

The planning systems and processes for public events management essay

[Business](#), [Management](#)



The purpose of this research was to evaluate the current planning systems and processes for public events in the Republic of Ireland. The rationale for undertaking this project is that there is a perception that the current planning systems and processes are inherently flawed, partially due to the existing legislative and guideline documents. This research identifies a gap within the literature in relation to the actual planning processes and systems that are utilised by both Event Organisers and stakeholders and the resources that these systems and processes require. To address this assumption, a number of interviews, a focus group and a questionnaire were carried out with participants from the Events Industry who are actively involved in the planning of public events. The research focussed on the time and resources that the current system requires and aimed to identify risks, issues and problems associated with the current systems and processes. The main problems facing Event Organisers and stakeholders are a result of lack of guidance and support in relation to the planning, support and management of Events across the country. The study also found that a lack of standardised requirements from Statutory Agencies and Prescribed Bodies is compounding the issue causing confusion throughout the industry which, in turn, raises a number of safety concerns. The drafting of all-encompassing national event planning guidelines is becoming a critical prerequisite in the area of Event Management in the Republic of Ireland. The findings also found support for the establishment of an Industry Advisory Group, industry and role specific accreditation and training in conjunction with the need for Local Authority endorsement of any proposed accreditation or certification. In addition, this study identifies a gap within the literature in relation to the

actual planning processes and systems that are utilised by both Event Organisers and stakeholders, and the resources that these systems and processes require. This dissertation reduces the significant gap between theory and practice which can now be applied to significantly improve the current planning systems and processes for public events in Ireland. TABLE OF CONTENTS Acknowledgements ii Abstract iii Introduction 1 Chapter One 3 Context of Study 4 Justification for this study 7 Aims and Objectives 10 Chapter Two 11 An Overview of the Current Event Licence / Permit Application Process 12 Outline of the Current Legislation & Regulations 14 The Role of Local Licencing Authorities 18 Event Planning 20 Defining Event Planning Stakeholders 28 Risk Management 35 Post Event Analysis 37 A New Innovative Solution? 38

Introduction

Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris and McDonnell (2006) describe events as a phenomenon; their acceptance is increasingly rapid as time and money becomes more plentiful, their utilisation is a necessity as they are considered strategic tools for governments and businesses. 'Large' scale public events have been occurring more frequently during the last few decades and the number of small and medium public events taking place in the Republic of Ireland has significantly increased. During this time a number of legislative, regulatory, and guidance documents have been produced which are now heavily relied upon within the industry by stakeholders. The existing literature provides insights into the role of the Event Organiser, the (Licensing) Local Authority, Statutory Agencies, Prescribed Bodies and other relevant stakeholders who are actively involved in the planning of public

events in the Republic of Ireland. The literature review attempts to evaluate the time and resources required to safely plan and manage public events and the processes that are necessary in order for a Local Authority to grant an event licence or to issue an event permit. To achieve this aim, a number of topics were presented for discussion through a mixed methods research approach. Event Organisers and other stakeholders were asked to give their opinions and experiences through interviews, a focus group and an online questionnaire in an effort to further contextualize the current planning systems and processes and identify potential risks, issues or problems associated with it. The third chapter presents the methodology utilised in current study. An extensive discussion justifying the mixed methods used, the data collection methods and the choices that were made regarding participant and case study selection is provided. This chapter ends with a consideration of the data analysis process and the ethical considerations and study limitations are discussed. The findings from the interviews, focus group, and questionnaires are provided in the fourth chapter. A number of reoccurring themes were identified and findings are presented by theme. The final chapter is comprised of conclusions which may be drawn from the study, primary and secondary research to support these findings, and recommendations regarding the improvement of current planning systems and processes for public events in the Republic of Ireland.

Chapter One

Context of Study

In recent years the number of public events taking place in the Republic of Ireland has grown rapidly and an industry around events has emerged. For the purposes of this study the researcher has focused predominately on events taking place in Dublin City in an effort to contextualize the study and has referenced the systems and processes that are implemented by Dublin City Council while comparing them to other systems and processes that are utilised throughout the country. During 2012, the Dublin City Council Events and Tourism Unit processed 673 individual event applications for events taking place with less than 5, 000 anticipated attendees. In addition the Dublin City Council's Planning Department also processed 10 event licence applications for events with an anticipated attendance of 5, 000+ attendees within this timeframe. As Dublin is the capital city it attracts more large scale public events than other cities in the Republic of Ireland. As a result of this the systems and processes that exist within Dublin City Council are more comprehensive, particularly in relation to event permits for 'small / medium' sized events That said, the majority of events hosted in Dublin have less than 5, 000 attendees and are subject to far less scrutiny in comparison to 'large' scale events during the event application process. This is of particular importance as the majority of events that take place across the country are small scale local events and are managed by non-professional or amateur Event Organisers. There are a variety of event permits and applications that an Event Organiser must submit to the relevant agencies / bodies in order to gain permission to stage their event (these are discussed in further detail in

