



## MODULE 9

# Part 2: Risk management for events



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**Disclaimer:**

These notes are adapted from the University of Cape Town and GetSmarter's course notes for Module 3 of the Events Management elective offered as part of the blended version of the UCT Postgraduate Diploma in Management and Marketing.

**Learning Outcomes:**

**LO5:** Show why health and safety management is vital to event planning.

**LO6:** Explain the need for and role of security management at an event.

**LO7:** Categorise the risks and benefits of insurance management.

**LO8:** Compare the legal and ethical implications of holding an event.

**LO9:** Select a solution for risk in a case study event.

## 1. Introduction

It is imperative that avoidable risks are managed and controlled through early detection and strategic risk management planning.

In this module you learn about the concept of risk and risk management in an event context, discover how to conduct a risk assessment for an event, and understand what event managers need to be aware of in terms of compliance management, legal and ethical management, emergency management, decision management, health and safety management, security management, and insurance management in order to mitigate risk on an event. These notes cover the risk domain from a risk management point of view, and the guidelines provided are generic and applicable to both small- and large-scale national and international events.

## 2. Emergency management

Any occurrence that disrupts an event and could potentially result in injury or death is classified as an emergency, and emergency plans have to be put in place to deal with these occurrences (Ninow, 2010:352). In developing this emergency plan, the event manager will have to liaise with specific service providers such as emergency and medical services, fire departments, and police departments. Emergency management deals with the following aspects:

- Identifying hazardous activities and potential threats to people and property.
- Outlining response, planning, and control mechanisms relevant to the identified threats. A response planning sheet that lists the type of emergency and the individual responsible for responding in that emergency should also be drafted.

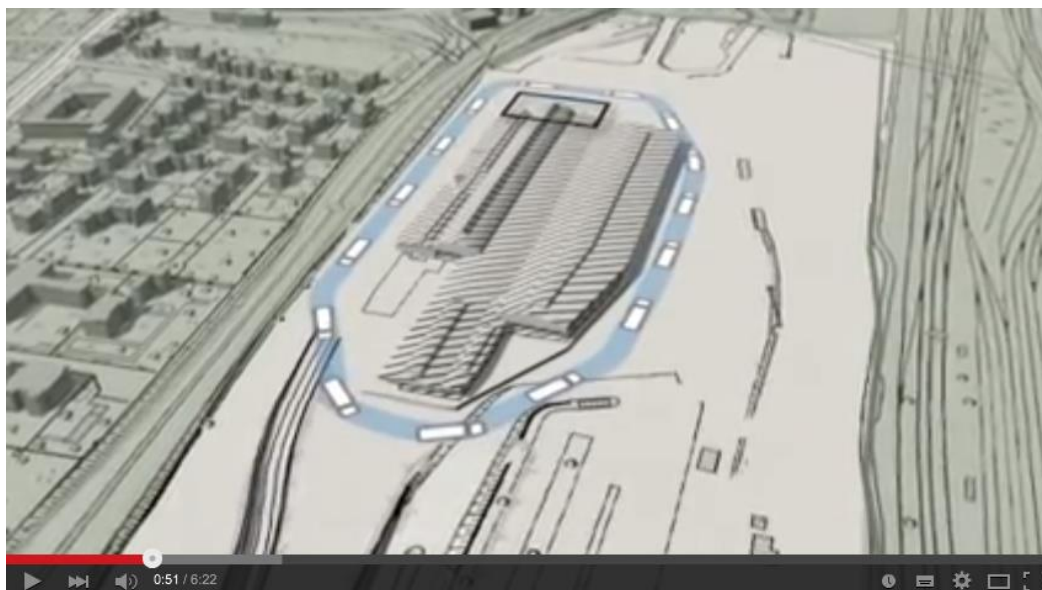


- Establishing a clear chain of command and delegating responsibility to indicate who is in charge should a specific emergency occur.
- Establishing a venue operations centre (VOC) or central control room to serve as a central point of contact in case of an emergency.
- Appointing a public relations (PR) spokesperson to issue statements and communicate with the media in the event of an emergency (to protect the event's image and reputation in the eyes of the public).
- Sharing a communication plan with all relevant role players before the event, and implementing effective communication mechanisms and procedures (such as two-way radios).
- Appointing trained personnel and compiling emergency equipment inventory lists relevant to the potential emergencies identified.
- Notifying emergency response stakeholders of the planned event in advance (in order for them to be prepared and effectively assign and deploy their resources with the event dates in mind).

