

Managing work health and safety at events guide

Important note

Events continue to be affected by COVID-19. Stay informed on current rules and guidelines by visiting nsw.gov.au/covid-19.

As an event organiser it's your responsibility to plan, manage and monitor the event to ensure the health and safety of workers, volunteers and the visiting public.

Introduction

This guide is intended to be read by event organisers and all others involved in an events preparation (including bump-in), delivery and close-down (including bump-out).

This guide refers to the legal requirements under the Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act) and Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation). These are included for convenience only and should not be relied on in place of the full text of the WHS Act or WHS Regulation.

The words 'must' or 'require' indicate a legal requirement exists that must be complied with. The word 'should' indicates a recommended course of action, while 'may' is used to indicate an optional course of action.

An event is a gathering of people brought together for a common purpose by some prearrangement, such as sports events, festivals, carnivals, fairs, markets, concerts, shows and displays.

This guide is relevant to one off events, events of a temporary nature as well as events that occur regularly.

The event organiser will generally be a Person Conducting a Business Undertaking (PCBU), and as such have overall responsibility for work health and safety (WHS) and must consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities so that WHS risks are effectively managed.

This guide is designed to provide advice to event organisers so that they can understand and meet their obligations under WHS laws when managing events. WHS duties require event organisers to ensure the health and safety of workers and to ensure that people are

not put at risk from the work.

There will often be other PCBU's at an event, for example, PCBU's running food stands or lighting contractors. These PCBU's will also have WHS duties and they must work together with the event organiser (primary PCBU – see below) to ensure risks to health and safety are eliminated or controlled. Each duty holder is responsible for complying with WHS laws, even if another duty holder has the same duty.

Towards the end of this guide you'll find a list of links to other useful resources, including the Event Starter Guide which covers many aspects of managing an event.

Responsibilities

Primary duty of care

As the Event organiser you have a primary duty of care and must, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of:

- workers you have engaged
- workers carrying out work who are influenced or directed by you, such as contractors

A PCBU must also ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that the health and safety of anyone else on site, such as visitors and the public, is not put at risk.

You owe this duty of care at all times, including when you:

- direct or influence work carried out by a worker
- engage or cause to engage a worker to carry out work, including through sub-contracting
- have management or control of a workplace.

A worker can be:

- an employee
- a contractor or subcontractor
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work for a PCBU
- an outworker
- an apprentice or trainee
- a student gaining work experience
- a volunteer

Unless otherwise stated, references to worker in this guide mean all of those listed above.

Planning

Good planning, risk management and organisation is essential to keep you, your workers and the public safe. The level of detail in your planning depends on the size, complexity and risk profile of your event.

Additional resources that may assist are available in the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Event Starter Guide.

As an event organiser, you should determine what resources and facilities will be required by identifying the:

- scale, type and scope of the event
- type and size of audience
- location
- duration of the event
- distance to the nearest tertiary health facility
- time of day and year the event will be held
- likely seasonal conditions.

Prepare an event management plan that:

- breaks down all the work to deliver, coordinate and close an event
- includes tasks, responsibilities, schedules and run sheets
- takes into account varying factors, such as anticipated crowd size or technical detail
- is event-specific - all events are unique. Even a repeat event, such as an annual festival, may have different suppliers, changes to the venue, different weather conditions or increased attendee numbers
- assists in producing a safe, healthy and successful event
- addresses contingency planning for unexpected changes or situations (including people and equipment)
- provides for appropriate responses if an emergency or incident occurs.

Risk management

Risk management is an ongoing process. A risk management plan should be continually updated, improved and referred to, and cover every aspect of the event, including planning, setup and shutdown.

The event organiser must identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to risks to health and safety.

Risk management involves identifying and controlling risks before, during and after the event. This includes ensuring that appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place for each phase of the event. While the numbers onsite during the public period will

be significantly greater, the need for safety management during build up, bump-in, breakdown and bump-out is just as important. There may be fewer people, but this is likely to be when the highest-risk work activities are carried out.

Managing the risks is key to putting on an event that is both safe and enjoyable.

- To get started you should consider what work activities may cause injury or a hazardous situation, for example, explosion or fire. Perform an assessment of the work that will be undertaken and what might cause an incident or injury. This includes things like outdoor electrical installations, working from heights to erect lighting, constructing any temporary structures such as tents, marquees or stages, hazardous chemicals, hot works such as welding, etc.
- The context may include a unique combination of weather, time of year, types of activities, suppliers and location. For example, electrical works in wet weather or crowd control in very hot weather present different risks than in dry and moderate temperature.
- Talk to workers, the venue owner / controller, contractors, emergency services, volunteers and any others that can help you identify risks. Venue owners / controllers and contractors may have their own risk management plans, policies or procedures that need to be considered to inform the broader event risk management plan.
- Consider engaging with persons with subject matter expertise, eg. arborists, engineers, site security to provide advice on specific risks or matters at the site.
- Document your findings throughout the process. The results will aid in the formation of the risk management plan.
- Put together a plan to manage all risk and safety issues. Ensure the plan includes allocating responsibility to specific people, contractors and others involved with the event and clearly identifies a person who unexpected hazards or emerging risks can be escalated to for action.
- Risk treatments, or controls are the actions taken to eliminate or minimise the identified hazard. Controls should include eliminating or reducing the risk, as well as providing for response and recovery should an emergency occur. Figure 1 illustrates the hierarchy of controls to eliminate or minimise risks.
- Promote clear and accurate communication and consultation between event organisers and all others involved with an event or place.
- Ensure all workers can access the risk management plan and have been appropriately trained and supervised to ably implement measures at an event.
- Implement a process to
 - review and test the plan at regular intervals to check the agreed methods for controlling risks are working and being followed
 - update the plan whenever changes occur (ie. an increase in the number of people at the event)
 - monitor the event as it occurs and adjust controls as necessary.

