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Tourism and related services — Requirements and recommendations for beach operation

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Tourism and related services — Requirements and recommendations for beach operation

Tourisme et services connexes — Exigences et recommandations pour les opérations de plage

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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 documents 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).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

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

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: Foreword - Supplementary information

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

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Introduction

At present, there are no specific standards for beaches and very little guidance for beach management to help operators determine and plan for beach management. As a result, many beaches have not been developed or managed in a sustainable way, resulting in some loss of the natural beauty of the site and, consequently, a negative beach user experience. This International Standard seeks to provide guidance in helping to establish international benchmarks for beach management and safety.

The aim of this International Standard is to help beach operators make better-informed decisions about managing the beaches for which they are responsible, using a consistent approach based on best practice. In addition to general beach organization, this International Standard includes other important aspects, such as providing education and information on beach safety, signage, access and zoning, supervision and rescue, water quality and beach facilities.

Every beach is unique and has its own characteristics. A particular beach could be defined as a low activity beach for the majority of the year, but classified as high activity beach for two weeks of the year (e.g. during a high season or a carnival period), thus requiring a different management approach to be adopted and temporary features to be added. This International Standard covers both high activity beaches and low activity beaches, without a clear segregation of beach type.

The beach operator can apply specific features of this International Standard to a particular beach, as stipulated in the results of a beach risk assessment exercise. The beach risk assessment exercise is a simple way to help review the management and safety issues for each beach.

In order to determine how to implement this International Standard, it is intended that a robust risk management process is used which highlights the risks and hazards present at each beach and which identifies the appropriate control measures required to reduce the likelihood of frequency or impact (see Clause 6). The risk assessment also identifies the beach type (i.e. high activity beach or low activity beach).

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INTERNATIONAL STANDARD ISO 13009:2015(E)

Tourism and related services — Requirements and recommendations for beach operation

1 Scope

This International Standard establishes general requirements and recommendations for beach operators that offer tourist and visitor services. It provides guidance for both beach operators and users regarding the delivery of sustainable management and planning, beach ownership, sustainable infrastructure and service provision needs, including beach safety, information and communication, cleaning and waste removal.

This International Standard is applicable to beaches during the bathing season.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 7001, *Graphical symbols — Public information symbols*

ISO 20712-1, *Water safety signs and beach safety flags — Part 1: Specifications for water safety signs used in workplaces and public areas*

ISO 20712-2, *Water safety signs and beach safety flags — Part 2: Specifications for beach safety flags — Colour, shape, meaning and performance*

ISO 20712-3, *Water safety signs and beach safety flags — Part 3: Guidance for use*

3 Terms and definitions

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

3.1
accessible beach
beach (3.3) that fulfils a number of requirements which make it safe to use by people with specific needs

3.2
bathing season
period of the year in which beach *services* (3.13) are available and a significant presence of bathers is foreseen, taking into account local factors and risk assessment

Note 1 to entry: See 6.2 for information on risk assessment.

3.3
beach
natural or artificial area, formed by sand, gravel, pebble, rock or another material, that facilitates access to the water and the bathing area where leisure activities are carried out and where *services* (3.13) are provided by the *beach operator* (3.4)

Note 1 to entry: This does not include promenades, pedestrian paths or similar that are joined to, or adjacent to, the beach.

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3.4
beach operator
organization (3.11) assigned to manage and inspect aspects related to a *beach* (3.3), including its public management, as well as its scope of influence

Note 1 to entry: The beach operator can be the local authority, or any organization that has been legally assigned to the management of the beach.

3.5
carrying capacity
maximum number of *users* (3.16) who can access and be accommodated on a *beach* (3.3) or in the water, within a given period of time

Note 1 to entry: See Annex A for additional information.

3.6
emergency services controller
appropriate and competent person who coordinates coastal emergencies or plans and liaises with external agencies

Note 1 to entry: External agencies include the police, fire service, ambulance, coastguard, military, civil protection or lifeguards.

Note 2 to entry: An agency or service normally has legal status for coordinating coastal-based emergencies.

