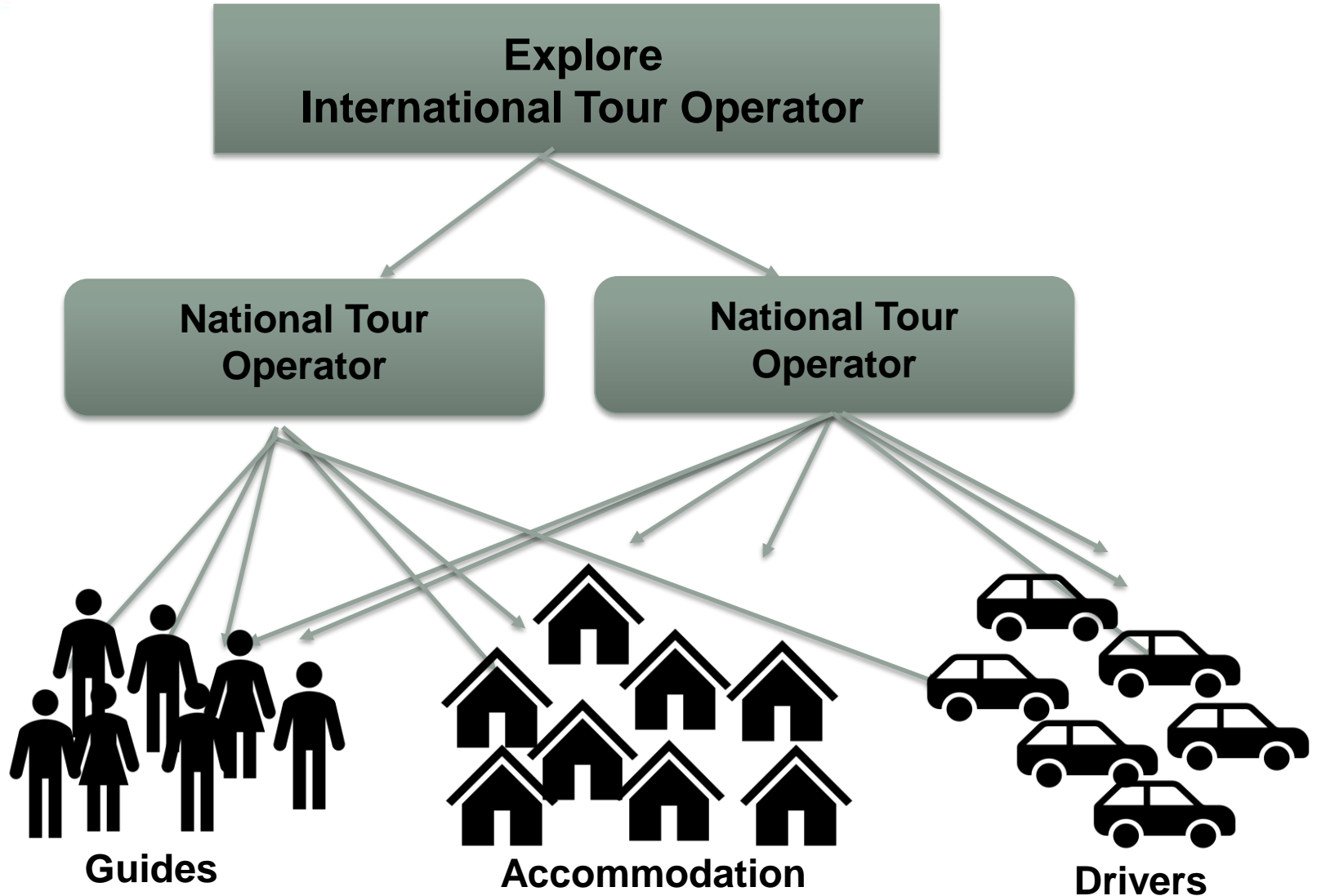


Standard Operating Procedures in practice

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Why are Standard Operating Procedures important?

- Our Public Liability requires us to have these checks in place
- If a supplier does not complete one we will not use them
- If a supplier does not comply on a serious risk factor we may not use them and look for a supplier who does comply.

