



# **Copenhagen Risk Navigator -**

## **International Strategies and Tools for Business Events**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Copenhagen Risk Navigator is the result of a collaborative effort involving risk management experts, practitioners and industry representatives, whose expertise, engagement, and contributions have been essential to its development.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our partners, Federation of European Risk Management Associations (FERMA) and Risk and Insurance Management Society (RIMS), for being part of the entire process. They have provided invaluable guidance on risk management principles relevant to our industry and have consistently contributed to the overall quality and relevance of the Copenhagen Risk Navigator.

- **Simon Grima, FERMA Board Member**  
Professor Risk Management  
Head of The Department of Insurance and Risk Management  
Deputy Dean - Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy, University of Malta
- **Gary LaBranche**  
Chief Executive Officer, RIMS
- **Stuart Ruff-Lyon**  
Chief Commercial Officer, RIMS
- **Joshua Salter**  
Vice President of Communications, RIMS

We also thank the professionals and practitioners, who participated in interviews and consultations, generously sharing their experience and insights.

The report benefited from an independent, comprehensive peer review process. We are very grateful to the reviewers for their time and for the constructive feedback, which strengthened the quality, clarity, and relevance of the final publication. In addition to RIMS and FERMA these are:

- **Oscar Cerezales**, Global President, MCI Group
- **Ben Goedegebuure**, Principal, BG Global Perspectives
- **Mohamed Mezghani**, Secretary General, International Association of Public Transport
- **Melissa Riley**, Senior Vice President, Destination DC
- **Silke Schlinnertz**, Marketing & Digital Communications Manager, European Petrochemical Association
- **Claire Smith**, Executive Director, Convention Centres of Canada
- **Gemma Strutt**, Director of Congress and Large Events Sales, Bellagroup

We further acknowledge the industry organisations, whose leaders have shown great interest and enthusiasm in the development of the Navigator and have kindly endorsed it below. Their endorsement does not imply responsibility for the content of the Copenhagen Risk Navigator.

Finally, we are very grateful to our consultants, GainingEdge, who have delivered with engagement, enthusiasm, and patience. Steen Jakobsen, Paul Vallee and Lesley Williams have professionally steered us through this extensive process, that has led to the development of the Copenhagen Risk Navigator.

All the contributions acknowledged here reflect the very unique, collaborative spirit and shared commitment to advancing the knowledge and practice of risk management for our industry.

Again - a big thank you to everyone involved, your contributions have been invaluable.

# ENDORSEMENTS

We endorse the Copenhagen Risk Navigator and support its contribution to advancing risk management in the meetings and events industry.



# FOREWORD

**When we, at Copenhagen Convention Bureau, launched the Copenhagen Risk Assessment white paper in 2023, we had just come out of the challenges of COVID-19 and were facing a number of global uncertainties. That brought about a new awareness of the negative impacts unexpected incidents can have on the business events sector. And it showed us that sometimes it is less about prediction and more about preparedness, agility and the capacity to act fast in a difficult situation.**

Three years later the global business events industry is navigating a period of even more uncertainty and accelerating change. Geopolitical instability, climate change, technological transformation and disruption, and shifting societal expectations are present - and unpleasant - realities reshaping how we plan, deliver, and experience events. The many new threats demand a renewed view on risk management in our industry and for each stakeholder to become better equipped to manage and mitigate risk through more structured, proactive approaches.

We no longer believe that understanding, prioritising and mitigating risk should be optional in today's uncertain business environment. The entire ecosystem, ourselves included, should start proactively treating event risk management as a core business discipline and elevate risk from an operational concern into a leadership priority.

Risk should be embedded in strategy, governance, planning and daily operations, and not something that is handled when things go wrong. That will require structured risk assessments, clear ownership and mitigation planning across the entire event lifecycle and subsequently also integrating risk analysis into strategic choices such as markets, partners, formats and locations. It can be done without compromising purpose, mission, and values.

With the Copenhagen Risk Navigator, we aim to take risk management in our industry to a new level. The Navigator provides not only a reassessment of current risks but also an analysis of the current risk maturity in businesses, associations and destinations. Furthermore, it provides a Risk Management Toolkit that has been aligned with the current risk landscape. The tools are designed to be accessible and practical so that stakeholders across the entire value chain and of all sizes can apply them to their own operations no matter the stage of risk management maturity they are at.

It is our sincere hope that you will find the Copenhagen Risk Navigator useful and that it will serve as a valuable resource for you and your organisation. Also, we hope it will be a well-received contribution towards a more resilient business environment and an improved collaboration across the business events value chain.

Once again, a big thank you to our partners, consultants, peer reviewers and industry organisations. And, a very special thank you to my colleague, Christina Wulff Lohmann, for the calm professionalism and tireless commitment she has brought to every step of this project.



**Bettina Reventlow-Mourier**  
Deputy Convention Director  
Copenhagen Convention Bureau

May 2026

# CONTENTS - PART 1

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>6</b>
Pillar 1: The Risk Landscape - Accelerating, Systemic, and Interconnected	6
Pillar 2: The Execution Gap - Awareness Without Action	6
Pillar 3: From Compliance to Resilience - Strategies and Tools for the Future	7
<b>PART 1 - COPENHAGEN RISK NAVIGATOR: International Strategies and Tools for Business Events</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Research Approach	9
1.2 Data Collection	9
1.3 Analysis and Validation	9
1.4 Methodological Boundaries	9
1.5 Business Events Ecosystem and Lifecycle	10
<b>CHAPTER 2: THE EVOLVING RISK LANDSCAPE</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Foundations: The 2023 Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper	13
2.2 Dominant Risks and the Pace of Change	13
2.3 The Evolution of Risk Management	15
2.4 How Business Events Differ	15
2.5 Risk Asymmetry: A Structural Vulnerability	16
<b>CHAPTER 3: INDUSTRY SURVEY - STATUS AND THE EXECUTION GAP</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1 Respondent Profile	18
3.2 Organisational Maturity: Progress and Regression	18
3.3 Risk's Influence on Decision-Making	19
3.4 Risk Priorities Across the Value Chain	19
3.5 The Execution Gap: Strategies	20
3.6 The Execution Gap: Tools	21
<b>CHAPTER 4: RISK STRATEGIES FOR THE BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY</b>	<b>22</b>
Cluster 1: Organisational-Level Foundations	23
Cluster 2: Foresight and Long-Range Assessment	24
Cluster 3: Event-Level Planning and Continuity	25
Cluster 4: Enabling Capabilities	26
<b>CHAPTER 5: THE RISK MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1 From Strategy to Action	29
5.2 How Tools Were Selected	29
5.3 The Tool Card Format	30
5.4 Tool Selection Guidance	30
<b>CHAPTER 6: LEARNINGS AND LOOKING AHEAD</b>	<b>32</b>
6.1 Implications for the Industry	33
6.2 How Knowledge Has Advanced Since the 2023 White Paper	33
6.3 Future Research: Toward a Self-Assessment Standard	33
6.4 Final Reflections	34
<b>ANNEXES</b>	<b>35</b>
Annex A: Research Instruments	36
Annex B: Expanded Data Tables	39
Annex C: Risk Navigator Tools	41
Annex D: Literature List	45
<b>PART 2 - RISK MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT</b>	<b>46</b>

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## **The Copenhagen Risk Navigator: International Strategies and Tools for Business Events**

represents the next major step in Copenhagen Convention Bureau's commitment to strengthening resilience across the global business events industry. Building on the foundations laid by the 2023 Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper, this project delivers a comprehensive analysis of the evolving risk landscape, a candid assessment of industry readiness, and a practical toolkit designed to close the gap between awareness and action. The findings are organised around three interconnected pillars.

### **PILLAR 1: The Risk Landscape - Accelerating, Systemic, and Interconnected**

The global risk environment is intensifying in both complexity and velocity. Cybersecurity threats, amplified by the rapid proliferation of generative and agentic artificial intelligence (AI), now rank as the leading concern across every major global risk survey, including the Allianz Risk Barometer 2025, Aon Global Risk Management Survey 2025 and World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risks Report 2025 and 2026 (see [Annex D: Literature List](#)). These are not static threats. Generative AI is enabling new forms of fraud, deepfakes, and social engineering at scale, while agentic AI (artificial intelligence systems capable of autonomously achieving specific goals with minimal human supervision) introduces risks that most organisations have not yet begun to evaluate.

Cybersecurity does not operate in isolation. Geopolitical fragmentation, the weaponisation of misinformation and disinformation, economic volatility, and climate hazards compound one another to create cascading, systemic impacts. The WEF's 2025 and 2026 reports position state-based armed conflict and geoeconomic confrontation among the most urgent near-term global risks, while climate adaptation failure and extreme weather events remain dominant long-term concerns. The regulatory environment adds further complexity: the volume and pace of legislative change across data protection, AI governance, and operational resilience frameworks means that keeping up with compliance has itself become a risk.

The business events industry mirrors these global trends but with unique intensity. Events are live, people-centric, and highly visible, making them particularly vulnerable to reputational damage, safety incidents, and operational disruptions. Short-term shocks, such as economic disruptions, supplier failures, sudden shifts in delegate behaviour, travel restrictions, have immediate and often irreversible consequences for events that cannot simply be rescheduled or redesigned after the fact. The ICCA Association Meeting Needs & Trends 2026 report found that 43% of associations have no strategy for managing risk, while only 40% of respondents in a Smart Meetings 2025 survey include risk evaluation in their request-for-proposal (RFP) process. These findings underscore that the industry's risk exposure is real, current, and insufficiently managed.

### **PILLAR 2: The Execution Gap - Awareness Without Action**

A significant finding in this project is not the scale of risks facing the industry but the persistent gap between awareness and execution. Across a survey of 87 international buyers and suppliers conducted during the project, risk awareness has grown considerably since 2023. Risk is now firmly embedded in decision-making at a moderate level, and most respondents are involved in risk management in some capacity. However, substantial gaps remain in how risk management is practiced.

Reactive, compliance-driven approaches remain the dominant operating model. Risk ownership is inconsistent, with some segments, most notably associations and 3rd party event organisers, showing declining maturity since the 2023 baseline. Risk sharing between buyers and suppliers is underdeveloped, leaving suppliers disproportionately exposed. Sector-specific frameworks are limited, forcing organisations to adapt general risk management guidance to an industry with unique operational realities. And critical capability gaps persist across the ecosystem, particularly in areas such as scenario planning, stress testing, and the use of key risk indicators (KRIs).

The challenge facing the industry is not awareness or intent. It is execution and capacity. The project's survey reveals strong stated interest in advanced tools: 64% of buyers express desire for scenario planning capability (against just 13% current use), and 56% of suppliers want governance structures and KRI frameworks (against 22% current use). Yet actual adoption of these tools remains low. The industry continues to rely heavily on basic compliance instruments, such as contract reviews, insurance policies, and avoidance strategies, while underinvesting in the proactive, analytical capabilities needed to navigate an increasingly complex risk environment. Future solutions must be accessible, scalable, and easy to operationalise if they are to close this execution gap.

A further structural dimension compounds this challenge: the asymmetry of risk distribution across the value chain. Suppliers carry the greatest direct financial, contractual, and operational exposure. They are most affected by late changes, low attendance, disruption, buyer insolvency, shifting regulations, and service delivery failures. This asymmetry is not incidental; it is built into many commercial arrangements. As volatility increases, this imbalance becomes harder to sustain and calls for clearer and fairer risk-sharing mechanisms.

### **PILLAR 3: From Compliance to Resilience - Strategies and Tools for the Future**

Risk strategies set the overall direction for how an organisation approaches risk, while risk tools put those strategies into practice. In simple terms, strategies define what needs to happen, and tools provide the means to make it real. The centrepiece of this project is the identification of risk strategies and tools for the business events industry. Given the modest evidence base specific to business events, these strategies and tools reflect the most consistent themes emerging from the data collection process, supported by professional assessment and validation of discussions with FERMA and RIMS.

Achieving resilience requires strategies that address clear governance, forward looking risk insight, integrated planning, reliable operations, shared responsibility with partners, and a capable workforce that can identify and act on risks quickly. This project translates these priorities into recommended strategies, organised under four clusters: Organisation-Level Foundations, Foresight and Long-Range Assessment, Event-Level Planning and Continuity, and Enabling Capabilities.

The Risk Management Toolkit is a portfolio of 14 tools. From an initial pool of 34 candidate tools, these 14 emerged as the most consistently valued and practically applicable, particularly those that most closely align with current and anticipated risk priorities. Each tool is documented via a standardised Risk Tool Card, which are portable, self-contained references that describe the tool's purpose, methodology, benefits, limitations, lifecycle applicability, and example applications in a business events context. These cards are designed to bridge strategy and daily operations, giving organisations a practical mechanism for selecting the right tool at the right time.

A Lifecycle Alignment Matrix maps each of the tools against the six stages of the event lifecycle - **Strategic Planning, Event Design, Procurement, Operational Planning, Event Delivery, and Post-Event Review** - providing a visual guide to which tools apply at each phase. Tool selection guidance helps organisations of different sizes, maturity levels, and event profiles determine where to begin.

Looking ahead, an important consideration for future research is the development of a standardised, business events sector-specific self-assessment tool measuring two complementary dimensions: Organisational Readiness (governance, policies, culture, training, monitoring) and Risk Exposure (event scale, geographic context, stakeholder profile, operational factors, financial exposure). Drawing on frameworks such as the RIMS Risk Maturity Model, such a tool would enable benchmarking, comparative analysis, and the generation of anonymised industry insights to inform standards and policy.

The following chapters present the research methodology, an analysis of the evolving risk landscape, primary and secondary research findings, recommended strategies, the Risk Management Toolkit, and a forward-looking agenda for continued development. Together, they form an integrated roadmap for building a more resilient, sustainable, and future-ready industry that treats risk management not as a burden but as a source of competitive advantage.

# Chapter 1

## Research Design and Methodology



**The Copenhagen Risk Navigator was developed through a multi-method research approach designed to produce findings that are both shaped by insights from the process and practically applicable. This chapter describes the research approach, data collection instruments, analytical methods, and methodological boundaries that underpin the project.**

## **1.1 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research combined qualitative and quantitative methods to build a comprehensive understanding of risk management practices in the business events industry. The approach was guided by a steering committee comprising representatives from Copenhagen Convention Bureau, FERMA, and RIMS, ensuring alignment with global best practices throughout the project.

Data was collected through four complementary channels: one-on-one consultations with European and North American risk experts (drawn primarily from sectors outside business events to bring external perspective and rigour), an online industry survey capturing current practices and priorities across the business events ecosystem, a comprehensive literature review of more than 20 published reports and academic studies, and expert analysis synthesising findings across all sources. Survey results were mixed with literature review findings and expert commentary to validate conclusions and identify areas of convergence and divergence.

## **1.2 DATA COLLECTION**

The literature review examined industry reports, academic studies, and best-practice resources from across the risk management, resilience, and business events fields (see [Annex D: Literature List](#)). The 2023 Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper served as the key reference point, with subsequent analysis focused on identifying how the risk landscape and industry practices had evolved since its publication.

Expert interviews were conducted with 13 senior professionals across multiple sectors:

- 5 from finance and insurance
- 3 from academia
- 1 from manufacturing
- 1 from a risk mitigation company
- 3 from the business events industry

Interviewees included board members and senior leadership of RIMS and FERMA, as well as representatives from the IMEX Group and Copenhagen Business School. This cross-sector composition was deliberate: drawing primarily from outside the business events industry brought mature, established risk management perspectives that challenged industry assumptions and enriched the recommendations.

The online survey was distributed to an international audience of business events suppliers and buyers, generating 87 total responses: 39 from buyers and 48 from suppliers. The survey was launched on 20 January 2026 and closed on 25 February 2026. It captured data on organisational maturity, risk priorities, current strategies and tools, and appetite for future capabilities.

## **1.3 ANALYSIS AND VALIDATION**

All strategies and tools presented in this project were validated against recognised best practices by FERMA and RIMS. Additionally, FERMA and RIMS along with a peer group of business event industry experts conducted a thorough review of the project report. The validation process ensured that recommendations are not only theoretically sound but applicable to the specific operational realities of business events.

## **1.4 METHODOLOGICAL BOUNDARIES**

As with any research project, this study operates within defined methodological boundaries. Understanding these boundaries is essential for interpreting findings appropriately.

The following table identifies these potential limitations:

Consideration	Implication
<b>Sample size</b>	87 survey responses and 13 1:1 interviews: senior leaders are well represented, but some segments of the value chain may be underrepresented. While the sample is not statistically representative of the entire industry, the consistency of themes across both quantitative and qualitative inputs strengthens the credibility of the findings.
<b>Self-reported data</b>	Responses may be influenced by recall bias or differing interpretations of risk terminology across organisations and geographies.
<b>Limited internal access</b>	No direct observation of organisational processes or internal risk documentation was conducted; findings reflect stated rather than observed practices.
<b>Cross-sectional design</b>	Data reflects a defined timeframe (January - February 2026); findings may shift as new challenges emerge or existing risks evolve.
<b>External expert input</b>	Insights from other sectors provide valuable perspective but may not always align with the specific operational realities of business events.
<b>Limited sector-specific literature</b>	Heavy reliance on general risk management sources and adjacent sectors, reflecting the scarcity of published research focused specifically on business events risk management.
<b>Toolkit not yet piloted</b>	Risk Tool Cards were developed from data and expert validation but have not yet been pilot-tested with end users in live operational settings.

## 1.5 BUSINESS EVENTS ECOSYSTEM AND LIFECYCLE

Consistent with the 2023 Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper, this project defines the business events ecosystem as the full range of organisations involved in planning, delivering, and hosting meetings, conferences, and congresses (i.e., buyers and suppliers). The following describes the types of organisations in each category:

### Suppliers

- Professional Congress Organiser (PCO) / Agency / Intermediary  
\*Note: These organisations could self-select either buyer or seller in the online survey
- Convention Centre
- Hotel
- Convention Bureau (CVB) / Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO)

### Buyers

- Association, Federation or Society
- Corporate Company

While this broader ecosystem provides important context, the primary focus is on meetings and conferences organised by associations and corporations. As a result, exhibitions and tradeshow are not examined in the same depth, although many of the strategies and tools presented here are equally applicable to those segments.

Throughout this project, risk management is examined across a six-stage event lifecycle, providing a consistent framework for aligning strategies and tools to the phases where they are most relevant:

Lifecycle Stage	Risk Management Focus
1. Strategic planning	Identifying long-range uncertainties, setting risk appetite, and aligning event objectives with organisational risk governance. This stage includes destination and venue selection.
2. Event design	Assessing risks associated with programme content, format, venue selection, stakeholder expectations, and attendee experience.
3. Procurement	Evaluating vendor reliability, contractual protections, financial exposure, insurance coverage, and supply chain dependencies.
4. Operational planning	Developing contingency plans, scenario-testing operational processes, and preparing crisis response structures.
5. Event delivery	Monitoring real-time risks, executing crisis communication protocols, and managing onsite safety and operational continuity.
6. Post-event review	Capturing lessons learned, evaluating risk management effectiveness, and feeding insights into future planning cycles.



# Chapter 2

## The Evolving Risk Landscape



The risk environment facing the global business events industry is evolving with unprecedented speed and complexity. This chapter presents a unified analysis by weaving together findings from the literature review, expert interviews, and secondary research. The intent is to map the dominant risks, trace the evolution of risk management practice, and highlight the distinctive characteristics that make business events uniquely vulnerable.

