Event Organizer’s Risk Management Guidelines for Annual General Meetings

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An event organizer carries a duty to manage, monitor and plan the event so, that the visitors and the staff are not exposed to any safety risks, that might cause them harm. Safety is a condition of being safe from hurt, injury, or loss (Merriam-Webster 2018). Since events vary in size, location, type, duration and nature, each event is obligated to pursue a risk management process. Annual General Meetings are events, which take place annually after a financial period. These meetings are for the company’s interested shareholders, CEO’s and other policy-makers, to discuss the last year and the future. Each public company is required by law to hold the meeting.

The main objective of this research-based thesis is to find the biggest safety risks of annual general meetings, and the sub target is to eliminate these risks as well as possible, find a procedure for handing the possible hazards and to utilize these findings in the future. The theoretical framework of this thesis covers the event planners responsibilities to secure the events, the regulatory perspectives and agenda of annual general meetings and all the risks and hazards are scouted, analysed, and monitored. For all of the hazards, the best mitigation plan is created. This thesis is commissioned by Management Events Studio.

The research is implemented by qualitative interviews, that were all done for companies, who are or will hold an annual general meeting in this financial period. Based on the results of this thesis, a safety checklist for an event planner (organizing the annual general meetings) will be done. This checklist is attached as an appendix 2. The results will give an overall look of all the possible risks that an event organizer might face organizing annual general meetings, and what they can do to prevent a possible harm.
# Table of contents

1 Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 1  
   1.1 Thesis objective and research questions........................................................................ 2  
   1.2 The demand of the research ..................................................................................... 2  
   1.3 Thesis commissioner: Management Events Studio ..................................................... 3  

2 Annual general meetings ................................................................................................ 5  
   2.1 The regulatory perspective ..................................................................................... 6  
   2.2 Implementation issues ......................................................................................... 7  
   2.3 The aftermath ....................................................................................................... 8  

3 Event organizer’s duty and responsibilities .................................................................... 9  

4 The risk managing process .......................................................................................... 13  
   4.1 Risk identification ................................................................................................ 14  
      4.1.1 Personal security ...................................................................................... 15  
      4.1.2 GDPR and cyber safety ............................................................................. 16  
      4.1.3 Fire and other emergencies ..................................................................... 17  
      4.1.4 Site and venue security ............................................................................ 18  
      4.1.5 Attendee management ............................................................................. 19  
   4.2 Risk analysis and evaluation .............................................................................. 19  
   4.3 Mitigation and control measures ......................................................................... 21  
   4.4 Monitoring and consulting ................................................................................... 23  

5 Methodology ............................................................................................................... 24  
   5.1 Research objective ............................................................................................. 24  
   5.2 The research method .......................................................................................... 25  
   5.3 Implementation ................................................................................................... 26  
   5.4 Main findings ..................................................................................................... 27  
   5.5 Similar themes .................................................................................................... 28  
   5.6 Connection with the literature .......................................................................... 30  
   5.7 Risk Matrices ...................................................................................................... 31  
   5.8 Summary of the results ....................................................................................... 32  

6 Discussion ................................................................................................................... 34  
   6.1 Answers to the research questions ..................................................................... 34  
   6.2 Development proposals to the commissioner company ....................................... 35  
   6.3 Reliability and validity ....................................................................................... 36  
   6.4 Learning outcomes ............................................................................................. 37  

7 References .................................................................................................................. 39  

8 Appendices ................................................................................................................. 44  
   8.1 Appendix 1. Qualitative interviews: questions ..................................................... 44  
   8.2 Appendix 2. Event Organizer’s Safety checklist for Annual General Meetings .... 45
1 Introduction

Safety is a condition of being safe from hurt, injury, or loss (Merriam-Webster 2018.) Safety is all around us: White lights tell us where the exits are, vehicles commands us to buckle our seatbelt and at the traffic lights, red means stop and green means go. Safety is considered one of the most important things in anyone’s life, so why shouldn’t we be prepared to guarantee safety at events?

An event is a planned public or social occasion (Oxford Living Dictionaries 2018) and is a definition of something, that is happening and is planned (Collins Dictionary 2018). Event organizer means a person who schedules an event, and usually the person that runs it and report it (Wizards 2018). All the attendees of an event trust the event organizer to keep them safe in case something happens. Some of the tasks of the organizer are problem solving, taking care of the smooth run of the event, and being responsible of the event; from start to finish. Event organizer carries a duty to manage, monitor and plan the event so, that the visitors and the staff are not exposed to any safety risks, that might cause them harm (HSE 2019). It is highly important, that an event planner can identify the risks, eliminate and manage them as well as possible, and knows the procedure in case a hazard takes place. This is also called a risk management process.

An Annual General Meeting, also known as AGM, is the statutory meeting of the directors and shareholders of a company or of the members of a society, held once every financial year, at which the annual report is presented (Investopedia 2018). In Finland, it is required to be held annually by a law and usually held in the third of fourth month of the year. At the meeting, the executives, companies’ board and shareholders interact together and decide on important things for the next financial year. In bigger companies, sometimes it’s the only time all of the companies’ decision-makers interact (Investopedia 2018).

An event organizer is required to create a risk management process for each event, they are organizing (Johnson 2017, 42-43.) This thesis is a broad risk management process that is done for specifically annual general meetings. The research is done in order to map out the biggest risks in annual general meetings in order to do the risk assessment and risk management process, as it is required. This thesis is a part of bigger entity, and will be used as a part of new strategy plan for Management Events Studio, which will be a commissioner of this thesis.
1.1 Thesis objective and research questions

The main objective of this thesis is to identify the biggest safety risks of annual general meetings. These safety risks will be scouted based on a literature research and qualitative interviews. All of these hazards will be identified, analysed and evaluated. This will all be done for annual general meetings. The control measures for these risks will be mapped, and the monitoring and consulting will be explained.

The main research question of this thesis is:

- What are the biggest safety risks of the annual general meetings?

The sub-questions of this thesis are:

- How can an event organizer eliminate or reduce these risks?
- What can an event organizer do, in case a risk occurs?

A focus of this research is also to utilize these findings in the future. This will be done in various ways by the commissioner of this thesis. The findings will be a supporting pillar in building a new business strategy, and will be a highly important tool to scout new clients, and to build up the brand image of Management Events Studio. In addition, an event organizer’s safety checklist is created and will be taken into use by the commissioner. This will be used as a tool to make sure that all the possible hazardous areas and items are checked and tested before the event. This will be attached as appendix 2.

This thesis consists a qualitative research method on top the theoretical framework. The interviews will be implemented by the researcher of this thesis under the commissioner’s supervision. These interviews will be made in order to get answers to the research questions and to gain more validity for this research. The interviews are the best research method for this purpose to focus on quality, not quantity of the results. This gives more deeper connection to the reality of the existing risks, and gives a better understanding of improvement of risk management.

1.2 The demand of the research

An event sector has massively grown lately, and it brings more and more risks to the field. The monitored growth of an event sector, both internationally and domestically, has caused significant development in tourism. More people travel and attend the events in destinations – Events incorporate a lot of options and range of activities and recourses. This all contributes towards the safety, since the potential hazards grow and get more and
more effective (Reid & Ritchie 2011). Since the safety risks have increased, an event organizer’s duties get more significant, and risk management process has increased its importance.

Lately, the world has changed a lot. Terrorism and outside threats have shaped the world. The fear of safety has become more realistic. Safety is usually changed and modified based on actual events. This means, that when something happens, it is taken into account. Safety should be guaranteed and the risks should be eliminated before the hazard occurs. At the present time, this is not the case with all events. Safety risks are rising all the time because events get bigger, the weather gets more unpredictable, and the technology is taking over.

The need for this research is also highly important and current for its sensitivity and unconsciousness. There hasn’t been a research or a study of the subject before. There is guidelines and books about safety assessments, but none of a business events, especially focussing on AGM’s, and their possible safety risks. More and more companies externalizes their events nowadays, which means that the event organizer needs to know the procedures and regulatory perspective of these specific events. This research is made from event organizer’s point of view, and will be done for the commissioner of this thesis, and for their specific needs. This research and the results of the study will be useful for anyone, who is working in the event management field.

1.3 Thesis commissioner: Management Events Studio

The commissioner company for this thesis will be Management Events Studio, also well known as ME studio. The company is originally built inside the Management Events International as a business unit to serve customers, who wanted to organize own, branded events for their use. In 2007, when the operation grew internationally and the process differentiated, ME Studio became its own limited company and got its name. For the past 12 years, ME Studio has become an event organizer company, which serves a vide group of Finnish and public companies, and Me studio organizes and designs annually around 150-200 events both in Finland and abroad, for 30 customers.

In Management Events Studio, the expertise is the focus on clients, and understanding their business strategy, and the event concepts. This is done by studying their history with the events, and the design is doing in order to maintain the client’s look, but also to highlight their strengths visually and make their look fresh. This will differ the client from their competition. The active face-to-face communication and networking with the client is
highly important before, during, and after events. This active sales and contact with the cli-
ents make ME studio to differ from other event companies in Finland. Management
Events studio is focused in client understanding, and following their needs with the inno-
vative event concepts, find new marketing strategies, stay current and fresh in event field,
and also offer surprising experiences, which creates positive results.

At this moment, ME Studio is filled with 17 staff members, which 14 are regular and 3 are
in a 5-month trainee program. The organization has three function – sales, concept de-
sign and production. The trainee program intakes three people every half-a-year by offer-
ing a front row seat for people interested in event organizing. This will contain different
tasks in and out the studio, and hand-on working with events: before, during and after.
This is also a big recruitment channel for ME studio to find the future producers, sales
people and designers to hire. I had a privilege to work in Management Events Studio as a
sales trainee starting in august, 2018. This opened my view of event management, and all
the tasks involved in the process.

