



Western Australian Adventure Activity Standard

Horse Trail Riding

Version 1.1 October 2009



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Adventure Activity Standards benchmark the minimum industry requirements and responsibilities for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for commercial and non – commercial groups.

The Adventure Activity Standards are designed to be applied when the participants are, for the purposes of participating in the horse trail riding activity, either

- In a pre-existing group
 - Where either the group members (and or its representative third party) have made a collective purchase of / collective decision to participate in the activity (ie a school, corporate or community group); or are
- Formed into a new group
 - Where the participants have purchased / made the decision to participate in the activity as individuals or smaller groups, but having done so become a part of a new group (ie citizens or tourists who, having purchased an activity from an organisation or leader individually, are formed into a group for the purposes of participating in the activity provided).

In all cases the relationship between the group of participants and the activity provider is one based upon dependence by way of contract and or duty of care.

The existence of other types of groups where the group is less defined and NOT dependent as a group upon an activity provider for the conduct of the activity is acknowledged. (ie independent club members participating in an activity). It is intended that such less defined groups of independent participants are not “captured” by the AAS.

The Western Australian Adventure Activity Standards were developed by an industry wide consultative process coordinated by Outdoors WA following the recommendations of the 2006 State Government Adventure Tourism Visitor Safety Task Force Report. The Project received grant funding via the Department of Sport and Recreation.

The development and implementation of the AAS allows the outdoor adventure industry to demonstrate its collective integrity and agreed standards. This, in turn will provide a measure of quality for the purposes of assisting

1. Consumers of our services to make informed choices about the services they select
2. Training organisations to produce graduates who understand and meet industry standards
3. Media, insurance and legal scrutineers of our industry and its members, to understand what is acceptable practice and what is not
4. The development of sustainable use practices that consider the specific natural and cultural heritage values of areas in which we conduct outdoor activities

The AAS are a critical component of the **industry quality framework** comprising four aligned and inter-connected components

1. **Accreditation** - the required business operating standards for businesses and organisations
2. **Adventure Activity Standards** - the minimum standards to which an activity must be conducted by a provider to dependent groups of participants
3. **Leader Competency / Registration Scheme** - the responsibilities and competencies required of the leaders conducting the outdoor activities
4. **Codes of Conduct** – the behavioural expectations of persons operating as outdoor leaders

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	4
PLANNING AND PREPARATION	5
Preliminary Information	5
Route / Campsite(s) Plan	5
Risk Management Plan	6
Emergency Response Plan	6
Leader: Participant Ratios and Group Size.....	7
Minimal Environmental Impact Plan - Leave No Trace 7 Principles	7
REQUIREMENTS OF LEADERS	11
Responsibilities of Leaders	12
Competencies of Leaders	13
FIRST AID REQUIREMENTS	13
REQUIREMENTS / RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANISATIONS	13
EQUIPMENT (and belongings).....	14
Participant's Equipment*	14
Leaders' and Group Equipment*	14
DEFINITION OF TERMS	15
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	15
FEEDBACK, REVIEW & APPEALS	15
FURTHER INFORMATION	16

INTRODUCTION

The Western Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) have been developed to assist organisations and leaders to plan and conduct outdoor adventure activities with commercial and non-commercial dependent groups of participants where there is a duty of care based in contract and or in authority.

The purpose of the AAS is to maintain the perception of adventure whilst simultaneously reducing / managing the real risk for participants. Increased outdoor physical activity with reduced incident and accident rates will be the ultimate performance indicators of the value of the AAS.

The AAS provide a valuable resource for the development of operating procedures, and or for the purposes of comparing existing operating procedures to industry agreed benchmarked standards. All groups differ in their collective skills and experience and in their degree of dependence upon the leader. They participate in outdoor activities at a range of sites with varying conditions (including weather). It therefore ***remains the responsibility of the leader to make the professional judgements and decisions concerning the conduct of the activity to ensure the safety of the group.*** The AAS are designed to assist such judgements and decision making.

The AAS are also designed to promote knowledge and awareness of the broad and activity specific impacts increasing recreation and travel opportunities place upon the natural environment. The AAS are designed to assist the protection of biodiversity values and the preservation of cultural sites balanced with the increased access demands. The 7 Principles of Leave No Trace are imbedded within the AAS.

