



Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) Update Number 17 October 2004

Introduction

This update will keep you up to date with the current status of the Adventure Activity Standards (AAS).

This report covers;

- Design developments (tackling online issues) update.
- Website review.
- Legal update.
- Surfing Australia level 1 progress.
- Incident reporting advice.
- Summary of waivers.
- Continued involvement of Victorian recreation bodies/providers.
- Additional industry News;
 - ORC AGM.
 - NOLRS developments.
 - WorkSafe update.
 - National Parks Advisory Council – Call for expressions of interest

News at a flash

Design developments tackling online issues

The development of the revised format for the AAS in order to make downloading easier and the layout clearer is progressing. Drafts have been developed and are currently being refined to ensure that they are as user friendly as possible.

Website review

As you may have noticed while visiting www.orc.org.au, the site has been updated so that the AAS section opens with current information on the project (it had previously described how the process would be delivered). We hope that the slightly reviewed layout upon selecting the 'Adventure Activity Standards' link provides a clearer introduction to what AAS are.

We will also be adding some Frequently Asked Questions so feel free to forward any questions you believe would be appropriate to include.

Legal update

In response to some changes to the Victorian legislation over the year 2004 a request for additional information recently raised while reviewing the most recent version of the Bushwalking AAS with the BMTAB, the AAS solicitors will be updating the introduction to the AAS (The section titled 'Why have standards'). The new updated intro will be included as soon as it has been received from Moray and Agnew Solicitors and the next AAS update will keep you informed.

Surfing Australia Level 1 coaching award progress

Discussions have continued between the ORC and Surfing Victoria regarding the soon to be released level one coaching award. New wording has been inserted to the draft to reflect this development and the working group members are currently reviewing it in the hope that it will be finalised as planned.

Incident reporting advice and Summary of waivers

Documents are currently being prepared by Moray and Agnew to assist in understanding (a) Incident reporting and (b) waivers, two key aspects of the AAS.

(a) Incident reporting is a very important if not essential component of any risk management process for organisations that conduct adventurous activities. This document will aim to explain why incident reporting is

important, what different levels of incident reporting can/should be undertaken, what steps should be implemented, who should be informed, by whom and when.

(b) This will provide an explanation of what waivers actually are, what different types of waivers can be used, when they will apply, when they will not apply and what benefits they provide to the activity provider. This will hopefully provide the tools to better explain waivers to clients, participants and parents alike.

Continued involvement of Recreation Bodies/Providers.

The AAS have been developed as a commitment to insurance availability issues that have been experienced by all areas of the Industry. The AAS are voluntary guidelines for commercial owners and operators, volunteer organisations and employees, guides and trip leaders (commercial and non commercial) undertaking organised adventurous activities.

The process is nearing it's end with only bushwalking, surfing, and snow activity AAS still outstanding due to the commitment of the process to inclusive consultation and currency.

The ORC will host a follow up forum in February 2005 for all stakeholders to discuss the ongoing process and the role of the AAS in safe outdoor recreation. This will include details such as the review process, development of additional AAS and any arising issues.

Your organisation may have received a communication from a Mr. Rod Costigan. The ORC is confident that the AAS do not expose outdoor organisations to further liability exposure. The February forum will clarify issues raised in his communication.

Additional Industry News

ORC Annual General Meeting 2004

This years AGM is being held on Tuesday November 30th and we are very pleased to announce that our special guest speaker for the evening will be acclaimed author for youth **Mr. John Marsden**. John's writing camps are a wonderful combination of education and recreation with John's unique ability to engage and communicate with youth making them a formative experience for young people.

If you would like further details please contact Sandy Jeffries at the ORC office (03) 9457 5432

National Outdoor Leaders Registration Scheme (NOLRS)

As a follow up from the initial discussions regarding the NOLRS initiative, we have identified the need to investigate the current learning and assessment pathways for leaders using adventurous activities to achieve their outcomes* within Victoria.

The ORC will be documenting these in the form of a discussion paper which will form part of a sector mapping process addressing the availability and appropriateness of training and independent assessment in the state. The aim of this will be to identify the pros and cons of the NOLRS process for various stakeholders.

Some points raised, which will be addressed in the discussion, include;

- The statement that leaders need to demonstrate competence in the activities they conduct needs to be defined and explained.
- NOLRS provides currency which is not offered by many other pathways.
- NOLRS must define the benefits to education practitioners.
- There is a need for better/easier recognition of current and past outdoor education courses & NOLRS should place more weight upon statutory declarations for recognition of experienced practitioners.
- Outdoor Educators are first and foremost educators, where does NOLRS fit in?
- OCA should determine greater portability to other nations to provide clearer benefits (Carrot vs. stick).

There are many points of view in this discussion and the ORC is keen to acknowledge them all.

Forward any additional points, or expand on the above to gordon@orc.org.au to contribute to this discussion.

The Forums to expand upon the discussion paper findings are still being planned for February and March 2005. They will be held in the metropolitan and regional areas and will include input from the VOEAs and any additional representative bodies.

If you would like more information on NOLRS as an assessment pathway please feel free to contact us and/or the VOEAs (Mark Dingle – education@voea.vic.edu.au)

[* The activities are utilised to assist in the achievement of many outcomes. These may include recreational, educational, therapeutic, religious and so on.]

Department of Sustainability and Environment

There is currently an opportunity to express interest in three forthcoming vacancies on the **National Parks Advisory Council (NPAC)**. Two applicants will be selected on the basis of their experience in matters affecting the interests of the community. They are required to reside outside the metropolitan area. A third applicant will be selected on the basis of their skills or experience relating to the preservation and protection of parks.

The NPAC is a statutory body established under the *National Parks Act 1975* to advise the minister on the administration of the Act.

For an information kit, please contact Annette Hatten, Conservation and Recreation Division, DSE on (03) 9637 8439 ASAP as Expressions of interest must be lodged by Friday the 19th November

WorkSafe Victoria update

Cross border legislation update: - On 1 September 2004 the new cross border workers compensation provisions came into effect in Victoria. These rules are to clarify in which state an injured worker should lodge a claim. For a free booklet outlining the changes please call the VWA publications line on (03) 9641 1333 or visit the publications section online at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au.

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