Risk Management Plan

template example

example organization: nonprofit in Southeast Asia
providing outdoor and experiential activities for international audience

Risk Management Plans for organizations may look very different from this template example.

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Introduction

A Message from the CEO

There is nothing more important to us than the safety and well-being of our students, staff and community members. Risk management is a top priority in everything we do.

We have created a set of procedures, documents and operating systems to help us achieve excellence in safety outcomes. This document outlines those, and serves to remind our staff and others of our unbreakable commitment to meeting or exceeding safety standards.

I expect every member of our team to value safety as a core priority. It's my job to both be a role model of valuing good risk management, and to put in place the structures to make that priority come to live in the work that we do. This document is intended to illustrate both our unwavering commitment to risk management, and to describe the principal organizational elements that help us meet our risk management goals.

The Purpose of this Risk Management Plan

The purpose of this Risk Management Plan (RMP) is to describe the major policies, procedures, values and systems we use in managing risks. The RMP also summarizes the principal risk management instruments, or tools, we use to keep risks as low as reasonably practicable.

The RMP is both a resource for new and long-time staff, and provides information to current and prospective students, clients and community members about our overarching approach to managing risk.

Both our procedures and best practices in risk management for experiential learning organizations such as ours are constantly evolving. This document should be updated regularly as we seek to continuously improve its management of risk.

This document can be used as a training resource for new staff, a reminder and reference for current personnel, and a guide for self-audits of our organizational safety practices. It can also be shared with stakeholders to provide high-level information about how we conceptualize and meet our risk management aims.

Every employee and volunteer should be provided with this risk management plan, review it thoroughly, and be given the opportunity to ask questions about it.

Risk Management Mission Statement

Our Risk Management Mission Statement is:

To minimize risks to our students, staff, client organizations, community members and stakeholders as far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with all applicable risk management and health & safety laws, rules and regulations.

We will do this while providing high-quality experiential learning programs in a socially responsible and financially sustainable manner.

<u>Our Philosophy of Risk Management</u>

We recognize that risk is inherent in the experiential learning activities that we do, such as traveling to remote locations and low-resource communities, hiking, snorkeling, kayaking, and road travel, among others.

We also believe that experiencing certain risks in carefully constructed and well-managed experiential learning activities can provide educational value for our students.

For example, conducting a snorkeling-based transect study of the marine environment can carry certain risks, such as sunburn or worse, but when activities are well-managed, the learning benefits can outweigh risks.

We do not seek for its students or staff to experience risks for their own sake, but only as required to meet the organization's programmatic objectives.

Consequently, we seek to provide the programmatic activities with the lowest inherent risk possible, but which still meet our educational objectives.

Roles and Responsibilities: Staff and Program Partners

Each and every member of our community has an important part to play in managing risks. These roles and responsibilities are summarized below.

<u>Executive Director.</u> Responsible for instituting risk management systems and ensuring safety outcomes meet objectives. Oversee all aspects of incident prevention and response. Sit on Risk Management Committee.

<u>Associate Director.</u> Responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations of risk management systems. Sit on Risk Management Committee.

<u>Program Staff Supervisor.</u> Responsible for ensuring program staff selection, training, supervision, and professional development support meeting risk management goals. Lead initial response to program-related field incidents. Sit on Risk Management Committee.

<u>Business Manager.</u> Responsible for developing procedures for management of administrative-focused risks such as fraud, theft, and IT-related risks, and seeing that they are followed appropriately.

<u>Administrative Supervisor.</u> Responsible for ensuring management of administrative-focused risks such as fraud, theft, and IT-related risks is conducted appropriately.

<u>Admin/Facilities Manager.</u> Responsible for carrying out assigned administrative risk management activities. Manages facilities-related risks regarding site security, code compliance, repairs and maintenance.

Bookkeeper. Responsible for ensuring accuracy of ledgers and accounts, and flagging potential suspicious financial activity.

Visa manager. Responsible for ensuring that all relevant individuals have the appropriate visas needed for travel and residency on a timely basis.

