

Event Management  
Toolkit

A close-up of a stone wall with a sign

Description automatically generatedRisk Management Plan Template

# [YOUR EVENT]

# EVENT RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

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# INSTRUCTIONS

## The importance of a Risk Management Plan

Your Risk Management Plan identifies all the risks that could arise from holding your event and how you will avoid, reduce or mitigate these risks to avoid serious consequences for your event such as financial loss, loss of reputation, or legal action against the event organisers.

Do not put off filling out this risk template and creating an incidence response plan! The cost of not doing this is too high. Assign this task to one person on the committee to be responsible to complete it thoroughly.

Consider completing the following documents before beginning the risk management process:

* Traffic Management Plan
* Site safety induction checklists

## Step 1: Identify risks

The main risks to consider are things that could:

* Cause injury to an attendee or participant (health and safety)
* Cause damage to equipment, infrastructure or the event site
* Harm the future of the event or the organising committee (including financial and legal risks)

The underlying legal issue of safety is duty-of-care, which means taking all possible steps to avoid potential injury to everyone involved.

Remember to consider all activities before and after the event is held, such as risks involving people, technology, selling enough tickets, income streams, your site’s terrain, bodies of water, weather, evacuation, fire, temporary structures, lighting, power, conductive wet environments, extension cords, traffic management, food handling, signage, chemicals, accessibility, emergency services access, first aid, sunburn, shade, children, noise, trip hazards, ergonomic safety (e.g. lifting), crowd control, alcohol, drugs, violence/aggression, cash security, rides, competitors, fence jumpers, negative reviews, key staff or entertainers being unavailable, and so on.

Add whichever of these risks apply to your event to the end of this document, as well as further risks that apply to your event.

Review your event plan and think about what type of incidents could impact on each area. Write your notes on identified risks here.

Identify each step in your planning processes and think about the associated risks. Write your notes on identified risks here.

Ask as many ‘what if’ questions as you can: What if we lost power supply? What if key managers were sick on the day? What if there was a storm during the event? What if a major sponsor or grant funding was lost? Write your notes on identified risks here.

Think about the worst things that could happen to your event to help you deal with smaller risks. The worst-case scenario could be the result of several risks happening at once, such as power loss leading to food spoilage leading to food poisoning leading to loss of reputation, legal consequences and financial losses. Take notes on worst case scenarios here.

Brainstorm with a variety of stakeholders, such as your accountant, suppliers and Council to get different perspectives on risks to your event. Make notes based on your stakeholders’ feedback here.

Now have each of your organisers identify risks for the areas they are responsible and provide you with notes. Remind them to consider all activities before and after the event is held, such as risks involving people, technology, selling enough tickets, income streams, your site’s terrain, bodies of water, weather, evacuation, fire, temporary structures, lighting, power, conductive wet environments, extension cords, traffic management, food handling, signage, chemicals, accessibility, emergency services access, first aid, sunburn, shade, children, noise, trip hazards, ergonomic safety (e.g. lifting), crowd control, alcohol, violence/aggression, cash security, rides, competitors, fence jumpers, negative reviews, key staff or entertainers unavailable, and so on.

**Add all of your identified risks into the template at the end of this document, filling out the first five columns for each risk.**

## Step 2: Evaluate risks

Once you have identified risks, work out the likelihood of each risk happening (its frequency or probability) and the consequences it would have (the impact) if it happened to determine the level of risk, calculated using this formula: level of risk = consequence x likelihood

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Consequence** | | | |
| **Likelihood** | **Insignificant** | **Moderate** | **High** | **Severe** |
| **Very unlikely** | Low | Low | Low | Medium |
| **Unlikely** | Low | Low | Medium | Medium |
| **Likely** | Low | Medium | High | Extreme |
| **Very likely** | Medium | Medium | Extreme | Extreme |

For example, a fire may be unlikely but could have severe consequences, so it’s level of risk is unlikely x severe = medium. Each risk level requires a different level of actions in order to mitigate them:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk Level** | **Actions Required** |
| **Low Risk** | * Manage with routine procedures. * Monitor with normal internal reporting. |
| **Medium Risk** | * Develop and implement an action plan for mitigating these risks. * Monitor implantation of plan. * Develop an incident response plan for how to respond if these risks occur. |
| **High Risk** | * Develop and implement an action plan for mitigating these risks. * Monitor implementation of plan. * Report to Executive Committee. * Consider alternate activity unless appropriate controls are implemented. * Develop an incident response plan for how to respond if these risks occur. |
| **Extreme Risk** | * This rating level is not acceptable. * Extreme risks require detailed research and management planning by Executive Committee. * Organise an alternate activity unless appropriate controls are implemented. |

## Step 3: Mitigate risks

Decide the steps you will take to reduce and avoid medium and high risks. Extreme risks are unacceptable, and you will have to find ways to completely avoid these.

Plan to reduce risks by

* reducing the likelihood of the risk happening, for example with compliance with legislation, staff training, regular maintenance or a change in procedures.
* reducing the impact if the risk occurs, for example with emergency procedures, off site data backup, or a public relations plan.

You may be able to transfer some or all of the responsibility for a risk to another party through insurance, outsourcing or partnerships.

Find a way to mitigate risks by:

* Elimination: removing the risk entirely through new design or implementing a new process
* Substitution: replacing risky materials or methods with less risky alternatives
* Engineering: isolating the hazard or with design improvements
* Administration: ensuring safe operating procedures are in place, and that effective training and monitoring is available to all
* Personal protective equipment: making sure that appropriate safety equipment, such as gloves, hats, sunscreen etc. are available.

