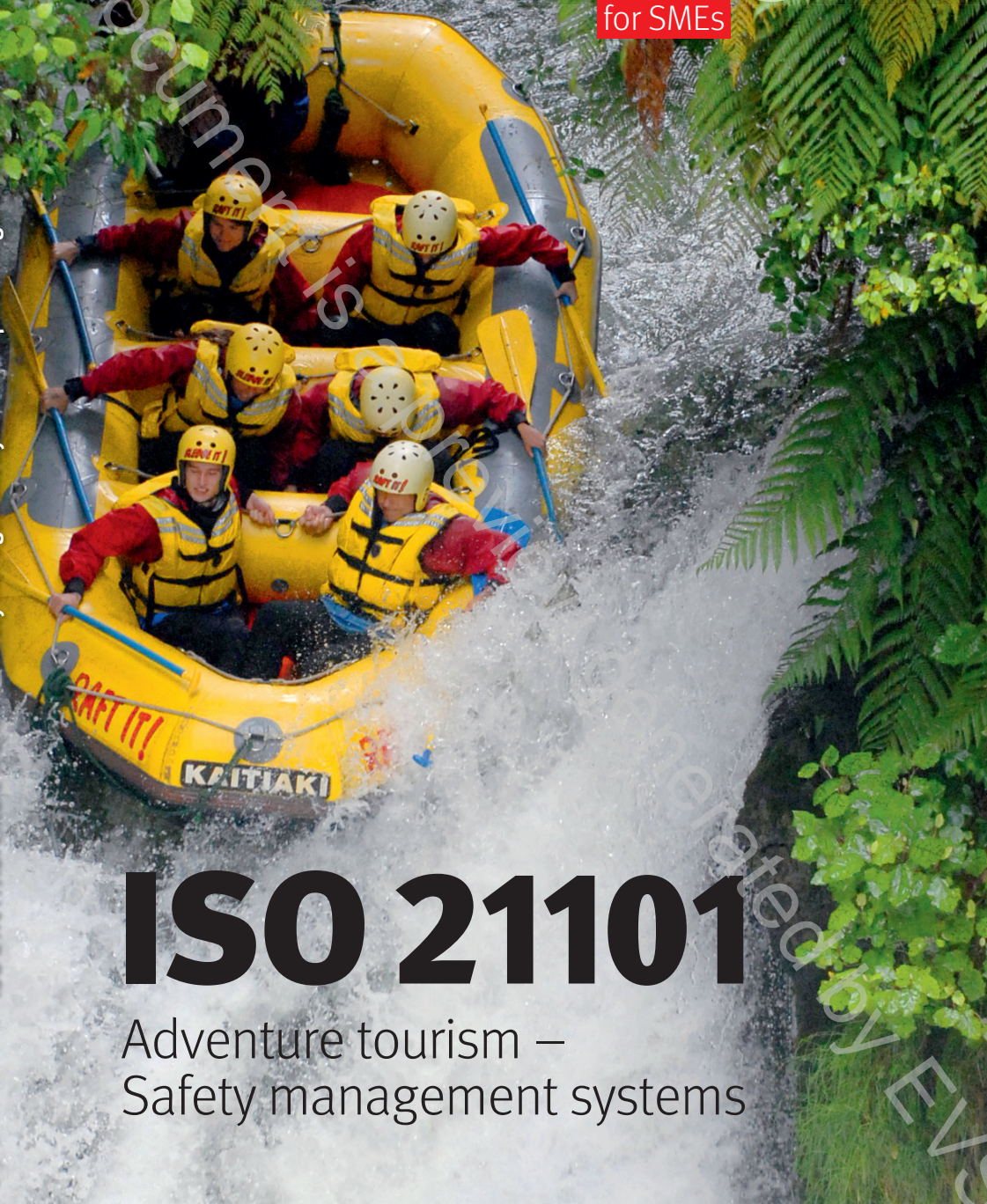




a practical guide

for SMEs



# ISO 21101

Adventure tourism –  
Safety management systems



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ISO copyright office  
CP 401 • CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva  
Tel. +41 22 749 01 11  
Fax. +41 22 749 09 47  
E-mail [copyright@iso.org](mailto:copyright@iso.org)  
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## About the Authors

Mary Beth Cook is a Director at Cook & Associates Limited. Ms Cook has 25 years' experience in audit, risk and assurance. She has written standards and supporting guides for a number of sectors, including sport and recreation. She was a member of the New Zealand delegation to TC 228: Tourism and participated in the development of ISO 21101, ISO 21103 and ISO/TR 21102.

