



**SUBJECT:** Zip Trekking Activity  
**WRITTEN BY:** Operations Team/ Health and Safety Team  
**REVIEWED BY:** Jo McLaren, Clair Fowler, Dave Daborn January 2025  
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**RISK ASSESSMENT REF:** ZTA 01/2025/V1

Risk Matrix								
Risk rating guidance	Likelihood (L)	5	5	10	15	20	25	Likelihood (L) x Severity (S) = Risk Rating (RR).
		4	4	8	12	16	20	
		3	3	6	9	12	15	
		2	2	4	6	8	10	
		1	1	2	3	4	5	
			1	2	3	4	5	
		Severity (S)						
Acceptability of risk guidance	<b>High-risk: 15 – 25</b>		High-risk activities should cease immediately. Further effective control measures to mitigate risks must be introduced.					
	<b>Medium-risk: 8 – 12</b>		Medium-risks should only be tolerated in the short-term and only whilst further control measures to mitigate the risks are being planned and introduced.					
	<b>Low-risk: 1-6</b>		Low-risks are acceptable. Where it is reasonable to do so, efforts should be made to reduce risks further.					
Guidance. When completing a risk assessment, you should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the persons at risk and the significant hazards.</li> <li>Calculate an initial RR for the activity.</li> <li>Identify risk control measures that reduce the risks to an acceptable level.</li> <li>Calculate a revised RR - you should consider how much safer the task will be if the control measures are followed. Here, you should consider changing both the likelihood (L) and the severity (S) ratings.</li> </ol>							
<b>Note.</b> Ideally, you should look to reduce the risks so that the task can be classified as "low-risk."								

Likelihood	Definition	Points rating
<b>Inevitable</b>	If the work continues as it is, there is almost 100% certainty that an accident will happen, for examples: A broken stair or broken rung on a ladder, Bare, exposed electrical conductors, Unstable stacks of heavy boxes	<b>5</b>
<b>Highly likely</b>	Will happen often. Additional factors could precipitate an incident, but it is still likely to happen without this additional factor.	<b>4</b>
<b>Possible</b>	The accident may occur if additional factors precipitate it, but it is unlikely to happen without them.	<b>3</b>
<b>Unlikely</b>	This incident or illness might occur, but the probability is low and the risk minimal.	<b>2</b>
<b>Remote possibility</b>	There is no risk. Only under freak conditions could there be any possibility of an accident or illness. All reasonable precautions have been taken - This should be the normal state of the workplace.	<b>1</b>

Severity	Definition	Points rating
<b>Very high</b>	Causing multiple deaths and widespread destruction e.g., fire, course/building collapse.	<b>5</b>
<b>High</b>	Causing death, serious injury or permanent disability to an individual.	<b>4</b>
<b>Moderate</b>	Temporary disability causing injury (to member of the public, contractor, or employees) or disease capable of keeping an employee off work for seven days or more and reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995).	<b>3</b>
<b>Slight</b>	Minor injury (to member of the public, contractor, or employee), which would allow the individual to continue work after first aid treatment on site or at a local surgery. The duration of the stoppage or treatment is such that the normal flow of work is not seriously interrupted.	<b>2</b>
<b>Nil</b>	Very minor injury, bruise, graze, no risk of disease.	<b>1</b>



Personal protective equipment (PPE) assessment								
Type of PPE:								
	Head	Foot Closed toe footwear	Eye Goggles to prevent flying debris irritating the eye	Hand Gloves to protect from damage	Hearing Ear defends to protect from noise damage	Hi-Visibility Vest	RPE	Fall Arrest

SER	HAZARD	L	S	R	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES	FURTHER CONTROL MEASURES: reviewed annually to formulate Risk Reduction Plan	L	S	RR
ZT1	Fall from height	3	4	12	Course Users Staff Unauthorised users	Course Users - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course construction.</li> <li>• Course users PPE.</li> <li>• Safety Brief.</li> <li>• Two Instructors accompany group.</li> </ul> Unauthorised Users – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access paths from forest road gated with signage.</li> <li>• Further signage on and close to platforms.</li> <li>• Platforms fitted with balustrades, handrails, chain, and no entry sign at stairs to deter access.</li> <li>• Foreseeable risk of falling.</li> <li>• Remote location of Zips 1,2 and 6 away from public pathways.</li> </ul>		1	4	4



