
Event Safety Guide

A practical guide to safety legislation, which is of relevance to organisers of events

Produced by the Public Protection Division of Pembrokeshire County Council



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INTRODUCTION

- 1 The information contained in this guide has primarily been written to provide advice on the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSW Act) and associated Regulations at events which come within the definition of “licensable activity” for the purposes of the Licensing Act 2003. However, elements of the guide can be used as a template for organising other types of public events.

It is usual for such events to require a Premises Licence for the period of the event involved under the Licensing Act 2003. However for smaller events (less than 500 people) of short duration (less than 96 hours), organisers may not require a Premises Licence but may give the Licensing Authority a Temporary Event Notice.

There is no difference between the application of the HSW Act at a licensed or unlicensed event. The difference lies in whether or not the responsible authorities can impose more detailed conditions in relation to the four licensing objectives in relation to the Premises Licence. The four licensing objectives are:

- The prevention of crime and disorder.
- Public safety.
- The prevention of public nuisance.
- The protection of children from harm.

This guide aims to help those who organise events so that the event runs safely as the event organiser, whether an individual, charity or community group, has prime responsibility, and an obligation in law, for protecting the health, safety and welfare of everyone working at, or attending, the event.

Good planning and management are fundamental to the success of any event. All organisers are recommended to use the section headings as a framework or checklist for planning the requirements for their particular event and to highlight the main areas for consideration in the risk assessment.

This guide does not replace the need for event organisers to seek advice from other sources and particularly for consultation with relevant Local Authority officers and the emergency services. These officers will be prepared to offer advice and assistance including whether a Premises Licence is required or not. More detailed guidance can be found in the HSE publication, HSG195, “*The event safety guide: a guide to health and safety and welfare at music and similar events*”. [See Recommended reading]

2 General legal considerations

Most events covered by this publication will involve a work activity (i.e. at least one person will be employed for example during site preparation, the actual event or the site breakdown) and therefore be subject to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSW Act) and subsidiary legislation. This legislation imposes duties in respect of the health and safety of everyone involved in managing the event. Legal relationships between promoters, event organisers, contractors etc. can be a very complex area of law so it is important to establish clear health and safety responsibilities. In the majority of cases the responsibility rests with the event organiser.

The two requirements below, coupled with the requirements for a risk assessment, are closely related and can be considered together:

- (i) Section 2 (2)(a) of the HSW Act requires employers to provide and maintain plant and systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health;
- (ii) Section 3 of the HSW Act requires employers to conduct their undertakings in such a way that, so far as is reasonably practicable, people who are not employees i.e. guests, are not exposed to health and safety risks. **It also imposes a similar duty on the self-employed towards themselves and other people.**

3 Risk assessment

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to make a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of:

- the health and safety risks to which their employees are exposed while at work; and
- the health and safety risks to other people resulting from or in connection with the employers' work,

in order to identify the measures needed to comply with health and safety legislation.

The same duty is placed on self-employed people in respect of their own health and safety and that of other people.

Event organisers will need to carry out a risk assessment for the site preparation, the event and the site breakdown. This will involve:

- Identifying the hazards associated with the event i.e. anything that can cause harm. This may be achieved by researching specific publications, visiting the site or venue and obtaining details of specific hazards from contractors, catering outlets and suppliers of special effects etc.
- Deciding who may be harmed and how
- Assessing the level of risk
- Identifying appropriate and adequate precautions; and
- Recording your findings. If you have fewer than five employees you do not need to write anything down, though it is useful to keep a written record of what you have done. If applying for a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 the precautions should also be listed with in the public safety licensing objectives.

