

Industry Profile ▶ Ken Trump, National School Safety and Security Services

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Q: What critical skills allow an event manager to provide a safe and secure environment for patrons, staff, and participants?

A: Security must be viewed as a specialized professional field. Too often event managers believe that anyone can do security, and so emergency preparedness plans end up being put together by well-intended persons with minimal to no training or expertise to do so. Event managers also too often must choose between the costs for adequate security and saving their proceeds taken in at the gate. Event managers either must have specialized training and experience in professional security and emergency preparedness best practices or must hire someone who has such expertise.

Q: The events of 9/11 forever changed the landscape of security and planning. Obvious changes

have occurred such as pat-downs and bag checks, but what changes may not be so obvious to the general public?

A: The terror attacks of 9/11 created a new normal by bumping up public expectations of security and the responsibility of entities to take reasonable security measures. Whether we are talking about security at our nation's airports or safety at a high school basketball game, the public expects the event managers to evaluate threats and security needs and to take reasonable risk reduction and preparedness steps.

Q: Realizing that sport is just one of the extracurricular activities that happen in an educational setting, do you see any differences in planning and preparing for this type of event over others?

A: The level of security for different types of extracurricular activities will vary event by event. Many factors go into decisions about the type and amount of security at an event, including the number of expected spectators, the size of the venue, past history of the type of event, rivalries, current security issues in the school or community, and related considerations. It is not logical to provide the same level of security for a 100-attendee volleyball game inside a high school gym as you would for a 5,000-attendee football game housed at a school stadium with large parking lots, concession stands, and a history of intense rivalries.

Q: What challenges do event planners face with regard to risk management and security?

A: The greatest challenge to risk management and security is that we have roller-coaster public awareness, public policy, and public funding on public safety issues. We legislate and fund by anecdote, and people have short memories when the threats to our safety are no longer staring us right in the face. So we have an incident, get alarmed, and throw money at it. Two or three years (and sometimes two or three months) down the road, we have forgotten about it and begin complaining about the

inconveniences created by the heightened security. As a society, we want it both ways: We want heightened security, but we don't want the inconvenience. But you cannot have it both ways. Whether you are talking about an airport or your local high school football game, if you want heightened security, by definition there will be heightened inconvenience.

Q: What opportunities have presented since 9/11 that have helped shape the United States' response to safety and security?

A: In general, there have been significant investments in security training, staffing, and technology since 9/11. The problem is that the commitment to security by organizational and government leaders is, at best, inconsistent. So the good news is that we are better off than

we were before 9/11. The bad news is that we are not as far ahead as we could be because of wavering organizational and governmental commitment to consistent security policy and funding.

Q: What advice do you offer to current or future event planners and managers with regard to risk management and safety?

A: Future event planners and managers need to view risk management and security as professional disciplines requiring professional skills. They need to set policies and budgets accordingly and hire people with the education, training, experience, and expertise to professionally implement and institutionalize security and preparedness best practices into their organizational culture.

Risk management concerns are inextricably woven into managerial responsibilities, whether you are a coach, teacher, recreation program administrator, or manager in a high school, college, Olympic, or professional sport organization. For many who attend events, the inner workings of producing an event are seldom known. The countless hours and efforts that go into running an event are not realized by the general public. What the public sees and expects is a safe and secure environment in which to enjoy the event.

A deep appreciation for identifying and addressing the potential risks associated with an event is vital. Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman (2006) defined risk management as "reducing or eliminating the risk of injury and death and potential subsequent liability that comes about through involvement with sport and recreation programs and services" (p. 2). DeLisle (2009) claimed it is the "exercise of common sense and prudent responsibility [in] minimizing threats" (p. 149). Sharp, Moorman, and Claussen (2010) describe risk management as being preventive in nature, playing the "what if" game to determine potential threats and address them in the planning phase. Risk management at its simplest is a "process for managing the risks that you can

identify—and insuring those you can't manage" (Ashley and Pearson 1993, p. 1).