chapter two). The current systems and processes regarding applications and permits vary from one Local Authority to another. They also vary depending on the type, scale and location of the event. As a result it is a very difficult process for amateur Event Organisers to navigate while ensuring that they are being completely compliant. The process can also be difficult for professional Event Organisers when organising an event in an unfamiliar location. The primary difference between an amateur Event Organiser and a professional Event Organiser is that the latter systematically completes all required steps to ensure that the event is safe, properly planned, implemented, and safely managed who then concludes with a thorough evaluation of the processes and outcomes for each event (Tarlow, 2002). Amateur Event Organisers in Ireland tend to be people who organise one or two events per year and have minimal training and experience. In some cases both amateur and professional Event Organisers may try to avoid the event licensing process as the process itself can be costly. For example, organisers of ticketed events with an expected attendance of over 5, 000 people in public spaces cannot avoid the licence application system, however, Event Organisers managing non-ticketed public events can understate the anticipated attendee numbers to avoid the licence application process. Once an event licence is applied for, the onus is on the Event Organiser to liaise with the relevant Statutory Agencies and Prescribed Bodies. It is the role of these organisation to insist that certain criteria are adhered to which inevitably increases the costs associated with the event. There are serious risks and potential consequences associated with the tendency to circumvent the application process, some of which will be

discussed further in chapter three. In general, there is a lack of oversight in the industry which is compounding the issues further. Currently a 'small or medium' sized event can take place in Ireland and no one is tasked with visiting the event to ensure that the event site is safe and that the event is being managed in a safe manner. There is a belief that this lack of oversight stems from a lack of resources within individual stakeholder agencies, a lack of industry knowledge and expertise within the majority of Local Authorities and an outdated system that does not cater for the type of events that are now taking place in Ireland on a weekly basis. While several Local Authorities and Statutory Agencies have good planning systems and processes in place for events, they do not necessarily have the resources, experience or knowledge to properly evaluate and manage the potential risks associated with public events. In addition, a rather confusing picture evolves when looking at the different systems and processes that have been implemented throughout Ireland as they appear to vary wildly depending on the location of the event.

Justification for this study

An extensive review of international public event planning systems and processes was conducted during the initial phase of this research project. In general, there is an absence of literature that has focused solely on the impact of existing planning systems and processes for public events on relevant stakeholders. While there is some research that investigates the relationship between Event Organisers and Local Authorities there is a lack of research evaluating the systems and processes required from a statutory

compliance perspective. The Republic of Ireland, in comparison to many other countries, has a number of legislative documents and regulations that form a framework for the planning of 'large' events (5, 000+ attendees) but there is a serious deficit of regulations surrounding the planning of 'small / medium' events (less than 5, 000 attendees). As a result some of the larger Local Authorities, such as Dublin City Council, have formed an independent framework for the application of event permits for 'small / medium' sized events for local events. While investigating the current Irish planning systems and processes for events the following key issues were identified by: There is no official national application process for events that have less than 5, 000 anticipated attendees. Where an application process for small and medium sized events is in place, it usually differs from one Local Authority to another. There is a lack of consistency in the planning process for large events between the individuals, stakeholders, Statutory Agencies and Prescribed Bodies involved . There is further inconsistency in the planning process for events and the requirements of an Event Organiser within individual Statutory Agencies and Prescribed Bodies. Some agencies and Prescribed Bodies are severely under-resourced and receive little or no compensation for their involvement in the planning of public events. There is no evaluation structure in place to assess whether an Event Controller/ Event Safety Officer is a professional or an amateur. The process for the dissemination of information from planning meetings etc. can be inconsistent and, in some cases, inaccurate. The public consultation process is antiquated, inadequate, inefficient, and an additional expense for Event Organisers. There is a considerable amount of ambiguity for Event

Organisers regarding the various processes for the application of road closures, permits etc. between different Local Authorities. Due to the lack of national streamlining the opportunity for the collection of data related to events is lost - this data could have several applications in the Tourism and Hospitality industry as well Governmental reports. Against this background the following questions arise: Are Statutory Agencies, Prescribed Bodies, and Event Organisers wasting valuable time and resources by using antiquated systems and processes to plan events? What are the risks, issues, and problems associated with continuing to use these processes? Is there a better way to streamline these processes and implement a sustainable online system to aid the planning of future events?

Aims and Objectives

The overall aims and objectives for this study are as follows: Aim: To contribute to improving current planning systems and processes for public events. Objective 1: To review and quantify the time and resources used by Statutory Agencies and stakeholders with active responsibility for the planning of public events. Objective 2: To identify risks, issues, and problems associated with the current planning system and processes. Objective 3: To propose a new innovative system to manage the planning of public events. As the researcher is a professional practitioner this study enabled her to investigate the planning systems and processes from an academic perspective. Getz reinforces the distinction between the academic researcher and the front-line practitioner, commenting that only a few event managers write about their experiences: " Speaking as a journal editor, I can

say that it has proved close to impossible to get practitioners to contribute research papers or case studies to the referenced academic literature. The starting point is for practitioners to be reflective, not just focused on the task at hand, and to use reflection in part to initiate research projects " (Getz D. , 2007, p. 354). Using her practical experiences within the industry and through a predominantly qualitative research approach the author of this dissertation aims to present an accurate evaluation and assessment of the current planning systems and processes that are in place in Ireland currently.