The overall event risk assessment will help to determine what controls or precautions you need to put into place to manage the event safely. The following paragraphs identify some of the hazards likely to require consideration and gives guidance on how to eliminate them:

4 **The venue/site**

- For all events there must be adequate space for the public to move around stalls, rides, performance/stage, arena/exhibition areas, etc and to have unobstructed routes to exits. It is especially important at indoor events to prevent stalls/goods obstructing exit routes and doors.
- Outdoor sites including the carpark, footpaths and any staging/structures should be suitable for use in bad weather conditions and this should be built into contingency arrangements.
- Identify and control obvious hazards on both the site and surrounding areas, such as stored chemicals or machinery, unfenced holes, steep drops between different ground levels, ponds/water and unsafe or other structures that the public should be kept away from by means of barrier/fencing. Overhead power lines may pose a risk particularly during construction, height restrictions should be identified and also notified at the access to the site. Where overhead cables are a problem you should liaise with the local power distribution company.
- There should be no trip, slip, fall or other similar hazards.
- There should be suitable lighting throughout the site, including adequate temporary emergency lighting, if the event will go on after darkness falls.
- When selecting the site/venue, consideration should be given to the nearby community with respect to noise nuisance. (See noise control section)
- Consider suitable arrangements to ensure that all people with special needs are able to attend event and use the facilities provided.

You should:

- Prepare a sketch plan of the site, preferably to scale showing the position of all the activities/ attractions, circulation routes and exits.
- Seek early approval from local highway authority if special traffic management arrangements are required on the highway.
- Have enough exits for a mass orderly evacuation of the site and the occupant capacity agreed with the emergency services.
- Have entrances and exits identified for emergency vehicles. These should be agreed with the emergency services. Emergency exits and routes should be clear of obstructions at all times and should be clearly indicated by suitable signs which are illuminated if necessary.
- Make sure that construction work and vehicle movements that may take place during site preparation are supervised and/or protected by suitable barriers.
- Arrange separate vehicle and pedestrian entrances/exits to the site and arrange entrance queues that do not obstruct vehicle access or nearby road junctions.
- Site any car parking well away from the pedestrian areas of the site. Clearly signpost the parking area and do not allow cars to be parked anywhere else.
- Design and steward car parking areas to eliminate hazards to pedestrians such as reversing vehicles.
- Except for emergency purposes, vehicle movements in the public areas of the site during the event should not be permitted.
- When there is a limit on the number of people that can be accommodated at the event (i.e. 500 for permitted temporary activities), make sure the entrance is well stewarded and that an accurate form of head counting is operated to prevent overcrowding on site and at exits.

5 **Safety barriers**

- Barriers serve several different purposes. They can provide physical security or be used to prevent the audience accessing equipment, displays, moving machines etc. They may also be used to relieve and prevent the build up of audience pressures, e.g. a properly constructed front of stage barrier.
- Barriers will always be subject to loading and should therefore be designed to withstand right angle and parallel loads in line with the probable pressures. Checks should be made by a competent person to ensure that, when erected, the barrier meets the design criteria.

6 **Structures i.e. stages, tents, marquees, lighting towers**

- If staging, lighting/sound towers etc are to be erected this must be done by a competent person. Written confirmation should be obtained from them
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to say that the structures are safe in all foreseeable conditions. The wind loading specification for each marquee should be obtained for use when planning for possible emergencies.

- If marquees and tents are to be erected then advice should be sought from the Fire Safety Officer on the safety aspects including their siting, construction and the provision of exits, emergency lighting etc. [See Recommended reading]
- Arrangements should be made to stop unauthorised persons gaining access to or interfering with equipment etc when the event is open to the public
- All staging and/or structures should be positioned so as not to obstruct any entrances or exits from the site.
- Fall protection for the edge of the stage facing the audience is not normally provided but the edge should be clearly marked. Other physical obstructions, unprotected edges, edges by gaps and stair nosings should all be marked with white or illuminous tape. Any such markings should be a minimum of 25mm wide to be visible, but 50mm is preferable.
- All staging and structures should be free from trip hazards and other physical hazards (i.e. sharp edges/points/protruding support members).

