

Locations

This chapter provides guidance in relation to the location of a production – from scouting to pre-production and production.





Section 5

Locations

Who needs to read this?

While all workers involved in a production have health and safety duties regarding the location of the shoot, roles that have specific responsibilities include the production company representatives, producer, director, production manager, heads of departments, assistant directors, health and safety officers and location manager.

What is a location?

A location, for the purpose of this chapter, is a place where some or all of a screen production – including film, television shows, documentaries, television commercials or web productions – is produced outside of a studio set (which is dealt with in a separate chapter). Potential locations are usually identified during scouting and then confirmed after consultation with heads of departments regarding workability.

The role of a location manager

A location manager is responsible for the finding and securing of the location/s to be used, obtaining required permits and coordinating the logistics involved to successfully complete the production. During the scouting process and pre-production, the location manager must take health and safety into consideration, advising directors and/or producers of potential risks when identifying possible locations and taking into account those risks when preparing the site for production.

Depending on the size of the production and available resources, there may or may not be a location manager. If there is not a specified location manager, the person/s responsible for scouting and preparing the location/s for the production shoot should follow the guidance in this chapter provided for the location manager.

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**Safety is
everybody's gain.**
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Types of locations

When considering the type of location for the production shoot, the production company, director, producer, production manager and location manager must take into account potential risks to health and safety and how these could be controlled.

While this chapter will not go into detail about specific types of locations, as the variables will be different in every case, listed below are some general and specific health and safety considerations to be taken into account depending on the type of location being scouted and/or used for filming.

Remote locations

- Local knowledge and expertise should be sought when planning activities in remote locations.
- Competent guides should be used where appropriate, especially in extreme conditions, such as in snow, on mountains or around water areas.
- Local police and emergency services should be advised when workers are operating in remote locations, including specific details of the location/s and expected duration of the stay.
- Reliable two-way communications should be available at all times.
- Adequate food and water supplies should be available to meet the needs of an extended stay. Local water supplies might not be safe for drinking and potable water should be available.
- Emergency supplies and equipment should be taken in case of unforeseen and extended circumstances.
- In the case of an extended emergency stay, consideration should be taken as to how long it could take to evacuate all workers.
- At least one worker should be competent in first aid and CPR.
- The need for an emergency beacon and / or GPS should be considered, especially for those working alone.



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Public places

- Local authorities and police should be consulted when planning activities in public places, and all necessary permissions received. Local authority or landowner (for example the Department of Conservation or Land Information New Zealand) permission is required to block public access.
- Access to all film equipment should be controlled, with public access suitably restricted.
- All warning signs, for example road control or information about access, should be clearly visible, taking into consideration the ability to see the signs at night.
- Public passageways should be kept tidy and free of obstructions; where necessary signs should be posted, lookouts posted or alternative routes organised.
- Provisions should be made to adequately control any crowd that may gather and / or to assist pedestrians passed the location.

Sacred places

- Many locations within New Zealand are tapu (sacred) to local iwi¹, who may have specific requirements or requests regarding the use of their land.
- Every location should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, and local iwi should be consulted about safety and potential risks, not only regarding use of land and their local expertise, but for cultural and spiritual guidance where appropriate.
- Refer to [The Brown Book](#) for information about the Māori screen industry.

1. The largest political grouping in pre-European Māori society was the iwi (tribe) – Te Ara, the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand.



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Minimum responsibilities for everybody on location

Everyone involved in a screen production should read and understand this section.

Everyone involved in a location shoot:

- is responsible for ensuring their tasks are conducted safely;
- is required to follow the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, as well as all health and safety information, training and instruction they have received;
- should be familiar with all emergency plans developed for the location/s they are working at;
- should take part in all safety briefings for every location;
- should inform the production manager, 1st assistant director, head of department or health and safety officer if they feel unsafe or observe unsafe behaviour;
- should inform the location manager if they have a health and safety concern regarding the location of the production shoot;
- must take care of others on location – from the moment they start work on the production until wrap, ensuring others safely depart the location;
- must ensure their actions do not harm themselves or others, including visitors and the public; and
- must be aware of what personal protective equipment they are expected to provide themselves and what will be provided by the production.²

Planning and guidance considerations and responsibilities

Everyone who is responsible for an activity or task in relation to the location of the production should read and understand this section as well as what is required by all workers. This includes the production company, director, producer, production manager, heads of department and assistant director/s.

While the production company is likely to be the primary PCBU, all PCBUs are responsible for the overall safety of all users of each location while the production is operating, including workers, visitors and other persons on, or in the vicinity, of the workplace.

2. Standard personal protective equipment, such as sturdy footwear / work boots and rain jackets, will likely be provided by the worker, unless specified by the producer / production manager.