Chapter Two

An Overview of the Current Event Licence / Permit Application Process

Most public events hosted in the Republic of Ireland require some form of official permission for the event to take place. The larger the event, in terms of attendance, the more official oversight is required. Professional Event Organisers understand the synergy between a well written and executed event management plan and the acquisition of the proper permits and licences and use this to ensure that their events are planned and managed successfully. Event management plans, permits and licences have legal, ethical, and risk management ramifications (Goldblatt J. , 2002). To ensure that these impacts are positive professional Event Organisers, work diligently to communicate with appropriate agencies as well as preparing and executing an all encompassing event management plan that is in line with current best practice. Though events and venues may widely differ, the

application of some common principles and standards of good practice can reduce the risks associated with the planning and organization for a safe and successful event (Dublin City Council, 2012). Event Organisers have a common law duty of care towards all persons involved in their event, including staff, participants, and artists. In addition to the common law 'duty of care' owed to those attending the event, Event Organisers also have to adhere to a number of key pieces of legislation including: The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts of 1989 and 2005 and associated regulations. Planning and Development Act 2001: Part XVI (licensing of outdoor events regulations). Code of Practice for Safety at Outdoor Pop Concerts and Other Musical Events 1996. Fire Services Act 1981 (responsibility for fire safety on persons in control of premises). Fire Services Act 1981 and 2003 (licensing of indoor events regulations). Licensing of Indoor Events Act 2003. Waste Management Acts, 1996 and 2001. The above legislation will be discussed in more detail in the next section. It is the responsibility of the Event Organiser to ensure that their event is in compliance with the above regulations and legislation. Following a consultation process with the relevant stakeholders and Statutory Agencies, where the Event Organisers have reached an agreement on the various aspects of the event application, the Event Organisers then submit their approved Event Management Plan to the Local Authority. The licence to hold a 'large' event or additional permits are then granted by the Local Authority, but may be subject to a number of conditions, all of which must be fully complied with, for a licenced event to proceed. The conditions commonly state agreements that have been made between the Event Organisers and the various stakeholders. A licence or

permit can be revoked if an Event Organiser does not comply with the conditions of their licence or permit.

Outline of the Current Legislation & Regulations

In an effort to further contextualize the study, the current legislation is outlined in this section. The table below portrays the range of permits and permissions that an Event Organiser must be aware of:

Licence or Permission

Issuing Authority

Criteria

Requirements

Outdoor Event(Large)	Local Authority	The event must be outdoors, either in its entirety or for the most part	Takes place in a structure having no roof, or a retractable roof, in a tent or other similar temporary structure	The event must be comprised of music, dancing, displays of public entertainment and other similar activities	Has an anticipated audience of 5000 persons or more	Newspaper advertisement	Not less than 16 weeks notice to Local Authority	Submit Draft Event Management Plan	Consultation process with Statutory Authorities	Payment of application fee and standard charges for Local Authority services	Proof of insurance, newspaper advertisement and venue owners consent	Certification & Specification of Temporary Structures
Outdoor Event(Small / Medium > 5, 000 attendees)	Local Authority	Varies across Local Authorities	Varies across Local Authorities	Indoor Event	Local Authority	The event consists of a performance, which takes place						

wholly, or mainly in a building Comprises music, singing, dancing or displays of entertainment Not restricted to public entertainment. Outdoor event licence regulations are not applicable Application is made to the Fire Authorities or person designated by the Fire Authorities Draft Event Management Plan submission Consultation process Proof of insurance Application fee Intention to sell Alcohol Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform Local Authority Temporary facilities for the sale of alcohol: Occasional Liquor Licence The consumption of alcohol in a public place: Intoxicating Liquor bye-laws Application to the Revenue Commissioners for Licence Application prior 6 weeks to Local Authority to relax provisions of bye-laws Fireworks Display Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform Importation of Fireworks Transport of Fireworks Storage of Fireworks Fire Authorities input requested before permission granted Consultation process with Fire Authorities Consultation process with An Garda Síochána (National Police Force) Consultation process with the Irish Army (Transport & Storage) Event Trading Local Authority Casual Trading at an event or events specified in the licence or at or in the immediate vicinity of the place where and on the days on which the event takes place Submit application for licence approval Charges per trader, per day vary between Local Authorities Temporary Road Closure Local Authority The closure of the public highway to vehicular traffic for a specified period Consultation with local Gardaí (National Police Force) if a road closure order is necessary prior to application Provide insurance indemnity Public advertisement Standard fee, plus other charges to be determined in relation to road usage Traffic management plan Preparation and/ or Sale of Food Products Health

