

UNIT-6

The Contingency Planning

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Plan for unexpected situations
- ✓ Explain the need for a contingency plan

Unit 6

The Contingency Planning

Having a contingency plan is all about having strategies in place to deal with any incident that is likely to affect the smooth running of an event. It involves identifying risks or hazards that may occur and devising measures to deal with them appropriately. This exercise should be carried out well before the event starts. The best strategy is to identify the worst-case scenario and to plan how you will deal with this to minimise the likelihood of it actually happening in the first place. Knowing the potential risks in advance reduces the time it takes to respond to an incident to ensure the safety and security of the people present at the event site. Information about the risks and characteristics of the audience who will be attending the event makes it easy to plan more efficiently and to deal with any hazard more effectively.

Event Risk Assessment

Having a risk management strategy to deal with risk assessment and control to prevent cancellation of the event and, more importantly, to keep people safe is critical to the success of an event. This strategic plan can also be used to secure insurance to cover the whole event. All risk assessments must be recorded. It is also recommended that the assessor visit the venue to identify potential hazards.

Five Steps to Risk Assessment

Step 1

Find out which activities are to take place, where they will take place and how they will be executed, and identify all potential hazards related to these activities.

Step 2

Targets which are likely to be affected by the hazards should be identified and recorded.

Step 3

You must find out about existing safety precautions and operational procedures.

Step 4

Next, you must assess the risks

Step 5

Recommend any urgent action/s that need to be carried out to minimise or eliminate the risks altogether.

How to Manage Risks

Creating an effective risk management plan to check for risks at the event involves the following:

- Clearly defining the event and listing all key stakeholders
- Organising a risk management meeting involving all stakeholders and staff
- Creating common terminology to describe and categorise all risks
- Putting the risks in a particular order or ranking them
- Developing procedures to manage the risks
- Delegating responsibilities for dealing with risks
- Creating a risk management plan and implementing it
- Ensuring regular monitoring of risk and establishing an incident-reporting system
- Undertaking a debriefing meeting after the event and making recommendations on specific actions to take in future based on what occurred at the event

What is Risk Management?

Risk management is defined as a logical and systematic method of establishing the context and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and communicating risks associated with any activity, function or process in a way that will enable organisations to minimise losses and maximise opportunities.

It is important to realise that risk occurs in all aspects of an event including:

- health and safety
- administration
- staff management
- financial
- legal
- marketing and public relations
- crowd management
- security
- Event-related activities
- environmental
- fire and evacuation
- technology
- transport
- weather

Hazard Analysis

Event planners find information obtained from undertaking hazard analyses of likely emergencies critical to determining their effect on people and properties. Hazard analyses can help to determine what actions are required to prevent emergencies from occurring and to indicate the best ways of responding to incidents at events. Hazard analysis begins with the creation of a list of potential risks at the event site. The nature of the list is dependent on the geographical location of the site, the topological features and the local weather pattern. For example, some coastal areas may be prone to Tsunamis and while others may experience tornadoes.

The event manager must consider the effect of hazards which may lead to other hazards (secondary hazards) such as collapsing buildings and power loss, etc.

Typical List of Risks and Hazards

Abandoned vehicles	Hurricane
Plane crash	Intentional chemical release
Airspace encroachment	Kidnapping
Assault	Landslide
Avalanche	Loss of utilities (water, sewer, telephone)
Biological incidents	Lost child
Bomb threat/suspicious package	Lost and found
Building inspection	Media relations
Cancellation of event	Motorcades
Civil disturbance with demonstrations	Mudslides
Communications	Parking
Credentials	Permitting
Crowd control	Power failure (sustained)
Cyber attacks	Radiological release
Dam failure	Security
Demonstrations	Structural collapse
Dignitary protection	Subsidence
Drought	Terrorism
Earthquake	Ticketing
Epidemic or other public health concern	Tornado
Evacuation of area	Traffic control

Explosive materials	Train derailment
Fire	Tsunami
First-aid matters	Urban conflagration
Flood	Volcanic eruption
Food-handling violations	Wildfire
Food waste disposal problems	Winter storm
Hazardous Materials release	
Hostage without terrorism	
Human waste disposal problems	

Event planners must identify the characteristics of each possible hazard to determine the risk and consequences. Characteristics to identify are as follows:

- Frequency of occurrence: The number of times the hazard is expected to occur based on predicted and historical data
- Magnitude and intensity: How severe the hazard is likely to be
- Location: The exact location where the hazard can be found
- Spatial extent: Geographical area likely to suffer from the impact of the hazard
- Duration: How long the hazard is expected to persist
- Seasonal pattern: Periods of the year when hazards are more likely to occur
- Speed of onset and warning alert: The difference between the time of first warning and the actual time of occurrence

Potential Consequences

The event planner should assess hazards by studying the community to determine the following:

- People (deaths, injuries and displacement).
- Critical facilities (days of service loss, repair time).
- Community functions (disruption).
- Property (damage, destruction, cost of replacement or repair).
- Potential secondary hazards (dams, chemical processing plants).
- Loss of revenue.
- Negative public image of jurisdiction.

