Adventure Activity Standards (AAS)
February 2005 Draft AAS Forum Report

Introduction/Summary
The AAS forum held at Holmesglen Institute of TAFE on February the 19th 2005 was conducted as a follow on from the development process for the AAS. The forum was developed to enable all stakeholders to discuss the process that had been undertaken, to discuss and provide comment on any ongoing issues. That feedback should provide the steering committee with a relevant and valuable resource to aide in the future direction and potential of the AAS.

At the forum, stakeholders in attendance had the opportunity to network and to discuss their own views with relevant experts representing the following organisations and specialist areas.

Organisation	Speciality
Individual	Chair of AAS Steering Committee
Camping Association of Victoria	Organisational Accreditation Chair of ORC Inc.
Sport and Recreation Victoria	AAS Steering Committee
DSE	AAS Steering Committee Land Management
Parks Victoria	AAS Steering Committee Land Management
Department of Education and Training	AAS Steering Committee DE&T Safety Guidelines
VOEA	Outdoor Education Professionals
Moray and Agnew Solicitors	AAS Solicitor
Phillips Financial Solutions	Insurance provider
i-Comply	Auditing services / Accreditation

Each of the above representatives also provided a summary of what they perceived to be the key details that attendees should know in the form of a forum wrap-up.

The ORC and many of the attendees would like to thank each of these representatives for their time and valuable contribution.

How was the forum conducted?
Ms Jo Prior, Chairperson of the ORC and Executive Officer of the Camping Association of Victoria greeted attendees before a 20-minute personal overview of the AAS by Ms Jodie Willmer, Chair of the AAS Steering Committee with a wealth of relevant experience from her career and from her personal observations.

In two separate blocks, attendees were introduced to six key discussion topics (three to be addressed within each block) that had been identified through feedback and discussions with stakeholders over the process of developing the AAS.

A separate handout was presented for each discussion topic that described the history of the issue, some key points for consideration as well as some suggested outcomes.

The attendees were then split into 5 discussion groups (ensuring diversity of opinion between the various commercial and non-commercial activity providers as well as training providers) and each group was asked to provide two discussion outcomes.

1. That each individual document their own considerations for these issues as accurately as possible considering the context of the activities that their own organisation provide.
2. That each group document a consensus/outcomes from the discussion.

The aim here was to gather the relevant feedback from the individual organisations as well as to share these opinions amongst peers to work towards the identification of common ground and suggested outcomes.

Discussion Outcomes
Of the ***45*** attendees at the forum, different numbers of attendees submitted responses to each topic (as could well be expected) the responses were varied in detail and in some cases the considerations and suggested outcomes related to different topics or related to detail that is already described within the AAS (website or introductions).

For these reasons it is not possible to provide the following report as a summary of suggestions but rather, the following is an interpretation of the submitted comments which can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Discussion Topic 1. Should these documents be called Standards or Guidelines?

This ongoing discussion is based upon the view (of some) that the AAS would be better accepted by the community sector if they were called Adventure Activity Guidelines. In part this is based upon misconceptions such as that the word standards refers to an "Australian Standard" and that a 'standard' has more legal relevance than a 'guideline'

The discussion was interesting and on the side of changing the name to Guidelines some attendees provided a simple point of view such as "Guideline not standard", others stated that they should be a guideline on the basis that there is a "need to make judgement across to the conditions at the time" and we also received a seemingly informed view that "The community would better accept Guidelines".

However, with 24 suggestions received, only 8 attendees suggested that they preferred the word Guideline. 13 preferred that they continue to be called Adventure Activity Standards and 3 comments were difficult to allocate to either.

The group feedback for this topic resulted in 2 groups suggesting that Guideline would be preferable where 3 groups remained supportive of standard.

Perhaps the two most useful comments were;
1. That regardless of the name, the AAS should not discourage clubs and volunteers from leading activities as walkers are safer in organised groups.
2. That there is a very popular misconception that the AAS must be either a Standard or a Guideline and that one carries more legal weight than another.

