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Event Safety – Communications

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The ESTA Technical Standards Program

The ESTA Technical Standards Program was created to serve the ESTA membership and the entertainment industry in technical standards related matters. The goal of the Program is to take a leading role regarding technology within the entertainment industry by creating recommended practices and standards, monitoring standards issues around the world on behalf of our members, and improving communications and safety within the industry. ESTA works closely with the technical standards efforts of other organizations within our industry, including ESA, USITT and VPLT, as well as representing the interests of ESTA members to ANSI, ICC, UL, and the NFPA. The Technical Standards Program is accredited by the American National Standards Institute.

The Technical Standards Council (TSC) was established by ESTA to oversee and coordinate the Technical Standards Program. Made up of individuals experienced in standards-making work from throughout our industry, the Committee approves all projects undertaken and assigns them to the appropriate working group. The Technical Standards Committee employs a Technical Standards Manager to coordinate the work of the Committee and its working groups as well as maintain a “Standards Watch” on behalf of members. Working groups include: Control Protocols, Electrical Power, Event Safety, Floors, Fog and Smoke, Followspot Positions, Photometrics, Rigging, and Stage Lifts.

ESTA encourages active participation in the Technical Standards Program. There are several ways to become involved. If you would like to become a member of an existing working group, as have over three hundred people, you must complete an application, which is available from the ESTA office. Your application is subject to approval by the working group and you will be required to actively participate in the work of the group. This includes responding to letter ballots and attending meetings. Membership in ESTA is not a requirement. You can also become involved by requesting that the TSC develop a standard or a recommended practice in an area of concern to you.

The Event Safety Working Group, which authored this (set of) Standards, consists of a cross section of entertainment industry professionals representing a diversity of interests related to event production, insurance and legal matters, rigging and stage machinery for theatrical events. ESTA is committed to developing consensus-based standards and recommended practices in an open setting. Future Event Safety Working Group projects will include updating this publication as changes in technology and experience warrant, as well as developing new standards and recommended practices for the benefit of the entertainment industry.

Investors in Innovation

The Technical Standard Program (TSP) is financially supported by ESTA and by companies and individuals who make donations to the TSP. Contributing companies and individuals who have helped fund the TSP are recognized as "Investors in Innovation". The Investors in Innovation when this standard was approved by ANSI's Board of Standards Review are as follows:

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Voting Membership List

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Observer Members:**Interest category codes:**

- EP = Event Producer: Person or company involved in the overall management of a live event.
- EQ = Equipment Producer: A person or company that makes equipment for events.
- DR = Equipment Dealer or Rental Business: A person or company that sells or rents equipment for events.
- DE = Designer of Events: Person or company that designs elements of an event, but who is not a producer. The elements can be artistic (e.g., scenery) or technical (crowd control plans).
- EW = Event Worker: Person who works at an event, such as a stagehand, technician, or stage manager.
- PA = Performing Artist: Persons and companies that perform at live events (e.g., singers, dancers, acrobats).
- I = Event Insurance Company: A company that provides insurance coverage for live events. An insurance broker would be considered to represent the interests of a company and not be independent if that company represents more than 50% of the broker's business.
- G = General Interest: Any person or company that cannot be reasonably assigned to one of the other categories listed above.

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Foreword

The Event Safety Guide was first published by the Event Safety Alliance in 2014, as a guideline for discourse regarding the many aspects of special event safety. It originated in the UK Health and Safety Executive's *HSG195 "The event safety guide (Second edition) A guide to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events."* where its purple cover subsequently led to its reference as, simply, *The Purple Guide*. In 2016, the Event Safety Working Group (ESWG) was established within ESTA's Technical Standards Program for the purpose of converting the Event Safety Guide chapters into formally recognized, consensus-based, standards that could be universally referenced across special events organizers, producers, enforcement agencies and user-groups. This document is one of many such chapters, intended to be used in conjunction with each other, as a collection of standards, which are used to establish minimum standards for care and public safety for special events. Because event technology and requirements constantly evolve, so too will this collection of standards change and evolve to accommodate industry needs.

It has been assumed in the drafting of this standard that the execution of any design provision is entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people, and that any fabrication and use provision is carried out by qualified and suitably experienced people and organizations.

This standard presents a coordinated set of rules that may serve as a guide to government and other regulatory bodies and municipal authorities responsible for the guarding and inspection of the equipment within its scope. The suggestions leading to accident prevention are given both as mandatory and advisory provisions; compliance with both types of provisions may be required.

Compliance with this Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.

Introduction

Users of this document shall comply with all applicable laws, rules, and codes.