7 **Electrical installations and lighting**

- The whole installation, including wiring, switchgear and any generator should be installed in a safe manner by a competent, suitably qualified, electrician.
 - On completion the electrical installation should be inspected and tested according to the procedures laid down in BS 7909:1998, also known as the IEE Wiring Regulations.
 - All electrical installations and equipment must comply with the general requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
 - The supply should be protected by suitable earth leakage device RCD having a maximum tripping current rating of 30mA and suitable overload protection.
 - Where possible locate the main electrical intake and/or generator enclosure where it is accessible for normal operations or emergencies, but segregated from public areas of the venue. Display warning signs around the intake or enclosure. Any generator and/ or electrical equipment, including switchgear, should be satisfactorily barriered to prevent unauthorised access and/ or interference
 - If generators are to be used, consider their location and accessibility for refuelling purposes. Fuel should be stored in a safe manner in suitable containers. If the venue is located close to a residential area consider the noise nuisance factor. If this is excessive, silenced generators may be a suitable means of reducing it.
 - All electrical equipment, which could be exposed to the weather, should be protected by means of suitable and sufficient covers, enclosures or shelters.
 - Cables of the correct rating for the possible load should be used. There should be no damage to the insulation and the correct type of connectors suitable for external use should be used.
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- Ideally temporary cables should be securely fixed or supported by catenary wire overhead, or buried underground. If cables have to be run on the surface they should be protected against sharp edges or crushing by heavy loads and should be positioned so as not to cause trip/ other hazard e.g. by covering with ramps or rubber mats.
- Where possible, provide sufficient fixed sockets outlets to avoid the use of flexible extension leads and multi-socket outlets. Fixed socket outlets can be either permanent or on properly mounted temporary distribution boards. It is also advisable for equipment to be located within 2m of a fixed socket outlet to avoid the need for long trailing leads.
- Ensure that any person that may bring portable electrical equipment onto the site can demonstrate that the electrical equipment is maintained correctly and the equipment has been subjected to routine inspection and testing.
- All parts of an outdoor venue should, unless not intended to be used in the absence of adequate daylight, be provided with suitable levels of artificial light. Consider the lighting of the first aid post, information area/marquees, pedestrian access to car parks, car park areas, toilets and access routes to public highways.
- In addition, emergency lighting should be provided as determined by the risk assessment and fire risk assessment.

8 **First Aid management**

- The level of first aid provision at any particular event needs to be suitable for the number of people expected to attend and for the type of event and entertainment. A risk assessment should therefore be carried out. Detailed advice can be found in “*The event safety guide: A guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at music and Similar Events*” [see Recommended reading]. Liaison should be carried out with your local Ambulance Trust with regard to advice and possible provision of services.
- Make sure that the basic services for first aid are always available. At smaller events a qualified first aider should be present and an area suitable for first aid treatment, (a supply of water should be available). No event should have less than 2 first aiders.
- A voluntary first aid society can be asked to provide a First Aid Post staffed by qualified first-aiders.
- The first aid post should be clearly signposted and provided with easy access for the audience and an ambulance at all times. Where an ambulance is required a parking area should be provided close to the first aid post with a clear exit from the site.
- Make sure that all persons assisting at the display know where the first aid post is and where appropriate the identity of the first aider.
- Provide access to a telephone or provide mobile phones.
- A record must be maintained of all people seeking treatment. The record may be required to assist in the organisers statutory obligations to report accidents and injuries to workers and audience members under the

9 **Fire safety**

- Contact your local Fire Prevention Officer for advice.
- Provide appropriate equipment around the site/venue for putting out fires (e.g. fire extinguishers, fire blankets).
- Make sure that stewards know where the equipment is and how to use it. They should be told not to attempt to fight major fires.
- The Fire Brigade should be called at once to any fire, suspected or real.
- Provide appropriate separation distances between individual marquees/tents/stalls to prevent the spread of fire.
- See Paragraph 4 (above) on site/venue design of site entrances and exits.

