



mildura

Event Planning Guide

www.mildura.vic.gov.au



Mildura Rural City Council

Introduction

Mildura Rural City Council (Council) aims to position the Mildura region as a major event destination with a vibrant year-round calendar of events.

Currently there are over 300 events held annually within the Council boundaries, including major festivals, sporting events, markets and community and multicultural events. These events provide significant economic benefit to the region along with social inclusion opportunities which together make this community a diverse and exciting place to live and visit.

How to use this guide

This guide has been divided into four sections to assist you in planning, conducting and evaluating your event and provides resources and templates you can use to make the process a little easier.

This will enable you to alert Council of your event in the correct way and allow our staff to guide you as you design, create and coordinate your event. It will also assist you in adhering to the relevant laws, permits and regulations.

How can Council help you?

When planning your event, no matter its size and scope, you will need to liaise with Council over various support, advice and regulatory matters to ensure your event runs smoothly.

Council has a dedicated Event Concierge who will act as your point of contact for all enquiries and documentation.

www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Event-Planning-Resources

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DISCLAIMER

This planning guide does not substitute for professional advice on laws and regulations in individual cases. Mildura Rural City Council has made every endeavour to ensure that the information contained in this document was correct at the time of printing, however event organisers should ensure that all of the information they use is both up to date and accurate.



Event checklist

9-12 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ Check venue availability
- ☐ Organise public liability insurance
- ☐ Look at possible funding opportunities
- ☐ Prepare sponsorship dates
- ☐ Prepare budgets

6-9 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ Complete event application form and relevant documentation
- ☐ Prepare risk assessments
- ☐ Organise a traffic management plan where required
- ☐ Approach possible sponsors
- ☐ Apply for other permits and licenses (eg. Temporary liquor licence)
- ☐ Book first aid, entertainment, dignitaries etc
- ☐ Book equipment (eg. Marquees, chairs, sound and lighting, cool rooms)

3-6 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ Organise event promotion such as publicity, media releases, posters, flyers, radio, online promotion, event listings
- ☐ Draft a resident notification letter to be used in the letterbox drop
- ☐ Finalise food vendors, pyro technicians, stall holders, amusement ride operators
- ☐ Appoint volunteer and staff
- ☐ Determine and book waste management requirements

2 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ Distribute media releases and posters
- ☐ Hold a planning meeting with key stakeholders, volunteers, staff

0-2 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ Develop and distribute a personnel roster to all involved
- ☐ Develop and distribute a contact list with details of all stakeholders
- ☐ Leave the day before the event free for last minute requests and issues

DAY OF EVENT

- ☐ Conduct site-specific inductions for all staff, volunteers and others involved in the delivery of the event
- ☐ Conduct patron surveys to gain feedback for future planning

POST EVENT

- ☐ Finalise accounts
- ☐ Send thank you letters to volunteers/entertainers etc
- ☐ Evaluate patron surveys
- ☐ Send out reports to major stakeholders eg. Sponsors/key organisations
- ☐ Complete final report/acquittal for any grants
- ☐ Advise on media coverage, audience numbers





Planning your event

So you have decided you wish to stage an event, let's first look at what you should consider before committing funds or undertaking the planning stage.

- Who is the target audience
- What is the event about
- What are your objectives in staging the event

We are sure you already know the answer to these questions, but if you are a part of a group or organisation it helps to spell these out so everybody involved is clear about the event. It will also assist you to better define the event in grant or sponsorship proposals.

Council have developed a template Event Strategy which you can [download here](#).

Researching your event

To ensure the viability of your event it is wise to research before committing funding or resources. Look at similar events that have been conducted locally or elsewhere to evaluate audience participation, whether or not the event was embraced by the community and their overall financial success.

Check to see if any market research exists which may guide how you conduct or market your event for maximum results.

Planning for an Inclusive Event

Selecting an accessible venue is the first step to providing an accessible event. There are many aspects of planning an accessible event which does not incur huge costs but requires strategic thinking in the early stages. The degree of accessible infrastructure required for each event will depend on the size of the event and the numbers expected to attend.

Some types of accessibility features to think about in the early planning stages:

- Clear large print signs, good lighting and audio announcements.
- Clear written notices, placement of information stalls away from noisy stages, directional signage and
- AUSLAN interpreters.
- Wide clear pathways around the site, disability parking, accessible toilets, ramps for stages, friendly staff to assist, seating and rest areas, accessible pathways to all amenities.
- Clear line of travel with information clearly presented. Seating, shelter, wheelchairs for loan.



Companion cards

Companion Card promotes the right of people with a disability, who require a companion, to fair ticketing at Victorian events and venues.

The Companion Card is a tool to assist organisations that charge an admission or participation fee to comply with existing anti-discrimination legislation.

The Companion Card is issued to people with a significant, permanent disability, who can demonstrate that they are unable to access most community activities and venues without attendant care support.

For the Industry Handbook and affiliation details visit the [Companion Card website](#).

Recognition of Indigenous land owners

An Acknowledgement of Country is a means by which all people can show respect for Aboriginal culture and heritage and the ongoing relationship the traditional custodians have with their land. An Acknowledgement of Country would be used at minor functions such as public speeches, seminars and meetings. On such occasions, a chair or speaker may begin by acknowledging that the meeting is taking place in the country of the traditional custodians.

At major functions such as conferences, naming and/or opening ceremonies, major exhibitions and other functions where official guests and dignitaries are in attendance, it is important that an Elder be asked to conduct the 'Welcome'. In addition, other welcoming activities such as music and dance may be used under the direction of the Elder.

For more information and bookings visit the [First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation](#).

For example:

"I acknowledge the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, The Latji Latji, Ngintait, Nyeri Nyeri and Werigia, as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which we are. I pay my respects to the Elders past and present of First Peoples of Millewa-Mallee and the ancient connection they hold with their Country."

