

# Planning Meetings, Safety Advisory Group, Tabletop Exercises and Debrief Meetings



## Planning Meetings

As mentioned within the [Roles & Responsibilities](#) section of this guidance, it is important that the workload of the event project is shared between competent individuals, organisations and contractors. In order to effectively coordinate the project it is advised that this group meet regularly to provide updates, discuss interdependencies, allocate / agree further actions and highlight any risks or concerns.

Depending on the scale of the event, the interdependencies and the availability of those with responsibilities organisers may set multiple sub-group meetings or they may invite all parties to one large meeting. Sub-group meetings will ensure a focused approach to the delivery of the event. They will also help to make good use of people's time, as they do not need to sit and listen to items and discussions which are of no interest or have no impact on them.

## Safety Advice Group (SAG)

Aberdeen's Safety Advisory Group is a platform designed to provide advice and guidance to event organisers in order to assist them in delivering successful events which are safe and legal.

The aim of the Aberdeen SAG is to provide independent safety advice to event organisers assisting them to discharge their public safety and wellbeing functions. It is the policy of Aberdeen City Council and all members of the SAG to uphold a suitable and sufficient standard of public safety that ensures compliance with legislative obligations and to encourage the wellbeing of the public, operatives and competitors. Event organisers retain the legal responsibility for ensuring a safe and legal event.

The SAG meets monthly to provide feedback on events which have recently taken place and to review the plans and risk profile of upcoming events.

The SAG group is made up of representatives from the following agencies & Council departments to ensure that advice can be given on the wide-ranging aspects involved in event management:

- Aberdeen City Council, City Events Team
- Aberdeen City Council, City Wardens
- Aberdeen City Council, Environmental Services
- Aberdeen City Council, Roadworks coordination
- Aberdeen City Council, Environmental Health
- Aberdeen City Council, Licensing
- Aberdeen City Council, Public Transport Unit
- Aberdeen City Council, Planning
- Aberdeen City Council, Facilities
- Police Scotland, Event Planning
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

By choosing to hold your event on Aberdeen City Council owned land you have agreed to follow the City Council's External Event Application Process. As part of this process your event will be vetted through the Aberdeen SAG and if deemed useful or necessary you may be invited to attend a SAG meeting to receive advice and guidance from the group on areas concerning public safety.

If you are requested to attend a SAG you will be notified by the City Events Executive who will provide advice and guidance on the process and what is required of you. Alternatively, if you feel your event would benefit from going through the SAG process, then please contact the City Events Executive on 01224 522802 who will look to arrange a suitable date for you.

If your event goes through a SAG, it is advised that you let your insurer know this as you may find that your insurance premium is reduced as the insurer has additional comfort that your plans and procedures are suitable and sufficient for the risk posed by your event.

Full SAG Policy and Terms of Reference are available upon request, please contact [cityevents@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:cityevents@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

### Further reading

[HSE Guidance](#)

## Tabletop Exercise

In addition to the SAG meetings and planning meetings, it is advised that events are tested to ensure that its plans and procedures are robust. One effective method of testing events is by way of Table top exercises, which are simulated exercises allowing event organisers, and those with responsibilities at the event, to test, review and develop their plans and procedures in a safe and controlled environment.

### Table top exercises are effective tools to:

- Validate event plans
- To develop staff competencies and give them the opportunity to practice carrying out their roles and responsibilities in a controlled environment
- To test established procedures

Table-top exercises should ideally be designed and delivered by someone independent from the event who has no role in the event to ensure that the event's plans, procedures and hierarchies are effectively tested. This could be Aberdeen City Council, Police Scotland or an independent person with knowledge of event management, contingency planning or from a related health and safety background.

*Table top exercises are based on simulation, not necessarily literally around a table top. Usually, they involve a realistic scenario and a time line, which may be real time or may speed time up.*

*Usually table tops are run in a single room, or in a series of linked rooms which simulate the divisions between responders who need to communicate and be coordinated. The players are expected to know the plan and they are invited to test how the plan works as the scenario unfolds.*

*This type of exercise is particularly useful for validation purposes, particularly for exploring weaknesses in procedures. Table-top exercises are relatively cheap to run, except in the use of staff time. They demand careful preparation.*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergency-planning-and-preparedness-exercises-and-training>

Table top exercises are most effective when they are attended by all of those with roles in managing and delivering the event or responding to contingency or emergency situations which may occur at or because of, the event.

**Example Table top scenarios for events:**

- A parent notifying a volunteer that their child is missing
- A drunk and abusive attendee causing nuisance and alarm to other attendees
- A fire near a marquee caused by the build-up of event waste
- A serious injury to an attendee, contractor or member of staff
- Power failure at the stage before the main act is due to begin
- Forecasts on the morning of the event warning of very high winds
- A terror attack or other serious incident requiring evacuation
- A suspect package
- A protest group disrupting the event

If you feel that your event would benefit from being tested through a Table top exercise, Aberdeen City Council's City Events Team can assist in the development of scenarios or the delivery of the exercise.

## Debrief Meetings

Debrief meetings are held after an event has taken place and are required to assess the successes, failings and learnings from an event and its plans, processes, systems and hierarchies in a structured and formal manner.

Debrief meetings are useful as they ensure that lessons are learned, and that systems, processes and practices are developed and improved for future events.

It is recommended that debrief meetings take place shortly after the event and involve all persons, organisations and companies who were involved in the event.

Contractors who have limited input to the management of the event may be asked to provide written feedback which will be fed in to the main debrief meeting. This will ensure that all issues are recorded and highlighted to those responsible for developing the event's plans and procedures. Others, who had a key role in the event or have feedback which will be useful for the development of plans, should be invited to the formal debrief meeting.