Regardless of the risk management definition you subscribe to, aggressively identifying potential hazards is a must. Many times we become too comfortable with the way things are because we have not been confronted with an incident to challenge our response. According to Trump (2009), "the most challenging obstacle . . . is complacency. Time and distance from a major high-profile tragedy breeds complacency and fuels denial" (para. 7). This complacency and denial could position an event manager on the wrong side of a lawsuit. Take a cue from the Boy Scouts of America: Be prepared.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

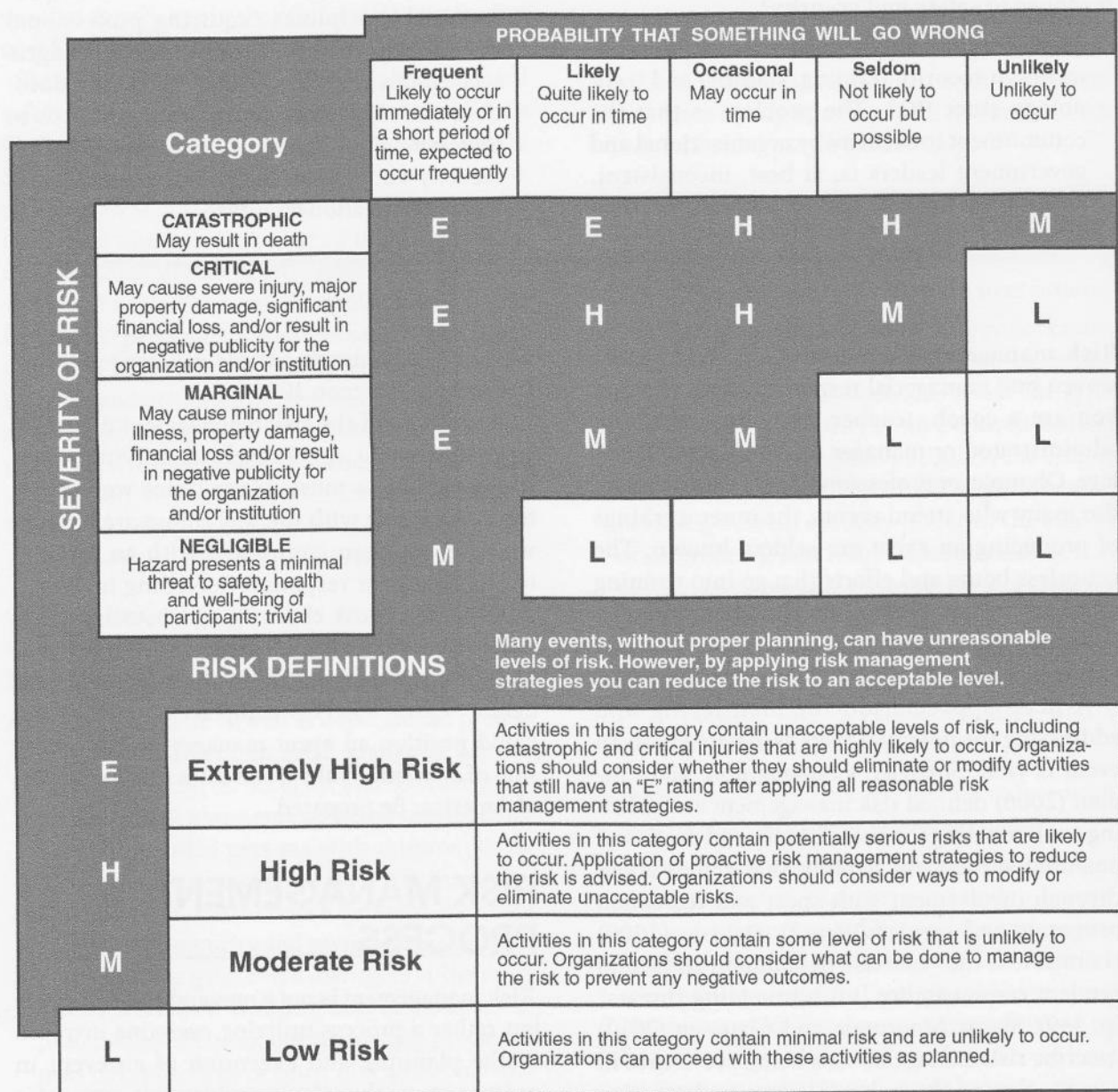
Risk management is not a one-and-done exercise but rather a process utilizing everyone involved in the planning and execution of an event in order to create the safest possible environment for patrons. A risk management plan entails all the necessary elements of a crisis management plan, an emergency action plan, and a communication

