

Noise Management for Outdoor Events

Noise Management Plan Guideline

This document provides guidance to an applicant for an Outdoor Events on the type of information/conditions that is likely to be required for an approval of a noise management plan.

Introduction

The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* sets out the legislative requirements for Open Air Events. Under Section 440X an occupier of premises must not use or allow the use of the premises for an open-air event:

1. Before 7am on any day if the use causes audible noise, or
2. From 7am to 10pm on any day if the use causes noise of more than 70dB(A)
3. From 10p.m. to midnight if the use causes noise of more than the lesser of the following:
 - a. 50dB(A)
 - b. 10dB(A) above the background level

For many events this requirement may not be achievable therefore Bundaberg Regional Council has its own specific requirements to reduce the impact of these one off events. One requirement is for applicants to complete and lodge a Noise Management Plan. A Noise Management Plan template is included for you to complete.

The purpose of the Noise Management Plan is designed to assist applicants for Open Air Events to comply with the 'environmental values' of the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy 2008* and Bundaberg Regional Council's Open Air Event (Noise) requirements. However if you can indicate an alternative method of compliance please indicate this on the Noise Management Template.

To demonstrate compliance, applicants should consider potential noise impacts of planned events and minimize those impacts where possible.

Noise Management Plan requirements

Council requires a Noise Management Plan if one or more of the following occurs:

1. Events with more than 1000 people in attendance
2. Amplified noise before 7am and after 10pm

The Noise Management Plan will need to be lodged with Council's Events Section a minimum of six (6) weeks prior to the event and approval of the event needs to be granted by Council for the event to proceed.

As a minimum the following information must be included in the Noise Management Plan for Council to assess the application:

Hours of operation

No amplified noise allowed before 7am or after 10pm.

Noise Requirements

The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* provides guidance criteria as to whether a site would be suitable for use for an open air event.

The use of amplified sound must at all times be kept at a level so that no nuisance or annoyance is caused to any occupied premises. All amplified sound is to be directed away from any noise sensitive locations adjacent to the site.

During the event Council may wish to contact a representative of the event organizer. A person who is familiar with sound must be nominated to Council.

At all times during the event consideration for surrounding residents is dominant, including setting up and cleaning up.

Site Plan

A detailed site plan indicating stage plan, orientation of stages including speakers, PA systems, amenities, facilities and location of potentially noise affected premises.

Stage Plan – including speaker setup, speaker direction.

- Stages should be located as far away from noise sensitive places as possible.
- Orient stages and speakers away from noise sensitive places.
- Instruct sound engineers to keep the bass noise down.
- Mount speakers at a downward 45 degree angle.
- Attach a sound level limiter if possible.
- Fold back speakers are elevated and directed downward where practicable and base loud speakers are located within 500 millimetre of the ground.
- Any speaker stacks above three tiers must have independent control over the top speakers.
- Rehearsals onsite are not allowed unless otherwise approved by Council's Environmental Health Services.

Advising Performing artists, Sound technicians

All performing artists and sound technicians utilizing amplified systems and PA systems must be informed by the event coordinator or a representative person about Council's noise requirements and conditions prior to the event.

Advising the community

Place a notice in a local newspaper circulating in the affected areas at least fourteen (14) days prior to the event advising residents of the operation of the event.

Letter Drop

A letter drop must be undertaken seven (7) days before sound checks and the event commences and must be distributed to an area around the event site. Contact is to be made with Council's Environmental Health Services at least fourteen (14) days prior to the event to advise of the intended drop areas. The distribution of a notification letter to surrounding potentially effected premises must include:

- Description of the planned event
- Date of the event
- Approved hours of operation
- Complaints hotline number

Complaints

The applicant must operate a complaints hotline number to manage complaints from the public during the event and have the authority to instruct the sound engineers to reduce sound levels if directed. The following information will be required for each complaint:

- Name
- Address
- Time and date of the complaint
- Details of complaint
- Contact details
- Whether the complainant had received the notification letter
- Any action taken as a result of the complaint

Site noise levels should be checked after receiving the complaint and corrective action may need implementing if a complaint is valid. Details are to be registered.

Details of all complaints shall be collated and forwarded to Council's Environmental Health Services within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the event or at the end of each day's event.

Noise Monitoring

It is advised to monitor noise levels during the event to ensure compliance with the noise requirements in your approval. You may also monitor noise levels in the event that a complaint has been received and the noise level output requires decreasing. Provide information on the following:

- Details of noise monitoring equipment
- Monitoring Location
- Time of monitoring
- Results of monitoring

Other Mitigating Measures

Provide Council with information on other noise reduction methods. For example:

- Reduce noise level as evening progresses
- Reduce base sound

Representative Contact Person

Provide Council's Environmental Health Services with details of a representative contact person for the event. The person must contain a position within the event management which is familiar with sound systems.

The applicant must comply with the approved noise management plan and related conditions in the Approval.

Approval

Once the Noise Management Plan has been submitted an Environmental Health Officer will assess the plan and may arrange a meeting to discuss any further issues. Once satisfied the plan has addressed all matters, a letter of approval will be issued to you with conditions (including maximum noise limits) which must be complied with to prevent any enforcement under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* requirements.

You are reminded that the event organizer is responsible for any noise exceeding the maximum noise limit.