OTAS LIVE

Supporting Events and Professionals at Every Stage

OTAS Insight, production and site safety. Article

Signed off yesterday, failed today: temporary seating on show day

A temporary grandstand gave way at a beach concert in Queensland a day after it was signed off. What UK guidance expects, and the checks to make on show day before the public sit down



A signature on the handover is the start of the checks, not the end. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

Operational **Tactical** **Strategic**

OTAS Insight v2.0 · 9 November 2026 · Correct as of 9 November 2026

OTAS Live Ltd.

SUMMARY

A sign off proves the stand was right when it was handed over. Show day needs its own checks, its own watcher and its own stop.

22

people treated after a temporary grandstand gave way at a beach concert in Queensland, police said [4]

4

of them taken to hospital, with injuries including a collarbone, an ankle and backs [3][4]

1 day

between the engineer's sign off and the collapse, the organiser said [1]

Before the public sit down, walk every temporary stand with the supplier, check the handover paperwork matches what is built, and name who watches the stand and who can close it.

By OTAS Insights. Edited by Kris Dailly. Correct as of 9 November 2026.



A signature on the handover is the start of the checks, not the end. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

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01
Read this first

Sources: 24 public sources opened on 9 November 2026. They are news reports from 7NEWS, Brisbane Times, Nine, Rolling Stone Australia, ABC News, Pollstar and Australasian Leisure Management, a Workplace Health and Safety Queensland alert, BBC News and New Civil Engineer reports from 2004, HSE guidance and research on temporary demountable structures, HSE pages on CDM in entertainment, the CDM Regulations 2015, IStructE guidance, three Sports Grounds Safety Authority documents, the Purple Guide and a borough council. We describe places and events rather than naming the event, the organiser or the supplier. Some source links carry names. Facts carry a source number. Where a cause is claimed, we say who claimed it. Everything without a source number is OTAS guidance for event professionals.

On the afternoon of 1 November 2026, part of a temporary grandstand gave way during a music concert on a beach at Coolangatta in Queensland, Australia [1][2]. One report said the stand moved like a wave [4]. Police later said 22 people were treated and four went to hospital [4]. The organiser said the stand had been signed off by an engineer the day before [1][7]. The show paused, the stand was cleared and the concert carried on about an hour later [2][3]. Queensland Police and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland are investigating, and the city council has said it will review [1][4][6]. The cause has not been made public. This Insight is for organisers who put temporary seating into an event. It covers what UK guidance expects, why a sign off is not the end of the checks, what to look at on show day, and when to close a stand.

> **In short:** the sign off is where show day checks begin. Get the handover paperwork, walk the stand on the day, watch it while it is full, and agree before you open who can close it.

Five things to take away

01	**A signed handover tells you what the stand is designed for. HSE research calls sign off more than a paperwork exercise [11].**
02	**As the CDM client, the organiser keeps duties for the build and must be clear who is in control [15].**
03	**Check the stand on show day: the feet, the ground, the rails, the gangways and the weather.**
04	**Watch the stand while it is full. Crowd movement, such as jumping, puts loads on a stand that sitting does not [11].**
05	**Agree before you open who can stop the show and close the stand, and keep it closed until it is checked.**

ACTION

Read the case, then share the actions with your team.



02

What was reported

Two collapses at events, in Queensland in 2026 and in Lincolnshire in 2004, and a regulator alert from 2016 [1][8][9]. We describe places rather than naming events, organisers or suppliers. Where a cause is claimed, we say who claimed it.

Once the stand is full, someone must watch it, not the show. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

Coolangatta, Queensland, 1 November 2026

Where	A temporary grandstand at a touring music concert on the beach at Coolangatta, Queensland [1][6].
What happened	Part of the stand gave way in the afternoon. Reports give times between about 2pm and 2.50pm [1][2][5]. One report said the stand moved like a wave, and that a woman's ankle was trapped [4].
Injuries	Early reports said three people had minor injuries [1]. Police later said 22 people were treated and four were taken to hospital [4]. Another report listed a collarbone, an ankle and two back injuries [3].
How many were on it	A trade report said 700 to 1,000 of the 10,000 people at the show were on the structure [6].
The sign off	The organiser said the stand had been signed off by an engineer the day before [1]. The council issued the event permit and said it would review [1].
Afterwards	The show paused, the stand was cleared and the concert carried on about an hour later [2][3]. Police and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland are investigating [4][5][7]. The mayor has asked to see the findings, and future concerts on the beach are under review [6].

