

PRODUCING A RISK ASSESSMENT

General Points

People assess the risks of their activities everyday. Most people call it common sense.

When organising an event and inviting people to attend, you and everyone in the organisation has a duty of care to yourself, to each other and to the general public.

Risk Assessment is a useful tool for event organisers. It provides a structured way of thinking through the day's activities to establish hazards and put plans in place to keep risk to an acceptable level.

It also allows you to prove that you have taken your duty of care seriously, even if you have not thought of everything.

Definitions

- Hazard means anything that can cause harm
(e.g. electricity, working from ladders, carrying heavy equipment, tripping over obstacles etc)
- Risk is a combination of the likelihood, high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard and the severity of that harm.
(e.g. If there is more than a very remote chance of breaking your leg then risk is high. If it is quite probable that several people will stub their toe then risk is also high.)

What is this guide for?

This document aims to guide you in assessing the risks of your activity and recording that process. The complexity of your assessment will depend on the size and complexity of your event. If you are organising a simple event then you will have a simple risk assessment.

Whatever your activity the risk assessment procedure is a useful way of fulfilling your duty of care in controlling risk.

THE FIVE STEPS TO RISK ASSESSMENT

Step 1: Look for the hazards

- Use your site plan
Walk around the site thinking through the layout, how will people use the park, are the entrances wide enough, are there trip hazards?
What extra hazards will your event bring, structures/vehicles/flammable materials/rides/sports etc.?

- Use your schedule
Think through the day's activities. Start with the build of the site, carrying heavy items, using tools, moving vehicles, storing refuse etc. Then think through activities during the event, from sports to carrying hot food.

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

- Identify those at risk
Staff, contractors, audience, children and young persons, people with disabilities, other park users.

Step 3: Evaluate the risks

- Identify existing precautions
This can be simply having enough people to carry something, tidy housekeeping to prevent trip hazards, venue design for clear entrances/exits, stewarding to avoid crowd crush, refuse collection to avoid fires and adequate fire extinguishers.
- Decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.

Step 4: Record your findings

- Writing the Risk Assessment (see below)

Step 5: Review your assessment and modify it if necessary

- Risk Assessment is a continuous process, as things change the Risk Assessment will need to be referred to and updated.
(E.g unexpected high numbers of audience, severe weather, substitutions to planned rides and attractions, changes to pathways and routes taken etc.)
- Decide what further actions may be required.
(E.g improvements in venue design, safe systems of work, increased stewarding)

WRITING A RISK ASSESSMENT

As long as it is a clear representation that the hazards have been identified and precautions put in place in order to keep risks at an acceptable level, your risk assessment can take any form. There is however a useful common model and this is described below. A risk assessment template is available from the Corporate Health and Safety Group.

Your local authority, police, fire brigade and insurance company will all be used to information being presented in the following format.

In its fullest form it includes a numeric representation of the level of risk for each activity. For example the 16-point scoring system:

- PROBABILITY (1-4)
The likelihood that the harm will come to pass
- SEVERITY (1-4)
The level of harm done

| PROBABILITY | | SEVERITY | |
|----------------|---|----------------|---|
| Probable | 4 | Multiple death | 4 |
| Quite probable | 3 | Single death | 3 |
| Remote | 2 | Major injury | 2 |
| Very remote | 1 | Minor injury | 1 |

- RISK = PROBABILITY X SEVERITY

IF GREATER THAN 4 - STOP AND RECONSIDER PRECAUTIONS

Example 1

Considering crowd crush at the village Fete (expected audience 200 through the afternoon)

There is a **very remote (1)** probability of **multiple death (4)**
Risk factor is **1 x 4 = 4**

Example 2

Mr Goodwin plans to balance on the spiked railings with his hammer in order to hang the welcome banner.

It is **quite probable (3)** that he will fall and suffer a **major injury (2)**.

Risk factor is **3 x 2 = 6**

We need to stop and reconsider the precautions. If he uses a ladder to hang the banner the probability of falling and suffering a **major injury (2)** becomes **remote (2)**.

Risk factor is now **2 x 2 = 4**

Example 3

If when we come to the day and there is a high wind, Mr Goodwin's banner hanging activity has become more dangerous. The chance of falling from the ladder is no longer remote but **quite probable (3)** and as the result is still **major injury (2)** we are back to a risk factor of **2 x 3 = 6** and we need to stop and reconsider this activity in the light of the change in circumstance. Risk assessment is a continuous process.