plan, all developed and coordinated by the people responsible for each area. Planning for risk is more like the adage that anything can happen and probably will.

Tarlow (2002) outlines the risk management process in the following way: identifying risks, projecting potential issues related to the risk, identifying remedies, doing what is necessary to prevent injuries, anticipating the reaction to the crisis, and creating a plan for both the crisis

and how it will be communicated to the public. Sharp, Moorman, and Claussen (2010) offered the following elements of risk management:

- Identification: Conducting a legal audit identifies the deficiencies that need to be addressed or corrected during the planning process of a risk management plan (discussed later in this chapter).
- Assessing and classifying: Documentation of previous incidents is of great use when assessing



■ **Figure 10.1** University of Wisconsin at River Falls risk-assessment matrix.

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issues and attempting to classify them. The risk matrix in figure 10.1 defines the levels of risks and provides a basis for determining the severity of the potential issues uncovered during the identification phase. Once identified, they will need to be classified.

- **Treating and managing:** Risk treatment refers to the process of identifying the options for addressing potential risks. Four specific options available for treating risks are retaining, reducing, avoiding, and transferring. Retaining the risk refers to accepting the risk and working around it. Reducing the risk is accomplished by putting measures in place such as supervision and staff training. Avoiding risks is possible when a decision is made to not proceed with an event because of the potential risk. The final treatment involves transferring liability to a third party (Cotten and Wolohan 2009).

The management of risks requires the generation of standard operating procedures (SOPs), which provide consistency and uniformity for job performance. Parkhouse (2005) defined SOPs as a “strategic plan that will provide the most efficient and effective way to decrease the occurrence of risks” (p. 160). These SOPs become guiding principles for events that outline the processes to be followed for each potential risk.

RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Proactively identifying and classifying potential risks will assist in the development of risk management plans. The DIM process is a way to remain proactive rather than reactive during a crisis situation. The DIM process involves developing, implementing, and managing the plan.

Developing the Plan

The first step in developing a risk management plan is identifying the potential risks that could be associated with an event (Ammon, Southall, and Nagel 2010; Cotten and Wolohan 2009). Various methods can be utilized to collect this informa-

tion, from fans reporting potential hazards to a full-fledged walk-through of the host venue. Most venues will already have standard operating procedures in place for addressing potential situations, but anything that has not been previously experienced may require special attention. Involve as many people as necessary to ensure the safety of all involved. This process is also referred to as a risk assessment.

Once the venue, whether indoor or outdoor, has been carefully considered, the identified risks must be classified (Ammon, Southall, and Nagel 2010). Classification of potential risks into a hierarchical order allows for understanding of their frequency and seriousness (Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman 2006). As mentioned earlier in the section on assessing and classifying risks, a risk matrix is a common tool used by event and facility personnel for this purpose. Barringer (2006) summed up a risk matrix as a graphical tool that highlights the chance of a risk with the consequence of the risk. Next, event managers need to decide how to manage or treat the identified risks. Various authors have identified the four possible treatments as retaining, reducing, avoiding, or transferring to a third party (Ammon, Southall, and Nagel 2010; Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman 2006; Cotten and Wolohan 2009).

Implementing the Plan

Implementation of a risk management plan requires that all involved understand the expectations the plan has established and their role in making sure these expectations are met. If properly trained, event staff should be confident and able to do what is expected of them. Buy-in is critical. This can be achieved by involving the staff in the development of the plan or, if utilizing volunteers, asking for suggestions during training (Ammon, Southall, and Nagel 2010). A key ingredient in the facilitation of a risk management plan is the effectiveness of communication. Handbooks, e-mails, posters, fliers, and other forms of conveying information are essential for maintaining open lines of communication and consistency in expectations.