BoardHSERequired where meat or meat products (other than fish or fish products) are sold or where food is prepared, cooked or heated for sale directly to the public, including: soft ice cream stalls, hot dog/baked potato stalls, burger/fried fish/chip stalls, Chinese and other ethnic food stalls Stall owner must submit a completed application form for the licensing of the food stall to the Health Board two months prior to the commencement of the business Use of a Public Space for Event Local Authority Event activities to take place either whole or in part on public property. Includes roadways/ footpaths, parks, public squares Submission of event details Consultation process Supply insurance indemnities Certification & specification of temporary structures Event Advertising Local Authority The placing of advertising banners/signage/flags in a public place and/or on a public building The distribution in a public place of advertising literature Application to the Local Authority for written approval (Section 18 of Waste Act). Supply specifications of flags or banners Plan for the prevention of litter (Irish Rugby Football Union, 2013) In addition to the above, below are a number of additional permits that may be required which vary from Local Authority to Local Authority: Permit to film in a public space. Permit for photo shoots in public spaces. Permit for promotional activity in a public space. Permit for sampling and merchandising. Equipment, Cranes, Hoists and Vehicle permits. Scaffolding and hoarding permit. Abnormal Load permit. HGV permit. In conjunction with the above permits and applications, Event Organiser must ensure that their event adheres to the following legislation and regulations: The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts of 1989 and 2005 and associated regulations (e. g. Construction Regulations, General

Application Regulations) applies directly to employers, employees, contractors, and anyone who is affected by a work activity (member of the public, passer-by, trespassers). When planning for events, Event Organisers must ensure that the activities planned (both work and entertainment) are safe and will not endanger their employees, contractors, the general public, or anyone who might be affected by the activities. This also includes ensuring that all workers and contractors have site specific safety statements and risks assessments. This applies to all events regardless of the amount of anticipated attendees. Planning and Development Act 2001: Part XVI (licensing of outdoor events regulations) is specific to the organisation of 'large' outdoor events. When Event Organisers want to stage a 'large' event they must submit an application in line with the act and regulations to the relevant Local Authority. Code of Practice for Safety at Outdoor Pop Concerts and Other Musical Events: gives guidance to Ground Managements, Event Promoters, Local Authorities, Gardai, Health Boards, and technical and professional specialists to assist them in assessing how patrons can be accommodated safely within a sports ground or at other outdoor venues used for pop concerts and other musical events. Fire Services Act 1981 (responsibility for fire safety on persons in control of premises) & Fire Services Act 1981 and 2003 (licensing of indoor events regulations) is the primary legislation governing fire safety. It enables the Fire Authority to serve a fire safety notice which may prohibit the use of a building or part of a building until specified precautions are undertaken to the satisfaction of the Fire Authority. This Act places a duty of care on every person having control over such premises to take all reasonable steps to

guard against the outbreak of fire and to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety of persons on the premises in the event of a fire. This applies to all events regardless of the number of anticipated attendees. Fire Safety in Places of Public Assembly (Ease of Escape) Regulations 1985 ensure specified places of assembly, including a stadium, tent or marquee. Additionally, certain fire safety precautions related to fire escape routes and exit doors should be adhered to by every person having control over a place of assembly and that a person having control over a place of assembly shall not prevent or obstruct the person in control from complying with the regulations. Licensing of Indoor Events Act 2003, in conjunction with the Fire Services Act 1981, is intended to ensure the safety of any person attending an event that takes place either wholly or mainly within a building. Unlike the licensing of outdoor event regulations, this act applies to events of all sizes. Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 (Section 37) refers to the safety of platforms etc. erected or used on public occasions. It requires that whenever a large number of people are likely to assemble on the occasion of any show, entertainment, public procession, open air meeting, or similar occasion, that every rooftop, platform, balcony, other structures, or part thereof, that are to be let or used for the purpose of affording sitting or standing accommodation for a number of persons, shall be safely constructed or secured to the satisfaction of the Local Authority.

The Role of Local Licencing Authorities

During the advanced planning stages for an event the Event Organiser must determine if their event requires a particular licence or Statutory Agency

approval to conduct the event. For small to medium sized events this process varies from one Local Authority to the next and, in some cases, there is no process. Dublin City Council have the best example of a 'small / medium' sized event application process with several permits for various activities. According to the current regulations (Planning and Development (Licensing of Outdoor Events) Regulations, S. I. No. 154/2001) any person who intends to hold a large event must make an application, " with the agreement (which shall not be unreasonably withheld) of the Local Authority or any Prescribed Bodies concerned, enter into consultations with the Local Authority or such Prescribed Bodies in order to discuss the submission of an application, including the draft plan for the management of the event, and the authority or the prescribed body may give advice to the applicant regarding the proposed application". The Local Authority circulates the draft event management plan submitted by the Event Organiser for individual events to all relevant departments within the Local Authority. The relevant departments would include for example; the Roads Department if the event required a road closure or the Parks Department if the event is due to take place in a public park. The plan is also made available to the general public and this enables any interested party to make observations in relation to the proposed events. The general public are notified that an application is being made to the Local Authority through public notification advertisements placed by the Event Organiser. When a licence is put on file for public inspection the planning department process any public enquiries and observations regarding the proposed event. These enquiries and observations are then circulated to the relevant stakeholders and the Event

Organiser must submit a response and, where necessary, a solution to the public's enquiry. Following the preliminary and pre-event consultation process the planning department make a decision regarding the granting of a licence and / or the imposition of conditions recommended by the Statutory Agencies and Prescribed Bodies.

