

Module 7

The Event Management Plan

The event manager plays a critical role in the planning, coordination and subsequent success of any event. This can be a complex task as event managers may be required to assume the role of creative director, human resource manager, operations coordinator, trouble shooter, public relations officer, licensee, accountant, health and safety officer, and master of ceremonies. With these multiple roles and significant responsibilities, event managers generally need help to ensure that their event is a positive and safe experience for the patrons, staff and the local community. Coordination and consultation with key stakeholders is not only advisable but essential if an event is to be successful. The success of events is often assessed against economic, social, health, and safety measures. The measurements generally include the impact the event has on patrons, event staff, police, emergency services and the community.

Completing a detailed event management plan will indicate that the event has been properly organised and that the event manager has considered all his/her responsibilities.

1 Organising Successful and Safe Event

Despite the many roles and responsibilities that must be assumed, planning and managing public events and festivals can provide event managers with immense personal satisfaction, economic return and exciting opportunities. Comprehensive planning and the completion of an Event Management Plan will provide the best chance to conduct a safe and successful event and create extra benefits for the event manager. The benefits are as follows:

- Efficient movement of patrons, staff and equipment throughout the venue thus making the event more enjoyable for all involved.
- Happy and contented crowds leading to fewer incidents, such as assaults and property damage. This will in turn reduce the costs of security, cleaning and repairs.
- Quick responses to unplanned incidents thereby creating a more secure environment for patrons.

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- Long term sustainability from the widespread support of patrons, staff and the local community.
- Increased opportunities for long term sponsorship from the corporate and community sectors.
- Reduction in accidents and injury which significantly reduces the risk of public liability claims and subsequent first aid and insurance costs.
- Reduced personal stress and concerns for event managers who can refer to a comprehensive Event

Management Plan which is supported by all the event stakeholders.

- Documentation of all the planning with evidence of the attention to duty of care and awareness of the responsibilities of event managers.

While all events are different and have unique characteristics, the structure of any event Management plan should include the same basic information. As event managers are responsible for the safe organisation and implementation of events, plans must be clear, complete, well documented and widely distributed.

1. 2 Event Details

It is important to provide clear and accurate information about the event. The nature of the venue should indicate whether the venue is outdoors or indoors, in a hall or stadium, at parklands, river, on beach or at another venue. It is valuable to note whether there are a combination of sites, e.g. both indoor and outdoor, as this can have a bearing on the capacity of the event as well as crowd movement within the event. For each event there is generally time required for setting up (bump in) and time required to return the venue to its original condition (retro-fit). Ensure that the venue manager knows how much time is required.

1.3 Event Manager

The event manager is the person responsible for the overall organisation of the event. Information about the event manager and contact details will need to be updated and accurate before, during and after the event. During the event it is essential that the event manager can be contacted at all times by staff and other stakeholders. Remember that this person is not necessarily the holder of any permits; the event manager is the manager of the event.

1.4 Description of the Event

When providing a description of the event ensure that as many details as possible are included so that anyone reading this plan will be able to easily understand the nature of the event. Provide a brief outline of the event's attractions. Include sufficient detail to ensure that the stakeholders are aware of the entertainment, main attractions, key times and locations.

1.5 Patron Details

The target audience is the main group of people expected to attend the event, e.g. families, singles, under 18s, senior citizens, 18–25-year-olds. In most major public events the actual numbers and demographics of the crowd will not be known in detail in advance. It is, however, worthwhile estimating the total numbers predicted to attend and indicate the major age groups expected to attend. This will generally be easy as the ages should reflect the target group of the event.

1.6 Police Contact

To enable police to assist in the conduct of a successful event, contact must be made as early as possible. Event managers and promoters should make contact police at least six weeks before the event. This timeframe is necessary to accommodate the rostering system used by police and will result in the best possible support. It is critical that a police officer be involved in the consultation and briefing process

1.7 Public Liability

There is increasing government and community awareness of the legal responsibilities of event managers, specifically in relation to duty of care, negligence and workplace health and safety issues. No-one wants to be personally liable for any incidents which occur at an event. It is therefore recommended that event managers obtain comprehensive insurance coverage and legal advice in relation to possible public liability, indemnity, volunteers, copyright and contractual claims. A detailed Register of Incidents and Subsequent Actions to be used to record incidents that occur before, during and after the event could be invaluable if legal action is taken against the event organisers or the event manager.

