



Department of
Sport and Recreation

Western Australian Adventure Activity Standard

Common safe practice for groups in the outdoors

Caving

Version 2.0 January 2013



Department of
Environment and Conservation
Our environment, our future 



Western Australian Adventure Activity Standard

Caving

Adventure Activity Standards benchmark the minimum industry requirements and responsibilities for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for commercial and non – commercial groups.

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.

The Adventure Activity Standards are designed to be applied when the participants are, for the purposes of participating in the caving activity, either

- In a pre-existing group
 - Where either the group members (and or its representative third party) have made a collective purchase of / collective decision to participate in the activity (ie a school, corporate or community group); or are
- Formed into a new group
 - Where the participants have purchased / made the decision to participate in the activity as individuals or smaller groups, but having done so become a part of a new group (ie 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 existence of other types 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. (ie independent club members participating in an activity). It is intended that such less defined groups of independent participants are not “captured” by the AAS.

The Western Australian Adventure Activity Standards were developed by an industry wide consultative process coordinated by Outdoors WA following the recommendations of the 2006 State Government Adventure Tourism Visitor Safety Task Force Report. The Project received grant funding via the Department of Sport and Recreation.

The development and implementation of the AAS allows the outdoor adventure industry to demonstrate its collective integrity and agreed standards. This, in turn will provide a measure of quality for the purposes of assisting

1. Consumers of our services to make informed choices about the services they select
2. Training organisations to produce graduates who understand and meet industry standards
3. Media, insurance and legal scrutineers of our industry and its members, to understand what is acceptable practice and what is not
4. The development of sustainable use practices that consider the specific natural and cultural heritage values of areas in which we conduct outdoor activities

The AAS are a critical component of the **industry quality framework** comprising four aligned and inter-connected components

1. **Accreditation** - the required business operating standards for businesses and organisations
2. **Adventure Activity Standards** - the minimum standards to which an activity must be conducted by a provider to dependent groups of participants
3. **Leader Competency / Registration Scheme** - the responsibilities and competencies required of the leaders conducting the outdoor activities
4. **Codes of Conduct** – the behavioural expectations of persons operating as outdoor leaders

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INTRODUCTION

The Western Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) have been developed to assist organisations and leaders to plan and conduct outdoor adventure activities with commercial and non-commercial dependent groups of participants where there is a duty of care based in contract and or in authority.

The purpose of the AAS is to maintain the perception of adventure whilst simultaneously reducing / managing the real risk for participants. Increased outdoor physical activity with reduced incident and accident rates will be the ultimate performance indicators of the value of the AAS.

The AAS provide a valuable resource for the development of operating procedures, and or for the purposes of comparing existing operating procedures to industry agreed benchmarked standards. All groups differ in their collective skills and experience and in their degree of dependence upon the leader. They participate in outdoor activities at a range of sites with varying conditions (including weather). It therefore **remains the responsibility of the leader to make the professional judgements and decisions concerning the conduct of the activity to ensure the safety of the group.** The AAS are designed to assist such judgements and decision making.

The AAS are also designed to promote knowledge and awareness of the broad and activity specific impacts increasing recreation and travel opportunities place upon the natural environment. The AAS are designed to assist the protection of biodiversity values and the preservation of cultural sites balanced with the increased access demands. The 7 Principles of Leave No Trace are imbedded within the AAS.

Whilst not statutory standards, the AAS provide the basis for policy formation and decision making by jurisdictions external to the outdoor adventure activity industry including, but not restricted to, licensing, insurance and legal jurisdictions.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The activity of caving involves exploration of underground passages and caverns (created by natural processes over time), for pleasure, challenge, research, experience and / or educational outcomes.

Caves vary in size, depth and fragility, and can be found in diverse environments including metropolitan suburbs, coastal and remote regions. Typically caving is described as either

Horizontal Caving – involves crawling through openings, scrambling up and down rock faces with / without fixed ladders; OR

Vertical Caving – involves using ropes, caving ladders and other descending / ascending equipment to enter, explore and exit caves.