You'll find practical guidance on the risk management process in the How to manage work health and safety risks Code of Practice (PDF 556kb) and the Managing hazards and risks information on our website .

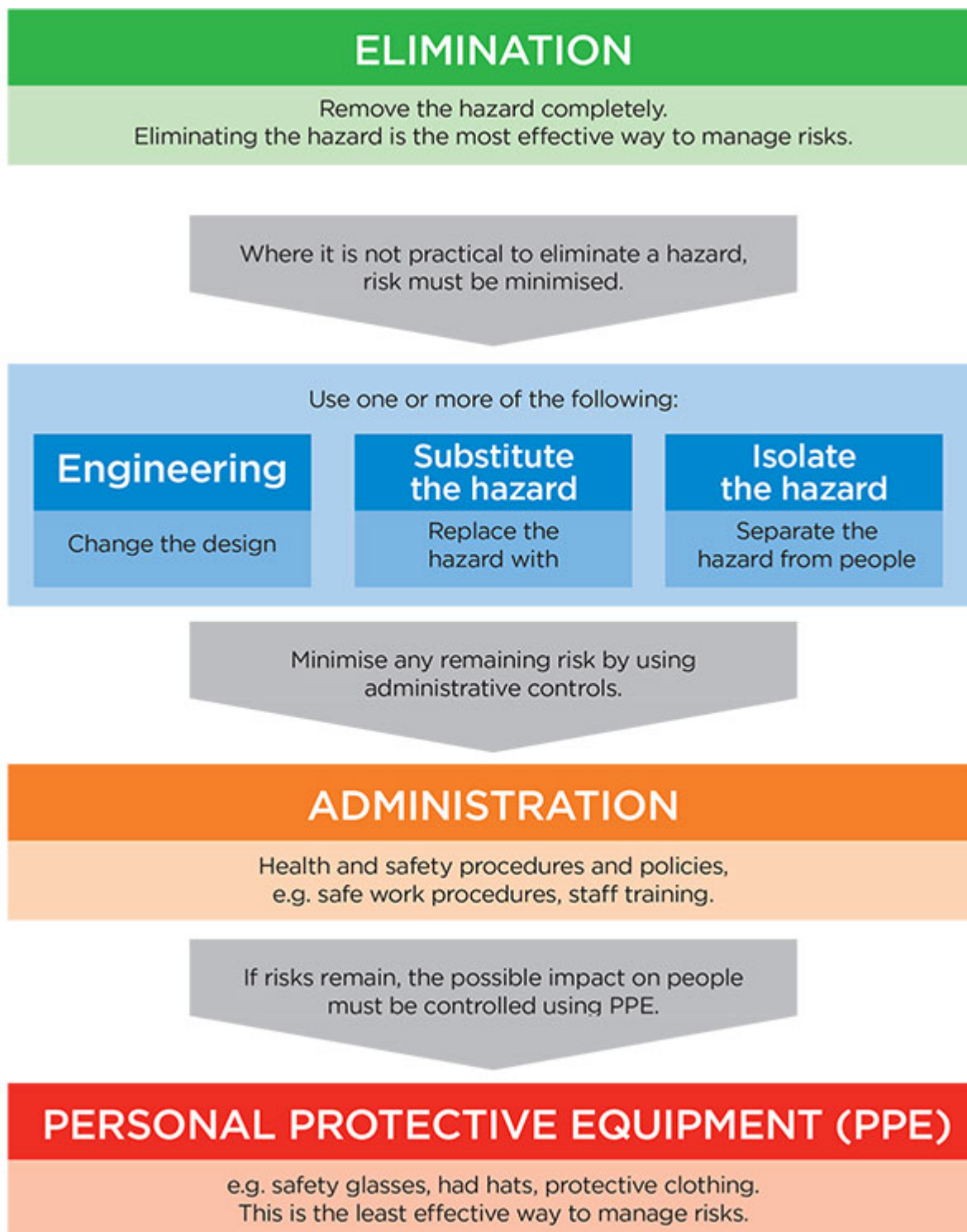


Figure 1 Hierarchy of control

Emergency and incident planning

As a PCBU, you must have an emergency plan as outlined in clause 43 of the WHS Regulation. The emergency plan can be derived from risk management planning and identification of risks that may arise from and occur in the crowded place. The plan should

be comprehensive and updated when new information is known.

The plan should describe actions to follow and key considerations, such as:

- notification methods and alarms
- evacuation procedures
- communication methods, including capacity, range and processes to report an incident or access information
- communication protocols with emergency services and other key stakeholders
- staff in charge
- staff and volunteer competencies, roles and responsibilities
- assembly areas, access/egress throughout the site and how this is to be managed
- response to first aid incidents and fire
- the human resources required in an incident, including on-site and external
- contact details
- attendees with disabilities
- procedures
- media management
- crowd control and event management
- event messaging.

Although a major incident or emergency may not occur in a crowded place, an assumption that one might happen should be embedded and communicated in the emergency plan.

