

Good Practice Document (Risk Assessment) - Normal Activities:

2.1 Movement of Staging

2.1.1 Loading and Unloading (to/from) the Van

The staging and associated accessories are loaded/unloaded by the choir members nominated by the Staging Rota Co-ordinator. The van driver should co-ordinate the actual loading and offloading. Protective gloves should be worn where practicable and the following additional guidance is applicable:

Nobody should attempt to lift or manoeuvre any object if he is in any doubt about his ability to do so safely. Assistance should always be sought before manoeuvring an awkward or heavy object. The staging has been designed with manoeuvrability in mind, each section being provided with wheels and a handle. However, it is heavy.

Lifting and loading the sections into the van is a manoeuvre that requires special care. It should not be undertaken by choir members single-handedly; two men should lift the sections from the ground, with a third man ready to receive and store it securely inside the van. A fourth man inside the van should be available to assist in manoeuvring the sections of staging into a stackable position. To assist men inside the van with access and egress to/from rear van floor level, a short set of steps could be used. Observers should be kept clear.

The lifting or moving of extremely heavy items, e.g. a grand piano should not be undertaken. If required, arrangements for movement should be made before or during a site visit.

Useful Manual Handling Tips:

- Ask for help rather than exert yourself.
- Keep your back straight.
- Keep your chin tucked in.
- Bend your knees.
- Position your feet at hip width apart with a lead foot slightly in front of the other.
- Take a firm grip of the object to be lifted
- Look up to ceiling level
- Lift with your thigh muscles.

In many concert venues, the staging has to be wheeled along the same route as the audience uses. To avoid collisions and/or delay which could result in fatigue, the transport in/out of the staging should be carried out well before any audience arrives or after it departs.

2.1.2 Arrangements by the Van Driver

Van drivers are volunteers from choir members and should take their lead from the Van Driver Co-ordinator. They need to have a current vehicle driving licence which allows them to drive a long wheel base/ high top van. Unless a choir member has access to one, van drivers should hire a long wheel-base van in which it possible to stand up for loading/unloading. If available, the 24 hour option should be taken to minimise costs. These will be re-imbursed by the treasurer. The insurance excess should be covered by taking out the personal insurance from <http://www.insuremyvanhire.com/>

At the beginning of the season, Van Drivers should check and note the dates when they will be required from the schedule issued by the Staging Rota Co-ordinator and Van Driver Co-ordinator. If any date is problematic, the Van Driver Co-ordinator should be informed to arrange a replacement.

Before the concert event, the allocated Van Driver should check the van loading/unloading rota and ensure that the nominated members know the times which have been agreed for meeting at the storage point for loading up and at the concert venue for unloading and loading back up.

Van Drivers should lead the loading and unloading by ensuring that adequate lighting is available in the storage location and van, that items are loaded safely as in 2.2.1 and that items are stowed safely using straps as required. The Secretary will list the van driver and the volunteer support teams for each concert in the concert event form.

The Van Drivers' box is stored in the lock-up, which contains the light/torch and straps should be stowed. This also contains a de-icer bottle and scraper for use in the event of very cold weather. The Van Driver should ensure that the box is loaded in the van.

When at the concert venue, where reversing is required, it is advisable to ask a competent choir member to act as a banksman, with the torch, if dark,

The Van Driver should check that all the items are in the Van Drivers' box, before and after the event, replace any used up and return the box to the lock-up during final unloading.

2.1.3 Assembly/Disassembly of staging.

These activities have the hazards of finger/hand entrapment, potential finger amputation and impact on other body parts, if not carried out correctly. Also back injuries could occur due to its weight and instability when unfolded. As a result of experience it is strongly recommended that it is carried out by two persons; the weight of the unit and the construction of the folding mechanism are such that a more controllable, and hence safer, operation is achieved by having a second person take some of the weight. Assembly and disassembly should always be led by an experienced, trained and nominated leader. Choir members who assist in this activity should receive training in this and should wear protective gloves. Side and back rails, whilst not especially heavy, are large and again it is recommended that two persons are employed.