This Standard EXCLUDES *artificial caving, caving in unexplored caves recently discovered, tourist or show caves, and cave diving.*

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The AAS provides a planning and preparation framework considered critical in maximising participant safety and enjoyment. All planning must be finalised and the relevant components documented before the activity is undertaken. A suggested planning and preparation framework includes

- Preliminary Information
- Site Plan(s)
- Risk Management Plan
- Emergency Response Plan
- Minimal Environmental Impact Plan

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

Preliminary Information

The following are the minimum information requirements for conducting a caving activity

- Objectives / desired outcomes of the session (recommended only)
- Planned start and finish times (may also include sector times)
- Leader to participant ratio and group size (refer Leader : Participant Ratios and Group Size)
- Profile of the group (age (if relevant), fitness level / capability, experience)
- Land / campsite manager requirements including
 - Access restrictions to caves and other karst features
 - Group sizes
 - Booking and permit requirements
 - Current environmental management policies and biodiversity issues effecting the region (refer to www.dec.com.au)
 - Regulations in regard to fire restrictions, restrictions, bans, local conditions
 - Localised regulations / policies with regard to conducting caving activities
- Availability of suitable maps
- Equipment requirements (refer Equipment)
- Dependent participants' names and emergency contact details
- Medical information advised by dependent participants which may be relevant to the activity
 - Conditions – EG asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, fainting, allergic reactions, blood conditions which may effect bleeding/ blood clotting, recent or long-standing injuries, (eg back, knee, ankle), disability, psychological conditions
 - Medications - what is it / why is it required / how is it administered?
- Group members are advised, in writing and or in a verbal briefing, of
 - Potential risks associated with the activity
 - The policy on drugs and alcohol
 - The requirement to conform to responsible and attentive behaviour
 - Suggested physical requirements for the activity (EG *“ability to crawl and maintain mobility with bent knees and backs”*)
- RECOMMENDED - Participant signed legal liability disclaimer (informed consent) / waiver to sue / authorisation to seek / provide emergency medical treatment (retain for a time frame as dictated by the Statute of Limitations Act 2005); dependent participants under the age of 18 must have the signature of a parent / guardian if required by the organisation that has legal responsibility for them
- An understanding of the natural and cultural history / diversity of the site(s) / location(s)

Site Plan

The purpose of the site plan is to assess issues regarding access, environmental impact, risk and emergency communications relative to a particular site. The site plan (which may include a diagram) shall consider

- Assessment of the suitability of the cave(s) and surrounding areas for the size and ability of the group

- Access to the cave
 - by vehicle (2WD / 4WD) including emergency services vehicles
 - on foot including the best routes to take to minimise environmental impact
- Where is / are the best place (s) in relation to the cave, to make an emergency contact (by mobile or satellite phone if coverage available, by radio or by a runner party to a land line, by EPIRB/PLB) and where is the best place to make these calls from
- Cave(s) characteristics
 - Horizontal / vertical
 - Wet / dry
 - Weather forecast (temperature, wind, rain)
 - Specific terrain / route characteristics to and within cave(s)
- Contingency plans for forecast / foreseeable weather conditions including potential for cave flooding
- Opportunities for rest breaks and availability of shaded areas / shelter
- Toileting facilities and appropriate waste disposal options
- Location of any water sources
- Location of any culturally significant areas, structures, artefacts or rock art that need to be avoided
- Location of any rare or endangered plants or animals, or sensitive areas
- Consideration of minimal impact requirements

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

Risk Management Plan

The purpose of the Risk Management Plan is to identify the human, route / cave(s) specific, equipment and environmental risks for the safe conduct of the activity. By identifying, analysing and evaluating these risks, appropriate strategies to reduce / manage the risk can be developed and implemented. Caving leaders must assess the chosen cave(s) for potential hazards and adapt the planning of the activity as required. Information with regard to any new hazard must be made available within the group / organisation and to the relevant land manager where appropriate.

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

Emergency Response Plan

The purpose of the Emergency Response Plan is to provide a set of steps for leaders to follow in the event of an emergency which may include injury or death. The plan must include information to assist the leader to minimise the escalation of the situation, the injuries incurred and how to reduce the likelihood of further incidents occurring. The Emergency Response Plan must be route / cave(s) specific and document current details including

- Access and egress options from the cave(s)
- Contingency plans for effective rescue with minimum environmental impact to the cave(s)
- Group assembly points
- Emergency contact details which may include
 - Next stage of definitive medical care (hospital, doctor)
 - Police
 - Relevant Agencies (EG Department of Environment and Conservation, land owners, rescue services)
- Specific communication requirements / available networks

ALL leaders must carry a copy and be fully aware of the emergency response plan. A copy of the emergency response plan must also be kept (with other documentation) with a non-participating contact and be readily accessible by the leader via an available telecommunication method in the event of an emergency.

