



Emergency planning guidance for International trips

This good practice guidance is intended to support Leaders taking
groups abroad with Girlguiding UK

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Introduction

Although this rarely happens, an emergency may occur whilst travelling to or within the destination country; there may also be an emergency at home that affects a participant.

An emergency is defined as:

While at the event or on the way to or from the event:

- A fatality within the group
- An event which seriously prejudices the safety and wellbeing of group member(s)
- An incident which leads to the hospitalisation of a participant
- An incident which may feature on news coverage, and which may lead to concerns at home

At home:

- A fatality within the immediate family circle of a participant, of which she needs to be advised while away
- The deterioration in the health or wellbeing of an immediate family member
- An event which may feature on news coverage and cause concern to group member(s)

This document explains how to manage these situations ensuring effective communications, actions and support are triggered in the event of an emergency.

Leaders should prepare a risk assessment outlining procedures for dealing with emergencies; this should be communicated and available to all Leaders within the group. Instructions and advice on how to complete a risk assessment is contained within Section 7.

This document is available on the Girlguiding UK website for use by any Girlguiding UK Leader/Event Coordinator taking a group of members abroad.

Please note:

Although the term “leader” is used in this resource, users should remember that this means the Leader/Event Coordinator or Party Leader as defined on the Residential Event Notification Forms and other Girlguiding UK publications.

The term “Next of Kin” is used in this resource: users should note that this could refer to a parent or the person who has parental responsibility.

Section 1 - Nominated Home Contact and Next of Kin

Nominated Home Contact

Leaders are responsible for organising a nominated Home Contact for their group. They may wish to nominate two or three people to take on these responsibilities as it may not be possible for one person to be available 24 hours a day throughout the trip.

The Home Contact(s):

- Should be contactable throughout the event (24 hours a day from departure until return to UK)
- Must not be related or have a close personal relationship to anyone in the group and must be someone who could deal with an emergency in a calm and effective manner. (A suitable person could be another Leader in the area, a Commissioner, County International Adviser, staff member etc.)

Leaders must inform the parents of participants how to contact the Home Contact(s). The Nominated Home Contact should receive contact information for **two emergency contacts** that live at different addresses for each participant. The Leader will extract this information from the Health Information for International Travel form. The Home Contact **should not** have copies of the participants' Health Information for International Travel form as this is confidential, but should have full details of the group's itinerary and copies of the picture page of each passport.

Next of Kin

Usually a participant will nominate their next of kin as one of their emergency contacts. If the next of kin is due to be away for any part of the event, they must leave full details with the participant's emergency contacts about how they can be contacted in an emergency or nominate another family member or close friend to deal with an emergency on their behalf.

Section 2 - Steps to take when planning your international trip

- Complete a thorough risk assessment, considering the full range of scenarios that may occur during travel. A template, including key advice, is given in Annex A.
- Research how to use phones in the country you are visiting before you go. Consider taking a mobile phone and buying a local sim card to use.
- It is important that the leadership team are advised of any emergency whilst abroad directly from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or local Consulate. These emergencies could include a natural or manmade disaster or civil disturbance. Leaders are encouraged to subscribe to a free service by the Foreign and Commonwealth office that sends email alerts when there is an important update for any country that you have registered to receive updates for. During a crisis any advice to British Nationals will be published through this travel advice website and updated regularly. Leaders can also follow travel advice updates by using Twitter @fcotravel or on Facebook www.facebook.com/fcotravel The local British Embassy or High Commission of your destination country may also have its own social media feeds that you could subscribe too.

- Subscribe for travel updates by registering at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ukgovuk/subscribe/new>
- The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have also written some guidance on the precautions to take should a crisis occur. This can be downloaded from www.gov.uk/how-to-deal-with-a-crisis-overseas

Section 3 - Contact details to have in hand

CHQ / Country and Region Emergency Contact (both in and out of office hours)

Ensure you have contact details for people who would be able to offer you support in an emergency. For example, your County International Adviser and local Commissioner.

