

# Queensland Adventure Activity Standards

## Mountain biking




Prepared by the Old Outdoor Recreation Federation

**Department of Communities**  
fair, cohesive and vibrant communities



**Toward** <sup>2</sup>  
Tomorrow's Queensland

 **Queensland**  
Government



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## Minister's Foreword

Outdoor recreation is important to Queenslanders. For some it is their pastime, for others it is their vocation and for many, it is their passion. Some enjoy the outdoors for relaxation, some for the challenge and self-development, some as the vehicle for learning or for the fun and social aspect. No matter what the reason, it is hoped that the development of the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards will make adventurous activities as safe as possible for Queenslanders.

The Queensland Adventure Activity Standards are a result of thorough consultation with the outdoor industry and key Queensland government agencies and statutory authorities and establish the minimum benchmarks that will help outdoor activity providers establish their own Standard Operating Procedures.

Industry directly contributed to the Standards, as part of a positive collaboration with the Queensland government.

The development of the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards complements other Queensland government initiatives.

Through the Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland initiative, we are aiming to make Queenslanders Australia's healthiest people, by reducing obesity by one third by 2020.

We all know that participating in outdoor recreation and getting active is one of the best ways to improve our quality of life, both physically and socially. In order to provide good access to outdoor recreation opportunities, the Queensland government has also committed to protect 50 per cent more land for nature conservation and public recreation by 2020.

The project consultants, the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation, should be congratulated on gathering information from a wide and varied range of stakeholders and formulating it into the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards. I also extend my thanks and appreciation to all those from industry who contributed their time and expertise to the development of the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards and to the Queensland government agencies and statutory authorities that collaborated on this project.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Reeves". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Honourable Phil Reeves MP**  
Minister for Child Safety  
Minister for Sport

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# Foreword

This document contains general information about why the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) were developed. It also provides specific information to assist organisations and individual leaders plan and run adventure activities for various groups. Although it may seem lengthy, the document provides an overview of the minimum preparation required to conduct adventure activities. As such, users of the document are encouraged to read the whole document rather than selected parts.

All information contained in this document, including legal requirements, website and contact information and pathways for demonstrating competency was current on the publication date.

Please note this document's version date to ensure that current information is accessed.

## 1. Activity description: mountain biking

Mountain biking generally involves riding on unsealed surfaces, such as gravel roads, fire trails, single track, or open or rocky ground, and can involve manoeuvring through or around obstacles such as fallen or narrowly spaced trees, creeks, mud, rocks, man-made structures and other technical trail features. The most common form of mountain biking is referred to as cross-country (XC) cycling. While the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) strictly apply to any organised mountain biking trip involving dependent participants, commercial or not, it is important that the individual circumstances of each trail network and route be taken into account.

## 2. Introduction

The AAS are designed to help organisations and leaders plan and safely conduct outdoor adventure activities with groups of dependent participants. More specifically, the AAS are primarily designed to help those who lead groups of participants in situations where an established and evident duty of care exists. However, other adventure activity providers might find that the standards are relevant to their activities. Although they are called “Adventure Activity Standards”, the AAS should be considered as guidelines that demonstrate non-specific principles and provide direction or suggest actions.

The AAS give leaders and organisations a valuable resource for understanding the processes they should follow to conduct safe and fun activities. They can help leaders and organisations develop operating procedures and plan activities. Each provider will apply the AAS differently, depending on each group’s collective skills and experience, and their degree of dependence upon the leader. Also, groups participate in outdoor activities at a range of sites with varying conditions (including weather) and there will be varying outcomes (e.g. educational, personal development, therapeutic, recreational).

To allow for these differences, the AAS can be adapted to suit the organisation, the leader, the group and the situation. The leader remains responsible for making professional judgements and decisions about each activity to ensure the

group’s safety. The AAS have been designed to assist such judgements and decision-making.

The AAS also help promote knowledge and awareness about the impacts of adventure activities on the natural environment. As the demand for access to areas increases, sustainable environmental practices have become more important. Therefore, these practices are embedded in the document to help providers protect biodiversity values and preserve cultural sites.

A wide cross-section of Queensland’s outdoor industry helped prepare the AAS using interstate AAS models as a basis. The result is a set of minimum, voluntary guidelines that reflect industry practices for planning and delivering adventure activities that are safe, thorough and informed. The AAS are NOT statutory standards imposed by law; however, some references throughout the AAS make some actions mandatory. These references reflect legislated considerations that providers must comply with and are highlighted as **MUST**.

**Note:** If dependent participants come from an Education Queensland school, providers should read this document in conjunction with the relevant *Curriculum Activity Risk Management Module* found at [education.qld.gov.au/strategic/epr/health/hlspr012/index1.html](http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/epr/health/hlspr012/index1.html)

### 2.1 Acknowledgements

In developing the AAS, the Department of Communities, Sport and Recreation Services, and the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation recognise the contribution of those who attended consultation workshops and technical working groups.

They also acknowledge the following owners and developers of interstate Adventure Activity Standards for generously providing access to their documents, expertise and ideas:

- Outdoor Recreation Centre of Victoria
- Sport and Recreation Tasmania
- Recreation SA
- Outdoors WA.

### 2.2 Partnership arrangements

Developing the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) has been an initiative funded, managed and owned by the Department of Communities, Sport and Recreation Services and developed by the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation.

### 2.2.1 AAS Interdepartmental committee

An interdepartmental committee comprising representatives from a range of Queensland Government departments and agencies oversaw the document's development, including:

- Department of Communities
- Department of Community Safety
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
- Department of Environment and Resource Management
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Queensland Police Service
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Department of Transport and Main Roads
- Queensland Treasury
- Forestry Plantations Queensland
- Queensland Government Insurance Fund
- Tourism Queensland.

### 2.3 Technical working group representatives

Activity-specific technical working groups used their skills and knowledge to develop specific operational details. Representatives consulted in this process included:

- Mountain Bike Australia
- Brisbane City Council — MTB Trail Care
- Outdoor Educators' Association of Queensland
- Bike On Australia.



### 2.4 Disclaimer

The information in this document was gathered through consultation across the outdoor recreation industry. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information was correct and accurate at the time of publication, the AAS are advisory and general in nature, and should not be relied upon to meet individual or specific requirements—they are to be used as a guide only and are not binding on any person or organisation.

The AAS will not cover every circumstance of adventure activity, nor can they, when adhered to, eliminate entirely the risk of loss or injury. Prior to using the information in this document, providers should consider the circumstances of their situation and evaluate the specific requirements of the activity and the participants.

This document is provided on the condition that the State of Queensland, and the authors, consultants and advisors who contributed and assisted in compiling it are not rendering any legal or professional advice or service, and make no warranties about the information in the document. Providers are encouraged to seek their own independent professional advice, as necessary, prior to relying on information in this document.

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At the time of publication, the links to websites referred to in this document were correct. The Department of Communities and the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation acknowledge that, at times, organisations change internet addresses or remove information from the internet.



## 3. Safety and the law

### 3.1 Risk management overview

Risk management and safety awareness are essential to providing effective and professional adventures. Not only does risk management minimise accidents and incidents during activities, it is also a vital component of any business model. Risk management assists with strategic and operational management, program planning and delivery, and people and resource management. It also helps to develop awareness in communities where adventure activities take place.

Risk management for outdoor activities has implications for all outdoor activity providers who are responsible for complying with any legal requirements. Section 3.3 of this document refers to a range of Acts that legislate the actions of adventure activity providers, while Section 3.4 explains providers' workplace health and safety obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*. Providers **MUST** also comply with other legislative and civil laws to meet their legal responsibilities. Some of these laws are built into statutes and local authority bylaws, and others have been developed through judges' decisions (common law).

The risk management and legal information in this document is a guide to the processes and procedures, as well as requirements and methods, for reducing, eliminating, transferring or accepting risks. Several sections in this document refer to actions or incentives that will reduce the likelihood of injuries or incidents and enhance the enjoyment of all involved. When risk management is fully incorporated into all stages of an activity, safer activities result.

This document is not sufficiently comprehensive to provide every piece of information about risk management for outdoor activities. Therefore, leaders and organisations are encouraged to seek further guidance, develop their own risk assessment and management systems, and review and update their systems regularly.

### 3.2 Summary overview of legal framework

The following general information on legal liability in contract and negligence does not provide a complete and accurate description of the law on these topics, or necessarily relate to every provider's circumstances. While this general information may be helpful, it is offered on the basis that providers will not rely on it solely, but will obtain their own independent legal advice.

### 3.3 Liability

The law of contract and the tort of negligence govern legal liability for personal injury or property. However, legislation such as the *Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002*, the *Civil Liability Act 2003*, the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Commonwealth) and the *Fair Trading Act 1989* (Queensland) may also apply.

#### 3.3.1 Contract

A claim in contract requires that a contract exists between the person who has suffered the loss or injury and the provider. If injury or damage occurred because the provider did not exercise reasonable care in providing the service, a court may find that they breached the contract, which entitles the party to claim compensation for the loss or injury suffered.

#### 3.3.2 Negligence

A successful claim in negligence against a provider may result in a court awarding damages against the provider to compensate the injured party for the loss or injury.

The essential elements of a claim in negligence are that:

- the provider owes a duty of care and, therefore, **MUST** take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of their clients and participants
- a breach of this duty of care occurred
- the breach caused the harm suffered by the client or participant.

Duty of care is a legal requirement—imposed by the courts—requiring providers to take reasonable care to protect clients or participants from reasonably foreseeable harm or loss.

Although the law does not automatically impose a duty of care, a duty may be imposed when one party (the provider) assumes responsibility for another in providing adventure activities.

Generally, anyone conducting an outdoor adventure activity for a group of dependent participants will owe a duty of care to those participants for the safe conduct of the activity.

If a party makes a claim against a provider and a court finds that the provider owes a duty of care, the court must then determine the appropriate level or standard of that care to determine whether the provider acted reasonably or has breached the duty of care. In determining the standard of care, a court will consider the experience of the providers and participants, and the conditions at the time of the incident, and may seek guidance from experts in the field.