Outcome
That the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) address the legal implications of the terms Guideline and Standard and that the FAQ's also emphasise the various legal frameworks put in place to support volunteers and community activities.

Discussion Topic 2. The relationship between the AAS and the DE&T Guidelines?

Introduced by Steve Metcalf and Mark Dingle, this has become a discussion topic as members of the outdoor sector seek clarity on the relationship between the AAS and the DE&T guidelines.

Many groups believe that the AAS should be recognised as the minimum standard for all groups and as such they should be adopted by the DE&T.

The History of the discussion point and the introduction explained that DE&T (like any other organisation) require their own standard operating procedures that reflect the specific nature of the activities being conducted.

Finally it was explained that the VOEA have now been contracted to undertake a project to review the existing DE&T guidelines with consideration of previous DE&T guidelines, The Schools Reference Guide and the Adventure Activity Standards as the primary reference material.

With so much detail provided by both DE&T and the VOEA an interesting outcome of the discussion was perhaps the fact that several attendees questioned the development of the DE&T guidelines. Perhaps this was due to the attendance of several providers whose services are contracted by DE&T schools. These organisations will comply with the AAS.

Outcome
The consistent message form the feedback is that DE&T recognise that the AAS are the minimum/base standard for group activities and that the DE&T guidelines should reflect this and be developed specifically for the school councils and staff.

It should be noted that DE&T will progress as they see fit and each and every organisation must develop their own procedures with consideration of the AAS. The purpose of this discussion topic was to share opinions and develop recommendations relevant to the AAS. DE&T and the VOEA will clearly be interested in these outcomes and will continue to be involved in the future development of the AAS.

Discussion Topic 3. Do Organisations wish to be audited for compliance to AAS?
The Adventure Activity Standards are Voluntary and are NOT Statutory standards imposed by law. Organisations currently have the option to undertake accreditation so that they may demonstrate that they do in fact comply with relevant laws, industry practice, business practices etc.

This independent assessment provides several benefits to the organisation such as marketing, consumer confidence as well as confidence that the business is being run efficiently and safely.

Several organisations have suggested that the ORC should develop assessment criteria for the AAS so that activity providers would have access to an accreditation of their activities only.

Attendees were asked to consider the demand/requirement for consistent auditing of activities, the role of existing organisational accreditation providers and the appropriateness of the ORC developing further resources in this area.

Outcome
Discussion highlighted the varied knowledge of accreditation schemes and the associated benefits of these schemes. Comments ranged from "Accreditation is not working now" to any organisation not auditing its performance is not serious".

The lack of consistency in individual responses considered with the generally consistent group feedback that the sector is not yet ready for auditing suggest that an appropriate outcome would be to provide a link to the Nationally supported accreditation scheme within the AAS website to increase awareness and to address the topic at later date.

Discussion Topic 4.How would the sector like to see land managers use the AAS?
The Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria have supported the development and adoption of the AAS from their inception.

Adopting the sector's own standards (AAS) as conditions/ requirements for commercial operators. This enables the agencies to meet their legislative responsibilities to licence and manage activities deemed to be undertaken as "trade or a business" in a way that improves consistency and compliance.

The adoption of the AAS by these land managers has also sparked concern among some community and education groups as well as some individuals who enjoy free access to these areas that they too will be required by law to comply with Adventure Activity Standards in order to conduct their activities.

This topic generated the most comments of the day and the considerations and feedback from the individual attendees was again diverse.

Outcome
The feedback from this discussion was extremely diverse. The three most frequent points rose were that;

1. Because the key issues are safety, environmental management and enjoyment, AAS should be the minimum standard for all groups.
2. If AAS were applied as compulsory for all organisations club activities would be threatened.
3. As the land managers do not have sufficient resources to enforce the AAS how can they be made compulsory with any effect.