Volunteer training and briefing is a key risk management action. Ensure all workers are fully aware of the need to take reasonable care to avoid situations where anyone could potentially get injured.

Insurance is also a necessary part of risk management. Seek professional advice to ensure your event has adequate public liability insurance cover for spectators, participants, volunteers, officials and the organising committee. Event organisers are legally responsible for the selection of suppliers, set-up of event infrastructure, ensuring sufficient amenities and accessibility, and addressing health and safety issues. Get advice on other relevant insurances for your event such as pluvius insurance for outdoor events which insures against losses caused by bad weather.

To avoid legal risks, document your legal obligations, ensure the event committee is aware of them, and implement controls and monitoring to prevent non-compliance.

**Fill out the last two columns of the template for all medium and high risks.**

## Incident Response Plan

For the remaining medium and higher risks that can't be avoided or transferred you need to develop an incident response plan and a recovery plan to help you deal with the consequences of the risk if it does occur. Your incident response plan provides clear instructions for what to do if any risks eventuate.

The way an incident is handled can significantly reduce negative publicity and reputational damage, and even help reduce the risk of legal action. Mobile video and social media commentary from attendees can quickly be used by mainstream media so include in your incident plan how to deal with media and how to communicate on social media if a serious incident occurs. In your plan, identify who will respond to the incident and who will communicate with media and on social media. Include in your communications the facts of what happened, and what is being done for the people involved and to right the situation.

Include in your incident response plan:

* plan activation details, including a clear statement of the circumstances when the plan will be activated and who is authorised to activate it
* incident response team details, including key roles and responsibilities
* an emergency kit
* evacuation procedures
* a communication plan to keep everyone safe, including key communication methods and timings needed
* a media communication plan, including who will be events spokesperson for communicating to media and on social media
* contact lists for all the people you will need to communicate with during a crisis, including staff and emergency services
* an event log to record information, decisions and actions that you take during a crisis

Remember:

* physical danger is your first priority
* there may be a lack of clear information about what is happening
* there may be limited time in which to make decisions about what to do
* external support may be needed (e.g. from emergency services)
* key staff may be unavailable
* the event management team may suffer from confusion, friction, pressure and stress
* attention from attendees, the media and your stakeholders may be intense
* news may travel fast, shaping public perception of the crisis and how it is being handled

# TEMPLATES

## Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Plan Template

Use the following template to assess the risks you have identified and plan for how you will mitigate them. Two examples have been provided.

Remember to consider all activities before and after the event is held, such as risks involving people, technology, selling enough tickets, income streams, your site’s terrain, bodies of water, weather, evacuation, fire, temporary structures, lighting, power, conductive wet environments, extension cords, traffic management, food handling, signage, chemicals, accessibility, emergency services access, first aid, sunburn, shade, children, noise, trip hazards, ergonomic safety (e.g. lifting), crowd control, alcohol, violence/aggression, cash security, rides, competitors, fence jumpers, negative reviews, key staff or entertainers unavailable, and so on.

**[Your Event] [Year] Risk Management Plan**

Prepared by: ……………………………………………………… Date: ……………………………

Reviewed by: …………………………………………………….. Date: ……………………………

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Potential hazard** | **Consequence\*** | **Who is at risk?** | **Existing control measures** | **Likelihood level** | **Consequence level** | **Risk level/ Priority** | **Mitigation and prevention measures and contingency plans** | **Who is responsible?** |
| ***Stalls*** | *Food poisoning* | *Food poisoning (Health)*  *Negative media coverage (Reputation)*  *Legal action (Financial)* | *Attendees*  *Event* | *Stallholders must comply with Australian National Food standards and health regulations.*  *PR spokes-person has negative media plan.* | *Unlikely* | *Moderate* | *Medium* | *Ensure all food stallholders have insurance.* | *Stallholders coordinator*  *Public Relations spokesperson* |
| ***Crowds*** | *Crushing* | *Health*  *Legal Action (Financial)*  *Reputation)* | *Attendees*  *Event* | *Site layout and program designed to reduce concentration of people in any one area. Multiple exit points from every area. Evacuation plan.* | *Unlikely* | *High* | *Medium* | *Security to monitor and control density of crowds.* | *Security* |
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\*Categorise risks: for example, financial, health and safety, public liability, reputation, natural hazards, governance, legal.

Risk Action Plan Template - Use the following template as needed to plan in detail how to mitigate specific risks. Include these action plans in your Risk Management Plan. An example is provided.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk** | Marquee Collapse with high winds |
| **Recommended action** | Ensure marquee installer completes an inspection checklist, submits it to the event organiser and develop a procedure to have the marquee dismantled in the event of high wind speeds, to ensure that the risk of collapse is acceptable. |
| **Proposed actions** | * Contact marquee company and advise that they will need to complete an inspection checklist and submit it to the event organiser once the marquee is erected. * Marquee company to provide level of wind speed that is unacceptable. * Develop a procedure for dismantling the marquee if there is unacceptable wind speed. |
| **Responsibility** | Stallholders Coordinator |
| **Reporting/Monitoring** | * Event organiser to remind marquee company of checklist requirement one month prior to event. * Completed checklist to be obtained from installer immediately after erection of marquee. |

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| --- | --- |
| **Risk** |  |
| **Recommended action** |  |
| **Proposed actions** |  |
| **Responsibility** |  |
| **Reporting/Monitoring** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk** |  |
| **Recommended action** |  |
| **Proposed actions** |  |
| **Responsibility** |  |
| **Reporting/Monitoring** |  |