



# VIRISTAR

## Outdoor Program Risk Management

### Summary of Key Points

- I. Risks in outdoor programs are unavoidable, but they can be managed by taking steps to reduce, transfer, eliminate and accept risks.
- II. Risk reduction aims to reduce risks to a socially acceptable level. What is socially acceptable depends on applicable laws, safety standards, and cultural norms. It is the responsibility of the outdoor program to understand what an acceptable level of risk is for their situation and to not exceed that level.
- III. Domains where outdoor risks are found include (Organizational) Culture, Activities and Program Areas, Staff, Equipment, Participants, Subcontractors, Transportation and Business Administration. Specific policies, procedures and practices should be in place to manage these risks.
- IV. Instruments (tools) that can help manage risks across all risk domains include Risk Transfer, Incident Management, Incident Reporting, Incident Reviews, Risk Management Committee, Medical Screening, Risk Management Reviews, Media Relations, Documentation, Accreditation and Seeing Systems. These instruments should be used as appropriate.
- V. Risks exist and interact with each other in a complex system. Risks therefore cannot be addressed in isolation. A systems approach to managing risk should be employed.

### Outdoor Program Risk Management Websites (in English language)

Disclaimer: This list is not a recommendation or endorsement. Content may not be current, accurate, or reliable. Use at your own risk.

#### **Global**

New Zealand outdoor adventure safety	supportadventure.co.nz
Australian Adventure Activity Standard	australianaas.org.au
UK Adventure Activities Licensing Authority	hse.gov.uk/aala
International Organization for Standardization	iso.org
Association for Experiential Education	aee.org
Wilderness Risk Management Conference	nols.edu/wrmc
Wilderness Medical Society	wms.org
Outdoor education	outdoored.com
World Health Organization	who.int
Wilderness Medicine Educators Collaborative	wfr-sop.org
Education Outside the Classroom, NZ Ministry of Ed.	eotc.tki.org.nz

#### **Activity-specific**

<u>Challenge course</u> : Association for Challenge Course Technology	acctinfo.org
<u>Climbing, Mountaineering</u> : International Climbing & Mountaineering Federation	theuiaa.org
International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations	ifmga.info
<u>Canoeing, Kayaking</u> : International Canoe Federation	canoeicf.com
<u>Tree Climbing</u> : Global Organization of Tree Climbers	gotreeclimbing.org
<u>Sailing</u> : World Sailing	sailing.org

**National activity-specific websites:** check local resources

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