RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Purpose

This policy outlines strategies in the assessment and management of risks involved in the operations of Outward Bound Australia (OBA). The policy addresses Risk Management across all sectors of the organisation and all phases of course implementation. It continually evaluates the Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) risks to the workforce, customers and the environment.

Objectives

This Risk Management Policy creates and protects Outward Bound's values. Outward Bound Australia has as its core objective, the facilitation and delivery of experiential, educational and well-managed programs.

Risk management is a central and consistent influence at Outward Bound Australia. The organisation integrates risk management within its overall planning processes at both strategic and operational levels.

The Risk Management processes at OBA support the broad vision of OBA by promoting the continuous improvement process and quality service provision through:

- Ensuring risk management is an integral part of the management practices, processes and decision making;
- Allocating appropriate resources (e.g. human, financial, time etc.) to support the risk management processes:
- Managing identified risks;
- Assessing, evaluating and advocating safe work practices;
- Educating the workforce, public and clients; and
- Recommending improvements.

Explicitly addresses uncertainty

Outward Bound Australia also recognises that the activities we are planning and conducting contain specific risks which need to be identified and managed. This risk assessment is developed with consideration to foreseeable hazards and risks across the stages of activity design, planning and delivery (e.g. aims of activity, staff/volunteer recruitment suitability, pre-existing medical conditions, participant prior experience, and expected weather conditions). Outward Bound Australia's risk assessment is specific and tailored for the activity, the participants and location.

This Risk Management Policy is integrated into our HSE Management Model – **Section 4: Risk Evaluation and Management**

Accountability

Every staff member within Outward Bound is a leader and is accountable and authorised to manage risk
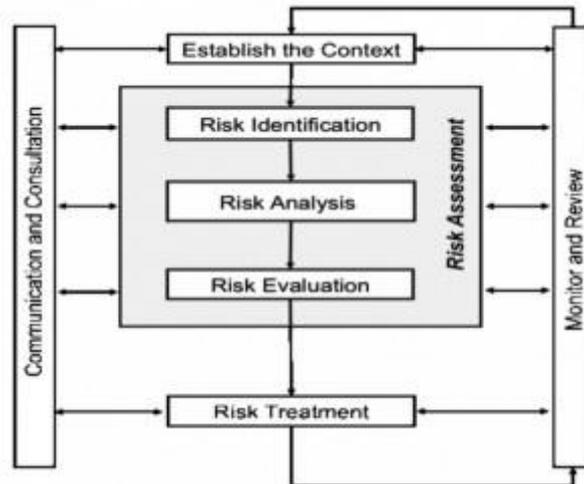
Risk Management Process

This section describes how to put into practice 'how risk will be managed'.

The risk management process involves the systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the activities of communicating, consulting, establishing context, and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk" (ISO 31000 p.3).

Risk assessment is a part of this process and involves the "overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation" (ISO 31000 p.4).

In assessing and classifying risks, OBA has implemented management intervention in high risk areas at a review point to ensure adequate strategies are in place and consistent and effective performance is maintained.

The risk management process is shown in the diagram above. It is deliberately not presented as a flow chart to demonstrate the continuous iteration between the steps and that communication, consultation, monitoring and review occurs during all the steps.

Organisational Context

Outward Bound Australia identifies and understands the characteristics of our clients and the participant groups that we work with during our programs, their specific context (e.g. educational aims and desired outcomes) and the likely characteristics of these groups (e.g., minors, inexperienced in activity, mix of outdoor abilities).

Our Business Development Managers analyse the following:

External context

- Which client group(s) do we work with? School groups, corporate groups, Youth at Risk, students studying at TAFE for Vocational placement
- Are there specific external requirements in working with these groups? Government (State/ Territory and Federal) Legislation
- Do we have sufficient understanding of the external influences and expectations of the service we provide in conducting adventurous activities?

