Risk register

Scottish Independence Referendum – 18th September 2014

Date:

Author:

Document version:

Reviews:			
Name	**Role**	**Date**	**Sign-off (✔)**

Defining the level of impact and likelihood of risk

Inherent risk evaluation

- How **likely** is it that the risk going to happen?
- Unlikely – Likelihood of occurrence is relatively slim - <10% chance of occurrence
- Possible – Quite possible that the risk could occur especially if control measures are inadequate - 10% - 50% chance of occurrence
- Probable – More likely to happen than not - >50% chance of occurrence

- What would the **impact** be if the risk was to crystallise?
- Minor – Unlikely to have a permanent or significant effect
- Moderate – Potential impact on performance and service delivery. May be adequately managed through existing processes
- Significant – Severe impact on performance through a reduced ability to deliver.

- The 3x3 matrix below can be used to calculate the overall risk score:

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">IMPACT</td><td>3
Significant</td><td>3
(Significant & Unlikely)</td><td>6
(Significant & Possible)</td><td>9
(Significant & Probable)</td></tr>
<tr><td>2
Moderate</td><td>2
(Moderate & Unlikely)</td><td>4
(Moderate & Possible)</td><td>6
(Moderate & Probable)</td></tr>
<tr><td>1
Minor</td><td>1
(Minor & Unlikely)</td><td>2
(Minor & Possible)</td><td>3
(Minor & Probable)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>1 - Unlikely</td><td>2 - Possible</td><td>3 - Probable</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="3">LIKELIHOOD</td></tr>
</table>

Residual risk evaluation

Once the appropriate action has been identified to address an individual risk, the action is given a score of 1 to 3 based on an assessment of how likely it is to be effective in reducing the risk (not all risks are capable of being reduced).

The risk owner will need to make an assessment as to whether the control measures are:

- **Good:** would score a **3**,i.e. control measures are fully in place, agreed by line manager and form part of everyday activity
- **Average:** would score a **2**, i.e. some controls are in place but further actions to be planned and/or executed
- **Poor:** would score a **1**, i.e. no control measures are in place as yet, although actions may be planned

The initial (inherent) risk score is then divided by the score for the control action to give a residual risk score. This is the ultimate assessment of the scale of the risk and whether it is Red, Amber or Green.

How to use this template

1. This risk register template provides some example risks and suggestions for mitigating them. In addition to the risks identified in the template, you should also identify any other risks, including any specific to your local circumstances, and how you would mitigate those. A template issues register is also included within this document to log any issues that arise and subsequent action taken.

2. You must prepare a risk register, treat it as a 'living document' and keep it under regular review, using it to monitor the risks and any changes, as well as ensuring that mitigating actions are being taken forward as appropriate. To meet the standard, your risk register must identify:

   - Any difficulties and problems that may occur, and the actions taken to mitigate them.

   - The seriousness of any risk by indicating both the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact of the risk if it did occur.

3. Further guidance on planning for the referendum can be found in Part B – Planning and organisation of the Chief Counting Officer's guidance for Counting Officers.

Risk register

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	LEGAL CHALLENGE											
	Legal challenge to carrying out of referendum	Action by interest group	Conduct of referendum at risk				*Have caveats in place*					
	PLANNING											
	Failure to ensure proper plans in place	No comprehensive written project plan Poor planning assumptions	Necessary activities not completed or completed late Missed deadlines Potential breach of legislation				*Maintain and update project plan to ensure all activities are planned for and sufficient resources are available as and when required* *Ensure evaluation of previous electoral events has been integrated into the planning process*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	LOSS OF PREMISES											
	Loss of polling stations or places	Venue affected by flood, fire, vandalism, etc.	Voters unable to cast their vote				*Prepare list of alternative venues, including standby arrangements for use of portacabins/ mobile vehicles if necessary* *Consider asking your council to approve a delegation mechanism to deal with unavoidable last minute changes of polling places.* *Brief Presiding Officers on possible emergency alternatives (e.g. setting up a temporary polling station in their car)*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	Loss of postal vote issue/ opening venue	Venue affected by flood, fire, vandalism, etc.	Delay in delivery of postal ballot packs Unable to check 100% of postal vote identifiers If it affects the last opening session, potential delay to the verification and count				*Identify alternative venues* *Have an emergency protocol in place, and ensure staff are briefed on what to do in such circumstances*					
	Loss of verification and count venue	Venue affected by flood, fire, vandalism, etc.	Delay in completing the verification Delay in counting Delay in declaration of totals locally and result nationally				*Identify alternative venues* *Establish emergency protocol to ensure security of ballot papers* *Ensure staff are briefed on what to do in such circumstances*					