						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inaugural Inspection Report. Courses are designed and constructed in compliance with EN Standard, including choice of materials, loads, support systems, marking, inspection, maintenance, and documentation.</li> <li>• PPE provision, Instructor check. Policy: Don't Fit Can't Go</li> <li>• All Zips secured each night (and if course is left unused for over 4 hours and in exceptional circumstances e.g. adverse weather).</li> <li>• Gates, barriers, and signage.</li> </ul>						
ZT2	Zip Collision	3	3	9	Course Users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course construction.</li> <li>• Clear lines of sight maintained.</li> <li>• Lines of sight monitored by all staff members and participants (additional use of binoculars prior to and during use if required).</li> <li>• Use of two instructors, one at bottom and top with radio communication.</li> <li>• Clearly communicated to participants at safety brief.</li> <li>• Radio communication between top and bottom of Zip Wire.</li> </ul>	Any Zip Assists that are required will be recorded, along with weather conditions. This data will be used to review control measures or procedures.	Tree surgeon to attend when required	FE monitor trees outside Go Ape ZT route.	2	3	6
ZT3	Landing at high speed	3	3	9	Course Users Staff	<p>Zip Stop braking system (refer to construction documents and Zip Stop Manual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All sites fitted with a secondary braking system.</li> <li>• Annual servicing.</li> </ul>	Any malfunction recorded including details of weather conditions in iPatrol			2	3	6



						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periodic checks according to Zip Stop Manual.</li> <li>• Daily recorded checks, including photos of brake correctly re-set and function tests – refer to Opening the Course Document.</li> <li>• Impact Buffer re-set monitored by instructors, course users and radio procedures.</li> <li>• Instructor positioned in landing site.</li> <li>• Participants trained in safety brief.</li> <li>• Instructors ensure zip stops are reset before moving to next section.</li> <li>• 3 monthly recorded inspections.</li> </ul> <p>Landing Site shaped and maintained using wood chip (refer to Go Ape Landing Site documents).</p>			
ZT4	Failure of Primary Brake	3	3	9	Course Users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of 2<sup>nd</sup> instructor in landing site.</li> <li>• Participants given clear guidance in safety brief.</li> <li>• Daily opening and closing checks bi-monthly and annual recorded inspections.</li> </ul> <p>Primary brake system is protected by outer sheath for first meter above Impact buffer.</p>	2	3	6
ZT5	Failure of reduction lines not set correctly	3	3	9	Course Users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of 2<sup>nd</sup> instructor in landing site.</li> <li>• Participants given clear guidance in the safety brief.</li> <li>• Failure to set correctly, the 2<sup>nd</sup> instructor will check and re-set it correctly.</li> </ul>	2	3	6



						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any further issues the 1<sup>st</sup> instructor will stop any customers going down the zip wire.</li> <li>Replacement of reduction line. When it starts to show signs of wear.</li> <li>Checked daily for damage. Whole line checked on operational inspection</li> </ul>				
ZT6	Vision impairment on Zip 6, Left and Right (longest zip wires)	2	4	8	Course Users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aerial balls added to overhead wires to aid visibility.</li> <li>Lead instructor to carry binoculars to improve sight down the zipwire if needed.</li> </ul>	1	4	4	
ZT7	Slips, trips, and falls  Walk up the Green Lane to the start of the course is steep and uneven terrain. To be used if any of the vehicles are unavailable	4	2	8	Course users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre brief checks to ensure customers are wearing suitable footwear.</li> <li>Customers are accompanied by two instructors, one at the front and one towards the back, to ensure they point out any tricky sections.</li> <li>The instructors will ensure the group goes at a pace to suit the slowest person.</li> <li>There is a rest stop halfway up the trail.</li> <li>A vehicle will be available for anyone with mobility issues, if it is deemed that will make it too difficult to walk the trail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are walked through the staff route between sites 4 to site 2 landing to ensure they are aware of any trip hazards.</li> </ul>	2	2	4



	All other paths.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructors must only walk the trail with the group at a slow speed to ensure they are not fatigued.</li> <li>Instructors use a car for opening and closing checks.</li> <li>A vehicle is used to transport any equipment to Zip Trek.</li> </ul> <p>Customer paths between sites are cleared of debris and are hard packed stone.</p>			
8	Collision with vehicles and other forest users on the Green Lane	3	3	9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructors are aware that the green lane to get to the brief site is used by off-road vehicles, bikers and other forest users and customers need to move to the side of the lane if vehicles are coming. Vehicles and bikes will be traveling slowly due to the lane's nature.</li> </ul> <p>Customers are instructed they need to move to the side of the trail if a vehicle or bike is coming before starting up the Green Lane.</p>	2	3	6
9	Impact from a vehicle while crossing the road from and to the cabin.	3	4	12	Course users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness training for staff.</li> <li>Customers are accompanied by staff members and warned of the road.</li> </ul>	1	4	4
10	Weather <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lightning</li> <li>High Wind</li> <li>Ice and snow</li> <li>Extreme Cold</li> <li>Excessive Heat</li> </ul>	3	3	9	Course users Staff Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course closures and evacuations due to adverse weather policy</li> <li>Emergency Evacuation Procedure</li> <li>Suitable clothing guidance and uniform</li> <li>Communications and use of radios and phones</li> <li>Rest periods and breaks</li> </ul>	1	3	3