An obvious defence in a claim in negligence is that the provider acted with all reasonable care in the circumstances and is, therefore, not negligent. To limit the potential for legal liability and minimise the risk of injury, each provider or organisation should implement risk and safety management processes. To develop these processes, the provider should identify foreseeable risks and implement measures to protect participants from known potential hazards and risks (that are reasonably foreseeable), against which they can take preventative measures.

- For more detailed legal information, please refer to [Appendix 1](#).

### 3.4 Workplace health and safety

The [Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995](#) outlines the laws relating to the health and safety requirements that affect most workplaces in Queensland. Providers **MUST** become familiar with the Act to understand their obligations. The Act requires specified persons to assess risks, and then implement and review control measures to prevent or minimise exposure to risks.

Further, if the [Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008](#) describes how to prevent or minimise risks in a provider's particular workplace, providers **MUST** comply with the regulation. Additionally, if a [code of practice](#) describes how to prevent or minimise risks in a provider's specific workplace, providers **MUST** either comply with this code or adopt and follow other steps that provide the same level of protection against risk.

If no regulation or code of practice describes risk in a provider's specific workplace, they **MUST** find an appropriate way to manage exposure to the risk. Where no regulation or code of practice describes a particular risk, providers **MUST** take reasonable precautions and exercise proper diligence to reduce the risk.

See the [Risk Management Code of Practice 2007](#) for further information. [www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/codes/riskman/](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/codes/riskman/)

## 4. Planning

### 4.1 Activity plan

#### Purpose

An activity plan helps a leader define and achieve objectives, and minimise the inherent risks to participants. A leader can plan an activity in various ways, and each leader or organisation will have their own approach to planning. This section is a reference for leaders or organisations planning activities. It will help maximise an activity's success and minimise risks to participants.

#### Practice

It is recommended that leaders or organisations prepare an activity plan for all activities. Each organisation can determine how much of the plan they need to document. However, they should consider the following list during the planning stage.

#### Participant

- Activity objectives (desired outcomes) and participant expectations
- Size of the group
- Age, experience and skills of participants
- Socio-cultural demographics of the group or individual participants and implications (e.g. religious or cultural dress code)
- Fitness, disposition and known medical conditions of participants
- Standard of care required (e.g. child participants, paying customers)
- Duration of activity

#### Area

- Area and route selection (description of intended route)
- Area-specific information
- Availability and suitability of maps
- Terrain (route characteristics), and associated implications and hazards
- Land manager requirements (access restrictions, group sizes, permit requirements, booking requirements)
- Site's ability to withstand visitation with minimal impact
- Seasonal factors (rain, fire, availability of drinking water, river levels, track conditions, other users)
- Remoteness and accessibility

#### Equipment

- Equipment, food and clothing requirements
- Condition and suitability of all equipment
- Expected weather conditions and implications (hypothermia, hyperthermia)
- Communication plan, including suitable communication equipment (e.g. satellite phone, emergency position indicating radio beacons or EPIRBs, personal locator beacons, flares, mobile phones, two-way radio) and its level of coverage
- First aid requirements
- Support and evacuation capabilities (e.g. vehicle) and availability of emergency medical assistance

#### Leader

- Leader to participant ratio
- Leaders' skills and competence to conduct the activity, effectively manage incidents and achieve the planned objectives
- Leaders' familiarity with the area
- Working With Children Check for individual leaders, where applicable (Section 4.11)
- Cancellation, modification or postponement procedure (e.g. due to forecasted or current adverse weather conditions, insufficient equipment, restrictions dictated by the land manager or environmental factors such as flood, drought, lightning or fire).

#### 4.1.1 Venue and route selection

Selecting an appropriate venue and route according to the activity's objectives and group's capability is important in mountain biking. When selecting a venue, safety and consideration for others and the environment, are of primary importance (Section 4.12). Leaders should determine any access restrictions by contacting relevant land managers and obtaining permission. This permission may take the form of a permit, such as from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), or permission from a private landowner.

Leaders who intend to undertake mountain biking activities with groups in QPWS-managed parks and forests should familiarise themselves with the QPWS operational policy *Cycling (mountain bike riding)* in QPWS managed areas. Section 8.2 provides details on how to access this resource and other information to assist in route selection (e.g. the International

Mountain Bicycling Association Trail Difficulty Rating System).

When selecting a route, leaders should conduct recent reconnaissance, consider the above planning factors as well as the:

- route characteristics, such as grading, technical difficulty, exposure, altitude gain/fall and surrounding environment
- access to and remoteness of the trail network and route
- suitability of the weather conditions for achieving the desired objectives
- support capabilities, such as vehicle support
- available communication systems and level of coverage.

#### 4.1.2 Leader considerations

When selecting a leader and assistants for mountain biking trips, providers should consider leader competencies (Section 5). Furthermore, mountain bike leaders should:

- be familiar with the trail network
- possess skills beyond those required for the difficulty of the trails
- possess full details of the planned route and emergency procedures
- have made informed decisions regarding vehicle tracks or roads that might carry heavy traffic.

## 4.2 Risk management

For adventure activities, risk can be defined as ‘the potential to lose or gain something of value’ (Haddock 2004, p.7). In contrast, the Risk Management Code of Practice 2007 states that risk is ‘the likelihood that a harmful consequence (death, injury or illness) might result when exposed to the hazard’. In practice, risk tends to be measured in terms of consequence and likelihood (Standards Australia, AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management - Principles and guidelines).

Given the nature of adventure activities, risk is inherent. Losses may be physical (e.g. bone fractures), mental (e.g. fear), social (e.g. embarrassment) or financial (lost gear) (Miles and Priest 1999). However, it can also be argued that exposure to risk can provide substantial reward, including good health, fun, challenge and enhanced personal confidence or self-esteem (Haddock 2004).

Finding the balance—minimising loss and reaping the benefits of adventure activities—is important. Leaders and organisations **MUST** implement processes to manage risk appropriately for the context and situation. The AAS can guide this practice.

HB 246–2010 *Managing risk in sport and recreation*, published by Standards Australia, defines risk management as ‘the systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the task of identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating and monitoring risk’ (p.4). While various models may achieve this goal, a risk management plan generally incorporates the following five steps:

1. *Identify all hazards.*

What could potentially cause harm or loss?

2. *Assess and prioritise the risks that these hazards create and address the highest priority risk first.*

What could happen and what might be the consequences?

3. *Choose measures to control the risks.*

Can you eliminate the risk? Use another venue? Use personal protective equipment? Bring in an expert? Substitute with an activity with less risk? Substitute real risk for perceived risk?

4. *Implement appropriate control measures.*

Act to control or eliminate the risk.

5. *Monitor the control measures and review the process.*

Are the measures working? Does the process meet industry standards? What needs amending? Are the activity goals or outcomes still being achieved?

HB 246–2004 *Managing risk in sport and recreation* can be purchased through the Standards Australia website:

[www.riskmanagement.com.au/Default.aspx?tabid=170](http://www.riskmanagement.com.au/Default.aspx?tabid=170)

Section 8.2 of this document and the Queensland Government’s Workplace Health and Safety Risk Management Code of Practice 2007 provide more information on managing exposure to risk.

A general web search can also provide more information on risk management processes and recognised training providers that offer courses

in risk management. Speaking with experienced colleagues and seeking advice from activity-specific organisations may also be helpful.

#### 4.2.1 Risk assessment measures

Risks for adventure activities are generally classified under the three categories of people, equipment and environment.

**People** risks may include participants who are physically or psychologically unprepared for an activity, or have known behavioural issues that affect the safety of the activity. People risks may also include leader fatigue, poor planning, lack of knowledge or skill, or complacency (Priest and Gass 2005).

**Equipment** risks may include insufficient gear for the group or an inferior standard of equipment.

**Environment** risks may include adverse or unseasonal weather, sudden changes in river levels, high winds or danger from local wildlife. They do not include factors inherent in the adventure activity, such as getting wet while canoeing.

Providers should consider each of these risk categories (and others as identified) in relation to the specific activity and the group involved. For example, as part of risk management planning, selected leaders should have the authority, skills and experience to:

- conduct the activity in the selected environments
- achieve the planned objectives
- effectively manage incidents
- supervise the group at all times
- preserve the environmental integrity of the route and campsites.

Providers should note foreseeable risks and develop strategies to manage, avoid or minimise them. Importantly, the group leader should understand these risks and strategies. They should be included in specific activity plans (Section 4.1), and considered in an emergency strategy (Section 4.4) and/or organisational risk management guidelines, which should be current and specific to the activity and location.

- For help with risk assessment and planning, see [Appendix 2](#) for sample risk management templates. While the templates are not prescriptive, they offer models to identify and manage risk.

### 4.3 Pre-activity documentation

Many sound reasons exist for documenting aspects of the activity plan, such as ensuring that information about the activities and group is available if a group member is injured or incapacitated. Activity plan documentation enables search and rescue teams to better conduct an efficient search if necessary. Documentation will also assist with legal defence following an incident.

The suggested minimum amount of documentation required for an activity includes:

- an emergency strategy (Section 4.4), including contingency plans
- documentation about designated start and finish times, and route description
- names, addresses, medical information and emergency contact details for all participants, leaders and assistant leaders. Medical conditions and management strategies for relevant participants should be documented, including details of any conditions (e.g. asthma), and any medication or actions to be taken (e.g. self-administered inhaler). Medical conditions can include but are not limited to:
  - diabetes
  - epilepsy
  - fainting and dizziness
  - specific allergic reactions
  - blood conditions that may affect bleeding or clotting
  - impaired sight
  - impaired hearing
  - conditions that affect balance
  - recent or longstanding injuries
  - disability
  - illness or other medical conditions relevant to a participant's ability to participate (e.g. heart conditions, migraines or pregnancy)
- information for all participants, leaders and assistant leaders on food allergies, including the magnitude of reaction and management strategies, as well as medications and who can administer them
- any access permits, licences or approvals required by land managers such as QPWS, local councils or private landholders

- relevant public vehicle driving licence if transporting participants, vehicle and trailer registrations. More information is available on the Department of Transport & Main Roads website: [www.transport.qld.gov.au/Home/Home](http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/Home/Home)
- a signed consent form from each participant that acknowledges the inherent risks of the activity after they have been fully briefed on those risks
- participants' agreement that they receive medical assistance if required, as well as any other documentation required by an insurer or legal advisor
- signed consent by a parent or legal guardian for participants under 18 years.
- the emergency trigger time for the non-participating contact to inform emergency services (if the group fails to return or check in)
- contingency plans for foreseeable emergencies (e.g. falls, fire, flood)
- communication equipment that the group will carry
- relevant aspects of the land manager's emergency strategy
- strategies relevant to the features of the areas being visited (e.g. hike-a-bike section or river crossings)
- a strategy for maintaining supervision ratios if the planned activity changes (e.g. due to adverse conditions, an injured leader or participants withdrawing from the activity).