The leader is to communicate with the relevant external contact at a designated time(s). Upon failure to do so the external contact must action the emergency response plan which may include contacting the police. In situations where there is only one leader, the emergency response plan

shall have been introduced to, and be available to members of the group so that it may be actioned in the event that the leader becomes unfit to do so.

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

Leader: Participant Ratios and Group Size

Whilst it is acknowledged that the characteristics of the cave and the site plan, the profile of the group, the purposes of the caving activity, and the experience of the leader(s) will influence the ratios of leaders to dependent participants, the minimum ratios considered acceptable are

For Groups up to 10 Participants

Operational Ratio – applicable for registered / recognised leader to actual dependent participants 1:10*

For Groups with more than 10 Participants

Operational Ratio – applicable for registered / recognised leader with additional responsible adult to actual dependent participants 1:1:11+*

Whilst one leader is the minimum standard, 2 leaders are RECOMMENDED for all groups so that the ratio is 1:1:11+ where the second leader may be either a responsible adult or a registered / recognised leader

Minimum Group Size in all caves shall be 3*

Maximum Group Size in all caves shall be 20*

(for most caves the suitable group size is 6 – 10)

****Subject to land manager policies for specific caves***

Minimal Environmental Impact Plan - Leave No Trace 7 Principles

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Research information / access permission, regulations and advice from local land management agencies, landowners and or the local Speleological Society before entering a cave
- Check for any Total Fire Bans with your local fire authority / land manager
- Before establishing a new route, carefully evaluate the impact compared with the benefit and consult with the appropriate land management authorities for permission
- Prepare for extreme isolation, weather hazards and emergencies
- Check for the possibility of flood
- Check for cave closures (protecting animal habitat, conservation projects, and restoration or preservation purposes)
- Find out about temperature, trip length, known hazards and impact concerns in the cave
- Schedule your caving trip for off peak times when possible
- Know what to expect in the cave: carry and use maps and consider the variables of each cave including current impact levels, inhabitants, water activity and geologic features, including speleothems
- Learn to recognise speleothems and their character so that you can make the right choices about moving within a cave
- Stay current in evolving minimum impact methods and share your understanding with others
- Choose a cave appropriate to your experience level
- Select appropriate equipment including communications and first aid equipment; ensure it is in good working order
- Plan to allow time to return to the entrance of the cave before you get tired
- Be self-sufficient; do not rely on hosts (eg. indigenous, pastoral, land managers and locals) for assistance, supplies, or drinking water
- Check energy levels of your group regularly
- Have a system to pack out all human waste
- Take appropriate food and drinking water

- Take food that does not create crumbs
- Repackage food to minimise waste and take some sturdy rubbish bags
- Carry extra warm and wet weather clothing
- Carry a small trowel for emergency toileting outside the cave

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Caving

- Use established marked routes first
- Learn how to move smoothly, deliberately and slowly in caves in order to avoid delicate formations and creatures
- Be aware of your entire body including your head/helmet, pack and other gear
- Don't run, jump or move carelessly in a way that might inadvertently damage the cave
- Speak up when someone else's head or back may be getting too close to fragile surfaces
- Move slowly and carefully to not stir up dust clouds that can change the nature of speleothems
- Take care not to transport mud within the cave
- Speleothems are fragile formations that should not be touched or walked on
- Only travel across flowstone as a necessity; remove muddied boots and clothing before crossing
- Take breaks in spots where the cave is already damaged and can handle more concentrated use, such as on the track itself; limit movement to avoid enlarging that space
- Anchor into durable surfaces where possible and protect other sites without cushioning

Walking Outside the Cave

- Always utilise recognised tracks to approach caves
- Concentrate your movements to durable areas like rock or bare ground

