

# Event construction and safety

## Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre

### Conference Centre

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The information is based on the Ministry of the Environment's regulation on the safety of building use as well as the legislation of the Rescue Services. This guide contains only the key requirements of the industry regulations. Authorities may issue regulations deviating from these guidelines. These guidelines must be forwarded to the event planners and builders.

**The event organizer is responsible for the general safety of the event and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the guidelines.**

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**The event organizer** is responsible for the overall safety of the event.

**The exhibitor/operator** is responsible for the safety of their stand and the necessary insurance for structures, exhibits, and activities taking place at the stand.

**The event builder** is responsible for the safety of construction on their stand, both in terms of property and personal injury.

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## 1. Timetables for Pre-Notified Matters

Issue	Deadline	Recipient of Notification
Fire classifications and fabrics for interiors and structures, advertising banners	45 days before the event	Conference services
Exhibition canopy	45 days before the event	Conference services
Special structures and programme areas	45 days before the event	Conference services
Exit routes in stands of at least 200 square meters	45 days before the event	Conference services
Use of liquefied gas	45 days before the event	Conference services
Flammable liquids and gases	45 days before the event	Conference services
Non-flammable gases and containers	45 days before the event	Conference services
Hazardous substances (chemicals)	45 days before the event	Conference services
Demonstration of heating devices	45 days before the event	Conference services
Motor vehicles at the stand	45 days before the event	Conference services
Use of deep fryers	45 days before the event	Conference services
Temporary accommodation	45 days before the event	Conference services
Construction in outdoor areas	45 days before the event	Conference services
Use of smoke machines	45 days before the event	Conference services
Hanging installations	7 days before the event	Technical adviser, Conference Centre foreman

## 2. Occupational Safety

- During construction and dismantling, there is a lot of freight traffic and possibly moving machinery in the halls.
- All heavy freight transport must use the freight elevator located at V11 door.
- Safe work practices and methods must be followed at Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre.
- Continuous monitoring of the work environment and methods used at Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre is carried out.
- Any deviations observed must be reported to the Conference services Service Supervisor.
- If hazardous work methods are used or inadequate equipment is used, work will be suspended until the deficiencies are corrected.
- If necessary, Conference services will issue a written warning to the operator, which may also be brought to the attention of the Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre Occupational Safety Manager.
- Additional materials on occupational safety are available from Conference Services.

### 2A Children in the Conference Centre During Construction and Dismantling

- Please note that we do not allow children to be present during construction and dismantling. This rule applies to all children under 12 years old.

### 2B Personal Protective Equipment

- It is recommended to use high-visibility clothing or vests.
- We recommend the use of safety footwear with toe caps and puncture-resistant soles at Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre.
- When using various tools, the manufacturer's instructions for safety equipment (safety glasses, ear protection, cleanliness) must be observed.

### 2C Working on Ladders and Scaffolding

- Ladders used at Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre must be intended for professional use and must comply with standard E131 (label on the ladder).
- Stepladders are not suitable for exhibition construction.
- A-frames can be used as a work platform when they meet the stability requirements set for work stools.
- A-frames with a working platform over 2 m can only be used for light measurement and electrical installation work, not for exhibition construction.
- Working platforms at a height of 2 meters must have railings (height = 1100 mm) and skirting boards (height = 100 mm).
- Wheels must be locked according to the instructions during installation work.
- The working height of the scaffold must not be increased, for example by using ladders at the upper level.

### 2D Personnel Lifts and Forklifts

- Fall protection and CE-approved chin strap helmets must always be used in the personnel basket of telescopic and articulated boom lifts. If there are assisting personnel involved in suspension work, they must also wear helmets.
- The fall protection equipment must have CE approval and a connecting rope equipped with a shock absorber.
- The use of safety harnesses is recommended for scissor lifts.
- The operator of the personnel lift and forklift must have written permission from the employer to use it.

### 3. Construction materials and furnishing/decorations

The materials used in event construction must meet the requirements for assembly spaces (fire load class 600-1200MJ/m<sup>2</sup>). Interior furnishings, decorations, and other construction materials for exhibition stands must not be easily flammable, and they must not jeopardize people's safety during evacuation or hinder rescue operations. The materials must meet at least as example the following fire classifications or be fireproofed.

