



OUTDOOR COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN ADVENTURE ACTIVITY STANDARD FRAMEWORK'S

AUSTRALIAN ADVENTURE ACTIVITY STANDARD

Key Requirements for Preparing and Delivering Adventure Activities.

This Standard has been designed and updated for the use of dependent groups and should be used in conjunction with the Core Good Practice Guide and activity specific Good Practice Guides.

(Version 2.0 Updated • September 2026)

TRADITIONAL OWNER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the Elders past and present.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Date	Version #	Changes
23 SEPT 2019	V1.0	FORMATION & RELEASE OF THE AAAS FRAMEWORK
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FOREWORD

“When I experience dadirri, I am made whole again. I can sit on the riverbank or walk through the trees; even if someone close to me has passed away, I can find my peace in this silent awareness. There is no need of words. A big part of dadirri is listening.”

Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann AM

The AAAS and Good Practice Guides are designed to ensure effective, responsible, sustainable and safe delivery of adventure activities to *dependent participants*. They can help people across the outdoor sector to develop appropriately managed adventure activities which enhance individuals and our communities, while protecting the environment and culturally significant places. In doing this, these documents can help ensure that people will continue to enjoy the benefits of adventure activities well into the future.

The Australian Adventure Activity Standard Steering Committee.
Outdoor Council of Australia

CREATION

The Australian *Adventure Activity* Standards (AAAS) and accompanying Good Practice Guides (GPGs) were developed through a national project and launched in 2019. They drew together, and built upon, the various state and territory-specific *adventure activity* standards that had previously operated across Australia, replacing a fragmented set of arrangements with a single, nationally consistent voluntary *framework*. The original development drew on the input of a wide range of outdoor and *adventure activity* experts with extensive sector experience, supported by expert advisory *groups* and informed by open consultation across *activity providers*, education authorities and other stakeholders.

The Steering Committee gratefully acknowledges the members of the various focus *groups*, industry consultation, working *groups* and expert advisors for their work and contributions, and thanks the Australian Government and the State and Territory Governments for funding the original development.

The AAAS and GPGs are now maintained by the Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA). They are subject to comprehensive review at least every five years, with targeted reviews undertaken in response to serious incidents, fatalities, relevant court decisions, or material changes in regulation or practice. Reviews are overseen by the Steering Committee and conducted in accordance with the AAAS Review and Update Methodology — a pragmatic, mixed-methods *process* combining legislative and regulatory analysis, *currency* checking of cited standards and instruments, stakeholder consultation, data-informed *risk assessment*, and structured expert input through the Expert Advisory *Group*, followed by open public consultation before endorsement.

The first comprehensive review under this methodology was undertaken in 2025–26. The review was facilitated, and the Standard and Good Practice Guides drafted, by Dr David Marsden of The OREAS *Group* for and on behalf of the Outdoor Council of Australia. The Outdoor Council of Australia gratefully acknowledges the contributions of all who took part in the review:

- Dr David Marsden (PhD), Lead Consultant (The OREAS *GROUP*)
- Lori Modde, Project Sponsor (OCA Chair)
- the members of the AAAS Steering Committee, who provided governance, direction and endorsement of the reviewed documents;
 - Lori Modde, OCA Chair, Outdoors NSW, ACT
 - David Marsden, Lead Consultant, The OREAS Group
 - Andrew Atfield, Tasmania Government
 - Andrew Knight, Outdoors Victoria
 - Dom Courtney, Outdoors Queensland
 - Jodie Freund, South Australian Government
 - Neil Le Febvre, Outdoors WA (left October 2025, replaced by) Katie Brown, Outdoors WA
 - Mitchell Hardy, NT Government (left January 2026)
- the members of the Expert Advisory *Groups*, who contributed specialist knowledge and reviewed drafts across the Core and *activity* Good Practice Guides; and
- the *activity providers*, education authorities, peak bodies and individuals who contributed through public consultation, focus *groups*, and submissions.

Further details of the creation and review of the AAAS and GPGs can be found at www.outdoorcouncilaustralia.com, where updates are also published.

FUNDERS

The Steering Committee gratefully acknowledges and thanks the Australian Government and the State and Territory Governments for funding the original development of the AAAS, and the following State and Territory Governments for funding the 2026 review: New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland.