3.7
environment
conditions in which an *organization* (3.11) operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, human beings and their inter-relationships

3.8
first aid
emergency procedures aimed at maintaining vital functions whilst ensuring that the condition of a person who is wounded, unconscious or whose life is in danger is not aggravated, until he or she receives more qualified assistance

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 21102:2013, 2.9]

3.9
high activity beach
beach (3.3) where recreation and commercial activities occur frequently

Note 1 to entry: High activity is due to ease of access, availability of facilities, traditional use or where the beach is well advertised/supervised for enjoyment by *users* (3.16).

3.10
low activity beach
beach (3.3) where recreation and commercial activities occur rarely

Note 1 to entry: Low activity is mostly due to either poor beach access issues or proximity to settlements.

3.11
organization
group of people and facilities with an arrangement of responsibilities, authorities and relationships

EXAMPLE Company, corporation, firm, enterprise, institution, charity, sole trader, association, or parts or combination thereof.

Note 1 to entry: Note1 to entry: The arrangement is generally orderly.

Note 2 to entry: An organization can be public or private.

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Note 3 to entry: This definition is valid for the purposes of quality management system standards. The term "organization" is defined differently in ISO/IEC Guide 2.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2005, 3.3.1]

3.12
rescue service
agency or *organization* (3.11) with trained and equipped personnel that can respond immediately to coastal-based emergencies

Note 1 to entry: Rescue services include the police, fire service, ambulance, coastguard, military, civil protection or lifeguards.

3.13
service
provision specifically to individuals or groups of individuals in order to facilitate activities of public use

Note 1 to entry: A service usually requires the support of specific installations, even though in some cases it can function without them.

3.14
supplier
organization (3.11) or person providing a product or *service* (3.13)

Note 1 to entry: Products and services include concessions and contracts.

3.15
surveillance tower
surveillance point
facility on or near the *beach* (3.3) at locations that allow trained personnel to have good observation of, and quick access to, the beach and water in order to perform a rescue or to inform the *users* (3.16) of hazards

Note 1 to entry: Lifeguards and wardens are trained personnel.

3.16
user
person who visits the *beach* (3.3) for leisure or for work

Note 1 to entry: Users can be visitors, tourists, workers and local residents.

4 General requirements and guidance for managing beaches

4.1 General

Coasts around the world face increasing demands to cater for a wide range of recreational activities, with millions of tourists visiting coastal areas each year. Tourism is the world's third largest industry and the primary economic sector in many regions. As a result, there is increasing competition for the use of resources in coastal waters and beach areas.

Beach activities are becoming more varied, ranging from para-karting to power boating; swimming to sailing and from horse riding to beach barbequing. Many activities, particularly those involving more active participation, require some form of management to reduce potential conflict between different user groups, and trying to cater for such a diverse range of activities can cause difficulties. Not only do conflicts need to be resolved between different users, but differences between locals and tourists also need to be considered. The requirements of local residents differ from those of tourists, and balancing their respective needs is a major contributory factor in successful beach use and management.

Beaches can have several uses, including:

— recreation and leisure;

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— coast protection;

— sporting activities;

— educational events, socio-cultural, religious or sporting;

— nature conservation;

— fishing and collecting shellfish;

— military activities.

Safety and security are increasingly important issues on beaches, and beach operators and local authorities now pay closer attention to the physical safety of individuals and the protection of the natural environment

It is not possible to have easy access to each beach, but all beaches should be made as accessible as possible. Wherever feasible, all beach equipment and facilities provided should be made accessible to all users, including to people with specific needs (e.g. by providing parking with designated places, sanitary services, first aid services, bars and restaurants, and practical information at the beach entrance).

4.2 Benefits of standard compliance

4.2.1 Benefits

There are sustainable benefits associated with this International Standard. Its value to tourist destinations is not only to help beach operators improve the beach experience for users, but also to help improve the economic and social fabric of beach resorts and local coastal communities as a whole. This International Standard seeks to:

a) provide consistency and credibility to beach management issues;

b) improve the visibility of beach issues within policy setting on coastal-related legislation and regulation;

c) harmonize national practices into global systems;

d) improve understanding and information of beach risks and issues;

e) increase recreation and access to beaches and near-shore waters;

f) encourage monitoring and evaluation;

g) provide information on the general environmental management on the beach;

h) contribute to the growing public awareness of, and commitment to sustainable development;

i) contribute to beach environmental protection;

j) improve the tourist experience and the satisfaction of the users by providing a quality service, in order to build customer loyalty and increase the tourism demand of the destination and therefore the economic growth for the region.