1 Using this Communication Standard

1.1 Scope

This standard shall apply to communications in the live event industry and describes requirements for both internal communication and public information for live events and related activities. Requirements shall include the thorough examination of all the organizations involved in the event, assessed individually or jointly, general and operational management of the event, the appropriate handling of routine health, safety and welfare information, as well as effective communication in the occurrence of a major incident.

1.2 Purpose

This document shall provide guidelines and good practices for effective communication within the production and operation of a live event. It describes communication messaging and technology for internal operations and external groups, such as the audience or general public, with guidelines for assessment with all involved entities. The goal is to determine logistics of and provide channels for general, operational, management, security, health and safety information to the affected parties in a timely manner.

Exclusionary Statement: While this document will address communicating with law enforcement, medical support, or other AHJs, this standard specifically does not address any communications within AHJs or military operations, as these systems are determined by those organizations and therefore are beyond the scope of this document.

1.3 Equivalency

The provisions of this standard are not intended to prevent the use of any materials or to prohibit any design or method not specifically prescribed by this standard, provided that any such alternative design or method complies with the intent of the provisions of this standard. The quality, strength and effectiveness of all methods of work shall be at least equivalent to those prescribed in this standard.

This standard is not intended to replace or supersede any applicable local rules or laws, but should supplement them in an abundance of caution with the ultimate goal of improving safety.

1.4 Application

This document is one part of a larger collection of standards relating to live event safety. The requirements of the complete collection shall be considered in relation to the application of this standard, where necessary to coordinate and correlate all related requirements into the scope of a special event.

1.5 Normative references

The following documents contain requirements relating to the scope of this standard. They are provided for guidance only, unless otherwise referenced specifically elsewhere within this standard. Where a specific version is not given, the version applicable to the event jurisdiction shall be used.

Incident Command System (ICS) FEMA.gov
Event Safety Guide, Event Safety Alliance 2014
NFPA 1, Fire Code, 2018 Edition

2 Definitions

2.1 AHJ (Authority Having Jurisdiction). An entity that has the authority and responsibility for developing, implementing, maintaining, and overseeing the qualification process within its organization or jurisdiction.

2.2 Communication plan. The creation of a communication system with messaging, specified organizational structure and documentation.

2.3 Communication system. The components, methods, and infrastructure necessary for sending and receiving of messages between specified parties through a specific method for a specified purpose.

2.4 Competent person. A person who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions, which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them [OSHA]

2.5 Event Organizer. The individual, group or organization (or their authorized representatives) that originates, organizes, promotes and or manages an event.

2.6 Event Personnel. Anyone working the event, including the production team, vendors, contractors, subcontractors, laborers, volunteers, etc.

2.7 Event Phase 1 - Planning (pre-event). The period before the Event (Phase 2) begins. During the planning phase, all aspects of the event are planned. Risk assessments are created and reviewed, recreated and reviewed again, and all elements related to the event are considered and, should be, planned for and completed prior to Phase 2.

2.8 Event Phase 2 - The Event. The period of time once the Event occupies the venue. This phase includes not only the actual event time (when the attendees are present) but also includes the setup time (including initial site layout and marking of the site, if applicable) and the dismantle time, along with execution of a site restoration plan, which would include returning the venue to its original state before the event began, if applicable.

2.9 Event Phase 3 - Post Event. The period after the event has relinquished control of the venue back to the venue owner. During this time, typically, final accounting is completed, post analysis reports are reviewed and discussed, rental items are returned, recaps are completed and, in some cases, assets are stored and managed for future use.

2.10 Event Safety Management Plan (ESMP). An Event Safety Management Plan (ESMP) states how the safety of all those present during the entire event will be managed. It describes, in particular, how safety at work during all phases of the event as well as crowd safety during the event itself will be taken care of. It may also describe roles and responsibilities of the Incident Command Team, identifies key staff, and contains information on site/venue infrastructure. The ESMP also describes, in detail, plans and emergency procedures to activate if an incident were to arise. The ESMP often includes a risk assessment (RA), an emergency action plan (EAP), and an emergency operation plan (EOP).

2.11 Incident An occurrence, natural or human-caused, that requires a response to protect life or property (FEMA EMI, 2018).

2.12 Live event: Any assembly, indoor or outdoor, which includes a live audience. As used herein, this includes the preparation for and dismantling (load in, load out) of the event.

2.13 Qualified person: A person who by possession of a recognized degree or certificate of professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated the ability to solve or resolve problems relating to the subject matter and work. [OSHA]

2.14 Risk assessment: A process to identify potential hazards and analyze what could happen if a hazard occurs.

2.15 Shall: Denotes a mandatory requirement

2.16 Should: Denotes a recommendation.

3 Event Safety Communication

3.1 Communication

Communication is the sending and receiving of messages between specified parties through a specific method for a specified purpose. From an event safety perspective, we need to tailor our messages and methodology to

communicate effectively with the relevant groups in order to inform, educate or even evacuate. Failure of communication at live events is frequently cited as a contributing factor for accidents, injuries and death.