Name	Position	Contact details
	District Commissioner	
	County International Adviser	
	County PR Adviser	
	Country/Region International Adviser	
	Country/Region PR Adviser	
	Country/Region HQ	
	Girlguiding UK	Office Hours 0900 - 1700 Mon-Fri 17-19 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 0PT Tel: 0044 20 7834 6242 Fax: 0044 20 7828 8317

	Girlguiding UK Press Office	Tel: 020 7592 1733 Or the 24 PR phone on 07990 553940
	UNITY Travel Insurance	Lancing Business Park, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 8UG Tel: 0845 0945 704 Fax: 01903 751044 Email: guiding@unityins.co.uk
	Own Insurance Company (if Unity not used)	
	British Embassy / British Consulate in country to be visited	

CHQ Contacts

These matters may also need careful PR management. Please ensure that the CHQ Press Office is made aware of these situations as soon as they arise. The Press Office can be contacted on 020 7592 1733 or through the 24-hour PR phone on 07990 553940. The Press Office will contact other CHQ departments as required. These include departments such as Membership Support Services in matters that involve the Police, Social Services or child protection concerns.

Section 4 - Advice for dealing with emergency situations

Important points for Leaders if an emergency arises

Never admit liability of any sort. In all cases keep a careful written record of all:

FACTS - who, where, when, why, what, take photos if appropriate?

EVENTS - include timings

DECISIONS - made by whom?

CIRCUMSTANCES - As they occur - in emergencies restrict access to telephone until the Party Leader has made contact with:

- Travel/medical insurer
- Next of kin
- Emergency Contact staff member or
- Nominated Home Contact

Leaders must take all necessary forms and documents with them overseas including:

- Full flight details and travel details
- Emergency contact details for all participants
- Copies of all passports (showing expiry dates)
- Lists of all participants' ages / DOB/ dietary and special needs
- British Embassy/Consulate contact details for country of visit
- Full itinerary
- Telephone number of Nominated Home Contact
- Insurance Forms and Policy number
- Health Forms (all clearly signed and fully completed)
- Copies of EHIC card if country to be visited has reciprocal health arrangements

Below is advice on how to handle emergency situations. These should be incorporated into your risk assessment (see Annex A).

In the case of a medical emergency

Checklist:

- Get help as required
- Phone medical insurer (as required by your policy) - see below
- Phone the nominated Home Contact who should advise the participant's nominated contact (likely to be their next of kin) of the medical incident

Medical Insurance

Arranging medical and health insurance is your responsibility. Ensure before you set off that you are familiar with your policy and what you need to do in the event of a medical emergency.

Information you are likely to be asked for should you call them are;

1. Your name, address and telephone number
2. Your policy number
3. Where you may be contacted
4. The type of assistance required
5. Tell them you are from Girlguiding UK

Although every insurance firm and policy is different it is likely that your provider would have a 24 hour multi-lingual emergency centre that you can call. Make a note of the number here;

Tel: (44 from abroad)
Fax: (44 from abroad)

An experienced Assistance Co-ordinator will usually deal with your enquiry and will then ensure that where necessary:

- a. Hospitals will be contacted and any necessary fees guaranteed
- b. Multi-lingual assistance co-ordinators are, in most cases, able to converse with doctors and hospitals abroad in their own language
- c. Medical advisers are consulted at the outset for their views on the possibility of arranging repatriation and the best method for transportation to be adopted.

Specially equipped air ambulances are available for critical cases whilst in less serious circumstances scheduled air services will be used. Whenever necessary the patient will be escorted by a medical attendant

- d. Assistance upon arrival in the United Kingdom will be provided where medically necessary

Keep your Insurance Policy to hand to refer to, and show to the hospital etc. together with the Health Information for International Travel Form of the member.

In case of serious accident, death, arrest, detention by police

Contact the British Embassy or Consulate who will advise on procedures etc. For the most up to date information about British Embassies or Consulates please check the website www.fco.gov.uk/travel which gives country-specific advice. Where appropriate, make contact with your emergency Home Contact.

In case a major incident occurs overseas

This could include a natural disaster, for example earthquake or major flood. Call your Home Contact to advise them whether the group is affected and ask them to reassure and inform family members back home. Be aware that should a natural disaster occur communication networks may be affected.

If a major incident has occurred in the country you are visiting, but this has not directly affected the group, such as a military coup, please seek advice from the British Embassy or Consulate who will advise on procedures etc. For the most up to date information about British Embassies or British Consulates please check the website www.fco.gov.uk/travel which gives country-specific advice. Where appropriate, make contact with your emergency Home Contact.

