

Introduction

0.1 The standard

This British Standard sets out requirements for the operational management, including safety, of all ventures outside the United Kingdom. The objective is to set out in clear, unambiguous language the actions and associated responsibilities essential to the provision of a risk-based safety management system for adventurous activities. In so doing it seeks to make available to those intending to provide such ventures a means of organizing their activities in accordance with currently accepted good practice in a manner that makes it possible objectively to verify compliance.

0.2 Applicability of the standard

This British Standard can be applied by any group or individual seeking to verify that ventures outside the UK organized, or provided by them, have safety management systems in place that are proportionate to the level of risk likely to be inherently or deliberately present in the venture and to the capabilities/life experience of the participants.

By way of example, it is expected that it will be applicable to:

- ventures designed to extend the experience/capability of the individual by exposing them to challenges of a type or extent not usually met;
- ventures organized for work related purposes where exposure to some elements of risk is inherent.

There are not believed to be any specific venture categories that automatically should be excluded. It is necessary that the nature, content and participant profile of each venture be viewed against the requirements of the standard for informed judgement to be made. It is suggested therefore that for any venture provider seeking to establish and demonstrate a level of risk management in line with currently established good practice the standard may offer an appropriate route. It can be expected however that for many package travel or similar holiday situations, application of the standard will be found not to be necessary.

The very nature of the ventures that are the subject of BS 8848 makes it highly likely that a venture provider will decide to make use of third party providers to deliver elements of any particular venture. Where venture providers subcontract an element of the venture to a third party provider, compliance can be facilitated by the third party provider demonstrating compliance with the relevant clauses of this standard. Given the “risk based” approach adopted in BS 8848 and the fundamental requirement that venture providers have overall responsibility for all aspects of the ventures they offer, it is wholly appropriate that third party providers offering services into the market should be expected to comply with the clauses of BS 8848 that are relevant to the venture element that they offer and conversely that those providers should be able to claim compliance with the standard in principle, provided that they are fully aware of the implications of so doing. Attention is drawn to the fact that BS 8848 makes provision for the use of the standard for this purpose.

Key types of venture provider, ventures, participants and environments to which this standard is applicable are shown in Figure 1, although this list should not be regarded as exhaustive.

Figure 1 **Examples of applicability of the standard**

| Venture provider | Venture |
|---|---|
| Educational establishments in the further and higher education sector Commercial organizations Sole traders Voluntary and charity organizations Youth organizations | Adventurous activities Fieldwork Expeditions Courses EU visits Educational visits Placements (e.g. by universities or organizations) Volunteer placements Cultural exchanges Gap year activities |
| Who participates in a venture | Types of environment |
| Groups Individuals Students Children Adults Vulnerable adults Third party providers | Temperate Tropical Mountain and high altitude Polar Aquatic (including marine) Desert Underground Urban Rural Remote region |

0.3 Fundamental principle

The underlying principle of this standard is that the organization claiming conformance for a venture that it provides (i.e. the venture provider) is responsible for all aspects, including safety, of a venture provided either on a voluntary basis or in return for payment.

Responsibility for providing constituent elements can be delegated but accountability for ensuring conformance with this standard remains with the venture provider.

Additional guidance on the use of this standard from a consumer perspective is given in Annex A.

The methodology for using this standard to claim partial conformance is given in Annex B and is of particular relevance to the relationship between venture provider and third party provider.

1 Scope

This British Standard specifies requirements for the provision of visits, fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous activities undertaken for educational, research, training or recreational purposes outside the United Kingdom.

It applies to ventures:

- a) where the hazards are such that without consideration by competent people the level of risk would be significant;
- b) at any location outside the United Kingdom including remote regions where climatic extremes, challenging terrain, health hazards or unfamiliar cultural experiences can be expected;
- c) organized for groups or individuals;
- d) that are planned, managed and evaluated from the UK by commercial companies, educational establishments, voluntary or charitable organizations and independent groups or individuals.

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following definitions apply.

2.1 adventurous activity

activity that involves an accepted element of risk, challenge or adventure and requires specialist skills for its safe management

NOTE An adventurous activity generally takes place in a natural outdoor environment, however, it can be mimicked artificially and/or indoors.

2.2 competent person

someone who has the necessary and sufficient training, knowledge, experience, expertise and/or other qualities to complete their allotted task safely and effectively

2.3 direct supervision

supervision where a venture leader manages the participants during all or part of the venture with the ability to intervene in person immediately

2.4 down time

period of time, occurring within the overall duration of the venture, identified by agreement between venture provider and participant prior to commitment to participation, as being beyond the jurisdiction of the venture provider

NOTE See definition of personal time in 2.16.

2.5 emergency

serious situation requiring immediate action

2.6 home agent

venture provider's point of contact in the UK

2.7 in-country representative

individual or organization who or which acts in support of the venture provider in the country where the venture is taking place