



Education Authority Document
Bay Islands 2020

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Objectives and structure of the expedition	3
Objectives	3
Structure	3
Start and end of the expeditions	4
Travel arrangements.....	4
3. Booking Process	6
4. Inclusion	6
5. Risk Management	6
Prior to the expedition	6
During the expedition	6
6. Training Before the Expedition	6
Details of the level of fitness required from the pupils	7
Other information	7
7. Roles and Competencies of Designated Leaders	7
Qualifications, licensing and technical competency	7
Role of the teachers	7
Role of Operation Wallacea staff.....	8
8. Medical Procedures	9
Information and records	9
Medical staffing	10
Medical facilities.....	10
9. Operating Procedures	10
Groups leaving camps.....	10
Diving	10
Snorkelling and swimming.....	11
Alcohol	11
10. Emergency Procedures	11
11. Insurance	12

12. Safeguarding and Child Protection.....	12
Supervision and accompanying adults	12
Sleeping and accommodation arrangements	12
Minimum number of students	12
Vetting and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.....	13
Codes of Practice	13
Training.....	13
Complaints procedure.....	13
13. Communications	13
Transfers	13
14. Transport.....	14
Buses.....	14
Boats to Utila	14
Boats to Roatan	14
Dive and research boats at Utila and Roatan	14
15. Accommodation and Camp Security	14
Utila	14
Roatan.....	15
Gran Hotel Sula.....	15
16. Integrity and Cultural Aspects of the Expedition	15

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to delineate some of the key procedures in place for Operation Wallacea trips to the Bay Islands. When creating the document, reference has been made to the National Guidance produced by the OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisory Panel – see <http://oeapng.info>) in the United Kingdom in addition to guidelines from the Expedition Provider's Association and BS8848 (the British Standard for organising and managing visits, fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous activities outside the UK). Additional guidance has been sought from bodies including but not limited to the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) DfE (Department for Education), AALA, and numerous Acts of Parliament.

This document may be useful for a number of parties interested in the expeditions, in particular but not limited to: The Educational Visits Coordinator (or equivalent) appointed by the school or college; the senior teacher(s) accompanying the trip (the group leader); parents or guardians of the students on the trip; students or other participants on the trip.

Operation Wallacea are members of the Expedition Providers Association (EPA) and hold a Learning Outside the Classroom quality badge (LOtC).

2. Objectives and structure of the expedition

Objectives

The Operation Wallacea expeditions in the Bay Islands have two key objectives:

- 1) to train the expedition participants in neotropical marine ecology and scuba diving (health allowing).
- 2) to continue gathering data at the various marine locations to answer specific questions related to the populations and communities and assess their responses to different climatic factors crucial for ongoing conservation.

Structure

The structure of the expeditions is a little different to that of many other expeditions or educational trips that are run by schools. Operation Wallacea are running a biodiversity and socio-economic research programme on the Caribbean islands of Utila and Roatan, the location of which can be seen in Figure 1. These surveys are led by university academics from a range of British and North American universities with additional help provided by university students who pay for the experience. The school groups are joining this established survey programme and providing an important part of the survey team.

Students will begin their expedition on either Utila or Roatan, arriving on the Island by mid-afternoon when they will attend an introductory lecture on health and safety, site orientation and the schedule for the week. The rest of the week will then be spent completing PADI Open Water dive training and/or a Caribbean Coral Reef Ecology course. The ecology course consists of two lectures each day that are supported by a land-based practical component, and two in-water practicals (either diving or snorkelling). Those students completing PADI Open Water during this first week will also complete a truncated version of the Caribbean Reef Ecology course. The aim is to provide students with an introduction to the marine environment, and to provide them with some knowledge of the methods used to survey coral reefs.

For the second week, school groups will travel to a second Island (Utila or Roatan, depending on their initial location) and assist scientists with data collection across a variety of research projects via diving or



Figure 1 - Location of marine research sites

snorkeling. Throughout both weeks, students will meet regularly with Operation Wallacea scientists who will give talks about the specifics of their research projects. Alongside the educational courses and surveys, students will be expected to complete an independent research project over the course of their two-week expedition and will present their findings to the group at the end of their second week.