3.2 Organizational Structure

The event organizer shall establish an organizational structure to facilitate decision-making, including the prompt and effective assessment of, and response to, operational requirements, unexpected situations and emergencies for each event.

The organizational structure, which may include a chain of command or response team, must identify specific roles and responsibilities related to the event and its anticipated risks. An alternate should be assigned for each role. The organizational structure must be documented and communicated to the event team.

The event organizer, or designate/alternate, should be onsite at all times during the event. This person should be authorized to make and implement decisions about event cancellation and site evacuation. Their name(s) and relevant contact details should be communicated to ensure that everyone (all affected event personnel including contractors, vendors, volunteers, performers, etc.) knows who is responsible for these decisions.

Roles may be assigned to specialists who are authorized to make decisions related to specific aspects of the event such as event structures, severe weather, pyrotechnics etc.

The event organizer shall ensure adequate organization, coordination and oversight of all event personnel and their related activities, recognizing that:

- Relationships among the workplace parties are complex and vary for each event.
- Event personnel may come from jurisdictions other than the event site or venue.

When developing the organization structure, include the appropriate personnel, groups and relevant authorities.

3.3 Risk assessment. The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify and triage risks that are reasonably foreseeable based on past incidents, or on information about an upcoming event, as distinguished from risks that are not reasonably foreseeable based on past experience with similar events. Risk assessments shall be performed prior to every event.

3.3.1 Risk assessment team. Risk assessments shall be completed by two or more designated members of the organizational structure, and may include 3rd-party experts if deemed necessary for the size and scope of an event. The risk assessment may be performed by one person, only if that person is qualified to do so.

3.3.2 Risk assessment completion. Risk assessments shall be completed prior to the event, while there is time to do something about whatever hazards are discovered.

3.4 Communication Plan(s) and System

The Communication Plan(s) and System, a key part of the Event Safety Management Plan (ESMP), shall be developed during the planning phase of an event. It should be determined by the nature, scope, and scale of the event, and should be informed by risk assessments of the event, including all phases of the production from initial set up to final equipment removal. It is highly recommended to have this system and plan be in written documentation as part of the event paperwork.

The Communication Plan(s) and System shall define the scale of the communication system and identify the methods or channels of physical communication for the phases of the process. Refer to the Annex A example chart

It should contain but not be limited to:

- Staffing list with assigned communication roles and responsibilities
- Contact list

- Permits, where applicable
- Relevant legal contracts, riders and other written agreements that clearly communicate information and expectations
- Site maps or diagrams
- Relevant technology for specific areas and event personnel
- The safety communications plan shall include hazard communication requirements, and post-event related activities including strike and load-out

A subset of the parties listed in the communication system will be an integral part of the emergency plan

While making the communication plan, it is imperative to identify operational vs. emergency communication. Both are extremely important, but serve different purposes. Time is a critical factor in an emergency, and an operational contact list will not be the most efficient tool. There shall be both operational and emergency communication plans.

Once outlined, a system shall be created that is resilient and includes redundancies, taking into consideration the limiting factors such as cost, time, and local infrastructure. Communication systems shall be tested during and after installation by a competent person, who shall also facilitate testing by the end user, prior to arrival of the public, and whenever a significant system change is made. The testing shall be completed in time to allow alternative plans or repairs to be implemented, if the testing reveals system faults or shortcomings.

The Communication Plan must identify the relevant users that require training in order to use the system effectively and to implement the specific operational plan, including emergency communications. Training shall be provided to these users.

4 Phase 1: Planning (Pre-Event)

This section identifies the people, and aspects of an event, that must be considered when determining overall communications system requirements. The risk assessment process shall consider all elements identified in section 4, when determining communication system requirements.

4.1 Event ownership.

The event producers, sponsors, and promoters have a fiscal, legal, and oversight responsibility for the event, and shall be integral to the risk assessment process.

4.2 Venue

Communication shall include the site and/or venue, regardless of type or location. There may be one contact or many depending on the event. Documentation of the communication should be kept. The topics of discussion could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Production needs, rider info, contract
- Estimated attendance and demographics
- Logistics
- Parking
- Noise restrictions
- Subcontractors, vendors
- House management, medical and other support staff
- High risk activities such as pyro, lasers, aerial acts

4.3 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)

Pre-event communication shall include relevant AHJ's including Law Enforcement and as determined by the event's specific risks and needs. Information exchanged could pertain to permits, security risks, traffic impact, and crowd management.