Camping

- Don't camp underground
- Camp away from AW cave entrances

3. Dispose of Waste Properly

In Caves

- Avoid dropping crumbs while eating; eat your food over the bag it came in
- Use a small ground cloth to make clean up easier
- Pick up any old flagging tape or old litter that you may find
- Pack out all human waste to avoid contamination of the cave and ground water system
- No smoking should take place in a cave

Outside caves

- Pack and carry out all packaging rubbish and leftover food including organics in sturdy bags
- Inspect your campsite and rest areas for rubbish and spilled food before leaving

4. Leave What You Find

Preserve Nature/Respect Culture

- It is illegal to excavate, disturb or remove archaeological, historical and cultural artefacts from any public or wilderness lands
- Avoid climbing close to Indigenous sites out of respect for the culture and to ensure their longevity
- If bones are discovered, report their location to the appropriate authorities
- Do not touch rock art which can be damaged by the natural oils from human skin
- Preserve the past; observe but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artefacts
- Avoid caving at sites where rare and vulnerable species are found
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them
- Avoid disfiguring caves with permanent markings like arrows

- Only mark sensitive areas so they can be avoided (experienced leaders only)
- Do not build structures, furniture or dig trenches
- Do not leave or add to fixed equipment at any site without permission

Introduced Species

- Wear clean clothes that are in good condition to prevent the introduction of foreign material into the cave; brush off your clothes before entering a cave to avoid bringing in any seeds, plant material, or insects
- Wear gloves, long sleeves and long pants to keep oils from your skin off the cave surface and to protect your skin
- Wash your caving gear between different cave visits as bacteria can be transferred from one cave to another
- Wear boots with non-marking soles to prevent black scuff marks on cave floors; in some areas it is necessary to change into a clean pair of shoes or aqua socks to prevent tracking muddy boot prints over clean flowstone
- Thoroughly wash your cave boots, clothing and gear between caves visits to avoid spreading diseases

Outside the Cave

- Avoid spreading non-native plant and animal species that are generally impossible to eradicate once they are introduced; do not transport flowers, weeds, wood or aquatic plants into or out of the wilderness
- Avoid transporting mud in boots, equipment and tyre treads which may contain *Phytophthora* (dieback fungal spores) by washing thoroughly before and after travelling; use wash stations immediately where provided

5. Minimise the Impact of Fire

In Caves

- Never light a fire in a cave
- Never smoke in a cave

6. Respect Wildlife

Cave Specific

- Respect the cave biota by avoiding disturbing them with direct contact or direct light
- Talk quietly in areas where bats may be resting
- Respect cave closure times, which might coordinate with protecting maternity or hibernating, bat colonies

In and out of the cave

- Observe wildlife from a distance; do not follow or approach them

7. Be Considerate of Your Hosts and Other Visitors

- Report any degradation of a cave to authorities
- Take the responsibility to ensure that your group behaves with respect for the hosts and other users
- Learn about the cultural history of the land; recognise, acknowledge and respect local knowledge
- Respect the wishes and regulations of all hosts. (Eg. Indigenous, pastoral, land managers and locals).

** Further information is available at Leave No Trace Australia www.lnt.org.au*

** Further information is available from the Department of Indigenous Affairs at <http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/en/Heritage-and-Culture/>*

REQUIREMENTS OF LEADERS

The performance of the leader is a critical factor in the safe conduct of a caving activity. The leader is required to

- Accept responsibility for the planning, preparation and conduct of the activity

- Maintain current skills, qualifications and experience as required
- Accept responsibility for the environmental preservation of the sites and surrounding areas

This does not exclude the fact that dependent participants are responsible for their own actions in relation to the potential risks that may be encountered by choosing to participate in a caving activity.