4.2.2 Risks

There are many potential risks in maintaining the status quo and not undertaking a standards-based approach to managing beaches, such as the following examples.

a) Economic impact:

— lose out to neighbouring competition;

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— poor beach tourism development planning: insensitive landscaping, views to the sea and badly-designed coastal engineering structures;

— investment in the tourism product reduced;

— negative portrayal in the media;

— poorly managed facilities and equipment.

b) Social implications:

— not meeting users expectations;

— health and safety: accidents and illness;

— residents staying away from the beach: perceptions challenged;

— reputation for criminal and nuisance activity;

— poor planning management;

— pollution.

4.3 Linking beach operation with hazard management

This International Standard considers how best to instil appropriate beach designs into climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies. For example, coastal flooding and erosion will continue to occur as the frequency of severe flooding events is likely to increase with the onset of climate change and increased storminess. Beach infrastructure damage, however, often only occurs when one exposes items of value to coastal processes (e.g. building too close to high tide mark). The lack of formal building regulation and development control is a significant issue, especially with regard to the appropriate construction of beach facilities.

In addition to building regulation, codes of practice in general are a recommended way forward to help developers design and manage beaches for specific beach recreational and water based activities. Any code of practice produced should be scientifically justifiable, and so where additional evidence-based and/or fact finding studies are needed (i.e. beach hazard risk assessment work, see 4.5), this should be clearly outlined as a requirement prior to production of the code of practice.

The beach operator should develop a code of practice which can include recommendations on:

a) beach access design manual;

b) beach facilities (comfort services) building and design manual;

c) development control on beach (setback) area;

d) beach conservation;

e) establishing and regulating zones on beaches;

f) placement, maintenance and management of public rescue equipment and facilities;

g) beach safety information;

h) effective beach management and maintenance.

4.4 Beach ownership

Clarity is needed on beach ownership, responsibility and other regulatory measures. If beaches are deemed as public, this shall be clearly communicated by the beach operator, even if a beach lies in front of a hotel, which means that users can (in theory) frequent every beach. As a general approach, it is the

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beach operator's responsibility to gain clarity on whether any part of the beach could be purchased or leased by third-party (private) operators.

4.5 Planning

4.5.1 Identification of health risks

The beach operator shall establish, update, review annually and maintain a documented procedure to identify direct or indirect health risks related to beach activities, services, installations and resources that could have an impact on the health and well-being of users. The identification of possible health risks to beach users shall include groups of risks associated with the following:

— drinkable water supply points;

— the cleanliness of the beach surface;

— the quality of bathing water (measured, recorded and presented in accordance with national/international best practices (see Annex B));

— tidal conditions regarding sanitary risks;

— heavy rains causing flooding, flow of discharged water and material onto the beach, temporary poor water quality;

— the physical characteristics of the beach (e.g. surfaces, man-made structures, rocks);

— coastal erosion and flooding;

— flora and fauna including marine life;

— installations and equipment associated with services provided at the beach;

— basic safety information and warnings.

The result of applying each criterion set out in the above list shall be based on objective evidence that allows verification of the results of any evaluation carried out.

The bathing water quality should comply with the quality guidelines defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) (see Reference [7]).

4.5.2 Emergency planning

The beach operator shall:

a) establish and document specific plans for emergency situations in order to prevent and reduce the impact and risks that are associated with them; these plans shall include:

   — identification of resources to address emergency situations;

   — identification and definition of responsibilities and authorities related to the responses in these situations;

b) have the emergency response plan from stakeholders and establish systems to coordinate with them;

c) have the necessary resources to address emergency plans;

d) check and record the effectiveness of the emergency plans in a practice exercise each year and every time that an accident or emergency situation arises, and revise them accordingly;

e) communicate the updated emergency plan to the emergency services controller.

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