

Guidance on developing a risk assessment

A full risk assessment should be carried out for all events.

As organiser of an event you have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety and welfare of any employees, volunteers or contractors involved in arranging the event, and of the public and participants attending the event.

All events must comply with recognised safety standards as outlined in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This legislation requires all employers and self-employed people to assess the risks to workers and others who may be affected by their work, to ensure a Safe System of Work (SSOW).

The event organiser's best tool for determining potential hazards connected to their event is a risk assessment. The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify hazards which could cause harm, assess the risks which may arise from those hazards, and the extent of it (high/low risk), and to decide on suitable measures to eliminate or control the risks.

Any contractors involved in the event should carry out risk assessments, which the event organiser must obtain copies of. It is also important to visit the site or venue to identify specific hazards. A risk assessment for the build-up, event, and breakdown can then be carried out once this information has been received.

Identifying hazards – issues to consider

Issues	Those at risk
Site hazards: design and layout of site including, capacity, lighting, fire precautions, site safety rules, access and escape routes.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Evacuation plan: detailing actions to be taken by designated people in event of a major incident.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Crowd safety plan: stewards, roles and responsibilities, consider audience profile, lost children policy	Public, participants, performers, stewards
Access issues: emergency exits, disabled access, and provision of facilities. People with impaired vision – may need to admit guide dogs, impact of audible evacuation procedure. Signs to be designed so they are easily distinguishable. All stewards briefed in	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards

how to approach visitors e.g. those with a disability	
Noise issues: must adhere to noise control protocols. Noise assessment must be made by competent person. Possible ear protection zones.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Health and Safety Plan: process for administering First Aid on-site. Evacuation procedure.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Structures, marquees, gazebos, barriers, staging: A risk assessment should be carried out to cover the assembly of temporary demountable structures by a competent person and checked before use to verify work has been carried out in accordance with the designers specification. Also working at heights risk assessment if applicable.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Special effects: use of naked flames or creation of sparks, fire – what precautions will be taken to prevent a fire occurring? Use of lasers, use of pyrotechnics	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Emergency procedures e.g. bomb threats - liaise with the police for a response. Police will advise on whether an evacuation is necessary.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Equipment: use of generators, use of portable electrical equipment (anything with a plug & lead), handling/storing gas cylinders, PA systems, stage lighting	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Adverse weather conditions: all structures must be secured to prevent wind impact.	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Manual handling operations: how will any materials be transferred to the event)	Event organisers, participants, performers, stewards
Waste management: including minimisation, recycling and litter collection	Public, event organisers, participants, performers, stewards

Assess the risk

The next stage is to evaluate the extent of the risk posed by the identified hazards (likelihood of harm if left unchecked).

- A simple matrix is a good way of assessing risk and monitoring control measures.
- List the control measure to minimise the risk.
- Record your risk assessment findings, and revise as the nature of the risk may change during the planning of the event, therefore the risk assessment is continually updated.
- Review control measures and any competencies required.
- Communicate this to the relevant parties.
- Appoint a competent person to ensure compliance with the SSOW once agreed with the GLA.

A simple matrix would consider the harm/severity that could result from an activity as:

1. Trivial
2. Minor injuries that may require first aid on-site
3. Major injuries that may require hospital treatment

The probability of the hazard being realised:

1. Unlikely
2. Possible
3. Likely

These two together determine the risk.

1 = Low risk: no action necessary but additional controls are advised.

2 = Medium risk: reduce risk and implement some controls

3 = High risk: reduce or remove risk, consider not doing activity.

Explain activities in line with risk assessment

Finally a method statement will explain how you will carry out the activity:

- Arrive at site, check in with venue host.
- Move equipment to be set-up to allocated area.
- Unload equipment in line with risk assessment, and make sure vehicle is moved to a designated area.
- Set-up structures following agreed method statement on manufacturers instructions
- Maintain safety controls throughout the day's activities.

- At end of the day, pack away all items brought on-site in line with risk assessment.