Responsibilities of Leaders

Leaders are required to accept the following responsibilities

- To ensure that ALL required competencies as outlined in “Competencies of Leaders” are available to the group for the activity, if not within his / her competency profile then within the collective of his / her co-leaders
- To use their judgement to make decisions that will ensure the safety of all group members and maintain the integrity of the environment including matters relevant to
 - People based risks*
 - Collect all documentation / forms signed by all dependent participants / parents or guardians (or ensure data is collected by the third party responsible for the group)
 - Communicate the anticipated risks relating to the activity to the group in a pre-activity briefing, and others that arise during the walk
 - Match the experience / capabilities of the group to the activity
 - Be aware where participants have stored / are carrying their personal medications
 - Ensure all significant incidents and accidents are documented and reported in writing to the organisation sanctioning the activity within seven (7) days of completion or as soon as is practicable
 - Ideally the sanctioning organisation will in turn communicate such incident(s) or accident(s) to the relevant land manager / owner, and to Outdoors WA in writing
 - Report any perceived breaches of the Caving AAS to Outdoors WA and land managers
 - Site / route based risks*
 - Be familiar with the selected cave(s) / route(s) and the scope of variation of conditions likely to be encountered (excludes club based explorations / discoveries of new cave chambers)
 - Check weather forecasts and water obstacles pre – departure
 - Appropriately manage hazards that are encountered
 - Consider the availability of drinking water on route and have appropriate contingency plans
 - Report potential hazards to land managers
 - Be aware of and comply with the land / site manager’s guidelines including minimal impact
 - Notify nominated external contacts of safe return / completion when appropriate
 - Equipment based risks*
 - Check suitability, condition and use of all equipment prior to departure
 - Ensure correct use of equipment by all dependent participants
 - Ensure that a First Aid Kit and communication equipment suitable for the route are in good order
 - Environmental based risks*
 - Apply Leave No Trace Principles
 - Comply with the land / cave manager’s guidelines including minimal impact principles relative to flora, fauna and rubbish removal
 - Report all environmental damage to the appropriate land manager

Recognition of Leaders

Common safe practice is that the organisation responsible for an activity is responsible for selecting suitable leaders for that activity. Such organisations include clubs, educational institutions, community groups and commercial businesses. It is widely acknowledged that a

qualification does not always mean competence; that confidence does not always accompany a list of competencies and that experience can be more valuable than a qualification. It is also acknowledged that qualities such as sound judgement, compassion and fairness are vital for outdoor leaders but are less easily measured than skills, knowledge and experience.

Normally all leaders will have all of the required skills, knowledge, experience and qualities. As people develop leadership skills they may assist in leadership roles with a more experienced leader. Where a leadership team operates, the leader in-charge must ensure that all skills are available within the group.

Organisations MUST have a documented process to recognise leaders. Factors to be considered when determining an appropriate recognition of leaders framework include but are not limited to the outcomes of a risk management process that considers;

- Participant, client and community expectations
- The organisational culture, capacity and experience
- Human and financial resources available
- The set of skills, knowledge, experience and qualities for specific contexts as outlined in Appendix A

Leaders of adventure activities can be recognised using **one or more** of pathways detailed below. Organisations develop and apply the recognition pathway(s) appropriate to their specific context.

Possible pathways within a recognition of leaders framework

Organisational accreditation or qualification

Key factors of an organisational accreditation or qualification system may include but are not limited to;

- Recognises the skills of the leader using a formal process
- Supports and recognises the progressive development of skills
- Maintains documented evidence of the accreditation or qualification system
- Is maintained by a group of leaders, usually more experienced leaders. (e.g. a committee or training team)
- Identifies individuals who are approved to conduct assessments using the system
- Is benchmarked against other recognised guidelines or criteria as identified in Appendix A
- Is contextualised to the organisations requirements; may have currency requirements

Peer recognition and verification

Key factors of peer recognition and verification process may include but is not limited to;

- Recognises the skills of the leader using a peer recognition process
- Progressive skills development is supported and recognised using a mentoring or coaching approach
- Documented evidence may include log books or other records of participation
- Verification is often conducted in-situ during participation
- Is based on the experience and judgement of the peer who is recognising the leader
- Is benchmarked against organisational context, expectations and other related experience as identified in Appendix A
- Currency of skills is usually demonstrated through regular participation

Formal training qualifications

A relevant activity qualification in outdoor recreation along with accompanying log book. Refer to Appendix B for a list of appropriate qualifications.

Leader registration schemes

Registration as an activity leader under a registration scheme. Refer to Appendix B for a list of appropriate registration/award schemes.

