions and firefighting arrangements.

Ambulance Service

The statutory Ambulance Service for the area should be informed of large events. They will be responsible for establishing a triage (casualty assessment) centre in the event of a major incident and deciding which hospital(s) will be receiving any casualties.

Local authority

Contact the local authority departments listed on page 15 for advice about:

- your duties under health and safety legislation, including carrying out risk assessments and emergency planning
- food hygiene, if food is going to be sold or prepared
- alcohol, if this is going to be sold and consumed
- trade descriptions, trademarks, counterfeiting, food quality and product safety, where goods are going to be sold
- the need for a licence in accordance with the Licensing Act as amended, where the event includes any form of licensable entertainment, such as live music.

Public liability insurance

The organisers could be held legally liable for the costs or damages for any injuries and so on which may occur during the event. Therefore, it is important that event attendees have their own public liability insurance.

All invite letters to potential event attendees should highlight requirements for attending the event. This would include the production of their public liability insurance prior to the event; the cover will be relevant to the risk involved in the running of the stall or attraction. A guide is set out below:

- Low risk – minimum limit of indemnity of £2 million
- Medium risk – minimum limit of indemnity of £5 million
- High risk – minimum limit of indemnity of £10 million.

A percentage of public liability insurances certificates should be checked through the insurance provider to ensure they are valid.

Council staff organising events can contact the council's insurance team (see page 15) to check that they are adequately insured. Public, private and voluntary groups will require their own separate insurance cover.

Contractor's insurance

Where organisers are using specialist contractors, they should check that the contractor holds their own public liability insurance, and that the contractor complies with any policy terms and conditions.

Insurance claims

In the event of any injury or damage to property, full details of the incident must be written down and, wherever possible, photographs taken which show the date and time they were taken. The incident should also be reported to your insurers without delay. Never admit liability as it may invalidate your cover.

Emergency planning

In addition to carrying out risk assessments on the attractions and activities to be provided at the event, you must also consider what could go wrong on the day and draw up a contingency plan to deal with each emergency or contingency.

This written plan should include details of what you intend to do in the event of an emergency such as a fire, accident, crowd disturbance, bomb scare, adverse and inclement weather, the need to evacuate the site and so on.

The plan should include:

- the action to be taken in the case of any of these emergencies occurring
- who will take that action
- how you will let the right people know about the emergency (this may include the use of coded messages)
- evacuation plan
- traffic management plan where appropriate
- a clear statement outlining at what stage during an incident control transfers from the event manager to the emergency services.

It is important that your plan is discussed and agreed with the emergency services and that they are given a copy of the finalised document.

Site preparation and facilities

The following examples identify some of the hazards likely to require consideration in the choice and preparation of the site and the activities to take place and give guidance on how to eliminate them:

The site

The site should be big enough for all the activities planned.

For all events, there must be plenty of space for the public to move around stalls, rides, performance, stage, arena or exhibition areas and so on, and to have unobstructed routes to exits. This is especially important at indoor events to prevent stalls or goods obstructing exit routes and doors.

You should:

- prepare a sketch plan of the site, preferably to scale, showing the position of all the activities and attractions, temporary structures, toilets, circulation routes and exits. This drawing should be updated if your plans change, and copies of the final version made available at the event

- have enough exits for a mass orderly evacuation of the site
- have routes for entry and exit identified for emergency vehicles. These should be agreed with the emergency services bearing in mind the size and weight of their appliances.

Condition of outdoor site

Check that:

- the site will be suitable in all weathers and that any staging or structures will be safe in bad weather conditions
- there are no trip, slip or other similar hazards to the public
- wet weather will not cause any other additional hazards
- there are no obvious hazards on either the site or surrounding areas, such as overhead power lines, stored chemicals or machinery, unfenced holes, steep drops between different ground levels, ponds or water and unsafe or other structures that the public should be kept away from by means of barriers or fencing
- there will be suitable lighting throughout the site, including emergency lighting, if the event will go on after dark.

Preparing the site

Make sure that construction work and vehicle movements that may take place during site preparation are supervised and/or protected by suitable barriers.

Public entry and exit (including vehicles and car parking)

Arrange separate vehicle and pedestrian entrances and exits to the site and ensure entrance queues do not obstruct vehicle access or nearby road junctions.

When there is a limit on the number of people that can be accommodated at the event, make sure the entrance is well stewarded and that an accurate form of head-counting is operated to prevent overcrowding on site and at exits.

This is important at indoor venues where the maximum number of people will be set either by the area of floor space available or the size and number of fire exits to enable evacuation in two and a half minutes. (A normal pair of exit doors 1.2 metres wide will allow 230 people to pass through in two and a half minutes).