Executive Assistant. Responsible for performing risk management-related administrative duties including communications, reference checks, and office management activities appropriately.

Field staff. Responsible for preventing and responding to field-based incidents, including student training and supervision; equipment management; transportation risk management; activity or location-based risks, managing program partner-related risks, emergency response, and reporting and documentation.

Thai language staff, academic staff/course professors. Responsible for managing risks present in classroom and field-based contexts, including related to student behavior, activity or location-based risks, and equipment/facilities-related risks.

US Manager. Responsible for ensuring successful day-to-day US-based operations of the organization, including financial management, developing institutional partnerships, and enrollment management, and managing financial and administrative risks related to those activities.

Associate Director of Admissions & Institutional Relations. Responsible for managing risks related to student recruitment, screening and enrolling; tuition-based financial performance, and partner institution relationships.

Accountant. Responsible for accuracy of financial statements, GAAP conformance, and compliance with financial regulations.

Social worker. Responsible for creating and operating effective systems to prevent and manage student-related emotional, psychological and psychiatric incidents.

Board members. Responsible for ensuring that US-based nonprofit providing philanthropic and other support to our organization meets legal, regulatory, financial, and operational objectives.

Board members. Responsible for ensuring that Thailand-based foundation operating the program activities meets legal, regulatory, financial, and operational objectives.

Program Partners (Sending Academic Institutions). Responsible for providing us with information necessary for us to assess and manage student-related and other risks. Responsible for complying with our expectations regarding student eligibility standards, timely communications, and effective collaboration in major incident response.

> The following documents provide information on our personnel roles and responsibilities:
> - **Position announcements**
> - **Job descriptions**
> - **Expectations & Guidelines for Faculty-Led Programs**

Risk Management Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Safety Culture

A positive safety culture is essential for achieving good risk management outcomes. This means that we must, on an ongoing basis, articulate that safety is an important priority at the organization, and emphasize that our students and partner institutions expect us to manage risks proactively and to a very high standard.

We also have an obligation to provide the financial, staff, administrative and other resources to allow pro-safety behavior to flourish. We must set clear safety objectives, empower staff and students to meet them, and evaluate if our efforts meet expectations. And, we must always seek ways to improve our safety culture.

Examples of ways we communicate our commitment to safety include, but are not limited to:
1. Recruiting and hiring staff with a demonstrated commitment to safety
2. Providing extensive risk management training to staff, including in our risk management procedures, in remote/wilderness and emergency medicine, and in incident response
3. Planning program operations to minimize inherent risks while still meeting educational aims
4. Carefully screening students, and rejecting those who are unable to meet safety requirements
5. Implementing policies and procedures to meet or exceed industry safety standards
6. Attending (and presenting at) continuing education experiences (such as conferences) addressing risk management
7. Hiring risk management advisors/consultants as needed
8. Providing suitable and well-managed program gear, facilities and transportation options
9. Encouraging staff to report errors and incidents, without fear of unjust reprisal
10. Including safety objectives in job descriptions, performance appraisals, and regular company communications

In these ways and others, our leadership seeks to instill an appreciation of the importance of safety in our staff, and provide a working environment and the operational resources that support a positive culture of safety.

New Element Readiness Assessments

We have been providing experiential education courses in Thailand for a primarily USA-based collegiate audience since 1998. Although we have shown decades of consistency in operating areas, student demographics, and program activities, we continue to innovate and respond to changes in participant populations and operating environments.

Prior to making a significant change in course areas, participant profiles, or programmatic activities, we go through a comprehensive "New Element Readiness Assessment" (NERA) process to help ensure that safety and quality will continue to meet our standards.

Recommended changes to policies and procedures that arise from this NERA process are incorporated into operations documents such as emergency response plans or field staff handbooks, and are included in staff trainings as appropriate.

Course Area Guides and Site Assessments

We maintain detailed risk management-related information for each of its areas of operation. This information includes, but is not limited to:
- Hazardous organisms of the course area, and their management
- Environmental, cultural or political hazards particular to the course area
- Emergency call guide with contact information for local emergency services
- Information on local medical facilities, including facility name, level of service provided, contact information, driving directions, and hours of operation

This information is located in the Field Instructor Handbook. Content is reviewed and updated as needed, on an annual basis.

