



Final Report Outdoors WA Industry Training Initiative June 2011 – February 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **The Outdoors WA Industry Training Initiative (“ITI”) spanned a duration from 1 June 2011 to 29 February 2012. The key deliverables of the ITI as stated in the MOU between Outdoors WA (“OWA”) and Bridging the Gap (“BTG”) on 1 June 2011 are:**
 - a. Develop project plan for outdoor recreation training and accreditation project.
 - b. Development of ITI training and accreditation framework.
 - c. Implementation of a pilot training initiative.

2. **The process for the implementation of the ITI is as follows:**
 - a. Scoping the project through consultations with OWA.
 - b. Review of relevant policies, standards, and documents in WA and the other states (e.g. NOLRS scheme, AASs, DEC Policies).
 - c. Outdoor Sector Consultation.
 - d. Convening of the Subject Matter Expert (SME) Panel.
 - e. Design and delivery of the pilot training, assessment and RPL workshops.
 - f. Collating/analysing the findings, crafting of the final report to include recommendations.

3. **Over the 7 month period, consultations with industry stakeholders took the form of:**
 - a. One-to-one consultation sessions with 24 industry professionals/leaders, outdoor practitioners/outdoor educators, including OWA board members.
 - b. One Consultation-Feedback session with practitioners in the Southwest Area held at the Margaret River Community which was attended by 5 industry stakeholders in the region which included Outward Bound Australia, a representative of the Department of Environment and Conservation and various schools and outdoor service providers.
 - c. One Consultation-Feedback session with practitioners in the Perth-Metro Area held at Mt Lawley which was attended by 21 Outdoor Practitioners/Outdoor Educators.
 - d. One Inter-Agency Meeting with 7 representatives from Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR), Department of Education (DET), Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC) & OWA.
 - e. Two meetings with the SME Panel to design and organise the January ITI 2012 Pilot Workshops.
 - f. A survey sent via email by OWA to members of the industry. Fifteen outdoor practitioners/outdoor educators (members and non-members of OWA) submitted their responses.
 - g. The consultants also attended the second meeting of the WA Resource Group for Outdoor Educators (WARGOE) to solicit comments on issues related to the ITI.
 - h. Three formal meetings with Mr. Jamie Bennett, Executive Officer of OWA, since he took on the appointment in November 2011. (A number of informal meetings with Mr. Bennett took place between 21-23 January 2012 as part of the ITI Workshop and were helpful in contributing to this paper.)

4. Findings from the consultations and surveys showed that industry stakeholders:

- a. Did not think that OWA had met their expectations. They expressed frustration, disappointment and anger at the lack of leadership, consultation and perceived misrepresentation on the part of OWA.
- b. Felt that OWA should facilitate much needed training and development opportunities as well as lobby and advocate with the respective agencies to improve the interests of the stakeholders.
- c. Overwhelmingly did not feel that the National Outdoor Leadership Registration Scheme (NOLRS) should be the sole criteria for recognising competency as stipulated in the OWA Adventure Activity Standards (with limited exceptions). While the NOLRS was a registration scheme, it was being administered as if it was a competency recognition scheme.
- d. Preferred a multiple-pathway approach to competency.

5. Three Pilot workshops were designed by the SME Panel and delivered on 21-23 January 2012 at the Woodman Point DSR Campsite. The workshops focused on three activity areas: Canoeing Guide/Instructor (Flatwater), Bushwalking Guide (Controlled Environment and Intermediate levels) and Climbing Instructor (Artificial Surface). DSR generously sponsored the campsite, facilities and accommodation. Fairbridge was appointed the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to deliver the program. Seventeen (17) Outdoor Leaders and Educators attended the training and assessment workshops. An additional two (2) will be going through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process over the next four months. The workshops were supported by the DET. Following the success of the workshops, it is recommended that the ITI move to Phase 2 over the next 12-24 months to deliver similar training and assessment opportunities for an estimated 600 outdoor educators (teachers) in Western Australia. A proposed budget for Phase 2 is set out in the paper.

6. Key recommendations in the paper include:

- a. Amending the AASs to be guidelines rather than minimum industry standards.
- b. Seeking the Industry Standards Panel's (ISP's) review of the 16 AASs to establish a priority list. The AASs addressing the activities most regularly delivered in schools (e.g. Bushwalking, Canoeing, Climbing, Abseiling) should be implemented, supported, 'sold' to industry stakeholder and monitored for compliance (with a view to assisting as many stakeholders achieve compliance as possible). The other AASs (e.g. 4WD, Horse Riding) could be implemented at a later phase. This would focus the limited resources of OWA so as to be more effective.
- c. Establish a multiple pathway competency recognition scheme.
- d. Establishing an 'open source' system for assessment with OWA designing and making accessible training and assessment tools and framework that could be used by industry stakeholders.
- e. Highlighting the urgent need for the estimated 600 WA teachers involved in Outdoor Education to undergo training, assessment and RPL within the next 12-24 months.
- f. Highlighting the urgent need for the OWA to establish good relations with the tourism sector to seek buy in for the AAS and the multiple pathway frameworks.
- g. Highlighting the urgent need for OWA, DSR, DEC, DET and the Tourism sector in WA to work together to establish a simple, practical, efficient and effective system for skills recognition and activity standards that emphasises sound risk management.
- h. Highlighting the need to establish good relations and communication between OWA and all industry stakeholders.
- i. Highlighting the importance of securing sufficient resources for training and development in the

Outdoor Industry and need for agencies apart from DSR to contribute to this area. DET, DEC and Tourism in particular.

- j. Rolling out the Industry Training Initiative into Phase 2 within the next 12-24 months to train 600 outdoor educators. A budget of \$586,000 is estimated.
- k. A few RTOs be appointed to deliver Phase 2 of the ITI. Some of the RTOs that have indicated their interest to be a part of the ITI include: Fairbridge, YMCA, the Australian Centre for Advanced Studies and Wongutha CAPS.
- l. The establishment of a competency scheme for Outdoor Recreation graduates from Notre Dame University akin to the VOEА-University of Ballarat Certifications in Victoria.
- m. Considering an organisational accreditation scheme in addition to instructor skills recognition schemes.

Background

1. This paper sets out and explores some of the issues being experienced by the Outdoor Education & Outdoor Recreation industry in Western Australia - specifically relating to matters of competency standards, recognition thereof and the training pathways related to them. The paper explores the issues based on the author's consultations with members of the industry.
2. The paper then proceeds to explore alternatives to the present situation which, gathering from the feedback from the industry, is far from ideal and is in need of change. The paper makes some recommendations in its conclusion.
3. The paper intends to stimulate reflection, analysis and discussion of the issues so that decision on the matter can be made after as extensive a consultative process as practically possible. The 2011 OWA Industry Training Initiative (ITI) is funded by the WA Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR).
4. As per the agreed MOU (1st June 2011) the following scope and deliverables were undertaken:
 - ❖ Develop project plan for outdoor recreation training and accreditation project, which will include:
 - Develop project timeline to ensure project completion on schedule.
 - Develop ITI communications strategy.
 - Develop and maintain project working group network.
 - Develop stakeholders' network and ITI implementation partnerships.
 - Develop ITI training and accreditation schedule.
 - Develop project and training costings that are viable and sustainable.
 - ❖ Development of ITI training and accreditation framework, which will include:
 - Carry out environmental scan (to develop in-depth understanding of potential industry needs, instructors' needs analysis and serviceability).
 - Exploration of the current and desired certification and standards process.
 - Focus on 3 or 4 "activities" to form a pilot scheme. Activities to be agreed with OWA.
 - Development of assessment process and matrix.
 - Development of Subject Matter Experts (SME).
 - Integration of Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) process into package; and
 - Integrating of National Outdoor Leaders Registration Scheme (NOLRS) into the initiative or explore and develop a better fit state wide standard that would still work within the AQTF, if appropriate.
 - Mapping of current outdoor recreation skill sets to existing national outdoor recreation training package.
 - Identify current and potential Training Providers (accredited and non-accredited).
 - Link identified current training providers, who may operate outside of the AQTF, to RTO(s) to support certification and sign off of existing training, where appropriate. Additionally to develop a strategy for RTO (s) to deliver a viable training package.
 - Ensure training providers understand and move to compliance with RTO requirements.
 - ❖ Implementation of training initiative, which will include:
 - Series of RPL and NOLRS registration workshops;
 - Series of skills gap workshop;
 - Series of training workshops to ensure a transition into the new initiative; and
 - Explore the viability of traineeships within the initiative training framework.

Process

5. The diagram below represents the process flow for the duration of this project, which is elaborated upon further in this report.

Scope: The project aims to conduct an environmental scan to identify and understand the needs of the outdoor industry stakeholders and deliver training outcomes for 3-4 AAS activities. The project will support the growth of a network of stakeholders who will be encouraged to play an active role in the initiative going forward.



Review of Relevant Industry Information: To undertake a review of all relevant industry standards, guidelines, schemes both nationally and state wide. This included the Adventure Activity Standards, NOLRS, National Outdoor Training Package, DEC Policy 18 and National Associations. This exercise influenced the strategies we employed to consult industry stakeholders.



Outdoor Sector Consultation: To undertake an environmental scan, focusing on training & registration issues via consultations with stakeholders. Involving 1-1 meetings across Perth and the South West, group consultation events, telephone conversations, design and delivery of an industry survey, inter-agency meetings, interest group meetings and monthly consultations with the Outdoors WA Board sub-committee.