Outdoors, provide at least two pedestrian exits from the site. The number and size of the exits should be large enough to permit an orderly evacuation from the site in less than eight minutes. Exits should be not less than 1.2 metres in clear width (which will allow up to 1,000 people to pass through in eight minutes), spaced well apart around the site, clearly marked, kept free from obstruction and well-lit where the event is likely to last beyond dusk.

Site any car parking well away from the pedestrian areas of the site. Clearly signpost the parking area and do not allow cars to be parked anywhere else.

Design and steward car parking areas to eliminate hazards to pedestrians such as reversing vehicles (remember vehicles and pedestrians do not mix).

Except for emergency purposes, vehicle movements in the public areas of the site during the event or as the public are leaving should not be permitted.

Emergency access

Keep the emergency services entrances, exits and routes within the site clear of obstruction at all times.

Safety barriers

Decide if you need to provide barriers around attractions, displays and equipment to protect the public and/or to prevent unauthorised interference, taking account of the presence of excited people, especially children.

Examples where barriers may be required include barbecues or spit roasting, moving machinery, including displays or demonstrations involving steam engines, welding, woodturning and so on, electrical equipment and switchgear.

Any barriers or fencing used must be capable of withstanding any reasonably foreseeable loading. The design must be suitable to contain and protect people, including small children. Single rope barriers may not be sufficient.

Staging or structures

If seating, staging, lighting or sound towers and so on are to be erected, this must be done by a competent person. Written certification should be obtained from them to say that the structures are safe.

The fire safety officer will advise you on the safety aspects of marquees and tents, including their siting, construction and the provision of exits, normal and emergency lighting and so on.

Arrangements should be made to stop unauthorised persons gaining access to equipment and so on when the event is open to the public.

All staging and/or structures should be positioned so as not to obstruct any entrances or exits from the site.

The open edges at the side and rear of any performance platform should be highlighted to prevent people falling off. Secure, safe flights of steps should be provided to access the platform.

All staging and structures should be free from trip hazards and other physical hazards (such as sharp edges, points, protruding support members).

Electrical supplies, installations and equipment

The whole installation, including wiring, switchgear and any generator, should be installed in a safe manner by a suitably qualified electrician who must provide written certification stating it has been checked and is safe.

The safety standard of the installation should be at least that of the current IEE wiring regulations.

A safe temporary electrical supply should at least include:

- the supply being protected by suitable earth leakage device(s), residual current device (RCD), having a maximum tripping current rating of 30mA
- the use of cables of the correct rating for the possible load with no damage to the insulation and using the correct type of connectors for external use
- all supply cables being positioned so they are **not** liable to physical damage (that is, not through door openings, across the surface of walkways or roadways)
- all cables, including to sound equipment, being positioned so as not to cause trip or other hazard
- any generator or electrical equipment, including switchgear, being satisfactorily barriered to prevent unauthorised access or interference
- any generator being supplied to have a certificate to show it is electrically safe
- all electrical equipment used at the event being in a safe condition and suitable for that type of use (that is, in the open air where it may get wet).

Fire procedures

Details of the equipment and procedures in place to prevent or combat fire and ensure fire regulations are adhered to:

- provide maintained equipment for putting out small fires (that is, fire extinguishers, fire blankets) throughout the site
- make sure that stewards know where the equipment is and how to use it; they should be told not to attempt to fight major fires
- the Fire Service should be called at once to any fire, suspected or real, however slight.

First aid

The first aid provision needs to be suitable for the number of people expected to attend and for the type of event.

Make sure that the basic services for first aid are always available. At smaller events, such as indoor markets and jumble sales, a qualified first aider should be present and an area suitable for first aid treatment, including a supply of water, should be available.

A voluntary first aid society can be asked to provide a first aid post, staffed by qualified first aiders (A first aid at work qualification is not suitable for events first aid).

The first aid post should be clearly signposted and provide easy access for spectators and an ambulance. Where an ambulance is required, a parking area should be provided close to the first aid post with a clear exit from the site.

Make sure that all persons assisting at the display know where the first aid post is and, where appropriate, the identity of the first aider.

Locate the nearest telephone box, provide access to a telephone or provide mobile phones.

Refer to the Purple Guide to obtain a guide of provisions for first aid cover:

“Reporting of accidents, near misses, violence at work

15. All accidents or near misses and violence at work incidents must be reported under current legislation. They are to be reported as follows:

- Event staff – All accidents, near misses and violence at work incidents are to be reported and recorded on the health and safety portal.
- Members of the public – Any incident involving a member of the public must be brought to the attention of the event manager and first aid assistance called if appropriate. A record of the incident is to be recorded on health and safety portal.”