Our staff also proactively assess risks of locations used in courses, giving special attention to sites used as overnight accommodations by students. Management evaluates homestay sites and student lodging well in advance of student arrival, and staff also evaluate site suitability upon group arrival at the location.

In addition, we systematically gather information about the areas and facilities it uses in program operations following the conclusion of a program/course, in a Course Debrief Form completed by field instructors. Management systematically reviews this information and conducts follow-up as appropriate.

Staff Recruiting, Hiring, Training, Supervision, & Retention

We recognize that human error is a predominant causal factor in many incidents. In an effort to minimize human factors in incident causation, we invest significantly in supporting personnel to have the knowledge, skills, abilities and values important to making good judgements both on a routine basis and during an emergency.

We use the following documents and systems to manage personnel-related risks:
- Written position announcements describing required risk management qualifications and capacities
- Written job descriptions recording minimum and preferred risk management qualifications and capacities
- A policy of conducting comprehensive interviews, reviewing resume/application materials, checking multiple references, and (depending on position) conducting background checks for criminal history and/or motor vehicle operating record, before hire, and retaining application materials on file

- A written training plan describing what risk management topics are covered for each job position, and how frequently
- A tracking system to ensure that staff qualifications (such as emergency medical training) are kept current
- Written procedures and 'check-off' documents regarding approving staff to assist with, lead, or train others on particular activities
- Regular review opportunities (e.g. at the end of each course/program) to help staff understand their risk management strengths and opportunities, and make improvements
- A practice of systematically recognizing and celebrating excellence in risk management by staff
- Efforts to provide compensation, benefits, work schedule, promotion and professional development opportunities, and a work environment for retaining high-performing staff on a long-term basis
- An exit interview process to help us understand how it can improve personnel engagement and retention

The following documents provide information on personnel risk management practices:
- **Position announcements**
- **Job descriptions**
- **Interview template**
- **Resumes, references, background checks on file**
- **Staff Training Plan**
- **Qualifications tracking spreadsheet**
- **Staff check-off documents (templates and completed forms)**
- **Performance evaluation forms (templates and completed forms)**
- **Exit interview template**

Equipment Management

Good equipment management is a priority for us, as this has a significant influence on safety, customer service satisfaction, and course quality. "Equipment" here includes gear, supplies, consumable materials, vehicles, buildings and related items owned or managed by us.

Selection. We source equipment from reputable vendors.

Purchase. We make all reasonable efforts to purchase high quality equipment, and for items with specific retirement or expiration dates, retains information about the date of manufacture or date of purchase as appropriate.

Use. We require equipment to be used according to manufacturer specifications, unless deviation is clearly warranted. Information on how to use certain items (such as medications and satellite-based communicator devices) is provided to relevant staff.

Documentation. We retain relevant documents (particularly for life-safety items) as appropriate; these documents include dated purchase receipts, maintenance and repair records, and use logs.

Maintenance, repair and inspection. We maintain, repair and inspect equipment according to original equipment manufacturer recommendations, or industry standards, as appropriate. This work is done by

qualified persons. Maintenance, repair and inspection records for life-safety equipment (such as motor vehicles) are maintained.

Availability, location and storage. Equipment is located so as to be readily accessible as needed, is stored with appropriate security and environmental (e.g. humidity) controls, and according to manufacturer and regulator direction.

Retirement and recall. Equipment and supplies (such as PDFs or medication) with retirement/expiration dates is irreversibly retired or destroyed at retirement/expiration date, unless it's clearly appropriate to do otherwise. We pay attention to safety recall notices and follows them as appropriate.

Inventory control. We use a documented inventory control, check-in/check-out and replenishment system for managing equipment and supplies inventories, including for first aid kit contents and materials issued and de-issued for courses/programs.