Identify the Hazards

This involves knowing the type of hazards that might emerge in the community where the event will be hosted.

Weigh and Compare the Risks

Qualitative and quantitative ratings should be used to understand the level of threat posed by hazards. Such information is useful for planners to consider for planning emergency arrangements.

Profile Hazards and their Potential Consequences

Historical and predictive information can be used in conjunction with data on the community to estimate the impact of hazards on the community.

Create and Apply Scenarios

Ratings of hazards can help planners understand how to assign resources and what resources to use to bring an emergency situation under control. Brainstorming sessions can help to identify the signs at the early stages of the hazard, the consequences of the hazard and, finally, the impact on the locality.

Make Contingency Plans

This involves brainstorming to determine how a top-ranked hazard might develop into a state of emergency. It deals with how a hazard starts and then escalates, and it provides an opportunity to find out what resources might be used to bring the situation under control. Given that not all events will proceed according to the event plan and some will indeed involve some sort of incident, it is always advisable to develop contingency plans for each event to manage incidents when they occur. The event management company may hold consultation meetings with stakeholders and staff to devise an emergency response plan to provide analyses of hazards and their effects. In devising such a plan, the following factors must be considered:

- Weather conditions that are likely to result in the cancellation or postponement of the event
- Provision for monitoring storms
- Determining the type of plans needed to deal with dangerous weather conditions
- Identifying people who will make decisions during emergencies or incidents
- How notification of cancellation or postponement will be managed
- Provision of extra security personnel to cover for other staff engaged to deal with an incident
- Arranging for consultative meetings with hospital management to discuss the event and likely medical needs in the event of an incident

- Fire service requirements should be discussed in advance with the fire service management team
- How will mass decontamination be carried out?
- What steps would be taken to deal with Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and/or Nuclear attacks

The Planning Process

Organising for Safety

After developing the health and safety policy and delegating all responsibilities, you will need to create a safety plan before any work starts at the site.

The four elements of effective organisation you will be required to use are as follows:

- Competence
- Control
- Cooperation
- Communication

Competence

Competency is the ability of staff to undertake activities for which they have been employed in a professional capacity while observing the rules of engagement. This requires staff of all trades to have the right training, expertise, knowledge and experience to carry out their assigned duties. Specialist advisers are also expected to have high competency when working for event management companies.

Evidence of the competency of workers in terms of health and safety awareness should be provided in the form of contractors' and subcontractors' health and safety procedures, showing how the workers would be able to manage their own health and safety when executing their assigned duties.

Control

Control involves the establishment of organisational structure by management which shows all health and safety responsibilities, the accountability of workers and how reporting should be carried out. Mechanisms of monitoring and controlling health and safety on the site should be well understood by all workers before work begins.

Co-operation

Preparation of various plans, procedures, risk assessment, and other essential tools for staging the event will require input from contractors and other workers who will be present on the site. This is the ideal opportunity for all staff to find out what is expected of them and how they can cooperate with others to

achieve the health and safety objectives and minimise potential risks associated with their respective tasks.

Communication

This involves maintaining effective communication with the workers by constantly reminding them of their safety obligations and the need to follow procedures accurately.

Monitoring Safety Performance

Two monitoring systems are normally used to maintain and enhance health and safety at event sites:

- Active monitoring
- Reactive monitoring

Active monitoring is pre-emptive in nature and provides a feedback mechanism for reporting performance levels before accidents or incidents occur. It involves regular comparison of a contractor's safety policies with the actual safety procedures adopted while work is being done at the site. Reactive monitoring, on the other hand, occurs only after an accident or incident has happened. It involves reporting all injuries, damages or risk likely to result in injuries. It also requires reporting on compromises in safety standards. Accidents and incidents are normally reported in event log books which are also used to record other pertinent information to be audited and reviewed in the near future. The ultimate goal of the monitoring system is to enhance the safety performance of future events.

