

Australian Adventure Activity Standard Webinar

Slides & Speaker Notes

Slide 1



Welcome

Welcome to the implementation of the Australian Adventure Activity Standard and associated Good Practice Guides webinar.

I am Dom Courtney, EO at QORF and Mark Squires, QORF's Partnerships Manager, will be assisting me today.

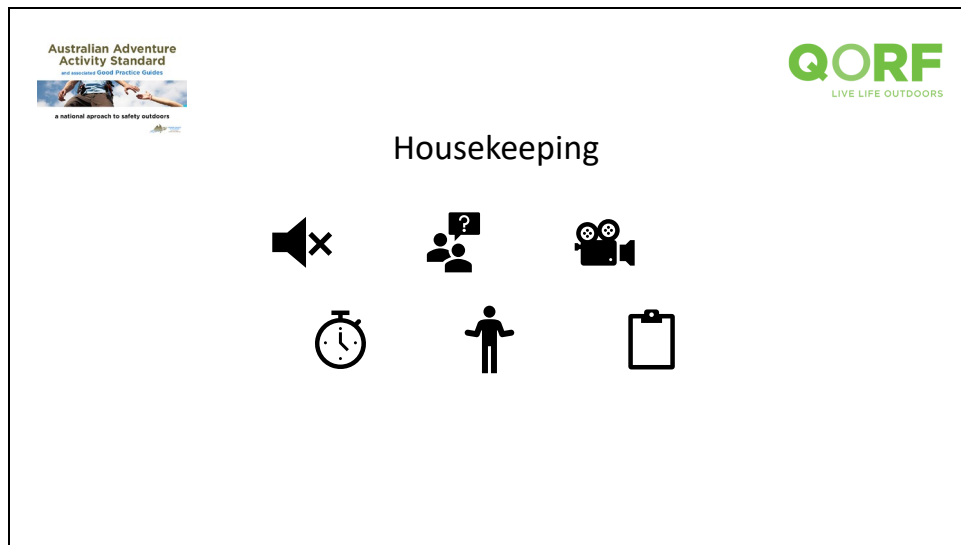


Acknowledge Traditional Owners

QORF recognises the traditional owners of the land where we gather for this webinar – I am in Brisbane and there are attendees from right around the country.

We pay our respect to elders – past, present and emerging – and we acknowledge the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the outdoor recreation community.

I also acknowledge the support provided to QORF by the Queensland Government as the peak body for outdoor activities across Queensland.



Housekeeping

- Introductions
- Questions
- Recording
- Timing – we expect the webinar to take approximately an hour, including time for Questions and Answers at the end. If necessary, in the interests of time, we may take some questions as homework, and publish answers online after the webinar.
- Acronyms – to try to enhance understanding, we will try to minimise use of acronyms throughout the webinar, but we will use some acronyms – for example Australian AAS rather than Australian Adventure Activity Standard, GPG rather than Good Practice Guide, and OCA rather than Outdoor Council of Australia. If we use an acronym you don't recognise, please flag it in the Q&A function.
- Survey – an attendee survey will be emailed to each of you. We ask that you complete that survey to provide feedback on the webinar, and on future offerings from QORF.
- Sign up to QORF eNews for further information

Slide 4



Australian Adventure
Activity Standard
an essential Good Practice Guide
a national approach to safety outdoors



QORF
LIVE LIFE OUTDOORS

QORF's mission is to:

- Raise the profile,
- Develop the capacity,
- Increase opportunities

for outdoor activities in Queensland



**LIVE
LIFE
OUTDOORS**

QORF

So, what is QORF and why do we do what we do?

QORF's mission is to raise the profile, develop the capacity and increase opportunities for outdoor recreation in Queensland. Our tag line, "Live Life Outdoors", encapsulates that purpose.

We take an inclusive approach to outdoor recreation, including outdoor education and adventure therapy, as well as adventure racing, outdoor fitness activities, and adventure tourism.





Outdoor Council of Australia

The Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA) recognises that outdoor activities are undertaken for a range of reasons, including recreation, education, tourism, personal development and corporate development.

I am a board member of the OCA, and I acknowledge the other OCA board members who are joining this webinar – consider listing them?

he OCA is the organisation that is responsible for the ongoing management of the Australian Adventure Activity Standard and Good Practice Guides, and all of the documents are available via the OCA website and a stand-alone Australian AAS website – www.australianaas.org.au



Why have standards?


Standards are embraced by those who seek excellence in their operations. The priority for such people is quality programming and good service to clients – not the avoidance of litigation. Standards may be seen as a threat by those who are not so careful and choose not to learn what others consider desirable practices.

(Charles “Reb” Gregg , Outdoors Safety Institute)


Why have standards?

