

A Practical Guide to the implementation of the EFCO-FICC Charter for the Management of External Risks on Holiday Parks, Caravan & Camping Sites



1 Introduction

This guide has been designed to provide practical assistance to the owners and managers of holiday parks, caravan and camping sites in the implementation of the EFCO-FICC Charter for the Management of External Risks on Holiday Parks, Caravan & Camping Sites. The charter outlines the principles that should be applied, whilst this guide outlines some practical measures and suggests issues that might be addressed.

In addition to the principles set out in the Charter, there is a considerable body of legislation at national level regulating the management of risk to ensure the safety of customers, visitors and staff. Owners and managers of holiday parks, caravan and camping sites should ensure that they meet all their legal obligations in addition to addressing the principles of the Charter.

Like the Charter, the guide is not exhaustive. The individual circumstances on any particular park, caravan or camping site will determine how best risks should be managed on the ground, having regard to topography, climate, client base, neighbouring businesses, access etc.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the EFCO-FICC Charter.

2 Definitions

The European Federation of Campingsite Organisations (EFCO) and the Fédération Internationale de Camping et de Caravanning (FICC) worked together to launch the EFCO-FICC Charter for the Management of External Risk on Holiday Parks, Caravan & Camping Sites in 1998. Through this they emphasised the joint endorsement of the right of every visitor to expect a safe environment in which to enjoy his/her leisure time whilst staying on a caravan, camping or holiday park in Europe.

The Charter was published to assist holiday park, caravan & camping sites owners and managers across Europe in the management of potential external risks. Its aim is to facilitate the preparation of risk management plans to ensure the best possible outcome should a “major emergency” arise, with the objective of ensuring the safe evacuation of people and so far as possible, the protection of property.

A **major emergency** is defined as any event or incident, which with little or no warning, causes or threatens to cause:

- injury or death
- serious disruption
- damage to property

The event would be beyond the normal capability of police, emergency services and public authorities. A major emergency can be as a result of a natural or technological disaster or a major accident.

NATURAL DISASTERS:

River flooding is one example of such an incident, particularly where there has been flash flooding with little or no prior warning.

MANMADE EMERGENCIES:

Emergencies can however be manmade.

TIP: *In order to meet the demands of any unforeseen disaster, it is incumbent on the owners and managers of holiday parks caravan & camping sites to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the people present on their parks/sites.*

However, it is also the job of the public authorities to make the necessary arrangements to provide, wherever possible, early warning to the owners and managers of holiday parks, caravan and camping sites. The owner and manager should therefore consult and collaborate with the public authorities so that:

- The park, caravan or camping site is included within the authorities' warning system(s)

- The Disaster Plan of the park, caravan or camping site complements those of the authorities.

3 Scope

This advice is provided for guidance only.

It should be used in conjunction with national and local regulations.

It is important to note that the Charter and this guide address external risk only, risks which are likely to give rise to a major emergency. Notwithstanding, it is the responsibility of the owner and manager of the park, caravan or camping site to address the internal risk on any park/site and to ensure management systems are in place to reduce any risk to customers, visitors and staff.

4 Objectives

The EFCO-FICC Charter lists five principles that should be adopted by holiday park, caravan & camping sites owners and managers in setting systems for the organisation of emergency situations:-

1. Evaluate possible risks
2. Draw up a contingency plan
3. Inform customers of potential risks
4. Install an internal alarm system on the holiday park, caravan or camping site
5. Ensure ways to evacuate people

In addition it is essential to ensure a systematic follow-up after any disaster, including incorporating the “lessons learnt” into future contingency plans.

5 The Practical Guidance

This Guide to the EFCO-FICC Charter aims to explain how these principles can be put into practice.

1. Evaluation of Possible Risks

A. Identify external risks most likely to affect the park/site

The external risks that will potentially affect parks, caravan and camping sites will vary from one region to another and indeed, from one location to another. Therefore, in considering the major emergencies that could happen on your park/site: -

- Keep in mind your climate, local geography and nature of the ground on which your park/site is situated.

(For example, avalanche: are there mountains? Flood and sea surge: how far are you from the water? etc...)

■ Take time to investigate the history of major emergencies in your local area and in your region. Talk to older people who have lived in the vicinity all their lives, check with previous owners and managers of the park/site, the local press and library may be able to help.

■ Liaise with your local authorities and emergency service providers about their own crisis management plans. Have they identified other risks and taken into account those that you have recognised?

