

A YEAR IN REVIEW

The Outdoors Victoria (OV) team delivered a program of activities to support and advocate for the outdoors sector. However this was no normal year, first with the tragic Black Summer Bushfires across the nation, then the continued smoke haze blanketing much of Victoria for many weeks which continued to disrupt lives, schooling and businesses further, and then the onset of COVID-19. OV were involved in the Outdoor Industry Recovery Taskforce to support and advocate for the outdoors sectors at an incredibly tough time for so many in the community. This year we also did achieve the launching of the first 9 of 15 Primary Teacher Toolkits for Outdoor Learning, formed up a Future of Climbing Governance Consultation, and grew "Nature Stewards" by 100% - an environmental learning and activities program with assistance from partners including the Victorian National Parks Association, Field Naturalist Clubs of Victoria, Parks Victoria, supported by DELWP and several Victorian local councils.

Outdoors Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to their Elders past, present as well as their emerging leaders.

KEY ITEMS IN FY 2019-20

Advocacy and support of the Outdoors sectors during COVID-19

During the crisis, OV has been hosting Zoom monthly morning teas for the sector, often with 100 plus organisations represented. This has been useful to keep everyone informed, circulate new ideas and ways of working, discover key issues for businesses and educators, as well as providing an opportunity for Parks Victoria to brief the outdoors community and take feedback and questions.

OV has been involved with the Outdoor Industry Recovery Taskforce that started work on bushfire recovery and then focussed mainly on COVID-19. Members of this taskforce with OV were the Australian Camps Association (ACA), People and Parks Association (PPF), Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC), supported by Sport and Recreation Victoria. There was a lot of team work surveying the wider industry and joint advocacy, as well as ACA and OV focussing on getting camps and outdoor activity providers back to work safely, working with and advising several government agencies - especially to get hundreds of thousands of Victorian school children back into the outdoors.

As a Board member of the Outdoor Council of Australia, there was much team work across State Outdoor Peaks, camp associations and Scouts Australia on the working up of the Rebooting the Outdoor Sector document and a COVID-19 Plan template mid-year that has formed the basis for later state based pieces of work to assist the outdoors sectors.

Advice to Department of Education on their Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors

OV's David Hagel and the Safety Guidelines Advisory Panel assisted with the integration of the updated Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, for the Department of Education and Training (DET), which was completed in June 2020.

VCE Guidebook

On behalf of Cambridge University Press, OV's Josh Ambrosy along with fellow authors J Harris, A Hipwell and B Hodges, produced the VCE Checkpoints study guide for the VCE subject Outdoor and Environmental Studies 2018-2022. This will be used by thousands of VCE students as a valuable resource over the coming years and contained a motivational Foreword by OV's then-Chair Mark Dingle (Retired from Board late 2019).

DET project with partners

After securing funding from the DET, OV commenced work in partnership with ACHPER (VIC), Geography Teachers Association of Victoria, Environment Education Victoria and Parks Victoria to build the capacity for Primary Teachers to increase their students 'learning outside the classroom' time. Nine toolkits are complete and provided for use by educators on the OV website and several partner websites. Another six toolkits will be completed by the end of 2020, co-ordinated by OV's Luke Parker.

Australian AAS - guidance for led dependent groups in the outdoors

Completed the work as Secretariat of the inaugural Australian Adventure Activity Standard and Good Practice Guides, which worked with close to 100 volunteer technical experts across the country. The Standard, and the Core and 18 Activity Good Practice Guides was completed in September 2019, with OV's Murray Irwin working tirelessly and with such rigour, across several years from start to finish. The project was supported by the eight State and Territory Sport and Recreation Ministers and they formally accepted the completed version in November 2020.

Bush Adventure Therapy

Advocated widely with community and government of the important work of bush adventure therapists with vulnerable disadvantaged young people through to seniors and supporting the Australian Association for Bush Adventure Therapy (AABAT).

Climbing Governance in Victoria, consultation project

In partnership with Sport Climbing Victoria and supported by Sport and Recreation Victoria, OV employed a Climbing Project Manager, Nikki Lovell LLB, to consult widely across the climbing clubs, organisations, businesses, and educators connected to climbing in Victoria. This was to identify whether a Climbing activities State Peak is needed and if so how would it be formed and operate. A report on this Climbing Governance Consultation is being produced, with recommendations, before going out for public consultation late 2020. OV acknowledges the issues that have arisen around current climbing restrictions imposed and this State Peak could assist in having closer collaboration of all the parties in future.

Nature Stewards

Co-ordinated by OV's Dr Madelaine Willcock, this unique 10 week, 14 session curriculum was launched in February 2019. The program was built in four months by Victoria's pre-eminent educators, researchers and ecologists to foster the wider community's introductory learnings of Flora, Fauna and Indigenous culture and land management. Outcomes from the courses include community members going onto environmental volunteering, further training and career change, as well as feeling more socially connected to their community. Financially and logistically supported by DELWP's Biodiversity 2037 team, and the Cities of Melton, Melbourne, and Manningham, and with a number of highly experienced volunteer experts on the Program Advisory Group from across Victoria.