#### 3A Material requirements and classifications

- Exhibition stand structures: walls, fixed floors (e.g., wooden floors), and screens. The minimum requirement for these is at least fire class E.
- Interior furnishings: banners, curtains, fabrics, loose carpets (e.g., exhibition carpets and artificial turf), and similar items. The minimum requirement for these is usually flammable. Examples of classifications for flammable materials include DIN 4102 B2, SL 2, M2, and EN 13501-1 C-s1, d1. A typical material ignites but not easily, burns out completely, and does not generate a lot of spreading molten fire.
- Displayed products: There are no classification requirements for these if the quantity is reasonable.
- When using pyrotechnics or working with fire, materials must meet class B-s1, d0 immediately nearby. The proximity is always assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- The use of EPS insulation (e.g., styrofoam) is possible. The material must always be of S-quality.
- If the material does not meet the requirements, it can be fireproofed on-site if the material allows. See 2b.

If unusual materials or materials that largely increase the fire load are used in the stands, the Project Manager/Conference Services must be notified separately.

#### 3B Protection of Materials on Site

- Deviant building materials and props/decorations (e.g., cardboard, hay bales, wood chips, silk flowers, and peat) that do not meet the requirements must be fireproofed. Fireproofing is a one-time process and is only valid for the duration of the event.
- Reliable documentation of fireproofing must be provided. Before fireproofing, we recommend verifying that the substance provides an adequate rating.

#### 3C Material Certificates

- Certificates must be submitted to Conference services no later than 45 days before the start of the event.
- The certificate must be issued by an official testing laboratory; product descriptions are not sufficient evidence of material classification.
- Certificates according to other countries' standards are acceptable:
  - DIN4102 B2 (Germany) all materials
  - M2 (France) all materials
  - Class II (Sweden) all materials
  - Class I (UK and Wales)

## 4. Exhibition Canopy

### 4A Basic Guidelines for Covered Stands

- The Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre has an automatic fire alarm and extinguishing system. These impose restrictions and requirements on the canopies built for stands. Only so-called sprinkler stretch fabric can be used for covering. Solid fabric or roofing cannot be used in meeting rooms or lobbies.
- All canopies must be notified in advance to the Conference services, at least 45 days before the start of the event.
- The material used for covering must meet the guidelines for building materials, see section 2.

### 4B One-storey covered stands

- The canopy can use fire-rated mesh fabric (so-called sprinkler stretch) or grid roofing that meets the requirements (see 2a).
- The grid roofing must have a regular open structure, and there must be 70% free surface area of the canopy's total area.

## 5. Evacuation safety

The evacuation routes in event premises should be planned following these basic principles:

- There should be clear and wide enough corridors at exit doors.
- When using only part of the premises, ensure in the planning that evacuation routes can be guided through empty areas.
- All evacuation routes must be marked with official evacuation signs by the builder. In spaces over 300 square meters, battery-backed illuminated evacuation signs must be used.
- If temporary structures cover the building's safety signs, replacement markings should be placed at the same level.
- Areas between stands, such as technical spaces or background areas of stands, cannot be used for storage due to fire safety regulations. Fire hydrants must be kept clear.

In stands built on one level, there must be sufficient evacuation possibilities to stands corridors.

The number of evacuation routes is determined by the stands surface area:

- Up to 20 m<sup>2</sup>: one 900mm evacuation route
- Over 20 m<sup>2</sup> but less than 50 m<sup>2</sup>: two separate 900mm evacuation routes
- 50 m<sup>2</sup> but less than 100 m<sup>2</sup>: one 900mm and one 1200mm evacuation route, separately positioned.
- 100 m<sup>2</sup> but less than 200 m<sup>2</sup>: two separate 1200mm evacuation routes
- Evacuation routes for stands larger than 200 m<sup>2</sup> are determined on a case-by-case basis. The plan must be submitted to the Conference services 45 days before the event.

## 6. Special Structures and Programme Areas

### 6A Special Structures and Heavy Exhibition Items

- Special structures include, for example:
  - Dock areas
  - Grandstand areas
  - Raised floors and stages (12cm or more)
  - Necessary load-bearing capacity and structural safety must be considered for pathways and necessary railings.
  - The load-bearing capacity of floor surfaces is up to 400 kg/m<sup>2</sup> uniformly distributed load, with a point load of up to 3000 kg. Floor well covers in the premises cannot withstand loads.
- Chair rows placed in grandstands must be installed following the Ministry of the Environment's regulation on the safety of buildings (1007/2017).
  - Special attention should be paid to the interconnection of chairs on the floor.
- Structures must be pre-painted and treated upon delivery. Painting or similar work is not allowed in the exhibition area.

