



Adventure Safety Accreditation Standards Summary

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Introduction

The Accreditation Standards Summary is a brief outline of the entire Adventure Safety Accreditation Standards Manual, which is greater than 100 pages in length. This Summary lists the top-level header for each standard.

However, the summary omits the essential Elements of Performance, which provide critical additional detail and requirements. The summary also excludes detailed Notes, which interpret and explain the Standards and how they should be met.

Consequently, the Accreditation Standards Summary must not be used for accreditation preparation or maintenance of accredited status. The full Accreditation Standards Manual must be used for that purpose.

Disclaimer

The purpose of the Adventure Safety Accreditation Standards is to provide guidance on good risk management relevant to adventure programs.

It is not the intention of Viristar to attempt to document in these Standards every safety-related measure, system, procedure, practice or process that might be desirable for or implemented by an adventure program.

The Standards are designed to be applied only to those organizations providing adventure activities that meet the eligibility criteria for Adventure Safety Accreditation. Organizations that do not meet those criteria are not eligible to be considered for accredited status.

In developing and applying these Standards in the accreditation process, Viristar does not undertake to verify the continuous conformance by organizations providing adventure activities, or the management of those organizations, to every applicable Standard, including all Elements of Performance.

Nor does Viristar warrant, guarantee or insure that conformance to these Standards will prevent any or all injury, illness, death, or other loss or damage that may be caused by or associated with any person's use of facilities, equipment, or other items or activities that are the subjects of these Standards. Nor does Viristar assume any responsibility or liability for any such injury, illness, death, or other loss or damage.

Similarly, Viristar does not warrant, guarantee, or insure that conformance to these standards is sufficient to be in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, codes and requirements in all jurisdictions.

Organizations providing adventure activities should make themselves aware of all applicable laws, regulations, codes and requirements, and consult with qualified legal counsel as necessary.

Further, Viristar hereby expressly disclaims any responsibility, liability or duty to organizations, staff, participants and their families for any such liability arising out of injury, illness, death, or other loss or damage to any person by the failure of organizations or their staff to conform to these Standards.



Adventure Safety Accreditation Standards Summary

General

Safety Management System (SM)

- SM.01 – The organization has established and maintains a safety management system.
- SM.02 – The safety management system employs a hierarchy of controls.

Leadership and Management (LM)

- LM.01 – Top management demonstrates leadership and commitment with respect to the safety system.
- LM.02 – Top management ensures that responsibilities and authorities for relevant roles are assigned and communicated.
- LM.03 – The organization conforms to relevant legal and other requirements.
- LM.04 – The organization has established safety objectives.
- LM.05 – The organization has established, has implemented, and maintains procedures for communicating relevant safety information.
- LM.06 – The organization manages risks arising from inappropriate absence of inclusion.
- LM.07 – A policy regarding safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, if applicable, is in place.

Risk Domains

Activities and Program Areas (AP)

- AP.01 – The organization has developed, has implemented, and maintains SOPs for each activity.
- AP.02 – The organization deliberately selects areas and activities with the lowest risk that still meet program objectives.
- AP.03 – The organization uses perceived risk and psychological risk in appropriate ways that permit the organization to achieve programmatic outcomes with reduced physical risk.
- AP.04 – Prior to commencing new activities, a plan for new programming is developed and approved.
- AP.05 – Ratios of participants to competent staff are established and employed for activities.
- AP.06 – Appropriately enhanced safety procedures are in place when only one activity leader is present.
- AP.07 – Procedures for times when participants are outside the organization's jurisdiction are in place.
- AP.08 – The organization has the appropriate permits and other permissions for use of activity areas.
- AP.09 – Hazards and risks in operating areas are appropriately evaluated and addressed.
- AP.10 – Weather-related risks are appropriately managed.
- AP.11 – The organization documents approved time-based plans, including alternates, for programs and activities.
- AP.12 – Activities are conducted in accordance with widely accepted good practice industry standards.
- AP.13 – Participants receive safety briefings prior to commencing activities.
- AP.14 – Risks are assessed and responded to while activities are occurring.
- AP.15 – Following completion of activities or programs, risk management evaluations are conducted.
- AP.16 – Participants and staff have adequate food and water.



- AP.17 – Procedures for infectious disease prevention and control are in place.
- AP.18 – Risks associated with lodging accommodations and other structures are appropriately managed.
- AP.19 – Health and safety of animals used by the organization is maintained.

AP.20 – Considerations with low-resource communities:

- AP.20.01 – Staff and participants are aware of and address hazards and risks specific to their areas of operation in low-resource communities.
- AP.20.02 – Emergency response plans specific to the low-resource community context are available.
- AP.20.03 – The organization, staff and participants have insurance coverage appropriate for the context of the low-resource community.
- AP.21 – The organization applies appropriate levels of supervision.
- AP.22 – Organizations providing adventure therapy follow outdoor behavioral healthcare good practice standards.

Staff (ST)

- ST.01 – Staff are competent to perform their work activities.
- ST.02 – Required competencies and qualifications are described in position announcements and job descriptions.
- ST.03 – Staff receive sufficient and appropriate training.
- ST.04 – Staff are appropriately supervised.
- ST.05 – Staff have sufficient rest and break times.
- ST.06 – The organization conducts performance reviews of staff.
- ST.07 – The organization maintains adequate systems for communications involving staff.
- ST.08 – The organization appropriately manages risks related to drug and alcohol use.

