

Fire Safety and Special Events

When a venue is being used to host special events it is important that fire safety arrangements are reviewed. This guidance highlights the actions that can be taken to limit the possibility of fires occurring during special events. Examples of special events include conferences, concerts, TV filming, exhibitions, ceremonies and weddings.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Your fire risk assessment should be reviewed and you should consider the following:

- Assess the number of persons likely to be present at the event and re-evaluate your emergency evacuation procedures. The local fire service may need to be advised, if expected attendance numbers are more than 500 people.
- You may need to review the number of stewards on site to support evacuation procedures and additional training may be necessary.
- Additional means of escape signage may be required.
- The event may increase the risk of fire ignition and, therefore, existing controls may need to be increased e.g. additional fire extinguishers may be required. These should be supplied by the event organiser or any attending vendors.
- Some events may involve installing generators and cabling to the main property. You will need to ensure these comply with any regulations such as Test and Tag and staff/volunteers are trained in their operation.

PRE-EVENT PLANNING

This is strongly recommended and should involve the host, the event organiser (if different) and other interested parties. Emergency services may need to be involved along with contractors who provide marquees and caterers. Items to consider in the event planning include the following:

- Security procedures and requirements should be reviewed.
- For larger events a volunteer ambulance crew should be considered e.g. Red Cross or St Johns Ambulance.
- If in-house catering services are not being used, create a list of preferred catering suppliers who agree to contractually comply with your fire safety arrangements.
- Agree to safe areas for the location of film and catering crews.
- Special attention is needed to LPG bottle usage and storage.

- Ensure Test and Tag conditions are implemented for electrical extensions and equipment.
- Permits or Licenses should be obtained from relevant authorities as appropriate.
- Will all or part of the main building be used to host the event?
- It may be beneficial to undertake a fire drill rehearsal before the event.
- If the event requires isolation of fire detection systems, alternative arrangements will need to be made.
- Aisles and gangways should be designed to ensure that no one is seated at an appropriate distance from a fire exit, as determined by your fire risk assessment.

SPECIAL HAZARDS

Marquees

Any marquees or tents erected at the event to be used as temporary structures should be sited at least 10 metres from buildings.

Lighting

Some events may require additional temporary lighting to be brought to the site. It is common for generator trucks and trailers to be used for filming. These items should be positioned well away from the main building with agreed cable routes. Spare fuel for the generators should be securely stored in a fire resistant compartment. Adequate portable fire extinguishers should be sited in close proximity.

KEY MESSAGES

- Arranging special events requires special attention and additional precautions to be taken.
- Fire risk assessments should be reviewed to ensure they are suitable and sufficient to reflect the changes in circumstances.
- Pre-planning of the event is critical.

NEED TO CONTACT US?

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