Timing of the event

Next, consider the timing of your event. It is critical that you put some thought into this to maximize the chances of your event achieving success. Some points to consider when looking at timing:

- When is the best time for your target audience to attend - school holidays, business hours, weekends or weekdays? E.g., economic benefits can sometimes be maximised by scheduling events in the tourism shoulder seasons when more accommodation is available.
- How much lead time is required for organisation and advertising?
- What other events are scheduled at that time? It may be wise to avoid competing for attention, and accommodation availability may be a problem when scheduled with a major event, but on the other hand clustering similar events together can be beneficial if the events are small to medium and not competing for facilities or participants. Check [What's On Mildura](#) for dates of other scheduled events.
- The availability of your proposed site/venue, essential participants/VIPs and volunteers?

Organising committee

If you haven't done so already it is important to establish a committee with identified roles and responsibilities or share the workload with professional event staff.

Dependent on the nature and scope of the event, you may seek the services of a company to help in the planning and management of the event, or some components of the event.

Using an external organisation to manage or partly manage the event does not diminish your responsibility to fulfil regulatory obligations outlined in this guide or under law.

Consider creating position descriptions for each role on the committee so everybody is clear on their duties and responsibilities. Council has developed a template position description which can be [downloaded here](#).

Selecting an event location

Choosing your venue is a crucial decision and one that will flow on to determining many elements of your event.

Before you decide, consider:

- Is the venue suitable for the theme of the event?
- Location and approximate travel time to get there
- Does it have enough capacity for the expected number of attendees?
- How is the venue configured, including sight lines and possible seating configurations?
- Is the venue available and affordable?
- What facilities and services does the venue offer?
- Is there public transport and/or adequate parking?
- Do you have information on accessibility, toilets, power, emergency plans, exits and shelter options in case of inclement weather?
- Is the venue/site on public or private land?
- Do you need permission to hold the event?

Council has a range of venues and facilities available to hire which can be found [here](#).

To hire one of these venues please complete the online [Venue Hire Application form](#).

Budget

To plan your event successfully you will need to develop a comprehensive and accurate budget. Your budget should be specific and consider the following:

- Start by listing your expected expenses then move on to income to ensure you've got your costs covered. List expenses like printing, permits, insurance, hire fees, temporary structures, entertainment, marketing, food, volunteer costs, professional services, supplies and security.
- Income should include revenue opportunities like sponsorship/ partnerships, ticket sales, donations, and food and beverage sales.
- Try to include a contingency of between 5% and 10% to cover the cost of unexpected impacts on your income/expenses like poor attendance due to bad weather.
- Fully exploring potential income opportunities including sponsorship, grants or donations can make a big difference to your budget.
- Before committing to specific expenses try to shop around and get at least two quotes particularly when it comes to the hire of large equipment.
- If your event will rely heavily on ticket sales, ensure you have a suitable marketing plan to raise awareness.
- Use our [Budget Template](#) to create your budget so it can do the calculations for you.

Grant funding

Sourcing grant funding can be a time consuming and lengthy process, however with the right application and careful planning this can be well worth the effort.

Mildura Rural City Council Funding Programs

Council conducts a variety of grant funding programs to assist events and the community, the following may be of benefit to event organisers:

Events and Festivals Grants – Funding to stage events in the Mildura region that have a social, economic or environmental benefit to the community

Community Grants – Funding to enhance opportunities for community participation in the arts

Other grant sources include;

Funding Body & Website

[Australia Council for the Arts](#)

[Arts Victoria](#)

[Department of Sport and Recreation](#)

[Festivals Australia](#)

[Philanthropy Australia](#)

[Regional Arts Victoria](#)

[Regional Development Victoria](#)

[Business Victoria](#)

[Vic Health](#)

[Victoria Government – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning](#)

[Victorian Multicultural Commission](#)

Council has developed a grant tracker which you can [download here](#).

Sponsorships

Sponsorships are also a major income source of many new and continuing events. Seeking sponsorship from businesses and organisations can be time consuming and non-productive if you are not strategic in your approach.

You must first assess your event for sponsorship potential by asking:

- Who is your target market/audience?
- Look at your event & its components critically to ascertain which aspects would most appeal to a sponsor.
- Establish the aims of your event and its strengths as these will have an impact on your type of sponsor.
- Benefits to sponsor (should be highlighted)

By researching their guidelines for sponsorship in advance, you can tailor your approach and application to these goals. Your written proposal should include:

- Introduction and background to the event and vision for the future
- Expected participation levels
- Sponsor benefits
- Details of local community support & funding
- Marketing & event plan outline
- Sponsorship budget & how the money will be spent
- Timeline

Demonstrate to prospective sponsors what the event can do for them. It is recommended that you contact the appropriate manager in person to give your sponsorship request maximum impact. A face-to-face meeting is often the most effective way to sell your event.

Consider approaching the media for sponsorship of your event. Often they will supply advertising space or airtime in return for inclusion on signage or space at the event to promote their brand. It is wise to have established a clear marketing plan first so that you know what marketing avenues/goals you are trying to achieve.

Council have a range of sponsorship tools and documents [available here](#).



Preparing for the event

Now that you've made the first big decisions, it's time to get going with the preparations, which will involve making many more decisions.

In this section, we take a closer look at approvals, logistics, programming, marketing and promotion, health and safety, staffing and communications.

However, not only will you need a detailed plan, you'll also need to stay on top of your event administration. If your paperwork is well managed you'll reduce your risks and improve your accountability and communication.

The best way to keep track of it all is to make a clear [Event Management Plan](#) and apply a project management approach. Include the stated purpose and objective of your event, and a range of supporting plans like the budget, marketing plan, event administration, human resource management and other logistics.

Focus on creating the event rather than running the event. If you apply a systematic approach you can refer back to it and improve it with every event you organise.

Permits and Licenses

The size and nature of your event will determine what permits and licenses will be required. The following list is a typical example but may vary based on the size and nature of your event.

Occupancy Permit (P.O.P.E.)

P.O.P.E. What is it? You have probably heard this acronym before. It stands for a Place of Public Entertainment. It is a defined term from the Building Act 1993 and it is the State Government legislation used to ensure that the life, health and safety of the people are being looked after when a public event takes place.

