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Managing risk for youth and school trips

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National foreword

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The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee RM/1, Risk management.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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Managing risk for youth and school trips

Gérer les risques pour les voyages scolaires et des jeunes

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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).

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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.

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Introduction

This 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 is 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.

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 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 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.

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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 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 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 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.

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Managing risk for youth and school trips

1 Scope

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

This document is 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 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 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 is applicable to the physical movement between locations, 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 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 apply to situations such as minors travelling with their families, as well as how to organize such trips.

This document does not apply to virtual travel, although some parts of it can be relevant.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

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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 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.

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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: 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.]

3.9
participant
person taking part in a *trip* (3.19) 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 of time during a *trip* (3.19) when a member of the *leadership team* (3.5) takes leave of absence, or other 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;

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— 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”.

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.]

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 *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 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 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 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)

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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;

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— 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.

Annex A provides examples of the range of potential internal and external stakeholders.

4.3 Organizational objectives and risk criteria

Organizations should balance the objectives and opportunities of their trip programme with the steps necessary to manage and control the potential risks. Risk treatment options should be proportionate to the outcomes of the risk assessment process. Organizations should consider the level of risk they are prepared to accept to meet their trip objectives and take advantage of any opportunities, putting in place appropriate arrangements to manage the risk effectively. There can be occasions where the level of risk is unacceptable and the trip should not take place.

It is recommended that an organization's risk owners identify and record their trip risk criteria in their trip risk management policy (see 5.2).

4.4 Risk profile

An organization should have a clear understanding of its risk profile and the dynamic trip risk management landscape in which it operates or plans to operate. To do this, an organization should review trip risk management objectives in relation to:

— context and type of the organization;

— nature of trips and available activities; and their intended experience, learning and developmental opportunities;

— destinations;

— profiles and objectives of participants and members of the leadership team.

A risk profile can incorporate different risks which can be interdependent.

The duration, location, number, frequency and nature of trips organized affect the risk profile. For example:

— short duration trips to a local museum are very different from an exploration or expedition abroad;

— commercial providers of activities and courses are unlikely to/do not have the same knowledge of individual participants as a school;

— supervision and safeguarding issues for a residential trip abroad for young teens are very different if the purpose is a cultural language exchange and involves staying with host families there compared with a residential centre providing adventure activities.

Behavioural characteristics of participants can also affect the risk profile.

A trip organizer should understand the relevant legislation, regulatory requirements and codes of practice, etc. which are relevant in their country of origin and how they can differ in other countries in which their

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trips take place. They should also take account of their duty of care and safeguarding responsibilities, business resilience policies and arrangements and sustainability objectives, as all can have a positive effect on risk treatment considerations.

Trip organizers need to proactively monitor and review their identified, evolving and emerging risks. Their impact on the trip organizer's trip risk management should be considered and any changes documented and acted upon.

4.5 Trip risk management and delivery

The key risks in the risk profile inevitably impact the extent to which the trip organizer, in consultation with the leadership team, can manage the risk in-house or needs to rely on support from third-party organizations to assist or deliver necessary functions. This is an important factor to address when developing and implementing a trip risk management policy and plan.

5 Establishing the framework for managing risk for trips

5.1 Leadership and commitment

Top management should take and demonstrate ownership of the trip organizer's trip risks and provide evidence of its commitment and support in their effective management by:

— ensuring that the trip risk management policy and objectives are established and are compatible with the strategic direction of the trip organizer;

— taking accountability for the effectiveness of the trip risk management process ensuring their integration into its wider operational processes and activities;

— ensuring that the resources needed for its trip risk management programme (hereafter referred to as the "programme") are available;

— communicating the importance of effective trip risk management and of conforming to the trip risk management process and its legal responsibilities;

— ensuring that the programme achieves its intended outcome(s);

— directing and supporting persons to contribute to the effectiveness of the programme;

— supporting other relevant management roles to demonstrate their leadership as it applies to their areas of responsibility;

— conducting, at planned intervals, management reviews of the programme;

— promoting improvement.

A trip organizer should provide instructions and adequate resources for the development and implementation of a trip risk programme.

5.2 Policy

The policy should be a high-level document that indicates the trip organizer's strategic approach to managing trip risks, which is part of its broader risk management strategy. This policy should be fully aligned with the intentions and direction of the trip organizer, as formally expressed by its top management.

Top management should establish a trip risk management policy that:

— defines its overall purpose and objectives, and the principles, intention and direction to achieve them;

— is appropriate for the needs and resources of the trip organizer;

— becomes an integral part of the trip organizer's management policy;

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— is aligned with the trip organizer's risk management, organizational resilience, travel procurement and sustainability policies;

— refers to relevant legislation, standards, policies and codes of practice;

— establishes principles for the risk assessment process including participant selection, supervision and safeguarding;

— takes into consideration (or establishes) the risk criteria of the trip organizer, see ISO 31000;

— defines roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of all relevant stakeholders including their competence;

— sets out the trip organizer's policy with respect to off-duty time and personal leave time associated with any trip (including consumption of alcohol, the use of recreational substances and other medications that can affect judgement or capabilities).

The policy should:

— be approved by top management;

— be made available to all appropriate stakeholders;

— be defined and effectively communicated within the organization through information, education and training;

— be integrated with any broader risk management framework to ensure a consistent approach to risk management within the organization;

— be periodically reviewed for relevancy and consistent application.

The policy should include an exception process to enable an organization to be agile and responsive to organizational needs. This should be designed to ensure that any requested exceptions to the policy requirements are:

— considered in line with the organization's risk management policy, priorities and other relevant criteria;

— evaluated and approved by the relevant stakeholders;

— managed with compensating controls if necessary;

— documented and reported.

For example, the trip organizer and the leadership team sometimes need to book trips for participants and members of the leadership team outside the policy for some reason. In these cases, it is crucial that they submit a policy exception request.

It is important that the policy exception request, approval or disapproval, and any associated controls or recommendations, is acknowledged and documented.

If the trip organizer uses a travel management company to make bookings, then the policy, the policy exception process and any changes to either should be communicated to the travel management company in a clear and timely manner.

5.3 Roles, responsibilities and accountability

Ultimate accountability for risk resides with top management, even where responsibilities have been delegated to others. If delegation of authority is in place, it should be documented in writing.

Both organizations and individuals can have legal responsibilities (which can include criminal liabilities); these can vary across jurisdictions.

The trip risk management function should be managed by a person or team with the necessary experience and competence.

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