

Guidance provided by Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service

Fire safety at public events

The following general advice, is given in respect to any public event that is planned, where members of the public will be invited to attend.

The organiser should consider the risk from fire at all outdoor events and in particular carry out a fire risk assessment to identify:

- Potential fire hazards and take measures to remove or reduce them.
- The people who may be at risk. This should take particular note of the young, elderly and disabled. If the event is licensed to sell alcohol, or it is permitted and likely that alcohol will be brought to the event, the effects of alcohol on people in an emergency should be taken into account.
- What measures are required to detect a fire effectively and to inform all necessary people of this.
- What measures and facilities are necessary to ensure the safe evacuation of all people from the event. Consideration should be given to ensuring that escape is possible from all areas of the event; that large numbers of people can be safely managed in an emergency situation; that lighting, signage and ground conditions are suitable for the circumstances; and that everyone can be safely evacuated to a place of ultimate safety, in a reasonable period of time.
- That measures are in place for dealing with a fire should one start.
- That facilities to call the fire service are in place.
- That a record of these issues and the management of them is recorded and relayed to everyone necessary, so that all marshals and other staff are aware of the preventative and reactive measures that need to be taken with regards to fire safety.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 has made it a legal requirement for general fire precautions to be addressed at this type of event and for a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment to be. The responsible person must take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances, to ensure that the premises, including outside areas, tents, temporary structures etc and all means of access to, and exits from the premises, are safe.

- As an organiser, you have a duty to ensure that emergency procedures for evacuation of any area of the event are included in the planning process.
- In all cases where it is planned to place a crowd in a confined place – either indoors or outdoors, an evacuation procedure must be part of the risk assessment and management process.
- Indoor venues will probably have an evacuation plan as part of their premises', public entertainment licence, but this should be reviewed for its adequacy, based upon the particular event that is planned.

- Large events should have an 'Event Control' or 'Event Liaison Team' area where key people can be contacted including the police and emergency services, and where the organiser should be based.
- For events with an expected attendance of over 100 competitors or spectators, a public address system should be used to communicate any safety messages to the area where they are assembled, and a back up electricity supply provided, whether this is a generator to back up mains supply, or a second emergency generator.
- A back up electricity supply is required for emergency lighting if the event is to be held during the hours of darkness.

For more detailed advice on how to carry out a fire risk assessment and the measures to deal with fire safety matters, visit the CLG website and download a copy of the appropriate guide:

Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Open Air Events and Venues -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-open-air-events-and-venues>

Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Small and Medium Places of Assembly -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-small-and-medium-places-of-assembly>

Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Large Places of Assembly -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-large-places-of-assembly>