SOP Template: Pre-trip Risk Assessment and Safety Planning

This SOP details the process for conducting a **pre-trip risk assessment and safety planning**, including identification of potential hazards, evaluation of risk levels, development of mitigation strategies, coordination with relevant personnel, review of emergency response protocols, and documentation of assessment findings. The objective is to ensure the safety of all participants by proactively addressing risks and establishing clear safety guidelines prior to travel.

1. Purpose

To provide a systematic approach for identifying, evaluating, and mitigating risks prior to travel, ensuring all participants' safety and compliance with organizational standards.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all pre-trip activities concerning travel organized or sanctioned by the organization, including staff, contractors, and participants.

3. Responsibilities

- **Trip Leader:** Oversees the pre-trip risk assessment and safety planning process.
- **Safety Officer:** Assists in hazard identification, risk evaluation, and development of mitigation strategies.
- **Participants:** Participate in safety briefings and follow established safety guidelines.
- **HR/Admin:** Maintain documentation and ensure compliance with the SOP.

4. Procedure

1. **Identify Hazards**
   - Review destination-specific risks (weather, terrain, political climate, health threats, etc.).
   - Assess transportation modes and accommodations for safety risks.
   - Consider participant-specific risks (medical conditions, experience levels).
2. **Evaluate Risk Levels**
   - Determine likelihood and potential impact of identified hazards.
   - Use a risk matrix to categorize risks as Low, Medium, or High.
3. **Develop Mitigation Strategies**
   - Propose actions to reduce risk (e.g., alternative routes, additional equipment, medical precautions).
   - Assign responsibility for implementation of mitigation measures.
4. **Coordinate with Relevant Personnel**
   - Inform all stakeholders of assessment findings and safety measures.
   - Coordinate with local contacts, emergency services, and medical providers as required.
5. **Review Emergency Response Protocols**
   - Ensure all participants are briefed on emergency procedures (contacts, evacuation plans, first aid).
6. **Document Assessment Findings**
   - Complete and archive the risk assessment report and safety plan before departure.
   - Ensure documentation includes identified hazards, risk evaluations, mitigation actions, and responsible persons.

5. Documentation

Document	Responsible Person	Retention Period
Risk Assessment Report	Trip Leader	3 years
Safety Plan	Safety Officer	3 years
Incidents and Near Miss Log (if applicable)	Trip Leader	5 years

6. Review and Update

This SOP should be reviewed annually or after any significant incident or change in travel protocols. Necessary updates must be communicated to all relevant personnel.

7. Appendices

- Appendix A: Risk Assessment Template
- Appendix B: Emergency Contact List Template
- Appendix C: Safety Briefing Checklist