Event Planning

The Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 require Event Organisers who intend on staging a 'large' event to follow the following steps when applying for an event licence: Place a public notification in one local and one national newspaper - this must be done no more than two weeks before the submission of an application to the Local Authority. Submit the application to the relevant Planning Department in the Local Authority. The application must be accompanied by the following: An actual copy of each public notification. Written consent from the Landowner (if the event is not taking place on public property). Draft Management Plan which must be prepared in accordance with the appropriate codes of practice. Statutory €2, 500 fee. Strategic planning is crucial to the success of any event and preliminary planning meetings are a critical part of the process for securing public safety at an event, and for determining whether a proposed site is suitable. It is advised in the guidelines (Dublin City Council, 2012) that Event Organisers arrange meetings with all the relevant stakeholders no later than 6 months prior to the event. When Event Organisers are preparing event budgets they have to consider the potential costs that will be associated with requests from the

relevant stakeholders. For example, an Event Controller (a role that will be discussed in further detail in this section) may believe that a certain amount of toilets are sufficient for their event attendees and a representative from the Health Service Executive may request additional facilities. Similarly An Garda Síochána may request more crowd control barriers, security personnel etc. According to O'Toole (2000) many event projects fail, or overrun their budget and schedule, and suggest that perhaps this is due to poor planning or control systems. If Event Organisers have not taken these potential additional costs into consideration they may overrun their budget. This poses particular risks for amateur Event Organisers as they may not be familiar with all the public safety requirements for their event in advance of the application process. They may also not be aware of the time and resources that are required by their Event Controller, Deputy Event Controller, Safety Officer, and Deputy Safety Officer in order to comply with Statutory Agency and Prescribed Bodies' requests. There is a general lack of overall strategic planning within the current system. " Strategic planning does more than set goals and ways to achieve them. It continuously monitors the environment, anticipates forces that will act on the organisation and the event, and devises and refines strategies" (O'Toole, 2000, p. 72). As such, Event Organisers should initiate a series of pre-planning, pre-event, and post event meetings between the relevant stakeholders and the Event Organiser's key personnel from the event management team (e. g. Event Controller and Safety Officer). Each of the Statutory Agencies and Prescribed Bodies have a public safety remit with regard to events and have a particular interest in the provision of certain services (e. g. public welfare facilities). In 1994 Getz and

Wicks examined and summarised the situation of the event industry with the following quote: " Festival and Event practitioners belong to a new and rapidly growing career field. As with other emerging quasi-professions, the managers, marketers and coordinators occupying full-time positions have organised professional associations and are seeking certification. Those wishing to enter the field look to the associations, and increasingly to formal educational institutions, to provide appropriate certificates which will hopefully ensure access to better jobs. As well, numerous volunteers are seeking recognition for their efforts and skills. Consequently, the situation is somewhat unclear and constantly evolving" (p. 103). For 'large' events an Event Controller must be appointed by the Event Organiser. The Event Controller term is used to identify the person with the status and authority to take full responsibility for all matters relating to the operational management of the event. The Event Organiser should also appoint a Deputy Event Controller of equal status and competence to the Event Controller. Some of the duties attached to these positions include: Having overall responsibility for the management of the event. Ensuring that the event is staffed by a sufficient number of competent staff. Ensuring effective control, communication, and co-ordination systems are in place. Ensuring that adequate measures are in place for the safety of all persons at the event. Initiation of emergency action procedures if necessary. Conducting a post event meeting on the event and preparing a resulting report. As there is no current legislation or regulations regarding whether a person is reasonably qualified or experienced to be appointed as an event controller it is possible for anyone to take on this role. In some cases a Local Authority may deem

someone unsuitable for the role but this only occurs in extreme circumstances. In addition, there is no certified accreditation available to persons that may be suitably knowledgeable or experienced. The continuation of these circumstances within the current planning systems and processes could lead to serious consequences, such as the legislation not being adhered to. In addition to an Event Controller the Event Organiser must also appoint a Safety Officer. The Safety Officer's role is to ensure that there is a common understanding of the Event Organiser's safety policy and procedures when dealing with safety and emergency response personnel such as event stewards, and / or security personnel; emergency services representatives, contractors, sub-contractors and performer representatives (Dublin City Council, 2012). Some of the duties attached to this position include: Act as the safety co-coordinator in relation to all safety matters. Be present at all planning meetings. Have overall responsibility for all aspects of safety. Ensure that all suppliers and contractors carry out pre-event safety checks. Be present during the event to monitor and manage all the safety arrangements. Take any necessary action to alleviate any perceived risks. Advise the Event Controller on the initiation of emergency procedures when required. As is the case for the Event Controller, there is no current legislation or regulation on whether a person is reasonably qualified or experienced to be appointed as a Safety Officer and so it is possible for anyone to take on this role. According to the experts in the field of professional certification, all professions are represented by three unique characteristics (Goldblatt J. , 2002); The profession must have a unique body of knowledge. The profession typically has voluntary standards that often