PREFACE

Interpretation of the Standard and Good Practice Guides

The following words and phrases are used in all documents and have specific meanings:

- **Must:** used where a provision is mandatory, if the *provider* is to operate fully in accordance with AAAS or GPGs. (This is equivalent to the keyword “shall” used in other voluntary standards e.g. Standards Australia, other International Organisation for Standardization (ISOs) etc.).
- **Should:** used where a provision is recommended, not mandatory. It indicates that the *provider* needs to consider their specific situation and decide for themselves whether it applies or is relevant. A “should” statement describes good practice. Departure from a “should” statement does not of itself establish a breach of duty — a *provider* may meet its obligations by other means appropriate to its *context* — but *providers* should be able to explain the basis for a different approach.
- **Can/cannot:** indicates a possibility and capability.
- **May/need not:** indicates a permission or existence of an option.
- **But are/is not limited to:** used to indicate that a list is not definitive and additional items may need to be considered depending on the *context*.

The following formatting is used throughout:

- Defined words are in *italics*. They are defined in Section 9 Glossary of this Standard.
- Examples are in smaller italic 9-point font.
- In document references are underlined. References are to section heading titles.
- External web or AAAS and GPG document links are dotted underline italic.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About these documents

The *Australian Adventure Activity Standard (AAAS)* and associated *Good Practice Guides (GPGs)* provide essential information for the safe and responsible planning and delivery of adventure activities with *dependent participants*. They are an industry good-practice *framework* covering safety, environmental and cultural responsibilities and service delivery. However, they are not a full legal compliance *framework*, and the AAAS relies on the disclaimer at the beginning of this document in that regard.

1.2 Does the Standard and Good Practice Guides apply to me?

A *provider* is any *organisation*, business, community *group*, government agency, school or individual that holds the ultimate legal *duty of care* and that organises and leads adventure activities with *dependent participants*. The Standard and GPGs apply to a *provider* as a whole *organisation* rather than to specific roles within it.

1.3 Dependent Participants

A *dependent participant* relies, wholly or partly, on the *provider's* systems, processes and operational practices for the support, supervision, guidance or instruction needed to take part in an *activity*. A *provider* owes a *dependent participant* a *duty of care*. Each *provider* must determine whether they are working with *dependent participants* and the level of that dependence.

1.4 Structure of the Standard and Good Practice Guides

The guidance for adventure activities comprises several related documents. For any *activity*, *providers* should consult the AAAS (the Standard), the Core GPG, the relevant *activity* GPG and any applicable Explanatory Notes issued by the Outdoor Council of Australia from time to time.



Figure 1.1: Structure of the Standard and Good Practice Guides

The documents present cumulatively more specific information. *Providers* should:

- determine how they use the AAAS and GPGs based on their *context* and need
- obtain independent professional and legal advice on their obligations, and
- reference the laws relevant to the area in which they operate.

This Standard and the Good Practice Guides identify essential considerations that help *providers* apply a systematic approach to the management, planning and delivery of adventure activities. They do this through a structured *framework* that outlines the importance of:

- managing *risk*
- planning for activities
- diversity, equity and inclusion
- understanding and supporting *participants*
- appropriate environments, equipment and logistics, and
- clear responsibilities and roles for those leading activities.

Safe, responsible and inclusive adventure activities

an ecological model — the AAAS components nested within the context of the activity

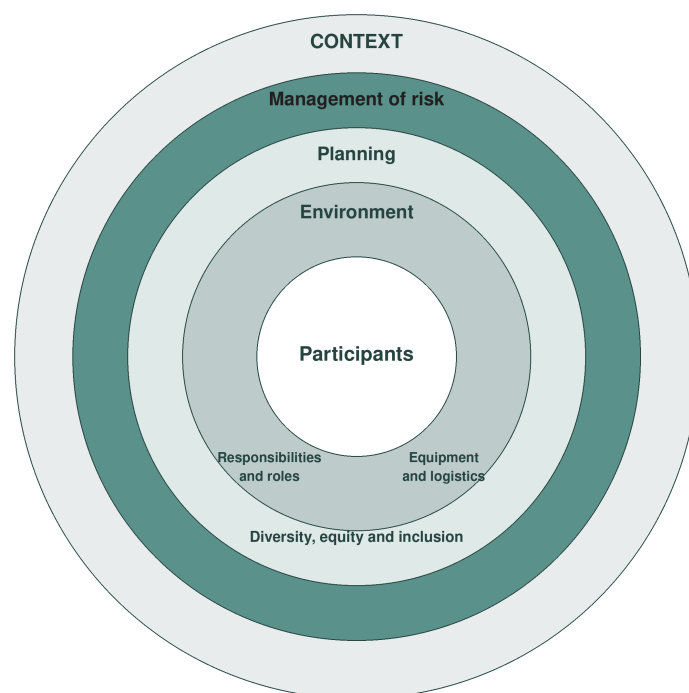


Figure 1.2: Components of the AAAS framework

While the components of the *AAAS framework* are discussed separately, they are inter-related. *Providers should consider how they address each component and how these work together within their own adventure activity management systems.* Further description and detail are provided in the Core and activity-specific Good Practice Guides.