Managing the Plan

All the hard work put into devising the plan is now ready to pay off. You've hired the staff, trained them, and prepared them for potential risks. It is crucial that you have confidence in the person or persons hired to oversee the risk management process. The risk management plan is an evolving document. Over the course of an event, things will happen that may not have been addressed in the plan. The risk manager will document these incidents and develop strategies for addressing them in the future. Each event should end with a formal evaluation. The final step in most processes—evaluation—allows for pinpointing where something went wrong and, more important, where things went right. Do not assume that an incident-free event means the plan is foolproof. Event managers must be constantly considering what can be done to best serve patrons, keeping them safe and secure while at an event. Remember, a satisfied customer is a repeat customer!

THREATS TO EVENTS

When attending an event, a patron does not plan to become part of the action, but sometimes a foul ball or broken bat ends up in the stands; or a hockey puck misses the Plexiglas and sails 12 rows up; or a patron spills a drink and it goes unreported, or the custodial staff does not respond immediately. All these non-event-related incidents have the potential to cost the event and facility managers in legal fees. Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman (2006) outlined those areas that require special consideration in risk management planning: medical attention, heat-related illnesses, lightning safety, bloodborne pathogens, equipment and supervision, and insurance.

Medical Attention

The medical attention an event manager needs to provide is dictated by the type of event and the governing body. In sport, we know that injuries are inherent and that we can prepare for what might happen. At the very least, staff should be certified in CPR, first aid, and AED use. Event personnel

should carry cell phones in case they need to call 911. In a medical emergency, response time can be the difference between life and death. Establish a clear communication plan for every situation, including who will be the designated caller (Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman 2006).

Heat-Related Illnesses

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2012) the most common weather-related killer in the United States is heat. The NOAA works diligently with local National Weather Service (NWS) offices to report weather conditions. As the weather becomes warmer, the NWS will begin to issue excessive heat outlooks, watches, warnings, and advisories. Identify someone from the event management staff who will be responsible for checking the extended forecast so that alternative plans can be considered if necessary.

Reports of well-conditioned athletes collapsing from heat-related causes are far too common. An estimated 2,100 people sought treatment for exhaustion and dehydration at the 2012 Boston Marathon. During the summer of 2011, six high school football players died from heat-related injuries in Texas, and in November 2011, a University of Miami football player was found unconscious on the field at an early-morning practice (Siegel 2011; Kercheval 2011).

Lightning Safety

In March 2012, four members of the Seymour (Indiana) High School softball team were injured, one critically, from a lightning strike on what was described as a hot, sunny day (WRTV 2012). The NOAA calls this phenomenon a bolt from the blue. A serious concern for event managers, lightning can travel as far as 25 miles (40 km) from its origin before it strikes. Consulting the various organizations that address lightning safety such as the National Athletic Trainers' Association, National Lightning Safety Institute, National Collegiate Athletic Association, and state high school sport associations is highly recommended (Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman 2006).

Bloodborne Pathogens

In many sports, injuries are a given. Some injuries involve the muscles and joints, while others involve the loss of blood. Strict precautions regarding handling blood are specified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). OSHA guidelines exist to prevent the spread of diseases through contact with blood. Using latex gloves and thoroughly washing hands are two preventive measures. Sports such as boxing and the martial arts are scrutinized when it comes to bloodborne illnesses.

Equipment and Supervision

Equipment is essential in sport for protection of the participants. Safety inspections must be performed to ensure that equipment is maintained and in proper working order. It is critical to make sure that equipment and supervision are adequate for the age of the patrons (Cotten and Wolohan 2009). Both equipment and supervision, from a legal perspective, fall within the realm of liability law. Sharp, Moorman, and Claussen (2010) reported concerns of liability with regard to supervision. The quality of the supervision (a competent, trained staff) and the quantity of supervisors (ratio of supervisors to participants or attendees) must be adequate for the activity or event.

