

Risk assessing an event

Introduction

This factsheet provides information about how to risk assess an evening. The guidelines given are adapted from the Health and Safety Executive's risk assessment guidelines to be more specific to SSAGO's needs.

Requirements

It is a requirement for our insurance that all SSAGO events are risk assessed. This ranges from the weekly club social to camps and outings as well as any event organized by a SSAGO club for those who are not members (such as local Scout/Guide events). Rally and ball risk assessments are completed by those running the event itself.

Risk assessments are done in 4 stages. Each will be dealt with in detail below

- 1) Identify Hazards
- 2) Determine the risks
- 3) Plan to minimize risks
- 4) Review risk assessment during and after the event

Stages of Risk Assessment

1. Identifying the hazard

A hazard is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer etc. Visit the site of the event, look around, look for anything that could be reasonably expected to cause harm. If you using someone else's property ask them if they have done a risk assessment of the property or are there any hazards you should know about

If, when identifying hazards, none or very minor ones are found then no written risk assessment is needed.

2. Determine the risks

Who is at risk?

When identifying who is at risk, you do not need to name names however you do need to group people e.g. "John Smith is at risk from objects falling off the abseil tower" is wrong, "people at the bottom of the tower are at risk of objects falling off the abseil tower" is correct.

How bad is the risk?

There are two measures of how bad a risk is, the first is how likely it is to happen, the second how severe is the outcome of the risk. A standard way to determine risk is using



the 10 scale, scoring how likely and how severe the risk is out of 5 as shown in the tables below.

Score	How Likely							
	Likely	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Deadly								
0		0	1	2	3	4	5	0 No Chance of it happening
1		1	2	3	4	5	6	1 Very Unlikely
2		2	3	4	5	6	7	2 Unlikely
3		3	4	5	6	7	8	3 Likely
4		4	5	6	7	8	9	4 Very Likely
5		5	6	7	8	9	10	5 Certain

Score	How deadly?
0	No chance of injury
1	Very Minor Injuries (small cuts and light bruising)
2	Minor Injuries (cuts and bruising)
3	Major injuries
4	Very major injuries or death
5	Fatal

Once a score out of 10 is allocated to the risk use the table below to determine what action to take:

Key

Risk is low and measures do not need to be implemented to reduce risk

Risk is medium and measures need to be implemented to reduce risk

Risk is high and hazard should be avoided and all measures possible be implemented to reduce the risk greatly

Having measured the level of risk, each one must now be minimized.

3. Minimizing the risk

There are two ways to reduce risk.

- First try to get rid of the hazard. If the hazard can be eradicated this is the best policy.
- Secondly if the hazard cannot be eradicated then it must be controlled.

Controlling risks

There are five ways to control a risk

- 1) Try a less risky option
- 2) Prevent access to the hazard (e.g. don't allow people who don't have helmets around the bottom of the abseil tower)
- 3) Organize any activities to reduce exposure to hazard (make sure people move away from the abseil tower base as soon as possible)
- 4) Issue protective clothing (e.g. issue all abseilers with gloves)
- 5) Provide welfare facilities (first aid kits etc)

Don't forget to decide who will be responsible for making sure the control is in place and is followed.

4. Reviewing risks

During the event it is necessary to review the risk assessment to update the measures implemented to minimise the risk because hazards change, so too the measures may need to change. Whilst carrying out the event it may be discovered that one of the measures on the risk assessment isn't enough to control a risk or is too controlling that it is affecting the event. During an event different hazards may present themselves that the initial sweep did not pick up and these need to be included in the risk assessment.

Writing the risk assessment

If there are hazards that are greater than very minor ones a risk assessment must be written. The writing framework provided below may be used for this. Some Student Unions require risk assessments to be submitted for each activity so ensure they are done fully and accurately. The National SSAGO Chairperson may ask to see a risk assessment of any activity to ensure these are being completed. It is likely that if the activity is classed as an 'Adventurous Activity' (see 'Doing Adventurous Activities' factsheet) that your risk assessment will be checked.

Keeping risk assessments

If an event runs without incident there is no requirement to keep hold of the risk assessment. However, it may be useful to keep hold of for future reference if carrying out a similar activity. If an accident occurs the risk assessment may be required by SSAGO's insurance company. It is therefore advisable to keep hold of the risk assessment for up to one year after the event.

Hazard	Who is at risk	Risk Score	What action is needed	Implemented by who	Reviews

Risk assessment performed by:

Signed:

Date