

ISLANDS IN THE SKY

Goal – Purpose of the activity.	
Challenge courses are also known as challenge ropes courses. <i>Participants</i> are required to use dexterity, strength, balance and complex physical movements to successfully traverse the element or course of elements. Challenge courses are often used for experiential learning, personal challenge or team building purposes but also for entertainment. Challenge ropes courses are designed to present physical and mental challenges to individuals and groups. Islands in the sky tests your initiative and balance to move from one island to another, with the activity suspended 10m in the air, the participant/s must use not only each other on the activity but also the people on the ground to help move the islands. A buddy checking system is used which makes this an excellent activity for developing communication between pairs and provides a challenging and shared experience for your group that's fun too! Island in the sky is a "High Element" <i>and</i> is an element for which safety can no longer be achieved by spotting and requires a <i>belay system</i> using harnesses and specialist safety equipment or other established methods or systems.	
Participants	Leadership and Qualifications
Participants are those persons who undertake the activity, and who are not a leader or assistant leader for the activity. Dependent Participants are persons owed a duty of care by the activity provider who is reliant upon the activity leaders for supervision, guidance and instruction to support the person's participation. All participants are to be considered Dependent Participants for this activity. This activity is not suited to Primary Years students. There will be a maximum of 3 active participants on the High Ropes at any one time, maximum 3 Belay Teams.	Activity leaders should have or be able to demonstrate: • Core Good Practice Guide Leader General Competencies (Appendix M Core Good Practice Guide) • Specific competencies as outlined in the Challenge Course Good Practice Guide Appendix 9 Leaders may demonstrate their competency through any of the 4 recognised pathways: • Training Qualification and/or Training Course • Outdoor Sector and/or Organisation Accreditation Scheme • Leader Registration Schemes • Peer Recognition and Verification Process
Participant/Leader Ratios	
1 Active Participant on the Course Ratio 1:20 + 1 School Staff Member (Assistant Leader) for school groups. Activity Leader is to provide Level 1 (Direct Supervision), Assistant Leader (school personnel) is to provide Level 2 Supervision. 2 or more Active Participants on the Course Ratio 2:20 + 1 School Staff Member (Assistant Leader) for school groups. Activity Leader is to provide Level 1 (Direct Supervision), Assistant Leader (school personnel) is to provide Level 2 Supervision. "When multiple active <i>participants</i> are at height on high element(s), there should be a minimum of two <i>activity leaders</i> included in the supervision plan." Challenge Courses Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide P 23	
Operational Procedures	Location: High Ropes Course
Participants are to be briefed by the facilitator of the expectations of the group. Linking in with their values discussed at the start of camp. The group then is run through what to expect and do that session, depending on the weather and ability of the group. Pre-Activity The psychological preparation of students is as important as the physical preparation, especially for students who are anxious about the activity. Under no circumstances should students be pressured by staff or peers to participate beyond their readiness. A challenge by choice should be used for all participants. They should all be encouraged to fit a harness in preparation for the activity, or at least to be part of the belay team. A safety brief is given and a demonstration of how to wear a harness and helmet correctly and how to use the carabiners and ropes safety. • All participants must wear appropriate clothing and be sun smart with sunscreen hat etc. Everyone is to wear a harness (and a helmet when required) for the session and is not to take it off unless instructed by the facilitator or at the end of the session as directed.	

Belay System Explanation, Demonstration and Practice.

As participants will be responsible for the operation of the belay system for participants at height, it is imperative that all belayers and their team are familiar with and capable of operating the belay system. The following procedures must be explained, demonstrated and experienced by the belayers prior to them belaying for an active participant. Belay teams will be responsible for active Participants whilst they are traversing the high rope elements. Leaders will be responsible for belaying participants as they climb to 1st platform and when they descend from final platform (this ensures all participant belay teams are used for elements only).

On Ground Activities

- Belay participants are given instruction of the Edelrid Eddy's, fall arrest, and belaying down techniques.
- Backing up procedures
- Participants must practice and demonstrate these procedures to ensure they are capable.
- Climbers – demonstration and practice of change over procedures. Participants must practice and demonstrate their ability to correctly change over the belay systems from one high element to another element at height. The “minimum of 2 rule” must be followed at all times. That is, the active participant must have a minimum of 2 connections at all times when at height. Participants must practice change overs on the ground prior to performing them at height.

