

RISK MANAGEMENT AT THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION GROUP

At The Outdoor Education Group, Risk Management is at the heart of everything we do; before, during, and after program. For each specific program, there are detailed components of both our proactive and reactive strategies. It is a requirement, by law, that The Outdoor Education Group implements processes and systems which endeavour to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety of all; staff, participants, and others who are associated with our programs. Our standards align with Australian Adventure Activity Standards, as well as international standards, and reflect over 30 years of industry leading experience.

The components of The Outdoor Education Group Risk Management strategies are:

- ▶ Communication and Consultation
- ▶ Establishing Context
- ▶ Risk Identification
- ▶ Risk Analysis
- ▶ Risk Evaluation
- ▶ Risk Treatment
- ▶ Monitoring and Review
- ▶ Training

The Outdoor Education Group policies and procedures meet or exceed all external compliance measures for outdoor education (e.g. staff training, ratios, and equipment audits); these are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with annual audits to ensure The Outdoor Education Group continues to improve our systems and practices in the field. The Outdoor Education Group emergency planning and critical incident response strives to cover all predictable and known hazards of outdoor education in the Australian environment, ensuring all staff are well equipped and prepared. Our internal compliance processes are second to none and reflect our commitment to ongoing review and improvement.

For any Outdoor Education Group program, general risk assessment and management strategies are documented via our standard operating procedures and Field Practices Manual. In addition, each program has a specific risk assessment, evaluation, and treatment plan applied (this is known as The Outdoor Education Group Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) form). This identifies, and analyses hazards specific to each program and defines any actions required to mitigate them to within The Outdoor Education Group's and client's risk tolerance.

THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION GROUP RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The Outdoor Education Group adopts both preventative and reactive strategies to assist us in managing bush fire risk. Of course, preventative management is paramount – our

number one aim is not to be in a situation where a bush fire threatens a group in any way. In order to achieve this, a number of specific measures are undertaken.

These include:

- ▶ Program venues used in Term Four and Term One are specifically selected following advice from Land Managers to be best able to cope with high heat and possible bush fire threat.
- ▶ Programs are designed to account for these conditions and take into consideration factors such as; use of marked tracks (where possible), access to water, staging areas with access via 2WD roads, etc.
- ▶ Should the predicted high temperature or bush fire threat conditions be deemed unacceptable in the program venue/s prior to the program, we will endeavour to secure an alternative venue or work with you to source a new program date.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES DURING PROGRAM

While on program, there are additional specific measures in place to manage bush fire risk:

- ▶ Weather patterns are monitored prior to any program commencing and the Field Duty Manager (FDM) support system liaises with program staff daily. Each the Localised All Hours contact (Course Coordinator) provides twice-daily weather updates throughout the program.
- ▶ A defined bush fire procedure will be enacted if the Fire Danger Rating (FDR) for the specific weather region reaches pre-determined points (please see attached document). These may, for example, necessitate moving to an urban location for a portion of the program, or remaining at the current location until the threat returns to acceptable levels. While we realise these measures may, and, in the event of Severe or Extreme FDR will, have a considerable impact on the program design, we feel they are warranted to maintain the highest regard for participant and staff safety.
- ▶ On days of Total Fire Ban, groups will act according to the law and not use stoves for cooking. Our meals are designed in fire season to be eaten hot or cold.
- ▶ Land managers have pre-determined thresholds and fire management plans in accordance with these, which may necessitate the closure of a park or venue that the program is operating in. The Outdoor Education Group is legally required to comply with such closures; this may have a considerable impact on the program design, and we will work with the School to manage this.

Download our [Bush Fire Policy Summary](#) and [Heat Procedure Summary](#).