4.4 Production contractors

Communication between the production contractors and relevant parties helps identify details specific to the event, eliminate, mitigate, and evaluate possible risks and challenges. Effective communication at this phase

leads to a more efficient and safe event. This normally takes place via standard channels. Critical information to be shared includes, but is not limited to:

- Venue specifics and restrictions
- Schedule
- Tech needs, special effects
- Staffing, Subcontractors, Vendors
- Parking

4.5 Vendors and Subcontractors

These entities are typically hired during the preproduction phase. Any vetting, training, equipment, credentials, personnel list or other expectations should be communicated during this time.

4.6 Responders (staff dealing with onsite issues, for example, EMT, Law Enforcement, Custodial, House Management)

Communication needs shall be determined prior to the event, so that resources can be in place for the anticipated attendance and crowd demographics, as deemed necessary by the guidance provided in ANSI ES1.9 – 2021, *Event Safety – Crowd Management*.

The reasonably foreseeable risks directly associated with responders shall be evaluated to determine the extent of secondary or emergency-specific communication channels that may be required within the overall communications system requirements.

4.7 Security

All reasonably foreseeable communication needs related to public safety and security shall be evaluated to determine the extent of these parts of the communication system, and shall consider if separate, unique communication channels are necessary for their exclusive use. In any case, security teams shall have access to an exclusive communication channel dedicate to public safety messages, and shall have access to the public address communication systems if necessary to convey information directly to the public.

4.8 Public transportation and ride share. When the risk assessment determines that the event may or will have a significant impact on usual local transportation systems, then advance communication with the local transportation authority shall be required, in order to fully assess the magnitude of additional passenger load on their system during event times, and to determine if other transportation modes should be engaged to facilitate the additional passenger load. Such additional transportation modes may be in the form of taxi, subway, or train lines, or other similar rideshare options, private transportation companies. It may also include traffic officer placement at high-traffic areas on main thoroughfare routes to and from the venue and use of area lots for overflow parking. These decisions are considered part of the risk assessment, requiring proactive affirmative action prior to the event date, and must consider the traffic impact on the event area, the estimated attendance at the event, the expected travel routes, and anticipated evacuation routes, if different than the expected travel routes.

4.9 Catering and food providers.

This important component should be addressed at the appropriate point in the planning phase. At a minimum communicate:

- Schedule: what time they are allowed on site, what time food is served, and to whom
- Needs: what equipment is required, signage, necessary insurance, permits, inspections, staffing and credentials, path for fuels, food and waste in/out of the venue, specifics of menu and any dietary restrictions/allergies

4.10 Public messaging

The event shall produce and distribute communications pertaining to the event, related to life safety. Each event shall communicate information dedicated to health and safety considerations, relevant to the reasonably foreseeable risks for the event. This information shall be shared in as many convenient places as possible. Some events currently use a “know before you go” paragraph, dedicated health and safety information page on the event’s website, and at all point-of-sale locations.

Examples of information the target crowd may need are:

- Location, directions, hours of operation.
- Ticket info such as pricing, availability, doors open, duration.
- Safety warnings, such as strobe or pyro effects, gunshot sound effects, and adult content.
- Acceptable or suggested items, as well unacceptable items to bring (e.g. appropriate clothing, sunscreen, hats, closed toe shoes, no firearms, etc.). As security measures increase events may have very specific requirements as to type of items, bags, equipment that may be allowed. This will need to be communicated in advance of the attendee arrival to the event site of venue.
- Forecast weather conditions, recommended precautions.
- Onsite facilities, medical resources, lost child procedures, safe shelters, quiet spaces, drinking water availability.
- Drug and alcohol policies.
- Ride shares and responsible driving programs.

Other information can also be made available in regards to event health and safety statements or policies concerning searches, consent, environmental considerations, concerns for specific groups such as women or ADA, and enforcement of laws.

4.11 Wayfinding

Wayfinding shall be planned to allow persons to easily locate entrances, exits, and services. All signage shall conform to local regulations and requirements. These should be customized to the specific needs of the event. At a minimum evaluate the need for the following wayfinding:

- Directional roadway signs for vehicles arriving at the event, and returning to a major thoroughfare post event.
- Parking lots for arrival, and to assist attendees to return to, and locate their vehicles.
- Maps of site/venue.
- Clearly defined pedestrian pathways to venues, camp grounds, or other related event sites.
- Signage and directional indicators for, entrances, security check points, lost child, first aid, temporary refuges and emergency points of assembly.
- Signage and directional indicators for restrooms, customer service information booths, water stations.
- Signage and directional indicators for box office, food concessions, bars, merchandise sales.
- Emergency exits and egress paths. Exits should be uniquely and clearly identified.
- Emergency lighting, to ensure exits signs and egress paths are visible in case of a power failure. Determine the minimum illuminations levels required by the AHJ, but in no case should illumination levels be less than 5 foot-candles at any point along egress pathways.

