Risk Management at Outward Bound Australia

Outward Bound Australia would like you to know that your child’s safety is our number one priority. This year as we set out together to challenge and inspire your child, we hope that the following information helps you to know that they are in the safest possible hands.

Outward Bound is the oldest and most respected provider of outdoor education in the world, currently affecting the lives of people in over 30 countries worldwide.

Outward Bound Australia has been providing life changing experiences within the wilderness for over 50 years, and leads the Australian Outdoor Industry when it comes to safety and quality standards.

Outward Bound Australia forms part of a worldwide benchmarking process with Outward Bound International. Bi-annual International Safety Reviews, comprising teams of senior Outward Bound staff from schools around the world plus other industry leaders, confirm our excellent standing, worldwide.

Risk Management at Outward Bound Australia is more than just one stand-alone procedure. It is a continuing and all encompassing cycle covering ten key areas and procedures that are listed and detailed below.

If you would like more information on anything Outward Bound related, or if your child has specific needs please call me.

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Proudly celebrating 25 years of helping West Australians discover, develop and achieve their potential!
**The Right Staff**
- It is important to recruit and train the right staff for such a demanding job as leading a group in the bush.
- We have an intensive staff selection process to choose the best instructors. Staff must have strong personal qualities with life experience and further education. We match our staff appropriately to client needs.

**Staff Training**
- OBA is a Registered Training Organisation offering nationally recognised qualifications up to Diploma in Outdoor Recreation.
- Our intern program utilises a holistic approach to education. Formal off-the-job training in such things as technical skills, experiential education theory and practice, and facilitation skills, is combined with on-the-job experience under the supervision of Senior Group Instructors, Coordinators, and Trainers.
- Our staff are trained in the following:
  - Wilderness First Aid – nationally recognised training provided by the Wilderness First Aid Consultants
  - Safe Leadership - This is an eight-day intensive course that focuses on risk analysis and management, incident prevention, and post-incident management, or “second aid”. It trains and assesses decision-making, problem solving, and instructor judgement, by putting staff through challenging scenarios.
  - Swift Water Rescue - provided by Australian Canoeing
  - Bronze Medallion – provided by Royal Life Saving Society
  - Canoeing - flat water and basic moving water
  - Rafting Skills – flat water and basic moving water
  - Rock climbing and Abseiling
  - Bushwalking and Navigation
  - Search and Rescue
  - Caving (area specific)
• Minimum Impact Camping Skills
• Ropes Course Facilitation and Construction
• 4 Wheel Driving
• Hazardous Tree Assessment
• Radios/ communication
• Mobile Basecamp set-up and management skills
• Adventure Based Learning
• Group management and leadership
• Conflict management and social/ psychological issues
• Behavioural management workshop
• Educational history and philosophy

Operational Protocols
• OBA has 132 policies of which many directly apply to the appropriate standards required to operate educational programs in the outdoors e.g. lost person policy
• These consist of policies, procedures and guidelines that ensure consistency in operations.
• All of our risk management strategies are matched against our policies that are reviewed regularly and audited through our external and internal safety reviews.

Risk Management Pre- Area Checklist
• A safety audit is completed at the beginning of each season prior to the commencement of any courses. The criteria includes: a thorough assessment of communications, vehicular access, activity sites, medical facilities and staffing considerations
• For each area the coordinator develops an area file containing all necessary information to run effective courses including risk management strategies and emergency response procedures.

Risk Analysis Management Form
• The RAMs form is used in conjunction with the policies and area audits. This is a system to assess the level of risk attached to an activity and ultimately the program
• The system looks at the inter relationship between people, equipment and environment, and how the level of real risk can be reduced and managed to an acceptable level.
Daily continual assessment of the risks

- Weather – daily weather forecasts are gained and passed through to all instructors in the field twice daily. This process is heightened when potential storms approach any operational areas.
- Continual risk assessment during course.
  - Weather
  - Time of day morning, afternoon or evening/night
  - Location, remoteness, change in conditions
  - Groups physical ability, compliance, motivation
  - Groups experience age, skill, knowledge, common sense
  - Individuals mental state
  - Course equipment and personal equipment
  - Energy levels, sleep (leader and group)
  - Leadership ability, motivation, training/experience
  - Qualifications, track record, good practice
  - Identified risks involved, dangers, hazards, perils
  - Leaders state of mind
  - Duration of activity
  - Health issues (leader and group)
  - Food and water (leader and group)
  - Group Dynamics – knowledge of individuals within the group
  - Briefing and Preparation of group and technical training
  - Travel to location
  - Familiarity with activity

Safety Network

- At OBA Safety is a fundamental priority and a Core Value which is supported by:
- Communications – Our current radio network consists of UHF (Short range), HF (long range) radios, and CDMA & Satellite phones and SPOT tracking devices. These networks work together to provide us with a national communication system. A Senior Manager is on call 24 hours a day.
- Vehicle Fleet – We have a stringent internal qualification for driving based on both theoretical and practical competencies. Our fleet includes: trucks, 4WD land cruisers, 4WD hilux utes, coaster bus, vans and trailers. These are regularly maintained by our Fleet Coordinator.
Medical Screening and Assessment
- Medical screening prior to course in liaison with school coordinators and OBA coordinators and managers.
- Medical interviews are held on the first night of course to touch base with each student to make sure the medical indemnity form has the most current up to date information recorded.
- Medical Assessment and Evacuation Forms – used when an incident arises; this form helps the instructor use a methodical logical process to determine the type of injury/illness and take the appropriate action.
- Evacuation support crew – there is always an evacuation team of a minimum four people during all wilderness programs that can respond to an emergency if the situation arises.