The idea for this thesis was decided together, when we were discussion the area, that
needs to be researched more and is needed in order to gain more knowledge of risks that
take place in events. In itself, event safety issues was too vide as a subject, so we wanted
to focus in annual general meetings in more specifically. This was totally unresearched
area, but should be known among event organizers. Annual general meetings are regu-
lated with rules, law requirements, and have their own risks on top of the possible safety
issues taking place in the venue. This makes it extremely important and interesting re-
search subject and area.

The aim for this research is to utilize the research and it's results in the future marketing
and finding new clients. The focus is to organize externalized annual general meetings.
This will also lift the brand knowledge and give ME studio more knowledge and aware-
ness of safety issues. With this discussion, the company can get more events, clients and
visibility. This thesis is also used as a tool to build new business strategy for the year
2020. As a one result, a safety check-list was created and will be used by the staff mem-
bers in order to guarantee a safe event. This is attached as appendix 2.
2 Annual general meetings

The Annual General Meetings, also known as AGM’s, takes place yearly after a financial year or period (Isännöintiliitto 2018). These meetings are for the company’s interested shareholders, CEO’s and other policy-makers, to discuss the last year and the future. All of the shareholders with the right to vote decides about current issues, such as appointments, executives, compensation, payments, and auditor selection (Investopedia 2018). Usually, the chairman or the president of the company leads the conversation and decision-making.

In Finland, annual general meetings usually take place from March to April. Finland’s Ministry of Justice (chapter 624/2006, second part) sets the law for annual general meetings in Finland and states that these meetings are required by law. The 1§’s states, that all the companies are required to have a meeting and the decisions need to be written, signed, numbered and dated. There is not always a need to have every general member present. In these cases, you can either hold hybrid or virtual meetings. The meeting types can be decided with the companies’ policy-makers and all the attendees needs to follow the decision. A hybrid meeting is a gathering, where some people are present and some join virtually. Breaking the term, hybrid in general means two types of components performing the same function. A virtual meeting is a meeting where all components have joined the meeting via technology, and exist primarily online (Merriam-Webster 2018).

What makes these meetings special and differ from other events with the specific rules, that needs to be followed. In order to fit in the law requirements, the event needs to follow the agenda set specifically for AGM’s, and discuss about the specific subjects. This makes the events extremely interesting and important to research. This needs to be marked in a report. Even though the subjects talked about are usually encrypted, some parts of the agenda needs to be visible, and available to read by anyone.

The chairman of the annual general meeting may always decide about convening a new meeting or postponing a matter to a continuation meeting. The notice of the meeting needs to be delivered to the shareholders 1) in a private company within two weeks and 2) Public company within a month from the request to hold the meeting in the first place (Investopedia 2018). In this case, the meeting is usually organized fast so it will still take place in the first quarter year and be part of the financial year. In case of an urgent matter, the annual general meeting might be held in a short notice. In this case, it is called an extraordinary general meeting, also known as Emergency general meeting or EGM. The
meeting follows almost the same protocol than Annual General Meeting, the only difference is the short period of time and that EGM is often concerning company management only (Investopedia 2018). Based on an online database for Finnish law regulations and other juridical information, or FINLEX for short, there are plenty of situations where an extraordinary general meeting needs to be organized (FINLEX 2018). The meeting must be organized and help if 1) the articles of association stipulate or the board of directors deems it necessary or 2) if the auditor or shareholders with one tenth of all shares demand the meeting in order for a given matter to be dealt with.

2.1 The regulatory perspective

Annual general meetings have a mandatory agenda that needs to be followed (Investopedia 2018.) The agenda intakes several things, that needs to be managed and dealt with. The basic agenda of annual general meetings is to go through previous year’s meeting and decisions, and discuss the following year’s needs and expectations. Based on the Finnish law, the following issues and elements needs to be covered in the annual general meeting:

- Welcoming and presenting the chairman
- Going through the previous meeting
- President’s and CEO’s reports (if available)
- Presentation of Financial reports
- Constitution amendments (if any)
- Elections for the next year’s committee
- Life memberships/awards/special thanks (if any)
- Next financial year: wants, beliefs, and mentioning the next auditor.

Since the meetings are required to organize by law and a certain agenda is followed, all of these procedures needs to be followed. The agenda of the Annual General meeting will be sent no less than 45 days before to all the attendees and the agenda will need to get approved by the board before the meeting takes place. The meeting can be executed virtually or hybrid, depending on the company’s policy (Iata 2016). Even though, the meeting needs to contain at least the following points of the agenda: minutes of the previous meeting, financial statements, ratification of director’s actions, and election of the board of directions for the next year.

After this, a report needs to be done, but depending on the company’s policy, it is published online or offline to staff and members only. All the Annual General Meetings need
to be scripted afterwards and have an annual report of the meeting. This annual report should contain at least the following: The president’s report, the secretary’s report, board and staff members, the summary of the strategic plans, results of the competitions, programmes run by the associations, a list of members by category, thanks to the sponsors/supporters/event organizers and anything else that will be found relevant (Play by the Rules 2019). If some of these perspectives are not followed, based on Finland’s law, the annual general meeting might be disqualified and may be in need to be organized again.

2.2 Implementation issues

There is not a one size or rule that fits to all the annual general meetings (ICSA 2018. 2-4). All of these meetings are different, even though they follow the same agenda. This includes different implementation issues that varies, based on the meeting type. A big issue is that there is not just one way to attend the meeting: especially in 21st century, there is no real two-way communication in annual general meetings. A big problem is that The AGM is treated as a formality and a lot of times, the meeting might turn into a monologue, and the importance and prime purpose of the meeting might get lost.

This means that some of the good ideas and valid questions may be lost without proper communication channel. Therefore, companies have taken this into account and are using different platforms to reach all the attendees and offer them a good channel to share their ideas. This issue brought an idea that is used a lot in 21st century; hybrid and virtual meetings. With the grown awareness of hybrid and virtual meetings, a lot of technical problems and possible hazards regarding the personal security, information and verification are met. Some implementation issues also follow, when emergency general meetings are held. Since these are usually organized in a short period of time, a lot of problems can be faced in these situations, since all the regulations might not be followed. Firstly, the 45-days-notice usually never happens, since the meeting might need to be held within a week or two. Also, some of the issues and agenda might get lost in the time. In any meetings, the company’s members need to consult the biggest shareholders before any change. This is made to ensure that they agree with the changes especially when they move towards virtual meetings. With EGM’s this is not always met.

Since there are some implementation issues, usually the agenda and regulatory perspectives need to be changed a bit. There are some of the identified practical aspects used in implementation of hybrid meetings. For example, companies has to ensure legal compliance for all the attendees where applicable and check their documents. All of the same procedures need to be followed even if there is technology failure. This means, that the organizer of the meeting needs to engage relevant service providers to handle the hybrid
meeting in case something happens. This is crucially important for the interface between the online platform and the physical meeting. Some issues might be met, when organizing an extraordinary general meeting. Since the meetings are usually organized in a hurry, it might surface its own problems. The hurry may affect finding a safe venue, studying it, making a background checks of the attendees and testing the technology for possible virtual attendees. Also, the strictions of the AGMs needs to be met. If there is not enough time to do an accurate safety assessment, it might cause safety issues.

2.3 The aftermath

There are plenty of things that needs to be done after the event. This process of the event is also called the aftermath (Berrini 2017). This process is the same with all types of general meetings intakes everything, that needs to be prosecuted after the event. The most important thing, that is part of the strictions of annual general meetings, is writing a report of all the things, that were discussed and decided. The report is usually sent to all attendees of the meeting and published online.

After the events, there are some big issues that should be discussed. Firstly, in the few weeks after the meeting has been held, is the prime time to analyse the vote and outcomes of the voting, when it’s still fresh in everyone’s minds. While analysing the vote, the investors sentiment needs to be taken into account as well (Berrini 2017). Also, there is a common mistake that should be avoided: if a company receives a high number or votes against the items, it might be helpful to reach out to major investors to see what they see is the best decision in this case and what do they think is relevant. Not just to focus on the big numbers. The board and the management team needs to know what the shareholders are saying and what they want. The information is the most meaningful when analysing the results. If all the largest stakeholders didn’t give enough information, the board should also check the recent public statements on issues that may be relevant. After taking care of the data and analysing the meeting, the board should start planning ahead for the fall. The companies are in charge of linking the earlier feedback and the votes together with the agenda items and to engage this in future (Berrini 2017). Usually these are the companies with the most productive shareholder engagement programs.

After the analysing is done, the data needs to be put in next year’s agenda and use it to analyse again the next years votes and results. After all these are made, the board needs to recognize that the off-season to organize AGM’s is becoming the new busy season. Companies need to be thoughtful and think, how to approach the meeting and how to get everyone to attend.
3 Event organizer’s duty and responsibilities

Risk Assessment is a purposeful recognition of uncertainties that might cause safety risks at events. The objective of risks assessment is to minimize the liabilities and maximize the opportunities of having fun at the event (Rutherford Silvers 2008). In many cases, the event risk manager is the same as the event manager, therefore the event manager needs to do the risks analysis for the event. In some cases, where they are different, they must work together to ensure the risk management is infused throughout planning and execution of the event project.