Internal context

- Do we understand our organisation's internal stakeholders? (e.g. volunteers, paid staff, casual and/or permanent)
- Do we understand our organisation's governance?
- Do we understand our organisation's culture? OBA's Core Values/ Course Objectives/ Design principles

Outcomes

- What are the adventure activities aiming to achieve for the client and participants?
- What processes do we use to ensure that the required outcomes are achieved and how do we measure these?
- What are the internal and external factors that may influence success in achieving those objectives?

Risk Identification

Risk identification uses a systematic process to understand what, how, when and why of risks that could occur. It is important to identify factors beyond the immediate activity delivery (i.e. the 'sharp end') which may occur within the 'system' at the 'blunt end'. Decisions made days, months or years ago at the 'blunt end' can affect factors that impact on risks at the 'sharp end'. For example, what competencies are required for leaders, how staff shortages or sickness is managed, ensuring the purchase of appropriate equipment and processes to monitor environment changes.

Risk Analysis

Risk analysis involves understanding the nature and level of risk for each identified risk. It examines the likely consequences of the risk and the likelihood of those consequences occurring.

OBA has developed and uses the following hazard and risk identification and management tools:

- Risk Analysis and Management Forms (RAM)
- Risk Matrix – Evaluation of risk
- Field Risk Assessments (Dynamic risk assessment)
- In Field Appraisals
- Hierarchy of Controls
- Checklists
- Regular Audits (internal and external)

Risk Evaluation

Risk evaluation involves decision making relating to determining what risks require treatment (see below) and the priority for implementing the treatment. These decisions are based on the level of the risk and if this level is acceptable or tolerable.

Risk Treatment

Risk treatment involves the process of adding new or improving existing risk controls where a risk is not acceptable or tolerable. Risk treatment controls may include but are not limited to:

- avoiding or removing the source of risk (e.g. changing venue due to bushfire)
- changing the likelihood of occurrence (e.g. adding additional supervision)
- changing the consequences (e.g. providing protective equipment like a helmet)

Where a new or change to an existing risk controls is required, the process needs to cycle back to analysis and evaluation to reassess the risk. This is to assess if the treatment addresses the risk and that the outcome of the change is acceptable or tolerable.

New or changes to controls also requires evaluation of the costs & benefits and the new & emerging risks that may result.

The OBA Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) provides guidance as to possible risk controls for many commonly occurring risks.
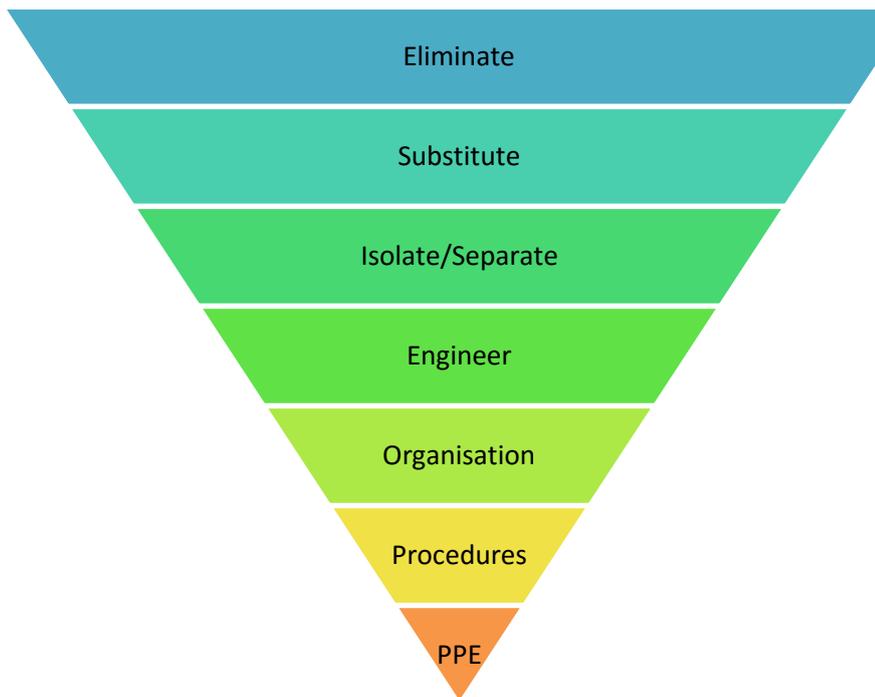
Eliminate	**Eliminate:** Eliminate the hazard – **Most Effective**
Substitute	**Substitute**: Use processes or methods with lower risk impact
Isolate/Separate	**Isolate/ Separate:** Segregate hazards and/or targets
Engineer	**Engineered Safeguards:** design to prevent an unwanted event or to mitigate harmful consequences
Organisation	**Organisational Controls:** Training, Competency, Communication.
Procedures	**Procedural Control**: Operating Procedures (SOPS), Maintenance regimes, Emergency Response
PPE	**PPE:** protect the person **Least Effective**