Simple messaging, color coding, and strategic placement are all effective ways to optimize wayfinding. Wayfinding messages critical to life safety must be re-enforced during the ingress and egress phases of the event.

Wayfinding shall also comply with the requirements of ES1.9 – 2020, Event Safety – Crowd Management

5 Phase 2: The Event

During the event, typically onsite, the event shall implement the communication plan and system so that all relevant entities are briefed and their ability to use the plan in the pursuance of their normal duties and handle any incidents or emergencies is verified.

When the plan relies heavily on electronic communication or email, a reliable, robust, digital connection system, with back-up systems or procedures, is critical. This should be tested and its intended functionality verified at least upon arrival, at installation, prior to house open, by a competent person, by the end user, and whenever a change of circumstance takes place.

5.1 Critical shared information.

Critical information that shall be shared across multiple event participants includes, but is not limited to:"

- Venue specifics – location, address, site or venue layout of the event.
- Restricted areas which require special credentials or safety precautions.
- Schedule – timeline detailing load-in to load out.
- Specific technical needs of each entertainment element.
- Vendors – audio, lighting, video and special effects.
- Staffing – stage production crew, security, hospitality, medical.
- Parking – pre event, event, and post event parking.
- Noise restrictions – Db levels generated from the stage
- Weather monitoring
- Incident management

The following shall be reviewed and verified. Critical components shall be tested and should be responsive to current onsite conditions. These include but are not limited to:

- Organizational structure
- Wayfinding
- Event messaging and audience communication
- Production communication
- Incident and emergency communications

5.2 Start of Event

At the start of every live event a message using both audible and visual methods should be used to describe the location of all the emergency exits for all attendees and how emergency information will be communicated.

5.3 Incident Communication

Effective communication is key to a rapid response time, which is critical and will vary depending on circumstances. Incident communication shall be assessed and functional during all phases.

Large events may have a full command center, which may include multiple types of event monitoring, and on-site dispatch for responders; however, all events should include some way to communicate with the necessary responders.

A list of emergency numbers such as medical and police contacts should be posted for event personnel in visible locations, such as in production offices, backstage call boards, etc. and be large enough to read easily.

Responders shall be trained and competent for the circumstances they are responding to, understanding the risks and how to take prompt corrective action will minimize the danger to themselves and others.

All communications and messages shall be tested prior to the arrival of the attendees to verify their proper operation. Allow time to test operation and to remedy any inadequacies found. Prerecorded audio and video messages are recommended, if possible and appropriate to the circumstances. Additionally, designated personnel should be supplied with scripted messages to read from the stage over the existing PA or bullhorn if needed. If it is safe to do so, a live voice message may be more effective than a prerecorded message for audience response.

When an incident (medical, lost child etc.) occurs, pre-specified event contacts shall be notified, and any necessary responders (security, custodial etc.) dispatched depending on the severity of the need.

During the incident, relevant information shall be given to affected personnel to help them safely manage the event, direct responders to the correct location, and deal with any resulting hazards.

Incident details shall be documented, and a written report shall be completed promptly.

6 Phase 3: Post-Event

An assessment of the communications plan and system should be completed in the post-event phase. This assessment should include post-event reporting requirements, opportunities for improvement, successes, and lessons learned. Relevant documentation shall be completed, compiled and archived, as well as shared with the appropriate parties.

7 Methods of Communication

7.1 Utilization of Marketing Channels

Marketing Channels shall also be available to communicate life safety, attendee expectations and requirements as pertain to a specific event.

7.1.1 Marketing safety communication

Marketing channels provide the opportunity to inform attendees about health and safety. Marketing personnel should be aware of the event health and safety requirements and communicate health and safety strategies within their messaging. Marketers should analyze each method of communication and assess how safety messaging can be effectively implemented. Event organizers should collaborate with their marketing partners to assess the most effective methods for messaging and communication. All messaging shall be reviewed for clarity, consistency and potential errors. This includes all directional and informational signage that will be on site for the event.