## 2.1 FOUNDATIONS: THE 2023 COPENHAGEN RISK ASSESSMENT WHITE PAPER

The 2023 Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper established the baseline for this research. It prioritised efforts on the three key risk pillars - strategic, financial, and operational - and documented significant inconsistencies in how risk ownership is distributed across the business events value chain. The White Paper found that risk sharing between buyers and suppliers was underdeveloped, that many organisations relied on reactive approaches, and that proactive, collaborative frameworks were largely absent. Its central conclusion was clear: the industry needed to move beyond fragmented, compliance-driven risk management and invest in structured, forward-looking approaches. The Copenhagen Risk Navigator builds directly on these foundations, assessing how the landscape has evolved and translating insights into practical strategies and tools.

## 2.2 DOMINANT RISKS AND THE PACE OF CHANGE

The pace at which risks are evolving, converging, and amplifying one another defines the current landscape. The following analysis integrates findings from major global risk surveys with insights from expert interviews to present a unified picture of the dominant threats.

### Cybersecurity and Artificial Intelligence

Cybersecurity threats, amplified by the rapid development of generative and agentic AI which can act on its own and not just generate answers, have moved decisively to the top of global risk agendas. The Allianz Risk Barometer 2025, Aon Global Risk Management Survey 2025, and Riskconnect 2024 and 2025 reports all position cyber risk as a primary concern for organisations worldwide. Generative AI is creating entirely new categories of threat, from AI-generated deepfakes and synthetic identity fraud to sophisticated phishing campaigns that are increasingly difficult to detect.

The emergence of agentic AI - autonomous systems capable of executing complex, multi-step tasks without human intervention - introduces a further frontier of risk. For example, although agentic AI can help provide a smoother event experience, better networking outcomes, and optimised use of space and resources, it also introduces material risks as it makes autonomous decisions without human oversight.

Research from Riskconnect's 2025 report indicates that 60% of risk leaders are actively exploring agentic AI applications, yet 55% have not evaluated the associated risks. More broadly, 80% of organisations lack a dedicated plan for managing generative AI risks, creating a significant exposure gap.

Expert interviews reinforced these findings with urgency. Cyber was cited as the single biggest change in the risk landscape over recent years. However, experts emphasised that technology alone is not the solution. Human behaviour is as important as technical controls. Multi-factor authentication, phishing simulations, identity verification protocols, and regular staff training were identified as mature, proven practices that remain underused in many business events organisations. As one expert observed, the most sophisticated firewall is rendered useless if an employee clicks on a malicious link.



The gap we've experienced in technology risk has left us exposed, particularly to systemic threats such as phishing and cybersecurity breaches. Closing that gap swiftly is essential, as cybersecurity now stands as one of our most significant concerns.

Mark L Zammit, Research Support Officer,  
Department of Insurance & Risk Management,  
University of Malta

### Geopolitical and Societal Instability

Geopolitical fragmentation represents a systemic risk multiplier. The WEF Global Risks Report 2025 and 2026 position state-based armed conflict and geoeconomic confrontation among the most pressing near-term concerns globally. In Aon's 2025 survey, geopolitical volatility surged nearly 30 places to enter the top 10 risks, which represents a dramatic shift at which geopolitical conditions can deteriorate.

Misinformation and disinformation are becoming increasingly systemic, with the WEF 2026 report highlighting their growing role in destabilising institutions, eroding trust, and complicating crisis response.

Organisations are responding. Riskconnect 2025 reports that two-thirds (66%) of companies entered 2025 with a geopolitical risk plan, up sharply from just 19% the previous year. This is close to a four fold increase that signals both growing awareness and genuine concern.

Expert interviewees described international affairs as an amplifier of other pressures rather than an isolated risk category. Trade disruption, sanctions regimes, inflation, currency volatility, travel advisories, and supply chain impacts were all cited as downstream consequences of geopolitical instability that directly affect business events planning, particularly for international congresses and conferences operating across multiple jurisdictions.



**I would say the environment is far more complex and it's a lot more interconnected than it used to be. Things that might have used to be isolated like geopolitical instability or supply chain disruption or cyber threats, they really kind of intersect with each other and then they create cascading impacts across the board**

Kristen Peed, Chief Risk Officer,  
SEQUOIA

### Climate and Environmental Risks

Extreme weather events and climate adaptation failure remain dominant high-impact risks across all major global assessments. The HOTREC Crisis Resilient Guidelines specifically address the hospitality sector's vulnerability to climate risks with direct implications for venues, hotels, and outdoor event components. The WEF 2026 report notes that while these risks have been temporarily overshadowed by geopolitical conflict in the short-term outlook, they remain the most significant long-term threats to global stability.

Experts highlighted the increasing frequency and severity of climate-related events and their practical impacts on the business events industry: higher insurance premiums, reduced insurance coverage in high-risk locations, compounding effects that are harder to model using traditional methods, and the declining utility of historical loss data as a basis for future planning. The consensus was that organisations relying on backward-looking risk assessment are ill-equipped for a climate future defined by non-linear change.

### Regulation and Compliance

The regulatory landscape is expanding rapidly across data protection, AI governance, sustainability reporting, and operational resilience. Expert interviewees consistently identified the volume and pace of regulatory change as a significant source of complexity, cost, and accountability. Rules frequently lag technological development, creating periods of uncertainty in which organisations must navigate ambiguity. Keeping up with regulatory requirements has itself become a risk, consuming resources and management attention that could otherwise be directed toward strategic risk management and resilience building.

### Top Global Business Risks: Cross-Survey Comparison

Rank	Allianz Risk Barometer 2025	Aon Global Risk Management Survey 2025	WEF Global Risks Report 2026
1	Cyber incidents	Cyber attack / data breach	State-based armed conflict
2	Business interruption	Business interruption	Extreme weather events
3	Natural catastrophes	Economic slowdown / recession	Geoeconomic confrontation
4	Changes in legislation and regulation	Failure to attract / retain talent	Misinformation and disinformation
5	Climate change	Regulatory / legislative changes	Societal polarisation

## 2.3 THE EVOLUTION OF RISK MANAGEMENT

The dominant risks outlined above are driving a fundamental evolution in how organisations approach risk management. Traditional frameworks, which focus primarily on compliance, insurance, and reactive incident response, are proving insufficient for a world of systemic, interconnected, and rapidly accelerating threats. Momentum is beginning to build toward strategic integration, resilience building, and foresight.

The BDO Global Risk Landscape 2025 report reveals that 69% of companies describe themselves as risk-averse, an orientation that could sacrifice growth opportunities even as it limits downside exposure. At the same time, 74% of respondents believe that embedding risk management in organisational culture is essential to long-term performance. FERMA's Global Risk Manager Survey Report 2024 confirms that risk managers are playing an increasingly pivotal role in Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) training and risk culture promotion, moving beyond technical compliance to influence strategic decision-making. The Institute of Risk Management (IRM) characterises ERM (see Chapter 4) as a "strategic enabler" for long-term value creation, a framing that positions risk management not as a cost centre but as a core business capability.

Strategic foresight is gaining prominence as a complement to traditional risk assessment. Organisations are recognising the need to prepare for both "black swan" events (rare, unpredictable disruptions with outsized impact) and "grey rhino" events (visible, high-probability threats that are often ignored until they become critical). Experts interviewed for this project consistently emphasised that organisations are placing less weight on forecasting (predicting what will happen) and more on resilience (ensuring the ability to adapt when the unexpected occurs). The goal, as one interviewee articulated, is to build "shock absorbers": clear ownership structures, strong controls, well-practised response plans, and flexible operating models that can absorb disruption without catastrophic failure.

Operational resilience is emerging as a discipline. The BCI Operational Resilience Report 2024 found that regulation is the primary driver, but nearly 60% of organisations also pursue operational resilience as good practice, indicating intrinsic motivation beyond compliance. The growing trend of appointing a Chief Resilience (or Risk) Officer roles

signals that resilience is being elevated from operational concern to board-level priority. Third-party risk management and the EU's Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA) are further accelerating this trend, requiring organisations to demonstrate resilience across their supply chains and technology infrastructure.

Despite these advances, significant preparedness gaps persist. The 2025 Riskconnect Report reveals that only 9% of risk leaders feel prepared for unknown future risks, underscoring the distance between aspiration and capability. The evolution from compliance to resilience is well underway, but it is far from complete.

## 2.4 HOW BUSINESS EVENTS DIFFER

While the global risk trends described above affect every sector, business events exhibit distinctive characteristics that amplify their impact. Understanding these differences is essential for developing risk strategies that are fit for purpose rather than borrowed wholesale from other industries.

**Reputational and participant safety risks are heightened.** Business events are live, highly visible, and people centric. A safety incident, a technology failure during a keynote, or a poorly managed crisis can cause immediate and lasting reputational damage not only for the organiser but for the destination, sponsors, and industry associations involved. Unlike manufacturing or financial services, where many risks can be managed internally, event risks unfold in public view.

**Sensitivity to short-term shocks is acute.**

Travel disruption, supplier failure, last-minute cancellations, political instability in host destinations, and sudden shifts in delegate behaviour can all have immediate, irreversible consequences. Events operate on fixed timelines: a conference cannot be rescheduled as easily as a product launch or a construction project.

**Workforce, talent, and stakeholder experience risks are prominent.** Events rely heavily on temporary staff, contractors, and volunteers. Mental well being, burnout, high turnover, and inconsistent training levels create operational vulnerabilities. Attendee expectations are also evolving rapidly - around sustainability, accessibility, digital experience, and safety - placing additional pressure on organisers to manage risks that extend well beyond physical security.

Industry-specific data reinforces these concerns. The ICCA Association Meeting Needs & Trends 2026 report found that 43% of associations have no strategy for managing risk. Only 40% of respondents in a Smart Meetings 2025 survey include risk evaluation in the RFP process, suggesting that risk considerations are frequently absent from the procurement decisions that shape event delivery. The ASAE Associations Guide to Risk and Crisis Management and the EIC Risk Management Guidebook both advocate proactive planning, crisis frameworks, and dedicated crisis communication teams; however, evidence suggests that adoption of these practices remains uneven.

In the hospitality sector, the HOTREC/Hotel Resilient Crisis Guidelines offer a structured approach, defining nine criteria across site and building resilience, operational systems, and management capabilities. These guidelines provide a useful reference for venues and hotels seeking to demonstrate resilience credibly, which is a capability that is increasingly expected by clients and event organisers.

## **2.5 RISK ASYMMETRY: A STRUCTURAL VULNERABILITY**

A critical structural dimension of the business events risk landscape is the asymmetric distribution of risk across the value chain. Suppliers - venues, hotels, 3rd party event organisers, CVBs, and DMOs - carry the greatest direct financial, contractual, and operational exposure. They are the organisations most affected by late programme changes, low attendance, event cancellations, client insolvency, shifting regulatory requirements, and service delivery failures.

Unlike buyers, who can often distribute impacts across multiple events and budget cycles, suppliers frequently absorb the full consequences of disruptions that are beyond their control.

This asymmetry is not incidental. It is embedded in many standard commercial arrangements - through cancellation clauses that favour buyers, attrition penalties that transfer demand risk to venues, and payment terms that leave suppliers exposed to cashflow volatility. As the broader environment becomes more volatile and unpredictable, these imbalances are becoming harder to sustain. Suppliers need clearer and fairer risk-sharing mechanisms, stronger contractual protections, and more transparent expectations about how risk will be distributed when disruptions occur.

At the same time, this dynamic creates a strategic opportunity. For venues and 3rd party event organisers in particular, demonstrable resilience is becoming part of their value proposition. Buyers are increasingly seeking evidence of cyber readiness, contingency planning, crisis response structures, staff training protocols, supplier oversight, and financial robustness. Organisations that can credibly demonstrate these capabilities are positioning themselves more competitively in the market. Risk management, in this context, is shifting from a back-office support function to a front-line element of market positioning and buyer trust.



# Chapter 3

## Industry Survey - Status and the Execution Gap



An industry survey was conducted for this project to provide a detailed snapshot of current risk management practices, priorities, and aspirations across the business events value chain. Its most revealing finding is the execution gap: a persistent disconnect between growing awareness and lagging capability. This chapter examines the data through the lens of that central tension.

### 3.1 RESPONDENT PROFILE

The survey captured 87 responses from an international audience of business events professionals: 39 buyers and 48 suppliers. The respondent profile reflects a senior, experienced, and engaged sample.

**Buyers:** 85% represent associations, federations, or societies, with a smaller share from corporate organisations.

**Suppliers:** Professional Congress Organisers and other 3rd party event organisers account for 42% of supplier respondents, CVBs and DMOs for 33%, and venues (convention centres and hotels) for 21%.

**Seniority is high:** 86% of respondents hold leadership or management roles, including 29% at C-suite level, 46% in senior management, and 11% at board or owner level. Engagement with risk management is widespread: 85% are involved in risk management in some capacity, with 31% holding overall responsibility and 54% carrying partial responsibility.

### 3.2 ORGANISATIONAL MATURITY: PROGRESS AND REGRESSION

An important finding is the uneven trajectory of organisational risk maturity since 2023. While some segments have made significant progress, the survey indicates others have regressed. It is important to note the 2026 sample size was smaller than in 2023, which may impact the comparability of results.

**Survey Question: Does your organisation have a risk framework for assessing risks of any kind?**

Segment	2023	2026	Change
Corporate buyers	75%	100%	Strong improvement
Associations	52%	48%	Slight decline
Venues (Convention centres and hotels)	55%	80%	Significant improvement
3rd party event organisers (PCOs / Agencies)	81%	70%	Decline
CVBs / DMOs	-	50%	Baseline

Corporate buyers and venues have demonstrated clear improvement, reflecting investment in governance structures and formalised processes. However, the decline among associations and 3rd party event organisers is concerning. These segments are central to the value chain, and their regression suggests that risk management resources, capability, or prioritisation may have weakened in the face of competing operational pressures. The CVB/DMO segment, surveyed for the first time, establishes a baseline at 50% - below the level that might be expected given the strategic importance of destination-level risk management.

### 3.3 RISK'S INFLUENCE ON DECISION-MAKING

Risk management has become a consistent factor in decision-making across both supplier and buyer segments, but it operates as a moderate rather than dominant influence. Among suppliers, 42% report that risk affects their decision to pursue a meeting moderately, while 31% indicate a strong influence and 11% a very strong influence. Only 16% describe the impact as slight, and none indicate that risk has no influence.

A similar pattern is observed among buyers when selecting destinations. The largest share, 46%, report a moderate influence of risk, followed by 23% indicating a strong influence and 15% a very strong influence. A smaller proportion, 13%, report only slight influence, while 3% state that risk does not affect their decision.

These results suggest that while risk is firmly embedded in decision-making processes, it is rarely the sole or dominant driver. Instead, it operates as one of several balancing factors alongside cost, strategic objectives, accessibility, and operational feasibility.

### 3.4 RISK PRIORITIES ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

The survey highlights a strong alignment between buyers and suppliers in terms of overarching risk categories, although their emphasis differs based on their roles within the value chain.

#### Suppliers prioritise in order of importance:

1. Financial viability and commercial risk, reflecting their exposure to profitability, return on investment, client solvency, and budget realism
2. Geopolitical risks, including political stability, regulatory conditions, travel restrictions, and exposure to macroeconomic or force majeure events
3. Safety, security, and health risks remain central, particularly in relation to attendee wellbeing, public health incidents, and emergency preparedness
4. Reputational risks, including brand alignment and stakeholder perception
5. Operational feasibility risks linked to delivery capability and resource capacity

#### Buyers prioritise in order of importance:

1. Place safety, security, and geopolitical stability emphasising crime levels, terrorism risk, and overall destination stability
2. Accessibility and travel feasibility follow, including visa regimes, air connectivity, and border policies
3. Infrastructure reliability, such as venue quality, transport systems, and accommodation capacity, is another critical factor
4. Economic and financial risks, including cost levels, inflation, currency fluctuations, and insurance exposure, also play a significant role
5. Environmental and health risks, including extreme weather, natural disasters, and public health infrastructure, round out the top concerns

### 3.5 THE EXECUTION GAP: STRATEGIES

The survey reveals a clear directional shift in how both suppliers and buyers intend to approach risk management over the next two to three years. Overall, the findings illustrate an industry that is becoming more cautious and risk-aware but remains largely focused on defensive

strategies such as avoidance, contractual safeguards, and contingency planning. There is a clear underinvestment in proactive capabilities, including scenario modelling, continuous monitoring, and organisational integration of risk management.

#### Risk strategies likely to be used in the next 2-3 years

Strategy (Suppliers)	Likely / Very Likely
Review contract terms	85%
Avoid high-risk venues/locations	82%
Strengthen cyber controls	62%
Collaborate with partners	62%
Establish dedicated roles	38%
Track/report risks	36%
Implement preventive measures	33%
Conduct scenario planning	28%

Strategy (Buyers)	Likely / Very Likely
Maintain backup plans	71%
Avoid high-risk environments	71%
Strengthen resilience/recovery	69%
Review contracts	69%
Enhance cybersecurity	69%
Diversify suppliers/insurance	44%
Establish risk roles	33%



### 3.6 THE EXECUTION GAP: TOOLS

The survey highlights a clear gap between current tool usage and future aspirations, pointing to structural limitations in how risk is operationalised across the industry. The results show a clear pattern across both suppliers and buyers: current tool usage is heavily weighted

toward foundational, compliance oriented tools, while demand is strongest for more advanced, capability building tools. The execution gap is not about willingness - it is about capability, resources, and access to practical guidance.

#### Survey Question: Does your organisation have a risk framework for assessing risks of any kind?

Tool Category (Suppliers)	Current Use	Desired	Total
Compliance checklists and contract reviews	67%	22%	89%
Risk registers and assessment matrices	44%	33%	78%
Crisis communication and response plans	56%	22%	78%
Insurance and financial risk instruments	56%	22%	78%
Scenario planning and stress testing	33%	33%	67%
Governance structures and KRIs	22%	56%	78%
Real-time monitoring platforms	33%	33%	67%
Post-event review and lessons learned	44%	33%	78%

Tool Category (Buyers)	Current Use	Desired	Total
Compliance checklists and contract reviews	62%	21%	82%
Risk registers and assessment matrices	36%	36%	72%
Crisis communication and response plans	44%	31%	74%
Insurance and financial risk instruments	46%	23%	69%
Scenario planning and stress testing	13%	64%	77%
Governance structures and KRIs	18%	44%	62%
Real-time monitoring platforms	21%	41%	62%
Post-event review and lessons learned	49%	26%	74%

# Chapter 4

## Risk Strategies for the Business Events Industry



The strategies outlined in this chapter are designed to propel the business events industry toward proactive, structured, and collaborative risk management. These strategies operate at the organisational level, defining governance principles, leadership responsibilities, and oversight mechanisms. The following chapter will introduce operational tools, including the Risk Tool Cards, which translate these strategic principles into practical actions and prompts for use throughout the event lifecycle.

Organisations should identify and implement the subset of strategies that they find most useful and have the capability to introduce.

It is important to note that these listed strategies are scalable and can be applied by both small and large organisations.

The strategies reflect the most reliable themes identified from the research, supported by informed professional analysis and validation input from FERMA and RIMS. They are organised into four strategic clusters, each addressing a distinct dimension of organisational capability. Together, these clusters form an integrated framework that links governance and foresight with operational planning and enabling capabilities.

## CLUSTER 1: ORGANISATIONAL-LEVEL FOUNDATIONS

### 1. Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)

A coordinated, organisation-wide approach to identifying, assessing, and managing risk, ERM establishes shared definitions, assessment criteria, reporting structures, and governance mechanisms that ensure risk is managed consistently rather than in departmental silos. In business events, ERM integrates risk considerations into programme design, supplier selection, budgeting, and attendee experience.

