



A guide to BS ISO 31030:2021 Travel risk management — Guidance for organizations

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Overview

It is imperative that travel buyers work with risk management when it comes to traveller safety. The role risk management plays, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic when policies were tested to the limit, has never been more important. The new ISO 31030 travel risk management standard definitely supports standardisation across the industry. It creates industry best practice that both corporates and suppliers can adopt to increase their oversight and evaluation of risks involved in travel. This has many benefits that will help buyers and risk managers develop an efficient and unified process to ensure the safety and well-being of travellers. It will also help organisations meet duty of care requirements and ensure suppliers adopt these standards as well. ITM is focussing on how to educate the travel buyer community about ISO 31030 while preparing them to discuss this important topic with their risk management colleagues. Collaboration between buyers and risk managers will support organisations taking this seriously and ultimately lead to the success of ISO 31030.

Alison Rogan – Chair, Institute of Travel Management

BS ISO 31030:2021 was released in September 2021 in response to rising concerns about the complexity of managing travel risk for business travellers. This new benchmark for the industry was developed by a global community of relevant experts to establish a framework of consistent standards and good practices. This executive briefing provides an overview of BS ISO 31030:2021 and what it means for any organization that requires its staff to undertake travel on their behalf.



Introduction

Effectively managing risks for an organization is crucial to success. In the field of travel risk the challenges range from day-to-day events that can impact on performance, through to crises that can threaten life or destroy whole organizations. Risk to people working around the world for their organizations is complex, and many organizations have struggled to understand and balance what capabilities they need and what is appropriate for their people and business. This new guidance provides a framework developed by experienced international experts to help organizations meet their 'duty of care' obligations and deliver proportionate, effective travel risk management.



Why do we have guidance on travel risk management?

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO), based in Geneva, is the body responsible for many of the world's most important product and management systems standards. It is made up of over 160 national standards bodies that work together to share knowledge and build 'consensus-based, market relevant international standards that provide solutions to global challenges'. The technical committee for risk management is TC262 and Working Group 7 is responsible for BS ISO 31030:2021. The United Kingdom is a prominent member of ISO and is represented by the British Standards Institution (BSI). The mirror committee to TC262 is RM/1, which works with a diverse range of organizations, academics and subject matter experts.

ISO has published BS ISO 31030:2021 *Travel risk management – Guidance for organizations*. The guidance was proposed by BSI to ISO in 2017 in response to growing levels of anxiety about travel-related risks on the part of business travellers and corporate travel managers. This was expressed in various authoritative surveys, and many risk management and security professionals considered travel risks to be intensifying, becoming more complex and difficult to predict and manage. BSI have adopted the standard as BS ISO 31030.

Travel is inherently risky for a whole variety of reasons. People are out of their usual environment; they may not be able to interpret danger or hazards abroad or in another city in the way they can at home. They may be using a variety of transportation modes and staying in unfamiliar accommodation. Destinations vary enormously in terms of threats and challenges they may pose; even in countries with well-developed policing and justice systems, the risk from crime and terrorism can be significant. In many countries health and safety regulation is underdeveloped and infrastructure is poorly maintained. Public health and hygiene conditions not only vary between countries but can vary enormously within a country as can access to appropriate medical services and facilities. Events in recent years have graphically illustrated the incidence of natural disasters such as floods and fires have increased significantly. In summary there is a myriad of potential hazards when travelling that need to be considered carefully if the risk of harm, loss or disruption is to be reduced.

Over the decades, practices have evolved in the management of travel risk that have helped to reduce or eliminate risk. However, these practices vary and have not been developed on a formal evidence basis or formally codified. BS ISO 31030:2021 is a major step in this direction and constitutes an authoritative global benchmark of good practice developed by a truly global community of relevant experience and expertise. It is guidance that the industry can use to address many serious issues and help stakeholders develop their operations to a point where more formal evidence-based codification might be possible, for example, in the form of a formally certifiable standard. The guidance is designed to promote a culture where addressing travel risk is critical and is resourced and managed effectively and efficiently.

At a time when building confidence in business travel has never been more important, the guidance offers the opportunity to strengthen trust and confidence and make travel safer and more productive.