External Safety Reviews
- OBA hosts an external International Outward Bound safety review by four suitably qualified people from Outward Bound International and representatives from the wider Australian outdoor industry.
- This enables OBA to be part of a worldwide benchmarking process with OB International every two years.

Internal safety review and permanent activity site checks
- OBA implements an internal safety review every year that covers all aspects of operations including our risk management processes.
- All fixtures such as our permanent ropes course, giant ladder, radios and antennas are checked on an annual basis.

Medical Incident Database
- This database is an initiative of OBA that has enabled us to reach a very high level of incident reporting. The database enables us to look at patterns occurring that may result from our operating practices. By identifying patterns and their causes we can modify our procedures to reduce the number of injuries and incidents.
- We have a comprehensive medical form and screening process to ensure the safety of our participants.

Preventative Incident Recording Procedure
- Instructors are required to record all near misses (any event that could have resulted in possible harm) that happen throughout OBA’s operations. These lessons are shared amongst staff to reduce incidents.
Medical Advisory Board

- The medical advisory board (external experts form the medical profession) helps advise OBA on medical matters and in particular careful, correct and proper use of medications for the benefit of staff and participants in the wilderness and expedition setting.

Operational Risk Management Committee

- Looks at risk management/safety interplay between – participants, staff and equipment that have the potential to cause damage or harm
- Balance between risk and safety
- Objectives:
  - Formulate strategic agenda for risk management/safety at Outward Bound Australia
  - Develop risk management/safety policy for implementation
    - Task as appropriate research and development of policy
  - Monitor and evaluate risk management/safety policy implementation
  - Monitor and supervise organisational risk management/safety performance
    - Organise external safety reviews through OBI biannually
    - Review incident statistics at least annually
    - Review policies relating to safety at specified review period
    - Ensure regular drills – fire, incident

Emergency Management Procedure

- This is a written procedure providing the framework for reporting and managing any incident that may arise in the field or at National Base.
- It guides staff efficiently and effectively to deal with an emergency situation

In summary, managing risk for adventurous outdoor expeditionary-based programs needs to have comprehensive multi faceted approach. All OBA staff are involved in managing risk to some degree or another, from our client managers through to our frontline instructors in the field. We would advise all of our clients to be wary of those who promote otherwise.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire Danger Rating</th>
<th>Fire Danger Index</th>
<th>Action required</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catastrophic</td>
<td>100+</td>
<td>▪ All programs must be closed and all groups relocated to safe locations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>75-99</td>
<td>▪ All groups must be evacuated to safe areas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Open comms must be maintained at all times</td>
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<tr>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>50-74</td>
<td>▪ Set up open comms for all field staff at earliest opportunity (inform them of the FDR and possible actions required)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ TC/CC and GI must review program relative to group location and the forecasted conditions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ When lightning is also forecast, all groups must be evacuated to safe areas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ When no lightning is forecast, move groups to safety only as requested by TC/CC</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>▪ QRM / On Call must be notified</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>▪ National Parks / Fire Authority must be contacted for advice</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>▪ CC must confirm safe areas and muster points with all field staff (as outlined in the LOP Evacuation Plan)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ CC must confirm closest evacuation point with all field staff (as outlined in the LOP Evacuation Plan)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Client Manager must be updated on situation to date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>25-49</td>
<td>▪ TC/CC must check weather reports and FDR twice daily (AM and PM). Monitor for any changes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Setup and maintain 3 call ins per day with field staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>12-24</td>
<td>▪ TC/CC must check weather reports and FDR twice daily (AM and PM). Monitor for any changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
<td>0-11</td>
<td>▪ TC/CC must check weather reports and FDR twice daily (AM and PM). Monitor for any changes</td>
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</table>

TC – Team Coordinator  ORM – Quality Risk Manager  
CC – Course Coordinator GI – Group Instructor  
LOP – Local Operating Procedure FDR – Fire Danger Rating
NOTIFICATION OF SMOKE/FIRE

CONFIRM WITH DEC

DETERMINE AREAS AFFECTED, WIND DIRECTION AND SPEED, FIRE MOVEMENT PREDICTION AND SERIOUSNESS. BE ADVISED BY DEC.

IF GROUP LOCATION UNKNOWN, RELATE TO RADIO LOG FOR LAST KNOWN LOCATION AND DETERMINE LIKELY DIRECTION OF TRAVEL.

INFORM GROUPS OF AREA BEING BURNT AND ANY RISK POSED TO THEM.

DETERMINE WHICH GROUPS ARE AFFECTED. PRIORITY.

DETERMINE SAFE MUSTER POINTS.

EVAC IN ORDER OF PRIORITY TO NEAREST SAFE SHELTER.

NO

EVACUATE?

YES - NOTIFY DEC OF GROUP’S INTENTIONS & RESOURCES REQ’D

REFER TO EVACUATION MAP. NOTIFY DEC ONCE EVACUATION COMPLETE.