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Production company

In pre-production, production companies (likely to be defined as the primary PCBU) must clearly identify who has control of the various locations that will be used throughout the production process, and ensure those people are competent.

During production, production companies must consult, cooperate and coordinate with other PBCUs on set, duty holders in charge of the location/s to be used and subject matter experts.

PRODUCER / PRODUCTION MANAGER

Producers and production managers should ensure:

- all information about potential risks associated with each location and required onsite activities are considered during pre-production location scouting and when deciding on the final location/s for the production;
- all workers are aware of health and safety risks on location;
- all workers have appropriate personal protective equipment for risks found on location;³
- there is at least one person with the appropriate level of first aid and CPR knowledge, if not more depending on the size of the production, location and type of shoot;
- emergency supplies appropriate to the location, including clothing, food and water, are provided in case of an emergency;
- information is distributed to cast and crew every day identifying all health and safety related matters specific to the location, such as specific risks and travel details – this could be included on the daily call sheets; and
- safety considerations are made regarding safely departing the location.

The producer should also:

- consider hiring a competent location manager with suitable experience for the size of the project;
- consider appropriate safety measures required if the location manager is working alone in a remote setting – for example the use of personal locator beacons;
- ensure hazard identification and risk assessments are undertaken for all locations;
- ensure all potential risks on location are eliminated or, if elimination is not reasonably practicable, minimised; and
- ensure that emergency and first aid procedures, specific to each location, are in place.

The producer, together with the director and heads of department, should consider the number and level of risks associated with proposed locations ahead of any final location decisions being confirmed. It is important to identify the possible risks to workers' health and safety as soon as is reasonably practicable during the location scouting and selection stage.



3. See footnote 2.



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Director / heads of department

When proposing the type of location required for production, the director and heads of departments should seek advice and consider the potential risks that may arise/be present.

From early in the pre-production process, they must consult, cooperate and coordinate with each other, and any appropriate subject matter experts working on the production, to ensure they are aware of all potential risks prior to committing to locations.

The director, together with the producer and heads of department, should consider all the information available and the number and level of potential risks associated with proposed locations ahead of any final location decisions being confirmed. It is important to identify the possible risks to workers' health and safety as soon as is reasonably practicable during the location scouting and selection stage.

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

Heads of departments should:

- ensure they are aware of, and understand, all identified potential risks associated with each location and how they may impact the work of their department;
- undertake their own hazard identification and risk assessment of their specific departmental activities on location (as the expert in their particular field of work);
- implement controls, ensuring all risks are eliminated or, if elimination is not reasonably practicable, minimised; and
- inform the location manager, production manager and/or health and safety officer of any new or altered risk.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/S

In the absence of a health and safety officer, the assistant director/s should:

- ensure hazard identification and risk assessments are undertaken for all locations, and controls implemented;
- ensure that emergency and first aid procedures, specific to each location, are followed;
- ensure personal protective equipment, specific for the location is provided to, and used by, workers when required;
- conduct safety inductions with cast, crew and others whenever filming has moved to a new location; and
- read and understand the section of this chapter intended for health and safety officers.





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Responsibilities specific to shooting locations

All those with specific technical responsibilities regarding locations, such as location managers and health and safety officers, or persons charged with these responsibilities, should read and understand what is required in this section, as well as the above two sections.

Health and safety officer

PRE-PRODUCTION

The health and safety officer should:

- work with the location manager and other heads of department to identify all potential hazards and assess risk;
- consider, from the outset, the size of the production and how much time is required to ensure all relevant people are able to provide input into the health and safety planning;
- conduct a health and safety specific assessment on each location before production;
- develop a health and safety report for the production and each location;
- liaise with the appropriate competent persons to identify and implement appropriate controls for all risks;
- conduct safety inductions whenever filming has moved to a new location;
- ensure workers are provided, or advised of, the appropriate personal protective equipment required on the location;
- ensure emergency supplies, including clothing, safety, food and water, are provided in case of an emergency;
- liaise with external medical facilities to ensure sufficient support can be provided if required; and
- ensure there is at least one person with the appropriate level of first aid and CPR knowledge, if not more depending on the size of the production, location and type of shoot.

EMERGENCY PLANS

The health and safety officer should:

- develop an appropriate emergency plan to cover all emergency situations for each specific location; and
- ensure appropriate rescue and evacuation practices are undertaken.





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EMERGENCY SERVICES

The health and safety officer should:

- consider how long would it take for emergency services to reach all areas of each location;
- consider what communication avenues are available to enable contact with emergency services at all times;
- ensure the distance of emergency services and the ability to contact them are included in all emergency planning, along with an alternative plan should emergency services not be able to reach the location in a timely manner; and
- inform local emergency services of the location shoot, especially in remote locations.

