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Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - JULY 2024

# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDANCE FOR MANAGING BEACHES- PART 2

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## General

This second article in the Managing Beaches series dives deeper into the essential requirements and recommendations for beach operations outlined in Part 1. Understand the crucial elements needed to create a safe, enjoyable, and well-informed environment for all beachgoers, from effective stakeholder communication and performance measurement to ensuring customer satisfaction, general accessibility and robust infrastructure. Establish the highest standards for exceptional beach management based on guidelines set out under ISO 13009:2015 for Tourism and Related Services.



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### Stakeholder Communication

The beach operator should designate responsible individuals for communication and establish essential communication channels to:

- Disseminate information regarding available services to users and notify them when services are unavailable.
- Promptly inform both relevant authorities and users about potential emergency situations.
- Address and respond to user complaints, suggestions, and inquiries, as well as those from other concerned interest groups.
- Disseminate information to users regarding legislative and regulatory restrictions that may impact their experience.
- Provide comprehensive information about water quality and pertinent environmental details.





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### Promoting the Beach

The beach operator should compile a comprehensive list of services available to beach users. This list should encompass:

- Details regarding the array of services offered to users.
- Guidelines on how users can submit suggestions and lodge complaints.
- Defined service indicators and commitments made by the beach operator.
- The outcomes derived from indicators pertaining to pertinent health and safety risks.
- The outcomes derived from indicators concerning relevant environmental aspects.
- Current period objectives along with the achieved results from the previous period.
- Information regarding prices and operating hours for user convenience.

The beach operator is responsible for implementing suitable mechanisms to guarantee the completeness and accuracy of promotional information provided to beach users. Efforts are made to prevent any errors of interpretation, ensuring that the information delivered to users is reliable, precise, and comprehensive. The beach operator should ensure that information provided to users is available in formats accessible to users with specific needs, excluding countries where English is the native language.

The beach operator should designate a responsible individual for selecting promotional information. This individual

determines the distribution channels used and establishes procedures for periodic updates and the removal of obsolete information from circulation. This approach ensures that users have access to updated and relevant information through appropriate distribution channels. Additionally, efforts should be made to provide accessible formats catering to the needs of users requiring specific accommodations.





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### Customer Satisfaction and Feedback Compilation

- The beach operator should establish a responsive system to address user complaints and suggestions. This system includes protocols for handling and resolving complaints, along with designated personnel responsible for their resolution.
- Moreover, the beach operator should conduct annual customer satisfaction surveys to gather user feedback. The results of these surveys can be compiled and presented in an easily accessible format for future reference. Clear and concise annual incident reporting documents should also be created to document these findings, enabling efficient reference and analysis of user feedback over time.



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### Infrastructure

It is imperative for the beach operator to be cognizant of relevant national building and coastal regulations. Compliance with these regulations is essential to meet the minimum requirements for services and infrastructure at the beach. By adhering to these regulations, the beach operator should ensure the provision of necessary services and infrastructure in accordance with national standards, ensuring a safe and compliant beach environment for users.



### Sanitary Services

The following sanitary services, namely toilets, showers, and foot washes, must be readily available at the beach. The beach operator should designate an individual responsible for ensuring the upkeep, cleanliness, and proper functioning of these services. Any identified deficiencies are promptly addressed to ensure optimal functionality.



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Regular supervision of the sanitary services should be recorded and maintained. Upon receipt of customer feedback from satisfaction surveys or complaints, the beach operator should communicate relevant improvement suggestions to the service supplier.

Wastewater from toilet facilities must undergo separate treatment and should not be discharged into the bathing area or associated water streams. These sanitary services remain accessible to users during specified beach operating hours, which are communicated by the beach operator and can vary seasonally.

Accessible beaches are equipped with sanitary services tailored to accommodate individuals with specific needs. The design of these services aligns harmoniously with the natural or urban environment where they are situated.

All installations and equipment within the sanitary services are to be included in the beach's cleaning and maintenance plan. Personnel responsible for providing these services are easily identifiable through uniforms and possess adequate customer care skills.

In collaboration with the individual overseeing the sanitary services, the beach operator should establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor service levels and user satisfaction. This comprehensive approach ensures the provision of quality sanitary services while prioritizing user comfort and satisfaction at the beach.





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### Toilets

In alignment with the beach's carrying capacity the beach operator should determine an adequate number of toilets to accommodate user demand effectively.

The designated toilets at the beach must be equipped with the following amenities:

- Toilet facilities.
- Durable non-slip flooring.
- Waste bins with lids.
- Provision of toilet paper.
- Coat hangers or hooks.
- Adequate natural or artificial ventilation.
- Wash basins with hygienic wash facilities, or if unavailable, with disinfectant liquid.

### Showers and Foot Washes

The beach operator should ensure that there is an adequate number of showers and foot washes available at the beach to cater to the demand, in accordance with the beach's carrying capacity.



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These showers and foot washes must be equipped with appropriate devices where feasible and aimed at water conservation and proper wastewater disposal.

To educate users on responsible usage, clear displays should be installed at these facilities highlighting the following prohibitions and recommendations:

- Prohibition of using soap.
- Discouragement of wasteful water usage.
- Caution against consuming non-potable water.



### **Lockers and Changing Facilities**

The lockers and changing facilities provided at the beach must consist of the following features:

- Non-slip flooring to ensure safety and prevent accidents.
- Coat hooks for hanging clothes or personal belongings.
- Adequate natural or artificial ventilation for comfort.
- Stools or benches to offer seating or convenience during changing.





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### Temporary Infrastructure

#### Beach Shade

The beach is required to offer some form of shade to shield beach users from the sun. Whenever feasible, a natural approach is favoured by both tourists and locals. This natural shading strategy aligns with preferences and also benefits beachgoers by providing a more environmentally harmonious and enjoyable experience.