The leader and an external, non-participating contact person (necessary in an incident or emergency) should have access to all documentation.

#### 4.4 Emergency strategy

Even with appropriate policies and procedures, such as an activity plan (Section 4.1) and risk management plan (Section 4.2), accidents and emergencies can still occur. These are often sudden and unexpected, can significantly affect groups and individuals, and require an immediate and planned response to contain the situation.

The emergency strategy complements the risk assessment and provides a framework for action in an emergency. Activity leaders and a suitable external, non-participating contact should fully understand the emergency strategy and be able to immediately access this document. A summary of emergency procedures should be one component of the preliminary group briefing (Section 5.1.1).

An emergency strategy for an activity will vary according to the situation, but should include:

- emergency response actions, allocated roles and responsibilities
- emergency access and escape routes (where possible)
- assembly points where appropriate
- details of key organisations (e.g. land manager and police) and how to best contact them in an emergency (e.g. mobile phone, satellite phone, radio)
- planned activity start and finish times

Under the Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008, anyone running a business that provides an adventure activity to a dependent group **MUST** notify Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, of any incident involving:

- a serious injury
- a person suffering an illness caused by work
- a dangerous event.

They **MUST** notify the department of the incident using the approved form available at [www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/incidents\\_form.pdf](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/incidents_form.pdf)

**Note:** If an incident involves search and rescue, death or an injury likely to result in death (whether or not death occurs), police are responsible and will take control of the incident. All other parties, including the contact person, will be under the police's direction. Police will advise a deceased person's nearest family member after a fatal incident.

- Refer to **Appendix 3** for a sample emergency response template.

#### 4.5 Restricting participation

There may be times when a leader needs to exclude or remove a participant from an activity, or modify an activity for the safety of the group or an individual. The leader will use their discretion and judgement to do this either before departing or during an activity.

A leader may need to exclude participants for several reasons, including (but not limited to) being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs that may affect performance), being unable or unwilling to follow instructions, lacking suitable equipment, or having an inadequate level of fitness, physical ability or experience for the activity.

The leader should also consider operational restrictions that affect participation, including issues relating to weather, equipment, route difficulty, restrictions dictated by the land manager and environmental factors, such as trail conditions, flood, drought, lightning and fire.

A sound risk management plan will help the leader determine how and when these restrictions or modifications might apply.

## 4.6 Ratios

When planning any outdoor activity, the ratio of qualified, experienced leaders to dependent participants needs to be considered. Some activity peak bodies provide maximum leader-to-participant ratios. In certain situations, judgement may dictate smaller or larger numbers of participants per leader.

Several variables can affect this decision, including but not limited to:

- outcomes of the risk management process
- the leaders' experience
- participants' expected capabilities (i.e. experience, competence, fitness)
- type, difficulties, distance and condition of trails, vehicle tracks or roads
- conditions (environment, weather)
- planned activity duration
- optimum group size (Section 4.7)
- location remoteness
- equipment suitability and availability.

Land managers or relevant authorities may suggest ratios that differ from those recommended in the AAS. If these are lower than the proposed AAS recommendations, they will be regarded as minimum requirements. For example, if the activity ratio is 1:6, but the land manager's ratio is 1:4, the land manager's ratio is considered the minimum standard.

The following indicative ratios have been provided, based on ideal/or best-case scenarios, to help leaders determine ratios.

Leaders may use these numbers as a starting point and then modify the number in their group according to the outcome of their risk management process, accounting for the above variables and the information on group size in Section 4.7.

Several variables affect the ratios of leader to participant, including the:

- trail network (e.g. type, distance, difficulty, condition)
- communications and support available to the group (e.g. quality of communication coverage, support vehicle)
- group itself (e.g. experience, competence, fitness).

In some situations, the leader's judgement will indicate the need for smaller or larger numbers of participants per leader, and land managers may also suggest ratios that differ from the AAS.

Regardless of these factors, indicative ratios for mountain biking fall in two categories:

- where the entire trip is never greater than one hour from emergency medical attendance (urban and semi-remote/short trips)—one leader to five participants
- where part or parts of the trip are greater than one hour from emergency medical attention (remote/long trips)—two leaders to five participants or three leaders to 10 participants.

Any trip conducted in a remote area, or long trips (full day) should be conducted with at least one leader and an assistant leader, each of whom possesses competency appropriate for the trip difficulty. (Refer to Section 5 for information on leader competencies.)

**Note:** As no group should be left unsupervised in the event of an accident or incident involving a leader, trips may need a higher ratio of leader to participant. Leaders should devise an emergency strategy that considers procedures for an emergency or incident that involves harm to the leader (Section 4.4).

## 4.7 Group size

The group's size is important when considering group management and ways to protect the environment. Leaders should carefully determine maximum and minimum group sizes, and the ratio of leader to participant.

Group sizes may be decided based upon:

- the group's and individuals' safety
- the activity's objectives
- a land manager's specific restrictions
- the activity's expected environmental impact
- the leaders' and participants' experience
- the potential impact on other users
- conditions (environment, remoteness, weather)
- available equipment.

Where a large group is split into a number of smaller groups, each smaller group should have its own leader and assistant leaders who independently adhere to the AAS.

#### 4.8 First aid

A person whose business or undertaking involves conducting outdoor activities for dependent participants in any situation (paid or volunteer) **MUST** comply with relevant legislation.

Under the Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008, employers **MUST** ensure that first aid equipment is:

- reasonably accessible to each of their workers
- appropriate and adequate for workers and the work they do
- maintained in a hygienic, safe and serviceable condition.

The First Aid Code of Practice 2004 gives advice on workplace first aid, including the contents of first aid kits for remote locations. The code also states that workers in remote locations should have access to appropriate communication systems. (Refer to: [www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/firstaid/facilities/kits/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/firstaid/facilities/kits/index.htm)).

The unit of competency, HLTF301C Apply First Aid (or equivalency) is a minimum standard for first-aid trained personnel. However, the level of first aid competency required will depend on the risk management assessment.

Activities for participants with disabilities may require more specialised first aid knowledge.

For activities and programs that are expedition based or in remote areas where access to professional medical care is greater than one hour away, a higher level of first aid competency, such as SISOOPS305A Provide

First Aid in a Remote Location should be held by at least one leader.

#### 4.9 Weather

Effective planning requires access to up-to-date weather and fire information, which is generally available through newspapers, radio and television. The most up-to-date information is available on the website of the Bureau of Meteorology at [www.bom.gov.au/weather/qld/](http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/qld/). This website provides information on weather, seas and hydrology, and some historical data.

#### 4.10 Sun safety in Queensland

Sunburn is a risk for anyone who participates in outdoor activities, particularly in Queensland. Leaders should take reasonable steps to prevent or minimise the likelihood of staff and participants suffering excessive sun exposure.

Measures can include:

- encouraging everyone to wear activity- and weather-appropriate clothing
- encouraging everyone to wear hats and sunglasses
- conducting physically demanding activities in the cooler part of the day where possible
- encouraging everyone to drink water
- encouraging everyone to use sunscreen (minimum SPF 30+ recommended)
- taking breaks in shaded areas.

For more information on sun safety, refer to:

- Sun Safety: [www.sunsafety.qld.gov.au](http://www.sunsafety.qld.gov.au)
- Cancer Council Australia: [www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlifestyle/SunSmart/Preventingskincancer.htm](http://www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlifestyle/SunSmart/Preventingskincancer.htm)

#### 4.11 Child protection

Some organisations and leaders will need to consider Queensland's safety requirements for working with children.

A person **MUST** possess a 'blue card' if they plan to work in a paid or voluntary capacity, or carry on a business, in a child-related area regulated by the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*. Refer to the commission's website for regulated areas of employment: [www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/employees/doineedbluecard.html](http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/employees/doineedbluecard.html).



In Queensland, the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000* requires all people who work with children under the age of 18 years to implement procedures for managing risks to children.

These include:

- ensuring that volunteers and paid employees undergo the Working with Children Check and receive a positive notice 'blue card'
- producing a written risk management strategy to protect children and young people from harm. They **MUST** update this document annually.

For further information, please refer to the following websites:

- Blue card information: [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/)
- Commission's risk management requirements: [www.cypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/risk-management.html](http://www.cypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/risk-management.html)

#### 4.12 Minimal impact—the seven principles of Leave No Trace

Everyone involved in adventure activities is responsible for protecting Queensland's natural and cultural heritage, including leaders, organisations and participants. The following principles draw on minimal impact ethics and raise awareness about respect for environments and communities where adventure activities occur.

##### 1. **Plan ahead and prepare**

(Refer to Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.6 for more details.)

- Never ride in areas where cycling is prohibited.
- Understand the regulations and special concerns of the areas you access. Research your destination before you leave home.
- Seek permits if necessary.
- Prepare for isolation, weather hazards and emergencies.
- Carry and know how to use a map, compass and/or GPS.
- Bring plenty of food and drinking water.
- Repackage food to minimise waste, and bring rubbish bags. Avoid cans, bottles and aluminium foil.
- Carry extra warm and wet weather clothing.

##### 2. **Travel and camp on durable surfaces**

Durable surfaces are established tracks, gravel and dry grass.

Mountain biking

- Ride only on the designated track and do not create new tracks.
- Do not detour; dismount and walk instead.
- Brake gently before corners and avoid skidding to protect the track surface from erosion.
- Avoid regeneration areas and places where impacts are starting to show.
- Avoid cutting corners. Do not widen tracks.
- Avoid mud and soft entrances and exits around water to reduce erosion.
- Do not ride when trails are excessively wet. If you encounter wet areas or puddles, do not leave the trail to avoid them; instead, ride straight through.

