



Security Newsletter

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Security for Special Events

This is the first of a two-part series examining the special requirements involved in safely securing any entertainment events taking place in your venue.

Many facilities such as casinos, hotels and other multi-use venues incorporate specialised spaces for a variety of entertainment functions. These include, sports events, concerts, exhibitions, conferences and other similar gatherings. Effectively securing each one of these brings different challenges for the security professional.

The requirement for the security of these special events changes our focus from the usual deter, detect and delay aspects of facility security and refocuses on the safety and security of the audience and of the performers.

The process of special event security can be broken down into expectations, needs and actions.



Detailed plans and procedures must be prepared covering the following issues:

Risk Factors

-What do we expect

The process starts with a risk assessment. All entertainment events differ in the size, the age, composition and the expectations of the audience. The makeup of people attending a rock concert for example differs markedly from one attending a cultural event, so the crowd psychology and crowd management issues vary with each differing event.

In examining the risks involved, in addition to those such stampeding, hooliganism, intoxication, drugs, terrorism, bomb threats and others, we also need to examine the specific issues related to the type of performance and venue.

These include:

- The nature of the event, whether it is sporting, musical or high-profile such as a political event. Large-scale events have increased needs for safety and security.

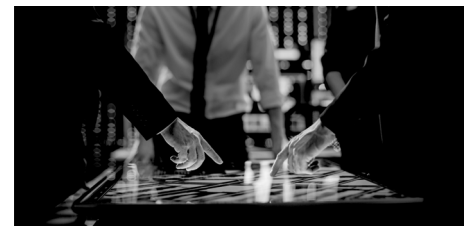
- Have any incidents previously occurred with this event or the venue?
- What is the size and demographics of the expected audience?
- Is the audience individually seated, group seated or standing?
- Are tickets presold or sold at the venue on the day?
- Is it a capacity crowd?
- Do the performers plan to do anything to overexcite the audience, encouraging them to stand or rush forward at any time?

Having established the risks involved and the background to the event we know what to expect. Our next stage is what do we need?

Budget for Event Security

The event security budget should not be an afterthought and needs to be included in the overall costs. Sufficient physical security staff will be needed at all entrances and exits, and placed strategically throughout the event. Allowances for security members to keep an eye on things during setup and takedown will also be required as well as provision for crowd control items and communications.

In a large event, there may even be a need to establish a command centre room as the event security headquarters. This room would have CCTV monitoring capability and be the communications centre with medical and emergency teams on standby.



Know the Venue Layout

It is important to get to know the venue layout. During the site inspection as part of the planning before the event the security leader should gather all the information about the venue layout and share it with anyone involved with the event.

The entire team should know the layout of the event space, as well as the nearby entrances and exits, routes for emergency services, VIP access, back of house areas and staff access and surrounding spaces. Locations of amenities such as bars, restaurants and restrooms should be known and planned for.

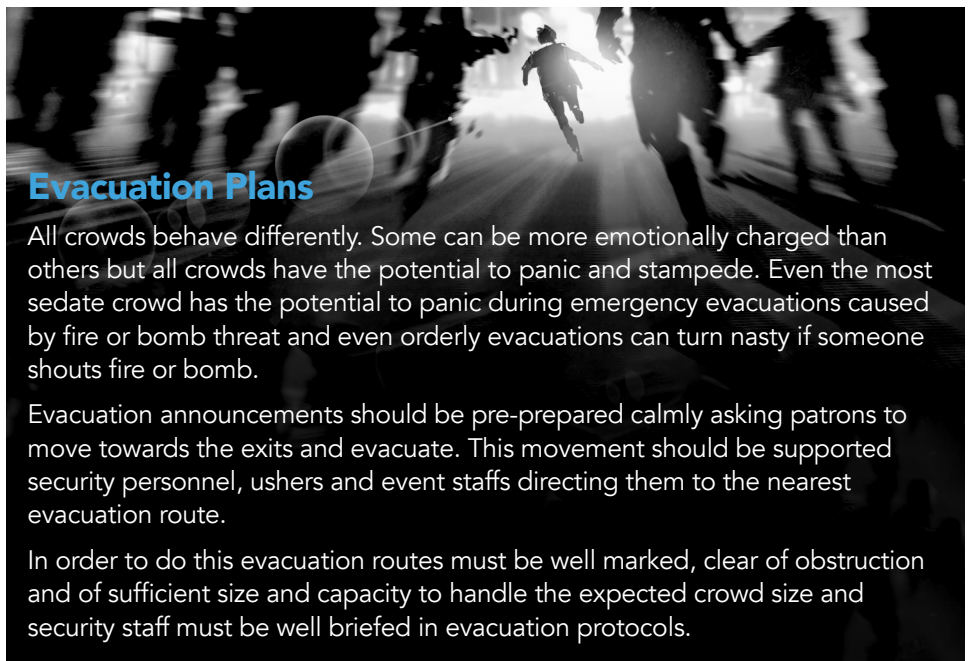
Safety Issues

The overall security operation is responsible for the safety and security of the audience as it approaches and enters the venue, for the safety and security of the audience and the performers throughout the performance and for the safety and security of the audience as it leaves the venue and disperses. In doing so it monitors the progress of the gathering and moving audience throughout the proceedings by electronic and human



Physical Crowd Control

A crowd control plan needs to be prepared. Depending on the size of the expected crowd, its likely mood and composition and the design of the facility entrances, we may need to make use of a variety of crowd management techniques in the pre-event stage as the audience is arriving. These can include passageways and tunnels already in place, ground markings, ropes/tape with or without stanchions, metal crowd barriers, water/sand filled barriers or security officers. In addition, depending on the type of event, some further security control may be necessary inside the venue to ensure the safety of participants, the performance and the performers



Evacuation Plans

All crowds behave differently. Some can be more emotionally charged than others but all crowds have the potential to panic and stampede. Even the most sedate crowd has the potential to panic during emergency evacuations caused by fire or bomb threat and even orderly evacuations can turn nasty if someone shouts fire or bomb.

Evacuation announcements should be pre-prepared calmly asking patrons to move towards the exits and evacuate. This movement should be supported security personnel, ushers and event staffs directing them to the nearest evacuation route.

In order to do this evacuation routes must be well marked, clear of obstruction and of sufficient size and capacity to handle the expected crowd size and security staff must be well briefed in evacuation protocols.

surveillance. Care must be exercised to prevent crowd crush situations where the audience is standing or allowed to stand and pushing towards the stage.

The security operation is also responsible for the preparedness and capability to effectively and efficiently control an orderly and safe emergency evacuation if necessary.

First-aid coverage

The overall security plan should include a provision for first-aid coverage. This will vary depending on the type of event and the expected composition of the crowd. Where large numbers of young people are expected, and the event is likely to be emotionally charged a more significant first aid presence will be necessary.

In the second part of this series we will examine the security coverage needed for such events and finally, what we do!

WHAT DO WE DO?

- Provide event planning
- Security management services
- Security manpower
- Incident response
- Communications
- Capturing the lessons learned

What can Omnirisc do to help you!

We provide bespoke consultations for businesses and organizations on security and on various levels of vulnerability, risk assessments and security services.