Managing risk is an integral and ever-increasing role played by the travel management community. The introduction of consistent, international standards in this area is to be welcomed, and will provide further support and guidance to the business travel industry in the world class service it delivers.

Clive Wratten, Chief Executive, The Business Travel Association

What is BS ISO 31030:2021?

BS ISO 31030:2021 is derived from its parent BS ISO 31000:2018 *Risk Management* Standard, the world's pre-eminent risk management framework and guidance, which risk management professionals use the world over. BS ISO 31030:2021 draws on the well-established principles of BS ISO 31000:2018 and provides a similar framework to guide travel management professionals through a structured and systematic process of consideration, assessment and decision making. The guidance compliments and works with not only BS ISO 31000:2018 but other management systems too. It can also be easily used on a standalone basis within organizations, which makes it particularly useful to SME organizations.

BS ISO 31030:2021 is an ISO 'Type-B' Management Standard and so constitutes authoritative guidance rather than a specification. This permits latitude for travel risk management professionals to interpret and adopt the guidance proportionately and pragmatically within the context of their own business sector and organizational need. Using BS ISO 31030:2021 can help organizations increase the likelihood of achieving their business travel objectives, improve the identification of opportunities and threats and effectively allocate and use resources for risk reduction and treatment. BS ISO 31030:2021 cannot be used for certification purposes, but it does provide a framework for internal or external audit programmes. Organizations using it can compare their travel risk management policies, procedures and practices against an internationally recognized benchmark, providing sound principles for effective management of travel risk.

ISO 31030:2021 Travel Risk Management crystallises the obligations, duties and benefits of working together across the travel sector to keep travellers safe and build confidence. It provides a practical framework for travel managers to ensure they are discharging their duty of care and to make business travel more productive. Suppliers of travel related services and accommodation have the opportunity to ensure their services enable travel management professionals to align with this new benchmark for travel risk management practices.

James Foice, Chief Executive, Association of Serviced Apartment Providers (ASAP) UK



The guidance advises organizations to integrate its travel risk management policies and programme with the organization's wider risk management and safety and security activities. It is clear that there are internal and external stakeholders that can add significant value to an organization's travel risk management approach. Dependent on the scale and type of organization such stakeholders might include:

Internal stakeholders

- human resources
- occupational health
- risk management
- security
- travel management
- procurement
- legal
- training
- IT – information security
- c-suite
- staff associations

External stakeholders

- travel management companies
- insurance providers
- specialist insurers
- travel risk management companies
- government
- regulators
- health, safety and security experts
- security services providers
- travel intelligence providers
- other suppliers
- families of travellers

The guidance has been written to enable organizations to apply the guidance proportionately within the context of the organization, its business objectives and travel programme. Smaller organizations may well have limited resources and capabilities to manage travel risk, but all organizations are encouraged to seek to balance business objectives with reasonable steps to assess and address the risks, which it can reasonably identify or foresee. Organizations are advised to consider how much risk they are prepared to accept in pursuit of business objectives and ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to treat the risks at this level, so they are managed effectively in a reasoned and proportionate way according to their risk exposure. In some circumstances travel will not be justifiable due to the level and nature of risk involved and the limited risk treatments options available.

Organizations that do not have the internal competencies to undertake the necessary assessments to determine its risk appetite, risk profile and the appropriate treatment options for its travel risk programme may need to consider how it can secure or access these competences, and guidance is provided on this subject.



Why is BS ISO 31030:2021 important?

Business travel will remain an integral part of business operations for most organizations in achieving their objectives. The experience of the global COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that travel can be substituted in some circumstances; however, the benefits of travel, particularly building trust-based business relationships are likely to provide an enduring need to travel in many circumstances.

However, expectations about how employers exercise the 'duty of care' have changed in recent years, and in the post pandemic era, expectations are even higher, as clearly demonstrated in the industry data in Table 1. The publication of BS ISO 31030:2021 creates a benchmark which almost certainly will be cited by many interested parties as a reasonable 'test' of an organization's due diligence in discharging its 'duty of care'.

