

## 3 Safety Management Standards

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The standards in this section identify the minimum health and safety provision that STF Members are required to implement for operating tours. Members are also recommended to ensure they have provisions in place to cover their statutory requirements for health and safety at work.

It is recommended that appropriate legal and professional advice is taken by each Member individually to ensure they can demonstrate compliance with the standards.

### 3.1 Health and Safety Statement

Members of the STF are committed to ensuring that all reasonable measures are taken, including meeting the requirements of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, so that our clients are assured of a high level of safety throughout their tour. They will achieve this by:

- a) Establishing and maintaining a written health and safety policy document which is consistent with the current advice offered by the Health & Safety Executive and incorporates the requirements of the School Travel Forum Code of Practice and the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge.

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- b) Facilitating and promoting a positive health and safety culture throughout their own, their clients', and their suppliers' organisations worldwide.
- c) Planning and setting standards which meet the needs of their clients and are measurable, achievable and realistic.
- d) Measuring and reviewing performance of their compliance with the terms of this standard and their own safety management system including a formal annual verification by a suitably qualified external expert.
- e) Ensuring that the following minimum standards are met by their individual safety management system.

### 3.2 Direction, Management, Implementation and Review

Members will clearly identify, in their health and safety policy, their organisational structure and who is responsible within it for the processes and what the processes are for:

- a) Policy making:
  - The development and implementation of a safety management policy as described above.
  - The appointment of persons who are competent by experience or training to implement the policies.
  - The provision of adequate resources to ensure policies are carried out.
- b) Planning:
  - Ensuring the participation of appropriate trained and competent personnel.
  - Establishing suitable and sufficient monitoring and feedback systems.
  - Ensuring the Member is up-to-date with current best practices.
- c) Implementation:
  - Ensuring staff are aware of their personal responsibilities and have sufficient training:
    - to familiarise all staff with an outline of the safety policy.
    - to enable them to be equipped to carry out the tasks assigned to them in the policy.
- d) Review:
  - Investigation and annual review of incidents, accidents, 'near misses' and trends.
  - An annual self-audit and declaration followed by an audit by STF approved external Health & Safety auditors.
  - A formal internal review by a board, a director, a partner, an owner, or a senior specialist manager each year.

### 3.3 Services Contracted by Members

#### 3.3.1 Accommodation

See Appendix 2

- a) For all accommodation used members will ensure that:

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- An accommodation contract or agent agreement is signed, or where use of the supplier is fewer than five times per calendar year a purchase order issued, in which it stipulates that the accommodation conforms to local and national fire, safety and hygiene standards and will have current liability insurance cover for the duration of the contract or order.
    - Members are cautioned against the risks associated with accepting a supplier's contract or supply terms.
  - Confirmation that the contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every three years.
  - A Standard or On-site Accommodation Audit is in place.
- b) Standard Accommodation Audit
- All accommodation (used or featured) will be subject to a Standard Accommodation Audit prior to first use and thereafter when a significant change occurs, such as major structural alterations, or change of owner, or at a maximum of three year intervals whichever is sooner.
  - The Standard Accommodation Audit may be completed by an STF Member, hotelier or agent.
  - The Standard Accommodation Audit will be assessed against the STF's Accommodation Core Values (Appendix 2.1) by an auditor trained in accordance with Section 3.3.10.
  - Where the Standard Accommodation Audit results indicate areas for concern the auditor should instigate further appropriate actions to clarify those concerns before use.
  - Based on the results of the audit analysis and any subsequent investigation, the result will be recorded as one of the categories defined in 3.3.2.
  - Members will complete random sample spot checks of Standard Accommodation Audits annually. The results will be analysed by a trained auditor and where significant discrepancies in the accuracy of the information provided by a third-party are identified suitable corrective action will be undertaken before accepting any further Standard Accommodation Audits from that source. Records of these checks will be maintained.
  - A Standard Accommodation Audit will not be required if an On-site Accommodation Audit has been carried out in the past three years.
- c) On-site Accommodation Audit
- In addition to the above Standard Accommodation Audit requirement, if it becomes evident that the accommodation will be used in any one year for five or more groups or 250+ clients, whichever is reached first, it will be listed as 'frequent use' and, within a maximum of twelve months of the frequent use criteria being established, will receive an On-site Accommodation Audit.
  - An On-site Accommodation Audit can only be carried out on-site by an auditor trained in accordance with 3.3.10
  - The accommodation will be re-audited to On-site Accommodation Audit standard at least every three years as long as it remains 'frequent use'.
- d) Based on the results of an audit analysis, the result will be recorded as one of the categories defined in 3.3.2.