Location manager / scout responsible for securing location

The primary role of the location manager / scout is to identify and find ideal locations for a production shoot. They tend to report to the producer.

Location managers should have a good understanding of:

- the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and associated regulations; and
- potential risks found on location.

SCOUTING AND PRE-PRODUCTION

A location manager's work starts when they are first contracted to scout a location for a production shoot and must understand the director's vision for the film in order to find ideal locations.

Considering health and safety issues for all workers during the scouting process not only ensures workers go home safe, but can reduce the cost of a production and save time and resources in the long term.

In scouting potential locations for a production shoot, location managers must:

- identify potential hazards and assess risk;
- request information about hazards and the associated risks from landowners;
- consult with relevant experts and authorities who have local knowledge of potential risks;
- collaborate with the health and safety officer in assessing the risks and required controls for any specific location; and
- ensure all information is captured in an appropriate and easy to understand manner.

When refining location options, location managers must:

- assess the level of risk associated with potential hazards;
- weigh up the level of risk; and
- consider how risky a location would be for the cast and crew.

Consideration must also be made for having elderly, children and/or disabled on location, if applicable.





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WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS

Welfare arrangements must be taken into consideration when both scouting potential locations and refining options; these arrangements must stay in place during production.

Sanitary conveniences (toilets) and washing facilities

- Must be provided together.
- Must be clean, safe and accessible.
- Must be in good working order.
- Must be in proportion to the size of the cast and crew on location at any one time (approximately one per 25 workers).
- Must consider requirements for the number of both men and women; a single toilet would only be acceptable if the door could be locked from the inside.
- Must consider disabled persons on location.
- Should have adequate protection from weather.
- In remote locations, sufficient chemical toilets and washing water must be provided.

Drinking water

- Must be readily accessible to all cast and crew.
- Must be clean, safe and accessible.
- Should be marked “drinking water” if there is water that is unfit to be drunk also on or near the location.

Facilities for eating meals

- Must be provided.
- Should be clean, safe and accessible.

Facilities for environmental protection

- Should be provided.
 - Should be clean, safe and accessible.
 - Should include a quiet area for children, pregnant woman and nursing woman, if required.
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RISKS TO SAFETY AND THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

When scouting for locations and refining options, specific issues with location environment and potential risks must be considered, and appropriate control measures put in place if required.

Alpine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there a possibility of snow, ice or avalanches?
Altitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about the lower temperatures and reduced oxygen supplies.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check phone coverage.• Is there the ability:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— for two-way communication on set;— to contact emergency services; and— for external contact from families or the production company?
Crowds / public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If filming in a public location, consider how crowds and the general public may pose as a risk.• Is security required?
Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration should be made of the distance workers will have to travel to the location and what risks this poses.• Driving for more than one hour to and/or from the location can be risky for crew if they become fatigued.• Workers should be encouraged to share driving where practicable.• If driving is identified as a risk, transport or closer accommodation should be organised.
Electrocution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Precautions need to be taken to protect cast and crew from potential electrocution.• Electrocution becomes a greater risk if the location has, or is near, water.
Falls / working at heights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Falls can be by a person and/or objects.• Falls can be from any height.
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long working hours, and physically and/or mentally tough tasks can cause fatigue.• The distance crew and cast are expected to travel to the location can also cause fatigue, especially when early starts and/or late finishes are also factored in.
Fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the area prone to fires?• Does the production require the use fire?
Hazardous substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All hazardous substances identified on location must be removed.
Heating and temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate heating, cooling and weather protection must be available for crew and cast.
Infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration of all unsanitary or contaminated situations.



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Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How far is the location from the closest town or private residence?• How easy would be to contact external people or be contacted? Especially in an emergency?
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there natural lighting?• Suitable emergency lighting must be provided if natural light would not suffice in an emergency.
Moving equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider equipment that is going to be moving through the production set and the space available, to ensure the safety of cast and crew.
Night work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will the production require work at night?• Efforts should be made to make the location as safe at night as it is during the day, so far as is reasonably practicable.• Take into account the restricted ability to both be seen and to see.
Natural disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about the potential for a natural disaster.• Is there a river or lake that has the potential to flood?• Is the building earthquake-prone?
Noise / vibrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will the location present new or increased noise levels and/or vibrations?
Pollution / contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waterways could be contaminated with organic and / or inorganic material that could cause toxic reactions or infection.• Consult with territorial authorities.• If water is contaminated, measures must be put in place to protect broken skin and prevent the accidental drinking of contaminated water.
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there an easily accessible and suitable power supply?• If not, would it be safe to use generators?
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is security required?<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Access control to protect people and property.• The location's terrain may lead to, or impact on, security needs.
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is traffic control required?<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Suitable traffic control must be provided by a licensed provider.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will the cast and crew get to the location?• Does transport need to be arranged?
Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the quality of the air supply at the location need to be considered?
Water hazard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the possibility of drowning or hypothermia.
Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extremes of exposure, sunburn, hypothermia, as well temperature need to be considered.• What are the weather conditions for the time of year that the production will take place?



