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Managing risk for youth and school trips

Maîtriser les risques pour les voyages scolaires et des jeunes

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Contents

Foreword.....	vi
Introduction.....	vii
1 Scope.....	1
2 Normative references.....	2
3 Terms and definitions.....	2
4 Understanding the organization and its context.....	5
4.1 Operating context.....	5
4.2 Stakeholders.....	6
4.3 Organizational objectives and risk criteria.....	7
4.4 Risk profile.....	7
4.5 Trip risk management and delivery.....	8
5 Establishing the framework for managing risk for trips.....	8
5.1 Leadership and commitment.....	8
5.2 Policy.....	8
5.3 Roles, responsibilities and accountability.....	9
5.4 Objectives.....	10
5.5 Planning/establishing the programme.....	10
5.6 Implementation.....	11
6 Risk assessment.....	13
6.1 General.....	13
6.2 Risk identification.....	15
6.3 Risk analysis.....	15
6.4 Risk evaluation.....	16
7 Risk treatment.....	17
7.1 General.....	17
7.2 Risk avoidance.....	17
7.3 Sharing liability risk.....	18
7.3.1 General.....	18
7.3.2 General insurance.....	18
7.3.3 Special risk insurance.....	18
7.3.4 Third-party liability insurance.....	18
7.3.5 Third-party provider insurance.....	19
7.4 Handling the specific requirements of children and youth (also referred to as minors and young adults).....	19
7.4.1 General.....	19
7.4.2 Identification and selection of potential participants.....	19
7.4.3 Information about potential participants.....	20
7.4.4 Protection of participants who are minors and vulnerable adults.....	20
7.5 Roles and responsibilities during the trip.....	21
7.5.1 General.....	21
7.5.2 Trip leader.....	21
7.5.3 Leadership team.....	22
7.5.4 Trip activity specialists.....	22
7.5.5 Individual placements and lone workers.....	23
7.5.6 Support personnel.....	23
7.5.7 Roles and responsibilities of participants during the trip.....	23
7.6 Supervision and staffing ratios.....	23
7.6.1 General.....	23

7.6.2	Direct supervision	25
7.6.3	Indirect supervision.....	25
7.6.4	Remote supervision	26
7.7	Safeguarding.....	27
7.7.1	General.....	27
7.7.2	Safeguarding policy and procedures	27
7.8	Medical considerations.....	28
7.8.1	General.....	28
7.8.2	Individuals with special needs.....	30
7.8.3	Medical, evacuation and repatriation insurance.....	30
7.9	Medical and security support services.....	30
7.10	Third-party provider	31
7.11	Travel and transportation	31
7.12	Trip activities	32
7.13	Accommodation.....	32
7.14	Contingency, incident and emergency planning.....	33
7.14.1	Contingency planning.....	33
7.14.2	Incident and emergency response.....	34
7.14.3	Escalating risk and responses	35
8	Communication and consultation.....	35
8.1	Programme/strategic communications	35
8.2	Operational/technical communications	36
9	Programme evaluation and continuous improvement.....	37
9.1	General.....	37
9.2	Trip evaluation	38
9.3	Management system reviews	39
9.4	Documentation	39
9.5	Recording and reporting.....	40
Annex A (informative)	Stakeholders	42
Annex B (informative)	Risk assessment framework	43
B.1	General.....	43
B.2	Guidance on carrying out a risk assessment.....	44
B.3	Travel to/from venue	45
B.4	At the venue	46
B.5	Visits abroad.....	46
Annex C (informative)	Safeguarding considerations	47
C.1	General.....	47
C.2	Considerations in developing a safeguarding policy	47
C.2.1	C.2.1 Policy statement and general approach	47
C.2.2	Roles and responsibilities	47
C.2.3	Building a safeguarding culture where all stakeholders know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns.....	48
C.2.4	Evaluation and continuous improvement	48
C.3	Considerations for the development of appropriate procedures	49
C.3.1	Recruiting and training suitable people to volunteer or work with children and youth ...	49
C.3.2	Codes of conduct for leadership team, volunteers and participants	49
C.3.3	Ratio of leadership team to participants for supervising effectively.....	49
C.3.4	Safeguarding requirements for third parties.....	49
C.3.5	Accommodation, transportation and activities during the trip.....	50
C.3.6	Procedures for reporting concerns about a participant at risk.....	50
C.3.7	Preventing and responding to bullying	50
C.3.8	Whistleblowing and complaints	50

C.3.9	Responding to safeguarding allegations against all individuals, including members of the leadership team, others in a position of responsibility, authority or involvement, and other participants.....	51
C.3.10	Keeping participants safe online.....	51
C.3.11	Taking, storing and sharing photographs including video media of participants	51
C.3.12	Storing child protection records	51
Bibliography	52

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 262, *Risk management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This ~~guidance~~ document is intended to assist those organizing trips for children and youths (also referred to as minors and young adults).

