

**Fellow Lions,**

## **Risk Management Responsibilities of Lions Club's Project Leaders**

Lions Club Project Leaders play a vital role in ensuring that community initiatives are not only impactful and inclusive but also safe, ethical, and sustainable. Effective Risk Management is central to this role, helping safeguard participants, resources, reputations, and outcomes. These responsibilities span across strategic planning, operational oversight, and continuous monitoring.

### **1. RISK IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT**

Project leaders must proactively identify potential risks, physical, financial, reputational, legal, and environmental that may affect the success of the initiative. This includes:

- Conducting risk assessments early in project planning.
- Engaging diverse stakeholders to gain a full picture of possible vulnerabilities.
- Reviewing historical data from previous events or projects for learning points.

### **2. COMPLIANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

Lions Club Project Leaders are stewards of transparency and accountability. Managing risks means:

- Ensuring all projects comply with local laws, council requirements, insurance policies, and Lions Clubs International (LCI) regulations.
- Following SHEQ (Safety, Health, Environment, and Quality) principles where applicable.
- Creating frameworks such as risk registers and governance plans to document protocols and decision-making.

### **3. RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

Leaders should design measures to reduce likelihood and impact of identified risks:

- Securing appropriate insurance coverage (e.g., public liability, volunteer protection).
- Planning for diverse accessibility needs and community sensitivity.
- Implementing checklists, safety briefings, and emergency procedures for volunteers and attendees.

### **4. PARTNER AND STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION**

Collaborating with councils, schools, and external community clients requires:

- Vetting partners for reliability and alignment with Lions values.
- Communicating expectations and safety protocols clearly.
- Ensuring shared accountability for risk prevention and response.

### **5. COMMUNICATION AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT**

Project leaders also manage the narrative surrounding risks:

- Communicating transparently with members, media, and the public.
- Preparing contingency messages in case of disruptions or incidents.
- Promoting a culture of safety and ethics in all communications and promotional materials.

### **6. POST-PROJECT REVIEW AND LEARNING**

After project delivery, it's essential to:

- Evaluate what risks emerged, how they were managed, and what can be improved.
- Document lessons learned in a shared repository for future leaders.
- Celebrate how proactive risk management contributed to project success.

Strong risk leadership ensures Lions projects remain beacons of trust and excellence. By embedding governance, inclusivity, and accountability into every stage, Project leaders help protect what matters most the people and purpose behind each initiative.

Yours in service,

PDG Paul Cairnduff | Risk Specialist | MD Insurance, Risk Management and Child Safe Committee

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## **Lions Club Officers & Members Obligations to Safety & Risk Management: A Commitment at Every Project and Sausage BBQ.**

Fellow Lions,

In every project we undertake whether it's a major community initiative or a humble Saturday sausage BBQ outside the local hardware store, Lions Club members carry a responsibility. Beyond our dedication to service, we are custodians of safety. Safety and risk management aren't just administrative tasks; they are ethical commitments that safeguard our volunteers, our guests, our reputation, and the community we serve.

As we navigate ever more complex projects, manage equipment, interact with diverse stakeholders, and brave unpredictable weather, our risk landscape evolves. It is not enough to say "we've always done it this way." We must be proactive, vigilant, and prepared. Our BBQ tongs and safety checklists go hand-in-hand.

While governance guidelines, insurance requirements, and council regulations provide frameworks, true safety culture is built on attitude. A careless moment can injure a fellow Lion or community member. A missed hazard can tarnish decades of goodwill.

Risk management does not exist to slow us down or burden us with bureaucracy. We each have a duty to act responsibly and take reasonable measures to prevent harm. This extends to fellow Lions, event attendees, contractors, and even passers-by. If something looks risky, say something. If someone needs help managing a hazard, offer it.

Conduct a thorough risk assessment ahead of any activity. Use structured templates to guide your thinking: location hazards, food handling, weather contingencies, crowd control.

Safety and risk management aren't simply tasks we tick off a checklist they are living expressions of our care for one another. Every Lions Club member, whether grilling onions in the rain or coordinating a complex community initiative, is a steward of trust. When we prioritize safety, we signal to our fellow volunteers, visitors, and partners that their wellbeing matters deeply. We show that professionalism and compassion can co-exist in every detail, from the placement of a gas bottle to the tone of a greeting.