Not all events require a P.O.P.E. but if you answer yes to any of these: enclosed or substantially enclosed, ticketed and over 500m² you will need to contact Council to see if it requires an occupancy permit to be used as a Place of Public Entertainment.

Given the issues that need to be addressed and the consultation that needs to be carried out, event organisers should endeavour to apply an Occupancy Permit well in advance (minimum 2 months) of the event. Specific issues that will need to be looked at in preparing and assessing the application for Occupancy Permit will include:

- The risk management plan for the event
- The emergency management plan for the event including communication systems details
- Nomination and having a safety officer responsible for the safety of the public during the event
- Provision of fire protection equipment appropriate to the venue and any special risks
- Provision of security and crowd control appropriate to the anticipated crowd numbers
- Approval for temporary structures (tents/ marquees, temporary stands and or stages)
- Provision of toilet facilities and drinking water appropriate to the anticipated crowd numbers
- Provision of First Aid stations appropriate to the anticipated crowd numbers
- Information about any special features that at the event e.g. amusement rides, fireworks, naked flames

Liquor Licence

If you are planning to supply or sell alcohol at your event you will need a Liquor Licence, or may need a BYO Licence if patrons are bringing their own alcohol for consumption at your event. The [Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation](#) (VCGLR) website guides you on the appropriate licence for your event and has downloadable application forms. Please be aware that your application will take time to be processed and approved. Applications for a limited licence should be made at least 60 days prior to the event.

All Victorian Liquor Licenses contain clauses relating to amenity, which covers your responsibilities regarding noise and patron behaviour.

In most cases, your licence will require that all servers hold a current Victorian Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) Certificate and that you maintain an RSA Register and copies of all certificates on site. There may also be requirements regarding security depending on the nature of the event.

Food catering services

If food and/or drinks are sold at your event it is important that you are aware of your responsibilities as well as those of the food vendors.

The Victorian Food Act 1984 (Food Act) controls the sale of food in Victoria to protect people from food-borne illness. All temporary and mobile food premises selling food (including drinks) must be registered or notified under the Food Act through the online state-wide registration and notification website [Streatrader](#). All Statements of Trade (SOTs) are to be lodged with Council at least one business day prior to operating within the municipality.

As the event organiser, you are responsible for the overall management of food vendors at the event including risk management provision of services and amenities, and site placement.

The event organiser will also need to complete the [festivals and events food providers list](#) 10 business days prior to the event and submit to Council's Environmental Health Unit.

The Environmental Health Officers from Council are responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Food Act and may inspect your event to determine compliance.

Licensing requirements for entertainment

As the event organiser, it is your responsibility to obtain the correct licence for the public performance or broadcast of any copyrighted music. Failure to obtain a licence may result in the event holder infringing copyright laws.

OneMusic offers licences on behalf of Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) specifically for music used in events through activities such as concerts, dance parties and other miscellaneous performances.

For more information visit the [OneMusic](#) website.

Planning permit

Public and private land is categorised into land use zones. Planning permission for events held on any land may be required.

Given the possibility for the public to comment on a planning permit application, the process may be lengthy so we recommend you contact Council at least 6 months prior to the event being staged.

Site plan

A site plan is a drawing indicating the ground layout of your event and shows the site boundaries, vehicle and pedestrian access, stalls and tent locations, etc.

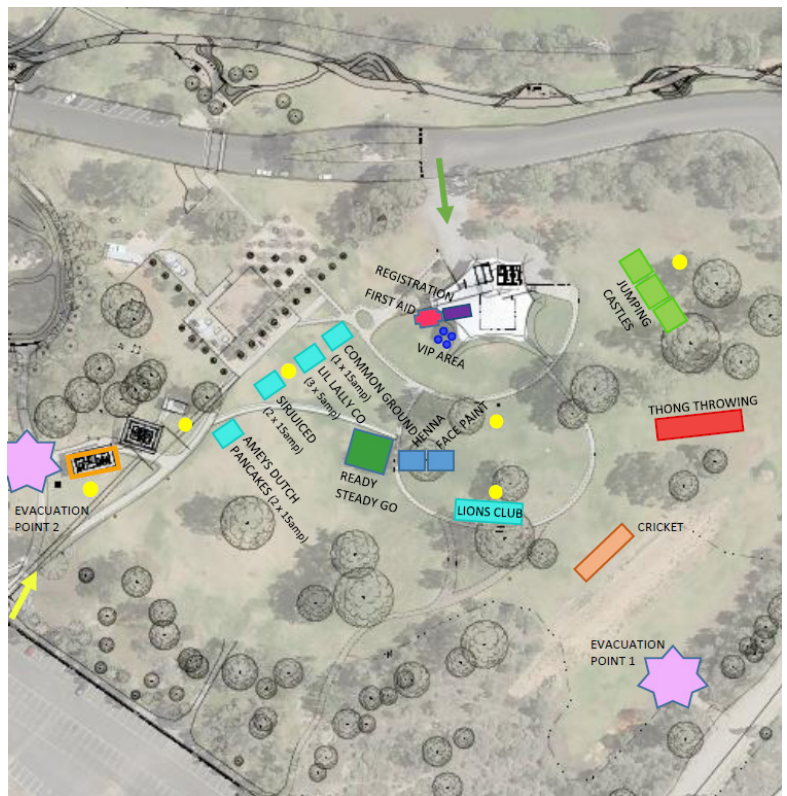
You may need to submit a site plan when applying for various permits, to plan the position of equipment and to communicate with contractors, suppliers, vendors, performers, participants and spectators.

First source or design a scale map of the site, including surrounding streets and roads. Council has developed template site plans for all Council hireable facilities and are located on our website [here](#).

A user-friendly version of the site plan can be used in promotional information (event maps) and made available at the event.

The site plan is also a vital tool for planning and communicating with emergency services.