You should liaise with the relevant emergency services including NSW Police, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Ambulance, State Emergency Services (SES) and local authorities, to determine any requirements that need to be included in the emergency plan.

The venue may have its own policies, procedures and emergency strategies that you may need to take into account.

Event organisers should provide appropriate risk-related training for workers in preparation for incident and emergency management. Workers should be taught situational awareness – awareness of the immediate surroundings of a situation and the crowd while focusing on the problem.

You must test the emergency plan to provide an opportunity for roles, responsibilities and responses to be tested and identify any improvements or changes needed.

Incident procedures should reflect command control transfer to emergency services and provide the information those stakeholders will need.

People

Working safely

The event organiser:

must provide workers and others with relevant information, instruction or training that is necessary to protect them from risks to their health and safety arising from your work. Your contractors will need to do the same for their employees. You should do this as part of a general site induction and briefings about individual work activities or tasks, including:

- site hazards and control measures
- buried services such as electric cables
- first aid, toilets and wash facilities
- emergency arrangements

You should provide relevant health and safety information to the public, eg. in the form of signage

- should ensure the competence of staff to undertake their role safely. You should determine that the workers are competent to undertake their nominated activities safely. There should also be an appropriate level of competent supervision, proportionate to the risk, nature of the work and the personnel involved
- must manage risks to health and safety relating to a hazardous manual task. The event organiser should ensure workers have access to and use appropriate manual handling equipment for manual tasks such as safely moving equipment
- should put mechanisms in place to report any equipment faults or failures and that these are fixed straight away
- should establish systems for managing fatigue.

Shared responsibilities - engaging contractors

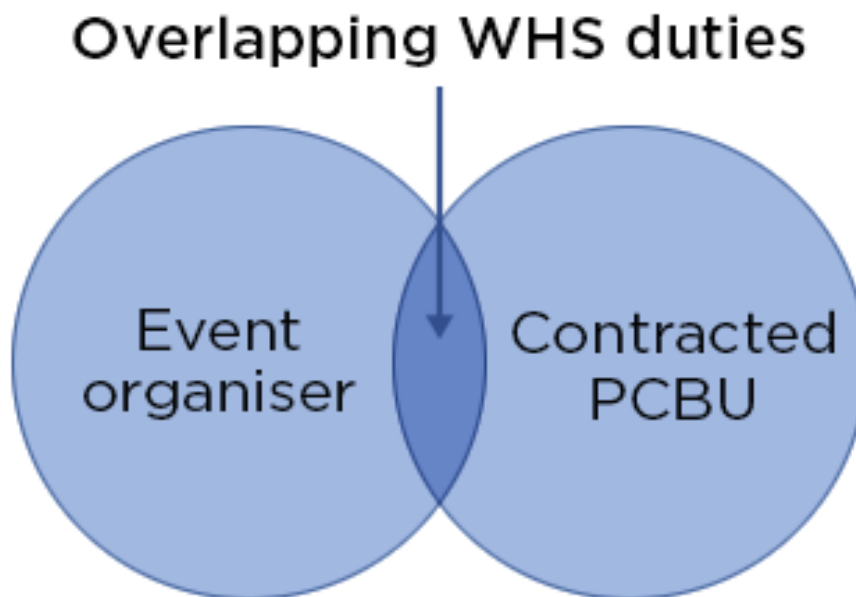
(In this section contractor refers to other PCBUs that are engaged by the event organiser.)

When an event organiser engages a contractor, both parties have shared responsibilities and must work together to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others. Both you and the contractor must ensure the health and safety of workers you engage and other workers whose work is influenced or directed by you. You also must both ensure that the health and safety of other persons (such as attendees at an event) is not put at risk from your work.

Shared responsibility does not diminish or eliminate responsibility; rather it acknowledges that everyone has accountability for ensuring events are safe and healthy. This means suppliers, contractors and others involved in the event may have a responsibility, along

with the event organiser and venue owners / controllers. As the event manager it is your responsibility to make sure that consultation and cooperation between all parties is in place and working.

If you are sharing an event workplace with other PCBUs, or working together in a contracting chain, you are likely to share overlapping duties. Each PCBU in the contracting chain should be aware of overlaps and manage risks that are appropriate and reasonably practicable for them to control.



Event organisers must consult, cooperate and coordinate with other PCBUs that share WHS duties.

It's important to note that you cannot:

- contract out of your health and safety duties, or
- push or transfer risks to other PCBUs in the contracting chain

When you select and appoint contractors, you should consider their suitability and competence for providing a safe and reliable service.

You should ask contractors to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their work and the health and safety hazards involved
- provide evidence of a trained workforce and the competence of key staff for the project (this includes that the contractor's staff hold the necessary competencies for certain activities for example a high-risk work licence or a traffic control work training card)
- relevant training, permissions and licences

- demonstrate that their workers can carry out the work safely, especially when it comes to:
 - electrical equipment, lights and leads
 - Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) containers and stoves
 - hazardous manual tasks, especially for bump in/bump out
 - operation and supervision of rides
 - working from heights
- confirm that they have enough resources to do the work
- provide evidence of previous successful work that shows they can adopt and develop safe systems of working
- provide evidence that their equipment is safe for use and regularly maintained and inspected by a competent person where required, including that high-risk plant such as amusement devices and pressure vessels hold the necessary plant item registration certificates.

Consultation, cooperation and coordination

Event organisers must consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with other PCBUs and with workers so that WHS risks can be effectively managed.