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## 3.3.2 Monitoring of Accommodation Audits

a) Members will record audits in the following categories:

- High Conformity

Minor or no areas of improvement have been identified. The management will be commended and encouraged to maintain their standards.

- Acceptable Conformity

Room for improvement has been identified, but the defects do not render the accommodation unsafe. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing, or at the time of the audit assessment, and followed up in writing within 14 days. The deficiencies will be evaluated and a schedule of remedial action will be agreed and monitored.

- Unacceptable

Room for improvement has been identified which renders the accommodation unsafe for use. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing, or at the time of the audit assessment, and followed up in writing within 14 days. The Member will remove the accommodation from its programme and will not consider its reinstatement until evidence is obtained that the defects have been rectified and the Member is able to reclassify the accommodation to either High or Acceptable Conformity.

b) A schedule of all accommodation indicating the current audit status will be maintained by members.

## 3.3.3 Coaches - Booked Direct

See Appendix 3

a) For all coach operators used and booked direct members will ensure that:

- A coach contract is signed, or where use of the supplier is fewer than 5 times per calendar year, or 250+ clients, whichever is greater, a purchase order is issued, in which it stipulates that they comply with all national, local, trade and other laws, regulations, rules and relevant codes of practice. This contract should also stipulate a set of safety standards regarding drivers' hours, driver vetting, insurance cover, subcontracting and vehicle age.
  - Members are cautioned against the risks associated with accepting a supplier's contract or supply terms.
- Confirmation that contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every three years.
- A Standard or On-site Coach Audit is in place.

b) Standard Coach Audit:

- All coach suppliers will be subject to a Standard Coach Audit prior to first use and thereafter when a significant change occurs, such as major fleet changes, or change of owner, or at a maximum of three-year intervals whichever is sooner.
- The Standard Coach Audit may be completed by an STF member, supplier or agent.

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- The Standard Coach Audit will be assessed against the STF's Coach Core Values (Appendix 3.1) by an auditor trained in accordance with Section 3.3.10.
  - A Standard Coach Audit will not be required if an On-site Coach Audit has been carried out in the past three years.
- c) On-site Coach Audit:
- In addition to the above Standard Coach Audit requirement, if it becomes evident that the supplier will be used for five or more groups in any one year, or 250+ clients, whichever is reached first, it will be listed as 'frequent use' and, within a maximum of twelve months of the frequent use criteria being established, will receive an On-site Coach Audit.
  - An On-site Coach Audit can only be carried out on-site by an auditor trained in accordance with 3.3.10.
  - The supplier will be re-audited to On-site Coach Audit standard at least every three years or as long as it remains 'frequent use'.
- d) Based on the results of an audit analysis, the result will be recorded as one of the categories defined in 3.3.5.

### 3.3.4 Coaches - Agent Supplied

See Appendix 3

- a) For all agents supplying coach services members will ensure that:
- A contract is signed in which it stipulates that they comply with all national, local, trade and other laws, regulations, rules and relevant codes of practice. This contract should also stipulate a set of safety standards regarding drivers' hours, driver vetting, insurance cover, subcontracting and vehicle age.
  - Confirmation that contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every three years.
- b) Standard Coach Audit:
- All coach suppliers offered by an agent will be subject to a Standard Coach Audit prior to first use and thereafter at a maximum of three year intervals.
  - The Standard Coach Audit may be completed by an STF member, supplier or agent.
  - The Standard Coach Audit will be assessed against the STF's Coach Core Values (Appendix 3.1) by an auditor trained in accordance with Section 3.3.10.

### 3.3.5 Monitoring of Coach Audits

- a) Members will record audits in the following categories:

- High Conformity

Minor or no areas of improvement have been identified. The management will be commended and encouraged to maintain their standards.

- Acceptable Conformity

Room for improvement has been identified, but the defects do not render the supply unsafe. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing and followed up in writing within 14 days. The deficiencies will be evaluated and a schedule of remedial action will be agreed and monitored.

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- Unacceptable

Room for improvement has been identified which render the supply unsafe for use. The defects will be brought to the immediate attention of the management at the time of auditing, or at the time of the audit assessment, and followed up in writing within 14 days. The Member will remove the supplier from its programme and will not consider their reinstatement until evidence is obtained that the defects have been rectified and the Member is able to reclassify the supplier to either High or Acceptable Conformity.

- b) A schedule of all coach suppliers indicating the current audit status will be maintained by members.