Training. Our gear management personnel and field instructors receive sufficient training, along with financial and other resources, to adequately manage equipment. "Check-off" records documenting successful completion of activity-related equipment training are used and retained in personnel files. Students receive appropriate training in use of technical equipment (such as kayaking gear and rescue items).

Participant equipment. We supply a gear list to participants prior to their arrival, and conducts gear checks to ensure participants have appropriate equipment.

Third-party equipment. We follow the practices described above, as appropriate, when sourcing, inspecting, and using equipment rented or otherwise acquired from third parties.

The following documents provide information on equipment management practices:
- **Gear issue forms**
- **Gear de-issue forms**
- **Equipment purchase records**
- **Equipment inspection records**
- **Equipment maintenance, repair records**
- **First Aid kit inventory lists**
- **Vehicle contents inventory list**
- **Participant equipment list**
- **Staff check-offs**
- **Staff Training Plan**

Student Management

Appropriate student management is an essential—and complex—element of good risk management. We have a set of policies and procedures in the Field Instructor Handbook that cover various aspects of managing students in the field. The Student Handbook covers safety topics for course/program participants. A field-based Emergency Response Plan and an administrative-oriented Emergency Response Plan are used to manage major incidents and evacuations from the field.

The following documents provide information on our participant management practices:
- **Field Instructor Handbook**
- **Student Handbook**
- **Emergency Response Plan (Administrative)**

Subcontractor Assessment and Management

Prior to using a subcontractor (vendor/provider), we assess potential subcontractors for suitability.

Subcontractors are asked to fill out a confidential questionnaire covering:
- Permits & Certificates
- Prior Experience
- Safety Record
- Safety Reviews
- Emergency Plan
- Equipment Standards
- Staff Qualifications
- Transportation
- Sub-Providers
- Liability Insurance
- Facilities Inspections

Hiring decisions are made based on responses to the questionnaire and any other available vendor information.

Subcontractors are also evaluated by our staff, as possible, during the period of hire.

Subcontractor performance is also evaluated after the period of engagement is completed, and assessments are recorded on a feedback form.

The following documents provide information on our vendor management system:
- **Vendor Questionnaire**
- **Vendor Questionnaire response materials (on file)**
- **Post-course/program evaluation (including vendor assessment)**
- **Transportation Vendor Assessment Checklist**
- **Transportation Vendor Assessment response materials (on file)**

Transportation

We recognize that transportation-related hazards are a significant issue in Thailand (and elsewhere). We have a comprehensive transportation risk management system, which includes:
- Procedures and documents for helping ensure that vehicles owned by us or provided by third parties meet requirements for maintenance, inspection, legal operation, insurance, record-keeping, and fitness for purpose
- Procedures and documents for helping ensure that drivers who are our staff or who are provided by third parties meet requirements for qualifications, training, and motor vehicle operating record

- Policies and procedures for motor vehicle operations, including emergency vehicles, pre-drive checklist, and emergency procedures, among others
- Procedures for managing passenger behavior
- Designing programs to minimize transportation and its attendant risks

The following documents provide information on our transportation risk management system:
- **Transportation Vendor Assessment Checklist**
- **Vehicle Operations Manual**
- **Vehicle operator written test**
- **Vehicle operator check-off**
- **Vehicle operator Driver Program authorization**
- **Pre-drive Vehicle Inspection Checklist**
- **Vehicle Accident Report Form**
- **Vehicle Maintenance/Repair Log**

Administrative Practices

Although this Risk Management Plan focuses on field-based risks, we also takes steps to minimize administrative risks. To this end, our organization:
- Takes reasonable steps to ensure its administrative facilities, from work-from-home offices to formal administrative headquarters structures, conform to relevant occupational health and safety regulations and code requirements
- Takes steps to secure confidential and proprietary data with a combination of physical and electronic security measures including lock-controlled physical access, firewalls, passwords, data backups, two-factor authentication, and user permission/access management.
- Uses annual external financial auditing and Dual Control in financial management to reduce risk of fraud or other loss
- Has a qualified attorney regularly review legal documents such as waivers, release of liability forms, leases and contracts
- Follows relevant non-discrimination practices in personnel matters
- Carefully reviews marketing materials to ensure that risks are conveyed accurately, and imprudent promises of absolute safety are not made
- Scans the larger environment of US-based higher education, experiential education, and the socio-political environment in Thailand, on an ongoing basis, to assess for long-term risks that may pose existential threats to our business model.

