

7

Legal compliance, risk and crisis management

Learning objectives

On completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Recognise the importance of legal compliance in the events industry
- Identify and explain key issues associated with legal compliance in an events context
- Understand the importance of crisis management and the need for an emergency response and evacuation plan
- Recognise the realities associated with the existence of risk at planned events and explain the steps involved in the risk management process
- Analyse and mitigate the risks associated with outdoor events
- Provide an understanding of theoretical issues associated with crowd behaviour, as well as the practical implications in terms of event security
- Explain the role and the challenges faced by event security staff.

In these litigious times, it is more important than ever for event professionals to recognise and understand their legal obligations and be able to ensure compliance. While many of the associated issues are complex, a sound understanding of their implications is an essential part of the event manager's toolkit. In fact, issues associated with legal compliance represent one of the most significant areas of risk for practitioners in the events industry.

Legal compliance in the events industry generally involves adherence to a range of legislative and regulatory requirements and obtaining appropriate licenses and permits. From an event enterprise perspective, it is important to have a compliance culture, that is developed and sustained around the core dimensions of legitimacy, permeability, and control.



How would you describe a compliance culture in an event company context?

Relevant legislation, regulations, licenses, and permits vary from country to country, region to region, and state to state. In broad terms though, legal compliance in the events industry involves a focus on:

- **Doing business** which generally includes:
 - Business registration either as a sole trader, partnership, or company.
 - A broad range of issues related to trade practices including the advertising of events.
 - Taxation issues.
- **Employees** which generally includes:
 - Occupational health and safety and ensuring that employees, contractors, and volunteers have a safe working environment.
 - Worker's compensation which generally covers employees for treatment and rehabilitation if injured on the job. Volunteers and spectators are often covered by public liability insurance.
 - Industrial relations, which are concerned with the employment relationship and hence, the workplace rights and responsibilities of employers and employees.
- **Operating requirements and procedures** which generally include:
 - Security and the need to provide appropriate staffing, training, and equipment for crowd control and the protection of people and assets.
 - Pyrotechnics licences for events in which pyrotechnics will be used and appropriate safety procedures will need to be applied.
 - Copyright.
 - Catering issues and the need to ensure food safety and acquire appropriate licences, including liquor licences for events that involve the sale and consumption of alcohol.
- **Compliance with legislation and regulations specific to the event**, e.g.:
 - Entertainment events and the need for licenses for managers, consultants, and agents in the entertainment industry.

- Sporting events and the need for adherence to relevant sports legislation and licensing requirements.



Can you think of reasons why sporting events have different legislation and licencing requirements from other events?

Case study 7.1: Alumni ceremony event

The Le Cordon Bleu alumni ceremony was held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in February 2021. To adhere to the safe Covid practices, multiple food stations were made available with easy access and space for guests. The event followed strict food safety processes with extra precautions including sanitising procedures. Staff received multiple briefing and training sessions to ensure processes were adhered to. To see the flexible solutions that were adopted while ensuring the event was memorable, visit <https://mcec.com.au/news-and-awards/2021/4-april/case-study-le-cordon-bleu-graduation-ceremony>.



Image 7.1: Photo by MD Duran on Unsplash

Permits and licences

There are a broad array of permits and licences that impact on operations in various sectors of the events industry. In general, they authorise event organisers to provide a range of special activities during the staging of an event. However, the scale, nature, and scope of permits and licences that apply to events varies significantly from country to country and even across state borders within many countries. Hence, it's important for event managers to be aware of local requirements and act accordingly.