The purpose of consultation is to ensure everyone has a shared understanding of the risks, who will be affected and how the risks will be controlled, including who will be controlling the risk.

Co-operation and proper co-ordination of work activities on the site can include considering contractor risk assessments and communicating to all relevant parties, which will assist in developing an overall safe programme of work.

Effective communication and the exchange of information helps each person to meet their duty and minimise gaps in safety management. This process can range from directly discussing and planning daily work with contractors to establishing formal mechanisms with written agreements and consultation meetings.

Each PCBU must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult with workers and any health and safety representatives (HSRs) about matters that directly affect their health and safety. This duty extends to all workers.

Each duty holder retains responsibility for meeting their health and safety duties.

In some cases, venue owners / controllers can be quite involved in the events and control or stipulate certain requirements, eg. Security, food and beverage, loading dock management. Event organisers must engage with the venue owners / controllers to verify the areas which they control are managed effectively.

For further information see the Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination Code of practice (PDF 503kb).

Communication

Effective communication assists all workers on-site to understand the significance of WHS objectives. By predetermined and preferred channels – such as social media or email – workers should be kept informed of safety matters and procedures to be followed on-site. A good example is on-site messaging about weather conditions via video screens where audio messages may not be heard.

Effective communication is key to providing information to workers. To ensure they know WHS is a main priority you should:

- provide inductions
- provide regular briefings and updates through forums such as toolbox talks
- provide them with easy to understand information, including the risk management plan and emergency plan
- consult with them on WHS matters
- train and supervise your workers
- give clear instructions on what to do
 - in an emergency
 - in extreme weather conditions, such as strong winds or hot weather
 - if someone is away
 - if someone is injured
- outline how communication will be undertaken at the event, such as phones, two-way radio, loudspeaker
 - this should include how problems such as equipment errors should be communicated to enable swift repair or resolution
 - consideration should also cover emergency management and the need for a backup communications plan in the event of equipment failure (eg. mobile phone reception clogged / drop outs).

Managing crowd safety

Event organisers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of crowds. You and others involved in crowd management should think about what may cause harm to event workers and visitors through crowd movement, dynamics and behaviour as people arrive, enter, move around a venue, exit and disperse. Safety zones where the public cannot enter may need to be established.

Remember to consider people with disabilities, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people and children/older people when deciding and communicating the appropriate action to take.

As an early priority, organisers should establish that they can manage a crowd safely for the type of event and at the venue chosen.

There are generally three main phases of an event where you can use design information and effective crowd management to ensure people's safety:

- arrival and entry to the venue or site (e.g. access routes, queuing space and entrances)
- onsite/venue circulation of crowds (e.g. concourses, areas around facilities)
- leaving the venue/site and dispersal (e.g. exit routes and exit gate widths)

You should liaise with your local Police command around the types of crowd management activities which may be appropriate for your event, including security planning. Additional resources that may assist are available in the Department of Premier and Cabinet Event Starter Guide.

Safely managing drug and alcohol related harm at music festivals

There has been a substantial increase in the severity of drug and alcohol-related harms associated with some large music festivals in NSW.

Event organisers must ensure that there are procedures and controls in place so that liquor is not sold or supplied to any person that appears to be affected by alcohol or is a minor. All staff involved in the sale or supply of liquor should hold a current recognised RSA certification.

The event organiser is primarily responsible for holding a safe event including developing and complying with a safety management plan. All music festivals are encouraged to have comprehensive plans in place to manage the risks associated with their events. Government agencies, including NSW Health, NSW Ambulance and NSW Police, are able to give festival organisers expert advice in developing and implementing safety management plans.

NSW Health have developed the 'NSW Health Guidelines for Music Festival Event Organisers: Music Festival Harm Reduction' to support music festival organisers to deliver safer music festivals. The Guidelines combine existing event planning guidance with harm reduction strategies. Those evidence-based strategies have emerged from information obtained from events where a number of festival patrons have presented with serious drug-related illness that required immediate and intensive medical management prior to and during transfer to hospital.

All music festival organisers should use the NSW Health Guidelines to plan their events in order to:

- consider the site environment to promote the health and amenity of patrons;
- include peer support and harm reduction messaging; and
- ensure appropriate onsite medical service capability.

The *Music Festivals Act 2019* was introduced as a fit for purpose solution to the inherent safety risks associated with some Music Festivals. The Act supports comprehensive safety planning designed to minimise drug and alcohol-related harms at music festivals and ensures that high-risk events are able to access additional support from Government to run a safer event.

Under the Act, organisers of music festivals that have been found to be high-risk by the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority are required to prepare a safety management plan for their event.

The NSW Government Music Festivals Guidelines, the Ministry of Health 'Guidelines for music festival event organisers: music festival harm reduction' and general information on the risks at music festivals and developing safety management plans can be found at the Liquor & Gaming NSW website.

Equipment

Providing workplace facilities

Ensure good working conditions for you and your workers by providing:

- clear, unobstructed entry to and exit from work areas
- fresh drinking water
- hygienic washing and eating facilities
- level floors with no debris/waste pooling on the floor
- level work surfaces that are well maintained
- first aid
- clean toilets
- adequate ventilation
- enough space to carry out work and for storage of stock
- equipment, if supplied, in good working condition.

For further information see the Managing the work environment and facilities Code of practice (PDF 409kb).

Temporary accommodation

If you are providing temporary accommodation to workers, you must maintain those premises so that the person staying in it is not exposed to risks to their health and safety. Accommodation should be located away from the work activities happening during the event.