- To ensure all services are up to a high quality and safety standard
- To ensure our customers travel in a safe environment

If the rules are not followed they are aware that any negligence to comply by the guidelines / rules may result in incident and therefore the leader, tour operator or Explore being liable

Explores Risk Management Systems (RMS)



The National Tour Operators responsibility

- To have these Standard Operating Procedure guidelines in place
- To communicate and distribute these to all relevant staff
- Make sure extended suppliers have completed the documents and that they comply
- To enforce compliance to the agreed guidelines through driver and guide checks
- In cases of non compliance – have a plan in place to reduce / remove the risk
- Renew them every 1-3 years

		Comply	EXPLORE LEADER ACTIONS - (if known non-compliance) please forward to tour leader
Fire	Apart from the main staircase, is there another escape route?	N	If only one staircase, Explore Leader to monitor that it remains free from blockage. Brief pax on evacuation plan.
Fire	Before departure, full briefing to be given by crew of procedures in case of fire (including meeting points).	N	Explore Leader must Give full briefing as per safety Manual

Practical Examples of SOPs for Extended suppliers – Guide’s guidelines for Vehicles

CHECK VEHICLE	Comply Y/N	Control Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All seatbelts are in good working order 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has emergency exit, hammers for breaking glass, any relevant equipment for repairs - If not ask driver to obtain one 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows have no crack in line of driver’s vision. If there is ask for the vehicle to be replaced 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All seats must be fixed seats – no jump seats (fold down) to be used. If there are jump seats to be used ask for the vehicle to be replaced 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check luggage is not in the passage or in the back seat above headrest level 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check no fuel to be carried in the vehicle 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the vehicle has legal tyres 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the vehicle has a legal spare tyres (2 if a 4x4 – additional towropes, jack and wheel brace). 		
<p>CHECK DRIVER –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is well rested, sober and in a fit state to drive. • Maximum actual driving = 9 hours • Make sure he takes a rest of 45 minutes, every 4.5 hours • They are on duty for a maximum of 13 hours • He has all necessary documents • He is aware he cannot use his phone at any point of the journey • Keeps to the speed limit • Brief driver on Explore SOP and company policy • Check driver has made all the driver checks 		

Practical Examples of SOPs for Extended suppliers – Guide’s guidelines for Vehicles

	Comply Y/N	Control Measure
BRIEF customers on -		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seatbelts - Make sure all passengers are seated and seat belted before departing • If it is the law in the country of operation to wear seatbelts then customers must wear them. If it is not the law to wear them but they are provided then Explore encourages customers to wear them. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind customers to put on seat belt each time they return to the bus 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore leader is authorized to tell driver to slow down, take a rest, not talk on mobile - even if not law in country it is an explore company policy 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No smoking in or near the vehicle 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No unauthorized people to board our chartered vehicles 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the driver can drive the vehicle, no customers 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is a convoy – leader to travel in the first vehicle -make sure the customers know 		
REPORT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask customers to report any safety concerns to the leader so that they can be acted upon straight away 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you experience problems vehicle / drivers please contact your Operations Manager at Explore immediately to change them. Do not board an unsafe vehicle, that is not professionally manned 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any breach in driving agreement (SOP guidelines) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in an Incident report for any accidents / near misses 		

Practical Examples of SOP for Extended suppliers – Additional – Diver’s guidelines for Vehicles

The following vehicle checks are to be done by the driver prior to departure every day.

It is the leaders’ duty to check these have been done, it would be good if you do the walk around check with him/her.

- Fluids – oil, water, fuel, power steering, brake, clutch
- Fuel – driver should carry enough for th day if possible. If need to fill up allow passengers off the bus
- Filters – air filter, fuel filters
- Tyres – inflated, legal, spares, cuts, thorns, etc. UK legal limit 1.6mm, thickness of a matchstick
- Battery – charged and charging
- Lights and electrics work
- Windscreen – clear of cracks
- Seatbelts – present and in working order
- Interior – clean and tidy
- Wheel nuts – check they are there / not sheered off
- Off road vehicles - 2 spare wheels, & tools to change a wheel inc jack and wheel brace, do they have a working radio,

Practical Examples of SOP for Extended suppliers – Guide’s guidelines for Accommodation