7.1.2 Marketing channels

Marketing channels include but are not limited to:

- Electronic: Internet, social media, email, text, electronic tickets, event app, push notifications
- Printed materials: newspaper, magazines, flyers, paper tickets, event maps, sponsor materials at booths and activation areas
- TV, radio, media
- Box office, and ticket point-of-sales
- Signage, billboards, LED screens
- Announcements, press releases
- Blimps, aircraft, unmanned airborne vehicles
- Event or sponsor activations

7.2 Technology

7.2.1 Communication between event personnel and staff.

Event personnel use many types of equipment to communicate. Technology evolves quickly and other options may exist. Options include:

- Radios
 - Use channels for different departments to direct messages to specific personnel.
 - Use an 'all call' feature to allow messages to be sent simultaneously to all radios.
- SMS (text messaging)
 - Program groups of relevant personnel for ease of communication.
 - Prepare sample messages in advance to enable quick action
- Mobile Device Push Notifications (App specific)
- Headset Communications Systems
- Phone Communication Systems
- Video for Command Center, or other monitoring group
- Wayfinding
- Internet transmission methods

7.2.2 Communication with attendees

- Public Announcement (PA) System

- Multi-stage events on a large site or venues with multiple rooms, should be assessed and coordinated as needed for effective safety communication.
- Each location should have a bullhorn or similar device ready in case power is lost to PA System, or audience is out of range of PA (parking lots, etc.)
- Video screens and electronic signage
 - Emergency messaging, and other critical info, should be pre-programmed if possible
- SMS (text)
 - If an event is capturing mobile device numbers for attendees through preregistration, SMS messaging can be effective. SMS may prove unreliable. If standard cell tower capacity is at risk of being exceeded, the local cell carrier(s) may need to reinforce their onsite systems with additional capacity in advance.
- Event app push notification
 - If an event or venue has a custom app for attendees, push notifications can be an effective method of notification. Push messages contain less data than SMS and typically travel better through congested cell systems.
- Social media
 - If weather patterns may turn into an extreme weather event, or other hazards arise, social media can make guests aware that an evacuation is a possibility.
 - After a site or venue has been evacuated, social media is an effective way of notifying attendees of the status of the event, including a re-entry time or cancellation for the day.
- Websites, updated prior to event and during event, if possible.
- Radio stations, TV Stations, and other media outlets

8 Message

8.1 Messaging content

The content of the communications is as important for effective communication as every other element of the communication plan. Creating messages with specific information, using clear, culturally appropriate language and images, is critical for effective communication.

8.1.1 Communication techniques shall be appropriate for the intended audience to increase crowd buy-in and voluntary compliance with instructions. Understanding crowd dynamics and the emotional state of the audience, as well as their motivations, will inform the messaging choices.

8.1.2 Attendees arriving at an event are receptive to information. This opportunity should be used to build trust and to communicate wayfinding, emergency info, etc.

8.1.3 The tone and delivery of the message must be accurate and unambiguous, but must remain calm so as to not inject undue stress among the message recipients.

8.1.4 Under no circumstances shall communication be used to incite hostile crowd behavior.

8.2 Message redundancy

During the event, safety messaging should be repeated when possible to reinforce the information being communicated, ideally using more than one method of communication.

8.3 Emergency communication

Emergency communication shall be in accordance with Section 9 of this standard.

8.4 Post-incident messaging

Post-incident messaging shall be used to resume or cancel a performance, allow reentry, or direct people and/or traffic to different areas. Include media, attendee services and vendors in the notifications.

8.4.1 Information request messaging

Information request messages (eg. watching for a lost child) should be distributed based on the risks and needs of the situation, at the appropriate time and in a way that does not incite unease or panic.

8.4.2 Incident resolution messaging

Incident resolution messages (eg. lost child found) should be communicated as appropriate.

9 Emergency Communication

9.1 Hazard identification

The responsible parties shall identify potential emergencies, determine the necessary response teams and create messages which may be needed for the event. Evaluate the information needed by personnel and attendees to respond effectively to potential emergencies.

9.2 Scripted messages.

Regardless of scale, every live event needs communication protocols and predetermined, scripted emergency messages. Messages shall be created, ready for use and tested as part of an emergency drill or exercise. They should address all reasonably foreseeable emergencies including, but not limited to:

- Fire or explosion.
- Medical incident.
- Acts of violence or terrorism.
- Severe weather.
- Power outage.
- Shelter in place and/or lockdown.
- Emergency evacuation.

9.2.1 Intended recipients.

Emergency communications for personnel may differ from communications for attendees. All emergency communication and messaging plans for the event shall consider the intended recipients. Note: While these recommendations and requirements are typical for communication plans, professionally trained first responders (e.g. EMS & Law Enforcement) are considered outside of the scope standard due to their specific training and communication protocols.

9.2.2 Additional impact.

There may be an additional impact if messages between personnel are overheard by attendees, and this impact may involve security or crowd management issues. Code words and earpieces for radios should be considered to keep these messages private. Personnel must comply with the social media policy for the event.