This discussion topic also raised several concerns that the legal status of the AAS as well as the actual content of the AAS are still being misunderstood. Statements like "AAS are now defacto legal status" highlight that groups have been unaware of how their legal responsibilities have been interpreted in the past. Although others provided clear statements that may assist in providing useful FAQ's such as;

1. Define who needs permits and who can adhere to permit systems, there should be levels of permits to provide equity to commercial, school, Volunteer and private groups.
2. Land managers should be managing land to the benefit of all users
3. Different levels of knowledge of the varying factors involved in this discussion bring different issues from different groups and areas within the sector (Indicating that the clear communication is important). and
4. All groups should have the best means reasonable to cope with the worst-case scenario.

So the future development of the permit review will be one to watch but our sector must understand the varied opinions being considered by DSE and DSE should certainly maintain the transparent process that they have begun.

View the appendix for the comments.

Discussion Topic 5.Development of the AAS Review Process?

The Adventure Activity Standards have been developed as an online resource that is free to access and live by nature. Being 'live' implies that the AAS will be reviewed as required by the sector. This can be in relation to an activity specific change such as changing opinion on affordable safe equipment and/or in relation to a whole of sector change (such as new expectations or risk management process').

Further to the requirement that the AAS are reviewed and updated by the sector, changes must be made 'as far as practicable' by a group that is representative of the very diverse needs and resources of those organisations to which the AAS apply. However, it is also preferable that any process to amend the documents does not require the expensive and time-consuming gathering of the original working parties (although review by these groups may well be a desirable option).

The AAS steering committee agree that an AAS review committee be established to be representative of the organisations and activities to which AAS are relevant. Having broadly discussed the establishment and operation of a single committee, the ORC is in the final stages of developing terms of reference and constitution requirements.

Some key points that the groups were asked to consider included;

- The model that seems to be largely accepted will involve the establishment of a single 'technical committee' to be constituted as representative of the sectors diversity and the activities being considered.
- It has also been suggested that any changes advised by a technical committee should be verified by the working parties and/or endorsees for each specific activity.

Outcome

Feedback for this discussion topic was perhaps the most consistent of all. There was unanimous support for the concept of the review committee to maintain the ownership of the AAS within the sector.

The following are the key messages for the development of that review process.

- That the AAS be reviewed
    - every 3-5 years
    - on a case by case basis if there is a serious incident or coronial finding suggesting a change to the AAS. And
    - that the legislating (legal) section be updated as laws change.
- That the committee consist of appropriately skilled individuals and be representatives of the various components within the sector (commercial, not for profit, community, education etc.)
- That the process includes some form of activity specific peer review.
- That the reviews should consider feedback collated by the ORC (via website comments page?)

The above does not exclude some rather different opinions such as;

- Each AAS should have their own technical committee
- AAS should be made more consistent (water based, track/trail based, rope based activities)
- Ongoing forums should be a source of feedback for the bigger picture development (say every 2 years.

Discussion Topic 6.Development of support material?

The AAS documents describe (as far as reasonably possible) the legal framework and appropriate procedures for organisations undertaking adventurous activities for their participants and/or clients.

There is potential to further develop support material to assist small and large organisations to acquire appropriate templates, forms and advice.

The AAS area of the ORC website has had a section devoted to such resources titled 'Additional Resources'. That area to date has only one document explaining the legal requirements of organisations providing food to participants and/or clients in the course of their activities or otherwise.

The ORC has recently developed accident/incident report advice and proformas that, once loaded to this area of the website, enable any organisation to freely download, complete and store documentation should an incident occur on an activity.

The groups were asked to provide guidance on the preferred resources that should be added to this section of the site. These may be advisory documents and/or templates to be freely downloaded to further enhance consistency and efficiency.

Outcome

The feedback for this discussion point was very clear. The sector would like to see the AAS area of the ORC website be developed to be as much of a one stop shop as reasonably possible.

We received 25 individual suggestions each fitting one of three distinct resources that can be made available;

- Templates and forms
- Links (State bodies, National Bodies and international systems)
- Information on laws, developments and relevant articles.

The group feedback provided a further 16 comments supporting that of the individuals. The group feedback did raise one other suggestion that frequent (every two years) forums be conducted for the sector to continually share opinions and revise the direction of this resource.