In the event of something going wrong which results in a legal claim, it would be reasonable to suppose a court, or a tribunal may well be persuaded that this guidance is a reasonable test.

2020 top priorities		2019
1	Traveller safety	-
2	Budget control	-
3	Traveller well-being	↑5
4	Enhancing experience	↑7
5	Booking tool compliance	↓3
6	Sustainable practice	New
7	Full content access	↓4
8	Expense integration	↓6
9	Diversity and inclusion	New
10	Adapting to Brexit regulations	New

Table 1. Survey of corporate travel managers 2019/2020, with kind permission from the Institute of Travel Management

Duty of care –
 'moral responsibility or legal obligation of the organization to protect the traveller from threats and risks'.



Who should be focusing on BS ISO 31030:2021?

The guidance is intended for those managing and participating in organizational travel. The management of travel risk is a component of any organization's travel-related activities and should include interaction with stakeholders who can contribute to making travel safer and more successful. The guidance does not apply to tourism and leisure-related travel, except in relation to travellers travelling on behalf of the organization.

Senior executives with legal responsibilities, travel managers and business travellers have a particular locus in this guidance. Business travellers not only include employees but also include anyone travelling at the request of, or on behalf of the organization, for example, subcontractors. ISO standards, guidance and specifications are voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant international standards designed to make business and trade more efficient and to help overcome global challenges. They standardize practices based on evidence, knowledge, experience and expertise drawn from global communities of experts from relevant sectors. They are designed to stimulate market responses to support standardized practices. Accordingly, all suppliers of travel-related services and products should consider BS ISO 31030:2021 and what role they might play in supporting organizations to adopt this standard and guidance; and in so doing may gain a competitive advantage.

The ISO and the law of England and Wales are clear: top management should be responsible and accountable for the overall implementation of policies to reduce the risks to employees associated with travel overseas. If they do not take such responsibilities seriously, this may lead to corporate as well as personal liability.

Peters & Peters LLP (London) – White Paper: ISO 31030: Travel Risk Management Standard – Legal Implications and Risks for Organisations (October 2021)



Who should be focusing on BS ISO 31030:2021?