The following is an example of a site map



Traffic management plan

If you are planning an event that involves a road closure, management of traffic and/or pedestrians you must submit a Traffic Management Plan (TMP). The TMP will be reviewed to assess the impact on the movement or safety of pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists or vehicles.

A TMP covers such things as temporary changes to the road, traffic conditions, road/footpath closures and any detours. All TMP's submitted must meet the following conditions:

- TMP's must be prepared by a suitably qualified person or professional traffic consultant and must be in accordance with Australian Standard AS 1742.3 2009.
- Please ensure all information is true and accurate to avoid any delays in the assessment.

For advice regarding traffic management, road closures and footpath closures contact Council.

VicRoads

For further information about temporary signage or regulations on the use of roads owned by VicRoads go to www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

Signage

Clear and strategically placed signage will assist in coordinating traffic and pedestrian movements and help to manage and promote your event. To determine your signage requirements, consider what information your audience will need to know:

- Parking/no parking areas (including disabled parking)
- Toilets (including disabled)
- Entrances and exits
- First aid posts
- Lost children
- Accessible facilities, including entry/exit points
- Meeting points
- Alcohol service and rules/dry areas
- Information booth

If you are placing temporary advertising signs for the event on public land such as footpaths, parks, and road verges, you will need Council approval (which you can do as part of your [Venue Hire application](#)).

For signage on private land you must obtain the approval of the land owner.

Shelter

Have you thought about what shelter and shade your event requires - not just for attendees but also the needs of staff and volunteers (including First Aiders)?

Some common shelter locations to consider include:

- Transport pick up and set down areas
- Spectator and official viewing areas
- Seated eating areas
- First aid area
- Event coordination centre
- Competitor and officials marshalling areas

There are many risks associated with temporary structures and marquees, and all structures need to be safely secured. In the event of windy conditions these structures can become dangerous missiles and should be secured appropriately.

To make sure your event is safe, you should conduct a risk assessment and seek professional advice.

To secure a structure appropriately you need to consider the type and size of the structure as well as environmental factors such as exposure to wind and type of ground.

Make enquiries regarding underground water, power, telecommunication, gas and irrigation infrastructure to ensure these are not damaged by temporary structure securing devices, or that build crews are not placed in danger. Council's preferred option is to use water/concrete securing blocks instead of in ground securing devices.

Toilets

It is essential to have sufficient toilet facilities at your event for the number of expected attendees. If there are not enough permanent toilet facilities at the site you may need to provide portable toilets.

A reputable supplier can advise you on the number and placement of toilets, and arrangements for cleaning and emptying during the event. A visit by a supplier to the site before the event would help them to advise you.

At least one toilet should be accessible for people with disabilities.

The Australian Emergency Manual recommends the following as a guide:

Toilet facilities – no alcohol provided

PATRONS	Female		Male		
	WCs	Hand basins	WCs	Urinals	Hand basins
<500	6	2	1	2	2
<1000	9	4	2	4	4
<2000	12	6	4	8	6
<3000	18	10	6	15	10
<5000	30	17	8	25	17

Toilet facilities – alcohol provided

PATRONS	Female		Male		
	WCs	Hand basins	WCs	Urinals	Hand basins
<500	13	2	3	8	2
<1000	16	4	5	10	4
<2000	18	7	9	15	7
<3000	22	14	10	20	14
<5000	40	20	12	30	20

The above figures may be reduced for shorter duration events as follows:

Duration of event	Quantity required
8 hours plus	100%
6-8 hours	80%
4-6 hours	75%
Less than 4 hours	70%



Waste management

Whether your event is a major festival or just a small community event, provision must be made for the appropriate collection and disposal of waste and recycling material, both during and after your event. Even small events can generate large amounts of waste and it is your responsibility as the event organiser to leave your site or venue in a clean and tidy condition.

Public litter bins only cater to the normal patronage of a site and should not be used for waste disposal by event organisers. If an event is to be held where litter bins exist, it is recommended event bins are hired to accommodate the additional waste and recycling that is produced.

Council encourages events to recycle and reduce waste as much as possible.

Consider:

- What type and quantity of waste bins you need and where you will put them? (Do you need additional receptacles for set up/ pack up times?)
- How often will they be emptied and how will they be accessed – event organisers need to move bins to a roadside where they can be emptied.
- How will you manage other litter? Can you [recruit volunteers](#) to clean up during and after the event? If so will you give them protective gear and training?

Council can provide, at a cost, event waste and recycling bins, however for larger events, it may be necessary to utilise a contractor to meet the volume and emptying schedules required.

Event bins can be booked as part of your [Venue Hire Application](#) or if your event is being held somewhere other than a Council facility you can [book event bins through this form](#).

Power, lighting and water

Power

Most venues have provision for power which you can use to run your event, however it is important that you assess the needs of your event and see if the existing system can accommodate these needs. To work out how much power you will need, first work out where the existing power is, how much is available, who will need power and if an extra power source is required? Consider that many events will need three phase power and often this is not readily available and may need to be provided via a generator.

Once this information has been collected you can plan your power allocation for the event.

The use of electricity at an event on any Council managed land or property must comply with electrical safety standards and procedures.

Lighting

Regardless of whether your event is being held during the day or night you will need to consider lighting for both outdoors and indoors, as it is a vital safety element.

All areas of your event site, especially access paths and emergency exits, should be clearly illuminated. A risk assessment should be undertaken to help you decide where you need to locate lights.

Water

Depending on the size of your event, you will need to assess your water requirements and determine if there is enough water available on site, where the water is located, and will extra water be needed?

Other considerations include:

- Will you, or are you required to, offer drinking water - think about the needs of attendees, participants, staff, volunteers, contractors and performers, particularly if the weather is likely to be hot? Council has a drinking water trailer available for hire for events which can be booked as part of your [Venue Hire Application](#)
- Will food vendors need water for hand washing and general operations?
- If a water access point can't be connected to food vendors (usually because of position) have you advised them to bring a reserve of potable water?
- Do temporary toilets need to be connected to water?
- If no water is available, have you advised the toilet supplier?
- Will your cleaning contractor need access to water?

