



# CODES OF PRACTICE AND ACCEPTED BEST PRACTICE

**122.** To meet statutory health and safety requirements, organisations must be able to demonstrate that their practices meet standards of safety. Such standards are contained in codes of practice – a statement of preferred work practices or arrangements.

**123.** Schools should be able to show that EOTC activities comply with the relevant code of practice or, in its absence, with accepted best practice for that activity. The national body<sup>27</sup> responsible for each activity is responsible for establishing its best practice standards.

**124.** This section summarises the codes of practice and accepted best practice relevant to EOTC.

## **(i) Health and Safety Code of Practice for State Primary, Composite, and Secondary Schools, 1998**

**125.** While the main purpose of the HSE Act (1992) is to ensure the health and safety of employees, boards of trustees are also responsible for the health and safety of many other people who come onto school grounds, including students, visitors, and parents. Therefore when guidelines to the Act were being considered, it was decided to bring together the health and safety requirements of all the acts, codes, regulations and Ministry guidelines that relate specifically to health and safety in schools.

**126.** The result was the *Health and Safety Code of Practice for State Primary, Composite, and Secondary Schools*. It can be found at [www.minedu.govt.nz/Property/HealthSafety](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Property/HealthSafety)

**127.** Compliance with aspects of the *Health and Safety Code of Practice for State Primary, Composite, and Secondary Schools*, as well as with these Acts and Regulations, is binding on such schools.

**128.** The following sections of the code of practice apply to EOTC.

**129.** **24 Provision and use of protective equipment** (pp 32–33) (for example, helmet and harness for climbing/abseiling).

**24.1** Boards of trustees shall:

- (a) provide all persons in any place of work with such protective clothing, footwear and equipment, as may be necessary to safeguard them against any risk or danger to their health;
- (b) ensure that all persons in any place of work use protective clothing, footwear and equipment provided by a board of trustees so often as the circumstances for which they are provided arise;
- (c) identify all circumstances and activities to which the use of protective clothing and/or equipment is appropriate;
- (d) ensure that all protective clothing and equipment supplied is sufficient to give adequate protection from the risk it is designed to eliminate or minimise, and that it complies with any relevant New Zealand standard or code of practice and is adequately maintained;
- (e) ensure that instruction is given in the use and maintenance of protective clothing and equipment kept pursuant to this clause;
- (f) ensure that any adjustment, adaptation, cleaning, repairing or maintenance to any protective clothing and equipment does not reduce the standard of quality of protection for which the protective clothing was designed, manufactured or provided.

**130.** **25 Storage of dangerous substances** (p 33) (for example, stove fuel).

Boards of trustees shall ensure that every container in any place of work holding material or substance that is, or likely to be, corrosive, an irritant, toxic, radioactive, explosive, or otherwise capable of endangering the health of any person who may come into contact with it or be in its vicinity, is:

- (a) safely and securely stored; and
- (b) clearly labelled.

<sup>27</sup> See Appendix VI, Resources and contacts for national bodies.

**131. 26 Storage of materials generally** (p 33)  
(for example, kayaks, camping and climbing gear)

26.1 Boards of trustees shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all goods, materials, substances, and equipment in any place of work are stacked, stored, secured, and kept so that:

- (a) they do not constitute a danger to persons in their vicinity;
- (b) they cannot, whether of their own accord, or by virtue of any external force (intentionally or otherwise), flow, move, roll or collapse so as to constitute a danger to persons in their vicinity;
- (c) they should not obstruct or restrict fire or exit ways.

**132. 26.2** Boards of trustees shall ensure that all employees and students who are responsible for stacking, storing, securing, keeping, or removing any goods, materials, substances, or equipment are fully instructed to do these tasks in a safe manner.

### **Incident<sup>28</sup>/accident recording, reporting, and investigating**

**133. 18.8** Register of first aid treatments (p 28)  
Boards of trustees shall ensure that a register of accidents is kept.

**134.** There should be a school policy on recording accidents and serious incidents that have affected students and staff. See clause 18.8 of the *Health and Safety Code of Practice for State Primary, Composite and Secondary Schools*, p 28.

**135.** The recording of accidents that have caused serious harm<sup>29</sup> to staff or students is compulsory under section 25 (1) (a) of the HSE Act. To ensure compliance with the National Education Guidelines, schools should have a system for recording this information in a central accident and incident register.

#### **Ministry of Education incident database**

**136.** The Ministry of Education has an incident database for all EOTC-related accidents and incidents. Eventually, this will be incorporated into the management, information and resourcing (MIR) system for schools' reporting to the Ministry. This anonymous, voluntary data-collection system, will enable the Ministry to

identify trends and subsequently inform safety management planning and policy for schools. Schools will also benefit from data that can inform their own safety management.

**137.** The database can be accessed on [www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/](http://www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/) Schools may choose to use this database online or hard copy, (see sample form 19 in Appendix V). This form also meets the requirements for compulsory reporting to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

**138.** In the case of serious harm to a staff member, the nearest OSH office must be informed in writing as soon as possible within seven days section 23 (3). In addition, OSH recommends that schools record minor accidents that have harmed or might have harmed staff.

#### **First-aid treatment records**

**139.** Any register of first-aid treatments is required to record:

- the nature of the first-aid treatment given;
- the date on which it was given;
- the name of the person to whom it was given;
- the nature of the injury or illness for which it was given;
- the date, time, and place the accident occurred;
- the cause of the accident;
- whether the injury was referred to a doctor or nurse; and
- the name of the person giving first-aid and their first-aid qualifications.