Quote from Charles “Reb” Gregg from the Outdoor Safety Institute in the USA. Not everything out of the USA is perfect, but this quote is pretty good!

We are very pleased to have over 100 people register for this webinar – showing your commitment to seeking excellence in your operations, quality programming and good customer service.





Australian Adventure Activity Standard
and associated Good Practice Guides
a national approach to safety outdoors



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What are the AAAS?





The **Australian Adventure Activity Standard** (AAAS) and related **Good Practice Guides** (GPGs) provide a voluntary good-practice framework for safe and responsible planning and delivery of **led** outdoor adventure activities with **dependent participants**.

Further they help to guide knowledge of the appropriate duty of care required for self, others and the environment.



Australian AAS

This slide has a description of what the Aust AAS is – a voluntary good-practice framework for planning and delivery of led outdoor activities.

More information on the defined elements of that description will follow, but it's worth taking a moment to discuss why the Australia AAS/GPG has been delivered.


This has been about having one framework for planning and delivery of led outdoor activities across the country. For the last 10 or 20 years, various States have had their own versions of Adventure Activity Standards for a range of activities. Some States and Territories didn't have any formal standards, so operators have either developed their own systems or sought guidance from the States who had published standards.

The Aust AAS/GPG was endorsed by all State and Territory Ministers responsible for recreation at a meeting on Friday 1st November 2019. This endorsement was the finalisation of the development of the Aust AAS/GPG, which has been project managed by Outdoors Victoria for the last few years. A big thank you to Andrew Knight, CEO of Outdoors Victoria, and Murray Irwin, Outdoors Victoria's Project Officer, who did so much work on this project, along with the volunteers who contributed to all of the Technical Working Committees, the project Steering Committee and consultants and other members of the industry who provided the project with their wisdom, experience and opinions.



Dependent Participant

A dependent participant is a person owed a duty of care by the activity provider, who is reliant upon the activity leaders for supervision, guidance or instruction to support the person's participation in an activity.





Dependent Participant

This definition is important because the Aust AAS/GPGs are limited in scope to the situation where dependent participants are involved.

The information provided in the standards could be extended to situations involving non-dependent participants, but it has been written with dependent participants in mind, so the information about participants relying upon the activity provider is important.

Having dependent participants is a very normal situation for many aspects of outdoor activities – it is a regular thing for you to have particular expertise that I need for me to participate in the activity. This applies right across our industry, from adventure tourism, outdoor education, corporate team building, bush adventure therapy, and outdoor recreation.

Whether the activity is delivered by paid or volunteer workers is not the question – the question is whether the participants in the activity rely on the activity provider for supervision, guidance or instruction (anyone who thinks that a volunteer isn't a worker has never been a volunteer).



The good practice framework

1. The **AAAS** – this addresses the common ‘requirements’ for all types of adventure activities
2. The **Core GPG** – this provides additional information to help support implementing the AAAS *
3. The various **activity GPGs** – these provide guidance specific to the various activities.

The Standard

Key requirements for preparing & delivering adventure activities

Core Good Practice Guide

Recommended **common practices** & supporting information regardless of the adventure activity being undertaken

Activity Specific Good Practice Guides

Detailed information on risk management & good practice for specific adventure activities



Good practice framework

How the elements of the framework co-exist.

If you are reviewing your processes for mountain biking or challenge course, you should compare your policies and procedures to the Standard, the Core Good Practice Guide, and the activity specific Good Practice Guide. This is a very comprehensive approach to the standards and what is expected to meet good practice for your participants.

If you deliver a range of activities, your knowledge of the Standard and the Core Good Practice Guide would be applied equally across those activities, when you apply the information in the activity specific GPG.

If you only deliver one activity, then you’d consider the Standard and Core GPG along with the particular activity specific GPG.



Activity Specific Good Practice Guides

- Abseil and Climbing
- Angling
- Bushwalking
- Camping
- Canyoning
- Caving
- Challenge Courses
- Cycling and Mountain Biking
- Enclosed and Coastal Waters Paddlecraft
- Horse Trail Riding
- Inland Water Paddlecraft
- Snorkelling

Activity specific good practice guides

This is the list of activities that have specific Good Practice Guides.

An amazing group of volunteer experts on a series of Technical Working Groups contributed to the development of the activity specific good practice guides, to complement the work done on the standard and the Core Good Practice Guide, which were also based on the work of another Technical Working Group.

It is tempting to jump straight into the activity specific good practice guide for a particular activity, but these need to be read in context of the Standard and the Core GPG... An understanding of the Standard and the Core GPG is important.