Subject Matter Expert Panel: To be identified from industry professionals to advise on and support the design of a pilot training, assessment and RPL program as directed by Outdoors WA Board of Directors.



Pilot Training Initiative: To be run in January 2012. Focus on 3 outcomes (training, assessment and RPL) for a minimum of 3 activities including paddling, ropes and bushwalking. To identify an RTO to deliver to National Outdoor Training Package Standards which enables participants to register with NOLRS.



Report and Recommendations: To collate and analyse the data gathered from the above processes and craft a report with recommendations to meet the objectives and cover the scope of the project.

Introduction

6. Outdoors WA (OWA) commenced the ITI in June 2011. With a 6 month time frame, the mission was to:
 - a. Develop and implement the outdoor recreation training, accreditation and registration initiative.
 - b. Enhancement of current outdoor training recreation package to increase accessibility.
7. The review also includes the recommendation of establishment of appropriate training standards and schemes. The initiative culminated in the organisation and delivery of a pilot program/workshop in January 2012 that facilitated, for the activity areas of Bushwalking, Paddling & Ropes:
 - a. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program for pathway for leaders & instructors that had sufficient skills and experience to meet the training standards /scheme adopted in this initiative.
 - b. A refresher (bridging) or skills training program for leaders & instructors who did not completely fulfil the training standards /scheme adopted in this initiative.
 - c. Skills and competency assessment opportunities that would allow access to the NOLRS registration process if desired.
8. The Pilot ITI Training & Assessment Workshop set out in paragraphs 5a-5c was conducted on 21-23 January 2012 at the DSR Woodman Point Camp. 17 candidates presented themselves at Woodman Point for the Training-Assessment-RPL mapping on 21-23 January 2012. A detailed report on the pilot workshop is set out at Annex K. A collation of the participants' responses on the evaluation and feedback is set out at Annex L.
9. The Bridging the Gap (BTG) ITI consulting team, comprising Andy Wahid and Farid Hamid, were tasked with managing the project and presented to the OWA Board an overview of the proposed plans for the ITI 8 June 2011 at DSR. The program of work was established in consultation with Gregg Moxham from OWA and Ben Hlaing from DSR. BTG is a Not for Profit providing community services from Perth to Peel and Eastern Suburbs that focus on employment services, training, youth services. It also delivers experiential leadership programs in WA and overseas. BTG is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).
10. On 1st June 2011, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BTG and OWA was officially signed by the then Chair of the OWA Board Gregg Moxham. BTG has been engaged to deliver the OWA ITI.
11. In June 2011, the Board of OWA established a sub-committee comprising four Board Members to support the project and the consultants. Members of the sub-committee included:
 - a. Gregg Moxham – Chair of OWA Board (Tom Shackles took over in Oct 2011).
 - b. Peter White (Also Chairman of the Industry Standards Panel).
 - c. Aaron Bertram.
 - d. Jason Zaurus.
12. Between June-December 2011, the ITI Committee met monthly. Since November 2011, the consultants have also met up with the new OWA Executive Officer, Mr Jamie Bennett on a number of occasions. The consultants were present at the meetings and discussed ideas and processes with the committee as well as updating the committee on developments. For the design and crafting of the ITI Survey form and exact wording for the invitation to industry stakeholders to attend the proposed consultation sessions in September, the consultants sought the committee's specific clearance.

The Adventure Activity Standards

13. According to the introductory paragraphs of the Western Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAS), **“the AASs benchmark the minimum industry requirements and responsibilities for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for commercial and non – commercial groups”**. Currently, 16 OWA AASs can be found on the OWA website. They areas they cover and the Leader Requirements are set out at Annex E.
14. According to the AASs’ introductory statements, “the Adventure Activity Standards are designed to be applied when the participants are, for the purposes of participating in the activity, either:
- in a pre-existing group where the group members and or their representatives or a third party, have made a collective purchase of, or collective decision to participate, in the activity (i.e. a school corporate or community group); or are
 - formed into a new group where the participants have purchased, or made the decision to participate in, the activity as individuals or smaller groups, but having done so become a part of a new group (i.e. citizens or tourists who, having purchased an activity from an organisation or leader individually, are formed into a group for the purposes of participating in the activity provided).
- The AASs go on to say that “..in all cases the relationship between the group of participants and the activity provider is one based upon dependence by way of contract and/or duty of care.”
15. The one exception expressly stated where the AASs will not be applied is when “..the existence of groups, where the group is less defined and not dependent as a group upon an activity provider for the conduct of the activity” is acknowledged. (i.e. independent club members participating in an activity, people going to a climbing gym to privately recreate, people trying a climbing wall at a fete, etc.)
16. The AASs state that they were developed by an industry wide consultative process, coordinated by OWA following the recommendations of the 2006 State Government Adventure Tourism Visitor Safety Task Force Report. The project received grant funding via the DSR. According to OWA, the AASs are intended to continually evolve, be revised and updated regularly.
17. The language of the AAS makes it known that it is designed to apply across all segments of the industry. Notionally, this would include:
- Outdoor Education (Schools & Service Providers being engaged by schools)
 - Outdoor Recreation Service Providers
 - Adventure Tourism Service Providers/Businesses
 - Not for profit organisations who use adventure (e.g. Cadets, Bushrangers, Scouts, Girl Guides)
 - Clubs (e.g. Bushwalking Clubs)
18. Except for Abseiling (where leader competency requirements became official on 30th June 2009), the AASs formal implementation was stated to start officially on 31 January 2011 at the start of this consultation period. By 20 December 2011, the date had been “deferred to February 2013”. The Summary List of AASs extracted from the OWA website is set out at Annex E.
19. It is understood that DSR and its operations at its various Campsites in WA have complied with the OWA AASs. Together DSR has about 94 instructors/guides on their payroll.
20. However, it could be asked whether OWA has the mandate to establish the AAS as a minimum requirement which it foresees implemented/accepted/ complied with by members of the industry. That the AAS does not have legal status (laws or bylaws/subsidiary legislation) in the state of Western Australia is clear because there is no legislation to support mandatory implementation of the AAS here.

21. OWA is a membership based organisation. As such, one could argue that its policies and guidelines are designed to apply only to its members (and any other non-member organisation that chooses to adopt its Standard).
22. Arguably, as a result of the lack of legal status and because OWA is an organisational peak body which is membership based, in establishing the AAS, OWA has sought to be as inclusive as possible in the process of crafting it. It is also understood that members of the Industry Standards Panel are also drawn from member and non-member organisations of OWA (e.g. The Representative from the DET)
23. It is not within the remit of the Consultancy to examine the AAS in detail outside the provisions relating to competency (as it relates to central issues in training). However, from the survey and consultations, it was found that:
- a. Stakeholders were generally agreeable to some standard for industry but that requiring the AASs to be a **'minimum industry requirement....'** is too onerous given the lack of coordination, resources and leadership within the industry.
 - b. Different stakeholders viewed the AASs differently - some felt they were only non-binding guidelines, some, as best practice standards, others felt they were not reflective of what is being practiced out in the industry, others adopted the AASs in spirit or in totality
 - c. Stakeholders felt there were many areas in which it was too detailed and in many areas where the AASs were not detailed enough.
 - d. Stakeholders felt that there should be some alignment between the AAS and the standards set by Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) as well as the policies and guidelines for Outdoor Education in the Department of Education (DET). DET is presently reviewing its policies and guidelines in Outdoor Education to align most of it with the AAS. The process is expected to be in place by January 2013.
 - e. Some felt that the provisions in the AAS were too blunt a tool with which to micro manage and apply to all situations. For example, Steve Sertis, Lead Guide at the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, commented on the Risk Management Plan section in the bushwalking AAS, with regards to the group profiling of participants:

"..We do not assess people's experience levels and skills on a day walk that may only last 4 hours - largely staying on the Bibbulmun Track."

With regards to the section that stipulated that the "Emergency Response Plan must be route/campsite(s) specific and document current details including, amongst others, access and egress options from route/campsite including sectors, Steve comments:

"..Emergency access points and emergency exits from various and all sections of the Bibbulmun Track are almost impossible to identify, given the state of tracks in the bush and exactly where the group may be at any given time."

Likewise, concerning the provision of group assembly points, Steve is of the view that on the Bibbulmun Track: *"..this is impracticable."*

- f. There is no way to ascertain for sure to what extent the adventure tourism companies adopt the AAS. It is ironic that for a process started by the tourism sector, the adoption of and compliance with the AASs has not been something that has been actively encouraged, enforced or supported by the Tourism Department or Tourism Council of WA (TCWA). The consultants were not able to get the Department of Tourism and the TCWA on board for consultations, especially at the inter-agency meeting. However, the TCWA has verbally informed the consultants that they are aware of the AAS and do update the tourism sector regularly on its development/revision. TCWA did state that it did not have the resources to monitor or ensure compliance of the AASs in the tourism sector.

Adventure Activity Standards (Provisions on Competency)

24. Amongst the other Standards, the WA AASs stipulate, under the “Competencies of Leaders” heading, that “..Leaders are deemed competent if they are “registered under the National Outdoor Leadership Registration Scheme – NOLRS)”. **No other recognition of competency is expressly stated as acceptable.**” From the consultations, the consultants understand that this is the way the industry interprets the AASs.

It is critical to note that NOLRS is a scheme that is not national and is a small part of the overall training, assessment and quality assurance model for Outdoor Leaders. Training does not need registration but registration cannot exist with training. It is suggested that resources be put into training and assessment rather than the NOLRS style registration system. NOLRS can be managed by the Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA) as intended and designed for qualified, experienced Outdoor Leaders.

