

## RISK MANAGEMENT SUMMARY 2019

Venture Force recognises the need for clients to assure themselves that the quality and safety of our activity provision and our risk analysis and management systems are suitably robust. The purpose of this document is to help organisers by providing the information usually required.

### ACCREDITATION

#### ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES LICENCE (AALA)



Venture Force believes that the safety of outdoor activities is best assessed by the experience and expertise of the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). Venture Force is inspected on a bi-annual basis and holds a licence issued by AALA for the safe conduct of activities it delivers, as required by law. AALA is part of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who are the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

The inspection process covers the safe management of activities and includes risk assessments, staff qualifications and the proper maintenance of equipment associated with the activities. The inspectors are experts in the field of outdoor activity delivery and the inspection is rigorous. Venture Force undertakes to conform to the requirements and guidance of the Licensing Service and its inspectors and is also subject to spot inspections. [www.aals.org.uk](http://www.aals.org.uk)

#### **Venture Force holds: Licence Number L9111 Reference Number R1913**

The specified activities on this licence are:

- Kayaking (Inland waters)
- Open Canoeing (Inland waters) a
- Sailing (Inland waters)
- Rock-Climbing (Single pitch only)
- Abseiling (Single pitch only, including 'aerial runway' abseiling)
- Gorge Scrambling
- Hill Walking & Mountaineering

In addition, AALS can (and does) include in their inspection, non-licensable activities to establish whether a "culture of safety" exists within the organisation.

#### EXPEDITION PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION (EPA)



*"The Expedition Providers Association is the only awarding body of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom's Quality Badge (LOtC QB) for overseas expeditions.*

*To be a full member represents, by independent inspection, proof of quality and safety across the business. This differs and is justifiably more robust than all other LOtC QB accreditations."*

#### **Venture Force Limited**

**Postal Address: 8 Craven Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 0QU**

Registered Business Address: Sydney Lodge, Macdonald Road, Lightwater, Surrey, GU18 5YA. (Last updated 08/01/2018)

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### INSTITUTE OF OUTDOOR LEARNING (IOL)



Venture Force is a member of the Institute of Outdoor Learning.

*'The Institute for Outdoor Learning supports individuals and organisations who use the outdoors to make a difference for others.'*

### EXPEDITION PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION & BRITISH STANDARD 8848



Venture Force is a full member of the Expedition Providers Association (EPA). Venture Force complies with, and in many instances exceeds, the requirements of BS8848 (British Standard for the provision of Overseas Expeditions). In 2016 we received the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge' for the provision of overseas expeditions.

### INSURANCE

Venture Force holds Public Liability Insurance, as required by law. It has a limit of £10 million indemnity for any one incident. Worldwide emergency rescue & evacuation cover is also provided for all clients. We strongly recommend participants make their own provision for personal accident, travel and cancellation cover should they consider it appropriate.

### SECURITY



Venture Force is ATOL registered and ABTA bonded giving clients, both groups and individuals, the highest level of protection possible.

## EXPEDITION LEADERSHIP & STAFFING

### 2 X 2 LEADERSHIP TEAM POLICY

There are many companies working in the same field as us, so what is it that makes Venture Force stand out, set us apart from the others? As well as our desire to meet our clients' needs, all our adventures and expeditions are designed and delivered in consultation with you. We believe it is our approach to safety and support whilst on expedition that really sets us apart from our competitors. We have a unique approach to leadership whilst on trips, whether it be with adults or school groups. In the case of school groups our **two + two** policy means that with teams of up to 16 we will always send a Leadership Team of 4, **two** Venture Force Leaders + **two** teachers. On adult trips, we will send **two** Venture Force Leaders. This means that you should never be left on your own to deal with a difficult situation in a foreign country and the extra numbers give for greater flexibility, a greater chance of achieving the expedition goals and greater security.

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### RESPONSIBILITIES

For school groups the group leader has overall responsibility for their group at all times. Venture Force has responsibility for the programme, equipment and for ensuring that operating practices meet all legal requirements. Venture Force staff will be responsible for the safety and management of clients on all activities provided by Venture Force. It is essential that visiting staff provide information regarding individuals and offer appropriate support to enable Venture Force staff to properly perform their duties. School staff retain a duty of care at all times for participants under 18. If a participant is withdrawn from the “led” activity for any reason, then the responsibility for those withdrawn will revert to the visiting staff. If, at any time, accompanying staff are unhappy about an activity it is essential that they make their concerns known to Venture Force staff at the earliest opportunity. Accompanying staff may insist that any activity does not continue on the grounds of physical or psychological harm, or that the activity is not commensurate with their planned outcomes.

