

# RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDE



## Identifying and Managing Risk for Meetings, Conferences and Events

### A Checklist and Resource Guide



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## ABOUT CanSPEP

The Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners (CanSPEP) [www.canspep.ca](http://www.canspep.ca), is a dynamic, diverse and innovative society of Independent Event Professionals with a leading national voice in the event industry and is the only association in Canada that offers an exclusive membership to independent event planner entrepreneurs. Formed in 1996, the association provides forums in which members exchange ideas, develop skills through educational programs and create a public awareness around the profession of event planners. While membership is open to event planners only, the association offers industry suppliers an opportunity to showcase their products and services to our members through various advertising and sponsorship opportunities.

Our primary goal is to **promote professionalism** and create awareness of the many skills that independent meeting planners offer. Our membership represents a diverse group of experienced businesses that cater to clients in the corporate, association, government and not-for-profit sectors, as well as the special events market.

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### **CanSPEP offers unique opportunities to those seeking a Professional Planner**

- One stop shopping to view independent planners across Canada.
- Knowledge that a CanSPEP member is well versed in strategic planning, has a wealth of supplier relationships, can partner with other CanSPEP members to ensure corporations, associations, non-profit, government events and meetings are designed and delivered successfully.
- One stop shopping to submit a Request for Proposal that will be viewed by CanSPEP professional members.

### **CanSPEP is a Founding Member of The Business Events Industry Coalition of Canada**

The BEICC's mission is to provide a unified voice for the business events industry and to promote the economic and business impact of our sector to government at all levels and the corporate world at large. For more information, please visit [www.beicc.com](http://www.beicc.com)

# FORWARD

In 2006, IMPAC (previous to CanSPEP) members began the creation of an Risk Management Guide for Members: “Risk Management Guide – *A Checklist and Resource Guide for Independent Meeting Planners*”.

The inaugural edition was launched in 2006. The original dedicated committee included:

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This initiative of updating the Guide was taken on by Past President’s ~ Gale Gingrich, CAAP, CMP (Retired), and Rita Plaskett, CMP, CMM who reached out to other CanSPEP members, Supplier Partners and industry experts who assisted in compiling the information.

A list of the contributors is listed in the Guide on page 2.

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# RISK MANAGEMENT FUNDAMENTALS

## RULE #1 – “Nothing happens by chance.”

There **must** be a risk management plan in place prior to all programs regardless of the number of attendees, size of venue, type of event, demographics of attendees, etc.

### Fundamental Considerations:

- ❑ Consider location of the event – is it indoors or outdoors?
- ❑ Consider the availability of shade and seating if the event is to be held outdoors, particularly in the warmer months dependant on the demographics of the group.
- ❑ Consider the political situation – is there a potential for demonstration.
- ❑ Consider time of day and weather conditions likely for the event – are these considerations likely to increase the risk of accidents?
- ❑ There are four critical steps essential to ensuring you have addressed each and every possible risk fact associated with any event – large or small. Serious consideration and thought must be given to the following:
  - ❑ Plan for the triage of the injured individuals;
  - ❑ Plan for the next steps – search and rescue, if necessary;
  - ❑ Plan for the management of the scene at hand;
  - ❑ Plan for control by limiting access, providing equipment necessary for the rescue team and taking steps to alleviate additional injuries or loss of life.

# FIRST QUESTIONS TO ASK

## Questions to ask of yourself if you are charged with the responsibility of risk management:

- Are you comfortable with the responsibility that you have been charged with?
- Do you know who you are dealing with and who you report to? Who are the attendees? You must understand those that you will be working for and serving so that you can work out a successful risk management plan to match their needs.
- Are you comfortable with collecting the required data ensuring that the event will proceed in a logical manner despite the risks involved in some events.
- Are you prepared to keep your options open – don't do things "the way they have always been done" if it does not make sense to continue to do so.
- Are you prepared to not get stuck in "politics" – know what is possible and go there. This will mean timing your proposals and recommendations carefully.

## Questions to ask of the client:

- A realistic count of the number of attendees expected to attend the event – this will aid in determining staffing needs and if medical equipment is required.
- What are the demographics of the attendees? The more you know about your attendees, the more you can work out a risk plan – is it an older group with the likelihood of age related problems – in order for the client to reach their goal of having a successful event, they must provide you with adequate information.

# THE TEAM

Creating your team and defining roles and responsibilities of each individual is one of your most important considerations.

## Who do you need?

- Meeting staff should be designated to be responsible for various emergency medical situations.
- Are any of the meeting staff members trained in basic CPR? Are their certifications current?
- If so, they should be provided with special visible identification so they can be easily identified.
- Are any of the meeting staff members trained in basic first aid?
- Should the team include paramedics, registered nurses or physicians, or is conference/event staff adequate? Are they trained in CPR? First Aid?

## How many team members do you need?

- If the event is, say, lengthy, for example one week, should more than one team be in place?
- How many persons should the team consist of? One formulation is to add 0.5 extra team for each additional risk factor and reduce the size of the team by 0.25 for factors that lessen risk. In any event, the number in the team should not drop below one per thousand participants.
- Consider the number of people who are likely to require medical attention at your event.
- Consider that there will be times during the event when more members of a team is required than at others, i.e., just be aware of scheduling efficiently.
- When sports or marathons are included, etc. – is additional staff required?

## Roles and Responsibilities:

- All team members **must** be fully briefed (as close to the event as possible) on the following:
  - Layout of the venue, emergency exits and fire extinguishers – include a map
  - Number of attendees expected
  - Demographics of the attendees – “high risk”?
  - Advise of any potential violence that might be encountered
  - Advise on procedure of handling of biochemical hazards
  - Crowd culture – anticipated risks?
  - Impending weather – risks?
  - Chain of command within the group in the event of an emergency.
  
- Must be provided with enough materials and personnel to coordinate most situations for at least 30 minutes and must be available for the entire event.
  
- Team must be prepared to implement triage/treatment and transportation. In the event there are more people that may need medical attention than staff and equipment on hand, formulate a strategy to determine the order of medical attention.
  