(Ninow, 2010:352-353)

#### **Love Parade tragedy:**

On 24 July 2010 disaster struck at the Love Parade music festival in Germany when a lack of crowd management, inadequate venue planning, and the inevitable laws of physics led to a build-up of festivalgoers in a tunnelled dual purpose entrance and exit point, leading to 21 deaths and multiple injuries. [This article](#) documents the potential causes of this tragedy, and serves as a sobering reminder of the consequences of inadequate risk assessment for event managers to consult when brainstorming considerations that they need to take into account when planning large-scale events.



**Video 1:** An explanation of the reasons behind the 2010 Love Parade tragedy from a venue planning and crowd management perspective using venue layout maps and CCTV footage. (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8y73-7lFBNE>)

It is also important to consider whether the emergency plan is feasible and if the type of event and venue make it easy to carry out the plan should an emergency occur. The event manager should consider whether local and on-site emergency personnel can cope with the risks should they realise, or whether it is necessary to enlist the help of emergency services from other towns, or private medical services such as ambulances (Ninow, 2010:353).

#### **Medical emergency planning:**

Medical emergencies are fairly common at events, and it is important to be prepared and equipped to handle such emergencies should they arise. [This BizBash article](#) provides useful guidelines for how to provide the correct medical care in the event of an emergency at an event.

Naturally, the factors that need to be taken into account will have to do with the venue's serviceability and the severity of the crisis. In some instances, local authorities that are usually empowered by law may make the decision to stop the event if public health and safety are endangered by its continuation.

#### **Emergency action plans:**

Events are also subject to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes, as well as other incidents such as chemical spills, fires, and water pollution. In the event of such disasters, it is very important for events to have proper emergency action plans (EAPs) in place to deal with the consequences and after-effects of these occurrences.



### 3. Health and safety management

Health and safety management deals with all the issues that may affect the health and safety of everyone involved in the event. This includes the workers during the build-up or load-in and breakdown phase, and all the participants; everyone from volunteers to exhibitors, performers, visitors, and vendors. It is applicable until the last worker has removed the last item on the last day of breakdown. The health and safety policies, procedures and controls should be clearly documented, as they reflect the organiser's duty of care, as well as the worldview on public health and safety at events.

Event managers in South Africa have to ensure that their event complies with the requirements stipulated in the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the SANS10366 document that outlines health and safety requirements for events.

### 4. Security management

The security plan forms part of the emergency plan and deals with the selection and allocation of protective personnel (such as security guards, police officers, and bodyguards) at the event venue. The security measures put in place at an event will be dependent on the results of the initial risk assessment, the size of the event, and the event budget (Ninow, 2010:357).

#### **Security at large events:**

The larger the event, the more risk is involved, and adequate security management becomes paramount when working on high-profile landmark or mega-events. Working out the security considerations for bigger events can seem daunting at first, but fortunately there are many experienced people working in the security industry that can provide insight and advice.

Event managers need to remember that security needs to be visible to guests at all times, but there should not be such a large amount of security officers that the guests feel uncomfortable or concerned about their own safety. Appropriately trained and qualified security personnel also need to be used at all times (Ninow, 2010:359). Event managers can either make use of private security companies, public security services (the police), or, on small-scale social and community events volunteers can assist with managing parking security and granting access at entry points. Regardless of who serves as security, it is very important that the security team is well briefed and equipped to secure the event.

#### **How do you know how many security guards to have at an event?**

The amount of security you need at an event generally depends on the SAP (South African Police) categorisation; in other words, the risk profile they have assigned your event after submitting a Section 6 (3) application for Event Risk Categorisation. This principle would apply internationally too; the amount of security will always be relative to the risk profile of the event. However, different countries may have different ratios however.



In South Africa, if an event is categorised as low risk, the ratio is 1 security guard per 100 people, and if it is high risk the ratio is about 1 security guard per 75 people. In South Africa, use SANS10366 as a reference for medical and security planning. Note that event security minimum grading is grade C; you can no longer use general guards of grade D or E to guard events. SAPS require a complete security and medical staffing list showing registration as well as proof of qualification of the security guards and medical personnel. Therefore, always use event security companies who have experience and the right qualifications.

