



COLLABORATION IN EVENT SAFETY AND SECURITY RISK PREVENTION: CASE RUISROCK

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ABSTRACT



The purpose of this article is to demonstrate the process of collaboration in event safety and security. The best practice demonstrates the model used by South-West Finland's authorities when collaborating with event organizers. The process follows the ISO 31000:2018 risk management process. Representatives of the Finnish police and the South-West Finland rescue authority have been consulted and interviewed for this article.

1. Introduction

Event safety and security are heavily legislated in Finland and for that reason planning in time is essential. The most important legislation related in basically every event in Finland includes the Assembly Act, the Rescue Act and the Land Use and Building Act. In every event the organizer is responsible for preventing and managing the risks and collaborating with various actors and authorities. The size and the risk profile of the event affect the requirements of the legislation but basically all events where the risks are considered substantial, an emergency plan is obligatory. The Government Decree on Rescue Services 407/2011 defines which events are considered as such.

This article focusses on event risk management at the Ruisrock summer festival held in Finland. Ruisrock is one of oldest festivals in Finland. It is held on Ruissalo island, which is part of the city of Turku (Ruisrock 2022a). Ruissalo is a unique site for events because its nature is heavily protected and the island location creates its own challenges for risk management. The island is connected to the mainland via one bridge. Ruisrock is a three-day festival and approximately 100,000 people visit the event during the weekend (Ruisrock 2022b). In this article the collaboration model between organizer and different authorities is presented.

2. Case

Planning annual big events like Ruisrock is usually continuous and planning for the next year's event starts right after the previous event is finished. The Finnish Assembly Act (530/1999) regulates that the event organizer needs to notify the police at least five days in advance of the event but in bigger events planning and consulting are practically constant all year round. In Finland The Rescue Act (379/2011) and The Government Decree on Rescue Services (407/2011) requires that all public events that have 200 or more persons present at the same time, draw up an emergency plan. Responsibility lies with the organizer.



Organizing the event also requires collaboration with other stakeholders like the performing artists with their organizations and different companies that offer services at the event. Planning is done in close collaboration with organizers, the event security provider, the police, rescue services and the health service provider. In this article the best practice presented is the model that describes organizers collaboration with the South-West Finland authorities (Varsinais-Suomen pelastuslaitos 2019). In this article this model is presented through the ISO 31000:2018 Risk-management framework (Figure 1).

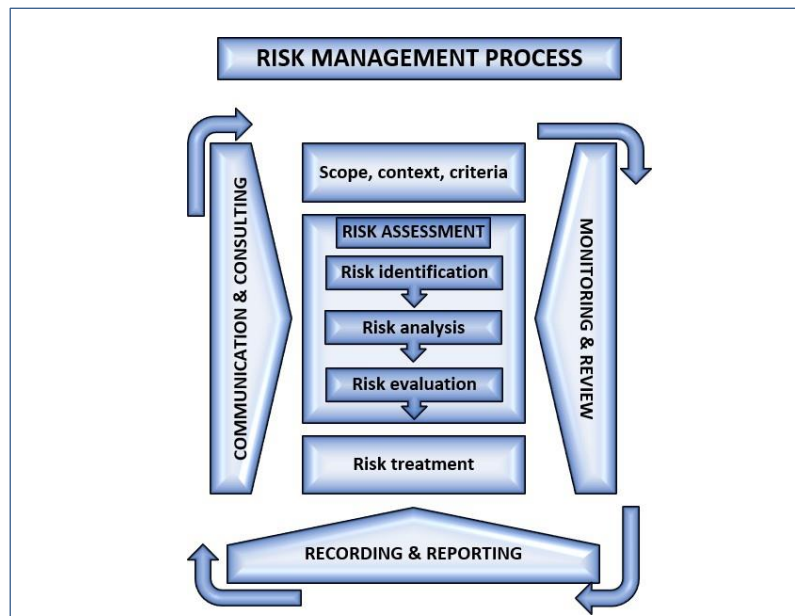


Figure 1. Risk management process (adapted from ISO 31000:2018)