Security and stewarding provision

Details of the numbers of stewards and security staff will be needed and the roles they will be delivering at the event. This will include:

- how they are managed and what times they are working
- information about any training and briefings to be provided for these teams.

The number of stewards needed may be calculated by considering each of the separate tasks to be covered (such as staffing entrances and exits, controlling access to attractions and activities, general crowd control, patrolling public areas, securing unauthorised areas, securing hazards and car parking duties).

If the event is to last several hours, extra stewards should be available to allow others to take meal breaks and so on.

The duties of the stewards are covered in detail in ‘Stewards’ duties’ on page 17.

Crowd management plan

This contains a description of how crowd movement will be monitored and controlled at the event, including details of how the security and stewarding works, locations and types of control barriers in place and referring to the site plan for detail of entrances and exits.

Control room

Consider setting up a control room on the site to:

- monitor the event, giving an early indication of any problems
- control any incidents
- direct resources to deal with any problems
- act as a base for any communications systems.

The control room should be constantly staffed during the event and provided with a telephone.

Event communication plan

This must include details of how you will communicate with members of staff, the public and with external agencies (such as the police). This should detail practical methods of communication and should show the structure of management for the event, showing the lines of communication between the top level event director and all other staff, agencies and audience.

- Consider providing personal radio contact between the safety officer and senior stewards and any other people responsible for activating the contingency arrangements.
- Consider providing a public address system for announcements and instructions to staff and the public.
- For smaller events, a portable loud hailer may be sufficient. Larger events may require a system with an emergency power backup.

Transport infrastructure plan

This should outline the impact of the event on traffic and transport in the area of the event, as well as how vehicles will be managed within the event site. Items to consider include:

outside the event:

- planned road closures
- parking restrictions
- public transport services available
- marketing messages – are you telling public not to come by car and giving public transport alternatives?

within the event site:

- stewarding controls in place
- vehicle pass system in place
- vehicle entrance points and main routes through the site
- where will supply, production and traders' vehicles park?

Staff safety

Cash handling

Think about the routines and security arrangements for staff who are handling cash, many of whom may be unfamiliar with this role.

Late finish

If the event is to finish late, make sure that all staff can get home safely and that they do not have to wait alone at bus stops or stations or travel alone. Consider arranging taxis for staff where public transport will be a problem.

Welfare facilities

People with disabilities

Provide facilities wherever possible to enable people with disabilities to gain access and see and take part in the attractions and activities.

Make sure that the ground conditions in public areas and access pathways are suitable for people with disabilities, as well as families with toddlers and pushchairs.

Toilets

Provide an adequate number and type of toilets for the number of people expected, including provision for people with disabilities.

It is best to use toilets which are connected to mains services, but temporary units may have to be provided.

Arrange for all the toilets to be serviced regularly to keep them fully operational, clean and hygienic throughout the event.

Provide direction signs to indicate the location of the toilets and provide adequate lighting where necessary and if the event continues into the evening.

Waste management plan

The event site must be left in the clean and tidy state it was found in. The waste management plan should give details of equipment and staffing in place to maintain the cleanliness of the site during and after the event, also how waste will be minimised and disposed of with as little environmental impact as possible.

You should:

- provide an adequate number of rubbish bins around the site where they will be most required
- make arrangements to regularly empty the bins and to satisfactorily dispose of the rubbish.

Lost child or vulnerable adult, lost property and so on

You should have a written procedure detailing how lost children or vulnerable adults will be reunited with their parents or guardians. This should include measures to protect the children or vulnerable adults involved and checks on identity of parents or guardians claiming responsibility for a child or vulnerable adult. This should also explain what action will be taken when a child or vulnerable adult is found without their parent or guardian.

Provide a location where enquiries can be made about lost children, lost property and for information about the event. This could be in the control room.

In the event of found or lost children, the police should be informed without delay.

Food safety plan

This will contain information about how you will ensure that any food provided at the event is prepared, stored, served and handled properly to remove the public health risk. This includes both food provided for staff and volunteers and food provided by caterers to the general public.

If you have caterers serving food to the public, you will be expected to pass details of the traders to the council's environmental health team in advance of the event (see page 15).

Barbecues and hot food outlets

Barbecue hazards include the use and storage of fuel (gas bottles), naked flames and hot components. Safety barriers may be required. Gas safety certification is required for vendors.

Weather conditions

Consider what actions to take in extreme weather and ground conditions such as:

- high winds and storms
- rain
- snow and ice
- heat and sun effects in the summer.

Community safety

In promotional literature or the event programme, suggesting directions and travel routes with advice on planning journeys, travelling in groups and avoiding shortcuts can be helpful, particularly if the event is to finish late.