The Role of the Safety Co-ordinator

The event manager must select someone highly competent in overseeing all safety-related issues. The appointed safety coordinator should be experienced, knowledgeable, and have an understanding of all legislation relating to safety at the workplace. The safety coordinator is also expected to report to the event manager. It is advisable to appoint someone who is not likely to have other conflicting roles. Generally, members of the organising team should not be selected for the role of safety co-ordinator.

The responsibilities of the safety co-ordinator include the following:

- Selecting and monitoring staff
- Ensuring adherence to rules and regulations
- Working in close collaboration with all event staff
- Undertaking safety checks and assessing risks
- Inspecting permits and certificates to ensure compliance
- Providing contractors with safety information
- Managing safety issues during major incidents

It is not recommended that event organisers appoint themselves as the safety coordinator. To be effective, the safety coordinator should not have other competing roles which will inevitably face an event organiser during the course of the event.

Auditing and Reviewing Safety Performance

Auditing is performed at the end of the event to determine whether loopholes, oversights or other problems exist in relation to safety policies and risk control measures and to understand the extent of their effectiveness. Auditing also involves undertaking debriefing sessions immediately after events. Debriefing sessions make it possible for other stakeholders to share their views about your safety management system – an invaluable source of feedback to help you improve future events.

Site Suitability Assessment

As mentioned earlier, choosing a suitable site for the event can contribute to its overall success. This means carrying out a comprehensive assessment of the site to determine the capacity of the parking area, the capacity of the venue, free space for the audience, availability of temporary structures, suitability of the backstage area etc. This assessment is best carried out using a rough estimate of the number of people to expect and how you would want the event to proceed.

Venue/Site

Try to find more than one potential venue as likely candidates for hosting the event. Consultation with emergency services about the choices of venues you might use should help narrow down the numbers. When deciding on the venue to use for the event at the planning stage, you may have to determine:

- Whether the event will require multiple venues
- Whether fixed facilities are appropriate for the event or otherwise
- How the event may affect fixed facilities
- Whether the particular type of event can be hosted at a temporary venue
- Whether services and utilities have already been provided
- Whether additional services and utilities will have to be provided
- Whether you will need to procure backup services or utilities
- Whether the event will be 'one of a kind' if hosted at a temporary venue

The initial stages of planning require an elaborate map or grid-referencing system containing the location of all facilities and emergency provisions to be made available to all staff and guests wishing to attend the event. The map should contain the following details:

- Transport pick-up and drop-off points

- Guest and official viewing areas
- Seated eating areas
- Pedestrian walkways or thoroughfares
- Performers' and officials' or stewards' marshalling areas
- Duration of the event and consideration of potentially conflicting events on the same date
- First-aid points and medical centres
- Provision of easily accessible facilities for people with disabilities
- Consideration of contingency arrangements in the event of bad weather
- Hazard warning systems
- Identification of hazards from utility lines which could be brought down by storms and sources of potential floods
- Availability of adequate space for medical services to deal with large number of casualties
- Accessible routes for ambulances
- Provision of areas for mass decontamination
- Provision for emergency evacuation
- Provision of crowd control routes and procedures
- Provision of crowd overflow areas
- Availability of extra space and buffer zones around large venues (e.g., stadiums) in urban centres
- Site for protestors

Dealing with Disasters

Planning

Event risk assessment for preparing major incident plans should consider the following areas:

- Fire or explosion
- Terrorism
- Structural failure
- Crowd surge
- Violent behaviour
- Power/lighting failures
- Extreme weather events
- Off-site hazards with the potential to affect site activities
- Safety equipment malfunction (e.g., PA system or CCTV camera)

Preparation of Major Incident Plans

When preparing major incident plans, you should consider the following:

- Select personnel who will take important decisions
- Provide efficient documentation and messaging boards
- Clearly mark out emergency routes
- Identify people who will need some sort of assistance
- Understand the geography of the site of the venue
- Choose holding areas for the crowd
- Create coded messages to alert stewards during major incidents
- Design mechanisms to warn the public about incidents
- Adopt measures and procedures for evacuating people and for containment
- Select assembly points for emergency service providers
- Identify local hospitals capable of dealing with major incidents and secure routes leading to the hospitals
- Determine location of emergency storage equipment
- Assign roles to the staff to be performed during major incidents
- Determine how decontamination would be accomplished
- Find out the nearest mortuary facility or provision of a temporary one

Some Specific Scenarios

Event Cancellation or Postponement

The decision to cancel, postpone or interrupt an event must rest with the person who was selected during the planning phase to make the final call. The conditions for cancelling or postponing must be clearly specified and everyone must be made aware of this before the event starts.