Whilst not statutory standards, the AAS provide the basis for policy formation and decision making by jurisdictions external to the outdoor adventure activity industry including, but not restricted to, licensing, insurance and legal jurisdictions.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The activity of horse trail riding involves organized recreational horseback riding where participants are led as a group outside of enclosed areas in the natural environment for pleasure, challenge, experience and / or educational outcomes. The term 'horse trail riding' is appropriately applied to long (multi day) as well as short (an hour or two) rides that can be experienced in diverse environments including metropolitan, coastal, outback and remote regions.

This AAS is intended to be applied in circumstances where the horse trail riding experience is the primary activity undertaken by a dependent group of participants.

It is not intended that riding lessons and competitive events will be captured by this Standard.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The AAS provides a planning and preparation framework considered critical in maximising participant safety and enjoyment. All planning must be finalised and the relevant components documented before the activity is undertaken. A suggested planning and preparation framework includes

- Preliminary Information
- Route / Campsite Plan(s)
- Risk Management Plan
- Emergency Response Plan
- Minimal Environmental Impact Plan

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

Preliminary Information

The following are the minimum information requirements for conducting a horse trail ride

- Objectives / desired outcomes of the ride linked to participant expectations
- Planned start and finish times (may also include sector times)
- Leader to participant ratio and group size (refer Leader : Participant Ratios and Group Size)
- Profile of the participants / group (age, weight (if in excess of 95kg), fitness level, skill / capability, experience, language)
- Land / campsite manager requirements including
 - Access restrictions
 - Group sizes
 - Booking and permit requirements
 - Regulations with regard to fire and the conduct of activities
 - Current environmental management policies and biodiversity issues effecting the region (refer to www.naturebase.com.au)
 - Regulations in regard to fire restrictions, restrictions, bans, local conditions, horse feed restrictions
- Availability of suitable maps
- Horse and equipment requirements / availability / suitability (refer Equipment)
- Dependent participants' names and emergency contact details
- Medical information advised by dependent participants which may be relevant to the activity
 - Conditions – EG asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, fainting, allergic reactions, blood conditions which may effect bleeding/ blood clotting, recent or long-standing injuries, (eg back, knee, ankle), disability, psychological conditions, pregnancy, heart conditions
 - Medications - what is it / why is it required / how is it administered / where is it stored?
- Group members are advised, in writing and or in a verbal briefing, of
 - Potential risks associated with the activity
 - Zero tolerance requirements re drugs other than prescription drugs NOT effecting the participant's ability to participate (includes alcohol)
 - The requirement to conform to responsible and attentive behaviour
- REQUIRED - Participant signed legal liability disclaimer (informed consent) / waiver to sue / authorisation to seek / provide emergency medical treatment (retain for a time frame as dictated by the Statute of Limitations Act 2005); dependent participants under the age of 18 must have the signature of a parent / guardian
- An understanding of the natural and cultural history / diversity of the route(s) / location(s)

Route / Campsite(s) Plan

The purpose of the route / campsite(s) plan is to assess issues regarding access, environmental impact, risk and emergency communications relative to a particular site. The route / campsite(s) plan shall provide details of

- Assessment of the suitability of the route / campsite(s) for the size and ability of the group
- Access to and along the route / campsite(s) for support services as required
 - by vehicle (2WD / 4WD) including emergency services vehicles
 - including access for horse floats

- on foot or by horse including the best routes to take to minimise environmental impact
- Where is / are the best place (s) to make an emergency contact (by mobile or satellite phone if coverage available, by radio or by a runner party to a land line, by EPIRB/PLB) and where is the best place to make these calls from
- Route / Campsite(s) characteristics
 - Weather forecast (temperature, wind, rain)
 - Potential risks; how these risks can be managed
 - Specific terrain / route characteristics
 - Availability of drinking water
 - Availability of shelter
 - Surface type & suitability
- Contingency plans for forecast / foreseeable weather conditions
- Opportunities for rest breaks and availability of shaded areas / shelter
- Toileting facilities and appropriate waste disposal options
- Location of any water sources
- Location of any culturally significant areas, structures, artefacts or rock art that need to be avoided
- Location of any rare or endangered plants or animals, or sensitive areas
- Ability of route / campsite(s) to withstand visitation with minimal impact upon vegetation
 - ***Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org***