Start and end of the expeditions

Groups need to arrange international flights to arrive in Honduras on the Tuesday before their expedition begins. Groups will then arrive at their first location by mid-afternoon on Wednesday. Return flights can be arranged any time after 16:00hrs on the Tuesday after the final day of expedition. Operation Wallacea will be responsible for the safety and welfare of the groups from the point at which they are met outside the airport on the day they arrive, until they are dropped off at the international departure gate at the airport on the day that they leave the country. The only exception to this would be if the group decide to organise their own excursions prior to or after participating in the Operation Wallacea expedition. If this were the case, Operation Wallacea would liaise with the school to agree suitable start and finish times and locations, and would be responsible for the safety and welfare of the group between those designated points.

Travel arrangements

Operation Wallacea will book international flights for the group from their country of origin through to Honduras, unless it is specified by the group leader that the group wish to organize their own flights. Operation Wallacea will then arrange transport to and from the expedition sites at the start and finish of the expedition. Most groups will fly in on a Tuesday and depart on a Wednesday.

For groups flying in to San Pedro Sula, the schedule will be as follows:

Week One

Tuesday (Day 0): land in San Pedro Sula Airport, travel by bus to Hotel in San Pedro Sula city centre (20 mins approx).

Wednesday (Day 1): travel by bus to La Ceiba (3.5hrs approx.), travel by boat to Utila or Roatan (1-1.5hr approx.).

Week Two

Wednesday (Day 8): travel by boat to Utila or Roatan (1hr approx.)

Tuesday (Day 14): travel by ferry to La Ceiba (1-1.5hr approx.). Travel by bus from La Ceiba to hotel in San Pedro Sula (3.5hrs approx.).

Wednesday (Day 15): travel by bus from hotel in San Pedro Sula to airport in time for flight.

For groups flying in to Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport, Roatan and visiting Utila followed by Roatan the schedule will be as follows:

Week One

Tuesday (Day 0): land in Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport, Roatan. Travel by bus to Hotel in West End (30 mins approx.).

Wednesday (Day 1): travel by boat to Utila (1hr approx.)

Week Two

Wednesday (Day 8): travel by boat to Roatan (1hr approx.)

Tuesday (Day 14): travel by bus to Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport in time for flight (20mins approx.)

For groups flying in to Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport, Roatan and visiting Roatan followed by Utila the schedule will be as follows:

Week One

Tuesday (Day 0): land in Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport, Roatan. Travel by bus to West End (30 mins approx.).

Week Two

Wednesday (Day 8): travel by boat to Utila (1hr approx.).

Monday (Day 13): travel by boat to Roatan Travel by bus to Hotel in West End (30 mins approx.).

Tuesday (Day 14): Travel by bus to Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport in time for flight (20mins approx.).

3. Booking Process

School and college students have the option to either book as a group, where there is a contract between the school and Operation Wallacea, or as individuals, where the contract is between Operation Wallacea and the participant (and their parent or guardian, if the participant is under the age of 18 at the time of booking the expedition). Once a school group has demonstrated interest in the expeditions, they are given a full presentation about the site where students, parents and teachers can ask any questions they feel are necessary. Following from this the school, or collection of individuals, are given an agreed amount of time to secure their places on the trip with a deposit. Operation Wallacea's terms and conditions are made available prior to booking, and acceptance of those terms and conditions is necessary before the booking can be confirmed.

4. Inclusion

In line with the Equality Act (2010) Operation Wallacea's policy is to make all reasonable adjustments to enable students of all physical and mental ability levels to participate in the programme. Likewise, participants will not be discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristic (e.g. gender, race or religion). Any specific needs (such as requirements due to religious customs, or those arising from a physical disability) are discussed with the school shortly after the booking has been made. If it is not possible to make suitable adjustments without substantially jeopardising the quality or safety of the programme for the remainder of the participants, then those students unable to participate would be offered a full refund of any monies paid.