#### Strategic value:

ERM transforms risk management from a fragmented, reactive function into a coherent organisational capability aligned with strategic objectives.

### 2. Governance and Decision-Making Structures

Clarifying roles and responsibilities for risk ownership, decision-making authority, and escalation pathways. Effective governance requires designated risk owners, clear decision rights, and mechanisms such as risk committees, cross-functional working groups, and escalation protocols that ensure risks are identified, communicated, and acted upon at the appropriate level.

#### Strategic value:

Clear governance eliminates ambiguity about who owns which risks and ensures that critical decisions are made by people with the authority and information to act.

### 3. Risk Appetite Statement

A formal articulation of the level and types of risk an organisation is willing to accept in pursuit of its objectives. A well-developed risk appetite statement combines qualitative principles (e.g., “we will not compromise on attendee safety”) with quantitative indicators (e.g., budget variance limits, minimum service level expectations, acceptable attendance thresholds), providing a consistent basis for decision-making across the organisation.

#### **Strategic value:**

A risk appetite statement provides decision-makers with clear boundaries, reducing inconsistency and enabling faster, more confident responses when risks materialise.



## CLUSTER 2: FORESIGHT AND LONG-RANGE ASSESSMENT

### 4. Strategic Risk Assessment

The systematic identification and evaluation of long-range uncertainties that could affect organisational strategy and performance. In business events, this includes shifts in travel behaviour, geopolitical instability affecting key destinations, climate disruptions, regulatory changes, and evolving attendee expectations. Methods include environmental scanning, stakeholder consultation, and scenario analysis.

#### **Strategic value:**

Strategic risk assessment equips organisations to make informed decisions about markets, formats, and partnerships before commitments are made.

### 5. Strategic Foresight and Horizon Scanning

The ongoing monitoring of shifts in technology, travel patterns, sustainability expectations, public health, and global mobility to identify emerging threats and opportunities before they materialise. Foresight activities complement formal risk assessment by maintaining a continuous watch on the external environment, ensuring that organisations are not surprised by developments that were foreseeable.

#### **Strategic value:**

Horizon scanning provides early warning, giving organisations time to adapt strategies and build resilience before emerging risks become acute.

## CLUSTER 3: EVENT-LEVEL PLANNING AND CONTINUITY

### 6. Risk Management Plan

A comprehensive, event-specific document that defines assessment criteria, mitigation strategies, escalation pathways, and responsibilities for managing risk throughout the event lifecycle. An effective plan encompasses pre-event reviews, onsite monitoring protocols, and post-event evaluations, creating a continuous feedback loop that improves performance over time.

#### **Strategic value:**

A risk management plan ensures that every stakeholder understands their role in identifying and managing risk before, during, and after the event.

### 7. Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

A structured process for mapping dependencies across suppliers, technology platforms, transportation networks, and venue operations to understand the consequences of disruption. In business events, BIA identifies recovery time objectives for critical functions such as registration systems, audiovisual services, food and beverage operations, and safety communications.

#### **Strategic value:**

BIA reveals hidden dependencies and single points of failure, enabling targeted investment in resilience where it matters most.

### 8. Business Continuity Plan (BCP)

A strategic crisis-preparedness plan that identifies priority functions, defines acceptable downtime thresholds, and clarifies roles between organisers, host facilities, and suppliers during disruption. Effective BCPs combine continuity planning with practical readiness measures. They include regular drills, cross-team briefings, and supplier readiness checks to ensure plans work in practice, not just on paper.

#### **Strategic value:**

A BCP ensures that when disruptions occur, the organisation can maintain or rapidly restore its most critical operations.

### 9. Operational Response Playbooks

Pre-developed, scenario-specific procedures that define activation triggers, command structures, communication protocols, and action sequences for specific incident types. Playbooks should cover medical emergencies, severe weather, protests or demonstrations, cyber incidents, and facility disruptions, ensuring that response is rapid, coordinated, and consistent.

#### **Strategic value:**

Playbooks reduce response time and decision-making burden during high-pressure incidents by providing clear, pre-agreed actions.

## CLUSTER 4: ENABLING CAPABILITIES

### 10. Risk Sharing Mechanisms

Formal arrangements for distributing risk across stakeholders rather than concentrating it on any single party. Risk sharing includes joint contingency planning, shared monitoring responsibilities, co-developed protocols, and transparent contractual terms that allocate risk equitably. The goal is to ensure that no single organisation carries the full impact of disruption.

**Strategic value:**

Risk sharing builds collective resilience and ensures that the organisations closest to specific risks have the resources and authority to manage them.

### 11. Cybersecurity Frameworks

Structured approaches to protecting information assets, event technology, and attendee data through identity management, data protection, network security, and incident response planning. Alignment with established standards such as ISO 27001 and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework provides a credible, systematic basis for managing cyber risk.

**Strategic value:**

A cybersecurity framework protects the organisation and its stakeholders from the fastest growing and most consequential category of operational risk.

### 12. Data, Analytics, and Integrated Risk Technology

The use of technology platforms for real-time risk monitoring, early detection, predictive modelling, compliance tracking, and audit readiness. Integrated risk technology consolidates data from multiple sources - registration systems, social media, weather services, security alerts - to provide a unified view of the risk environment and support faster, better-informed decision-making.

**Strategic value:**

Data and analytics transform risk management from periodic assessment to continuous intelligence, enabling proactive rather than reactive responses.

### 13. Workforce Capability and Risk Culture

Building risk management competence across the organisation through structured training, leadership modelling, and the development of practical skills in emergency response, guest services, conflict management, and crisis communication. A strong risk culture means that risk awareness is not confined to specialist roles but is embedded in how every member of the team thinks and acts.

**Strategic value:**

A risk-aware workforce is the most adaptive and responsive defence an organisation possesses - technology and processes are only as effective as the people who use them.

## 14. Partnership and External Expertise

Strategic engagement with emergency services, insurance providers, cybersecurity specialists, medical teams, legal advisors, and other external experts. Partnerships extend the organisation's risk management capability beyond its own resources and provide access to specialised knowledge, risk transfer mechanisms (such as insurance), and external validation of preparedness.

### **Strategic value:**

External partnerships provide expertise, capacity, and credibility that most business events organisations cannot develop internally.



# Chapter 5

## Risk Tools for the Business Events Industry



## Please see the full Risk Management Toolkit in Part 2

**Strategies provide direction. Tools provide the means to execute. The challenge for many business events organisations - particularly smaller teams with limited risk management resources - is not knowing what good risk management looks like in principle but knowing how to implement it in practice.**

**This chapter details the methodology for selecting and applying priority risk management tools. It introduces a standardised Risk Tool Card format and includes a matrix to guide the alignment of tools with specific event lifecycle stages and needs.**

### 5.1 IDENTIFICATION OF RISK TOOLS

The Risk Management Toolkit, along with 14 Tool Cards, is the practical centrepiece of the Copenhagen Risk Navigator. It translates the strategies outlined in Chapter 4 into a portfolio of actionable tools that organisations across the business events value chain can adopt, adapt, and apply to their own operations.

The development process began with an initial identification of 34 candidate tools drawn from the research (see [Annex C: Risk Navigator Tools](#) for list). Through an assessment process, supported by insights from FERMA and RIMS, 14 tools emerged as the most consistently valued and practically applicable. These tools form a balanced portfolio: some are designed for long-range strategic planning; others support day-to-day operational management while several bridge the gap between the two. Together, they cover the full event lifecycle and serve organisations at every level of maturity.

### 5.2 HOW TOOLS WERE SELECTED

The 14 priority tools, which have been validated by FERMA and RIMS, were selected through a structured, three-source methodology designed to ensure that the toolkit reflects both empirical evidence and practical relevance:

**Online survey:** The industry survey served as a practical filter, identifying the tools that practitioners most need and find most relevant to their operational context. Tools with high combined scores of current use and desired use were prioritised.

**Expert interviews:** The 13 expert consultations included feedback on effective risk tools across multiple sectors. Experts identified not only what works in theory, but what delivers results in organisations under real pressure.

**Secondary research:** The literature review confirmed that selected tools align with global best practices as documented by FERMA, RIMS, ISO 31000, and leading risk management publications.

#### Tools were selected based on four criteria:

- **Cross-source consistency:** Tools that appeared strongly across survey data, expert recommendations, and published literature were prioritised over those supported by a single source.
- **Lifecycle coverage:** The final portfolio was designed to ensure that every stage of the event lifecycle has at least one primary tool, preventing gaps in coverage.
- **Scalability:** Selected tools can be used by organisations of different sizes, from small association secretariats to large venue operators and multinational 3rd party event organiser.
- **Practical usability:** Preference was given to tools that can be implemented with reasonable resources and do not require highly specialised expertise to deploy.

### 5.3 THE TOOL CARD FORMAT

The Risk Tool Cards are designed for multiple practical uses such as selecting the right tool at the right time in the event lifecycle, aligning stakeholders around a shared understanding of risk management processes, building internal capability through structured learning, supporting procurement conversations with evidence of risk readiness, and enhancing post-event learning through standardised review frameworks.

Each of the 14 priority tools is documented through a standardised Risk Tool Card - a portable, self-contained reference designed to make each tool immediately understandable and usable. A Risk Tool Card contains the following elements:

Element	Description
Tool name and purpose	What the tool is called and what it is designed to achieve.
Description	How the tool works in practice, including key steps and processes.
Benefits (and limitations)	What the tool does well and where its boundaries lie.
Typical situation / Event lifecycle stage	The phase(s) of the event lifecycle where the tool is most applicable.
Requirements for use	Resources, expertise, data, or systems needed to deploy the tool effectively.
Outputs / what the tool produces	The deliverables or results generated by applying the tool.
Maturity indicator	An indication of where the tool sits on the development pathway - from essential foundations to gold-standard practices.
Example applications	Practical illustrations of how the tool might be applied in a business events context.
Supporting resources	References to standards, templates, or further reading to support implementation.

### 5.4 TOOL SELECTION GUIDANCE

Not every organisation needs to implement all 14 tools simultaneously. The right starting point depends on four factors:

**Business event lifecycle.** Because each stage of the event lifecycle has distinct needs, certain tools are more useful at specific points. Their relevance spans strategic planning through to post-event review, ensuring full coverage and flexibility as events progress.

**Organisation size and maturity.** Small teams with limited risk management experience should begin with foundational tools: Risk Identification Checklists, Risk Registers, and Post-Event Reviews.

These three tools establish the basic discipline of identifying, tracking, and learning from risks without requiring significant investment. As capability grows, organisations can layer in more analytical tools such as Probability-Impact Matrices, Scenario Planning, and Real-Time Monitoring.

**Event scale and complexity.** A small regional meeting may require only checklists and a basic risk register. A large international congress - with multiple venues, complex logistics, high-profile speakers, and diverse attendee populations - demands a fuller toolkit including scenario planning, contingency plans, crisis communication plans, and vendor management checklists.

**Available resources and expertise.**

Organisations with dedicated risk or operations staff can adopt more sophisticated tools immediately. Organisations without dedicated resources should prioritise tools that can be integrated into existing project management workflows. For example, embedding risk registers within project plans and incorporating risk review into standard post-event debriefs.

**Risk profile of the specific event.** Events in geopolitically sensitive destinations, events with large outdoor components exposed to weather risk, events with high-profile attendees requiring enhanced security, or events handling significant volumes of personal data all warrant a more comprehensive toolkit deployment.

**Recommended Starting Points by Organisation Type**

**Associations and corporate buyers:**

Risk Identification Checklists, Risk Registers, Post-Event Review & Lessons Learned

**Venues and hotels:**

Contingency & Business Continuity Plans, Crisis Communication Plans, Vendor & Contractor Management Checklists

**3rd party event organisers:**

Project Management Tools, Risk Registers, Scenario Planning & Stress Testing

**CVBs and DMOs:** SWOT & PESTEL\* Analyses, Brainstorming & Stakeholder Workshops, Crisis Communication Plans

\* SWOT=Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat / PESTEL=Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal.



# Chapter 6

## Learnings and Looking Ahead



The Copenhagen Risk Navigator has documented a global business events industry at a critical juncture. Risks are escalating, awareness is growing, but execution remains uneven. This closing chapter draws together the implications of these findings, charts the evolution of knowledge since the Copenhagen Risk Assessment white paper from 2023, outlines a priority area for future research, and offers final reflections on the path ahead.

## 6.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INDUSTRY

Risk management can no longer sit at the margins of business events operations. It is becoming a core condition of competitiveness, trust, and long-term resilience. The evidence presented in this project converges on a clear conclusion: the organisations that invest in structured, proactive risk management will be better positioned to win business, earn trust, retain stakeholders, and navigate disruption.

However, the data also reveals an important nuance. Risk management is influential but rarely decisive as a standalone factor. Across both supplier and buyer segments, risk exerts a moderate rather than dominant influence on decision-making. Strong risk management alone will not win business, but weak risk management can increasingly disqualify an organisation or a destination from consideration. Risk capability is becoming a threshold requirement for conducting robust business cross the events eco-system

In an environment where buyers, sponsors, and delegates are asking more questions about safety, cybersecurity, contingency planning, and sustainability, managing risk is now central to building trust in business-to-business markets. The challenge is to move beyond fragmented, defensive approaches toward integrated resilience that is embedded in governance, culture, and operations.

## 6.2 HOW KNOWLEDGE HAS ADVANCED SINCE THE 2023 WHITE PAPER

Comparing the findings of this project with the 2023 Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper indicates five changes in the industry's understanding and practice of risk management:

**Cyber and technology risk has evolved from emerging to priority.** In 2023, cybersecurity was identified as a growing concern. By 2026, it has become the top-ranked risk across all major global surveys, with AI establishing itself as a top-tier threat requiring dedicated governance and response planning.

**Risk management is moving from reactive compliance to embedded resilience.** The 2023 findings documented an industry largely reliant on reactive, compliance-driven approaches. This project finds a growing, while still limited, shift toward more proactive capabilities: scenario planning, analytics, organisation frameworks, and structured foresight.

**Uncertain risk ownership is shifting toward formalised shared accountability.** The 2023 findings highlighted significant inconsistency in who owns risk within organisations and across the value chain. The current research shows movement toward clearer governance structures, though progress is uneven and much work remains, particularly in risk sharing between buyers and suppliers.

**Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations are becoming core risk factors.** ESG has moved from a peripheral concern to a material risk dimension, with climate disruption, sustainability expectations, and social responsibility now directly influencing event planning decisions, venue selection, and stakeholder engagement.

**Risk is recognised as systemic and interconnected rather than operational and isolated.** Perhaps the most fundamental evolution is the understanding that risks do not exist in silos. Cyber, geopolitical, climate, and regulatory risks compound one another, and effective risk management must address these interconnections rather than treating each category independently.

## 6.3 FUTURE RESEARCH: TOWARD A SELF-ASSESSMENT STANDARD

Risk management resources tailored specifically to the business events sector remain limited, despite the industry's increasing operational complexity and exposure to diverse threats. This reliance on generic risk strategies and tools could be enhanced with better, industry specific guidance.

Future research is important to determine industry strategies and tools that the business events industry could adopt. Focusing this research on the development of a self assessment tool offers a particularly high value pathway.

A well designed tool would give organisations a structured, accessible way to evaluate their current practices, identify gaps, and prioritise improvements. It would also create a shared language for risk readiness across suppliers and buyers, while generating anonymised insights that can inform standards, training, and policy. In this way, a self assessment tool becomes both a practical resource and a catalyst for sector wide resilience, helping the industry anticipate challenges rather than simply react to them.

A potential methodology for such a self-assessment tool is to evaluate an organisation's risk posture across two complementary dimensions. Together, these dimensions provide a balanced view of both what an organisation can control and what it must be prepared to manage. An organisation, along with relevant stakeholders and partners, would conduct the self-assessment through a questionnaire that is intuitive, uses plain language, and gives respondents a clear sense of where they sit on each dimension.

- **Organisational Readiness:** The extent to which governance structures, policies, risk culture, training programmes, and monitoring systems are in place and functioning effectively.
- **Risk Exposure:** The level of inherent risk associated with an organisation's operations, including event scale, geographic context, stakeholder profile, operational complexity, and financial exposure.

An existing reference point for this work is the RIMS Risk Maturity Model (see [Annex D: Literature List](#)), an assessment framework built on five pillars: strategy alignment, culture and accountability, risk management capabilities, risk governance, and analytics. While not designed specifically for business events, the RIMS model provides a rigorous methodological foundation that could be adapted for the sector.

A self-assessment tool designed by the industry for the industry would offer a way to reflect the unique realities of meetings and conferences.

Should the sector choose to co design and implement a tailored self assessment tool, it could provide a useful step toward a more consistent and proactive approach to risk readiness.

## 6.4 FINAL REFLECTIONS

The Copenhagen Risk Navigator analyses and comments on the current risk transformation of the global business events industry. The forces reshaping our world are accelerating faster than traditional approaches can accommodate. This is not simply a challenge to overcome; it is an invitation to elevate how the industry understands and manages risk.

What becomes clear through this project is that resilience grows when organisations move beyond reactive practices and begin to embed risk awareness into strategies and everyday decisions. It emerges when teams share accountability, when partners collaborate with intention, and when risk becomes a unifying lens rather than a fragmented responsibility. The strategies and tools developed through this work offer a practical foundation for that shift, helping stakeholders build new habits, strengthen communication, and make risk readiness part of their organisational culture.

The industry has an opportunity to build on this momentum. Continued research, deeper capability building, and the exploration of sector specific resources, such as a standardised self assessment tool, can help create a shared language for resilience and a clearer pathway for collective progress. These efforts will support organisations in understanding where they stand today and where they can grow tomorrow.

In the end, the future of the business events industry will come down to how ready it is to adapt and try new things. If the sector focuses on being prepared, building stronger partnerships, and encouraging a forward-looking mindset, it can turn uncertainty into real opportunities. Copenhagen Convention Bureau, along with FERMA and RIMS, is committed to helping make that happen.

# Annexes

The following links to the items in these Annexes:

- A. [Research Instruments](#)
- B. [Expanded Data Tables](#)
- C. [Full List of 34 Risk Tools](#)
- D. [Literature List](#)



# ANNEX A: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

This section outlines the survey and interview questions employed in the research study, offering insight into the methodologies used to gather comprehensive data from participants.

## Online Survey - Suppliers and Buyers

### Respondent Profile Questions

- Name. Organisation, Head Office location
- Which regions represent your organisation's primary markets or service areas
- Is your organisation primarily a buyer of events (i.e., you own the Intellectual Property (IP) of the event) OR a supplier to events (i.e., you represent a convention bureau that is looking to host the event, a venue, PCO or another supplier providing services that support the event)
- What best describes your role in the organisation?
- Which of the following best describes your involvement in risk management within your organisation?
- Which positions in your organisation have responsibility for risk assessment and/or risk management?

### Risk Considerations

- Does your organisation have a risk framework for assessing risks of any kind, including for events and conferences?
- To what degree do risk considerations affect your organisation's decision to pursue (i.e. bid for or quote for) a meeting? *Suppliers only*
- To what degree do risk considerations affect your organisation's choice of where to hold events or conferences? *Buyers only*
- What are your top risk concerns when deciding which meetings to pursue? *Suppliers only*
- What are your top risk concerns when selecting a host destination for your organisation's events or conferences? *Buyers only*
- To the best of your knowledge, how much weighting does your organisation apply to each of the below risks when
  - » *Suppliers only* - pursuing and/or hosting an event or conference
  - » *Buyers only* - selecting a host destination for your organisation's events or conferences?