9.3 Emergency communication systems required.

Event Organizers shall identify all methods of communication required for emergency messaging, by and between those individuals responsible for implementing emergency protocols and procedures.

9.3.1 Safety of participants is paramount

All emergency communication and messaging systems shall be designed and implemented to protect the safety of the event participants.

9.4 Communication redundancy required.

Communications systems shall be designed and installed with redundancy to ensure that failure of one communication element does not disable the remaining emergency communication system elements. Emergency communication should be assigned to different channels/platforms/frequencies to prevent interference or system overload that could delay response times.

9.5 Extent of communication system coverage.

Communication systems used for emergency messaging shall extend to include all affected personnel and attendees.

9.6 Communication sequence.

A sequence of communication shall be established in accordance with the event's organizational structure. It shall not be restricted by a sequence that delays public communication in an emergency.

Security, crowd management and event personnel with specific roles and responsibilities for emergency response shall be notified prior to general notification, unless such notification would cause an additional life safety risk to people onsite. If such a risk is identified, implement additional control measures to ensure that prior notification occurs in all but the most extreme and reasonably unforeseeable circumstances.

9.7 Testing and verification.

Communication systems used for emergency messaging shall be tested and/or verified to be in working order before each event and each time prior to the event site opening. Allow time to test operation and to remedy any inadequacies found.

9.8 Public address system requirements.

The public address system requirements should be clearly identified in the communication plan.

9.8.1 Emergency communication.

Announcements and other forms of communication regarding emergency actions required shall be accurate, unambiguous and take priority over all affected areas or functions of the event. All emergency information must be consistent through all communication channels and continue as needed. All emergency messaging content shall consider the event accessibility and language needs as determined by the communications risk assessment.

9.9 Multiple Methods of Communication

Audible and visual methods shall be used for all emergency messaging.

9.9.1 Audible communication methods include:

- Voice
- Bull horn
- Radio
- Public Address (sound) system
- Pre-recorded announcement with automatic repeat once triggered

9.9.2 Visual communication methods include:

- Visual cues provided by event personnel or crowd managers
- Video screens displaying clear legible text or images
- Texts, apps and social media messages on mobile devices
- Printed signs, only used during that type of emergency

9.9.3 Briefing

Prior to each event day, all event personnel, regardless of their prior familiarity, shall receive a briefing on:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Location of all emergency exits (in the area of operation in larger venues), evacuation routes and areas of assembly.
- Emergency communication, methods, messages and protocols for the event. This should include a demonstration.

Annex A – example communication system chart

The following is an example only, demonstrating various considerations for an event communication system plan. While it can be used as a guideline, each event’s needs should be uniquely identified for the specific event. This example illustrates a more complex version with many different radio frequency requirements. It is, however, scalable down to smaller events. The key elements of this example include the alphabetical listing of all communication participants, and an example of how they might be grouped for the exclusive purpose of radio frequency assignments.

