

Reading Male Voice Choir.

Rehearsal Risk assessment

The following identifies the foreseeable Hazards and Risks likely to be encountered at all RMVC rehearsals, and the procedures and actions to be taken to minimise the likelihood of personnel and equipment coming to harm. Certain venues may have additional hazards peculiar to that site and may require additional precautions, as will temporary or permanent changes (such as building works) to the RMVC regular rehearsal venue. Members of the choir will be informed of any such additional hazards as and when they occur, both verbally and in writing. Much more safety information is available in the RMVC members' safety handbook, available via the RMVC website. (RMVC.net)

Fire

Although in a modern building fitted with up-to-date fire alarms the risk from fire may be considered to be low, the risk must never be underestimated. On arrival at the venue seek out the blue "Actions to be taken in the event of fire" notices which will be posted at strategic locations. Read what it says and commit it to memory, paying particular attention to escape routes and assembly points. On hearing the fire alarm always leave the building immediately, proceed to the assembly point and remain there (unless it is clearly unsafe to do so) until given further instruction by a committee member. Make your presence known to your section leader to ensure that all personnel have safely evacuated.

Movement of chairs, tables and other equipment

Most of the equipment used at RMVC rehearsals is light and easy to handle and hence carries a low risk of manual handling and other injury. However, the few heavier items such as tables and the keyboard are to be carried by two persons, having previously established that the route to be taken is clear of obstruction and tripping hazards. Standard safe manual-handling techniques must be used (as outlined in the RMVC Safety handbook). Persons of limited mobility are not expected to undertake any movement of equipment. At the close of rehearsal all items are to be returned to their correct storage place. Importantly, chairs must not be stacked above the maximum allowable height/number; this will normally be dictated by the venue's local arrangements.

Tea and Coffee making.

This carries a medium risk of scalding, and a similar level of risk of manual handling injury. Persons operating a hot water boiler must previously have familiarised themselves with its safe operation and read and act upon any additional instructions provided by the venue's proprietor. The number of persons in the vicinity of the boiler must be kept to the minimum actually required for its operation; normally this will be two, one of whom could render assistance in the event of an accident. Boilers must never be carried when full of boiling or very hot water – they should be emptied and allowed to cool down first. Carrying a boiler full of cold water presents a serious risk of manual handling injury and should not be undertaken; the boiler should be filled in its required location. A heavy boiler may require two persons to carry it even when empty, again following standard safe handling techniques. Should a scald unfortunately occur, immediately place the affected part under a cold running tap and keep it there for several (at least 15) minutes, preferably longer. More extensive scalds will of course require emergency hospital treatment.

Spillages present a risk of slips and possible serious injury and must be cleared up immediately. Small spillages can usually be mopped up with an absorbent paper towel and disposed of into the general waste bin, while larger spillages may require a mop and bucket. The liquids used in tea and coffee making will usually be inert and no special precautions are required. However, should a more hazardous material (e.g. bleach) be involved follow the instructions on the original container and/or consult the RMVC Safety Officer (Alan Broodbank). The Safety Officer or a committee member must be informed of spillages of large amounts of hazardous material.

Car parks

These are high-risk areas to both drivers and pedestrians. In unfamiliar areas and at night the risk is multiplied several-fold. Details of local parking arrangements will be provided to choir members beforehand and any particular hazards (such as an unexpected trip hazard, dark spot etc.) will be pointed out. Speed limits must be strictly adhered to and indicated routes and driving lanes followed. It should be borne particularly in mind that some persons have restricted mobility or sight or hearing and

that drivers should therefore exercise above-average due care and attention. Able bodied persons should be prepared to lend assistance to those who require it.

Electrical equipment

The RMVC's electronic keyboard and other associated electrical equipment is PAT (Portable Appliance Tested) tested by a competent person every two years. Only equipment certified as electrically safe is allowed to be used. It is further tested visually on every occasion on which it is used. If there is any doubt about the safety of RMVC's electrical equipment it is taken out of use immediately and, unless it can be repaired, rendered inoperable.

Electrical leads laid across walkways or floors present a high tripping hazard. All leads are therefore to be routed, as far as is possible, away from all such areas. Where this is impossible, cables will be held down and covered over by wide sticky tape or other similar measure. Members will be informed verbally of the existence and location of the hazard.

Medical Emergencies.

The choir has a number of well-qualified personnel who are able to render first-aid in the event of injury or accident, including life-threatening emergencies. In addition, the choir has held its own in-house first aid training sessions for members, instructed by a highly-qualified first aider, concentrating on life saving techniques. It is expected that several of these persons will be present at any RMVC rehearsal who could render assistance in the event of a medical emergency.