It is essential that the organizers of the event plan the strategies and deal with possible attacks, hazards and risks correctly to insure the safety of the attendees (Reid & Ritchie 2011). Whether the safety is guaranteed by the event organizer or an event risk manager, the staff is the public face of the event. They should be the eyes and the ears of the head of safety, in case something would go wrong. The communication is a main key, when it comes to guaranteeing safety. The safety personnel must be able to be mentally prepared to everything: to be calm and secure the safe situations, but also to be quick to solve problems (Säterhed, Hansson, Strandlund, Nilsson, Nilsson, Locken & Meimermondt 2011, 175-180). This six step procedure is called “state of mind scale.”

![State of mind scale](image)

Figure 1. State of mind scale. (Säterhed et al. 2011, 175-180).
The lowest two steps (representing and informing) are a normal situation, and should always be the normal state of an event manager. This intakes a pleasant body language, informative presentation, smiling to the visitors, and overall a positive mood. The third and the forth steps (preventing and reacting) are the focus of this thesis as well: in its simplicity, these two mean the fast problem solving and acting in case of emergency. The highest steps (rescuing and emergency response) are the procedures when something has already happened. These intakes knowing how to act in situations, how to contact emergency numbers, knowing the emergency plan, and how fast is the situation managed. Going up and down these steps should be smooth and happen in a matter of seconds (Säterhed et al. 2011, 175-180).

On top of knowing how to go up and down these imaginary steps, it is likely, that an event manager is on charge of the risks by him or herself (Rutherford Silvers 2008.) This means, that it is event organizers duty to teach other staff to understand the venue and the possible safety risks, by illustrating the benefits of dealing the risks. This means, that if the event organizer doesn’t do this, none of the staff knows what the procedure is in each case. The responsibilities vary, but every event needs to be secured and the risk assessment needs to be done in order to control the safety of everyone.

In order to secure an annual general meeting, the risk manager needs to know at least the type/purpose of the meeting, the schedule and agenda, the expected attendance, the activities included (if any), other organizations and people included (if different than the expected attendees), the roles of the staff and the venue’s/AGM’s regulatory perspectives. With these tools, an event organizer can elaborate a risk assessment for all the possible hazards and risks of annual general meeting. The responsibilities, that belongs to the event organizer, are all listed in the checklist, that will be the main tool and product of this research. This is also put into a safety checklist, that can be found as appendix 2.

It is significant importance to know the risks involving events (Reid & Ritchie 2011). It is in event manager’s responsibility to know how to reassure that something risky doesn’t happen, but also know how to act, if something happens. This also explains, why the role of the risk management is such an important issue in events – it guarantees, that the attendees can enjoy the event fully without having a fear of not being safe. In order to share the responsibilities, the event organizer needs to know the hazards, that the business meeting might face. Some of the risk categories are human (type and size of crows expected), technological (mechanical, utilities, gas), natural (the location, site area conditions) and environmental (weather) hazards (Government of South Australia 2010).
Event safety organizer’s responsibility is also to create a safety document for an event. Tukes, also known as Finnish Safety and Chemical agency, provides a consumer safety act for event organizers (2015). Based on the section 7, an event organizer is expected to have and/or create a safety document for each event. This withholds safety risks that might cause danger to the visitors and staff. The document also includes control measures and the procedure plan for the possible hazards. Events are required to have a safety document, that is present at the event day as well, in case any attendee or worker wants to see it (Tukes 2015).

Based on the Government Act of Safety Document Concerning Certain Consumer Services’ (1110/2011) section 2, the guidelines for the safety document are the following (Tukes 2015. 14):

1) Event organizer: name/company, home town, and contact information
2) The responsible safety/risk manager
3) Possible safety risks and possible consequences
4) Control measures to prevent the safety risks
5) Instructions/ procedure in specific dangers (section 3, Tukes)
6) The safety training and requirements of the staff (that participate at the event)
7) Equipment/devices used at the event
8) The circumstance restrictions
9) The maximum number of participants that fits at the venue and the health, physical state, experience, training or other requirements of all the visitors.
10) The measures, that ensure the safety for all the participants.
11) Information gathering/ monitoring of the safety risks and possible hazards, that takes place at the event.
12) Possible procedures to follow the section 8 of the Consumer Safety Act
13) how the information on this safety document is presented to the visitors
14) Which information on the Government Act is delivered to the participants and all of those, who are influenced by the event (e.g. staff).

With safety document, there should also be a check list for an event/risk organizer and manager. This list should include all the possible sources of safety risks, but also the procedures (e.g. exits, fire extinguisher and the location of the first-aid locker). This is provided as appendix 2. Event organizers checklist. An event organizer should produce a safety policy statement (HSE 2019). This statement intakes the specific responsibilities of an event organizer, and how to carry these out.
This also covers the event organizer from the possible law suits. This should be studied together with the company, who has the annual general meeting, in case they have requirements (or wants to organize something by themselves). This safety policy statement has a list of each party: which responsibilities belong to who. This is only required, not mandatory, but the event organizer should follow it in order to have a common goal with the company, and a statement that secure the event organizer.
4 The risk managing process

Risk management process is an umbrella term for risk assessment and it is a careful examination of different, possible hazards that could cause harm to people (HSE 2018). A risk management is the planning, organizing, directing and controlling of all the activities to active the goal of the event. (Rutherford Silvers 2008). The goal is to react to the uncertainties by minimizing the liabilities, both personal, legal and financial. In order to do all of this, an event organizer must know the venue, the company, the attendees and the environment of the event in order to guarantee a full safety for annual general meetings. Since each events differ in purpose, size, venue and type, the risk management process should be done specifically for each event that takes place.

Based on ISO, stands for International Organization for Standardization, provides a figure for risk management process (presented in below), that follows a five step procedure, where the three middle ones together are called risk assessment. These three are identifying, analyzing, and evaluating the risks. All of the five steps also need communication, consulting, monitoring and reviewing all the time (ISO 31000:2018). Risk management process is made, so an organizer can weigh up the possible precautions and acts to prevent the harm. Risk management process consists of systematic identification of risks, the analysing of the risk levels by risk matrix, and the risks should be evaluated. It is not only understood as the risks that society faces, but also to determine the effectiveness of the disaster, and risk prevention, mitigation and the probabilities of the impacts (Simmons, Dauwe, Gowland, Gyenes, King, Riedstra, & Schneiderbauer).

Figure 2. Risk Management Process (ISO 31000:2018).
Understanding the risk management is highly important when it comes to event planning. The basic setup for events is that it is fun, it looks harmless and it is entertaining. The unfortunate fact is, that a lot of risks can be faced before, during and event after the event. Each event needs to have a risk management in order to know the basis of the risks, how to control them, and how to procedure in case of emergency (Cooper 2018). Since there are a lot of stakeholders and organizations at the event (including accommodation, government agencies, venues, construction, staging, food/beverages, transport etc.) a lot of things in these aspects needs to be taken cared of (Reid & Ritchie 2011). Since this thesis is focusing on the annual general meetings, therefore the accommodation and the transport is not taken into account in this research.

Since the event industry has a huge growth and popularity, a lot of risks have risen in the surface. Events draw huge crowds of people together, and a lot of times they are stuck together with a little space. This brings a lot of potential to have significant impacts (Reid & Ritchie 2011). In many cases, both large and small events have their own legal requirements and the safety risks may vary. This makes monitoring an event and updating the risk assessment highly important. Risk monitoring will be discussed more in later chapters.

4.1 Risk identification

Risk/hazard identification is wide step, because it answers to the questing *What can go wrong?* This step also consists examining the program to determine risk at the events. This is the most important step in risk assessment. This chapter is focused on defining the biggest safety risks of annual general meetings. The most common safety risks, that rose from the literature, are merged together in five biggest safety risk categories (identified later). Since this thesis is focusing on event manager’s tasks in annual general meetings, the environmental hazards are not discussed in this paper. All of the risks are viewed and analyzed from event organizer’s point-of-view.

Hazard classification, also known as risk identification, can be done in many ways. Department of Defense (2017. 15-33) categorizes risks in three different categories based on their impacts of cost, schedule, and performance. These risk categories are technical (emergencies with electricity), programmatic (non-technical risks that are controlled by program executive office, the PEO) and business/external risks (non-technical, but mostly occurring outside of the PEO). This doesn’t work in annual general meetings, since most of the risks would be included in the first two categories. This is so, because this identification is made in event organizer’s point-of-view, and the external risks are not their duty.
Another way to identify the risks is a CASE method by Talbot (2018). CASE is a shorten from words “Consequence, Asset, Source and Event.” the hazards causing risks are analysed by using this method, and depending on the similarities, they are identified and categorized. Consequences, also known as effects of the risk, are analyzed in the next chapter. In this case, the assets that are at risk, are the attendees. The sources are depends on the different hazards: usually they are coming from outside the venue, technical issues or food-related source. The last category, event, means the particular type of incident. In this situation, this can’t be used either, since the hazards can’t be grouped with the sources (too many sources), or consequences (similar in each situation), and the assets and the event type is same in each hazard.

Since there are plenty of ways to categorize the risks, the following risk categories are done by using both both Talbot’s (2018) and Department of the Defense (2017) way to analyze risks. In this chapter, these possible risks are personal security, GDPR and cyber security, Fire and other emergencies, site and venue security, and attendee management. These are done based on their likelihood to occur in annual general meetings and the possible consequences. This will be explained in more detailed the following chapters.