If you are providing a location for workers to set up their own temporary accommodation (e.g. tents) at or near the event venue, you must also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the location being provided doesn't create health and safety risks. The following factors should be considered when choosing a location:

- the surface is reasonably level
- the location is away from danger zones for natural hazards like flash flooding or other incoming weather
- people using the location will be protected from incoming weather eg. thunderstorms, hail, lightning, strong winds, extreme heat or cold
- there is access to reasonable shade
- there are no large trees or trees that appear to be dead or have dead limbs or have unattached limbs or material suspended in its canopy
- drinking, toileting and washing facilities available
- access to eating facilities
- there are no trip hazards around the site (including those created by tent ropes or the structures themselves)
- adequate lighting and access to electricity (this can include electricity from a generator)
- persons staying in the accommodation can safely enter and exit the location, including in an emergency situation
- flora in the vicinity will not cause any risks or injuries (ability to cut or scratch etc.)
- there are no risks associated with the fauna expected (e.g. venomous snakes, ants etc.)
- the accommodation is in a location which is separate from other people attending the event
- the accommodation (eg. tents etc) is erected in a way that won't expose the worker or others to injury
- no other hazards are on the site that could cause injury
- workers staying in the location are aware of potential hazards.

For more information see the Managing the work environment and facilities Code of Practice (PDF 409kb).

Also, see the Guidance note - accommodation

Bump in and bump-out (set-up and pack-down)

The bump-in and bump-out process at events should be carefully planned to provide a safe process for the delivery and removal of equipment, prior to and at the conclusion of the event.

Some of the things you should consider in this process include -

- access to and from the site
- how traffic flow will be managed
- restricting pedestrian movement
- staggering times to ensure a manageable flow
- parking
- where and how equipment will be dropped off / collected

- fatigue management.

Food catering sites

You can manage some of the common risks associated with food catering sites by understanding what activities can cause people harm and taking steps to control the associated risks.

You should ensure workers are trained on how to work safely and are adequately supervised. This includes giving them clear instructions on what to do when safety issues arise, such as:

- a leaking gas bottle or electrical fault
- severe weather conditions (eg. heat, storms)
- unsafe food preparation / storage or unhygienic practices
- an injury
- an emergency (for both the catering site and the event site)
- work at height (eg. catering vans/contractors with signage that is installed when on-site)
- testing and tagging
- re-supply of equipment / products (how this is managed especially when the event is still operational).

Electrical safety

For electrical safety ensure that:

- A residual current device (RCD – commonly known as a safety switch) that accommodates all electrical items is fitted
- where pegs and anchor stakes are likely to be used, consideration should be given to possible underground electrical and gas services. Where possible, consider alternative measures to secure, such as tent weights or sand bags.
- all electrical leads and equipment are tested, tagged and inspected at regular intervals
- electrical leads, equipment and connection points are protected from heat sources and wet weather and are suitable for the environment in which they are operating
- appropriate electrical power boards are used (no 'piggybacking' of power boards and double adaptors). Power boards should be of the type that incorporates over-current and thermal overload protection
- electrical cables are suitably protected to prevent damage and secured to prevent hazards such as tripping
- electrical installations and cables are protected from vehicle and pedestrian travel and impact
- festoon lighting is supported by steel cables or guy-wires of at least 2.7 metres height above pedestrians, at least 6 metres above ground where vehicles may travel, and are installed by a competent person

- all electrical work must be undertaken by a suitably competent and licenced electrician

For more information see the Managing electrical risks in the workplace Code of Practice (PDF 1.3MB).

Generators and inverters

- Low voltage generators must be connected by a competent person.
- Generators and inverters providing electrical supply via permanently connected RCDs must have a maximum tripping current of 30mA.
- Generators must be positioned in open environments and away from people to reduce exposure to fumes.
- Isolated winding generators and isolated inverters must only be used to supply a separated circuit for electrical equipment installed by a competent person, and each winding must supply not more than one item of Class I (exposed conductive parts – e.g. metallic outer) electrical equipment.

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)

For LPG safety ensure that:

- all gas appliances are certified and fit-for-purpose
- provide appropriate training for staff to change gas cylinders
- gas appliances must be inspected by a competent person on a regular basis and appropriately maintained
- any connections from LPG cylinders to appliances are in good working order and have been tested for leaks after connection
- LPG cylinders, including spares, are:
 - correctly stored outside in well-ventilated areas
 - kept on a firm stable base and secured from falling, such as by chain restraints
 - positioned so that pressure relief valves are facing away from catering vans, tents or other combustible materials
 - kept clear of ignition sources, such as naked flames and electrical sockets
- plastic milk crates are not used to store LPG cylinders as this may cause static electricity to build up
- all LPG gasfitting work is undertaken by a suitably competent and licenced LPG gasfitter.

Event organisers should ensure the locations of flammable liquids, e.g. petrol and diesel fuel, and LPG gas storage locations and quantities are included and marked on site plans and communicated to local emergency agencies as part of their emergency planning and the event planning process

Fire prevention

For fire safety:

- maintain clearance distances between all ignition sources and combustible materials, such as vans, tent and marquee walls, overhanging trees etc
- use soapy water or detergent to check for leaks in LPG cylinders and fittings before use
- safely dispose of used cooking oil and coals, after they have cooled, and clean up excess grease and fat from grills etc
- ensure structures or vans are fitted with appropriate, readily available and unobstructed fire-fighting equipment, ensuring that fire extinguishers are charged and within the test date
- consider the impact that your event build may have had on the firefighting equipment within the venue and the ability for this to be used in an emergency (example of this is Exhibitions with large stands impacting on the ability for fire hose reels to be used in the centre of an Exhibition Hall).

