

Amusement Ride Risk Management

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Following the incident at Dreamworld in October 2016, Australian regulators have been conducting audits of amusement devices at theme parks and, of course, amusement ride safety is at the forefront of each regulators' agenda.

All organisations which come into contact with amusement rides (including outside the theme park industry) must have a broad understanding of the regulatory regime in relation to amusement devices. For example, this is an issue that may impact church or school organisations that hold fetes or other organisations who run community events and engage amusement ride contractors.

Running a community event presents a range of particular WHS challenges, including contractor management and managing the presence of children and the elderly. Although organisations engaging amusement ride contractors are not experts in relation to those devices, they continue to have an obligation to ensure health and safety, so far as reasonably practicable, for matters within their control. As we've seen, it's not enough for a PCBU to engage a contractor with expertise in an area and for the PCBU to rely on that expertise - the courts have found the PCBU still has WHS obligations under the legislation.

In addition to the usual steps required as part of contractor management, organisations engaging amusement ride operators should:

1)	Request specific amusement device information including the:	
	(a)	Amusement device registration with the relevant regulator
	(b)	Log book for inspection and maintenance of the ride
	(c)	Emergency plan for the ride
	(d)	Confirmation that COVID-19 protocols are being observed and follow strictly local health authorities and government websites
2)	Conduct its own due diligence including by independently confirming the registration with the relevant regulator and using ride operators who have been used by other organisations previously	
3)	Ensure the contractor has public liability insurance	
4)	Before allowing a ride to operate:	
	(a)	Comply with relevant Australian Standards
	(b)	Ensure all law and regulations for set up and use have been met by Rotary (including permits etc.)
	(c)	Conduct a high level risk assessment
	(d)	Consider appropriate fencing/security/locks for rides
	(e)	Consider suitability of the ride for your event
	(f)	Ensure appropriate signage on rides (e.g. you must be this ' ' tall to ride etc.)
	(g)	Not exceeding manufacturers specifications in terms of number of children using the equipment at any one time, maximum age of children
	(h)	Organise safe access points (e.g. assist safe and orderly queuing)
5)	During ride operation, monitor and supervise the activity (not just ride operators but also guests) and direct any unsafe activity to case.	