Camping

- Plan your route carefully so you arrive at a pre-arranged site rather than creating a new campsite.
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity where there is no vegetation.
- Use a freestanding tent that requires few pegs if staying overnight.
- Bring your own poles; do not cut them from the bush.
- Never camp on frontal sand dunes.
- Protect water sources by camping at least 100 metres from rivers and billabongs.
- Never dig trenches around your tent.
- Leave the campsite in better condition than you found it.

##### 3. **Dispose of waste properly**

*Rubbish*

- Remove all rubbish. Even biodegradable food scraps can upset the balance and cause weeds. Do not burn rubbish. Never bury rubbish as animals may dig it up.

*Human waste*

- Use toilets where provided.
- Carry a small trowel for emergency toileting.
- Bury any human waste 15 centimetres under the topsoil, where organisms in the soil will break it down fastest, and at least 100 metres away from tracks, campsites, watercourses, lakes or drainage channels.

Where possible, avoid using man-made toilet paper. Where necessary, use sparingly and bury it deeply or carry it out.

- Check with the land managers for current restrictions on lighting fires.
- Carry any cigarette butts out with you.

### Hygiene

- Wash yourself and any equipment at least 100 metres away from streams or lakes. Avoid using soaps or detergents. Scatter drained dishwasher.
- Do not use soap, toothpaste, shampoo or sunscreen in lakes or streams.

### 4. *Leave what you find*

- Help prevent the spread of weeds and pests by checking your vehicle, camping equipment and clothing to ensure they are clean before visiting parks, waterways and forests.
- Respect Indigenous art and other sites of cultural significance. Seek appropriate permission.
- Do not touch rock art, which can be damaged by the natural oils from human skin.
- Preserve the past by observing but not touching cultural or historic structures and artefacts.
- Do not build structures or furniture, or dig trenches.
- Never remove obstacles, such as rocks and logs, from the trail surface.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species. Do not transport firewood.
- Learn to recognise non-native species and report sightings to appropriate sources.
- Do not travel through quarantine areas.
- Avoid transporting mud and dieback fungal spores. Wash bike tyres, shoes and pedals before riding into a different area to prevent the spread of disease and unnatural species migration.
- Check clothing and all gear, and burn or dispose of all hitchhiker-type seeds, before and after travelling into different areas.

### 5. *Minimise the impact of fire*

#### Stoves

- Use a fuel or gas stove when cooking. Reduce the risk of bushfires and burn injuries. Open fires destroy vegetation and leaf litter, and can devastate the bush if they escape.
- Fire bans
- Light fires in parks only where permitted. Many parks do not permit open fires.

Fire ban information is available on the Queensland Rural Fire Service website: [www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au](http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au)

#### Camp fires

- Where open fires are permitted, use the fireplaces and fire rings provided.
- Light fires in cleared areas away from vegetation and tents.
- Keep the fire small.
- Use an existing or pre-used fireplace where possible.
- Do not place rocks around the fire as they conduct heat and damage the surrounding vegetation. They may also explode.
- Collect timber only where permitted. Use only dead, fallen timber. Do not break branches from trees as leaf litter and dead timber provide homes and food for animals.
- Always put the fire out by dousing it with water rather than earth. Embers can smoulder for days.
- Never light fires during high bushfire periods or in places where the fire might spread.

### 6. *Respect wildlife*

- Travel quietly.
- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Become educated about the role each species plays in their environment to understand the importance of its position within an ecosystem.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times, such as mating, nesting, and raising young. Touching nests or young animals may cause their parents to abandon them.
- Never feed wild animals or birds. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviours, and exposes them to predators and other dangers. Store food and rubbish securely.
- Control pets at all times or, better yet, leave them at home. All national parks restrict pets so check regulations before bringing them.
- Report injured animals to the local land managers. Do not attempt to handle an injured animal.
- Take care in adventure activities to minimise the risk from interactions between wildlife and participants. Queensland has unique fauna often not found in other parts of

Australia and interactions may damage it. Contact relevant land or conservation authorities for site-specific details.

- Beware of some specific creatures that are prevalent in certain locations around Queensland, including:
  - crocodiles
  - marine stingers
  - snakes
  - dingoes
  - cassowaries
  - pigs, cattle, horses and buffaloes.

These wild animals can be dangerous, and those animals that are native are protected. Nesting shore birds may also need consideration. More information on Queensland wildlife and how to best share nature with them is available on the Department of Environment and Resource Management website:

[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)

#### **7. Be considerate of your hosts and other visitors**

- Learn about the cultural history of the land. Recognise, acknowledge and respect local knowledge.
- Respect the wishes and regulations of all hosts, including Indigenous, pastoral, land managers and locals.
- Never visit places without appropriate permission. Seek permission and/or a permit.
- Familiarise yourself and have respect for peoples' customs, culture, values, religion, dignity and feelings.
- Respect signage and follow rules.
- When descending, yield to climbing cyclists.
- Be careful and in control.
- Slow down at blind spots.
- Be courteous and give way to other users.
- Do not race on recreational trails.

Find more information at:

- Leave No Trace Australia: [www.lnt.org.au](http://www.lnt.org.au)
- International Mountain Bicycling Association rules of the trail: [www.imba.com/about/trail\\_rules.html](http://www.imba.com/about/trail_rules.html)
- Mountain Bike Australia trail etiquette cards:

[www.mtba.asn.au/trails/respect.asp](http://www.mtba.asn.au/trails/respect.asp)

#### **4.13 Activity planning checklist**

- Sought approval for activity from relevant land manager
- Clearly stated objectives and learning outcomes
- Completed area assessment (e.g. route, area significance, maps, terrain)
- Checked weather and made necessary alterations (e.g. gear, route)
- Maintained equipment logs
- Identified participants' social and cultural needs
- Assessed competence of leaders and assistant leaders (including the Working with Children check)
- Determined the leader to participant ratio
- Briefed all staff on activities, objectives, responsibilities, communications and emergency procedures
- Briefed all participants on activities, expectations, communications and emergency procedures
- Collected the names, addresses, and medical and emergency contact details for all participants
- Sought parental consent where appropriate
- Established cancellation, modification or postponement procedures
- Completed and shared the communication plan
- Packed appropriate first aid kits
- Checked all water, food, equipment and transport arrangements
- Identified support and evacuation abilities
- Completed and shared the contingency plan
- Identified emergency procedures
- Determined review procedures for

activities

## 5. Leader

This AAS refers to leaders and assistant leaders. The leader's performance is a critical factor in the safe conduct of an outdoor activity. The leader is required to accept responsibility for conducting the activity by:

- maintaining current skills, qualifications and experience as required
- implementing and/or supervising activities suitable for the individual, group and environment
- taking responsibility for the environmental preservation of the sites and surrounding areas.

The leader may also have responsibility for the planning and preparation of activities.

An assistant leader is an individual whose role is to act as an additional support to the activity leader, and/or who has responsibility for a group of participants on an adventure activity.

The leader's and assistant leaders' overall responsibility does not negate the dependent participants' duty to be responsible for their own actions, and having agreed to participate knowing the inherent risks and circumstances involved.

### 5.1 The leader's responsibilities

The leader takes overall responsibility and coordinates the entire group. They supervise and aim to achieve the objectives of the group or individual participants' session. The leader may delegate individual tasks but they maintain ultimate responsibility.

Recommended leader responsibilities include:

- working within the policies, procedures and activity standard operating procedures (SOPs) of the organisational stakeholders and land managers (where applicable)
- confirming the activity plan (Section 4)
- researching and planning for likely hazards, incidents and emergencies
- confirming that an emergency strategy has been lodged with an appointed external contact
- checking the first aid kit and communication equipment before the activity

- checking all group equipment before departing and after returning
- carrying out a full briefing session and ensuring that all participants and staff understand it (Section 5.2.1)
- assessing that each participant's level of knowledge, ability and skill is appropriate for the difficulty and complexity of the activity, and that the equipment is adequate
- obtaining each participant's acknowledgement that the leader has the role of leading the group
- ensuring that participants and staff have completed all documentation, and that it has been collated
- ensuring that the message of minimal impact to the environment is conveyed and adhered to
- managing and minimising the activity's effect on the environment (Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2)
- ensuring that the group knows where to access safe drinking water
- conducting a practice session of required skills and ongoing coaching of technical skills
- managing last-minute checks, including weather and equipment checks
- taking a head count before, during (regularly) and immediately after the activity
- maintaining a constant awareness of the group's physical and psychological condition
- managing the group to avoid or minimise the effects of hazards
- complying with any land manager's requirements, including permits and approvals (Sections 4.1 and 4.3)
- controlling the pace of the group and resting the group if necessary
- maintaining observation of participants
- maintaining communication between the participants
- facilitating the achievement of objectives (e.g. through a post-activity debrief)
- monitoring participant experience and following up with the group
- delegating responsibility to any support personnel and ensuring that any vehicle used is suitable
- notifying external contacts when the group has completed the activity and returned safely
- ensuring any incidents are managed, documented and reported

- ensuring equipment is logged and packed away.

### 5.1.1 Pre-activity briefing

The leader should clearly communicate all information about an activity to potential participants, leaving sufficient time for them to make an informed decision about their participation.

Each leader and organisation may have a preferred way to deliver a pre-activity briefing. The method may depend on an activity's length and complexity. The briefing should make participants aware of:

- the identity and role of activity leaders
- activity objectives
- the activity's nature and inherent risks
- current and anticipated conditions (e.g. environment, remoteness, weather)
- the land managers' requirements (e.g. specific conditions that apply to the site)
- essential equipment and clothing (see specific examples below)
- the correct use and fit of equipment (see specific examples below)
- any ride tips (relevant to the terrain they are undertaking)
- road rules where applicable
- their responsibility to call obstacles, and communicate all incidents, accidents and near misses
- how the session will be managed (timings, procedures)
- the agreed methods of communication within the group (signals and calls), which they will devise before commencing the activity
- the group management process
- the type of food, the amount of food and water they will need and water availability
- conservation strategies, including protecting flora and fauna, removing rubbish and being aware of sanitation
- emergency procedures so participants behave appropriately in an incident or emergency, including emergency communication methods
- the leader's expectations of participants, and their responsibility to behave as

requested (e.g. conduct, safety zones, equipment)

- any restrictions to participation.