During Activity

- Climbers must stay on the ground until instructed to start climbing.
- When belaying, there should be no slack in the rope. Belay teams must keep the belay rope as tight as possible at all times whilst the participant is negotiating the high element. It should not be too tight as to cause discomfort.
- There should be good communication between belayers and climbers at all times, especially when the climber is changing from one high element to another high element.

Post Activity

All harnesses to be fully extended and placed into boxes for next session.

The facilitator will front load the participants before the debrief to think about how they may have improved on their values or maybe achieved a goal they set from them self or team before heading. They then will be challenged to apply those values/goals back at camp and home.

Weather

Effective planning requires access to up-to-date weather and fire information, which is generally available through newspapers, radio and television. The most up-to-date information is available on the website of the Bureau of Meteorology at www.bom.gov.au/qld . Or <http://www.eldersweather.com.au/qld/darling-downs/geham>

Equipment and Logistics

Equipment, whether hired, borrowed or owned by the school or students, must be in a safe condition and suitable for the activity

Belay Devices

Belaying devices must meet Australian standards. Devices must be in good working order.

Harnesses

Providers of artificial climbing and abseiling activities must refer to manufacturers and installers to establish appropriate operating parameters. These parameters must address the correct fitting and attachment of harnesses. The harness must also ensure the student or staff member will remain secure in the event of an inversion. Harnesses must be regularly checked and replaced, if necessary, with a recommended maximum life span of five years.

Helmets

Helmets which meet Australian standards must be worn by all students and staff using high elements and by those belaying or observing from below. Caps must not be worn under helmets.

Ropes

Ropes used on a challenge rope course must be used in accordance with manufacturer recommendations and meet Australian Standards. Before the activity commences, an experienced staff member needs to inspect the ropes.

The ropes' history and maintenance needs to be logged and the ropes must be stored in a cool, dry place free from ultraviolet light, chemical or physical hazards.

Shoes

Participants must wear covered and firmly fitting shoes with a non-slip sole.

First aid kits

First aid kits appropriate to the location and level of training must be carried.

Rescue equipment

Rescue equipment specific to the ropes course must be accessible at all times..

Clothing

Clothing is the individual's primary protection against severe and variable weather conditions.

Clothing lists need to be appropriate for the activity, environment and season. Items which are recommended not to be taken or worn (such as jewellery or rings) should be identified.

Glasses or sunglasses should be secured and long hair tied back to avoid being caught in belay devices or other equipment. Loose jewellery must not be worn and rings should be taped if not removed. Items of jewellery or rings which students remove should be placed in a secure location so they do not get lost.

All objects should be removed from pockets before participating. Gloves may be appropriate on elements involving a dynamic belay.

To protect against sunburn use broad-spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen on all exposed parts of the body, applied according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Students who own sunglasses should be encouraged to bring and wear them when required.

Identification

Staff and students must be easily identifiable.

Staff must determine the most suitable system/s of identification, based on the assessment of the environment, students' skills, the type of activities to be undertaken and the age and number of students.

Levels of Challenge and Possible Variations

Having to people attached to each other.

Safety Considerations

Sun Safety

Sunburn is a risk for anyone who participates in outdoor activities, particularly in Queensland. Leaders should take reasonable steps to prevent or minimise the likelihood of staff and participants suffering excessive sun exposure.

Weather

Effective planning requires access to up-to-date weather and fire information, which is generally available through newspapers, radio and television.

The most up-to-date information is available on the website of the Bureau of Meteorology at www.bom.gov.au/qld . Or

<http://www.eldersweather.com.au/qld/darling-downs/geham>

Ensure all safety equipment is fitted correctly.

Ensure clear instructions are given to participants.

Ensure the crates are moved away by the instructor. Do not let participants kick crates.

Course construction and security

The construction of challenge ropes courses is an expert field and should be undertaken by qualified individuals and/or organisations specialising in the planning and construction of ropes courses.