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	Loss of referendum office	Office affected by flood, fire, vandalism, etc.	Unable to administer referendum Loss of data				*Check council's emergency plan for relocation/security arrangements, and identify alternative temporary premises.* *Ensure daily back-up of data held off-site*					
FAILURE OF IT PROVISION												
	Loss of IT capability	System or network failure	Unable to administer the referendum to the required deadlines Need to carry out processes manually				*Perform daily back-ups and download info for secure storage off-site* *Ensure hard copies of data are available* *Check with ERO/ election management software supplier re availability of duplicate system*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
							IT provider to ensure adequate support throughout referendum period, particularly on critical days *Emergency generator provision by IT provider*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	Delay in postal vote opening session	Technical problems with scanners/ printers	Unable to verify 100% of postal vote identifiers Integrity of polls brought into question If it affects the last opening session, potential delay to the verification and count				*Ensure scanners have been fully serviced and tested* *Identify suitable alternative printers and scanners and ensure necessary network connections are in place*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
							Have sufficient scanning capacity so that breakdown of one scanner would not delay a postal vote opening session *Draw up contingency plans for undertaking postal vote identifier verification manually ensuring that access to hard copies of postal vote application forms is available*					

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COMMUNICATION												
	Queries unable to reach electoral staff	Telecom/fax/IT failure Wrong advice given to voters Lack of voter information	Voter confusion Voters unable to register or to vote				*Ensure dedicated line to referendum office, plus mobile numbers as back up* *Identify other nearby fax machines to use if necessary* *IT provider to ensure adequate support throughout whole referendum period, particularly on critical days* *Emergency generator provision by IT provider* *Ensure all outgoing information contains referendum office*					

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							contact details *Provide frontline staff with FAQs*					
	FAILURE ON THE PART OF CONTRACTORS											
	Non/late delivery of poll cards/postal ballot packs	Missed printing deadlines or non-completion Printing errors Postal strike	Electors unaware of when/where to vote Voters unable to cast their vote				*Check out performance of potential suppliers with other clients and consider visiting premises of the selected contractor to inspect capacity, set up and processes* *Prepare and agree contracts as soon as possible and regularly monitor performance against expectations* *Close liaison with contractor to identify potential*					

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							problems in advance *Consider contingency arrangements to print products elsewhere in the event of non-completion* *Ensure robust proofing procedures are in place and include quality checking mechanisms in contract or in any in-house arrangements prior to issue* *Close liaison with account manager at Royal Mail* *Consider alternative*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
							options for distribution e.g. by hand using in-house teams or by an alternative provider/carrier *Develop process for re-issue of lost/not received postal ballot packs during legislative time-frame* *Consider alternative means of getting postal ballot packs back to the Counting Officer in time for close of poll (e.g., establishing postal vote collection points and promoting the ability for voters to hand in*					

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							their completed postal ballots at polling stations in the relevant electoral area)					
	Poll cards/ballot papers/postal ballot packs do not contain correct information	Printing errors / lack of checking mechanisms	Voters do not receive the correct information and are unable to cast their vote/ their vote is not counted				*Ensure robust proofing procedures are in place and that quality checks are carried out throughout the process* *Where ballot papers are collected in advance of polling day by Presiding Officers, require them to check the sequential numbering of ballot papers before taking them away*					

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INTEGRITY ISSUES												
	An individual votes as someone else	Electoral malpractice	The integrity of the results is called into question				*Presiding Officers trained to ask statutory questions where appropriate* *Presiding Officer to hold police contact number* *Prepare template for polling station staff for recording statements* *100% postal vote identifier verification*					
	A threat to public safety	Public order incident	Delay/ postponement of polls				*Liaison with local police SPOC* *Review of security arrangements and analysis of risks*					

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							Police attendance at polling stations and the count according to level of risk identified					
	Ballot papers interfered with	Security of referendum stationery is breached	Integrity of the polls is called into question				*Ensure method of storage is such that you can be satisfied that you have taken all necessary steps to ensure that the ballot papers are kept securely.*					
	STAFFING											
	Unable to appoint sufficient staff	Insufficient/non-provision of resources Difficulty in recruiting suitable staff	Insufficient staff to cover processes				*Early agreement on availability and release of local authority staff* *Seek alternative sources of recruitment – e.g.*					

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Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
							community groups *Ensure sufficient staff have been identified and allocated to all referendum processes* *Consider training additional staff as a contingency*					
	Loss of staff	Sickness Outbreak of pandemic or other contagious illness affecting large numbers of referendum staff	Insufficient number of staff to cover processes				*Ensure all staff have contact details for the referendum office in the event that they can no longer attend* *Have in place a list of trained, reserve staff with contact numbers*					

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							Provide appropriate training and guidance notes to staff re-deployed and carrying out unfamiliar tasks *Consult with council's contingency planning unit* *Have processes in place to minimise the risk of cross-infection, taking into consideration any advice provided by the Department of Health*					
	Insufficient support staff appointed	No detailed assessment of staffing requirements	Inability/difficulty in meeting deadlines				*Map-out staffing requirements at an early stage in project planning process.*					