The leader will conduct a verbal check that enables participants to voice concerns about their capabilities, and a final check that participants have completed and submitted all documentation.

### 5.1.2 Correct use and fit of equipment and clothing

It is recommended that the leader ensure that the following points are covered in the pre-activity briefing.

#### **Helmets**

- State the features of the helmet.
- Demonstrate proper fitting of helmet.
- Ensure each helmet is fitted and used as designed.
- Instruct participants to wear a fastened helmet at all times.

#### **Bike**

- Demonstrate and adjust to correct seat height (never more than the maximum seat height mark).
- Demonstrate ride position.
- Check tyre pressures and brake levers.
- Demonstrate hand grip.
- Demonstrate braking foot position and stance.

#### **Use of bike**

- Demonstrate the correct operation of brakes and gears.
- Demonstrate the control of body position.

#### **Clothing**

- Recommend enclosed shoes.
- Demonstrate how loose clothing may become entangled in the bike and is not appropriate.

Leaders should ask participants to acknowledge that they understand the content of the briefing, and ask them to voice any concerns and ask questions about the activity. Leaders should consider an alternative briefing method for participants from non-English speaking backgrounds.

## 5.2 Responsibilities of assistant leader

Like the leader, the assistant leader offers the experience of the activity and achieves the activity's objectives. An assistant leader will support and assist the leader as instructed. Therefore, the assistant leader might need to understand the detail of the activity plan, risk management plan and emergency strategy.

To be included in a leader-to-participant ratio, the assistant leader should:

- possess relevant documented or demonstrated skills to safely conduct the activity
- be able to undertake activity-specific tasks as delegated by the leader
- be able to manage the group's safety, including in an emergency if the leader becomes incapacitated.

An accompanying adult without these skills and capacities may be responsible for the welfare and supervision of participants, but they would not be an assistant leader. As such, it is not recommended that leaders include these people in the leader-to-participant ratio.

## 5.3 Competencies

A leader requires competencies, experience and sound judgement at a level appropriate for the activity. To understand and reach this level, a leader should have acquired skills at least equivalent to the appropriate units of competency identified in the SIS10, Sport, Fitness Recreation Training Package.

Several organisations conduct training courses, which vary from full qualifications to statements of attainment for units of competency and skills sets. The units of competency for activity-specific, outdoor recreation leader training are available at [www.sportrec.qld.gov.au/Recreation/QldAdventureActivityStandards.aspx](http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au/Recreation/QldAdventureActivityStandards.aspx).

While neither a full qualification nor a statement of attainment of units of competency is compulsory to lead a mountain bike activity, the units provide a benchmark for preferred leader skills and experience. Individual organisations will need to decide which leader competencies and equivalencies they expect informed by adherence to effective risk management practices and legal requirements.

Leaders should maintain a log or diary of activities to encourage currency and demonstrate experience. The log should include the mountain biking activities that the leader has participated in or taken responsibility for, and details of the conditions, activity durations and roles that the leader has taken.

**Note:** The AAS are primarily designed for those who lead groups of participants where an established and evident duty of care exists. Each group will apply the AAS differently because they will possess distinct collective skills and experience, and depend on their leaders to varying degrees. However, the leader remains responsible for making professional judgements and decisions about the activity to ensure the group's safety.

### 5.3.1 Example pathways to demonstrate competency

A mountain bike leader may demonstrate competency by any of the following:

- graduating with a Certificate III or IV in Sport and Recreation or Outdoor Recreation or a Diploma of Outdoor Recreation, with specialisations in mountain bike guiding
- becoming a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), [www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/](http://www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/), at one of the following registration levels appropriate to the activity context:
  - Mountain Bike Guide (easy to intermediate terrain)
  - Mountain Bike Guide (intermediate to difficult terrain)
  - Mountain Bike Instructor (intermediate to difficult terrain)
- receiving a statement of attainment from a registered training organisation that specifies the appropriate units of competency
- demonstrating, to the organisation's satisfaction, skills and currency that meet the leadership, group management, technical capacities and safety requirements of the specific circumstances being addressed.

**Note:** If a provider's dependent clients come from an Education Queensland school, this AAS should be read in conjunction with the relevant Curriculum Activity Risk Management Module,

which is available at: [/education.qld.gov.au/strategic/epr/health/hlspr012/index1.html](http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/epr/health/hlspr012/index1.html)

### **5.3.2 Leadership of activities and volunteer-based youth training organisations**

Youth training organisations, such as Scouts Australia, Guides Queensland and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, permit suitably trained, prepared and equipped groups of participants to undertake outdoor activities, expeditions and journeys. They do this to encourage independence and give young people (or others) achievable but challenging opportunities to test their skills. These journeys may include a range of day and multi-day outdoor activities.

Due to the desired training and development outcomes, they may not conduct these activities under the direct supervision of a qualified adult leader. In such cases, a suitably qualified adult leader should be responsible for ensuring that participants have undertaken all necessary pre-activity training, are appropriately equipped, and have made all necessary logistical and organisational arrangements. It is recommended that the suitably qualified adult leader indirectly supervise the activity

via communications technologies and/or site checks.

## 6. Equipment

Equipment requirements will vary according to the planned activity (including the route and its objectives), the environmental conditions, and the nature and size of the group. The leader and group should have easy access to emergency and contingency equipment.

### 6.1 Leader's equipment

The leader should have the equipment stated in Section 6.2, as well as a first aid kit, communication equipment (including a whistle), and the following gear.

**Note:** The leader should only use this equipment if they are experienced and capable of making safe adjustments.

#### Tools

- One chain breaker
- One pair of pliers
- One spoke key
- One adjustable spanner
- One screwdriver or Allen key tool (4 millimetre, 5 millimetre, 6 millimetre)
- Two tyre levers or a multi-tool with the above components
- One pump
- One puncture repair kit (glue and patches)
- One tube of lubricant

#### Spare parts

- Inner tubes of appropriate size, with valve stems appropriate for the rims in use
- Brake cable inners (optional)
- Gear cable inners (optional)
- Rear derailleur and hanger appropriate for the bikes in use (optional)
- One piece of chain or a power link
- Brake pads (appropriate for the brakes in use)

The leader should also ensure the following equipment is carried in a support vehicle or accessible on multi-day trips.

- One lubricant spray
- Two rags
- One headset spanner
- One pedal spanner
- One crank puller and one pair of pliers with cable cutter
- One pressure gauge
- One adjustable, 300-millimetre spanner
- Two cone spanners
- One pair of pedals
- Allen keys
- Spare bikes where available or relevant

Participants should be able to quickly and easily identify the leader and assistant leaders. Therefore, they may choose to wear clothing and/or helmets that distinguish them from participants wherever possible.

### 6.2 Participant equipment

The following equipment requirements apply to all dependent participants:

- participants **MUST** wear cycling helmets which adhere to Australian Standard AS/NZS 2063. Preferably, the helmet should be specifically designed for mountain bike riding, as it will provide greater protection than some road cycling helmets.
- participants should wear appropriate clothing for the duration and objectives of the trip, including closed-in shoes. They should also wear close-fitting clothing that suits the weather conditions and appropriate gloves, and avoid denim.
- participants should carry personal medication and ensure that the leaders understand the requirements of its use.
- participants should carry a water bottle or hydration pack.
- some manufacturers of lower quality mountain bikes state that people should not use them for jumps, stunts and off-road riding. Participants' bikes should be appropriate for the proposed use and have the following features
  - tyres appropriate for specifically suited to the terrain
  - wheels that are straight and true
  - front and rear brakes that are well maintained and suitable for off-road use



- mountain bike-style handlebars.
- participants may choose to wear a high-visibility vest.

### 6.3 Group equipment

Refer to equipment used by leader.

### 6.4 Maintenance and storage

- All equipment used in mountain biking activities is used, maintained and stored according to manufacturers' specifications where applicable
- All equipment is checked before and after each ride
- All issued and used equipment, including helmets, is carefully washed or disinfected after each trip
- Brake levers are within reach of two fingers and, when pulled, actuate braking at roughly half the full range of the brake lever. Braking should be smooth and unrestricted
- Wear indicators on brake pads are clearly visible
- Wheels are straight and true, with no loose or damaged spokes
- Tyres are checked for wear and correct pressure
- All bearing surfaces and fittings are appropriately adjusted
- Headsets and handlebars are suitably tightened to prevent movement
- Handlebar grips and plugs are fitted and secured
- Wheels are firmly attached
- Pedals are intact
- Saddles are attached and secure
- Bikes are cleaned, maintained and lubricated before each use
- Biodegradable products are used where possible.

It is recommended that a log of all equipment use and maintenance be kept.

#### 6.4.1 Use of support vehicles

Mountain biking activities may be undertaken with the aid of a support vehicle that can travel over rough terrain. For more information, refer to:

- Queensland AAS Four Wheel Driving
- the Department of Environment and Resource Management  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)

Leaders using a support vehicle on road, may need to consider:

- signage to indicate that the vehicle is constantly stopping
- use of flashing amber light on the roof
- ensuring that drivers stop only in legal and safe locations
- ensuring that staff wear reflective gear
- ensuring that the support vehicle moves off

the road intermittently to allow passage of other vehicles.

A leader's responsibilities remain the same whether or not the session is for commercial purposes.

## 7. Definition of terms

### Organisation

A person or group of persons organised for a particular purpose that provides a mountain biking experience for either commercial (for profit) or non-commercial (not-for-profit or community group) purposes.

### Dependent group

A group of people who rely upon a leader or organisation with an established and evident duty of care.

### Duty of care

An obligation that a sensible person would have to treat others and the public with care, attention, caution and prudence. If they do not, their actions are considered negligent.

### Standard operating procedure

A set of written instructions that document procedures to help outdoor leaders and managers implement best practice systems to safely deliver activities.