## Online Survey - Suppliers and Buyers

<b>Economic</b> – e.g. market conditions, inflation, currency shifts, recessionary pressures, economic resilience in your region/country	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Financial</b> – e.g. budget overruns, cash flow within event ecosystem, sponsorship withdrawal, projected delegate or exhibitor demand, financial stability of local suppliers, sponsors, or buyers	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Climate and Environmental</b> – e.g. extreme weather, natural hazards, environmental degradation, ability of destination to meet sustainability standards	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Geopolitical</b> – e.g. political instability, conflict, civil unrest, sanctions, state of international relations affecting travel	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Societal</b> – e.g. social trends, public sentiment toward visitors, cultural sensitivities, community acceptance of international events, demographic shifts	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Technological</b> – e.g. reliability of event technology, digital platforms, digital connectivity infrastructure, reliance on unproven emerging tech	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Cyber</b> – e.g. data breaches, hacking, ransomware, phishing, vulnerabilities in systems, venue networks, or hybrid event tools	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Regulatory</b> – e.g. local laws, permits, health regulations, visa requirements, accessibility and mobility standards, labour compliance obligations	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Contractual</b> – e.g. potential disputes, liability exposure, adequacy of insurance coverage, intellectual property issues, buyer or organiser contract terms	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
<b>Workforce</b> – e.g. staffing availability, skill gaps, labour disputes, volunteer or temporary labour pool reliability	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know

## Risk Management Strategies

- As your organisation considers risk management strategies for:
  - » Suppliers only - pursuing and/or hosting an event in the next 2-3 years, how likely are the following to occur?
  - » Buyers only - planning an event in the next 2-3 years, how likely are the following to occur?

1 = Very unlikely

2 = Unlikely

3 = Possible

4 = Likely

5 = Very likely

### Our organisation will...

Governance and Oversight						
... provide board level oversight of risks associated with hosting events and conferences	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... have a dedicated role for event-related risk management	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... track event risks and report them regularly	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... use a structured process to assess event organisers and planners (buyers)	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Skills and Engagement						
... train staff in key risk areas, such as safety, crisis response, digital risks	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... communicate openly about risks with attendees and partners	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... collaborate with buyers and destination partners on shared risk practices	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Resilience and Preparedness						
... focus on resilience and rapid recovery during disruptions	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... run scenario planning and stress tests for major event risks	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... diversify suppliers, sponsors, and partners to ensure business continuity	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... maintain backup plans for critical event operations	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Prevention and Mitigation						
... use preventive measures such as crowd safety and vendor audits	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... avoid high-risk activities or locations to host events	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... review contract terms carefully to reduce exposure	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... include flexible clauses to manage uncertainty	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Cyber and Digital Security						
... strengthen cyber controls for data systems and digital platforms	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... ensure suppliers and third parties meet minimum cyber standards	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Risk Transfer						
... transfer risk through insurance or shared liability agreements	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... accept minor risks when mitigation is not cost-effective	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
... retain some risks through self-insurance or internal reserves	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know

- Do you have other risk management strategies you plan to utilise in the next 2-3 years?

## Risk Management Tools

- Which of the following risk management tools does your organisation currently use, and which would you like to use in the next 2–3 years for pursuing and/or hosting events?

Tool	Currently Use (Checkbox)	Would Like to Use (Checkbox)	
Risk checklists and registers to identify risks across the destination or venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Scenario and stress-testing tools to model disruptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Cybersecurity tools to protect event systems and data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Project management tools to track risks across event tasks, timelines, and supplier activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Financial and insurance tools to manage event risk exposure to the destination or venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Compliance and contract tools to meet legal and safety requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Governance structures and Key Risk Indicators (KRIs) to monitor risks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know
Staff training and partner collaboration to strengthen risk capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

- Do you have other risk management tools you plan to utilise in the next 2-3 years?
- Are there any additional comments you would like to share regarding your own experiences with risk management, including specific risks you have encountered, major challenges you have faced, or best practices you have implemented?
- In your view, what are the main challenges facing the meetings industry as a whole in its current risk management practices, and what specific improvements would you recommend at the industry level?

## One on One Interview Questions

- How has the risk landscape changed in the past 2-3 years?
- What factors (e.g., economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal, technological, cyber) have most influenced these changes?
- Which strategies, tools, or practices are most effective for mitigating risk? (These can be in your own organisation or generally).
- Which of these do you believe should become standard across multiple industries and sectors?
- What are some barriers for implementing risk practices in your organisation or generally?
- What type of resources are most important in managing risk?
- What emerging risks do you anticipate will have the greatest impact in the next five years? Of these risks, how would you rank them in order of importance?
- How should organisations prepare for these emerging risks?
- Are you familiar with or involved in the meetings sector? If you are, to what extent does risk influence the selection of where to hold a meeting? [If not, proceed to question #11]
- Can you share examples of destinations or meeting industry suppliers that demonstrate strong risk management practices?
- Do you have any risk management tools, key trend reports, or other information you would be willing to share with us?
- Do you have anything else you would like to comment on?

## ANNEX B: EXPANDED DATA TABLES

### What best describes your role in the organisation?

- 11% are Board Member / Owner
- 29% are C-suite / Executive leadership (CEO, CMO, COO, CFO etc.)
- 46% are Senior Management (Director, VP, Head of Department)
- 10% are Middle Management (Manager, Team leader)
- 5% are Professional / Specialist (Non-managerial)

### Which best describes your involvement in risk management?

- 31% are involved and have overall responsibility
- 54% are involved with some responsibility
- 11% are involved but not responsible
- 5% are not involved

### Does your organisation have a risk framework for assessing risks of any kind?

Buyers	2026 survey	2023 survey	Suppliers	2026 survey	2023 survey
Corporate companies	100%	75%	PCOs, Agencies and Intermediary	70%	81%
Associations	48%	52%	Convention Centres/ Venues	80%	55%
			CVBs and DMOs	50%	N/A

### To what degree do risk considerations affect your organisation's decision to pursue a meeting? (Suppliers)

Very strongly	11%
Strongly	31%
Moderately	42%
Slightly	16%
Not at all	0%

### To what degree do risk considerations affect your organisation's choice of where to hold events or conferences? (Buyers)

Very strongly	15%
Strongly	23%
Moderately	46%
Slightly	13%
Not at all	3%

**As your organisation considers risk management strategies for planning an event in the next 2-3 years, our organisation will... (Suppliers)**

**Most likely:**

- 85% are likely or very likely to review contract terms carefully to reduce exposure
- 82% are likely or very likely to avoid high-risk venues or destinations
- 74% are likely or very likely to include flexible clauses to manage uncertainty
- 62% are likely or very likely to collaborate with industry and destination partners on shared risk practices
- 62% are likely or very likely to strengthen cyber controls for registration, payment, and digital platforms

**Least likely:**

- 28% are likely or very likely to run scenario planning and stress tests for major event risks
- 33% are likely or very likely to use preventive measures such as crowd safety and vendor audits
- 36% are likely or very likely to track event risks and report them regularly
- 38% are likely or very likely to have a dedicated role for event risk management
- 44% are likely or very likely to use a structured process to review event hosts and destinations

**As your organisation considers risk management strategies for planning an event in the next 2-3 years, our organisation will... (Buyers)**

**Most likely:**

- 71% are likely or very likely to maintain backup plans for critical event operations
- 71% are likely or very likely to avoid high-risk activities or locations to host events
- 69% are likely or very likely to focus on resilience and rapid recovery during disruptions
- 69% are likely or very likely to review contract terms carefully to reduce exposure
- 69% are likely or very likely to strengthen cyber controls for data systems and digital platforms

**Least likely:**

- 33% are likely or very likely to have a dedicated role for event-related risk management
- 36% are likely or very likely to retain some risks through self-insurance or internal reserves
- 44% are likely or very likely to diversify suppliers, sponsors, and partners to ensure business continuity
- 44% are likely or very likely to transfer risk through insurance or shared liability agreements
- 47% are likely or very likely to accept minor risks when mitigation is not cost-effective

**Mostly used tool: (Suppliers)**

- 60% use Compliance and contract tools to meet legal and safety requirements
- 56% use Risk checklists and registers to identify risks across the destination or venue
- 49% use Cybersecurity tools to protect event systems and data

**Would like to use: (Suppliers)**

- 22% use Governance structures and Key Risk Indicators (KRIs) to monitor risks, but 56% would like to use it
- 29% use Financial and insurance tools to manage event risk exposure to the destination or venue, but 44% would like to use it
- 40% use Staff training and partner collaboration to strengthen risk capability, but 47% would like to use it

**Mostly used tool: (Buyers)**

- 59% use Compliance and contract tools to meet legal and safety requirements
- 56% use Financial and insurance tools to manage event risk exposure
- 51% use Cybersecurity tools to protect event systems and data

**Would like to use: (Buyers)**

- 13% use Scenario and stress-testing tools to model disruptions, but 64% would like to use it
- 21% use Staff training and partner collaboration to strengthen risk capability, but 64% would like to use it
- 21% use Project management tools to track risks across event tasks, but 59% would like to use it.

# ANNEX C: RISK NAVIGATOR TOOLS

Presented below is a mapping of risk tools that most support each phase of the business event lifecycle. Through this project's research, a total of 34 tools were identified. From that broader set, 14 tools emerged as the most consistently valued. Details on these 14 tools can be found in [Part 2: Copenhagen Risk Management Toolkit](#).

## 1. STRATEGIC PLANNING (HIGH-LEVEL, FORWARD-LOOKING TOOLS)

This stage focuses on early risk discovery, strategic alignment, and organisational readiness.

### Risk Tool Cards

(see Part 2 for more details)

#### 1.1. Risk Identification Checklists

Provides a structured method for buyers and suppliers to scan widely for potential risks that could affect future meetings or conferences, thereby ensuring early recognition of vulnerabilities and supporting informed strategic decisions before major commitments are made.

#### 1.2. Brainstorming & Stakeholder Workshops

Brings diverse partners together to surface emerging, hidden, or interconnected risks that may not appear in formal assessments, strengthening early understanding of the event environment and improving shared ownership of long-range risk considerations.

#### 1.3. SWOT & PESTEL Analyses

Provides a structured assessment of both internal and external factors that may influence risk exposure in the planning and delivery of meetings and conferences, thereby helping organisations anticipate contextual risks and align event strategy with broader operating conditions.

#### Other Risk Tools

#### 1.4. Historical Incident Analysis

Examines patterns and recurring issues from previous events to identify risks that are likely to reappear, enabling buyers to incorporate proven mitigation strategies and avoid repeating past vulnerabilities during early strategic discussions.

#### 1.5. AI/Machine Learning

Uses predictive analytics to identify long term trends, emerging threats, and early warning indicators that may influence future meetings, supporting more resilient strategic planning and helping organisations prepare for evolving risk landscapes.

#### 1.6. Key Risk Factor Scenarios

Develops narrative scenarios that explore how major uncertainties could unfold over time, helping organisations recognise early signals, test strategic assumptions, and prepare for shifts that may influence event feasibility or destination selection.



## **2. EVENT DESIGN (WHERE RISK BECOMES EMBEDDED IN THE EVENT ARCHITECTURE)**

This stage focuses on translating strategy into program design, venue selection, and experience architecture.

### **Risk Tool Cards**

(see Part 2 for more details)

#### **2.1. Probability–Impact Matrix**

Prioritises risks by evaluating how likely they are to occur and how severely they could affect the event, enabling stakeholders to focus attention and resources on the most consequential vulnerabilities embedded in program, venue, or experience decisions.

#### **2.2. Risk Registers**

Creates a centralised, structured record of all identified risks, accountable owners, and mitigation actions, enabling transparent tracking as the event design evolves and embedding clear responsibility for risk management throughout planning and delivery.

#### **2.3. Mitigation Planning Checklists**

Ensures that all necessary mitigation measures are considered and integrated into the event's design, reducing the chance of overlooked vulnerabilities and strengthening preparedness before operational planning begins.

#### **2.4. Project Management Tools**

Supports structured coordination of timelines, tasks, and dependencies, helping teams identify where event design decisions introduce risk and ensuring that mitigation actions are monitored and updated as the event concept evolves.

#### **Other Risk Tools**

#### **2.5. Digital Risk Identification Platforms**

Provides structured templates and automated prompts that help to identify event design stage risks early, improving consistency in risk capture and enabling more proactive adjustments to program, venue, or technology choices.

#### **2.6. Accessibility & Inclusion Risk Tools**

Evaluates potential barriers related to mobility, sensory needs, cultural inclusion, or equitable access, ensuring that event design decisions reduce exclusion risks and support a safe, welcoming experience for all participants.

#### **2.7. Environmental & Sustainability Risk Tools**

Assesses environmental impacts and sustainability vulnerabilities, such as waste, energy use, or climate related disruptions, helping to embed responsible design choices that reduce ecological risk and strengthen event resilience.

## **3. PROCUREMENT (WHERE THIRD-PARTY RISK BECOMES REAL)**

This stage focuses on selecting vendors, contracting, and ensuring compliance.

#### **3.1. Vendor & Contractor Management Checklists**

Verifies all vendors and contractors involved in a meeting or conference meet defined safety, insurance and compliance requirements, thereby reducing operational, legal and reputational risks.

#### **3.2. Insurance, Financial & Legal Risk Tools**

Reviews insurance coverage, contractual obligations, and financial exposures to ensure risks are properly allocated and organisations are protected from liabilities, disruptions, and unforeseen costs that could impact on the successful delivery of meetings and conferences.

#### **Other Risk Tools**

#### **3.3. Budget Contingency Tools**

Forecasts potential cost overruns and identifies appropriate contingency levels, helping organisations prepare for financial uncertainties and ensuring that unexpected disruptions do not jeopardise the event's viability.

#### **3.4. Waivers of Liability**

Documents participant acknowledgement of specific risks associated with certain activities, reducing legal exposure for organisers and ensuring that responsibilities are clearly communicated and understood before the event.

## **4. OPERATIONAL PLANNING (THE MOST RISK-DENSE STAGE)**

This stage focuses on staffing, logistics, safety planning, and readiness.

### **4.1. Scenario Planning & Stress Testing**

Simulates a range of plausible disruptions to assess preparedness, uncover operational vulnerabilities, and strengthen the event team's ability to respond effectively under pressure before risks materialise.

### **4.2. Contingency & Business Continuity Plans**

Defines clear alternative procedures, backup resources, and recovery strategies that enable meetings and conferences to continue operating or resume quickly after disruptions, strengthening operational resilience and protecting attendee safety and overall event experience.

### **Other Risk Tools**

### **4.3. What-If Scenarios**

Explores simple "What if...?" questions to test assumptions and identify vulnerabilities in logistics, staffing, or program flow, enabling organisations to adjust plans before issues escalate into operational problems.

### **4.4. Health, Medical & First-Aid Preparedness Tools**

Outlines medical response protocols, equipment needs, and reporting procedures to ensure that health related incidents are managed quickly and effectively, reducing harm and supporting duty of care obligations.

### **4.5. Security & Access Control Tools**

Establishes procedures for entry screening, credentialing, and perimeter management to reduce security threats, manage crowd movement, and maintain a safe environment for attendees and staff.

### **4.6. Training, Drills & Staff Preparedness Tools**

Ensures staff understand their roles, response procedures, and communication protocols, improving readiness and reducing the likelihood of confusion or delays during incidents.

### **4.7. Threat and Capability Assessments**

Evaluates external hazards and internal response capacity, helping organisations understand where vulnerabilities exist and what resources or partnerships are needed to strengthen operational resilience.

## **5. EVENT DELIVERY (REAL-TIME RISK MANAGEMENT)**

This stage focuses on real-time monitoring, communication, and incident response.

### **5.1. Real-Time Monitoring Platforms**

Enables continuous oversight of key risk indicators during planning and live event operations, allowing stakeholders to detect emerging issues early and respond proactively to reduce disruption and ensure safety.

### **5.2. Crisis Communication Plans**

Defines clear communication roles, responsibilities, channels, and pre-approved messages to ensure timely, coordinated communication during emergencies, reducing confusion, supporting effective decision making, and protecting the organisation's reputation throughout crisis situations.

### **Other Risk Tools**

### **5.3. Incident Reporting & Management Software**

Captures real time incident data, photos, and corrective actions, enabling quick resolution of issues and creating a reliable record for post event analysis and accountability.

### **5.4. Mass Notification Systems**

Delivers urgent alerts to attendees and staff through SMS, email, or app notifications, ensuring rapid dissemination of critical information during emergencies or operational disruptions.

### **5.5. Internal Communication Platforms**

Supports real time coordination among staff and suppliers, enabling quick decision making, efficient task allocation, and consistent messaging during live event operations.

### **5.6. Health & Medical Tools**

Provides on-site medical stations, AEDs, and reporting mechanisms to ensure rapid response to health incidents and maintain a safe environment for all participants.

**Risk Tool Cards**  
(see Part 2 for more details)

## **6. POST-EVENT REVIEW (WHERE LEARNING BECOMES IMPROVEMENT)**

This stage focuses on learning, reporting, and improving future events.

### **6.1. Post-Event Review & Lessons-Learned Tools**

Evaluates event performance, identifies strengths and weaknesses, and captures actionable insights that improve future planning, strengthen organisational resilience, and reduce the likelihood of repeated risks.

#### **Other Risk Tools**

### **6.2. Incident Reporting & Management Software**

Provides a complete record of incidents, near misses, and corrective actions, enabling teams to analyse patterns and refine risk strategies for future events.

### **6.3. Risk Registers**

Updates final risk outcomes and residual exposures, creating a clear record of what occurred and informing improvements to risk frameworks, mitigation plans, and future event design.

### **6.4. Training & Staff Preparedness Tools**

Captures training gaps and future needs. Identifies gaps in staff knowledge or response capability revealed during the event, helping organisations refine training programs and strengthen readiness for future meetings and conferences.

#### **Risk Tool Cards**

(see Part 2 for more details)



## ANNEX D: LITERATURE LIST

The following sources informed the research, analysis, and recommendations presented in this project:

1. Allianz. [Allianz Risk Barometer 2025](#). Munich: Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty, 2025.
2. Aon. [Aon Global Risk Management Survey 2025](#). London: Aon plc, 2025.
3. ASAE (American Society of Association Executives). [Associations Guide to Risk and Crisis Management](#). Washington, DC: ASAE, n.d.
4. BCI (Business Continuity Institute). [Operational Resilience Report 2024](#). Caversham: BCI, 2024.
5. BDO. [Global Risk Landscape 2025](#). Brussels: BDO International, 2025.
6. Copenhagen Convention Bureau. [Copenhagen Risk Assessment White Paper 2023](#). Copenhagen: Wonderful Copenhagen, 2023.
7. EIC (Events Industry Council). [Risk Management Guidebook for Events](#). Washington, DC: EIC, n.d.
8. European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. [Psychosocial Risks and Mental Health at Work](#). Bilbao: EU-OSHA, n.d.
9. European Travel Commission and TOPOSOPHY. [Crisis Preparedness Hub](#). Brussels: ETC, n.d.
10. FERMA (Federation of European Risk Management Associations). [Global Risk Manager Survey Report 2024](#). Brussels: FERMA, 2024.
11. FERMA. FERMA-NEXT [New Exposure Trends Report 2025](#). Brussels: FERMA, 2025.
12. [Forester's B2B Marketing, Sales and Product Predictions 2026](#), Forrester Research, Inc. 2026
13. HOTREC (Hotels, Restaurants & Cafés in Europe). [Hotel Resilient: Crisis Resilient Guidelines for the Hospitality Sector](#). Brussels: HOTREC, n.d.
14. ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association). [Association Meeting Needs & Trends Report 2026](#). Amsterdam: ICCA, 2026.
15. IRM (Institute of Risk Management). [Risk Trends 2025](#). London: IRM, 2025.
16. ISO. [ISO 31000:2018 - Risk Management Guidelines](#). Geneva: International Organization for Standardization, 2018.
17. Mayvin Global - [Mission and Margin: Mitigating Risk for Associations 2025](#).
18. NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology). [Cybersecurity Framework](#). Gaithersburg, MD: NIST, 2024.
19. RIMS (Risk and Insurance Management Society). [RIMS Risk Maturity Model](#). New York: RIMS, n.d.
20. Riskconnect. [New Generation of Risk Report 2024](#). Kennesaw, GA: Riskconnect, 2024.
21. Riskconnect. [New Generation of Risk Report 2025](#). Kennesaw, GA: Riskconnect, 2025.
22. Smart Meetings. [Risk Management Survey](#). Sausalito, CA: Smart Meetings, n.d.
23. World Economic Forum. [The Global Risks Report 2025](#). Geneva: WEF, 2025.
24. World Economic Forum. [The Global Risks Report 2026](#). Geneva: WEF, 2026.

