

✓ CHECKLIST

Checklist for school fireworks display organisers

Prepared in consultation with Department of Mines and Energy

Fireworks displays can be a major drawcard for special events such as school fetes and other fundraisers. However, these displays can be hazardous unless properly controlled. Fireworks are regulated by the *Explosives Act 1999*, the *Explosives Regulation 1955* and Australian Standard AS 2187.4-1998.

A school does not necessarily have to be familiar with this legislation. However, the school is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of workers and others at the site and should take all necessary steps to ensure that an appropriately licensed and experienced fireworks operator is engaged.

The following checklist has been prepared to assist school organisers to select and monitor fireworks display operators.

A licensed and experienced fireworks operator should be aware of the following issues and should address them appropriately. If you have any particular concerns discuss them with an Explosives Inspector from the Department of Mines and Energy — 07 4760 7410 (northern); 07 4938 4683 (central); 07 3237 1630 (southern). Information bulletins relating to fireworks can be found on the Department of Mines and Energy web page at www.dme.qld.gov.au.

Selecting an operator ✓

1. Licence to use fireworks

- The operator's licence should be sighted and/or copied. Details to note include: the licence number, that the licence is current, the operator's photo and the issue date. The licence is issued subject to accredited training or significant experience within the industry. Ask the operator for details of this training and experience.

Licence sighted/copied

Details of training/experience provided

2. Licence type

- Licences to use fireworks are categorised as ground-level and/or aerial display type and/or special/theatrical effects.
- A person licensed to carry out ground-level displays is restricted to ground-level fireworks only. This does not permit the use of shells of any size.
- A person licensed to carry out aerial displays may carry out both ground-level and aerial displays — up to the maximum size shell specified on the licence ('Major displays' indicates no restriction).
- A person licensed to carry out special/theatrical effects may use indoor pyrotechnics for theatrical or musical productions.

Licence type is appropriate to planned display

3. Insurance policy

- The operator requires an insurance policy specifically covering fireworks displays. This should be sighted and/or copied.

Insurance policy sighted/copied

4. Experience of the operator (log books)

- An operator is required to keep records of displays carried out. Ask to see the operator's records of previous displays and examine the thoroughness of the records to gauge the professionalism of the operator.

Log book examined

5. Safety of the display

- The fireworks display must be carried out in accordance with a national Australian Standard, AS 2187 Part 4. The operator should have a copy — request to see it.

Australian Standard AS 2187 Part 4 sighted

- A notice has been issued to all operators to prohibit the use of metal equipment (mortars, tubes, frames, pickets, stands etc.) Ask the operator if he/she complies fully with this notice.

Operator complies with notice prohibiting the use of metal equipment

6. Notify neighbours prior to the event

- To minimise the potential for complaints, the operator is required to notify those people who might be affected by the display — for example, neighbours. This is also a common courtesy and allows people to take certain precautions, such as protecting animals. How will the operator achieve this? As the organiser, are you required to do something as well?

Appropriate measures are in place to notify neighbours

✓ CHECKLIST

Planning of the display

1. Revisit the above issues

Is the licensed operator on site — as opposed to a delegate/assistant?

Licensed operator is on site

2. Display plan

Request a copy of the display plan from the operator that includes a layout, and the location and types of fireworks.

Display plan provided

3. Assistants

Are there sufficient assistants on site to:

- prepare the display without rushing
- provide security at the site
- clear the site afterwards

While this will vary depending on the size of the display, generally an operator alone is insufficient.

An appropriate number of assistants are on site

4. Crowd control

How is the operator handling this important aspect?

Is the designated display area effectively secured with barriers, fences, etc?

Is the audience effectively isolated from the fireworks and the display site?

Crowd control is appropriate

5. Emergency planning and preparedness

The fireworks operator has obligations under Australian Standard AS2187.4 for emergency procedures covering accidents, fire, misfires and their disposal, and theft or loss. Request that the operator provide their emergency planning procedures and preparations.

Emergency planning and preparedness requirements are appropriate

6. Prior notification of the display

The operator is required to give seven days prior notification of the display to the Explosives Inspectorate (Department of Mines and Energy) and the local fire services. Request a copy of the notification. An approval form for the fireworks display is not required.

Copy of notification provided

7. Approval to use site

The operator is required to have approval to use the site on which the display is being held. If the display is not being held on school grounds, request to see a copy of the approval — for example, local authority approval for parks.

Approval to use the site has been obtained

8. Protection of the operator/assistants

- Does the operators' and assistants' attire afford them protection — for example, suitable overalls, hats, footwear and hearing and eye protection?
- Is there fire protection — for example, extinguishers on hand?

While this is not the direct responsibility of the school organiser, it will provide an indication of the operator's professionalism and understanding of workplace health and safety requirements.

Operators/assistants are suitably attired

Fire protection is readily available

9. Weather conditions

The operator should consider stopping (or not commencing) the display in adverse weather conditions — for example, high winds.

Weather conditions are acceptable

10. Clean up after the display

What is the operator's plan for cleaning up after the display? Some aerial shells may not have functioned and may have fallen to the ground unfired. What is the plan for inspecting the area after the display?

Clean-up plan is in place and appropriate for the display

✓ CHECKLIST

Authorisation Sheet

If you are satisfied that all of the issues outlined in this checklist have been addressed, you may choose to engage that operator and proceed with the display.

Signature of school's fireworks display organiser:

..... / /

Signature of school WHSO (if appropriate):

..... / /

Signature of principal:

..... / /

School name:

.....

More information —

- Occupational Health and Safety Tool Kit — Module 4 Contractors
 - Creating Healthier Workplaces: <http://iwww.qed.qld.gov.au/workdept/hr/chw/index.html>
 - Department of Mines and Energy: www.dme.qld.gov.au
-