

## 22. The Role of Safety Advisory Groups



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There is no legal requirement for having a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) it is considered good practice and can provide real assistance to those organising events. It is there to support organisers in understanding and delivering their (the organisers) responsibilities.

A SAG may be formed in relation to a specific event, a venue or with a broader remit in relation to a range of events. The aim should be to bring together all those who have an involvement or responsibility for safety at events. Local Authority websites generally carry information on how the SAG is formed and its stated purpose and membership.

Core membership of a group is likely to include the local authority, police, fire and ambulance services. Other event specific agencies such as HM coastguard or the Civil Aviation Authority for example may also attend. Although the SAG has no powers, organisers should be aware that many of its members do have powers under licensing, fire and safety remits intended to ensure public safety.

For a particular event those invited to attend meetings are generally the event organisers and key members of the organising team who have responsibility for safety aspects of the event, such as the venue operator, security contractor and those responsible for managing traffic and crowds.

The key role of the SAG should be to provide a quality assurance process for considering and advising on safety related aspects for any event. Typically, this might include clarifying the roles of those responsible for safety; encouraging a coordinated approach between the event and external agencies, such as police; and encouraging arrangements to minimise disruption to local communities and services. It is not intended to be cumbersome but should make reasonable requests of organisers to demonstrate that the event will be safe for the public attending.

The exact role of any particular SAG, and the type/size of events they get involved in, will depend on the local remit. They vary considerably across the UK but the main outcome should be to endeavour to improve safety at events.

Nowadays, the majority SAGs tend to be chaired and run by local authorities but there are still a small number who are chaired by police and fire authorities. Do not let this put you off, their intention should still be the same; providing advice to help you deliver a safe event!

Further advice and up to date guidance is provided by the HSE at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/safety-advisory-groups.htm> (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/safety-advisory-groups.htm>) or a copy of the UK Good Practice Guide to Working in Safety Advisory Groups can be purchased via The Stationary Office at

<https://www.tsoshop.co.uk/bookstore.asp?Action=Book&ProductId=9780117082731>

(<https://www.tsoshop.co.uk/bookstore.asp?Action=Book&ProductId=9780117082731>) Though this is not an essential step before attending SAGs for smaller events.

More detailed information about the above can be found in the Purple Guide at [www.thepurpleguide.co.uk](http://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk)  
(<http://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk>)