Contractors must provide written confirmation that the materials, equipment and installation meet current industry requirements.

Staff must ensure that challenge ropes course elements are not accessible when unsupervised.

Maintenance

The owner of the course must carry out regular formal maintenance inspections which are fully documented and endorsed by an independent industry expert. Operators must be able to provide written evidence that a maintenance check has been conducted. Before each activity, the instructor should carry out a visual inspection of the course to ensure there are no obvious impediments to normal operation.

For more details please see corresponding RA

Emergency Management Procedure

- | | |
|----------|---|
| A | Assess situation, call emergency services, assist those in danger |
| E | Evacuate students, staff and visitors, if appropriate |
| I | Inform School Camp Leader onsite and off site, Camp Cooby Directors or Camp Manager if not onsite |
| O | Organise resources, advise parents |
| U | Undertake recovery operations and return site to normal |

Risk Assessment

Danger.	Risk Description	Risk Level.	Management Strategies.	Residual Risk Assessment – after Management Strategies.
Environment.				
Sun Exposure	Sunburn Dehydration Heat Exhaustion/ Stroke	M	Participants advised on appropriate clothing and equipment. Clothing with sleeves must be worn. Participants carry minimum of 3L water. Refill stops. Particular pointers to apply sunscreen to backs of hands and inside thighs. (recommended minimum +30) Regular rest stops. Encourage peer reminders and monitoring. Review weather conditions prior to the activity. www.bom.gov.au/qld . Or http://www.eldersweather.com.au/qld/darling-downs/geham Briefs and debriefs as well as team planning should be conducted in the shade where available.	L
Winds	Falling branches Falling trees.	S	Monitor winds before departure. Aggressive movement of trees nearby are an indication of thinking about strong management strategies or cancellation. No activity will take place during strong winds, or near dead trees, no pulling or swinging on trees. All dead trees & fallen branches will be monitored in initiative area. All dead trees and branches deemed a risk will be removed from the area..	L

			Review weather conditions prior to the activity. www.bom.gov.au/qld . Or http://www.eldersweather.com.au/qld/darling-downs/geham Assess students' ability to cope with increasingly difficult wind conditions.	
Rain	Wet Equipment Hypothermia Slips and trips	S	Review weather conditions prior to the activity. www.bom.gov.au/qld . Or http://www.eldersweather.com.au/qld/darling-downs/geham Pre-briefing and equipment list outlines appropriate clothing and wet weather gear. Participants are shown how to waterproof equipment. Group condition is monitored closely during wet weather. Group to be briefed on safe practice in wet conditions using extra caution. Students will wear firmly fitting, covered footwear with a non-slip sole. Participants will be instructed to be aware of the ground underfoot, & to avoid walking on damp/wet areas & to be aware of trees, branches & brambles, & not to run.	L
Bushfire	Burns Smoke Inhalation Death	H	Participants advised on appropriate clothing and equipment. Participants carry minimum of 3L water. Encourage peer reminders and monitoring. Review weather conditions prior to the activity. www.bom.gov.au/qld . Or http://www.eldersweather.com.au/qld/darling-downs/geham Aggressive heat waves are an indication of thinking about bush fire management strategies or cancellation. Fires may only be lit in specified areas. Fires should not be lit in windy conditions. Participants will be briefed on emergency procedures.	L
Dead Trees	Impact Injuries Canoe Damage	M	Participants are briefed about the dead trees and the likelihood of tree fall if hit. Participants are asked to care for equipment.	L
Steep Banks	Sprains & Strains	M	Appropriate pathways are chosen to avoid any difficulties. Students will wear firmly fitting, covered footwear with a non-slip sole.	L
Rubbish	Cut Feet Embedded Objects	S	Participants are expected to wear closed in shoes at all times.	L