Examples of how leader recognition pathways may be applied

1. A club or community group may consider peer recognition and verification an appropriate means of recognising leaders within their context and expectations;
2. A small organisation determines that it will use a national registration scheme as its primary recognition pathway with peer verification during initial supervised programs.
3. A large community based organisation may apply their own organisational accreditations, supplemented by peer recognition and verification in specific situations that are appropriate to their organisational culture;
4. A commercial outdoor education provider may consider that a Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation and their own organisational accreditations are a basis for employment and supplement this with a peer recognition and verification during a period of probationary employment.

FIRST AID REQUIREMENTS

Caving groups require leaders with first aid qualifications in addition to the competencies listed above. The following framework guides the level of first aid qualification required for different types of caving locations in relation to the availability of medical support services

- All caves - Senior First Aid REQUIRED

REQUIREMENTS / RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANISATIONS

Organisations sanctioning the conduct of caving activities for dependent groups of people are required to

- Maintain current appropriate insurance
- Report incidents and accidents to relevant jurisdictions in writing within seven(7) days
 - Insurers
 - Land Managers
 - Outdoors WA (recommended)
 - *Ideally the industry will have developed a process to disseminate details of the from the incident thereby reducing the likelihood of it being repeated*
- Provide leaders with the necessary resources to conduct the activity in accordance with all aspects of this Standard
- Notify nominated external contacts of safe return / completion when appropriate
- Verify and accept responsibility for the current competence of leaders selected for caving activities

EQUIPMENT

Equipment requirements vary with the objectives of the activity, the group characteristic profile and the environmental conditions likely to be encountered. When planning equipment requirements for a caving activity it is important to consider all possible eventualities and to select equipment that will maintain safety and minimise cultural and environmental impact of the activity.

Participant's Equipment

The following equipment requirements apply to all dependent participants

- Helmet specifically designed for caving / rock climbing / abseiling and which adheres to UIAA or equivalent must be worn securely with a fitted chinstrap, a well – fitted cradle and have provision for mounting a light source
- A reliable / independent primary light source
 - Helmet mounted (or hands free) for ALL vertical caving activity
 - Can be hand held for horizontal caving activity
- A secondary light source; spare batteries (RECOMMENDED)
- Clothing including long sleeves and pants (RECOMMENDED)
- Enclosed footwear
- Personal water supply if the caving trip is greater than 2 hours
- Spare dry / warm / waterproof clothing to change into after the cave trip is complete
- Participant’s personal medication
- Whistle (optional)

Leaders’ Equipment

- The following equipment, in addition to that listed above, applies to leaders conducting dependant group caving activities
- A copy of the emergency response plan
- Emergency communication equipment (EG. mobile phone, satellite phone, details of nearest land line, radio, EPIRB / PLB if in remote area etc.)
- A First Aid Kit appropriate for the level of training completed, the location of the activity and the size of the group (to be taken into the cave)
- Tools for proper waste disposal
- A whistle
- Spare personal light source
- A watch, pocket knife, note pad and pencil

Group Equipment

The following equipment is required for all dependant group caving activities

- A First Aid Kit appropriate for the level of training completed, the location of the activity and the size of the group
- Thermal blanket – required for “wet” caves / recommended for “dry” caves
- Container to collect human waste for removal from the cave
- Emergency food and water
- Spare lights

Equipment for Vertical Caving

The following additional equipment is required for all dependant group vertical caving activities

- Ropes, harnesses and all ascending / descending equipment (karabiners, slings and chocks) which adhere to UIAA, CE, ANSI or equivalent must have been manufactured specifically for caving / rock climbing / abseiling and used according to the manufacturer’s specifications and accepted practice
- An additional rope equivalent to the longest pitch should be accessible for rescue (ie this rope shall not be used for any other purpose at the site)
- Two points of attachment for all participants ascending ropes
- Belay rope, bottom brake or second attachment point (eg petzyl shunt) for descending on ropes
- Caving ladders (used in association with belay systems)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Activity Provider** – an entity, person or group of persons assuming the role of providing the activity (the activity provider) for a dependent group of participants for a specific commercial or not – for – profit purpose
- **Dependent Group / Participant** – a group or individual within a group whose welfare associated with participating in the activity is in part the responsibility of the leader; who is dependent upon the leader for their safe participation in the activity which may be so deemed by law or contract

