

# Safety and Services Criteria

## 10.23.20 Working Group Notes

- [Notes](#)
- [Next Steps](#)
- Written Comments
  - [Appendix A](#) – Blue Flag International Jury Comment
  - [Appendix B](#) – Mobi-Mat Comments
  - [Appendix C](#) – Maura B's Comments

### Notes

The purpose of criteria working group meetings are to go over the specific criteria in detail with the goal of identifying questions to take back to the international organization; identifying criteria which need to further strengthening; identifying areas for improvement; and identifying areas which may be problematic to implement. To facilitate note taking on these goals we will look at each criterion and assess:

- A. No change
- B. Yes this specific change
- C. Yes need more discussion/question to international org
- D. Add criteria, is this a guideline or imperative criteria?

### **Criterion 27. Appropriate public safety control measures must be implemented.**

#### **C. Yes, this criterion needs to be clarified.**

National operator staff will engage in conversations with the United States Lifeguard Association and Blue Flag international staff to determine the current US standards and intent of this criterion respectively. National operator staff will come back to the working group with recommendations from these conversations.

- Conversation with USLA has been had and we are waiting to get back detailed written comments.

### **Criterion 28. First aid equipment must be available on the beach.**

#### **C. Yes, this criterion needs to be clarified.**

National operator staff will engage in conversations with the United States Lifeguard Association and Blue Flag international staff to determine the US standards and intent of this criterion respectively. National operator staff will come back to the working group with recommendations from these conversations.

- Conversation with USLA has been had and we are waiting to get back detailed written comments.

### **Criterion 29. Emergency plans to cope with pollution risks must be in place.**

This criterion fits better with environmental management plans asked for earlier in the criteria and will be brought up in the appropriate stakeholder meeting. Please feel free to submit written comments.

**Criterion 30. There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents.**

Not reviewed.

**Criterion 31. There must be safety measures in place to protect users of the beach and free access must be granted to the public.**

Not reviewed.

**Criterion 32. A supply of drinking water should be available at the beach.**

Not reviewed.

**Criterion 33. At least one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and facilities provided for the physically disabled.**

Not reviewed.

National operator staff will engage in conversations with the National Center on Accessibility and Mobi-Mat has submitted comments below. National operator staff will come back to the working group with recommendations from these conversations.

#### Next Steps

Notes will be sent out via email and made available on the Blue Flag in the US website. Written comments on the above notes will be accepted through November 20.

We will plan another time to discuss the criteria not reviewed above.

National Operator staff will have proposed criteria changes by December 4. If necessary, another meeting will be held for review and acceptance of the criteria by the working group at a time convenient to most stakeholders.

## Appendix A: International Jury Comments

"It also asked to provide best practices in regards to the accessibility on these chosen sites, especially infrastructures to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)."

## Appendix B: Mobi-Mat Comments

As a general comment, if I may, page 23-24 **people with limited abilities which is more inclusive and with a larger spectrum ( including any disability physical, sensorial, intellectual ) should be preferred to** “disables persons », “ disabled users”, « people with physical disabilities “ , “ physically disabled” etc... Some people with limited abilities can be very specific on this and sensitive.

I believe that the US is more advance on accessibility question than most of the European countries. The European countries may be more advanced in environmental question.

The American Disability Act establishes **requirements** and enforceable standards which apply to Public Beach Access.

I believe that Blue Flag should include some criteria in the evaluation process for more inclusive world. Below my 10 suggestions following the ADA requirements as a start:

- 1-Requirement for facilities: combination of parking + paths + toilets + bathing access for people with limited abilities
- 2- Minimum number of beach access routes: at least one access route for each one-half mile of beach shoreline
- 3- path / access: route from the entry point of the beach to the high tide level and strongly suggesting a beach access path to extend to the water for direct transfer to the water
- 4- surface: firm, non-slippery and stable
- 5- access clear width: minimum of 60” (including path, openings of barriers and gates)
- 6- path free from any obstacles and any openings (gaps, spaces)
- 7- running slopes, cross slope, resting intervals, handrails and edge protection requirements for the ADA ramps
- 8 – beach access free from protruding objects (especially for people with visual impairment)
- 9- signage
- 10- a beach floating chair can make as well a difference when the water allows the use.

Blue Flag can really contribute to design a more inclusive world. It can make a difference and make our American beaches accessible, inclusive and help to ensure people with limited abilities or the seniors to enjoy the water with their families, friends, grandchildren and not just as spectators. DMS and Mobi-Mat will be happy to work with you on this.

**Lifeguards in many locations are seasonal, do the beaches then need to also have rescue equipment every 100 m for the off-season?**

No. Blue Flag defines a season as “any period of time a site is meeting all 33 criteria”. If lifeguards cease to be active then the beach would lower its flag indicating the end of the Blue Flag season at the site.

**Many beach patrols do not wear internationally recognized red/yellow, but do have easily recognizable uniforms after decades of use. Do we need to keep that comment in since it is the International standard or can it just be that lifeguards wear an easily recognizable uniform?**

This language is suggested not mandatory. At this time the language will stay but with the understanding as long as lifeguards use identifiable language – lifeguard, beach patrol, emergency services, etc.

**For the requirement of potable water access, does it have to be a certain distance from all aspects of the beach or is any location within the beach area acceptable? Some beaches have one large parking access and toilets/fountains accessible at this location, but other beaches have multiple accesses with toilets/fountains a significant distance away.**

Great question, I will ask international staff. As this is a guideline criterion, it is not mandatory to receive the certification but should be considered best practice.