Counter terrorism

The National Counter-terrorism Security Office have produced specific advice to help mitigate the threat of a terrorist attack in crowded places. The key message for the public is 'Run, Hide, Tell':

- Run – to a place of safety. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's nowhere to go, then:
- Hide – it's better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally, and only when it is safe to do so:
- Tell – the police by calling 999.

Contact telephone numbers

Service	Telephone number
West Suffolk Safety Advisory Group	01284 757054
Suffolk Constabulary	01473 613500
Suffolk Fire Service	01473 260588
St John's Ambulance	08700 104950
Red Cross	01284 727246
Trading Standards	01473 264859
Suffolk County Council	08456 066067
Consumer Advice	01473 584358
Health and Safety corporate events	07979 293237 or 07946 180401
Licensing	01284 757113 or 01638 719733
Food Safety	01284 757048 or 01638 719733
Emergency Planning	01284 758460 or 01638 719321
Insurance	01284 757204 or 01638 719709
Out of hours	01284 763252 or 01284 766051

Recommended reading

The following publications provide additional information and advice on safety at events:

- [Health and Safety Executive:](#)
 - Five steps to risk assessment
 - Fairgrounds and amusement parks – guidance on safe practice (HSG 175)
 - Safe operation of passenger carrying amusement devices: inflatable bouncing devices
 - The radiation safety of lasers used for display purposes (HSG 95)
- [GOV.UK – Fire safety risk assessment: open air events and venues](#)
- [GOV.UK – Fire safety risk assessment: large places of assembly](#)
- [Health and Safety Executive: Guidance on running events safely](#)
- The National Outdoor Events Association – Code of practice for outdoor events
- [Chartered Institute of Environmental Health \(CIEH\)](#) – National guidance for outdoor and mobile catering

Event checklist before and during event

Check	Complete? Yes or No
Have all staff holders and attractions, where necessary, satisfied the event safety criteria (that is, have current public liability insurance, risk assessments or method statements and PAT certification, provided qualifications or evidence of competence)?	
Crowd safety – Are premises free from hazards (that is, they have even ground or floor surfaces, no trip hazards and hazards are fenced)?	
Are all attractions, activities and structures complete and staffed?	
Are structures and seating sound and secure; stairways, platforms and equipment guarded; protective barriers or fencing secure?	
Entrances and exits – Are adequate entrances and exits open, clearly marked and staffed to control admission where necessary?	
Are all circulation areas, staircases and escape routes and exits unobstructed, with all doors and gates unlocked?	
Crowd control – Is the control room operational, with communications and public address (PA) systems working?	
Are the required number of stewards in their allotted positions, fully briefed on their duties and wearing jackets or tabards?	
Electrics – Is the electrical installation complete and certified, cabling and equipment secure and protected and clear of public circulation routes or areas?	
Gas cylinders – Are they certified and inspected?	
Lighting – Is normal and emergency lighting provided, in working order and lit where necessary?	
Medical facilities – Are there adequate trained first aiders on site; is a suitable clearly marked room (provided with water) available as a first aid post?	
Fire precautions – Is firefighting equipment in place and rubbish and combustible materials stored away from tents or structures?	

Toilet accommodation – Is clearly marked toilet accommodation available (including for disabled); have arrangements been made to service them during the event?	
Rubbish – Are there sufficient rubbish bins around the site and arrangements in place to empty them during the event?	

Stewards' duties

Stewards should:

- be able to undertake the physical tasks required of the job
- be suitably trained and competent to carry out their duties effectively
- receive verbal or written instructions of their duties and, where appropriate, a checklist and a layout plan showing the key features of the site
- receive a final briefing of their duties on the day of the event, particularly about communicating with supervisors and others in the event of an emergency
- be easily identifiable (that is, wearing jackets or tabards)
- know the layout of the site and be able to assist the public by giving information about the available facilities, remembering especially people with disabilities
- be aware of the location of the entrances and exits in use on the day, first aid posts and firefighting equipment
- know the ticketing arrangements and be aware of the routes in and out for any celebrities
- be provided with torches where the event is likely to go on beyond dusk and test this and any other equipment issued to them prior to the event
- **patrol their allotted areas, being on constant watch for emergencies, and be aware of the actions to take, paying particular attention to:**
 - any potential hazards (such as squeeze points) near their location
 - ensuring that overcrowding does not occur in any part of the site
 - preventing the public from climbing fences, barriers, lighting and sound towers, equipment and so on
 - ensuring that circulation areas and exits (including entrances and exits for emergency services) are kept clear at all times. This can be particularly important at indoor events where visitors may well park their cars outside halls across exit doors or routes from the building
- know, understand and have practised their specific duties in an emergency and the arrangements for evacuating the public from the site, including the possible use of coded messages.