10 **Stewards**

- Provide an appropriate number of stewards and supervisors for the security and control of the site and the attending public. For licensed events the numbers and level of training should be agreed with the Licensing Authority/Police.
- The number of stewards needed may be calculated by considering each of the separate tasks to be covered (i.e. crowd control, staffing entrances and exits, controlling access to attractions/ activities, patrolling public areas, securing unauthorised areas, securing hazards, car parking duties etc).
- If the event is to last several hours extra stewards should be available to allow others to take meal breaks etc.
- Stewards may need to be licensed by the Security Industry Authority the cost of which should be allowed for in your budget.

Stewards should:

- Be fit, active and aged not less than 18.
- Be suitably trained and competent to carry out their duties effectively.
- Receive a written statement of their duties, and where appropriate a checklist and a layout plan showing the key features on site.
- Receive a final briefing of their duties on the day of the event, particularly about communicating with supervisors and others in the event of an emergency.
- Be easily identifiable i.e. wearing jackets or tabards.
- Know the layout of the site and be able to assist the public by giving information about the available facilities, remembering especially people with disabilities.
- Be aware of the location of the entrances and exits in use on the day, first aid posts and fire-fighting equipment.
- Be provided with torches where the event is likely to go beyond dusk and test this and any other equipment issued to them prior to the event.

- Know, understand and have practised their specific duties in an emergency and the arrangements for evacuating the public from the site, including the use of coded messages.

11 **Communications**

- Ensure that you have adequate contingency arrangements in place which are communicated to all stewards and other personnel, and which are documented where necessary.
- Provide personal radio contact between the safety officer and senior stewards and any other people responsible for activating the contingency arrangements.
- Consider providing a public address system for announcements and instructions to staff and the public. For smaller events or as a back up a portable loudhailer may be sufficient.
- Batteries must be fully charged and stewards should be trained on how to use them and where they are located.
- The public address system should be fully tested before the event. It should have a back up power supply that allows it to continue to operate at full load in the event of an emergency. It should be able to be heard clearly in all parts of the venue.
- Consider background noise levels when determining methods of communication and if necessary issue full ear-defending headsets.
- Consider setting up a control room on the site which is constantly staffed during the event and provided with a telephone to:
 - Monitor the event giving an early indication of any problems
 - Control any incidents
 - Act as a base for any communications system

12 **Welfare Facilities**

- Provide an adequate number and type of toilets for the number of people expected to attend the event including provision for people with disabilities. For licensed events the numbers and locations of toilets should be agreed with the Licensing Authority. The table below shows a general guideline for music events. Country fairs, garden parties and other short duration events would require less facilities but events where there is a high fluid consumption or with camping would require more facilities.

For events with a gate opening time of 6 hours or more		For events with a gate opening time of less than 6 hours duration	
Female	Male	Female	Male
1 toilet per 100 females	1 toilet per 500 males, plus 1 urinal per 150 males	1 toilet per 150 females	1 toilet per 600 males, plus 1 urinal per 175 males

For further details on sanitary facilities provision see BS 6465: Part 1 2006

- It is best to use toilets which are connected to mains services but temporary units may have to be provided. If non-main units are to be used provision for safe and hygienic waster removal must be arranged.
- Consideration should be given to location, access, construction, type of temporary facilities, lighting and signage.
- Provide hand-washing facilities (no less than 1 per 10 toilets) with warm water, soap and hand drying facilities. Antiseptic hand wipes or bacterial soap should be provided where warm water is not available.
- Regularly maintain, repair and service toilets through out the event to ensure that they are safe, clean and hygienic.
- Floors, ramps and steps of the units should be stable and of a non-slip surface construction.
- Provide a location where enquiries can be made about lost children, lost property and for information about the event. This could be the control Room.
- Provide a supply of drinking water within easy reach of the audience and all catering operations
- Provide an adequate number of rubbish bins around the site where they will be most required
- Make arrangements to regularly empty the bins, and to satisfactorily dispose of the rubbish at the end of the event.