Equipment (EQ)

- EQ.01 – Suitable clothing and equipment are available and appropriately used.
- EQ.02 – Emergency supplies, including appropriate first aid and rescue equipment, are usable and available at activity locations.
- EQ.03 – Equipment is used in accordance with original equipment manufacturer recommendations and generally accepted industry standards.
- EQ.04 – Equipment maintenance is performed to original equipment manufacturer recommendations and generally accepted industry standards by competent persons.
- EQ.05 – Equipment repair is performed to original equipment manufacturer recommendations and generally accepted industry standards by competent persons.
- EQ.06 – Equipment is inspected as appropriate upon acquisition, prior to use, during use, after use, and periodically, by qualified inspectors.
- EQ.07 – Equipment is appropriately stored and accessible.
- EQ.08 – Equipment is appropriately retired from service.
- EQ.09 – Appropriate documentation is kept for equipment.

Participants (PA)

- PA.01 – Participants are informed of requirements and expectations.
- PA.02 – Participants (and legal guardians and parents as appropriate) are informed of, acknowledge, and accept the risks of program activities.
- PA.03 – Participants are adequately supervised.
- PA.04 – Participants receive safety, emergency response and first aid training as appropriate.



Contractors (CO)

- CO.01 – The contractor-contractee relationship is structured to be legally valid.
- CO.02 – A written contractor agreement exists, and includes appropriate risk transfer elements.
- CO.03 – Contractor-contractee roles and responsibilities are clear and agreed-upon.
- CO.04 – Contractor suitability is assessed and found acceptable, prior to engagement.
- CO.05 – Participants are advised of the use of contractors.
- CO.06 – Contractor performance is assessed during the performance period, as practicable, and appropriate action is taken in response to assessment results.
- CO.07 – Contractor performance is evaluated after the performance period, with results informing decisions regarding future engagement.

Transportation (TR)

- TR.01 – Only individuals meeting established eligibility requirements serve as vehicle operators.
- TR.02 – Vehicle operators receive adequate vehicle operator training.
- TR.03 – Vehicle operation policies and procedures are established and adhered to.
- TR.04 – Vehicle occupants are aware of and comply with established safety policies and procedures.
- TR.05 – Vehicles have appropriate licenses, registrations, inspections, and any similar requirements.
- TR.06 – Vehicles have appropriate insurance.
- TR.07 – Vehicles are appropriately maintained and repaired.
- TR.08 – Vehicle operators appropriately inspect vehicles before use.
- TR.09 – Vehicle loading standards and weight ratings are adhered to.
- TR.10 – Vehicle trailers, if used, are used appropriately and by competent staff.
- TR.11 – Vehicles are stocked with appropriate emergency supplies.
- TR.12 – Appropriate risk management practices for use of personally owned vehicles for program purposes are established and maintained.

Business Administration (BA)

- BA.01 – The organization employs appropriate practices to guard against business risks including fraud, theft, breach of confidentiality, workplace safety concerns, and employee misconduct.
- BA.02 – The organization is aware it may consider enterprise or strategic risks such as climate change, the regulatory environment, and geopolitical concerns, in its business strategy.

Risk Management Instruments

Risk Transfer (RT)

- RT.01 – Appropriate insurance policies are in effect.
- RT.02 – Transfer of risk through indemnification, liability release or other instruments is appropriately employed.
- RT.03 – The organization considers the use of third party contractors as part of a risk transfer strategy.

Incident Management (IM)

- IM.01 – Plans for field-based response to incidents are in place.
- IM.02 – Plans for administrative response to incidents are in place.
- IM.03 – Procedures to prevent and manage unwanted separation from a group are in place.



IM.04 – Procedures to address loss of contact with group are in place.

IM.05 – Specific first aid and medical practices and protocols for organizational use are in place.

IM.06 – A system for management of medications is in place.

IM.07 – Procedures for managing behavioral concerns, psychiatric emergencies and related situations are appropriately in place.

Incident Reporting (IR)

IR.01 – Incidents are reported, analyzed, and responded to, individually and in the aggregate.

IR.02 – Incidents are reported to workplace health and safety authorities and others as required.

IR.03 – The organization effectively supports and encourages the reporting of incidents.

Incident Review (IV)

IV.01 – The organization has a documented policy establishing a process for formal incident reviews.

IV.02 – The organization has staff capable of organizing internal and external incident reviews.

Risk Management Committee (RC)

RC.01 – An official Risk Management Committee with qualified members provides appropriate risk management guidance.

Medical Screening (MS)

MS.01 – The organization employs a suitable process to reasonably ensure medical suitability for activity participation.

Risk Management Review (RR)

RR.01 – Risk management reviews are conducted.

Media Relations (MR)

MR.01 – The organization has designated media spokesperson(s), and staff are aware of who is and is not authorized to speak with media representatives.

MR.02 – The organization has prepared, and made readily accessible, information about its program, safety record and safety procedures.

MR.03 – The organization has assembled current contact information for relevant news media outlets.

Documentation (DO)

DO.01 – The organization's safety management system includes relevant and necessary documented information.

DO.02 – The organization suitably controls documented information.

DO.03 – The organization retains documentation of risk management-related activity.

Accreditation (AC)

AC.01 – The organization has considered accreditation by relevant accrediting bodies.



Systems-Based Safety (SY)

SY.01 –The organization is informed by contributions of systems theory to effective risk management.

Continual Improvement (CI)

CI.01 – The organization engages in a continual improvement process.