

Guide to industry best practice for organizing outdoor events

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Foreword

This Publicly Available Specification, PAS 51, has been published to provide good practice guidance for the organizing of outdoor events.

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 23 and a back cover.

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Introduction

This Publicly Available Specification provides good practice guidance for the organizing of outdoor events by outdoor event organizers. It does not attempt to classify actual events, or to standardize the products or services provided by outdoor event suppliers. It is intended to be applicable to all outdoor events, which may range from one-day shows, to a short-term series of events or a festival.

The information contained in this Publicly Available Specification may also be of interest to outdoor event suppliers and inspecting officers, training bodies and members of outdoor event trade associations.

1 Scope

This Publicly Available Specification (PAS) is a good practice guide for organizing outdoor events. It is intended for use as a navigating tool, referencing current good practice guidance for the outdoor events industry.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS 8406, *Event stewarding and crowd safety services — Code of practice*.

Fairgrounds and amusement parks: guidance on safe practice — Practical guidance on the management of health and safety for those involved in the fairgrounds industry. HSE Books, 1997 (HSG 175).

Temporary demountable structures. Guidance on design, procurement and use (second edition). The Institution of Structural Engineers, 1999.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this PAS, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

competent person

someone (whether client, employee, self-employed person, contractor or subcontractor) who has necessary and sufficient training, knowledge, experience, expertise and other qualities to complete their allotted task safely

3.2

crowd management

systematic planning for, and supervision of, the orderly movement and assembly of people

NOTE Crowd management involves the assessment of the people-handling capabilities of a space prior to its use. It includes evaluation of projected levels of occupancy; adequacy of means of access and egress; processing procedures (such as ticket collection); and expected types of activities and group behaviour.

3.3

event

organized gathering of persons outdoors and/or within a temporary structure, not including purpose-designed event venues

3.4

risk assessment

systematic examination of all aspects of an event, in order to identify and assess potential threats or hazards that might arise

3.5

site

location of an event

NOTE This can be a venue with identifiable boundaries or a public space with no identifiable boundaries.

3.6

street event

organized gathering of persons taking place on a public highway

3.7

temporary demountable structure

non-permanent structure designed to be in place for part or all of the duration of an event

4 Risk management

4.1 General

To anticipate and manage the potential threats to outdoor events (including threats to the people present, assets and property, and the environment) a risk management strategy should be implemented to cover the project from its inception to its completion.

The risk management strategy will vary from event to event and should be customized by completing a risk evaluation (see 4.3.4).

A key aspect of risk management is the health and safety of all those involved in an event (see Clause 5).

4.2 Risk assessment

Risk assessments assist the event organizer in identifying the measures that need to be taken to control the risk of, and guard against, any potential hazards or threats.

NOTE Attention is drawn to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Risk assessments will assist the event organizer to identify priorities, to allocate resources and to compare and select from different alternatives (e.g. at which site to host the event, how to decide on a venue layout). It will also provide a record of the decision process and justifications for the actions taken should a dispute arise.

The measures identified in a risk assessment should be realistic and achievable.

4.3 Performing a risk assessment

4.3.1 General

A risk assessment should consist of the following steps:

- a) identifying the various hazards associated with the site and/or the event's activities, see 4.3.2;
- b) identifying who is at risk (who may be harmed and how), see 4.3.3;
- c) evaluating the extent of the risks and deciding whether the existing precautions are adequate or can be improved, see 4.3.4;
- d) identifying suitable measures to eliminate, minimize and control the risks, see 4.3.5;

NOTE 1 Attention is drawn to paragraph 3(2) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (the Management Regulations), and paragraph 7 of the accompanying approved code of practice and guidance, which states that the purpose of a risk assessment is to help the employer or self-employed person to determine what measures should be taken to comply with the employer's or self-employed person's duties under the relevant statutory provisions.

- e) recording risk assessment findings, recommendations and remedial actions implemented, see 4.3.6;
- f) reviewing and revising the risk assessment, see 4.3.7.

The event organizer should ensure that risk assessment is arranged and coordinated by a competent person(s). Where other agencies are part of the overall operation (e.g. in major events), the event organizer should ensure that they are involved in the risk assessment.

NOTE 2 Attention is drawn to the following publications:

Five steps to risk assessment. HSE Books, 1998 (INDG163).

Practical risk assessments. PLASA, 2002.

NOTE 3 It can be beneficial to seek independent input from someone who is less involved in the design and planning of the event, who might be able to assess the risks in a more objective manner, without preconceptions or prejudice.

4.3.2 Identifying the hazards

The process of hazard identification should highlight any foreseeable incidents and disruptions to the event and hazards that could arise as a result. It should provide sufficient information to enable the event organizer to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to deal with these hazards should they arise.

4.3.3 Attendance

The event organizer should establish a crowd profile to identify the age, gender, likely behaviour and expectations of the proposed audience, and to in turn inform a risk assessment of the kinds of hazards that will need to be tackled.

NOTE 1 The availability of alcohol is a key factor in determining likely audience behaviour and response to crowd management input.

Particular attention should be given to the potential number of attendees at an event and the safe capacity of the proposed venue in order to assess the required management resources for production of a safe event, or whether the event can be safely staged. The following should be assessed prior to the event:

- a) expected numbers for the event;
- b) crowd entry to the event;
- c) the type of event and likelihood of crowd movement, e.g. fairgrounds where crowds would be moving around;
- d) the dispersal of attendees and the possible requirement for emergency evacuation.

The maximum capacity for various parts of a site should be assessed.