						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of staff and customers</li> <li>• Monitor weather reports and forecasts</li> <li>• Patrolling instructors' observations (Beaufort scale)</li> <li>• Provision of water</li> </ul>			
11	Mist and Fog	3	3	9	Course users Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training – when visibility is limited, Controlled Descent of Zip wire is carried out from top to bottom – during opening checks and at the start of each session.</li> <li>• Descents during a session are controlled by radio.</li> <li>• 2nd instructor confirms when landing site is clear and the break has re-set correctly.</li> </ul> <p>A customer is only allowed to attach to the zip wire after confirmation has been received by the Lead instructor.</p>	1	3	3
12	Darkness causing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disorientation</li> <li>• Inability to read safety signs</li> <li>• Unable to see landing</li> <li>• Impaired supervision</li> </ul>	2	3	6	Course users, Employees, Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careful planning of session availability in line with sunset times</li> <li>• Torches available</li> <li>• Adequate supervision</li> <li>• Staff assistance</li> <li>• Termination of the activity</li> </ul>	1	3	3
13	Forest fires	3	3	9	Course users Employees Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• Evacuation Plan</li> </ul>	1	3	3
14	Inappropriate clothing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footwear</li> <li>• Covered waists</li> </ul>	2	3	6	Course users Employees Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre booking and on arrival advice/checks</li> <li>• Refer to supervision policy for agreed requirements by activity</li> </ul>	1	3	3



15	Inappropriate participant age/ratios/supervision	2	3	6	Course users Employees Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre booking and on arrival advice/checks</li> </ul> Refer to supervision policy for agreed requirements by activity		1	3	3
15	Challenging Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbally abusive</li> <li>Physically abusive</li> <li>Failure to follow rules</li> <li>Aggressive</li> </ul>	2	3	6	Course Users, Members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Customer Conflict Policy</li> <li>Staff Training</li> <li>Exclusion from activity</li> <li>Safety Rules and Advice</li> <li>Terms and Conditions</li> <li>Verbal warning, of session being cut short</li> <li>Emergency Services</li> </ul>		1	3	3
16	Medical conditions Pre-existing injuries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pregnancy</li> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Hearing and Visual impairment</li> <li>Individual additional needs</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	2	2	4	Course Users Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical Disability, Pregnancy, Additional Support, Deaf Participants, Existing Physical Injuries Policies</li> <li>Risk Acknowledgement</li> <li>Terms and Conditions</li> <li>Staff training</li> <li>Safety Rules and Advice</li> <li>Dynamic assessment of risk</li> <li>Patrolling</li> <li>Users advised to seek medical advice</li> </ul>		1	2	2
Refs	References: HSW Act, MHSW Regs, WAH Regs, PUWER, LOLER, PPE Regs, Workplace HSW Regs, H&S (Safety Signs) Regs, First Aid Regs, Occupiers Liability Act, European Standard for ropes courses EN 15567 Part 1 and Part 2, HSL "Guide to good practice in safety management of aerial ropes courses. AAIAC "UK Ropes Course Guide" (3 <sup>rd</sup> edition), HSE Information Sheet Entertainment Sheet No 14 ,HSE 5 Steps to Risk assessment INDG 163 ,HSE A Guide to Risk Assessment requirements INDG 218 ,Go Ape Generic Risk Assessments									
	Control Measures. Where a control measure has been identified, it is only included once and not repeated under every subject. Therefore, for a specific hazard identified, a control measure noted above may apply to that hazard. (HSE RA guidance.)									
	Go Ape operational and training systems. These include the following: Go Ape Operations on how to run a Go Ape Activity, Go Ape Training Manual including training and assessment policy, Practical Session plans and online training and Go Ape Company Handbook.									
	Instructor Training. Go Ape staff must undertake relevant training and assessment programme specific to their role. They undergo training in accordance with the Go Ape Online Training Manual.									