- A master copy of emergency contact information (prepared from attendee registration) should be prepared and be easily accessible to all team members on site.
  
- From the master copy of all profiles, **all** team members should be trained to recognize any potential medical problems.
  
- One individual should be designated to take charge in a medical emergency.
  
- All emergency procedures and information should be made available to **all** committee members. This includes providing them with the name and number of the hospital and ensure that they are aware of the procedures within the facility. (Please note, while procedures may generally be the same, they do vary from one facility to another.)
  
- In the event that media should be involved, designate someone on the team to be a spokesperson.
  
- In the event of a medical emergency, meeting staff should ensure witnesses are available.

# MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

## Overall:

The venue personnel are better suited to give exact location details to emergency personnel. It is suggested that staff and volunteers familiarize themselves with the location of hotel house phones.

For minor health emergencies, staff and volunteers should have a list of the nearest hospital, clinic, dentist, pharmacy on hand to help the person.

Ensure that you ask for emergency contact information for all guests. This information is confidential and should only be used in extreme emergencies. Lead planner should assign one or two persons to have immediate access to this list.

Ensure that Defibrillators are on property. Please confirm & advise locations nearest meeting/exhibit space.

## Food Allergies:

Planner will design a method so serving staff will know who is allergic to what. This will be discussed with all venues.

Some suggestions:

1. For sit-down meals: include a food ticket in the back of the name badge that can be shown to the server,
2. For buffets: ensure that all food and beverage is labeled so those with allergies know what to avoid,
3. In all cases, a list of allergies (could include scents, etc) is sent to the food manager/caterer well in advance. Ensure all staff and volunteers know who has allergies to what.

## Supplies and Equipment

- ❑ What medical equipment and supplies are required to be brought on site?
- ❑ Has a budget been put aside for such supplies? If not, make arrangements for one
- ❑ Is there a first aid station on-site? How accessible is it? What are the hours?
- ❑ What is the first aid station equipped with and how is it staffed?
- ❑ Is a defibrillator on site?
- ❑ Is there oxygen on site?
- ❑ Are there first aid kits available? Where are they located?
- ❑ What are some of the medical emergencies the station has handled?
- ❑ Is there a doctor on call 24 hours?
- ❑ Where should the medical first aid station be? If the event is outdoors, should there be more than one? Should beds be included in the area?

## Attendees

- Consider the demographics of the attendees attending, i.e., mobility, vision, hearing issues etc.
- For international attendees travelling overseas, ensure they have adequate medical coverage. In case of a medical emergency, make them aware of consequences if they do not.

## Questions to ask of the Venue

- What types of events usually take place in the chosen venue? – if built as a sports stadium, can its staff be expected to be responsive if the venue is used for another purpose.
- How often is the venue used for events? Are the staff familiar with working with groups (large or small) regularly.
- Is a written medical emergency plan in place? If so, could they provide you with a copy and have it readily available for all meeting staff members.
- How are emergency procedures initiated – who dials 9-1-1?
- What skill does the response team at the facility have?
- What is the medical procedure if someone is unable to communicate?
- When was the emergency plan last reviewed?
- Who is the first response staff?
- Is all facility staff familiar with the plan?
- Are there CPR trained staff onsite? Who are they?
- Is there a first aid station on-site? How accessible is it? What are its hours?
- What is the first aid station equipped with and how is it staffed?
- Is a defibrillator on site?
- Is there oxygen on site?
- Are there first aid kits available? Where are they located?
- What are some of the medical emergencies the station has handled?
- Is there a doctor on call 24 hours?
- Where is the nearest hospital? What is the name and phone number?

- ❑ Who is responsible for the ambulance service? What is the phone number to call for an ambulance?
- ❑ Where is the nearest entrance/exit for ambulance and fire department?
- ❑ What is the response time?
- ❑ Is wait staff trained to perform the Heimlich manoeuvre?
- ❑ Where is the closest pharmacy? What is the name, phone number and address?
- ❑ What is the medical procedure if death occurs on site?
- ❑ In the event of weather related emergencies, where is the safe area for the team and victims?
- ❑ Are there any considerations that should be considered, such as uneven ground, walkways, hills, excessive necessity to use stairways that could potentially give rise to more risk of accidents, etc?
- ❑ What is the distance of the parking from the event? Is the ground uneven? Is it well lit?

## EVENT MANAGEMENT of Medical Risk

### Pre-Event

During registration process ask attendees for:

- Pertinent medical history, disabilities, and allergies.
- Emergency contact information, including family contacts with phone numbers and e-mail addresses.
- Language preference, particularly for foreign destinations.

Pre-Event Preparations:

- “In Case of Emergency” contact information should be on the back of the attendee’s nametag for easy reference. It is recommended that language preference also be included for ease of communication during medical emergencies.
- A master copy of emergency contact information should be prepared and be easily accessible to **all** team members on site.
- From the master copy of all profiles, all team members should be trained to recognize any potential medical problems.

### During the Event

- At the beginning of the meeting when attendees are all together, give a very brief description of emergency procedures, whether security, safety or medical.
- Post signage indicating: first aid station; emergency exits and security office.
- Post emergency numbers (fire, police, ambulance, etc) by telephones.
- Ensure that communication devices (such as two-way radios or PA systems) are available and used by all staff.
- Ensure that all staff are easily recognizable and visible.

### Post-Event

- Determine if risk management techniques used for the particular event were effective.
- Determine what, if any, improvements could be made in future to risk management techniques used.

# NATURAL DISASTERS

Natural disasters can happen at any time. How can you create a plan for this?

