

Adult groups in adventurous activities (FS120087)

(Published March 2016 replacing version Jan 2015)

Guidance

The following is not an exhaustive list, but sets out certain broad areas for consideration. They could be used as part of a checklist and in a Risk Assessment.

1 Co-ordinator

The role of the co-ordinator is to ensure that the following steps are taken

a) All administrative aspects have been dealt with, including:

Details of the activity are published

The acknowledgement of risk statement is signed and copies of this factsheet are made available to all participants

All participants have a copy of the guidance card 'Adult Groups in Adventurous Activities'

A Risk Assessment is conducted and discussed by all participants

An InTouch system is put in place

Relevant medical information is obtained

The relevant Commissioner is advised

b) Liaison with an activity adviser

2 Seeking advice

Consideration must be given to seeking technical advice where this is not available within the group. One, or more, person could be approached, for example; a person holding an adventurous activity permit for the activity, an experienced member of a County team or an active and informed member of an appropriate club.

3 Group management

Each group should have an adult clearly nominated to act as a focal point for group decision making. This is particularly important for communication where there are two or more groups undertaking the activity.

4 Group size

The size and experience of the group plays an important factor in safety management. Allowance needs to be made for the safe operation of the activity in changing circumstances. The Rules and factsheets produced by The Scout Association give indications of the appropriate size for those leading groups of young people with little experience.

5 Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment should be conducted and the conclusions shared with all participants. The factsheet [FS120000 Activities - Risk Assessments](#) may be used as a prompt, but bear in mind it is by no means exhaustive.

Consideration should be given to the dynamic nature of the activity. It may change due to such factors as weather conditions, progress by groups or performance by individuals. Points at which the activity might be stopped or amended should be considered as part of the Risk Assessment.

Where there is no local knowledge within the group, consideration should be given to seeking local or specific advice and incorporated within the Risk Assessment.

Consideration should be given to external factors and their impact on the activity. For example, driver fatigue and late nights.

6 The capacity of the individual and group

The objective or task should take into consideration the experience and personal limitations of each individual. Medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, heart and breathing disorders) and fitness need to be established beforehand. It is recommended that medical information is recorded but each individual is responsible for communicating any such circumstances to the co-ordinator.

7 Appropriate technical knowledge

Common sense dictates that absolute novices should not participate in intermediate or advanced levels of activities without briefing, preliminary and progressive training.

8 Suitable personal equipment

Primarily this relates to suitable clothing and any necessary 'spares' to deal with the operating environment. Where novices or those with little experience are involved, or the activity is complex or extended, attention should be given to providing kit lists and if necessary checking kit.

9 First Aid

Appropriate First Aid equipment should be available within the group. Every participant should have access to a person with sufficient knowledge to administer First Aid in the relevant environment. The identity of those who

are to act should be advised to all participants. With activities in Terrains Zero or One, and inland water activities, the minimum knowledge is The Scout Association's First Response (or equivalent) training. For more adventurous or remote activities, a full First Aid qualification is recommended. Definitions of terrains and water classifications can be found in [POR chapter 9](#).

10 Safety equipment

The requirement for safety equipment greatly depends on the activity. Advice given should comply with the recommendations of the Scout Association or relevant National Governing Body

Attention should be paid to ensuring that everyone is aware of how to use safety equipment and that it is checked as functional.

If individuals are required to bring their own equipment, this should be expressly stated, together with any specifications. It may also be appropriate that personal and other equipment is checked prior to the activity by a permit holder with the necessary skills.

11 An alternative plan

Focusing on a single task, or objective, may lead to pressure in accomplishing it. An alternative plan should be considered in the run up to the activity so that a switch can be made without too much difficulty – there is always another day!

12 Emergency plan

It should be clear about 'who does what' in the event of an emergency. Continuous evaluation during the activity may prevent a real emergency arising.

Where an activity is in a remote location, a route or activity plan should be left with a responsible person in the locality, who is able to act in case the party is late returning. The Scout Association produce a Route Card template, although others that contain similar information could be used.

13 Briefings

These should be conducted irrespective of the size of the group.

Apart from a preliminary briefing given well in advance of the activity, one should be conducted immediately before the event. This is so everyone is aware of the agreed and defined objectives, the possibility of changes and limitations, and the procedures in the event of emergencies.

14 Thinking 'outside' of the activity

Consideration should be given to any adverse environmental impact or to the effect of the activity on other people.

Further advice and information

This may be available via your Assistant County Commissioner (Activities), the relevant National Governing Body, or by contacting the Scout Information Centre at UK HQ.

The Information and risk acknowledgement form can be downloaded [here](#).

Information about the inclusion of adults with disabilities can be found available [here](#).