25. The two exceptions to the NOLRS Competency requirements are:

- a. For the Canoeing, Kayaking, Sea Kayaking & Rafting AASs, a current qualification from the Australian Canoeing Award Scheme is acceptable.
- b. For the Bushwalking AAS, Bushwalking Club Leaders, when organising/leading their walks under the auspices of the clubs, may “..be signed off as sufficiently competent to lead the walk”.

26. The OWA AASs stipulated that all adventure leaders and instructors (in the area of review) must attain the required competencies set out at paragraphs 13–16 (above) by 31 January 2011 (deferred to February 2013). **From the consultation sessions with industry stakeholders, the consultants understand that, the Industry, as a whole has not been able to fulfil the requirements of the AAS (at least, as far as the NOLRS competency requirements are concerned. One exception being the DSR campsites, their staff and operational policies and guidelines).** A comprehensive examination of industry compliance with the AASs as a whole is not within the remit of this ITI. However we would recommend that further research be undertaken in this area.

27. Before the general deferment, DET’s Ms Alison Turner (a member of the Industry Standards Panel) had also informed the consultants that a formal extension has also been made for DET teachers/schools to comply with the AASs by end January 2013. DET is also in the process of revising its policies and guidelines in Outdoor Education/Pursuits to align it with OWA’s AASs.

28. DET sources estimate that there are 600 Outdoor Educators in WA Public Schools (450 in secondary schools and 150 in primary schools) who need to be trained up to the required competencies outlined in the AAS. According to Curriculum Council Statistics in 2010, there were 2,129 students registered on Outdoor Education courses at Year 12 level For the same year, there were 2,930 Year 11 students registered on Outdoor Education courses.

29. There are 187 guides/instructors registered under the NOLRS scheme in WA

30. Some of the statistical data related to the Outdoor Industry in WA is set out at Annex F.

31. If OWA is prepared to ensure AAS compliance from the Industry, it may need to seek feedback from the Industry, or carry out an audit.

DEC Policy 18

32. DEC's Policy 18 (December 2006) is a policy relating to recreation, tourism and visitor activities and services at DEC sites. The policy has adopted the NOLRS competency requirement only for climbing & abseiling (Section 2.3.7) where it states:

“All commercial operators referred to in 2.3.6 above as well as not-for-profit groups conducting rock climbing and abseiling with dependent participants such as school groups, scout groups, community groups, or youth groups will be required as part of the conditions applying to their license or other approval to be registered under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS) or hold current equivalent accreditation recognised by DEC's CEO. The scheme conducted by the Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) is currently regarded as equivalent to NOLRS.”

33. As can be seen, even in the case of Abseiling and Climbing, DEC allows for multiple pathways of recognition, namely:

- a. NOLRS registration
- b. Current equivalent accreditation recognised by DEC's CEO.
- c. The Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) scheme is regarded equivalent to NOLRS

34. DEC has not adopted the AAS minimum requirements of competency in its Policy for the other activity areas.

Comparing Adventure Activity Standards among States (Advisory vs. Minimum Requirement)

35. The OWA AASs are unique, as a state wide AAS in that:

- a. They benchmark the *minimum industry requirements* and responsibilities for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for commercial and non – commercial groups.
- b. **For the section on competency of leaders, guides and instructors, the OWA AASs state NOLRS as the only recognition of instructor/leader/guide competency** (with a couple of exceptions). It might have been the intention of OWA NOT to have NOLRS as the sole pathway to recognition of competency of leaders/guides/instructors. It could be argued that one interpretation of the preceding words of AASs relating to the competency of leaders/guides/instructors:

“Leaders are deemed to be competent...” is that other qualifications are as equally valid.

36. However in their consultations with industry stakeholders, the section referred to above is interpreted as stipulating that NOLRS is the ONLY scheme for competency recognition. Perhaps if this wasn't the intention, the words in the AASs in relation to competency should be re-crafted.

37. The AASs from the following states were looked at as a comparison:

- a. Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation (Queensland, Supported by the Queensland Government),
- b. Outdoors Recreation Industry Council (ORIC – NSW, Supported by NSW Government)
- c. Outdoor Recreation Centre (ORC – Victoria. Supported by Victorian State Government)
- d. Recreation South Australia (Government of South Australia, Office of Recreation & Sport)
- e. Sport & Recreation Tasmania (TAS)

38. Some of the similar sections of the AASs of WA and the other states are compared below:

Jurisdiction	Relevant Phrase
Queensland AASs (QORF & Queensland Government)	<i>“The AAS should be considered as guidelines that demonstrate non-specific principles and provide direction or suggest action.</i>
Outdoor Recreation Industry Council (NSW)	<i>“The NSW Adventure Activity Standards (NSW AAS) are only advisory and general in nature and should not be relied upon to meet individual or specific requirements. They are recommendations for voluntary application to Adventure Activity providers and participants. They are not binding on any person or organisation and have no legal force.”</i>
Outdoor Recreation Centre (Victoria)	<i>“AAS are voluntary guidelines for undertaking adventure activities...”</i>
Recreation South Australia (Office for Recreation and Sport)	<i>AAS are voluntary guidelines for undertaking adventure activities in a manner designed to promote:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safety for both participants and providers 2. Information for providers against legal liability claims and criminal penalties 3. Assistance in obtaining insurance cover. <i>These AAS are not statutory standards imposed by law.</i>
Sport & Recreation Tasmania (Government of Tasmania)	<i>“The AAS...should be used as a guide only” Whenever using the information contained in this AAS, providers should carefully evaluate the specific requirements of the intended activity and the persons participating in it and act accordingly. “</i>
OWA (Supported by DSR, DEC, Tourism)	<i>“Adventure Activity Standards benchmark the minimum industry requirements and responsibilities for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for commercial and non – commercial groups.”</i>

39. OWA's AASs seem to be unique in stating that it benchmarks the minimum industry requirements & responsibilities while all the other states seem to frame their AASs as a guideline and advisory.
40. It is submitted that unless clearer language is used, this seems to expressly state that organisations and instructors who fail to follow the AASs, fail to adhere to minimum requirements of the industry. While the intention of upgrading the industry and managing risk is a laudable one, it is suggested that the way the AAS is positioned in WA is restrictive as the 'one size fits all' benchmark is unrealistic given the state of the industry and especially the lack of resources within it. The net effect is that the industry is unable to live up to it, has become frustrated and the notion of the AAS has lost ground.
41. For any benchmark to be effective, it needs to be:
- a. felt that they are owned by stakeholders of the industry;
 - b. monitored and enforced by all relevant agencies such as DEC, TCWA, DET, DSR etc. for compliance (To be fair, the AASs have been officially in force only since end January 2011.);
 - c. supported with adequate resources from the relevant agencies to assist the stakeholders to meet the benchmarks.
42. It is felt that the AASs may not meet the above criteria. It is not even known to what extent the AASs are being complied with – especially within the Tourism sector. At least the issues are discussed, debated and, in some cases, complied with within the Outdoor Education & Outdoor Recreation sectors in WA.
43. Perhaps it is the recognition of the above by DEC as land managers that has seen them not enforcing compliance of the OWA AAS. Enforcing the AAS by DEC might lead to devastating reductions in land use for Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Education & Adventure Tourism. The statistics seem to indicate that the status quo works well – incidents of serious injury and fatalities have been very low and are generally seen as acceptable by industry. An industry wide system to record, collate, analyse and communicate near misses, incidents and accidents, is sorely required.

Comparing Adventure Activity Standards among States (Single vs. Multiple Pathways for Competency Recognition)

44. Among the AASs of the States reviewed, there were multiple pathways to recognition of competencies, NOLRS (which is a system of registration rather than a statement of competency / qualification) is only ONE of the possible ways and even, Unfortunately the way NOLRS has been administered (as phrased in the AAS) creates the impression that it is a qualification rather than a registration tool. QORF, which administers NOLRS for OCA has not seen it appropriate to make NOLRS mandatory. Other qualifications are acceptable and it was for employers, organisations and practitioners to use the AAS as a guide to competency and suitability.
45. The number of outdoor instructors, leaders, guides and educators in the WA Outdoor Industry is relatively small. Admittedly, the ITI consultants have been unable to obtain the actual numbers of outdoor instructors, leaders, guides and educators from OWA or DSR. Some statistical figures are set out at Annex F but a more comprehensive collation of such data will have to be obtained from DSR, OWA, DET and Department of Tourism for future analysis.
46. The resources (time and money) available to most outdoor instructors, leaders, guides and educators are very limited. The market wages for most of them do not allow many to sustain their mortgage payments or support a family. Many professionals in the Outdoor Industry leave the profession after 3-4 years for other sectors. This point was seen as a major issue which the Outdoor Industry and OWA need to address – a point emphasized by Terry Hewett and Peter Nidd.
47. Many instructors, guides and leaders are already competent. Their competencies should be recognised and they shouldn't be made to jump through more hoops, pay more money and spend more time to attain other forms of competency for the same skill set they already have. It has been asserted by many who have been consulted in this initiative that the industry has lost many good and experienced professionals when OWA insisted that NOLRS is the only scheme of recognising competency. Many simply walked away, feeling betrayed, frustrated and disappointed. (Please see Annex D).
48. Virtually ALL industry stakeholders interviewed by the consultants expressed the view that the AASs should adopt a “multiple pathway approach to recognising competency”. (Please see Annex D again).
49. Even DEC's Policy 18 (2006) adoption of NOLRS registration as recognition of competency for abseiling and climbing is framed in a multiple pathway frame when it states that competency will also be recognised in the case of:
- a. A current equivalent accreditation recognised by DEC's CEO.
 - b. The Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) scheme (it is “..regarded equivalent to NOLRS” in Policy 18).