1.5 Are they Legally Binding?

The *AAAS* and *GPGs* are not, of themselves, legally binding. However, they refer to laws and/or regulations that may be binding, and some *land managers* or *organisations* may require compliance as a condition of a licence, permit or contract. *Providers* have a legal *duty of care* to *dependent participants*.

2. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

2.1 Context Matters

Risk is defined as the ‘effect of uncertainty on objectives’ and can result in positive and negative outcomes. The management of *risk* involves systematically:

- identifying the range of factors and influences that might impact on achieving objectives, and
- putting in place coordinated activities to direct and/or control these factors, and to ensure, *so far as is reasonably practicable*, that the health and safety of people is not put at *risk* due to the identified *risks* (adapted from AS ISO 31000:2018 *Risk management — Guidelines*).

The management of *risk* and the development of safety systems must focus on all stages of the design, planning, preparation and delivery of adventure activities.

Risk management systems should be flexible, adaptive and responsive.

Providers may choose to apply a *benefit–risk assessment* approach. *Benefit–risk assessment* (adapted from AS ISO 4980:2023) complements, but does not replace, the *risk management framework* based on AS ISO 31000:2018.

While the AAAS identifies a range of potential *risks*, these may not be fully comprehensive. The management of *risk* may include addressing aspects not identified in the Standard. These could include, but not be limited to, such things as additional site-specific *hazards*.

2.2 Risk Management Framework and Process

Providers should integrate risk management into all aspects of their governance, management and operations. It covers all the factors that contribute to *risk*, not only those arising during delivery of the *activity*.

The ‘work health and safety’ law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

The development and implementation of *risk management* involves several steps. The steps required, and the nature of those steps, will be determined by the *provider’s organisation* and the *adventure activity* itself.

Effective *risk management* also includes ensuring compliance with the law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* that apply to the *activity* and the *context*. These may change over time.

2.3 Risk Management Plan

A *risk management plan* identifies *hazards* and assesses *risks* for an *activity* and specifies how these will be managed. *Providers* must document a *risk management plan* for each *activity*.

What a *provider* must do to manage *risk* depends on what is reasonably practicable.

Where a *provider* relies on administrative controls or personal protective equipment as a *risk* control, the *provider* must document why a higher-order control was not reasonably practicable.

2.4 Dynamic Risk Assessment

Risks can change over time before, during, and after a planned activity. Providers must ensure dynamic risk assessments are applied as required.

2.5 Incident Reporting

There must be a *process* for reporting incidents and near misses.

Providers must:

- have a *process* for reporting incidents and near-misses
- notify a *notifiable incident* to the work health and safety regulator, and report a reportable incident to all relevant government authorities, and
- determine and comply with the 'incident reporting' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant jurisdiction(s).

Information on incidents and near-misses should be collected and assessed.

Providers may also periodically review other incidents related to adventure activities they conduct.

Incident and *near-miss* information should be used to develop *risk management* strategies and to inform *risk treatment*, program design and delivery.

The 'incident notification' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

3. PLANNING

3.1 Management and Approval of Activities

Whether preparing for one, or a series of activities, the management, design and delivery of adventure activities requires good planning. Planning allows *providers* to:

- meet their own objectives (e.g. to comply with laws, provide enjoyable/educative experiences, sustain financial viability), and
- contribute to the objectives of their members, clients or partners (e.g. achieve personal goals, social interaction, leadership/skill development).

Providers must have a *process* for the development and approval of *activity* plans that suit the *context* and purpose.

3.2 Activity Plans

Activity plans help bring to life the purpose and objectives of the *activity*, and inform decisions made before, during and after it.

All activities must have an *activity* plan appropriate to the scale and complexity of the *activity*. The *activity* plan must be documented.

Inclusions in the *activity* plan will vary depending on the *activity* but should include:

- *participants*: Who are the *participants* and why is this *activity* relevant?
- *location/s*: Are the location and conditions suitable for the *activity*?
- *risk*: What are the *risks* involved and how will these be managed?
- *emergency management*: How to respond in case of an emergency?
- *logistics*: What needs to be organised (e.g. permission, transport, equipment)?
- *leaders*: Who will lead the *activity* and what competencies and *currency* do they need?
- *contingency*: How to respond if things change?