Appendix One – Comments for Discussion Topic One Standard vs. Guideline

Individual feedback and Considerations

Suggesting change to guidelines (8 individuals)

- Guideline – the need to make a judgement across to the conditions at the time.
- Guideline - Use of term 'standard' is misleading, implies (quite obviously) that it is a standard.
- Guideline – Community/General awareness is a failing of the current scheme.
- Guideline - Originally called Minimum Activity Standards therefore standards relates to the term minimum. Given that compliance is notionally voluntary I would go with Adv Act Guidelines as standards can be misleading.
- Guideline – Change to AAG as they are voluntary.
- Guideline – not standard
- Guideline – I like better as a name but I don't think it's an issue
- Guideline - the community would better accept Guidelines. "Guideline" allows for judgement which is necessary given the changing outdoor environment.

Suggest remaining with standard (13 individuals)

- Standards – Considering participants, guardians, providers, stakeholders and status quo, stick with standards.
- Standard – This is semantics, standard stronger than guideline Keep Standards
- Standard – Semantics, Keep as standards.
- Standard – Avoid watering down of public image! Maintain Standards
- Standard – Calling them guidelines will weaken the cause, leave as standard and define duty of care.
- Standard - Don't care but MUST remain voluntary, Standard is better than guideline.
- Standard – Adventure Activity Standard, leave as is and work towards them becoming recognised standards
- Standard – Why change them? Some groups will still not comply as not legislated. Standards have some recognition. AAS are base standards ie minimum. (or base guidelines). So they should be called standard and have guidelines included as they are now!
- Standard – For some organisations the AAS are standards, if we look at the historical point of view we refer to industry standards so keep it standards.
- Standard - Australian Standards are guidelines unless written into an Act (not law), AAS have been accepted as currency. Maintain the name
- Standard – Awareness of who it applies to so an education program is required. Advertised as AAS so a change would be confusing
- Standard – In our sectors we refer to industry standards, courts tend to ask what is the industry standard. AAS have been promoted and if changed now it would cause huge confusion, people would think that there were two systems. We need to keep AAS and clarify in definition of AAS.
- Standard – Better to be prescriptive as a standard for commercial ventures.

Unclear and discussion based feedback (3 individuals)

- Standard is more prescriptive and must be followed by law? So should be standard for commercial and Guideline for non-commercial or should be minimum standards.
- Guidelines to assist standards!
- The important aspect is that it is far safer; from at least a bushwalking point of view; that it is far safer for people to go out in an organised group. There have been few incidents in the past. Thus it is important that whether called standard or guideline the AAS should not discourage clubs and volunteers from leading activities

Group feedback and suggested actions.

The group feedback indicate three groups staying with standards and two suggesting change to guideline. The significant outcome from the feedback is that there is an overwhelming misconception that being called standards implies a higher legal requirement to comply. FAQ's should address this.

