



# **Risk and Safety Management in the Leisure, Events, Tourism and Sports Industries**

**Mark Piekarz, Ian Jenkins and Peter Mills**

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# Preface

This is a book about risk analysis, assessment and decision making. It examines and explains how risk-related concepts, theories and tools can be applied to analyse past and current operational conditions, in order to try and assess what could happen in an uncertain future. The purpose of doing this is simple: it should be done to help practitioners ensure risks, as they relate to safety, operations, projects and strategy, are effectively managed, not simply removed. This book is designed for those people, from students to practitioners, who do not want to simply replicate past practices, but to understand why certain concepts and practices are used and how they can be improved.

While many writers and practitioners may view risk as simply a chance of a loss or injury occurring which needs to be removed or reduced, the preference in this book is to use a broader-based definition of risk, whereby it is viewed as something that not only creates threats, but also opportunities. There are a number of reasons for adopting this balanced approach. The first is that for many adventure, sport and touristic activities, risk can be a vital component in creating memorable and satisfying experiences, where to avoid all risk would be to destroy the essence of the activity. Second, in many fields of business, risk is never just understood as negative and something to be avoided. For example, in relation to financial management and entrepreneurship, risk has always been intimately related with making profits and loss. Another example relates to project management theories and practices, where there is encouragement to consider how risks can create both opportunistic and threatening risks, such as how a spell of good weather can mean project schedules can speed up, or bad weather can create delays or cancellations. Indeed, an increasing number of writers on project risk management state that, without risk, there can be little reward for undertaking the project. Finally, there is the ongoing debate about the role of risk in society and the problems of removing all risk from life, such as the discussion about childhood development and the possible impacts of how too much regulation and control of play environments can impede learning, development and reduce the quality of childhood.

So this book adopts the balanced or *symmetric* view of risk, whereby the focus is not a simplistic reaction to remove risk. Instead, the emphasis is on using various concepts, theories and tools relating to *risk* and *risk management* to try and help people make better management decisions that deal with negative, *downside* risks, or seize opportunistic, *upside* risks. It is a process that can be used for different levels of management, for different industries, in different countries, as the core strands of risk management can be distilled and adapted to all these areas. It is a book about decision making in an immediate context, or making more long-term strategic plans.

The difficulty is that there is no clear agreement about what risk is, or what the management of it involves in relation to the adventure, sport or tourist sectors. True, there is in theory a generic international standard of risk that has been developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), which defines risk as 'the effect of uncertainty on objectives' (ISO, 2009: 1). This body also argues that this standard is relevant for any organization, industry, sector and country. Evidence can be found that some organizations have adopted this definition, particularly in Australia, New Zealand and to a lesser extent, the UK. For example, the Australian and New Zealand handbook for managing risk in sport and recreation defines risk in relation to the impact on objectives, noting that risk can be both positive or negative (Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand, 2010: 2); similarly, UK Sport, in its document on 'staging major sporting events', defines risk as 'any factor that may prevent you from fulfilling your objectives' (UK Sport, 2005: 43). Yet these examples are still far short of providing evidence that the international standard has universally filtered down to all adventure, event, sport and tourism operators around the world, because for each example where one can find an organization that adopts a symmetric approach to risk, one can find more that do not.

The result is that there are many *inconsistencies* in the application of concepts, terms and practices between the different sectors, countries and even within single organizations. This in turn means that many good practices may not be properly transferred between organizations and sectors, together with *impeding* the effective communication of risk to staff, customers and other key *stakeholders* in a business or organization.

In relation to the concepts of *safety* and *safety management*, these are *intimately* related to risk management but are not terms that should be used *interchangeably*. *Safety* is a critical element in risk management. Although it can often focus on operational-related issues, it is vital that it is also considered strategically, in terms of the leadership given by senior managers and recognizing that when accidents do occur, they can have profound strategic reverberations that can affect the future viability of the organization itself.

All these issues therefore help establish the key aims of this textbook, which are:

- to explain the *underpinning* concepts, theories and tools of risk, safety and risk management as they relate to the adventure, event, sport and tourism industries;
- for students and practitioners to develop a clear risk culture, or philosophy of risk, that can shape how they view and approach safety, operational, project and strategic risk management;

- for students and practitioners to gain an appreciation of the variations in definitions and approaches, in order to develop more effective risk practices that can be clearly communicated to staff, customers and other key stakeholders; and
- to enable students and practitioners to develop and implement effective risk control measures.