3.3 Group Size

Providers must determine the maximum and minimum *group* size for an *activity* through the planning and *risk management process*.

Group size and the number of *activity leaders* available are interrelated. A change to one must prompt reassessment of the other.

3.4 Cultural, Environmental and Historical Values

Providers should factor consideration and respect for the cultural, spiritual and historical significance of sites, places and people into their planning and delivery of services. Considerations may include:

- recognising and giving due regard to the feelings, wishes or rights of others
- seeking information and/or permission from native title holders, *Traditional Owners* and/or other *land managers*
- respecting and applying appropriate cultural values, and
- implementing environmental sustainability practices.

3.5 Emergency Management Planning

Providers must develop actionable plans to support a timely and effective response to an emergency.

Emergency management plans must be:

- specific and include documented emergency processes and *procedures*
- familiar to those who need to implement them
- shared with other appropriate people or agencies where necessary (e.g. *land managers*, a responsible non-participating person and/or *participants*)
- periodically reviewed and updated.

3.6 Activity Leader Required Documentation

Activity leaders must have timely access to relevant documentation to assist them to prepare for, and deliver, the *activity*.

4. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

4.1 Diversity of Participants and Leaders

Adventure activities are delivered by, and for, people of diverse identities, abilities, cultures and circumstances. Providing equitable opportunities for safe and meaningful participation is fundamental to good practice.

Providers should recognise the diversity of participants and activity leaders, which may include:

- ability and disability,
- age,
- cultural and linguistic background,
- First Peoples identity and connection to Country,
- *gender identity*, sex, sexual orientation and *intersex* status,
- neurodivergence,
- religion or belief,
- socio-economic and family circumstances, and
- prior experience of trauma, marginalisation or discrimination.

Risk management and activity planning must address the foreseeable implications of this diversity for the safety, wellbeing and participation of all involved.

4.2 Inclusive Practice

To support safe and equitable participation, *providers* should:

- identify and reduce foreseeable barriers to participation
- apply reasonable and proportionate adjustments suited to the *activity*
- provide information and *briefings* in accessible formats
- assess the suitability and safety of any adaptive or *participant*-supplied equipment.

4.3 Cultural Safety

Providers should ensure that the planning and delivery of activities:

- respects the cultural, religious and dietary requirements of *participants* and *activity leaders*, and
- considers, where reasonably practicable, the lived experience of culturally and linguistically diverse *participants* and *activity leaders*, and of those with lived experience of marginalisation.

The 'cultural heritage protection' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

4.4 Psychological Safety and Dignity

Providers must plan for and manage *psychological safety* for:

- *participants*,
- *activity leaders*,
- contractors, and
- employees.

Providers should identify and address foreseeable *psychosocial hazards*, including bullying, harassment, exclusion and discrimination.

The 'work health and safety' and 'discrimination' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

4.5 Information, Communication and Consent

Pre-activity information and the *activity briefing* must be clear and able to be understood by the *participants*, parents or legal guardians, *client organisations* and *activity leaders* receiving it.

Where the level of choice available to a *participant* or *activity leader* will foreseeably be limited once they have committed to an *activity* or a stage of an *activity*, *providers* must communicate this before that commitment is made.

Consent must be informed and, where reasonably practicable, able to be revisited through the *activity*.

4.6 Leader Competence

Providers should ensure that the competencies required of *activity leaders* include the ability to:

- recognise the diversity of *participants* and *activity leaders* present in the *activity*,
- apply inclusive facilitation appropriate to the role and *context*,
- recognise foreseeable *psychosocial hazards* and respond appropriately,
- recognise and respond to disclosures of harm, including harassment, discrimination, abuse and trauma, and
- exercise cultural responsiveness appropriate to the *participants*, *activity leaders* and *context*.

4.7 Concerns, Complaints and Review

Providers must have an accessible *process* for receiving and responding to concerns and complaints. The *process* must:

- cover concerns about discrimination, exclusion, harassment or *cultural safety*,
- be able to be used by *participants*, parents and guardians, staff and volunteers, and
- be accessible to children.

4.8 Universal Design

Providers should apply the *principles of Universal Design* when designing, delivering and reviewing an *activity* — to the *activity* itself, to the information given about it, to equipment selection, to the settings the *provider* controls or selects, and to the *provider's* own systems.

Universal Design is a design method. It does not replace the duty to make reasonable adjustments, or the need for specialised equipment or individual support, in a particular case.

Where a *provider* owns, leases, manages or selects the premises at which an *activity* is conducted, the 'building access' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

5. PARTICIPANTS

5.1 Pre-Activity Communication

Providers should consider the needs and abilities of *participants* at every stage of adventure activity design, management, planning and delivery.

