Why is there a need for beach management standards?

ISO 13009: Beach Operations

Why have a Standard for beaches?

With an ever increasing trend for sustainability of tourism products, coupled with the need for describing beach recreational activities for tourists, operators are needed to adapt to growing consumer demands. It is therefore of paramount importance that beach and near shore areas are well managed to ensure the safety and enjoyment of today's users as well as future generations.

Historically, there have been no specific standards for beaches and very little guidance for beach management to help operators determine and plan for beach management. As a result, many of the beaches have not been developed or managed in a sustainable way, resulting in overcrowding and also a number of human-water interaction accidents. The new international standard for beach management and conservation 2013 has been designed specifically to plug this gap, to help improve beach operations, with information and guidelines, to effectively manage coastal beaches, in a consistent manner on an international level.

ISO 13009 (Beach Operations) is an international standard that aims to improve beach management for beaches that are ISO 13009 compliant.

Implementing the Standard

The success of this standard is dependent upon operators and local authorities also using it as a tool to improve their management strategies and practices. The standard provides a framework for improved beach management, which will help to ensure that beaches are managed in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.

The standard provides guidance on the following key areas:

- Project planning and management
- Stakeholder communications
- Promoting the beach
- Infrastructure
- Beach and water safety
- Access
- Beach cleaning and waste removal
- Commercial services
- Training and capacity building

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Risks associated with doing nothing

Economic impact

Lose out to competition – tourist regions provides plenty of consumer choice;

 Poor development planning – insensitive landscaping around the beach area;

 Investment in the tourism product is reduced;

 Negative media portrayal.

Social implications

Not meeting visitor and local expectations;

 Health and Safety – accidents and illness;

 Stay away from the beach – perceptions challenged;

 Reputation for criminal and nuisance activity.
Beach Safety Management around the world – a strategic concept for visitors and tourist boards
Why is a standard beneficial for beach users, operators and the private sector in general?
WHY IS IMPROVED BEACH MANAGEMENT IMPORTANT TO HOTEL BUSINESSES AND TOUR OPERATORS?

Because it’s the right thing to do for coastal tourism (*corporate and social responsibility*);

Reputation and brand value;

Commercial advantage for beach fronted hotels;

Identifies beach risks to help hotels with tailor made actions;

Protects the tourism “product” of beach/nearshore waters.
ADVANTAGES OF A BEACH MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Coastal resorts perceived as “safe & secure” have a comparative advantage in marketing & promotion

Effective safeguards & preventative measures reduces risks to hotels

- Promotes a strategic approach to improving safety & security by reducing risk
- Reduces risks of legal liabilities and enhances duty of care
- Enhances & protects reputation of the coastal resort as being as ‘safe as possible’
- Provides an additional marketing & promotion tool
WHAT WOULD TOURISM BOARDS ACTUALLY GET

“Peace of mind” on their ability to demonstrate “duty of care” for their surrounding beach environment.

A unique opportunity to actually market their tourist beaches as being “as safe as possible”.

Improved image of beach safety at tourist resorts in country
RNLI
ISO BEACH STANDARD (ISO 13009)

ISO TC 228 WG5- Beach Services Standard

"Standardization of the management of beaches to provide quality services facilities"

1. General requirements for the beach operator

2. Infrastructure

3. Service provision
INTRODUCTION

1. SCOPE
2. NORMATIVE REFERENCES
3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGING BEACHES

4.1 General
4.2 Sustainable benefits of Standard compliance
4.3 The Need to link Beach Management with Hazard Management
4.4 Ownership and legislative responsibilities
4.5 Planning
4.5.1 Identification of risks
4.5.2 Emergency planning
4.5.3 Beach operation, organization plan and maintenance
4.6 Stakeholder communication
4.7 Promoting the beach
4.8 Performance measurement
4.9 Customer satisfaction and feedback compilation

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Responsibilities and regulation
5.3 Permanent infrastructure
  5.3.1 Sanitary services
    5.3.1.1 Toilets
    5.3.1.2 Showers and foot washes
  5.3.2 Drinking water
  5.3.3 Lockers and changing facilities

5.4 Temporary infrastructure
  5.4.1 Beach lighting and shade
  5.4.2 Beach furniture

5.5 Access for ramps, roads and vehicles
  5.5.1 General
  5.5.2 Responsibilities
  5.5.3 General requirements
  5.5.4 Parking and vehicle movement
  5.5.5 Prohibitive vehicle access