13 **Catering, merchandising, attractions, and special effects such as fireworks**

- Obtain advice about the particular hazards associated with the activity/special effect from the operator and ask them for copies of their own risk assessment and safety information. Incorporate the information obtained into your overall risk assessment for the event. If this information cannot be provided consider not engaging their services.
- Checks should be made on any public and product liability certificates. Any gas, electrical, lifting or other equipment bought on site should be accompanied by relevant inspection reports and undergone the recommended testing. If this information cannot be provided consider not engaging their services.
- Brief all operators about safety matters on site.
- Position stalls and amusements etc away from access routes and in less densely occupied areas of the arena. Some units will have highly flammable products such as LPG and require careful positioning.
- Consider circulation space and potential queuing arrangements, which should not obstruct pathways.
- Power supplies, if required need to be considered as part of the overall electrical supplies to the event (see paragraph 7 on electrical installations and lighting).
- Any stalls or stands etc should be erected properly and must satisfy any structural integrity requirements (see paragraph 6 on structures).

- Specific guidance in relation to attractions, rides, amusements devices and on lasers fireworks etc has been produced by HSE (see recommended reading).
- Guidance notes and advice on all aspects of food hygiene at the event can be obtained from the Food safety department within Pembrokeshire County Council.
- Officers may wish to carry out an inspection of the all ancillary activities provided at the event and may require you to provide them with a list of the caterers/operators attending the events at the planning stage.

14 **Camping**

- Any camping area should be provided within the defined event site and incorporated as part of the event planning.
- The camping area will need to be reasonably well drained and level with grass cut short to minimise the risk of fire spread.
- Provide appropriate separation distances between individual tents to make the site safe from fire and trip hazards.
- Physically segregate camping areas from vehicle parking areas.
- Provide information on site safety to campers i.e. no campfires, location of fire points, toilets etc at strategic points.
- Provide a suitable number of fire points: as a minimum these should consist of a means of raising the alarm, such as a gong or triangle and supplies of water and buckets.
- Provide an appropriate number of sanitary facilities and wash hand basins.
- Provide drinking water.
- Provide refuse receptacles at strategic points.
- Provide adequate lighting to enable orientation at night, with higher levels of lighting at toilet areas, fire points etc.
- Provide both vehicular and pedestrian tracks to and through camping areas to ensure ready access for emergency vehicles and also to provide safe routes for pedestrians free of trip hazards such as guy ropes etc.
- Sites that are grazed will naturally be contaminated with animal droppings and may expose campers to health risks such as E.Coli 0157 infection. Exclude animals from all areas other than car parks for as long as possible before public access.
- Plan for preventing or reducing the impact of noise from campsites on nearby domestic properties.

NOISE CONTROL

- Be respectful of noise sensitive properties in the locality and the impact the nature and duration of the event may have.
- Control and think through the potential for dealing with unauthorised sound systems on the site, including ticketing advice, checks on entry and advice to stewards. This is particularly important when there is overnight camping.
- Ensure that music noise levels are adequately controlled to prevent nuisance, particularly the base component and PA systems.
- Consider speaking to neighbours before the event and providing a contact number in case of problems.
- Make one person responsible for noise compliance, and establish links with the Council's Pollution Control Team before the event for advice and agreement on any necessary monitoring.
- Face stages away from residential properties as much as possible and use multiple smaller output speakers, spaced around the audience area, as opposed to stacked speakers.
- If possible take the advice of competent Acoustic Engineers. (List available from Pollution Control on request)

PRE AND DURING EVENT CHECKLIST

	Comments
VENUE SAFETY	
Are premises free from hazards? (i.e. even ground/floor surfaces; no trip hazards)	
Are all attractions/activities/structures complete and staffed?	
Are structures/seating sound and secure; stairways/platforms and equipment guarded; protective barriers/fencing secure?	
ENTRANCES/EXITS	
Are adequate entrances and exits open, clearly marked and staffed to control admission where necessary?	
Are all circulation areas, staircases/escape routes/exits unobstructed with all gates/doors unlocked?	
CROWD CONTROL	
Is the control room operational, with communications and PA systems working?	
Are the required number of stewards in their allotted positions; fully briefed on their duties and wearing jackets/tabards?	
ELECTRICS	
Is installation complete/certified; cabling/equipment secure/protected; clear of public circulation areas?	
LIGHTING	
Is normal and emergency lighting provided, in working order and lit where necessary?	
MEDICAL FACILITIES	
Are there adequate trained first aiders on site; is a suitable clearly marked room (provided with water) available as a first aid post?	
FIRE PRECAUTIONS	
Is fire fighting equipment in place; rubbish/combustible materials stored away from tents/structures?	
TOILET ACCOMMODATION	
Is clearly marked toilet accommodation available (including disabled); have arrangements been made to service them throughout the event?	
RUBBISH	
Are sufficient bins provided around the site and arrangements made to empty them during the event?	