Considerations relating to *participants* should include:

- taking reasonable steps to understand the abilities and needs of individual *participants*, *group* and/or *client organisation*,
- using understanding of *participants* to design, plan and deliver an appropriate program,
- effectively communicating timely information about the *activity* or program and its requirements, and
- implementing a *process* to obtain relevant details on pre-existing health or personal conditions, *informed consent* and *acknowledgement of risk* to participate before the activity begins.

Providers must not misrepresent the nature, demands or *risks* of an *activity*, and must communicate its foreseeable material *risks* to *participants*, and to a parent or legal guardian where the *participant* is a *minor*, before participation.

Providers must obtain *informed consent* and *acknowledgement of risk* before the *activity* begins, from a parent or legal guardian where the *participant* is a *minor* or is unable to give *informed consent*.

5.2 Participation Restrictions

Providers may restrict or exclude a participant from an activity, or from part of an activity, where, after considering reasonable adjustments and alternative ways of taking part, the risk to the participant or to others cannot be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable to a level the provider can accept.

The decision must be based on an assessment of the individual participant and the specific activity, be made by a *competent person*, be no broader than the risk requires, and be recorded with reasons.

The participant, or their parent or guardian, must be informed of the restriction and the reasons before committing to the activity (see 4.5), and told how the decision may be reviewed. See 4.2, 4.4 and 4.8 for further detail.

5.3 Vulnerable Participants

The 'discrimination' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

Where activities involve *minors* or *vulnerable participants*, the 'child safety protection' and 'vulnerable person safety protection' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

5.4 Health and Wellbeing

The 'allergy and anaphylaxis safety for *minors*' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

5.5 Privacy of Information

The 'privacy' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* must be determined and complied with.

Providers must retain records relating to activities involving *minors*. The minimum retention period is determined by the law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)* and must be complied with.

5.6 Supervision and Management During the Activity

Providers must provide *participants* with appropriate supervision throughout the *activity*. The level of supervision must be determined on the basis of a *risk assessment*.

The level of supervision — *direct supervision*, *indirect supervision* or *remote supervision* — must be:

- appropriate to the *activity*, environment and *participant group*,
- based on the *risk assessment*, and
- adjusted as conditions or circumstances change.

Where *indirect supervision* or *remote supervision* is used, a *risk assessment* must first confirm that the person responsible can intervene appropriately.

Providers must take reasonable steps to manage the *risks* associated with *participant* fatigue.

5.7 Activity Leader to Participants Ratios

Ratios must be:

- determined through the planning and *risk management process*,
- appropriate to the *participants*, environment, *activity* and the potential *risks* associated with the *activity* and/or *participant group*,
- maintained throughout the *activity*,
- reassessed, and the *provider* informed, if an *activity leader* becomes unavailable, and
- compliant with any *land owner*, *land manager* or other authority requirements.

5.8 Activity Briefing

Participants must receive a *briefing* appropriate to the *activity* before the *activity* commences.

The *briefing* should cover:

- the nature of the *activity*,
- safety requirements,
- emergency *procedures*,
- communications, and
- *activity* expectations.

Briefings may reoccur at appropriate points as the *activity* progresses, including before a new stage or task and when conditions, plans or the environment change.

6. ENVIRONMENT

6.1 Environmental Conditions, Safety and Impact Management

Providers have a responsibility to understand the environments in which they operate. Further, they have a responsibility to implement practices that address *principles* of environmental sustainability.

Providers must consider relevant environmental conditions and impacts in *risk management* and *activity* plans.

These conditions include:

- weather and emerging weather variations,
- geography,
- seasons,
- sun safety,
- local flora and/or fauna *hazards* or impacts,
- *severe weather* and fire weather warnings, and
- bushfire and fire danger rating.

Providers should identify and monitor weather and environmental conditions that might trigger modification, evacuation or other relevant response.

6.1.3 Sun safety

Excessive ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is a year-round *risk*. *Providers* must implement sun-safety measures regardless of season.

6.1.4 Severe weather sites

A *severe weather* site is a location that provides shelter or protection from the *hazards* associated with *severe weather* conditions. *Severe weather* sites should be predetermined during *activity* planning and the *risk management process*.

Activity leaders should be able to interpret relevant weather information and respond to forecast and localised *severe weather* conditions.

6.2 Bushfires, Prescribed Fire and Fire Danger

Providers must determine and comply with the 'bushfire and fire danger' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

6.3 Tree Safety

Providers must assess and appropriately manage the *hazards* posed by trees, including falling trees and branches, and the impact of *severe weather* on venue safety.