Queensland Adventure Activity Standards

- Four Wheel Driving (2014)
- Surfing (2014)
- Trail Bike Touring (2014)




State based Adventure Activity Guides

For the Australian States which had State based Adventure Activity Standards, you will find that not all of the activities that were covered in each State have been covered in the new Australian AAS/GPG. This was due to differing priorities and budgetary issues – we simply could not cover all outdoor activities during the Aust AAS project.

There are no immediate plans to develop Activity Specific Good Practice Guides for the activities that are not covered by the Australian AAS. This may happen in the future when the Australian AAS/Good Practice Guides are reviewed, but of course that will depend on budget.


So, the Qld Adventure activity standards for four wheel driving, surfing and trail bike touring have not been superseded. This does not mean that the Australian AAS/GPG doesn't provide any guidance for those activities. The standard and the core Good Practice Guide are still relevant, since those apply to all adventure activities. I would suggest using the activity specific elements of the State based AAS as the guiding document for planning and conducting that activity, while reading it in context of the new Aust standard and good practice guide – that would mean that your overall operations would be consistent.

Alternatively, you could continue to use your current procedures and policies, It is up to each operator on how you review your procedures and policies

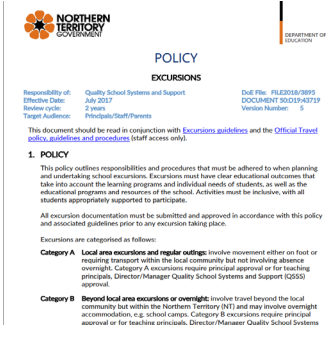


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Implementation



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POLICY
EXCURSIONS

Responsibility of: Quality School Systems and Support
Effective Date: July 2017
Review cycle: 2 years
Target Audience: Principals/Staff/Parents

This document should be read in conjunction with [Excursions guidelines](#) and the [Official Travel policy, activities and procedures](#) (staff access only).

1. POLICY


This policy outlines responsibilities and procedures that must be adhered to when planning and undertaking school excursions. Excursions must have clear educational outcomes that take into account the learning programs and individual needs of students, as well as the educational programs and resources of the school. Activities must be inclusive, with all students appropriately supported to participate.

All excursion documentation must be submitted and approved in accordance with this policy and associated guidelines prior to any excursion taking place.

Excursions are categorised as follows:

Category A Local area excursions and regular outings: involve movement either on foot or requiring transport within the local community but not involving absence overnight. Category A excursions require principal approval or for teaching principals, Director/Manager Quality School Systems and Support (DQSS) approval.

Category B Beyond local area excursions or overnight: involve travel beyond the local community but within the Northern Territory (NT) and may involve overnight accommodation, e.g. school camps. Category B excursions require principal approval or for teaching principals, Director/Manager Quality School Systems



Procedure
Managing risks in school curriculum activities

Audience: All state schools
Purpose: This procedure:
- outlines the responsibilities of departmental employees (regional directors, principals, teachers and others) for the safe delivery of curriculum activities
- provides the process for curriculum activity risk management when conducting curriculum activities in schools and other locations, as part of a school's overall risk management framework. This process is called Curriculum Activity Risk Management (CARM) process.

Overview:
The department is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff and others involved in all curriculum activities at schools or other locations. Those responsible for any school curriculum activity have legal obligations and a common law duty of care to ensure the safety of all those involved in the activity through curriculum activity risk management.

In order to promote a safe, supportive and productive learning environment, this procedure has been informed by the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2009 \(GPs\)](#), [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(GR\)](#) and the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(WHS\)](#).

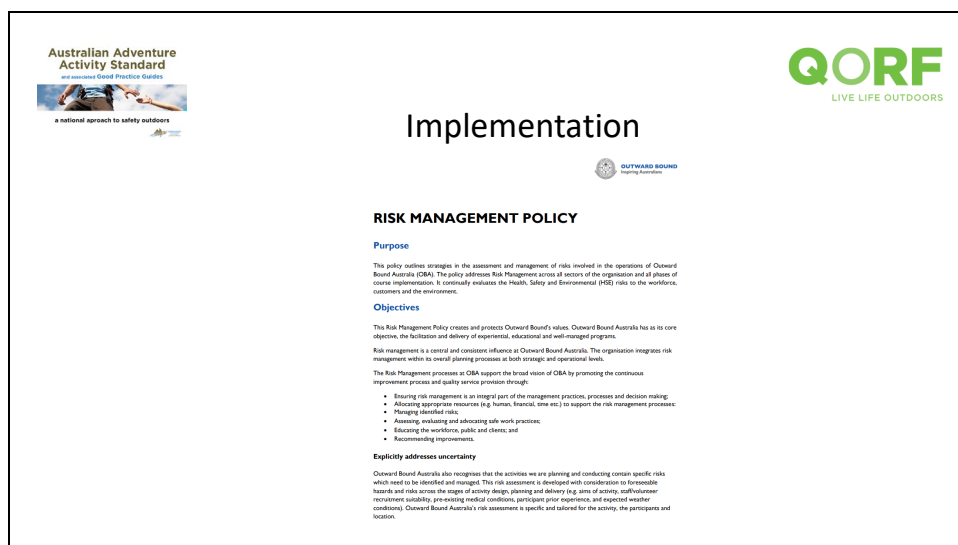
This procedure provides risk assessment and risk management processes to support:

So, we've made it this far, and most of you seem to be still with us...

The big question is - how do you implement the Aust AAS and Good Practice Guides in your operations? I deliberately said how do **you** do this, because this will change depending on how each of you operates. The way you conduct any adventure activity, and what policies or procedures you have in place, are a matter for you. That can be influenced by various factors in your environment – for example:

- the expectations of your insurers,
- the legal system in which you operate,
- other policies of your organisation,
- the policies of the land and water managers responsible for the places you access, and
- by your own experience in particular spaces and conducting particular activities.

The Australian AAS, Core Good Practice Guide and the activity specific Good Practice Guides can be seen as another part of the environment in which we operate. This part of the operating environment has been developed by a range of experts from across the country from within the outdoor sector - that cannot necessarily be said for your insurers and the legal system, and may not hold true for all of the organisational policies that apply to you...





So, what are the hints for how you should **implement** the Aust AAS into your procedures:

- Don't dismiss what you already have in place – if you have policies/procedures that currently work for you, the chances are they will work under the Aust AAS. Critically compare your existing practices to what is recommended in the Standard/GPGs, and assess whether you should make some changes. You are effectively comparing what you already have to the collected advice of a range of experts in their fields – for free!
- Don't despair – this doesn't have to be a chore. Most of us don't immediately think of policy review when considering a fun filled day, but this is an opportunity to do an update (which may be overdue anyway), and ensure you are operating in what is recognised as a safe and responsible manner.
- Don't follow blindly – be prepared to disagree with something written in the Aust AAS/GPGs. Just because something is handed down as the collected wisdom of experts, doesn't mean it necessarily works in your particular setting. Remember that you are also an expert at what you do. My word of caution here is that if you identify a particular statement in the Standard or GPGs that does not enhance safety or responsible delivery in your setting, I suggest documenting the statement, and explaining in your policy/procedure the reasons behind your decision not to follow the guidance provided. There are a couple of reasons for documenting this – firstly to show that you were aware of the standard/GPG and made a deliberate decision based on particular reasons (this is crucial if you ever find yourself having to justify why you chose not to follow the expert guidance, whether to your boss, your insurer, a court, or even justifying it to yourself), and secondly, it makes it easier for you to provide feedback to the next review of the Adventure Activity Standards.
- Don't be too stubborn – consider that the guidance in the Standard and GPGs was harvested from industry experts who voluntarily gave their time and expertise, and make an informed decision about changes to the way you operate.
- Share your learnings – don't just update your policy/procedure and leave it stored on your system or on our shelf. You need to roll that out and explain the changes and reasons for them to all of your team. You may need to update your training schedule and you may need to update the information you provide to your clients, your insurers, and other key stakeholders. Also, consider discussing any changes with industry colleagues who you respect – they may have encountered the same issue as you.



Questions?



Wrap up

- Please take a few minutes to complete a simple survey about this webinar.
Go to www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAAS_Survey
- Sign up to QORF eNews

Contact QORF if queries from Qld or NT operators
Contact local State peak bodies for other states
ACT queries to Outdoors NSW
Tasmanian queries to Outdoors Vic

- Slides and recording to be provided – post webinar and on website

You will get an email from the webinar software immediately after the webinar thanking you for attending.

We will send you a separate email with a link to a quick survey about this webinar and about future offerings you might like to see from QORF. We need feedback to improve how we operate and ensure we are staying relevant.

If you would like more information about QORF and the industry, consider signing up to the QORF eNews – we send out monthly eNewsletters, filled with interesting information, and we send out special bulletins from time to time, always conscious that we don't want to overload our subscribers.

If you have specific queries about the Aust AAS, please get in touch with your friendly State peak body. QORF has offered to assist operators in the Northern Territory, Outdoors NSW will help those in the ACT, and Outdoors Victoria will help people from Tasmania.

The slides and a recording of this webinar will be available on the QORF website and possibly on other websites, such as the Aust AAS website and the OCA website.

We will also look at adding some of the Questions and Answers to our webpage.



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