Finance: An end of financial report for FY2020 (net surplus) is provided.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The directors present this report on Outdoors Victoria Limited (ABN 78 158 927 872) for the financial year commenced 1 July 2019 and ended 30 June 2020. This report and the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with section 300B of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) for the information of our members and other stakeholders.

The purpose of the company is to support the development of Victoria's outdoor community, which includes outdoor learning, nature-based recreation, education, tourism, therapy and related activities. OV focuses on several key deliverables as set out in the 2019 and 2020 Strategic Plan: sector development, industry advocacy, outdoors safety, research delivery, industry connectedness and infrastructure development.

These priorities are described in more detail in OV's strategic plan, available at www.outdoorsvictoria.org.au

Activities during 2019-20

During the reporting period, Outdoors Victoria undertook the activities described in "KEY ITEMS IN 2019-20", and the following:

- Representation of the outdoors community at key events and forums, including being a member of Minister D'Ambrosio's Regional Forest Agreements Advisory Group and sport and recreation government forums. These include the Victorian Active Living Alliance and People in Parks Foundation's Live Nature Wise project. Along with attending and contributing at the Council of the Professional Teachers Association of Victoria AGM, ACHPER Victoria's conference and accepting an invitation from Parks Victoria to sit on the Grampians – Gariwerd Land Management Plan Advisory Group.
- Publication of communications to affiliate members and subscribers, including OV website, monthly e-newsletter, policy briefings, COVID-19 News Bulletins, Facebook page and other incidental communications.
- Advocacy for key policy priorities, including working with the sectors, other peaks and government agencies on the COVID-19 response and support for the outdoors sectors, increased resources for park management, Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, and learning outdoors from early years upwards – including commencing a Nature Kindergarten Facilitation project in partnership with the Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Network and supported by a Together More Active grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria.
- Working as the national Secretariat for the Australian Adventure Activity Standard and Good Practice Guides project, with completion on 30 September 2019.
- Participating in collaborative research projects of value to the outdoors community, including communication of the findings in the Outdoor Youth Programs Research Alliance project (OYPRA), as well as the continuing work on the Understanding and Preventing Outdoor Accidents Data System (UPLOADS) safety project.
- Responding to government requests for information and participating on advisory bodies on request.
- Maintaining our office at Westerfolds Park, Templestowe, including sub tenancies for five other recreational activity/education outdoors bodies within this Outdoor Activity Hub.
- Seeking funding for the above and other activities, and otherwise conducting our organisation to position it as a sustainable and trusted body for the outdoors community.

Staff, resources and financial position

The Chief Executive Officer for the reporting period was Mr Andrew Knight and with his team and support from the Board, has set up a number of activities that continue to build upon the positive impact of a high functioning organisation. Outdoors Victoria had a total of seven staff (3.9 FTE) at the end of the reporting period.

Outdoors Victoria measures its performance using a range of qualitative and quantitative measures, including those designed to gauge financial performance and sustainability; effectiveness and reach of communications and advocacy; the usefulness to our community of our events and publications; and successful outcomes in terms of policy, research and resource development.

Outdoors Victoria secured a \$100,000 funding agreement from Sport and Recreation Victoria for operations during 2019-20 and includes a number of new projects and initiatives which will be

communicated in the coming months via the monthly newsletter our to subscribers.

Outdoors Victoria receives funding from government grants, private sponsorships, event registrations and sponsorships, affiliate memberships, and rental of five sub-tenancies.

The company can report a surplus/net profit of \$59,548 with total equity of \$ 133,555 as of the end of the 2019-2020 reporting period.

The directors are confident that Outdoors Victoria is in a sound financial position and are working to further diversify and strengthen revenue for the long-term. In August 2019, Chair Mark Dingle retired as Chair and from the Board. All of us at Outdoors Victoria thank Mark for his three years of service as Chair. Current Board members, Steve Mc Murtrie, was immediately appointed Chair and Sandy Allen-Craig as Deputy Chair.

Directors

The names of each director of Outdoors Victoria during any portion of the period covered by this report and their attendance at meetings during their period of service, is as follows:

Name	Date appointed	End date	Meeting attendance (actual / eligible)
Mark Dingle (Outgoing Chair)	20 Feb 2015	9/8/2019	1 / 1
Steve McMurtrie (In-Coming Chair)	30 Oct 2013	ongoing	6 / 6
Sandy Allen-Craig (In-coming Deputy Chair)	24 Nov 2017	ongoing	5 / 6
Sophie Bone	24 Nov 2017	ongoing	5 / 6
Mark Collard	27 Nov 2015	ongoing	4 / 6
Amber Gardner	27 Apr 2016	ongoing	3 / 6
Anthony Hall	30 Oct 2013	ongoing	5 / 6
Reegan Key	24 Nov 2017	ongoing	5 / 6
Michael Naismith	30 Oct 2013	ongoing	5 / 6
Richard Thornton	24 Nov 2017	ongoing	5 / 6



Each director is currently employed in a role of senior leadership within the outdoors community, and/or has held such a position for a significant period in their career, and/or has particular skills needed by Outdoors Victoria.

Further details of each director are available at www.outdoorsvictoria.org.au.

Auditor's report

The auditor's report for the reporting period has been received and a link is provided on the OV website. Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

Director

Dated

Director

Dated

**Outdoors
Victoria** 

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Dated: 12 November 2020