6.4 Drinking Water Safety

Providers must determine and comply with the 'drinking water safety' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

6.5 Food Safety

Providers must determine and comply with the 'food handling and safety' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

6.6 Land Owner and/or Manager Requirements

Providers must determine and comply with the '*land owner* and/or *land manager*' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

7 EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTICS

7.1 Framework for Equipment Requirements

Refer to the GPGs.

7.2 Equipment Requirements

Providers must select equipment that is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be used.

This includes ensuring all equipment:

- meets any legislative or regulatory requirements,
- is appropriately serviced, stored, maintained and regularly tested, and
- is appropriate in style, size, quality and quantity for the *activity* and client.

Communications equipment, first aid equipment, and emergency response and rescue equipment must be:

- suitable for the *context* and the *activity*, and
- accessible, adequate and appropriate for the potential *hazards* and *risks* involved.

Providers should identify the personal protective equipment (PPE) required for the *activity* through the *risk management process*.

Where an *activity* uses plant classified as an amusement device, the *provider* must determine and comply with 'plant and amusement device' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

7.3 First Aid Equipment and Medication

Providers must ensure first aid equipment meets the 'work health and safety' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant jurisdiction(s).

7.4 Communications Equipment

The requirement for, and type of, communications equipment must be appropriate to the *activity*, the *hazards* and *risks*, and the *emergency management plan*.

7.5 Use of Equipment

Providers must ensure that all relevant people receive appropriate training before using equipment, and that equipment is used with appropriate supervision as dictated by the *context* of its use.

All equipment should be checked for serviceability prior to use.

7.6 Transport

At times it may be necessary to transport *dependent participants* for the *activity*. *Providers* must determine and comply with the 'transport' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

7.7 Maintenance and Storage of Equipment

The care and maintenance of equipment is the responsibility of the *provider*. *Providers* must implement a *process* to maintain and store equipment, and must regularly test equipment to ensure it remains operational for its purpose.

All equipment must be checked, and any damaged or worn item that is no longer fit for use must be appropriately marked and removed from service.

An equipment maintenance log should be kept.

8 RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

8.1 Responsibilities and Roles Framework

The *activity provider* has primary responsibility for *participants* and for the overall conduct of an *activity*. The *provider* plans, authorises and resources the *activity* and is accountable for the systems that make delivery possible.

Providers must ensure that:

- adventure activities are led by competent people who act under the lawful and reasonable direction of the *provider*, and
- all persons in a leadership role have the knowledge, skill, training and experience appropriate to the responsibilities they carry.

8.2 Naming Conventions

The standard leadership roles are *Leader*, *Assistant Leader* and *Support Person*. Where a *provider* uses different titles, each should be mapped to these roles and the mapping documented.

8.3 Provider Responsibilities to Prepare and Support Leaders

Providers must prepare and support every person in a leadership role, whether employee, contractor or volunteer.

This includes:

- Induction,
- familiarisation with sites and *hazards*,
- provision of the *activity*, *risk management* and *emergency management plans*,
- suitable and serviceable equipment, and
- the authority to modify, pause or cancel an *activity*.

Activity leaders, *assistant leaders*, contractors and volunteers are *workers* under the 'work health and safety' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant *jurisdiction(s)*.

8.4 Leader Responsibilities and Role Descriptions

Providers must ensure that people in leadership roles:

- conform with the *provider's risk management* systems,

- have current, verified and documented *knowledge, skill and experience*,
- only assume roles within their *knowledge, skill and experience*,
- provide an appropriate level of supervision (direct, indirect or *remote*) for the *context*,
- are physically and psychosocially fit to carry out the demands of the role, and
- maintain the *activity leader to participant ratios* determined for the *activity*.

8.4.4 Leader Fitness for Work

Providers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that each person assigned to a leader or assistant leader role is physically and psychosocially capable of carrying out the demands of the role.

Activity leaders must self-assess their own physical and psychosocial fitness before accepting a role, and should not accept a role for which they are not fit.

An activity leader must not be impaired by alcohol or any other drug while delivering an activity.

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure that appropriate resources and processes to manage fatigue risk are in place and are actively used.

8.5 Leader Readiness and Capability

The *knowledge, skill and experience* required of *leaders* is expressed through the AAAS Outdoor *Leader Knowledge, Skill and Experience (KSE) Framework*. Determining that a person is capable of their role is a non-delegable responsibility of the *provider*.

