



## **GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1) What are Generic Risk Assessments?**

- a) Generic Risk Assessments highlight commonly identified hazards (i.e. things with the potential to cause harm) and control measures/precautions (i.e. ways of reducing the likelihood of the hazard causing harm) associated with the general locations visited, events attended or activities that are undertaken as part of our battlefield tour service.
- b) The aim of these Generic Risk Assessments is to: -
  - i) Ensure that the overall safety standards of our tours are maintained to suitably high levels.
  - ii) Ensure that our customers are properly informed about potential hazards and the control measures/precautions to minimise their effect.
  - iii) Fulfil In the footsteps and Take us Touring's legal responsibility to provide its 'employees' and customers for whom they have a duty of care with relevant written risk assessments.
- c) These Generic Risk Assessments may not apply to all situations and may not cover every aspect of a tour, but are made available as helpful tools for all who have responsibility for the organisation and leadership of our tours. If 'employees' choose not to use our provided Generic Risk Assessments, they must ensure that adequate alternative risk assessments are undertaken, and that these are recorded and stored appropriately.

#### **2) How can Generic Risk Assessments for our tours help?**

- a) Generic Risk Assessments should help all those responsible for the organisation and leadership of tours by: -
  - i) Raising awareness of possible hazards and control measures/precautions that might have previously not been considered.
  - ii) Promoting recommended good practice.
  - iii) Providing information that can easily be shared with, and adapted by, all 'employees' (and customers) to ensure a common understanding of expected standards and responsibilities during a tour.
- b) Generic Risk Assessments should therefore help to: -

- i) **Protect customers** - By highlighting ways of improving safety standards on tour and encouraging 'employees' to actively discuss issues and agree good standards of practice that can be applied consistently.
- ii) **Safeguard 'employees'** - From the threat of litigation, by providing clear written evidence of the risk assessment and management measures that have been taken (as required by law).
- iii) **Save considerable time and effort** - By providing an initial framework of ideas for discussion rather than starting with a blank sheet of paper. It is generally easier to cross out the suggestions that may not apply, rather than to think from the start of all the issues that do.

### 3) How should Generic Risk Assessments be used?

- a) Generic Risk Assessments provide a useful starting point for discussion and consideration, **BUT** they must never be regarded as: -
  - i) **Foolproof** - Accidents can and still will happen! The risk assessments give written evidence to help show that 'employees' have given reasonable prior thought to the risks and control measures involved.
  - ii) **Comprehensive** - Whilst generic risk assessments seek to identify and highlight key hazards and the control measures/precautions designed to minimise their effect, it should never be assumed that **all** significant issues have been recognised and included. It is still up to the 'employee' to identify and add any other hazards or control measures/precautions that may be appropriate.
  - iii) **Rigid** - Risk assessment forms are flexible, and must be adapted to each tour's own circumstances by adding further hazards, control measures or precautions that may be relevant and/or deleting those hazards, control measures or precautions that are not appropriate or acceptable, or cannot practically be implemented for some reason. Indeed, whilst the control measures or precautions suggested might all be worthy of consideration, it is understood that they are not all universally applicable for all tours and situations. However, if an accident were to occur as a consequence of a control measure/precaution not being adopted, a court of law might expect the 'employee' to justify that decision.
  - iv) **One person's sole responsibility** - All risk assessments should be shared and discussed in advance with all the other 'employees' involved in the tour. Wherever possible, the group members should also be involved in discussions as this will help them to recognise hazards, to identify suitable control measures/precautions, and to take more responsibility for their own safety and welfare.
  - v) **An Opt Out** - Whilst Generic Risk Assessments should significantly ease the workload of 'employees', considerable thought, discussion, and interaction are still required to complete the forms. A generic risk assessment is not complete unless it has been suitably adapted and agreed as acceptable by all those responsible for the tour.
  - vi) **Complete** - The generic risk assessments identify likely hazards and suggest control measures/precautions to consider, but they do not provide a comprehensive list of all options. Users should delete inappropriate and unacceptable options, and add extra measures in each section of the form, as necessary. In addition to using relevant generic risk assessments, a "Specific Visit Risk Assessment" form should be completed to identify hazards and control

measures/precautions that are unique to the precise locations visited, activities undertaken, and/or individuals within on the tour (see the blank “Specific Visit Risk Assessment form). Furthermore, it must be clearly understood by all ‘employees’ that risk assessment and management is an ongoing process that involves far more than written documents. Therefore, during a visit, all ‘employees’ must maintain a “Dynamic or Ongoing Risk Assessment” by remaining alert to, and responding to, changing circumstances or additional unforeseen hazards.

vii) **Static** – At the bottom of each form is the name of the person who initially wrote the generic risk assessment, together with the date it was last updated. Inevitably, during the course of time, various changes, corrections and improvements will be made. Users of the forms are encouraged to notify In the footsteps of any mistakes or suggested amendments, so that the forms can be steadily improved, and thus become increasingly useful and effective tools for developing safe practice on our tours. The forms may also need to be amended in the light of accidents, incidents or near-misses during tours. It is important therefore that ‘employees’ review tours after they return and, as part of the risk assessment and monitoring process, record and pass on to us lessons that can be learned for future tours. In particular, it may be helpful to raise awareness of newly identified hazards or of management strategies that were not effective, or indeed to share with others successful strategies and good practice. ‘Employees’ should therefore note changes that do occur (by checking on the date of the last update), and regularly update any hard copies of these forms.