## Natural Disasters can consist of:

- ❑ Floods
- ❑ Hurricanes
- ❑ Earthquakes
- ❑ Fire (while not strictly a natural disaster, concerns are very similar)
- ❑ Weather
- ❑ Medical epidemic
- ❑ Avalanche
- ❑ Mudslides

## There are several things you can do before even choosing the city, venue:

1. Look at the time of year you want to hold your event in the part of the world you want to hold it. Is this hurricane season? Rainy season? Extreme heat or extreme cold? Tornado season? If you really want to go to that location, can you change the time of year?
2. Understand your demographics. Who is coming to your meeting? Are they young, old, a mix? This will help you determine how well your plan needs to be developed.
3. Research the history of natural disasters in the city you are considering. How were natural disasters handled in the past? What did they learn from their mistakes? For example, if taking a group to New Orleans, you will want to know their city evacuation procedures and know that they have improved from Hurricane Katrina.
4. If you decide to hold your event in a city with potential risks, undertake a complete evaluation of the risks and develop a plan, in conjunction with the city safety officers. Piggyback on their plans and communicate the plan to your client, staff, volunteers, suppliers and all others that need to be in the know.
5. Do you communicate the plan to your guests? That is a call you must make, in discussions with local safety staff, your client and staff. You may wish to provide them an overview of how to proceed and the safety measures you have put in place should a natural disaster occur. This will add to their sense of safety and security.

## Questions to ask:

- ❑ Does the venue meet fire codes of the city/province/country?
- ❑ What do the bells mean? (one = : two = : three = )
- ❑ What is the protocol for the planner to follow?
- ❑ Who does the planner call in case of emergency? (not always 911)
- ❑ Is there a portion of your entertainment that could cause an alarm to go off? If so, what is the protocol to ensure safety for all?
  - I.e. fire department on hand if alarms disabled because of pyro-tech display
- ❑ Will a fire drill take place during your event?
- ❑ What are mock fire drill procedures?
- ❑ Where will everyone gather if building needs to be evacuated?
- ❑ Who is the main contact person?
- ❑ Within reasonable knowledge, understand the emergency plan of the venue & dovetail yours into theirs.
- ❑ Are all fire exits visible?
- ❑ Are all stairwells unlocked?
- ❑ Where are the fire extinguishers?
- ❑ Is/are there defibrillator(s)? Where are they?
- ❑ Respect maximum capacities for all rooms
- ❑ Have a buddy system for head counts
- ❑ Are there CPR trained staff onsite? Know who they are and how to reach them.
- ❑ What alternative arrangements should be in place to allow for delegates to return home, or move to another area that is not involved in natural disaster or fire (this could be a nearby city)

# TERRORISM

Our world, since September 11, 2001 has unfortunately had to consider terrorism at every crossroad. For many nations, this has always been the way it is. North Americans are learning hard lessons. There is no easy answer to this. To prepare you and your group better, consider staying on top of current events. If you have planned an event in a location that, prior to planning, was safe and as your planning progresses, terrorist attacks happen, you must evaluate the decision to go to that city. You must consider that some guests will not want to come, out of fear.

If you are onsite when a terrorist attack happens, you will need to put your plan in action. The better prepared you are before; the better you will be onsite. Work with the local authorities; understand the history of terrorism; have a plan in place and communicate that plan.

Have backup transportation in place, backup food suppliers, etc. Your job is to look after the health and safety of all your guests.

You cannot do this alone: find the right partners who have experience in this area and work with them to design a plan that will work with your guests. Understand your guests and the environment you are taking them to.

## **Terrorism can consist of:**

- War (on the country you are in, or generally in the world)
- Attacks in the geographic area around you
- Attacks in the world that will affect your group
- Political change
- Government actions
- Hostage situations

## **Questions to ask:**

- Is location or event attractive to terrorists?
- Is there a history or faction of activists in the city or surrounding area?
- Is a delegate or speaker a target for terrorists?
- Where are the potential risk areas near the location or city? (for example, CNTower in Toronto)
- What other event or groups close by can influence risk of terrorism?

- What plans does your venue have in place to address:
  - Potential terrorist attacks?
  - What changes have been implemented since 9/11 (security plans)
  - What is the policy for unattended bags?
- Where are government or consulate/embassy buildings?
- What and when do you disclose emergency info?
- What is your emergency communications plan and who delivers this?
- Who is the first point of contact in case of a terrorist attack?
- What is the most appropriate security team for the event?
- What personal or special security do you have to have for your high risk delegate or speaker who could be a target? (security, protocol)
- What is the evacuation plan?
  - Terrorist attack in your meeting city—how do you evacuate people out of the city?
  - Buses to where?
  - Where is the nearest hospital/clinic?
  - How many emergency vehicles are available?

# INSURANCE

As a Professional Event Planner you cannot control every detail and outcome. Insurance should be an important part of your risk management strategy. There are two areas that you need to consider when managing risk through insurance: Insurance for your business and insurance for the events you manage.

## Insurance for Your Business:

All business owners should have the correct liability insurance to protect their personal assets and the business from lawsuits. Event Planners have unique risk exposures requiring a comprehensive liability solution including coverage for both Professional Liability and Commercial General Liability.

### Professional Liability Insurance

As a professional, the public holds you to a higher duty of care. Canadian society has become more litigious and allegations of professional negligence against all types of professionals are on the rise.

Also known as Errors and Omissions Insurance (E&O), the CanSPEP E&O policy provides coverage for a loss sustained by a third party due to an unintentional error or oversight by you or an employee when rendering professional meeting and event planning services. All professionals providing advice need this type of protection. You cannot control every detail. The policy will respond to both frivolous lawsuits and cases wherein you were found negligent. The policy protects your clients by ensuring that there will be adequate funds to pay for damages incurred if you are held liable.

### Commercial General Liability Insurance

Commercial General Liability (“CGL”) is designed to protect your business from third party claims for bodily injury and property damage caused by a representative of your business. Most governments, corporations and meeting venues now require that you have CGL insurance.

As a meeting planner you will likely be named in a lawsuit related to a bodily injury or property damage claim sustained by a third party at an event you planned even if you had nothing to do with the circumstances surrounding the loss.

Your CGL policy is triggered by a lawsuit that results from the negligent actions of any member of your organization.

General liability issues for an organization typically arise from one of the following:

1. Injuries or harm to participants in a meeting or event.
2. Damage to third party property as a result of a meeting or event.