CHECK -	Comply Y/N	Control Measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire exits are clear of obstructions and they can be opened easily by customers in an emergency. If blocked or locked they must be cleared and unlocked immediately by the hotel staff. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire exits are clearly marked. If not, brief customers on the evacuation plan and enter details in the safety section of the tour report. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire extinguishers are present on all floors. If not, enter details in the safety section of the tour report. 		
BRIEF customers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to take extra care in bathrooms (wet floors) and to use floor mats where provided 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if there is only one main staircase available in an emergency 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evacuation plan of the hotel you are in, including meeting point in case of fire. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that they are responsible for their luggage and personal belongings. Recommend use of - safety deposit boxes (these may be in reception) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOT use lift in case of earthquake or fire 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not to smoke or have any naked flames in the rooms (candles) 		
REPORT -		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask customers to report any safety concerns to the leader so that they can be acted upon straight away. I.e. electrical sockets, exposed wires, fans, showers, balconies, tiling, locks, slippery floor, loose carpets etc 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any poorly lit, damaged, broken or unfit balconies are reported to the hotel immediately and the customers’ rooms are changed. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any gas heaters in room must be reported the room changed immediately 		

Practical Examples of SOP for Extended suppliers – Guide’s guidelines for Trekking / walking with groups

CHECK – COUNT ALL CUSTOMERS	Comply Y/N	Control Measure
• Explore leader or guide must carry the correct safety equipment including a full first aid kit and check the location of the nearest medical facilities		
• Explore leader or guide is carrying effective method to communicate with emergency services (SAT phone, mobile phone, radio etc) and you have all necessary contacts on the TRA - Checked and tested before departure.		
• Customers have the correct footwear for the type of walk, as per the trip notes		
• Customers are fit and physically prepared for the walk with the correct equipment		
• Route plan, group details and approximate return time are left with local crew not going on walk or accommodation staff.		
• Route has been walked before by the leader / guide and is safe to operate it.		
• Weather forecasts are obtained prior to a walk starting. Tour leader has the right to cancel or postpone a walk if the weather forecast or local conditions make it unsafe. Especially in areas prone to flash flooding like canyons.		
• Monitor customers’ behaviour and wellbeing. Look out for anyone who might be struggling or suffering from heat exhaustion, hypothermia, blisters etc.		
• Pack animals are well treated, look healthy and are not overloaded.		
• If using porters – see guidelines below		
• If trekking at high altitude the tour leader must monitor customer’s health, have an emergency plan in place and brief customers on high altitude sickness symptoms.		

Practical Examples of SOP for Extended suppliers – Guide’s guidelines for Trekking / walking with groups

BRIEF CUSTOMERS	Comply Y/N	Control Measure
• on equipment e.g. insect repellent, water, food, rain protection, sun block, clothes (dependent on weather conditions) etc.		
• on the back marker system – how they are allocated for all walks and provided with a whistle		
• ensure group stays together		
• on potential dangers on route such as steep drops, steep gradients etc.		
• Brief customers on schedule for the day including breaks, toilet stops, distance, level of fitness, terrain, timings, water etc		
• Make sure ALL customers take adequate rest during walks, including slow walkers. Don't set off the minute the slower members of the group get to a rest stop regardless of how long the faster members have been waiting.		
• Avoid areas prone to rock falls. Customers briefed to shout a warning if rocks become loose.		
• If walk is very exposed – brief on sunburn / insects and vertigo		
• Explore leaders to be aware of guidelines if coming across thunder storms.		
• Explore leaders to be aware of what action to take if encountering dogs on walks		
• Avoid customers approaching all wild animals.		
• Rivers with a water level above knee height are only crossed by using a bridge or stepping stones.		
• No walking at night unless planned into the itinerary by Explore. If agreed with Explore all customers to carry torches.		
• If trekking at high altitude brief the customers on explores policy of acclimatization		

Practical Examples of SOP for Extended suppliers – Guide’s guidelines for Trekking / walking with groups

REPORT	Comply Y/N	Control measure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a customer wants to terminate a walk, clear instructions are given by the leader about the return route or area where they should wait. Ideally the customer should be accompanied, ask for a volunteer if no guides available. Areas where a customer waits for the group are free from danger and there is protection from poor weather. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any terrain that requires customers to be roped together is avoided unless planned into the itinerary by Explore. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask customers to report any safety concerns to the leader so that they can be acted upon straight away. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If porters not being treated in a proper manner you must inform Explore as soon as possible. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in an Incident report for any accidents / near misses 		

Summary

Explore have SOPs for all services we use on our trips and through these SOPs we have checked we have :

- Qualified / competent staff
- Compliance by national law
- Legally required documentation
- First aid and safety equipment
- Pre safety checks
- Detailed safety briefs

All tour operators / guides / driver and extended suppliers must be familiar with our guidelines and rules and comply to follow them in order to work with us

- Have an emergency plan in place (next session)