Each year millions of young people around the world take part in trips for a wide range of purposes including, for example, educational, training and development, religious, cultural, and sporting. A wide range of organizations provide such opportunities including schools and other educational institutions, commercial operators, youth organizations, charities, and cultural and religious groups.

Such trips can range widely from a day trip to visit a local museum, to an international expedition requiring lengthy travel and involving one or more nights away from home. The risk profile can also range widely: a week-long student exchange ~~will be~~ very different from a trekking expedition to a remote area or an adventurous activity course to learn sailing or mountaineering.

Trip organizers have a duty of care towards those involved in these trips. This duty applies to the adults, teachers or instructors involved as well as the children and youths participating. Within this, attention to safeguarding issues is a significant consideration in respect of children and youths and vulnerable adults.

One of the key objectives and benefits of such trips, whether they are domestic or international, is to provide children and youths with the opportunity to experience new environments and cultures and meet new people. Such trips are intended to support their growth, learning and development, as well as enhance their resilience.

However, children and youths do not always have sufficient experience to deal intuitively with unfamiliar situations and environments. Additionally, children and youths can behave unpredictably, which can create unforeseen situations.

There is thus a need to ensure that a balance is struck between protecting the health, safety and well-being of children at the same time as evaluating opportunities that support their growth and development. This document will assist trip organizers in achieving the broad range of trip objectives in a way that ensures that uncertainty and risk exposure are managed and controlled effectively.

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The concept of youth varies by culture and jurisdiction. For the context of this document, “youths” are treated as those persons – regardless of whether they are part of an educational establishment or not – who have not yet reached their twenty-fifth birthday. This is in line with the United Nations (UN) definition of children/youth. For purposes of the application of this document, the organization should decide upon the age range based on applicable jurisdictional requirements, and the purpose and structure of the organization itself.

Trip risk management requires that organizations anticipate and assess the potential for hazardous events, develop risk treatments and communicate anticipated risk exposures to those involved in trips. Advising and providing trip participants and leadership teams with adequate medical, emergency response guidance, security and information security precautions, including challenges to travel logistics, can significantly mitigate the impact of disruptive events.

The use of this document provides a means for a trip organizer to demonstrate that decisions on and during trips are based on its capacity to treat risk using internal resources only or with external assistance. Not all trips ~~will~~ warrant the same level of risk assessment and management. Although this document provides a wide-ranging set of risk treatment options that a trip organizer can consider, the elements of this document should be scaled and tailored to the organization’s needs and trip-specific setting and proportionate to the risk exposure. This ~~will help~~ helps the trip organizer, the leadership team delivering the trip, and the children and youths involved to realize the opportunities and benefits for which the trip is designed.

Managing risks for trips abroad where the trip organizer has no local base requires more comprehensive controls than for locations where risk profiles are well known and where risk treatments have already been established. Timeliness and accuracy of information, analysis and advice, including travel warnings, and dynamic risk assessments are particularly important. The trip organizer should also ensure that cultural differences (both among participants and in regard to the destination) are observed.

This document is based on the principles, framework and process of ISO 31000. These are set out at a very high level. ISO 31030 provides further particulars details of how organizations can apply these in the context of managing travel risks.

This document can be used on a standalone basis or integrated within other risk management programmes. This document is also aligned with the core occupational health and safety management system set out in ISO 45001. As such, elements of this document can assist or inform organizations developing such management systems, but it is not a management system standard.

One of the aims of this document is to promote a culture where the risk involved in organizing trips for children and youths is taken seriously, resourced adequately and managed effectively, and where the benefits to the organization and relevant stakeholders are recognized. These benefits are mutually reinforcing and can include:

- promoting considered trip management to encourage and support inclusivity and accessibility;
- increasing the likelihood of delivering the cultural, learning and developmental objectives underpinning trips;
- enhancing an organization's reputation and credibility – particularly with parents/guardians, and sponsors;
- improving confidence in health, safety and security arrangements with regard to travel among the staff involved in delivery;
- contributing to organizational continuity, capability and resilience;
- contributing to meeting the United Nations UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all and strengthening the social dimension of sustainability.

Some child and youth organizations or trip providers already have in place policies, risk management and safeguarding protocols to manage risks associated with trips. For such organizations, the guidance in this document can be used to review or benchmark what they already have in place and to, where necessary, build upon them or establish additional protocols for new activities or environments.

Equally, the guidance can be used to create policies, procedures and protocols, where they don't these do not already exist, or for trips where a group has come together for a one-off experience outside any regular or otherwise structured organization.

Managing risk for youth and school trips

1 Scope

This document ~~provides~~gives guidance ~~for~~on managing risk for youth and school trips for both domestic and international travel with specific attention to minors.