Hence a multiple pathway approach to recognising qualifications is being recommended in this report.

The AAS Places Too Much Responsibility on the Guide / Leader

50. The responsibility for organising, planning, delivering and supervising a safe yet meaningful Outdoor Experience ultimately lies with the organisation. Principles of Common Law would place vicarious responsibility onto the organisation employing the instructors/leaders/guides if they are found breaching a duty of care towards their clients.
51. However, it could be argued that the AAS frames the responsibility for attaining competency and maintaining a registration system on the shoulders of the instructor/guide/leader. Without devising a complicated system of competency qualifications, it would be just as possible for the AAS to stipulate that:
- a. the AAS are guidelines (which reflect common practice but not minimum standards);
 - b. Organisations can adopt different schemes, qualifications etc. but they do need to satisfy themselves that the instructor/guide/leader is competent and experienced to lead/guide/supervise the activities with the clients.
52. In that way, business and organisations will (as they do now) seriously assess each candidate or potential staff member via a myriad number of qualifications, evidence of experience and other requirements.
53. As is the case for the United Kingdom (and in some other jurisdictions including the Tourism sector in WA), a system of accreditation could be established and implemented for organisations/companies. This will, however, require OWA or another relevant agency/body to have sufficient resources to implement the system, which for example proved expensive when implementing only 5 areas in the UK. It is arguable that the Outdoor Industry in WA does not have the critical mass to support such a system. Therefore, a simpler, less 'resource intensive' system, would be appropriate.

The challenge remains that the competencies are attained by the individual, but this does not mean the system or the process to recognise or register those skill areas needs to be maintained by the individual. It would be fair to say that individuals do not have the capacity to maintain the system or to pay for the system. Please see the Recommendation section below.

Possible Recognition Options

54. Going back to the Competency Standards and Training Scheme, and given the above factors, as far as the first phase ITI mission is concerned, the following options are available:

No	Options	Pros	Cons
1	<p>Maintain the AAS status quo – NOLRS registration is the only way to recognition of instructor/leader/guide competency</p>	<p>A “national” registration scheme.</p> <p>Ease of recognition across states and for landowners, clients and agencies.</p> <p>One standard for everyone.</p>	<p>Very bad impression on members of the community after almost 10 years in existence. If this option is pursued, unless sufficient resources are provided by supporting government agencies, many schools, outdoor service providers may be forced to cease operations. (Already the case?).</p> <p>Perceived as red tape heavy / cumbersome.</p> <p>Registration takes too much time, energy and effort, especially for RPL.</p> <p>Too rigid and inflexible, not allowing multiple pathways for recognition.</p> <p>NOLRS isn't a national scheme and is not widely adopted in other states.</p> <p>Expensive and time consuming.</p> <p>Registration requires jumping through `hoops' again.</p>
2	<p>Use the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package as the sole criteria for recognition of competency.</p>	<p>National Training Standard.</p> <p>Ease of recognition across states and for landowners, clients and agencies.</p> <p>One standard for everyone.</p> <p>Flexible as it can be delivered by RTOs who have the scope to deliver them.</p>	<p>If this option is pursued, unless sufficient resources are provided by supporting government agencies, many schools, outdoor service providers may be forced to cease operations.</p> <p>May again be too rigid and inflexible, not allowing multiple pathways for recognition.</p> <p>Seen by some as not designed to meet the needs of the industry.</p> <p>Expensive and time consuming.</p>
3	<p>Leave it up to the employers, organisations and providers to assess the competency of each instructor based on :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. certifications and qualifications in area of skill b. currency based on evidence entered in logbook c. First Aid currency d. interview & practical assessment by potential employer e. WWC Card f. Bus Driver's Licence (as required) 	<p>Minimal intervention and management by OWA and government agencies.</p> <p>Minimal resources required.</p> <p>Flexible.</p> <p>Can accommodate professionals from overseas / other states.</p> <p>De facto in practice by many schools, service providers etc.</p>	<p>Standards may vary too much and not meet or be equivalent of recognised standards.</p> <p>Expose clients to risks related to above</p>

4	<p>WA Competency Recognition Scheme (e.g. DSR Abseiling Instructor Panel)</p>	<p>WA/OWA and industry able to establish standards of recognition suitable to industry and environmental conditions in WA.</p> <p>One standard for industry in WA.</p>	<p>Will require huge amount of resources and commitment from government agencies, OWA and senior members/leaders of the industry to establish and implement this alternative 1st across many activity areas.</p>
5	<p>As stipulated in AASs in SA, Queensland, NSW, Tasmania and Victoria, Multiple Pathways to recognition of leaders are allowed. Examples are provided but in the end, Organisations apply the recognition pathway/s appropriate to their specific context.</p> <p>Some of examples of the multiple pathways that have been used include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cert III or IV in Outdoor Recreation (either in full or in the specific activity clusters) -NOLRS registration -Activity Specific Competency Certification for a recognised body: Australia Climbing Instructor's Association, Professional Association of Climbing Instructors, Australian Canoeing, -Organisational Accreditation or Qualification, (the AASs offer guidelines on key factors to be taken into account here. For example, one of the items listed here is <i>benchmarking against other recognised certifications/guidelines.</i>) <p><i>Another option would include having a formal process of recognition that looks at competency, currency and First Aid *</i></p> <p>Where benchmarks, standards and units of competency are set out in the AAS of the States reviewed, all of them include the phrase: <i>"..or equivalent"</i>.</p>	<p>Flexible - offering a benchmark balanced with guidelines on how competencies are to be assessed/recognised by employers & organisations.</p> <p>Employers & organisations empowered to select their own standards of recognition according to the resources available to them.</p> <p>Minimal resources required.</p> <p>Flexible.</p> <p>Professionals from other states and overseas can be accommodated.</p> <p>Enforcement of Standards rests with the Land Manager and employer as is the case with legislation.</p>	<p>Multiple standards. Relies on each organisation/employer to adopt recognition of competencies. Standards may vary.</p> <p>OWA would need to convene a SME panel to review certifications from a few bodies to determine if it is acceptable to be categorised as equivalent to the NORTP or NOLRS. This will take time and other resources.</p> <p>Land and Facility Managers will need to have a quality assessment system to ensure an organisation has a process to ensure its workers are competent when accessing sites and facilities.</p>

**please see Proposed Multiple Pathway Competency Scheme in recommendations section*

Note this does not address any training needs, it is only a benchmark for people to show competency.

55. Extracts of relevant sections of the AASs from Other States are set out in the box below. The multiple 'pathways' enabling clause is highlighted.

ORC AAS (Victoria)

"To lead activities a leader must be confident of having the **skills and experience at least equivalent** to that described by the following Units of Competency. A leader can acquire these skills and experience through training with community organisations such as clubs, via employers, TAFE colleges and universities, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), in-house training and by attaining international qualifications." The AAS goes on to list the specific units of competency under the National Training Package for Outdoor Recreation

A statement of attainment for these units is not required but the inclusion of this section is intended to provide a suitable benchmark describing the skills that leaders should have, although not all of the skills listed below will be applicable on all activities"

QORF AAS (Queensland)

"To reach the level (of competencies), a leader should have acquired skills at least **equivalent to the appropriate units of competency identified in the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package.**"

SPORT & RECREATION (Tasmania)

Supervisors or facilitators/conductors of these activities should be confident in demonstrating that they have the skills and experience, **which should be at least equivalent** to those described by the relevant units from the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package (NORTP)"

"A statement of attainment for these units is not compulsory. However, the inclusion of this section is intended to provide a suitable benchmark."

ORIC (NSW)

"Leaders of Adventure Activities acquire and develop their skills and abilities in a variety of ways; Leaders of adventure activities are recognised using **one or more** of pathways detailed below.

Organisations apply the recognition pathway(s) appropriate to their specific context."

RECREATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA (SA)

"In the absence of any established and recognised national training qualification for all mountain bike activity providers, any Ride Leader must be confident of having satisfied a process of skill acquisition which must be **at least equivalent to that described by the following selected units from the DET, Science and Training.**"

"A statement of attainment for these units is not compulsory. However, the inclusion of this section is intended to provide a suitable benchmark describing the skills that a Ride Leader should have as described **within the National Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package.**"

Proposal by the Australian Centre for Advanced Studies (ACAS)

56. A bold proposal was made by Randy Salmond of the ACAS - an RTO which is involved in the education sector.
57. The proposal would see OWA as the peak body in the Outdoor Industry partnering ACAS in establishing a framework for instructor and guide competencies using the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package (NORTP) as its base. Mapping onto the NORTP, OWA will determine the standards and evidence required to obtain the required statements of attainment whether through training, assessment or RPL. OWA will determine and appoint RTOs and registered instructors to deliver and assess the scheme/program. As the peak body, OWA would determine what is acceptable and what is not.
58. In this form the proposal by ACAS would, in essence, create a training and assessment system. The proposal has its merits; Instructors appointed by OWA who might also be Senior Outdoor Education teachers in schools (or Training and Development Schools identified by DET), could design, deliver and assess teachers who would then be awarded the required VET qualifications by OWA and ACAS. OWA's branding would be on the certificates awarded. A registration system, NOLRS, could be implemented on top of this if required in order to address the issue of monitoring currency. Other RTOs would then also be appointed in addition to the individual instructors who have their TAE10 and their skill specialisation competencies, as well as OWA in partnership with ACAS, who would have similar roles to that of an RTO.
59. In this proposed system, ACAS is willing to negotiate a range of financial options with OWA. It would also be open to managing the registration system for OWA.
60. It is submitted that the proposal by ACAS would require a significant investment of resources to establish and maintain/run. It is also felt that with the current low morale as industry professionals come out from almost a decade of the NOLRS, the ACAS proposal may not be timely. In the longer term, with sufficient funds and under the right industry climate, it may be recommended.
61. The ACAS proposal is summarised in schematic form at Annex M.

