

RISK MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

Governance

Governance Document (safety policy, safety guiding principles)

The organization's position on many aspects of international risk management should be clearly defined through a document. All of these decisions determine the organization's risk tolerance and the various preventive measures, risk management procedures and protocols to be implemented to meet the due diligence requirements imposed by legislation.

Here are some elements that should be addressed:

- Reasonable due diligence, individual responsibility and risk tolerance.
- Safety management approaches and application circumstances.
- Communications including the use of social media.
- Positioning on harassment and discrimination adapted to the international context.
- The relevant stakeholders' selection process.

Prevention

Activity Development Process

The organization should have a clear process for selecting and developing international projects that includes, among other things, an examination with regards to their security.

The process of developing an international activity should include an analysis of the activity, i.e., a census of the information allowing the activity to be approved, while taking into account risk tolerance of the organization. It is from this information that it is possible to objectively evaluate safety and therefore the possibility of holding an activity or not in any given country or region. To be complete, this study first includes an understanding of the general context and then a risk analysis. In order for this analysis to meet best practices in risk management, it should include a field visit.

Partner Selection Process

A defined process should be established in which specific criteria, required by the organization, are indicated. The responsibility for selecting partners should rest with a competent and designated person or group. Establishing an approval mechanism with comprehensive criteria involving the health and safety of the traveller is a practice to be encouraged.

In addition, partner selection is intimately linked to the process of selecting and developing an activity.

The selection process must take into account the partner's ability to respond appropriately to a crisis and therefore its ability to contribute to its resolution. Although the organization is confident that its partners are able to prevent and manage a crisis, evidence about specific elements must demonstrate this (selection and evaluation process).

Human Resources Selection Process

A selection process should be put in place to identify vulnerabilities beforehand, pre-existing conditions, potentially harmful or travellers' dangerous intentions or behaviours that could negatively influence the activity's progress. The organization should select its human resources based on criteria related to their roles and responsibilities as well as to the activity's specific framework.

The organization should reserve the right to refuse an individual's participation or to withdraw him from an ongoing activity for legitimate reasons such as health status, behavioural problems, criminal record, etc.

Medical Process

A medical procedure should be defined to ensure that travellers are healthy enough to take part in a trip where health conditions differ from those in Canada.

The organization should also position itself on traveller vaccination especially in regard to highly recommended but not compulsory vaccines.

Awareness and Training

Travellers should follow one or more pre-departure training sessions to cover all topics necessary for preparation. The training should address the destination, the preventive behaviours, safety guidelines, intercultural and group life. It should provide information on the risks associated with staying abroad, raise awareness and make participants accountable for their health and safety.

Additional safety training should be provided by the partner upon travellers' arrival at destination. The partner is best suited to showcase the realities in the field and present the safety issues.

Training should be provided in order to maintain or increase the capacity of personnel who oversee international activities in Canada.

Recognition of Roles and Responsibilities

Partner Agreement Protocol

The organization should sign agreement protocols with each of its partners (in Canada and abroad) in which the roles and responsibilities for the safety of travellers are stipulated.

Traveller Agreement Protocol

All travellers (employees, group guides, students, interns, volunteers, aid workers) should be required to sign a contract that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each of them.

Administrative Procedures

Informed Consent

The organization should have a clear and complete, informed consent to risk form that any traveller would have to sign following pre-departure training.

Registration on the Global Affairs Canada Site

Registration to the GAC site should be done prior to each departure either by the participants or by the organization itself.

Trip Extension

The organization should have a document allowing travellers to extend their stay beyond activity dates without the organization being responsible.

Single Accompaniment Procedure

In the case of a group trip where there is only one group guide, one or more group members should be identified as resources in the event of a crisis to support the group guide or act as spokesperson or group leader in case the group guide is unable to do so.

Country Safety Guide

For each of the countries in which international activities are taking place, the organization should develop a Country Safety Guide to identify risks present in the field and introduce specific measures and procedures prior

to departure. The safety document makes it possible, among other things, to implement the necessary mitigation strategies in order to respect the organization’s risk tolerance.

The document also centralizes communication procedures and emergency contact information (police, embassy, firefighters, etc.) specific to a destination and an activity.

First Aid

The organization should consider first aid questions for each activity.

In the case of a group activity, the group guide and/or partner should be trained in first aid (depending on the activity’s context) and the organization should provide a first-aid kit.

In the case of individual activity, travellers should be trained in first aid and the organization should provide them with a list of items to include in their first-aid kit.

Information Monitoring

When travellers are present in a given country and region, activity leaders should monitor information to identify elements/events that may impact the safety of its travellers throughout their stay, depending on the country’s safety context.

Crisis Management

Communication

The organization should have a communication process that allows bidirectional exchange. Communication needs should be determined based on the analysis of the activity.

Means

Means of communication adapted to the type of activities conducted and their location should be accessible.

Emergency Contact Management

The organization should provide all travellers with emergency contact information and communication procedures.

Access to Resources

The organization should have a simple procedure to free human, financial and material resources if necessary.

Secure Information Management System

It is recommended that the organization have a central and secure data storage system, as quick and convenient access to travellers’ personal information makes it easy to manage incidents efficiently.

Crisis Cell

International crisis management should be structured. Human resources should be dedicated to crisis management in order to form a crisis cell adapted to international activities.

Crisis Management Protocol

Crisis management should be carried out according to predetermined procedures. The protocol should therefore be the crisis cell’s main tool. The roles and responsibilities of the crisis cell members, the classification of emergency levels and the communication procedures should be reflected.

Standard Operating Procedures

Any organization should have standard operating procedures (SOP) for the situations most likely to arise during a

stay abroad as well as for all other situations that the organization deems necessary. These SOP should be known by all stakeholders (crisis cell, travellers, partners, managers, etc.).

Insurance

The organization must make sure that its travellers are covered by its liability insurance and health/repatriation insurance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Event Reporting Process

The organization should have an event reporting process in place to identify any incidents or accidents and their causes. This should enable the required improvements to be implemented in order to reduce the likelihood of other incidents occurring or to better manage the crisis.

Evaluation Process

The organization should have a process in place to evaluate international activities in which attention is given to safety.

A crisis cell evaluation process should also be implemented to improve performance.

TRAVEL RISK MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

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