When an event has to be cancelled, postponed or interrupted, plans should be in place to control the crowd, who may become angry or dissatisfied with such actions. A procedure for readmitting the crowd should also be prepared as part of the contingency plan.

Stopping and Starting an Event

The person responsible for stopping the event must be known to all those who need to be aware of such information. Unscheduled stopping of events is a source of hazard due to guests being inconvenienced, and this has to be considered very critically by the incident planning team before arriving at a decision to stop the event. Significant evaluation of risks needs to be undertaken before deciding to evacuate the

venue. All possible actions must be planned in advance, rehearsed and tested sufficiently to ensure they will not escalate problems.

Unattended Packages

Plans containing procedures for dealing with unattended packages must be prepared well in advance of the start of the event. The responsibilities for dealing with issues pertaining to different aspects of security threats posed by unattended items should be delegated to experts or specialists from relevant backgrounds, depending on the nature of the threat. The plan should consider where people might be evacuated to in the event of an incident and whether the services of an explosive-detecting dog might be needed.

Concealment Areas

Areas which might serve as hiding places for weapons or concealed items need to be identified with the help of the police and preventive measures put in place to deter troublemakers from using these places.

Security Sweeps

Arrangements for security personnel to undertake a site sweep should be made in advance. The persons to perform this activity must be identified, the goal of the sweep outlined, the frequency of the sweep determined and procedures for dealing with incidents clearly stated. This calls for venue staff and security personnel to collaborate to ensure this is done thoroughly and the venue site secured immediately.

Suicide Bombers

The threat posed by suicide bombers is a serious one that needs to be considered by the planning team, and measures should be adopted to deal with this threat during events should it ever occur. Suicide bombers care little about being arrested. They tend to target crowded public venues or areas to detonate bombs concealed about their persons. Other deadly tactics employed by terrorists involve the use of multiple suicide bombers; some bombers act as decoys to draw emergency personnel to the scene before other bombers detonate their own bombs with the emergency personnel as their target.

Criminal and Terrorist Risks

Terrorists like to attack high-profile targets and people attending special events due to the worldwide media coverage at such events as well as the large number of people attracted to them. It is important that security personnel do not underestimate the likelihood of an attack on small community events by thinking

that they are not at risk of such attacks. Regardless of the size and nature of events, adequate preparations to deal with terrorist activities should be undertaken to protect all participants as well as the security personnel themselves. This means that personal protective equipment needs to be worn by the security personnel for their protection in their various roles. Terrorists are selective when it comes to picking events for launching attacks. They may choose a target based on the location, expected guests, festive periods, etc. Pre-emptive action by event organisers should identify potential terrorist groups who may be attracted to a particular event, and they should prepare adequately for such threats.

Threat Assessment

Having information on a terrorist's mode of operation is very important when trying to create an effective plan of preventive actions to take in those situations. The safety team should prepare well by practising how they would respond in the event of a terrorist attack and they should have plans in place to reduce the likelihood of such an incident. The event planners need to understand two important categories of terrorism to equip them to deal with situations effectively:

- Counter-terrorism: which deals with action taken to prevent terrorist activities
- Anti-terrorism: which has to do with reducing the potential impact of terrorist activities

Pre-Event Public Health Survey

A pre-event health assessment should be conducted by the event organisers in consultation with health authorities for the venue selected to host large crowds. The aim of this assessment is to determine whether the following facilities are available:

- Running water
- Provision of toilet facilities
- Provision of refrigeration for all perishable foodstuffs
- Certified providers of bulk food items to the site catering team
- Provision of adequate refuse bins with covers for all waste products
- Provision of storage and removal facilities for liquid waste

Monitoring of health-related activities should be undertaken by public health inspectors to ensure that correct procedures are being followed. Food service operators who violate standards should be ordered to 'stop operating immediately' (which is termed a 'cease operation order').