Once erected, the staging should be checked by the erection team, in particular that all the clips are in place and secure, and then checked a second time by the Events Coordinator.

As 240 volt electrical cables are used, their routing under the metal staging should be avoided, to reduce the risk of a section of staging being dropped and damaging the cable. If, for any reason, cables have to be routed under the staging, the dismantling of the staging should not commence until the power has been switched off.

In many concert venues the staging has to be wheeled along the same route as the departing audience; it is therefore recommended that removal of the staging should be delayed until the exit routes have cleared sufficiently.

2.1.4 Mechanical defects

As the staging needs to be in a sound condition, those involved in Assembly/Disassembly should look out for any obvious damage or defects. If found, these should be reported to the Assembly/Disassembly Leader who will decide if the item must be taken out of service. The Assembly/Disassembly Leader should then inform the Chairman, Secretary and/or Safety Officer of this.

A full inspection/routine maintenance of the staging should be carried out annually and a record made and passed to the Secretary.

2.1.5 Electrical items

Electrical items in a poor condition can cause an electrical shock and/or fire. Some of the choir's electrical equipment has to be connected to the 240v mains. The leads and/or extension leads to this should be tested and inspected annually by a competent person. Other relevant electrical equipment should also be safety tested. Each item thus inspected should be marked and a written record made and passed to the Secretary.

13A sockets should not be overloaded and cables must be routed away from public walkways where they could present a tripping hazard. In practice this is not always possible meaning that there will be a risk of damage caused by people walking on them or items being dropped on to them, thereby presenting a risk of electrocution. To reduce the risk of tripping, cables should be covered and secured by sticky tape.

2.1.6 Walking and Standing on the Stage

There is a risk of tripping, stumbling and/or falling during this activity; therefore, when making the pre-concert visit to the venue, the Choir Secretary and Event Manager should assess and record the risks; e.g. access for staging, lighting levels etc. If a venue is likely to prove hazardous in any respect the Secretary should take this up with the concert organiser to resolve before the concert. The Choir Secretary should inform members of

any risks associated with the concert venue through the concert event form and at rehearsals.

If any choir member considers that they may slip, trip or fall, or has other concerns about getting on and off the staging, he should bring it to the attention of the Events Coordinator and Section Leader.

Members, who feel that they cannot safely stand on the staging for a long time, should speak to their Section Leader who will make alternative arrangements.

Good Practice Document (Risk Assessment) - Emergencies:

3.1 Fire

Fire arrangements at any particular concert venue are the responsibility of the venue. When arranging new concerts, the Choir Secretary should establish the local fire procedure with the concert organiser and the identity of the local contact for taking charge in the event of an emergency; the choir should take its lead from them.

Fire arrangements at school rehearsal venues are the responsibility of the Head Teacher. However, choir members should be informed of the local fire procedure 3.1.1 by the Choir Safety Officer or his deputy and an evacuation practice should be carried out annually at the regularly-used location, e.g. Hawkedon Primary school. Suitable records should be kept of this.

3.1.1 Fire Emergency Procedure at Hawkedon Primary School

1. Raising the alarm: any member who observes evidence of a fire should push a call point break glass which will activate the fire alarm; call points are located near fire exits.
2. Reacting to fire alarm sound: on hearing the fire alarm, members should walk briskly but calmly out of the school via their nearest exit and move to the assembly point in the school playground.
3. Section Leaders should ensure that members with special mobility needs are assisted and should record those who have successfully evacuated, at the assembly point. They should report any members missing to the choir incident co-ordinator, who should liaise with the school and fire authorities, as required.

3.2 First Aid

The choir should have at least two qualified First Aiders at every activity arranged by the Choir Secretary, who should be listed in the event form. Our first aiders should provide help in the first instance and decide to call an ambulance if necessary.

In the event of first aid being required during a performance, evacuation of the stage by the stage manager may be required. When the choir is going on tour, all members of the tour should be asked to supply to Choir Secretary,

contact details of their next of kin and any medical information they think appropriate.

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