Appendix Two – Comments for Discussion Topic Two AAS & DE&T

Individual feedback and considerations

- Minor vs. Over 18, clear this up!
- DE&T should follow the AAS Not look at the AAS.
- AAS involved all agencies in the planning and development of AAS and AAS are the minimum standard for safety and as such AAS should be the basis for ALL organisations procedures
- AAS = DE&T
- Insurance – enforces requirements from advisory areas
- Audits need to be done for schools
- Schools will look at pricing structure.
- The AAS is the dominant standard; The DE&T is one user amongst the sector. It may (and should) write it's own as necessary. It is no longer the Holy Grail.
- AAS should be viewed as minimum, then build from they're with the needs of government schools. Need to clarify and justify where these differ.
- The issue is not relevant for volunteer organisations
- Important note for schools is that standardisation of guidelines reduces work and confusion.
- AA are not written for schools and are not school specific. Does not have emergency management procedure. Adventure activities are not linked to schools standards frameworks. Essential learning and standards related to old
- 2006 documents will be available via VOEA.
- VOEA must talk to schools, must refer to 30 years of DE&T guidelines, school reference guide and AAS.
- DE&T/VOEA must involve people from both School and commercial because many schools use commercial operators. How is it going to apply to schoolteachers and be interpreted?
- VOEA may have no choice as they have been contracted but they are not the appropriate group to write it up.
- AAS are Minimum standard as striving for best practice.
- Important to get all involved in the process to develop DE&T guidelines(Not just VOEA/ DE&T and Educators.)
- DE&T should have AAS as minimum.
- There are problems with getting qualified/experienced leaders (e.g. caving).
- VOEA should liase with statewide groups better re expertise.
- What is the difference? Cannot ascertain differences other than detail.
- DE&T Must develop their own guidelines. But not sure that any are required.
- Need to have core description, address group responsibilities and abilities of group etc…
- Any development needs congruency (Agreement/consistency) between all stakeholder information.
- With the AAS being agreed by the sector and DE&T guidelines running in parallel – more difficulties.
- AAS Are voluntary so DE&T are an add on document for schools. They must be 1. Same standard, 2. Risk management standards need to adhere to it & 3. in the same format (especially the tables).
- On the surface it seems odd that the effort in contributing to AAS is being duplicated under DE&T.

Group feedback and suggested actions.

- DE&T should use and accept the AAS.
- AAS Must be the base framework for DE&T Guidelines.
- Any key differences should be referred to the AAS to consider changes.
- DE&T guidelines should use same format as AAS. Not change table but may add more.
- AAS + Extra clauses.
- Use the same standard for DE&T as for AAS, there should not be two documents.
- DE&T should not duplicate work already done. Should incorporate AAS NOT rewrite and add to as required for school context.

Appendix Three – Comments for Discussion Topic Three AAS & Audits

Individual feedback and Considerations

- Frequency of audits, Code of audits, Difficulty/time required. The groups that are not doing the right thing are not doing it anyway.
- There is a real need to consider the broad range of groups involved; one audit is unlikely to cover needs of all groups.
- Large organisations/professional bodies are self-regulated.
- Audit recommended that a voluntary process be investigated
- An outside inquisitor body is not wanted.
- A managed audit accreditation process is in place at the moment.
- Is probably a place for it but with arguments still over "standard" or "Guideline" what exactly is being audited?
- Needs to be fully onboard with AAS.
- Accreditation is necessary for commercial organisations particularly where they are contracting their services to schools etc.
- These should be centralised and preferably Australia wide.
- Accreditation is not working just now!
- Training /development would need to go a lot further for audits to work. Still a discussion on standard or guideline. Who would conduct an Audit?
- I have real concern as to who would do any specialist AAS audit eg caving, rock climbing etc…
- Not appropriate for volunteer groups particularly not running dependent groups. Still issues of accreditation of individuals etc.
- Independent evaluation often a benefit, skills safety and compliance so that customers can be reassured.
- Set up a working group to develop a system of auditing.
- There is a very good place for someone to be in a position to audit organisations. E.G schools that subcontract activities need to know what standards the operators meet. Not appropriate for clubs though.
- Service providers point of view it is very important for compliance and review.
- Any operation not auditing it's performance is not serious.
- Any audits are to be carried out by persons with knowledge of the activity. And they need to continually assess.
- It would greatly assist independent Schools to have an ORC stamp re accreditation process so schools contracting adventure activity providers can be assured of AAS compliance. It would seem that the Parks Victoria accreditation already does this.
- If it is audited do you get a seal on what? Why audit? Strong opinion against auditing activities.

Group feedback and suggested actions.

- Audits are/will be another imposition.
- Current accreditation only marginally accepted in outdoor agencies.
- Cost may not be able to be passed on at this time.
- Too early as AAS are still not widely accepted or practiced.
- ORC is not the Agency that should manage auditing.
- Good Idea but revisit in two years.
- AAS working party, when would audits be done and how long (every ½ years?) How much work = 60 questions or 200 questions? Need to be done though.
- It is too early in the process for audits.
- Identify clearly what needs to be audited, get buy in from key stakeholders and proceed from there.
- Get the standards notion accepted and working before entering the audit debate.
- It should not be the ORC that goes down this road.
- How do you audit activities (individuals → Groups) doing adventure activities? Commercial companies are still bearing the brunt/cost of accreditation systems that are not working.
- Concern re how to do this, it needs to be thought through carefully.
- An ORC stamp of compliance would be useful to help organisations interpret and comply with AAS.
- It is not the place of the ORC to establish auditing and compliance.