#### 4) What is the recommended process for using Generic Risk Assessments?

- a) **Select and print off** – All relevant and helpful Generic Risk Assessment forms according to the type of tour and activities normally organised for that tour.
- b) **Add** – Others (e.g. that apply to specific situations or locations) as required.
- c) **Store** – In a clearly identified and marked file.
- d) **Carry** – The clearly identified and marked Risk Assessment file with them on tour.
- e) **Remain familiar** – With the agreed practice, and refer to forms as a reminder before beginning a tour if necessary.
- f) **Review and amend** – At least annually (or more often if necessary), and immediately if new hazards are identified or new precautions deemed necessary.
- g) **Stop** – Any activity if the level of risk is considered unmanageable and unacceptable.
- h) **Flexibility** – May be acceptable on occasion, if the ‘employee’ can reasonably justify their actions.
- i) **Specific Tour Risk Assessment** – May also be required for each tour to address any additional issues relevant to the specific site/group/activities involved.

#### 5) Which Generic Risk Assessments should be completed?

- a) Generic risk assessments that apply to the specific tour must always be completed, as these provide the foundation for all other Generic Risk Assessments, and identify issues that are common to that tour.
- b) In addition other generic risk assessments that may be relevant and helpful, depending upon the type of tour, associated activities and specific locations normally visited during the tour.
- c) Other generic risk assessments that were not considered previously, but apply to non-standard tours, should be completed, as and when required.

**6) Who needs to see and check completed Risk Assessments?**

- a) Completed risk assessments should be available for inspection, if requested, by all those who are responsible for managing, monitoring and overseeing In the footsteps and Take us Touring tours.
- b) Completed risk assessments should be available for inspection, if requested, by the customer.
- c) Completed risk assessments should be available for inspection, if requested, by an approved body.
- d) Where the tour is related to a group tour: -
  - i) Copies of the forms should be presented for inspection and checking internally by a school, college or other education establishment by the Head of Dept and/or Headteacher according to their own Visits Policy. There should be no need for additional copies to be sent to the Local Authority (LA). However, the LA Educational Visits Consultant may request copies of documentation for specific visits that are causing concern, or for a spot check, as part of the LA's standard monitoring policy.
  - ii) For Youth and Children's Service groups, copies of risk assessments should be presented for inspection and checking internally by a suitably experienced and competent Line Manager or Unit Manager (according to their agreed policy).
  - iii) For all other groups, copies of risk assessments should be presented for inspection and checking in accordance to their agreed policy.

**7) When, and how often, should Generic Risk Assessments be completed?**

- a) For generic risk assessments it is appropriate and acceptable for the form to be completed once initially, then reviewed, amended, and signed annually.
- b) For other occasional, non-routine risk assessments an appropriate and relevant new risk assessment should be completed and signed as required. This would then form the foundation for the risk assessment for that occasional or non-routine activity.
- c) New 'employees' and prospective new 'employees' should be made aware of any generic risk assessments that are used regularly, and should be asked to read and indicate their acceptance of the recognised and adopted safety measures.

**8) Where should risk assessments be stored, and for how long?**

- a) It is suggested that hard copies of all generic risk assessments are kept for reference in a clearly marked file.

- b) It is important that all 'employees'/customers can easily access and remind themselves of recommended safe practice.
- c) Where applicable, 'employees' can also download and/or scan electronic copies for themselves where available and if required.
- d) Hard copies of completed and signed risk assessments should be retained by those responsible at least until such time that they are confident that all issues/incidents arising from a tour have been dealt with fully.

**9) Are these Generic Risk Assessments compulsory?**

- a) By law, those who are responsible for organising and leading tours should be able to show evidence of the risk assessments they have undertaken, and of the preventative control measures and/or precautions they have established to safeguard those in their care. There is no single acceptable method for this, and it would ultimately be up to the law courts to decide what level of risk assessment and management is deemed "reasonable".
- b) These generic risk assessments reflect In the footsteps & Take us Tourings' ultimate responsibility in law (see "The Health and Safety at Work Regulations" 1999) to assess the risks of activities and to pass on to its 'employees' recommended measures that it should be adopted.
- c) It is not mandatory for those 'employees' to use these exact forms, and it is perfectly acceptable for 'employees' to complete their own risk assessments in a different format, if preferred, providing they are suitable and sufficient. However, in the event of an investigated incident, 'employees' clearly might need to justify why they had chosen not to adopt the forms provided by In the footsteps & Take us Touring.

*For the purposes of this document and its associated generic risk assessments 'employees' are considered to include all those who directly work for In the footsteps & Take us Touring and all sub-contractors whilst employed to do tours on our behalf.*