

## **Association of Rodeo Committees Emergency Scenario with Attendee Comments**

The Emergency Scenario Exercise was a group project to develop possible solutions for situations that may occur on the grounds of any rodeo. The objective was for each group to develop a comprehensive plan of action based on the information given. Special attention was given to information shared with the public, media, exhibitors, contestants and other event customers. Comments shared with the group follow each scenario.

### **1. RODEO DISRUPTION**

**SCENARIO:** One hour prior to your final performance, you receive word from the police that protesters have purchased a large block of tickets and intend to disrupt and/or shut down the rodeo. You don't know where the tickets are located, nor do you have any idea of what type of disruption is planned or how many people are involved. What steps do you take?

#### **RESPONSE:**

- Sit down with law enforcement prior to event and create the action plan if something like this is reported. Include committee members in the discussion.
- Written plan should include steps to take if a disruption occurs (i.e. chain of command for who removes them, media reaction, etc.)
- Include this plan in the production meetings during the event.
- Work to remove the people from the arena as quickly as possible. Leave this job up to the uniformed police, not committee or staff.
- Have disruptive behavior "right of removal" notice on back of ticket.
- Have uniformed and plain clothes officers on premise.
- Instruct crowd managers and staff to watch for disruptions during likely events (calf-roping)

### **2. CONTESTANT DISAGREEMENT**

**SCENARIO:** A fight breaks out in your rodeo hospitality area between two contestants that are at your rodeo to compete. The media is on the grounds covering your Rodeo and how it benefits the community. They capture the fight on camera and plan to air the episode on the news. What do you do regarding the contestants? The media?

#### **RESPONSE:**

- Have the event media coordinator or chair handle the situation. This is the person that the media is used to communicating with.
- Do not try and cover the situation up.
- Craft messaging to the media that indicated what happened and the actions that were taken by the committee. Notify the appropriate PRCA representatives and include all communication information with them as well.

### 3. FIRE ON GROUNDS IN STALL BARN

**SCENARIO:** A fire breaks out in the middle of the night in the stall barn that houses the timed event contestant horses. Several animals were injured, others got loose and are on the grounds. What actions do you take? Who do you contact?

#### **RESPONSE:**

- Rodeo Committee should have a prepared and posted action plan for what to do in case of a fire.
- Stall manager information should be posted and contestant information in a safe place for tracking.
- A fire extinguisher must be on site.
- Once a fire is found, notify security who will call for firemen, stall manager and animal control to find and assist in movement of animals, committee media and other appropriate chairpersons.
- Establish a safe perimeter and close area down allowing for movement of animals and people quickly.
- Take all able animals to a safe location and injured animals to a closed area for care by a vet.
- Contact contestants as needed.
- Fire personnel will treat the fire, the committee needs to address concerns of contestants and public.
- Don't forget to contact and involve your insurance carrier.

### 4. EQUIPMENT FAILURE

**SCENARIO:** You have completed timed event slack and the first performance of a five performance rodeo. One hour prior to performance time for the second performance, the tractor driver hits the calf chute while working the arena rendering the chute inoperable and beyond repair. What do you do?

#### **RESPONSE:**

- The Committee Chair and the Arena Director decide where the quickest place for a replacement is and contacts them.
- Committee should have after-hours contact numbers and a backup plan in place for this type of concern.
- Notify the judges and work with them on options.
- Could run rough stock events to buy time. May run risk of a rider not being there. Don't turn out the horse if the rider isn't there when running an event early.
- May run an intermission, special entertainment acts to fill time.

### 5. MANAGING A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE

**SCENARIO:** On the 4<sup>th</sup> day of your 7 day event the local Department of Health contacts your event and indicates that a young second grader who attended your rodeo and participated in mutton bustin has been diagnosed with H1N1. What do you do?

#### **RESPONSE:**

- Confirm with the local agency the details.

- Work on a joint announcement and get out in front of the story before it comes from someone else.
- Communicate the situation factually, with sympathy to the family, and detailed about what as an event you have done to make the event safe for attendees, contestants, and all animals involved.
- Do not hide the occurrence.

## 6. NO JUDGES ON SITE

**SCENARIO:** The rodeo judges assigned to work your rodeo are involved in a traffic accident. Due to the accident, they will not make the rodeo performance and of course you have a sold out performance. What do you do? Would your actions change if they were only delayed?