Lincolnshire, August 2004

Where	Temporary seating in a large marquee at a festival on a showground near Lincoln [9][10].
What happened	HSE research says the crowd was invited to stand and jump together, and the seating, which was not anchored, moved forward by about 1.5 m and then collapsed [11].
Injuries	BBC News reported four people seriously hurt and 12 with minor injuries [9]. New Civil Engineer reported 21 people treated in hospital [10].
The question asked at the time	New Civil Engineer reported that investigators were looking at whether the stand had slipped off the timber blocks it stood on, on grass [10].

Queensland, 2016 alert

What the regulator said	Workplace Health and Safety Queensland warned about temporary modular grandstands after two people were seriously hurt when part of a platform dropped [8].
Causes it listed	Corrosion of scaffold parts, set up on soft or sloping ground where a stand can slide or tilt, storm damage, and loads greater than a platform was designed for [8].

What it asked for	An inspection before each event, written down with the name and signature of the competent person and the date [8].

	As reported
Coolangatta 2026	Stand gave way a day after an engineer's sign off, the organiser said. 22 treated, 4 to hospital [1][4]
Lincolnshire 2004	Crowd jumped together, unanchored seating moved about 1.5 m and collapsed [11]
Queensland 2016	Part of a platform dropped. Corrosion a major factor in the first findings [8]
Show carried on?	Coolangatta yes, after about an hour [2][3]
Cause public?	Coolangatta no. Lincolnshire set out in HSE research [11]

Table 1. Temporary seating failures, as reported. 7NEWS [1], Brisbane Times [2], Nine [3], Rolling Stone Australia [4], WHSQ [8], HSE research [11].

ACTION

Ask your team: if one section of your stand moved during the show tonight, who would see it first, and who would stop the show?

03

What these cases do and do not show

Facts and judgement are kept apart here. The facts carry source numbers. The rest is OTAS guidance.

	What is reported	What is not known
Coolangatta 2026	Signed off the day before, the organiser said. 22 treated, 4 to hospital [1][4]	The cause, what the sign off covered, and what changed after it
Lincolnshire 2004	Crowd jumped, unanchored seating moved and collapsed [11]	Not in question: HSE research sets out the sequence [11]
Queensland 2016	Part of a platform dropped, corrosion a major factor [8]	Which parts a visual check could have found [8]

Table 3. Facts and open questions in the three cases. Facts from [1][4][8][11].

The lesson for organisers does not depend on the cause. In each case a stand that had been put up for the public failed while people were on it. The design, the build, the ground and the way the crowd used it all matter, and show day is when they come together.

ACTION

Read these cases with your seating supplier, and ask what in their design and handover covers each one.

04

The paperwork to collect before the public sit down

Collect these for every temporary stand. Sources shown. Not a full list. Ask your council and safety advisory group what they need.

Document	What to check
Design and calculations	For this stand, this use and this ground, with the loads and wind limits [17][18]
Competence	Written evidence that the designer and builder are competent for this work [18]
Independent check	Who checked the stand was built to its design, and when [11]
Handover report	Signed by the supplier, with the limits in plain words [11][22]
Construction phase plan	For the build and breakdown, if your event is a CDM project [14][16]
Show day record	The walk before doors, with name, signature and date [8]

Table 4. Paperwork for each stand. Sources shown.

Read the handover report, not just the signature. It should tell you how many people the stand is for, whether they may stand, what wind it can take and what to do if the weather goes beyond it [11][18].

ACTION

Make a folder for each stand, and do not open the stand until the folder is complete.



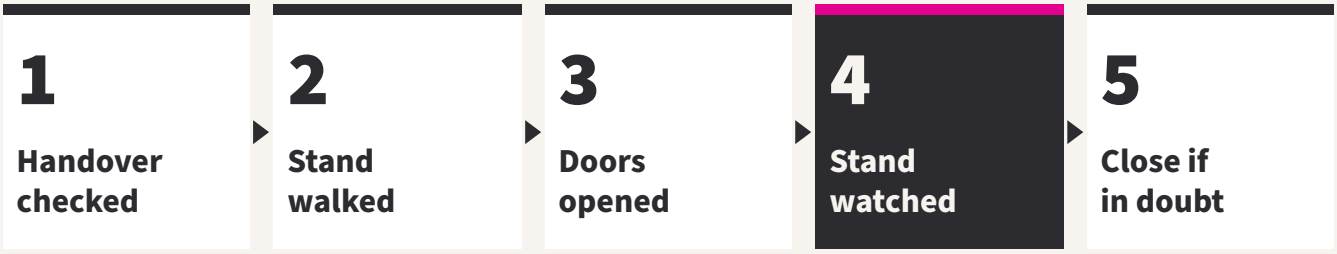
05

Why show day is where stands fail

The Coolangatta stand was signed off the day before [1]. The Lincolnshire seating moved when the crowd jumped [11]. The rest of this section is OTAS guidance, drawing on HSE, IStructE and WHSQ.