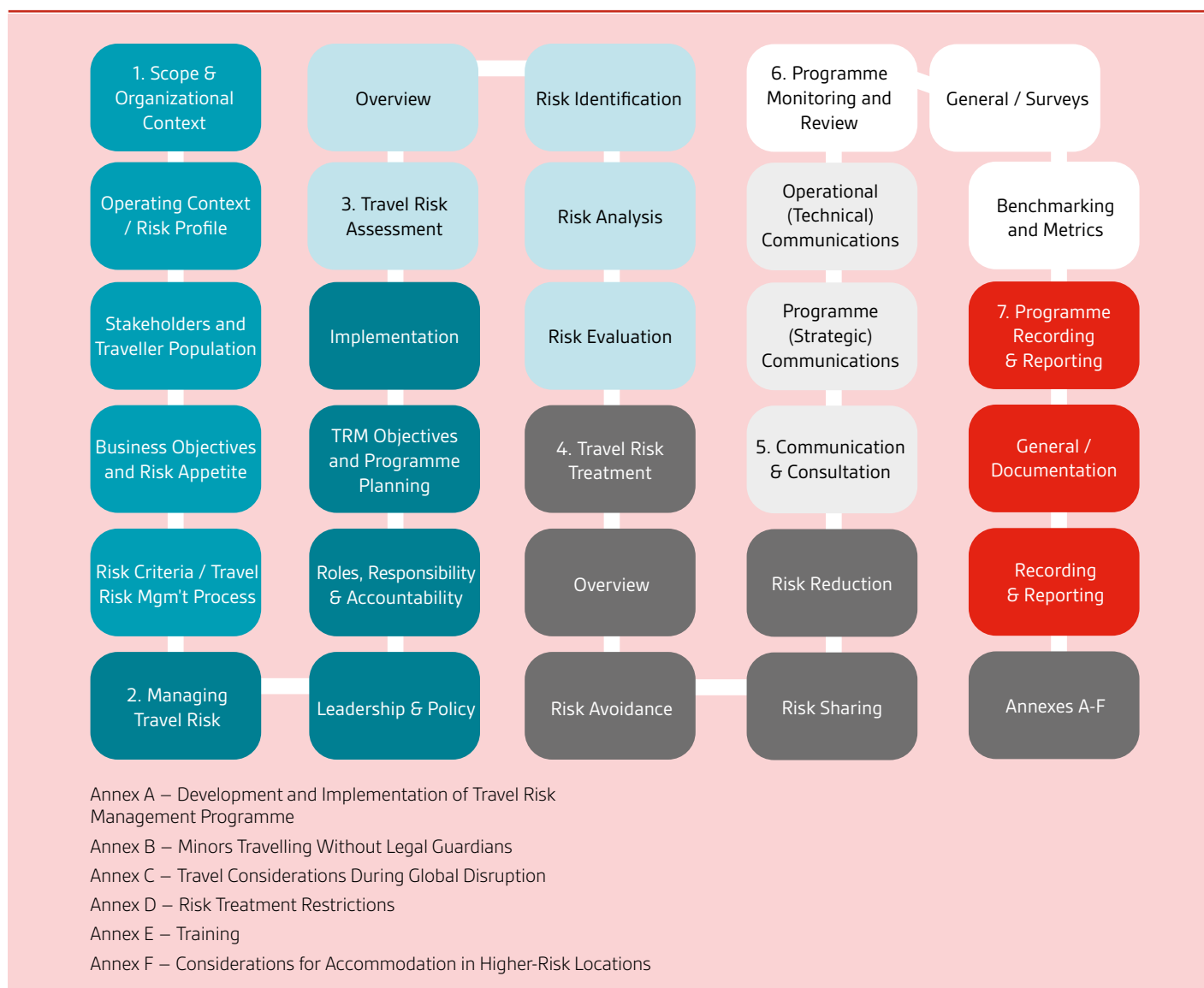


Figure 1. Aspect of travel risk management (from BS ISO 31030:2021)

The guidance is structured into seven discrete aspects of a travel risk management programme.

BS ISO 31030:2021 is designed to help organizations manage the challenges associated with the fast-changing and diverse risk and threat landscape that surrounds business travellers. Some organizations may have well-developed TRM programmes and might consider that they are already fully aligned with BS ISO 31030:2021. However, they will have the discretion to review their current TRM programme against this benchmark to confirm this view and where there are gaps, they can act to adopt the guidance more comprehensively, commensurate with their travel requirements.

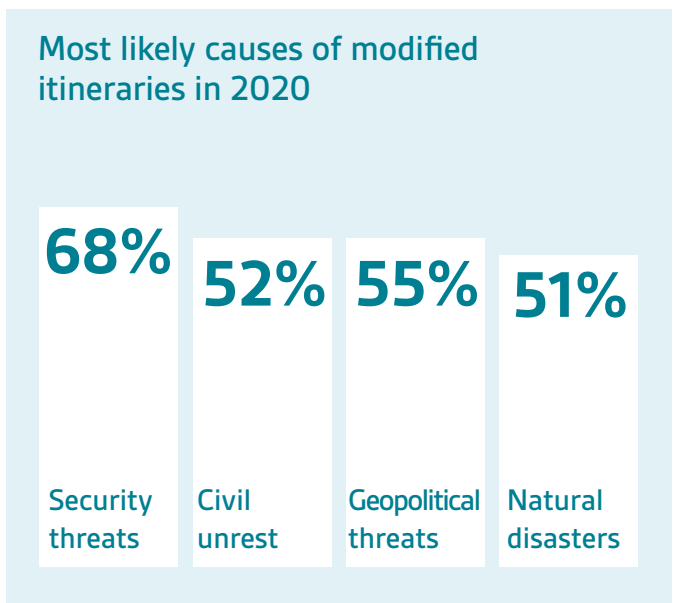


Figure 2. Risk reduction

Risk reduction

Experts across the travel, safety and security domains understand the issues and recognize the scope of the challenge. Over time, they have developed good practices that help address the health, safety and security issues and demonstrate that the duty of care is being fully discharged. In addition to risk avoidance and risk sharing, the new guidance addresses a wide range of potential risk reduction treatments.