For many reading this book, the definitions used for risk, risk management and its various associated key concepts may run against their previous understanding and approaches, leading to the cry of 'that's not risk' or 'it's not done that way'. Yet this is the key to understanding why this book is necessary. It does not try to provide definitive definitions or approaches; rather it explains why there are variations in risk processes, together with identifying examples of good practice, in order to help with both regulatory compliance and good management decision making.

## STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

In order to explain the underlying principles of risk management as they relate to the adventure, events, sport and tourism sectors, a wide variety of materials are used from a number of scientific disciplines and subject fields. In this textbook, one will find literature drawn from the disciplines of economics, sociology, anthropology and business management, with additional materials used from more specific subject areas of adventure, leisure, sport and tourism. Furthermore, an important aspect to this book is that it takes an international approach in relation to the theories, concepts and case studies scrutinized, focusing on all the key industry sectors.

In Chapter 1, how students and practitioners encounter risk is explored. It explains why practitioners working in the adventure, event, sport or tourism sectors can find it impossible not to engage with risk management concepts and practices. This is because of a mixture of legal regulations, good management practice and that risk is an inherent part of these activities which needs to be managed, not removed. It also briefly defines the different sectors and how risk is relevant to these areas.

In Chapter 2, risk is examined as both a culture and a practical management process. An important part of the discussion is an explanation of how the many different risk definitions can be placed in various cultural paradigms; simply put, this means that the risk definition people use can influence what is viewed as a risk and how they approach risk management. Particular attention is given to the contrasting risk paradigms where risk is viewed as the chance of harm, injury or loss, compared with definitions that define risk as both positive and negative, embedded in a complex system. The discussion about the practical process of risk management compares a variety of examples from different fields, identifying the key features of any risk process. From this chapter, various key concepts are identified and are utilized in many of the subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 3, the key theories that underpin risk and risk management are examined. It explains why certain concepts and practices are often used in risk management, exploring the historical scientific foundations of some of the key theories. It pays particular attention to the theory of probability, why it is used and some of the problems that students and practitioners should be aware of.

In Chapter 4, the practical tools that can be used to analyse risks are examined. A distinction is made between a risk theory and a risk tool, whereby tools are the practical methods that can be used to collect data and information, analyse it, then develop some form of assessment and control mechanism. A variety of tools are explored, ranging from simple mind mapping, to more complex scenario writing exercises. In essence, this is about turning the theory into practical analysis.

In Chapter 5, the focus is on the control measures that can be taken to deal with risk. It offers a reminder that the reason for analysing and assessing risk is to help practitioners make decisions. It also illustrates how practitioners and managers will have a range of options in terms of *what* they decide to do with risks, *how* they employ resources and *how* they implement control measures, which is represented as a jigsaw or mosaic of management options. It is stressed that controlling risk is not simply about removing risks, but managing them effectively, which in relation to safety is clarified by being done *as reasonably as practicable*.

In Chapter 6, the vital necessity of documenting and recording information in paper or electronic documents is explained. This chapter pays particular attention to designing forms and using assessment criteria. As before, the wide variety of practices are examined to help students and practitioners interpret the many possible approaches. Various practical tips are given for how to approach form design and use checklists to help with the implementation and monitoring of control measures. It also briefly explores aspects of crisis management.

In Chapter 7, the many factors and theories that influence risk behaviours are examined. The importance of understanding this is explained through the people who need to do the risk analysis and assessment, together with the key stakeholders and customers who use the services. A number of the themes touched on in Chapter 5 are returned to, highlighting the subjective nature of interpreting risk situations and events, which can influence the assessment of risk, or the participation in the activity.

In Chapter 8, the concept of tort and its importance in risk management are examined. The necessity for students and practitioners to understand tort is stressed and gives an additional insight into why risk is often considered in asymmetric terms. In essence, tort relates to the idea of a wrong having been done and the law. The chapter examines the various types of tort and its importance for managers when approaching risk management.

In Chapter 9, a more intimate examination is conducted in relation to safety risk management. The legal compliance to engage with risk and hazard management is examined in relation to health and safety legislation from around the world. It is illustrated that the engagement with risk management practices is not always explicitly stated in regulations, but it most certainly is always implied.



In Chapter 10, a number of key themes and theories relating to safety management are looked at in more detail. It is linked with Chapter 3 and the key theories of risk management, but brings in a number of additional theories and tools that can be used.