Ticketing

Depending on the type and size of your event you may decide to offer tickets - these could be either advanced tickets, tickets purchased at the event, or both. Ticketing can be an effective tool in controlling crowds where venue capacities are limited.

A sound administration process is essential to ensure maximum numbers are not exceeded and that payments are properly recorded and accounted for. Consider using an online booking system to streamline the process.

There are numerous online event ticketing services such as Eventbrite, Trybooking and Mildura Arts Centre.

Event coordination centre

A 'control area' for your event should be established and easily identifiable. This is a central point where staff, volunteers, emergency services and the general public can come for all enquires.

The Centre should provide all relevant general information for the public as well as resources for volunteers such as sunscreen and hats.

The Coordination Centre and the Information Centre can be established in separate areas but should be clearly sign posted.

Things to consider:

- Event Coordination Centre location and is it clearly marked on your site map
- Ensure there is signage to clearly identify it
- Prepare maps and general information for the general public
- Ensure a supply of [run sheets](#), evacuation plans and resources are available for volunteers
- Ensure a copy of all event plans, contact lists and emergency documentation is held at the centre

Communication

It is imperative that all event staff, volunteers and emergency services have access to a system of communication. The number of communication units should accurately reflect the staff and volunteers on duty i.e. for each team of two volunteers there should be one two way radio.

Firstly consider if you will use two way radios or mobile phones, bearing in mind that mobile phones may not be reliable in times of emergency when usage can be high.

Ensure all volunteers, staff and emergency services have a contact list detailing radio frequencies or phone numbers.

Event organisers need to be able to communicate with the crowd for both public announcements and in emergencies. Consideration should be given to the public announcement system in relation to volume, acoustics and the distance the system covers.

Smoke free events

For food fairs the Victorian Government has banned smoking in all outdoor areas. A food fair is an event where the principal activity is the supply of food for consumption at the event. Smoking is also banned within 10 meters of a food stall or food vendor at an organised outdoor event (other than a food fair).

It is the responsibility of the event organiser to ensure that smoke free outdoor areas are provided as required by Victorian Government legislation.

No smoking signage is recommended at your event as follows:

- At least 10 meters from food courts and areas where food vendors are located
- At each entrance to your event if it is a food fair or an event where the main activity is the consumption of food.

To obtain the no smoking signage contact Council.

Event programming

Program and Entertainment

The program content should be selected and tailored to support the theme of the event, and any activities should also be tailored to meet these requirements. A range of performers to keep people interested from the event's start to finish should be chosen to complement activities. If your event is targeted at children, remember to also cater for parents and carers in the programming.

Noise

It is illegal for offensive noise to emanate from a public place, so it is important to carefully consider the impact that noise will have on the surrounding environment.

Noise levels can emanate from speakers/amplifiers and also machinery during set up and affect nearby residents, businesses and wildlife. For this reason both the Environmental Protection Authority and Council have rules guiding the levels of permissible amplified sound/noise at outdoor events.

Consult with the venue/landowner and Council about managing noise at your event, especially as some venues have maximum noise levels.

Also, if using a public address system or sound amplifying device on Council-managed and owned public land, you may need approval from Council.

It takes only one or two complaints from a member of the public for an event to risk being fined for breaching noise guidelines, so it is worth your time to consider:

- Times of use
- Position of speakers
- Direction of speakers
- Sound checks
- Noise monitoring—who will do this and how (Qualified sound/audio Technicians may be required depending on the nature of the event)
- Ability to adjust noise levels if noise complaints, or a request from authorities, is received
- Appointing a person responsible for adjusting the volume if noise monitoring indicates noise limits are being exceeded.

If your staff or volunteers will be working in noisy areas you may also need to provide them with hearing protection.

Fireworks

Under Victorian state legislation, fireworks may only be included in an event if they are provided and operated by a pyro-technician who is licensed by WorkSafe Victoria. A notification of [Intention to Discharge Fireworks form](#) must also be lodged with WorkSafe.

It is important that nearby residents are warned of any proposed fireworks so that they can take action to ensure the safety and security of pets and other animals which may be startled.

If your event is being held within the specified 'Fire Danger Period' you will also be required to obtain a permit from the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and supply a copy to Council prior to the event.

Further information can be found at www.cfa.vic.gov.au



COVIDSafe events

The Victorian Government has developed the COVID-19 Public Events Framework (framework) to guide event organisers and venues in developing COVIDSafe events.

Public events are assessed according to their scale, complexity and associated risk factors. A three-tiered system is used to ensure the appropriate level of public health oversight is applied to public events. Further information can be [found here](#).

Council have developed a [COVIDSafe Plan template here](#).

Risk and emergency management

Risk Management Plan

As the event organiser you have the responsibility to ensure your event is managed safely and without risk to all involved. As such, you are required to identify and manage the risks associated with your event. To assist you, Council has produced a [template risk management plan](#).

In the template Council provides example risks and corresponding controls that may be associated with your event. You are not compelled to implement these controls, however, should an incident occur that results in an injury, damage or loss they may be used as evidence to determine your liability.

These recommendations provide reasonably practicable measures to manage risk at your event, however, they are not exhaustive and may not cover all risks specific to your event.

You are advised to identify all risks and provide appropriate risk management measures prior to and during an event.

For most events, Council will require a copy of your risk management plan to be submitted as part of the [Venue Hire Application](#). For further advice on risk assessment or developing your risk management plan, please contact Council.

Emergency Management Plan

An important part of the event planning process is the development of an emergency management plan which outlines your response in the event of an emergency. If you are planning a large event it is key to consult with emergency services in the development phase to ensure their needs are considered.

Your plan should clearly identify the person responsible for managing any emergency response at your event, and the contact details given to all emergency services.