It is important to note that E&O insurance does NOT cover claims related to bodily injury or property damage sustained by a third party. The CanSPEP Insurance Program has been customized to bundle E&O and CGL insurance together under one comprehensive package for members.

### **Data Security & Privacy Liability**

Protecting your data and your client's information is critical to your operations. On June 18, 2015, Bill S-4, better known as the Digital Privacy Act ("DPA") became law. The DPA makes significant changes to the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA), including requiring mandatory breach reporting to both the Privacy Commissioner and the affected individuals, and instituting additional fines up to \$100,000.

The DPA's new privacy breach response requirements, forensic investigation costs and mandatory reporting will create real, measurable costs for organizations that experience a breach. Implementing proper policies and procedures around data protection is critical to reduce the impact of a breach; however, even the most sophisticated organizations in the world cannot prevent a hacker or rogue employee from breaching their computer systems.

The insurance industry has responded with unique "Cyber" insurance specifically designed to respond to direct costs incurred on a first-party basis (i.e., your own costs) following a data breach, as well as to third-party liability claims arising from the data breach incident.

### **What Does Cyber Insurance Cover?**

Cyber Insurance can cover the following short-term risks to organizations:

- Lost data and records management;
- Loss of customers;
- Financial Loss (in the case of theft);
- Immediate loss in profits;
- Notification of those affected by a breach.
- Identity theft protection;

Cyber Insurance can cover the following long-term risks to organizations:

- Brand image damage;
- Loss of jobs;
- Lawyer defense fees during the investigation stage and trials;
- Updating IT systems;
- Forensic investigation costs to investigate incidents to find out if data was stolen and why;
- Finding and fixing any vulnerabilities; and
- Credit monitoring

## Insurance for Events

### Event Liability for Your Clients

The hosts/sponsors of the events you plan and manage need to ensure they have the appropriate liability insurance to protect their organization and the attendees. Due to the nature of different events, it is possible that the host/sponsor's Commercial General Liability policy may **not** extend to cover certain events. The first step is to ask your client to get confirmation that their Commercial General Liability policy will extend to cover their event.

### Event Cancellation Insurance

These unique and valuable policies protect the hosts/sponsors of events against unpredictable problems that can lead to the postponement, cancellation or relocation of their event. Coverage responds to terrorism, threat of terrorism, communicable diseases, labour strikes, weather, non-appearance, venue unavailability, etc.

Organizations can insure against the loss of revenues or expenses related to their event. *Actual examples of when the policy would respond:*

- ❑ Disease outbreak/threat (e.g., SARS, avian flu, H1N1 etc.)
- ❑ Terrorism (e.g., 9-11, Paris attacks, attack on Canadian parliament)
- ❑ Threat of terrorism (e.g., Toronto Royal Ontario Museum bomb threat in Dec. 2007)
- ❑ Adverse weather (e.g., hurricanes, snow, lightning storms etc.)
- ❑ Natural disasters (e.g., flooding in Southern Alberta in 2013, Icelandic volcano in April 2010)
- ❑ Labour disputes (e.g., Toronto Municipal garbage workers strike in July 2009, airline strikes)
- ❑ Power blackouts (e.g., Eastern North America in Aug. 2003)

This content was provided by Derrick Leue from LMS PROLINK Ltd.

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To learn more: [www.LMS.CA/CANSPEP](http://www.LMS.CA/CANSPEP) or [CANSPEP@LMS.CA](mailto:CANSPEP@LMS.CA).

# INSURANCE CHECKLIST

## General

Ensure you have a well formulated client contract in place that clearly sets out terms and responsibilities to minimize an event planner's liability (see CanSPEP sample contract)

- ❑ Ensure the client contract is clear and presented to the client in a format that is easily read i.e. no small print.
- ❑ Include mention of event cancellation insurance in the letter of agreement or contract with clients to show that insurance coverage has been offered and discussed with the client. Ask client to respond in writing (email is adequate) if they do not wish to purchase event cancellation insurance.
- ❑ Ensure promotional, marketing materials don't expose you to risk i.e. don't oversell yourself and don't issue oral blanket promises during negotiations.
- ❑ Consider incorporation of your company to minimize personal liability.
- ❑ If incorporated, ensure all company documents, communications, e-mails state the corporate name.
- ❑ Consider Professional Liability insurance to protect you from lawsuits where a third party (i.e., client or venue) alleges that your professional advice caused them to incur a financial loss.
- ❑ Purchase adequate coverage to protect your business assets (i.e., office contents, equipment etc.).
- ❑ Always maintain Commercial General Liability insurance. Maintain a minimum of \$2,000,000 of coverage and consider \$5,000,000 if affordable. Many venues now require the meeting/event planner to maintain \$5,000,000 of Commercial General Liability.
- ❑ Ensure all third party vendors maintain their own commercial general liability insurance. Ask to receive a copy of the supplier's certificate of liability insurance. There should be no cost for a supplier to provide you with a copy of their certificate of liability insurance.

## Event Insurance

- ❑ Be aware of the various event cancellation insurance options and what it does and does not cover.
- ❑ Be very specific when discussing event cancellation insurance requirements.
- ❑ Cancellation insurance offers protection for financial loss associated with an insured event that is cancelled for reasons beyond the control of the event host, promoter or organizer.
- ❑ Look at an area's history during the time of year that travel or the event is to take place. If it is a high risk location, be prepared to outline the financial risks of an event cancellation and offer clients the option of purchasing cancellation insurance.
- ❑ Know the size of the budget, duration and location of the event as this determines the cost for the insurance and the determination of risk for the event.
- ❑ Event cancellation policy pricing is based on the total budget/costs to hold the event and the expenses or gross revenue.
- ❑ Know the specific guidelines used to determine the insurance and ensure what you need is covered.
- ❑ Event liability insurance policy pricing is based on the number of participants, location of the event, length of time the event is running, activities and entertainment at the event and if food and alcohol is being served.
- ❑ Review the Event Liability or Event Cancellation policy terms and conditions of coverage to understand what is excluded from coverage. Ask your insurance broker lots of questions to help you understand the coverage.
- ❑ Seek out an insurance broker who has experience serving meeting and event planners. Ask the insurance broker for at least two policy options to compare the differences available.
- ❑ Event Liability insurance policies should commence the day that you start working and setting up at the event venue.
- ❑ Event Cancellation insurance policies should commence as soon as the event planning starts and immediately if any contracts have been signed.
- ❑ Event Cancellation insurance premiums tend to go up the closer insurance is purchased to the scheduled event and some restrictions may apply if purchased later in the event planning cycle.
- ❑ Event Cancellation insurance must be purchased a minimum of 14 days prior to the event start date. You can typically make an Event Cancellation policy effective up to one year prior to the event.

