

POLAR QUALIFICATION

Operations in Polar Bear Environments (Tourism or Field Operations)

2020 Edition



**POLAR
TOURISM**
Guides Association
guiding guiding

DEFINITIONS:

- Scope:** Outlines who the Test is for.
- Element:** Outlines the overall **skill set** to be Tested.
- Range:** The **specific skills** to be examined. An examination **may or may not** include all of the range items. It is at the discretion of the Assessor if the Assessee shows confidence and ease in other range items as to whether they examine them or not.

SCOPE:

Operations in Polar Bear Environments (OPBE) is for all guides, field staff or personnel who guide or work with OPBE's individually or with groups of peers or clients. It is an awareness, behaviour and performance competency that any people operating in polar bear environments could use.

Special Notes: i Firearm training may include: UNIS Safety Course, approved company firearms training programs.

ii Guides and field staff include: personnel from large polar tourism vessels or commercial and private yacht operations.

iii This award is useful and valid for other polar sector industries and activities such as scientists, sailors and hikers.

PREREQUISITES:

- Current First Aid Certificate.
- Firearms license or an approved company/organization firearm training program that **MUST** include a statement of competency and performance with the relevant firearm, OR approved course in polar bear non-lethal deterrent options.
- PQ Communications for Polar Operations.

CROSS CREDIT:

Existing licenses or qualification/s, OR logged experience and endorsement that all criteria and elements are met. See RCC and Cross Credit Matrices.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:

Element 1 – Demonstrate knowledge of polar bears and their environment.

1.1 High Value Habitat (HVH) knowledge.

Range: Polar bear abundance knowledge, seasonal variation and risk factors, common HVH factors, HVH terrain traps.

1.2 Polar bear body language, behaviour and condition.

Range: Common body language, common approach and charging strategies, physical condition matrix, mothers with cubs, common polar bear behaviour heuristics.

1.3 Polar bear attack statistics knowledge.

Range: Statistics of polar bear attacks and review of causal factors.

Element 2 – Demonstrate knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of commonly used lethal and non-lethal deterrent strategies.

2.1 Non-lethal deterrent strategy knowledge.

Range: Rubber bullets, flares, cap guns, screamers, pepper spray, improvised deterrents (i.e., banging rocks/pots etc., dropping clothes/gear during retreat), which actions/deterrents appropriate at different distances.

2.2 Firearm and shooting knowledge.

Range: Rifles, shotguns, handguns, appropriate shooting techniques/positions, specific targets on body, lines (imaginary) in terrain, implications of different clothing in shooting ability, safe and appropriate handling, appropriate briefing for clients.

Element 3 – Prepare for an excursion in polar bear environment.

3.1 Personal preparation.

Range: Pre-knowledge from any other operators' and/or locals about site/terrain suitability, local HVH factors known, knowledge of local laws and regulations for given location, safety equipment organised and accessible, communications checked and operational, scouting strategies (if possible), non-lethal deterrents prepared.

3.2 Firearm preparation (if applicable).

Range: Obtains correct firearm, performs standard safety checks, packages firearm for given conditions and ease of access, ensures correct ammunition and sufficient quantity.

Element 4 – Undertake an excursion in polar bear environment.

4.1 Individual excursion.

Range: Excursion intentions registered, continuous checking and scouting, movement strategies around/within terrain traps, use of warning indicators (shout, whistle, bell, noise-makers), firearm and/or deterrents checked, appropriately carried for the activity and efficiently accessible.

4.2 Group excursion.

Range: Excursion intentions registered, plan for avoiding conflict, continuous scanning, checking and scouting, movement strategies around/within terrain traps group management strategies communicated to everyone, pre-brief of behaviour in an encounter, use of warning indicator (shout, whistle, bell, other noise-makers), final safety checks of personnel and firearm and deterrents, appropriately carried for the activity and efficiently accessible.

Endorsement 1 – Advanced Operations in Polar Bear Environments – Large Group Management

SCOPE: This endorsement is for mass tourism expedition leaders or ground staff in charge of larger groups (more than two groups/two guides) with attendant staff/guides in polar bear environments. It is primarily a management and strategy qualification.

PREREQUISITES:

- PQ Operations in Polar Bear Environments.
- PQ Communications for Polar Operations.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:

Element 1 – Manage a large group excursion in polar bear environment.

1.1 Prepare a site for visitors.

Range: Pre-knowledge from any other operators' and/or locals about site suitability/risks, plan a site management strategy, plan a site clearance, outline any laws or regulations governing the site, brief staff of any HVH issues or traps, pre-landing scouting, execute site clearance and begin operations.

1.2 Demonstrate strategy for polar bear encounter and withdrawal.

Range: Theoretical exercise outlining an orderly departure from the site/bear and strategies to maintain process.

1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of an emergency response strategy.

Range: Laws and regulations in case of real incident, internal communications with the involved company or group, resolution phase strategies.

Endorsement 2 – Camping Operations

SCOPE: This endorsement is for guides, field staff or personnel who must camp or are in charge of groups camping in PBE's. This qualification is for land based operations and is outside the scope of larger mass/ship tourism operations.

- PREREQUISITES:**
- PQ Operations in Polar Bear Environments.
 - 5 nights logged camping/overnighting in polar bear environment .
 - PQ Communications for Polar Operations.
 - PQ Lead a Hike in Non-technical Terrain.

ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:

Element 1 – Manage a camping excursion in polar bear environment.

Range: Laws and regulations governing the activity for the given area, functional camp layout, camp utility access routes, bear safe containers, appropriate storage of food/hygiene articles.

Element 2 – Demonstrate knowledge of management strategies for overnight stays.

Range: Watch system, electric fences, trip wires, appropriate briefings for watchkeepers.

Element 3 – Demonstrate knowledge of HVH that might coincide with campsites.

Range: Known travel routes, water, noise, obvious sign, pre-existing camps, known carcasses, beaches, narrow valleys & passes.

DATE:	REVIEWERS:
2017	Prepared by Graham Charles
1/12/17	Rupert Krapp/Graham Charles
16/1/18	Rupert Krapp
23/12/18	Theres Horntrich
16/3/20	Qualification Review Meeting