In Chapter 11, a range of case studies from each of the sectors are briefly examined. These are reflected and explored in relation to the main theories, concepts and themes discussed in all of the previous chapters. They are designed not only to help explain and illustrate how theories can be applied, but also to provide some important examples for students and practitioners to learn from.

Chapter 12 is a concluding chapter, which gives a short review of the key themes discussed in this book, together with a short reflection of the book aims.

In all chapters a series of text box inserts are given that highlight key theories, themes or case studies. In addition, a number of quick reflective tasks are given to help focus on some of the key points being discussed in the chapter. In each of the chapters, the final section explores and applies a number of key themes and concepts discussed in that chapter in relation to a variety of sector case studies.

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# The Risk Encounter for the Different Industry Sectors

## CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- To explain why risk management is important for practitioners to understand.
- To explain why managers in different industry sectors, at all levels of management, cannot avoid risk management.
- To define the key industry sectors, illustrating their relationship with each other and the importance of risk. 图解, 阐明.

## Key concepts

Risk and risk management; levels of management; defining adventure, leisure, events, sport and tourism.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores why risk management is difficult to avoid for practitioners and managers in the adventure, event, leisure, sport and tourism sectors. A representative model is developed to illustrate the variety of ways that risk and risk management are both encountered and utilized. Particular distinctions are made between those who help deliver services and those who plan services. Finally, a brief overview is given explaining what the different industry sectors are, how they relate to each other and some of the key reasons why it is vital to understand risk management in those sectors. 使/应/运用

## 1.2 THE RISK ENCOUNTER

For someone working in the adventure, event, leisure, sport or tourism industry, it can be difficult to avoid risk management. By appreciating the factors that make risk unavoidable, it helps clarify the importance of understanding and using risk management theory and practices. These factors can be summarized as:

- *Risk is an inherent part of life.* Living involves constant exposure to risk and making decisions about risk. To cross a road, to take a new job, to play a sport, to go on holiday, to drive a car, all carry risks, with Box 1.1 offering more examples of how mundane objects and activities can generate risks. By recognizing the ubiquity of risk and the need to deal with it, this helps draw out an important feature about risk: that it involves assessing options and taking actions, which can be done in a matter of seconds, months or even years. In short, as Bernstein (1998: 12) observes, to take risks is to be human.
- *Risk is an inherent part of adventure, sport and tourism activities.* If there is no risk in many sport, adventure and travel activities then the essence of the activity and what creates the enjoyment and satisfaction can be lost. Just think where sport would be without physical contact, contests or if there was never any uncertainty about the outcome of games? Alternatively, consider the value of many adventurous activities in terms of the reflection on the learning, or the sense of achievement gained, if there was no surprise, challenge or

### Box 1.1. Risk is everywhere!

Bill Bryson gives this humorous reflection on the risks we are exposed to from mundane objects, which helps remind us that risks are everywhere, but that we accept them because of the benefits they bring. He says:

Here's a fact for you. According to the latest Statistical Abstract of the United States, every year more than 400,000 Americans suffer injuries involving beds, mattresses or pillows. Think about that for a minute. That is more people than live in greater Coventry. That is almost 2,000 bed, mattresses or pillow injuries a day. In the time it takes you to read this article, four Americans will somehow manage to wound themselves by the bedding... consider this interesting fact: almost 50,000 Americans are injured each year by pencils, pens and other desk accessories. How do they do it? I have sat many an hour at a desk and would have greeted almost any kind of injury as a welcome diversion... Consider this one. In 1992... more than 400,000 people in the United States were injured by chairs, sofas and sofa beds. Does it tell us something trenchant about the design of modern furniture or merely that Americans are exceptionally careless sitters? ... But the people I would really like to meet are the 142,000 hapless souls who receive emergency injury room treatment for injuries inflicted by their clothing. What can they be suffering from? Compound pyjama fracture? Sweatpants hematoma? I am powerless to speculate. (Bryson, 1999: 23)

arousal of emotion? Even in relation to travel, risk can play a vital role in the quality of the experience and it is of interest that the origin of the word *travel* derives from the French word *travail*, which means an arduous or painful journey, but one which still brings rewards.