The following documents provide information on our administrative risk management system:
- **External audit reports by US-based CPA**
- **Documentation of legal review by qualified attorney**

Risk Management Instruments

Risk Transfer

We transfer risk to vendors, participants/program partners, and insurance providers.

We transfer risk to vendors (contractors/providers) by carefully selecting vendors by suitability of potential vendors, entering into written contracts with vendors which indemnify us for vendor negligence, requiring us to be listed as additional insured on vendor liability insurance policies as appropriate, and by carefully evaluating vendors during and at the end of their terms of service.

We transfer risk to participants by having participants sign a document through which the participant acknowledges and assumes the risks of participating in our programming, and indemnifies and releases us from liability.

We transfer risk to partner institutions (such as sending schools) through written service agreements where the institution acknowledges and assumes risks, and indemnifies and releases our organization from liability.

We transfers risk to program delivery partners through MOU or equivalent documentation where the institution acknowledges and assumes risks, and indemnifies and releases us from liability.

We transfer risk to insurance providers through the provision of suitable insurance coverage, which may include coverage for liability, professional liability, auto, medical, property, employee-related (e.g. worker's compensation, unemployment), Directors & Officers or other policies.

> The following documents provide information on our transfer of risk to others:
> - **Vendor contracts**
> - **Vendor certificates of additional insured**
> - **Assumption & Acknowledgement of Risk, Indemnification & Release of Liability agreements with participants and partner organizations**
> - **Insurance policies and certificates of insurance**

Incident Management

We seek to prevent incidents from occurring. However, in case an incident does come to pass, our staff have written emergency response plans, and staff go through training and emergency response drills to enable them to respond to emergencies skillfully and effectively.

We have an Emergency Response Plan for field staff that describes initial field response. This plan is embedded in the Field Instructor Handbook.

We also have a separate Emergency Response Plan for administrators, describing managerial responses to situations, including legal, insurance, HR, and media relations issues.

Field staff carry a telecommunications device by which to reach emergency services and our organization's management, and an emergency contact phone is carried 24/7 by administration when students are in the field.

We train all personnel with risk management responsibility in their risk management duties, including, as appropriate, emergency response. As part of this, we hold a comprehensive, multi-hour emergency response drill involving the entire organization (from field staff to senior leadership), typically on an annual basis.

Critical Incident Debriefing. Experiencing a major incident—directly or indirectly—can be a psychologically challenging experience. The incident can be experienced as traumatic, and stress can result. Sometimes, the level of stress interferes with normal life activities or quality of life to an unacceptable degree.

When a critical incident occurs, we will make available skilled debriefing/counseling resources to staff who may be affected and who may wish to take advantage of such resources. Access to skilled personnel will be made available by sus at no cost to staff.

Examples of critical incidents may include, but are not limited to:
- Fatality of staff or participant
- Permanently disabling injury or illness of staff or participant
- Assault, kidnapping, or violent crime

Critical incident debriefing may be held as group sessions and/or one-on-one sessions. Participation in debriefing/counseling sessions is optional.

As best practices in critical incident debriefing are evolving, this guidance may be adapted to meet current best practice.

The following documents provide information on our incident management system:
- **Emergency Response Plan (Field Staff)**, in Field Instructor Handbook
- **Emergency Response Plan (Administrative)**
- **Staff Training Plan**
- **Emergency Card**
- **Emergency Drill planning documentation**

Incident Reporting

Recording and analyzing safety incidents helps us engage in institutional learning and continual improvement. Our incident reporting system includes the following components

- Staff training on incident reporting, including encouragement to report incidents without fear of unjust reprisal
- Incident Report form
- SOAP notes
- Evacuation Report
- Medical Facility Visit Form
- Managerial analysis and synthesis of incident report individual and aggregate data
- Memos or other communications to staff regarding safety incidents, lessons learned, and changes to policy or procedure
- Risk management reviews to check that learning from incident report data has been durably transferred to institutionalized changes in organizational practice

We recognize that it is not enough to encourage staff to report incidents, and to gather incident report forms together. Incident report information must be evaluated to assess for trends and patterns, and

durable changes to our policies, procedures, documents and systems must be made in response to conclusions and action recommendations made from evaluation and synthesis of incident report data.