Please note - many of the references and resources are external, and thus dependent on others for their continued existence. Some may require visitors to request or purchase the referenced document



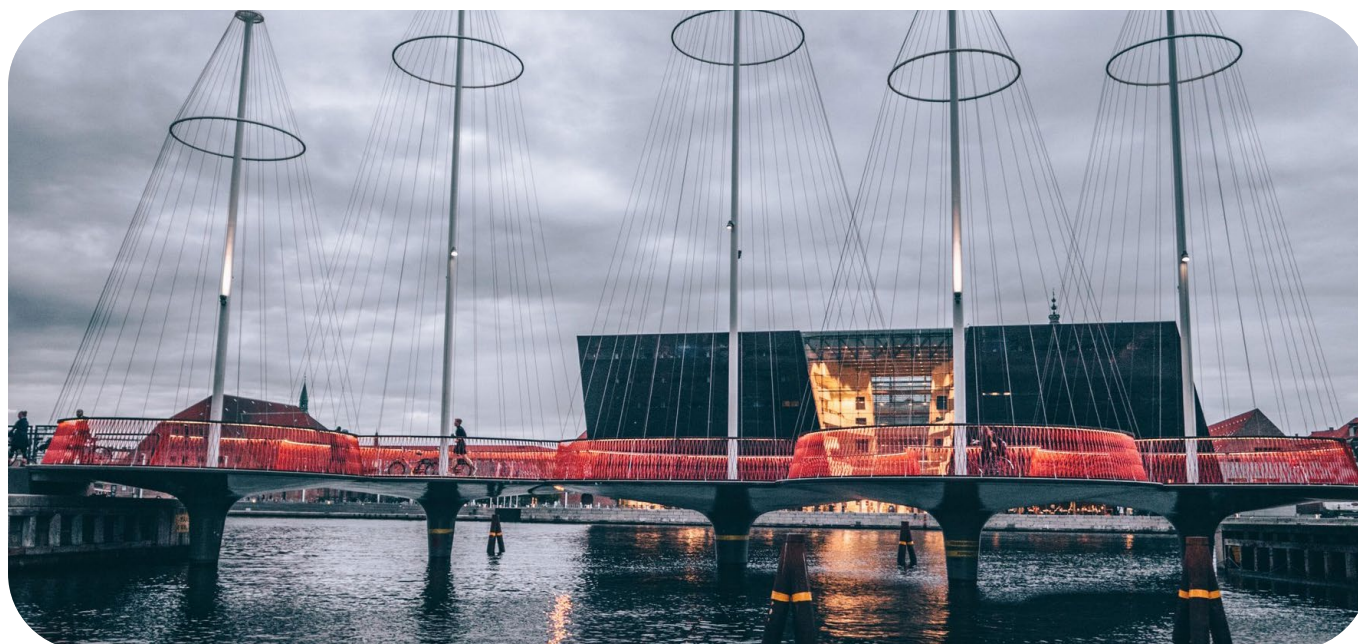
# **Copenhagen Risk Navigator**

## **Part 2: Risk Management Toolkit**



# CONTENTS - PART 2

<b>HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT</b>	<b><a href="#">48</a></b>
<b>SECTION 1: RISK TOOL DIRECTORY</b>	<b><a href="#">49</a></b>
1.1 The 14 Priority Tools at a Glance	<a href="#">50</a>
1.2 How the 14 Tools Were Selected	<a href="#">50</a>
<b>SECTION 2: LIFECYCLE ALIGNMENT MATRIX</b>	<b><a href="#">52</a></b>
2.1 Tools × Lifecycle Stages Reference Matrix	<a href="#">53</a>
2.2 Responsibility Guidance	<a href="#">54</a>
<b>SECTION 3: TOOL SELECTION GUIDANCE</b>	<b><a href="#">55</a></b>
3.1 Maturity-Based Prioritisation	<a href="#">56</a>
3.2 Time and Resource Investment Guide	<a href="#">57</a>
3.3 Quick-Start Guide: “How to Use This Tomorrow Morning”	<a href="#">58</a>
<b>SECTION 4: THE 14 RISK TOOL CARDS</b>	<b><a href="#">59</a></b>
Tool Card #1 - Risk Identification Checklists	<a href="#">61</a>
Tool Card #2 - Brainstorming and Stakeholder Workshops	<a href="#">63</a>
Tool Card #3 - SWOT and PESTEL Analyses	<a href="#">65</a>
Tool Card #4 - Probability–Impact Matrix	<a href="#">67</a>
Tool Card #5 - Risk Register	<a href="#">69</a>
Tool Card #6 - Mitigation Planning Checklists	<a href="#">71</a>
Tool Card #7 - Project Management Tools	<a href="#">73</a>
Tool Card #8 - Vendor and Contractor Management Checklists	<a href="#">75</a>
Tool Card #9 - Insurance, Financial and Legal Risk Tools	<a href="#">77</a>
Tool Card #10 - Scenario Planning and Stress Testing	<a href="#">79</a>
Tool Card #11 - Contingency and Business Continuity Plans	<a href="#">81</a>
Tool Card #12 - Real-Time Monitoring Platforms	<a href="#">83</a>
Tool Card #13 - Crisis Communication Plans	<a href="#">85</a>
Tool Card #14 - Post-Event Review and Lessons-Learned Tool	<a href="#">87</a>
<b>SECTION 5: CLOSING</b>	<b><a href="#">89</a></b>



# HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit serves as Part 2 of the [Copenhagen Risk Navigator: International Strategies and Tools for Business Events](#). It offers practical, portable risk tools that business event professionals and organisations can apply in their day-to-day work.

Each of the 14 Risk Tool Cards in this toolkit are a self-contained reference designed to be used in meetings, site visits, planning sessions, and post-event debriefs. You do not need to read the toolkit cover to cover; instead, select the tools most relevant to your current needs and return to others as your practice matures.

The toolkit is organised by event lifecycle stage, reflecting how risk management activities naturally align with the flow of planning and delivery. Cross-references throughout show where each tool applies across multiple stages, helping you build integrated risk management practices rather than isolated activities.

The tools in this toolkit are designed for organisations at all maturity levels of risk management, ranging from new to advanced. Each Risk Tool Card includes Maturity Indicators to help you understand what basic and advanced use looks like, so you can start wherever you are and build capability over time.

## Where to Start

The Toolkit presents three clear entry points to guide how users begin:

- **Lifecycle Alignment Matrix** (Section 2.1) - See which tools apply at each stage of event planning and delivery.
- **Maturity-Based Prioritisation** (Section 3.1) - Identify which tools to adopt first based on your organisation's current capabilities.
- **Quick-Start Guide** (Section 3.3) - A five-step plan you can implement tomorrow morning.



# Section 1

## Risk Tool Directory



## 1.1 THE 14 PRIORITY TOOLS AT A GLANCE

The following 14 tools represent a set of highly applicable and relevant risk management tools for the business events industry. They are organised here by their primary lifecycle stage.

### Strategic Planning - High-Level, Forward-Looking Tools

- Risk Identification Checklists
- Brainstorming and Stakeholder Workshops
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) Analyses

### Event Design - Where Risk Becomes Embedded in Event Architecture

- Probability-Impact Matrix
- Risk Register
- Mitigation Planning Checklists
- Project Management Tools

### Procurement - Where Third-Party Risk Becomes Real

- Vendor and Contractor Management Checklists
- Insurance, Financial and Legal Risk Tools

### Operational Planning - The Most Risk-Dense Stage

- Scenario Planning and Stress Testing
- Contingency and Business Continuity Plans

### Event Delivery - Real-Time Risk Management

- Real-Time Monitoring Platforms
- Crisis Communication Plans

### Post-Event Review - Where Learning Becomes Improvement

- Post-Event Review and Lessons-Learned Tool

## 1.2 HOW THE 14 TOOLS WERE SELECTED

The 14 priority tools were selected through a structured, three-source methodology designed to ensure that the toolkit reflects both empirical evidence and practical relevance.

### Literature Scan

A comprehensive review of 24 business events and broader risk management literature including the Allianz Risk Barometer 2025, AON Global Risk Management Survey 2025, World Economic Forum Global Risks Report 2025 and 2026, FERMA (Federation of European Risk Management Associations) surveys, and Events Industry Council publications, identified 34 distinct risk management tools.

### Expert Insights

Thirteen structured interviews with risk management experts and senior business events professionals revealed tools which are most valued, used, and impactful in practice.

### Survey Feedback

Eighty-seven industry respondents rated tool awareness, adoption, and perceived effectiveness, confirming usage patterns and identifying gaps between what professionals know about and what they use.

### Convergence Filter

Tools that ranked highly across at least two of the three sources were retained. The final 14 represent the tools with the strongest combined evidence of practical value, expert endorsement, and industry adoption. Finally, the 14 tools were sense-checked with FERMA and RIMS.



Selection Stage	Source	Tools identified	Method
Literature scan	24 published sources	34 tools	Secondary research
Expert insights	13 interviews primarily with risk experts	Guidance on value and impact of key tools	Semi-structured interviews
Survey feedback	87 respondents	Rated by awareness, adoption, effectiveness	Online survey
<b>Final selection</b>	<b>Convergence across 2+ sources</b>	<b>14 priority tools</b>	<b>Multi-source corroboration</b>

**Note**

The selection reflects tools with demonstrated cross-sector relevance. Specialist tools (e.g., crowd simulation software, AI-driven threat detection) were noted but excluded from the priority set as they serve narrower applications.



# Section 2

## Lifecycle Alignment Matrix



## 2.1 TOOLS × LIFECYCLE STAGES REFERENCE MATRIX

The matrix below maps each of the 14 priority tools against the six event lifecycle stages. Most tools have a Primary where they deliver their greatest value, and one or more secondary stages (S) where they remain applicable. This cross-referencing reflects the reality that effective risk management is iterative, not linear.

Tool	Strategic Planning	Event Design	Procurement	Operational Planning	Event Delivery	Post-Event review
1. Risk Identification Checklists	Primary	S	S	S	-	S
2. Brainstorming & Stakeholder Workshops	Primary	S	-	S	-	S
3. SWOT & PESTEL Analyses	Primary	S	S	S	-	-
4. Probability–Impact Matrix	S	Primary	-	S	-	-
5. Risk Register	S	Primary	S	S	S	S
6. Mitigation Planning Checklists	-	Primary	S	S	-	-
7. Project Management Tools	S	Primary	S	S	S	S
8. Vendor & Contractor Management Checklists	-	-	Primary	S	S	-
9. Insurance, Financial & Legal Risk Tools	S	S	Primary	S	-	-
10. Scenario Planning & Stress Testing	S	S	-	Primary	S	S
11. Contingency & Business Continuity Plans	S	S	S	Primary	S	-
12. Real-Time Monitoring Platforms	-	-	-	S	Primary	-
13. Crisis Communication Plans	S	-	-	S	Primary	-
14. Post-Event Review & Lessons Learned	S	S	-	-	-	Primary

**Key:** Primary lifecycle stage (where the tool delivers its greatest value); S = Secondary stage (applicable and recommended); = Not typically applied at this stage.

## 2.2 RESPONSIBILITY GUIDANCE

Effective risk management is a shared responsibility because no single partner sees the full picture. Each organisation involved in a business event holds different pieces of operational, strategic, and destination-level risk. The following table shows how risk management functions map across the event lifecycle

Lifecycle Stage	Primary Risk Function	Supporting Functions
Strategic planning	Risk leadership and governance	Legal, commercial, destination partners, executive sponsors
Event design	Risk informed programme and experience design	Venue, creative, technical, security
Procurement	Risk aware procurement and contracting	Legal, finance, operations
Operational planning	Operational risk and logistics management	Venue, security, technology, transport, medical
Event delivery	On site risk operations	Security, technical, client team, medical, venue operations
Post-event review	Evaluation, insights and continuous improvement	All delivery partners



# Section 3

## Tool Selection Guidance



**Maturity Scale:** 1 = Essential foundation / where to start; 2 = Early development; 3 = Established practice; 4 = Advanced practice; 5 = Elite-level / high maturity.

### 3.1 MATURITY-BASED PRIORITISATION

Organisations should start with foundational tools and build capability over time. The maturity ratings below indicate where each tool sits on the development pathway - from essential foundations to elite-level practices.

Tool	Maturity Rating	Guidance
1. Risk identification checklists	1 - essential foundation	Start here. Low complexity, high impact. Every organisation should use this.
2. Brainstorming & stakeholder workshops	2 - early development	Introduce once basic identification is in place. Builds shared ownership of risk.
3. SWOT & PESTEL analyses	2 - early development	Adds strategic context. Best when combined with checklists.
4. Probability-impact matrix	2 - early development	Critical for prioritisation. Moves beyond listing risks to evaluating them.
5. Risk register	1 - essential foundation	Start here alongside checklists. The backbone of structured risk management.
6. Mitigation planning checklists	2 - early development	Translates identified risks into concrete actions.
7. Project management tools	3 - established practice	Embeds risk tracking into delivery workflows. Requires tool investment.
8. Vendor & contractor management checklists	2 - early development	Essential for any organisation working with third-party suppliers.
9. Insurance, financial & legal risk tools	3 - established practice	Requires cross-functional expertise. Critical for large or complex events.
10. Scenario planning & stress testing	4 - advanced practice	For organisations with established risk processes seeking deeper resilience.
11. Contingency & business continuity plans	3 - established practice	Should be in place for all major events. Complexity scales with event size.
12. Real-time monitoring platforms	5 - elite-level practice	Technology-intensive. For large venues and complex multi-site events.
13. Crisis communication plans	3 - established practice	Should exist for any organisation. Sophistication increases with maturity.
14. Post-event review & lessons learned	1 - essential foundation	Start here. Creates the learning loop that drives continuous improvement.

### 3.2 TIME AND RESOURCE INVESTMENT GUIDE

The following estimates indicate the amount of effort typically required for initial setup at basic and mature implementation levels. Ongoing maintenance is additional.

Tool	Basic Implementation	Mature Implementation	Benefit
1. Risk identification checklists	<b>Baseline</b> – simple setup and occasional use	<b>Moderate</b> – integrated into routine planning	Foundational for risk visibility
2. Brainstorming & stakeholder workshops	<b>Moderate</b> – ad hoc sessions	<b>Significant</b> – structured, recurring workshops	Surfaces hidden risks
3. SWOT & PESTEL analyses	<b>Baseline</b> – used selectively	<b>Moderate</b> – embedded in strategic planning	Provides strategic context
4. Probability-impact matrix	<b>Baseline</b> – applied to major risks	<b>Moderate</b> – applied consistently to all categories	Focuses resources on what matters
5. Risk register	<b>Moderate</b> – basic version for key events	<b>Significant</b> – continuously updated, used for decisions	Central risk backbone
6. Mitigation planning checklists	<b>Baseline</b> – used to guide planning	<b>Moderate</b> – integrated into workflows	Converts analysis to action
7. Project management tools	<b>Moderate</b> – basic task tracking	<b>Significant</b> – fully integrated with risk processes	Embeds risk in workflows
8. Vendor & contractor management checklists	<b>Moderate</b> – used during procurement	<b>Significant</b> – applied throughout vendor lifecycle	Reduces 3rd party exposure
9. Insurance, financial & legal risk tools	<b>Moderate</b> – reviewed during contracting	<b>Significant</b> – proactively reviewed and updated	Protects against financial loss
10. Scenario planning & stress testing	<b>Moderate</b> – occasional exercises	<b>Significant</b> - regular, cross team simulations	Builds adaptive capacity
11. Contingency & business continuity plans	<b>Moderate</b> – developed for major events	<b>Significant</b> – maintained, tested, and updated	Enables recovery
12. Real-time monitoring platforms	<b>Significant</b> – basic setup	<b>Extensive</b> – fully integrated into operations	Technology enabled
13. Crisis communication plans	<b>Baseline</b> – basic plan developed	<b>Moderate</b> – tested and updated regularly	Protects reputation
14. Post-event review & lessons learned	<b>Baseline</b> – informal review	<b>Moderate</b> – structured evaluation & follow up	Drives improvement cycle

**Key: Baseline=1-2 days, Moderate=2-3, Significant=3-5 days, Extensive=5+ days**

## QUICK-START GUIDE: "HOW TO USE THIS TOMORROW MORNING"

For organisations new to structured risk management, the five steps below offer a practical starting point. Each step uses one of the 14 priority tools.

### Step 1 - Identify (Tools #1 and #2)

Use a **Risk Identification Checklist** to scan for risks across your next event. Work with your core team brainstorming what could go wrong - across operations, finance, safety, technology, reputation, and external factors.

### Step 2 - Record (Tool #5)

Open a simple **Risk Register** (a spreadsheet works). Log each risk with a brief description, likelihood (High / Medium / Low), impact (High / Medium / Low), and an owner.

### Step 3 - Prioritise (Tool #4)

Plot your top risks on a **Probability-Impact Matrix**. Focus your energy on the high-likelihood, high-impact quadrant.

### Step 4 - Act (Tool #6)

For each high-priority risk, write one concrete mitigation action with a deadline and a responsible person using a **Mitigation Planning Checklist**.

### Step 5 - Learn (Tool #14)

After the event, conduct a structured debrief using a **Post-Event Review**. What worked? What didn't? Update your checklist and register for next time.



# Section 4

## The 14 Risk Tool Cards



**TOOL CARD #1 - Risk Identification Checklists**

**TOOL CARD #2 - Brainstorming and Stakeholder Workshops**

**TOOL CARD #3 - SWOT and PESTEL Analyses**

**TOOL CARD #4 - Probability–Impact Matrix**

**TOOL CARD #5 - Risk Register**

**TOOL CARD #6 - Mitigation Planning Checklists**

**TOOL CARD #7 - Project Management Tools**

**TOOL CARD #8 - Vendor and Contractor Management Checklists**

**TOOL CARD #9 - Insurance, Financial and Legal Risk Tools**

**TOOL CARD #10 - Scenario Planning and Stress Testing**

**TOOL CARD #11 - Contingency and Business Continuity Plans**

**TOOL CARD #12 - Real-Time Monitoring Platforms**

**TOOL CARD #13 - Crisis Communication Plans**

**TOOL CARD #14 - Post-Event Review and Lessons-Learned Tool**

# TOOL CARD #1 - RISK IDENTIFICATION CHECKLISTS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Strategic Planning \ **MATURITY RATING:** 1 - Essential Foundation

## 1. Purpose

Provides a structured method for planners and suppliers to scan widely for potential risks that could affect future meetings or conferences, thereby ensuring early recognition of vulnerabilities and supporting informed strategic decisions before major commitments are made.