Garth Gulley is a Director at Waitoa NZ Limited, a New Zealand firm offering advice and support to the domestic and international adventure tourism sector. Mr Gulley has over 30 years' experience in managing adventure activities, including auditing, policy development and standards setting. He served as the Head of New Zealand delegation to TC 228: Tourism and played a key role in the development of ISO 21101, ISO 21103 and ISO/TR 21102.

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# Foreword

Adventure tourism is a ‘people business’. All adventure tourism organisations, no matter where they operate in the world, are responsible for people’s safety. Adventure tourism activities involve risks, and providers have to manage those risks. The consequences of not doing so can be catastrophic.

Although all providers manage safety to some extent, some may take a less systematic approach than others. To promote a more systematic approach to managing safety in adventure tourism, ISO has published ISO 21101:2014 *Adventure tourism — Safety management systems — Requirements*. The Standard sets out the requirements for a safety management system (SMS) that can be used by all types and sizes of providers, operating in different geographic, cultural and social environments.

A provider can use ISO 21101 to:

- enhance safety performance
- meet expectations for participant and staff safety
- demonstrate safe practice
- support compliance with applicable legal requirements.

The benefits of having an SMS that conforms to the Standard could include a better safety record, a strong reputation as a safe provider, and improved service delivery overall. This, in turn, could lead to positive feedback from participants, more bookings, revenue growth, better staff engagement, and improved relations with business partners, suppliers, regulators and other interested parties.

# Introduction

This guide is designed to help you apply ISO 21101 to develop, implement and continually improve an SMS for your adventure tourism activities. It is aimed primarily at small businesses.

The guide sets out a logical sequence of activities, and it can be useful to work through it in order. However, there may be times when you will find it helpful to work backwards and forwards as you develop aspects of your SMS and clarify your understanding of the requirements. Doing so may assist you to stay focused on the ‘big picture’ — the entire SMS — if you find yourself getting hung up on the detail.

Each section of the guide starts with a question to stimulate thinking and discussion. Even though some of these questions could be answered as a ‘yes’, you are encouraged to read the section in detail to ensure that you are meeting all of the requirements of the Standard. After explaining the importance of the requirement, further questions and guidance delve deeper into what is needed and how you can achieve it.

While this book provides some guidance on how to meet every requirement in the Standard, the guidance is necessarily generic due to the diversity of the global adventure tourism sector. The guide provides some examples and illustrations, but do not limit your thinking to them. Take your own situation and unique circumstances into account.

In addition, some of the concepts in the Standard, such as planning and risk management, have whole fields of study devoted to them. The guide will help you to meet the requirements of the Standard, but we encourage you to extend your knowledge of the various concepts as part of your continual improvement process.

Two other ISO publications relate to adventure tourism. ISO 21103:2014 *Adventure tourism — Information for participants* specifies the minimum requirements for information to be provided to participants, before, during and after adventure tourism activities. Some elements from this Standard have been incorporated into [6.3](#), *Communicating with participants*.



ISO/TR 21102:2013 *Adventure tourism — Leaders — Personnel competence* sets out desirable competencies and the related expected results of competencies for adventure tourism activity leaders common to any adventure tourism activity.

This guide does not set out the exact text of ISO 21101. You can purchase a copy of the Standard — and the other publications mentioned — from your national standards body or from ISO directly at [sales@iso.org](mailto:sales@iso.org) or through the website [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org).