6. SERVICE PROVISION

6.1 General introduction
6.2 Responsibilities and regulation
6.3 Information
  6.3.1 Information about the services provided at the beach

6.4 Beach safety services

6.4.1 General
6.4.2 Responsibilities
6.4.3 General requirements
6.4.4 Planning and risk assessment
6.4.5 Control measures
6.4.6 Signage, flags and zoning
  6.4.6.1 Signage
  6.4.6.2 Flags
  6.4.6.3 Zoning for activities
6.4.7 Lifeguards and first aid services
  6.4.7.1 Lifeguards
  6.4.7.2 First aid services
6.4.8 Public rescue equipment and emergency communications
6.4.9 Beach evacuation and closure

6.5 Beach cleaning and waste removal

6.5.1 General
6.5.2 General requirements
6.5.3 Cleaning installations and equipment
6.5.4 Waste disposal, collection and recycling

6.6 Commercial services

6.6.1 General
6.6.2 Responsibilities
6.6.3 General requirements
6.6.4 Food and drink
6.6.5 Sunbeds and sunshades
6.6.6 Sports and leisure activities

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Why the need for a Standard?

- Gives consistency and credibility to important information;
- Standard becomes recommended best practice and can influence law;
- Harmonises national practices into global systems;
- No legal duty to provide beach related service;
- Most deaths & accidents = lack of understanding & poor information;
- Increased recreation and access of the water;
- Globally – 1.2m drowning’s (Economic / Social & Political impacts).
List the steps involved towards implementing a beach management system?
BARBADOS FRAMEWORK FOR BEACH MANAGEMENT

Develop a National Framework for Beach Management

Risk Assessment  Incident Reporting  Bathing Water Quality

Low Activity Beaches  High Activity Beaches

Education & Information  Signage/Access/Zoning  Supervision & Rescue  Beach Facilities

Local Action Plan  National Action Plan

National Programme Actions (NPA)

National Beach Standards (to be established for Barbados)
BEACH MANAGEMENT AND ISO14001?

Low cost, straight forward implementation

It's specifically designed for the clients needs on beach safety and for beach environments

Links directly with parallel tourist sustainability accreditation programmes such as Travelife

Complementary to wider resort programmes for beaches such as Blue Flag etc..

Responds to increasing consumer expectations (for beach access, safety, communications and supervision/rescue).
Breaking the accident chain

- Lack of education
- No safety advice or protection
- Lack of supervision
- Inability to cope
Lack of education
Lack of safety advice or knowledge
Lack of supervision
Inability to cope
When none of the links in the chain are broken

Girl, 12, dies after wave-dodging game

By Andrew Clennell

A GIRL aged 12 from Northumberland died yesterday after she and three friends were swept out to sea while playing a seaside game of “wave-dodging”.

Jade Anderson, of Deneside, Seghill, and her friends climbed over a safety barrier on a concrete slipway at Seaton Sluice, near Blyth, to watch powerful waves whipped up by winds blowing at up to 40mph.

Two of the girls were rescued by fishermen at the scene. A third, Beth Gardner, was pulled horrendous tragedy like this.”

Coastguards called the girls’ actions foolhardy and warned others not to attempt wave-dodging.

A Maritime and Coastguard Agency official said: “They were caught by what we would describe as a rogue wave.”

A Flumber Coastguard spokesman said: “They were all local girls and you can just assume they have been down there before when nothing’s happened and possibly familiarity with the area made them a little less aware of what
Existing Standards:

- ISO 20712 water safety signs and beach safety flags
- ISO 31000 risk assessment

Other tourism related Standards under development:

- Recreational Diving Standards
- Tourist Information Offices
- Natural Protected Areas
What are the benefits for a country such as Barbados?

- It’s an insurance “security blanket” against liability for beach accidents on the hotel property.
- The hotel can “Showcase” its sustainable beach standard credentials
- Demonstrates international best practice on beach standards and hence helps assist towards capturing repeat and new business with clients.
What Next?

• Is there support for such an initiative amongst the industry?

• Who should the stakeholders be (role of the Barbados National Standards Institution etc)

• How implementable would a beach standard be for the industry?
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