#### **Accident/incident review procedure**

**140.** Schools must also have an incident review procedure. Its purpose is to discover underlying causes and determine if the situation was caused by or arose from a significant hazard.<sup>30</sup> The results of such an investigation may be used to improve safety in that school and/or schools in general. A school safety committee composed of the EOTC co-ordinator, principal and suitable safety or outdoor expert could carry out this function.

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix I, Glossary.

<sup>29</sup> See Appendix I, Glossary.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix I, Glossary.

141. Assistance with incident investigation is also freely available to schools from the Ministry of Education, Water Safety New Zealand, New Zealand Mountain Safety Council, Education Outdoors New Zealand and Outdoors New Zealand. Contact details for these organisations are in Appendix VI, Resources and contacts.

### ***Emergency preparedness***

142. It is a requirement under the HSE Act to:

... take all practicable steps to ...

- (a) develop procedures for dealing with emergencies that may arise while employees are at work.
- (b) ...every employer shall ensure that all employees have the opportunity to be fully involved in the development of procedures developed for the purpose of ... dealing with or reacting to emergencies or imminent dangers.

143. Schools can prepare themselves to respond to a crisis in a number of ways.

#### ***(a) Crisis management***

144. In the first instance, the risk assessment process using a RAMS or SAP form (sample forms 12 and 13 in Appendix V) includes writing a crisis management plan for each identified risk (potential crisis). This sets out a step by step plan of how to manage each potential crisis, and what resources and equipment are required.

#### ***(b) Traumatic incident plan***

145. On a larger scale, a school would benefit from having a traumatic incident plan ready in case of a serious injury or death during an EOTC activity (or any school activity). Such a plan would reduce the stress associated with a traumatic incident by assisting the school to deal with the aftermath and to continue with their normal operations. The Ministry of Education can be contacted for assistance in developing a traumatic incident plan. It would include at least:

- a protocol for whom to contact in the event of a death (police, principal, parents);
- a protocol for steps to take immediately following a death or serious incident (ensure safety of all others; preserve the scene – leave all equipment as is, photograph the scene, etc);

- a protocol for authorisation to speak to the media;
- contact arrangements for accessing support from the Ministry of Education at the time of a traumatic incident. The Ministry provides support to schools at the time of a traumatic incident and will work alongside school management to assist with immediate issues and problems; and
- trauma counselling options listed and protocol developed for students, staff and others to access follow-up support.

#### ***(c) Media contact***

146. In the case of a serious injury or death, boards need to appoint a media liaison person. All other staff must understand that media comment regarding the incident is to be made by this person only.

### ▶ ***(ii) Outdoor industry codes of practice***

147. At the time of writing, two codes of practice, relevant to EOTC activities, have been registered with the Department of Labour. They are:

- Flying Fox Code of Practice (ACC); and
- Rafting Code of Practice – Rule Part 80 – Maritime Safety Authority.

### ▶ ***(iii) Outdoor activity guidelines***

148. Guidelines for professional best practice in outdoor pursuits are available for teachers, instructors, leaders and administrators. These may be found in *Outdoor Pursuits, Guidelines for Educators*, Education Outdoors New Zealand (1996) and on [www.safeoutside.org](http://www.safeoutside.org) Guidelines are available for the following activities.

Land-based:

- abseiling;
- artificial climbing walls;
- caving;
- downhill skiing and snow boarding;
- expeditions;
- fishing, shore-based;

- horse riding and pony trekking;
- initiative games and problem-solving exercises;
- mountain biking;
- mountaineering;
- orienteering;
- rock climbing and bouldering;
- ropes courses;
- ski touring;
- solos;
- top rope rock climbing; and
- tramping.

Water-based:

- dinghy sailing;
- flat water kayaking and canoeing;
- scuba diving;
- sea kayaking;
- snorkelling;
- tubing and rafting;
- water skiing; and
- windsurfing.

Aerial:

- aerial pursuits and bungee jumping.

► (iv) **Other Standards**

149. The following publications contain best practice guidelines relevant to EOTC:

Activity	Organisation	Publication <sup>31</sup>
Bush and river crossing skills	New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (NZMSC)	Bushcraft manual
Abseiling	NZMSC New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA)	Abseiling Handbook Abseiling
River skills	Water Safety New Zealand	Riversafe Manual
Challenge ropes course	Project Adventure New Zealand	Challenge Ropes Course Code of Practice (most are site specific)
Adventure activities/ initiatives	Project Adventure Inc (USA)	Cowstails and Cobras II Bottomless Bag No Props
Sea kayaking	Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (KASK)	Sea Kayaking Handbook
Firearms	NZMSC NZ Police	Arms Code – Firearms safety manual NZ Firearms Handbook
Mountaineering	NZMSC	Mountaincraft Manual
Orienteering	NZMSC	Orienteering Handbook
Hunting	NZMSC	Hunts training manual
Recreational swimming	Watersafe Auckland Inc (WAI)	Watersafe Guidelines for Schools (forthcoming 2003)
Surf survival	Surf Life Saving New Zealand	Surf Survival Programme

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix VI, Resources and contacts for full details of books.

▶ (v) *Other sources of best practice*

*150.* When trying to establish best practice for an activity that does not have written guidelines, the following options are available to teachers:

- contact one or two schools that run the same activity and find out what their current procedures for running the activity are; or

- contact a related organisation that runs the activity, for example a recreation centre or youth organisation such as Girl Guides and ask them what their current procedures are for running the activity.

*151.* The object is to establish that the procedures you are planning to use are consistent with what your professional peers are currently doing (peer accepted best practice).