The Consultation Process

62. Between June-December 2011, the consultation process has proceeded on 7 platforms:
- a. One-to-one consultation sessions with industry professionals/leaders, outdoor practitioners/outdoor educators were consulted with (24 persons were consulted). This included one-to-one discussions with the OWA Board Members on the ITI Sub-Committee.
 - b. One Consultation-Feedback session with practitioners in the Southwest Area held at the Margaret River Community Hall on 6 September 2011 (2-4pm). The session was facilitated by the Consultants and Chaired by OWA Board Member, Peter White. (5 Outdoor Practitioners/Outdoor Educators from the Margaret River region attended the session)
 - c. One Consultation session with practitioners in the Perth-Metro Area held at Mt Lawley on 7 September 2011 (4-6 pm). The session was chaired by Gregg Moxham, Chairman of OWA and facilitated by the Consultants. (21 Outdoor Practitioners/Outdoor Educators attended the session.)
 - d. One Inter-Agency Meeting with 7 representatives from DSR, DET (DET), Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC) & OWA. The meeting was held on 7 September 2011.
 - e. Two meetings with the SME Panel on 18 October 2011 & 8 November 2011 to design and organise the January ITI 2012 Workshop.
 - f. A survey sent via email by OWA to members of the industry. Fifteen outdoor practitioners/outdoor educators (members and non-members of OWA) submitted their responses. The respondents submitted their forms by mid-September 2011.
 - g. The consultants also attended the second meeting of the WA Resource Group for Outdoor Educators (WARGOE) on 25 July 2011 where an overview of the ITI was given and feedback solicited.
 - h. Three meetings with Mr Jamie Bennett, Executive Officer of OWA since he took on the appointment in November 2011. Informal meetings with Mr Bennet over the course of the 21-23 January 2012 ITI workshop was also helpful in contributing to this paper.
63. The list of industry members who contributed to the above consultations is set out at Annex A. A copy of the survey form is attached at Annex B. The collated responses from industry are set out at Annexes C and D.

Feedback & Comments from Consultations

64. The feedback from the consultations was overwhelmingly consistent: Over 95% of interviewees felt that NOLRS should NOT be THE SOLE scheme for “RECOGNITION” of instructor/guide/leader competency as set out in the AASs. Some of the reasons for the unhappiness that were shared with the consultants include:
- a. NOLRS was pushed through without taking into account the feedback of the industry at large. An open and transparent review of NOLRS was not carried out in spite of calls for this to be done.
 - b. NOLRS did not adequately and affordably consider RPL of instructors, guides and leaders. The RPL processes were overwhelming difficult for the candidates, full of red tape and required enormous energy just to register. Many instructor, leaders and guides simply gave up or registered at levels far lower than their operating ability/skill/experience level. It was simply too time and energy consuming.
 - c. Outdoors Council of Australia (OCA) which ‘owns’ NOLRS is inadequately resourced to service the needs of the WA industry.
 - d. NOLRS was presented as meeting the National Training Package for Outdoor Recreation. This was felt to be untrue and a misrepresentation.
 - e. Apart from OWA managing the scheme on behalf of OCA (until Dec 2010 when OCA decided to hand the administration over to the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation – QORF), WA industry members “suffered” much as a result of the ‘forced’ adoption of NOLRS. The returns have been highly unsatisfactory.
 - f. It had been explained by some of the senior members of the Outdoor Industry interviewed that NOLRS was misrepresented as a National Scheme when in reality this was not the case. It was felt that WA had, by far, the highest number of registrants on NOLRS. Second highest was Queensland and a smattering of registrants from Victoria. Tasmania pulled out of NOLRS and so did South Australia. In short, the scheme isn’t National.
 - g. Many who were consulted felt that the NOLRS did not offer much of an advantage for industry here. “Not worth the cost and energy required to get on it.” (Quote from the survey. Please see Annex D)
 - h. It was also shared by some respondents that when OCA launched the Partnered Assessment Providers (PAP) scheme that required enormous amounts of energy and resources from training providers/organisations to get accreditation and registration as a PAP for the NOLRS. Getting the accreditation was likened to be “..worse than getting endorsed on the National Training Package”. After all the trouble, time, money and resources spent on getting PAP status, the providers were informed by OCA that it was going to drop the PAP scheme altogether. This caused an amount of anger, disappointment and frustration in the industry.
 - i. “NOLRS keeps changing the ‘boundaries & goal posts’ continually.” One Outdoor Educator who shared his views in detail in his OWA survey form stated that:

“I am currently going through the NOLRS registration process. It is confusing, contradictory and the boundaries keep on changing. I completed the TAFE course in May 2011. It was designed to give me NOLRS registration and already the course is out of date requiring me to obtain another unit for NOLRS. How is this efficient?” – Pam Bubrzycki, St Marks Anglican Community School.

(Please see collated feedback form comments at Annex D)
 - j. NORLS was never meant to be recognition of competencies. It was a scheme to be a registration system – meant to assist Employers and Land Managers to screen and check currency & competency without having to look to various qualifications, certificates and log books. However, the

way the sections on competency have been written in the AASs seem to frame the NOLRS as a measure of competency with the phrase

- i. Leaders are deemed to be competent if they have their NOLRS registration. It is this conflation of registration with competency in the choice of words in the AASs that have given the perception by the industry stakeholders that OWA has elevated the NOLRS from a registration system to that which confers recognition of competency. Many in the industry feel they have been 'taken for a ride', 'conned' and 'betrayed'.

(Please refer to Annex D for further comments.)

65. Steve Sertis, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation's Lead Guide, who trains and assesses the Foundation's 30 volunteer guides, had the following to say about the section on competency in the AAS with regards to Bushwalking:

*"..Our intention is and always has been to give people the confidence, skills and knowledge needed to go walk the Bibbulmun Track themselves – it is open for anyone to do. We cannot prevent people from doing so but we are here to arm them with the skills and knowledge to do it in a safe way. **If all our volunteers are now required to be instructors and fulfill the requirements outlined above (in the AAS) then we may as well close down now and just let everyone figure out bushwalking for themselves.**"*

66. The above sentiment (highlighted in bold) is similar to the comment given by Colin Walker (President, Perth Bushwalkers), Ian MacDonald (President of the Federation of WA Bushwalkers) and Peter Hegarty (Insurance Convener, Federation of WA Bushwalkers). At a meeting where the three leaders of the Bushwalking Clubs were present, they each shared their feelings that AAS were too constricting and hadn't taken into account many of the inputs from the Clubs. Many instances of the club representatives having objected and then having to insist on their views being reflected officially (during the process of consultation in drawing up the AAS) were shared. There is a palpable lack of trust in, frustration and disappointment with OWA.

67. Overall there is a sense of distrust and disappointment with OWA and the AAS. It was with this sense that the three bushwalking representatives **declined to accept the OWA invitation to sit on the ITI Subject Matter Expert Panel**. They felt that if there were to come on board like they did before with the NOLRS/AAS etc., they would have to fight tooth and nail for their interests to be taken into consideration with no guarantee that the end result would include their views. This had been their experience in previous OWA consultative processes.

68. The extent of **UNANIMITY AND INTENSITY of the NEGATIVE FEEDBACK** from the members of the industry (themselves senior practitioners and leaders in the industry) **CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED**.

69. As mentioned above, DEC has not seen it necessary to adopt the AAS in its policies and guidelines (Policy 18) with one exception in the case of Abseiling and Rock Climbing. However, even in the case of DEC's Policy 18, it has taken a pragmatic approach – recognising not just NOLRS as the only indicator of competency. (Please refer to paragraph 29, above).

The Reality in Practice

70. The picture of the reality in practice, as understood by the ITI Consultants is that:

- a. A number of the AASs are being seen as impractical and as a consequence, are being ignored as far as the Instructor/Leader/Guide NOLRS Competency Requirements are concerned in favour of a more simple, pragmatic and effective method of screening and assessment of competency. Admittedly, the AASs have only been officially 'in force' since end January 2011, with the exception of Abseiling, which has been officially 'in force' since 30 June 2011.
- b. Schools, organisations, employers and private industry providers employ Outdoor Leaders, Instructors, Educators and Guides based on assessment of:
 - i. experience and demonstration of skills in the activity area(s);
 - ii. their qualifications (obtained from a reputable organisation – e.g. Professional Association of Climbing Instructors, Australian Canoeing, National Outdoor Recreation Training Package – Certificate II, III, IV);
 - iii. their currency and experience (obtained from interview, practical assessments and examining the log books);
 - iv. possession of a current First Aid Certification (appropriate level);
 - v. possession of a current Bus Driver's Licence (where required);
 - vi. possession of a current "Working with Children Check Card"; and
 - vii. possession of an attitude and aptitude that fits the organisational culture of the employer.

71. The screening and selection process roughly outlined in paragraph 70b is simple, cost effective and appropriately adequate to meet the needs of prospective employers. Many organisations employ professionals from overseas or from other states. Although it has been claimed to be a National Scheme, the NOLRS clearly isn't one.

