Adventure Activity Standards (AAS)
Update Number 28
September 2006

Introduction
September already; Well it has been a very busy year for all who are involved in providing outdoor activities in Victoria (or nationally for that matter).

- If you are dealing with rope based activities you will be keen to find out exactly what is happening in the aftermath of the Victorian Workcover Authority's application of industrial harness standards; rather than the globally accepted UIAA and CEN standards (see below).
- If you are dealing with activities in open water then the Marine Safety Victoria investigation into the Torquay near miss may still impact upon you. (also below)
- If you prefer four heel drive touring, the VFWDA have finalised new track classifications (similar to ski runs) and implemented a new club based trip leader course.
- If you are involved in snow activities you are still waiting for the AAS to be published (below) while you are praying for snow.
- We continue to wait on changes to our (Victorian) activity provider license scheme (being reviewed by DSE). Will we get 10 year license terms? Will accreditation play a bigger role? Will the term 'commercial' be defined?
- Or you may be looking towards accreditation. The ACA will be developing their activity provider accreditation scheme, CCI Australia's NARTA program may be available soon and Better Business continues to develop the tourism product. The ORC are keen to hear any feedback on the topic for accreditation to help us to work with the accreditation providers to get this right.
- You may be looking forward to the completion of the new Victorian Outdoor Recreation House OR
- You may be getting political (see our further information below)
- Even if none of the above has affected you, we are now approaching a review of the Outdoor Recreation Training Package. For which the ORC is the formal partner of VERVE to complete part one. (below)

While the workload seems to be getting larger by day, I can assure you that the ORC is responding to all of these issues at some level and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. If the following update does not suffice, please contact us for more information, discussion or to provide your input.

This report covers;
- **AAS Review Committee**
- **VWA High ropes harness progress**
- **MSV Torquay investigation**
- **Training Package Review**
- **Snow AAS update**

- **Additional information**
  - **Getting political**
  - **2006 ACA National Conference**

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.

News at a flash
AAS Review Committee update;
The Steering Committee for the Victorian Adventure Activity Standards would like to thank everyone who expressed an interest in this committee for their ongoing support of the AAS. It is this committee that will shape the AAS into the future.

A selection panel nominated by the AAS Steering committee reviewed the nominations vs. the established criteria on July 4th. The selection panel included a representative from the ORC Inc, Parks Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria. For a copy of the draft terms of reference that were used as criteria, please contact the ORC info@orc.org.au (these will be posted to our website).

The successful nominees form a remarkable resource of knowledge and understanding for the activities covered by AAS, the different types of organisations providing these activities and the many outcomes sought. The implementation of this review committee will ensure that the AAS continue to evolve, maintain currency and communicate practices in a way that benefits the provision and management of adventurous activities in Victoria. For those who noticed that the terms of reference used in the selection process were draft, it is because finalizing the terms of reference will be one of the first jobs for this committee.

Input will be required for this review committee and we will be setting up a specific aasreview@orc.org.au email address by the end of September 2006. We will inform you of more details in the next update.

VWA High ropes harness and procedures
On the 4th July 2006 the ORC attended a meeting at the VWA to follow up on the four key outcomes from our previous meeting. (see update 27 available at www.orc.org.au)

Topics discussed at this meeting included; the many stakeholders involved in disseminating the relevant standards and appropriate procedures for this industry. The inherent issues in applying industrial roping (and similar) Australian Standards to activities conducted for recreation, tourism and education and the need for industry to be involved at every level to ensure support for the outcomes of any developments initiated by the VWA.

The VWA presented a new project aimed at all of the above. They have employed a project officer to coordinate the project and to date, this project officer has been establishing the scope to satisfy the mandate of the VWA and to ensure that this scope remains within the mandate of the VWA (as specified within 'the act').

The VWA will liaise with the ORC Victoria once the scope has been refined and then, working with the ORC, develop a project stakeholder group to discuss in more detail;

1. The activities to be considered.
2. The types of organisations to be addressed.
3. The relevant training, standards and assessment currently available.
4. The process for communicating with industry

It is hoped that the stakeholder group will be established by mid December of this year.

For more information, the VWA will be providing a project summary at the 2006 ORC AGM being held on the 31st of October. Please contact the ORC Office for more details or email info@orc.org.au.

MSV Torquay investigation
As you are probably aware, a group participating in a sit on top surf kayaking session off point danger (Torquay) were blown out to sea earlier this year. The group were rescued safely but the effect on the industry is yet to be fully known.

