



INTRODUCTION

Event planning is the process of identifying and developing the tasks that must be executed in order to deliver a successful event. Staff in each functional area must address as many scenarios as possible during the planning phase, so that they can be confident that the “ordinary” will be dealt with according to well-articulated procedures. This will allow them to devote their energies to address unanticipated incidents that arise during operations. And because of the inter-dependent nature of all functional areas, an integrated planning approach can help identify and minimize gaps and overlaps.



READINESS ASSESSMENT

As a consequence of the planning process, many event organizations have found it essential to engage in a process of **Readiness Assessment**, prior to their event. This process, which can occur within six (6) months of an event, is typically conducted by an independent outside party who can provide an objective and impartial appraisal of the status of planning. A **Readiness Assessment** can provide senior management with advance notice of potential areas of concern, at a point when time remains to address issues. Among other things, such an exercise can uncover that Functional Areas may:

- be lagging in one or more elements of its planning timeline;
- have failed to address critical elements of planning;
- be dependent on late or missing deliverable(s) from other Area(s);
- be unprepared to provide promised deliverable(s) to another Area(s);
- not have adequate contingency plans in place;
- be inadequately staffed;
- have poorly identified its risks (or not identified them at all).

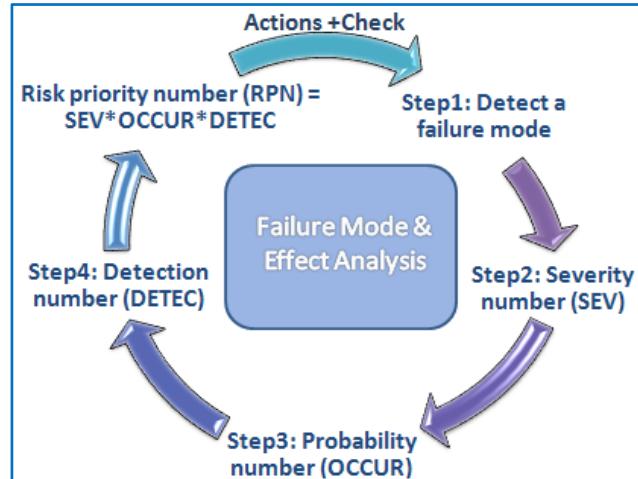
An **Assessment** can also determine the accuracy of the Risk/Issues registers, evaluate the adequacy of the communications plan, and assess the suitability of the simulation exercises to operations.



READINESS ASSESSMENT USING FAILURE MODES EFFECTS ANALYSIS

Readiness Assessment uses a version of Failure Modes Effects Analysis (“FMEA”), which will identify:

- What could go wrong?
- What would be the effect of such a failure?
- What could cause such a failure to occur?
- What exists to prevent or detect such a failure?
- What actions should be taken to prevent/reduce occurrence or improve detection of such a failure (e.g. contingency plans)?
- What is the optimal Operational Plan?
- What processes, steps or areas need to be tested?



THE PROCESS OF READINESS ASSESSMENT

The process of **Readiness Assessment** involves a detailed examination of all functional areas, gained through formal interviews of relevant staff. These sessions focus on achieving an understanding of each area's operational plan, their policies and procedures, their workforce and their contingency planning.

In addition to evaluating functional areas, **Readiness Assessment** examines the organization's Risk Identification and Mitigation strategies, assesses its Risk Likelihood and Consequence Factors, involves a Gap/Overlap analysis, reviews the organization's Emergency Response Procedures and examines its Issues Register. This results in the production of a confidential report to senior management, detailing the state of readiness as well as all recommendations.

An optional (but useful) adjunct to **Readiness Assessment** is the implementation of tabletop exercises and event simulations.