■ Liaise with other holiday park, caravan & camping site businesses in your area and those in membership of your national trade association. Draw on their experience.

TIP: Do not limit yourself to planning for natural disasters.

B. Identify internal risks that may exacerbate an emergency situation

Once you have identified the external risks that may affect your park, caravan or camping site you should investigate whether there are any internal risks that may effect the management of an emergency. Where such risks are identified, you will need to apply **principles of prevention**.

Some examples of how to do this are shown in the table below: -

TIP: When the risk assessment is complete and an effective risk management plan is in place, you might get in contact with your insurance company to try to reduce your premium (you minimize risks, that's good for them too!).

SUMMARY: Identify and evaluate external risks specific to your individual park, caravan or camping site in liaison with the public authorities. Then carry out an assessment of internal risk and apply principles of prevention to problem areas that could exacerbate an emergency situation.

<i>Example of Potential Risk Area</i>	<i>What you should do</i>	<i>Example of how this can be achieved</i>
<i>Caravans sited on flood plain on park/site</i>	<i>Minimise risk that cannot be avoided</i>	<i>If caravan holiday homes are already sited on a flood plain, your risk assessments may show, e.g., the need for these caravans to be raised on blocks to avoid flood, the need for early warning systems and close liaison with river or coastal authorities</i>
<i>No procedures on park/site to deal with emergencies</i>	<i>Introduce risk controls as part of a coherent policy</i>	<i>You should introduce formal procedures as part of your park's/site's everyday operating system so that relevant risks are considered and managed</i>
<i>Safety signage in one language only</i>	<i>Give priority to measures that will protect the many rather than the few - therefore consider the mother tongue(s) of your customers</i>	<i>Use multi-lingual signage and literature to inform as many visitors as possible about emergency procedures. The use of pictograms can be very effective in communication to people of many different mother tongues</i>
<i>Some staff have no knowledge of how to deal with an emergency</i>	<i>Ensure all staff have an understanding of what they must do</i>	<i>Provide coherent training that is recorded and regularly evaluate its effectiveness</i>
<i>Some points are difficult to reach by emergency services</i>	<i>Every spot in your park/site should be reachable within 60 meters by a fire-wagon</i>	<i>Invite your local fire service for a test in low season to try things out on the spot and to find solutions together</i>

2. Drawing up of a Contingency Plan

Decisions taken in a panic response to an emergency will inevitably be far less effective than an action plan prepared in advance. However, your risk assessment will give you a sound basis from which you will be able to develop procedures to respond to serious and imminent danger. These procedures should be documented as your contingency plan, which should detail issues such as: -

- Methods of raising the alarm
- Methods of informing visitors about the emergency
- Methods of transporting visitors to the designated evacuation point(s)
- Methods to ensure the visitors' needs are followed through (alternative accommodation, care-taking, first aid, contacting the family of possible victims...)
- Staff responsibilities (individual and general) in the event of a major emergency. Have someone (or a team) responsible for crisis-management including:
 - someone who may take decisions
 - someone who knows about the technical aspect of the park/site
 - someone in charge of communications.
- Methods to make your staff easily identifiable (e.g. provide a uniform, luminous jacket, etc) and able to communicate during emergencies (e.g. radios, megaphones)
- Contact details for external emergency services
- Methods of informing "the outside world" (emergency services, police, neighbours, press...) of what happened ensuring they get real facts and not speculative comments
- Other specifics of the evacuation plan, to include, for example:
 - Evacuation routes (ensure no interference with incoming emergency help)
 - Direction of incoming traffic (i.e. emergency vehicles) that will need to be applied
 - Closing of redundant exits and entrances
 - Consideration for special groups such as visitors with disabilities
 - Creation of a central point on the park/site as a "crisis-centre". Have an alternative to this crisis centre in case the main one is not usable.
 - Be sure to have within reach:
 - telephone (with a free phone line available only to emergency services, i.e. members of the public)
 - list of telephone numbers (up to date)
 - fax
 - access to the listing of your visitors (names, ages...)
 - enough copies of your contingency plan (including technical plan of the site) and enough copies of your evacuation plan.
 - first aid equipment
 - keys or copies of keys

- torches
- blankets
- mobile phones for crisis team members
- jackets for crisis team members
- horn (s)
- means to control roads (white/red tape, warning triangles, flashlights...)

TIP: *It is recommended that your contingency plan is tried and tested at least once every six months. Furthermore, it should be re-examined after any physical developments or alterations are made to the park, caravan or camping site and when key staff leave or change their role within the park's/site's organisation.*

A park, caravan or camping site's contingency plan should be fully documented and available to staff at all times.