5. Risk Management

Prior to the expedition

A thorough assessment of all research sites and activities is completed before the start of each expedition and reviewed throughout via in-house audits. Risk assessment and management instructions are put in place for general activities (such as traveling by boat), for specific activities (such as diving) and specific sites (such as Utila). The risk assessments are published on the Operation Wallacea website and hard copies are available on request, free of charge.

During the expedition

The risk management policies are dynamic and can be amended by the senior Opwall staff on-site should new or unforeseen risks present themselves. All medical incidents and near misses are recorded throughout the season, in addition to the completion of in-house audits. Any major incident (e.g. requiring emergency evacuation or significant deviation from the planned expedition activities) results in an incident report being written by the senior Opwall staff member on-site and statements being taken from parties involved as appropriate. Additionally, the Operation Wallacea Senior Management Team is informed of any major incidents immediately, in case the in-country team should require any further support.

6. Training Before the Expedition

Operation Wallacea staff work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils are ready and prepared for the expedition abroad. Various joint meetings take place with the Operation Wallacea schools team and the

teachers regarding facilities on site and skills required. A training package is sent to each of the schools including the following:

Details of the level of fitness required from the pupils

The level of fitness required by students is outlined in detail in the training presentation. For those students that have limited outdoors experience professional UK based outdoor adventure companies can be recommended to provide this additional training. Fitness is measured according the British standard bleep test. All pupils are required to reach at least level 4 - bleep tests can be sent to the school to be carried out by teaching staff if this is deemed necessary or helpful.

Other information

Operation Wallacea also make available a student handbook (downloaded from the Opwall website) containing full details of the facilities at each site, the learning outcomes for the expedition, and the planned itinerary.

Additionally, participants are given a kit list (which is also available on the Opwall website) and some identification guides for the local fauna and flora. The Operation Wallacea staff are always available to talk to any student, parent, or teacher, who has any questions about any aspects of the expeditions, and the preparation required.

Whilst Operation Wallacea aims to ensure that the pupils are well prepared for the expedition, the teachers are responsible for the dynamics and teamwork abilities of the group.

7. Roles and Competencies of Designated Leaders

Qualifications, licensing and technical competency

Operation Wallacea is not eligible for a license through AALA (Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority) as we do not conduct licensable activities and because we operate outside of the UK. Many of the activities organised by Operation Wallacea are research focussed and so no formal qualifications exist. Wherever possible though, the procedures for ensuring technical competency of key staff are in line with AALA recommendations. Where new staff are recruited (i.e. those who have not worked for us before) the selection process includes a review of the CV or resume, a telephone interview, and obtaining at least two positive relevant references from previous employers. The qualifications or experience levels necessary for the various activities are described below, in addition to the roles and responsibilities of the key staff.

Role of the teachers

The teachers accompanying students are responsible for their care during travel from the school until the expedition start time at the Gran Hotel Sula or Half Moon Bay Resort/Posadas Las Orquideas on Wednesday at 07:00hrs. For those groups arriving into San Pedro Sula suitable hotel accommodation and airport pickup can be arranged through a respected and trusted Honduran travel company (Maya Temple Tours) and this booking process can be facilitated by Operation Wallacea on behalf of the school group. For those arriving into Roatan, internal travel arrangements can be made directly through Operation Wallacea. If the group arrives the night before the start of the expedition then they are advised to stay in the hotel allocated by Maya Temple Tours or Operation Wallacea as (hotels are selected that can provide a full range of services

including internet, telephone and restaurant facilities). Once the expedition starts, the teachers will be travelling with the group and responsible for pastoral care issues and checking that the safety procedures run by Operation Wallacea are working in full. At the end of the expeditions the teachers and the group are delivered to their departure airport in time for their international flight; this may involve another night in a suitable hotel in San Pedro Sula or Roatan.

During the expedition the responsibility for the safe provision of activities, and organising the full itinerary, rests with Operation Wallacea rather than the teachers accompanying a group, as the teachers are not expected to have specific technical expertise in activities such as SCUBA diving. However, the teachers should, prior to the trip, have familiarised themselves with the activities to be carried out. They also should have ensured that the Educational Visits Coordinator (or equivalent in their area) is aware of the trip and has been sent the relevant Operation Wallacea documents (e.g. risk assessments and this document) and that the trip has the approval of the senior management team at the school.

