



Tortuga Escondida Residency Center Risk Assessment

Health

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation measures	Observation or Interview	Compliance (Action to be taken if not compliant)
Travellers stomach problems	L	M	Ensure only bottle water is drunk. Do not clean teeth in tap water.		
Mosquito bites leading to malaria, dengue fever or Zika virus	L	M	All participants to be instructed to cover up in the early morning and late afternoons and wear insect repellent. If taking anti-malarial tablets then participants advised to complete full course. All participants to be warned of specifics of each disease and symptoms to look out for.		
Dehydration	M	M	All participants are informed that dehydration is a significant risk at all. They should be informed that they should drink 2 litres of water per day. For any treks, participants should carry sufficient water supplies for the duration of the trek and the trek leader should stop regularly to rest and check for signs of dehydration.		
Participants poorly equipped or with a lack of fitness to cope adequately with the forest conditions	L	M	Participants are fully briefed prior to the start of any walks and check they have the appropriate equipment with them. New participants will be watched carefully for signs of exhaustion and to adjust the distances covered according to the fitness levels. Training sessions given to students prior to expedition to ensure they are fully prepared for conditions on site.		
Need for emergency evacuation	L	H	Vehicles always available for emergency evacuation from field sites. Full evacuation plans in place for extraction to local medical facilities.		
Injury or danger encountered when wandering around the town	L	M	Faculty in charge must be informed of any groups leaving site and they are due to return. All trips off site should be in groups of at least two people.		
Fire	L	H	No smoking allowed within buildings and only in designated smoking areas. All participants should be fully briefed on evacuation procedures.		
Lack of hygiene increasing risk of disease	L	M	Participants sleep in dorm rooms with flushing toilets and showers and will be briefed on the importance of washing hands thoroughly before meal times.		
Allergic reaction to food	M	H	All participants to submit dietary and allergy information prior to the expedition. Where allergies are serious (eg severe nut allergies), no trigger foods to be prepared or served whilst the relevant participant is on-site (eg a total nut ban).		
Medical problem for participant	M	M	All medical details are provided by all participants before the expedition. Medical staff always available during the expedition or always within close proximity of medical facilities. Sites have adequate medical supplies for stabilising any patients needing to be transferred to a hospital.		
Need for emergency evacuation	L	H	Vehicles always available for emergency evacuation from field sites. Full evacuation plans in place for extraction to local medical facilities.		
Snake bite	VL	H	Only herpetologists will handle snakes and venomous species should not be brought to camp to show participants. All participants should wear long baggy trousers and walking boots/wellingtons when walking through the forested areas. If snake bite was to occur then response is to apply a light pressure bandage, immobilise the patient and evacuate them to hospital.		
Large cat attack	L	H	All participants to travel in groups in the forest. Chance of this type of incident is extremely low.		
Small mammal or bat bit	L	H	Only participants who have received rabies injections to be allowed to handle bats and small mammals. Any participant or staff member bitten by a bat to be given booster rabies injections.		
Reaction or disease from insect or arachnid bit	L	M	Participants with strong reactions to insect/arachnid bites identified prior to expeditions, and instructed to carry epipens with them. Participants to wear long trousers and closed-toed footwear whilst in forested areas and long grass.		
Local fauna and flora	M	M	Trek leaders to walk at front of group and identify any major insect hives and ensure groups avoid these areas. All participants should check their shoes before putting them on. Participants will be briefed on any risks from flora or fauna.		



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Transfers & vehicles: Cars, buses, trucks

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation measures	Observation or Interview	Compliance (Action to be taken if not compliant)
Lack of management control increases risks of collision or other incident	L	M	Ensure there is an English-speaking transfer supervisor for each journey. This person should have a mobile phone and be able to contact each of the drivers travelling on any transfer. They should also ensure the drivers are always briefed (see below), and that vehicles travel in convoy with at least one transfer supervisor per group of vehicles.		
Vehicles attacked	L	H	Travel to take place during daylight and on main roads wherever possible		
Inappropriate or lack of insurance	L	L	Ensure supplier holds relevant motor insurance to satisfy national requirements. This is a contract requirement.		
Inexperienced driver increasing risk of accident	L	H	Ensure driver has more than 3 years' relevant experience.		
Driver fatigue	L	M	Ensure there is a second driver if the journey is longer than 10 hours on any given day.		
Driver unaware of safety requirements	L	M	Ensure the driver has committed to meet their obligation to comply with national vehicle regulations relevant to the journey e.g. for licensing, speed limits, weight of vehicle, number of passengers etc. and have been briefed on our safety requirements (see below).		

Survey Practical in Water

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation measures	Observation or Interview	Compliance (Action to be taken if not compliant)
Inappropriate supervision	L	M	Complete assessment pro-forma to establish level of supervision required.		
Beach / Cenotes	L	M	Ensure appropriate supervision is in place (see pro-forma). Do not enter water if there are strong tides or current that could cause participants to be drawn out to sea or to a dangerous area (e.g. rocks or coral). Give a safety briefing to highlight any out-of-bounds areas.		
Under ground river crossings	L	M	Staff member to enter first in order to test the depth and terrain under the water. Any slippery sections should be highlighted. Use a rope if appropriate over sustained slippery terrain.		
Injury or illness during snorkelling	L	M	All snorkelers to be wearing a wetsuit or rash vest and short to protect from the sun. All participants briefed on dangers of local flora and fauna.		
Injury during snorkelling from boats	L	M	Clear briefings on designated snorkelling areas and need to stop and check for boats every few minutes.		
Becoming lost while snorkeling	L	M	All snorkelers must sign in and out and be covered by a staff member (see below).		
Lack of supervision for snorkelling groups	L	M	Depending on the location this may be shore cover / boat cover / in-water supervision. All snorkelers must be in groups of two or more and the group or supervisor (who should have an appropriate water rescue qualification) must carry an SMB. For night-snorkels, each pair to have a torch, and supervision must be provided both in water and on shore with a maximum ratio of 1:6.		
Alcohol	H	L	No alcohol to be consumed by any participants while in the water. No participants to enter water under the influence of alcohol.		

Facility

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation measures	Observation or Interview	Compliance (Action to be taken if not compliant)
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Safety and security of participants and personal belongings	L	H	Valuables should not be left lying around. Staff members will always be present at the Center.		
Slipping on wet floors	M	L-H	All participants informed of slippery floors when wet. No running. Signage posted.		
Fire	L	VH	Building is made of cement. Smoking is not permitted except in designated areas. All participants should be fully briefed on this regulation and are trained in evacuation procedures.		
Swimming pool	L	M	Ensure participants are told never to use the pool alone. Brief participants on any slippery areas around the pool and on any banned activities e.g. diving in the shallow end.		
Alcohol	H	L	No alcohol to be consumed by any participants while in the pool. No participants to enter water under the influence of alcohol. Very limited consumption allowed under group leader supervision.		

Hurricane & severe weather risk

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation measures	Observation or Interview	Compliance (Action to be taken if not compliant)
Hurricane & severe weather	M	M	Weather monitored by facility management and dive centre and any severe weather is reported to Opwall staff. If weather is severe but safety is not compromised then activities to be restricted until it has passed. If impending weather conditions to be sufficiently serious to warrant an evacuation of personnel from the survey sites, then instructions to be given to remove all staff and volunteers to the nearest government assigned evacuation point in Playa del Carmen. Ensure senior staff on site regularly communicate with reserve or dive centre regarding weather issues.		