Consider distributing a copy to all staff members for reference, but remember to provide them with updates as and when the plan is revised.

SUMMARY: Procedures to deal with emergencies should be set in a fully documented contingency plan the details of which must be communicated to all staff and emergency services.

Remember also to

- Liaise with your local authorities and emergency service providers about their own crisis management plans (have they taken the population on your park/site in to account and how?)
- Consider the size of your park, caravan or camping site; larger sites may need a more elaborate plan than smaller ones (more evacuation routes, more shelter needed, more people to be evacuated...)
- Consider the type of park, caravan or camping site you are running (e.g. what is the risk of fire spreading? Is there enough space between caravans? can emergency services reach all points? How far away are emergency services?) and all other aspects that may influence risk.

3. Informing Customers of Possible Risks

3.1. Customers

It is important that a park, caravan or camping site owner/manager communicates to visitors the actions that they should take in the event of an emergency.

When drawing up this information, consider: -

- How to communicate safety information to your customers as simply and positively as possible
- What you want your customers to be able to do having read the information you provide
- How many languages to provide the information in
- How to display/distribute the information, for

example:

- On notice boards
- Inside hire caravan or chalet units (for example on the back of the main door)
- As part of the park's/site's welcome pack

■ Examples of what you should communicate to your customers include: -

- What to do in the event of an emergency - i.e. "In the event of fire..."
- How to raise the alarm in an emergency - i.e. "Use the telephone located at..."
- What alarm systems the park/site and public authorities use - i.e. "In the event of a major emergency, you will hear a long siren...", "information will be provided by radio on frequency xxx..."
- Where to go to in the event of an emergency - i.e. "Assemble outside the reception office..."
- What route to follow in the event of an emergency - i.e. "Follow the yellow brick road..."
- What to expect - i.e. "A staff member will lead you to an evacuation point..."
- What not to do - i.e. "Do not stop to collect your belongings..."
- How the end of the emergency will be signalled - e.g. "the head of the crisis-team will announce "alarm over" on the Tannoy system", "the end of an emergency will be known when the siren blows twice..."

TIP: *Always remember that if your safety literature refers to assembly points or specific areas of the park, caravan or camping site these areas must be clearly identifiable and sign-posted. On large parks, caravan or camping sites it may be sensible to provide maps.*

As visitors will need to be able to contact the emergency services themselves in the event of an emergency, clear directions should be displayed on the park/site for emergency telephones and/or sirens. The nearest telephone and the alarms/sirens should be clearly indicated.

3.2. Sirens/Alarms

How to operate the siren to raise alarm and to end alarm.

Where to go once the siren has been sounded. (Sirens should be checked in varying weather conditions to confirm they can be clearly heard in all parts of the site)

3.3. Telephones

Telephones for emergency use should be toll free. Information should be clearly displayed by the telephone to include: -

■ The number to dial for each emergency service, i.e. fire, ambulance, police, rescue corps

- The number to call to alert the holiday park caravan or camping site's personnel to the problem
- Park, caravan or camping site name
- Park, caravan or camping site location
- Park, caravan or camping site contact number
- Any other information that your local emergency services will require.

You might consider installing emergency phones that automatically call the emergency services when customers lift the receiver.

3.4. Informing your staff

- those who are part of the crisis-team
- the others: tell who to do what and when

3.5. Informing "the outside world"

- neighbours to the park, caravan or camping site
- family of possible victims (before informing press)
- press (only one person speaks to them, no speculations, no "no comment")
- emergency services (provide them with plan of the park/site copy of your contingency plan, emergency exits plan, listing of visitors...)

SUMMARY: The supply of comprehensive emergency information to your visitors, staff, emergency services and the outside world is essential. Ensure that evacuation procedures and assembly points are clearly identifiable by all groups and make sure that anyone resident to or visiting the park, caravan or camping site would be able to call the emergency services.

4. Installation of internal alarm system on the holiday park, caravan or camping site

The type of alarm system that an individual park, caravan or camping site should use will generally be dictated by the site's size, layout and infrastructure. An alarm system does not necessarily mean investing in cutting edge technology, but it **MUST** attract attention in such a way that **ALL** people on the park, caravan or camping site will know that they need to take immediate action when they hear it. This should include visitors with disabilities who may for example be hard of hearing or physically impaired.