Appendix Four – Comments for Discussion Topic Four AAS & Public Land Access

- AAS should be minimum standards (a benchmark) for all land use. It should be a recommendation/requirement that all users should comply.
- The issues are equity of access for groups and Management of the Impact.
- Commercial Orgs should adhere to AAS (as a minimum) or as a condition of their license.
- Under resourced. Not an issue for community groups.
- Any outcome should be via a transparent process.
- Not sure about the relevance of AAS to the permit system. AAS should only be one consideration in determining whether a permit is granted.
- Access for all groups to be "regulated", "noted", "accredited" Currently Schools have open slather.
- AAS are now defacto legal – status Non commercial groups require safety, emergency services. It must be consistent across the board.
- Consistent legal situation.
- Risk management plans are consistent expectations.
- Should have equitable access; this is not the case with Horse riding.
- Considerations are Terrestrial vs. marine, No idea how sector works with boats (Charter). Flexibility of rules. What do fees pay for in marine environment? Inequity.
- Environmental issues; Is AAS sufficient? Different areas require different standards. Issue of booking which should cover all types of organisations and individuals.
- Should consider TAFE access.
- Who relates to?
- How do we extend this to other groups?
- Appropriate and equitable access for ALL groups.
- Key issues are Safety, Environment and Enjoyment of other users. So AAS should be used on ALL public land as the minimum standard.
- AAS should be used as the basis for all public land access.
- PV must also adhere to the AAS when they conduct activities. Some problems have been noted where PV have not complied.
- Access is a separate issue.
- Definitions should be clearer, what is private recreation and what is organised?
- Do AAS sanitise the experience?
- Is AAS as a requirement going to stop organised clubs? (as they may operate as private activities)?
- Difficult to discuss [This topic] as there are too many issues being batted about.
- Some difficulty for the group in working out what the question is!
- Complication in Language. Demonstrates the difficulty of pin pointing the issues. There was a conflict with different types of groups (With varying skills and degrees). This leads to conflicting issues.
- When Groups go on a non-commercial capacity, the individual may be accepting risks here!
- It is important that application of compliance to AAS is not applied to non-commercial groups, i.e. clubs. Etc.
- Land managers should be managing public land for the benefit of all users. More resources are needed.
- Not relevant to me.
- I have heard that some operators pay more than others to Parks. All should pay the same so that there is no advantage to Big operators who negotiate.

Group feedback and suggested actions.

- We have gone off topic several times due to negativity in the group. Too many clubs/volunteers are not professional so major challenge is to educate those in clubs that they should be complying with all safety standards regardless of the outcome being for fun or for money.
- Some I the group suggested that having clubs/orgs and volunteers comply with AAS will make all people move away from organised activities/clubs
- There are three groups involved in the discussion, Two are organised (non-commercial and commercial) while the third is private recreation for which there are no implications from the AAS. It is the organised but non-commercial groups who are the problematic area, what will happen if we try to make clubs operate at this level? Will they raise their standards or will they go underground?
- Staffing levels must be increased to allow parks to really deal with public and groups.
- Developed by DSE – Along coastline closed off the possibility of journey destinations that are not managed. Doesn't fit in with low impact.
- A more flexible approach to access especially marine. Want to facilitate everything. Management of land is decreased, and not prosecuting those who break the rules. Under resourced; so issues are ; 1/ Inequity, 2/ Land managers are under resources, 3/ Flexibility such as designated educational areas & 4/ These are unenforceable for anyone.