Providers must:

- verify each *leader's* knowledge, skill, experience and *currency*,
- keep records of *verification*, and
- ensure every *activity leader* holds a current Australian Qualifications *Framework* (AQF) qualification in first aid, or an equivalent qualification, appropriate to the *context*.

Providers must ensure that knowledge, skill and experience are current. Where a qualification or recognition pathway imposes its own time limitation, that limitation is the maximum.

9 GLOSSARY

AAAS: Australian Adventure Activity Standard – See Introduction for details.

Acknowledgement of risk: a confirmation by a participant, or by a parent or legal guardian, that they understand the inherent risks of an activity and their possible consequences.

Activity: an adventure activity.

Activity briefing: informing someone thoroughly, especially in preparation for a task, immediately prior to an activity or task (also see briefing and pre-activity briefing).

Activity leader to participant ratio: the number of competent activity leaders relative to the number of participants for an activity, determined and justified through the risk management process.

Activity leaders: the collective noun for leader(s) and assistant leader(s).

Activity provider: see provider.

Adventure activity: an activity delivered under the AAAS in which participants engage with a natural or outdoor environment.

Assistant leader: a currently competent person within the role, who takes some responsibility for participants and is able to lead or supervise delegated elements or tasks of an activity.

Benefit–risk assessment (BRA): a structured process, described in AS ISO 4980:2023, in which the benefits of an activity are identified and weighed alongside its risks so that a decision to proceed, modify or not proceed rests on both.

Briefing: informing someone thoroughly, especially in preparation for a task (also see activity briefing and pre-activity briefing).

Can/cannot: indicates a possibility and capability.

Client organisation: where the client of the provider is someone other than the participants who undertake the activity (e.g. a school uses a provider to deliver an activity for its students – in this instance the school is the client organisation and the students, while participants, are not the client).

Competence: ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve expected results.

Context: the group of conditions, circumstances and facts that form the setting for an activity.

Cultural safety: an environment in which participants and activity leaders of every cultural background, including First Peoples, can take part without assault, challenge or denial of their identity and needs.

Currency: from the present or the very recent past. Currency provides assurance that the evidence (e.g. qualifications, certificates, log book experience) provided is recent enough to show that the activity leader is competent at the time of making a decision.

Dependent Participant: a person owed a duty of care by the activity provider who is reliant upon the provider's systems, processes and operational practices for the supervision, guidance or instruction required to support their participation in an activity.

Direct supervision: where a nominated person responsible for supervising others during all or part of the activity can see and readily communicate with those participants at all times and is able to intervene immediately (also see indirect supervision and remote supervision).

Duty of care: a duty to, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of persons who are under the provider's care and charge (including workers and volunteers) while on the activity.

Dynamic risk assessment: a process of assessing newly identified risks and changes to previously identified risks, and the modification of the management arrangements accordingly.

Emergency management plan: the documented processes and procedures a provider will follow in an emergency, developed within the emergency management framework and reviewed as often as necessary.

Fitness for work: a leader's physical and psychosocial capacity to carry out the responsibilities of their role at the time an activity is delivered, taking into account health, fatigue, alcohol, medication and other substances.

Framework: set of components that provide the foundations and organisational arrangements, or basic structure underlying a system or concept. A framework can be adapted to specific needs.

Gender identity: the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth. Refer Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013.

GPGs: Good Practice Guide(s) – See Introduction for details.

Group: a number of participants, leaders, assistant leaders and/or support persons located, gathered or classed together for the purpose of completing a part or whole of an activity.

Hazards: a potential source of harm. This can be a physical (e.g. cliff edge or moving water), technological (e.g. incorrect white water equipment) or intentional agent (e.g. work practices such as manual handling).

Indirect supervision: where a nominated person responsible for supervising others during all or part of the activity is in the vicinity and able to intervene in a timely manner (also see direct supervision and remote supervision).

Informed consent: agreement to take part given by a participant, or for a minor or vulnerable person by their parent or legal guardian, after receiving accurate pre-activity information about the activity, its environment and its inherent risks.

Intersex: having natural physical characteristics that are different from conventional ideas about male or female bodies.

Jurisdiction: the territorial range of authority or control. This will generally relate to the state or territory in which the activity is being undertaken.

Knowledge, skill and experience (KSE): the three integrated elements of leadership capability assessed under the Outdoor Leader KSE Framework: the concepts and information a role requires, the ability to perform its tasks, and the practice needed to interpret complexity and respond to uncertainty.

Land manager: the party that has legal responsibility for managing a particular environment. This may include the power to restrict access or place conditions and/or requirements on anyone accessing that particular environment. Includes managers of rivers, waterways and other bodies of water (also see land owner).