Alarm systems may be: -

- Manual - i.e. a member of staff uses a loud bell, foghorn or similar apparatus to attract the attention of visitors on a park, caravan or camping site (this will generally suit only the smallest of sites)
- A Tannoy or loudspeaker system
- A siren or bell based system

TIP: *Tannoy/loudspeaker systems may be able to incorporate pre-recorded emergency messages in a number of languages which could help to reduce the need for foreign language speaking staff members to be present on the park/site at all times. However, consider the length of such broadcasts, which must be communicated in as short a time as possible.*

If external alarm systems are linked to the park/site remember to provide information about these to visitors as well. For example, if the public authorities use a siren-based alarm for emergencies that can be heard on the park/site, visitors need to be able to quickly identify what it is and act accordingly.

Furthermore, you must ensure that your park/site is taken into consideration by local emergency services and public authorities in this regard. Often businesses will be contacted by telephone, radio, e-mail or fax in the event of an emergency, so make sure your park/site is registered on appropriate databases.

SUMMARY: Alarm systems can take many forms but must attract attention in such a way that all people on the park/site will know to take action when they hear it. Also ensure that the alarm system procedure includes notification of a situation to the emergency services and public authorities if necessary.

5. Ensuring ways to evacuate people

The prime responsibility in respect of assessing risk of major emergency, issuing early warning and planning rests with the public authorities.

As the agencies responsible for licensing, regulation and certification for planning and environmental matters and for public health and safety, they have the resources and expertise to assess the risks and plan the appropriate response.

The park/site owner should consult and collaborate with the Public Authorities so that the park, caravan or camping site's plans complement those of the authorities. The plan of the park/site plan should be detailed and documented and all staff should be fully versed in its content.

Where possible, local emergency services should be made aware of the location of potential risks on the park/site. e.g. gas storage areas.

Evacuating a park, caravan or camping site is a major task, especially in the case of large holiday parks, caravan or camping sites and will need to be carefully supervised. Consider the following helpful hints: -

6

■ Designate suitable evacuation points only after thoroughly investigating their accessibility, size, and location

- Give careful consideration as to how special groups of people will get to evacuation points, e.g. those who are very old, very young or disabled – can you provide transport if necessary or will you need assistance from the emergency services?
- Consider any emergency equipment that will need to be stored at the evacuation point, for example torches, first-aid supplies and blankets
- Try to keep nosy people away from the work-area of the emergency services. If necessary put the nosiest visitor in charge to keep away the others.
- Try to isolate the place of the emergency (coloured tape, small lamps, flashlights...)
- Appoint an individual or team of people to co-ordinate the evacuation and to manage other staff members throughout the process
- Dedicate staff members to police the movement of visitors on the park/site to the designated evacuation point to avoid “drop-outs”
- Design a specific route or routes along which visitors will be evacuated bearing in mind the access requirements for the emergency services
- Consider closing entrances and exits that will not be used throughout the evacuation process to prevent people going the wrong way
- Consider how the arrival of the emergency services will affect the evacuation – it may be necessary to create one-way traffic routes, for example
- Co-ordinate a final checking system so that all areas of the park/site are “swept” for people who may have been left behind or got lost
- Ensure that staff members can communicate with each other throughout the emergency as far as possible, for example by radio or mobile telephones
- Ensure that communication between staff and visitors is managed properly, i.e. that all members of staff give out the same information originating from a point of authority. Try to ensure that visitors are kept as up to date as possible with developments.
- Ensure that gas, oil, petrol, water and electric supplies can be cut off easily

SUMMARY: Thoroughly investigate your park, caravan or camping site's accessibility, size and location before designating evacuation points. Ensure your evacuation plan covers all areas of the park/site, staff communication, emergency services access and special groups.

6. Staff Training

It is imperative that all staff are aware of, and fully conversant with, the contingency plan and their specific role in any major emergency. They need to know where their responsibilities begin and end, as well as who will be in overall charge of incidents.

Specific staff training sessions in areas such as first-aid could also be vital to the management of a crisis situation.

You must ensure that every member of your staff is adequately trained for the role they are expected to play in an emergency. All staff should receive induction training covering the action to be taken in the event of an emergency including: -

- How to raise the alarm
- Evacuation procedures
- Location and use of any equipment that may be required, e.g. first aid equipment, fire fighting equipment
- Location and use of escape routes

Members of staff with managerial responsibility for emergencies will require more detailed training. In addition to the above, it is important that their training covers areas such as public authority liaison and the management of other staff members in a crisis situation.

