

**Outdoors Queensland** is the peak body representing the interests of Queensland's outdoor sector.

Outdoors Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters now known as Queensland, their Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledges the important role that Indigenous people continue to play in Queensland, especially on the land and water which has seen outdoor activities for countless generations.

Outdoor activities are important to Queenslanders. Outdoors Queensland assists to develop and promote quality human experiences undertaken in outdoor environments, as part of a balanced life.

Outdoors Queensland is a member-based organisation, representing a broad range of stakeholders in the outdoor sector. We promote outdoor activities and enhancing the capacity and capability of outdoor operators.

Outdoor activities are undertaken for a range of purposes including non-competitive outdoor recreation, outdoor sports, outdoor and environmental education, health and lifestyle improvement, adventure therapy and recreation tourism, eco-tourism and nature-based tourism.

The terms "outdoor sector" and "outdoor activity" are used to incorporate all facets of the outdoor community, and the stakeholders we represent.

Outdoors Queensland recognises that being outdoors is good for people. The outdoors is great for well-being and can speed up healing. Nature can calm us down and increase creativity and productivity. Outdoor experiences connect people to their true selves, to others and to the natural environment.

## Outdoors Queensland – where we go to actively Live Life Outdoors

**VISION** Everyone can enjoy health and well-being benefits of Queensland's outdoors.

**WHY?** Because a healthy world comes from a balanced life, incorporating outdoor activities for all people.

**MISSION** That all people have opportunities to make connections with Queensland's outdoors.

Outdoors Queensland believes that the connections we make in the world around us and to those in it, influence and contribute to the quality of our lives. Everyone should have chances to connect with all that is around us regardless of time, place, age, race, culture, experience, and limitations.

### VALUES

- Explore – the unknown
- Courage – take on daunting challenges



- Connect – communities in the outdoors
- Trust – credibility and integrity
- Unite – empowering outdoor organisations

## Outdoors Queensland – where we become best possible versions of ourselves

### STATE OF QUEENSLAND'S OUTDOOR SECTOR – CURRENT CONTEXT

Part of our role is to monitor the state of Queensland's outdoor sector. We scrutinise trends, policies, customs and actions which may impact on the outdoor sector. We rely on feedback from our members and others to make decisions about priorities for the future.

There have been many societal changes since Outdoors Queensland was established in 1996 as Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation Inc (QORF). These changes include the methods and tools that people use to connect with each other.

Trends around the shift from traditional/organised sport to more organic unstructured or less-structured outdoor recreation have been noted for several years, both anecdotally and through empirical research. By improving the understanding of the personal choices involved in engagement in outdoor activities, Outdoors Queensland can assist the outdoor sector to better meet demand and ensure outdoor activities are available for all people across Queensland.

Recent years have seen an increased focus on community health and well-being, including mental health. Outdoor activities have long been recognised within public health as a positive determinant, and even as a possible treatment for ill-health.

#### Indigenous Cultural Heritage<sup>1</sup>

For Traditional Owners, connections to land and sea country are integral to cultural values, identity, traditions and heritage.

The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures to the education of Australians is recognised through inclusion in the Australian Curriculum.

People regularly undertake outdoor activities in areas rich in Indigenous cultural heritage across Australia and Queensland. The cultural heritage inherent in some places can be the key drawcard that attracts visitors to those locations.

At times, certain outdoor activities have not been allowed in particular places due to conflicts with cultural significance or misunderstandings between the people involved. Land/water managers, who have responsibilities to protect and preserve the cultural heritage values, and responsibilities to facilitate public access to that land and water, can become trapped in the middle of a potential conflict situation.

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<sup>1</sup> Text adapted from Section 3.3.2 Traditional owners and cultural heritage, Core Good Practice Guide Version 1.0, Australian Adventure Activity Standards



Everyone in the outdoor sector has a responsibility to recognise and respect native title rights, land rights and interests, and to ensure that outdoor activities accord with the cultural and natural values of these areas.

Awareness of the cultural significance of places and sites is a key step. To avoid or reduce potential conflict with cultural significance, it may be necessary to modify some outdoor activities. Permission to enter sensitive areas should be obtained prior to access, and there should be compliance with all reasonable requests from recognised Traditional Owners and other Indigenous people with rights and interests in the area.