Insurance cover should also be arranged for property and equipment. Such asset protection is essential for the event manager.

1.8 Health & Safety Permits

A major public event must meet a variety of safety requirements set by local councils and other government departments. It is important to contact the council well in advance as there will be a lead time to lodge applications for licences and permits. A copy of this Event Management Plan should accompany any applications. Consultation with stakeholders in the planning process will assist in determining the types of permits which are required for the event. Fire safety permits, food vendor permits, parade permits, fireworks permits and road closure permits must all be sought through the relevant bodies.

1.9 Consultation Register

It is essential that events are developed and reviewed in consultation with identified key stakeholders. All these key people need to be contacted about the event well in advance. This is to allow sufficient time for organisations to provide advice and to process any permits which may be required. It will also allow time for organisations to arrange support for the event. Remember many organisations work on a rostering system for their staff well in advance and cannot change these arrangements at short notice.

Apart from the police, emergency services, Liquor Licensing Division, council and security personnel, it is helpful to brainstorm with the organising committee to generate a list of other groups which could be considered stakeholders. Other key people; who may be affected by the event either positively or negatively, will appreciate the contact with event organisers and will often be more cooperative and supportive if involved during the initial planning stages.

1. 10 Planning Meeting

A series of planning meetings should be conducted with the key stakeholders well in advance of the event to allow sufficient time for any planning changes.

1.10.1 Briefing before Event

Once the planning has been done it is essential to call all the participants together to conduct a pre-event briefing. Issues of communication, timetabling, responsible service of alcohol, security and emergency procedures should be clarified at this time.

1.10.2 De Briefing after Event

A formal debriefing should be conducted with the key stakeholders after the event when information about the event, including attendance and incident data as well as staff and patron feedback, is available. This should be completed as soon as possible to ensure that all information is documented while fresh in the minds of the stakeholders. An event evaluation will be useful to determine what worked, what didn't work and why.

1.11 Consultation Log

It is important that a record of contact with various stakeholders is kept on file. These details are useful in the planning phase of the event as well as being useful for any future events. As contact is made with various government departments, non-government agencies and businesses, a record should be kept. The log can be kept in a diary or a separate book and should include the date, organisation, contact person and details of the conversation.

1. 12 Selection of the Venue

The selection and design of the venue will have a significant impact on all components of event planning and on the overall safety and success of the event. In the selection of a venue consider the following:

- services and utilities available on site;
- movement of people within the site;
- crowd regulation and overspill areas;
- access to site for patrons;
- access to site for emergency vehicles;
- hazards in and around the area;
- potential impact on the local environment;
- road access in wet weather;
- traffic flows/parking;
- provision for disabled people;
- agreement of key stakeholders on selection of site/venue.

1.13 Site Plan

A site plan is a map of the event and an essential tool in event planning and management. Firstly, as a way of communicating during the planning of the event, the site plan can be distributed for comment, and any problems or conflicts can be sorted out early in the planning phase. It may be that some stakeholders have not been to the venue before and a well detailed site plan may help them in their organisation. Secondly, a site plan can be a worthwhile resource for setting up the event. Staff can use the plan to erect temporary first aid stations, food stalls, position seating, and bins and to create walkways.

A site plan is invaluable in the event of an emergency. Security staff, police, first aid personnel and emergency services personnel should carry a copy of the site plan. The site plan can quickly determine the exact location of an incident or emergency thereby assisting in speedy responses.

Remember:

- For the site plan to be most useful it should be set out clearly on a grid format.
- Surrounding landmarks and streets will help to identify the venue layout.
- Entrances, exits, vendor locations, first aid posts, toilets, phones, security and licensed areas should be numbered, and/or indicated by a symbol.
- Include a legend explaining all symbols and numbers.
- All access roads and pathways should be clearly marked to indicate use by patrons, vendors, performers and emergency service vehicles.

