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Event Logistics

In this chapter you will cover:

- Event logistics procedure and tools
- Designing and delivering the event
- Client briefing form
- Event logistics planning
- On-site event logistics
- On-site health and safety logistics
- Events transportation logistics
- Hosting a virtual logistical challenges for event manager

This chapter will discuss and introduce a specific orientation of event logistics. It will analyse and evaluate the fundamentals of event logistics practices and tools that are used by the event industry. The event industry has grown over the last two decades and health safety concepts have been changed to meet the event logistics requirements. The chapter further will discuss different approaches of event logistics that need to be designed to meet the regularly changing situation of the events environment. It will identify event management roles within logistics and provide a practical guide for event organisers and staff through developing guidelines around venue location, arrival, departure and dispersal.

Event logistics procedure and tools

Event logistics are a very important part of the event industry in the current climate and ever-changing environment. Event organisers and managers need to have a clear role to develop and design the logistical infrastructure that will be implemented to achieve the final outcome. Event logistics are developed after knowing the event activity/activities that are going to take place and along with the date and timing of the event. The event manager needs to understand event capacity, audience, featured presenters, performers and length of the event. This will help the organisers to determine the logistics and design that is required to

complete the final plan and event manual. Theodore (2018, p. 80) argues that it is important and critical for event organisers to understand the purpose of the event.

This will include the broader programme of activities that will be taking place; the specific type of event (e.g. rally, conference, pilgrimage, worship ceremony); there may also be a need to identify whether there is a secondary purpose to the event, and what atmosphere is intended or will be generated.

Therefore, it is very imperative for event managers to consider the rationale of the event and its purpose. Ceil (2014, p.10) states that organisers have a clear understanding of what “*Each event brings with it unique challenges that need to be tackled by the event organizer according to the specific needs.*”

Event logistics are critical for any organisation that is preparing to organise an event or festival. It is a very complex operation for organisers to implement and keep people safe during the event. The key principle for event managers to consider is whether you are planning a small charity fundraiser, networking business event, one day conference, musical festival in the park or sporting event. The event logistics require detailed planning and organisation to meet multiple tasks all the time. Advance event logistic planning is a very critical process for organisers to implement and requires determination to adapt to change required during the event period. Byvalkevych (2019) stated that event logistics play an important role in managing and planning the event.

The logistics of an event include the management of technical support services and the competent management of the flow of visitors on the day of the event (navigation, coordination of actions, etc.). To cope with multiple tasks successfully, you must understand the different components of a logistics plan for an event and come up with an effective event logistics plan. (<https://www.gevme.com/blog/event-logistics-plan/>)

Therefore, it is important to adopt the following steps highlighted in Table 14.1, because event logistics provide an overall technical support services to event organisers and help to set steps in place to achieve management of the movement of attendees during the day of the event.

Pre-event logistics stages

- Event goals and plan
- The day, date and time of the event
- Location of the event / site description
- Venue logistics (capacity and cost)
- Preparation of the transport structure of the event
- Target audience for the event
- Produce a timeline for the event
- Onsite communication equipment (walkie talkies) and technology
- Event signage and signing posting for attendees
- Confirm event logistics and orders with all vendors & venue(s)
- Contingency plan for the event
- Communication with staff and attendees
- Final program for the event
- Marketing promotion for the event

Event logistics on the day of the event

- On-site check-in and check-out procedures
- Staff brief and debrief start and finish of the event
- Site manager and emergency services (contact details)
- Coordination and monitoring of the schedule time for each stage of the event

Post event logistics

- Remain on site until all vendors and contractors have left site
- Double check venue site
- Post-event debrief with staff, performers and contractors
- Post-event attendee survey

Table 14.1: Event logistics 22 stages for the event

Designing and delivering the event

The event logistics plays a key role in designing and delivering the event on a day to day basis and identifying the actual day or day that event takes place will determine the expected attendance of the attendees and visitors. The organisers need to consider other factors that play part in organising event logistics to address the following issues.

- Opening and closing time of the site
- Crowd movement plan
- Transportation method for attendees
- Venue structure and design (purpose or temporary installed stages)
- Event specification document, event manual.

Therefore, event logistics is an integral part of the event planning and monitoring of the event, and depends on size and type of the event. Event organisers tend to handle logistical elements of small and local events themselves and move goods, merchandise equipment and have their own staff on the event site, which is more cost effective and analyses the impact of the event.

The event logistics for large scale events are handled by specialist logistic teams with various experts working on numerous diverse areas of the event logistics. Large scale events intend to employ people with experience and knowledge of the event industry and able to understand the needs of the attendees and deal with event logistics very professionally and successfully.

In addition, it is important that the event logistics team are able to deal with attendees, contractors and local residents to overcome following issues:

- Car parking
- Road closures
- Refuse collections
- Electrical power supply
- Temporary toilets
- Transport control and movement

- Event security for crowd movement and safety
- Location for on-site materials and equipment storage
- Liaising with emergency services, local city council and organisers.

Therefore, the event logistics manager and team plays a pivotal role in organising the event on a daily basis and taking care of the other logistical matters, such as the risk management plan and risk assessment, technical equipment, lighting design and operation, stage management and site management. The event logistic is a vital instrument that drives the organisation of the event preparation and should never be considered by the management as a separate operational procedure. Haugen (2011, p.15) argues that logistics is an important part of the event organisation and it is not a new phenomenon.

The term logistics is old and was originally used in military operations. The massive need for planning related to large transportation of soldiers, supplies and technology in war time situations made military logistics important. Today, this seems obvious from the failure of Napoleon (and Hitler). Still, apart from military operations, logistics as a term is relatively new as a scientific subject.

Event logistics have become a key part of the event management process for large scale events such as (Glastonbury Outdoor Music Festival, Football World Cup, Olympic Games, Formula One, American Football, London Marathons, Carnival in Rio de Janeiro and Commonwealth Games). These events require a special logistical team to carry out a daily event management plan to achieve smooth running of the event and provide a safe environment to event attendees.

■ Client briefing form

For event managers to deliver safe and effective events, the client briefing form is an important factor for an organiser to complete with potential clients. The client brief helps the manager to make better decisions and enables the delivery of the event on time and within a given budget, because events can vary extensively.

The client briefing form serves as a base to work with client needs and requirements, and as a guide for organisers to prepare to suit the client requirement. In addition, the form will help with event planning internally and externally.

Figure 14.1 is outline example of the client briefing form that can be used by prospective clients as the very first stage in the process of event organisation.

Event logistics planning

The event logistics plan helps the managers and organisers to provide active support during venue preparation and on the day of the live event, to ensure the smooth running of the event and able to act very quickly to any risk occurring. Organisers are required to deliver and deal with any emergency circumstances and run the entire live event for the client. Therefore, it is important for event managers to deliver very effective events that will enhance their own reputation, and successful event logistics can empower the client and attendees.