Outward Bound has a written process for any changes of our SOPs and LOMS (Local Area Management). In summary this involves

- Receiving written requests for change outlining: the concern, the suggested change, the proposed solution, the reasons for change and the standards and/or evidence that underlies the suggested change.
- The HSRM will run the suggested changes by the OBA Subject Matter Expert (SME). The SME will ensure that any changes comply with the relevant Australian and /or international standards and forward a report with their recommendations to the HSRM. The HSRM will send the changes out to a technical external referee. Once we have their approval it will be presented to the Operations Safety Committee (which meets on a monthly basis) to review and accept or send back for further consideration.

Resources to manage risk

At OBA various committees and systems support these phases. They include:

- Outward Bound Board Safety Committee
- Medical Advisory Board – (MAB)
- Operational Safety Committee
- Employee Assistance Program and Mental Health First Aid Training
- Incident Management & reporting processes
- Emergency Management Procedure (EMP)
- Quality Manager and In Field Supervisors – Responsible for ensuring all staff are appropriately skilled and qualified to perform their job role
- WHS System Employee database (Qualifications and training) – To track all operational staff qualifications (competency and currency)
- HR Department - Recruitment and Placement
- OBA Operations Manual (All Operational policies and procedures)
- OBA Instructor Handbook (Standard Operating Procedures for all field staff)
- Internal and External Audits & Inspections including Outward Bound International (OBI)

- Industry Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) compliance
- Document Control

Communication and Consultation

Communication and consultation is fundamental to both understanding and gaining input into the process of risk management. Outward Bound Australia has designed these policies and procedures to be systematically applied and communicated consistently through involvement of staff in their creation and review.

OBA implements the following processes:

- Our Business Development Managers (BDMs) consult with clients and/or participants to understand their particular requirements, objectives and outcomes associated with participation in the OBA program.
- There are processes for two-way communication about risk management (e.g. processes, procedures, reports, learnings etc.) with all relevant people within the organisation. This is achieved through Operational Safety Committees,
- There are processes for two-way communication about risk management systems, plans, processes with external stakeholders. We can provide information on our Risk Management procedures and are considerate with our audience in a way that supports understanding and clarity.

Outward Bound Australia has a desire to ensure that our risk management processes are as robust and effective as possible. We achieve this by involving as many stakeholders as we can both within and external to our organisation, in the risk management process. These stakeholders are representative of the multiple aspects to activity planning and delivery (e.g. parents, school, instructors and participants). OBA communicates and consults often and highly values these steps as integral to identifying, assessing and managing potential sources of risk which may cause harm on the activity.

Monitor, review and improve the Risk Management Framework

This part of the risk management process is ongoing throughout and in relation to adventurous activities, relates to the task of continual scanning and monitoring for new and emerging risks associated with the planning, conduct and review of the activity. Examples here may include; new terrain hazards not present previously, new laws in relation to child protection or inclement weather forecasted which may necessitate a change of plan.

