

1. **PUB LIB COC** - Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency \$10 MILLION
2. **SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT** – detailing your safety processes in your installation, performance and dismantle activities for each gig.
3. **TAGGED AND TESTED LEADS CERTIFICATE** every **SIX MONTHS** – a dated certificate from your electrician noting equipment tested and tagged.

*Below is an introductory guide to Safety Considerations for Live Performing Artists to assist in the compilation of the Safe Work Method Statement.*

## Safety

### Maintenance and Safe Use of Equipment in Live Performances

It is a legal requirement to take reasonable steps to ensure your own safety - as well as the safety of anyone else who is likely to be affected by your actions.

Live events always involve both production personnel and the general public, and require vigilance from everyone on the production side. Regardless of what anyone else is doing about risk management, your own efforts should be to:

- Look out for any actual or potential hazards, and where any are identified, seek ways to
  - Reduce or remove the hazard.
  - Reduce or eliminate the risk.

Removal or elimination is the primary objective: only look at reducing a hazard or risk if it cannot be eliminated.

*Hazards are anything that may cause harm.*

*Risk is the likelihood of harm being caused.*

In other words:

- Where something might cause harm, look at ways to avoid it or make it less harmful.
- Also look at ways to make a harmful event impossible or less likely.

An example might be where lighting crew will need to work above the stage. A hazard is something - tools or equipment - falling onto someone working underneath and the likelihood of it happening is a risk. Designating the stage a hard-hat area reduces the potential harm (reduces the hazard). Keeping the stage clear of all personnel while overhead work is in progress reduces the risk. Both enforcing hard-hat use and restricting access during overhead work are important risk-management steps.

Most live productions present a variety of potential hazards and risks. Go to this [website](#) and using their guide, establish the risks associated you're your live performances.

A **Safe Work Method Statement** is a description of what you are planning to do, and how and when you will carry it out. If several band members and crew are involved, it should also detail who will be responsible for each task (and, where relevant, to whom they are answerable).

*A method statement does not have to be long, complicated, or excessively detailed (indeed, its main purpose is as a reference document for all parties, so clarity and brevity are important).*

Considerations are as follows:

## Manual Handling

To get equipment in and out of a venue safely, you may need to think about:

- Heavy Items. Can they be moved without being carried? How can they be lifted safely? How many people are needed to lift or carry them?
- Personal Protection. Anyone moving heavy equipment should always wear gloves, which should be able to grip securely as well as offering some protection for the hands. Depending on the equipment and the production, they might also need steel-capped boots or shoes (again, grip is important as well as protection), hard hats (if anyone is working overhead, whatever they are doing), or high-visibility clothing (particularly if cherry-pickers, fork-lift trucks, or other site traffic will be in the same area).
- Resources. Have you got enough people, trolleys, ramps, and other lifting or moving equipment to do the job safely in the time available?

## Electrical Safety

The electricity supply itself must be safe (i.e. earthed, breaker-protected, and adequate for the load placed on it). The Venue is responsible to ensure the safety of the electricity supply.

*It is a legal requirement that all portable electrical equipment should be inspected and checked and tagged for electrical safety every six months, where it is used in a workplace or public area.*

A live event is both a workplace and a public area. You should always have your eye open for obviously unsafe equipment - whoever owns or is in charge of it - in your own area of work. Common easily visible faults are:

- Damaged casing. If screws are missing so that covers are not secure, or the lid is bent inwards (potentially putting it in contact with conductors), or guards or grilles are not in place, don't use it, and don't allow anyone else to use it.
- Damaged wires or plugs. If the inner insulation (or - worse - a bare wire) is visible, don't use it. Any other signs of damage to cables or plugs also mean you should put them out of use: a cable that has been crushed or cut or badly twisted or stretched is unsafe. If the plug casing is cracked or damaged, REPLACE IT before using the equipment. DO NOT use insulating tape (or Gaffer, Sellotape, parcel tape or Superglue) to hold it together, even 'in an emergency'. In fact, do not use any kind of tape, or any other 'repair'.

Other points that are relatively easy to check are:

- Connections and cable clamps. Cables in plugs or at entry or exit points in equipment casing should be securely clamped over the outer insulation. Don't put lives at risk for the sake of a couple of minutes with a screwdriver. All cable conductors should be secure: screws can (and often do) work loose in plugs, and these should be checked fairly often. EARTH WIRES SHOULD NEVER BE DISCONNECTED even if it does make the hum go away. If you have earth loop problems, disconnect signal grounds, not the mains earth.
- Fuses and fuse ratings. If the plug has a fuse rating (usually embossed somewhere on it), the fuse should correspond with it. The same applies if there is a fuse-point on the appliance (20mm fuse-holders are common in audio equipment). DO NOT REPLACE FUSES WITH OTHER CONDUCTORS like silver paper, kitchen foil, nails, screws, or wire. Do not use equipment in which fuses have been bypassed or replaced with fuses of a different rating.

## Tag and Test Certificate Every Six Months

Electricity can kill. Look after your equipment, and get it tested every six months. You are obligated to provide your six month tag and test statement to every venue where you connect to THEIR electricity supply.