results in certification. The profession has an accepted code of conduct or ethics. According to Goldblatt (2002) the profession of event management meets each of these qualifications. Not only that, but the subfields of event management, such as Event Controllers or Safety Officers, also meet these qualifications. Considering that an amateur Event Organiser may have the knowledge and experience to manage a small event, they may have no experience or knowledge of the number of additional challenges and complexities associated with hosting an event with 10, 000+ people. Therefore the size, scope and type of event should determine the level of skill required by the Event Organiser, Event Controller, and the Safety Officer and, as such, the level of expertise, experience, and certification that each of these key management personnel should have. This is currently not the case in the Republic of Ireland, if a Local Authority believes that the personnel are not suitably experienced they can advise the Event Organiser to contract suitably qualified personnel. However, this very much relies on the personnel within the Local Authority having the experience to be able to decipher whether a proposed Event Controller or Safety Officer is indeed capable of performing adequately in their respective roles. Events that are directly organised by a Local Authority are also susceptible to unqualified personnel being assigned to the roles of Event Controller, and Safety Officer. There is a perception, for example, that a Local Authority Safety Officer has the relevant experience to perform in the role of an Event Safety Officer even if they have never worked on an event before. While there are similarities between the two roles and it could be argued that the nominated person may have sufficient knowledge of Health and Safety practices to perform

well in the role, the same theory does not apply to Event Control positions. On occasion a Senior Executive Officer within a Local Authority has been assigned to the role of Event Controller on complex 'large' events, having no prior event management or Event Controller experience. This, according to Goldblatt's definition of a professional, would imply that these Event Controllers are, in fact, amateur Event Controllers and are not suitable for the role according to the current legislation and regulations. There is also the perception from professional Event Organisers that Local Authorities take a "muddling through" and "incrementalism" approach to managing events by appointing unqualified personnel to roles where they "muddle through" the application and planning process. "Incrementalism", that is developing or progressing slowly, in measured steps, indefensible approach when uncertainty or complexity is high (Getz, 2007). Getz, 2007 suggests "It does not attempt to be comprehensive, but attacks problem and policy issues with precision instruments rather than broad strategies". While this strategy may be effective during the planning process it inevitably leaves a number of potentially hazardous operational and logistical issues unresolved in advance of the event. This has been known to have serious implications, such as the misplacement of infrastructure on a site plan in advance of the event which cause crowd movement and control issues during the event. For events that have an anticipated audience of over 5,000 attendees an Event Management Plan is drafted by an Event Safety Consultant on behalf of their client and is submitted to the relevant Local Authority in support of the Licenced Application in accordance with the appropriate codes of practice. Although it is not required at present, it is widely acknowledged by

professional Event Organisers in Ireland that event management plans should also be written for events that have an anticipated attendance of less than 5, 000. Event management plans usually include the following key elements: Event Management Structures and Responsibilities. Event Safety Strategy. Site Structures and Facilities. Medical Facilities. Stewarding and Site Security. Traffic Management Plan. Communications Plan. Sound Levels. Site Emergency Plans and Procedures. Safety Strategy Statement. Sanitary Accommodation. Environment Monitoring Programme (for before, during and after the proposed event). Clean-up Remedial Works. Miscellaneous Provisions (including lighting, temporary structures, fire rating of materials, site signage, pyrotechnics and special stage effects but not limited to such matters). Security Arrangements. Duties of Security Personnel. Emergency Procedures. Production Schedule. Site drawings and grid layout plans. Once an event management plan has been drafted and submitted, to the relevant Local Authority it is then reviewed by all the relevant stakeholders and the consultation process begins. Depending on the event type some agencies will have more involvement in the consultation process than others. While extensive efforts are made by both the Event Organisers and the Local Authorities to ensure that all relevant stakeholders attend pre-planning meetings some agencies and Prescribed Bodies simply do not have the time and / or resources to attend all necessary meetings. This has led to key agencies not being represented at meetings which can lead to the following: The agency or Prescribed Body may not have the up to date information in advance of the event. Key safety issues may be overlooked. The plans that are put in place for the event by the independent agency may have a

negative effect on the event. As mentioned previously the amount of information that an Event Organiser must submit for a 'small / medium' sized event varies depending on the location of the event and the Local Authority. Upton (2007) states that a number of guidance documents have been published to assist both Event Organisers and Local Authority staff related to event planning and safety; that guidance can be interpreted differently by individual Local Authorities and their staff. A number of publications offer guidance in the field of event planning for both the Event Organiser and various organisations, some of these include: Guidelines for Event Organisers, Dublin City Council. The Event Safety Guide, H. S. E., UK. Festivals and Events, Best Practice Guide, Fáilte Ireland. Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds, Dept. of National Heritage, UK. With the introduction of degree level programmes offered, the event industry in the Republic of Ireland is becoming increasingly professional but the lack of consistency in the planning processes and systems throughout the country causes confusion. There is a perception in the Irish event industry, which is supported by anecdotal evidence, that different Local Authorities interpret legislation and guidance and requirements of Event Organisers differently. Upton (2007) found that inexperienced persons are disposed to treat guidance as strict instructions whereas more experienced persons treat guidance as it was intended, a process guide.