Risk Management Plan

The purpose of the Risk Management Plan is to identify the human, route / campsite(s) specific, equipment and environmental risks for the safe conduct of the activity. By identifying, analysing and evaluating these risks, appropriate strategies to reduce / manage the risk can be developed and implemented. Horse trail riding leaders must assess the chosen route / campsite(s) for potential hazards and adapt the planning of the activity as required. Information with regard to any new hazard must be made available within the group / organisation and to the relevant land manager where appropriate.

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

The Risk Management Plan must consider

- Leader(s) have the required authorisation, skills, qualifications and experience to
 - conduct the trail ride in the selected environment(s)
 - satisfy the planned objectives
 - effectively manage incidents (refer Requirements of Leaders)
 - preserve the environmental integrity of the route and campsite(s)
- Leader : Participant ratio (refer Leader : Participant Ratios and Group Size)
- Group size (refer Leader : Participant Ratios and Group Size)
- Group profile including
 - Skill / experience levels
 - Needs / requirements
 - Knowledge of environmental minimum impact strategies
 - Methods for managing group safety and communication at all times; in particular to manage varying riding skill and experience in the group
- How the ride leader will communicate with the participants including situations where an interpreter is the only method of crossing language barriers

Emergency Response Plan

The purpose of the Emergency Response Plan is to provide a set of steps for leaders to follow in the event of an emergency which may include injury or death. The plan must include information to assist the leader to minimise the escalation of the situation, the injuries incurred and how to reduce the likelihood of further incidents occurring. The Emergency Response Plan must be route / campsite(s) specific and document current details including

- Access and egress options from the route / campsite(s) including sectors

- Contingency plans for effective rescue with minimum environmental impact to the route / campsite(s)
- Group assembly points
- Emergency contact details which may include
 - Next stage of definitive medical care (hospital, doctor)
 - Police
 - Relevant Agencies (EG Department of Environment and Conservation, land owners, rescue services, Department of Planning and Infrastructure)
- Specific communication requirements / available networks
- Written procedures for foreseeable emergencies

ALL leaders must carry a copy and be fully aware of the emergency response plan (often included as a part of the “route plan”). A copy of the emergency response plan must also be kept (with other documentation) with a non-participating contact and be readily accessible by the leader via an available telecommunication method in the event of an emergency.

The leader is to communicate with the relevant external contact at a designated time(s). Upon failure to do so the external contact must action the emergency response plan which may include contacting the police. In situations where there is only one leader, the emergency response plan shall have been introduced to, and be available to members of the group so that it may be actioned in the event that the leader becomes unfit to do so.

Samples and suggested templates are available at www.outdoorswa.org

Leader: Participant Ratios and Group Size

Whilst it is acknowledged that the characteristics of the route / campsite(s), the profile of the group, the purposes of the trail ride, and the experience of the leader(s) will influence the ratios of leaders to dependent participants, the minimum ratios considered acceptable are

- **Day Trail Rides**

Minimum Operational Ratio for o/10 year old dependent participants – applicable for recognised leader to actual dependent participants 1:6

Recommended Operational Ratio of o/10 year old dependent participants – applicable for recognised leader with assistant leader to actual dependent participants 1:1:6

- **Overnight / Multi Day Trail Rides**

Minimum Operational Ratio for o/10 year old dependent participants – applicable for recognised leader with assistant leader to actual dependent participants 1:1:6

NOTES:

1. **For Day Trail Rides the minimum recommended age is 10 years old**
 - a. **Leaders may use their discretion if younger riders have experience**
2. **Group size will be determined by route and campsite(s) characteristics, land manager restrictions, environmental considerations and the application of the above ratios**

Minimal Environmental Impact Plan - Leave No Trace 7 Principles

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations for and special concerns of the area in which you'd like to ride
- Check with land managers regarding the use of nightlines
- Check whether there is a Total Fire Ban and contact your local fire authority or local land manager regarding your legal responsibility
- Check with Land managers or owners for information and special considerations. (There may be a group number requirement, restricted areas etc.)