### **RESPONSE:**

- Notify the PRCA. Tommy Keith is the contact. His cell is 719.331.0449.
- PRCA should provide a list of judges located in your region.
- Consider any qualified contestants.
- Delay the performance if possible. Run special acts, have announcer fill time as needed.
- Production meetings should include a discussion on how to address this situation if necessary.
- Tickets need to say “all sales are final” .

## 7. LAST MINUTE DETOUR

**SCENARIO:** Your rodeo grounds are located five miles outside of town. Right across the road from the grounds, a new Wal-Mart is under construction. About an hour prior to the Saturday performance, your largest, you notice a cloud of smoke from the construction site. Shortly after you see the smoke, the stream of vehicles entering your parking area stops. Upon investigating, you find that the police have closed the road due to the fire and less than half of your crowd has arrived. The only other way into the grounds requires a detour of about 10 miles. Your seating isn't reserved and most of your sales are walk-ups. What can you do to try and ensure that all of those people who were turned back come to the rodeo?

### **RESPONSE:**

- A Committee Crisis Plan should include the reactions to this situation.
- Call a meeting of your committee crisis team and decide if the situation calls for a delay.
- Get the information out to the media as quickly as possible.
- Discuss with the announcers, contract acts, judges, stock contractor, and decide how to manage the delay.
- Need to keep crowd on hand entertained.
- PRCA Rules say – delay of production must be approved by the judges, committee and stock contractor. Make sure these steps are followed.

## 8) ANIMAL INJURY IN ARENA

**SCENARIO:** During the second performance of the rodeo in the Saddle Bronc event a horse bucks so hard, that it flips itself down on its neck. It remains down lying on its side pinning the contestant to the ground as well. At first, the horse makes no real effort to get up but begins to thrash around as if trying to get up. You are not in the rodeo arena but receive a call from a volunteer on the rodeo committee saying a horse is dead in the arena. In a matter of a minute you are on scene and the animal lying in the arena with rodeo personnel, rodeo committeemen and the rodeo veterinarian. The veterinarian for your rodeo has determined that the horse should be sedated for the safety of the animal itself, those helping, and the removal of the animal from the arena. This causes a delay in your rodeo of approximately 30 minutes. Later, upon further inspection by the veterinarian outside of the arena the animal is diagnosed with a broken neck and euthanized. There are still 2 rodeo performances left in the run of the event and a local reporter has requested information about the animal's condition. What do you do?

**RESPONSE:**

- The Committee should have a written plan of procedures for removal of the animal from the arena. List the person for each job and practice each year.
- Committee members must be in or near animal care unit or equipment.
- A vet must be on site.
- Have the script for the announcer ready.
- Have a place to take the animal that is not in plain sight.
- Have a prepared statement and release any media statements in writing.
- Have the media spokesperson already decided.
- Do not release any information to the media until it is confirmed and keep message consistent.
- Have facts prepared for animal injury rates at your rodeo and nationally.

**9) ANIMAL ACTIVISTS**

**SCENARIO:** It's Thursday, the first day of your event, at 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Tickets sold for your PRCA Rodeo, which starts at 7:00 p.m. that night in an outdoor arena, are at 8,000. Sell out is 12,000 seats. You notice several event patrons walking through the crowd with bright yellow pieces of paper. When you stop and ask what they have, the patron shows you a handout that somebody gave them stating all the cruelties of rodeo. When asked where they received it, you discover people are outside the main gate handing these flyers out to people as they walk. The group claims to be members of a nationally recognized animal activist group known for their publicity stunts and large advertising budget. Several are carrying signs stating "Rodeo is Cruel" and "Animals have Rights too." Media is on scene interviewing one of the protestors. What do you do?

**RESPONSE:**

- The Committee Crisis plan should include this situation. A written policy for protesting should be readily available to distribute and follow.

- Consider including the policy that no handouts are allowed. Check city ordinances for that as well.
- Consider posting signs that highlight event policy on protests. Select a specific area for protestors.
- Use the PRCA resources for developing your plan.
- Have the media talk with a vet for the other side of the story. Give the media background information from the PRCA.

## **10) SEVERE WEATHER**

**SCENARIO:** Your rodeo has just starting tie-down roping and a tornado warning has been issued. What do you do? Provide plans for both an indoor and outdoor facility.

### **RESPONSE:**

- The Committee Crisis Plan should include this situation. A written policy would include the one person who will make the call to evacuate. Work with fire and police to form policy.
- Before the public is informed, the stock contractor and judges must be informed.
- Have a weather radio on site.
- Have maps of shelters and call all committee members together to safely move people.
- Consider having an announcer script ready for this situation.
- Don't forget to consider the safety of the animals and contestants as well.