Public Health Contingency Arrangements

Contingency plans in this respect should include the following details:

- Provision of contact details for key event personnel such as emergency service personnel, environmental health personnel, health service personnel, tradesmen, etc.
- Provide other staff with contact details
- Contact details of food proprietors on a 24-hour basis
- Availability of alternative suppliers of equipment and utility if failure of utilities occurs
- Standby staff in the event regular staff become ill
- Provision for product recall
- Procedures for tracking epidemiological cases
- Efficient procedures for dealing with complaints
- Procedures for debriefing

Planning Medical Care

Medical logistic issues to tackle when planning events:

- Determine the number of medical stations you will need.
- Decide whether injured people must find their way to medical facilities or whether medical staff will be stationed across the venue to help the injured.
- Devise unique medical identification codes. Will it be high-visibility vest or uniform?
- Will you require vehicles to carry people to the medical facility? If vehicles are required, the appropriate type must be chosen for the task: use four-wheel-drive for off-road venues or golf carts for greenfield sites.
- Determine the form of transport to be used for transferring people from medical facilities; this could be ambulances or chauffeur-driven vehicles.
- Find out how medical personnel would be effectively deployed to assist spectators in crowded areas.
- Determine effective communication tools for the attending medical team to use for communicating with other off-site medical personnel and key stakeholders.
- Consider how to deal with sponsorship conflicts between the medical team and the event sponsor.
- Determine the extent of on-site medical care that will be required based on the characteristics of the event.
- Determine the different types of medical professionals you may need at the site, i.e., doctors, paramedics and nurses, etc.
- Find out who will supply the medical personnel and where funding for this arrangement will come from.
- Determine how external and local service personnel will synchronise their services if the services of both are required.

- Determine the level of expertise of health staff to identify whether they will require further training.
- Will authentication of the health personnel/vehicles be required when they access certain areas of the site/venue?
- Will there be a need for aero-medical services and is there provision for a landing area?
- The location of the trauma centre should be clearly stated
- You must identify the location of primary and secondary hospitals
- Consider whether there are enough beds and personnel to deal with emergency situations and take appropriate steps to address this issue.

Management and Planning

- Identifying companies taking part in the process and selecting one of them to lead
- Organising a series of meetings for key personnel to formulate the plan
- Determining the role each company will play in relation to the provision of medical care
- Understanding the type of care to be provided
- Finding out which laws or regulations are important when providing emergency first-aid care
- Creating a budget for medical care services
- Partnering with other emergency services providers such as the police, fire brigade and security services
- Considering equipment and the suppliers who will provide it. How would the equipment be acquired? Would it be by renting, buying, or borrowing?
- Determining whether volunteers will be needed, what qualifications they are required to hold and how they will be rewarded.
- Providing security at medical centres for the medical team
- Providing information management systems for treating patients
- Considering how patients' records will be managed after the event
- Preparing for weather-related illnesses such as hypothermia and heatstroke
- Determining the number of incidents reported by medical publications on similar events

Casualties

According to some experts who have studied past events, casualties mostly arise from the following sources:

- Fainting and exhaustion in restricted areas due to heat, hysteria, etc.
- Injuries from broken glasses and bottle missiles
- People being crushed due to 'surging' to the front

- Diving onto the stage or 'surfing' on the crowd
- Use of prohibited drugs and excessive alcohol consumption
- Old-age medical conditions

Medical Access to Venue

Medical service providers working at event venues must agree on the following:

- Making use of agreed reference maps to reach casualties quickly
- Determining the means of reaching distressed guests in crowds or through obstacles
- How to transport patients on-site
- Which access route should be dedicated to ambulance use
- How the nature of the event might affect medical operations at the venue
- The use of aero-medical services and the regulations governing these

Level of Care

Levels of care can be categorised as follows:

- Basic—first aid.
- Intermediate—first aid plus IV therapy and oxygen.
- Advanced—Care and life support and early management of severe trauma.
- Site Hospital—full monitoring, ventilation and resuscitation capability.

Other level-of-care concerns include:

- Provision for treating patients who are victims of biological, chemical and radiological attacks
- Enhanced coordination of medical activities between on-site medical team and local off-site medical personnel
- Identification of the location of the nearest hospital to the venue
- Availability of experienced medical staff who have managed similar events and have the requisite knowledge to deal with major incidents

Medical Aid Posts

Medical aid posts should be:

- Properly marked and easy to identify
- Located within five minutes of crowded areas
- Well-maintained and accessible to emergency vehicles

- Security-protected
- Equipped with good communication facilities
- Provided with an adequate number of beds for injured or ill people
- Provided with adequate disposal facilities

Environmental Concerns

Weather

The effect of the weather on an event is usually determined by the location of the venue and whether the event is being held outdoors or indoors. Event organisers need to consider extremes of weather conditions, especially with regard to high or low temperatures as these present hazards and risks to the audience. Other weather problems in addition to extreme temperatures include thunderstorms, lightning strikes, gusting winds, tornadoes etc.; these conditions are common to outdoor events. Local evacuation plans may not have provisions for dealing with an extra large number of people at the event. Such situations will have a negative impact during emergency periods. It is at the planning phase that the event manager will have the opportunity to consider all likely weather scenarios and their effect on the event. Structures and equipment to be installed must be considered carefully in terms of their composition (metal, wood, plastic or stone), their height, and their positioning. The areas surrounding the structures must be well-protected. The impact of lightning strikes on the equipment and consequently on the participants should be determined by an electrical expert to help the organisers to devise measures to prevent electrocution should the stage or scaffolds become energised.