Consult with NSW Fire and Rescue about any specific fire prevention requirements for the event based on location etc.

First aid

Event organisers must ensure:

- the provision of first aid equipment
- each worker at the workplace has access to the equipment
- access to facilities for administering first aid
- an adequate number of workers are trained to administer first aid, or workers have access to an adequate number of other people who have been trained to administer

You should also consider:

- provision of medical / first aid response to event participants and how this is managed / coordinated
- access / egress for emergency personnel / vehicles / equipment

You should consult with NSW Ambulance regarding medical provision and potential ambulance provision for the event.

Your risk assessment process will help you to determine whether there is a requirement to have highly trained medical staff or emergency personnel on site during the event to manage medical emergencies.

For further information see the First aid in the workplace Code of Practice (PDF 391kb) and the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Event Starter Guide.

Fireworks displays

Organisers planning the use of fireworks at an event must ensure several key areas are considered and implemented:

- a licensed pyrotechnician must be engaged for the use of fireworks
- an organised public event must have a supporting letter from the local Council stating they have no objections to fireworks being used at the event
- ensure the police, fire brigades, local council and any other relevant agencies have been notified by the licensed pyrotechnician
- ensure SafeWork NSW has been notified by the licensed pyrotechnician
- ensure notification has been by the pyrotechnician to the public, and surrounding neighbours. This may occur during the event promotion, and prior to the event using social media, print media, radio, or local letterbox drops.
- a risk assessment relating to the use of fireworks which includes, suitable location, exclusion zones, fall out of debris, impact on crowds must be conducted and adopted by both the event organiser and the Licensed pyrotechnician
- consult with the pyrotechnician on matters such as strong winds, fire bans, electrical storm activity, and provision of a safe firing position
- provide any security or event staff required by the pyrotechnician to maintain security and exclusion zones
- provide any first aid or fire protection measures required by the pyrotechnician
- provide safety for any animals or livestock that may be impacted by the noise of fireworks. Pyrotechnicians have responsibilities to notify surrounding stables, kennels etc in the conditions of their licence which may be assisted by your planning.
- ensure that the pyrotechnician has an exclusion zone available once any display has been completed to enable a search for any misfired or fireworks debris to be conducted
- assist the pyrotechnician with provision of safe access and egress.

Managing hazardous manual tasks

Event organisers must manage the risks associated with hazardous manual tasks (HMT) in order to eliminate or minimise the risks. This could involve considering measures that could be implemented to eliminate or reduce the risks, such as:

- work area design and layout e.g. making sure there is sufficient space for the worker to perform their task safely
- the nature, size, weight or number of things handled in performing the task e.g. use appropriate equipment, such as trolleys, sack trucks, forklifts and mechanical lifting, scissor lifts, to help you and your workers lift and move equipment and supplies more easily

- systems of work, or the way work is organised, can influence the physical and mental demands that a HMT places on a worker. E.g. ensure the equipment is in good working order and operators are appropriately trained and/or licenced in the use of the equipment
- the environment in which the HMT is performed e.g. adequate lighting is available to minimise body stressing from sustained awkward posture and eye fatigue.

For more information see the Hazardous manual tasks Code of Practice (PDF 1.3MB).

Equipment safety

Event organisers must check all plant and equipment before use and ensure that:

- guarding is in place to prevent access by workers to moving / dangerous parts of the plant
- there are no faults or defects
- emergency stops are working, if applicable
- workers are trained in safe working methods, including the location and use of emergency stop buttons on equipment.
- All plant has been inspected, serviced and maintained as required and recommended by the manufacturer or competent person.

Continually check equipment throughout the event and encourage workers to report any malfunctions to a supervisor or manager.

Marquees

Event organisers must ensure that:

- the marquee has been properly erected
- access to underground services is not obstructed
- above and below-ground services, such as overhead power lines, are identified during installation and dismantling
- suitable anchor mechanisms are used (weights/stakes), considering adverse weather conditions, especially high winds
- anchor mechanisms are suitably protected against trips, impalement and traffic
- the ground is suitable for the anchor mechanisms
- all guy ropes are in a sound condition
- you have a safety procedure for severe weather conditions and all workers have been trained in this procedure
- suitable exits are always available and kept clear of tripping hazards
- adequate lighting is provided
- marquees are inspected at regular intervals during the event to ensure no risks to safety have occurred (e.g. loose ropes, broken sections etc).

Structures (including stages)

Event organisers must ensure that:

- the structure is designed by competent person
- the design accounts for, or is supplemented to account for, site specific conditions such as topographic or soil conditions, weather events, site access during erection and dismantling, erection or dismantling methods e.g. use of cranes, and proximity to other structures or utilities e.g. overhead powerlines and underground services
- the design accounts for fittings or items to be fixed to the structure e.g. lighting and sound equipment, banners or signage that will increase wind loading
- the construction / installation is undertaken in accordance with the design and/or instructions from the designer, and thereafter inspected and signed off by a competent person at critical stages and upon completion e.g. the designer, structural engineer, or for minor structures; a person competent in the design of such structures
- structures using scaffolding components above four metres in height are installed by licensed scaffolders
- where mechanical load shifting equipment and associated gear is used to erect or dismantle the structure, and/or where ancillary equipment such as safety nets, static lines or flying foxes and cable ways are secured to the structure that this work is carried out by licensed riggers
- no alterations are made to the design of the structure unless approved and recertified by the competent person
- components are not mixed and matched unless they are approved by the manufacturer and included in the design
- appropriate fall protection measures are in place at all times (the measures are required at the front of performance stages until all construction and fit out work is completed).