### Participant

A person whose welfare is the responsibility of a leader or assistant leader.

Note: The National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS) refers to a participant as a client. A participant may also be known as a dependant.

### Leader

An experienced person who is responsible for and coordinates the entire group, including supervision, to achieve the objectives of the group's or individual participants' session.

### Assistant leader

A person who gives the leader additional support and/or is responsible for achieving the objectives of a group's adventure activity. The assistant leader's responsibilities remain the same whether or not the session is for commercial purposes.

**Must**—In this document, must indicates that a section or statement is mandatory by law.

**Should**—In this document, should indicates a recommendation.

## 7.1 Summary of abbreviations

AAS	Adventure Activity Standards
DERM	Department of Environment and Resource Management
DoC	Department of Communities
EPIRB	Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon
FPQ	Forestry Plantations Queensland
NOLRS	National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme
OCA	Outdoor Council of Australia
PAP	Partnered Assessment Provider
PLB	Personal Locator Beacon
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SIS10	Sport, Fitness Recreation Training Package
TGA	training.gov.au

## 8. Further information

### 8.1 Organisations

Sport and Recreation Services, Department of Communities  
PO Box 15187, City East Qld 4002  
Phone: 1300 656 191 (within Australia only)  
[www.sportrec.qld.gov.au](http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au)

Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation  
150 Caxton Street, Milton Qld 4064  
Phone: (07) 3369 9455  
[www.qorf.org.au](http://www.qorf.org.au)

Outdoor Council of Australia  
150 Caxton Street, Milton Qld 4064  
Phone: (07) 3369 9455  
[www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au](http://www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au)

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland,  
Department of Justice and Attorney-General  
PO Box 69, Brisbane Qld 4001  
Phone: 1300 369 915  
[www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/index.htm)

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service,  
Department of Environment and Resource Management  
PO Box 15155, City East Qld 4002  
Phone: 1300 130 372  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)

Leave No Trace  
PO Box 71, Cottesloe WA 6911  
Phone: 1300 884 086  
[www.lnt.org.au](http://www.lnt.org.au)

Queensland Fitness, Sport, Recreation  
Skills Alliance  
Sports House, Suite 1.08, 150 Caxton Street,  
Milton Qld 4064  
Phone: (07) 3367 0833  
[www.skillsalliance.com.au](http://www.skillsalliance.com.au)

Service Skills Australia  
GPO Box 4194, Sydney NSW 2001  
Phone: (02) 8243 1200  
[www.serviceskills.com.au](http://www.serviceskills.com.au)

### 8.2 Resources

#### General websites

Blue cards  
[www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/bluecard/index.html](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/bluecard/index.html)

Bureau of Meteorology  
<http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/qld/>

Cancer Council Australia  
[www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlifestyle/SunSmart/Preventingskincancer.htm](http://www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlifestyle/SunSmart/Preventingskincancer.htm)

*Civil Liability Act 2003*  
[www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/C/CivilLiabA03.pdf](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/C/CivilLiabA03.pdf)

*Child Protection Act 1999*  
[www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/C/ChildProtectA99.pdf](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/C/ChildProtectA99.pdf)

Department of Environment and Resource Management  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)

Operational policy: Group activity permits  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au/register/p01237aa.pdf](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/register/p01237aa.pdf)

Operational policy: Commercial activity—  
general requirements  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au/register/p01086aa.pdf](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/register/p01086aa.pdf)

Operational policy: Permits of written  
approval for special activities  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au/ecoaccess/parks\\_and\\_forest\\_management/recreational\\_uses/special\\_activities.html](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/ecoaccess/parks_and_forest_management/recreational_uses/special_activities.html)

Operational policy: Cycling (mountain bike  
riding) in QPWS managed areas  
[www.derm.qld.gov.au/register/p02146aa.pdf](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/register/p02146aa.pdf)

First Aid  
[www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/firstaid/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/firstaid/index.htm)

Forestry Plantations Queensland  
[www.fpq.net.au/asp/index.asp](http://www.fpq.net.au/asp/index.asp)

TGA (training.gov.au)  
[www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au)

Queensland Fitness, Sport and Recreation  
Skills Alliance  
[www.skillsalliance.com.au](http://www.skillsalliance.com.au)

Queensland Health  
[www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)

Queensland Primary Industry and Fisheries  
[www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/28\\_ENA\\_HTML.htm](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/28_ENA_HTML.htm)

Queensland Rural Fire Service  
[www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au](http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au)

Standards Australia  
[www.standards.org.au](http://www.standards.org.au)

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland—  
Incident forms

[www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/incidents/  
incidents/notify/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/incidents/incidents/notify/index.htm)

Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008

[www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/  
SLS/2008/08SL283.pdf](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/SLS/2008/08SL283.pdf)

### Cultural heritage

Department of Environment and Resource  
Management

[www.derm.qld.gov.au/cultural\\_heritage/](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/cultural_heritage/)

Note: The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* (Queensland) details guidelines for duty of care in recognising, protecting and conserving Aboriginal cultural heritage. For more information, refer to [www.derm.qld.gov.au/](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/)

Multicultural Affairs Queensland

[www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/index.html](http://www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/index.html)

### Risk management websites

Australian Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009

Risk management - Principles and guidelines

[www.riskmanagement.com.au](http://www.riskmanagement.com.au)

(including HB 246–202 Guidelines for managing  
risk in sport and recreation)

Commission for Children—Risk management  
requirements

[www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/risk-  
management.html](http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/risk-management.html)

*Risk Management Code of Practice 2007*

[www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/codes/  
riskman/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/codes/riskman/index.htm)

Safety guidelines for children and young people  
in sport and recreation

[http://sma.org.au/wp-content/  
uploads/2009/05/childrensafetyguidelines-  
fulldoc.pdf](http://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/childrensafetyguidelines-fulldoc.pdf)

### Books

Dickson, T.J., and Tugwell, M. (2000). *The risk management document: Strategies for risk management in outdoor and experiential learning*. North Sydney: Outdoor Recreation Industry Council.

Haddock, C. (2004). *Outdoor safety: Risk management for outdoor leaders*. Wellington: New Zealand Mountain Safety Council.

Miles, J., and Priest, S. (1999). *Adventure programming*. State College, Pennsylvania: Venture Publishing.

Priest, S., and Gass, M. A. (1997). *Effective leadership in adventure programming*. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics.

The Scout Association of Australia. (2008). *Fieldbook for Australian Scouting (2008 Year of the Scout edition)*. North Ryde, NSW: McGraw-Hill Australia.

### References to interstate AAS

- Victorian AAS: [outdoorsvic.org.au/  
activity\\_standards\\_review.php](http://outdoorsvic.org.au/activity_standards_review.php)
- Tasmanian AAS: [www.development.tas.  
gov.au/sportrec/sportrec\\_tasmania/  
sportrectas/current\\_projects/adventure\\_  
activity\\_standards](http://www.development.tas.gov.au/sportrec/sportrec_tasmania/sportrectas/current_projects/adventure_activity_standards)
- South Australian AAS: [www.recreationsa.  
org/downloads.html](http://www.recreationsa.org/downloads.html)
- Western Australian AAS: [www.outdoorswa.  
org/page.php?id=7](http://www.outdoorswa.org/page.php?id=7)

### Activity Specific Resources

International Mountain Bicycling Association  
[www.imba.com/](http://www.imba.com/)

Mountain Bike Australia  
PO Box 17, Mirani Qld 4754  
Phone: (07) 4959 1913  
[www.mtba.asn.au](http://www.mtba.asn.au)

## 9. Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Legal framework detail

#### **Why have the Adventure Activity Standards?**

The Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) are voluntary guidelines for undertaking potentially risky activities in a manner that promotes:

- safety for participants and providers
- protection for providers against civil legal claims and criminal penalties
- assistance in obtaining insurance cover.

The AAS are not imposed by law.

#### **Applying the AAS**

Implementing suitable risk management programs and strategies, and meeting the AAS, minimises the risk of injury or loss. Having evidence of compliance with these programs and strategies, and the AAS, could help providers in the legal defence of claims, and prove that a provider and its leaders acted reasonably under the circumstances (i.e. they were not negligent, in part, because the provider was following industry guidelines). Implementing these programs could also help providers obtain better insurance arrangements.

#### **Basis of legal liability**

The law of contract and negligence governs legal liability for personal injuries or property damage, though legislation such as the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Commonwealth) and the Fair Trading Act 1989 (Queensland) may also be relevant.

#### **Claims in contract**

A claim in contract may require a court to consider whether:

- a contract exists between the parties
- a breach of an express or implied term of the contract has occurred
- compensation must be paid.

#### **1. Contract**

A contract may be written or oral, or both.

To establish a claim in contract, a contract must exist between the person who suffered injury or loss and the provider against whom the injured party made the claim. For example, a contract would exist between a provider and a client if the provider has agreed to provide services for payment.

A claim in contract can only be made by one party to the contract against the other party to the contract, which differs from a claim in negligence.

#### **2. Breach of a term**

To have a claim in contract, a breach of an express or implied term of the contract must have occurred. An express term is a term described in the contract. An implied term is in addition to the express terms of a contract. A court might read other terms into a contract as if they were written into the contract. These terms may give a service providers other obligations when providing that service.

For example, a court might read into a contract that a provider must exercise the degree of reasonable skill and care expected of a competent provider.

The *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Commonwealth), *Fair Trading Act 1989* (Queensland) and the *Civil Liability Act 2003* may also apply to conduct under the contract.

#### **3. Compensation**

If a court finds that a breach of either an express or implied term of the contract has occurred, such as that the provider did not exercise reasonable care in providing the service, a party may claim compensation (damages) for the loss or injury suffered as a result.

#### **Claims in negligence**

The Common Law (law developed by the courts over time) and Statute Law (laws created by Parliament), such as the Civil Liability Act 2003, establish the law of negligence.

To make a successful claim in negligence, a party must prove on the balance of probabilities (i.e. more probable than not) that:

- the provider owed a duty of care to take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of their clients or participants
- a breach of this duty of care occurred
- the breach of the duty of care caused the injury or loss suffered.