- ❑ Consider negotiating event cancellation insurance and cancellation contract terms and conditions with the hotel, venue and suppliers. Ensure it is outlined in the contract in writing so it is legally binding.
- ❑ Will the hotel or its suppliers refund deposits without penalty in the event of a severe weather (i.e., hurricane or flooding)?
- ❑ Make sure you know what will and will not be covered under the hotel and venue contract terms "Force Majeure", "Act of God" or "Impossibility". Find out if you or your client will be held accountable should something unforeseen take place.
- ❑ Negotiate amendments and addendums to the contract with regard to how your group will be accommodated in the event of an emergency.
- ❑ Will the hotel reroute you to another property if it is available and/or will they offer your client full or partial refunds?
- ❑ Ensure the contract with the venue covers what will happen if the infrastructure of the venue does not support the hotel by the time your event is scheduled to take place i.e. electricity, water, and hotel staff strike.

### **Questions to ask Your Insurance Broker**

- ❑ Does the insurance company offer worldwide coverage for claims related to your events held outside of Canada?
- ❑ What is the difference between event cancellation/postponement insurance and event liability insurance?
- ❑ Does the event cancellation insurance protect against damage to the venue, extreme weather conditions, and strike by third-party employees, nonappearance of a large number of participants, late arrival of necessary equipment, national mourning, terrorism, communicable diseases and other unpredictable events?
- ❑ Can custom coverage be arranged if the insurer's standard policy does not offer the protection necessary for your event?
- ❑ What is the minimum premium and what size of expense budget will it cover? The minimum premium is \$1,500 which would cover an expense budget of between \$150,000 and \$250,000.
- ❑ What are the insurance company's terms and conditions regarding event planning companies, suppliers, clients domiciled in Canada or the United States or elsewhere?
- ❑ What are the procedures, timelines and requirements for making an insurance claim?

# EVENT CANCELLATION INSURANCE

## Event Cancellation Insurance Protects Against the Following Scenarios:

- ✓ Severe weather such as hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes and snow storms
- ✓ Natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding, tsunamis, volcanic ash and rock slides
- ✓ Physical damage to the premises where the event is being held (i.e., fire)
- ✓ Accommodation at your destination that becomes uninhabitable
- ✓ Complete cessation of your airline, arrival airport or travel suppliers
- ✓ Government mandated evacuations due to weather, natural disasters, communicable disease or terrorism
- ✓ The threat of terrorism causing a reduction in attendance
- ✓ Mandatory rescheduling of your event due to conditions beyond your control
- ✓ Strikes by contracted suppliers including airlines, hotels or venues
- ✓ Withdrawal by authorities of obtained licenses and permits
- ✓ Late or non-arrival of essential items to your event
- ✓ Infrastructure rebuilding delays

## Possible Financial Liabilities to be covered by Event Cancellation Insurance:

- ✓ Inspection expenditures
- ✓ Travel deposits
- ✓ Venue and DMC deposits
- ✓ Decor and entertainment deposits
- ✓ Travel and financial commitments
- ✓ Food & beverage deposits
- ✓ Staging, lighting and audiovisual deposits
- ✓ On-site staffing deposits
- ✓ Speakers, print and promotional costs
- ✓ Rescheduling costs
- ✓ Communication costs and any other fees that may be charged in the event of cancellation that have been laid out in supplier contract terms and conditions.

## Credits:

*“Courting Disaster” and “Under Cover” November/December 2005 meetings & Incentive Travel Magazine LMS PROLINK Ltd. “Overview of Directors & Officers and Commercial General Liability Insurance for Canadian and Non Profit Organizations”.*

# SAMPLE SITE INSPECTION FORM

## SITE SAFETY/SECURITY INSPECTION FORM

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Type of Facility:**
- Hotel
  - Restaurant
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
  - Conference Center
  - Club

	YES	NO	DETAILS	COMMENTS
Emergency Management Plan			Date of Plan: Last Updated:	Forward copy 21 days prior to event. Attach description of how staff is trained and how often.
Staff CPR trained			Who: How many per shift:	
House doctor available			Name: Number:	
Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on site and trained staff			Where stored on property:  How many people per shift:	
Epi-Pen (epinephrine syringe) on site and trained staff			Where stored on property:  How many people per shift:	

CONTACT NAME	DAY NUMBER	NIGHT NUMBER	WEEKEND NUMBER
Fire Emergencies:			
Security Issues:			

## EXTERNAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

FACILITY	NAME/ADDRESS/PHONE	SERVICES PROVIDED	PAYMENT METHOD	DISTANCE (MILES & MINUTES) OR RESPONSE TIME
Hospital Emergency Room				
Ambulance Service				
Urgent Care Facility				
Fire Department				
Police Department				
Dentist				

## FIRE/POWER/VENTILATION PROTECTION ISSUES

AREA	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Has site received a fire inspection within last 12 months – provide date			
How often is fire alarm system tested; date of last test			
Is entire site protected by an operating Automatic Sprinkler System (guest rooms, meeting space, public areas, etc.)			
Is entire site protected by an Automatic Fire Detection System (including smoke and fire detectors, guest rooms, meeting space, public areas? Etc.)			
Is site equipped with audio warning systems in hallways, sleeping rooms, meeting space, public areas, etc.			
Does staff know how to operate the system			
Does each sleeping and meeting room have a highly-visible evacuation plan drawing			
Are fire response instructions posted in each guest room			
Are all exits clearly marked with illuminated signs Ceiling height			
Are all exits clear, accessible, unlocked, and in working order			
Are all fire doors equipped with self-closing devices			

