

High Rope Activities – Land Based Adventure Tourism Activities

For Registration with Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

1. Definition

High Rope Activities refer to Adventure Tourism Activities that involve participants navigating elevated obstacles, challenges, or courses, typically constructed above the ground and secured with ropes, cables, any other required materials and safety equipment. These activities are designed to provide individuals with a thrilling and physically demanding experience in an outdoor setting.

High rope courses often include elements such as ziplines, swinging bridges, burma or monkey bridge, cargo nets, balance beams, trapeze jump or spider jump, Jacob's ladder, giant's ladder and other challenging structures.

2. Objectives

The objectives for developing guidelines for High Rope Activities are essential to ensure the safety, responsibility, enjoyment, and success of participants. These objectives will establish a regulatory framework for promoting responsible and secure engagement in High Rope Activities under Adventure Tourism Activities.

Here are key objectives:

2.1. Safety Assurance:

Establish comprehensive safety guidelines to minimize risks and ensure the well-being of participants, staff, and others involved in or around the High Rope Activities.

2.2. Risk Assessment & Management:

Identify, assess, and manage potential risks associated with High Rope Activities, considering elements such as equipment, course design, participant health, and environmental factors.

2.3. Regulatory Compliance:

Ensure adherence to international and national regulations and standards governing Adventure Tourism Activities.

2.4. Participant Education:

Adhere to the guidelines that provide clear instructions and information to participants, promoting understanding of safety protocols, equipment usage, and the nature of the adventure.

2.5. Environmental Sustainability:

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Integrate guidelines that promote environmentally responsible practices, minimizing the impact of High Rope Activities on the natural surroundings.

2.6. Continuous Improvement:

Improvement operational standards on par with national guidelines & regulations.

3. General Guidelines

3.1. Location

3.1.1. The site may be located entirely in a privately owned property or in a public area or may extend from one area to the other.

3.1.2. *Explicit/ stipulated approval shall be obtained from the private/ public owner of the property where the high rope site is located before arranging any High Rope Activities.

3.2. Safety Protocols

3.2.1. *Service providers shall obtain participants' details and require them to sign personal medical and indemnity forms.

3.2.2. *The high rope operator and staff shall have adequate professional training and experience.

3.2.3. *The high rope operator shall maintain records of ongoing and refresher trainings.

3.2.4. *Prior to the activity, risk factors and safety measures shall be communicated to all participants. Regular checks should also be conducted during and after the activity.

3.2.5. *Safety check-ups on all equipment used for activities shall be carried out regularly and immediately before an activity by a qualified instructor or safety auditor.

3.2.6. *Ensure activities are conducted under the supervision of a well-trained, experienced facilitator or instructor.

3.3. Services Protocols

3.3.1. *The High Rope operator shall provide the communication facilities (mobile communication, radio communication etc.) along the planned High Rope Excursion.

3.3.2. *Overall course briefing (ground rules & safety briefing) and changing of appropriate attire shall be conducted prior to the activity started.

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- 3.3.3. *Conduct a pre-activity demonstration to familiarize participants with the equipment and safety procedures. Allow participants to practice using the equipment under close supervision before starting the course.
- 3.3.4. *Providing all participants with the necessary safety gear required carrying out an activity and ensuring the participants wear proper and appropriate safety gear when taking part in any activity.
- 3.3.5. *All essential High Rope gear and equipment's shall be made available for the High Rope activity well in advance as follows;

3.4. **Operational Protocols**

- 3.4.1. *The operator shall have a written safety management plan that outlines the procedures for risk assessment, training, supervision and emergency response.
- 3.4.2. *Well written code of conduct shall be available for the Operators and Passengers according to the SOP.
- 3.4.3. Well maintained log Book shall be available.
- 3.4.4. *The service provider offers a transparent and detailed sustainable policy, demonstrating commitment to environmental, social, and economic responsibility for participants awareness.
- 3.4.5. *In case of emergency, service provider shall be learned and aware rescue operation procedure with adequate staff and gear.
- 3.4.6. *Adequate number of trained staff shall be available for each activity in high rope course.
- 3.4.7. *Service provider and the staff shall have adequate knowledge and the skills of wilderness first aid and elementary first aid, lifesaving & emergency rescue procedures.
- 3.4.8. *Service provider shall ensure public liability insurance, dully filled accident management report.
- 3.4.9. *All emergency contact numbers (such as hospital, doctors on call, police station, fire brigade rescue unit, armed forces, and relevant local authorities) of parties to be contacted in case of an emergency shall be always available with the High Rope instructor as well as at the communication base station.

3.5. ***Mandatory Safety Gear particularly for High Rope Activities;**

- 3.5.1. Climbing helmet.
- 3.5.2. Full body & half body harnesses.

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- 3.5.3. Safety ropes. (semi-static, static & dynamic)
- 3.5.4. Ascending & descending gear (figure of eight, gigri, grillon, jumar, ATC or belay plate etc.)
- 3.5.5. Carabiners & connectors (snatch, screw gate, auto-lock types)
- 3.5.6. Rope bags
- 3.5.7. Anti-burn rescue gloves
- 3.5.8. Zipline trolleys/ track & safety pulleys
- 3.5.9. Safety line & lanyards

3.6. Other Items That are Commonly Needed;

- 3.6.1. *Field first aid kit
- 3.6.2. *Maintenance tool kit
- 3.6.3. Training equipment's
- 3.6.4. Anchors and support structure
- 3.6.5. Bulldog clip, thimble, turning buckle, D-shackle, etc.
- 3.6.6. Steel wire ropes – (12mm diameter or above rope shall be used for zip line activities- design and development of the zip line shall be adhered to international standards)
- 3.6.7. Extra abseiling ropes
- 3.6.8. Other ropes (Manilla rope, PP rope, tiger rope, nylon rope)

4. Important Practices

- 4.1. *As some of the High Ropes could be sensitive bio-diversitically or geologically, obey the Leave No Trace (LNT) principles and existing rules and regulations of respective authorities.
- 4.2. The operator shall have the awareness of general weather condition patterns of the relevant area/locations. (lightning & thundering).
- 4.3. *The appointed safety auditor shall be empowered throughout all activities to provide effective supervision of preventive and corrective measures.
- 4.4. Implement a system for continuous monitoring of the high rope course, including regular inspections and maintenance. Encourage to use video surveillance or staff patrols to monitor participant progress and address any safety concerns promptly.
- 4.5. Adhere to international safety standards for high rope courses and activities.

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- 4.6. Regularly inspect and maintain all high rope equipment, including harnesses, helmets, carabiners, pulleys, and ropes.
- 4.7. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for equipment maintenance and retirement schedule.
- 4.8. Have trained staff members positioned at various points on the course to monitor participants to provide assistance if needed and implement a buddy system to enhance participant safety.
- 4.9. Establish weight and age restrictions based on equipment specifications and safety considerations to ensure participants meet the physical requirements for the specific high rope elements.
- 4.10. *Doctor or paramedic officer on call facility shall be available.
- 4.11. Install clear signage indicating safety guidelines, rules, and emergency contact information. Provide effective communication systems between staff members and participants.
- 5. ***Participant Feedback:** Encourage participants to provide feedback on their experience, including safety concerns or suggestions for improvement. Use feedback to continually enhance safety and the overall participant experience.
- 6. ***Post-Activity Debrief:** Conduct a debriefing session with participants to discuss their experience and address any concerns. Use debriefs sessions to reinforce safety guidelines and gather insights for future improvements.