Many groups were keen to see the ORC lead an investigation that would co-ordinate the various Government and industry stakeholders towards a better understanding of what went wrong and how similar incidents can be prevented from happening in the future. While this would be a role that has potential, it is simply not possible. Regulators have their own mandate and no regulator will be directed by an industry body. With this consideration, the following is the status of both industry and government developments;

Marine Safety Victoria; MSV are undertaking a thorough investigation involving input from industry stakeholders. This investigation is nearing completion. Once complete, this will form the basis of recommendations or actions and the ORC will communicate as much detail as possible.

There are no processes currently in place for the recommendations to be made public although the ORC have requested this information so that providers can learn from the outcomes and the Adventure Activity Standards can be amended if necessary.

The ORC; the ORC has responded to a request made by the relevant operators and the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee to develop specific AAS for sit on top surf kayaking activities. We expect that this will involve the

development of relevant sections to be added to the kayaking and the surfing AAS. However the AAS project is not sufficiently funded to address this requirement. As such, The ORC has applied for funding through Marine Safety Victoria. We hope that the application is successful and that the recommendations from MSV will help determine the scope of the development of AAS.

We appreciate the assistance and inclusion that we have received from MSV and we hope that this relationship remains strong into the future.

Training Package Review
A review of the Sport and Recreation Training Packages will be undertaken Nationally by Service Skills during 2006. The Outdoor Council of Australia is represented on the Sport and Recreation Industry Advisory Committee of Service Skills and also on the National Industry Reference Group established to oversee the Training Package review.

In Victoria; the first component of the review is being managed by **Verve – Knowledge and skills** (our industry ITAB and peoplearn partner) and the ORC is the formal partner for Verve to ensure that there is sufficient industry awareness and feedback for the recreation sector.

the Discussion Paper highlighting some of the National issues for consideration in the review has been prepared by Service Skills Australia and has now been posted to their website. You may access it using this link: http://www.serviceskills.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=572&Itemid=1774. There is also an on-line feedback form.

The ORC and Verve will keep you informed about the dates/locations of Victorian consultation workshops in the next couple of months.

Snow AAS update
What is happening with these AAS?

Resort AAS; the resort AAS remains on hold until the ORC and ASAA have the opportunity to review it's scope and content. This has not changed since previous updates.

Non – Resort AAS; This has been completed and reviewed by the solicitor, however it seems odd to publish this mid-season and as such we now expect to publish the non-resort AAS after this snow season so that organisations have appropriate time to plan their activities for the 07-08 winter.

This decision is supported by the fact that the AAS technical review committee may choose to update the format and even content of all AAS. As such the document will now be included in the review. To assist in obtaining feedback, the non resort AAS will be re-posted to the drafts section of the AAS website for the interim.

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Additional Information

Getting Political;
The ORC Victoria has received information regarding two separate initiatives that are being established to put some power back into the hands of the many individuals (and organisations) that depend upon access to Victorian crown land for their livelihood and/or simply for their sanity (recreational access).

Though these are distinct initiatives they are worthy of mention in this part of the AAS update because you may wish to contact, join, support or even help lead these worthy causes. The similarity seems to be that they both support the need to conservation and careful land management but, particularly relevant in the upper house, they wish to place a voice that can clearly be heard supporting the absolute need for **public having access to public land now as well as in the future.**

For more information you can contact the ORC or;

The newly established **'Recreational Environmental Group – REG –**
Please contact: Michael Coldham (03) 9857 5209
&
The **'Push for the Bush'** campaign led by the Mountain Cattlemen
To support this email: **pushforthebush@bigpond.com**

2006 Australian Camps Association (ACA) *"IMPACT – Camping in Australia"* Conference

The 2006 Australian Camps Association (ACA) *"IMPACT – Camping in Australia"* Conference will be held on 13th to 16th October 2006 at Vision Valley, Arcadia NSW. Registrations are now open.

The conference offers a comprehensive program, targeted and highly relevant to today's and more importantly, tomorrow's changing face of the Camps & Recreation profession. Conference program includes:

- **Peek-behind-the screen Campsite Tour**,
- Learn great adventure games which campsite operators, teachers and outdoor educators can use and integrate into their curriculum for the purposes of building self-esteem, team skills or simply to have fun at the **No Props: Great Activities with No Equipment Workshop**
- **Flying Foxes and Challenge Activities** – what's the future?
- **The Seven Habits of a Sometimes Ineffective Operations Manager**
- And more….visit: http://www.auscamps.asn.au/conf06/confprogram.htm

REGISTER TODAY and Save!
Early Bird Registration closes 18th September 2006
For all conference enquiries, contact Anna at the ACA office on
Ph 1800 061 702
Email conference@auscamps.asn.au
Web: http://www.auscamps.asn.au/conf06

For more information regarding the Victorian AAS project visit our website or contact us;

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