Hiring competent staff and conducting a thorough screening process, including background checks, are necessary. Although events rely heavily on volunteers, every person who applies does not need to be hired. Training, according to Van Der Wagen and Carlos (2005), should address three areas: event objectives, the facility, and each staff member's job duties. Becoming familiar with expectations allows the staff to fully grasp the intent of the event. Touring the facility gives them a sense of familiarity with exits, evacuation routes, concessions, and any other aspects necessary for them to properly do their jobs. Be sure to provide employees and volunteers with the expectations of their specific jobs and how they fit into the overall experience that patrons will have while at the event.

As a shining example of how properly trained staff make for a spectacular event, we need only look at the 2012 Super Bowl in Indianapolis. The Super Bowl Host Committee provided numerous training sessions over the course of a year for its 8,000-plus volunteers. Volunteers were subjected to background checks by Homeland Security and were trained on how to respond to certain issues, should they arise. Communication was critical to the success of the Super Bowl volunteer program, and text messages, e-mails, and websites were vital tools for disseminating the necessary information about schedule or venue changes.

Insurance

Insurance needs are determined by the type and location of your event, but at a minimum event organizers need to secure liability insurance to protect their financial investment and protect against potential legal action related to civil or criminal law (deLisle 2009; Supovitz 2005). Liability insurance is necessary because facility owners will require you to purchase it to protect their interests in your event and because of the duty owed to participants, spectators, and workers (Supovitz 2005). This duty refers to the requirement of the party hosting the event to provide a safe environment for all involved. Due diligence in the planning process should account for potential issues that could result in injury or worse to participants, spectators, or workers. According to Van Der Wagen and Carlos (2005), liability claims "can be reduced by careful risk analysis and prevention strategies" (p. 52). It is especially important that event planners allocate the funds necessary to procure the appropriate amount of liability coverage. Each event is different and will require insurance coverage based on the size, complexity, and location of the impending event (Supovitz 2005).

CROWD CONTROL

Among the many skills required of facility managers is an understanding and appreciation of crowd dynamics and the relationship of crowding to facility design and management. Fruin

(1984) reported that good crowd planning and management improves the public's enjoyment of events and encourages attendance. It also reduces crowd-related accidents, their associated liability claims, and the possibilities of more serious and costly incidents. This is a management skill that is critical for both the patron and the manager. Understanding the differences between crowd management and crowd control is imperative for event planners. Berlonghi (1994) defined crowd management as those measures taken to facilitate the movement and enjoyment of people. He contended that properly managing a crowd reassures people that they will get what they paid for and will return home safe and sound.

CROWD MANAGEMENT PLANS

Crafting a crowd management plan (CMP) that includes the strategies necessary for creating a successful and safe event is one part of the overall risk management plan. A CMP helps provide a safe and enjoyable environment for patrons. An effective plan addresses the following:

- Number of people at the venue
- Behavior of spectators
- Layout of the facility
- Movement and activities of guests
- Emergency response
- Specific concerns of guests visiting the facility

Following are some key terms related to crowd management.

- **Crowd expectations:** Patrons have the expectation that the environment they are entering has been prepared for the event and is safe and secure. They assume that every precaution has been taken to prevent accidental, intentional, or negligent acts that could cause harm.

- **Crowd dynamics and demographics:** Each crowd has its own unique qualities. Fell (2003) stated that crowd dynamics refers to "the management and the flow of pedestrians in crowded venues and situations" (p. 1). The demographics of the crowd also play a role in the dynamics.

- **Movement theory:** How people move within and without a facility relates to pedestrian traffic flow. As an equation, movement theory takes into account the speed at which a crowd is moving multiplied by the density and the width of the crowd, which will tell us the flow. Hoogendoorn and Bovy (2003) asserted that certain factors contribute to walking speeds, such as "personal characteristics of pedestrians (age, gender, size, health, etc.), characteristics of the trip (walking purpose, route familiarity, trip length), properties of the infrastructure (type, grade, attractiveness of environment, shelter), and finally, environmental characteristics (ambient and weather conditions)" (p. 154).