Land owner: the party that owns and has legal responsibility for managing a particular environment (also see land manager).

Leader: a competent person who takes responsibility for people involved in, and is able to lead and supervise an activity.

May/need not: indicates a permission or existence of an option.

Minor: someone under the age of 18 years.

Must/must not: indicates that a statement is mandatory or a requirement. Additional information provided might indicate that the section or statement is mandatory by law.

Near miss: an event or set of circumstances during an activity that could foreseeably have led to death, injury, illness, psychological harm, significant loss of property, harm to the environment or damage to cultural heritage values, but did not.

Notifiable incident: an incident that the 'work health and safety' law(s) and/or regulation(s) of the relevant jurisdiction(s) require to be notified to the WHS regulator — a fatality, a serious injury or illness, or a potentially dangerous incident.

Organisation: a person, group of persons or legal entity organised for a particular purpose that provides an activity for either commercial (for profit) or non-commercial (not-for-profit or community group) purposes (also see provider).

Participant: a person who undertakes an activity and is not a leader or assistant leader for the activity.

Prescribed fire: a planned burning operation of vegetation by land owners or managers to meet management objectives.

Principle: a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of beliefs or behaviour or for a chain of reasoning.

Procedure: an established or specified way to carry out an activity or a process.

Process: a systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices, in a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.

Provider: a generic term to indicate the party responsible for the delivery of the activity. This may include but is not limited to an entity, organisation, or individual — including but not limited to a company, partnership, sole trader, incorporated or unincorporated associations, school or statutory body for either commercial (for profit) or non-commercial (not-for-profit or community group) purposes.

Psychological safety: a condition in which participants and activity leaders can raise concerns, ask questions, decline participation and make mistakes without fear of ridicule, exclusion or reprisal.

Psychosocial hazard: a hazard arising from the design or management of work, the working environment or workplace interactions that may cause psychological or physical harm — in adventure activity settings, for example, fatigue, isolation, role ambiguity, high-consequence decision-making, exposure to traumatic incidents and team conflict.

Remote: a location that is more than 30 minutes from access to reliable telephone access or more than 20 minutes from vehicle access or greater than one hour from access to professional medical assistance in all foreseeable weather (also see non-remote). Note: access to professional medical assistance needs to account for the foreseeable possibility that professional medical assistance via helicopter may not be possible due to terrain and/or weather when determining access times.

Remote supervision: where a nominated person responsible for supervising others during all or part of the activity is not involved in direct or indirect supervision (also see direct supervision and indirect supervision).

Risk: the effect of uncertainty on objectives. (AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk management — Guidelines)

Risk assessment: an overall process of risk identification, analysis and evaluation.

Risk management: the coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk.

Risk management framework: set of components that provide the foundations and organisational arrangements for designing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and continually improving risk management throughout the organisation.

Risk management plan: scheme within the risk management framework specifying the approach, the management components and resources to be applied to the management of risk.

Risk treatment: a process to modify risk.

Severe weather: potentially hazardous or dangerous weather.

Should/should not: indicates a recommendation.

So far as is reasonably practicable: the standard that qualifies the primary duty of care under the 'work health and safety' law(s) of the relevant jurisdiction(s): that which is, or was at the relevant time, reasonably able to be done, weighing the likelihood of the hazard or risk, the degree of harm, what the duty holder knows or ought reasonably to know, the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk and, after those, the cost.

Support person: a competent person who is able to complete delegated elements or tasks during an activity that does not require the activity-specific competence of a leader or assistant leader.

Traditional Owners: those people who, through membership in a descent group or clan, have responsibility for caring for particular country. Traditional Owners are authorised to speak for country and its heritage.

Universal Design: the design of activities, environments, equipment, information and services so that they can be used by the widest possible range of people without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

Verification: the process by which a provider confirms, in context, that a person holds the knowledge, skill and experience required for the responsibilities they are assigned.

Vulnerable participant(s): (a) a minor; or (b) an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason. (Note: different jurisdictions may have a legal definition for vulnerable participants relating to specific law(s) and/or regulation(s).)

Worker: A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU).

ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in this Standard.

AAAS: Australian Adventure Activity Standard

AQF: Australian Qualifications Framework

AS: Australian Standard

BRA: Benefit–Risk Assessment

GPG: Good Practice Guide

ISO: International Organization for Standardization

KSE: Knowledge, Skill and Experience

OCA: Outdoor Council of Australia

PCBU: Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment

UV: Ultraviolet

WHS: Work Health and Safety