



## Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) Update Number 25 February 2006

### Introduction

Welcome to 2006. January has already proven to be a very busy year for the ORC and for many of our member organisations. Resignations, changes of locations, new committees and other such developments are the reality of our extremely large, extremely beneficial and equally unrecognised industry/community.

2006 looks like it will see more change that will raise the profile and awareness of the benefits of having such a diverse and healthy community. These benefits are in our schools, at our camps in our tourism and in the community organisations that, driven by the volunteer, contribute so much to the lifestyle and health of Victorians (and Australians).

From the point of view of the AAS, we (in Victoria) are being joined by an increasing number of states picking up this model to communicate and enhance consistency among providers of activities. The ongoing management of the Victorian AAS will be taken over by a carefully selected committee that will be representative of our entire industry/community, and we will all continue to work towards the process of continuous development and enhanced awareness.

### This report covers;

- **AAS for Non Resort snow activities**
- **AAS Review Committee**
- **AAS Online Forms**
  
- **Additional information**
  - **Directions Paper – Public Land Tour Operator and Activity Provider Licence Reform Project (objections from non-commercial organisations)**
  - **Emergency Equipment Grants**
  - **A Warm Farewell to Our Chairperson**

*Please pass this report on to all members, staff, committee members or individuals who you believe will have an interest in the continued development of the Victorian AAS.*

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### News at a flash

#### **AAS for Non Resort based Snow Activities (Ski touring, snow shoeing etc....)**

The Snow Activity AAS has now been removed from the AAS website and is awaiting some final input prior to being finalised. This has been an interesting AAS mainly due to the many similarities with the Bushwalking AAS.

There are two key points to note;

1. This AAS (like all others) states that is accepted that leaders have the skill and experience for the activity and level being undertaken. It does NOT state that qualifications are required. While qualifications are certainly a good thing, AAS acknowledge currently accepted practices.
2. There was much feedback regarding the clothing and equipment section of this AAS. This section reflects the information provided in the current SnowSafe guide which continues to be viewed by all participants on the original working group as an excellent reference. The decision to support that guide is also consistent with the recently developed draft of the Department of Education Safety Guidelines for School Activities.

Snowsafes information can be accessed via the website [www.snowsafes.org.au](http://www.snowsafes.org.au).

### **AAS Review Committee**

Thank you to everyone who has submitted an expression of interest in a place on the AAS review committee. The ongoing maintenance of the AAS is clearly an important aspect of the project. Several suggested developments have already been gathered from within the Victorian Outdoor Community and as other states and territories release their own versions it is increasingly important that the currency and relevance of the documents is maintained.

If you have suggestions for this committee please email them to [info@orc.org.au](mailto:info@orc.org.au). These may relate to a single point of a single AAS or they may be suggestions for all AAS from layout and format to skills and possible additions. All

comments will be collated for review.

If you have not yet expressed an interest in this committee but you would like to do so; Please email [gordor@orc.org.au](mailto:gordor@orc.org.au)

## AAS Online Forms

Please note that we have received several online comments and requests for updates that have not included contact details. Clearly we can not respond to these. Be careful to add at least an email address so that we can get back to you.

## Additional Information

### Directions Paper – Public Land Tour Operator and Activity Provider Licence Reform Project (Objections from non-commercial organisations)

On Wednesday 1st February 2006 the Department of Sustainability and Environment released their long awaited directions paper on the **Public Land Tour Operator and Activity Provider Licence Reform Project**. The aim of this project is to improve the current licensing system for tour operators and activity providers and in doing so encourage a number of associated benefits such as promotion and sustainability of those doing the right thing as well as enabling DSE and other land managers to better manage their resources.

The ORC is very supportive of this project for the many improvements that it has the potential to impart on our industry and community as a whole. The directions paper can be downloaded from the AAS updates section of the ORC website [http://www.orc.org.au/aas/aas\\_updates.htm](http://www.orc.org.au/aas/aas_updates.htm) from Wednesday 8th February.

### Of significant importance to those not currently included within this permit system

On page 20, section 2.1, '*Clarifying who requires a 'tour operator licence'*' the directions paper states that;

- A. *All business entities, organisations (except registered schools) and individuals undertaking commercial activity associated with recreation, tourism and education on public land are required to hold a licence.*
- B. *Commercial activity is to be defined as providing services or goods as a trade or business, or for hire or reward. It includes any guided or chartered tour, course, or transport on public land managed by Parks Victoria, DSE, or other land manager, where one or more of the following applies:*
  - o *An entry, participation or membership fee is collected to cover indirect expenses (advertising, purchase or replacement equipment) as well as direct expenses (food, transport, prizes etc). Donations are considered fees if they exceed direct costs;*
  - o *Guides or leaders are paid or compensated for providing the service; and*
  - o *The activity, course, tour or transport is provided free of charge but in conjunction with another commercial product or service.*
- C. *Where the activities of non-profit and charitable organisations, incorporated associations, or other legal entities meet the above criteria, such organisations are considered to be undertaking commercial activity and require a licence.*
- D. *All contractors /subcontractors are required to hold a licence where they access public land to undertake commercial activity associated with recreation, tourism and education.*
- E. *Ticket sellers and any other business entities in the supply chain that do not access public land are not required to hold a licence.*
- F. *Non-commercial recreation groups, visitors or registered schools are not required to hold a licence, except in special circumstances (refer objective 4) but will be encouraged to notify land managers and adopt safe and sustainable practices. (refer objective 6).*

The ORC wish to develop a response (or assist others wishing to do so) that will assist DSE in clarifying the ambiguity created by this section (underlined in the above text). All comments should be made with consideration of the direction paper (page 20) that clearly states the intention that "schools, clubs, some government programs and benevolent organisations that provide a broader public benefit....." " should continue to access public land to conduct activities...." "and should not require a licence to conduct such activities."

Please forward any comments to [gordon@orc.org.au](mailto:gordon@orc.org.au) and include within each response your organisations views and preferred position to the following three areas;

1. Requiring a Licence (i.e. We should /should not require a licence because.....)
2. Licence conditions (i.e. the following conditions ..... require amendment because.....)
3. Fees ( i.e. 1 and 2 are fine but the fee structure requires amendment because.....)

You may also request that the ORC conduct a workshop to discuss this issue.

If you prefer to forward this feedback directly then email [licence.reforms@dse.vic.gov.au](mailto:licence.reforms@dse.vic.gov.au)

### Emergency Equipment Grants

The Minister for Sport and Recreation, the Honourable Justin Madden MLC, recently endorsed the '**Emergency Grant to Replace Essential Sports Equipment Guidelines**' and '**Application Form**'. Emergency grants to replace essential equipment provides assistance to local sport and recreation clubs to replace activity or first aid equipment that has been lost or destroyed by fire, flood, significant storm, theft or criminal damage.

Forms are now available from the department for Victorian Communities (DVC) website: [www.dvc.vic.gov.au/grants](http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au/grants).

### A Warm Farewell to Our Chairperson

Ms Jo Prior has recently resigned her position as Chairperson of the ORC Inc. As Deputy Chair person and more recently as Chairperson, Jo Prior has contributed many many hours of her own time to the development and increased success of the ORC and certainly contributed to the process and transparency of the AAS and other significant projects undertaken over the past three years.

Ms Prior continues to be a strong supporter of the outdoor community and our right to develop our own mechanisms for continued sustainability and development and for that we would like to thank her.

### Contact details

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