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MULTIPLE RISKS

Location managers must consider multiple risks while scouting locations and assessing those risks.

EXAMPLE: Scouting Waitomo Caves – the locations manager must consider:

- the water hazard – could someone drown or get hypothermia?
- the lighting – is there adequate lighting for both the entrance and within the cave?
- the power supply – it will need to be portable; do individuals need to have their own torches, if so, extra batteries will be required;
- weather – dependant on the time of year there may be a risk of flooding;
- temperature – will people need wet weather gear or thermal layers?
- trip hazards – uneven terrain, lack of lighting;
- the cave – will people need waterproof footwear suitable for uneven terrain or hard hats to avoid head injury; and
- communication – will you have reception? Be able to contact emergency services?

After considering all possible locations, the location manager must provide all information they have obtained, including identified potential risks with each location, to the production manager, producer and/or director.

Production

Once filming has started, location managers are responsible for managing all aspects of the shooting in, and overseeing the production's use of, each location.

Location managers must ensure:

- the cast and crew know how to get to the location safely;
- access to the production site is controlled to stop other persons from entering and risking their own health and safety – or if use of the location is dependent on keeping access open to the public, security measures are in place to keep other persons safe;
- welfare requirements are adhered to at all times;
- there is appropriate heating, cooling and weather protection for crew and cast;
- safe access to locations;
- security is provided where required; and
- that potential contaminants, such as paints, thinners, repellents, gasoline and oils, do not pollute land and waterways.



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GENERAL PUBLIC

Remember, even though the production company is likely to be the primary PCBU, all PCBUs are responsible for the overall safety of all users of each location while the production is operating, including visitors and other persons on, or in the vicinity, of the workplace.

The location manager should ensure appropriate signage, cones and/or barriers are in place to keep public safe.

If using a public road, the location manager must inform traffic control about what is required for the production shoot, ensuring the production does not place undue inconvenience on traffic or pedestrians and that pedestrians are never forced to step onto an adjoining road without adequate protection from traffic.

MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE ON SET

Production sets are a busy work environment and control measures must be put in place to ensure all workers can safely move around the set. Issues to consider include, but are not limited to:

- slips, trips and falls on the same level – for example poor or uneven floor/pavement surfaces, badly lit walkways or a leak;
- falls from heights – both objects falling and injuring a person, or a person falling;
- being struck by intentional moving or flying objects – ensuring people know what is happening in front of and behind the camera;
- collisions with vehicles – think about separating pedestrians and vehicles; and
- striking a fixed or stationary object – ensure there is good lighting, hazards are signposted and define walkways.

NIGHT WORK

All steps necessary to make a location as safe at night as it is required to be during the day must be considered; this may include additional working/access lights as well as extra heating, clothing, food and time.

SIGNAGE

Signage to ensure the health and safety of workers and other persons must be considered, including:

- letting the public know what is happening; and
- informing cast and crew of any restricted areas, restricted access and welfare requirements.



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MOVEMENT ORDERS

Location managers are responsible for preparing movement orders, outlining directions to locations, enabling cast and crew to travel safely from the production base or home to each location.

Movement orders must be accurate and easy to understand, and should be provided to cast and crew with daily call sheets.

Location managers should ensure the route to the location is clearly signposted, and check the conditions each day to ensure it is safe for driving. High-risk areas should be highlighted in the movement order.

FATIGUE AND SCHEDULES

Fatigue is a high risk within the screen sector, and must be taken into consideration when scheduling shifts for cast and crew; this includes thinking about the regulations set out for driving hours.

See the guidance chapters on fatigue and motor vehicles for further information.

VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC ROUTES

If vehicles are required on set, specific traffic routes and speed limits should be implemented. One-way systems and separate vehicle and pedestrian access should also be considered.

If vehicles cross public pathways, the safety of the general public must be considered.

See the guidance chapter on motor vehicles for further information.

Post-production

After filming, the location manager should ensure:

- potential contaminants, such as paints, thinners, repellents, gasoline and oils, do not pollute land and waterways;
- all signage, cones or barriers are removed;
- all rubbish is removed from the location;
- all location sites are left as they were found; and
- all workers safely depart the location.



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