Planning considerations for weather phenomena include:

- Obtaining the latest weather forecast from the TV, internet, radio, or mobile phone
- Providing a direct phone line connection to the nearest weather service station
- Informing participants about the latest weather information
- Making arrangements with the organisers to interrupt proceedings and provide information via the public address system and advise the participants on what to do
- Providing lightning detector systems

Time, planning, equipment and extensive stakeholder participation are the most important ingredients necessary to develop an effective contingency plan to deal with severe weather issues.

Site Hazards

The planning team must determine potential hazards which may include:

- Falling power lines

- Lightning striking certain structures and equipment at the venue
- Potential flooding due to nearby streams or bodies of water
- Danger from bushfires
- Gusty winds
- Extremely high or low temperatures
- Danger of snipers using elevated positions to carry out an attack
- Reptiles
- Rodents
- Insects
- Spiders
- Pollens and poisonous plants and weeds
- Marshes or swamps
- Quarries and pits
- Pollution from dust and noise (this will require the wearing of hearing protection)
- Water quality (bacteriological)
- Hazardous chemicals or underground tanks.
- Darkness
- Use of lasers or Ultra Violet (UV)light
- Use of prohibited items such as weapons and drugs

Camping

You may have to consider the following if camping is allowed on-site:

- Removal of all fire hazards
- Provision of disposal facilities
- Provision of emergency service personnel and ambulances
- Presence of security personnel to protect property and personal belongings
- Availability of public address system
- Construction of temporary streets

To ensure safety at the camping site, you need to consider:

- Danger from falling tree branches
- Flooding concerns

- Danger from utility lines falling to the ground due to storms

Structural Matters

All structural facilities required for staging the event must be considered carefully during the planning phase. The planners also have to decide whether or not a temporary structure will be required.

Stages, Platforms and other performance facilities

Stages, platforms and other structures to be used for an event need to be assessed for safety reasons by qualified professionals. The type of equipment and structure to use will depend on the nature of the event site. Stage arrangements or positioning depend on the expected behaviour of guests at the event. Elderly people attending events are known to be calm while teenagers are more boisterous, especially at rock concerts, where these teenagers or young adults sometimes attempt to jump onto the stage and interact with their hero/heroine.

The scenario of fans accessing the stage is a risky proposition and may result in accidents; hence, event planners need to understand the emotional dimension of the fans at events.

Ways of gathering information about different categories of crowds at events include the following:

- Public safety official/s and press reviews and reports may provide some relevant information on crowd behaviour.
- Information on crowd behaviour can be obtained from spectators who have been to previous entertainment events.
- The promoter may also provide the event manager with information on the behaviour of audiences at previous events.

Elevation of the stage serves three purposes: first, it gives the audience a better view of performers; second, it acts as a barrier; third, it prevents crowds from accessing the stage and creates space in front of the stage since the audience has to retreat some distance away from the stage to have a decent view.

Sometimes the first-aid personnel are stationed under the stage to work on injuries in the front section of the audience. Reinforcement with additional physical barriers is also required at the front of the stage to guarantee the safety and security of the guests.

Indoor Events

A 'V-shaped' barrier is effective for keeping crowds away from the main stage when there is a surge towards the front from behind. The space between the stage and the V-shape can be occupied by the security personnel. Provision should be made for this space to be easily accessed from the sides. The V-shaped barrier should be firmly anchored to the floor with protection padding wrapped around it.

Outdoor Events

During outdoor events, board fences are used as stage barriers in a similar fashion to the V-shaped barrier just described for indoor events, but with a few minor differences. The main difference is that the board fence provides walking space on either side of the fence whereas the V-shaped barrier has space on the stage side only. The major requirement for the board fence is that it should be made from a flexible material to prevent people being crushed as a result of surging from the back; it must also be sufficiently strong that it does not collapse and cause injuries when pressed against. Nevertheless, most fences provided at events appear not to meet these twofold criteria and usually fulfil just one of them.

One advantage of having such a fence in front of the stage is that people seated at the front row would have to be positioned some distance away in order to have a view of the performers, thereby providing some level of safety for the performers.