Outward Bound Australia conducts an annual review of our risk management policies and procedures for experiential programs with clients. We firstly consider and identify the multiple stakeholders involved in the planning, review and review of the activity (e.g. participants, parents, Outward Bound Australia staff, school staff, school principal, AAS and insurance requirements).

Outward Bound also implements the following:

- Reporting and review of all incidents (general/ medical, near misses)
- Internal and External Audits & Inspections including Outward Bound International (OBI)
- Monthly meetings of the Operational Safety Committee to review incidents (participant and staff) and any other WHS Hazards reported.
- Quarterly Report to the Board Safety Committee
- Monitoring and reviewing of all Policies and Procedures occurs at least annually to address new, changing or emerging risks. For example, new laws or regulations, changing environmental conditions or development of process problems causing risks to emerge where previously considered appropriately managed.

Outward Bound Australia understands that human and cultural factors are central to all organisations. Consequently, we also appreciate that accidents, or the potential for accidents, are also created by multiple interacting factors, and that often, even normal, commonly accepted behaviours can play a role in accidents. These human and cultural factors are therefore specifically considered in our risk management reviews.

Reporting Incidents and Near-Misses

Reporting of incidents and near misses helps identify risks and risk factors which enables proactive action to be taken to address them. Minor incidents may be considered near misses or leading indicators for major incidents and are therefore useful in helping to identify areas of concern.

There is a process for reporting incidents and near misses.

All reported incidents and near misses are analysed individually on receipt and collectively on a periodic basis, to determine if changes to the treatment of risks or risk factors is required.

OBA will report all notifiable incidents to authorities.

Implementation of Risk Management Procedures

Course Design

Business planning process for Delivery of Operations:
- Senior management project staffing and logistics twelve months ahead of time in line with the strategic plan
- Clients are confirmed and courses administration commences
- Operation Managers allocate operational staff to designated courses
- Resource Coordinator provide staff training requirements
- Human Resources provide future staff projections
- The operational checklist is initiated

Operational Planning for Delivery of Operations:
- The Operational Checklist is initiated biannually for each Operational Area. This includes resource allocation and risk identification (licences, land owners, suppliers, transport of staff and equipment).
- The Operational Checklist is followed in conjunction with Local Operating Procedures to ensure each area is systematically prepared for course delivery. This process considers all delivery functions from resource allocation through to activity and campsite risk analysis (RAMS).
- The Operations Manager responsible for the area, in co-ordination with the Health Safety & Risk Manager, must review and update any Local Operations Procedure's for the area.
- The Operational Checklist is used to ensure that courses are assessed holistically and systematically prepared.
- The Operations Manager writes the course in consultation with the Client Managers to ensure it meets the client's needs.
- The Operations Manager and Program Coordinator assess the course to ensure safety, quality and educational outcomes are addressed.

If at any time an area of Operations becomes exposed to significant risk of any type, the Chief Operations Officer and Chief Executive Officer must be notified immediately.

New Delivery Area – Procedure:

- Outward Bound Australia is open to new areas of Operation. To establish if a course is viable in a new area, the Area Investigation and Reconnaissance Form must be completed in conjunction with the Operational Checklist.

Course delivery

Risk Management of course delivery considers the interplay of the following elements:
- People (staff and participants)
- Activities
- Equipment
- Environment

People: Staff

Staff selection:
- Staff are selected at OBA for strong personal qualities with life experience and further education.
- All staff at OBA must undertake a Child Protection Assessment.
- All staff must complete and keep updated their Personal Medical Declaration Form & Driving History Form

Staff Qualifications:
- All staff at OBA must have the training, assessment and qualifications (current and up-to-date) and/or demonstrated current competency as outlined for their job position.
- Staff qualifications (competencies and currency) are monitored by OBA and recorded in our WHS Employee Qualification Database