- Seek access permits or permission if required
- Schedule your trip for off peak times
- Prepare for extreme isolation, weather hazards and emergencies by obtaining information before you go
- Carry and know how to use a map, a compass and/or GPS
- Have appropriate emergency communication equipment appropriate to the situation. (Sat. phone, EPIRB, radio, mobile phone, PLB, flares etc.)
- Carry an appropriate First Aid Kit and check that all guides have adequate skills to handle emergencies
- Give your organisation or a responsible friend your itinerary and notify them on return from isolated trips
- Take plenty of food and drinking water
- Repackage food to minimise waste and take some sturdy rubbish bags.
- Carry extra warm and wet weather clothing
- Carry a small trowel for emergency toileting
- Check that all gear is in good working order

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Riding

- Always be observant and avoid unduly disturbing unstable or erosion prone soils
- Rather than risk damage to fragile creeks, streams and riverbanks, select firm, stony crossings
- Use bridges wherever possible as this will help limit erosion and to ensure good water quality
- Always camp horses well clear of watercourses – at least 50 metres
- Avoid horses denuding vegetation especially during stays of more than one night. Check with land managers regarding the use of nightlines and ensure that portable yards are relocated each night
- Use tree protectors on nightlines to prevent trees from being damaged. Incorporate stops in line to prevent horses from being entangled around trees
- Where possible make nightlines 15 metres or more in length to reduce concentrated impacts

Walking

In popular areas:

- Stay on track
- Stay on durable surfaces, which include established tracks, rock, gravel and dry grasses.
- Do not create new tracks
- Always walk on the track even if wet and muddy, to avoid widening it (with the exception of Phytophthora areas where one should avoid mud)
- On narrow paths walk in single file as much as possible to avoid widening the track
- Do not disturb vegetation as you will encourage erosion and promote the spread of pest plant species
- Avoid revegetation areas altogether
- Find out about local vegetation to learn about those that are fragile and those that are resilient

In natural areas:

- Take care not to create new tracks
- Spread out and walk carefully to avoid trampling
- Avoid steep areas that are more prone to erosion once disturbed

Camping

In popular areas:

- Use established campsites. Take care not to create new ones
- Other wise camp on rock, sands, or gravel where impact is smallest. When these can't be found, then on areas with durable grasses or weeds
- Actively manage your group at the site to minimise trampling and damage to the surrounding vegetation. (You might choose to educate them and select their tent areas for them.)
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary
- Avoid digging, landscaping and trenching around tents
- When leaving a campsite, "naturalise it". Fluff up flattened grasses, brush away boot prints and replace any rocks that have been kicked or moved
- Avoid damaging live shrubs, woody plants or branches
- Protect water sources by camping at least 20 metres from rivers and billabongs
- Keep your group size small

In natural areas:

- Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and tracks
- Choose durable surfaces for tents and cooking areas
- Avoid places where impacts are just beginning
- Stay only one night

3. Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack and carry out all packaging rubbish and leftover food including organics in sturdy bags
- Inspect your campsite and rest areas for rubbish and spilled food before leaving
- Do not burn rubbish
- Be careful not to drop rubbish while walking on tracks
- When available, use established toilet facilities
- In other situations, carry a trowel and deposit solid human waste in cat holes dug in topsoil – usually 10-15cm deep and at least 100m from water, camp and tracks. If toilet paper use is necessary, use it sparingly and bury it deeply or preferably, carry it out. Cover and disguise the hole when finished. (In water catchment areas, human waste should be carried out.)
- Urinate on bare ground away from vegetation, abseiling routes and tracks
- Pack out all hygiene products in a suitable container
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 100 metres from streams and pools. Avoid using any soaps or detergents; if they must be used, use only small amounts of biodegradable soaps and detergents. Scatter strained dishwater
- Hand sanitisers are a good alternative for personal hygiene
- All campsites must be located at least 20 m from any waterway

Horse specific

- Carry and use canvas or collapsible buckets, and/or pump and hose, where possible to water and wash horses. Wash horses at least 50 metres away from watercourses
- Dispose of or disperse manure from overnight campsites. This can be done by kicking the piles or carrying a small collapsible rake