Environmental Impact		M	Participants are to be briefed on specific environmental factors that concern Cooby Dam. Ensure rubbish is 'carried out'. Ensure that the designated landing areas are used and no landing zones are observed.	L
Wildlife		S	Participants are expected to wear closed in shoes at all times. Appropriate pathways are chosen to avoid potential wildlife Participants will be instructed to be aware of the ground underfoot, & to avoid walking through unmown areas & to be aware of trees, branches & brambles which may be home to various wildlife, & not to run. pathways are kept clear and mowed to ensure all wildlife can be seen and avoided. Participants will be instructed to give all wildlife a wide berth to avoid injury. Staff will inspect all activity areas prior to use to ensure no wildlife is in close proximity.	L
People.				
poor belay technique	A student falls from height.	H	Pre-activity planning will consider whether the planned challenge ropes course session matches the maturity and abilities of the group. Each participant will have at least one designated observer while on high elements of a challenge ropes course. This is most important when the participant is making the change from one element to another high element. "Rule of 2" must be observed at all times. Belayers and observers will be briefed on their responsibilities and closely supervised.	L
Poor Belay Technique	A student holds rope while belaying, climbing participant falls resulting in rope burn.	M	Pre-activity planning will consider whether the planned challenge ropes course session matches the maturity and abilities of the group. Belayers and observers will be briefed on their responsibilities and closely supervised.	L
Inexperienced	poorly fitted harness, resulting in soft tissue or skeletal injury	S	All participants will wear correctly fitted helmets and harnesses. These are to be checked at the start of the activity and throughout the activity, especially when a harness is removed or adjusted. Pre-activity planning will consider whether the planned challenge ropes course session matches the maturity and abilities of the group.	L
	During a belay equipment changeover at height, a student mistakenly unclips and falls causing serious injury.	H	Pre-activity planning will consider whether the planned challenge ropes course session matches the maturity and abilities of the group. Changeovers at height will be carefully explained, demonstrated, practiced and observed by a staff member.	L
Entrapment (equipment)	A student or staff member catches their hair, clothing or jewelry in equipment, causing injury or distress.	H	Staff will advise students that jewelry and rings must not be taken or worn, and suggest appropriate clothing (both in the pre-activity briefing and before the day of the activity). Staff will ensure that hair, clothing and jewelry are appropriately managed to avoid injury or mishap	L

Fear / psychological damage	Student or staff freeze	H	If a person freezes on a high element it is normally possible to talk him through. On a bottom top rope element (rock climbing Jacobs ladder milk crate stack and leap of faith) a person always has the option of stopping and coming down wherever he is. On a cow's tail course a participant is obviously less able to return to the ground immediately. Therefore the use of progressions is of paramount importance on a cow's tail course. (if necessary a rescue will be performed.)	L
Inconsiderate Participants	Participants being inconsiderate of other participants resulting in soft tissue, skeletal or emotional injury / damage	M	Participants will be briefed on the risks associated with the activity. Inconsiderate participants will be removed from the activity. Staff will ensure safety procedures are met and will cease any ideas which may result in a participant's safety being jeopardised.	L
Allergies	Environmental triggers (pollens, dust)	H	Check medical information, be aware of possible triggers.	
Equipment				
Faulty	Faulty equipment could result in further damage to equipment and increase risk of incident,	H	Staff will inspect all ropes equipment before and after activity. All equipment use will be logged. All equipment will be used and maintained according to the manufacturers recommendations. Camp Staff are responsible for set up and pack down of all High Ropes equipment. Personal protective equipment checked for correct fitting & monitored throughout activity by the instructor	L
Incorrect use of equipment.	Failure to use climbing holds, use of tower structure	M	Clear instruction about what holds to use, avoid using tower structure to climb	L

Consequence					
Likelihood	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A (almost certain)	S	S	H	H	H
B (Likely)	M	S	S	H	H
C (Moderate)	L	M	S	H	H
D (unlikely)	L	L	M	S	H
E (rare)	L	L	M	S	S

Risk Level

H – High risk: e.g. likely or almost certain to occur, with at least moderate consequence – at least medical treatment required (See table below)

S – Significant risk

M – Moderate risk

L – Low risk

CONSEQUENCE RATING TABLE		
1	Insignificant	No injuries, No financial loss
2	Minor	First Aid treatment, Low financial loss
3	Moderate	Medical treatment required, Medium financial loss
4	Major	Extensive injuries, High financial loss
5	Catastrophic	Death, Major financial loss