



LODESTONE SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

Vetting for International Programs
What Can you know? What should you know?

WRMC - 2014



...as
safe as
it
should
be.



What requires a diligent review?

Staff

Students

Local Hazard Landscape

Third Party Providers

Partners

Vendors

Transportation, Accommodations, Food Service

Home Stays

Medical Resources

Adventure Activities



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

What requires a diligent review?

Staff

Students

Local Hazard Landscape

Third Party Providers

Partners

Vendors

Transportation, Accommodations, Food Service

Home Stays

Medical Resources

Adventure Activities



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

Vetting?

1. No. What are we supposed to know? We are a small program.
2. I don't know. Our faculty put the programs together. I think they do all the vetting.
3. Our provider/partner/liaison puts all that together, so we aren't responsible for it.
4. Yes...some of it. We ask questions. We require info.
5. Yes, we have checklists/we conduct onsite reviews/
we have thorough documentation



Negligence

Harm

Duty to Act

Breach of Duty

Causation



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

Standards

Generally set by trade organizations, court rulings or dominant organizations

Association of Experiential Education (AEE)

National Outdoor Leadership Association (NOLS)

Outward Bound

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Federal Aviation Authority (FAA)

Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA)

British Standard 8848

The American Camping Association

The American Gap Association (AGA)

The Forum on Education Abroad



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

The Forum's Standard 8

Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management:

The organization assures continuous attention to the health, safety, and security of its students, faculty, and staff, from program development stages through program implementation, by way of established policies, procedures, student orientation, and faculty and staff training.



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

The Forum's Standard 8

8. a. i. What are the organization's procedures for considering the safety of a particular program site: the safety of buildings, facilities, and equipment; fire precautions; health and hygiene, transportation and venues for excursions?

8. a. v. How does the program vet home-stay families?



The Forum's Standard 8

8.a. vi. In the development of program components such as excursions and field trips, by what means does the program evaluate the safety of transportation, orientation activities, itineraries, and venues?

8. f. Risk assessments are conducted as part of the development process for new programs to evaluate and mitigate potential risks prior to the commencement of the program.

*Bill Hoyer IES



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

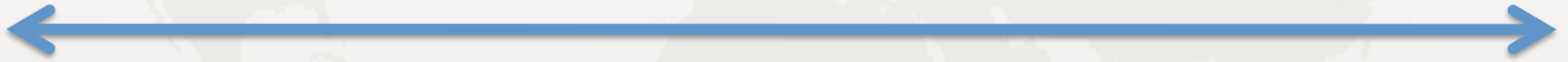
American Gap Association

3.2 Organization critically and continually reviews all locations for safety in advance of any student activities.

5.2 Organization has policies for vetting homestays and addressing potential homestay issues



Evolution of Study Abroad



The Grand Tour



Herodotus



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

Evolution of Study Abroad



The Dark Ages

The Age of Reason



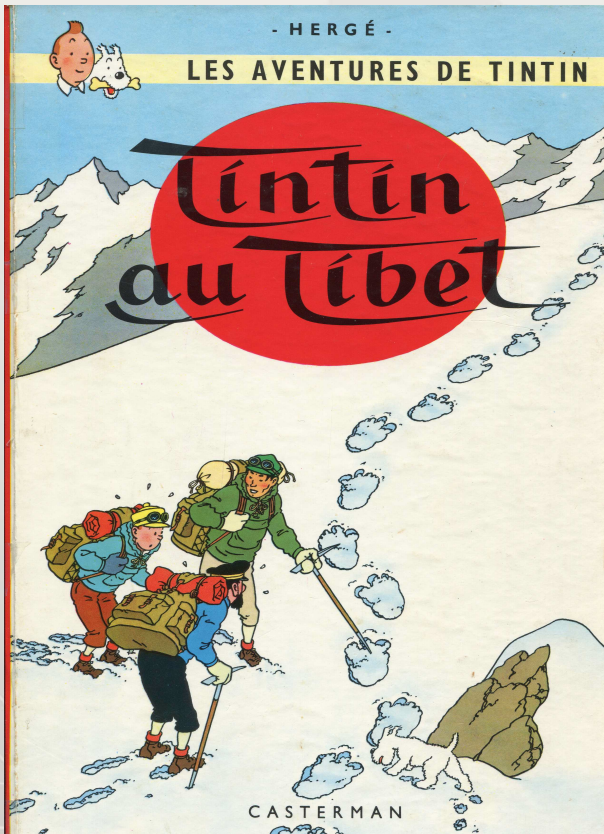
The collage illustrates the 'Age of Reason' in study abroad, featuring several key digital resources:

- OSAC (Overseas Security Advisory Council) Website:** Displays the 'Global Security News & Reports' section, including news items like 'SOMALIA OFFICIAL: WESTERN CATHOLIC NUNS KIDNAPPED' and 'OSAC ACTIVITY REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2008'.
- Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT):** A website dedicated to road travel safety, with news and events sections.
- News Articles:** Multiple browser windows showing news reports, such as 'SOMALIA OFFICIAL: WESTERN CATHOLIC NUNS KIDNAPPED' and 'OSAC ACTIVITY REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2008'.
- Social Media Feeds:** Overlaid on the bottom left are screenshots of social media feeds, including a Facebook post from 'Study Abroad' and a Twitter feed with tweets about study abroad experiences.
- Search Results:** A Safari browser window shows search results for 'international education', listing various articles and resources.

Evolution of Study Abroad



Amateur



Professional

Field Staff
Administrative Team
Travel Assistance
Provider
University Health
Center
Legal Counsel
Networks of
Expertise



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

The Safety Matrix

Less Aggressive

More Aggressive



Strategic Interventions

Student screening
Pre trip med consult
Info acquisition &
management
Communication
Transportation strategy
Medical strategy
Staff training
Student preparation
Student facilitation and
behavior
management

PROGRAM EXPOSURE

Who/What/Where/When/Why/How/How Long



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

HIC vs LMIC

- Poverty
 - Geography
 - Underdeveloped infrastructure
 - Underdeveloped regulatory systems
 - Irregular regulation enforcement
 - Political instability
 - Underdeveloped insurance/torte law
- 85% of people exposed to earthquakes, floods, TC, droughts
 - 97% all drownings
 - 95% all fatal fires
 - 95% all homicides
 - 90% all MV deaths
 - Poorer sanitation
 - Higher disease risk
- *It's more dangerous for those who live there and they are more competent



Transportation in the DR

You partner with St. Agnes of Santa Domingo for your public health program. They arrange your daily visits to poor villages. They have also arranged your transportation. One of the drivers works for them and he vouches for the other 3 drivers. They each own flatbed pickup trucks. Your liaison assures you that this is the only good option for traveling in The mountains.



What would make you feel like using the flatbeds was a good decision?



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

Home~stay

You are working with a language immersion program in rural China. They have a home-stay coordinator who arranges all accommodations. He says that he personally knows each family and most have been with the program for years. When you ask about specifics, he states that it is against the law to do background checks or to enter the home of a family. And, in any event, if you did either of those things, it would offend the families who are very difficult to recruit for the program. Families are paid 300 dollars/month/student and need to provide breakfast. Some host up to 6 students.

Are you good to go?



Medical Care Decision Making

You have a student who has a mild fever and nausea who has significant pain in her lower right abdomen. It is 6PM in Kenya and getting dark.

There is a clinic 20 minutes East with a “medical officer”. There is a hospital with one GP for a 100 bed facility 1 hour West. There is a big city hospital with specialists 4 hours North.

What do you need to know in order to make a decision?



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

Pura Vida Adventures

Your outing club is arranging a trip to Costa Rica with a provider.

Pura Vida Adventures says they can do it all. Surfing, sea kayaking, canopy tours, whitewater rafting, etc.

Their website says certifications include: American Canoe Association, British Canoe Union, Rescue 3, WMA, Technical Ropes Rescue and the International Surfing Association

When you speak to them, they explain that all staff have been trained by Felipe Lopez Salazar.

Sound good? Do you want to do any additional vetting?



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

La Costeña Airlines

A great opportunity has opened up for your program in Nicaragua. Instead of operating in Managua as you have for years, a new site has become available in the north. The only way to get there is a flight from Managua to La Siuna via La Costeña Airlines.

Are you making reservations?