BS ISO 31030:2021 contains a rich menu of practical considerations and associated guidance. The risk reduction section encourages reasoned and proportionate risk assessment and reduction in relation to a wide range of sources of risk such as the booking process, the travel route, the destination, the travel itinerary and the selection of safe, secure accommodation and many other aspects of a travel programme (see Figure 2).



Booking travel

Establishing an effective booking process to ensure travel, including transport and accommodation, is booked through appropriate channels, is recorded and visible to the TRM function and thus properly assessed and approved in-line with the travel programme, its policies and risk criteria.

Accommodation selection

Accommodation selection is also a significant feature with guidance on assessment of health, safety and security standards. The guidance advocates a risk-based, objective approach to assessment of standards. BS ISO 31030:2021 suggests that, in some circumstances, 'on site' assessments may be advisable in higher-risk locations. In lower-risk locations other options include evidence-based questionnaires where the TRM function is involved in designing the questions and analysing the results. Where the risk assessments suggest a more focused assessment of standards is required organizations are advised to ensure they use competent internal or external assessors. The use of third-party assurance schemes offering accreditation or certification of accommodation is also suggested as an appropriate mechanism to conduct '*structured, evidence-based evaluation of health safety and security standards*'. Organizations using such schemes are advised to conduct due diligence as to the scope, design and operation of the scheme and whether it is itself, independently validated.

A key element of the BS ISO 31030:2021 guidance on accommodation selection is as follows:

Some organizations refer to 'preferred' or 'approved' accommodation in their travel programmes. Traditionally, these are primarily focused on considerations such as room types and rates, cancellation policies and the range of services available, etc. and do not always address the health, safety and security risks addressed in this document. Organizations should therefore ensure that, if such terms are used, they are inclusive of health, safety and security considerations

Information security and privacy protection

BS ISO 31030:2021 provides extensive guidance on how an organization should carefully consider the data protection, information security and privacy requirements relative to its business, the assignment and the traveller, and implement appropriate measures to manage these risks. This will help protect the organization's data assets and IP.

Medical and health risk reduction

The guidance promotes assessment of key aspects of medical need and appropriate medical and security assistance where appropriate to support the traveller in emergency situations. The guidance covers assessment of travellers to check their fitness to travel and re-assessment on return if there have been any exceptional or stressful events. It also provides detailed guidance rest and recuperation and the due diligence required in respect to any medications and vaccines the traveller may require and how these are secured and where they are available. Some medications may not be available in some countries or can even be prohibited.



What are the benefits of adopting BS ISO 31030:2021?

BS ISO 31030:2021 has been developed to achieve wide-scale benefits to the management of travel risk. These benefits include:

- an overall increase in the safety and security of travellers resulting in fewer incidents of disruption, loss (including data and IP), harm or illness
- more productive and successful business travel due to fewer incidents and greater confidence and well-being on the part of travellers
- a greater level of preparedness when incidents do occur
- signalling to employees, other workers and staff associations that TRM is a top priority
- reducing the legal exposure of executives
- stimulation of a market response (suppliers) enabling organizations to fully align with the guidance

The core message in BS ISO 31030:2021 is to substitute assumptions of safety for pro-active assessment and management of health safety and security when people are travelling for business.

Author

Robert (Bob) Quick



Robert (Bob) Quick, QPM Executive Director and Founder of Global Secure Accreditation Ltd (GSA)

Bob Quick enjoyed a 32-year career as a police officer. In 2008 he was appointed Assistant Commissioner at New Scotland Yard, where he was responsible for counter terrorism nationally, the protection of the British Royal Family, the UK Prime Minister and cabinet, the foreign diplomatic community and visiting Heads of State. Between 2004 and 2008 he was Chief Constable of Surrey Police.

In 2018 Bob established Global Secure Accreditation Ltd (GSA) introducing the world's first independently validated security and safety accreditation for hotels and other accommodation. He was co-opted onto the BSI Policy Working Group on BS ISO 31030:2021 from 2019 to 2021.

Reviewers

Russell Price, Chairman, BSI RM/1 & Continuity Forum.

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