4.1.1 Personal security

Person’s health or safety can be threaten by anything: food, electricity, electronic devices, weather, or attack inside/outside the venue. Personal security is something that is hard to totally eliminate: every event has possible risks. Personal Security is an aim to protect and keep people safe from physical and domestic violence, abuse, and from predatory adults (US Legal 2016). It defines the concept of personal security vide, because it involves protection from personal harm as well. Since there are numerous ways of person getting hurt, taking care of personal security becomes the most important thing in events and the important task for event organizer. These tasks include knowledge of the requirements of the event and venue, choosing right resources, first-aid training and knowledge of the attendee list (US Legal, 2016).

The Health hazards are often hardest to recognize because the effects may delay the consequences (Rossol 2000 & Rutherford Silvers 2008). This means, that, for example food poisoning, might occur and seem like a small deal, but might affect the person even after the event. This brings the importance of monitoring: personal security needs to be secured after the event as well. An article by McCarthy holds five steps of the logistics of event security, that should be taken care of. These steps are presented as 1) Know the venue inside and out, 2) Gauge attendee risk, 3) Control the crowd, 4) assess the poten-
tial for large-scale attacks, and 5) keep communication tight. All of these steps are important. Though in case of the annual general meetings, the group is usually well known for each other’s and sitting, so the crown control shouldn’t be a big issue. On top of these five should be added a background checks, especially in hybrid or virtual meeting: the regulations of AGM include a comprehensive security check.

Event organizer should also be aware of the nature of the event and the occupants, crown density, means of egress (continuous way of exit travel from any point of the building), communication systems and structural integrity (Rutherford Silvers 2008). Knowing every attendee in personal level is recommended. This is not only to secure other’s safety, but also to give a safety to the person himself and to the event organizer. The research about food allergies and the awareness by all people involved in the dining proves is necessary (Pongdee 2019). Also knowing people’s face reduces a possibility of wrong person entering to the meeting.

Especially preventing any personal harm happening, it is important to do a risk assessment for the venue before and after the event. This will be provided in the attachments (Appendix 2. Event Organizer’s checklist). This checklist is one of the sub objectives for this thesis, and guarantees an event organizer to remember test and check all areas and items, that might cause harm to anyone attending the event.

4.1.2 GDPR and cyber safety

Cyber security is a term to portray computer systems, software and electronic data, in this case GDPR. The term GDPR (shorten from words General Data Protection Regulation) is one of the biggest risks in annual general meetings. The regulation sets the rules relating to the protection of the personal data regarding each member participating. This regulation also intakes the free movement of personal data. Personal data has a lot of identified information of a person, therefore it can’t be leaked unless the person wants it to. To secure the personal data, an event provider needs to be careful with the information. For example, having a list of the attendees (with personal information) is not allowed, unless the company has given a permission. Even sending the list via e-mail is a high risk. In many cases, the presentations and the attendee list is provided weeks before the actual meeting, which means a high protection on the information before, during, and especially after the meeting. Deleting the data after the meeting is highly important, since there is a high chance a wrong person can attend to the laptop or flash drive, and get the personal information (Hanchar 2018).
There are some regulations how to work with the data so the GDPR is met correctly and nothing leaks outside the company. At the annual general meeting, an event organizer should organize an information audit, review regulation forms, double-check individuals’ rights and develop procedures for data breach management. Usually, the event organizer has the list of attendees, the companies’ information, agenda of the meeting or the presentation for the event in their files. The new GDPR regulations about cyber security are coming to effect on May 28, 2018 (Hanchar 2018). This means, that all the event companies organizing any events that deal with any lists or information of the company needs to study the new regulations before organizing any event to provide a safety of the attendees and the company.

4.1.3 Fire and other emergencies

Fire and other emergencies are merged into one hazard category, because the sources are usually the same in the biggest incidents: they are usually caused by electricity, e.g. blackout, and weather, like snow, lightning and heavy wind. Usually in this case, the personal security among attendees and staff might be in take, like falling down. These emergencies usually have a clear procedure provided. University of Cambridge has provided an information package of what to do in case of Fire or other emergencies (2019). They have delivered information for venue, fire marshals, staff and attendees.

Since this thesis is focusing on the staff and the event organizer, this chapter is also going to focus on these procedures. The staff needs to know how to warn others, how to operate the systems, what are the locations of the escape routes, and how to alarm the fire apartment. Before the event is held, the venue’s alarms should be checked as well and the fire extinguisher should be located. This is important, since the annual general meetings usually have a lot of technology involved. Everyone, who is attending, usually has a laptop or other kind of device with them.

In case the fire takes place, the most important thing is to get all the attendees outside safely. The information about the meeting point and closest exits should be provided before and/or during the event, and print somewhere to the venue. As Fire apartment states, never use the elevator or go towards the heat (Apartment Fire Safety 2014). If there is smoke or heat in the stairway or hallway, close the door. Also a worth to mention, as organizer or attendee should never risk their own safety. If the event organizer or staff feels unsafe, always take care of yourself first before helping others. The emergency and evacuation plan needs to be event specific and shall address at least the types and nature of the emergencies that could reasonable occur during this event, the preparation, the personnel who can authorize an evacuation, establishment of an emergency control center,
the role event staff will play, the brief information of emergency personnel (including fire apartment and police numbers) and the site map that shows the exits and the meeting point (Auckland Council 2018). The fire and emergency plan should always be made and provided for all the event attendees.

4.1.4 Site and venue security

Something that has been all over the news channels, websites and papers is terrorism. Since 19070’s till 2018, there has been 1800 terrorism conflicts at different types of events (Global Terrorism Database 2018.) These include all kinds of attacks and attack attempts listed. This is a big number, since it’s not something that people think first, when they attend to an event. Annual general meetings are usually smaller gathering with people who work together, and the attack is very rare. Of course, this is something that event manager can’t eliminate, but they have to be prepared if it would happen.

An effect of terrorism and attacks is discussed as part of site and venue security, since it has made a huge impact in safety at the events and venues. Even though this is not a huge risk in Finland, it is still something that is all around us all the time. In 2017 Manchester had one of its biggest terrorism attack during a pop-sensation Ariana Grande’s concert (Booth 2017). In the same year, another horrible terrorism attack took place in Las Vegas, NV, United States, when a man shot people at a country festival. Together, these two incidents took 70+ people’s lives and injured hundreds (Lujoy & Matza 2017). These are only a few event-based terrorism attacks in the last 10 years. After some of the incidents, Finland has reportedly added security for biggest concert areas. Even though Finland is still one of the safest countries in the world, the event planner needs to be prepared for any types of attacks in the future.

Health and Safety Executive website lists all aspects, that needs to be done before and during the event. Some of these aspects include developing the emergency plan, knowing the exits/ entrances and securing them, sharing the plan with the attendees and testing the possible evacuation (HSE 2018). Some things during the event is to keep tight security and check everyone’s personal information, when they enter. This is the number one thing to eliminate possible attacks to the venue. The event organizer is in charge of event site capacity, capability and marketing perspective, not in case of an AGM (Rutherford Silvers 2008). The site rating attributes are attendance volume, nature of the event and needed safety procedures, event duration and timing, the location and the needed equipment. Usually annual general meetings don’t cover the transportation, so these issues are not talked about in this chapter.
4.1.5 Attendee management

Attendee management usually doesn’t rise as a big problem in annual general meeting. This is because the people usually work in the same company (or are stakeholders), and are known for each other beforehand. They also sit down for the meeting, or join virtually. Still, there are things that needs to be considered. Buller (2016) has provided nine steps for efficient attendee management. Following this, the first step is to find the venue that suits best for this group of attendees. With annual general meetings, the next stop is to choose the right communication channels and inform the attendees.

Since the AGM’s have a lot of legal structures that needs to be followed, the event organizer should go through all of those at this point and provide a list of safety procedures to all the attendees while inviting them to the event. With attendees, it’s important to make an extensive security check before, during and after the event. Checking the personal information and knowing, who attends, is highly important. Then, the event organizer knows, who are the important persons to protect, but also if there are any people who might be a danger to others. When entering, the security should go through everyone’s belongings. At the venue, the event organizer checks that the audience has enough room, everyone has a seat and no one is in danger.

4.2 Risk analysis and evaluation

After identifying the biggest risks of annual general meetings, the risk matrix needs to be made in order to analyze the likelihood and the consequence of the risk. Risk matrix is a guide for an event organizer to avoid, reduce, retain and transfer the risk (Marshall & Alexander 2006). By using it, it can solve a lot of possible problems, and eliminate many risks from occurring. This chapter is a theoretical look for the risk matrix and its use. In later chapters, the risk matrix is done in order to apply it to the annual general meetings.

Figure 3. Risk Matrix (Marshall & Alexander 2006). The figure is modified.
The advantages and limitations of using risk matrix should be recognized, before taking it into a use. Some of the limitations that might occur are the problematic mathematical features, and it might make it harder to analyze the risks (Cox 2008). Some of these problems are poor resolution in the matrix, the errors from the qualitative and qualitative research, and some ambiguous inputs and outputs. In this case, the main problem might occur from the resolution: some of the risks (for example terrorism or a weather related hazard) might be very rare, but the consequences might be dangerous. Whereas something likely to happen (for example getting a flu or slipping in the ice) might not have any bad effects, goes in the same with terrorism (Cox 2008). These two totally different hazards might fall in the same category, which might give a wrong idea of these two risks: both are totally different.