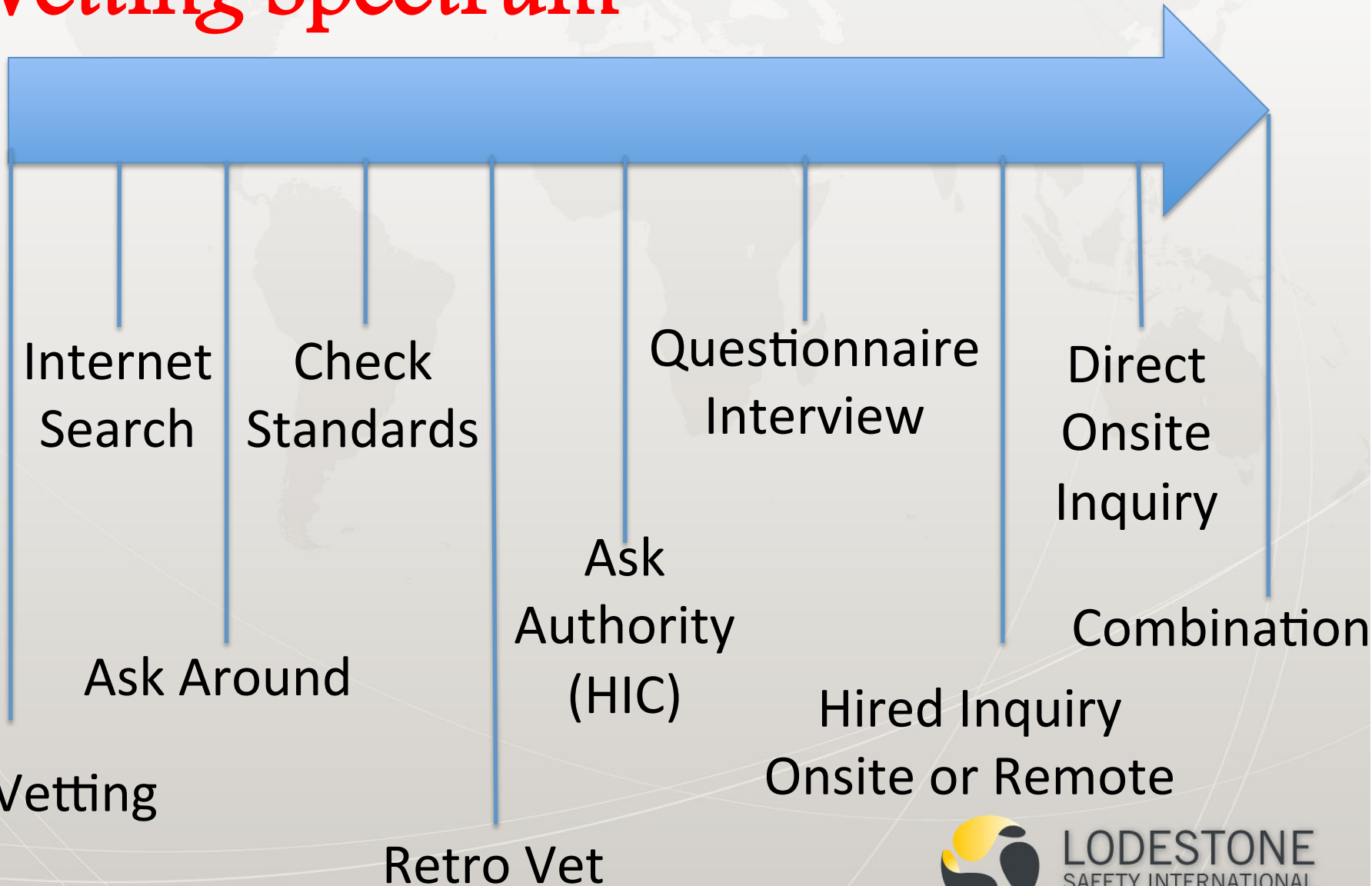
LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL

La Costeña Airlines

- Your travel assistance provider says they cannot comment on airline safety
- You find 2 other universities that have used the airline, but they have no information about it, their faculty just made the reservations
- Wikipedia – Started 1999; 140 employees; one crash in 1999 where 2 crew and 14 passengers all died, no accidents since
- In the International Aviation Safety Assessment Program La Costeña is a category 2, i.e., does not comply with ICAO standards
- FAA – Nicaragua CAA does not provide minimum safety oversight standards