Role of Operation Wallacea staff

Venture Leader

The Venture Leader is responsible for the overall running of the project. The 2020 venture leader is Dr Dan Exton - he has supervised students on Operation Wallacea field trips to Honduras and Indonesia for over 10 years.

Dan will ensure that in each of the locations the correct level of leadership is provided for each of the survey groups and that the various risk amelioration measures are being adhered to, in addition to ensuring that the overall objectives of the project are being met.

He will also ensure that the agreed protocols for the different activities are being adhered to (for example, we have comprehensive Opwall Dive Standard) and that volunteers and staff alike are properly briefed with regard to suitable conduct within their role whilst on the expedition.

Leadership for San Pedro Sula to Bay Island transfers

From San Pedro Sula, groups travelling to Utila do so on private buses accompanied by Opwall staff members to the harbor in La Ceiba. They will then take a ferry to Utila town (1hr approx.) or Roatan (1.5hr approx.), where they are collected by additional Operation Wallacea staff.

Leadership for transfers between Utila and Roatan

From Roatan, groups are transported to the ferry port via bus, before taking a ferry to Utila. From Utila, groups are transported to the ferry port via boat (approx. 15 mins) before taking a ferry to Roatan (approx. 1hr). Groups will be accompanied by an Opwall staff member to the ferry port, and met by additional staff members on arrival.

Leadership at Coral View, Utila

The Coral View Camp Manager is responsible for training all the participants in the safety and operating procedures for the site. Richard Astley is the Coral View Camp Manager. Richard is a PADI Course Director with over 10 years of senior dive management experience, and has managed large groups of volunteers with Operation Wallacea for 9 years.

Leadership at Roatan

The Roatan Camp Manager is responsible for training all the participants in the safety and operating procedures for the site. Antal Borcsok is the Roatan Camp Manager. Antal has many years' experience overseeing tourism projects in Honduras and has been running Opwall operations in Tela since 2014.

Leadership for diving activities

All dive training is led by PADI qualified Dive Instructors or Master Instructors. Dive training is done at a ratio of 1 Dive Instructor per 8 students plus 1 Divemaster. For qualified divers the ratio is 6 divers per 1 Divemaster. Both the Utila and Roatan sites are registered PADI dive centers.

Leadership from marine sites to airport

For groups flying out of San Pedro Sula, Opwall staff members travel back to the mainland from Roatan or Utila with their outgoing groups and accompany them on the bus back to the airport in San Pedro Sula.

For groups flying out of Roatan, Opwall staff members accompany outgoing groups to the Juan Manuel Gálvez International Airport.

8. Medical Procedures

This section summarises the medical and evacuation procedures report which has a much more detailed description of the staffing, First Aid facilities and procedures to be followed.

Information and records

All participants will be required to enter their medical details onto the Operation Wallacea data portal. Details of how to log on are sent out upon receiving the booking from the participant. The data is stored securely and is initially only available to certain Operation Wallacea staff members, and, for groups of school students, the teacher leading the group. All medical forms are assessed by Operation Wallacea. The venture leader may seek to contact the participant to gather further information, which they would then enter on to the portal.

Operation Wallacea has purchased a comprehensive travel insurance policy on behalf of all of its participants which includes personal property, cancellation, curtailment and rearrangement cover as well as unlimited overseas medical and repatriation expenses. Operation Wallacea prepare detailed evacuation plans which are passed to insurers so that any Medivac planes and hospitals likely to be used during an evacuation can be contracted in advance and if there is a need for an evacuation then there are no delays. In addition to this, Operation Wallacea have comprehensive combined liability insurance with up to £10,000,000 for public/product liability.

All medical problems, illnesses, injuries and near misses are recorded at each of the sites. At the end of the season, these data are collated and a health and safety report is completed and published on the website. This report classifies incidents into 7 categories and allows comparison between the expeditions and other activities. The policy of publication of the accidents and illnesses recorded on the expedition is a unique aspect of the Operation Wallacea expeditions and helps ensure the procedures on site are followed fully.