Look at the feet of the stand: plates, pads and the ground under them. OTAS style image, generated from real photography. Not a record of a specific event.

From the handover to a full stand



The step most often missed is watching the stand once the show starts. OTAS guidance, drawing on HSE research [11] and IStructE guidance [17][18].

The ground changes

Rain, tides, traffic and the build itself change the ground. WHSQ warns that a stand on soft or sloping ground can slide or tilt [8].

The load changes

A full stand is not an empty stand. People stand up, sway and jump together, and gangways carry people moving fast [11].

The stand gets changed

Rails come off for a camera, a panel is moved for access, bracing is borrowed. Small changes after sign off can undo the design.

The weather changes

Wind and rain on show day may not be what the design assumed. IStructE asks for a plan for weather beyond the limits [18].

Nobody owns it after handover

The supplier has gone, the stewards watch the show, and the sign off sits in a folder. HSE research calls for clarity over who is in control [11][15].

ACTION

At your next event, stand at the side of the seating for ten minutes during the busiest song or moment, and watch the structure, not the show.

06
Tool: close the stand triggers

When a stand, or part of it, should be cleared, and who acts. Agree these with the supplier before opening. OTAS guidance, drawing on WHSQ [8] and HSE research [11].

If a stand moves in a way it should not, the safe call is to clear that section first and ask why later. Agree the radio call and who makes the decision, and make sure every steward on the stand knows them.

Trigger	Who acts	What happens next
A section moves, bounces or shifts	Stand supervisor	Clear the section, call the supplier
A plate, pad or the ground has moved	Stand supervisor	Close that section until checked [8]
Parts missing or damaged	Stand supervisor	Close that section until fixed [8]
Wind or rain beyond the limits	Organiser, on the supplier's advice	Clear the stand [18][22]
Crowd jumping or standing on a seated stand	Stewards, then the show caller	Ask the stage to calm it, stop if needed [11]
Anyone hurt or trapped	Stand supervisor	Stop the show at the stand, clear the section around them, call first aid and the supplier

Table 6. Close the stand triggers. Who acts is OTAS guidance.

ACTION

Agree the radio call for "clear the stand" with event control and the stage, and test it before doors.

07

Tool: stage and PA words for a seated stand

Short words, ready before the show. Agree them with the stage manager. OTAS guidance, drawing on HSE research on crowd movement [11].

Before the show

- "Welcome. If you are in the seating, please stay seated and keep the stairs clear."

If the crowd starts jumping

- "Thank you, you sound amazing. For your safety, if you are in the seating please stay seated."

If a section needs clearing

- "Can I ask everyone in the seating on the left to calmly follow the stewards down the nearest stairs. Thank you."

A stand designed for people sitting may not be designed for people jumping together [11]. Ask the supplier what the stand is designed for, and brief the stage so the act does not ask the seated crowd to jump.

ACTION

Add the PA lines to the show caller's script, and brief the act's team before doors.

08
What to do at each level

Operational

Walk it before doors

Keep gangways clear

Call in the signs

Walk the stand before doors. Look at the feet, the ground, the rails and the gangways. Keep gangways clear while the stand is full. If you see a sign, call it in and keep people off that section.

Tactical

Check the handover

Brief the signs

Name the watcher

Get the handover report and check it matches what is built. Brief stewards on the five signs and the stop. Name who watches the stand during the show and who can close it.

Strategic

Act as the client

Get limits in writing

Name who reopens

Act as the CDM client. Order seating from a competent supplier with the design and limits in writing. Agree the independent check, who stays on site after handover, and who decides when a closed stand reopens.

ACTION

Pick one action at your level and do it before your next event opens.

09
What we do not know yet

- What caused the stand at Coolangatta to give way, which investigators have not said.
- What the engineer's sign off covered, and whether anything changed after it.
- How many people were on the affected section, and whether they were sitting or standing.
- What the council review will decide about future concerts on the beach.

ACTION

We will update this Insight if investigators, the council or the organiser publish more. We will not speculate about the cause.

10

Coming up: winter events with seating

Ice rinks, carol concerts, light shows and New Year events often put temporary seating on town squares, parks and car parks in the dark and the wet. Ground, wind and crowd mood all change through a winter evening. Plan the show day checks and the stop before the first night [8][11].

ACTION

If you need support with planning temporary seating at your event, reach out to us to see how we can support you.

Questions

The engineer signed it off. Is that not enough?