4. Leave What You Find

Preserve Nature/Respect Culture

- It is illegal to excavate, disturb or remove archaeological, historical and cultural artefacts from any public or wilderness lands
- Avoid Indigenous sites out of respect for the culture and to ensure their longevity. Land managers can advise you on these locations. Seek appropriate permission
- Do not touch rock art, which can be damaged by the natural oils from human skin
- Preserve the past: observe but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artefacts
- Avoid areas where rare and vulnerable plants or animals are found. Land managers can advise you of these locations
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them

- Do not build structures, furniture or dig trenches

Introduced Species

- Only allow your horse to eat weed free feed at least 48 hours prior to entering bushland areas. Weed free feed includes clean chaff, pellets and cracked, rolled or steamed grains. Never take meadow hay as it often contains seed
- Avoid spreading non-native plant and animal species that are generally impossible to eradicate once they are introduced. Do not transport flowers, weeds, wood or aquatic plants into or out of the wilderness
- Avoid spreading diseases like Giardia or Cryptosporidium by properly disposing of human waste at least 100m from water
- Know non-native species and report sightings of them to appropriate sources
- Do not travel through Quarantine Areas
- If a trip crosses areas known to contain pathogens, visit the un-infected area first
- Avoid transporting mud in boots, equipment and tyre treads which may contain Phytophthora (dieback fungal spores) by washing thoroughly before and after travelling. Use wash stations immediately where provided
- Check clothing and all gear and burn or dispose of all hitchhiker type seeds before and after travelling in different areas
- Undertake some basic weed identification
- Help landowners and managers initiate control efforts by alerting them to infested areas

5. Minimise the Impact of Fire

- Fires can cause devastating and lasting impacts to the bush
- Check area regulations for fire bans. No fire (including a fuel stove) may be lit on a day of Total Fire Ban. Total Fire Bans may be implemented regionally so be sure to check daily and be aware of fire regions that cover the route
- Leaders MUST know applicable fire regulations in advance of the trip, as fire regulations are the LAW. Contact your local fire authority or local land manager for details regarding your local responsibility
- Preferably use a lightweight fuel stove for cooking and enjoy a candle or gas lantern for light. Consider using candles standing in sturdy clear plastic bags or containers for light instead of fire (Non-drip Church candles are recommended). Don't leave wax residue
- Avoid lighting an open fire (even if permitted) if at all unnecessary or where doing so will not comply with the minimal impact approach
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Dismantle and naturalise any extra fire rings
- Do not dig fire-pits
- Judge the wind, weather, location and wood availability
- Do not make a fire if fuel is scarce. Choose small dead pieces of wood that are found on the ground. Do not break off branches from trees or bushes
- At least three (3) metres around the fire must be clear of flammable vegetation
- Keep fires to a minimum size necessary for cooking and minimise disturbance to the surrounding area
- Manage your fire. Do not leave it unattended
- Burn wood down to ash. Fires must be completely extinguished with water before leaving the campsite
- Clean out campfires rings after use
- Fires should not be used to create heat unless it is an emergency. Carry enough warm clothing so that fires for warmth are unnecessary
- Be careful of improper cigarette butt disposal. Take butts with you

Minimal Impact Fires

If fires are permitted and it is important to you, then build a small minimal impact Mound or Pan fire:

- Carry a large ground cloth or metal pan as a base for your fire

- Lay down a large ground cloth or metal pan and collect sand, gravel or soil with a low organic content with a stuff sack and a trowel (Mineral soil can often be found where large dead trees have fallen and their roots are exposed). Construct a pedestal approx. 25 cm thick by 75 cm in diameter on the ground cloth or fire pan. (The pan could also be placed on stable flat rock or raised to avoid contact with vegetation.)
- Burn all wood to ash and extinguish completely with water. Scatter **cold** ash widely and disperse the soil or return to the base of the upturned tree

6. Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them
- Understand through education the role each species plays in each environment in order to realise the importance of its position within an ecosystem
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: 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 for regulations first
- Report any injured animals to the local land managers. Do not attempt to handle the animal