Consider the following points:

- An assessment of the kind of emergencies that could occur, their likelihood, and how the risk of such occurrences can be reduced.
- A site plan, identifying access and egress, evacuation routes, assembly points and the location of first aid facilities.
- A decision-making hierarchy clearly identifying roles and responsibilities.
- The evacuation procedure, identifying who can authorise an evacuation.
- An emergency medical plan that includes the contact details of relevant hospital, and developed in consultation with the local Ambulance Service or first aid providers.
- The arrangements for minor on-site emergencies.
- A communications plan identifying persons, contact details and means of communication.

Provide copies of your Emergency Management Plan to:

- Emergency services
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Staff/volunteers/contractors (within a pre-event briefing).

To assist you, Council has produced a [template emergency management plan](#).

Public Liability Insurance

Managing a public event includes ensuring the safety of event organisers, volunteers, event staff and the public.

Perhaps consider seeking sound legal advice to ensure the event you are conducting has adequate public liability insurance. Where the event is being held on Council owned/managed property, is funded by Council, and/or under a permit from Council, evidence of current cover of \$10 million will be required.

What does public liability insurance cover?

This is insurance indemnifying the group organising the event against legal liability for personal injury and/or property damage claims made by third parties, as a result of negligence occurring in connection with the group's activities, and/or their products (goods sold). It is important to ensure that all volunteers connected with your event are covered by your insurance policy.

Various insurance companies offer a community group insurance scheme with cover available for most community events, celebrations and festivals. Local Community Insurance Services is one such service, underwritten by QBE, and was developed by the Municipal Association of Victoria. It can be found at www.localcommunityinsurance.com.au

In addition to taking out your own public liability insurance, all contractors, performers, food vendors and other suppliers at your event should supply you with a current certificate of currency prior to their participation at the event.

Health and Safety

As an event organiser you have a duty of care to ensure that any volunteers, staff and contractors have a safe environment in which to work.

Depending on the nature of the event, you may have certain legal responsibilities in relation to occupational health and safety legislation, details of which are available from WorkSafe.

First Aid

The provision of first aid is an important aspect of any event. First aid posts must be appropriately equipped and easy to find by patrons.

The number of posts required depends on the size and nature of the event.

For small events you should ensure that as a minimum you have an adequate first aid kit and staff or volunteers with current first aid qualifications. For medium to large events you should consider using the services of St Johns, V.M.A.T or Rural Ambulance Victoria.

If your event is high risk, with the likelihood of more serious injuries, you should engage the services of Rural Ambulance Victoria.

First aid providers such as Rural Ambulance Victoria can require as much as six months' notice for large-scale events and one month for those of a smaller scale.

Fire Management

Event organisers must consider potential fire hazards in the planning process and discuss any concerns they may have with Council and the CFA.

Sources of fire risks at events may include:

- Food vendors using LP gas or naked flames
- Audio/visual equipment causing electrical fires
- Fireworks and pyrotechnics displays
- Surrounding grass or bushland

To proactively manage these risks, event organisers and staff should conduct pre-event safety inspections to identify and control any potential risks. The appropriate fire extinguishers and water supplies should be made available in any high risk areas. Contact the CFA for advice on the correct type of extinguisher or other equipment.

Consult with the CFA to understand permit requirements for all activities that may involve fires, particularly during the Fire Danger Period.

Security and Crowd Control

In planning your event you will need to consider the likelihood of security issues and make the decision as to whether you need to enlist a registered security provider. If your event is to be licensed to sell alcohol you may well be required to have security as a condition of your liquor licence.

Consider the following:

- Crowd control requirements
- Serving of alcohol
- Storage and transport of money

Incident Reporting

During your event or festival, and as a part of your risk management plan, an incident/hazard reporting system should be in place to ensure all incidents are recorded for further investigation, or to be discussed as improvements for the following event at the Post Event Evaluation and Debrief.

An incident or hazard may include an injury to an employee or to a patron, damage to property or a near miss incident that may have required use of equipment not on site such as a ladder to remove a cable.

Council has developed a template **Incident Report & Investigation form** and can be [downloaded here](#).

Human resources

Working with Children

If your staff or volunteers will be working with children at the event, in a one-on-one environment (for example, supervising children's activities), they will also be required to obtain a Working with Children's Check. There is a fee for this and you should decide whether you as the event organiser will cover this, or whether it is up to the volunteer to pay.

Team Briefing

Prior to the event it is important to hold a briefing session for everybody involved with the event to go through the program and run sheet, emergency management procedures and contingency plan.

Ensure that everyone is fully briefed on their role, and their duties and responsibilities in the event that something goes wrong.

Make sure all equipment has been tested and that any issues have been reported prior to the commencement of the event.



Marketing and promotion

The marketing and publicity of your event is crucial to how successful it will be.

Think clearly about who your intended target audience will be. This will help you decide how best to present what you are offering and how to reach the right people.

When planning how you will market your event be sure to document everything clearly in an event marketing plan, clearly showing timelines and who is responsible for each facet of your marketing activities. An [event marketing plan template](#) has been developed to assist you.

Advertising

There are many ways to market your event, and some of your choices will come down to your budget.

However, even with little or no budget there are still plenty of ways to get your message out to people who would like to attend your event.

The first question to ask when planning your marketing is to work out who your audience is and then which channels of communication can you reach them through.

Consider the following options:

Television

WIN TV, Prime 7 and Southern Cross Ten
Consider airing some adverts during shows which are directly aligned to your event theme to reach your target market. E.g. motorsports event adverts screened during motorsports shows will reach people most likely to have an interest in attending the event.

Radio

Triple M 97.9, Hit 99.5, ABC Mildura/Swan Hill 104.3, HOT FM 106.7, Easy Mix 1476, Old Gold Radio 1611

Print

Sunraysia Daily, Mildura Weekly, Mildura Midweek

Tourist News

Produced quarterly by Sunraysia Daily and contains a calendar of events.

Mildura Living Magazine

Quarterly publication containing calendar of events.

Community Banner Program

Banners are an effective way of activating and decorating the town. They provide a vibrant and strong visual presence and allow an event or organisation to further enhance its marketing campaign on a large and impressive scale. Council has 26 poles which can be hired to display promotional flags along Deakin Avenue between 7th Street and 10th Street. For more information [click here](#).