3. Best practice

Communication and consultation

In order to have a safe and secure event, close and immediate multi-authority cooperation is essential, as well as continuous interaction with the event organizer. Due to cooperation with the authorities, expertise is available in a wide area of event safety, which is combined with up-to-date information and expertise with the organizer. Safety and security planning are started early enough by the event organizer. Continuous collaboration also requires and assures that concrete preparations for the event are made in time. For large events it is usually necessary for the event organizer to consult also other experts in safety and security, rather than doing everything by themselves. It is important to be able to recognize the areas where one's own expertise isn't sufficient. The authorities will advise on the basics, but the responsibility lies with the organizer. Besides supervision, authorities also provide information and guidance. Nevertheless, the legal responsibility lays with the event organizer. Therefore, the organizer must submit the rescue plan of the event to the regional rescue authorities no later than 14 days before the start of the event (Rescue Act 379/2011).

Functional safety and security measures are fundamental to successful events, so it is vital that the organizer is motivated and sensitive about a safety and security culture, even though that might mean investing more money or resources.



Scope, context, criteria

When the group for Ruisrock's risk assessment is formed, the following aspects are considered when gathering enough expertise to cover the specific risks and features:

- The specific characteristics of the area (water, location on an island, heavy traffic, elevation differences, urban environment, public transport, etc.)
- The amount of people participating in the event (environmental maintenance, security stewarding, guidance, services, exits, etc.)
- The nature of the event (whether there are topics or performers that are politically or societally sensitive, people with disabilities, children, the elderly)
- Whether there are any special programs or equipment at the event that require special safety planning and expertise, the availability of the organizer/ resources of public authorities.

According to the Rescue Act (379/2011) the dangers and risks concerning the event need to be identified and assessed. All measures in the emergency plan must be based on this risk assessment. The event organizer must take care that all relevant legislation is taken into consideration.

Risk assessment

The first step in the risk assessment process is drawing up the overall situational picture. It includes the structures, program, environmental management and placement, human resources, and all other essential factors. Identification of the risks is based on the specific features of the event and the lessons learned from previous years. Analysis of the risks is done by recognizing causes and consequences for each risk. After this, the analysis is used to evaluate the magnitude of risks. All key authorities affecting event safety must participate in this risk assessment, in the form of a joint meeting. The organizer presents the factors affecting the situational picture to the authorities, and together the severity of risks and the level of preparedness for them are considered. The organizer makes a preliminary emergency plan that can be discussed with the authorities.

Recognized causes and consequences are used to create event specific treatment measures. The event organizer needs to have a comparable and reliable criterion for assessing the magnitude of the risk. They should demonstrate that their risk management measures are risk-orientated and compliant with the legislation. Authorities evaluate whether the measures presented in the rescue plan are sufficient and they can ask the event organizer to enhance the event safety and security plan.

In addition, regarding the overall security of society at large, the authorities must then carry out an assessment of the risks posed by the event and how the authorities should prepare for identified risks that are not directly the responsibility of the event organizer. This preparedness may include increasing authorities' resources, reserving additional spaces, ensuring the internal flow of information, and providing information etc. In addition to the event area, a mega-scale event has a wider impact on society, and the risk assessment generated by its impact is the responsibility of the authorities.

Risk treatment

The risk treatment is a combination of structural, technical and operational measures that are based on the risk assessment. Preventing crimes and other deliberate harmful acts is largely directed by legislation. Various laws regulate the powers of different actors, like security stewards, security guards and police. For example, the security checks and removal from the area and apprehension are regulated by law. In bigger events like Ruisrock multiple other plans must be drawn up beside a rescue



plan and they are part of the risk treatment.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring in Ruisrock is done through an official inspection just before the start of the event. During the event onsite monitoring is done by both authorities and the security service provider. Private security service and health service providers are also obliged to keep a logbook of the service events that help organizer to develop and plan the event for the future. After the event debriefing a session is held with the organizer. Information is also obtained from the media and other public sources. All this information and sources are helping to review and develop the Ruisrock festival.

The authorities always go over the most significant events together afterwards. Often, debriefing is also carried out together with the organizer. If criminal negligence by the organizers is suspected, the matter can be investigated by the police.

Recording and reporting

During all the phases authorities take notes, so that after a year, the shortcomings identified are considered at the planning stage. During the process there are multiple mandatory documents that must be made. These include for example:

- Fire inspection minutes
- Event logs
- Meeting minutes

A dynamic and continuously improving emergency plan also serves as a recording and reporting tool.

References

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