For further information see the Safe Design of Structures Code of Practice (PDF 1MB) and Construction Work Code of Practice (PDF 1MB).

Amusement devices

Amusement devices can be a lot of fun, however incidents, and serious injuries can still occur if they are incorrectly set up, anchored, operated or supervised.

Event organisers are PCBU's, and therefore have a duty under the WHS Legislation to ensure that they eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety due to the operation of amusement devices and other plant at the event.

Event organisers are responsible for:

- planning
- engaging competent operators

- providing information about the event site
- anticipating the likelihood that patrons will be exposed to health and safety risks
- providing control measures to any safety risks to ensure a safe and successful event.

You'll find practical guidance and information on amusement devices at events, including selection of devices, installation, site planning, registration and installation on our website.

For more information see the Managing the risks of plant in the workplace Code of Practice (PDF 2.1MB).

Transport

You are responsible for ensuring that the risks created by moving vehicles onsite are managed so that people do not come into contact with them. You must:

- assess the risks from vehicle movements onsite when planning your event
- keep people and vehicles apart
- have a traffic management system in place incorporating one-way systems where possible
- minimise the need for reversing
- plan for the entry and exit of emergency vehicles
- plan to complete all tasks involving work vehicles in the public areas of an event before the audience is admitted
- design the site, where possible, to allow access to toilets, trade areas, waste or skip collection points by trade vehicles and sanitary service vehicles, without passing through areas open to the public
- consider using alternatives where possible if routes deteriorate, e.g. due to bad weather, or use hardcore, metal trackways and/or other temporary surfaces like straw or woodchip
- prepare and document a traffic management plan, which includes clear site rules and how they will be enforced
- make sure drivers of work vehicles, banksmen / signallers and traffic marshals are trained and competent in the implementation of the traffic management plan.

Preventing falls from heights

A significant risk of falls exists at festivals and outdoor events in particular around staging, platforms, rigging and scaffolding, loading docks and preparation areas. This includes both indoor and outdoor events. Outdoor events present very particular risks due to the temporary nature of the staging and dock area.

As the event organiser, you must assess the work and work area and take appropriate action to manage the risk of falls, this includes making sure that:

- no work is done at height if it is reasonably practicable to do it on the ground

- work is properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out in as safe a way as is reasonably practicable
- work at height takes account of weather conditions that could endanger health and safety
- those working at height are competent
- the risks from working at height are assessed and appropriate work equipment is selected and used to minimise the risk of falls and other hazards such as coming into contact with overhead power lines
- equipment for work at height is properly inspected and maintained and workers have been trained and are competent in its use
- the risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled
- the use of fall prevention systems (e.g. harnesses) should only form part of the controls in place to minimise injuries whilst working at height
- there is a plan for emergencies and rescue
- fall protection is provided to protect workers and others while the stage area is not a live venue (eg. the performance or show has not commenced)
- all workers completing rigging and scaffolding, or using elevated work platforms, hold a current high risk work license.

For more information see the Managing the risks of falls at workplaces Code of Practice (PDF 4.1MB).

Load shifting plant

- All load shifting plant e.g. forklift truck must be fit for purpose and in good condition.
- For outdoor events plant must be rated for the purpose, all terrain.
- Often load shifting plant is leased for the particular event, be very clear with the provider as to your needs and any particular requirements with its use.
- If you need to use attachments e.g. tine extensions, jibs, work boxes, they must be in good order, fit for purpose and the appropriate load rating information displayed on the load rating plate for each piece of plant that they will be used with.
- High risk work license for use and available.
- Part of the venue induction program, e.g. traffic management, high risk work license register.

Waste management

Assess the risks associated with storage, handling and disposal of waste and implement effective control measures to avoid or control these risks.

There are several hazards associated with poor management of waste at an event:

- accumulations of waste can block emergency access or escape routes, hamper movement around the site, and present tripping hazards to workers and visitors
- waste can cause fire hazards if it is ignited accidentally or purposely

- vehicles collecting waste materials can cause a hazard, especially if they are not separated from people working at or attending the event.

Other considerations

Inclement weather

The key to effectively managing a change in your event due to inclement weather is an effective decision-making process and good communication. The event organiser needs to be prepared for changes in weather that could affect the event, such as extreme heat or strong winds, and have a clear understanding of how different conditions could affect the event. This could include having separate procedures that could be implemented should inclement weather occur during the event. Procedures should include how communication will occur during inclement weather. Communication should be accurate, concise and timely, to avoid confusion and manage people's expectations.

Event organisers should have systems in place to monitor the event and any alerts relating to changes in weather so that proactive measures can be taken to reduce the risk of weather impacting on an event (eg. cutting scaffold screens (scrim) to reduce the risk of structural collapse or damage to stages when high winds are expected or pulling signage down due to high winds).

It is the responsibility of the event organiser to be prepared to handle the occurrence of inclement weather and to know what will be done in the event the weather conditions become unsafe. Safety is always the top priority and should never be compromised simply to get through an event.