Opportunities for Training

72. From the ITI survey and consultations, many industry stakeholders expressed their expectations of OWA. One thing that stood out was for OWA to organise, plan, facilitate and coordinate training opportunities for the industry members. (Please see Annex D).
73. This lack of opportunity for supported training is deeply felt in the outdoor education sector – especially in the public schools. As can be seen from Annex F, in 2010, 51 out of 65 schools offering outdoor education at Year 11 and 12 are government schools. In 2010, 2,129 Year 12 students and 2,930 Year 11 students were enrolled in outdoor education.
74. DET estimates that there are 600 public school teachers involved in delivering outdoor education. It is also generally acknowledged that many of the public school teachers do not have some form of qualification or recognition of competency in the activity areas (e.g. bushwalking, abseiling, climbing, canoeing). However, in DET policies and guidelines, the Director General of Education may (through the principals) recognise competency of the teachers even though they do not possess what is deemed to be 'formal qualifications'.
75. DET also recognises the fact that many of the public schools do not have the resources to facilitate professional development for teachers. The budget per teacher is \$150 annually. In addition to this, the school would need to spend \$450 per day for a substitute teacher to cover for the teacher who is undergoing professional development training. This means that teachers who would like to attend professional development courses in outdoor education would have to:
- a. spend their own money to 'top up' the allocated budget of \$150.00 for professional development training;
 - b. undergo training over a weekend or during a school vacation period.
76. In attempting to address these circumstances, DET has been:
- a. Revising its policies and guidelines to make them more user friendly for teachers.
 - b. Encouraging its teachers to participate on the pilot RPL/Training/Assessment program in January 2012 by disseminating the information to all Heads of Learning Areas/Heads of PE in the public schools, the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools, WA. The 3 day program in January 2012 is highly subsidised (approx. \$309-\$1240 pp.) with each teacher having to pay only \$150.00. (see Annex N for a draft budget to deliver to estimated 600 educators).
 - c. Exploring the idea of identifying schools (and teachers) with expertise in Outdoor Education and providing them with some resources to lead/facilitate/coordinate training of other teachers in schools in the same cluster.
77. The above circumstances were also observed by Jason Zaur's in his Master's level research/thesis (Notre Dame University) entitled: *"Training Backgrounds Perceived and Content Knowledge of Outdoor Education Teachers in Western Australia"*. According to his (albeit limited sample size) research, the number of teachers out there organising and delivering Outdoor Recreation/Education programs for students in schools (mostly public schools) without the support for training and professional development, is worrying.
78. Outdoor training providers in WA have also been doing their bit to offer professional development training for teachers/outdoor educators. Brett Huntly of Outdoor Discoveries explains that he has tried to offer many training programs for teachers but the take up has been low and disappointing. Usually

the courses end up having to be cancelled due to this factor. This is an area which OWA, as the peak body, can support the industry to make a much needed difference. Clearly more resources are required to facilitate sponsorship acquisition, the coordination and marketing of the training and professional development program for industry stakeholders. (Please refer to Annex D.)

79. There has been a loss of training providers, such as Central TAFE, which suggests the Outdoors Industry sector as a whole, including DSR, DEC, DET, Tourism, needs to critically address this current situation.

OWA SME Panel and the January 2012 Pilot Training Initiative

80. It was initially proposed that an SME Panel be established for a limited time (say 3-6months) to explore, deliberate the issues relating to the most suitable standards for competency in the industry. Many of the factors elaborated upon in the preceding paragraphs would be weighed and considered. The SME Panel would then make a recommendation to the OWA Board for establishment and implementation of the competency recognition scheme for WA.
81. The selection of the SME Panel would, for this first ITI phase, be an interim one. Time was a critical factor in completing this phase. However, after this phase, a more elaborate and thorough process of selection and appointment of an SME Panel was planned, which would convene from time to time for a short duration – say 4 weeks - to deliberate and decide on a very specific set of issues.
82. The SME Panel concept was shared with industry stakeholders at consultation meetings in September 2011. Individuals were invited to be considered for Phase 1. An interim SME Panel was formed in October 2011 after receiving the endorsement of the ITI Committee. Members of the SME Panel included:
- a. Duncan Picknoll (Notre Dame University)
 - b. Brett Huntly (Outdoor Discoveries)
 - c. Graham Sharpe (Department of Sport and Recreation)
 - d. Markus Leone (Safelift & Fairbridge)
 - e. Grant Tomlinson (Mandurah Senior College)
 - f. Peter White (Industry Standards Panel, ITI Committee)
83. However, with the change in leadership of OWA, the Board informed the ITI Consultants via email on 18 October 2011 that the SME Panel was to focus on planning the January 2012 Pilot RPL/Training/Assessment Program under the ITI. This was explained by the Chair of OWA to the SME Panel at the second SME Panel meeting on 8 November 2011. The SME Panel accepted this new mandate and completed its planning of the January 2012 Pilot RPL/Training/Assessment Program including the selection and appointment of the RTO to deliver the program. The Panel duly declared that it had served its purpose and held its final meeting on 8 November 2011.
84. The January 2012 Pilot Training & Assessment Program was deliberated and decided upon by OWA on 8 November. The program which was successfully run on 21-23 January 2012 is attached at Annex G. The poster for the program was generously designed by DSR with inputs from BTG, Fairbridge, DET and OWA. It is attached at Annex H. Information on the program was shared by the Chair of OWA at the DET Conference on Heads of Learning Areas and Heads of Physical Education on 15 November 2011.
85. BTG engaged Fairbridge to deliver the program. DSR kindly sponsored the Woodman Point campsite and its facilities. The program was highly subsidised by DSR and OWA. Candidates were charged only \$150.00 for the 3 workshops. DET was pro-active in disseminating information about the program to the teachers in the public schools as well as through the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools WA.
86. In preparation for the anticipated ongoing roll out phase of the Training Initiative, the following RTOs have indicated their in-principle interest in delivering RPL, Training and Assessment according to the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package for the Outdoor Industry for a possible Phase II of the ITI:
- (a) Fairbridge
 - (b) YMCA
 - (c) The Australian Centre for Advanced Studies

Key Principles and Considerations for Adopting Recognition Schemes

87. Some of the key principles and considerations in adopting the most suitable recognition schemes for the Outdoors Industry at this point in time are listed below:
- a. It is reasonably simple to administer making it accessible to all concerned (cost and time wise).
 - b. It balances the need for one mutually agreed upon standard that meets the needs of the industry, even though there may be multiple pathways to reaching that standard.
 - c. It is sustainable – the industry has the resources required (human, time, financial, material resources) to implement, maintain and develop the scheme to meet the changing industry conditions from time to time. Sustainability is likely to require a measure of ongoing support from related government agencies.
 - d. The industry – including clubs, government agencies, OWA, and senior industry leaders must feel that they OWN the scheme. While it is impossible to obtain 100% agreement on the adoption of the scheme, a majority of the key “players” in the industry must consciously adopt and support the scheme after a process of deliberation, consultation and reflection.
 - e. The scheme provides an optimal balance that serves to enhance and protect the best interests of stakeholders – clients, students, organisations, business and government agencies.
 - f. The scheme must be adequately developed, marketed and resourced with professional tools developed that make compliance easier and assist people towards better practice.

Summary of Recommendations

88. In the light of the issues and points set out above, the following recommendations are made:

OWA's Role in the Industry

- a. Although this issue is strictly not within the remit of the ITI, the consultants feel that in the light of the overwhelming responses surfaced in the consultations, it needs to be reflected in this paper. OWA needs to re-examine its role and add value to the Outdoors Industry. Some of the respondents have shared their expectations of OWA at Annex D. Most are of the view that OWA has not met their expectations. Some of the areas it could explore a bigger role in are:

- i. Facilitating, coordinating and supporting training and development and professional opportunities:

Apart from the training, assessment and RPL initiatives that have been recommended above, as the peak body, OWA should also facilitate and organise professional development training, workshops, seminars for its members and industry stakeholders in general. This is a priority area and is widely seen as having been overlooked in favour of the desire for registration based framework initiatives. Any developments in this area must include the provision of support to aspiring practitioners who currently face a number of barriers to entry into the industry. This is consistent with the role of other peak and professional bodies to ensure that its members/industry stakeholders are:

- Up to date with the latest developments;
- Able to refresh and review their skills and knowledge;
- Able to share experiences, skills and knowledge;
- Internships / traineeships for junior practitioners; and
- Network to build a stronger industry state-wide and expose OWA members to national and international opportunities.

From the surveys conducted and in discussions with industry stakeholders, this need has been also clearly and consistently articulated. The professional development and networking programs/seminars might need to be held in the various regions to enable better access by stakeholders in the industry.

- ii. Bringing the voices of the industry to the Agencies (through advocacy, lobbying) so as to support, co create and maintain a vibrant, dynamic industry that meets the expectations of the stakeholders.
- iii. Facilitate the establishment and maintenance of a more efficient and transparent database of accidents, incidents and near misses across the industry and ensure that this information is shared with all stakeholders. This would include a timely and comprehensive analysis of the data to produce recommendations that would continually improve risk management.
- iv. Establish and maintain a continually updated database of information on the number and profile of stakeholders – instructors, guides, educators, participants, students, supervisors, administrators etc. and the trends in the industry. In this role, OWA would need to draw upon and share the information from/with government agencies, schools, service providers, clubs/associations and other private sector companies. OWA must be seen to be inputting into the strategic direction of the relevant Government departments and support the ongoing development of member organisations.