Using the risk matrix can also mistakenly assign higher categories for certain ratios to the smaller quantitative risk (Talbot 2018). Some of the effects of the hazard high not be categorized and analyzed. For example, it might be impossible to analyze a likelihood of a hazard, that is out of an event organizer’s hands (like weather or outside threats). This is why they might be categorized poorly. Ambitious inputs and outputs means, that the categorizations cannot be made objectively. The inputs (e.g. frequency) and outputs (risk rating) are hard to analyze sometimes. Different users and organizers may have opposite, totally different ratings of a risk based on their previous experience and knowledge.

There are a lot of good in risk matrices (Talbot 2018). Not only are they easy to use, but they give a good view with one look of all the possible scenarios. Risk matrix can be effective and help organizations and event planners on track of the event. He also writes, that a lot of the limitations mentioned can be overcome with a detailed risk assessment, that is well researched. The risk matrix is used by the biggest companies, for example Department of Defense, International Organization for Standardization and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which makes it one of the most used risk analyzing technique in the world. This is why I choose to use risk matrix in order to analyze the biggest risks of annual general meetings by finding each hazard’s likelihood and consequence.

Since probability impact and the consequence probability are the most commonly used methods in risk assessment (Dumbrava 2013) this thesis is focused on using these two in order to analyze the biggest safety risks in annual general meetings. Both likelihood and the consequences are categories from 1-5 (likelihood; unlikely 1 to define 5 and consequences; insignificant 1 to catastrophic 5). Numbering the possibility and the impact helps to place them in risk matrix, and both figures are presented in the next page.
Unlikely | Almost no probability of the hazard occurring. | 1
---|---|---
Seldom | Very small probability of the hazard occurring. | 2
Occasional | About 50/50 probability of the hazard occurring. | 3
Likely | High probability of the hazard occurring. | 4
Define | Almost certain probability of the hazard occurring. | 5

Figure 4. Likelihood chart. (Marshall & Alexander 2006). The figure is modified.

Insignificant | Almost no consequences or significant threat. | 1
Minor | a small potential consequences or significant threat. | 2
Moderate | Mediocre consequences or threats. | 3
Critical | Possibility to serious consequences or threat. | 4
Catastrophic | Extreme negative consequences and significant threat. | 5

Figure 5. Consequence chart. (Marshall & Alexander 2006). The figure is modified.

By using these number systems, it is easier to place each of the hazards to the risk matrix by adding the numbers together. For example, if the hazard’s likelihood of happening is small (seldom; 2) and the consequences possibly serious (critical; 4), the place in the risk matrix is simply 2 + 4 = 6. The risk matrix, presented in figure 3, has the likelihood meter on the left side, from bottom to the top (2-6) and the consequence meter from left to right (2-6). So, if the likelihood of the hazard is higher that the consequence, then it is usually places on the left side, up, not right ride and down (Talbot 2018).

The risk are used to calculate and determinate the risk from taking place in an event (Dumbrava 2013). The graphical presentation is used to highlight the position of the level of consequence and likelihood in order to make it easier to visually place the risk in the risk matrix. The matrix is taken into use in later chapter (5.7. Risk matrices).

### 4.3 Mitigation and control measures

When the risk assessment (identification, analyzation and evaluation of a risk) is made, the next step that is going to be done is the mitigation of the risks: elimination and risk control. Risk Control is taking an action to eliminate the biggest hazards or health risks and minimizing the safety risks as much as possible (Code of Practise 2011). Control measures should be clear to everyone, so in case a hazard takes place, everyone knows
how to work together and who’s responsibility it is to take care of it. In order to control the risks there needs to be a clear, best method to handle the risk (Government of South Australia 2010). This was already presented and partly covered in risk identification paragraphs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elimination</td>
<td>Removing the hazard entirely through new design or implementing a new process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution</td>
<td>Replacing hazardous materials or methods with less hazardous alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Isolating, enclosing or containing the hazard or through design improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Ensuring safe operating procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</td>
<td>Making sure that appropriate safety equipment is available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Methods to control a risk at events. Government of South Australia (2010).

In this chapter, a five step method presented and best suitable for annual general meetings and to control the risks at these events, is presented as figure 6. The aim is always towards eliminating the risks, but the next four steps are in case the elimination can’t be done. For example, we can’t fully eliminate all the sources that might effect to personal security, or cyber security: technical issues, like blackouts, or weather can’t be handled. In this case, there is good to be other steps as well. Substitution is a method, that attempts to replace the hazardous material with less hazardous alternatives. In annual general meetings, this might mean finding the fire-proof furniture, better computers and coffee machines, and compensate all the cheap, hazardous items with better ones (Talbot 2018). This part goes hand-in-hand with the engineering method, which is design improvement.

Both administrative and PPE, shorten from words Personal Protective Equipment, methods are a big responsibility for event manager: these are usually made in the safety assessment for the events. All the procedures should be clear to all attendees and the personnel. In most cases, the event organizer is in charge, if a hazard takes place. Also, the equipment should be tested and the location/use needs to be clear for the staff, but also the visitors. These five methods are important for all event organizers to know (Government of South Australia 2010).
To have mitigation plan for an event is highly important. It is a key to securing the attendee’s safety. The plan covers everything from eliminating the risk to the point where the event organizer needs to work to prevent personal harm. Each of these methods should be used in order to guarantee a good event experience for everyone attending the annual general meeting.

4.4 Monitoring and consulting

Monitoring and consulting is the knot that tights up the risk management process. As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the monitoring and reviewing the possible risks is highly important in order to secure the safe events in the future as well. A risk assessment doesn’t just cover the existing event, but wants to focus on the next events. This is why the arrow is in both ways: the risks are monitored, and the possible monitored risks are taken into account in the following events. Monitoring is also known as risk acceptance. This is because the hazards should be avoided, but never ignored, if they happen. Monitoring helps to follow the possible hazards and learn from them, and analyze if the risk has changed or moved in the risk matrix somehow (Cox 2008).

When the risks occur, the communication and the consultation needs to work fluently. This covers the communication between each staff member, but also to the emergency authorities in case it is needed. The consultation should happen: each risks needs to be told to authorities, to the company, the venue, and to the other staff members (Government of South Australia 2010). These will work as the guideline for the future: if a risk takes place often, it should be learned from and something needs to be done differently in order to eliminate or reduce the possibility of it happening again. With these guidelines the risks are eliminated as well as possibly can be done by an event organizer.
5 Methodology

In this chapter, the research process of this thesis is explained. This chapter introduces the thesis method and the objectives, sampling and the implementation of the thesis, and the findings of the research. The main objective of this research is to answer the research questions in order to verify the findings done from the literature. This research is done by open-end questions in order to give the interviewee a freedom to tell about their possible safety risks and safety procedure by themselves without the researcher guiding the process. This gives the better validity for the research.

Creating a research for this thesis is important in order to get reliable information of the current problems and risks with the annual general meetings, since this is not studied before. This also gives a better view of Finland’s events, since these issues are not talked a lot in Finland, and most of the literature is from other countries. By interviewing real companies and their safety executives for the purpose of mapping a risk management process a certain and specific information is gathered and the final result can be applied to Finland’s annual general meetings with more certainty. This research and its results are made for specifically based on companies, that organizes AGM’s and the results are a gateway to the safety issues, that all events might face.

5.1 Research objective

It is important to map out the objectives and the research questions before the research. This will help to build the questions for the interviewees. The main objective of this thesis is to answer the research questions. The biggest safety risks will be scouted based on the qualitative interviews and the findings will be connected to the literature research. The research questions for this thesis are the following:

The main research question of this thesis is:

- What are the biggest safety risks of the annual general meetings?

The sub-questions of this thesis are:

- How can an event organizer eliminate or reduce these risks?
- What can an event organizer do, in case a risk occurs?

The focus of this research is also to utilize these findings in the future by the commissioner. Based on this research, an event organizer’s safety checklist is created and will be taken into use. This will be used as a tool to make sure that all the possible hazardous areas and items are checked and tested before the event (see appendix 2).
5.2 The research method

Choosing the most appropriate research method for what is being investigated is highly important. The commissioner wishes to have more qualitative results, and to get deeper conversations and results. The need is to get the specific, deeper information of a company, rather than the number of the companies. The aim is to find answers to the deeper questions, and to collect evidence for a bigger phenomenon. Based on two studies (Golafshani 2003 & Family Health International) the best research method to choose is qualitative interviews.

Qualitative research is usually defined as a method, that is focused on obtaining the data through a conversational communication. It has an approach to understand a phenomena without manipulating it. It is any kind of research that produces findings, focusing the quality rather than quantity (Golafshani 2003. 6). Qualitative interviews give more data about one person, whereas the quantitative questionnaire focuses on bigger numbers and to find the similarities among these people. In this case, the research objective is to find specific risks without any direction, which gives the better possibility for new findings. This is something that quantitative research wouldn’t reach (Golafshani 2003. 5).

Qualitative methods are plenty and are usually categorised as participant observation, in-depth interviews and focus groups (Family Health International). Based on the need of the data, the best method out of these needs to be justified. Both participant observation and the focus groups are the most appropriate and effective methods, when a naturally occurred behaviours towards a phenomenon needs to be analysed (Family Health International). Also, this would be hard to implement in safety cases, because it is harder to go deeper and see all the possible risks (Golafshani 2003. 5). This is why either of these can’t be used in this thesis.