This document is ~~intended for use by~~applicable to any organization, institution or group, that provides activities, visits or trips for children and youth outside of their usual place of operation. These include, but are not limited to:

- educational institutions (schools, colleges and universities);
- children's homes (including foster care provision);
- residential tutorial centres (summer schools and language colleges);
- community-based youth groups (scouts, guides, cadet units and youth clubs);
- faith-based groups;
- youth sports clubs;
- youth arts clubs (music, drama, painting and literature);
- adventurous activity centres (day visits and residential);
- commercial and non-commercial providers of visits abroad (offshore sailing, cultural tours, sports, community projects, adventure activities and expeditions);
- tourist attractions, tour operators and other service providers.

This document ~~covers~~is applicable to trips of any duration, from day trips visiting local points of interest to months-long trips to other continents. These trips can be for purposes such as excursions, fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous or cultural activities undertaken for educational, research, training or recreational purposes.

This document ~~covers~~is applicable any sort of travel under the auspices of an organization, be it one person travelling for an internship or dozens travelling for a sporting match.

This document ~~not only covers~~is applicable to the physical movement between locations ~~but also, as well as~~to the events and activities associated with the objectives of the trip.

This document provides good practices to address typical risks arising from activities related to trips. It also includes ~~guidelines~~guidance for creating an emergency response plan.

This document does not apply to groups of vulnerable adults per se. However, some aspects of the guidance can also be relevant to the management of trips for vulnerable adults.

This document does not ~~cover~~apply to situations such as minors travelling with their families, as well as how to organize such trips.

This document ~~has~~does not ~~been designed~~apply to ~~cover~~ virtual travel, ~~but~~although some parts of it can be relevant.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

duty of care

moral responsibility or legal requirement of an *organization* (3.8) to protect *participants* (3.9) and the *leadership team* (3.5) from *hazards* (3.2) and *threats* (3.17), particularly those that can result in injury or harm

3.2

hazard

source of potential harm

[SOURCE: ISO 31073:2022, 3.3.12, modified — Note 1 to entry ~~has been~~ deleted.]

3.3

incident

situation or event, including an accident, that can lead to harm, disruption or a significant change of plan, loss, emergency or crisis

3.4

incident management team

group of individuals functionally responsible for planning for the likelihood and management of an *incident* (3.3)

Note 1 to entry: Responsibilities of the incident management team can include liaison with external *organizations* (3.8), *stakeholders* (3.15) and families.

Note 2 to entry: It is possible for the team to be one individual.

Note 3 to entry: The composition of the incident management team can change based on the evolution of the situation and the seriousness of the incident or crisis.

3.5

leadership team

team that includes the *trip leader* (3.21), any other leaders and *trip activity specialists* (3.20), approved by the *trip organizer* (3.22) to deliver the *trip* (3.19)

Note 1 to entry: It is recognized that many trips can be run by the trip leader only, in which case there would be a leadership team consisting of one person, with the trip leader fulfilling the requirements of both the leader and leadership team.

Note 2 to entry: This can include teachers, parents, chaperones, or other volunteers, if they have responsibilities in organizing the trip.

3.6

minor

person who has not yet attained the age of majority

Note 1 to entry: The age of majority can vary across countries or jurisdictions.

Note 2 to entry: For *trip* (3.19) into different jurisdictions, the status of individual *participants* (3.9) can change depending on the locale.

3.7

off-duty time

periods of time during a *trip* (3.19) when members of the *leadership team* (3.5) are not engaged in work activities but remain under the responsibility of, and responsible to, the *trip organizer* (3.22)

~~Note 1 to entry: This definition is based on that contained in ISO 31030 but has been modified to be more specifically focussed on the scope of this document.~~

~~Note 2 to entry:~~ ~~Note 1 to entry:~~ Members of the leadership team can retain supervisory responsibilities if required during such time.

[SOURCE: ISO 31030:2021, 3.7, modified — definition modified to be more specifically focused on the scope of this document. Note 1 to entry replaced.]

3.8

organization

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to, sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, association, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

[SOURCE: ISO 31022:2020, 3.4, modified — “but is not limited to” and “association” added to Note 1 to entry has been modified.]

3.9

participant

person taking part in ~~the~~ *trip* (3.19) ~~but~~ who is not a member of the *leadership team* (3.5)

Note 1 to entry: This can also include teachers, parents, chaperones, or other volunteers, if they are not members of the leadership team.

3.10

personal leave time

~~Period~~ period of time during a *trip* (3.19) when a member of the *leadership team* (3.5) takes leave of absence, or other ~~authorised~~ authorized time-off, and when their duties associated with the trip cease for a specified duration.

3.11

risk

effect of uncertainty on objectives

Note 1 to entry: An effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative or both, and can address, create or result in opportunities and *threats* (3.17).

