

AP 222

## **SAFETY MUST BE TOP PRIORITY AT ADVENTURE HOLIDAY CENTRES**

Health and safety lawyers are calling for safety not to be left to chance on adventure activity holidays.

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) strongly disagrees that the current licensing scheme in place for adventure activity centres should be replaced with a self-regulatory scheme, as called for by company bosses.

APIL secretary Mark Harvey says, “There have been no fatalities within the relevant adventure activities since the introduction of the licensing regime. So we don’t believe there can be any justification for removing a successful scheme, especially when issues of safety, and lives, are at stake. In our view it is the most appropriate precaution against the potential for tragedy – it’s crucial this should not be left to chance under self regulation.”

Lawyers also want to fill loop holes in the current licensing scheme, by extending it to cover all adventure activities and all ages. At the moment only a limited number of pursuits are regulated for youngsters under the age of 18. High risk activities not currently licensed include hot air ballooning and paragliding.

Mark points out, “It’s difficult to see why certain adventure activities require licensing, whilst others do not. We are calling for one rule for all. People should be secure in the knowledge that they are protected – whether they’re 14 or 50 years old.

**AP222/2**

“Another concern for APIL is the fragmented nature of the adventure activities holiday industry. There isn’t an overall umbrella organisation that would obviously take the lead on self-regulation, so the sector’s ability to effectively police itself would be called into question.”

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