## 2. Description

Risk Identification Checklists are structured lists of potential hazards and risk categories relevant to the business events industry. They guide users through a comprehensive review of possible risks across operational, strategic, environmental, financial, reputational and external factors.

The tool works by prompting users to consider risks across predefined categories such as health and safety, security, technology, logistics, supplier reliability, regulatory compliance and geopolitical factors. It can be applied individually or collaboratively in workshops.

By ensuring a consistent and thorough identification process, the tool helps mitigate risk by reducing blind spots and enabling earlier intervention. It provides a foundation for further risk assessment, prioritisation and mitigation planning.

The tool delivers insight into the overall risk landscape of an event and supports more informed decision-making during planning and execution.

## 3. Benefits

The tool helps ensure a comprehensive and structured approach to risk identification, reducing the likelihood that critical risks are missing. It supports better decision-making by providing a clear overview of potential vulnerabilities and encourages proactive rather than reactive risk management.

It also facilitates collaboration between stakeholders by creating a shared understanding of risks across buyers, suppliers and other partners. The tool is easy to use, scalable across different event sizes and adaptable to various contexts.

A limitation is that the checklist is only as effective as its relevance and completeness. It may not fully capture emerging or highly context-specific risks unless regularly updated and complemented with expert input.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Strategic Planning stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Event Design
- Procurement
- Operational Planning

It may also be revisited during Event Delivery and Post-Event Review to validate completeness and capture learnings.

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on a structured approach, access to reliable information, and input from knowledgeable stakeholders:

- A structured checklist covering relevant risk categories
- Supporting templates or worksheets for documentation
- Access to historical event data and past risk experiences
- Input from key stakeholders across the event ecosystem
- Optional facilitation (e.g. workshop setting) to ensure completeness
- Basic understanding of risk management principles

The tool can be used with simple documents (e.g. spreadsheets) and does not require advanced technology.

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- A comprehensive list of identified risks
- Categorised risk register
- Initial indication of risk exposure areas
- Input for risk prioritisation and further analysis
- Foundation for mitigation planning

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1-2):** A one-page checklist reviewed by the lead organiser before each event, covering 8–10 major risk categories.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4-5):** Dynamic checklists customised by event type, scale, and destination, reviewed collaboratively with all key suppliers, updated after every event cycle, and integrated with the organisation's risk register.

## 8. Example Application

**Example 1:**

A convention bureau and an international association use a Risk Identification Checklist during early destination planning for a rotating annual congress. The checklist prompts discussion of visa processing risks, hotel capacity constraints, public transport reliability, cybersecurity exposure and reputational sensitivities linked to local policy issues. By identifying these issues before launch, the association adjusts timelines, strengthens delegate communications and requests additional destination support before committing to key event decisions.

**Example 2:**

A hotel hosting a multi-day corporate leadership retreat applies a Risk Identification Checklist with the third-

party event organiser during pre-planning. The process highlights risks relating to food allergies, VIP security, last-minute rooming changes, AV dependency and transportation from the airport during peak traffic periods. As a result, the organiser introduces a detailed arrivals plan, confirms backup technical support and strengthens guest communication well before supplier commitments are locked in.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

[Event Safety Sorted: Your Free Mitigation Checklist Template \ ChecklistGuro](#)

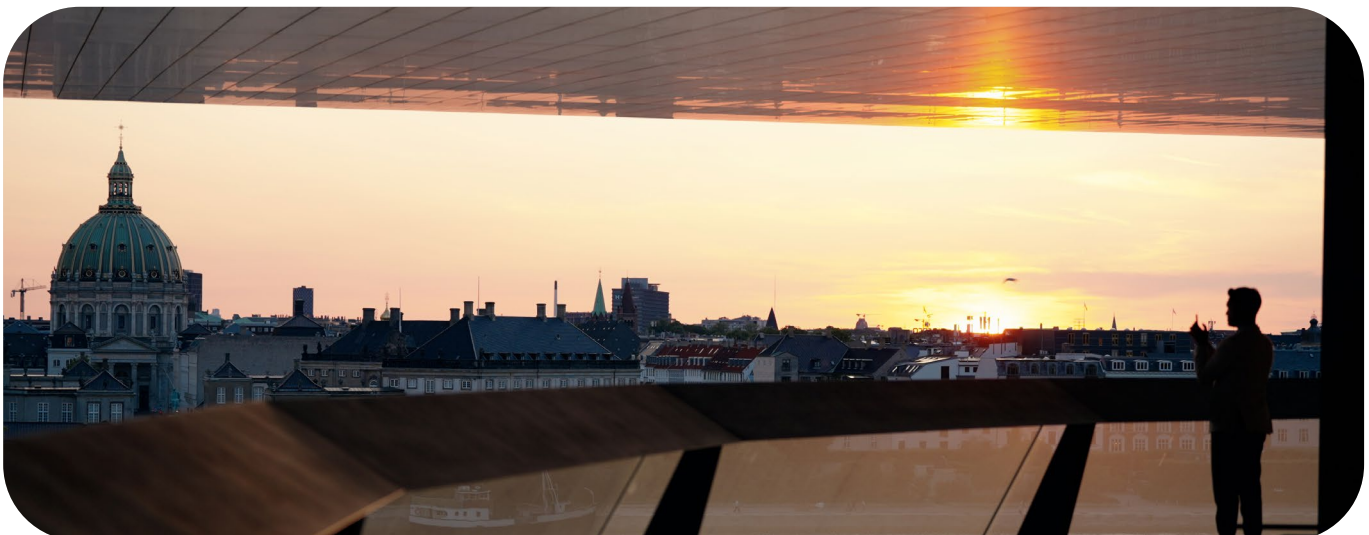
A practical, ready-to-use checklist covering key safety and operational risks in events. It supports systematic identification of hazards across planning and delivery phases and provides a strong foundation for building a comprehensive event risk register.

[Event Safety 101: The Ultimate OHS Checklist for Event Planners - SafetyDocs by SafetyCulture](#)

A structured occupational health and safety checklist that guides planners through risk categories such as crowd safety, emergency preparedness, and compliance. Particularly useful for ensuring no critical safety risks are overlooked.

[Complete Event Risk Management Checklist](#)

A broad and practical checklist that spans multiple risk domains including logistics, security, financial exposure, and external risks. Helps users take a holistic view of the event risk landscape and supports early-stage identification and planning.



# TOOL CARD #2 - BRAINSTORMING AND STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Strategic Planning \ **MATURITY RATING: 2** - Early Development

## 1. Purpose

Brings diverse partners together to surface emerging, hidden, or interconnected risks that may not appear in formal assessments, strengthening early understanding of the event environment and improving shared ownership of long-range risk considerations.

## 2. Description

Brainstorming and stakeholder workshops bring together relevant internal and external stakeholders in a facilitated setting to systematically explore potential risks. The process typically combines open ideation with guided prompts to uncover operational, strategic, reputational, and external risks that may not surface through traditional risk assessments.

The tool helps assess both known and unknown risks by leveraging collective experience and cross-functional insights. It is particularly effective in identifying interdependencies, cascading effects, and “blind spots” across the event lifecycle. By surfacing a broader risk landscape early, the tool supports proactive mitigation planning and more resilient decision-making.

The output provides structured insights into risk categories, likelihood, and potential impact, forming a foundation for further analysis and prioritisation.

## 3. Benefits

The tool enhances risk identification by drawing on diverse stakeholder perspectives and real-world experience. It strengthens alignment and shared understanding of risks across organisers and suppliers, while encouraging ownership and accountability. It is particularly effective in uncovering non-obvious risks and interdependencies that are often missed in desk-based assessments.

A key limitation is that outputs depend on the quality of facilitation and participant engagement and may be influenced by group dynamics or biases if not properly managed.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Strategic Planning stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Event Design
- Operational Planning
- Post-Event Review

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on structured preparation, informed stakeholder participation, and guided facilitation:

- Structured workshop agenda and facilitation guide
- Risk prompt lists or scenario triggers
- Skilled facilitator (internal or external)
- Representation from key stakeholder groups (e.g. organiser, venue, suppliers, destination)
- Pre-read materials (e.g. event brief, past risk logs, contextual intelligence)

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Comprehensive list of identified risks (including non-obvious risks)
- Categorised risk map (e.g. operational, financial, reputational, external)
- Initial assessment of likelihood and impact
- Identification of interdependencies and cascading risks
- Input for risk prioritisation and mitigation planning

## 7. Maturity Indicators

**(a) Basic Use (Level 1-2):** A 60-minute brainstorming session with the core planning team using a simple “what could go wrong?” prompt.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4-5):** Structured half-day workshops with cross-functional stakeholders (including suppliers, venue, destination representatives), using scenario triggers, risk prompt cards, and formal facilitation methodology, with outputs documented and fed directly into the risk register.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

An international association convenes a workshop with its third-party event organiser, convention centre, host hotel and convention bureau ahead of a major congress. Through structured brainstorming, the group surfaces not only obvious operational risks but also interdependencies around citywide demand, protest activity, pressure on transport infrastructure and sustainability expectations from members. The session helps align responsibilities early and produces a broader, shared understanding of where mitigation planning needs to begin.

### Example 2:

A convention centre organises a stakeholder workshop before hosting a large consumer technology event managed by a third-party organiser. Participants from catering, security, registration, cleaning and venue operations map possible failure points and cascading effects, including queue build-up, delayed deliveries and social media backlash if entry systems fail. The discussion reveals blind spots between teams and leads to clearer escalation routes, revised staffing assumptions and stronger coordination across service partners.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [How to facilitate scenario planning workshops – SessionLab](#)

Provides a practical, step-by-step methodology for designing and facilitating structured workshops, including agenda setting, stakeholder engagement, and guided exercises. Particularly relevant for enabling effective brainstorming, managing group dynamics, and surfacing complex and interconnected risks through scenario-based discussions.

### [Scenario planning in events – Event Architect](#)

Focuses specifically on applying scenario planning within the events industry to identify uncertainties and emerging risks. Demonstrates how facilitated discussions can uncover interdependencies, cascading effects, and “what-if” situations, directly supporting the objective of identifying less obvious and systemic risks.

### [46 Best Business Continuity Plan Templates – TemplateLab](#)

Offers structured templates and frameworks that can be used as inputs or outputs from stakeholder workshops. Helps translate brainstormed risks into organised, actionable formats, supporting the transition from ideation to risk categorisation, prioritisation, and mitigation planning.



# TOOL CARD #3 - SWOT AND PESTEL ANALYSES

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Strategic Planning \ **MATURITY RATING: 2** - Early Development

## 1. Purpose

Provides a structured assessment of both internal and external factors that may influence risk exposure in the planning and delivery of meetings and conferences, thereby helping organisations anticipate contextual risks and align event strategy with broader operating conditions.

## 2. Description

SWOT and PESTEL (or PESTLE) analyses are complementary strategic frameworks used to systematically assess risk exposure. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) focuses on internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats, while PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) analyses the broader external environment across key macro factors.

Applied together, the tool enables stakeholders to identify how internal capabilities align with external conditions, where vulnerabilities may arise, and which external factors could disrupt or enhance event outcomes.

It supports risk mitigation by highlighting critical dependencies, emerging threats, and areas requiring contingency planning. The tool provides structured insight to inform strategic choices, prioritisation of risks, and alignment between stakeholders.

## 3. Benefits

The tool improves the quality and robustness of decision-making by combining internal and external perspectives on risk. It enables earlier identification of vulnerabilities and emerging threats, allowing stakeholders to act proactively rather than reactively. By structuring discussions, it facilitates alignment and shared understanding across organisers, suppliers, and other partners.

The approach is flexible and can be applied across varying levels of complexity. However, its effectiveness depends on the quality of input data and stakeholder engagement. It may also oversimplify complex risks if not complemented by deeper analysis.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Strategic Planning stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Event Design
- Procurement
- Operational Planning

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on access to relevant data, informed stakeholder input, and structured facilitation:

- Structured SWOT and PESTEL templates or worksheets
- Access to relevant internal data (e.g. capabilities, past performance, financials)
- Access to external intelligence (e.g. market trends, geopolitical developments, regulatory updates)
- Stakeholder workshops or expert input to ensure comprehensive perspectives
- Facilitator to guide structured analysis and avoid bias
- Optional use of digital tools for documentation and collaboration

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Structured SWOT matrix highlighting strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- PESTEL overview identifying key external risk drivers
- Consolidated risk identification across internal and external dimensions
- Prioritised list of critical risks and influencing factors
- Strategic input for mitigation planning and scenario development

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1-2):** A single-page SWOT completed by the event lead during the planning kickoff, focusing on the most obvious strengths and threats.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4-5):** Full SWOT and PESTEL analyses conducted collaboratively with destination partners and key suppliers, informed by real-time geopolitical and market intelligence, and revisited at key decision gates throughout the planning cycle.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A convention bureau uses SWOT and PESTEL analyses with a hotel group and an association considering the city for a medical congress. The SWOT highlights strong academic assets and committed local partners, while the PESTEL review identifies pressure from inflation, changing healthcare regulations and transport strikes. Together, the analyses help the association compare strategic fit against external volatility and lead to earlier contingency planning around budget, timing and attendee travel.

### Example 2:

A third-party event organiser applies SWOT and PESTEL analyses when assessing whether to launch a new annual industry forum in a secondary city. Internal strengths include strong sponsor relationships and event design capability, while weaknesses include limited local experience. External analysis points to policy uncertainty,

tight labour availability and changing environmental regulations.

The combined insight leads the organiser to phase the event rollout, strengthen local partnerships and build more conservative financial assumptions.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Free Risk Register Templates](#)

Provides structured templates to identify, categorise, and prioritise risks. These templates complement SWOT and PESTEL outputs by translating identified internal and external factors into actionable risk registers and mitigation plans.

### [How to facilitate scenario planning workshops i SessionLab](#)

Supports the application of SWOT and PESTEL in practice by guiding structured workshops. It helps stakeholders explore how external PESTEL factors and SWOT insights may evolve into future scenarios, strengthening risk anticipation and strategic alignment.

### [SWOT and PESTLE Analyses - City University of Seattle](#)

This resource explains what SWOT and PESTLE (often referred to as PESTEL) analyses are, how they differ, and how to find or build them using library resources from the City University of Seattle. It provides practical information, tips, and references to help conduct these type of analyses.



# TOOL CARD #4 - PROBABILITY-IMPACT MATRIX

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Event Design \ **MATURITY RATING: 2** - Early Development

## 1. Purpose

Prioritises risks by evaluating how likely they are to occur and how severely they could affect the event, enabling stakeholders to focus attention and resources on the most consequential vulnerabilities embedded in program, venue, or experience decisions.

## 2. Description

The tool visualises risks on a two-dimensional grid where probability is plotted against impact, allowing users to classify risks into priority levels such as low, medium, or high. It supports structured evaluation of a wide range of risks, including operational, financial, reputational and external risks, by translating qualitative or quantitative assessments into a clear visual format.

By highlighting the most significant risk exposures, the matrix informs mitigation planning, resource allocation and decision-making, ensuring that high-priority risks are addressed early in the event design process.

## 3. Benefits

The tool provides a clear and intuitive overview of risk exposure, enabling faster and more consistent prioritisation of risks across stakeholders. It supports informed decision-making by focusing attention on the risks that matter most and facilitates alignment between buyers and suppliers through a shared visual framework. The matrix is simple to apply and adaptable to different event types and scales. A limitation is that scoring can be subjective if not supported by clear criteria or data, which may affect consistency across users.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Event Design stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Operational Planning

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on clear assessment criteria, reliable risk inputs, and structured facilitation:

- Defined risk assessment criteria (probability and impact scales)
- Risk identification input (e.g. from workshops or checklists)
- Matrix template (standardised grid format)
- Facilitator or responsible lead for scoring and alignment
- Access to relevant historical data or expert judgement

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Visual risk map (matrix)
- Prioritised list of risks (e.g. high / medium / low)
- Basis for mitigation planning and resource allocation
- Clear decision support for risk treatment actions

## 7. Maturity Indicators

**(a) Basic Use (Level 1-2):** A simple 3×3 grid (High/Medium/Low for both axes) completed by the event lead based on experience and intuition.

**(b) Advanced Use (Level 4-5):** A calibrated 5×5 matrix with defined scoring criteria, completed collaboratively by the full planning team with evidence-based probability and impact ratings, linked directly to the risk register and reviewed at each planning milestone.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A third-party event organiser and an association use a Probability-Impact Matrix during programme design for a large annual congress. They score risks such as keynote cancellation, registration system failure, sponsor under-

delivery and lower-than-expected delegate turnout. By plotting each risk visually, they identify which issues require immediate mitigation and which can be monitored. This allows the team to focus effort on the most consequential exposures before final programme and budget decisions are made.

### Example 2:

A convention centre uses a Probability-Impact Matrix with its internal operations and security teams before a high-profile international summit. Risks assessed include power interruption, crowd congestion, catering disruption and VIP security incidents. The matrix helps distinguish high-impact but less likely threats from frequent lower-level disruptions, enabling management to prioritise backup power readiness, access control and staffing plans while avoiding unnecessary escalation on issues that can be handled operationally.

## 9. Supporting Resources (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [The Probability-Impact Matrix: From Rookie to Risk Management Expert - Forty-Four Risk PM](#)

A clear and structured explanation of how to build and use a probability-impact matrix, including scoring approaches and practical examples. Particularly useful for understanding how to translate qualitative risk assessments into a visual prioritisation tool.

### [Probability and Impact Matrix: With PMP Exam Tips \[2026\]](#)

Provides a step-by-step guide to defining probability and impact scales, scoring risks, and categorising them into priority levels. Strong on methodology and ensuring consistency in risk evaluation across stakeholders.

### [Free Risk Register Templates](#)

Includes downloadable templates that integrate probability and impact scoring into a structured risk register, directly supporting the practical application of the matrix and linking prioritisation to mitigation planning.



# TOOL CARD #5 - RISK REGISTER

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Event Design \ **MATURITY RATING: 1** - Essential Foundation

## 1. Purpose

Creates a centralised, structured record of all identified risks, accountable owners, and mitigation actions, enabling transparent tracking as the event design evolves and embedding clear responsibility for risk management throughout planning and delivery.

## 2. Description

The Risk Register is a structured, living document that records identified risks, their likelihood and impact, assigned ownership, and corresponding mitigation or contingency measures. It is typically maintained in a tabular format and updated regularly as new risks emerge and existing risks evolve.

The tool supports the identification and assessment of a wide range of risks, including operational, financial, reputational, environmental and external risks. By making risks visible and traceable, it enables proactive mitigation and informed decision-making.

It provides a central reference point for all stakeholders, ensuring alignment on risk exposure, accountability and response strategies. Over time, it also creates an institutional memory that strengthens future planning and resilience.

## 3. Benefits

The Risk Register improves transparency and accountability in risk management by clearly assigning ownership and actions. It enables structured prioritisation of risks based on likelihood and impact, supporting better allocation of resources. The tool enhances coordination across stakeholders and ensures continuity as projects evolve. It also facilitates ongoing monitoring and early intervention.