The following documents provide information on our incident management system:
- **Incident Report**
- **SOAP notes**
- **Incident Report tracking spreadsheet**
- **Medical Facility Visit Form**
- **Evacuation Report Form**

Incident Reviews

Major incidents (for example, significant property damage, traumatic brain injury without sequelae) at our organization go through a formal incident review process conducted by a team composed of members of our community. This internal incident review process systematically gathers incident information through document collection, site visits, interviews and other means necessary. A written report is generated describing the incident and enumerating recommendations to help prevent recurrence of similar incidents.

Critical incidents (for example, significant permanently disabling injury, fatality) go through an internal review process but also go through a formal incident review by an external body. The external review team is composed of individuals (not associated with us) qualified in reviewing incidents and with knowledge of standards and best practices for the activities associated with the incident (e.g. open water sea kayaking). A written report is generated by the review team and provided to us.

We hold the institutional knowledge, budgetary resources, and awareness of potential external review providers requisite for conducting internal or external incident reviews.

Risk Management Committee

We recognize that safety research indicates that external perspectives can provide valuable information to support good risk management. Consequently, we have a Risk Management Committee composed of both internal (our staff) and external members.

The committee's purpose, construction and activities are described in a Risk Management Committee charter document provided to all RMC members. The RMC meets regularly and keeps minutes of its meetings.

The committee has a proactive role, scanning the environment for resources, technologies, emerging best practices and other items which may help enhance our management of risk.

The committee also has a reactive role, reviewing incident reports and responding to requests for research or information from our staff.

The following documents provide information on Risk Management Committee:
- **Risk Management Committee charter**
- **Risk Management Committee meeting minutes**

Medical Screening

We screen participants and field staff for medical suitability for program participation, well prior to course start. We fully accept, conditionally accept, accept for partial participation, or medically reject students and staff for program participation as indicated.

We use an established medical health history form for this process. We use mental health specialist and physician medical advisor resources to support medical screening decision-making.

We also publish and uses an Essential Eligibility Requirements list in its screening process.

> The following documents provide information on our medical screening system:
> - **Medical screening form**
> - **Intake Interview Questions form**
> - **Essential Eligibility Requirements**
> - **Physician Referral form**
> - **Mental Health Referral form**

Risk Management Reviews

We recognize that periodic, formal, audits of its safety systems can help proactively prevent or mitigate future incidents. These Risk Management Reviews, or safety audits, are held on a regular basis (unlike incident reviews, which are retrospective, and take place following significant incidents).

We conduct a formal internal Risk Management Review using its own staff, approximately every four years. (The precise timing depends on our incident history, its programmatic and personnel stability, the presence or absence of changes in the overarching risk milieu, or other factors.) A report on recommendations for improvement is generated, and the recommendations are systematically acted upon.

We also retain an external organization to conduct a formal external Risk Management Review. These typically occur in between internal risk management reviews, so that internal and external reviews alternate. A report on recommendations for improvement is generated by the external review team, and the recommendations are systematically responded to by us.

> The following documents provide information on our Risk Management Review process:
> - **Risk Management Review reports (internal and external)**

Working with the Media

We recognize that being able to work effectively with the news media when a newsworthy incident involving us occurs supports both the public's right to know, and our institutional interests in helping ensure that media reports accurately portray our commitment to safety and quality.

Only our Administrative Supervisor, Executive Director, and the President of the Board are authorized to speak to the media as representatives of our organization.

We recognize that working effectively with new media is a learned skill, and values having its spokespersons participate in training regarding how to work effectively with news media.