Emergency Evacuation

Some venues are designed to have collapsible physical structures to enable maximum escape passageways for evacuating the venue quickly during an emergency.

Temporary Structures

Most short-duration events tend to rely on the erection of temporary structures such as viewing platforms, marquees, tents, dance platforms, a variety of towers, and overhead signs, etc. Under normal circumstances, structures have to be designed with safety features to deal with hazards. However, the majority of these structures lack the expected inbuilt safety features. While erecting such structures, it is important to have on-site a local authority building code inspector to ensure standards and specifications are complied with. Hazards often arise during the use of low-quality structures which have not been designed to absorb large stress; consequently, during the event the weight of spectators, or high winds, places extreme stress on the structure and presents hazards to the guests.

Warning messages should be displayed by building inspectors when they find any temporary structure to be in violation of local authority building regulations. Long-duration events, on the other hand, need regular inspection of temporary structures to ensure the integrity of the structure is intact.

Load Capacity

Structures must not be overloaded beyond their load capacity. Warning signs must be provided to alert people to this and to prevent misuse of the structures. Structures such as viewing platforms, building walkways etc., should be controlled to ensure the audience do not overcrowd these structures and create

risks for themselves and others. Protecting the base of the structure from damage from the impact of vehicles is accomplished by creating buffer zones around it.

Seating

It is advisable to provide teenagers with seats to prevent surges and crushing. The seats should be secured to the ground to allow medical teams to gain access to those in need of urgent attention. There must be sufficient spacing to allow quick access.

Temporary Seating and Anchorage

Some venues have fixed seating around the perimeter and unsecured foldable seats in the central area. Depending on the type of guests, these unsecured seats may not cause any problems. But when certain other categories of people such as very enthusiastic, boisterous, or aggressive ones turn up, the unsecured seats may become a source of danger when they are turned into dangerous missiles or projectiles. People standing on unsecured seats to gain a better view may topple over and injure themselves or cause a domino effect when they fall on nearby seats.

Consequently, all unsecured seats must be secured to the floor to avoid all of the hazards mentioned above. Alternatively, two long planks may be provided along the front and back of the chairs, with the chairs attached to the planks.

General Issues for Consideration

There are a few major crowd issues that have to be dealt with. First, you will need to know the maximum number of people that can be allowed into the venue without endangering the safety of guests. You will also need to know the age and gender of the guests in order to make extra facilities available to children and senior citizens. Children may require child care, rental strollers and other special medical resources because they are more vulnerable to injuries from being crushed by older people.

Certain classes of spectators are attracted to certain events and due attention must be paid to them. The following should be considered when planning events with regard to the kind of people who attend them.

- There may be a considerable number of people possessing weapons, drugs and alcohol during rock events.
- There will be increased need for on-site medical facilities for infirm guests at 'faith healing' and similar religious events.
- There is also the need for a higher level of health services for senior citizens.
- Beware of the propensity for violence at sports events and prepare for this.

- Event planners should make provision for multicultural facilities such as special food, multilingual publications and interpreters at cultural events.

Special considerations for outdoor events include:

- Controlling and distributing effectively across the field
- Working with a guide of four-to-five square feet per person when distributing crowds
- Barrier management of crowd by security personnel

Entrances and Exits

Important considerations for the entry and exit of spectators include the following:

Entrances

The main functions of entrances are:

- To enable supervising, directing and marshalling of participants
- To provide easy access points for emergence service personnel
- To make it easy for participants to escape from danger
- To enable security personnel to use them as checkpoints to ensure no prohibited items are brought into the venue

Entrances should also:

- Have the correct signage
- Be operational at all times
- Allow for separate access by pedestrians and vehicles

Entrance Management

Items that event organisers should consider when performing entrance management:

- Ensuring flexible opening and closing times (preferably, stick to the advertised times)
- Spacing entry times using support activities (performances)
- Ensuring entrances are well cleared of all other activities
- Removing all lines from entrance areas

- Providing an adequate number of fences, gates, barriers etc.
- Ticket sales and pick-up point should be in line with entrances but separate
- Availability of public address system
- Medical and security personnel should be close by to deal with unforeseen events
- Provision of properly designed security search points to prevent prohibited items such as weapons, drugs and glass, etc., from being smuggled in.
- Provision of a suitably designated area to store confiscated items
- Provision of a toilet nearby for emergency situations

Exit Management

Exit management includes the following functions:

- Ensure that exit doors are not locked. If personnel are concerned about illegal entry, doors can be fitted with alarms.
- Ensure that exit doors open in the direction of escape and are confirmed as operational.
- Check the placement, function and signposting of exits.
- Ensure that doors that do not lead to an exit are so marked, preventing “dead end” entrapment and the potential for panic.
- Ensure that all exit corridors are free of all impediments to crowd movement.
- Ensure that turnstiles are freewheeling or capable of operating in reverse.
- Ensure that cords, which can create trip hazards, do not cross exit corridors. (If this precaution is unavoidable, the cord should be marked, insulated, and secured to the floor to prevent damage and potential electrical risks.)