The truth is, our projects live and breathe through the people who make them happen. That's why risk management isn't about fear it's about empowerment. It gives our members the confidence to act boldly and wisely, knowing their actions are backed by thoughtful preparation. When procedures are clear, roles are defined, and hazards are anticipated, we create an atmosphere of calm and control even in the busiest of settings.

Importantly, safety is also about inclusion. Clear signage helps people of all languages and abilities engage comfortably. Structured event plans protect children and elders alike. And when we seek diverse perspectives in our planning, we catch blind spots that one person alone might miss. That's why risk conversations should be communal not top-down. Everyone should feel confident to raise concerns, suggest improvements, and celebrate safe outcomes.

Our sausage BBQs are known not just for their smoky aroma, but for the fellowship they foster. By integrating safety into their core, we ensure those moments of connection can continue without disruption or harm. As Lions, we are known for our integrity, service, and spirit. Let's make safety and risk management one more hallmark of that identity.

By embedding these practices into our culture, we honour both our heritage and our future. Let this be a call not just for compliance, but for compassion. Not just for prevention, but for pride. The most impactful projects are the ones that care for every hand that helps, and every life that walks safely away afterwards.

Together, let's keep safe, and manage the risk.

Yours in service,

PDG Paul Cairnduff | Risk Specialist | MD Insurance, Risk Management and Child Safe Committee

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## RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDE

### Safeguarding Service: A Risk Management and Workplace Safety Guide for District Lions Clubs, Officers and Members

In the spirit of “We Serve,” Lions Clubs strive to create meaningful and safe experiences for their communities. Whether coordinating children’s train rides, hosting a fundraising BBQ, or planning other initiatives, each activity requires careful consideration, not only of purpose, but of responsibility. Workplace Safety and Risk Management are not just legal obligations; they are ethical imperatives that reflect our care for people, our respect for public trust, and our dedication to sustainable service.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY IN SERVICE

At its core, Workplace Safety in Lions Clubs encompasses the responsibility to foresee, prevent, and respond to hazards that may arise during volunteer-led activities. As community stewards, members must recognize their duty of care to volunteers, guests, and the broader public. This duty is multi-dimensional it includes physical safety, emotional wellbeing, ethical governance, and reputational protection.

While Lions projects vary in size and scope, they often involve temporary venues, public interaction, youth participation, and specialized equipment. Without effective risk protocols, even the most well-intended efforts can result in unintended harm. A safety-first approach is not about stifling creativity; it’s about enabling service to flourish with confidence and integrity.

#### DEFINING RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE CLUB

All Lions members, regardless of position, have a role to play in promoting Workplace Safety. Event coordinators must demonstrate reasonable foresight in planning. Committee members are responsible for oversight and documentation. Volunteers should be equipped with training and clarity about escalation procedures. These expectations reflect a shared culture, not a top-down mandate.

Key responsibilities include:

- **Understanding Duty of Care:** Lions members are accountable for creating safe environments that anticipate and address potential risks.
- **Legal Compliance:** Adhering to local laws such as food handling standards, working with children checks, insurance coverage, and equipment permits is essential.
- **Risk Awareness:** Members should identify and assess risks ranging from physical hazards (e.g. tripping, burns) to social dynamics (e.g. miscommunication or crowd conflict).
- **Documentation:** Clubs must maintain accurate records of inspections, incident reports, safety checklists, and training activities.
- **Further Reference:** Lions Australia Risk Management Manual ([www.lionsclubs.org.au/members/resources/insurance\\_centre/](http://www.lionsclubs.org.au/members/resources/insurance_centre/))

#### EMBEDDING RISK MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE

Risk management is not a one-time event, it’s a continuous, proactive process grounded in structured frameworks. It involves five core steps:

- **Identify Risks:** What could go wrong?
- Examples include slippery walkways at outdoor events, gas leaks during BBQs, or unclear communication during volunteer briefings.
- **Analyse Risks:** How likely is the event, and what are the consequences?