### 6B Programme Areas and Consumer Safety

- Test and trial areas are designated areas for customers to test products either independently or under supervision.
- Planning should consider the following:
  - Participant and audience safety (area delineation, pathways, and staff)
  - Planned measures to ensure safety and preparedness for emergencies (if necessary, a safety document)
  - Vehicles used in presentations and vehicles that the public can test must have valid traffic insurance (for example, in a parking lot test area).
  - The use of smoke machines must be separately reported in advance to the Conference services 45 days before the event.
- According to the Consumer Safety Act (920/2011), the responsibility for the safety of services lies with the service provider. Consumer services refer to services intended for or substantially used for private consumption. The service provider refers to a natural person or a private or public legal entity that provides, sells, or otherwise provides or transfers or mediates consumer services. Services provided by associations or communities are not covered by the law if they are provided only to their members in a non-commercial context.
- The operator must report to the supervisory authority (Tukes) if a product used in the provision of the service causes health hazards, accidents, dangerous situations, or near-miss situations. The form and instructions for reporting can be found on Tukes' consumer safety website.

### 6C Work Demonstrations

- All presentation activities must be conducted in a manner that does not pose a danger to outsiders.
- Objects that pose a risk of pinching or cutting must be protected by fixed protective coverings so that a person near the demonstration or observation area cannot reach it, for example, with their hands or feet. Alternatively, the presentation area can be fenced with a fence at least 2m high (e.g., a net) if no material or sparks are ejected from the presentation work.

- Risks of work demonstrations must be considered in planning and implementation. Limiting access to the work area must be done with sufficient care and consideration for the safety of spectators during the demonstration.
- For more information, contact the National Telephone Service of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration at +358 295 016 620.
- For more information, visit: <https://www.tyosuojelu.fi/>

## 6D Suspensions

- Suspensions from the ceiling of the space are always done by Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre. When a customer wants suspensions, information and necessary drawings must be provided to the Conference Centre foreman or technical advisor at least 7 days before the start of the event.
- Suspensions are possible in limited areas of the Conference Centre (according to a separate map). All suspensions should be confirmed on-site in advance. No banners should obstruct visibility of emergency exits or fire extinguishers.
- Truss and lighting boom suspensions are ordered from Suomen Videoviestintä SVV Oy, tel. +358 40 450 3258, [svv.myynti@messukeskus.com](mailto:svv.myynti@messukeskus.com). Additional information about suspension possibilities per facility can be obtained from Suomen Videoviestintä SVV Oy. Any necessary suspension materials etc. will be charged separately.
- The fabric used for decoration must primarily be fire-rated material, class SL-2 (B-s1, d0), and must have a fire rating certificate. Otherwise, they must be fire protected. Reliable documentation of fire protection must be provided.

## 7. Structures in Other Areas

### 7A Lobbies

- Lobby spaces are evacuation areas subject to separate regulations. Canopies or other structures that obstruct fire extinguishing systems as well as flammable liquids, or gases may not be placed in the lobby.
- When planning activities or stand locations, contact the technical salesperson/advisor.

### 7B Outdoor Areas

- When fastening structures, consider wind loads and weather conditions. For tents and structures, follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe use.
- Structures cannot be placed closer than 8m to the building to prevent the spread of accidents. This applies to tents, fair structures, cabins, and similar structures.
- For more information on tent structures: [Tukes telttaohje](#).

## 8. Electrical Safety

Exhibition electrical installations must comply with standard SFS 6000-7-711 (EXHIBITIONS, PERFORMANCES, AND EXHIBITION STANDS) requirements.

Standards are sold by the Finnish Standards Association SFS ([www.sfs.fi](http://www.sfs.fi)).

- If using own construction site or similar electrical distribution centres, it should be noted that all sockets of 32A and smaller must be equipped with a 30mA residual-current device (RCD).
- Devices brought to the stands must have a connection cord with a plug.
- Only pre-made extension cords with plugs and extension sockets equipped with grounding should be used at the stands.
- No electrical connections are allowed to be performed by oneself at the Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre; if needed, electrical connection service can be ordered for a separate fee.
- If the electrical installations of the stand need to be inspected by the Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre, a separate fee will be charged for it.
- Halogen lamps, heaters, or other devices producing high heat cannot be installed without proper protection to prevent burns or fire hazards.
- Cables in corridors and walkways must be fastened/protected to avoid tripping hazards. Crossing cables over walkways can also be done with cable ramps, ensuring that the clearance height is at least 2100mm.
- Only extension cords and construction site panels suitable for outdoor conditions should be used in outdoor areas.