Another good reason to get your equipment tested - if protecting yourself and other people from electrocution and/or legal action is not enough - is that test certificates are required by most public bodies (schools, colleges, hospitals, local authorities...) for all equipment brought onto their premises. An increasing number of privately-owned venues and businesses apply the same standard, and this trend is set to continue. In many venues, no certificate means you don't get to plug it in, however safe you think it is.

Your Test and Tag certificate will not cover any third-party equipment. Where certificates are required, they will also be required for the band's electrical equipment (amplifiers, keyboards, extension leads). If you need to plug it in to make it work, you need a certificate for it. If the show must go on, get it tested.

## Positioning and Connecting Equipment

At outdoor events, any cable connectors that may be exposed to rain, dew, or other sources of moisture should be at least splash-proof, and preferably even more watertight. Don't use ordinary plugs and sockets in the rain in the middle of an open field. After electricity the most obvious dangers come from cables or other objects - notably the legs of stands - creating a trip hazard, or from equipment that is insecurely stacked or suspended.

## Trip Hazards

- Don't run cables on the floor across thoroughfares (try to avoid running them across any open spaces: use walls and/or other boundaries). If there is absolutely no alternative to running a cable across a thoroughfare then:
  - Cover it, preferably with a purpose-made cable strip, or matting and/or
  - Make it visible with hazard tape, or
  - Bury it if it is on grass (but speak to the owner or person in charge before you dig up their croquet lawn).
- NEVER RUN ANYTHING ON THE FLOOR ACROSS A FIRE EXIT. Don't obstruct (or place any obstruction or trip hazard close to) a fire exit.
- Don't allow the legs of speaker stands to project into thoroughfares. If you really can't avoid it, put waist-high barriers around them, or - at the very least - use hazard tape to make them clearly visible. You can also use hazard tape to mark the floor around them.
- Secure all loose cables (and remember that everyone is at risk from them, even the performers, and even you). Use cable ties overhead, or gaffer tape on the floor. In outdoor events, use matting to cover cables in any thoroughfares, or lift a couple of inches of turf with a spade and cover them that way. If you want an easier life, check you have power where you need it before you tape power cables down, check your speakers are working before you tape speaker cables down, and line-test before you tape signal cables down.
- Take care where you place toolboxes and other similar objects. Under the console or on top of the amp rack or on a table is good. On the floor in a public aisle or backstage walkway is not acceptable.
- In poorly lit areas take extra care of where you place your feet as well as where you position your equipment.

## Suspended Hazards

Speakers are often stacked, raised on stands, or flown. Lighting - with the exception of uplighters - is always raised, and usually flown. Flown systems should only ever be suspended from certified load-bearing mounting-points by qualified personnel. If a speaker or lantern falls 4 metres into a crowded auditorium it will probably kill someone.

However, more people are injured (and more equipment is damaged) by stacks or stands collapsing or falling over than by flown equipment falling.

### Particular hazards in this respect are:

- Uneven or sloping surfaces (this is a particular issue at outdoor events). Speaker stands or stacks should be vertical.
- Unstable or weak supports. If you are putting heavy speakers or amplifier racks on the edge of the stage, make sure the stage can support them safely. Do not stack speakers on trestle tables, damaged tables or stands, or on anything that is not designed to carry their weight. Make sure stands are rated for the weight you are placing on them.
- Wind. Do not underestimate wind forces at outdoor events. Stacks may need to be pegged down - or secured in some other way - to be safe.
- Loose equipment. Anything placed on top of something else can fall off it (in a speaker stack, the boxes on top can fall - or be pushed, dragged or blown - off the boxes underneath). A wooden box can kill someone if it falls on their head. Just putting a ratchet strap around the stack - preferably threaded through the handles or in some way prevented from slipping off - will make it much safer.
- Other stacked equipment - like a mixing console or effects rack - need the same attention.

## Loud Noises

An event itself may call for hearing protection so refer to this [website](#) for control measures. There are risks to consider during set-up: production crew may be working near loudspeakers, and the full output of a 134dB/1m speaker feeding back when someone un-mutes a channel at the desk can do permanent damage in no time at all. It is quite common during sound-check for technical crew to be needed on stage, where monitor levels (usually determined by the musicians) may be higher than advisable even for short periods of exposure.

Generally, therefore, it is good practice for anyone involved where there is a risk of high sound pressure levels to wear some form of hearing protection. In addition, however, setting up should be planned so that:

- Nobody's ear is anywhere near a loudspeaker when anything is un-muted;
- Nobody's finger is anywhere near a unmute button while crew are working immediately in front of loudspeakers.

## Other Safety Issues

Where there are a lot of people, you may need to think about crowd-control and First-Aid.

Crowd-control may require physical restraints (barriers, fences and gates) and/or personnel (stewards or security staff). First-Aid requires one or more staff with a recognized First-Aid qualification. Typically a venue will be responsible for this. However you must always take these risk control measures into consideration as you are jointly responsible with the Venue to ensure the safety of the audience.