- This includes rating each risk by likelihood and impact—for example, a ride malfunction may be unlikely but could result in serious injury.
- Evaluate Risk Responses: Is mitigation adequate?
  - Clubs must assess whether identified risks are tolerable or require stronger controls. Consultation with external advisors may be needed for high-risk scenarios.
- Treat the Risks: Apply safeguards.
  - Strategies include signage, PPE, supervision protocols, volunteer training, and compliance checklists.
- Monitor and Improve: Review after each event.
  - Continuous feedback and post-event evaluation allow clubs to adapt and refine their practices.

Risk management should be incorporated in all phases of activity planning from concept to execution to debrief. Assigning clear roles such as “Safety Officer” or event safety coordinators can strengthen implementation and accountability.

### BUILDING A SAFETY-FIRST CULTURE

A culture of safety requires openness, respect, and collaboration. It must be driven not by fear of consequences, but by pride in responsible leadership. To embed this in Lions Club operations:

- **Conduct Volunteer Inductions:** Ensure all members understand safety expectations and escalation procedures.
- **Encourage Incident Reporting:** Create a non-judgmental space for concerns or near-misses to be shared and addressed.
- **Host Risk Training Workshops:** Invite guest speakers such as local police, emergency responders, insurance representatives, District Risk Management Chair.
- **Foster Inclusive Practices:** Design signage, briefing materials, and activities that accommodate age, mobility, neurodiversity, and language diversity.

Clubs should also recognize those who lead by example, celebrating members who champion safe practices and uphold values with integrity.

### REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS: TRAIN AND BBQ EVENTS

Let’s examine two familiar Lions events, the kids’ train ride and a community BBQ fundraiser through the lens of risk management:

#### KIDS’ TRAIN OPERATION

Aspect	Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Ride Setup	Unstable tracks, pinch points	Pre-use inspections, secure barriers
Supervision	Child injury or wandering	Adult ratio policy, pre-ride briefings
Equipment Failure	Brake malfunction	Maintenance logs, emergency protocol
Public Dynamics	Conflict or confusion	Clear signage, designated contact volunteers

## COMMUNITY BBQ FUNDRAISER

Phase	Risk	Control Measure
Setup	Gas leaks, unstable marquee	Equipment checks, buddy system
Operation	Hot surfaces, hygiene breach	Food safety certificates, protective gloves
Interaction	Pricing disputes, crowd tension	Clear signage, trained greeters
Pack-down	Volunteer fatigue	Clean-up checklist, welfare follow-up

Documenting and reviewing these risks allows the Club to continuously improve and build trust with both members and the community.

## BROADER GOVERNANCE AND ETHICAL RISK

Risk Management is not limited to physical safety it also applies to governance and internal operations. Clubs must watch for subtler threats such as:

- Emotional Burnout: Members feeling undervalued or exhausted
- Data Privacy Risks: Mishandling member information
- Reputation Management: Public criticism stemming from poor execution
- Financial Oversight: Misunderstood budgets or ambiguous transactions
- Youth Engagement Risks: Lack of clarity in supervising underage volunteers

Mitigating these risks involves clear communication, robust policies, transparent reporting, and regular club-wide training. Ethical conduct, psychological safety, and respect should be woven into every decision-making process.

## TOOLS AND TEMPLATES TO SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

To embed Risk Management, every Club should maintain and regularly review the following tools:

- Risk Register
- Safety Checklist Proforma
- Incident Reporting Template
- Volunteer Induction Handbook
- Governance Risk Matrix

These documents enable consistency and reflection, ensuring that safety becomes part of the Club's DNA rather than an afterthought.

Refer: Lions Australia Risk Management Manual for documentation examples([www.lionsclubs.org.au/members/resources/insurance\\_centre/](http://www.lionsclubs.org.au/members/resources/insurance_centre/))

Conclusion: Leadership Through Safety

The heart of Lions Clubs lies in service. But service must be safe, inclusive, and ethically grounded to be meaningful and sustainable. Risk management is not merely a function it is a mindset that protects what we value most: our people, our mission, and our reputation.

By cultivating safety as part of our everyday leadership, we elevate the trust placed in us. And through that trust, we expand our ability to serve communities with purpose, pride, and lasting impact.

Yours in service,

PDG Paul Cairnduff | Risk Specialist | MD Insurance, Risk Management and Child Safe Committee