

8

Risk Management and Safety

In this chapter you will cover:

- Overview of the risk assessment process
- Risk factors for events and festivals
- Event risk assessment matrix
- Health and safety

The purpose of this chapter is to develop an understanding of the key risk management assessments for event organisers. The chapter will critically evaluate how health and safety management works in practice within events and festivals. This chapter will present in the first instance the principles of risk assessment and some of the legislation that applies in different countries.

Overview of the risk management process

The risk management process is an important part of the events and festivals industry and plays a vital role in developing effective plans to meet the risk challenges faced by event organisers. Risk management is seen by event managers as a significant systematic process to meet the health and safety standards outlined by legislation. A risk assessment is a vital tool that develops clear indicators at every single signal action that is being taken by the event and festival organiser.

The risk management process investigates the following issues:

- What could go wrong
- The implications of each risk
- Suitable control measures to prevent loss
- Damage or injury that could occur
- Who could be affected
- Evaluating control measures.

It is vital for the event manager to develop a risk assessment with a view to eliminating, reducing and minimising risks at the event or festival. Risk management is an important process that should be monitored at regular intervals, reviewed and analysed by the organisers to determine what are acceptable risks. Raj and Griffin (2018: 18) argue, in the context of organising religious events, that organisers should develop a clear and effective risk management process:

The risk assessment is developed to protect the employees, visitors, volunteers and the general public who are present at the place of worship from harm or damage that could be caused by the natural disaster or self-generated risk. Therefore, it is important for the organisers to create a product/service with a minimum level of risk to themselves and others.

Risk management helps organisations and event managers to safeguard individuals attending events and festivals. Risk management processes have become even more important for event organisers and tourism destinations as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Risk management covers many areas of event management and during the duration of the event several types of key stakeholders are involved in the process. Consequently, it is important that key stakeholders cover every aspect of the risk process, planning and implementation before allowing event attendees to the event site. Korstanje et al (2018, p.4) stated that it is essential for event and festival organisers to develop a risk assessment plan to cover any issues that may arise during the live event.

Risk, vulnerability and long-term planning are important aspects in any planning / development process for large scale gatherings, and the importance of disaster management practices is now vital for global and large-scale events.

It is essential for event and festival organisers and managers to develop and produce a risk assessment plan and discuss the obligatory steps that need to be taken before, during and after the event in order to protect all the attendees, employees and contractors. Event organisers should develop and implement a risk assessment plan prior to the commencement of their activities and should identify risks and hazards; it is necessary to eliminate exposure of risks happening during live events. The risk process is a critical prerequisite for event and festival managers to develop for major event sites, sporting arenas, music festivals and events in a climate where it has become key requirement for organisers and managers to address the safety and security of their events.

Risk factors for events and festivals

Event and festival organisers need to adopt multidisciplinary methods to overcome the increasing risks of health and safety issues that have been impacting the industry over the last two decades, which includes embracing international standards outlined by the health and safety procedures governing bodies within the industry. Organisers should address the issues and problems event and festival attendees may face by adopting risk assessment methods which are provided by international health and safety acts. The UK legislation Act 1974 Health and Safety at Work states very clearly that if you have five or more employees, a

health and safety policy must be in operation. The Covid-19 global pandemic has changed working conditions and organising sporting, musical, cultural and community events and festivals. It has changed the concept of individual people getting together in person and in groups. Risk management processes have become even more important for organisers to adopt and implement new changes to meet the health and safety requirements. Eventbrite (2020) stated:

As the world slowly begins to re-open and we can meet again, event creators must thoughtfully consider attendee and staff safety and well-being, and people will need comfort knowing the creators of the events they're attending are considering and addressing safety. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/blog/covid-19-event-safety/>

Event and festival organisers need to understand that the risk assessment and health and safety procedures must meet the legal requirements and adopt the five risk assessment steps outlined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), and establish clear and effective measures to address any risks. These risk assessment steps must be developed and implemented before allowing any attendees on site:

1. Identify hazards
2. Determine who is affected
3. Assess existing controls
4. Record the findings
5. Review the assessment process

To reduce the risks at events and festivals, organisers need to have reputable management in place to prevent all risks and necessary measures need to be taken with all key stakeholders. Therefore, it is important to have an agreed risk plan with health and safety executives, environmental health, local ambulance services, police and fire and rescue services to reduce all possible risks to safeguard attendees, employees and the well-being of the general public.

The risk management plan is a vital tool for organisers to develop when planning any event or festival. It will identify all the potential risk factors that may arise during the event life cycle and it is important for the organisers to determine possible steps would be taken to reduce the risks.

Case study 8.1 looks at the Solidays Music Festival held in Paris at the end of June each year. It shows the Festival values risk assessment as an important document to manage the steps to analyse risks that might occur in this outdoor music festival. The case study shows that the organiser must take into account each risk and take control measures suitable to their probability of occurrence and severity.

Case Study 8.1: Solidays Music Festival, Paris, France

Solidays Music Festival is an annual festival that takes place in Paris at the end of June and brings together around 175,000 festival attendees and over 100 artists performing over three days. The event is organised by Solidarité sida who consider a number of risk factors that may arise over the 3 days period. The main risks to be considered by the organiser relate to the large number of festival goers attending the event. Table 8.1 event risk matrix to look at the possible risks that may arise during the festival.

Subject area	Hazard and effect	To whom	Existing control measures	Action required when risks are not adequately controlled
Drugs/ alcohol	Health problems for users and increasing violence with other festival goers	Mostly the audience but also staff who could be assaulted	Health points information & safety 1st safety kits and intervention Safety team: 4 doctors and 9 nurses Random check Being supported by police Sniffer dogs	No further measures required
Fire risk	Serious burns; spread of fire	Audience, working personnel, artists and surrounding population	Extinguisher Fire response team dedicated to fire problem always available on site Fire control and observation points	In case of large rubbish fire, external stakeholder (larger team of firemen) will operate
Terrorist attack	Explosion, gunfire, risk of death	Audience, working personnel, artists and surrounding population	Multiple bags Verification multiple Body verification ID verification Set cameras Weapons forbidden	External help with police officer and evacuation plan set up

Table 8.1: Event Risk Matrix for Solidays Music Festival

Event risk assessment matrix

Organisers and managers need to consider the main risks that can affect the event. Therefore, event managers should consider putting together detailed risk management plans and avoid common risk factors which can arise during a live event. Raj and Griffin (2018, p.24) identifies the following event risk assessment matrix.

Event Risk Assessment Matrix

Severity scale

- 1 = trivial injury
- 2 = moderate injury
- 3 = moderate injury requiring hospital treatment
- 4 = serious injury or death
- 5 = multiple deaths/serious injuries

Likelihood scale

- 1 = very unlikely to occur
- 2 = unlikely, but possible
- 3 = might happen sometime
- 4 = probably will happen
- 5 = certainly will happen