- *Risk management can help organizations remain market oriented.* Marketing as a function is often misunderstood as simply advertising and selling. In fact the essence of marketing is about understanding customer needs and wants, whereby people are increasingly seeking more intense experiences. Risk can play a vital role in creating these memorable, intense experiences (explained in Chapter 7), which practitioners need to understand if they are to be market oriented (i.e. focusing on what customers need and want), rather than product oriented (i.e. focusing on the service or product offered, rather than the benefits it brings).
- *Risk is an essential part of entrepreneurial activity.* In business, risk is often viewed as essential, whereby Bernstein (1998) makes the blunt point that if there is no risk, there is no profit. Recognizing this is important in relation to adventure, sport and tourism activities as it can remind people who design services and products that taking risks may be necessary not only for the quality of the experiences, but also to make a financial profit.
- *Risk is part of management.* Merna and Faisal (2005: 35), citing Handy (1999), look at the necessity of risk in management, saying 'risk management is not a separate activity from management, it is management'. They go on to argue that a symptom of poor management is the constant reaction to events; in contrast, effective management attempts to deal with uncertainty by anticipating future events that can generate risk, then developing plans to deal with them.
- *Risk is part of the language of problem solving.* A simple scan of news stories can quickly reveal many instances where the language of risk is used in all spheres of work and life, ranging from education, health, business and even war. This widespread usage gives an indication of the value of using risk theories and concepts. It should, however, be appreciated that common usage of the term 'risk' does not mean consistency in understanding or application; hence, a more detailed examination of what risk can mean is given in Chapter 2.
- *Risk management is part of legal compliance.* For the developed world at least, it can be difficult to find a country that does not have a number of legal and regulatory guidelines which deal with work or occupational health and safety. While they may not always directly refer to the term 'risk' or 'risk management', implicit in these many regulatory guidelines is a legal requirement to conduct some form of assessment in order to identify hazards and risks that people may be exposed to. There can also be regulatory guidelines that deal with corporate governance and have a more strategic risk focus.

Yet there are problems. Despite the common usage and application of the concepts of *risk*, *risk management* and the *management of risks* (explained in more detail in Chapter 2), what can be so striking are the variations in definition and application. This leads to the problem that managers working at different levels of management, such as the health and safety,

project or safety level, can encounter variations in the words, concepts and practices utilized. The result can be confusion. As will be explained in Chapter 2, these variations are not necessarily because operational safety, project or strategic risk management as used in the different sectors, or even countries, have different theoretical underpinnings; rather that it can reflect an insular development within the subject field or sector and the terminology or descriptors utilized.

It is also important to note that the growth of risk management practices is not the same as saying that there are more risks or dangers. For people in the developed world, improved sanitation, immunizations, health and safety legislation, etc. have made profound impacts on populations, life expectancy and the quality of life. Yet there is little doubt that the practice, language and literature on risk management have grown significantly over recent years; so much so that Furedi (2002) argues this now means a discrete risk industry has developed, which he considers is not necessarily always a good thing.

The challenge is for managers is to try and understand what is the *tolerability of risks* (TOR) (Gardiner, 2005: 175), or the *minimum risk environment* (MRE). The UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) makes the important point that 'tolerable' risk does not necessarily mean 'acceptable' risk. It goes on to say that a willingness by society to live with a risk is done so as to secure certain benefits, but in the confidence that the risk is one worth taking and that it is properly controlled (HSE, 2001: 3). For example:

- people are willing to tolerate the risk of a flight to gain the benefits of relaxing on a holiday;
- people will tolerate the risk of injury when playing sport to gain various health benefits;
- people will tolerate the risks of an event, such as travel delays and frustrations, to experience moments that can be intensified by sharing them with thousands of others;
- an entrepreneur may mortgage his/her house to raise the capital for a new business venture, which could mean a family home could be lost, but is done so because of the financial rewards that may be gained; and
- people may undertake a physically demanding adventure expedition to test themselves and gain a sense of achievement, even though it may be fraught with many physical dangers.

In all of these examples a degree of risk is 'tolerated' because of the personal or financial gains and benefits that may be made; the risks will be 'accepted' because there is a belief that the negative risks will be properly controlled by others, or because people have confidence in their ability to overcome the challenges and deal with the risks. Of course, what is deemed as tolerable can vary considerably between individuals, groups and countries, as will be discussed in Chapter 7 and as illustrated in Box 1.2. This also connects to the discussion in Chapter 5 in relation to what is *reasonably practicable* in terms of controlling the risks.