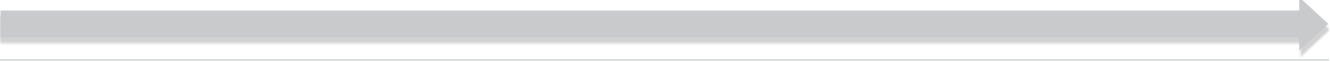
- v. Facilitate, support and advocate for appropriate and on-going research with universities (and other research organisations) in WA, other states and internationally to build a more robust industry.
- vi. To develop and grow a network of SMEs, under the Industry Standards Panel, to advise on specific technical issues as required. For example:
 - For an anticipated Phase 2 ITI roll out
 - To determine priority activity areas in consultation with other industry stakeholders

AAS – Competency Provisions (Multiple Pathways)

- a. **An overwhelming majority (95%) of persons consulted and interviewed by the consultants were of the view that there should be multiple pathways to recognition of Outdoor Leaders' competencies.** The criteria in the AASs in this section were seen as too restrictive, unrealistic, unnecessary and turned away many people (especially experienced people) from being more involved as Outdoor Leaders, Educators and Professionals.
- b. In the words of Peter White (Dwellingup Adventures & OWA Board Member): “we need to find a sweet spot” somewhere in between the two extremes of “NOLRS only” scheme and the Laissez-Faire “Anything goes” positions.
- c. Some of the key considerations that were suggested by the industry stakeholders who were engaged during the course of the ITI include:
 - i. Simple
 - ii. Affordable
 - iii. Accessible
 - iv. Meet the needs of the industry
 - v. Any standards should reflect a balance of common practice and minimum standard based on risk management
- d. It is doubtful if OWA has the resources to administer a multiple pathways state-wide registration scheme for 16 activity areas. It is recommended that employers use their judgement (as they do now) when they evaluate potential instructors/guides/leaders for employment. They would need to show that there is a process in place to evaluate their skills and experiences perhaps by:
 - i. Checking out the qualifications and statements of competency they have attained (e.g. Australian Canoeing Cert, Cert III/IV, Professional Association of Climbing Instructors etc.). Over time (say the next 24-36 months), instructors, guides and their employers will get their qualifications mapped via RPL or Assessment to the NORTP.
 - ii. Reviewing their logbook to ensure currency and level of experience that fits the needs of the job
 - iii. Checking to see if there are any other qualifications/licences that have been obtained that are necessary for the job (e.g. Bus Driver's Licence, Senior First Aid, WWC Card)
 - iv. Having an interview and organising `check-out' or assessment session(s) to determine any practical skills that are needed – also to appraise aptitude and attitude to match with the job and organisation
 - v. Checking out the references, previous employers etc. of the potential candidate
- e. Where the skills/experiences of the instructor/leader don't match the needs of the program /employer/clients, the employer/organisation engaging the leader/instructor will be responsible to facilitate necessary professional development/training/orientation program for the staff member.
- f. It is submitted that this very simple and practical system is already in place. The system has always been in place. It is doubtful if any employer would simply look at a NOLRS registration card or a Certificate III/IV statement and employ without having a process like the one above. (Land Managers have used the system above but may need to consider a more sophisticated system like the current DEC Cave Leaders Recognition System!)

- g. The AAS should be amended to enable multiple pathways to recognition; placing the responsibility on the employer or the organisation engaging the leader/instructor to ensure that there is a match between the needs of the program, the needs of the client and the skills and experiences of the instructor/leader.
- h. Should there be a need to offer more guidance, OWA may convene an SME Panel from time to time to deliberate and offer guidelines as to what would be considered sufficient competency or experience for particular sets of activities/programs/clients. The Panel would be set up on a case-by-case basis. Guidelines could be shared with the rest of the outdoor industry for comments and subsequent amendments before being appearing officially on the OWA website or other forms of publications. The SME Panel could also consider including a range of “minimum to ideal” standards of competency that might look something like what is reflected in the Diagram below.

Proposed Multiple Pathway Competency Scheme



	Competency/Qualifications	Currency	First Aid	Outcome/ Management	Management
1	National Outdoor Leaders Registration Scheme (NOLRS)	Already taken into consideration when registering for NOLRS	Already considered	Competent and Current for the areas stated in the Qualifications	Recommended that Potential Employer/Client interview the instructor/guide and conduct a practical assessment of his/her skill, experience & overall suitability for the job/task/organisation
2	National Outdoor Recreation Training Package (Full Cert III or IV) – awarded by an RTO	Updated Log Book	Updated certification to be presented to employer/client	Minimum competency requirements. Assessment would be in the context of the workplace operational areas & conditions. Organisations engaging these instructors & guides need to ensure that operational policies and systems take into account the competency and experience levels to ensure effective Risk Management (e.g. having additional experienced/competent staff at the on-site team)	
3	Statements of Competency Attainment from Specialist Activity Based organisations (e.g. Australian Canoeing/Canoeing WA/WA Climbing Association/Professional Assn of Climbing Instructors etc)	Updated Log Book			
4	Statements of Competency Attainment for the Groups in the Elective Segment of SIS40310 or SIS 30410 (e.g. Canoeing – Flat Water, Bushwalking – Controlled etc) - awarded by an RTO and SISOODR404A (manage risk in outdoors)	Updated Log Book			
5	Statements of Competency Attainment for the Groups in the Elective Segment of SIS40310 or SIS 30410 (e.g. Canoeing – Flat Water, Bushwalking – Controlled etc) - awarded by Workplace Assessor (with relevant SIS 40310 and TAE40110) + SISOODR404A (manage risk in outdoors)	Updated Log Book			

- a. Any pathway changes will require appropriate communication and marketing strategies to 'sell' the concept to the industry. This will require resources and funding to support the provision of communication tools and risk management tools.

Outdoor Educators

- a. This issue has been set out at paragraph 78 above. (Reference: *"Training Backgrounds Perceived and Content Knowledge of Outdoor Education Teachers in Western Australia"* by Jason Zaur, Notre Dame Master's Thesis.) The consultants have encountered much sharing from quite a few Heads of Physical Education (PE) and learning areas who lament that they have new WAICOT graduate teachers who have just come into schools and have been tasked to teach outdoor education. Many are inexperienced and unqualified in this area. Even PE teachers only get the cursory bushwalk or camping experience let alone any skill specific training. A two track approach is suggested.
- b. It is suggested that the DET recognise that resources need to be made available to schools to train teachers to be competent to design, deliver, supervise, guide and instruct outdoor education in school. Ideally, all Outdoor Educators should be trained and be current in their skill areas. DET has, to some extent, started addressing this issue by appointing Training and Development Schools for Outdoor Education in WA. John Tonkin College in Mandurah has been appointed as a TDS for Year 11 and 12. Sadly however, there were no takers for the TDS for Year 8-10. It is understood that the TDS staff is responsible for curriculum development as well as professional development. The system is all very new and will only commence in February 2012.
- c. While this is a good step, more needs to be done. As it stands, DET has 'bought' 20% of the time of one senior teacher at John Tonkin College. This is equivalent to 1 day a week. With curriculum and professional development roles in Outdoor Education (theoretically, for the all state schools in WA), this is woefully inadequate. A professional development budget at \$150 per teacher annually is another challenge.
- d. OWA should play a key role in advocating for Outdoor Educators to address the above issue.
- e. While it is ideal to insist that all outdoor educators attain the qualifications in the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package, the immediate reality is that many do not have formal qualifications at all. While advocacy work is going on, it is proposed that a more practical approach be run side by side. Items 4 and 5 in the diagram on page 32 set it out in visual form.
- f. Creating a standard that is not reasonably attainable is simply not workable. It doesn't help the Outdoor Educators and their schools address the issues they need to face. In reality, many schools are just doing it on their own without training their teachers. They have a job to do and they just do it. The DET guidelines and policies enable them to operate that way. Given the number of students and schools engaged in Outdoor Education and Outdoor Recreation activities and expeditions, there have been minimal fatalities or serious accidents/incidents recorded, however what is not known is the robustness of a recording process although it is safe to assume that no fatalities or serious injuries have gone unnoticed. This lucky streak may not continue for long given the annual increase of students taking on outdoor education and outdoor recreation in schools. Something practical needs to be done and done immediately. In particular a system for recording near misses, that is shared amongst the practitioners of Outdoor Education / Adventure Activities. This may exist at an organisational level but it is not apparent that this is analysed at an industry level. This presents another opportunity for OWA input / management / facilitation.
- g. It is proposed that more training programs be organised like the one organised in January 2012. Ideally a series of programs would be organised to adequately cover the identified needs of the industry, however there may be a conflict with regards to resources available, Support (and sponsorship) from DSR and DET as well as DEC would be very helpful indeed. The main focus of the training workshops would be to deliver training, assessment and RPL mapping for outdoor educators. A modified version of the workshop which focuses only on training should also be considered. OWA is well placed to facilitate and coordinate this vitally important thrust.