In March 2022, Outdoors Queensland was the first Australia state outdoor peak body to have a Reconciliation Action Plan endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. Our Reconciliation Action Plan is a way to build stronger and more respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while showing leadership to our members and other operators in the outdoor sectors. During 2023 to 2025, Outdoors Queensland will continue on the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

### Climate Change

Queensland is renowned for having a wonderful climate for outdoor activities – the lifestyles of many Queenslanders and a large portion of Queensland’s tourism industry is dependent upon our climate and our amazing natural resources.

“Queensland already experiences climate extremes such as floods, droughts, heatwaves and bushfires. Climate change is likely to exacerbate the frequency and/or severity of these events and can be an amplifier of these and other hazards.” – *Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy 2017-2030*

Outdoor activities are dramatically affected by climate and weather. While outdoor enthusiasts have been known to claim that there is no such thing as bad weather, only poor planning or inappropriate clothing, climate change and extreme events are a different story.

Outdoors Queensland has a role to play in climate change adaptation. We can assist the outdoor sector to take the appropriate actions to understand, adapt and transition. This will range from considering climate change impacts in long-term strategic planning and investment decisions, assessing climate risks to assets and activities, implementing management strategies to reduce risks, investing in research and development to support adaptation and mitigation activities, and identifying and investing in emerging opportunities for new products or services.

### COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic which emerged in late 2019 and early 2020 had a dramatic effect on all aspects of society, including the Queensland outdoor sector. COVID-19 caused increased levels of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

COVID-19 emphasised the value of outdoor activities when many other types of physical activity were cancelled due to risks of possible transmission. Outdoor activities that can be undertaken solo or in small groups were considered lower risk and became more attractive options in a COVID-19 environment.



More people engaging in outdoor activities is great for the Queensland outdoor sector, but this also placed additional pressure on the infrastructure and on managers of those spaces.

The COVID-19 pandemic focussed people on limiting/preventing the spread of disease, while challenging people about the importance of physical activity for their health and the health of their communities.

As society moves into a phase of living with COVID-19 post-pandemic, increased participation in outdoor activities needs to be managed to ensure that people keep moving outdoors with friends and families to obtain benefits for their physical, mental, social and spiritual health.

### Activate! Queensland 2019-2029

*Activate! Queensland 2019-2029* is the State government's "10-year strategy to encourage and support more Queenslanders to become more active".

In 2022, the Queensland Government released *Activate! Queensland* action plan 2, *Accelerate 2022-2025*, which follows on from the first action plan released in 2019 – *Our Active8 (2019-2022)*.

"Aligned with the four priority areas of *Activate! Queensland 2019-2029* and *Queensland's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan*, *Accelerate* centres on five key commitments aimed to build and strengthen industry capabilities":

1. Collaborate with the active industry to get more Queenslanders moving.
2. Enhance pathways for Queensland's athletes, coaches and officials.
3. Operate precincts and venues that serve community and industry from grassroots to elite.
4. Champion an industry leading network of infrastructure across Queensland.
5. Leverage events and opportunities.

*Accelerate* sets out a range of success measures under each of the above commitments. In relation to Commitment 1 "Collaborate with the active industry to get more Queenslanders moving", *Accelerate* states that success looks like:

- Queenslanders are participating more often
- Physical activity opportunities better meet community preferences and emerging needs
- Sport and recreation opportunities are more inclusive and accessible
- Improved capability of the industry

Queensland's outdoor sector is a key component of the Queensland active industry. As the leader of Queensland's outdoor sector, Outdoors Queensland needs to ensure that our section of the active industry has clarity regarding priorities, and we are working together to take advantage of opportunities and overcome challenges that might be presented by the *Activate! Queensland* strategy.

The Queensland outdoor sector already aligns with the core principles and contributes towards the priority areas set out in *Activate! Queensland*. However, the significance of the outdoor sector's contribution is often underestimated. We need to ensure that we are recording and reporting every action taken by the outdoor sector to get more Queenslanders moving more often and better



connect our communities – by highlighting those actions, we can increase the appreciation and support for the Queensland outdoor sector.

Outdoors Queensland has a vital role in ensuring that decision-makers in all disciplines who affect our sector understand the implications of their decisions, and that those decisions enhance outdoor activities for all Queensland communities.

The benefits of outdoor activities are known, from health at individual and community levels, creating and developing environmental advocates, connecting people with cultural heritage, and associated economic benefits. Outdoor activities develop physical literacy, contributing to knowledge and behaviours that give people the motivation and confidence to enjoy active lifestyles.