#### Beach Infrastructure

Beach infrastructure, including sunbeds, toilets, showers, and surveillance towers, should harmoniously blend into the natural and constructed environment, meeting relevant environmental and aesthetic standards.

Regular maintenance and checks are essential to ensure the safety and usability of beach infrastructure. The beach operator is responsible for conducting routine checks, including but not limited to:

- Ensuring cleanliness of equipment.
- Verifying the operational condition of equipment.
- Assessing the environmental impact of materials, such as paint, used for maintaining equipment and infrastructure.
- Identifying and mitigating potential risks associated with equipment deterioration or malfunction.





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### **Access to the Beach**

The beach operator is responsible for strategising vehicle access to the beach and establishing a maintenance approach to ensure all access points are kept in suitable condition for use. Results of these assessments should be documented and analysed to implement necessary improvements.

Key points include:

- Prioritising accessibility for all beaches to the maximum extent possible.
- Clear communication by the beach operator if a beach is categorised as public.
- Ensuring free access to public beaches; however, in some instances, a reasonable fee may be charged for public access.
- Guaranteeing safe, clean, and well-maintained access paths to the beach always.
- Designating most of the beach as entirely vehicle-free. Except for vehicles essential for cleaning and safety purposes, such as emergency vehicles, other vehicles are restricted. The beach operator should devise plans for vehicle access specifically to designated parking areas at the beach.

### **General Requirements Concerning Accessibility**

Access to the beach should be enhanced through the installation of access ramps tailored to accommodate users with specific needs. Where feasible, efforts should be made to ensure that access to the water is also facilitated, providing inclusive access for all beachgoers, particularly those with specific requirements.

### **Car Park**

At beaches featuring car parks, it is imperative to uphold the maintenance of these areas, ensuring their optimal functioning and upkeep. Any identified issues must be promptly communicated to the relevant authorities responsible for car park management. The guidelines dictate the incorporation of designated spaces for individuals with disabilities within beach car parks.



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### Prohibitive Vehicle Access

Unauthorised camping, driving, and dumping activities are strictly prohibited on the beach. Visible information displaying these restrictions should be available at the beach-front. Except for vehicles essential for cleaning and safety purposes (e.g., lifeguard equipment or emergency vehicles), vehicular access onto the beach is restricted. In cases where vehicle access cannot be entirely prevented, proper justification and management protocols should be in place.

Designation of driving and parking areas, along with car-free zones, is essential. Police or traffic guards may monitor the beach when necessary. Vehicles must not enter the high-water zone at any time, and most of the beach area should be designated entirely vehicle-free.

In scenarios where physical barriers to vehicular access are absent, by-laws must be established to prohibit unauthorised vehicles, camping, or dumping. These by-laws and regulations need to be prominently displayed. The beach and its adjacent areas should not be used as dumping grounds for litter or waste.

Special events involving vehicle use on the beach require a dedicated management plan to prevent ecosystem damage and risks to beach users. Adequate parking for emergency vehicles must be arranged nearby. Additional resources, such as cleaning staff and portable toilets, should be made available if needed to uphold the quality standards of the beach.





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### Responsibilities

The beach operator is required to appoint an individual, alongside their other duties, responsible for ensuring that access points and areas meet the quality standards outlined in this International Standard.

Regular supervision tasks should be conducted by the beach operator to ensure that these access points and areas are well-maintained and suitable for use. Additionally, the status of these installations should be accurately recorded, ensuring compliance and upkeep in line with the defined quality standards.

### Service Provision

The beach operator should implement this requirement as part of their operational framework. This involves assigning a specific individual, in addition to their existing duties, to ensure comprehensive information dissemination to beach users. This includes:

- Disseminating the beach operator information.
- Enforcing conduct codes.
- Upholding safety measures.
- Addressing sanitary, medical, and environmental concerns.



### Tourist Information

The beach operator should implement the following in their operational setup:

- An information point at the beach offering tourists details about local attractions and relevant information for beachgoers.
- Advance notice to users of scheduled beach area events through various means such as beach displays, local media announcements, or postings on appropriate local authority/beach operator websites. Notices at the beach provide event specifics, duration, information sources, and avenues for complaints.



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### Tariffs and Levies

The beach operator should incorporate the following measure into their operations:

- The consideration of charging event organisers for utilising beach areas, with the revenue directed towards enhancing the beach or local surroundings.

### Information About Safety

The beach operator should integrate the following requirements into their operational framework:

- Ensuring the presence of information signboards at primary beach access points, detailing rescue services available and health recommendations for users.
- Mandating these signboards to contain essential information, including a beach map, monitored bathing area boundaries, flag explanations, safety service locations, emergency contact details, scheduled rescue service periods, and first aid station locations.
- Proactively informing beach users about any beach closures or restricted areas.

### Sanitary/Environmental Information

The beach operator should ensure that essential information is accessible at primary beach access points, encompassing:

- Analysis outcomes of water quality in bathing areas.
- Guidelines to mitigate potential health risks at the beach.
- Identification of environmentally sensitive zones within or around the beach





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### Information About Codes of Conduct

The beach operator should ensure information about the beach user's code of conduct is available at main beach entrances, employing graphical symbols comprehensible to users of all nationalities.

Moreover, the beach operator is tasked with formulating a user code of conduct that includes guidelines on:

- Pet regulations
- Nudism policies
- Proper waste disposal and prohibition of placing containers in unauthorized areas
- Camping rules
- Regulations for boat mooring
- Prohibition of unauthorised vehicles
- Guidelines for detergent use in external shower facilities
- Regulations for activities that may disrupt other users (e.g., noise, unauthorized sports)
- Identification of environmentally sensitive zones
- Activity zoning directives.

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