In case of inappropriate behaviour of a very serious nature

A participant's behaviour may lead the Leader to decide that she must return home early. Sending a participant home is the most serious action you can take and it should only be taken if the participant is involved in very serious inappropriate behaviour, for example drug-taking or violence, and where discussing this with the participant has resulted in no change in behaviour. The leadership team must therefore clearly discuss the facts, agree and understand why you are considering taking such action.

Concerns that the participant's behaviour may affect the rest of the party, cause distress to the host Association or bring the name of Girlguiding UK into disrepute may result in the Leader deciding to send the participant home.

What to do

- Discuss the problem with the participant. She might alter her ways, but if she shows no intention of doing so, state that you may need to send her home. She must be made to understand that her actions are unacceptable.
- Clearly understand the facts that have led you and your leadership team to the decision to send the participant home.

- Contact by telephone or email your Commissioner, International Adviser or your Home Contact (whomever you feel will be best placed to offer you advice) to discuss the problem fully and decide on the action to be taken.

If it is agreed to send the participant home:

- Inform the participant.
- Make the appropriate travel arrangements, involving the home contact. The participant's safety and co-operation must be assured so a Leader may need to accompany her home, or you could ask a family member to travel to collect her.
NB - If some of your group are under 14, then you will also need written permission from a parent to organise an unaccompanied flight for them.
- The Leader must write a prompt and clear report on returning to the UK, which should be submitted to her Commissioner and International Adviser and should include the reasons why the decision was made to send a participant home. It may be helpful for the leadership team to take notes of any discussions and decisions to enable accurate report writing. This should be shared with all parties involved in your discussions when you considered sending the participant home. This report needs to be supported by the whole leadership team. The responsibility for any further action taken, as a result of the report, will lie with the Commissioner.

Section 5 - Emergency procedure for families who need to contact a participant whilst overseas due to an emergency at home

- Family members should be advised to contact the nominated Home Contact if an emergency arises that a participant needs to be made aware of while away.
- **The Home Contact should contact the Party Leader and they should discuss whether it is essential for the participant to be advised of the news while she is away from home. If so, the Leader should decide which member of the leadership team is best placed to convey the news to the participant.**

Section 6 - Media and PR

Members of Girlguiding UK dealing, or proposing to deal, with the national media of the country being visited or UK media organisations, especially in an emergency or crisis, must contact the CHQ Press Office. No comments should be made by the leadership team without advice from the CHQ Press Office.

The Nominated Home Contact and CHQ/Country or Region Emergency Contact should have the CHQ Press Office contact details and should call them immediately in the event of an emergency or crisis.

In the event of an emergency or crisis, any media statements must only be written and issued by the CHQ Press Office.

During office hours the CHQ Press Office can be contacted on 020 7592 1733 and the out of hours number is 07990 553 940 - please note that this is a standard mobile phone and as such may be out of range for short periods. In this instance, please leave a message and a member of the team will call you back as soon as possible.

Section 7 - Advice for developing a risk assessment

The template risk assessment shown below is an example and other formats can be used. The template below gives some examples of risks that may occur and actions that may need to be taken. This template is not comprehensive and leaders must think about their own trip and add and delete items accordingly.

There is more information within the member section of the Girlguiding UK website and other publications regarding risk assessments. Leaders who have completed international trips may also be available to help you complete your risk assessment. It is important to remember that your risk assessment should be reviewed and shared with the whole leadership team regularly throughout the planning phase and the trip itself.

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Template risk assessment for international trip

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

1. Each risk must be thought about and qualified for the likelihood of the risk occurring and the severity of any injury or illness that could result (called impact). The numeric assessments are then multiplied to achieve a risk rating for each of the hazards identified.
2. Likelihood of Impact: Unlikely = 1; May happen = 2; Likely = 3; Very Likely = 4; Certain = 5
3. Impact: First Aid injury or illness = 1; Minor injury or illness = 2; injury or illness needing medical treatment = 3; Major injury or illness needing to stay in hospital = 4; Fatality, disabling injury, etc. = 5
4. Each risk with a multiplied score of 1-4, must have a counter measure in place
5. Each risk with a multiplied score of 5-10 must have a counter measure and an action to take if the risk occurs.
6. Each risk with a multiplied score of 12-25 must have a counter measure and an action to take if the risk occurs. You should also note any controls that can be implemented to reduce this risk.
7. Each risk should have a named owner. That is the principal person responsible for reducing the risk prior to something happening and/or the person that will be responsible to any action to take should the risk occur.