The in-depth interviews are focused on personal history and experiences of a company or a person, and explores the phenomenon deeper, and the biggest advantages is the opportunity to gather precise data of these companies, and ask the right questions to collect the most meaningful data. This method gives a better opportunity to explore the problems and the researcher gets to go deeper with the questions and answers, and the data is more compelling, which was a wish by the commissioner. Also, the flexibility is easier, and the focus can be given for individuals, rather than studying many people at once. This is why the interviews are used as a research method in this thesis.
Implementing a qualitative research for this thesis is important in order to get reliable information of the current problems and risks with the annual general meetings. The interviewing style is going to be one-on-one interviews, with open end questions in order to give the interviewee a freedom to think the answer. The questions are created based on the research questions of the thesis. The themes of the interviews were the following: the company’s profile and history, the Annual General Meetings and the biggest safety risks. The risks are focused on the occurred hazards, and the possible future hazards. In total 16 questions were asked and these are provided as the appendix 1.

The first theme has an intention to find the connection with the interviewee and the company, and to create a gateway to the future questions. The first three questions asked about the interviewees’ title, the tasks and the knowledge of both AGM’s and the safety risks. Theme two, questions 4-9, were about the annual general meetings. The questions were made in order to get a specific information about the history and organization of the meetings. These questions had an objective to give the idea of the size and location of these events as well. The last six questions were the main interview questions on this research, because these opened up the conversation about the risks, which were the main objective of the research. All of the questions were made and focused in order to reach the objective of this research. All the questions were done based on the need of the research, and the knowledge of both researcher and the commissioner company.

5.3 Implementation

Each interviewed companies were chosen with the following conditions: 1) Finnish-based company that 2) is obligatory to organize an annual general meeting 3) needs to follow Finnish law requirements. Also, a big focus was on the possibility to answer the sensitive questions, and a possibility to take part of this research. The list of possible interviewees, that met these requirements, was provided by the CEO of the commissioner company of this thesis. The list had 23, and all the companies were contacted by the researcher. Together, five companies took part of this study, and are referred as companies A to E in order to keep each company anonymous.

Each company differ in size, which gives a wide range of answers about the possible risks. All the companies are well-known and located in Finland. The interviewed person was in charge of either event management or in safety issues of the company. The reason behind this was to find the most knowledgeable person of the subject, so the information would be reliable for the use of this thesis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Workers (2018)</th>
<th>Founded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4 000</td>
<td>1980’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1990’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>8 000</td>
<td>1990’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>15 000</td>
<td>1990’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1990’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. The interviewed companies.

The interviews were implemented in march, 2019. The planning process for the qualitative interviews started two months before the actual interviews. This time was used to brainstorm, sampling, creating the questions and contacting the interviewees. Each interviewee was contacted via phone, and all the interviews were fully or party done on the phone. The interview lengths were the following: company A 22 minutes, company B 34 minutes, company C 16 minutes, company D 5 minutes (+ e-mail) and company E 20 minutes. Since the privacy of the companies was highly important, none of the interviews was recorded. All of the interviews were scripted and written as a whole for memorial purposes. Each of these is saved only for the purpose of the research of this thesis, and will be deleted after the thesis is successfully finished.

The main objective of this research was to find those risks, that might be faced in the annual general meetings. The sub objectives of this research was to find a way to reduce and eliminate these risks, and the procedure for each hazards occurring. These objectives were leading the interview process, and will be taking into account when analysing the findings of these interviews.

5.4 Main findings

All of the interviewed companies were different, and had different procedures when it comes to the annual general meetings. Each company had different things, that they wanted to mention about their safety issues. These findings are later themed based on similarity, and analyzed to create a risk matrices for each safety risk found from the research.

Company A listed three possible risks: personal security, venue, and the weather related risks outside the venue. Their AGM was held in march, before the interview. This made it harder, since the meeting was still secured and the interviewee couldn’t answer a lot of questions about it. This year, the meeting was also externalized, which didn’t give a lot of
tasks for the company to do. Their risk assessment is done hours before the event, and they have a checklist for this task. Also company B talked a lot about personal security and venue security. Also, GDPR was mentioned quickly after the interview. The main focus was on their personnel and staff arriving to the venue before the event by securing that the right people attend the event. Company C has a lot of virtual meetings, since a lot of their workers join the meeting from abroad. GDPR security was a big theme in their interview. The meeting was help two weeks after the interview was made, therefore the research of risks is useful for them as well. A possible risk that could happen is a technical issues or a wrong person joining the meeting.

Company D has its own event team, which was contacted for this interview. This team is in charge of safety, organizing events, and doing risk assessments for each of them. Since the company is big, the event team has around 10-20 people taking care, that everything is ran smoothly. They also mentioned, that each event organizer has first-aid training and some have security training as well. They have organized their events even outside Finland, but for those they couldn’t give a lot of information. Risks, that were mentioned, were food-related issues (they have history of these) and attendee management.

The company E was found after the other interviews. Since the sampling was quite small, more interviewees were reached. This company was already reached earlier, but then the event organizer and safety manager of the company was not reached. All the attendees remain also the same, therefore they didn’t find a lot of risks in their events. After a small thinking, they came up with fire emergencies, food-related risks, and other personal security issues, that may follow from electronic devices, weather, or slippery floors.

5.5 Similar themes

For this research and its purpose, the following themes gave an interesting data and useful information about annual general meetings. This chapter focuses on introducing the biggest similarities and differences, that rose from this interview. All the interviews were held over the phone, and one was finished on e-mail, and the questions were open, and the interviewees had a possibility to answer whatever they wanted. Based on this, the themes can be created, because the research was not guided by the researcher to the specific categories.

The first theme, that was highlighted in a lot of cases, was the fact that one company has externalized the annual general meetings, four companies organize themselves. Company A was the only one, who has an outsider organizing their meetings. This makes the situation a lot different. Firstly, the company has globally around 4500 workers and they
have externalized the meetings (and a lot of other events as well) for the past two years. This meant, that a lot of responsibilities are in the event planner’s hands, and the company doesn’t do a lot by themselves. Their responsibilities are only to provide the list of attendees, send them an invitation, choose a dining option and provide the presentation to the event organizer. All the other responsibilities, mostly the risk assessment, is organized by someone else. The other four companies have either a person or a team behind the annual general meetings and are responsible of the risk assessment.

One big theme was the personal security and risks involving that. For example, Company B organizes security guards for the biggest shareholders and the CEO of the company. Company B has two to three security guards and two different cars for each person to guarantee their safety from the office to the meeting venue. This was the procedure last year. Company C and D both mentioned, that they have a lot of people joining virtually to the meeting, so they use hours to secure each computer and location the people are joining from. Also, they have an identity verification before the meeting, that needs to be checked online before meeting. One big theme was also the hybrid meetings and the risks involving those. The identification doesn’t always allow people to join, and in one case, a company D had to hold extra meeting because everyone couldn’t join. This also brings a lot of technical issues on the table.

One interesting and eye-opening fact was, that three companies (A, D and E) mentioned the possible terrorist attack and it changing the behaviour of the events. All of these three companies have a check-list for the risk manager, that needs to be handled before the event. This includes checking the venue (exits, fire distinguishers, fire alarms, trash cans and windows) and the attendee list beforehand. During the event, the security is tight and each member needs to let their ID or passport, phones and sometimes even laptops outside the meeting rooms. These companies were the biggest ones out of the five.

The biggest company (D) introduced, that their main focus is the staff. They have a team of 5-10 people, that takes care of their events and annual general meetings. They offer an annual first-aid training and security guard education. They couldn’t tell specifically how many people they train for each event, but the team usually consists from 5-10 people. This became a common theme, since all of the companies except the company A mentioned a possible training exercises as a control measure for the possible safety risks. The last common theme that was found in the interviews was the possible weather-related risks. This was brought up by the company E and company A. Both stated, that “Finland
has a snowy and cold weather, which might affect slipping, breaking bones or twisting ankles” (Company A). Both had an idea of checking the entries and exits before the event and possibly covering the paths with salt or rocks to prevent slipping and falling.

As a conclusion, the common themes were externalized/internalized meetings, personal security, GDPR/ hybrid meeting management, terrorism/ venue management, staff and their training program. All of these rose to the surface as the common answers, and were all talked about without any guiding from the interviewer.

5.6 Connection with the literature

This chapter is comparing these findings to each other. The common themes, that was found was from the interviews, were externalized/internalized meetings, personal security, GDPR/ hybrid meeting management, terrorism/ venue management, staff and their training program. In the literature research, the five biggest themes were personal security, GDPR, Fire and other emergencies, venue/site and attendees.

As the common themes show, there are plenty of connections and equivalency with the literature research. At least personal security, cyber security and venue management were both talked and found in the research. In the literature research, this was done by studying the biggest safety risks in events, and by many authors. In literature, these themes were found in 2-3 companies interviews. This can verify the common problems in both Finland and abroad, and can be connected to the annual general meetings. The staff training is part of preventing any personal or health issues and risks. Therefore, this is not talked about as a safety risk, but is still a worth mentioning in the data analysation. Training the staff is an important issue, which helps the event organizer reduce the hazard impact.

Fire and other emergencies usually go together with the venue. Based on the interviews, the fire and other possible emergencies was not as big as the literature stated. A big problem with the fire emergencies is that no one talks a lot about them. These go hand-in-hand with all events, and since the talk was about annual general meeting, a big possibility of not mentioning them, might be their commonness. When asking a possible safety risks in AGM’s, the interviewees started straight thinking the specific problems with these meetings, not in general. Of course this is just assumption, but there is a high possibility. This would explain why these weren’t mentioned in the interviews, yet the literature and statistics show, that there is always a small risk of fire taking place in events – especially with so many technology devices around.
Terrorism and outside threats were talked about in various ways in the interviews, whereas it was barely mentioned in the theory, at least not in the Finnish based articles. This is one difference from the interviews comparing to the literature. Of course articles from UK and United States has changed their behaviour a lot based on the previous terrorism attacks in the events, and even Finland has taken this into account. Though, terrorism possibility in Finland is so small, that it is not afraid of in events. As an event organizer, the outside threats are hard to eliminate, but the possible terrorist attacks inside the venue can be reduced by focusing on a better attendee management.