Staff Allocation to course:
- Prior to commencement of a course, the Operations Manager allocates staff according to client needs, course requirements, staff member experience and qualifications.
- To ensure OBA courses are conducted in a professional manner and the safety, quality and educational aspects met, a variety of staffing roles and functions are employed:
- Operations Manager - manages a team of staff and ensures quality programs are delivered.
- Program Coordinator
    - oversees the operations of individual courses and manages the day to day needs of the team.
    - coordinates OBA outdoor experiential education courses.
- Instructors/facilitators - Take on responsibility of delivering the course to participants and facilitates them through all lessons and activities.
- Support Staff - Provide the logistical and safety support throughout the course by ensuring all participants are supplied with food, water, clothing, and equipment. They also increase the supervision ratios during activities, and are on call 24 hours a day for emergency response purposes.
- Staff in Training / Interns - Operate at an 'assistant' level both operationally during their course practicum as well as behind the scenes as back up staff.
- Support Safety Structure - Behind every course a large safety network exists that is made up of the following.
    - On-Call 24 hours a day; Support staff members, course coordinator, Program coordinator, and On Call Senior staff members.
    - Accessible throughout every course - Outward Bound Safety Committee, Medical Advisory Board, Incident Support Network, Child Protection Group.
    - There is a comprehensive communication network for all courses. This includes:
        I. Radio contact in the field from the instructor/facilitator to local basecamp via UHF radio
        II. SPOT Satellite Technology – allowing instant communication to either local basecamp or emergency services.
        III. On-Call manager 24 hours a day at Outward Bound's National Base in Tharwa, ACT

People: Participants

A significant portion of time is spent on physically and mentally preparing participants for their OBA course experience. Client Managers will provide specific information sessions for participants and client coordinators to aid course preparation. They will also provide information such as gear lists, recommended suppliers and work through any concerns participants may have.

- All participants are required to completed a Personal Medical Declaration which identifies all past and present illnesses, injuries, conditions, medication, dietary needs etc. Additional information may be required from the participant/parent/guardian. This is gathered by the relevant Client Manager. Some participants may be required to undertake a physician's examination as outlined in the Medical Screening Policy before proceeding to attend a course.
- Other concerns are also addressed during the screening phase, including: psychological conditions, addictions, inappropriate behaviours, etc. The intensity of the screening process is to enable OBA to deliver a quality product for all participants. The following policies aid this process:
  - o 05. Operations Manual - Duty of Care Policy
  - o 1100. Operations Manual – Behaviour Management Policy
  - o 1300. Operations Manual – Child Protection Intervention Policy
  - o OBA Privacy Policy

OBA retains the right to refuse participants on an Outward Bound course where there is deemed to be too great a risk of harm to themselves or others.

Activities

All staff must comply with a comprehensive list of Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines as outlined in the Operations Manual. In addition, our activities are conducted in such a way as to comply with the Industry recognised Adventure Activity Standards (AAS).

Risk Assessment and Management in the field and at work:
- An awareness and understanding of the dangers and risks involved in each phase of a course will equip OBA staff with a greater ability to manage participants. It is vitally important to be continually assessing and identifying dangers to ensure a high level of safety.
- Delivery Staff continually undertake risk analysis and implement management strategies in the form of Field Risk Assessments.
- A staff member must make constant evaluations of risks and make decisions based on whether or not possible actions produce acceptable risks, minimize risks, eliminate risks, or cause further risk to safety of participants, staff, and bystanders.

Equipment

- All staff must ensure the appropriate running order of gear that is used in the field.
- All staff must comply with the relevant procedures and guidelines pertaining to the management, cleaning, care, use and transport of equipment.
- All staff are expected to comply with relevant Work Health and Safety Policies and Procedures and to uphold their WHS responsibilities.

Environment

- All staff must be aware of specific environmental hazards in an operational area in which they are working. This information is made available through Local Operating Procedures.
- Weather reports must be collected twice daily for each operational area. Information is then relayed to the field instructors/facilitators. More frequent reports may be forwarded in extreme conditions such as severe thunderstorms, high fire danger and flood or wind warnings.