7. Be Considerate of Your Hosts and Other Visitors

- Take the responsibility to ensure that your group behaves with respect for the hosts and other users. Set out reasons and expectations early in the trip
- Learn about the cultural history of the land. Recognise, acknowledge and respect local knowledge
- Respect the wishes and regulations of all Hosts. (Eg. Indigenous, pastoral, land managers and locals)
- Never visit places where you have not obtained appropriate permission. Seek permission and/or a permit
- Read signage and leave gates as found
- Always take the initiative in avoiding any potentially dangerous situations involving your horse and the general public
- Respect others' wilderness experience by examining your own behaviours to minimise any negative impact. Make reasonable efforts to minimise the impact of the group on others
- Assist other parties in difficulty provided that this action does not adversely affect the safety of your group
- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Be diplomatic with other groups and other recreational users of the area
- Be courteous. Give way to others on tracks and roads
- Do not block paths or tracks with people or equipment. Have rest breaks in discreet places to minimise impact on other groups
- If possible camp out of sight and sound of other visitors
- Try not to wear bright coloured clothes or use bright coloured tents that can cause disturbance to animals as well as other recreational users
- Let everyone enjoy nature's sounds. Keep noise to a minimum. Talk quietly especially when in large groups
- Avoid the use of bright lights, radios, electronic games, mobile phones and other intrusive urban devices

Further information is available at Leave No Trace Australia www.lnt.org.au

REQUIREMENTS OF LEADERS

The performance of the leader is a critical factor in the safe conduct of a horse trail riding activity. The leader is required to

- Accept responsibility for the planning, preparation and conduct of the activity
- Maintain current skills, qualifications and experience as required
- Accept responsibility for the environmental preservation of the sites and surrounding areas

This does not exclude the fact that dependent participants are responsible for their own actions in

relation to the potential risks that may be encountered by choosing to participate in a horse trail riding activity.

Responsibilities of Leaders

Leaders are required to accept the following responsibilities

- To ensure that ALL required competencies as outlined in “Competencies of Leaders” are available to the group for the ride, if not within his / her competency profile then within the collective of his / her co-leaders
- Designate and maintain vigil over roles to assistant ride leaders as appropriate
- To use their judgement to make decisions that will ensure the safety of all group members and maintain the integrity of the environment including matters relevant to
 - People based risks*
 - Collect all documentation / forms signed by all dependent participants / parents or guardians (or ensure data is collected by the third party responsible for the group)
 - Be aware of medical issues within the group
 - Communicate the anticipated risks relating to the activity to the group in a pre-activity briefing, and others that arise during the ride
 - Perform a pre ride demonstration of horse management techniques (including mounting, dismounting, riding, turning, stopping and starting the horse)
 - Match the experience / capabilities of the group to the selected trail ride and the pace of the ride
 - Establish a communications process for the group
 - Be aware where participants have stored / are carrying their personal medications; in some instances carry medications for participants
 - Make decisions about the medical, physical and behavioural suitability of participants to participate in the activity
 - Confirm a participant head count before, during and after the ride
 - Ensure all significant incidents and accidents are documented and reported in writing to the business / organisation sanctioning the ride within seven (7) days of the completion of the ride or as soon as is practical (preferably same day)
 - Ideally the sanctioning organisation will in turn communicate such incident(s) or accident(s) to Outdoors WA in writing
 - It is further recommended that incidents and accidents be supported by witness statements where possible
 - Site / route based risks*
 - Be familiar with the selected site(s) / route(s) and the scope of variation of conditions likely to be encountered; check weather forecasts and water obstacles pre - departure
 - Appropriately manage potential hazards that maybe encountered on the trail by ensuring the lead rider maintains a safe riding pace and communicates with other riders
 - It is generally recommended that the most qualified / experienced leader ought to ride at the rear of the group with the assistant at the front
 - Consider the availability of drinking water on route and have appropriate contingency plans
 - Be aware of and comply with the land / site manager’s guidelines including minimal impact
 - Notify nominated external contacts of safe return / completion when appropriate
 - Equipment based risks*
 - Check suitability, condition and use of all equipment prior to departure
 - Ensure that the suitability, health and fitness of the horses to be ridden is appropriate
 - Ensure correct use of equipment by all dependent participants
 - Ensure that a current First Aid Kit and communication equipment suitable for the route are in good order
 - Accept responsibility for the welfare of all horses

