

Darlington Public Event Safety Advisory Group

A15 – Contingency Planning



Event organisers should consider the planning and management for emergency situations which require resources beyond the norm as part of their risk assessment – no matter how unlikely they are to occur.

What types of emergencies should be considered?

There are well known disasters that have occurred at major sporting and recreational events over the past few years such as the Bradford Stadium Fire (1985), Hillsborough (1989) and Collapse of seating at Earls Court during a Pink Floyd Concert. There can be other events that can overwhelm your event, large or small, eg a horse bolting through a crowd, a tent catching fire or unseasonable weather causing large numbers of casualties due to exhaustion or exposure.

The key to planning is the **Risk Assessment**. You must try to consider the likely events and assess them but also consider the unlikely.

Points to Plan For:

1. Event Location – Consider the location of your event in relation to services and infrastructure that you may need in an emergency, such as electricity, telephones, water, shelter, proximity to hospitals and availability of Emergency Services. It is better to have them available or nearby.
2. Access, Egress and sterile routes. Make sure you have agreed access routes for Emergency Vehicles to and around your event, ideally separate from access routes for the public.
3. Designate an Emergency Control Point. Designate a point where members of your event management team and the Emergency Services can meet in the event of an incident. Ideally this point should be under cover and have electricity and telephone access.
4. Designate a single point of contact to liaise with any Emergency Services. Emergency Services will deploy a co-ordinating officer to the scene. You should consider who would be the Emergency Services Liaison.
5. Brief your stewarding, security, contractors/stall holders and medical staff on procedures to be taken in the event of a significant incident. Brief them on what their role and actions are. Consider a test exercise prior to opening to the public.

6. Consider an evacuation plan. Consider where public and staff should assemble and evacuate to (eg a remote car park). Consider evacuation routes, signage and public address systems. Consider pre-prepared messages that are clear and will not alarm the public.
7. Security. Are there any VIP's who will require special planning and arrangements. Could your event be subject to any subversive action from an individual or group. If in doubt consider getting specialist advice from Police or a specialist event security consultant.
8. Consider specifying individual and organisational roles and responsibilities in an incident.
9. Consider the resources (equipment and people) at your event and how they can be utilised and managed in the event of an incident.
10. Plan for dealing with the media. If an incident occurs plan to deal with local or national media. Pre prepare factual information about your event which can be released immediately (eg type of event, number of years running, no of people attending). See PESAG Advice A8 Fatalities at an event

It should be stressed that whilst many of these actions may seem to be specific to larger events, correct planning and risk assessment should look at these issues even for small events. Organisers should consider a section on Major Emergencies as part of their overall Event management Plan. It should also be shared with the Emergency Responders before the event.

General Advice on Emergency Planning

UK Resilience <http://www.ukresilience.info/home.htm>

Emergency Planning Society <http://www.emergplansoc.org.uk/>

Courses <http://www.epcollege.gov.uk/>