5.7 Risk Matrices

Based on the data gotten from the interview, the risk matrix for the biggest safety risks can be made. As stated in the theoretical framework, a risk matrix is a useful method for an event organizer to avoid, reduce, retain and transfer the risk (Marshall & Alexander 2006). Now when the research is made and the biggest safety risks are scouted, the risk matrices can be done in order to analyze the likelihood and the possible consequences of each.

Based on the literature research, and the interviews, the biggest risks are updated as personal security, cyber security, venue/attendees, fire emergencies, and terrorism. Personal and Cyber security are talked in the previous chapters, and based on the qualitative research, the likelihood with these two are the biggest. Venue and attendee management was merged in the same category, but the likelihood and consequences are quite small. With fire emergencies, the possibilities are small, but the possible technological issues effects the likelihood meter. Terrorism is highly unlikely to take place, but the consequences would be severe.

By using these number systems, it is easier to place each of the hazards to the risk matrix by adding the numbers together. (Talbot 2018). For example, if the hazard’s likelihood of happening is small (seldom; 2) and the consequences possibly serious (critical; 4), the place in the risk matrix is simply 2 + 4 = 6. The risk matrix, presented in figure 3, has the likelihood meter on the left side, from bottom to the top (2-6) and the consequence meter from left to right (2-6). So, if the likelihood of the hazard is higher that the consequence, then it is usually places on the left side, up, not right ride and down. These calculations are made, and the risk matrices are created based on the researchers own analysis, interviews, and literature help to make each risk matrix as current and valid as possible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
<th>Risk Matrix</th>
<th>Risk Matrix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Security</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber security</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue and Attendees</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Emergencies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8. The risk matrices of the biggest safety risks at the annual general meetings.

Since the interviews talked a lot about personal and the cyber security, both have a possibility to take place. The consequence with the personal hazard is more severe, since the personal safety is the most important thing in the events. The risks at the venue and the attendee related hazards are both as a same category, because most of the issues happening in the venue are related to the attendees, and the risks with the attendees are usually at the venue. The likelihood of anything happening is low, since the event organizer can eliminate a lot of safety issues. Terrorism is mentioned as an unlikely hazard, but the consequences would be severe, based on the literature. This analysis is made based on the literature and the qualitative research, and using the researcher’s knowledge of event management and event organizer’s duty in safety issues.

5.8 Summary of the results

The results of this research were wide and satisfying. The research confirmed and changed some of the gotten data from the literature, and the gotten data should reliable. This is because the companies vary in size, and still the similar themes was found. Since the interviews had open-end questions, and gave the interviewee a possibility to answer freely to each question, the reliability of the research is as good as possible. The wide
sampling might make it harder to analyse the connection between the companies, but the connection between the interviews and with the literature was found.

Some interesting findings were made. Firstly, none of the interviewees mentioned fire as a big risk. It might also be the fact that it’s common, and doesn’t need mentioning, but it was surprising that it wasn’t discussed. Also, terrorism rose from the interviews more than from the literature. Especially in Finland, it is quite rare that a terrorist attack would take place in Annual general meeting, but since it rose as a theme from the interview, it has to be analysed in the risk matrix. Even though the interviews were to a minimum and some differences can be found, there was a clear connection with the interviews and literature research.

A lot of companies couldn’t take part of the thesis project because they can’t answer any of the questions, not even anonymously. Five out of 23 companies took part of this thesis process. The remaining 18 companies couldn’t answer the questions, because the subject is too sensitive or hidden. This is one conclusion of this research – the sensitivity of the subject makes it hard to study this subject. It also pushes the research towards the importance of this thesis. Since the research is new, highly important and sensitive, it is ahead of its time and gives it a great value for the future event organizers. Even though the sampling was small, the results were satisfying, effective, and gave a good gateway to the bigger phenomena: the safety of events.

The changes in the monitoring of the risks and the control measures are small, but some adaptations should be made. The better training program for the staff would prevent a lot of consequences, as mentioned in the themes. In the interview with the company A it was mentioned that the outside of the venue should be checked as well. Their event manager checks the slippery roads and the route from the parking lot to the venue. These have been taken into account, and will be added in the mitigation process in the site management. In cyber security, it is important to test all the devices, check that each connects and that the skype/other used website for hybrid meetings opens without any problems.

Based on the research on both literature and qualitative interviews, the biggest safety risks of the annual general meetings can be justified as the following: personal security, cyber security, venue/attendees, fire and other emergencies, and terrorism. Since the subject is sensitive, it verified the need of this research and will give a good brand image for the commissioner company and give them a possibility to differ from the competition.
6 Discussion

This final chapter of this thesis is seeking to answer the main research questions and will be a knot between the theoretical framework and the empirical part. This discussion is focused on evaluating the success of the research process as a whole and will be a summary of all the findings in this research. This chapter’s content is the following: 1. answers to the research questions, 2. development suggestions to the commissioner, 3. reliability and validity, and 4. reflecting own learning process.

6.1 Answers to the research questions

The main objective of this research was to find those risks, that might be faced in the annual general meetings. This thesis consists of three research questions, and focuses on the usage of this information in the future. The main-question and the sub targets were the following:

The main research question of this thesis is:
- What are the biggest safety risks of the annual general meetings?

The sub-questions of this thesis are:
- How can an event organizer eliminate or reduce these risks?
- What can an event organizer do, in case a risk occurs?

After analysing the results gotten from the data, The main research questions is possible to answer. The theoretical framework introduces the common terms and concepts of this thesis. As introduced in the chapter 2, the Annual general meetings, also known as AGM’s, takes place yearly after a financial year or period (Isännöintiliitto 2018), and all are a discussion of current issues (Investopedia 2018). The fourth chapter identifies the biggest hazards of events to be personal security, cyber security/GDPR, fire and other emergencies, venue/site and attendee management. When analysing the interviews and annual general meetings, the biggest risks are the following: personal security, cyber security, venue/attendees, fire and other emergencies, and terrorism.

The sub research question is seeking an answer of how can an event organizer eliminate or reduce these safety risks. Risk Control is taking an action to eliminate the biggest hazards or health risks and minimizing the safety risks as much as possible (Code of Practise 2011). Theoretical framework introduces the risk control and control measures to be the following: elimination, substitution, engineering, administrative, and personal protective equipment. These can be added to have staff training, taking care of the weather-related
issues and checking/testing the technological devices are added to the list (chapter 5.8.). As part of answering the research questions, a safety checklist is done in order to reduce all the possible risks (check appendix 2).

The third and final sub question for this thesis was to scout the best procedure in case a hazard takes place. The focus of this thesis is to prevent the risks, and the idea is to offer a good guidelines for an event organizer to eliminate these risks. Therefore, this sub question has the same answer as the first sub questions: the checklist for an event organizer has all the possible procedure methods, that can be done in case a hazard takes place – e.g. knowing the emergency exits, fire distinguishers, and where is the emergency first aid package. Before each event, a common rules and the responsibilities should be given in order to make a good safety plan for the possible hazards.

Since all the research questions can be answered, it means that this research was successful. The research in both sides (literature and the qualitative interviews) were implemented well, and gave wide enough results in order to scout answers for all the questions. The interviews gave a good direction towards the valid answers and a product, which was the objective of the whole research process. The last sub objective of this thesis was to utilize the research in the future by the commissioner, which will be analysed in the following chapter.

6.2 Development proposals to the commissioner company

The big objective of this thesis is to use the findings in the future. Based on the research made, some of the development suggestions can be given to the commissioner company in order to get the best use out of the findings. This thesis will be the supporting pillar in building a new business strategy, and will be a highly important tool to scout new clients, and the research will be taken into use and develop for the company and its strategy and brand image. The need for this research was important for Management Events Studio, and the future and usage for the finished product is wide. It was already known, that ME Studio wants and needs to develop their event safety knowledge, and part of the research will be shared in ME Studio’s blog post of safety and is going to be a big part of a new business strategy.

The big proposal is to use this study in order to orientate the existing staff and new trainees of the safety issues, that an event organizer is responsible of. The safety checklist should be used in the events in order to get a better view of all the things, that needs to be checked, tested and known before an event and especially before the annual general
meeting. One suggestion is to make security and safety management as part of Management Events Studio’s image. The big objective for this thesis for ME Studio to find a way to differ from their competitors. Safety issues are important, but not talked a lot, therefore this study is a good way to open a door to the new clients. This will also secure the existing customers, since the ME Studio is focusing on them and their safety. This is something that is not mentioned in any other event organizer’s website.

This thesis will be presented in a lot of channels in future, and since it was successfully done and the main objective and all of the sub objectives were found from the research, the findings will be used in the future. The research is showing a way to the safe event planning, and will be a big pillar supporting the bright future of Management Events Studio. Also, an event organizer’s safety checklist is created and will be taken into use. This will be used as a tool to make sure that all the possible hazardous areas and items are checked and tested before the event. This research brought a lot of new information, that will be useful in event organizer’s skillset.

6.3 Reliability and validity

In qualitative research paper it is recommended to evaluate the reliability of the final product and the sources used for the research. The final outcomes can’t be occasional or random, and the methods used in qualitative research have to be able to be meaningful for the final study (Golafashani 2003, 5-8). If the trustworthiness is maximised, the more credible the result. So rather than examining the surface, the researcher goes deeper into both interviewees and to the literature. This way, something meaningful and new can be created, with the best potential to be reliable.