- **Evacuation procedures:** Mass exodus of crowds requires that adequate exits be unlocked and ready for use. Tragedies such as the Rhode Island nightclub disaster of 2003 are preventable if evacuation routes are not blocked or locked, preventing people from exiting the building. Pyrotechnics were set off during a rock concert, catching the nightclub on fire and creating chaos within the crowd. Several exits to the facility were chain-locked from the inside, preventing escape from the burning building and resulting in the deaths of nearly 100 people (CNN 2003).

- **Alcohol policy:** Selling alcohol requires careful consideration. If the decision to sell alcohol is made, an alcohol policy must be in place to manage the sale of alcohol and address the handling of intoxicated and obnoxious fans. Removing the patron as quickly as possible, without incident and without becoming the main attraction, is the goal.

- **Training:** Ammon, Southall, and Nagel (2010) contend that properly training staff is the first component of an effective CMP. Ticket takers, ushers, and bag-check personnel are the first line of defense in controlling risks and crowds, and these employees should be trained accordingly. Training should also include the scope of their duties and cover the second component of an effective CMP, activation and implementation of an emergency plan. Procedures for dealing with unruly or intoxicated fans should be well thought out and explained. In devising your emergency plan, consider creating a working document that

all employees will have access to. The table of contents of Purdue University's emergency plan is a good example of what to include (figure 10.2).

- **Crowd control:** Crowd control more directly relates to the actions implemented once a crowd begins to act in a way that was not planned. Examples include engaging in unsafe activities, becoming rowdy, pushing or shoving, and fighting. The 2004 "Malice in the Palace" fiasco helps up better understand how a situation can turn ugly in a matter of seconds. The Pacers–Pistons brawl originally started on the court but ended up in the stands, with players and fans battling it out Wild West style (Lage 2004; Associated Press 2004).

- **Signage:** A key ingredient of crowd control is adequate signage inside and outside a facility. Signage is one aspect of the communication plan that gives patrons necessary information to maneuver to and from and within an event. Two typical types of signage are as follows:

- **Directional signs:** These signs provide patrons with directions to important locations such as interstates, main roadways, and parking areas. Inside a facility, directional signs help patrons navigate the facility.
- **Informational signs:** These signs inform patrons of things such as prohibited items, facility rules, and locations of importance within the facility.

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■ **Figure 10.2** Purdue University's emergency plan, table of contents.

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NEGLIGENCE

For the most part, events are produced with minimal cause for concern. Most of the issues that arise are behind the scenes and are unknown to participants and spectators. But in the event something happens that places participants and spectators in harm's way, you must have a plan in place to remedy the situation. This can be addressed during the initial planning phase, where it is critical for you to take the initiative and consider the potential hazards that might interfere with hosting a safe and secure event. Specifically, the tort of negligence must be visited. You can decrease your liability with proper planning.

Cotten and Wolohan (2009) define negligence as an unintentional wrongdoing that results in injury to a person, property, or reputation. They go on to state that this is the area of law in which the sport industry sees most of its lawsuits. Simply put, negligence is failing to provide a safe environment, resulting in someone or something being injured or harmed.

Establishing negligence is not as simple as it may seem. There is no guarantee that a person injured at an event will be able to recover a monetary reward. In our sue-happy society, too many people believe that something as simple as slipping and falling is cause for compensation. But in order to make such a claim and potentially receive restitution, negligence must be proven. To prove negligence, four elements must be present: "duty, breach, cause, and damage" (Owen 2007, p. 1673).

- **Duty:** The term *duty* refers to a recognized social norm regarding how you should conduct yourself with others (Cotten and Wolohan 2009). The relationships covered by a duty are those that are viewed as inherent to the situation, such as a facility owner and invitees, coach and athlete, or teacher and student. Bell (1995) highlighted the following groups as those that must be afforded special relational considerations: (a) students, (b) employees, (c) volunteers, (d) tenants, (e) authorized visitors, and (f) trespassers. Specifically with regard to your event, you must consider the following duties: "the duty to protect against foreseeable dangers, the duty to provide adequate

security and the duty to warn about known dangers" (Bell 2005, pp. 2-3).

