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Remote Supervision

Remote supervision refers to the monitoring of a group's safety and well-being from a distance, with limited direct interaction. This approach is commonly employed in open countryside and mountainous areas, but as a parent, you likely practice a similar concept when supervising your children in urban settings. Think back to when you first took your child to a local shopping centre. Initially, you may have walked around with them, but as they grew more independent, you might have allowed them to shop on their own while informing them of your whereabouts and arranging a meeting time or making use of mobile phones. You were comfortable with this arrangement because you knew your child well, trusted their independence in that environment, and possessed a good understanding of the area. The principles remain largely unchanged when it comes to remote supervision in countryside or mountainous regions.

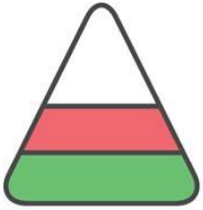
Granting groups this level of independence can lead to a **perceived** increase in risk, but when remote supervision is effectively implemented, the **actual** level of risk should not change.

Why is remote supervision necessary for a DofE Expedition?

To successfully complete a DofE (Duke of Edinburgh) expedition, you must fulfil something called “*The 20 Conditions*” set by the Award. The first of these conditions is that the expedition must be “*unaccompanied and self-sufficient, without external assistance*”. To meet this requirement, groups cannot be directly “led” by their instructor but must instead make their own decisions and be self-reliant throughout the journey. However, as responsible supervisors, we are still accountable for the group's safety. Therefore, remote supervision is employed to monitor and oversee the group's progress during the expedition.

So, how exactly do we go about "remotely supervising" those DofE groups?

1. We ensure that the groups receive appropriate training in all the skills they'll need to be self-sufficient in their chosen environment. We get to know their abilities well, allowing us to predict their reactions during the expedition. This training is a crucial part of our expeditions and tailor-made programs before remote supervision comes into play.
2. We have first-hand and up-to-date knowledge of the specific area where the expedition takes place. We conduct thorough risk assessments and are aware of any potential hazards. When necessary, we share this valuable information with the group.



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3. Through a combination of field experience, extensive prior knowledge working with these groups, and continuous review of our procedures, we are able to make informed judgments and position ourselves effectively throughout the expedition. Our goal is to maintain safety and effectively manage risks. We adapt our level of supervision based on the group and the prevailing conditions.
4. We carefully assess the group's route and continually make dynamic risk assessments once the expedition is underway, taking into account the current conditions.
5. We have the ability to move quickly and efficiently in the wilderness, which we believe is essential for remote supervision. This allows us to reach the group promptly if they require assistance. When possible, we utilize bicycles to aid our mobility in suitable terrain.
6. When appropriate, we leverage modern communication systems such as radios, mobile phones, and GPS. These tools facilitate communication between instructors and within the group. However, we firmly believe that competence is paramount, and technology should only serve as an aid. We emphasize this message to our DofE groups.

**If you have any concerns or would like further clarification on how we'll handle this aspect of the expedition, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact your DofE Leader directly or get in touch with us. We're here to address any questions or worries you may have.*