Events Signs

Council has signage space available for the promotion of events located on Deakin Avenue (cnr. Plantation St.), Deakin Avenue (near 13th Street) & Seventh Street (cnr Madden Ave), Quandong Park & Big Lizzie, Pump Hill & Library.

Websites

By listing your event on [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse](#) (ATDW), you are accessing a nationwide online marketplace for tourism which shares data with many state and territory tourism bodies, including Visit Victoria and Visit the Murray. Any events that you list will pull through automatically to the [What's On Mildura](#) website as well. Effectively, ATDW will help to increase your digital presence and by maintaining that site, you will be able to effectively market your events across multiple sites automatically.

Mildura Visitor Information and Booking Centre

- Monthly 'What's On' Events Guide – 500+ electronic circulation and hard copies through centre
- Free floor space for event displays
- Distribution of flyers
- Poster display
- Event ticketing service

Social Media

Setting up an event 'page' on Facebook is free and simple to do. You can then directly invite people to your event and promote via others. Like a website, if your partners/sponsors or performers have their own Facebook page, ask them to promote or 'like' your event as well. Announce program changes as they are confirmed - like new speakers, rides, etc. Add photos or special offers.



Media Releases

Media releases can be an effective low cost option to get the message out to the public.

Publications will want the basics of who, what, when, where and why, but they'll also be looking for something extra - is there a celebrity or unusual performer, an unusual attraction, an interesting statistic or fact. Is there someone the media can interview about the event?

If a publication has a what's on listing, ask to be included. Include a photo of a performer or keynote speaker or a crowd shot from a previous year.

Co-Promotion

Why not partner with other organisations and promote each other's events. Leveraging off each other's attendees can be a cheap and effective way to get the message about your event out to large numbers of people, particularly if you partner with events that have a common theme or purpose to your own.

Media Sponsorship

In addition to sending information to media organisations, consider entering into a formal sponsorship arrangement with your local newspaper or radio station.

An example of a sponsorship arrangement would be for the media organisation to provide free advertising or promotion of your event in return for inclusion of their branding on publicity materials like posters or signage, a free stall at your event, or an opportunity to be a guest speaker



Setting up & Running the event

Before the event, it's important to have all your ducks in a row. Be sure to provide clear instructions to your staff, volunteers, entertainers and vendors on how to get to the site and give them your number or preferably a business card with contacts to call if they need directions. Ensure everyone is aware of key timing and any equipment or resources they are required to bring.

A good way to do this is create an event manual which can be distributed to all relevant personnel at a **briefing meeting** several days before the event. Alternatively provide individuals with personalised briefing notes which have all key information relevant to their role.

Go through the manual or briefing notes with staff and volunteers if you have time, to ensure everyone is familiar with the manual's contents and is as informed as possible about what will happen on the day.

Setting up the event

Management Coordination Centre

A 'control area' for your event should be established and easily identifiable. This is a central point where staff, volunteers, emergency services and the general public can come for all enquires. The centre should act as a general information centre and provide all relevant general information for the public as well as resources for volunteers such as sunscreen and hats.

The Coordination Centre and the Information Centre can be established in separate areas but should be clearly sign posted.

Copies of all relevant procedures and plans should be located at the Management Coordination Centre, including:

- The event management plan
- Emergency management plan
- Traffic management plan
- Incident reporting documentation
- Emergency and on-site contact lists

Coordinating 'Bump In' (Set Up)

Bump in can be chaotic if not organised well. Using the site plan and event management plan you prepared during the planning stage of the event will help to ensure that everything proceeds in an orderly fashion. Allocate areas to key staff to coordinate, ensuring they are fully briefed on what is required.

Often vendors and entertainers will want to set up their way and not wish to follow the site plan. Liaise with them and assess if there is a legitimate reason for their wish, otherwise you will need to stand firm. Remember safety first.

Assist those who need assisting, direct those who need directing, and get out of the way when you need to.

Set-up signage

Hang up visible signs for event guests, team-members and suppliers. Ensure there are signs everywhere people go, from bus stops and parking areas to the location itself.

Check all Equipment

Make sure AV/IT equipment has been tested, particularly your communications equipment and any emergency backup systems. Check with any vendors and entertainers that they have checked their equipment and all is fine. It is much easier to fix any problems, or use your contingency plan now than to wait until the event to find out something is not working.

Conduct a Walk Through

It is strongly advised that the event organiser, and any key staff such as the safety officer, conduct a walk through at least 30 minutes prior to your event commencing. This process will ensure any potential hazards are identified and rectified before event attendees are present. Often you will identify hazards which could not be foreseen prior to all structures and infrastructure being put in place. Please make a note of these so they can be included in your risk management plan for future events.

Final Briefing

Just prior to your event opening to the public it is important to hold a briefing session for everybody involved with the event to go through the program schedule and run sheet. In addition, ensure that everyone is aware of their role, the correct reporting procedures and what to do in the case of an emergency. This is also a good time to go over your contingency plan so others are aware of what to do should something not go to plan.

Managing the event

If there's a positive and relaxed atmosphere at an event, smaller mistakes tend to go unnoticed.

Do not be afraid to delegate. The main stressor when it comes to an event is time. To save it, all hands need to be on deck or different decks. If someone isn't being as useful as they could be, give them something better to do. It's your job. It's not you being bossy or overstepping your boundaries; it's you doing what you're supposed to do.

Trust and respect your team to look after themselves, if you've given them a good base they should be fine. Offer assistance if needed, but they should be experienced enough not to need any help at all. Things happen. There's no way you can predict everything, and the sooner you accept this the better. A calm, collected event manager can do wonders for any event.

If things do go wrong, try not to panic and remember to revisit your risk and emergency management plans and your event manual. Consult others and make a shared decision wherever you can.