**Box 1.2. Different risk tolerances?**

An interesting observation can be made about how different countries tolerate and accept risk. In the USA for example, resorting to litigation (legal action) after accidents to try and gain compensation can be a common practice, which has also developed in the UK. Using litigation to seek financial compensation is epitomized by such slogans as 'where there is blame, there is a claim', with legal practices advertising their services that encourage people to put in claims with the promise of 'no win, no cost.' While there is no doubt that many claims are fully justified, particularly where there have been clear breaches in occupational or work health and safety guidelines, some would argue that the growth in a compensation culture is also leading to a risk-averse *society*, which is not necessarily beneficial for the individual, society or the economy. In the UK for example, the 2010 government report entitled *Common Sense, Common Safety* (Lord Young of Graffham, 2010) looked at the issue of health and safety regulation and the concern that it was being over-zealously applied, leading to such problems as 'uninspiring play spaces that do not enable children to properly experience risk, or school trips cancelled because of concerns over health and safety' (Lord Young of Graffham, 2010: 37). A key theme of the report was to try and move towards a risk-benefit analysis approach to the management of risk.

Collins and Collins (2013: 74) explain and outline the advantages of adopting a risk benefit approach in relation to sport and adventure, whereby they argue that teachers, coaches and leaders across sports should generate all assessments built around a 'justification' of stated risks against the benefits shown to flow from them. The key point is that risk should not just be approached from a risk avoidance view, but from one where the benefits of risks are also identified and can therefore be exploited.

In other countries, such as New Zealand, Australia, France or Switzerland, where the culture of litigation is not as strong, the tolerability of risk can appear much higher in comparison with the UK and USA. These differences between countries are partly reflected in how risk may be defined: while in the UK and USA it can be more common to find the definition of risk used that focuses on harm or loss, in Australia and New Zealand they tend to adopt the more neutral, ISO definition of risk as one impacting on objectives, which can be both good and bad (discussed in Chapter 2).

So what is *risk* and *risk management*? The answer is not a simple one, which is why a more considered approach is taken in Chapter 2. For now it will be sufficient to say that in this book the focus is on the control of risks, in order to deal with negative, threatening downside risks or to seize positive, opportunistic upside risks, all of which are explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

### 1.3 WHO NEEDS TO CONSIDER RISK MANAGEMENT?

To convey the variety of ways that people working in the adventure, event, leisure, sport and tourism sectors encounter risk, it can be useful to show how different work roles may utilize or encounter risk management practices, concepts and theories. This 'encounter' is represented in Fig. 1.1, which distinguishes between the roles and the factors that shape risk practices. The critical point to emphasize here is that everyone in an organization will either conduct some form of risk analysis and assessment, or will be affected by risk management practices.

In relation to the *roles*, a simple distinction can be made between *deliverers* of services and *planners* of services (see Fig. 1.1). The type of role can affect what type of risk management process needs to be engaged with and applied.