- h. The aim would be to get the teachers trained and assessed in the relevant “Activity Groups” (with their clustered units of competencies as set out in the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package) – e.g. Bushwalking –controlled, Canoeing – Flatwater etc. Guide or Instructor level as required. It is recommended that this together with SISOODR404A – management risk in the outdoors be the basic building block for training and developing outdoor educators. With this covered, experience can be gained and schools can plan their outdoor activities by deploying more experienced and competent teachers (those with NOLRS or Cert III and IV) together with these teachers trained at this basic level to improve the management of operations and risk.
- i. It is estimated that there are 600 teachers involved in Outdoor Education today. Over a period of 3-4 years, as more and more teachers attain this basic level competency, OWA, in partnership with DSR, DET and DEC, can ratchet it up a notch by facilitating the teachers getting their full Cert III and/or Cert IV qualifications.
- j. To further enhance accessibility of the Mapped Skills to the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package a few suggestions are being proposed.
 - i. OWA, DET, DSR and DEC would work with a few RTOs so that costs are kept low and timing for the training scheduled optimally. Three RTOs have indicated their interest in working on this initiative – YMCA, Fairbridge and the Australian Centre for Advanced Studies. Fairbridge has actually been able to design and deliver a successful training program in Jan 2012 as part of this project.
 - ii. Adopting the principle of “open source”. OWA could develop a “generic assessment framework” (including the development of simple assessment tools) and make it available at little or no cost to assessors. Assessors would be anyone (including senior teacher) with a Cert IV in Outdoor Recreation (in the relevant activity area) and a Cert IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110) with the relevant experience. Such assessors would then use the assessment framework (tools) to assess their staff (teachers) without having needed to work under an RTO arrangement. The training would be done within the context of the specific work environment of the candidates.

As the assessment framework and tools would fit the criteria and be mapped to the National Outdoor Recreation Training Package, should the candidates later have a desire (and the requisite resources) to obtain an RTO endorsement of the units of competency, they can then present their evidence of assessment to the RTO. Having done the assessment in such a way as suggested, getting RTO endorsement should not be a problem. Meanwhile, the immediate need of assessing competency and awarding qualifications has been addressed.

- k. Simply put OWA needs to advise DET:
 - i. Of the risk existing due to lack of teacher competency and experience.
 - ii. To implement a skills assessment for all outdoor educators.
 - iii. Of the need for funding for ongoing training and professional development.

Support for Clubs / Volunteers

- a. OWA should investigate whether similar impacts are applicable to recreational clubs which will have more limited resources for attaining professional registration.

Accreditation for Employers / Organisations

- a. Instead of placing undue burden on the instructor/guide/leader, OWA should lobby for the establishment of an accreditation system for employers/organisations to ensure that systems are in place for the screening/checkout and investment in professional development of the staff. The accreditation system could also look at to what extent the organisation meets the standards set out

in the AASs – changing it from a minimum requirement to a best practice document. However, given the state the industry is in at the moment, it is recommended that accreditation be deferred until the up-skilling of the industry has taken root and well underway – perhaps in 5 years.

Too Many AASs

- a. It is submitted that OWA may be trying to cover too much ground by having 16 AAS – ranging from horse-riding to 4WD etc. Unless OWA can truly claim to be representative of these organisations who have the experience and skill in their specific area, it should leave them to regulate themselves or leave it to the relevant authorities. We recommend the Industry Standards Panel consult / engage / inform the relevant clubs / organisations / activity groups of the AASs and review the list of AASs with a view to identifying priority areas for compliance.

Role of the AAS

- a. It is proposed that the role of the AAS be made consistent with that of other states and that a guidance document be adapted to suit the needs of the particular program. It could be set out as a suggested 'best practice' document. The current positioning of the AAS as a one-size-fits-all minimum industry standard for schools, outdoor clubs and tourism operators may be too ambitious and limiting. It may also not suit the operational needs and business models of organisations in the various sectors.

The Missing Sector – Tourism

- a. It is viewed with some concern by the consultants that, despite all their efforts, they have been unable to engage the tourism industry as a whole – notably the Department of Tourism and the WATC. It is recognised that it was the tourism sector that initiated many of the changes towards regulation, standardisation and control in the outdoor industry. Yet, it is representatives and voices from this sector that are missing. The consultants are unable to ascertain what standard are being used by the Adventure Tourism Sector. In a telephone conversation with the WATC we understand that organisations operating in the adventure tourism market are advised of the need to adhere to NOLRS but the WATC admitted that they do not have the resources to do any more. Indeed the WATC stated that they work 'closely' with OWA and encourage their members to contact OWA for information, but in practice this does not happen. At the Inter Agency Meeting on 7 September 2011, WATC were noted as attending, but failed to show up. DEC, DSR, DET and OWA representatives carried on with the meeting.
- b. It is recommended that a more robust relationship is established with the tourism sector. In particular OWA should lobby for an adventure tourism focused training/assessments/RPL needs analysis consistent with requirements in other sectors.
- c. An opportunity would be for OWA to lobby the Tourism Council of WA to include a greater emphasis on compliance to the AAS as part of the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP).
- d.

New Standards of Competency

- a. Organisations like Notre Dame University which deliver degree programs in Outdoor Pursuits should also be in a position to establish standards of competency for their students without requiring them to go through the VET system (Cert III/IV). There is already a precedent in Victoria where La Trobe University partners the Victorian Outdoor Educators Association (VOEA) to establish statements of attainment of competencies for different skill categories. (Please refer to the Australian Journal for Outdoor Education, 12(2), pages 32-38 (2008): "*Teacher Qualification*

Guidelines, Ecological Literacy and Outdoor Education” by Peter Martin. This is another area where OWA can play a key role contributing to the development and training of Outdoor Educators in WA.

- b. Mapping such a scheme to the National Outdoor Training Package or equivalent would be of great help to the faculty and students from Notre Dame who, in addition to their course work and practical assessment are forced to pay extra to be VET certified to be employable in the Outdoor Industry. If standards and processes can be agreed, and quality is ensured, a certificate of attainment could be jointly issued by Notre Dame University and OWA. Two samples of such certificates awarded by The University of Ballarat and VOEA are set out at Annex I.
- c. There will be other opportunities for OWA to partner with other universities in WA in the area of teacher training to facilitate Outdoor Pursuits/Education modules and competency certification.
 - d. Given the open source approach to training and assessment recommended above, an experienced and skilled course leader at Notre Dame like Duncan Picknoll could even start assessing and facilitating RPL for his undergraduate students, mapping their assessment to the NORTP. With TAE 10, someone like Mr Picknoll could assist students to gather and organise their evidence and assessments in such a way that they could easily approach an RTO to obtain formal qualifications, assuming funds for this become available. Alternatively, OWA could appoint Notre Dame as an appropriate assessment body (as per the ACAS model) and the assessed students could obtain formal statements of attainment directly from Mr Picknoll. Meanwhile, the students would have been assessed on a framework that is rigorous and mapped to the NORTP with evidence to show for it.

Conclusion

89. The issues facing the outdoor community/industry in Western Australia are serious. Some of the challenges, opportunities and issues facing the industry have been articulated by the respondents in the survey. Some suggestions at addressing them are have also been tabled. (Please see Annex D). OWA needs to play and be seen to play a key role in facilitating, supporting and assisting the industry and all its stakeholders.
90. Prior to November 2011, feelings of anger, hopelessness, frustration and cynicism seem to be commonly and consistently expressed by the majority of survey participants. (Please refer to quotes at Annex J.) Many feel that OWA is irrelevant, unimportant and even an obstacle to the development and growth of the industry.
91. Pete Nidd talked about the 'mining wage driven' economy in WA. WA is losing many of its Professional Leaders/Instructors/Guides – some of the best and most experienced have simply walked away from the industry. The wages are relatively low – and grossly insufficient to fund the required professional training programs that are required for them to operate at their level of expertise. "Our instructors and educators cannot live on passion alone. It is not sustainable" – says Nidd.
92. Whatever training / assessment / recognition of competency / registration scheme the WA Outdoor Community adopts, must be supported by the required resources – both financial and time investments for staff development. The burden cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of the instructor/educator.
93. The gargantuan efforts made by those interviewed are inspiring and contribute greatly towards sustaining the outdoor industry and community in WA. As veterans of a decade of mostly voluntary contributions made using personal resources and at their own expense for what they see as 'giving back to the community', even they exhausted and disillusioned.
94. WA may truly be at a defining crossroads. One last heave is required to salvage what is possible from a community that has seen so much heart and goodwill and demonstrated so much professionalism. This initiative is one small step of many that must be made to steer the industry in our chosen direction. OWA is but one part of this community with the potential to serve, meet and possibly exceed the needs of all.
95. The timely appointment of Jamie Bennett as the Executive Officer of OWA together with the successful run of the January 2012 Training-Assessment Workshop at Woodman Point is a turning point in the state of affairs of the Outdoors Industry. Before the appointment of Mr Bennett and the conclusion of the Pilot Training-Assessment-RPL workshop on 21-23 January 2012 at Woodman Point, there seemed to be very little positive comment and feedback about the state the industry is in (as evidenced from the survey in September 2011 and in the conversations the consultants had with members of the industry).
96. Since 23 January 2012, feedback from the participants on the January workshop has been very positive and encouraging. (please see Annex L1). OWA should secure more funds from DET, DEC, DSR and Department of Tourism to run more such courses in 2012 running up to the AAS deadline in February 2013 (and even beyond).
97. OWA, working together with DSR, DEC, DET, Tourism Council of WA, Dept of Tourism and the outdoor industry in general can revitalize, rejuvenate and yes, even heal the Outdoor Industry & Community.
98. The above preliminary proposal is submitted for the consideration of members of the Western Australia Outdoor Industry. It is hoped that the ideas can be criticized, analysed and built upon.
99. The robustness / success of any development of initiatives depends upon the ability of OWA, DSR, Tourism, DET, DEC and other relevant organisations to work together. This cannot be overemphasised.