It is important that quality outdoor experiences are provided for the entire community, not just for our traditional client base. Outdoor products vary significantly from operator to operator, which is a strength - it allows us to work together to ensure that the sector continues to grow to meet demand and contribute to healthier communities. The collective effort of all outdoor operators means that outdoor experiences will be available for people of all ages, all abilities and all cultures.

Outdoors Queensland will assist organisations to develop their capacity (current ability) and capability (potential to deliver in the right conditions) around outdoor activities.

Developing capacity and capability will be especially important in the lead up to the 2032 Olympic/Paralympic Games which are to be held in Queensland. With significant investment in elite sport by governments, there are risks that investment (from government and non-government sources) in non-sport activities and in non-elite sporting activities will be reduced due the focus on paying the bills associated with the 2032 Games.

A strong Queensland outdoor sector, operating at full capacity, will be well positioned to benefit from the intended legacy of the Olympic/Paralympic Games, while also meeting the challenges through sustainable and valued outdoor experiences.



## Outdoors Queensland – where we outdo ourselves

### FOCUS AREAS

When?	Who?	How?	Where?	What?
2023 to 2025	Build relationships	Connecting community	Places and Spaces	Research
	Connect stakeholders	Build capacity/capability		

Six inter-related focus areas have been identified for Outdoors Queensland and the outdoor sector in Queensland from 2023 to 2025:

#### **Build Relationships:**

- We develop mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Outdoors Queensland engages with government, the active industry, First Nations Peoples, and media (traditional and digital) regarding outdoor activities.
- We engage through conferences, forums and other opportunities to contribute.

#### **Connect stakeholders:**

- We invite a wide array of outdoors people to connect through Outdoors Queensland.
- We encourage conversations and discussions.
- In sharing experiences, we increase understanding.

#### **Connecting community:**

- We connect the Queensland outdoor community.
- By speaking clearly and concisely, Outdoors Queensland ensures outdoor operators are heard.

#### **Build capacity/capability:**

- Outdoors Queensland helps build better outdoor organisations with improved current ability to deliver and increased potential to deliver more.
- We assist organisations to ensure places are accessible and offerings are inclusive for all ages, abilities and cultures.
- Outdoors Queensland encourages more skilled outdoor leaders to participate in a diverse, healthy workforce.

#### **Places and Spaces:**

- Spaces for outdoor activities are identified, secured and managed to enhance access for outdoor activities, along with other values and uses.
- Indigenous cultural heritage is valued.
- Environmental custodianship is respected and embraced.



- Places cater for current outdoor activities and for future growth in demand for, and variety of, outdoor activities.
- Appropriate actions are taken to understand, adapt and transition to realities of climate change, including reconstruction post disaster to ensure outdoor activities continue.

## ○ Research:

- Outdoors Queensland has strong industry intelligence, and applies its knowledge for the benefit of community and the active industry.
- Physical literacy of the outdoor sector is increased, with clear communication of benefits of outdoor activities for physical, cognitive, psychological, and social health (mind/, body, soul and heart).
- Outdoors Queensland supports research into impacts of climate change on outdoor activities.

## ENABLERS

Outdoors Queensland has identified four key **Enablers** that will contribute to our success:

- Knowledge and Insight
- Alliances
- Sharing of Stories
- Sustainable Resources

## GOALS

To further our **Mission** during the life of this Strategic Plan Outdoors Queensland has five high level **Goals**, which have been mapped to our **Priority Areas**:

1. Outdoors Queensland members are engaged, connected, educated and informed:
  - Connect stakeholders
  - Connecting Community
  - Build capacity/capability
  - Places and Spaces
  - Research
2. Outdoors Queensland has well-informed partners who support our mission:
  - Build relationships
  - Connect stakeholders
  - Connecting Community
  - Research
3. Outdoors Queensland staff and volunteers are innovative, trusted, and resourced:
  - Build capacity/capability
  - Build relationships
  - Connect stakeholders
  - Connecting Community



4. Outdoors Queensland empowers the outdoor industry to provide best-practice for safety and enjoyment for inclusion of all Queenslanders in their entire diversity:
  - Build capacity/capability
  - Build relationships
  - Connect stakeholders
  - Research
  - Places and Spaces
5. Outdoors Queensland will explore opportunities to ensure we are an influential, financially sustainable organisation:
  - Build relationships
  - Connect stakeholders
  - Research
  - Connecting Community
  - Build capacity/capability