## 9. Hazardous Substances

- Chemical legislation imposes requirements for the use of liquefied gas in assembly rooms and public events. Devices must be suitable for indoor use. Requirements may include ventilation and noise generation.
- The use of such substances in assembly rooms and public events must be limited.
- Notification to the Conference services must be made 45 days before the event regarding the use of these substances or the activities mentioned below. The quantity of substances may need to be restricted, and activities may need to be adapted to suit the environment.

### 9A Flammable Gases (Liquefied Gas, Acetylene, Other Flammable Gases)

- Liquefied gas and liquefied gas installations:
  - Composite bottles are recommended for liquefied gas.
  - Liquefied gas cylinders should be placed in a ventilated area.
  - Spare or empty cylinders cannot be stored in the premises.
  - At the point of use, there must be a minimum safety equipment of one 34A183BC class handheld fire extinguisher and a fire blanket.
  - Liquefied gas devices and hoses must comply with the regulations and their condition must be checked in advance.
- Acetylene and other flammable gases:
  - The container must be secured to prevent it from tipping over. Care must be taken when moving the container.
  - Equipment using gas and hoses must comply with the regulations and their condition must be checked in advance.
  - At the point of use, there must be a minimum safety equipment of one 34A183BC class handheld fire extinguisher and a fire blanket.

### 9B Flammable Liquids (Heating Appliances, Motor Vehicles, Bioethanol, Other Flammable Liquids)

- Notification to the Conference services must be made 45 days before the event.

- Flammable liquids:
  - Heating appliances operating with lamp oil, gasoline, diesel oil, or gas must be suitable for indoor use. The quality of the fuel used must be marked visibly.
  - A drip tray may be required under the fuel-using device. Additionally, necessary absorbents and collection tools must be provided for potential spills.
  - At the point of use, there must be a minimum safety equipment of one 34A183BC class handheld fire extinguisher and a fire blanket.
  - spare fuel may not be stored in the facilities.
  - a responsible person must be appointed, who is in charge on-site.
- Motor vehicles:
  - Vehicles displayed for demonstration on the exhibition or meeting premises, including transportation vehicles and machinery (referred to as equipment later in the text), must have power switched off from the main switch or the battery terminals disconnected.
  - However, power can be kept on under the following conditions:
    - Demonstration requires the power to remain on.
    - Keys are kept away from public access.
    - At least one 34A183BC powder fire extinguisher or at least one 21A 144B foam or liquid fire extinguisher per power class must be placed in the demonstration area as follows:
    - Number of equipment 1 - 3 pieces, 1 extinguisher
    - Number of equipment more than 3 pieces, extinguishers are determined separately
    - Equipment placed in the lobbies must always have the power switched off.
  - The event organizer monitors compliance with the regulations.
  - Equipment that does not comply with the regulation can be moved at the owner's expense from the premises.
  - **Electric cars/motorcycles, hybrid vehicles, etc., cannot be placed in the Conference Centre.**  
In the event of a fire, the car should be easily towed out of the premises, which is not possible in the Conference Centre.
- Bioethanol-operated fireplaces:
  - The device must be intended for indoor use.
  - At the point of use, there must be a minimum safety equipment of one 34A183BC class handheld fire extinguisher.
  - Spare fuel cannot be stored in the premises.
  - A responsible person must be appointed to oversee usage on-site.
- Other flammable liquids:
  - Fuel storage and sales are possible, but the maximum quantity is limited in the conference facility. Notification to the Conference services must be made 45 days before the event.
  - Contact the Conference services well in advance for any other use of flammable liquids.

## 9C Chemicals and Non-Flammable Gases

- Chemicals
  - Chemicals can be handled and stored in conference facilities with the permission of the event organizer.
  - For agreed chemicals, readily available safety data sheets and quantities of the respective chemicals must be easily found on-site.
  - When considering the use of chemicals, factors such as the following must be taken into account.
    - safe storage
    - environment for use
    - ventilation requirements (spot exhaust, filtration, etc.).