Escalator Management

Event organisers should provide for:

- Staff control at the top and bottom, including an emergency stop button.
- Metering of the flow at both ends.

Security Roles and Responsibilities

The role and responsibility of all security personnel should be clearly defined and good communication maintained between security and emergency services. The event manager should maintain good working relationships among the following groups of personnel:

- Security personnel
- The promoter
- Health and medical services
- Police and emergency services
- Other security services (for example, those who are responsible for the performers' personal safety)

Special Security Considerations

When making arrangements for special security, the event manager and organisers should consider the following:

- Will the event use the services of private security or the police?
- What provision will be made to integrate private security personnel and the police if the primary security duty is assigned to private security?
- What is the policy for dealing with minor offences?
- If money is to be collected and stored on-site, what ideal security arrangements must be made to protect the facility where the money will be stored?
- What are the risks associated with transferring the money from one point to another and what kind of security will be needed for the safe conveyance of the money?
- What security measures will be adopted to protect high-profile persons in crowded areas or when moving them through crowds?
- How will lost or stolen property be handled?
- Consider putting in place measures to detect forged credentials
- Decide how to deal with lost or missing persons

A policy of equal treatment and searching of people should be adopted by all security personnel when dealing with all guests, with no preferential treatment given to any particular person. All guests must be treated as 'equal security risks.'

Roles and responsibilities must be clearly stated and may include:

- Preventing the audience from gaining access to the stage
- Managing the audience to prevent crushing
- Maintaining adequate security at entrances and exits

- Providing stewards to direct traffic at the site
- Conducting thorough searches for prohibited items, such as weapons and drugs
- Providing security for large sums of money
- Helping emergency services

Pre-Event Briefing of Security Personnel

To enable security personnel to perform their duties effectively, you must brief them appropriately prior to the event. This briefing should provide security personnel with:

- A grid map showing key areas to patrol
- Explanation of procedures to enable security to deal with inappropriate behaviour
- Basic information on all aspects of the event including parking and emergency procedures, etc.
- Training on how to operate special equipment during emergencies
- Adequate training in using communication devices and procedures for reporting incidents
- Details on contingency plans and emergency/evacuation procedures, e.g., alerting safety personnel, etc.

It is important to brief security personnel on what is expected of them to ensure that they are able to perform efficiently. This should be done before the event begins. At the briefing session, the security personnel should be instructed to do the following:

- Clearly mark doors which do not lead to an exit to prevent entrapment and panicking of people who have picked the wrong route
- Ensure that exit corridors are free of all obstacles that might affect the movement of guests
- Provide reversible turnstiles which are in good working condition
- Avoid having cords crossing exit corridors to prevent people tripping. Alternatively, mark, insulate and secure the cords to the floor
- To prevent illegal entry, secure exit doors with alarms rather than locking them
- Ensure that all exit doors open in the direction of escape and are in good working order
- Provide adequate signage to indicate the locations of exits

The attitudes of security staff can defuse confrontational situations or escalate matters to fever pitch during an event. The event organisers must consider the role of security personnel to ensure an enjoyable experience for the guests by reminding them, at pre-event briefings, of their role not only as crowd controllers but also as facilitators of peace.

Deployment

Security personnel should be strategically deployed to key areas of venues. For indoor events, foot patrols may be more suitable, while outdoor events may require golf carts, vehicles or bicycles for patrol duties. The security personnel should monitor all areas and focus on particular problem spots. Strategically sited observation points may also be established to observe the crowd with surveillance cameras or video pole cameras for highlighting populated areas.

Information Centre

Provision of an adequately resourced information centre will relieve pressure on other personnel such as medical, security and event staff and also serve as a place for guests to clarify any aspects of the event they are unsure about.

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Contingency Planning and Disaster Recovery: A Small Business Guide*
by Donna R. Childs, Stefan Dietrich, 2011
- ✓ *Guidelines for Contingency Planning for Information Resources Services*
by DIANE Publishing Company, 1996