A sign off tells you the stand was right when it was checked. HSE research says sign off is more than a paperwork exercise, it is how the limits of the structure are passed on [11]. Show day checks look for what has changed since.

Who is responsible for the stand, us or the supplier?

Both have duties. At most events the organiser is the CDM client, and keeps client duties even when contractors are appointed [15][16]. The supplier is responsible for the stand it designs and builds. Agree in writing who is in control at each stage [15].

Who enforces this?

HSE says local authorities generally enforce health and safety at events, and HSE enforces the erection and dismantling of temporary demountable structures [13].

How often should a temporary stand be checked?

WHSQ asks for an inspection before each event, written down [8]. SGSA guidance for sports grounds lists checks every year, every three months and before each event [20]. One council asks for regular checks in wind [23]. On show day, walk it before doors.

What should stewards on a stand do if it moves?

Call it in, keep people off that section and move them calmly to a safe area. The named person decides whether to stop the show at the stand. Keep it closed until it is checked [8].

Does the Green Guide apply to our event?

The Green Guide and SGSA guidance are written for sports grounds [19][20]. Many event safety advisers use them as a benchmark for demountable stands elsewhere. Ask your safety advisory group what it expects.

If one section of your stand moved during the show tonight, would anyone be watching it, and could they stop the show?

ACTION

Send us your question and we will add the answer to the next update.

Sources

Web sources opened 9 November 2026 and labelled with their publisher.

1. **7NEWS, injuries after grandstand collapses during a show in Queensland, 1 November 2026** 7news.com.au
2. **Brisbane Times, grandstand collapses at a Queensland music festival, 1 November 2026** brisbanetimes.com.au
3. **Nine, grandstand collapses at a Queensland music festival, 1 November 2026** nine.com.au
4. **Rolling Stone Australia, dozens injured after grandstand collapse, 2 November 2026** au.rollingstone.com
5. **ABC News, Queensland local news briefing, 2 November 2026** abc.net.au
6. **Pollstar, investigations begin over a Queensland grandstand collapse, 3 November 2026** news.pollstar.com
7. **Australasian Leisure Management, investigations launched after grandstand collapse in Queensland, 1 November 2026** ausleisure.com.au
8. **Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, safety alert, grandstand collapse, 2016, updated 2018** worksafe.qld.gov.au
9. **BBC News, witness saw terrifying collapse, Lincolnshire, August 2004** news.bbc.co.uk
10. **New Civil Engineer, collapsed stand could have slipped off blocks, 9 September 2004** newcivilengineer.com
11. **HSE research, identification of safety good practice in the construction and deconstruction of temporary demountable structures** hse.gov.uk
12. **HSE, event safety, temporary demountable structures** hse.gov.uk
13. **HSE, event safety, frequently asked questions** hse.gov.uk
14. **HSE, how the CDM Regulations are applied and administered in the entertainment industry** hse.gov.uk
15. **HSE, CDM Regulations, roles and duties in the entertainment industry** hse.gov.uk
16. **The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015** legislation.gov.uk
17. **The Institution of Structural Engineers, Temporary demountable structures: guidance on procurement, design and use, fourth edition** istructe.org
18. **The Institution of Structural Engineers, procurement and use of demountable structures** istructe.org
19. **Sports Grounds Safety Authority, demountable structures** sgsa.org.uk
20. **Sports Grounds Safety Authority, Annex D, demountable stand checklist** sgsa.org.uk
21. **Sports Grounds Safety Authority, Guide to Safety Certification, December 2024** sgsa.org.uk
22. **The Purple Guide, temporary demountable structures** thepurpleguide.co.uk
23. **Hastings Borough Council, event planning, temporary structures** hastings.gov.uk

24. HSE, event safety, put crowd controls in place hse.gov.uk

Related OTAS Insights

These are links to other OTAS Insights pieces, not to any OTAS Live product or service.

Stopping the show for the front of stage
Overhead banners and arches at winter markets

Guidance: this Insight summarises HSE guidance and research, the CDM Regulations 2015, which apply in Great Britain, IStructE and SGSA guidance, the Purple Guide and council guidance, with a Queensland regulator alert. It is not legal advice. Northern Ireland has its own CDM Regulations from 2016. Ask your council, your safety advisory group and your seating supplier what applies to your event.

Interest: OTAS Live Ltd, which publishes OTAS Insights, sells event operations services, handbooks and training related to this topic.

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ACTION

Check the sources before you quote them, and tell us if any link has changed.

OVER TO YOU

If one section of your stand moved during the show tonight, would anyone be watching it, and could they stop the show?

If you need support with planning temporary seating at your event, reach out to us to see how we can support you.

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