Medical staffing

Operation Wallacea employ sufficient qualified medical staff including doctors, nurses and paramedics to provide the medical support at each of the field sites. In 2020, there will be a full-time medic on-site in Utila throughout the expedition season. Opwall medics are required to have at least 18 months postgraduate training with some experience in accident and emergency. There are numerous medical clinics on Roatan within a 30-minute drive of Eco Divers and all dive professionals have completed an Emergency First Responder course.

Medical facilities

A full medical kit is provided by Operation Wallacea which includes the equipment and medications needed to be able to deal with the minor conditions that may be encountered in the field. This reduces the need to rely on general medical care and enable us to continue working in the field. Note the First Aid supplies are provided for all the participants on the expedition and include items that might not be considered appropriate for school pupils (e.g. sexual health).

Research into medical facilities in country is completed prior to the start of the season by the in-country representative and are checked at the start by the Operation Wallacea medical coordinator or senior medical officer. Operation Wallacea has very close links with the hospitals in San Pedro Sula, La Ceiba and Tela, the recompression chambers on Utila, Roatan and La Ceiba, the emergency services (including the Honduran Red Cross) and the military in San Pedro and Tegucigalpa (who provide emergency helicopter support in the event of an emergency evacuation).

9. Operating Procedures

There are detailed operating procedures for all aspects of expedition management. The main measures used to minimise risk are included in the risk assessments which are published on the web site but are summarised below if they are not included in other sections of this report:

Groups leaving camps

At all camps there is a whiteboard system operating, where all groups leaving camp have to sign out, with details of the group leader, the group members, the intended location, departure time and estimated time of return. No school group members (pupils or teachers) are allowed to leave any of the camps unless this procedure is followed.

Diving

All diving follows protocols that are more conservative than PADI procedures. All training dives are completed with a ratio of 1 Dive Instructor plus 1 Divemaster to a group of no more than 8 students. All qualified divers are accompanied by a Divemaster at a ratio of 1:6. Maximum diving depth is 18m, maximum dive time is 50 minutes and all divers have to perform a 3-minute safety stop at 5m on the way up. Recommended minimum surface interval time is 3 hours, where this is not logistically possible students will be back to pressure group A ahead of all dives. No night diving is allowed for school group members. If one or more of the group wish to undertake the Advanced Open Water dive training course they will need to do one dive to no deeper than 30m as part of the course. This dive would need to be completed as the first dive of the day and only one additional dive would be permitted that day. These restrictions mean that all divers are well within the limits allowed for no-decompression recreational diving by PADI.

Snorkelling and swimming

No snorkelling is allowed unless supervised by a staff member with a minimum of Rescue Diver or equivalent qualification, and carrying an inflated Safety Marker Buoy (SMB). The Rescue Diver will ensure the group stop every 2 minutes and look around them for boats. Swimming is only allowed immediately in front of the hotels in Utila and Roatan, where there must be a Rescue Diver in attendance.

Alcohol

Alcohol is available in Utila and Roatan. Whilst the school group is under the care of Operation Wallacea no school group member under 18 (the legal age for drinking alcohol in Honduras) is permitted to consume alcohol.

10. Emergency Procedures

A document describing the medical and evacuation procedures in full, for Honduras, is available on the health and safety pages of the Operation Wallacea website.

Carefully planned evacuation protocols are in place in all of the sites in Honduras and are designed with the worst-case scenario in mind and have worked well in previous years. All staff will have training on evacuation procedures, and protocols are rehearsed prior to the expeditions starting.

Because of the high variability of influential factors such as weather conditions and nature of potential injuries, a number of different evacuation scenarios must be prepared for prior to the season. All staff are fully briefed in these scenarios.

Operation Wallacea has 3 levels of evacuation as follows: **Emergency** (requiring the fastest possible transfer, usually by air, from the various forest sites to the CEMESA hospital in San Pedro Sula for the forest sites or to the D'Antoni hospital in La Ceiba for the marine sites), **High Priority** (requiring the patient to be moved at the fastest speed possible by land and/or sea to hospital facilities in San Pedro Sula or La Ceiba or the recompression facilities on Utila) or **Medium Priority** (requiring the patient to be moved as quickly as possible without the need to hire special vehicles or boats to the nearest appropriate medical facilities).