Coordinating 'Bump Out' (pack down)

Make sure all event participants and stall holders know the process for packing up when the event has ended. Ensure, for patron safety, that nobody begins bump out until the event is finished and all patrons have cleared the area. Everyone will be keen to pack up as soon as possible, but the safety of all takes precedence.

By managing the demobilisation effectively the event will be concluded in an orderly manner and the venue cleared safely and in a timely fashion.

Removal of Signage

As soon as possible after the event all advertising and directional signs you erected as part of the event should be removed. To ensure no signage remains uncollected it is recommended that sign placement should be recorded when you are putting it in place.

Cleaning of Site

Leave the venue in the same condition you found it in. You will need to coordinate the necessary resources to ensure that staff/volunteers and stall holders properly clean their sites and allocated areas.

If the site is not left in a clean state, fees will most likely apply.





Evaluating and Debriefing the event

Event responsibilities do not end when everything is packed away at the end of the day. Now that the event is over it is now time to undertake a thorough assessment to measure whether you have achieved the event's purpose as planned. Aspects of the event that are successful need to be documented along with areas that need greater work. Feedback should be sought from patrons, staff, entertainers and stallholders in an effort to make an informed assessment of the events overall impact.

Evaluating the event

It's important to schedule some time to reflect on what worked, what didn't and where improvements can be made for future events.

Consider the following:

- Conduct a survey or provide [feedback forms](#) during the event asking attendees what they like about the event and what they think could be improved. This is also a good chance to collect information about the types of people attending your event.
- Ask people if they know who the sponsors are. If large numbers of people associate the sponsor with the event, this will prove valuable when renegotiating sponsorships for the following year.
- Did you achieve the amount of media publicity you wanted?

Other questions should relate to the actual staging of the event. These could include:

- Please rate the availability and ease of parking?
- How did you find out about this event?
- How could we improve promotion?
- Did you find the program enjoyable?
- How was the catering for this event?
- What could we have done better?
- Was the event value for money?

Feedback methods need to be quick and easy for participants to access and answer. They also need to be measurable and useful for event organisers. Suitable methods could include feedback surveys, roving evaluators talking to participants and collection of hard data such as attendance numbers.

Using a program such as Survey Monkey and using internet enabled tablets for onsite data entry will save you time in collating and preparing reports.

Measuring economic benefit

If your event attracts visitors from outside of the region, then they are generating an economic benefit. It is particularly important to gather valid and verifiable data on this aspect of your event if you are seeking to gain funding from Council or other funding bodies.

You will need to measure total visitor numbers and the number of nights they have stayed.

Council provides event funding for events at three tier levels. Tier 1 and Tier 2 events, which attract the higher funding amounts, are events which generate significant direct economic benefit to the Mildura region, and are assessed based on visitor nights.

Council's Events and Projects Unit can provide you with the formula to calculate the direct economic benefit.

It may be advantageous to also calculate the total economic benefit (direct benefit plus flow on effect) if you are seeking State Government funding. Again, you only need to gather data on total visitors and total nights stayed. Mildura Regional Development or Council's Events and Projects Unit can assist you with the calculation of this figure.

There are a number of ways in which you can gather data to verify your economic benefit, and these may vary depending on the type of event.

If a participant needs to purchase a ticket to attend the event, such as a sporting event or musical festival consider surveying them through the ticketing process.

Consider asking questions such as where they are visiting from, how many people are traveling in their group or team, and how many nights the group is staying in the region.

If your event isn't ticketed, consider implementing survey's during your event to gather visitor information data.

The level of confidence of your survey results will depend on the sample size in relation to the total number of event visitors. [Survey Monkey](#) has a ready calculator which acts as a guide to the sample size required to be confident in your results.

Holding a debrief

As soon as possible after your event has finished you should arrange to conduct a post event 'debrief' to get feedback and thank any staff, volunteers, sponsors and key stakeholders for their involvement.

Your debrief meeting should include as many people as possible who were involved in the event. This might include staff, volunteers, emergency services, Council events officers, stallholders, entertainers and more.

Organise the debrief well in advance so people have the date in their diaries, and circulate an [agenda](#) that covers the key areas for discussion like achievements, challenges and recommendations. If you send this out beforehand, people can prepare their feedback.

Send out an evaluation sheet to all key stakeholders - especially those who can't attend the debrief. You can seek feedback from suppliers, venue managers and security guards as well as those directly involved with coordinating the event.

Evaluate your success against the objectives you set at the beginning of your event planning process:

- Did you attract the numbers of people you had anticipated?
- Did you attract the type of people you wanted to reach?
- Did you reach your fundraising target?

Seek feedback from stakeholders on areas such as:

- Was the site layout effective? (Were there any access issues, difficulty in patrons locating key areas, problems with patrons not being able to see your entertainment, long wait times to enter or exit the venue)
- Any hazards not identified in your risk assessment plan?
- Any injuries/incidents?
- Communications/information issues.
- Traffic management issues
- Security
- Customer complaints

Council has developed a range of useful templates for your post event review which can be [found here](#).

Reflecting on results

Now that you have collected feedback and suggestions for improvement, it is time to get your organising committee together to discuss the findings.

Look at negative feedback just as favourably as the positive aspects, and view this as an opportunity to improve your next event.

Look for common themes and trends as these are clear indications that these are the views of your attendees, and anything done to improve these areas will result in higher customer satisfaction at your next event.

As a group consider and document the following:

- What did we do well?
- What didn't go to plan?
- What can we do next time that will add to the success of the event?
- What do we need to change or improve based on the results?
- Are there any additional risks we need to manage?

Adjust documentation for your next event

Once you have completed your evaluation, and while the details are still fresh in your mind, take some time to alter your event management plan and supporting documents to reflect any identified improvements. This process will ensure that staging your next event will be easier and less time consuming as a large part of the planning will have already be completed.

Council hope you have found this guide helpful and that you will use it to assist you to plan and stage a successful event. We are only too pleased to offer you our assistance, should you need it, at any time – all you need to do is call us.



Enjoy the show!

www.mildura.vic.gov.au



Mildura Rural City Council