High risk work (HRW)

Event organisers must ensure that workers hold an Australian HRW licence that is current and relevant to the specified work being undertaken. The following HRW is commonly associated with events and requires a HRW licence:

- Operating Forklift trucks, Elevated Work Platforms (boom type of 11 metres or more) and Reach Stackers.
- Undertaking Scaffolding work, which is the erection, alteration or dismantling of a temporary structure that is or has been erected to support a platform and from which a person or object could fall more than 4 metres from the platform or the structure.
- Operating Cranes – which includes: slewing mobile cranes; non-slewing mobile cranes greater than 3 tonnes capacity; and Vehicle Loading Cranes with a capacity of 10 metre tonnes or more. Telehandler or Multi-tool Carrier operation, when configured as a crane, also requires a crane HRW licence.

- Undertaking Dogging work, which is the application of slinging techniques, including the selection and inspection of lifting gear, to safely sling a load. Dogging work also includes the directing of a plant operator in the movement of a load when the load is out of the operator's view.
- Undertaking Rigging work, which is the use of mechanical load shifting equipment (and associated gear) to move, place or secure a load using plant, equipment or members of a building or structure, to ensure the stability of those members. Rigging work also includes the setting up or dismantling of cranes or hoists.

Other Authorised Work

The event organiser must ensure that workers hold any authorisation required under the WHS Legislation for specified work to be undertaken. Common specified work for events may include construction work, traffic control, electrical work or using explosives (fireworks).

Notifications / permits

You may need to consult with other organisations, government departments and regulatory bodies about your event. The NSW Governments 'Event starter guide' provides information on how to identify what types of permits / notifications you may need and who to consult with to obtain them.

Holding the necessary permits/notification will demonstrate your commitment to holding a safe event.

Products

Event organisers and vendors should:

- ensure any novelty products sold or given away are safe for the various ages of the people attending the event, and also that they will remain safe when taken home after the event
- reconsider supplying products containing button or coin batteries, which can be deadly when ingested by young children who can mistake them for lollies. Even if the products are intended for adults or if the batteries are secured inside products at the time of sale, discarded novelty products may be trampled and break open to expose the batteries to a young child
- ask for test certificates from upstream suppliers before you supply any products that will be accessed by young children
- check the Product Safety Australia website for information on the type of product to be supplied
- more information about button battery safety and recent recalls can be found at the Product Safety Australia website.

Links to other useful resources

- Event starter guide (NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet)
- Guidelines for music festival event organisers: Music festival harm reduction (PDF 331kb) (NSW Health)
- Guide to traffic and transport management for special events (NSW Government) (PDF 3.9MB)
- Safe and healthy crowded places (Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience)
- Traffic management guide – events (Safe Work Australia)
- Mobile food vendors (NSW Food Authority)
- Markets and temporary events (NSW Food Authority)
- Bureau of Meteorology (Australian Government)
- Office of Local Government (NSW Government)
- Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism (Australian Government)
- Easy to do WHS (PDF 329kb) (SafeWork NSW)
- Toolkit for accessible and inclusive events (NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet) - search result listing

Appendix 1 - Case studies

Case study 1

Vera owns a 150 hectare property in a regional area. Every year Dominic, who owns a small events business, uses 5 cleared hectares of Vera's land to run a multi-day food festival on the site. The event has stalls and suppliers from the local community and attracts thousands of visitors from across the State.

As event organiser for the food festival, Dominic's business is responsible for organising all of the event and facilities needed for the staff and visitors to attend the site. They also contract out the supply of various services and facilities, including security services, cleaners, portable washrooms and kitchens.

As part of the planning process Dominic gives consideration to issues such as ground conditions, site access for delivery, setup, dismantling and removal of equipment, available utilities, proximity to permanent structures such as fixtures and powerlines on the site. This assists with determining or understanding the types of contractors and services that are required. Dominic also develops a risk management plan in consultation with Vera and the other contractors.

Dominic's business also has a legislative responsibility to consult, cooperate and coordinate with other duty holders and any workers whose health and safety is likely to be affected. For example prior to engaging the Security Services Contractor, Dominic checked the contractor's risk management plans, training and competence, consultation

and communication arrangements. Dominic and the contractor agreed to hold scheduled briefings to discuss issues and put in place reporting procedures and processes to coordinate activities.

Case study 2

Council owns a park in the city. It contains public facilities, including toilets, a playground and a hall.

Council contract Adam's event business to run a cultural community event on the land. Adam will be responsible for event management, including organising entertainment, managing event staff, hiring sites out to stall holders and security.

There are two main PCBU's under the WHS legislation, Council as the venue owner / controller and Adam as the event organiser. Where duties are shared, all PCBUs have a responsibility to meet those duties, to the extent that they have the ability to influence or control the matter. They also need to work with other PCBU's participating or providing services as part of the event to ensure health and safety risks arising out of their activities are appropriately managed.

The Council and Adam implement processes to consult, cooperate with and coordinate activities to ensure they both meet their work health and safety duties, to the extent that they have the ability to influence and control how risks are managed.

The Council has contracted management and control of the event to Adam however they do have control over the site and a responsibility to manage any risks, including maintenance of the facilities.

Adam has the most influence and control over the event and is responsible for managing any risks to workers and the public during the event. This includes appropriately managing contractors at the event.

Appendix 2 - Checklist

Download the Managing WHS at events checklist (PDF 168kb).

<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/arts-and-recreation-services-publications/guide-managing-work-health-and-safety-at-events> 02-08-23

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