- AAS are involved with Codes of Practice. They present a level playing ground, get rid of some paperwork, enforced permits
- Define who needs a permit; work out who adheres to permits. Schools can have permits but what about tourists and public? So there should be levels of permits to provide equity to Commercial, Schools, Volunteers and tourists. This could be a tiered system like Big Bus, medium bus, small car.
- AAS should be the basis for all group use of public land including Recreation, Education and Fee for Service.
- Legislation should support land managers increasing access as compliance is seen to increase.
- AAS should be used as the basis for all relevant public land issues.
- AAS need to be used as the base for all groups.
- All groups should operate with a set of standards to minimise the risks.
- AAS should not be enforced but they should be recommended from an advocacy point of view.
- Groups should have the best means reasonable to cope with the worst case scenario.

Appendix Five – Comments for Discussion Topic Five AAS Review Process

Individual feedback and Considerations

- Yes, develop a technical committee. The ideas outlined be adopted.
- Caving already has can activate appropriate assessment.
- Test across all AAS
- Members should be appointed for up to 3 years and should be staggered.
- Process must be documented re terms of reference.
- Must be transparent.
- Use technical experts from each activity area.
- Technical Committee needs feedback/input.
- Consultation on issues with industry sectors.
- Essential that these forums are held regularly (Once every two years).
- Develop an online AAS Chat forum.
- Operators should have an avenue to feed comments into review committee.
- Deadlines must be maintained for cut off times for comment.
- Review 3 yearly
- Govt funded (or pursue funding from insurers)
- Online feedback should be continued.
- Use similar system to now.
- Technical committee should review AAS say every 5 years on a rotating system. Management of this and the coordination between these should be the responsibility of government.
- Review must be part of the full process.
- Small task forces with specific technical expertise to regularly review each activity on a rolling basis.
- Should educate the private people that they may want the safety of an organisation for the adventure activities re risk management and a plan.
- Diverse range of ideas from sector
- How will the tech committee be seen to fully represent the diversity?
- Members of review group being currently involved (old boys club)
- Review process needs to review input from technical committee & stakeholders.
- Need to ensure clarity and consistency through all AAS.
- Review committee definitely needed.
- 5 yrs review
- Working party reviews with cross section of interested parties.
- If they are right then they do not need to be constantly reviewed.
- Do on a timed basis.
- Each AAS needs it's own technical committee. I personally believe that the AAS Bushwalking is poor from a technical perspective and therefore experts need to fix it. Not a general committee.
- Given concerns about cost, could the BMTAB people sit on an AAS (Bushwalking) Committee?
- Review is needed and should be carried out by people with relevant experience.
- Should be a 3 year review.
- Consideration for regulations and Acts being continually introduced.
- Rolling reviews of 1-5 AAS each 2-5 years
- Only needs to be existing AAS circulated to relevant bodies for any changes required
- Needs a general legislative updating as the Regs and Acts change.
- Process needs to be efficient and not onerous. Therefore something like technical reviews committee with option to call on advice/opinion from sector "experts" is recommendation.

Group feedback and suggested actions.

- Proceed with the suggested outcomes.

- Process needs to be efficient and not too onerous, they AAS must be kept up to date.
- Technical review committee to make technical reviews.
- Some grouping of the AAS could be investigated.
- Need a technical sub committee for each activity
- Generic issues could be grouped.
- Run changes through similar process to the current one.
- Form committee.
- Set timelines.
- Draft review process for comment.

- Commence process.
- Set up technical committee and mechanism for operators to feed experiences into the committee on a regular basis and have forums every 2 years.
- A system does need to be put in place.
- Ensure that there is minimum bias within the group – technical group can be OK but can often be pushing their own barrows eg canoe board, CIA etc…
- Transparent process +terms of reference/contract/review procedures need to be defined and consistent across all the AAS.
- Way for the sector to input key groups for continuous improvement. Needs to be funded to work – can not rely on volunteers.
- Technical sub committees for each activity for which there is an AAS.
- Sharing of generic issues such as communication, first aid environ impact.
- Efficiently managed
- Up to date
- Grouping of technical specific groups
- Overarching group for more generic issues
- Or rolling review to technical groups over set period – staggered