NOTE 2 The number of emergency exits available can limit this.

Once the final capacity of a site or part of a site has been determined, the numbers should not be exceeded in any circumstances other than an emergency.

NOTE 3 Attention is drawn to:

Guide to fire precautions in existing places of entertainment and like premises. The Stationery Office, 1990.

Guide to safety at sports grounds. The Stationery Office, 1997.

Managing crowds safely. HSE Books, 2000 (HSG154).

4.3.4 Risk evaluation

To evaluate risk, the event organizer should ensure that an estimate is made of both the likelihood of the hazard occurring and the severity of the harm it would cause. Risk evaluation should not be based on personal experience alone; any accident records from previous events of a similar nature should be considered.

NOTE Other sources of information that may be useful for risk evaluation include the experience of organizers of other similar events, incident logs or injury figures, feedback from front line staff and customer services.

The event organizer should take into account any existing precautions that are already in place, and assess their viability.

A qualitative risk evaluation method should be used. This involves the use of ratings to estimate the likelihood and severity of hazards, e.g. high, medium and low risk. The risk posed by a hazard can then be expressed in terms of a combination of the likelihood rating and the severity rating using a risk classification matrix (see example in Table 1).

Table 1 — Example of a risk classification matrix

	Major	Significant	Minor
Likely	Very high	High	Medium
Possible	High	Medium	Low
Unlikely	Medium	Low	Very low

4.3.5 Risk minimization

When considering what measures need to be taken in order to minimize and control risks, priority should be given to the hazards that pose the highest risks.

Eliminating the risk altogether by removing the hazard should be the first strategy in trying to control risks. If the hazard cannot be eliminated entirely the following should be considered:

- a) choosing a lower risk option;
- b) making the hazard less likely to occur or to cause harm by preventing access to the hazard or by reducing exposure to it;
- c) reducing the severity of harm that may result from the hazard.

Proactive management to minimize and control risks should occur throughout the event management process, and should involve:

- 1) design – designing the risks out, or mitigating them wherever possible;
- 2) planning – ensuring that risks that cannot be designed out are controlled, and that there is coordination and cooperation between contractors;
- 3) information – ensuring all event personnel know site risks and limitations;
- 4) selection – appointing only competent contractors who use trained personnel;
- 5) methodology – obtaining and vetting method statements and risk assessments;
- 6) control – only allowing authorised persons on site; enforcing rules;
- 7) prioritization – concentrating on what could cause the most significant damage, particularly to people;
- 8) monitoring – ensuring that plans are implemented and that problems, accidents and incidents are reported;
- 9) reviewing and recording – ensuring that lessons are learnt for the next time.

4.3.6 Records

The event organizer should ensure documented risk assessments are carried out and made available at all times.

Records that should be kept include details of policy, plans, assessments, actions taken, review and details of any accidents and incidents.

Records should be kept for seven years.

NOTE Where records kept pertain to individuals, attention is drawn to The Data Protection Act 1998.

4.3.7 Reviewing and revising the risk assessment

Risk assessments should be continually reviewed and revised. Circumstances that can highlight the need for review are:

- a) significant changes to the event, the venue, or the attendees;
- b) the emergence of a new problem that was not previously detected;
- c) the occurrence or near occurrence of a significant incident;
- d) the occurrence of a serious incident at a similar event;
- e) changes to relevant legislation.

Reviews should be carried out as soon as possible after an event and involve as many staff as practicable, particularly those directly involved. Staff should be encouraged to discuss concerns, the causes of any accidents, incidents or problems and any identifiable means of improving the management of future events.

4.4 Third party risk assessments

The event organizer should request risk assessments for significant hazards and, where appropriate, method statements from contractors and participants.

NOTE This task may be delegated to the site manager.

Information about contractors should be kept with general event documentation. Significant risks should be noted and communicated to all relevant parties, including staff.

4.5 Audit of risk management systems

Audits of the risk management systems should be performed. These should:

- a) be carried out by a competent person(s);
- b) assess the elements of policy, organization, planning and implementation of the risk management system;
- c) measure the relevance and adequacy of the systems;
- d) assess the ability of the organization to learn from experience and improve performance.

5 Health and safety

Health and safety is fundamental to all aspects of running an event.

A document outlining the site rules should be presented to all staff and contractors outlining their health and safety roles and responsibilities while operating on site. This information should also indicate local medical and welfare facilities.

NOTE Attention is drawn to the following legislation, codes of practice and guidance:

General

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

A guide to managing health and safety in construction. HSC, Construction Industry Advisory Committee, 1995.

Successful health and safety management. HSE Books, 1997 (HSG65).

Managing contractors: a guide for employers. HSE Books, 1997 (HSG159).

The event safety guide: a guide to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events. HSE Books, 1999 (HSG195).

Guide to safety at sports grounds. The Stationery Office, 1997.

Selecting a health and safety consultancy. HSE Books, 1992 (INDG 133).

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994.

Installation

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

Safe use of work equipment: Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998: approved code of practice and guidance (second edition). HSE Books, 1998 (L22).

Manual handling: Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. HSE Books, 1998 (L23).

Manual handling: solutions you can handle. HSE Books, 1994 (HSG115).

A short guide to the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992. HSE Books, 1995 (INDG174).

Safe use of lifting equipment. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. Approved code of practice and guidance. HSE Books, 1998 (L113).

Simple guide to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. HSE Books, 1999 (INDG290).

Health and safety in roof work. HSE Books, 1998 (HSG33).

Managing construction for health and safety: Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994: approved code of practice. HSE Books, 1995 (L24).