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			Mistakes by overworked staff, which could adversely affect the voter				*Consider need to appoint temporary support staff to assist the project team at different points of the process.*					
	Mistakes by inexperienced staff or by staff not fully aware of legislation /procedure	Inadequate/lack of training	Voters are unable to cast their vote Results called into question				*Training to be scheduled for all staff to ensure they are provided with the necessary information to be able to undertake their duties* *Provide adequate resources such as guidance notes and polling station handbooks to relevant staff* *Use of polling*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
							station inspectors to troubleshoot any issues identified on polling day					
	POLLING DAY											
	Presiding Officer unable to gain access to polling place	Venue manager does not provide keys Vandalism, loss of venue etc.	Delay in opening the polling station				*Presiding Officers (POs) to open temporary polling station(s) outside with guidance from referendum office, pending access.* *Consider having a locksmith on call* *Prepare list of alternative venues, including standby arrangements for portacabins/mobile vehicles if necessary*					

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	Poor accessibility to the voting process, including for disabled voters	Polling station not set-up appropriately Staff not adequately trained	Not everyone who is entitled to vote is able to do so				*Accessibility and good customer care to be stressed in staff training.* *Instruct POs on making any necessary access alterations* *Require POs (or in house staff) to set up polling stations as per checklist in the handbook* *Ensure provision of correct tactile devices* *Ensure POs and polling station inspectors carry out checks throughout polling day.*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	Missing equipment	Equipment not properly prepared prior to poll	Delay in issuing ballot papers to electors				*Use checklist for preparing sundries* *Instruct POs to check box and other materials on receipt* *Give polling station inspectors spare equipment/ stationery*					
	Electoral registration problems	Errors on polling lists Staff unaware of clerical errors procedure	Not everyone who is entitled to vote is able to do so				*Develop polling day communication procedures with ERO* *Ensure helpline can deal with polling day queries.* *Ensure ERO and referendum office are staffed throughout polling day to handle queries*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	A threat to public safety	Problems with voter dissatisfaction or aggressive behaviour	Staff feel threatened and are unable to carry out their role Delay/ postponement of polls				*Provide guidance and training to front line staff.* *Provide FAQs to assist with answering common queries* *Provide guidance and training on dealing with aggressive customers, drawing on resources developed by other council departments* *Provide contact details for the police*					

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	The public are unable to cast their votes	Polling station runs out of ballot papers	Results of referendum called into question				*Print 120% of ballot papers as per CCO direction.* *Allocate 100% of ballot papers to polling stations on basis of number of voters due to attend.* *Retain surplus ballot papers in house as contingency* *Use polling station inspectors to monitor and troubleshoot throughout polling day* *Ensure staff know how to deal with any queues at close of poll.*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	THE COUNT											
	Insufficient space at venue	Inadequate planning	Lack of transparency and loss of confidence in the process				*Plan layout of count venue in advance, allocating space to accommodate all those entitled to attend*					
	Delay of delivery of ballot boxes from the polling stations to the count venue/failure of ballot boxes to arrive from the polling station	Presiding Officer has difficulties getting from the polling station to the count venue (e.g., becomes lost, car breaks down, has an accident)	Delay in verification and count				*Agree ballot box delivery routes from polling stations to count location* *Provide maps to POs* *Establish effective lines of communication between central control point and individual vehicles* *Have contact details of all POs available at the count*					

Number	Risk	Cause	Impact description	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent rating	Mitigation / current controls	Control Score	Residual rating	Further action required	Lead Officer	Date of completion
	Errors during verification of ballot paper accounts	Inadequate training	Delay to completion of verification and count Inaccurate result				*Use ballot paper account style approved by CCO* *Train POs on how to complete ballot paper accounts correctly.*					
	Evacuation of count centre	Emergency alarm activated (due to fire, etc.)	Delay to declaration of results Security of ballot papers compromised Potential loss of ballot papers				*Establish an emergency protocol for the count.* *Develop evacuation and re-entry procedures to ensure that the count is not compromised i.e., ballot boxes and papers are secured or removed from premises* *Make an appropriate announcement at*					

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							the start of the count to communicate evacuation procedures *If re-entry is not possible, invoke contingency plans.*					
	Failure of the AVI checking system	Power failure to the count centre Technical issues with the system	Loss of confidence in the process Delay in declaring local totals and national results				*Ensure adequate power supply and back-up generation available at the count centre* *Check no planned works to the electricity supply on the day of the count* *Ensure sufficient technical support is available on-site* *Prepare emergency*					

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							protocol to use another location if necessary					

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	AFTER THE DECLARATION OF RESULTS											
	Legal action against the Counting Officer		Result of referendum bought into question				*Maintain a clear audit trail of processes, including evidence of a project management approach and structured risk management process.*					

Issues register

This issues register can be used to record any issues arising. The log should cover the nature of the issue, its source, the date it was raised and its potential impact. It should also include the proposed action to deal with the issue, as well as assigning clear ownership to the issue and establishing the date of its anticipated resolution.

An issue which has occurred is usually the result of an earlier risk which has now become reality, so it is vital to ensure that both the issues register and risk register are live documents and that they are reviewed and updated in conjunction.

Issue (already occurred)	Issue source (Where/Who raised)	Date issue arose	Potential impact (1-3)	Action	Issue owner	Target date for resolution (completion date in brackets)	Status – Open/Closed

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