

## Release of Western Australian Adventure Activity Standard Bushwalking Version 3.2 – update.



The WA Adventure Activity Standard for Bushwalking has been reviewed and revised resulting in a current set of guidelines to support bushwalking activities.

The review process progressed over two years and included open public consultation. Feedback was then considered by a Technical Working Group of activity experts and ratified by the WA Industry Standards Panel.

These voluntary standards provide a common benchmark for activity providers reflecting the minimum industry requirements and responsibilities for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for dependent groups.

The new standard is: **Bushwalking Version 3.2**

### Summary of changes

A summary of changes is outlined below. It is recommended that organisations take the finalised standard and use it to review their own practices and procedures.

- Added reference to voluntary nature of AAS, and
- Replaced 'must' with 'should' in reference to AAS use in guiding the activity, for clarification and consistency with draft National AAS
- Replaced 'ensure the safety of the group' to 'promote the safety of the group' as clarification of scope
- Deleted 'urban suburbs' in activity definition
- Expanded definition of relevant medical information about participants beyond just that which is advised by participants
- Deleted example of physical requirements (was too specific)
- Simplified formatting of Leader: Participant ratios
- Added recommendation that a female leader should also be present where there are female participants under 18 years, especially for overnight walks
- Replaced reference to leaders 'Accepting responsibility' for the activity and the environment with reference to 'managing' the activity and environmental impact.
- Replaced 'All required competencies' with 'All expected competencies' in reference to competencies available to the group
- Replaced 'dependent participants' with 'participants' to remove redundancy
- Deleted requirement to report perceived breaches of the AAS to Outdoors WA
- Redefined Recognition of Leaders for consistency with other Standards and to recognise different methods of attaining competence
- Replaced 'required' with 'recommended' in relation to First Aid qualifications
- Replaced 'Senior First Aid' with 'Provide First Aid'
- Added reference to at least one leader holding First Aid qualifications in multi-leader groups

- Added requirement to comply with all relevant legislation and Codes of Practice
- Added UPLOADS as an option for reporting incidents
- Deleted requirement for fire starting equipment
- Replaced Unit Code HLTF301B (Apply first aid) with HLTF301C (Provide first aid)
- Replaced PUAOPE002A with PUAOPE002B (Operate communications systems and equipment)

Differing views on leader: participant ratios remained unresolved by the review process and the issue was deferred for settling by the forthcoming National Standards.

The full set of WA Adventure Activity Standards and supporting resources can be downloaded from the Outdoors WA website at <http://www.outdoorswa.org.au/Industry/aas>

### **Future standards**

The WA Adventure Activity Standards are one tool supporting safety in the outdoors in WA. There is currently a project underway to align all state Adventure Activity Standards into Australian Adventure Activity Standards. Each state will maintain their own standards until these national standards are completed. More details on the Australian AAS can be found at <http://australianaas.org.au/>

### **Acknowledgements**

Outdoors WA on behalf of the WA Outdoor Sector thanks the many outdoors volunteers who have put in hundreds of volunteer hours to sustain the development and ongoing review of the standards to support common safe practices in the outdoors in WA.

The WA Department of Sport and Recreation is acknowledged for their funding and ongoing support for outdoor recreation and the WA Adventure Activity Standards. Thanks to PX2 for their professional consultancy work on the project.