- Environmental based risks*
 - Apply Leave No Trace Principles
 - Comply with the land / site manager's guidelines including minimal impact principles relative to flora, fauna and rubbish removal
 - Report all environmental damage to the appropriate land manager
 - Report any perceived breaches of the Horse Trail Riding AAS to Outdoors WA (recommended – for the purposes of collating industry based data)

Competencies of Leaders

Leaders require a range of technical and group facilitation skills to effectively conduct group horse trail riding activities. Leaders are deemed to be competent to the national standard to lead / assist horse trail rides and manage centres if

- They are currently registered in the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS)* as a Horse Trail Riding Assistant, Restricted Leader, Unrestricted Leader, Restricted Manager or Unrestricted Manager (NOLRS is administered by Outdoors WA on behalf of the Outdoor Council of Australia) which requires
 - A recognised qualification or skill set
 - Sufficient current experience
 - Appropriate first aid qualifications
 - Within one hour from definitive medical care – Senior First Aid required
 - Beyond one hour from definitive medical care – an advanced / wilderness / remote First Aid qualification is required

*** registration with NOLRS must be achieved by 31 January 2011**

*** further information about NOLRS including how to register is available at www.outdoorswa.org**

*** the registration achieved must align with the specific form of horse trail riding to be undertaken ie. Horse Trail Riding Unrestricted Leader**

*** NOLRS is based on the Outdoor Recreation Training Package**

Further details are available at www.outdoorswa.org

OR IF

- They have achieved / maintained a current Trail Ride Level 1 qualification administered by the Australian Horse Riding Centres by January 2010

Further details are available at www.horseriding.org.au

OR IF

- They have maintained registration with Horse Safety Australia

FIRST AID REQUIREMENTS

Horse trail riding groups require leaders with first aid qualifications in addition to the competencies listed above. The following framework guides the level of first aid qualification required for different types of trail rides.

- Metropolitan Trail Rides (less than half a day) - Senior First Aid (or equivalent)
- Rural Trail Rides (half to full day) - Senior First Aid (or equivalent)
- Multi Day Trail Rides (rural) - Senior First Aid (or equivalent)
- Remote Area Trail Rides - Advanced, Remote or Wilderness First Aid

REQUIREMENTS / RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANISATIONS

Organisations / centres sanctioning the conduct of horse trail riding activities for dependent groups of people are required to

- Maintain current and appropriate insurance
- Display signage with a message similar to "horse riding can be a dangerous activity and can lead to injury"
- Maintain a minimum of one qualified trail ride leader at all times
- Maintain records including
 - Saddlery maintenance

- Helmet purchase dates (remove from service if involved in accident)
- Horse behavioural incidents including staff responses and re-education initiatives
- Horse hours worked and usage
- Provide and maintain a point of contact for ride leaders at all times during rides
- Report incidents and accidents to relevant jurisdictions in writing within seven(7) days
 - Insurers
 - Land Managers
 - Outdoors WA (recommended)
- Provide leaders with the necessary resources to conduct the trail ride in accordance with all aspects of this Standard
- Notify nominated external contacts of safe return / completion when appropriate
- Verify and accept responsibility for the current competence of leaders selected for horse trail riding activities
- Inform participants BEFORE the ride of clothing and ALL related requirements
- Provide suitable horses for participants
 - Horses are to be assessed for trail rides in terms of their training, behaviour, fitness and workload
- Provide participants with
 - Helmets with current approval IE ASNZS3838 helmets)
 - Heeled boots (or alternatives: e.g. toe stoppers or breakaway stirrups to prevent a foot becoming caught up and subsequent dragging)

EQUIPMENT (and belongings)

Equipment requirements vary with the objectives of the activity, the group characteristic profile and the environmental conditions likely to be encountered. When planning equipment requirements for a trail ride it is important to consider all possible eventualities and to select equipment that will maintain safety and minimise cultural and environmental impact of the activity. All equipment is to be used and maintained according to manufacturers' standards.