- **Outdoor Leader** - term for an individual accepting the roles of leading and managing the outdoor activity; can be a guide or instructor; can be paid or voluntary
- **Registered Leader** - currently registered in the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme
- **Recognised Leader** – outdoor leader recognized as suitably experienced and skilled by an organisation
- **Competency** - minimum industry agreed standard of skill and knowledge necessary for a specific activity being conducted at a specific level
- **Responsible Adult** – adult person deemed, by the outdoor leader, as adequately capable of accepting responsibility for selected aspects of the management of the group and or its participants in conjunction with the safe conduct of the activity
- **Phytophthora** – Phytophthora Dieback: is a microscopic soil borne water mould that attacks plants. It impacts 40 percent of our native plant species and threatens whole communities including animal habitats. It is spread in the movement of infested water, soil or plant material. As the name water mould suggests, it requires moist conditions to thrive. Its food source is the root and basal stem tissue of living plants. It is currently the biggest threat to biodiversity in Australia and it is spread extensively by human activity. More information is available online at www.dieback.net.au
- **Route** - includes all intended and emergency routes, rest stops and campsites

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Adventure Activity Standards initially developed by The Outdoor Recreation Centre in Victoria proved to be an invaluable resource in the development of the Western Australian Adventure Activity Standard for Caving.

In addition The Australian Speleological Federation www.caves.org.au and the Department of Environment and Conservation www.dec.wa.gov.au provided valuable input to the development of this Standard.

FEEDBACK, REVIEW & APPEALS

The AAS are designed to be 'living' standards with feedback, requests for review and/or appeal against aspects of a standard considered to be healthy part of the development process, one that will ensure the currency & relevancy of the standards. Feedback, requests for review and/or appeals will be managed by the Industry Standards Panel. Details and proformas are available at www.outdoorswa.org / industry quality framework / Industry Standards Panel.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Outdoors WA for further information or to obtain contact details of the organisations conducting caving activities and training.

TELEPHONE: 08 9468 0102

EMAIL: executiveofficer@outdoorswa.org

WEB: www.outdoorswa.org

Appendix A: Provisional skills, knowledge, experience and qualities

This set of skills is taken from the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards and reflects Skills Sets from the SIS10 Outdoor Recreation Training Package that have been identified through consultation with the Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA), the peak body for the Outdoor Recreation industry and will be utilised as the basis for the registration requirements of programs like the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS). Descriptions for the unit code can be found at training.gov.au

In the absence of any other agreed list, they are provided as a provisional list until such time as a review of the AAS in its entirety occurs.

This is a suggested list of skills. Organisations can use this as a guide and may amend to suit their specific needs and contexts.

Caving Guide Single-Pitch

For those wishing to guide caving activities.

Unit Code	Unit Title
SISOCVE201A	Demonstrate caving skills
SISOCVE302A	Apply single pitch abseiling skills in caves
SISOCVE303A	Rig a ladder pitch
SISOCVE304A	Apply laddering skills
SISOCVE305A	Apply caving specific single rope techniques
SISOCVE306A	Rig ropes and establish belays in caves
SISOCVE307A	Guide vertical single pitch caving trips
SISOCVE308A	Guide horizontal caving trips
SISOODR302A	Plan outdoor recreation activities
SISOODR303A	Guide outdoor recreation sessions
SISOODR404A	Manage risk in an outdoor activity
SISOOPS201A	Minimise environmental impact
SISOOPS304A	Plan for minimal environmental impact
SISOOPS305A	Provide first aid in a remote location
SISOOPS306A	Interpret weather conditions in the field
SISOVTR301A	Perform vertical rescues
SISXCAI306A	Facilitate groups
SISXEMR201A	Respond to emergency situations
SISXEMR402A	Coordinate emergency response
SISXOHS101A	Follow occupational health and safety policies

Caving Guide – Multi Pitch

For those wishing to guide caving trips multi pitch.

