



Liaison with carnival organisers

Once you have secured your booking you should receive a contract or letter of agreement from the organiser. This sets out the details, terms and conditions of your engagement and should provide information, such as, date of performance, time of arrival, fees and expenses and technical provision. It may also include information on your health and safety responsibilities, emergency routines and any paperwork that you may need to bring with you on the day of carnival, for example, evidence of insurance cover or a Vehicle Special Order (see separate fact sheet entitled "Sound systems and trucks" for details on VSO).

You should find out what resources the event organiser has available and what will be provided. In addition, you will want to know practicalities such as whether there is secure parking, on-site storage facilities, a designated changing area and toilet facilities for performers.

You will need to establish how the event will be stewarded and what is expected from you in terms of your own stewarding. Normally, the event organiser provides stewards for the carnival parade and finale and the carnival band, troupe or organisation provides stewards to oversee health and safety whilst the band is on the road.

You will want to find out what happens at the end of the carnival event. For example, how far is the finish of the carnival to the start and how will band members be reunited with their clothes and belongings?

Finally, you will want to be paid! You should confirm arrangements with the organiser about payment. You will want to be paid on the day if at all possible. In return, the organiser will need to have your invoice so make sure you have sent it in advance or have it with you on the day.

Ensure everyone knows who is in charge on the day and that all questions from the organisers are directed to the appropriate person. Otherwise you find band members get drawn in to trying to sort out arrangements and adding confusion to situations.

It is important not to make assumptions about the carnival you are going to. You should research the event and be fully prepared to respond to problems as they occur. Obviously, your experience will grow as the number of carnivals you perform at increases. It may be worth bringing in an experienced carnivalist to act as project manager to support you on the first few dates of your tour until you feel confident enough to manage the event on your own.