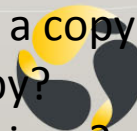


Vetting Spectrum



Third Party Providers

1. How long has this company been conducting this kind of business?
2. Is this a registered business entity? In what country? As what kind of organization?
3. How many programs do you conduct each year?
4. Do you routinely track all health, safety and security incidents?
5. Have you had any participant fatalities or serious incidents?
6. What is the mission of your organization?
7. What is the average age of your staff?
8. What is the average tenure of your staff?
9. What are your hiring requirements for field staff?
10. To what extent do you vet your staff? Background checks? Previous employment? References?
11. How much training do hired staff receive?
12. Do staff receive any training in sexual misconduct?
13. Are staff familiar with U.S. cultural norms regarding sexual misconduct?
14. Please list any certification requirements you have for all field staff.
15. Please describe your communications infrastructure.
16. Please describe your transportation strategy. (see transportation list)
17. Do you have a staff handbook? May we have a copy?
18. Do you have natural disaster contingency plans? May we have a copy?
19. Do you have an emergency response plan? May we have a copy?
20. Do you carry liability insurance? What are the limits and exclusions?



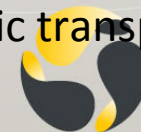
Medical Facilities

1. What level of expertise practices here? Are there physicians? If so, are they GPs or are they specialists? What kind of specialists? Are there trauma surgeons available?
2. Is Emergency Medicine a discipline here?
3. Is this a teaching hospital?
4. Lab capacity – serologic testing/blood cultures? How powerful are the microscopes?
5. Scanning capacity – CT, MRIs? Xrays?
6. Pharmacology – WHO List of Essential Medicines? Rabies HRIG? Local snake antivenom?
7. Are they accustomed to working with foreigners and are they familiar with foreigners vaccine histories and lack of childhood conferred immunities?
8. Are they willing to confer with your program's physician?

*if you have to ask about blood supply and reusing needles, don't go here?

Homestays

1. Family structure – What is the family structure? Are there one or two parents? What are the ages and genders of family children? Do any other family members live in the household? Are there any pets in the household?
2. Do any of the adults work outside of the home at night?
3. Fire safety – Are there smoke alarms in the house? How many and where? Where in the house would the student's room be located? Is there more than one exit from their bedroom? Is there a fire department nearby?
4. Security – Is the neighborhood safe? Is it safe for women to walk around alone after dark? Is there a police station nearby?
5. Communications – Does the family have a landline phone? Do family members use cell phones?
6. Water requirements – Is there easy access to drinking water that is suitable for students, i.e., bottled, boiled or filtered?
7. Food requirements – Is there a minimal requirement for what needs to be provided to each student per day, e.g., 2 meals per day? Are there foods the student should not eat, i.e., salads or uncooked fruits and vegetables that cannot be peeled first? Can the homestay accommodate food allergies and special diets? Are food allergies well understood
8. Public transportation – is there safe and easily accessible public transportation available?
9. Family transportation – does the family own a car?



Transportation ~ Provider

Vehicle Safety (to be completed by bus company official)

1. How long has your company been in business? _____
2. Do vehicle operators routinely check all of the following to be sure they are in good working order before driving? Service brakes, parking brakes, steering mechanism, brakes, turn signals, lighting devices and reflectors, speedometer, tires, horn, wind- shield wipers, rear vision mirrors? Yes ___ No ___
3. Are all buses equipped with emergency equipment including spare tires, spare fuses, fire extinguishers, warning devices for stopped vehicles, such as flares and reflective triangles, first aid kits, a cellular phone? Yes ___ No ___
4. Are buses inspected annually? Yes ___ No ___
5. Is the date of the last maintenance inspection affixed to each motor vehicle? Yes ___ No ___
6. What is the average age of your vehicle fleet? _____
7. Are records kept of vehicles that have been in accidents? Yes ___ No ___
8. Are emergency exits easy to open? Yes ___ No ___
9. Are mini-vans equipped with safety belts? Yes ___ No ___
10. Is your company bonded? Yes ___ No ___
11. What is the name of your insurance company?