In all Emergency or High Priority case where a patient is being transferred to medical facilities they are accompanied by the relevant Medical Officer or someone appointed by the medical officer as fit to accompany the patients. The absence of the Medical Officer from the site whilst the patient is accompanied to the hospital will require the suspension of all activities at the site until the Medical Officer is back on site. In the case of a Medium Priority evacuation (e.g. transfer to a hospital for a confirmatory X-ray) another suitable staff member other than the Medical Officer may be nominated to accompany the patient.

Once a major incident or emergency is identified the Venture Leader will advise Operation Wallacea HQ in the United Kingdom. The Venture Leader will take overall control as Incident Coordinator in conjunction with other senior staff if they are in a position to assist. Operation Wallacea's medical and evacuation plans are designed so that, in a serious incident, Operation Wallacea are able to be self-sufficient (and not reliant on a third party such as an insurer or medical assistance company) in terms of getting prompt and effective care to a patient, or moving that patient to care.

11. Insurance

Operation Wallacea has purchased a comprehensive travel insurance policy on behalf of all its participants which includes personal property, cancellation, curtailment and rearrangement cover as well as unlimited overseas medical and repatriation expenses. Operation Wallacea prepare detailed evacuation plans which are passed to insurers so that any Medivac planes and hospitals likely to be used during an evacuation can be contracted in advance and if there is a need for an evacuation then there are no delays. In addition to this, Operation Wallacea have comprehensive combined liability insurance with up to £10,000,000 for public/product liability.

12. Safeguarding and Child Protection

We endeavour to ensure that all school students participating in our activities are safe in accordance with the Protection of Children Act (1989 and 2004). This is done a number of ways as outlined below. It is important to note that it is not possible, practical, and in many cases useful, to obtain government supported vetting checks (such as Disclosure and Barring Service) for all staff that students will come into contact with during their time on the expedition. As such Operation Wallacea adopts the following policies where vetting service checks are included where appropriate amongst other safeguarding methods, but are not the sole precaution taken.

Supervision and accompanying adults

Operation Wallacea offer a free teacher place with every 8 students thus giving an automatic ratio of at least 1 to 8. For each activity provided by Operation Wallacea in the field a ratio of 1 staff member to 8 students applies.

These ratios do not include other supervisory staff such as guides or cooks. Overall there is a level of at least 1 to 4 adult staff to students on site providing a very high level of supervision. Teachers are asked to accompany students on as many activities as possible.

Sleeping and accommodation arrangements

Separate male and female sleeping facilities are available in both Utila and Roatan. Accommodation for staff members and teachers accompanying the groups is also separate. Bathroom facilities are shared, but toilets are always private, as are the shower facilities. The details of the accommodation are sent out to participants prior to the expedition so that the school has plenty of time to consider any pastoral issues that may arise as a result of the sleeping arrangements.

Minimum number of students

No activities are planned which will involve a single pupil being accompanied or supervised by a single staff member or adult, without another pupil or adult being present. There may be occasions where a one-on-one situation is unavoidable (e.g. a student is struggling with one of the skills required to pass their SCUBA course, and the instructor spends some extra time with them working on that skill). These occasions though are rare and all staff members are fully briefed on how to conduct themselves when in these situations.

Vetting and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Staff who work for Operation Wallacea in the UK, and then lead the various expeditions around the World, are subject to an enhanced DBS check. All locations where students are sleeping have a DBS checked staff member in attendance. DBS and other vetting service checks are included where applicable amongst other staff team members. The teachers accompanying these school groups will, at the responsibility of their employer, be vetted through the DBS (or national equivalent system if one is available), and whilst on expedition will stay with the students overnight at each location.

All medical staff are also required to be checked and will have had enhanced checks completed by either their University or place of work. Operation Wallacea use a copy of these as part of the recruitment process of medics.