A useful site plan would include:

- the surrounding area
- all entrances and exits
- emergency access routes
- paths used by vehicles
- paths for pedestrians only

- parking
- stage location
- seating arrangements
- entertainment sites
- security and police locations
- first aid posts
- 'chill-out' areas (safe, quiet rest areas)
- lost kids/property
- drinking water sites
- food/vendors/stalls
- liquor outlets
- approved liquor consumption areas
- non-alcohol (dry) areas
- toilet facilities
- communication centre/command post
- fire extinguishers
- refuse containers
- public telephones
- media points (TV and radio)

1.14 Event Promotion & ticketing

Event promotion can set the expected tone of the event before patrons arrive at the venue. A clear and well sequenced promotion and media strategy can significantly influence the expectations and subsequent behaviour of patrons. Pre-event messages should clarify the focus of the event, availability of food, entertainment and transport.

The ticketing process is particularly important as event managers may choose to structure the ticketing so that they can predict and control the crowd size, segment the crowd by using a number of entrances, or stagger crowd arrival by specifying entry times. Tickets are also an

important means to disseminate quality information to patrons. As well as information provided on the tickets, it may be useful to hand out a separate resource with additional information. Such information could include: maps; patron information regarding restrictions; services and their location; safe drinking information; transport arrangements; gate opening and closing times; and personal health and safety warnings, e.g. water, sunscreen and hats.

1.15 Signage

Clear and appropriate signs can inform and direct patrons to parking, entrance conditions, first aid services, toilet facilities, and rules relating to the serving and consumption of alcohol. Signs should be strategically placed to ensure that patrons are informed before entering the event. This will minimise conflict and congestion at entry and exit points.

1.16 Transport

A range of widely publicised and economical transport options will help patrons to get to and from the event. Provision of transport also promotes responsible drinking behaviour. Liaison with transport providers, police and local council personnel is necessary to coordinate an effective transport plan. It is also wise to advise local taxi companies and establish a taxi/bus queuing system with a controller in place. Including the cost of transport in the ticket price can encourage use of public transport. Parking facilities, waiting areas and pickup/drop-off zones are also an important part of a transport plan. There will also need to be contingency plans for cancellation of the event, wet weather during the event or a delayed finish.

1.17 Noise

When selecting the venue and the entertainment, consideration should be given to the level of noise emanating from the venue and from patrons entering and leaving the venue. Noise from amplified music, motors, refrigeration equipment, generators and patrons can create problems for local residents and businesses. If complaints are received regarding excessive noise a permit may not be issued in the future. If the event will provide amplified entertainment, there will need to be an agreement with the local council regarding noise levels and time restrictions.

1.18 Weather

For outdoor events in particular, the prevailing weather conditions should be a major factor in choosing the date and time for the event. Adequate space, freely available water and shade need to be provided before, during and after the event. Sometimes, severe storms and lightning strikes can occur during the summer period. An unexpected storm at a large outdoor event can cause erratic crowd behaviour and panic, structural damage, risk of electrocution and the delay or cancellation of the event. Technology now provides event managers and emergency service personnel with access to regular weather and storm reports and the opportunity to develop a range of contingency plans in response to an anticipated adverse weather change.

1.19 Information Centre Communication

A well-identified, well-located, and well-publicised information centre on site, serviced by knowledgeable staff, can provide a full range of information services to patrons. An information centre will minimise the uncertainty of patrons and reduce confusion or tensions. Remember to mark the location of the information centre on the site plan.

Communication between event staff is vital to ensure safety and security for both staff and patrons. Communication between the organisers and patrons must also be adequate to cope with emergency situations. Battery operated megaphones or back-up generators may be necessary to ensure that communication is maintained at all times.

1.20 Food

The availability of a range of outlets for high-quality, affordable and accessible food can enhance patron comfort, reduce levels and effects of alcohol consumption and increase event revenue. Having a variety of food options is particularly important in or near 'wet' areas to encourage drinkers to eat. This will also reduce the need for patrons to move through other areas to buy food thus avoiding possible disruptions in 'dry' or family areas.