Risk Rating Matrix

Likelihood of impact	Certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Very Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Likely	3	3	6	9	12	15
	May Happen	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Unlikely	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			First Aid Injury or Illness	Minor injury or Illness	Injury or illness needing medical treatment	Major Injury or Illness needing to stay in hospital	Fatality, disabling injury, etc.
Impact (although this shows medical impacts, some risks do not have a medical impact, but will have levels of implications to plans and individuals)							

Risk Rating Table

Score	Priority	Action
1-4	LOW	This represents a low risk although a counter measure must be identified
5-10	MEDIUM	Action will be required to control the risks. Interim measures may be necessary in the short term.
12-25	HIGH	Action will be urgently required to control the risks. Further resources and/or expertise may be needed

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes
Passports out of date or not valid for the required length of time after you return to the UK	5	4	20	All passports to be checked and copies given to leaders in advance of the trip	New passport to be applied for by individual	Leader	Check to be made at least 6 months prior to the trip to give time for a successful passport application
Injury/sickness of a trip leader just before trip							
Injury/sickness to group member before trip							
Member of the team / team leader does not arrive at the airport on time							
Transport problems to get to airport for one/more of team							

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes
Forgotten passport							
Missed/cancelled flight or connecting flight					<p>You should contact the airline at the airport at the earliest opportunity and ask for help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have no success you should contact your travel agent • Contact your Home Contact with details of the situation and keep them informed of developments • If the group is late through their own negligence they will be liable for additional costs incurred • If you miss your flight through circumstances beyond your control, you will need as much written evidence as you can get to claim via your travel insurance on your return to the UK 		
Someone has their possessions stolen at the airport					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report theft to police and obtain a police report for any insurance claim • Get on plane 		

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes
Someone has their possessions stolen overseas					Report the theft to the camp or event organiser <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to police (keep the written report) • Proceed with insurance claim upon return 		
Someone loses their luggage					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to airline with description of bag, contents and flight details • Have forwarding destination address available, airlines will often deliver missing luggage direct • Airline is obliged to make payment to them if there is a 24 hour delay • If any purchases have to be made for essentials as a consequence of the missing luggage keep the receipts • Make a note of contact number at the airport 		
Someone loses / has stolen their debit/credit card					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact emergency credit card number/ card protection plan • Report loss / theft to event organisers • Report any theft to police 		

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes
Someone goes missing					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the reality of the situation - are they really missing? • Contact local event organiser • Contact British Embassy/ British Consulate • Contact the police • Contact Home Contact • Record the situation 		
Someone loses their passport overseas					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always keep a copy of your passport, as leader, and keep a copy of everyone's passport which can be given back to them at the end of the trip • Contact the British Embassy / British Consulate for replacement 		
Someone becomes seriously injured					<p>Assess the situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove person from danger • Get help - involve ambulance, police or medical services • Contact British Embassy / British Consulate • Contact Home Contact • Record events • Contact event organisers 		

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes
Someone is hospitalised					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Name of leader] to accompany them to hospital • Assess level of seriousness • Make a note of any advice received or treatment given • If serious, contact insurance company to advise them. Ascertain what they are prepared to pay for - take a note of the name of the person you spoke to • Call Home Contact • Call British Embassy / British Consulate • Keep event organisers informed 		
Someone dies (natural causes)					<p>Immediately phone the Home Contact who needs to inform the family, CHQ and the local Commissioner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let others on the trip know • Inform event Organisers • Contact Insurance Company • Contact British Embassy / British Consulate 		

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes
Someone is killed					Call the police • Call Home Contact with information on how the incident happened / assessment of situation. They will inform the family, CHQ and the local Commissioner • Inform other leaders and close friends • Inform event organisers • Contact insurance company • Contact British Embassy / British Consulate		
Someone is arrested					If for a very short time for something minor inform British Embassy / British Consulate and event organisers • If for something more serious contact the British Embassy / British Consulate • Get information from police • Call Home Contact • Contact event organisers		
Someone receives news of a serious incident back home and wants to return home					Phone insurance company - have travel documents to hand and be ready to negotiate for them to return home and when they can do so if given the go ahead • Keep in touch with Home Contact		

Annex A - Template risk assessment for international trips

Risk assessment for [name of group] trip to [destination] [dates of trip]							
Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk	Counter measures	Action to take if risk occurs	Owner	Notes