SHOW NAME											
CHANNEL MATRIX EXAMPLE											
KEY: REPEATER TALKAROUND WIDE AREA											
USER LIST	USER LIST (cont)	ZONE 1	ZONE 2	ZONE 3	ZONE 4	ZONE 5	ZONE 6	ZONE 7	ZONE 8	ZONE 9	ZONE 10
1 EMERGENCY	51 LASERS - STG 1	1 ARTIST RELATIONS	1 ENHANCED EXPERIENCE	1 EXPERIENCE	1 FOOD & BEVERAGE	1 GENERAL					
2 ADA	52 LASERS - STG 2	1 EMERGENCY	1 EMERGENCY	1 EMERGENCY	1 EMERGENCY	1 EMERGENCY					
3 AMR STAGING	53 LASERS - STG 3	2 PRODUCTION	2 PRODUCTION	2 PRODUCTION	2 PRODUCTION	2 PRODUCTION					
4 ART OPS	54 LIGHTS - STG 1	3 SITE OPS	3 SITE OPS	3 SITE OPS	3 SITE OPS	3 SITE OPS					
5 ARTIST HOSPITALITY	55 LIGHTS - STG 2	4 SECURITY MAIN	4 SECURITY MAIN	4 SECURITY MAIN	4 SECURITY MAIN	4 SECURITY MAIN					
6 ARTIST RELATIONS	56 LIGHTS - STG 3	5 ARTIST HOSPITALITY	5 VIP	5 EXPERIENCE	5 FOOD & BEVERAGE	5 MEDICAL MANAGERS					
7 ARTIST TRANSPO	57 MANAGER DIRECT	6 ARTIST RELATIONS	6 SKYDECK OPS	6 SITE EXPERIENCE	6 POWER	6 HR					
8 ATM	58 MARKETING	7 ARTIST TRANSPO	7 PASSPORT LOUNGE	7 ART OPS	7 EXPERIENCE	7 PHOTO					
9 AUDIO - STG 1	59 MEDICAL COMMAND	7 STAGE MANAGERS	8 POWER	8 ULTIMATE LIGHTING	8 RESTROOMS	8 FILM CREW					
10 AUDIO - STG 2	60 MEDICAL DIRECT	8 EXTERIOR OPS	9 RESTROOMS	9 SIGNAGE	9 CLEAN / SANI MGMT	9 PERFORMERS					
11 AUDIO - STG 3	61 MEDICAL DISPATCH	9 TRAFFIC/PARKING	10 CLEAN / SANI MGMT	10 POWER	10 IT	10 MARKETING					
12 BS EMERGENCY	62 MEDICAL JANITORIAL	10 RESTROOMS	11 FOOD & BEVERAGE	11 [GC/HX] MANAGERS	11 SIGNAGE	11 FINANCE					
13 BS EXPERIENCE	63 MEDICAL MANAGERS	11 CLEAN / SANI MGMT	12 EXTERIOR OPS	12 PERFORMERS	12 SITE EXPERIENCE	12 TICKETING/BOX OFFICE					
14 BS IT	64 MEDICAL REPORTING	12 FILM CREW	13 TICKETING/BOX OFFICE	13 VIP	13 VIP	13 MERCH/GEN SHOP					
15 BS PRODUCTION	65 MERCH/GEN SHOP	13 MARKETING	14 [GC/HX] MANAGERS	14 SKYDECK OPS	14 SKYDECK OPS	14 [GC/HX] MANAGERS					
16 BS SECURITY MAIN	66 OPEN TALK 10	14 IT	15 IT	15 FOOD & BEVERAGE	15 [GC/HX] MANAGERS	15 IT					
17 BS SITE OPS	67 OPEN TALK 12	15 VIP	16 MEDICAL MANAGERS	16 MEDICAL MANAGERS	16 SECURITY MAIN	16 ADA					
18 BS STAGE MANAGERS	68 OPEN TALK 22	16 SKYDECK OPS	17 OPEN TALK 22	17 RESTROOMS	17 COMMAND POST	17 VENDOR VILLAGE					
19 CCTV	69 PASSPORT LOUNGE	17 COMMAND POST	18 COMMAND POST	18 CLEAN / SANI MGMT		18 STAGE MANAGERS					
20 CISS 1	70 PERFORMERS		19 ULTIMATE LIGHTING	19 ATM		19 COMMAND POST					
21 CISS 2	71 PHOTO		20 EXPERIENCE	20 PASSPORT LOUNGE							
22 CLEAN / SANI MGMT	72 POWER		21 SIGNAGE	21 COMMAND POST							
23 CLEANING 1	73 PRODUCTION		22 COMMAND POST								
24 CLEANING 2	74 RESTROOMS										
25 COMMAND DIRECT	75 SECURITY MAIN										
26 COMMAND POST	76 SFX - STG 1										
27 CSC 1	77 SFX - STG 2										
28 CSC 2	78 SIGNAGE										
29 DJ TECHS	79 SITE EXPERIENCE										
30 EXPERIENCE	80 SITE OPS										
31 EXTERIOR OPS	81 SKYDECK OPS										
32 FILM CREW	82 STAGE - STG 1										
33 FINANCE	83 STAGE - STG 2										
34 FOOD & BEVERAGE	84 STAGE MANAGERS										
35 [GC/HX] MANAGERS	85 STING OPS										
36 [GC/HX] LEADS	86 TICKETING/BOX OFFICE										
37 [GC/HX] TICKET SCAN	87 TRAFFIC / PARKING										
38 [GC/HX] L&F	88 ULTIMATE LIGHTING										
39 [GC/HX] ZONE 1	89 VENDOR VILLAGE										
40 [GC/HX] ZONE 2	90 VIDEO - STG 1										
41 [GC/HX] SPEC. OPS	91 VIDEO - STG 2										
42 [GC/HX] POST-SHOW	92 VIP										
43 HR	93 WELLNESS										
44 INCIDENT 1	94 SECURITY MAIN - EXT										
45 INCIDENT 1 DIRECT	95 SECURITY MAIN - INT										
46 INCIDENT 2	96 SECURITY PERSONAL										
47 INCIDENT 2 DIRECT											
48 IPS 1											
49 IPS 2											
50 IT											

**These channels to be locked to Zone 9, Security 1 only - Not accessible through the Alpha list.