

## DS1 – Risk Assessments for BHS Events

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For all BHS activities, a Health & Safety Policy Statement and Risk Assessment are mandatory. If you think you have never carried out a risk assessment you couldn't be further from the truth. Every minute of the day you will naturally be assessing everything you do to see if it will cause you harm; much of this will be almost subconscious. It becomes more of a challenge when you have to explain your actions to others and articulate the strategies to avoid harm. Carrying out a risk assessment is not the huge burden that many people believe, and it could even become your best friend should something go wrong at your event.

### Before the Event

- Organisers must produce a Health & Safety Policy Statement in respect for the overall safety of the event. This policy should include the procedures to be followed in an emergency and should be included in the programme for the event, or similar, where appropriate. The **BHS Event Health & Safety Policy Statement Template** can be used to assist you with this. See below for further guidance on completing a policy statement.
- Organisers must complete a Risk Assessment for any BHS event. A BHS event could be anything from a small event such as a quiz, to a large competition such as a Horse Trials. Any activity should be subject to an assessment and documented to show you have carried it out.
- The **BHS Event Risk Assessment Template** should be used if you are starting your risk assessment from scratch. If you are already using a different type of risk assessment template, then you may continue to use this as long as it is fit for purpose and takes into account the information in this datasheet. The BHS Event Risk Assessment Template is based on the example produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who are responsible for enforcement and guidance in the UK. See below for guidance on completing a risk assessment.
- The Organiser must submit their risk assessments along with the **Event Health & Safety Checklist for Organisers** to BHS HQ before the event takes place. This can be done by emailing [EventSafety@bhs.org.uk](mailto:EventSafety@bhs.org.uk).
- It can be useful to ask the venue for a copy of their own risk assessment for the site. This may detail things that you would otherwise not know about the site you are using. Similarly, the venue may ask to see a copy of your risk assessment. Risk assessments should not be secretive documents, and it's often really helpful to share them as required. The same is applicable if you are having any contractors on site, and they should be willing to share their risk assessments with you as part of the terms of booking.

### At the Event

- The Organiser is responsible for reviewing the risk assessment should situations change. See step 5 below for further information on this.
- If your risk assessment document is not available as an electronic document when you are at the event, it's a good idea to have some blank lines at the end of your assessment, which can be used to add to during an event if required.

### After the Event

- Risk assessments and the associated paperwork should be kept by the Organiser for three years plus the current year.
- Remember to correctly report any incidents to BHS HQ.

## Completing a Health and Safety Policy Statement

The **BHS Event Health & Safety Policy Statement Template** can be used to easily create a policy statement for your event. This should be published in the event programme or similar, and be available for each attendee to view. Each section should be read through and amended or deleted as applicable to your particular event.

## Carrying out a Risk Assessment

This guidance has been designed to be followed when completing a risk assessment using the **BHS Event Risk Assessment template**.

The first page is a summary of the Event Health and Safety Policy and each area in brackets should be updated.

On the second page, the following details should be recorded at the top of the risk assessment:

- **Event name & date**
- **Name of person carrying out the risk assessment**
- **Date the risk assessment has been carried out**

There are five steps to carrying out a risk assessment:

### **Step 1: Identify the hazards**

A hazard is something with the potential to do harm. It can be an object i.e. a hole in the ground or an action i.e. slips and trips. Start by walking around the event site. Some hazards will be obvious but some may be hidden e.g. hidden electric cables. Common hazards you may find at a horse event include: access and egress to the site, ground conditions, adverse weather, vehicles on site, movement of horses around site.

### **Step 2: Identify who may be harmed and how**

Remember to think of all of the possible groups of people / animals that may be affected by the hazard. These may include: officials, volunteers, riders, horses, spectators. You then need to detail how the hazard may cause harm. For example, a hole in the ground could cause harm by someone falling down it, tripping over it or getting a foot stuck in it.

### **Step 3: Evaluate the risk and decide what you can do about it**

The Risk is the likelihood of harm occurring from the hazard. The risk may be to one person or to a group of people. Risks come in varying degrees from minor to major and different people may have a different view of the severity of the same risk. The likelihood of injury can vary from unlikely to very likely. When trying to evaluate the risk, consider how likely it is that someone will be harmed, and if so, how severe those injuries are likely to be. For example, the risk of someone falling down a hole in the middle of the tradestand area is quite likely; however the level of injury would probably be mild to moderate. You can then use this information to decide on what things you can do to manage or reduce that particular risk. This is called your control measure. The following process can be useful in assessing what control measures might be best:

**R = REMOVE** the risk entirely i.e. filling in a hole in the ground

**A = AVOID** the risk i.e. fence off a hole in the ground

**R = REDUCE** the risk i.e. wearing riding hats to reduce the risk of injury in a fall

**A = ACCEPT** the risk i.e. horses jumping as part of the competition

### **Important points to remember:**

- You are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks
- Any control measures detailed must be achievable
- Control measures **MUST** be implemented if noted

## **Step 4: Record your findings**

It's extremely important that risk assessments are written down. Every hazard and its control measures should be detailed on a suitable risk assessment form. Should an incident happen at your event that requires further investigation, then the risk assessment is the first piece of paperwork that you will need to show. It is also important to make sure that people are aware of what they need to do to remain safe. So briefings or signs may be useful to communicate this. For example, if you have identified a safe place for a vet to base themselves throughout an event, then it's only going to be effective if that plan is communicated to the vet on the day.

## **Step 5: Review your assessment**

Once a risk assessment has been completed, it remains a working document for the duration of the event. It is the Organisers responsibility to ensure that the assessment is added to or reviewed during the event if a situation changes. For example, the onset of adverse weather may introduce a new hazard of wet and slippery ground, which was not detailed in the original assessment. It could be that someone else has spotted a hazard that you had not originally noted. Perhaps there has been an accident or incident that requires that particular area of the event to be reviewed. It's useful to always have some blank lines at the end of your completed risk assessment, so that extra things can be added on the day if required.

## **Common Risk Assessment Mistakes**

When you have completed your risk assessment, just check the following:

- Have you identified all of the obvious hazards?
- Have you considered all of the people that may be harmed?
- Have you under-estimated a serious risk?
- Do any of your control measures introduce a new hazard themselves?
- Are your control measures easy to implement / achievable?
- Have you communicated to people what they need to do to stay safe?
- Have you left space to review the assessment on the day should things change?
- Have you completed the risk assessment following a trip to the venue? They should never be written from memory only.

## **Other Useful Resources**

- BHS Event Risk Assessment Template v1 2019
- BHS Event Health & Safety Policy Statement Template v1 2019
- BHS Event Health & Safety Checklist for Organisers v1 2019
- Risk Assessment: A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace – HSE Publication 08/14
- [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- BHS Regional Managers or BHS HQ Event Safety staff [EventSafety@bhs.org.uk](mailto:EventSafety@bhs.org.uk)

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