### STAFF COMPETENCE

All staff leading our activities will hold the relevant National Governing Body qualification or have been assessed as competent by an appropriately experienced and qualified person as required by the Licensing Service. Copies of certificates are available for inspection on request. All our leaders hold an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check or Disclosure Scotland Check and hold an in-date 16hr outdoor first aid certificate.

### SUPERVISION WHEN NOT ON ACTIVITIES – SCHOOL GROUPS

Accompanying staff are responsible for the supervision of their groups when not in a structured session led by Venture Force staff. All Venture Force staff are first aid qualified and they are available to give assistance at all times. Rules regarding conduct of clients whilst on activity / expedition / adventure are discussed and agreed prior to the activity / expedition / adventure.

### CHILD PROTECTION

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service and Disclosure Scotland Checks are carried out on all Venture Force staff including long-term and regular volunteers, trainees and student placements.

## EXPEDITION & ACTIVITY SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

### 24HR UK BASED EMERGENCY OPERATIONS ROOM

For the duration of any Venture Force expeditions our ‘Emergency Operation Room’ will monitor and support leadership teams in-country with advice and assistance. In the case of an emergency the Operations room team, staffed by major incident managers from the uniformed Emergency Services, Military and Mountain Rescue, will take control and manage the incident to its satisfactory conclusion. This effectively leaves our leaders to manager the team on the ground.

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### INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE

Leadership teams have access to the latest technology that affords them international communications and a link with the Operations Room 24hrs per day. The package may include; satellite phone, personal locator beacons and in-country mobile phones.

### REMOTE MEDICAL SUPPORT

Venture Force work hand in-hand with the 'Remote Medical Support', run by experts in the field of expedition medicine. Our link with RMS enables us to; suitably screen and advise clients prior to any expedition, provide each leadership team with a medical kit specific to the team and location of the expedition and, when in-country, supplies our leadership teams and Operations Room with immediate access to expert medical advice and support. This union links perfectly with the medical insurance and repatriation we provide to each client and member of staff.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE AND REPATRIATION

From the out-set Venture Force purchase Travel Insurance (with repatriation) to each client and member of the leadership team. This insurance is specific to the destination, environment, and activities of the expedition. Clients are requested to provide their own insurance to protect themselves against loss, theft or damage to their personal items.

### IN-COUNTRY AGENTS

To complement and add to our provision and capabilities Venture Force liaise with and manage a group of in-country agents. Our agents supply us with vital important information prior to the expedition, a friendly face to teams arriving at any destination and offer our Operations Room and Leadership Teams with a local solution to a local problem.

### TRAVEL SAFETY ADVICE

Venture Force expedition managers continually monitor the political and environmental situations in all countries to which we lead expeditions. By monitoring information supplied by the press and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'Travel Safety' department enables us to take a close look at the situation on the ground and in conjunction with our agents make informed choices as to the safety and suitability of each location at all times. In the months prior to each expedition and, during the trip, we make travel safety certificates available to all clients, schools and interested parties.

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### EXPEDITION & ACTIVITY RISK MANAGEMENT

#### RISK ASSESSMENTS AND RISK BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Venture Force has a Health and Safety Policy and a Code of Practice that includes a generic risk/benefit analysis supported by site specific risk assessments. These are held centrally and are available for inspection on request. These are updated regularly and reviewed annually by our Technical Advisors. Dynamic risk assessments are carried out by experienced Venture Force Leaders during the activity to take into account local conditions and other continually changing factors. Risk assessments and risk management is a major part of the AALS inspection. All Venture Force clients are asked to acknowledge the residual risk inherent in adventurous activities prior to embarking on their adventure.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK

We will take all steps to ensure the health & safety of you and your group whilst on Venture Force Courses / Expeditions. However, you must be aware that certain inherent risks remain, which are integral to the activity and these cannot be eliminated completely. The risk of serious injury is extremely remote but some activities may result in minor injuries; e.g. grazes, sprains and bruises. The level of risk in participation in our activities is no greater than that associated with, for example, normal play activity. This is not a 'disclaimer' but serves to inform group leaders and participants about what they may experience.

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