- **Breach:** As mentioned already, you are expected to provide a safe and secure environment for all involved in the production of your event. If you fail to provide such an environment, you are considered in breach of your duty. A breach can involve misconduct that occurred or a person's action or oversight (Owen 2007). Breach of duty is centered around two risks: (1) those that are inherent to the activity (audience participation in a halftime game) and (2) those that are negligent behaviors (climbing on a railing at a facility and falling).

- **Cause:** To determine if a defendant's actions or lack of actions were responsible for the plaintiff's injuries, the plaintiff must prove cause and effect. In other words, if someone claims he was injured while attending your event, he must prove that you (event manager or facility manager) created the situation that caused the injury (negligent behavior), either by not taking the necessary precautions or by failing to warn. It is best that event managers work closely with the facility to ensure that all potential situations are addressed before the event or that a plan is in place to address them as they arise.

- **Damage:** For recovery, there must be damages. The damage is typically either physical or emotional injury. Compensable damage can be a financial loss, an emotional distress, or an impairment.

Because sporting events involve competition, with some being very physical in nature, and spectators who have a tendency to become rowdy, it is no wonder that event managers need to diligently prepare for charges of negligence. Rowdy fans can become verbally violent, which may lead to a physical altercation. On the other end of this spectrum, jubilant fans can also become rowdy as they express unbridled emotion for their teams. Either can develop into a crowd management issue that could turn deadly. From soccer matches in Europe to concert-goers in the United States, it is hard to manage a mobile crowd, and thus injury or death could occur. Far too often we hear of

tragic situations in which people are trampled by out-of-control crowds.

As an event manager, you need to consider all potential areas of liability that are within your purview, including spectators, participants, and event workers. Ultimate liability lies with you. Liability laws vary from state to state, so you need to be aware of your responsibilities if you are managing a mobile event (Cotten and Wolohan 2009). According to Cotten and Wolohan (2009), there are three potentially liable parties to consider: employees, the administrators or supervisors, and the corporate entity (owners). For these reasons, it is critical that you hire competent staff that are responsible and trustworthy and then train them for their specific tasks.

Spectators and participants must also share some of the burden for potential problems. Spectators assume the risk of attending an event knowing that some sports have potential dangers, such as a puck clearing the Plexiglas and entering the seats, a baseball or bat flying into the stands, or an errant golf ball finding its way into a gallery. Situations such as this can be addressed through various means such as a disclaimer on the back of a ticket or signage around the event that provides warnings for spectators.

Participants in your event should be required to sign a waiver or release form before competing. Considered contracts, waivers and releases inform participants of the potential dangers associated with participating. Upon signing these forms, the participant assumes the potential risk for participating, and they surrender the right to sue

if injured during the activity (Cotten and Wolohan 2009). It is advisable to secure the services of a lawyer to help you create the necessary forms (waiver and releases) and provide counsel for local and state laws.

SUMMARY

Providing a safe and fun experience for patrons is not only expected but also legally required. Risk management strategies help address any potential issues before an event is held. Creating an overarching risk management plan, inclusive of crowd management strategies, emergency responses, and an effective communication plan, will offer protections against potential injuries and lawsuits.

Safety and security are sometimes used synonymously, but they are different. Peter Taylor, former lord chief justice of England and Wales, summed up that difference with the following quote: "You cannot create a safe environment without effective security. If a crowd gets out of control, safety will be compromised." Ultimately, facility management is responsible for maintaining order. Event and facility managers work attentively to create detailed crowd management plans that address crisis situations such as "fandemonium," the state of crowd chaos. Once a crowd reaches this level, law enforcement officers or security personnel will be called to action.

A popular quote is, "Failing to plan is planning to fail." Set an event up for success; be diligent in taking the necessary precautions to prepare for a successful event through proactive planning.