RECOMMENDED READING

The Event safety guide: A guide to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events HSG195 HSE Books ISBN 978 0 7176 2453 6

Fairgrounds and amusement parks: guidance on safe practice. Practical guidance on the management of health and safety for those involved in the fairgrounds industry HSG 175 HSE Books ISBN 0 7176 1174 4

Managing Crowds Safely HSG 154 HSE Books ISBN 0 7176 1180 9

Radiation Safety of lasers used in display purposes HSG 95 HSE Books ISBN 0 7176 0691 0

Working together on firework displays A guide to safety for display organisers and operators HSG 123 HSE Books ISBN 0 7176 0835 2

Smoke and vapour effects used in entertainment ETIS 3 HSE Books

All available from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2WA, Tel. 01787 881165

BS 6465 – 1:2006 – Code of practice for the design of sanitary facilities and scales of provision of sanitary and associated appliances ISBN 0 580 47917 X. BSI, 389 Chiswick High Road, London, W4 4AL. Tel. 020 8996 7001

Mid and West Wales Fire Brigade – Fire Safety Information Sheet: FSIS/12. Fire Precautions: For Tents and Marquees **Mid and West Wales Fire Authority**, Fire Safety Department, Western Area Command Head Quarters, Merlin's Hill, HAVERFORDWEST, SA61 1PG. Tel. 08706 060699

Managing Large Events (Licensing Act 2003) – A LACORS Guide LACORS, Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ. Tel. 020 7665 3888

FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

This guide is not exhaustive and cannot cover every circumstance. If you require any further advice on the subject of this guide or any other related matter contact:

Health and Safety/Food Safety/Licensing/Pollution Control

Pembrokeshire County Council, Public Protection Division,
County Hall, HAVERFORDWEST, SA61 1TP.

Tel - 01437 764551

e-mail: health&safety@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Mid and West Wales Fire Authority, Fire Safety Department, Western Area
Command Head Quarters, Merlin's Hill, HAVERFORDWEST, SA61 1PG.

Tel – 08706 060699

e-mail: mail@mawwfire.gov.uk

Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust, Central and West Region, Ty Maes y
Gruffudd, Cefn Coed Hospital, Crockett, SWANSEA, SA2 0GP.

Tel – 01792 562900

Health and Safety Executive, Government Buildings, Ty Glas, Llanishen,
CARDIFF, CF14 5SH

Tel – 029 2026 3000

e-mail: hseinformationsservices@natbrit.com

HSE Books, PO Box 1999, SUDBURY, Suffolk, CO10 6FS.

Tel – 01787 881165

www.hsebooks.co.uk

RoSPA, Edgbaston Park, 353 Bristol Road, Edgbaston, BIRMINGHAM, B5 7ST.

Tel – 0121 2482000

e-mail: help@rospa.co.uk

CORGI (The Council for Registered Gas Installers), 1 Elmwood, Chineham
Business Park, Crockford Lane, BASINGSTOKE, Hants, RG24 8WG.

Tel – 01256 372200

www.corgi-gas.co.uk

National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC)

Vintage House, 37 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7UJ.

Tel – 020 7564 2323

e-mail: enquiries@niceic.org.uk

Electrical Contractors Association (ECA)

8 Earlswood Road, Cardiff Business Park, Llanishen, CARDIFF, CF14 5GH

Tel – 029 2074 7103

www.eca.co.uk