In this thesis, both literature depth and the proper analysis of the interviews is done. I have used qualitative literature more than a quantity of different sources. In the research process, I have focused more in individuals than getting a large number of the interviewees. The qualitative research is trustworthy, if the researcher doesn’t attempt to manipulate or lead the interviewees by their own interest, but to study and unveil the ultimate truth. As stated in the earlier chapters, the interviews were made to remain a conversation, a dialogue, without any directions given by the interviewer. The reason behind this was exactly what Golafashani states: to keep the result as valid and truthful as possible.

Analysing the sources the validity refers to the explanation of the studied subject, and the realities of the world (McMillan & Schumacher 2006). The subject needs to be studied well, it needs to reflect to the real world, and it needs to be useful. All of these meet in this thesis. The subject is well studied and the sources used are all from the professional of
the field. As well as the interviewees. The thesis objective is to create a risk management
process for annual general meetings and use this in the future. This reflects to the reality,
and well as makes the thesis research useful.

Some factors that may affect to the reliability of this thesis were the sampling the inter-
viewees, the language/translations and the similarities between these companies. Firstly,
the five interviews remain a small sampling for this research, and the aim as to get more
quantity. Some interviewees only scratched the surface, and couldn’t answer the ques-
tions about safety scenarios. This was one factor as well, since the thesis subject is sensi-
tive. The interviews were made in Finnish, and later transferred into English. This be a
risk, if some of the answered were transferred incorrectly or a wrong word was used.

Though, in Finnish a lot of the interviewees were able to give better answers, since there
were no language barrios. All the companies were similar, which also may have affected
to the final results. With different companies or with more quality of the interviews the re-
sults may’ve been different. Though, the objective was not to find results that will apply to
all groups, but to collect findings that will give the right direction to Management Events
Studios and to the phenomenon. Also, a sensitivity of the safety issues might effect on the
results, since some companies might not be able to tell every detail about their safety
strategy. Overall, I have done everything I can to secure the validity of this research and
to offer current, trustworthy answers to the research questions.

6.4 Learning outcomes

There are plenty of learning outcomes from the past months. This thesis process took to-
gether around 6 months, starting from the first brainstorming session and finishing with the
finished product. This thesis was a combination of both need and interest, of me and my
commissioner, and I was pleased to do something that matters. I could also contribute to
ME Studios future and work ethic, and working with the company was both helpful and
flexible.

I succeeded well with scheduling enough time for the writing, studying, and doing the
qualitative research. I focused my time for school, which was a good decision. I also made
time for thesis every week, and didn’t have problems with the stress or hurry at any time. I
also had time to research the subject, which makes my theoretical framework trustworthy
and I used sources well. I was motivated and interested to make this research, and I have
learned a lot during this thesis process.
The biggest challenge of this thesis process was the interviews. The qualitative research has a difficulties with the time consumptions, issues with anonymity, and the dependence on researcher’s skills to ask the right questions. Contacting the companies was frustrating after a lot of them couldn’t take part of my thesis. Even though the company list was provided to me, it was hard to get them to join the research based on its sensitivity. The sensitivity of the subject made it extremely hard. I also struggled of creating the questions, since there was no previous qualitative interview form about this subject. This subject hasn’t been studied a lot, so it was hard to scratch the surface of safety issues. This was also one of the reasons why a lot of people couldn’t answer the questions. There was no other studies done of this subject, which made it difficult as well.

The best outcome of this thesis process is the gain of my research skills, development of time-management and the understanding of this big phenomena called safety. I believe some difficulties turned into strengths in this thesis. Since this research is ahead of its time, it gives me a big strength to the work life. If I could change something, I would allow more time for the interview process, so I could scout more interviewees. The interview process was definitely the hardest part of this thesis, but that’s the part I learned the most. The subject needed a lot of background knowledge, which was time assuming, yet a teaching process.

Overall, I am satisfied with this thesis. I was able to answer all of my research questions and make a successful research. The findings of this research can be operated by everyone, who wants to guarantee a safe event, and for the commissioner especially this research is going to be very useful. This means, that all the objectives were met, and something new was created as a result, since this subject hasn’t been studied before. Making this research has been a teaching process, and it has made verified my desire to work in the event management field in the future.
7 References


# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Qualitative interviews: questions

### Esittely, opinnäytetyön tavoite, haastatteluiden tavoite

**Teema 1: henkilöprofiili**

- Voisitteko hieman kertoa tittelistänne ja työtehtävistänne tässä yrityksessä?
- Kauan olette toimineet kyseisessä työtehtävässä?
- Mikä historia teillä on yhtiökokousten kanssa?

**Teema 2: Yhtiökokoukset**

- Milloin yhtiökokoukseen järjestetään tänä vuonna? Entä ennen?
- Kuinka monta henkilöä kokoukseen tulee? (Suomi/Ulkomailta)
- Milloin aloititte valmistelut? Koetteko sen olevan työlästä?
- Kuvaile yhtiökokoustenen kulkua. (Monelta ne alkavat, monelta päättyvät, jne.)
- Mitä työnkuvaan yhtiökokouksissa kuuluu?
- Minkä koet olevat suurin vaikeus yhtiökokousten järjestämisessä?

**Teema 3: Turvallisuus**

- Tuleeko osa turvallisuustoomista ulkopuolelta vai hoidatteko kaiken sisäisesti?
- Koetko yhtiönne koon vaikutavan turvallisuuteen?
- Mitkä koette olevan suurimpia riskejä? Miten ehkäisette niitä?
- Valmistaudutteko mahdollisiin turvallisuusriskeihin? Miten?
- Teettekö turvallisuussuunnitelman yhtiökokoukselle?
- Mitä teette kokouksen jälkeen (esim. kutsulistat, kiitosviestit, esitykset)?
- Onko jotain, missä voisitte parantaa?
Appendix 2. Event Organizer’s Safety checklist for Annual General Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the risk manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The date of the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The date of the assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you done a risk assessment before?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Do you understand all the elements of this list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Number of attendees / number of maximum attendees allowed to the venue:


In case of emergency, the location/address of the venue is presented visibly for all the staff and attendees, the ambulance/police loading points are clear and there is at least one staff member who knows first-aid/CPR:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Complete the following check list for the event making sure to check each element carefully. Mark N/A [non-applicable] where a the element is irrelevant or doesn’t exist in the area. Each point of this list needs to be checked in order to guarantee a safety event.

Possible comments
### Staff/ Personnel of the event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All exits and entries are clearly presented (to all the visitors and staff).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the other exits and entries (like windows and backdoors) are locked, but available to open from inside the venue in case of emergency. Each staff member knows the closest entry and exit, and all the other possible routes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire equipment are clearly presented, and available for both staff and attendees. The staff knows how to use them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the possible risks and the procedures are listed and the list is provided for all the attendees (either before or during the event) and the staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In case of fire, all the exit routes and the fire apartment loading points should be clearly seen and understood. Event organizers sign all the exits to the visitors in case of fire. In some venues, there are many entries and exits: check the closest one before the event.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire extinguishers, fire alarms, and other fire-fighting equipment have been checked and everyone knows how to use them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each staff worker have been trained for any safety situation and knows how to work, in case visitor is under a safety risk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tasks of each worker is clear.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communication

Communication channels between the staff, catering and (if any) between visitors is clear and have been checked. There is also extra communication channels in case it is needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the possible, unneeded information channels/signals (laptop, tv, radio) have been turned off.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The emergency contact in case of hazard is available and visible for everyone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Venue
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there security guards at the site?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there someone with the security card or professional training?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Visual inspection have been done:** ensure the routes are not slippery or blocked. If there is slippery parts, either draw another walking path, or put ice/rocks to the road so no one will fall. Possibly move the blocks.

Think already the ending: if it’s snowing, be prepared. Put lights, so the routes are visible.

A list of site safety rules should be drawn up and distributed to all workers or helpers who need to be aware of safety procedures.

Employees/volunteers should be informed beforehand of the need to wear sensible outdoor clothing, including trousers and warm clothing where appropriate.

Check the closest first-aid cabinet and available items.

Make sure that all the entries and exits are clear and visibly shown. Also, make sure all the extra entries are closed from outside, but can be exit from the inside in case of fire (windows too).

Clear parking spaces and the path from there to the venue (females might be wearing heels or long dresses!).

Check the possible barriers in case of fire apartment/police needs to enter the site.

Check where the visitors come and where might be crowded (if any). Move all the possible blocks and make room.

Check the backstage (enough room for catering, staff etc.)

Fire alarms, extinguishers etc.

Check the toilets: sanitary products, towels, paper, nappies, trash cans)

Special guarding of pyrotechnics, flammable liquids etc. (if any)
Monitor: every hour check toilets, catering, the meeting room if something is needed or something is missing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Electronic devices**

Before the event, do an inspection: All the possibly damaged and dangerous items have been fixed or replaced. This should be done by someone, who knows how to manufacture electronic devices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Test all the PowerPoints and other possible presentations, videos and sound.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Have extra cables, PowerPoint, flash-drives etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**After the event**

Did any hazards take place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If yes, what was it and how was it handled:

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
</table>

Was all the information (e.g. guest list, presentations) fully deleted from event organizers computer after the company, who’s event was arranged, gave the permission?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*By signing this safety checklist, I swear all the information is trustworthy and each point have been checked. All the possible risks and hazards have been informed to the higher authorities.*

Signature of the risk assessment manager