AREA	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Are there alarm switches on each floor and in meeting and public space			
Do all exit doors open in direction of major travel pattern			
Do meeting rooms have at least two exits (or more if large)			
Are occupancy placards/licenses available for review			
Are fire extinguishers present, charged, and currently tagged			
Are elevators on automatic recall during fire alarm			
Are fire stairwells pressurized/ventilated			
Are fire stairwells open to ground/roof			
Are fire stairwells intact, fire rated, clear, accessible, and properly marked			
Do fire alarms alert fire department directly – if NO, how soon after internal alarm is sounded are they notified and how			
Are there fire codes/regulations governing our event or activities; if YES, attach detailed explanation			
How are handicapped guests handled in a fire emergency			
Does site have emergency backup power generators; if YES, when last tested; how long will they last? If NO, can they be rented			
What areas are covered by the emergency power backup generators			
Does site have emergency lighting at exits and in stairwells and does it work			

## SECURITY ISSUES

AREA	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Does site have 24-hour on-site security personnel Uniformed, plain clothes, or both			
Does site have electronic surveillance equipment installed, monitored (by how many people and during what hours), and operating			
What areas are covered by the surveillance equipment			
How are security staff trained and how often			
Provide name and number of head of on-site security			
Are security escorts available if needed			
Is off-site security available for group or tour events			

AREA	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Do all staff wear venue-issued IDs			
Is meeting space patrolled; are people asked for ID if in space after hours			
Are there lock down hours for entry and exit points to the site; if YES, what hours			
Do guest room doors have dead bolts, steel frames, solid core doors			
Are guest room doors equipped with security viewer			
What type of windows and window locks are used at site			
Are rooms accessible from other balconies, ledges, outside group areas, and/or other windows from sides, above or below			
Is identification required to obtain a new room key			
Ensure front desk does not give out guest room information, such as name and room number			
Is keyless entry system utilized by site			
Ensure operators ring calls through to guest room without the guest's name			
Do elevator emergency phones ring directly to the switchboard; if NO, where do they ring			
If requested wake-up call is not answered, how does site respond			
Specify safety devices available for handicapped guests			
How are handicapped handled in emergency situations			
Does hotel have in-room safes			
Are hours of events kept confidential			
Does facility have a plan in place in the case of a terrorist attack			

## DISASTER ISSUES

AREA	COMMENTS
<b>Explain area of safe refuge in the event of:</b>	
High winds/tornadoes	
Hurricanes	
Floods/High Tides	
<b>Explain what on-site precautions are in place for:</b>	
Heavy snowstorms	

AREA	COMMENTS
Ice storms	
Drought conditions	
High heat conditions	
Water main breaks or contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a backup water supply; if so, where and how long to go into effect	
Power outage; <input type="checkbox"/> Generators <input type="checkbox"/> How long will generators function and what do they cover? <input type="checkbox"/> Backup if generators fail?	
Floods	
Hurricanes	
If evacuation of the facility is necessary, how is group notified and where would group be relocated	outline specific plan for sleeping rooms, meeting space, food functions
If facility is designated as an evacuation center for the local area in the case of disaster or is used to house emergency workers, injured citizens, who maintains control of the facility and how is the facility used	
How is building security handled during emergency; lockdown, ID required, separate keys, sign-in and sign-out, etc.	

**PREPARED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Designed by Barbara MacManus, Embryo used with permission February 2006

# APPENDIX 1

## Submitted by:

Ellen Boddington, CMP, CMM  
Stellar Conference & Event Management Inc.

## **The Risky Situation: The 2013 Calgary Flood**

A large Association Conference being held June 16-21, 2013. We were housed at the Calgary Marriott Downtown Hotel and our meeting space was in the attached Telus Convention Centre.

Overall 600 people over the course of a 6 day program. I was on site personally for 9 days and I left the day of the Flood evacuation (Fri. June 21, 2013).

We had various events throughout the course of the week including a golf tournament, AGM, Awards Ceremony, 2-off site events for the entire group at nearby venues on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The recent flood in Calgary will forever be etched in the minds of Albertans. One of the most memorable events from the disaster was the outstanding response and recovery of the Calgary Stampede.

For me personally and professionally, it was the classy, calm and professional response from the team at the Calgary Marriott Downtown Hotel.

In specifics of my conference attendees, it was an experience they will not forget, but I am quite certain no one was traumatized by it.

### **Did you have a risk management plan in place?**

- I had created what I thought was a fairly comprehensive laundry list of Q&A that covered the venues (Hotel and Centre) contingency plans. I shared them with my client and she in turn, with her internal stakeholders.
- We had a meeting place in case we are evacuated, cell numbers and agreement to follow venue safety instructions.
- We reviewed this as a client team and as a hotel / venue team in our pre-con. The Pre-con took place exactly 1 week prior to the evacuation date so no one was talking about the Flood at this point whatsoever.
- I will point out that we did not have an action plan with respect to Flooding specifically. I naively never thought that the city of Calgary could or would flood!

### **If so, did you follow it? Or did you panic?**

I did neither of the above.

Interestingly we did not follow the Risk Plan in exact detail for a few reasons:

- (1) we did not have one for flooding.
- (2) I confess that it being the last day of the conference my notes on the Risk Plan were not front and centre to me anymore.
- (3) the power blacked out, eliminating all lighting (there were no natural lights / windows in the Convention Centre area I was in) and therefore there was no way to read the Risk Management Plan even if I did have one about flooding.
- (4) We did not meet in our designated meeting place in case of evacuation as we were not to go outside due to the flooding and rains. However we did have working walkie-talkie radios and that was essential to our success on site.