TIP: *Always remember that staff holidays and sickness mean that deputies should be trained to cover key roles in your emergency action plan - ensure that there is at least one person who can cover for individual staff members with specific responsibility.*

SUMMARY: All staff must be fully trained and practised in emergency management. Ensure that staff are aware of their individual responsibilities in the event of an emergency, as well as the responsibilities of their colleagues, in particular those in charge. Ensure adequate cover for staff holidays and sickness.

7. Checking Safety Measures and Actions

Successful monitoring of your emergency management contingency plan can be undertaken in various ways.

You should always document the monitoring process through effective record keeping, not least so that you are able to demonstrate the fact that you have taken all reasonable steps to protect staff and visitors on your park/site.

You should keep documents to show that as part of your emergency procedures, you check: -

- Emergency lighting
- Alarms
- Portable equipment (e.g. fire fighting equipment)
- Signage
- Literature for visitors

You should further test your procedures by completing: -

- Evacuation drills
- Staff training sessions

TIP: *Each evacuation practice and staff training session should be documented. Use these sessions as an opportunity to get feedback from your staff as to whether changes to the contingency plan should be made in order to run a more effective operation. Ensure that any such changes are documented in an amended contingency plan.*

SUMMARY: Emergency procedures and related equipment, training etc should be regularly checked with the checking procedure itself being documented.

8. Audit

As with all policies you need to ensure that you are reaching the standards that you have set.

Practically this involves systematic and careful examination of the implementation of the policies in a formal and structured way. This allows you to:

- Ensure that controls are not broken down over time
- Review the adequacy of your measures to protect against emergencies
- Identify any failings in your procedures and consider possible remedies
- Ensure that the performance standard of your employees is adequate and identifies training needs if it is not.

SUMMARY: A formal, systematic and careful examination of your emergency procedures should be regularly documented. Problems can then be identified and improvements made as necessary.

9. Follow-up after the disaster

- Make sure calm returns to the park, caravan or camping site. Try to take away fear and other emotions amongst your visitors (if necessary, get professional help, e.g. psychologist, minister...)
- Assist possible victims and their family with whatever they need (lodging, transport, storage of their belongings...)
- Assist your visitors with possible insurance claims
- Evaluate your contingency plans now they have been tested "for real". Where needed, make amendments and corrections.
- Evaluate the security on your park, caravan or camping site; could the emergency and any related security issues have been avoided and how?
- Keep contact with the visitors who were present during the disaster, with e.g. a mailing where you apologise for the bad experience and offer them a voucher for a future stay.

SUMMARY: Do not forget to meet your visitors' needs in the aftermath of the emergency. Learn from your experiences of the situation and amend any shortcomings in your contingency plan.

Signatory Trade Associations

The following trade associations welcome this guidance which will assist in ensuring the health, safety and well-being of customers, staff and visitors to parks:

Belgium:

BELCAMP ASBL
(Walcamp & Unicamp)

Croatia:

Kamping Udruzenje Hrvatske (KUH)
(Croatian Camping Union, CCU)

Denmark:

DK-Camp

Finland:

Finnish Campingsite Association

France:

Federation Nationale de l'Hotellerie
de Plein Air (FNHPA)

Germany:

Bundesverband der Campingwirtschaft
in Deutschland (BVCD)

Greece:

Panhellenic Camping Union

Hungary:

Magyar Kempinghek Szakmai Szövetsége
(MaX)

Ireland:

Irish Caravan & Camping Council

Italy:

Federazione delle Associazioni Italiane dei
Complessi Turistico-Ricettivi dell'Aria Aperta
(FAITA)

Latvia:

Latvian Camping Association

Luxembourg:

Association des Propriétaires de
Camping & Camprilux a.s.b.l.

Netherlands:

Vereniging van recreatie-ondernemers
Nederland (RECRON)

Norway:

Reiselivsbedriftenes Landsforening (RBL)

Portugal:

Associação Portuguesa de Empresarios de
Camping e Hotelaria de Ar Livre (AECAMP)

Serbia

Kamping asocijacija Srbije (KAS)
(Camping Association of Serbia, CAS)

Slovenia:

Committee of Campingsite
Organisations of Slovenia

Spain:

Federacion Española de Empresários de
Campings y C.V. (FEEC)

Sweden:

Sveriges Camping- & Stugföretagares
Riksorganisation (SCR)

Switzerland:

Verband Schweizerischer Campings VSC/ASC,
Association Suisse des Campings ASC/VSC

United Kingdom:

British Holiday & Home Parks Association
(BH&HPA)