### 3.3.6 Airlines

- a) All air transport to and from the UK is regulated by the Department of Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority. These bodies operate to very strict safety criteria and it is considered no additional practical measures can be undertaken by members.
- b) Flights originating in other jurisdictions are governed by the laws and regulations of the country in question; however, members will ensure that use of airlines currently prohibited from UK and EU airspace will not be used, or where no alternative is available, brought to the attention of clients. See [Banned airlines list | UK Civil Aviation Authority](#)

### 3.3.7 Rail, Ferries (Inc. Eurotunnel), Ocean-Going Cruise Liners and Public Transport

All rail, ferry, ocean-going cruise liners and public transport is regulated nationally. It is not felt that members can take any additional measures.

### 3.3.8 Services Secured By Agents and Ground Handlers

Where Agents or Ground Handlers provide services that would be the subject of a safety review if booked direct by members e.g. visits and excursions, they will sign a contract agreeing to use the appropriate STF standards as a minimum.

### 3.3.9 Services Obtained Through Approved Third-Party Verification Schemes

- a) Where services are obtained through the approved schemes, the quality of the third-party verification has been assessed and, other than confirmation of the supplier's current membership of the scheme, such as validation via the scheme's website, the STF's safety management requirements can be considered as met and further substantiation is not required.
- b) Approved schemes are:
  - LOTC Quality Badge
  - CPT Coach Marque
  - Guild of British Coach Operators membership.

### 3.3.10 Training of In-House Accommodation and Coach Supply Auditors

- a) All in-house accommodation and coach supply auditors will comply with the STF audit training requirements prior to completing any audits.

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- b) In-house accommodation and coach supply auditors will:
- Analyse the results of Standard Audits, identify and action suitable additional investigation if required and provide an informed opinion on the suitability for use by the Member.
  - Visit suppliers to complete On-site Audits, make recommendations regarding improvements to the safety management of the supply where necessary and provide an informed opinion on the suitability for use by the Member.
- c) All in-house auditors will complete an initial training course, which is supplied, or approved by the STF or the STF's relevant consultants. This course will be designed to enable the auditor to understand the reasoning behind the audit requirements and to be able to complete fully the audit process and forms.
- d) After successful completion of this course, auditors will be allowed to assess Standard Audits.
- e) Before undertaking On-site Audits, all new auditors must also undertake at least two accompanied On-site Audits with an auditor who has a minimum of two years' experience or an STF approved auditor. The new auditor must undertake at least one audit themselves to demonstrate competence in the completion and outcomes of audits and the sign off completed by in writing with the New Auditor Sign Off Form (see Appendix 2.8).
- f) All in-house auditors will complete refresher training at least every two years, which is undertaken or approved by the STF.
- g) In-house auditors who fail to demonstrate competence during the initial training course or the accompanied On-Site Audit will not be authorised to analyse Standard Audits or complete On-site Audits.
- h) In-house auditors who fail to complete the refresher training:
- If less than three years has elapsed since the date the refresher training was due, they will be required to attend and pass the refresher training before continuing auditor duties.
  - If a period of three years or more has elapsed since the date the refresher training was due, they will be required to attend and pass the new auditor training before continuing auditor duties,
- i) Where the STF or its consultants have reason to question the competence of an in-house auditor following on-site audits, the in-house auditor may be requested to undergo additional refresher training and may be excluded from completing further audits until such time as this is completed satisfactorily.
- j) Coach Transport: Holders of the CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence) for Transport Managers (Passenger Transport) Level 3 – 2012, or earlier equivalents, are exempt from the above requirement.
- k) The member will maintain a record of suitably qualified in-house auditors and retain them for a minimum period of 5 years.

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## 3.4 Visits, Excursions and Activities

See Appendix 4.1

- a) Where visits, excursions or activities are included in a final itinerary, except where the itinerary specifically states the event is not being arranged or facilitated by the member, then members will take reasonable steps to ensure that risks have been evaluated and monitored.
- b) Sufficient information on the visits, excursions or activities will be provided to group leaders so that they are able to make informed decisions for their own group.

## 3.5 Inspection Visits

Each member will provide a means for clients to inspect a destination in advance of travelling with their group. Terms and conditions for such visits will be at the discretion of each member.

## 3.6 Safety Information Before Travel

Each member will provide written practical safety information to their clients prior to their tour.

## 3.7 Emergency Management Procedure

- a) Members will produce and maintain a fully documented emergency management procedure that is available to all their clients and that is operational at all times.
- b) Members will operate a Duty Officer system so that they can be contacted at all times when groups are travelling and all group leaders on tour, drivers of British coaches and agents will be provided with details of how to contact the Duty Officer.

## 3.8 Safeguarding

See Appendix 5

Members will produce and maintain fully documented policy and procedures to ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable clients that is available to all their clients and that is operational at all times.