As the result of a successful claim in negligence, the court awards damages against the provider to compensate for the loss or injury that the claimant suffered.

## 1. Establishing a duty of care

Although the law does not automatically impose a duty of care, such a duty may be imposed when one party (the provider) assumes responsibility for another in providing adventure activities.

The court imposes the duty of care on a provider, which legally requires them to take reasonable care to protect a client or participant from foreseeable harm or loss.

## 2. Determining a breach in a duty of care

### **Standard of care**

If a party makes a claim and a court finds that a provider owes a duty of care, the court must determine whether the provider has breached that duty. To decide whether a breach has occurred, the court must first determine the appropriate level or standard of that duty of care.

The court determines the standard of care by taking into account all the relevant circumstances and the specific facts of each case. To determine the appropriate level or standard, a court considers the provider's and clients' experience and the conditions at the time, and possibly asks experts in the field for advice.

A court will find that the provider has not met the standard of care (i.e. a breach of the duty of care has occurred) if the evidence, on the balance of probabilities, establishes that the provider has not acted reasonably in the circumstances.

For example, some participants could find themselves in an outdoor recreation activity that is better suited for more advanced participants. The provider may have led people in the group to believe that they did not require a certain skill level, so they enrolled in a group incorrectly described as suitable for beginners. If an accident occurred due to their inexperience, and these beginner participants were injured, they might be able to claim legal action against the leader and guide to recover damages based in the law of negligence. They might also take legal action against the provider because they failed to adequately instruct, advise and perhaps supervise the group.

The provider's duty of care is higher than that of an ordinary citizen because the provider has agreed to provide services for a reward or is responsible for the care of others.

The following is a guide (not a complete list) to the standards that a provider, guide, instructor, teacher or staff member should meet.

- Ensure that the activity is appropriate for the skills and experience of intended participants.
- Ensure that the intended activity is appropriate for the known, expected and forecasted conditions.
- Provide adequate staff and leader supervision.
- Provide competent and appropriately trained staff and leaders.
- Provide safe and properly functioning and adjusted equipment.
- Provide reasonable food and safe shelter if relevant.
- Give participants reasonable guidance, instruction and direction.
- Depending on the activity, have adequate knowledge of the area where the activity will occur, and be able to provide reasonable first aid, emergency backup and rescue.

The law requires the provider to protect participants from known hazards associated with the activity, and from those risks that could arise (i.e. risks that the provider, instructor, teacher, or staff member or guide can reasonably foresee), against which they could take reasonable preventative measures.

### **Defence—no breach of duty**

In essence, the Civil Liability Act states that a leader, guide or provider is not breaching a duty if:

- a risk is foreseeable
- a risk is 'not insignificant'
- in the circumstances, a reasonable provider can take appropriate precautions.

In determining whether a reasonable operator took adequate precautions, a court will consider (amongst other relevant issues) the:

- probability that harm would occur if they did not take care
- likely seriousness of the harm
- burden of taking precautions to prevent the risk of harm
- social utility of the activity that creates the risk of harm.

In these circumstances, to limit the potential for legal liability and minimise the risk of injury, each organisation must implement risk and safety management processes that identify foreseeable risks and implement measures to control them. For the same reasons, all providers, leaders or guides should, as a minimum have appropriate first aid and activity-specific training.

This is particularly important when the activity is a specialised one. In these circumstances, as a participant will rely on the expertise of the provider, leader or guide, a higher duty of care will be imposed because the provider, leader or guide will be considered to be responsible for controlling, guiding and protecting the participant.

### **3. Establishing that the breach caused the harm**

To hold someone liable for paying damages in negligence, the court must establish that the breach of duty caused the harm suffered.

#### ***Defences***

##### *Voluntary assumption of risk*

The Civil Liability Act states that if a participant was fully aware of the risk of suffering injury during an activity and freely accepted that risk, this may be a defence to a claim in negligence. For example, if the risk of harm was obvious, then a rebuttable presumption exists (i.e. a presumption that can be proved to the contrary with evidence) that the person who suffered the harm was aware of the risk.

However, it would not be a defence if the injury was caused by the provider's inexperience or incompetence, defective equipment, or inadequate supervision or instruction, because it is unlikely that any participant would have consented to accept such risks.

##### *Dangerous recreation activities*

The Civil Liability Act provides an additional, possible defence to negligence where the harm was caused because an obvious risk materialised in a situation where a participant engaged in a dangerous recreational activity. This may apply whether or not the participant was aware of that risk. A dangerous recreational activity is an activity engaged in for enjoyment, relaxation or leisure that involves a significant degree of risk of physical harm to a person.

When deciding cases, the court will determine what constitutes a dangerous recreational activity under the Civil Liability Act. In the event of a claim, the court would examine the specific circumstances of each case.

##### *Contributory negligence*

If a participant's lack of reasonable care caused or contributed to the accident, then this would be a partial defence depending how the court apportions responsibility between the provider and the participant. When considering by how much to reduce the damages due to contributory negligence, a court may decide to reduce the damages by 100 per cent and so defeat the claim.

##### *Exclusion of liability agreements*

In some instances, the court may uphold documents that exclude liability, sometimes referred to as a 'waiver to sue or release'. Exclusion of liability agreements are usually a written statement that a supplier of recreational services cannot be sued if a participant is injured or killed using the service. Each participant signs the agreement before the supplier supplies the services. These agreements must be carefully drafted and comply with any applicable legislation. The use of these agreements may enable suppliers of recreational services to exclude their liability for negligence and limit their liability to a participant's injury or death.

##### *Volunteers*

Under the Civil Liability Act, volunteers are protected from personal civil liability in relation to any act they undertake in good faith when providing community work organised by a community organisation.

A volunteer is a person who does community work on a voluntary basis. This includes work for which a person receives reimbursement of reasonable expenses but does not include court-ordered community work.

Community work is not for private financial gain and is performed for charitable, sporting, educational and other purposes.

##### *Expressions of regret*

The Civil Liability Act also states that when a person apologises (verbally or in writing) for causing death, personal injury or harm, this apology does not constitute an admission of fault or negligence liability provided the apology

does not include a clear acknowledgement of liability. Similarly, a reduction or waiver of fees payable for a service is not an admission of fault or liability.

#### *Additional considerations*

Providers may also wish to consider the following obligations in relation to their instructors:

- *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995.* This Act's objective is to prevent a person's death, injury or illness due to a workplace, a relevant workplace area, work activities, or plant or substances for use at a workplace
- *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000.* This Act regulates the requirement for people to obtain a blue card if they intend to work or carry on a business in a child-related area, either in a paid or voluntary capacity. Both **paid employees** and **volunteers** may need a blue card if they intend to work in facilities or situations that fall under any of the following categories
  - **residential facilities**
  - **school boarding houses**
  - **schools—employees other than teachers and parents**
  - **child care**
  - **churches, clubs and associations involving children**
  - **health, counselling and support services**
  - **private teaching, coaching or tutoring**
  - **education programs conducted outside of schools**
  - **child accommodation services, including homestays**
  - **religious representatives**
  - **sport and active recreation**
  - **emergency services cadet programs**
  - **school crossing supervisors**
  - **care of children under the Child Protection Act 1999.**

A service or activity that a person provides may be considered a business irrespective of whether or not the service or activity is performed for profit. However, the service or activity must fall within one of the business categories regulated by the Commission's Act, such as **private teaching, coaching and tutoring**, or **providing sport and active recreation activities**.



## Appendix 2: Exemplar risk management templates

Note: The following templates have been included as examples for guidance purposes and are incomplete. If these templates are used, information specific to the activity, location, participants, etc. will need to be sourced and incorporated.

### Activity: Mountain biking

DANGER	Risk items	Risk assess (Rate probability and magnitude as High, Med or Low. E.g.: Prob H /Mag L)	Management strategies	Evaluation/ comments
<b>Environment</b>				
Terrain	Asthma	Prob L Mag H	Selection of appropriate route for group.	
Hills (up and down)	Cuts & grazes	Prob M Mag L	Skill session opportunity at school prior to program.	
Loose surface	Broken bones	Prob L Mag H	Skill workshop before departure – evaluate suitability (option of not riding).	
Washouts	Damage to bikes	Prob M Mag M	Supply of track notes, tips and hints. Section warnings. Walking bike is always an option if not comfortable or confident. Constant monitor of behaviour and fatigue. Participants wear appropriate clothing and helmet to protect body. Participants carry personal asthma medication. Staff carry back up. First Aid kits carried by group and staff. Support vehicle Etc.	

<b>DANGER</b>	<b>Risk items</b>	<b>Risk assess</b> (Rate probability and magnitude as High, Med or Low. E.g.: Prob H Mag L)	<b>Management strategies</b>	<b>Evaluation/ comments</b>
<b>Environment</b>				
Bitumen surfaces	Cuts & grazes Broken bones	Prob L Mag L  Prob L Mag H	Participants wear appropriate clothing and helmet to protect body. Skill session opportunity at school prior to programme. Skill workshop before departure – evaluate suitability (option of not riding). Supply of track notes, tips and hints. Section warnings. Constant monitor of behaviour.	
Hot Weather	Dehydration Heat exhaustion	Prob	Participants advised on appropriate clothing and equipment. Participants carry minimum of 2L water. Refill stops. Regular rest stops. Encourage peer reminders and monitoring. Monitor weather.	
Rain	Cuts & grazes Broken bones Damage to bikes			

DANGER	Risk	Risk assess	Management strategies	Evaluation/ comments
<b>People</b>				
Unskilled riders	Cuts & grazes Broken bones	Prob Prob L Mag H	Appropriate route selection for group Skill session opportunity at school prior to program Skill workshop before departure—evaluate suitability (option of not riding) Supply of track notes, tips and hints Walking bike as an option if not comfortable or confident Section warnings Constant behaviour monitoring	
Over-confident riders	Cuts & grazes Broken bones		Theory session Section warnings Behaviour monitoring and management Walking of bike if necessary Steep downhill sections controlled by staff	
Collision between riders	Cuts & grazes Broken bones Damage to bikes		Skill session opportunity prior to program	
Poor road sense	Cuts & grazes Broken bones		Routes selected with consideration to the amount of traffic Radios used to communicate traffic on route Warning signs ahead on roadways and on the rear of the support vehicle Skill workshop before departure Section warnings Constant vigilance and communication with group Walking of bike if necessary.	

