



Canadian Event Safety Summit: The conversation continues

INSPIRED BY THE EVENT SAFETY SUMMIT in Lititz, PA, Samantha Slattery of Capital Presents and I wanted to assemble a similar get-together for our Canadian colleagues. Our goal was to bring together a wide variety of like-minded people for a day of safety education. Would anyone be interested? The answer was a resounding “Yes!”

“We’re making great progress but, as an industry, we need to keep working to make each of our unique projects healthy and safe.”

We launched our first event on May 18, 2016 at the Spoke Club in Toronto with “Adelman’s Event Safety Two-Four,” presented by Steven A. Adelman, head of Adelman Law Group and Vice President of the Event Safety Alliance. He gave us a lawyer’s view of 24 reasonable safety measures that everyone can practice in their daily work. Next up, Angela McGowan of Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment and I reviewed “Health & Safety for Ontario Event Employers and Constructors.” Then, Kevin Jones of Odyssey Medical reminded us that “911 Is **Not** Your Medical Plan!” and covered the issues around planning for medical response at special events. We



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Participation has been strong for the first two Canadian Event Safety Summits. The next is scheduled for April 2017. Learn more at <http://canadianeventsafety.com/>.

learned about “Temporary Performance/ Event Structures” from Cindy Sypher of Sypher & Associates Field Engineering Ltd. Next, we heard from a panel of Canadian entertainment insurance specialists including Neil Gibson, Alan Hollingsworth, Susan M. Wallis, and Ben Wiggins who dug into the question of “Why Is So Much Info Needed?” We wrapped up with a discussion of current weather risk management tools

with Michael Eilts of WDT.

The feedback was enthusiastic. As a follow-up to that sold-out event, we held our second Canadian Event Safety Summit on November 22, 2016 at the beautiful Living Arts Centre in Mississauga. This time, we focused on Ontario, because in Canada, each of our 14 jurisdictions (10 provinces, three territories, and the federally regulated workplaces) has its own

health and safety legislation.

Ronald Landry from the Ministry of Labour provided an update about Ministry of Labour activities, as well as a review of the role of the inspector, inspector powers, and penalties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Gary Miller with Electrical Safety Authority discussed issues affecting live events such as high amperage power tie-ins, multi cable (socapex) usage, ground-fault circuit interrupters, cable protection, and grounding and bonding of temporary performance/event structures. He also clarified when inspections and permits are required and made reference to the *ESA Spec 003 – R7 (July 2013) – Television, Film, Live Performance and Event Electrical Guidelines*.

We ended the afternoon with a lively panel discussion titled “Keeping Workers Safe at Challenging Venues.” Acknowledging that we don’t always work in “perfect” venues, Vanessa Arscott of Plan V Productions; Julie Belzing of the City

of Toronto / Economic Development & Culture; Tanya Hart of Lula Productions, Inc.; and Zane van Hoek of Snap Hoek Productions/Staffing talked about events held at sites such as parking lots, abandoned buildings, historical sites, fields, fairgrounds, and roadways. They shared their experiences with incorporating health and safety into the project planning phase, the load-in and build, the run of show and, finally, the strike and load-out.

Our panelists were candid about what is working well, as well as ongoing challenges. Key points included:

- Client education on the importance of health and safety at the beginning of each project
- Contractor management to ensure all suppliers are on the same page and understand expectations
- Documentation including a health and safety manual, forms, and reports
- Health and safety orientation and ongoing communication

- Personal protective equipment requirements
- Awareness of fatigue and the potential need to reassign workers to appropriate tasks

Overall, we’re making great progress but, as an industry, we need to keep working to make each of our unique projects healthy and safe. We look forward to continuing the safety conversation with our next event in April 2017. ■



Janet Sellery is one of Canada’s leading experts in health and safety and the arts. After a career in stage management, she pioneered the health and safety program at the Stratford Festival.

As a health and safety consultant through her company Sellery Health + Safety, she focuses on customizing programs, training, and resources to reflect the constantly evolving and unique demands of the live event environment.