Defining Event Planning Stakeholders

Getz stated that " 'Stakeholders' are those people and groups with a stake in the event and its outcomes, including all groups participating in the event

production, sponsors and grant-givers, community representatives, and anyone impacted by the event" (1997, p. 15). For the purposes of this dissertation the researcher is specifically evaluating stakeholders who have responsibility for the overall development and implementation of plans for public events within their own organisation. Stakeholders can represent an independent agency (e. g. Public Transport Agency) or Statutory Agency / Prescribed Body (eg?). According to the Planning and Development (Licensing of Outdoor Events) Regulations, S. I. No. 154 / 2001 "prescribed bodies" means -the relevant Chief Superintendent of An Garda Síochána, the relevant Health Board, or any other county council, county borough corporation, borough corporation or urban district council, which will be affected by the event. In the Republic of Ireland, stakeholder involvement varies depending on the location of the event and the event size. Each agency or prescribed body has their own individual structure and guideline process for the management of events. For agencies such as the Health Service Executive (H. S. E.) their emergency management unit oversees all H. S. E. related activity throughout the country. Whereas there are 34 primary Local Authorities throughout the country and a further 80 town authorities who independently manage event applications in their respective areas. Getz (1997) argued that crucial to the success of strategic planning, management and delivery of a large public event are the identification and categorisation of the stakeholders who are involved with it. McDonnell, Allen and O'Toole (1999) argue on the importance of the identification of stakeholders from a managerial perspective by stating that "events are now required to serve a multitude of agendas. It is no longer sufficient for an

event to meet just the needs of its audience. It must also embrace a plethora of other requirements including government objectives and regulations, media requirements, sponsor's needs and community expectations" (p. 39).

The primary stakeholders involved in the planning process for public events are detailed below: An Garda Síochána In so far as planning for events the Gardaí are primarily concerned with the following aspects of the event:

Crowd Management. Public order - both on site and in the environs of the event. Traffic Management. Safety plans and arrangements. The event control room and communication facilities. Emergency action procedures.

Gardaí engage in policing inside the event site in accordance with the prepared plans and arrangements made by the Event Organiser and they should have access to all parts of the site if the need arises. The Senior Garda and the Event Controller must maintain close and constant contact with each other at all times during an event. Health Authority As outlined in the Health Act 2004, the objective of the Health Service Executive (HSE) is: "to use the resources available to it in the most beneficial, effective and efficient manner to improve, promote and protect the health and welfare of the public". The HSE has sole responsibility for approving and overseeing all medical and public health aspects of a public event, to ensure best standards are provided, complied with, and maintained at all times during an event. Through the Emergency Planning Office, the HSE is concerned with the overall medical cover, first aid provision, and needs to be satisfied in advance of the event that all necessary medical plans are in place. For 'large' scale events where there is a high risk of injury they are also concerned that the event will not negatively impact on the routine medical

services that are provided to the resident population. In addition to the Emergency Planning department, the ambulance service is also concerned with the emergency plans and procedures that will be put in place for the event. Local Authority There are a number of departments and sections within a Local Authority that have a public safety remit and are part of the consultation process for events. Below are some of the key departments / section: Fire Authority - The relevant fire authority assigns a Fire Officer to the task of liaising with the event organisers to ensure the following areas of concern are addressed in advance of the event: Safe Holding capacity of a venue (both indoor and outdoor venues). Ease of escape and the maintenance of safe exit routes. Access routes for emergency vehicles. Fire precautions for on-site catering units. Refuse collection (removal of potential fire hazards). Usage of fireworks / pyrotechnics. The Fire Authority also requires Event Organisers to supply detailed particulars of the safety precautions that will be in place during the event ensuring that the precautions detailed in the event management plan for the event are adhered to and implemented during the event. Planning Department - The relevant planning department accepts and processes the applications for event licences. They consider the local environmental impact of the proposed event while ensuring that the Event Organiser has given due regard to the proposed times of the event, with particular regard for other events that may be planned to take place in the vicinity of the event, the protection of local amenities, traffic management etc. Building Control - If the Event Organisers plans to install any temporary structures they must appoint a structural engineer to provide certification so that any structure

erected on the site such as staging, grandstands, marquees etc. are in compliance with current building regulations. The structural engineer must submit the following documentation to the building control department, so that the Local Authority's designated engineer can carry out checks to ensure that the structures are sound and have been constructed in the correct and safe manner: Structural calculation specification documentation. Structural drawings. Method Statements. Site Layout drawings with exact locations of the proposed structures. In the event that there is any discrepancy regarding the submitted information and an erected structure the Local Authority's designated structural engineer will liaise with the event's structural engineer and the relevant contractor to ensure that any and all problems are rectified in advance of the structure being used.

Environmental Health - The environmental health section of the Local Authority has two primary concerns with regard to events: Acoustic Levels - if sound levels could potentially become an issue at an event the environmental health section will either monitor the acoustic levels at the event or they will insist that the Event Organisers appoint a specialist acoustic consultant. The welfare of patrons with particular regard to the adequate provision of sanitary accommodation and the supply of drinking water at the event. The following information must be provided to the relevant Environmental Health Officer in advance of the event by the event organiser: Final location of sanitary accommodation. The design and specification of the toilet units. The design and specification of water holding tanks. The details and number of sanitary service truck (if any) in operation. Confirmation of the method of final disposal of any collected effluent. When