Unit Code	Unit Title
SISOCVE302A	Apply single pitch abseiling skills in caves
SISOCVE305A	Rig a ladder pitch
SISOCVE409A	Rig ladders in complex situations
SISOCVE410A	Rig a complex pitch using caving specific techniques
SISOCVE411A	Apply vertical caving skills
SISOCVE412A	Rig multi pitches in complex vertical cave systems
SISOCVE413A	Navigate in untrogged caves
SISOCVE414A	Guide vertical multi pitch caving trips

SISONAV302A	Apply navigation skills in an intermediate environment
SISOODR302A	Plan outdoor recreation activities
SISOODR303A	Guide outdoor recreation sessions
SISOODR404A	Manage risk in an outdoor activity
SISOOPS201A	Minimise environmental impact
SISOOPS304A	Plan for minimal environmental impact
SISOOPS305A	Provide first aid in a remote location
SISOOPS306A	Interpret weather conditions in the field
SISOVTR402A	Perform complex vertical rescues
SISXCAI306A	Facilitate groups
SISXEMR201A	Respond to emergency situations
SISXEMR402A	Coordinate emergency response
SISXOHS101A	Follow occupational health and safety policies
SISXOHS402A	Implement and monitor occupational health and safety policies

Caving Instructor – Multi pitch

For those wishing to instruct caving multi pitch

Unit Code	Unit Title
SISOCVE201A	Demonstrate caving skills
SISOCVE302A	Apply single pitch abseiling skills in caves
SISOCVE305A	Apply caving specific single rope techniques
SISOCVE409A	Rig ladders in complex situations
SISOCVE410A	Rig a complex pitch using caving specific techniques
SISOCVE411A	Apply vertical caving skills
SISOCVE412A	Rig multi pitch in complex vertical cave systems
SISOCVE413A	Navigate in untrogged caves
SISOCVE522A	Instruct vertical multi pitch caving skills
SISOODR302A	Plan outdoor recreation activities
SISOODR303A	Guide outdoor recreation sessions
SISOODR404A	Manage risk in an outdoor activity
SISOOPS201A	Minimise environmental impact
SISOOPS304A	Plan for minimal environmental impact
SISOOPS305A	Provide first aid in a remote location
SISOOPS306A	Interpret weather conditions in the field
SISOVT402A	Perform complex vertical rescues
SISXCAI306A	Facilitate groups
SISXEMR201A	Respond to emergency situations
SISXEMR402A	Coordinate emergency response
SISXOHS101A	Follow occupational health and safety policies
SISXOHS402A	Implement and monitor occupational health and safety policies
TAEDEL301A	Provide work skill instruction

Caving Instructor –Vertical Single Pitch

For those wishing to instruct caving vertical single pitch

Unit Code	Unit Title
SISOCVE201A	Demonstrate caving skills
SISOCVE302A	Apply single pitch abseiling skills in caves

SISOCVE303A	Rig a ladder pitch
SISOCVE304A	Apply laddering skills
SISOCVE305A	Apply caving specific single rope techniques
SISOCVE306A	Rig ropes and establish belays in caves
SISOCVE417A	Instruct vertical single pitch caving skills
SISONAV302A	Apply navigation skills in an intermediate environment
SISOODR302A	Plan outdoor recreation activities
SISOODR303A	Guide outdoor recreation sessions
SISOODR404A	Manage risk in an outdoor activity
SISOOPS201A	Minimise environmental impact
SISOOPS304A	Plan for minimal environmental impact
SISOOPS305A	Provide first aid in a remote location
SISOOPS306A	Interpret weather conditions in the field
SISOVTR301A	Perform vertical rescues
SISXCAI306A	Facilitate groups
SISXEMR201A	Respond to emergency situations
SISXEMR402A	Coordinate emergency response
SISXOHS101A	Follow occupational health and safety policies
SISXOHS402A	Implement and monitor occupational health and safety policies
TAEDEL301A	Provide work skill instruction

Appendix B: Qualifications and registration/award schemes

The intention of this list is to identify common qualifications utilised in WA that may be considered when identifying the skills required to perform the activity. **This list is not comprehensive. The list is reviewed as part of the Adventure Activity Standards review process. An up-to-date list is maintained on the Outdoors WA Website.**

Qualifications

- VET Outdoor Recreation Training Package Certificate III or higher with a skills set / competency list consistent with the requirements of Appendix A of this document
- Australian Speleological Federation Trip Leader Qualification for club based caving trips.
- With specific application to the Leeuwin Naturalist National Park - a current Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) Cave Trip Leader qualification (applies to access to some DEC managed caves)

Registration/award schemes

- National Outdoor Leadership Registration Scheme in appropriate caving activity area.