Participant's Equipment*

The following equipment requirements apply to all dependent participants

- Clothing appropriate to the requirements of the route and potential weather conditions with particular emphasis upon protection from the sun, wind, rain, cold, heat, insect bites and vegetation cuts
 - Full length trousers (required)
 - Sleeved shirts or equivalent (long sleeves recommended)
- Heeled, enclosed footwear (rubber soles NOT acceptable unless cased stirrups are available)
- Correctly fitted helmets currently compliant to AS / NZS 3838, EN 1384 or ASTM F1163
- Participant's personal medication including sun and insect protection
- Minimal jewellery is recommended
- Cameras are not recommended (unless carried in saddle bags)

Leaders' and Group Equipment*

The following equipment is required for all dependant group horse trail riding activities

- A copy of the emergency response plan
- Emergency communication equipment appropriate to the route (EG. mobile phone, satellite phone, details of nearest land line, radio, EPIRB / PLB if in remote area etc.)
- A First Aid Kit appropriate for the location of the activity and the size of the group
- Tools for proper waste disposal (ie trowel)
- A whistle
- Suitable / sufficient water carrying capability for the for the size of the group / length of the ride
- Saddlery
 - Secured saddle (2 points of attachment) checked pre-ride, after a rider has mounted, 10 – 20 minutes after ride commences and periodically throughout

- Neck straps or straps attached to the front of the saddle
- A horse first aid kit including
 - Hoof pick
 - Suitable bandage
 - Head collar and rope
- A relevant map and compass (overnight trail rides only)
- Equipment to clean footwear and other items that may carry soil borne pathogens such as phytophthora (excludes disease risk free areas or if such equipment is available “on track”)
- Horse feed (overnight trail rides only)
- Buckets for watering horses
- Saddle bags for participants with cameras

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Activity Provider** – an entity, person or group of persons assuming the role of providing the activity (the activity provider) for a dependent group of participants for a specific commercial or not – for – profit purpose
- **Dependent Group / Participant** – a group or individual within a group whose welfare associated with participating in the activity is in part the responsibility of the leader; who is dependent upon the leader for their safe participation in the activity which may be so deemed by law or contract
- **Outdoor Leader** - term for an individual accepting the roles of leading and managing the outdoor activity; can be a guide, leader or manager; can be paid or voluntary
- **Registered Leader** - currently registered in the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme
- **Recognised Leader** – registered outdoor leader or AHRC or Australian Horse Safety qualified as suitably experienced and skilled to lead a trail ride
- **Competency** - minimum industry agreed standard of skill and knowledge necessary for a specific activity being conducted at a specific level
- **Assistant Leader** – person deemed, by the outdoor leader, as adequately capable of accepting responsibility for selected aspects of the management of the group and or its participants in conjunction with the safe conduct of the activity
- **Phytophthora** – Phytophthora Dieback: is a microscopic soil borne water mould that attacks plants. It impacts 40 percent of our native plant species and threatens whole communities including animal habitats. It is spread in the movement of infested water, soil or plant material. As the name water mould suggests, it requires moist conditions to thrive. Its food source is the root and basal stem tissue of living plants. It is currently the biggest threat to biodiversity in Australia and it is spread extensively by human activity. More information is available online at www.dieback.net.au
- **Route** - includes all intended and emergency routes, rest stops and campsites

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Adventure Activity Standards initially developed by The Outdoor Recreation Centre in Victoria proved to be an invaluable resource in the development of the Western Australian Adventure Activity Standard for Horse Trail Riding.

In addition The Australian Horse Riding Centres (WA Branch) and Western Australian Horse Council are acknowledged as providing valuable input into the development of this Standard.

FEEDBACK, REVIEW & APPEALS

The AAS are designed to be ‘living’ standards with feedback, requests for review and/or appeal against aspects of a standard considered to be healthy part of the development process, one that will ensure the currency & relevancy of the standards. Feedback, requests for review and/or appeals will be managed by the Industry Standards Panel. Details and proformas are available at www.outdoorswa.org / industry quality framework / Industry Standards Panel.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Outdoors WA for further information or to obtain contact details of the organisations conducting abseiling activities and training.

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