DANGER	Risk	Risk assess	Management strategies	Evaluation/ comments
<b>People</b>				
Poor judgement	Cuts & grazes Broken bones		Skill session opportunity at school prior to program Skill workshop before departure—evaluate suitability (option of not riding) Supply of track notes, tips and hints Section warnings Behaviour monitoring and management	
Fitness	Cuts & grazes Broken bones Asthma		Early notice of program—school calendar and briefings Student choice of activity where possible (double classes) Skill workshop before departure—evaluate suitability (option of not riding) Constant behaviour and fatigue monitoring Regular rest stops	
Participant health condition	Flare-up of existing condition		Information provided so participant can make informed decisions before and during program Medical details collected Sister checking through the student medical information, liaising with families and providing a summary of medical conditions Information gathered on specific medical condition (what to look for, what to do, triggers) Regular monitoring Medication carried Participant to report any unusual indicators	
Group size				
Traffic			Participants wear fluorescent orange safety vests	

DANGER	Risk	Risk assess	Management strategies	Evaluation/ comments
<b>Equipment</b> Brake failure	Cuts & grazes Broken bones	Prob H Mag L Prob L Mag H	Skill session opportunity at school prior to program Skill workshop before departure Regular maintenance of bikes Skill workshop before departure Rider self-checking Problems reported while riding Faults reported at the end of each session Caution at steep downhill—track notes, self-check brakes	
Gear failure	Cuts & grazes Broken bones Difficult riding condition Accident Damage to bike		Regular bike maintenance Skill workshop before departure Rider self-checking Problems reported while riding Faults reported	
Flat tyre	Impeded progress Damage to bike	Prob	Regular bike maintenance Skill workshop before departure Rider self-checking Problems reported while riding Faults reported Spares and toolkit	

Thanks to James McIntosh for this sample risk assessment and management plan.

## Activity: one-day bush walk

Location: Smith's Track, Kamerunga to Stoney Creek, and return via Weir track

Date: 19 February 2007

Analysis	Description		
<b>Risks</b> Accident, injury, other forms of loss	(1) snake bite (2) stung by stinging tree (3) scrub itch (4) leech bite (5) injury related to fall	(6) injury related to slip (7) dehydration (8) drowning (9) getting lost (10) getting separated from the group	
Causal Factors	People	Equipment	Environment
Hazards, perils, dangers	(1) unaware of the potential danger of snakes, being unable to identify snakes, deliberately annoying snake, being aware of the environment (2) unaware of the potential danger of stinging trees, being unable to identify stinging trees, being aware of the environment (3) unaware of the potential presence of scrub itch in rotting timber, being unaware of the environment (4) not checking extremities after walking through wet areas (5) unaware of safety on cliffs and steep ground, unsafe behaviour, over balancing, poor group control (6) unaware of safety in slippery areas, unsafe behaviour, over balancing, poor group management (7) not drinking water	(1) lack of suitable footwear, leg protection (2) lack of suitable clothing (3) lack of insect repellent (4) lack of insect repellent (5) lack of suitable footwear, lack of hand line/safety rope (6) lack of suitable footwear, lack of hand line/safety rope (7) lack of water, lack of water storage capacity	(1) untracked environment, in long grass/vegetation (2) rainforest environment (3) rainforest environment, rotting logs (4) wet environments (5) cliffs, steep ground (6) heavy rain, slippery pathways (7) hot day, lack of shade, steep hills, unclean water sources

Causal Factors		People	Equipment	Environment
Hazards, perils, dangers		(8) poor swimming ability, not checking swimming areas (9) lack of navigational skills, not paying attention (10) not paying attention, poor group management	(8) no throw rope/ safety line (9) damaged or lost compass, lost or inaccurate map (10) no whistle	(8) muddy water, moving water, hidden obstacles/rocks (9) unclear track/ route, recent tree/rock falls blocking pathways (10) lack of visibility, multiple pathway/route options
Risk management strategies	Normal operation	(1) adequate pre-activity safety briefing, including identification, dangers and appropriate behaviours (2) adequate pre-activity safety briefing, including identification, dangers and how to avoid (3) adequate pre-activity safety briefing, including identification, dangers and how to avoid (4) adequate pre-activity safety briefing, including identification, dangers and protection measures (5) adequate pre-activity safety briefing about cliff top safety, maintain good group control (6) adequate pre-activity safety briefing about slippery pathways, how to avoid slipping, and safe behaviours	(1) clear and accurate equipment briefing (2) clear and accurate equipment briefing (3) clear and accurate equipment briefing (4) clear and accurate equipment briefing (5) clear and accurate equipment briefing, take hand line on walk (6) clear and accurate equipment briefing, take hand line on walk (7) check of water bottles (size and how full) at start of walk	(1) being aware in long grass (2) avoiding stinging trees (3) avoiding rotting logs (4) being aware of wet environments (5) avoiding cliff edges (6) taking care in slippery/wet areas (7) being prepared for hot weather, seek shade, have rest breaks, treat/ purify unclean or suspect water

Risk management strategies	Normal operation	People	Equipment	Environment
Emergency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(7) adequate pre-activity safety briefing about the need to drink plenty of water</li> <li>(8) check swimming ability before walk, safety briefing and muddy and/or moving water</li> <li>(9) training in navigational skills, constant checking of location</li> <li>(10) regular checking of groups members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(8) take a hand line/throw rope</li> <li>(9) check of compass and map, take more than one of each</li> <li>(10) take a whistle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(8) checking swimming locations for dangers</li> <li>(9) double-checking pathway/route</li> <li>(10) good group management</li> </ul>



Relevant industry standards applicable	(1) Queensland Adventure Activity Standards (Bushwalking) (2) Department of Environment and Resource Management, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Group Activity Permit	
Policies and guidelines recommended	Education Queensland Education Policy and Procedures Register, HLS-PR-012: Curriculum Activity Risk Management Module (Bushwalking)	
Skills required by staff	Skills required in navigation, weather, logistical, group management, first aid, swimming and rescue. This may be indicated by the following industry registrations and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> <i>National outdoor leader registration scheme</i> bushwalking guide</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Remote or wilderness first aid</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Swiftwater rescue operator</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Vertical rescue training.</li> </ul>	
Final decision on implementing activity	Choose one	
	Accept	Reject
	Comments: The walk along Smith's track via Toby Lookout to Stoney Creek and return via the Weir track is a challenging day-walk activity. While there is potential for serious misadventure, with appropriate training, safety briefing and leader qualifications, it is a relatively low risk activity.	

Completed by: Phil Harrison

Signed:

Date:

**Original RAMS template reproduced with permission of Grant Davidson.**

**Thanks to Phil Harrison for this sample risk assessment and management plan.**

## Appendix 3: Emergency strategy

### Emergency response plan template

#### Introduction

The following template has been included as an example for guidance purposes and is incomplete. If this template is to be used, information specific to the activity, location, participants, etc. will need to be sourced and incorporated.

Emergency is defined in many jurisdictions as an event that requires a significant, coordinated

response. The concepts of emergency and emergency management must be viewed in context, and emergency planning must account for the range of possible causes and responses. For example, natural emergencies are caused by storms, bushfires, floods, drought or weather extremes that may create an emergency. Similarly, outdoor leaders need also to prepare for emergencies caused by humans, such as accidents, lost or missing persons, or equipment failure; or social hazards, such as substance abuse and misuse, emotional trauma, or infectious diseases or food poisoning.

#### Plan overview

Verify	Confirm that there is an emergency situation.
Notify	Notify appropriate authorities and staff of emergency event.
Assess	Determine the extent and nature of the emergency.
Act	Respond to situation based on requirements, skills and responsibilities.

#### Emergency contacts (phone numbers)

Key organisations	Best contact methods (mobile or satellite phone, radio)
Police, ambulance, fire	000 triple zero (112 from mobile)
Land manager	Etc
Etc	Etc
Assembly locations	

Identify and describe locations of established evacuation assembly points and ensure every person knows them.

#### Site plan

The map must include locations of:

- emergency assembly and evacuation areas
- water, gas and power isolation points
- fire fighting equipment
- first aid kits
- dangerous goods
- etc.

### *Roles and responsibilities*

Outline the responsibilities of all key personnel involved in the activity and their contact details.

Key personnel	Responsibilities	Contact
e.g. Leader	Determine seriousness of incident, implement planned response, e.g. notify home organisation and external support, manage the group, administer appropriate first aid (as required)	
e.g. Assistant Leader	Etc	
Authorised media spokesperson	Etc	
Etc	Etc	

### *Media management*

Outline procedures for when media makes contact with staff members; For example, outline the people who have clearance to speak to media, and who media should be directed to for information on the emergency and what information they can provide.

### *Foreseeable emergencies and response actions*

#### ***Routine incidents***

Incident type	Response actions
Electrical failure	
Ruptured water pipe	
Etc.	

#### ***Non-routine incidents***

Incident type	Response actions
Bushfire	
Building fire	
Lost or missing person	
Injury/medical	
Storm/flood	
Snake bite	
Etc	

### *Specific communication equipment carried by group*

List types and number of communication devices that group may have, such as:

- mobile phone
- UHF radio
- satellite phone
- etc.

### *Relevant aspects of land managers' emergency strategy*

Identify and access any land management requirements for emergency strategy, including the following.

*Strategies relevant to the specific features of the areas being visited (e.g. river crossings)*

Detail any site specific features that may require particular attention during an emergency response situation.

*A strategy for maintaining supervision ratios if any changes to the planned activity occur*

Detail plans of how to maintain group supervision during the course of the emergency response.

### *Post-emergency debrief*

Outline what discussions or debriefs will be required after the incident to refine response procedures. The severity of the incident will determine the level of debrief.

### *Post-incident reporting*

Complete an incident/accident report form and file accordingly. The form should outline details of the incident, including the:

- date and time of the incident
- personnel involved
- type of incident
- first aid administered.



