



One Act Play Festival

SAFETY GUIDANCE NOTE

Nothing is more important than making sure everyone goes home safe from the theatre. Effective safety management is largely about applying things we already know, and generally do, in a systematic way. This Guidance Note and the accompanying Safety Plan, (Combined Form F 1) will be used at all SCDA festival performances and technical rehearsals.

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone taking part in a festival has a duty to look after their own safety and that of others. No-one should follow an instruction they are unhappy with. If in doubt, stop and ask the Club Stage Manager or Festival Stage Director.

The Organising Committee will appoint a **Festival Stage Director**, (FSD). The FSD will provide advice to clubs on safety requirements and agree each club's Safety Plan. The FSD has the right to impose additional safety measures if considered appropriate and will monitor the behaviour of club members against their Safety Plan. The FSD can stop a rehearsal or performance at any time if people are at risk. The FSD will ensure everyone involved in the festival understands the theatre's safety rules. The FSD must also record and report any safety related incident or near miss to the Festival Organising Committee in writing.

The **Club Stage Manager**, (CSM) of a performing club has primary responsibility for ensuring its members behave safely. The CSM must carry out a risk assessment, identify appropriate controls and submit a Safety Plan prior to the festival. Any specific hazards must be discussed with FSD prior to the Technical Rehearsal. The CSM must cooperate with the FSD by implementing the Safety Plan and ensuring everyone in the club understands its contents.

2. PREPARING A SAFETY PLAN

A Safety Plan needs to be prepared as part of the forms submitted to enter a play to an SCDA festival. The Safety Plan fulfils a number of functions:

- it identifies hazards associated with the production
- it lists the safety precautions that the club will apply to control these hazards
- it confirms that all members of the club have been briefed on the safety precautions they should follow

Every production and venue is different and presents different hazards. The main hazards are identified as a list of YES/NO questions on the Safety Plan. If a production involves these hazards, the proposed controls and safety precautions should be discussed with the Festival Stage Director prior to the Technical Rehearsal.

The Safety Plan should consider any other potential risks, bearing in mind the limitations of the particular theatre. All the time spent in the theatre should be considered, set-up, rehearsal, performance and get-out.

Where possible, hazards should be eliminated – such as by lowering a lighting bar, to avoid working from a ladder. Where a hazard cannot be avoided, control measures must be identified in the Safety Plan. Examples are outlined overleaf. It is important when developing appropriate control measures to consider both events which happen frequently, though usually do not have serious consequences, (such as trips and falls) and events which seldom happen but can be very serious, (such as fires).

<i>Hazards</i>	<i>Controls</i>
Work at height	Use certificated access equipment available at the venue Check all equipment before use Have someone nominated to hold the ladder. Never stand on the top two steps of a ladder
Falling objects	All lamps must be clamped and have a safety chain. Movable lenses must be chained to the lamp body. Flats must be braced and weighted. Empty loose items from pockets before working at height.
Trips, slips and falls	Mark obstructions with bright tape. Loose cables must avoid passageways and be taped to the floor. Avoid the use of liquids or gels. If required, ensure facilities are provided to clean-up any spills.
Manual handling	Break down sets into elements weighing less than 25kg where possible Make sure everyone knows how to lift safely and there are enough people. Hold doors open when carrying items through Never pick something up until you have a clear space to put it down
Heat or flame	Avoid any naked flames or heating elements. Tie back tabs away from lamps, delegate someone to check them regularly All scenery to be sprayed with fireproofing solution.
Electrical safety	Ensure all connections are made or checked by the theatre's Authorised Electrical Person. All portable mains appliances to have valid PAT test label.

The completed Safety Plan forms a checklist of safety precautions and behaviours which everyone participating in the production has agreed to follow.

3. TAKING TIME FOR SAFETY

At the start of each technical rehearsal, the FSD will ensure everyone involved in the festival understands the theatre's safety rules and emergency procedures. This will include fire alarms, emergency exits, smoking policy, location and use of fire extinguishers and first aid arrangements. The FSD will also make sure everyone understands their responsibility to look after themselves and others, and agree the procedures for calling a safety 'time-out'.

Anyone becoming aware of a hazard has a duty to advise the CSM or FSD or to call a 'time-out' to resolve a safety issue. If someone is at immediate risk of being hurt, all activity should be stopped until the hazard is removed or controlled.

SCDA's Festival Rules limit the time available for technical rehearsals and for setting and striking sets during festivals. Clubs should ensure that they do not attempt more in the time than can be safely achieved. Under the festival rules, no club will be penalised for time spent to resolve a safety issue.