1.21 Water

For outdoor events (e.g. rock concerts, raves and some sporting events) especially during the summer period, patrons require access to drinking water to prevent dehydration. Clean, easily accessible drinking water

should be available, free of charge, with an additional option to purchase chilled bottled water.

1.22 Lighting and Power

Even in venues darkened for performances, lighting should always be adequate to identify exits, corridors and aisles. Auxiliary battery power or generators should be in place to provide minimum light in a power break, as well as to power the public address system, which can be used to give directions to patrons during a power failure. As many concerts are performed with only stage lighting, access to the main lighting or house lights is essential in case of an emergency. The location and means of activation of lighting and power must be known to those on site who are responsible for emergencies. It is worthwhile to have an electrician on call.

1.23 Toilets

If existing toilets are judged to be inadequate, additional portable units must be made available. Toilet locations should be:

- well marked;
- well lit (including surrounding area) if night use is required;
- serviced (including pump-out portables) on a 24-hour basis during the event;
- conveniently placed to allow service vehicle access to the toilets.

Other considerations for toilets are:

- toilets for people with disabilities;
- the safe disposal of sharps in containers away from the reach of children;
- the duration of the event;
- the type of crowd;
- the weather;

Remember to mark the location of toilets on the site plan.

1.24 Entry and Exit Details

Efficient entry and exit points will prevent congestion and frustration and create a positive atmosphere for the event.

These points should allow for:

- large crowds;
- adequate staff;
- space for bag and identification checks;
- quick response to problems;
- wet weather provisions;
- clear venue information to assist patrons to move to a specific location;
- identifiable drop-off and pick-up points;
- separate entrances and exits for entertainers and staff. Gates should be opened allowing sufficient time for all patrons to enter the venue before the entertainment starts.

1.25 Security

Adequate security arrangements can be a major factor in the success of an event. A risk assessment of the event will indicate the type and level of security required. This entails the event manager examining the possible security concerns of the event in terms of 'what could happen?' and 'what if?,' remembering that different events will have different requirements depending on the type of event, the site, number of patrons, and the expectations of the crowd. Event managers should consider security in relation to cash security, asset protection, crowd management and public safety. A professional, friendly and active approach to security will prevent confrontations and contribute to a positive atmosphere at the event. It is essential that security personnel have efficient communication equipment and processes to maintain direct liaison with police, emergency services and the event manager.

At large events, a central command post can coordinate security, police and emergency services. At any event there are likely to be prohibited items. Patrons need to know in advance that certain items are not to be brought to the event. Searches of personal belongings including jackets, purses and bags and confiscation of weapons, alcohol and other drugs can

reduce on-site problems. Some items, such as video cameras, may be prohibited by the performers at an event. A process to advertise this and deal with such items must be considered. Confiscation, while effective, may create a hostile situation even before the event begins. It may be possible to give the patron the option of returning the property to their car, with a subsequent loss of place in line, or tagging the item, with a duplicate number, for reclaiming when leaving the event (cloaking)

1.26 First Aid and Medical services

The provision of first aid services and direct access for emergency ambulance and medical response services is critical for all types of events. First aid services should be in a clearly defined area and the officers should be able to easily communicate with the event manager, staff and security personnel. Patrons should be informed and encouraged to access the first aid services for themselves or friends. The location and design of the first aid post and services should be carefully considered to give the best access for patrons. For health and safety reasons, intoxicated people must not be left to 'sleep it off' and should be taken to the first aid area for medical supervision. A small number of event staff could adopt a 'roaming guardian angel' role to identify and assist patrons who may require first aid services.

1.27 Emergency Procedures

The development of an effective evacuation process and emergency action plan is essential for all major public events. It is recommended that a written plan be provided to all staff, police and emergency service personnel. Problems can be reduced if basic forcible entry tools are available, e.g. bolt cutters, crowbar etc. These items need to be located in an accessible area.