A limitation is that its effectiveness depends on regular updates and active ownership. Without discipline, it can become outdated and lose relevance.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Event Design stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Procurement
- Operational Planning
- Event Delivery
- Post-Event Review

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on a consistent structure, clear governance, and reliable data:

- Standardised risk register template (e.g. Excel or digital platform)
- Agreed risk scoring criteria (likelihood and impact)
- Access to relevant risk data and insights
- Defined governance structure and roles (risk owners)
- Regular review meetings or checkpoints
- Basic risk management capability among stakeholders

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Comprehensive risk register with defined ownership
- Risk prioritisation list based on scoring
- Mitigation and contingency plans
- Ongoing risk monitoring framework
- Documentation of risk evolution over time

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1-2):** A shared spreadsheet listing 10–15 key risks with assigned owners, reviewed monthly.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4-5):** A dynamic digital risk register integrated with project management tools, updated in real time, with automated alerts for escalation triggers, historical trend analysis, and quarterly executive reporting.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A third-party event organiser creates a risk register for a large association congress involving multiple hotels, off-site venues and international suppliers. The register records each identified risk, assigns owners and documents mitigation actions for issues such as transport delays, exhibitor non-compliance, cybersecurity concerns and speaker travel disruption. Reviewed weekly with stakeholders, it becomes the central reference point for tracking how risks evolve and for ensuring that agreed actions are followed through.

### Example 2:

A convention bureau maintains a shared risk register for a citywide event that spans a convention centre, partner hotels and destination services. Risks linked to room block performance, public transport disruption, weather exposure and reputational issues are logged with responsible parties and escalation triggers.

The register improves transparency across organisations and gives the bureau a practical tool for monitoring destination-level risk exposure while coordinating timely action with local partners.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Free Risk Register Templates](#)

Provides a range of ready-to-use risk register templates (Excel and digital formats) including fields for likelihood, impact, ownership, and mitigation actions. Highly practical for immediate implementation and aligns directly with structured, tabular risk tracking.

### [Event Planners Risk Register Template \ Template by ClickUp™](#)

An event-specific risk register template tailored to meetings and conferences. Includes categorisation of risks, ownership assignment, and tracking of mitigation actions, making it directly applicable for PCOs, venues, and organisers.

### [The Probability-Impact Matrix: From Rookie to Risk Management Expert](#)

Explains how to assess and prioritise risks using likelihood and impact scoring, which is one of the core components of a risk register. Helps ensure consistent risk evaluation and supports prioritisation and decision-making.



# TOOL CARD #6 - MITIGATION PLANNING CHECKLISTS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Event Design \ **MATURITY RATING: 2** - Early Development

## 1. Purpose

Ensures that all necessary mitigation measures are considered and integrated into the event's design, reducing the chance of overlooked vulnerabilities and strengthening preparedness before operational planning begins.

## 2. Description

Mitigation Planning Checklists provide a structured and comprehensive framework to validate that all key risk mitigation actions have been considered and incorporated into event design and planning. The tool works by guiding users through predefined categories of risk, such as operational, financial, safety, reputational, and external risks, and prompting verification of corresponding mitigation measures.

It helps assess whether mitigation strategies are complete, proportionate, and aligned with the event's risk profile. By enforcing a consistent review process, the tool reduces reliance on ad hoc judgement and minimises the risk of overlooked vulnerabilities.

The tool supports risk mitigation by translating risk identification into concrete, actionable measures and ensuring accountability for implementation. It provides decision support by highlighting residual risks, identifying mitigation gaps, and enabling informed trade-offs between cost, feasibility, and risk exposure.

## 3. Benefits

The tool improves the completeness and consistency of mitigation planning by embedding a systematic approach into the design phase. It enhances risk visibility and reduces the likelihood of critical oversights, particularly in complex, multi-stakeholder environments.

It supports alignment across organisers and suppliers by providing a shared reference point for mitigation responsibilities. The tool is practical and scalable, making it suitable for both small and large events.

A limitation is that the quality of outcomes depends on the relevance and completeness of the checklist content, which may require periodic updates to reflect evolving risks and contexts.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Event Design stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Operational Planning
- Procurement

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on structured mitigation resources, informed stakeholder input, and access to past risk insights:

- Predefined mitigation checklist tailored to event type and scale
- Access to prior risk assessments or risk registers
- Input from key stakeholders (venue, organisers, and other suppliers)
- Internal expertise in event operations and risk management
- Optional digital tool or shared platform for checklist tracking and updates

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Validated mitigation plan
- Identified mitigation gaps and actions
- Clear allocation of mitigation responsibilities
- Residual risk overview
- Decision support for prioritisation of mitigation measures

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A one-page mitigation checklist reviewed by the event lead covering the top 10 risk categories, with yes/no completion status.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):**

Comprehensive multi-category checklists tailored to event type, reviewed collaboratively with all suppliers, with residual risk scoring and formal sign-off at each planning gate.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A hotel uses a Mitigation Planning Checklist before hosting a high-value pharmaceutical meeting with strict compliance requirements. Working with the organiser, the hotel validates mitigation measures covering confidential meeting space, restricted access, catering controls, technical backups and emergency medical response. The checklist highlights two gaps around badge control and backup internet provision, allowing corrective actions to be implemented before the event moves into final operational planning.

### Example 2:

An association and its convention centre apply a Mitigation Planning Checklist during the design stage of a large annual congress. The review confirms evacuation arrangements, accessibility measures, speaker substitution procedures, queue management and contingency plans for programme overruns. It also tests whether responsibilities are clearly allocated between organiser and venue teams.

As a result, the group closes several planning gaps early and enters the next phase with clearer ownership of key safeguards.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

[Event Safety 101: The Ultimate OHS Checklist for Event Planners - SafetyDocs by SafetyCulture](#)

A comprehensive, operational checklist covering health, safety, and compliance risks across the full event lifecycle. It provides structured categories (e.g. crowd control, emergency planning, equipment safety) that align directly with mitigation planning needs and can be adapted into a broader mitigation checklist framework.

[Complete Event Risk Management Checklist](#)

A practical, end-to-end risk checklist that translates identified risks into concrete mitigation actions. It includes pre-event, on-site, and post-event considerations, making it particularly useful for ensuring completeness and avoiding gaps in mitigation planning across multiple stakeholders.

[Cyber Security Checklist for Event Professionals \ PCMA](#)

A focused checklist addressing digital and data-related risks in events which is an increasingly critical but often overlooked category. It supports mitigation planning by ensuring cybersecurity measures are embedded early in event design, complementing broader operational and safety checklists.



# TOOL CARD #7 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Event Design \ **MATURITY RATING: 3** - Established Practice

## 1. Purpose

Supports structured coordination of timelines, tasks, and dependencies, helping teams identify where event design decisions introduce risk and ensuring that mitigation actions are monitored and updated as the event concept evolves.

## 2. Description

Project management tools provide a systematic framework to plan, execute and monitor all phases of a meeting or conference. These tools typically combine task management, timeline planning, resource allocation and progress tracking within a single platform. They help identify operational, financial and reputational risks by increasing visibility over dependencies, deadlines and responsibilities.

By structuring workflows and centralising information, the tools support early detection of delays, resource gaps or misalignments, allowing timely corrective actions. They also facilitate scenario planning and contingency tracking, thereby strengthening risk mitigation and decision-making.

## 3. Benefits

Project management tools enhance transparency, accountability and coordination across stakeholders, leading to improved control over complex event delivery. They support proactive risk identification by making dependencies and critical paths visible and enable faster response to emerging issues. The tools improve decision-making through real-time data and progress tracking and reduce the likelihood of disruptions caused by miscommunication or overlooked tasks.

Limitations may include dependency on user discipline and data accuracy, as well as potential complexity if tools are not tailored to the scale of the event.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Event Design stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Procurement
- Operational Planning
- Event Delivery
- Post-Event Review

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on structured project framework, shared documentation systems, and clear governance:

- Defined project plan and work breakdown structure
- Access to shared documentation and communication tools
- Clear governance structure and assigned responsibilities
- Regular progress reporting and update routines
- Internal expertise in project planning and coordination
- Project management software (e.g. task and timeline platforms) - optional

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Detailed project plan and timeline
- Task ownership and responsibility matrix
- Risk log integrated with project milestones
- Progress and performance dashboards
- Issue tracking and mitigation actions
- Decision-making framework linked to project status

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A shared timeline document (spreadsheet or simple Gantt chart) with key milestones and assigned owners.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4-5):** Integrated project management platform with automated dependency tracking, risk-linked milestones, real-time dashboards, cross-stakeholder access, and lessons-learned integration from previous events.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A third-party event organiser uses a project management platform to coordinate planning for an international trade conference involving a convention centre, multiple sponsors and several hotels. The system tracks deadlines, dependencies, approvals and risk-linked milestones across registration, programme development, exhibition build and delegate logistics. When a delay emerges in exhibitor onboarding, the tool makes the knock-on effects visible immediately, allowing the team to reassign tasks and prevent disruption to the wider delivery timeline.

### Example 2:

A convention bureau uses project management tools to coordinate destination support for a large association congress. Workstreams covering site visits, room blocks, welcome services, city permissions and stakeholder communications are mapped in one shared system. Because responsibilities and due dates are visible across teams, the bureau can quickly

identify slippage, resolve gaps between local partners and escalate emerging risks before they affect the organiser's confidence or the event's delivery schedule.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Free Risk Register Templates](#)

Provides structured templates that integrate risk tracking into project workflows, including risk identification, ownership, mitigation actions and status tracking. Highly relevant for embedding risk management directly into project plans and dashboards.

### [Event Planners Risk Register Template \ Template by ClickUp™](#)

Demonstrates how modern project management platforms combine task management, timelines and risk registers in one system. Supports visibility of dependencies, responsibilities and real-time progress tracking across event delivery.

### [Incident Postmortem Templates: Improve Response Process \ Atlassian](#)

Illustrates how project management tools extend into issue tracking, incident management and continuous improvement. Particularly relevant for post-event review, lessons learned and strengthening future risk mitigation processes.



# TOOL CARD #8 - VENDOR AND CONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT CHECKLISTS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Procurement \ **MATURITY RATING: 3** - Early Development

## 1. Purpose

Verifies all vendors and contractors involved in a meeting or conference meet defined safety, insurance and compliance requirements, thereby reducing operational, legal and reputational risks.

## 2. Description

This tool consists of structured checklists applied during vendor selection, contracting and pre-event validation to ensure that all third-party suppliers comply with required standards. It assesses key risk areas such as health and safety procedures, insurance coverage, legal compliance, certifications and operational readiness.

By enforcing consistent due diligence across all vendors and contractors, the tool helps identify gaps, enforce accountability and ensure alignment with regulatory and event-specific requirements. It supports risk mitigation by preventing non-compliant suppliers from participating and by ensuring corrective actions are taken prior to event delivery. The tool provides clear decision support on vendor approval, conditional engagement or exclusion.

## 3. Benefits

The tool strengthens risk control by introducing a consistent and auditable process for vendor verification, reducing the likelihood of incidents, legal exposure or service failure. It enhances transparency and accountability across the supply chain while supporting informed decision-making. It also facilitates alignment between organisers, venues and other suppliers on minimum standards.

A limitation is that the tool relies on accurate self-reporting and documentation from vendors, which may require additional validation or audits in higher-risk contexts.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Procurement stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Operational Planning
- Event Delivery

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on consistent compliance standards, access to verified vendor documentation, and clear procurement governance:

- Standardised vendor compliance checklist templates
- Defined minimum requirements (safety, insurance, legal, sustainability) with clearly categorised and weighted criteria to reflect strategic priorities (e.g. ESG, safety, cost)
- Access to vendor documentation (certificates, policies, licences)
- Internal procurement and legal guidelines
- Contractual clauses aligned with compliance requirements
- Optional: digital procurement or supplier management platform
- Internal expertise (procurement, legal, operations)
- Defined approach to handling non-negotiable vs. flexible requirements

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Verified vendor compliance status (approved / conditional / rejected)
- Identified compliance gaps and required corrective actions
- Documented audit trail of vendor verification
- Risk-informed vendor selection decisions
- Strengthened supplier database with validated information

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A standard compliance checklist applied to all vendors before contracting, covering insurance, licensing, and safety documentation.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):** A comprehensive supplier risk assessment framework that evaluates not only compliance but also financial stability, cybersecurity posture, sustainability credentials, and contractual risk balance - with formal risk-sharing negotiations embedded in the procurement process.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A convention centre uses a Vendor and Contractor Management Checklist when onboarding staging, cleaning and temporary labour providers for a major congress. The checklist verifies insurance, safety training, method statements, access protocols and required certifications. It also flags documentation gaps for one contractor whose staff will work overnight during build-up. By identifying this early, the venue secures corrective action before access is granted and reduces the risk of non-compliance during event delivery.

### Example 2:

A third-party event organiser applies the checklist during procurement for an international association meeting hosted across a headquarters hotel and an off-site gala venue. Catering, AV and transportation suppliers are screened against legal, insurance and service requirements as well as event-specific standards.

One transport vendor is approved only conditionally pending updated licences and driver credentials. The process gives the organiser a documented basis for vendor decisions and strengthens confidence across client and venue partners.

## 9. Supporting Resources (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Contractor and Supplier Compliance Checklist \ SafeContractor](#)

A comprehensive checklist covering contractor pre-qualification, health & safety compliance, insurance verification, and legal obligations. Particularly strong on structured due diligence and documentation requirements, making it directly applicable for validating event suppliers against minimum compliance standards.

### [Contractor Management Checklist: 15+ Items to Tick Off \ Asanify](#)

A practical, operational checklist focused on onboarding and managing contractors, including contract validation, compliance documentation, and risk controls. Useful for structuring vendor approval workflows and ensuring accountability throughout the lifecycle.

### [Complete Event Risk Management Checklist](#)

An event-specific risk checklist that includes supplier vetting, insurance requirements, and operational readiness checks. Provides contextual relevance for meetings and conferences, linking vendor compliance directly to event risk mitigation and delivery assurance.



# TOOL CARD #9 - INSURANCE, FINANCIAL AND LEGAL RISK TOOLS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Procurement \ **MATURITY RATING: 3** - Established Practice

## 1. Purpose

Reviews insurance coverage, contractual obligations, and financial exposures to ensure risks are properly allocated and organisations are protected from liabilities, disruptions, and unforeseen costs that could impact on the successful delivery of meetings and conferences.

## 2. Description

The tool provides a structured approach to assessing whether risks are appropriately insured, contractually transferred or retained. It combines a review of insurance policies, contractual clauses and financial exposure scenarios to identify gaps, overlaps and misalignments.

It helps assess risks related to event cancellation, liability, force majeure, supplier default, non-performance and revenue loss. By mapping these risks against insurance coverage and contractual terms, the tool enables users to understand where they are exposed and where risk has been effectively transferred.

The tool supports mitigation by guiding users to strengthen contractual provisions, optimise insurance coverage and align financial safeguards with the overall risk profile. It provides decision-making support on whether to accept, transfer, insure or mitigate specific risks and ensures consistency across stakeholders.

## 3. Benefits

This tool improves financial resilience by clarifying who carries which risks and under what conditions. It strengthens negotiation positions by identifying contractual gaps and ensures that insurance coverage aligns with actual exposure. It enhances decision-making by making financial and legal implications transparent and comparable across scenarios.

A key limitation is that effectiveness depends on access to up-to-date contracts, insurance documentation and legal expertise. It may also require interpretation of complex policy wording and jurisdiction-specific legal frameworks.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Procurement stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Event Design
- Operational Planning

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on access to complete contractual and financial documentation, clear assessment criteria, and informed cross-functional input:

- Access to contracts (venue, suppliers, other partners)
- Insurance policies and coverage summaries
- Standard contract templates and clause libraries
- Financial data (budgets, revenue exposure, cancellation costs)
- Legal expertise (internal or external)
- Risk assessment framework or checklist
- Stakeholder input (procurement, legal, finance, operations)

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Overview of insurance coverage vs. risk exposure
- Contractual risk allocation map (who bears which risks)
- Identified gaps and overlaps in coverage and contracts
- Recommended contractual clauses and negotiation priorities
- Financial exposure scenarios and risk transfer strategies
- Decision framework for risk acceptance, transfer or mitigation

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A contract review checklist ensuring key insurance, cancellation, and force majeure clauses are present in all supplier agreements.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):** A comprehensive financial risk modelling approach that maps insurance coverage against all identified risks, models financial exposure scenarios, benchmarks contractual terms against industry standards, and includes formal risk-sharing negotiations with all major suppliers.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

An association reviews venue, hotel and supplier contracts alongside its insurance arrangements before confirming a major annual congress. The analysis shows that cancellation costs linked to civil disruption would fall heavily on the organiser, while several supplier agreements contain unclear force majeure wording. With legal and financial advisers involved, the association renegotiates key clauses, clarifies liability allocation and increases selected insurance cover, resulting in a more balanced and transparent distribution of financial risk.

### Example 2:

A hotel group hosting a large corporate event uses this tool to assess exposure related to attrition, late cancellation and technology failure. By comparing contractual obligations with insurance coverage and expected revenue dependencies, the hotel identifies that certain losses would remain largely uninsured. This prompts stronger contract language, revised deposit terms and better documentation of risk transfer.

The outcome is improved protection for both the hotel and the event organiser in the event of disruption.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Event Contingency Plan: Safeguard Your Success \ Eventbrite](#)

Provides a clear framework for identifying financial risks (e.g. cancellation, revenue loss) and linking them to mitigation actions such as insurance and contractual safeguards. It is particularly useful for understanding how contingency planning connects financial exposure with practical risk transfer strategies.

### [Free Business Continuity Plan Templates \ Smartsheet](#)

Offers structured templates to map risks against likelihood, impact, ownership, and mitigation actions. This directly supports the tool's requirement to map financial/legal risks against insurance coverage and contractual allocation, helping identify gaps and overlaps in a systematic way.

### [Cyber Security Checklist for Event Professionals \ PCMA](#)

While focused on cybersecurity, it explicitly highlights liability exposure, contractual responsibilities, and insurance considerations tied to data breaches and digital risks. This reinforces the importance of aligning contractual clauses and insurance coverage with specific risk categories, which is an increasingly critical financial and legal exposure area for events.



# TOOL CARD #10 - SCENARIO PLANNING AND STRESS TESTING

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Operational Planning \ **MATURITY RATING: 4** - Advanced Practice

## 1. Purpose

Simulates a range of plausible disruptions to assess preparedness, uncover operational vulnerabilities, and strengthen the event team's ability to respond effectively under pressure before risks materialise.

## 2. Description

Scenario Planning & Stress Testing is a structured approach to exploring how different risk scenarios could impact an event, an organisation, or a destination. It involves developing a set of realistic but challenging scenarios, such as geopolitical disruption, supplier failure, extreme weather, or technology breakdown, and systematically testing how current plans, resources, and processes would perform under these conditions.

The tool assesses both operational and strategic risks, including external shocks and internal weaknesses. It helps identify gaps in contingency planning, decision-making processes, and stakeholder coordination. By simulating stress conditions, the tool supports proactive mitigation by enabling organisations to refine response strategies, reallocate resources, and strengthen critical systems.

The output provides decision-makers with clear insights into risk exposure, readiness levels, and priority actions required to enhance resilience.

## 3. Benefits

The tool strengthens organisational readiness by moving risk management from a theoretical exercise to a practical, test-based approach. It improves decision-making under uncertainty by highlighting how plans perform under pressure and where adjustments are required.

It enables early identification of vulnerabilities that may not be visible through traditional risk assessments and enhances alignment across stakeholders by clarifying roles and response protocols.