- Information about the weather is used by the instructional and field staff to assess the suitability of planned activities, as well as to prepare for any adverse conditions, such as potential snowfall or extremely hot days.
- Activities may be cancelled or postponed due to the impact of weather conditions.

Incident Management

- In the event that an incident arises in the field or in the workplace, all OBA staff members follow the Emergency Management Procedure (EMP). This defines a clear process to allow for appropriate incident management under stressful conditions, from immediate steps through to post-incident management. Other supporting documents include:

  - Subjective and Objective Assessment and Plan (SOAP) NOTE
  - Incident Response Sheet
  - On-Call Policy

Review

Valuable information may be obtained through a variety of feedback mechanisms to ensure the safest possible course for participants for the best possible personal development outcomes.

The feedback and review loops are critical to ongoing risk and quality management strategies.

Evaluation occurs across a number of areas:
- OBA has an implemented system to record, track, analyse and disseminate lessons learnt from any incidents that occur during operations.
- All incidents are reviewed after every course by the Program Coordinator and the Operations Manager, then finalised and analysed by the Health Safety & Risk Manager.
- The Program Coordinator alerts the Client Manager to all significant medical incidents and these are followed up with the appropriate Client.
- All incidents are tracked through incident report forms and recorded on an incident database. These are reviewed by the Health Safety & Risk Manager, Chief Operations Officer, Operations Safety Committee and finally by the Board of Directors.
- Recommendations, adjustments to training and review of Standard Operating Procedures may result from this process.

Incident Evaluations:

Near Misses:
- Near Misses are recorded on the Incident report form any time staff or participants are engaged in a potentially dangerous situation where safety is compromised but does not result in reportable injury

Medical Incidents:
- A SOAP Note is used in the field to record any medical assessment, repeated treatments or in the event of an evacuation.
- A Medical Incident Report Form (MIRF) is used to record any medical incident from start to finish. This form becomes the basis for further analysis.

General Incidents:
- The Incident Report Form (IRF) must be completed following any incident that could have or did lead to:
- Equipment damage of any property (private or OBA)
- OBA vehicle and/or trailer incident resulting in a disruption of Operations
- OBA staff or participants in danger
- Behavioural issue with participants
- Incidents with external persons

Course Evaluations:

Course Debrief:

- At the finalisation of course, all staff come together to report on the outcomes of the course. This information is gathered by the Program Coordinator to prepare the Course Report.
- Personal debriefs are conducted with each Instructor by the Operations Manager in order to ensure appropriate professional development.

Course Reports:

- On the completion of the course, the Program Coordinator is required to complete a Course Report
- It reports on the general conduct of the course, specific feedback pertaining to client aims and outcomes, relevant feedback (which is distributed to the relevant departments), incidents, etc.
- Departmental feedback is disseminated to all departments and reviewed by the Client Manager and other Departmental Mangers

Staff Evaluations and Appraisals:

- Staff performance is monitored on each course, through self, peer, and client evaluations. Staff meet individually with the Program Coordinator prior to and following the course to discuss professional goals, issues, and performance. These meetings are recorded and forms are held for annual review by the Operations Manager.
- Clients and participants on some courses are asked for their feedback via the following forms - Colleague Evaluation of Program and Instructor form (CEPI), Participant Evaluation of Program and Instructor (PEPI).
- In Field Supervisors conduct staff appraisals out in the field. This process allows mentoring and where required corrective training for staff.

Research

Research is conducted on selected courses in order to quantify and improve the quality of the courses in order to ensure best practice.

Research on Course Outcomes includes Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ) and Participants Evaluation of Program and Instructors (PEPI) plus Performance Evaluation Questionnaires (PEQ).

Approvals

Reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team

Approved by the Chief Executive Officer

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