- Non-flammable gases and pressure vessels:
  - Non-flammable gases such as Helium, shielding gases, Nitrogen, Carbon Dioxide.
    - Helium balloons can only be used as decorations at stands. Helium balloons cannot be distributed to event visitors from stands. We charge the exhibitor for the cleaning and removal work of helium balloons after the exhibition (including the costs of lifting equipment required to remove balloons from ceiling structures).
  - Usage and storage permit must also be obtained for pressure vessels containing non-flammable gases.
  - The pressure vessel must be secured to prevent tipping over. Care must be taken when moving the pressure vessel.
  - Empty gas cylinders for display purposes must be clearly marked with a sign "empty/empties"; only so-called factory-empty gas cylinders can be marked in this way.

#### 9D Working with fire and performances with fire

- Working with fire is not allowed in the conference facilities.
- Fire performances are not possible in the conference facilities.

#### 9E Pyrotechnics and Smoke Machines

- **The use of pyrotechnics is not possible in conference facilities.**
- Smoke machines
  - Notification to the Conference services must be made 45 days before the event regarding the use of smoke machines. The use of smoke machines incurs costs (fire surveillance) and requires disconnection of the building's fire alarm devices.
  - Smoke from smoke machines must not obstruct the visibility of exit signs.

### 10. Food Safety and Food Preparation

- When preparing food, attention must be paid to protecting hot surfaces from the public.
- A minimum requirement at food preparation points is a fire blanket. If cooking with liquefied gas, see Section 8a. Notification of liquefied gas usage must be made to the Conference services 45 days before the event.
- Food preparation must also comply with the guidelines of the Environmental Services of the City of Helsinki. The food guidelines for exhibitions can be found on the Environmental Services' website.
- The use of deep fryers is possible provided the following precautions are taken:
  - The use of deep fryers requires the same safety measures as those required in restaurant premises. A fire blanket and an F-class food-grade oil fire extinguisher (with a minimum effectiveness rating of 34A183B 40F) are required at food preparation points.
  - Proper disposal of used cooking oil is required.
  - A placement and protection plan must be submitted to the Conference services 45 days before the event.
- The use of charcoal grills is not possible in conference facilities.

## 11. Environmental Safety

### 11A Water Fixture Disinfection

- Water fixtures and connection hoses used in the distribution of drinking water must be disinfected before commissioning.
- The guidelines and obligations for self-monitoring apply to both event organizers and participating companies. Compliance with the guidelines is monitored by the Food Safety Unit of the City of Helsinki.
- For more information: [eMessukeskus](#)

### 11A Oil Spill Response

- Waste oil must not be disposed of with other waste for recycling.
- Exhibitors must take care of the removal and proper disposal of waste oil.
- If necessary, Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre's partner can collect and dispose of waste oil for a separate fee.
- Any oil or fuel spills during events must be reported immediately to the Conference services.

### 11C Noise Protection

- Devices and demonstrations that generate loud noise should be avoided indoors.
- Signs should be placed in reasonable areas to indicate areas with high levels of temporary loud noise.
- When playing music at exhibition stands, sound systems should be directed towards the stand itself.
- The event organizer will intervene if necessary to address noise that disrupts the flow of the event.
- If a customer uses their own wireless microphone system and/or data transmission at their stand, arrangements must be made in advance with Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre. For more information, contact: +358 40 450 3258, email: [svv.myynti@messukeskus.com](mailto:svv.myynti@messukeskus.com)

### 11D Laser Devices

- The Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK) provides guidance and monitors the use of laser devices at public events.
- High-power laser devices classified as safety class 3B and with a radiation power exceeding 5mW must always be coordinated with the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority.
- For more information: [www.stuk.fi](http://www.stuk.fi)

## 12. Other Considerations

### 12A Temporary Accommodation at Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre

- Refer to the document "Guidelines for Safety Arrangements for Temporary Accommodation in Assembly Facilities," which can be found on the website of the Helsinki City Rescue Department.
- The permission of the property owner must be included in the notification.
- Notification and permit matters must be arranged in advance with the Helsinki City Rescue Department no later than 14 days before the start of the accommodation. Notification to the Conference services must be made at least 45 days before the event.

#### 12B Display of Edged Weapons and Other Dangerous Items

- Edged weapons or other dangerous items should not be left unattended during the event's opening hours.
- When planning the display point, attention should be paid to safety-enhancing placement and possible securing of items in place.
- Products sold should be clearly packaged.

#### 12C Drone UAVs

- Due to the ceiling height of the Conference Centre, the flying of drone aircraft is not permitted.