### **Looking back, what would you do differently?**

It can happen to you. Whether or not a meeting coincides with blizzards, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes or other natural disasters that seem to be impacting destinations as never before, wise planning includes contingency components. It's especially essential for associations because it could mean the difference in AGM quorums, etc.

We do MANY things differently now, having learned from this experience:

- 1.) In case of emergency situations, we appoint a Meeting Marshal to walk around and give information to committee rooms. This person is an appointed volunteer from the client team who is assigned this task before we even go on-site and I give them clear instructions on the role.
- 2.) I have assembled an emergency plan that includes ideas on how the committee managers communicate with their committees and alert them in an emergency situation.
- 3.) The client has purchased a defibrillator and first aid kit of their own.

### **Emergency Plan**

- Cell phone No's for all people hosting meetings.
- Meeting Marshal
- CPR training for on-site team.
- Defibrillator – kept at the registration desk and the staff at the desk, client manager and myself are all trained annually on how to use it.
- The client has event cancellation insurance.
- I assign a member of the on-site team to be a 'weather monitor' in charge of weather tracking and delivers reports about weather and possible disasters that might impact the area—short and long term.

- All of the above, in addition to:
  - prepare an action plan for all types of scenarios (fire, medical, general evacuation, etc)
  - coordinate plans with facility staff and ask them their plans for emergency
  - designate people to take charge in case of an emergency and delegate specific responsibilities
  - keep a master copy of all attendees contact info and emergency contact info

### **How it all came down:**

Arrived on Thursday. Client program started Sunday night.

- heavy rains

Wednesday – Banff Ntl Park closed due to landslides / floods.

Seemed so far away / not an urgent concern.

- rumors of the Bow River banks expanding but the Hotel / CC was 9 blocks.

Not a concern.

Thursday (20<sup>th</sup>) – out for dinner. Lovely sunny day. No rain.

Surprised when dinner service was cut off early. Roads to Calgary closing so staff leaving.

Back to hotel that night (9pm / 10pm) – my CSM gone for the day already – spoke to Front Desk.

Not concerned.

Friday morning – business as usual. Our last day of meetings.

Approx. 15 meetings / 150 people left.

Emails from client's exec team back in Toronto (2 hours ahead) and concerned / want updates.

6:00 am – all 'normal' on the conference floor.

7:00 am – call from AV. Call from CSM's.

7:00 am – breakfast being served. All lights on.

8:00 am – meeting managers arriving from hotel rooms.

Their driving attendees asking if meeting is on or cancelled. They cannot get in.

8:00 am – checked with airport.

No closures or delays (airport is well north of the downtown so not impacted)

8:30 am – power shut off including generators for electrical safety from floods.

All evacuated from Telus Convention Centre. Ushered into the Marriott Hotel where our delegates were to get their bags / check out as hotel was shutting down.

- elevators not working. Very dark. Starbucks had F&B out for the 'taking' as it was going to melt and goodness of the Hotel
- GM was in the Hotel lobby the entire time
- taxi's were limited availability as only could get out / not 'in'. putting 4 /5 people to cab to airport
- I could get a motor coach thru my DMC to the airport for our attendees but no driver was available
- taxi's all worked out.

I was the last of the group to leave and that was at 10:30 am.

## APPENDIX 2

### Submitted by:

Bettyanne Sherrer, CMP, CMM  
ProPlan Conferences & Events

### **The Risky Situation: The 2013 Las Vegas Mega Storm**

A large International Association Conference (approx, 4,000 delegates) being held July 19-23, 2013. We were housed and meeting space was at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. My role was the design, production and delivery of numerous off-site special events utilizing various venues in the Las Vegas region:

150 ppl.	Friday, July 19	VIP Golf Reception	Mandalay Bay
150 ppl.	Saturday, July 20	VIP Golf Tournament	Rio Secco Golf Course
1,500 ppl.	Sunday, July 21	Fundraising Event	Caesars Palace
1,000 ppl.	Monday, July 22	Themed Party	Voodoo Lounge-Rio Hotel

I was on site personally for 12 days including advance (final pre-cons) and post-events incident reporting. The event pre-planning and risk assessment centered more on heat management (July in Vegas, average temperature are over 100 degrees) with one day and one evening outdoor event planned. The remaining risk assessments were standard for this group size and events planned.

On Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013, a Mega Storm hit the city of Las Vegas bringing 150+ mph winds and flash flooding of the area. The local news reported that it was the worst storm to hit the region in over 20 years. Specifically, our events were affected by:

1. Flash floods severely damaged the load-in docks/elevators at Caesars Palace as our 48-hour advance load-in had just started for our Sunday event;
2. Heavy rainfall swelled the fairways of the golf course resulting in the potential non use of carts for next morning's (Saturday) tournament;
3. High winds blew 2 full-size couches off the Voodoo Lounge outdoor patio (52<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Rio Hotel) to fall to the parking lot below. This is our planned venue for Monday event.

### **Did you have a risk management plan in place?**

- Yes! A very comprehensive risk management/disaster response plan was in place to cover the entire conference and the special events planned.
- In addition to our internal plan and venue response plans, each event had the following Security/EMT teams also assigned:
  - Saturday, Golf Tournament (2 x Paramedics; basic life support equipment & A.E.D.; additional coolers with ice and water to deal with any heat related health issues)
  - Sunday, Fundraiser Event (4 x Security including 2 x Paramedics; basic life support equipment & A.E.D)
  - Monday, Themed Party (5 x Security including 3 x Paramedics; basic life support equipment & A.E.D)

- Security/EMT team leaders were brought in advance of the events and I conducted dedicated site and event walkthroughs with them, in addition to attending all pre-cons.
- Event Team and Security/EMT team leaders shared same on-site communication channels (walkies) with cell-phone back-up.

### **If so, did you follow it? Or did you panic?**

YES (sort of) and definitely not...

The resulting impact of the storm led to multiple disaster or incident responses needed almost at the same time. This included the response to a major medical emergency as well. In the end, there was no time to pull-out and refer to the 60+ page emergency response plan. I knew the essentials of the plan and who the top 2-3 people I needed to contact in each scenario. Additionally I had the support of the event team and the security/EMT team assigned.