Appendix six – Comments for Discussion Topic six AAS Support Material

Individual feedback and Considerations

- Standard forms such as waivers.
- Information on relevant acts of parliament.
- Links to relevant info from peak bodies such as ASF (Risk Management Guidelines).
- Links to other relevant sites.
- Should be available on website and also available on paper format.
- Lots of templates – more the merrier
- Auditing and generic forms
- Links page to similar organisations/initiatives around the world.
- Support material should be specific to commercial and non-commercial.
- Generic forms online
- AAS form support materials
- Plenty forms should be developed for general consumption
- Advisory documents such as;
  - History of AAS/reasons for compiling them
  - DE&T Guidelines
  - Guidelines/standards from other areas
  - Member protection policy templates
  - Risk management templates
  - Updates to AAS
  - List organisations accredited/complying to AAS
- Promote the AAS broadly and as soon as possible
- Include all things that are happening
- To get them out there do the AAS need a sponsor? I know people who could help/donate.
- Documents will be a useful check for orgs with in-house/existing forms
- Make information and documentation available online, useful for community groups.
- The development of shared resources will help solve unnecessary duplication – Do it.
- In addition to management info, the section should also contain technical info (Hypothermia, how to use GPS etc.)
- Generic info should be available on the website.
- FAQ's is an excellent idea and should include examples/case studies.
- Risk management tools;
  - Methods
  - Sheets
  - Matrix etc.
- Links to other AAS type documents (such as caving and canoeing associations)
- Additional resources will be of great use to clubs etc. Such as;
  - Legislation (Basic details)
  - Waivers and voluntary assumption of risk samples
  - Incident reports
  - Risk assessments
  - Interesting articles and forums

Group feedback and suggested actions.

- Everything must be updated in a regular and timely manner
- Forms – PDF copies of reports/templates as very useful to have standardised documentation
- Forums – (discussion boards) should be established for Risk specific and for activity specific.
- All information on website should be available to download.
- There should be links to peak associations such as ACF and Canoeing Victoria
- Management information should be available.
- AAS should become a one stop shop including
  - Standard waiver forms
  - Relevant acts of parliament
  - Workshops for schools, scouts etc.
  - Links to other relevant info such as
    - Government Sites
    - Education resource
    - Accident info

- Overseas developments
- Funding
- Strong support for information that is both current and relevant – requiring resources.
- Clubs and volunteers should have access to standard forms and similar resources.
- Hard copies should be available.
- Information should be available for new activities.
- Links to existing resources.
- FAQ's are important and should be expanded and dynamic.
- Further technical information
- Activity specific pages/areas
- Forums and discussion would be of great benefit.

Appendix Seven – Forum Attendee list

ORG Name	Sector
ORC	
ORC	
VicWalk	Community
VicWalk	Community
AAS Steering Committee Chair	Independent
Camping Association Victoria	Commercial
SRV	Government
Norval	Commercial
Adventure Victoria	Community
Adventure Victoria	Community
Indoor Rockclimbing Gyms of Aust.	Commercial
AGATI	Commercial
Ballarat Grammar	Education
Monash University	Education
Diving Headquarters	Commercial
Australian Adventure Experience	Commercial
Victoria University	Education
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Community
Moray & Agnew	Legal
Phillips Financial Services	Insurance
DSE	Government
DE&T	Government
VOEA	Community
Outdoor Initiatives	Commercial
Bindaree	Commercial
Guides Victoria	Community
Tintern Grammar	Education
Victorian Speleological Assoc	Community
icomply	Auditing
Outdoor Education Group	Education
AMTRA	Community
Victoria National Parks Assoc	Community
Parks Victoria	Government
Holmesglen TAFE	Education
Holmesglen TAFE	Education
Holmesglen TAFE	Education
Victorian Climbing Club	Community
VERVE	Community
Australian Trail Horse Riders Assoc	Community
Scuba Divers Fed Victoria	Community
Merricks Camp & Conference Centre	Commercial
Merricks Camp & Conference Centre	Commercial
Plus three independent attendees	Independent