

## Outdoor Sector Survey



### March-April 2016

#### Summary

In early 2016, QORF undertook a survey of its members, to improve our understanding of the sector to assist us to perform as the peak body for outdoor recreation in Queensland.

The survey was completed by 23 people, representing a mix of individual, not for profit, education providers, commercial entities and land management organisations.

QORF has a membership of over 170 people and organisations, so this response rate is only a snapshot of the total membership. Conducting this survey during the Easter school holiday and public holiday period may have affected the number of surveys completed. Despite the low response rate, the information is valuable in relation to the opinions of the people who completed the survey.

Survey Report: Donna Little, [way to be](#)

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## Responses to the Survey

The types of activities or practices people would **like to develop** include:

- enhanced capability regarding management, group participation, and events;
- activity and personal risk management;
- marketing;
- volunteer management;
- activity specific capacities; and
- lobbying.



*Maria Bowering*

**Gaps** in skills or knowledge include:

- reliance on volunteers,
- lack of certifications, and
- lack of time.

Aspects that **limit growth** of organisations were:

- (high impact) lack of skilled or suitable staff; insufficient time to work on organisational development; availability of quality training, and
- (medium impact) increased compliance requirements; insufficient time to work on organisation development; lack of access to suitable spaces; availability of quality training.

Responses regarding the most powerful **negative impacts on growth** varied, but there was some consistency of recognition of the weak work conditions and skilling opportunities for people working in the sector. For example, lack of tertiary pathways, lack of funds and time for training, lack of suitable staff candidates, poor pay scales, seasonal work.

More than 75% of respondents believed the following would help them **build organisational capacity**:

- access to training,
- more staff, and
- networking opportunities.

More than 75% of respondents believed the following would most help the **outdoor sector grow**:

- positive mainstream media stories;
- promotion of lifestyle & health benefits; and
- capturing youth participants to encourage family participation.



The **core roles for QORF** to help encourage greater participation and valuing of outdoor activities and benefits were considered to be:

- promotion of the sector,
- enhancing its communication and networking opportunities for the sector,
- advocating for the sector with diverse stakeholders and interested parties,
- hosting and sharing information for sector, and
- negotiating access for outdoor activities;

### Greatest opportunities for outdoor recreation in Queensland

*To position outdoor recreation as a way of life for all Queenslanders to take advantage of our weather, spaces, venues and corridors.*

### Conclusion

While the roles and target markets of the respondents differed, there were core commonalities in the overarching messages from their survey responses. While the outdoors is seen as offering great potential for all to enjoy, the outdoor sector remains somewhat limited due to a lack of public profile, aligned fit across a suite of government policy and agendas, an over-reliance on volunteer labour, and an incapacity to prioritise organisational development (service delivery takes precedence over organisational development).

For QORF, the survey indicates that members need and appreciate:

- networking opportunities,
- communication strategies regarding the benefits of engaging in outdoor pursuits for a range of different outcomes (social, recreational, educational, therapeutic); and
- ongoing need for advocacy and coordinating the development and dissemination of information that builds the sector's capacity and profile.



*Christian Botella*