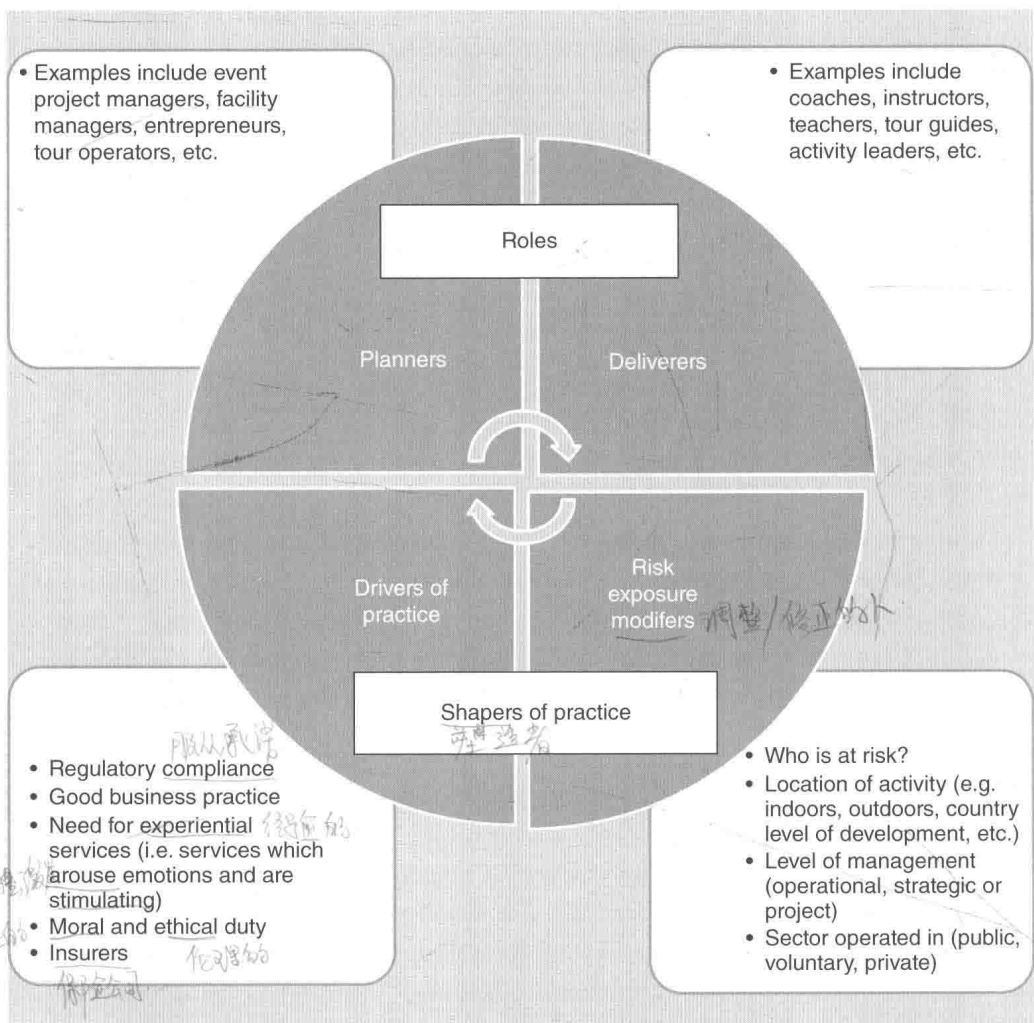


Fig. 1.1. Overview of the risk encounter.



The *deliverers* describes jobs such as coaches, teachers, activity assistants, tour guides, instructors, volunteer helpers and event stewards. Deliverers are characterized by their direct involvement with participants and the responsibilities they have for controlling risks relating to safety and service operations. All these roles need to consider legal regulatory compliance, along with a constant assessment of risks as activities are being conducted (*dynamic risk management* discussed in Chapter 5). These people work primarily at an operational level of management, which refers to day-to-day decision making and management. Hence tour guides, coaches and teachers would all have to do preliminary, formal risk assessments, ensuring that they comply with regulations, such as using staff who are suitably qualified and checked, or ensuring proper maintenance of equipment has been done. This formal process is one which would require information being recorded on paper or as an electronic document. As the activities take place, if the conditions alter, such as the changes in the weather, the leader of the activities would have to make judgements on how the hazards and risks are changing. For these type of assessments, it is not realistic (or desirable) to stop and record information, as decisions must be made to deal with the immediate dynamic conditions as they change.

The *planners* describes roles such as project managers, event organizers, company owners, managing directors, line managers and boards of governors. Planners are characterized by being more remote from operational service activities and day-to-day safety. For planners, they are primarily operating in what can be described as *project* and *strategic* levels of management. Strategic management is defined by the scale and complexity of the resources that need to be coordinated, dealing in timescales of months and years. Project risk management falls between operational and strategic management in terms of the timescales and resources that may need coordinating, but is distinguished by having clearly defined start and end points. While in the early stages of projects, the risks may be more strategic in focus, as the project nears completion, the attention on risks becomes operationally concentrated, such as how periods of good weather allow schedules to be advanced, or bad weather may create schedule delays.

For planners, while at times there is a need to explicitly engage with risk management, very often risk management is an implicit part of planning activities. To put it another way, because the term 'risk' is not stated or used, this does not mean that risk management is not being engaged with. For example, SWOT (which stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and PEST analysis (which stands for Political, Economic, Social and Technological) are two common tools used in both project and strategic management. While these tools do not explicitly refer to 'risk', they are, for all intents and purposes, also methods for identifying and assessing hazards and potential risks.

The need for deliverers and planners to engage with risk management is influenced by the *shapers of practice*, represented in Fig. 1.1. This has two key elements. The first relates to the *drivers of practice*, which considers such things as regulatory compliance, the desire for effective management, offering services which give satisfaction and, just as importantly, out of a sense of morality and behaving ethically. The second area relates to the *risk exposure modifiers*, which considers how different factors can affect the risk analysis and assessment done. This includes