Note 2 to entry: Objectives can have different aspects and categories, and can be applied at different levels.

Note 3 to entry: Risk is usually expressed in terms of risk sources, potential events, their consequences and their likelihood.

[SOURCE: ISO 31000:2018, 3.1]

3.12

risk assessment

overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation

[SOURCE: ISO 31073:2022, [3.3.8](#)]

3.13

risk treatment

process to modify *risk* ([3.11](#))

Note 1 to entry: Risk treatment can involve:

- avoiding the risk by deciding not to start or continue with the activity that gives rise to the risk;
- managing risk to an acceptable level in order to pursue an opportunity;
- removing the risk source;
- changing the likelihood;
- changing the consequences;
- sharing the risk with another party or parties (including contracts and risk financing);
- retaining the risk by informed decision.

Note 2 to entry: Risk treatments that deal with negative consequences are sometimes referred to as “risk mitigation”, “risk elimination”, “risk prevention” and “risk reduction”. [DIS 31031](#)

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Note 3 to entry: Risk treatment can create new risks or modify existing risks.

[SOURCE: ISO 31073:2022, [3.3.32](#), modified — “managing risk to an acceptable level” replaced “taking or increasing risk” in Note 1 to entry ~~amended~~.]

3.14

safeguarding

process to ensure the safety, health, well-being and human rights of children and youths to protect them from abuse, physical and emotional harm, and neglect

Note 1 to entry: Safeguarding is also applicable for *vulnerable adults* ([3.23](#)).

3.15

stakeholder

person or *organization* ([3.8](#)) that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity

Note 1 to entry: The term “interested party” can be used as an alternative to “stakeholder”.

[SOURCE: ISO 31000:2018, 3.3]

3.16

third-party provider

~~External~~external organization (3.8) providing services, ~~or~~ products, or both, on behalf of the *trip organizer* (3.22) in accordance with agreed specifications, terms and conditions.

3.17

threat

potential source of danger, harm or other undesirable outcome

[SOURCE: ISO 31073:2022, 3.3.13, modified —Notes 1 and 2 to entry ~~have been~~ deleted.]

3.18

top management

person or group of people who directs and controls an *organization* (3.8) at the highest level

3.19

trip

any off-site travel ~~and~~ or activity, ~~or both~~, undertaken by *participants* (3.9) under the direction and responsibility of the *trip organizer* (3.22)

3.20

trip activity specialist

individual having expertise in a particular activity, taking part in the *trip* (3.19) and contributing, within their competence regarding that designated activity, to decisions taken by the *leadership team* (3.5)

Note 1 to entry: ~~the~~ The trip activity specialist can be employed by the *trip organizer* (3.22) or by a *third-party provider* (3.16).

3.21

trip leader

designated individual taking lead responsibility for the *trip* (3.19) under the direction of the *trip organizer* (3.22)

3.22

trip organizer

organization (3.8) having overall accountability for all aspects of the *trip* (3.19), provided either on a voluntary basis or in return for payment

3.23

vulnerable adult

individual who has reached the age of majority but does not have the capacity, or understanding, to make fully informed decisions concerning their participation in and during *trips* (3.19), visits and adventurous activities

4 Understanding the organization and its context

4.1 Operating context

The trip organizer should have a clear understanding of the factors that can affect or influence its trip risk management programme objectives, including the external and internal context in which it operates.

The internal context can include, but is not limited to, the trip organizer's:

- vision, mission, values and culture;
- governance, structure, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities;

- strategy, objectives and policies;
- plans, standards, guidelines, regulations and instructions;
- risk management strategy including risk criteria;
- range and type of trips and their intended experience, learning and developmental opportunities;
- capabilities, competence and profiles of leaders;
- capabilities and profiles of participants;
- resources, techniques and tools needed to manage organizational trip risks;
- data, information systems and information flows.

The external context can include, but is not limited to:

- political, socio-economic, cultural, legal, regulatory factors, whether international, national, regional, or local;
- political violence (including terrorism, insurgency, politically motivated unrest, instability and war);
- social unrest (including sectarian, communal and ethnic violence);
- violent and petty crime;
- the quality, availability and reliability of transport;
- the quality, availability and reliability of telecommunications;
- the effectiveness of public and private security and emergency services;
- the responsibilities of other parties for the participants;
- natural or geographic factors;
- susceptibility to natural disasters;
- potential health threats;
- information/cyber security;
- quality of accommodation;
- terrain/road conditions;
- norms and quality of local health infrastructure.

4.2 Stakeholders

When developing policies and programmes, trip organizers need to consult and engage with appropriate stakeholders to make the trip risk management function useful to as wide a group as possible. The trip organizer should determine the internal and external stakeholders that are relevant to trip risk management. Internal stakeholders are interests from within the organization itself while external stakeholders are associated parties such as third-party providers and parents or guardians of participants.