I trusted my gut, my experience; gathered information, evaluated options and made quick decisions.

### **Looking back, what would you do differently?**

My biggest learning was the creation of a one-page first-response contact list. When in the 'eye of the storm' you need to inform key stakeholders of the incident so they can help and/or provide you with updated information you need. .

Once the first stage of emergent response has passed, you can review your comprehensive plan in greater detail to ensure that processes are followed.

It can happen to you. For example, the Plan B (Rain) Scenario for outdoor events needs to be much more than 'What indoor space is available if I need it?' If it can rain, other weather challenges may also come with it:

- If Lightning – is tent or any outdoor structure metal framed?
- If Winds – what is increased risk if venue is elevated? Can you still use elevators?
- If heavy rain – Is there any equipment (i.e. AV; Amps, etc.) that needs to be covered if can't be moved quickly? Do you have tarps ready?
- How will you comfort the attendees? (Towels to dry off, etc.)

### **How it all came down:**

Arrived on Tuesday. Client program started Friday night.

- all clear; hot/dry desert weather
- Biggest concern remains potential heat stroke during golf tournament.

Friday Evening – No Warning, storm rolls in.

8:00 PM - On-site at VIP Reception for Golfers (Tournament pre-event)

- Within minutes rain is coming down so hard it is falling sideways.
- Winds start to pick-up and very quickly become big concern.
- I question if we are being hit with Tornado. Start downloading local weather and Doppler radar reports.

My phone starts to ring...

9:00 PM – Storm is over, sky is clear and winds recede

- Caesars Palace (CP) (Sunday event) – Production Lead with AV supplier advises that all elevators at Caesars load-in are down due to flash flooding. Repair time estimate 24 hours.
- Voodoo Lounge (Monday event) – Venue manager advises of high winds and furniture flying off patio down 52 floors (thankfully, no one is injured). I am advised that venue may close.
- Golf Course advises that tournament can continue, but carts may not be allowed.

10:00 PM

- Advised of internal labour issues at CP (Engineering staff waiting for management to guarantee overtime prior to repair work will commence). Place call to hotel contact.

12:00 AM

- Wrap-up VIP Golf pre-event; golfers ready to take on the course even if walking!
- CP – Production Team is now hand-carrying steel beams (for rigging) into venue...evaluating time lost on production schedule and additional labour costs.

1:00 AM

- CP – Advised that Engineers due to start work on elevators at 4:00 AM.

Saturday Morning

4:30 AM

- Depart to Golf Course for set-up (beautiful sunrise – no weather issues);
- call with production team at CP confirms repair work started; 18 hours behind on production schedule, looking to shave time everywhere...add more labour to speed up set-up.

5:00 AM – Inspect a few holes with tournament director; course is sufficiently dry to allow golf carts

6:00 AM – Golfers arrive (7:00 am Tee-off)

9:00 AM

- Call with Venue Rep to determine options of secondary venue if Voodoo Lounge is not available for Monday event.

9:30 AM

- Update from CP – One elevator is back; still @ 12 hours behind on production schedule; additional labour needed could be \$20,000+; re-writing production schedule to move all secondary suppliers load-in to Sunday, challenging on Saturday with only hours notice.

10:00 AM

- Panic call from Golf hole sponsor – has witnessed golfer in cart tumble over ridge on course

10:01 AM

- Radio Paramedics with location; jump in cart with venue manager to meet them at scene of accident

10:30 AM

- Paramedics stabilize golfer for transportation to local hospital. Injuries severe.
- Contact client to advise of incident; venue security lead contacted; incident reporting initiated.
- Tournament Co-Chairs and Event Team Member accompany injured golfer to hospital.
- Client contacting Golfer ER contact to advise of accident.

12:00 PM

- Venue Incident report complete and cause of accident confirmed (Heavy rains made shoulder of cart path soft).
- Golfer's injuries confirmed; broken ankle, arm/wrist broken in 3 places; severe concussion

12:30 PM

- With Tournament Co-Chairs departure – jump-in to act as MC for Tournament lunch.

2:00 PM

- Depart Golf Course to return to conference hotel
- Meet with client and EMT team to finalize internal incident report

4:00 PM

- Voodoo Lounge reports partial opening (indoor space only; outdoor patio space remains closed). Winds continue to be concern at higher elevations.

5:30 PM

- 2 x Site inspections at alternate venues as options for Monday night event.
- CP – Production Schedule @ 6 hours behind; new Sunday load-in schedule confirmed; all suppliers complied

Saturday Evening

8:00 PM

- Visit injured golfer at hospital
- Attend Conference official opening event

Sunday Morning

6:00 AM

- CP Set-up on Schedule; re-book all script reviews/sound checks

8:00 AM

- Site Inspection at one more alternate venue for Monday night event.
- Confirm no other major weather incident expected.

10:00 AM

- Visit injured golfer at hospital; meet with family members arrived to provide accident details

12:00 PM

- Meet with Voodoo Venue Manager and senior management to confirm Monday event remains at Voodoo and negotiate re-opening of patio space (needed for capacity); but no furniture or other planned set-ups allowed. All potential risks evaluated.

2:00 PM

- Key suppliers answer call to meet at Voodoo to re-design affected event elements.

3:30 PM

- Receive call from agent of headlining act for Fundraising event that evening, advising that he may be no-show (...are you kidding me?). Note: After a number of conversations, the act was re-confirmed.

Sunday Evening

6:00 PM +

- Delivered Fundraising Event.

Monday

9:00 AM+

- On-site with venue and key suppliers on new event design delivery, as event specs were 'out the window'.

Monday Evening

6:00 PM +

- Delivered Themed Party
- Note: At event end (@1:00 AM) the winds picked-up and the patio had to be closed.

Tuesday

- Slept for 32 hours straight...

Special Thanks to my colleagues in this adventure:

Karen Elliott, CMP

Rose Timmerman-Gitzi, CMM