## 4.1 Terrorism and events

Sporting events have emerged as especially at-risk of attack, as there have been several prominent instances since the 1972 Munich massacre, such as the 1996 Centennial Olympic Park bombing in Atlanta, and more recent attacks such as the Boston Marathon bombings, and the attacks in Paris at the Stade de France stadium.

One would think that the only likely targets would be very large-scale international events, however, the 2015 attack at the Bataclan Theatre in Paris illustrated how casual cultural events have more recently become targets not only because of their size, but their celebration of ideals that are opposed to those of the terrorist groups. The aim of terror attacks is to create fear and disrupt day-to-day life, and the media attention created by attacks at large events spreads fear and awareness of the terror group's ideologies.

Large sporting events can be very difficult to control from a security perspective; in the case of the Boston Marathons, for example, the event site was very large and the finish took place in the streets of the city, with many streets and alleys and buildings all around. It is impossible to man and secure an area like this in its entirety. However, the event industry can learn from these unfortunate events in order to be more prepared for security risks of this magnitude, minimise potential harm, and ensure good communication about any incidents that do occur to the public, in order to prevent panic. Since the Boston Marathon, event planners and security companies have been looking at new and more effective ways of securing events and ensuring there are plans in place in the event of a terror attack.

### **The impact of terrorism on sporting events:**

If you would like to find out more about the implications of acts of terrorism in the event industry, and whether or not the hospitality industry is in a position to host mega-events in the light of increasing terrorism threats, Cyril Ravindran Peter's thesis entitled *Implications and impacts of terrorism on sporting events: Is the hospitality industry prepared and equipped to host mega events?* provides an insightful look into the considerations that influence how prepared an event is for such acts, with a particular focus on New Zealand's hospitality industry.



## 5. Insurance management

No matter how well planned an event is, there is always the chance that something could go wrong. Insurance is a fairly new concept to the event industry, and not all events opt to make use of it. It is, however, particularly relevant to large public events where there are higher risks. The Safety at Sports and Recreation Events Act 2 of 2010 highlights the need for event insurance. The two most common types of insurance are event liability and event cancellation insurance.

### 5.1 Event liability

Event liability insurance covers everything that the event organiser would be legally liable for should someone accidentally die, or sustain a bodily injury or illness. This also covers accidental loss or damage to property. The amount of cover necessary is determined by the event. Different events require different cover. The key considerations when thinking about taking out cover are the following:

- **The venue:** Consider size, capacity and specific requirements noted by the venue owners.
- **The type of event:** Is it a concert, a conference, or a sporting event? The risks associated with each type of event are vastly different.
- **The profile of the typical person attending:** Certain individuals are classified as more “at risk” than others, and risk profiles for attendees at international conferences, corporate events, and local entertainment events, for example, will differ.
- **The size of the crowd:** Consider how many people will attend the event.
- **Temporary structure:** These include stages, stands, and marquees that will be used throughout the event.

### 5.2 Event cancellation

This type of insurance is applicable to any type of event, as forced cancellation can have very damaging financial implications.

This insurance cover applies if the event is cancelled, abandoned, or postponed due to circumstances out of the event organiser’s control. Examples of factors beyond the event manager’s control that can lead to event cancellation include:

- Damage to the venue;
- Breakdown of technical equipment;
- Government intervention such as national mourning;





- Labour, social, and political disturbance;
- Non-appearance of an individual or group of performers (due to illness, death, accident, or travel delays), or catastrophic non-appearance of a number of persons or group of persons (group of delegates); and
- Adverse weather for outdoor events. Please note that cover for this extension must be bound 14 days prior to inception of the policy.

When deciding to take out risk cover or not, one has to weigh up the risks. If you are going to take out risk cover make sure you know exactly what you need to pay, budget for it and make sure you are aware of any exclusions to the cover.

#### Is event insurance necessary?

With the additional cost it adds to planning an event, some event managers (and clients) may wonder if event insurance is really worth the extra money. [This article](#) outlines when event insurance is necessary, and why it is necessary in today's event planning context. It also provides a breakdown of the different types of insurance that event managers can consider taking out for their event.

## 6. Conclusion

Event managers should pay careful attention to the initial risk assessment in order to clearly identify which risks have to be managed, and then work together with relevant role players to develop comprehensive compliance, legal and ethical, emergency, health and safety, security, and insurance management strategies to ensure that the event runs as safely and smoothly as possible.

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