Codes of Practice

All Operation Wallacea staff in the field are required to sign a code of conduct before they are employed. The Code of Conduct commits each staff member to not entering into relationships with school volunteers as well as conformity to restrictions on alcohol use and a complete ban on drug abuse. Operation Wallacea will dismiss staff that do not follow the code of conduct.

Training

All staff are, in addition to their code of conduct, are given specific training on suitable conduct with young people. They are made aware of their position of trust and are given examples of how to behave in certain situations. Staff who do not speak English are read the code of conduct in their own language, and any staff employed by third party providers or partners are subject to the same code of conduct.

Complaints procedure

Any complaint by a school pupil about inappropriate behaviour from any staff member or other student will be treated as a formal complaint and documented. The accompanying teacher will be informed immediately and together with the senior Operation Wallacea staff member on site will investigate the complaint. If the complaint is upheld then any individuals involved will be dismissed from the expedition and a police file created if a criminal offence has occurred.

13. Communications

Utila and Roatan have land line, cell phone coverage and email and internet connections. Each of the dive boats has a radio or cell phone that communicates back to the dive operations centre.

Transfers

All bus and vehicle transfers have cell phones with the drivers and accompanying Operation Wallacea and Maya Temple Tour staff also have cell phones on them at all times.

14. Transport

All transport arrangements conducted by Operation Wallacea in the field are subject to stringent protocols. Transport used to move pupils from various sites have been assessed by the Operations Manager and his team in Honduras and only reputable companies with an excellent safety record are used.

Buses

All buses used on arrival transfers and movements between the forest and marine sites are contracted by Maya Temple Tours/ Operation Wallacea with English speaking staff and cell phone communications. A pre-departure vehicle check is carried out which includes checking fluid levels on each of the buses before they are allowed to depart with volunteers. A senior member of Operation Wallacea staff is present on all transportations to ensure that drivers conform to safe procedures such as no speeding.

Boats to Utila

The Utila Dream is the main transport for passengers from the Honduran mainland to Utila, and between Utila and Roatan. The ferry carries lifejackets and life rafts sufficient for all passengers.

Boats to Roatan

The Galaxy Wave is the main transport for passengers from the Honduran mainland to Roatan. The ferry carries lifejackets and life rafts sufficient for all passengers.

Dive and research boats at Utila and Roatan

There is a whiteboard system operating at Utila and Roatan, so that all boats leaving the centres have to sign out and complete various safety checks (presence of life jackets, oxygen, First Aid kits, radio test etc). The whiteboard contains details of where each boat has gone and the estimated return time. The Utila and Roatan dive are in contact with all boats via cell phones at all times.

15. Accommodation and Camp Security

The safety and hygiene levels at all sites are the responsibility of the Venture Leader. Upon arriving volunteers will receive a full briefing detailing safety precautions to take with this in mind. There will be Opwall staff members in the site at all times so that if there are any problems the students will know who to talk to. The participants are given a full health and safety briefing upon arrival in each camp and will only be able to leave the camp site if in a group as per the above operations protocols.

Utila

Accommodation is in the Coral View Beach Resort Hotel, Blue Bayou, Utila 34201. All rooms are lockable. We endeavour to ensure that a school teacher is located at each floor that is being occupied by pupils. The hotel owners have a safe in which passports and valuables can be stored.

Roatan

Accommodation is in Half Moon Resort, West End at Half Moon Bay, Roatan 34101 with small cabins containing dormitory style rooms and en suite bathrooms. All rooms are lockable, both staff and students live on site and students are made aware of where all staff can be found in case of an emergency during the night.

Gran Hotel Sula

This a hotel at 3 Primera Calle, San Pedro Sula 21102 and may be used for overnight accommodation by school groups either at the start or end of the expedition. The hotel has security guards on the door at all times.

16. Integrity and Cultural Aspects of the Expedition

In addition to the drive to collect data for purposes of biodiversity monitoring and specific research projects, Operation Wallacea also attempts to ensure that local organisations and individuals are empowered and supported by the projects. In Honduras we are working with the fisheries and forestry department and offer training and knowledge exchanges with personnel from these departments.