12. What type of insurance does your company have?



Transportation –Hiring Policies

1. Do you have a policy of requiring potential vehicle operators to provide your company with a list of previous employers? Yes ____ No ____
2. Does your company have a policy of checking employment history of potential vehicle operators with previous employers? Yes ____ No ____
3. Do you require potential vehicle operators to undergo literacy tests? Yes ____ No ____
4. Do you have a policy of checking background and records of potential vehicle operators for drug or alcohol abuse by contacting previous employees and/or official records? Yes ____ No ____
5. Do you have a policy of not hiring operators who have a record of drug or alcohol abuse record or a felony record? Yes ____ No ____
6. Do you check to be sure that potential vehicle operators' driver licenses are valid? Yes ____ No ____
7. Do you check to be sure that potential vehicle operators' drivers' licenses are current? Yes ____ No ____
8. Do you check to be sure that potential vehicle operators' licenses have not been suspended, revoked or expired? Yes ____ No ____
9. Do you have a policy of checking background and records of potential vehicle operators for a road history of frequent moving violations? Yes ____ No ____
10. Do you have a policy of checking background and records of potential vehicle operators for frequent involvement in road crashes? Yes ____ No ____

Accommodations – Fire & Security

1. Are there guards? Do they carry arms? What kind? Is there always someone at a front desk?
2. Are all entrances locked at night?
3. How safe is the neighborhood? How dangerous is traveling to and from the neighborhood?
4. How late do taxis run?
5. Are there security cameras?
6. Are outside areas well illuminated?
7. Have there been any security incidents?
8. How many routes are there from rooms to outside (egress)? Are there fire escapes?
9. When was building constructed? What fire code?
10. Are there fire doors, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers?
11. Are there smoke detectors?
12. Are there candles or wood stoves in any rooms?
13. Is there a restaurant or kitchen in the building
14. Are there any electrical problems in the building?
15. Fire department? How far away? Ladder reach? What floor will we be quartered?

Food Service ~ Not just “cook it, boil it, peel it or forget it”

1. Do all staff involved in food handling have recent (at least one year) documented physical exams on file?
2. Have cooking staff received any formal training in safe food preparation?
3. Are there food preparation policies?
4. Is all perishable food refrigerated? What temperature?
5. Are all fruits/vegetables washed with filtered/treated water?
6. Are there hand washing stations for kitchen staff with soap and hot water?
7. Does the dish washing process include a sterilization stage? Please describe. Are dishes done by hand or by dishwasher?
8. Does the food service follow any external standards or regulations?
9. Are there periodic Inspections of the kitchen conducted by an appropriate external agency?
10. Have kitchen staff received any training in managing allergies?
11. Are cutting boards segregated by use?
12. Is all food stored off the floor in containers that would prevent access by rodents or insects? Are there food storage policies?
13. Where is food purchased from?
14. Are eggs typically refrigerated?



Sea Kayaking

1. What are your staff certifications? Are staff certified by some internal mechanism or by an internationally recognized agency? Have you ever had a staff person leading a trip in the field with an expired certification? What is the minimum level certification required for your staff to lead a trip? To assist a trip? May we have copies of the certifications of staff who work with our students?
2. Do you have written policies for conducting sea kayaking trips? Do they include a teaching progression? How spread out do groups usually get? May we have a copy of them?
3. What kind of boats do you use? Singles/doubles, mixed? What kind of PFDs are used? Do instructors carry radios, cellphones, flares, air horns, towing ropes, etc?
4. Does each boat carry a pump, float bag and extra paddle?
5. Are there designated cruising areas? How protected/exposed is the paddling area?
6. What is the tidal range in this area? Average water temp? Typical weather?
7. What about boat traffic?
8. Are there contingency plans?



Vetting

1. Who/What/When/Where/Why/how/How Long
2. Identify the areas that require vetting
3. Compose your questions
4. Choose your methods
5. Systematize your vetting process
6. Develop the criteria for working/not working with an entity
7. What adjustments do you want them to make?
What adjustments do you need to make?
8. Communicate limitations to stakeholders
9. Retro vet
10. Document, document, document
11. Limit # of new programs each year



LODESTONE SAFETY INTERNATIONAL



LODESTONE
SAFETY INTERNATIONAL