All other employees, contractors, and staff are expressly prohibited from speaking with news media representatives, and should refer inquiries to the authorized spokespersons (starting with the Administrative Supervisor and Executive Director) listed above.

Documentation

We believes that good documentation helps our staff be clear on what *should be done*, and also helps all interested stakeholders (from management to investigating authorities) understand what *has been done*.

Consequently, we have a variety of documents that provide risk management direction and guidance, and also retains incident reports, incident review reports, safety audit reports, training curricula, evidence of successful training completion, certification documents, and other safety communications.

Documents used in management of risk are described in the bulleted lists in this document. However, the documents we use may change over time. Therefore, the documents used by us may not exactly match the lists in this Risk Management Plan.

Risk management documentation is reviewed on an annual basis by a qualified person (e.g. administrator, attorney, physician), and changes are made as appropriate.

Risk management documents are version-controlled (by revision date).

Accreditation

We have considered accreditation by relevant bodies, and has concluded that there is not an accreditation system that is a good match for us at this time.

Since our program is not experiential adventure, and activities such as farm visits and forest research are not covered in its standards, the accreditation offered by the Association for Experiential Education is not a good match.

The Gap Year Association's Accreditation Standards do not precisely match our programming, which is academically structured, and involves a continuous instructor presence without a prolonged independent student learning component.

The Forum on Education Abroad offers "Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad," but no formalized accreditation system.

The standards of the Global Education Benchmark group focus on K-12, rather than university-level, students.

No other accreditation schemes—for instance, for higher education, behavioral health, camp programming or vertical/technical experiential activities—appear currently to be a good match for our organization.

We will continue to scan for appropriate accreditation schemes which may be a good fit for its operations.

<u>Systems Thinking</u>

We recognize that good risk management involves understanding that major incidents sometimes occur as a result of an unpredictable combination of risk factors, that lead to an incident whose nature, time of occurrence or other characteristics cannot be anticipated in advance.

We acknowledge that even good safety systems may experience a breakdown, in a way and at a time and in a place that may not be possible to determine in advance. We recognize that engineering in resilience to its safety system, so that perhaps inevitable breakdowns do not lead to catastrophic collapse of the entire system, is an important element of good risk management.

We engineer in resilience to its risk management infrastructure in ways that include, but are not limited to:
- Having two Field Instructors with each group, so that if one Field Instructor is incapacitated, the remaining Field Instructor can lead an effective emergency response
- Carefully and thoroughly analyzing incident reports, holding Incident Reviews as needed, having Risk Management Reviews periodically conducted, systematically soliciting instructor feedback on risk management issues, and systematically soliciting participant feedback on risk management concerns, so there are multiple pathways for early identification of emerging safety issues
- Training multiple administrators in emergency procedures, so if one key administrator (e.g. Executive Director) is unavailable, a high-quality emergency response can be provided
- Investing in professional development of administrators with respect to risk management, and global education/study abroad best practice standards, so we can take advantage of the best industry knowledge regarding safety and quality
- Adhering to international standards for emergency medicine and rescue, emotional first aid, and activity-specific skills (e.g. sea kayaking qualifications), even if these are not required in Thailand
- Providing field instructors and lead instructors (academic staff) with thorough risk management training, so they are optimally able to prevent and effectively respond to incidents as practicable
- Providing a compensation package, work schedule and workplace environment that supports excellence in staff engagement and retention, to maximize skills, institutional knowledge, and other risk management capacities in the staff team
- Investing in relationships with officials at the US Consulate in Chiang Mai and senior higher education figures in the USA, and connections to industry bodies such as the Global Education Benchmark Group, Gap Year Association, and Forum on Education Abroad, so we can benefit from robust support in the event of a crisis
- Building strong financial reserves so that funds can be allocated for emergency response, crisis communications, legal representation, critical incident follow-up and post-response review in case of a major incident
- Proactively planning for effects of the global climate crisis on Thailand's natural environments and geopolitical situation, and for potential political upheaval/civil unrest within the country, so impacts from emergencies stemming from these concerns can be mitigated.