A key limitation is that the quality of insights depends on the relevance and realism of the scenarios selected, as well as the level of stakeholder engagement in the process.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Operational Planning stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Event Design
- Event Delivery
- Post-Event Review

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on a clearly defined scope, structured scenario-building methods, and informed cross-functional participation:

- Clearly defined event or organisational scope
- Scenario development framework or templates
- Access to historical data and risk intelligence
- Facilitated workshop format with key stakeholders
- Cross-functional participation (operations, security, communications, leadership etc.)
- Documentation tools for capturing assumptions, responses, and gaps
- Digital simulation or modelling tools (Optional)

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Defined set of high-impact risk scenarios
- Assessment of organisational readiness per scenario
- Identified gaps in plans, processes, and capabilities
- Scenario-specific response and contingency plans
- Prioritised actions to strengthen resilience
- Enhanced stakeholder roles and coordination framework

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A 90-minute tabletop exercise with the core team walking through two or three “what if” scenarios for the most likely disruptions.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):** Full-scale stress testing exercises involving all key suppliers and stakeholders, using multiple interconnected scenarios (e.g., cyber-attack combined with weather disruption), with timed response protocols, formal gap analysis, and documented improvement actions fed back into operational plans.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A convention centre and an association run a stress-testing exercise six months before a large international congress. They simulate a transport strike, simultaneous AV failure and a high-profile speaker cancellation to test how current plans would perform under pressure. The exercise reveals unclear decision authority, weak backup communication channels and unrealistic assumptions about replacement resources. These findings lead to revised escalation protocols, stronger supplier coordination and more credible contingency arrangements before the event goes live.

### Example 2:

A convention bureau facilitates a scenario planning workshop with local hotels, the host organiser and city authorities before a citywide congress. The group tests how the event would cope if severe weather disrupted airport arrivals and one major hotel became unavailable. The exercise exposes gaps in room reallocation processes, delegate communications and transport coordination. Based on the results, the bureau establishes fallback accommodation procedures and strengthens cross-city coordination for future disruption scenarios.

## 9. Supporting Resources (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Scenario planning in events: - Eventarchitect](#)

Provides a clear, event-specific overview of how to design and apply scenario planning exercises. It outlines how to construct plausible future scenarios, facilitate structured discussions, and use insights to improve preparedness and decision-making in event contexts.

### [How to facilitate scenario planning workshops \SessionLab](#)

A practical guide to running scenario-based workshops, including facilitation techniques, stakeholder engagement methods, and step-by-step processes. Particularly valuable for structuring the collaborative element of stress testing and ensuring high-quality outputs.

### [Event Ready Guide](#)

Offers a robust framework for stress testing events against extreme weather scenarios. It includes preparedness planning, risk communication, and response coordination - providing a strong real-world example of scenario-based resilience planning.



# TOOL CARD #11 - CONTINGENCY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Operational Planning \ **MATURITY RATING: 3** - Established Practice

## 1. Purpose

Defines clear alternative procedures, backup resources, and recovery strategies that enable meetings and conferences to continue operating or resume quickly after disruptions, strengthening operational resilience and protecting attendee safety and overall event experience.

## 2. Description

This tool provides a structured approach to identifying critical event functions and defining pre-agreed contingency actions in the event of disruption. It works by mapping key operational dependencies, assessing potential failure points, and establishing alternative scenarios to maintain continuity.

The tool addresses a wide range of risks, including operational, logistical, technological, environmental and geopolitical disruptions. It supports risk mitigation by ensuring that response measures are predefined, roles and responsibilities are clear, and decision-making pathways are established.

As a result, it provides practical decision support under pressure and enables faster, more coordinated responses when disruptions occur.

## 3. Benefits

The tool strengthens organisational resilience by enabling proactive planning for disruption scenarios and reducing reliance on reactive decision-making. It enhances coordination across stakeholders by clarifying roles and escalation procedures, and it limits the operational and reputational impact of unforeseen events. The tool also increases confidence among clients and partners by demonstrating preparedness.

A limitation is that plans may become outdated if not regularly reviewed and tested, and overly complex plans can reduce usability during live incidents.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Operational Planning stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Event Design
- Procurement
- Event Delivery

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on clear event objectives, structured planning templates, and coordinated cross-functional input:

- Clearly defined event objectives and critical success factors
- Access to risk assessments and scenario analyses
- Standardised contingency planning templates
- Input from key operational stakeholders and suppliers
- Defined governance structure and decision-making hierarchy
- Access to communication systems and crisis management protocols
- Periodic testing (e.g. simulations or tabletop exercises)
- Assigned owner responsible for maintaining and updating plans

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Documented business continuity plan aligned to the event
- Scenario-based contingency response plans
- Defined escalation and decision-making framework
- Roles and responsibilities matrix
- Communication protocols for stakeholders and participants
- Prioritised list of critical functions and recovery timelines

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A two-page contingency plan covering the three most critical failure scenarios (venue loss, key supplier failure, severe weather) with named decision-makers and contact lists.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):** A comprehensive, regularly tested BCP covering all major risk categories, integrated with supplier contingency plans, tested through annual simulation exercises, with automated escalation triggers, pre-approved communication templates, and annual review cycles.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A third-party event organiser develops a business continuity plan for a hybrid conference being held at a convention centre. Critical functions such as registration, live streaming, speaker management and room turnover are mapped, with backup procedures assigned for each. When the event platform experiences a major outage during rehearsals, the team activates pre-agreed alternatives including a secondary streaming setup and revised run-of-show procedures, allowing the programme to continue with minimal disruption.

### Example 2:

A hotel prepares a contingency and business continuity plan for an incentive event with high VIP expectations and multiple off-site activities. The plan identifies critical dependencies such as airport transfers, room availability, kitchen operations and power reliability, and defines fallback options for each.

When a kitchen equipment failure occurs during the programme, service is shifted to backup production areas and guest communications are handled quickly, preserving both experience quality and client confidence.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Free Business Continuity Plan Templates \ Smartsheet](#)

Provides structured, ready-to-use business continuity plan templates that help identify critical functions, define recovery strategies, and establish clear response protocols. Particularly useful for translating contingency planning into practical, operational documents for events.

### [Event Contingency Plan: Safeguard Your Success \ Eventbrite](#)

A practical guide tailored to event planners, outlining how to anticipate disruptions and define fallback scenarios across logistics, technology, and operations. Strong on real-world applicability and scenario-based thinking relevant to conferences and meetings.

### [46 Best Business Continuity Plan Templates \[Word & PDF\]](#)

Offers a wide range of downloadable continuity and contingency plan templates, including scenario planning and crisis response structures. Useful for building comprehensive yet adaptable plans covering operational, environmental, and external risk factors.



# TOOL CARD #12 - REAL-TIME MONITORING PLATFORMS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Event Delivery \ **MATURITY RATING:** 5 - Elite-level Practice

## 1. Purpose

Enables continuous oversight of key risk indicators during planning and live event operations, allowing stakeholders to detect emerging issues early and respond proactively to reduce disruption and ensure safety.

## 2. Description

Real-Time Monitoring Platforms integrate multiple live data sources into a single interface to track crowd density, environmental conditions and operational performance in real time. The tool typically combines inputs from sensors, CCTV analytics, IoT devices, ticketing systems and external data feeds such as weather or transport updates.

It helps assess operational, safety and environmental risks by identifying anomalies, thresholds breaches or developing patterns that may signal potential incidents. By providing immediate visibility and alerts, the tool supports rapid decision-making and coordinated response actions, thereby mitigating risks before they escalate. It offers both situational awareness and predictive insights, enabling operators to adjust flows, deploy resources or activate contingency measures.

## 3. Benefits

This tool enhances situational awareness and enables faster, data-driven decision-making during critical phases of an event. It supports early identification of risks related to overcrowding, environmental conditions or operational bottlenecks, thereby reducing the likelihood and impact of incidents. It strengthens coordination between stakeholders by providing a shared, real-time view of operations.

Limitations include reliance on data quality and system integration, as well as potential costs and technical complexity associated with implementation and operation.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Event Delivery stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Operational Planning

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on advanced technology, integrated real-time data environment, and trained operational oversight:

- Technology platform capable of integrating multiple live data sources
- Access to real-time data feeds (e.g. sensors, CCTV, ticketing, environmental data)
- Defined thresholds and alert parameters
- Trained operational staff or control room function
- Data governance and privacy compliance measures
- Integration with communication and incident response protocols

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Real-time operational dashboard
- Alerts and notifications on threshold breaches
- Crowd density and flow visualisations
- Environmental condition tracking (e.g. temperature, air quality)
- Incident detection and escalation triggers
- Data logs for post-event analysis

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** Manual monitoring of key indicators (crowd flow, weather, social media) by designated operations staff using standard communication channels.

(b) Advanced Use (Level 4–5): Fully integrated digital command centre combining IoT sensor data, AI-powered crowd analytics, environmental monitoring, social media sentiment tracking, and automated alert systems linked to pre-defined response protocols.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A convention centre hosting a corporate conference uses a real-time monitoring platform to track attendee movement, queue build-up, room occupancy and indoor climate conditions. During a keynote transition, the dashboard shows crowd density rising beyond agreed thresholds near one entrance. Alerts prompt venue and organiser teams to redirect flows, open alternative access points and adjust steward deployment. The intervention prevents congestion from escalating and helps maintain a safe and more comfortable delegate experience.

### Example 2:

A convention bureau supports a citywide congress by combining live transport updates, weather feeds and delegate flow data from participating venues and hotels. When heavy rain begins to disrupt shuttle movements between the convention centre and partner properties, the platform provides early warning of delays and pressure points. This allows the bureau and organiser to update delegates quickly, reroute transport resources and stagger programme starts, reducing confusion and protecting the event experience.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [The Ultimate Guide to Crowd Management i SafetyCulture](#)

Provides a comprehensive, practical overview of crowd management, what it is, why it matters, and how to implement it effectively for events and public spaces. It highlights tools and practice, such as barriers, signage, trained staff, emergency planning, and real-time monitoring, that help organizers maintain safety and deliver a smooth attendee experience.

### [Event Ready Guide](#)

The National Weather Service Event Ready Guide outlines how real-time weather monitoring and alert systems should be integrated into event operations. It highlights the importance of continuous environmental data feeds and early warning systems, reinforcing how external live data sources strengthen proactive risk detection and decision-making.

### [Weather Stations and Climate Monitors - Ecomeasure Events](#)

Describes event-specific environmental monitoring solutions (e.g. weather stations, air quality sensors) that provide continuous real-time data during events. It supports the role of IoT devices and sensor-based inputs in tracking conditions, triggering alerts, and informing operational adjustments.



# TOOL CARD #13 - CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLANS

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Event Delivery \ **MATURITY RATING: 3** - Established Practice

## 1. Purpose

Defines clear communication roles, responsibilities, channels, and pre-approved messages to ensure timely, coordinated communication during emergencies, reducing confusion, supporting effective decision-making, and protecting the organisation's reputation throughout crisis situations.

## 2. Description

This tool provides a structured framework for planning and executing communication during emergencies. It defines who communicates, what is communicated, through which channels, and at what stage of a crisis. It typically includes stakeholder mapping, escalation protocols, message templates and approval workflows.

The tool helps organisations manage a wide range of risks including operational disruptions, safety incidents, reputational crises and external shocks such as geopolitical or health-related events. By pre-defining communication processes, it reduces response time and ensures consistency and accuracy of information. It supports decision-making by providing clear guidance on communication priorities and stakeholder engagement, thereby enabling organisations to maintain trust, control narratives and mitigate the impact of crises.

## 3. Benefits

This tool enhances an organisation's ability to respond quickly and coherently under pressure. It strengthens internal alignment and external credibility by ensuring that all stakeholders receive consistent and accurate information. It reduces the risk of miscommunication, delays and reputational damage, while improving overall crisis readiness.

A limitation is that plans require regular updating and testing to remain effective and may not fully anticipate highly complex or unprecedented crisis scenarios.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Event Delivery stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Operational Planning

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on a structured communication framework, coordinated stakeholder protocols, and focused training simulation:

- Crisis communication plan template
- Pre-approved message library (e.g. holding statements, FAQs)
- Stakeholder contact lists (internal and external)
- Defined escalation and approval protocols
- Access to communication channels (email, SMS, social media, press)
- Media monitoring and intelligence tools
- Internal coordination structure (e.g. crisis team)
- Periodic training and simulation exercises

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Crisis communication plan
- Defined roles and responsibilities (RACI)
- Stakeholder communication matrix
- Pre-approved message templates
- Escalation and decision protocols
- Channel strategy for different crisis scenarios

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A one-page crisis contact sheet with named spokespersons, three pre-drafted holding statements, and agreed communication channels.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):** A comprehensive crisis communication playbook with scenario-specific message libraries, multi-channel strategies (including social media and real-time media monitoring), designated and media-trained spokespersons, annual simulation exercises, and integration with the overall BCP (Business Continuity Plan).

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A convention centre experiences a major IT outage during an international congress. Using the crisis communication plan, the venue activates predefined roles, issues a holding statement to delegates and organisers, coordinates messaging with the third-party event organiser and updates stakeholders through agreed channels. This helps maintain trust and reduce confusion. After the event, the debrief reviews response effectiveness and considers whether supplier changes or market conditions should alter communication planning for future editions.

### Example 2:

A hotel hosting an association board meeting faces a food safety incident affecting several participants. Because a crisis communication plan is already in place, the hotel quickly aligns messages across management, the organiser and the association leadership, while also preparing responses for media enquiries and internal staff.

Timely, consistent communication helps contain reputational damage, reassure attendees and support decisions on programme adjustments while health and safety protocols are being implemented.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

### [Event Crisis Communication Templates Worth Copying](#)

Provides ready-to-use crisis communication templates tailored for events, including holding statements, stakeholder messaging and channel strategies. Particularly useful for building a pre-approved message library and ensuring consistency across communications.

### [Crisis Communication Plan Template for Event Planners](#)

Offers a structured, event-specific crisis communication plan template covering roles, escalation protocols, stakeholder mapping and communication workflows. Strong alignment with defining responsibilities and approval processes.

### [Event Contingency Plan: Safeguard Your Success \ Eventbrite](#)

Includes crisis communication as a core component of broader contingency planning, with practical guidance on communication timing, channels and coordination during disruptions. Useful for integrating communication into wider risk response planning.



# TOOL CARD #14 - POST-EVENT REVIEW AND LESSONS-LEARNED TOOL

**PRIMARY STAGE:** Post-Event Review \ **MATURITY RATING: 1** - Essential Foundation

## 1. Purpose

Evaluates event performance, identifies strengths and weaknesses, and captures actionable insights that improve future planning, strengthen organisational resilience, and reduce the likelihood of repeated risks.

## 2. Description

The tool provides a structured framework for reviewing an event after delivery, combining quantitative performance data with qualitative stakeholder feedback. It assesses operational, financial, reputational, and strategic risks encountered during the event and evaluates how effectively they were managed.

By comparing planned versus actual outcomes, the tool identifies root causes of deviations, highlights vulnerabilities, and uncovers blind spots that may not have been visible during planning or delivery.

The tool supports risk mitigation by translating insights into concrete recommendations, process improvements, and updated risk assumptions. It generates institutional knowledge that strengthens organisational resilience over time and enables more informed planning, budgeting, and stakeholder coordination for future events.

## 3. Benefits

The tool strengthens organisational learning and improves future event performance by turning experience into structured insight. It enhances risk awareness by identifying recurring issues and systemic weaknesses, while also reinforcing effective practices that should be replicated.

The approach supports better cross-stakeholder alignment and accountability, as findings are evidence-based and shared transparently.

Over time, it contributes to more accurate planning, reduces uncertainty, and improves risk mitigation strategies.

A potential limitation is that the value of the tool depends on honest input and sufficient data availability, and it requires time and stakeholder commitment shortly after event delivery.

## 4. Typical Situations / Event Lifecycle Stage

In addition to the Post-Event Review stage, this tool can be applied during:

- Strategic Planning
- Event Design

## 5. Requirements for Use

Effective use of this tool relies on structured evaluation methods, access to reliable event data, and coordinated stakeholder input:

- Post-event evaluation template or structured review framework
- Access to event data (attendance, financials, operational KPIs)
- Stakeholder feedback (surveys, interviews, debrief sessions)
- Facilitated debrief workshop (recommended)
- Internal coordination across teams (sales, operations, marketing)
- Time allocation shortly after event delivery
- Digital survey tools and reporting dashboards (optional)

## 6. Outputs / What the Tool Produces

After applying the tool, users typically obtain:

- Consolidated post-event evaluation report
- Lessons-learned log (successes, failures, root causes)
- Updated risk register or risk assumptions
- Recommendations for future events
- Process improvement actions
- Stakeholder feedback summary
- Benchmarking of planned vs actual performance

## 7. Maturity Indicators

(a) **Basic Use (Level 1–2):** A 45-minute team debrief within one week of the event, documenting three things that went well, three things that didn't, and three actions for next time.

(b) **Advanced Use (Level 4–5):** A structured multi-stakeholder review process combining quantitative performance data, formal supplier feedback, delegate surveys, financial analysis, and root cause assessment - with findings documented in a formal report, integrated into the organisation's risk register, and used to update checklists, templates, and training materials for future events.

## 8. Example Application

### Example 1:

A convention centre, association and third-party event organiser hold a structured post-event review after a major congress. By comparing planned outcomes with actual delivery data and stakeholder feedback, they identify that late programme changes created operational strain because approval authority had not been clearly defined. Although the event succeeded overall, the review highlights governance and communication weaknesses. These insights are then translated into clearer escalation procedures and revised planning templates for future events.

### Example 2:

A convention bureau leads a post-event review with local hotels and the host organiser after a citywide conference. Analysis shows that delegate satisfaction remained high, but transport bottlenecks and uneven room block performance created avoidable stress and cost exposure.

The review captures root causes, including optimistic transfer assumptions and inconsistent reporting from hotel partners. The bureau uses these lessons to refine destination coordination, improve data requirements and strengthen risk assumptions for future bids and hosted events.

**9. Supporting Resources** (Third-party sources may require request to access)

[How to Write a Post-Event Report: Template + Metrics to Include - Events.com](#)

This guide provides a practical framework for structuring post-event evaluations, including key metrics, performance analysis, and stakeholder feedback. It directly supports the tool's focus on comparing planned vs. actual outcomes and generating actionable insights.

[Incident Postmortem Templates: Improve Response Process \ Atlassian](#)

Offers structured templates for conducting post-event "postmortems," including root cause analysis and lessons learned. Highly relevant for translating event issues into systematic improvements and strengthening organisational resilience.

[IC-Event-Evaluation-Form-Template-9053.xlsx](#)

Provides ready-to-use templates for capturing feedback, analysing performance, and documenting lessons learned. Supports consistent documentation, benchmarking, and institutional knowledge building across events.



# Section 5

## Closing



## CLOSING

Risk management in the business events industry has historically been treated as a compliance obligation - a box to tick, a form to file, a policy to reference in an emergency. The Copenhagen Risk Navigator's research reveals a different reality: the organisations that manage risk most effectively are those that treat it as a shared, embedded, and operational discipline.

This toolkit provides the practical foundation for that shift. The 14 risk management tools presented here are not theoretical constructs; they are the instruments that experienced professionals across the industry - from suppliers to buyers - identified as the most valuable, most used, and most impactful.

The journey from reactive compliance to proactive resilience does not require a wholesale transformation overnight. It begins with the first checklist, the first register, and the first honest post-event conversation. It grows through consistent application, shared ownership, and a willingness to learn from every event - whether it proceeds flawlessly or encounters unexpected challenges.

**The goal is not to eliminate risk - that is neither possible nor desirable in an industry built on bringing people together. The goal is to understand risk, share it fairly, and manage it well.**





## **copenhagen convention bureau**

[www.copenhagencvb.com](http://www.copenhagencvb.com)  
[cvb@woco.dk](mailto:cvb@woco.dk)