the Event Organiser is providing drinking water a proposed microbiological and chlorine water analysis sample must be submitted to the relevant Environmental Health section a minimum of 14 days prior to the event. In addition the following information must be provided: The source of the water supply that will be used. The design and specification of any water tankers that will be used. The location of any tankers on the event site. In addition to the above departments and sections the following stakeholders may have involvement in the event (depending on the scale of the event: Casual Trading Section - When an Event Organiser wishes to include food vendors and the event is taking place on public property the organiser or the individual vendor must apply for a casual trading licence. Events Unit - where there is an Events Unit they are tasked with processing event permits for events with less than 5, 000 anticipated attendees. Parks Department - if an Event Organiser wishes to use a public park they must contact the relevant parks department to seek permission. Roads Department - when an Event Organiser wishes to close public roads to facilitate their event they must submit a road closure application form for each road to the relevant roads department. Waste Department - when an Event Organiser requires additional assistance for the management and removal of waste they must liaise with the relevant waste department. Water Department - when an Event Organiser needs to gain access to the water mains on their event site they must request access via the relevant water department. Event Site Specific Stakeholders Site specific stakeholders vary from area to area. They traditionally include both public and private transport agencies, state bodies such as the Office for Public Works, and private land owners. It is imperative

that these additional stakeholders are included in pre-planning meetings. Event Safety Consultancy Providers Private Event safety consultancy providers tend to provide a wide range of consultancy services in relation to safety at public events, some of these include; Preparing the event licence application. Event pre-planning and design advice. Licensing applications. Attending Statutory Agency meetings. Crowd flow analysis. Queuing Analysis. Venue Risk Assessment. Ensuring that the safety details and conditions agreed for holding the event are implemented and adhered to. It is common place that Event Safety Consultants provide Event Safety Officers for the events that they provide safety consultancy services. This engagement is particularly effective for an Event Organiser as it ensures that their Event Safety team are very familiar with their event and its idiosyncrasies.

Risk Management

Risk management is the art of being aware of all the things that could go wrong and having plans and contingencies to prevent this, not to remedy the situation as best as possible if things go wrong (Tum, 2009). The process by which risk management is interpreted and executed by Event Organisers and major stakeholders of events is becoming increasingly important, especially for large-scale public events (Atkinson, 2002). Risk management is becoming an integral part of event planning but has inherent issues as what may be considered a risk by a professional Event Organiser may be overlooked by an amateur Event Organiser. This can have serious implications for all event types but 'small / medium sized' events, which are not subjected to the same

level of scrutiny as 'large' events, are particularly susceptible to risk. Due to a lack of experience, amateur Event Organisers can be inadvertently exposed to the risks and hazards that are associated with the current planning system and processes. In most cases they are not aware of all the legislation and regulations regarding the planning of events and, as such, are unaware of potential risks and hazards in their event plan and on the event site itself. This is particularly evident in the case of 'small / medium' sized camping festivals where attendees are essentially residing on an event site for a number of days where the site may not be suitable or may not have the appropriate level of health related services such as toilets, access to fresh drinking water, and access to adequate medical care. A myriad of risk and risk-related definitions can be applied to the events industry, and no standard definitions or procedures exist for what constitutes a risk assessment. Fáilte Ireland provide the following definition for risk assessments as part of their Festivals and Events Best Practice Guide " a formal review and consideration of potential hazards, their impacts and the likelihood that together they could cause harm, affecting the health and safety or welfare of people affected by your event" (Failte Ireland, 2007). While this relates to the potential impact on event attendees it does not indicate that a risk assessment for the overall success of the event should be conducted in advance of this for the event itself, financial risks etc

Table Top exercises Agencies being over-stretched not able to be present in Event Control Risk Assessments - being conducted by independent agencies.

Sharing of Risk Assessments Poor communication with Local Authorities leading to issues - how that affects the Event Organiser and their budget - e.

g. road closure issues, Some departments not being aware that events are taking place as they don't have time to " deal" with events.

Post Event Analysis

The post-event phase of the planning process is as important as the pre-planning phase. The post-event phase includes both internal and external review meetings. De-briefings and post event meetings involving all event stakeholders should be organised as soon as possible after the event. These meetings facilitate a thorough assessment of the planning, organisation and operation of the event by all interested parties. In addition to any outstanding issues from the event itself, which may need to be resolved, these debriefings are essential as a source of information to enhance potential similar future events Unfortunately, due to the current processes, this information is only readily available to stakeholders who were directly involved in the individual event. While the information may be shared with other Statutory Agencies it is not currently available for Event Organisers who were not involved with the event.< > Debriefing staff evaluating any " failures" in the plan Fixing them for the following year - brought up at the initial pre-planning meeting the next year

A New Innovative Solution?

Need a bit of an intro here The Office of Citywide Event Coordination and Management in New York offer an online solution that could alleviate some of the problems associated with the current planning systems and processes discussed in this chapter. Their website (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/cecm/html/event/event.shtml>) centralises event permit

applications for the city of New York regardless of the scale of the event. It also serves as an information portal for Event Organisers where they can refer to guidance documentation, view fees, rules and regulations, and gain access to information such as street activities (planned road closures are identified on a dynamic map where users can see upcoming road closures). In New York, Event Organisers are actively encouraged to submit their event applications online and this enables them to get real time status updates on the application, pay the processing fee by credit card, and due to the reduction in administrative work it also enables the swift issuing of permits. Building on the progress of Local Authorities such as Dublin City Council XXX