1.28 Keeping Documents and Information

There are many important documents which must be kept for legal and insurance purposes. The event manager must take responsibility for this and ensure that records are in good order and readily available. There are a number of benefits of maintaining a structured filing system. Firstly, to ensure that all approvals and permits have been granted and to keep the details of the conditions of permits at hand for easy reference. Secondly, to maintain copies of insurance documents in case of a claim. Documents will be required in the event of a complaint or a court case. Compiling a file will demonstrate that the event manager has been prepared and

organised before the event and this could assist in any lawsuit brought against the event manager or organising committee. There are also obvious benefits for future planning in keeping a record. Any subsequent events will be easier to plan if there are records and examples of documents to be used as a starting point.

1.29 Documents to Keep

A typical event will create a large amount of paperwork and a copy of each item should remain on file. It is easy to forget that the documentation for an event will take many forms. Permits, policies, correspondence, promotional material, tickets, contracts, accounts and records of meetings are only a few of the documents involved. It is important to ensure that if other members of the committee are charged with the responsibility of completing various tasks that they also maintain records and pass on copies of all documents to the person who is maintaining the master file.

Event Management

Event Management Plan (template)

This is a guide to the basic aspects that should be included in an event management plan

A. Event Rationale

Why is the event being conducted?

B. Event Summary

Name of event:	
Venue/location:	
Date/s:	
Time/s:	
Contact Person*:	
Position:	
Ph:	
Mobile:	
Fax:	
Email:	
Website:	
Mailing address:	

* A list with contact details of all involved in the event, eg committee members, stall holders, entertainment etc should be prepared and attached.

Event description (20 words or less)

Event vision/mission statement/positioning, eg local, regional, national

Event theme

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Core activities of the event (attach event programme)

1.
2.
3.

Event strategic long term objectives, eg branding, promoting local produce

1.
2.
3.

Event operational short term objectives, eg no. of visitors, profit level, increase in visitor spend

1.
2.
3.

C. Event Organisation

Name of event sponsoring organisation

Event committee: names of committee members, organisations represented, tasks and responsibilities assigned to each member. If the committee is yet to be finalised, list the skill mix that will be required of the committee (see the event planning process and human resource management)

What strategy is being used to get local businesses involved?

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Business/council/community involvement/support (eg complementary business promotions, in-kind support, commitment). Attach copies of letters of support.

Description of volunteers management approach, eg recruitment, training (see the human resource management module)

D. Event Attendees

Target markets (eg families, locals, previous attendees, visitors)

1.
2.
3.

Marketing objectives for each target market listed above (eg attract additional attendees). This relates to event operational strategies in section A.

1.
2.
3.

Marketing and promotional strategies to achieve each target market objective (eg ticket pricing, which TV, radio and/or print media to be used to reach target market)

1.
2.
3.

E. Event funding (if applicable)

Funding strategy for current year

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Funding strategy for future years (if the event takes place on yearly basis)

Sponsorship policy (attach sponsorship prospectus)

List potential sponsors

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Strategy for approaching potential sponsors

Other revenue sources (eg merchandising, stall holder fees, ticket prices and number of expected attendees)

Draft budget (income and expenses) for next 2 years (see the event budgeting section in the module)

INCOME Year 1

Source	In-kind contributions (£ Value)	Cash contributions (£)
Total		

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EXPENDITURE Year 1

Description	In-kind contributions (£ Value)	Cash contributions (£)
Total		

INCOME Year 2

Source	In-kind contributions (£ Value)	Cash contributions (£)
Total		

EXPENDITURE Year 2

Description	In-kind contributions (£ Value)	Cash contributions (£)
Total		

F. Event Support Services

Site plan - attach

Facilities plan, eg for people with disabilities, additional toilets, parking, water, electricity etc

Legal requirements (eg insurance, risk management plans, permits from local council)

Waste management plan

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Parking plan

Transport plan

G. EVALUATION

Financial measures of success, eg profit

1.
2.
3.

Other performance indicators, eg length of stay of visitors, success of marketing strategies

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Methods for measuring performance indicators, eg data collection through surveys (business, attendee, stall holders), sponsor feedback, market research

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Expected outcomes

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Actual outcomes (to be completed after event)

1.
2.
3.

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4.
5.

What will change next time with this event? Based upon debrief(s) with stakeholders/staff and feedback from surveys etc.
