

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a natural climbing area. It features large, grey, textured boulders and trees with thin, light-brown trunks and green foliage. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating dappled shadows on the rocks and ground.

Outdoors
Victoria



**SPORT CLIMBING
VICTORIA**

Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations document is to present findings from a consultation process that was initiated after a need was identified by Victorian climbing organisation representatives that there is a need to improve the governance and representation of outdoor recreational climbers. This document contains analysis of the benefits and challenges of recommendation implementation options and ultimately recommends an option that will be the most effective and sustainably structured model to best meet the needs of the broader climbing community in Victoria.

Rock climbing, which includes traditional climbing, sport climbing and bouldering, is a growing recreational activity in Victoria, and there are over a dozen climbing organisations that serve climbing communities across the state. Participation data of climbing in Victoria is severely limited however, extrapolation from Ausplay surveys suggests there are an estimated 52,620 climbers in Victoria with an annual growth rate of 8% per year.¹ Ausplay survey data only goes back to 2016 and so the current extreme growth rate is likely new and normal baseline growth rates are unknown. The current growth rate reflects new indoor climbing facility establishment suggesting unmet demand and continuing growth for recreational opportunities in climbing. This participation data does not provide insight into specific climber behaviour such as frequency and location of climbing activity and demonstrates a need for improved monitoring and data collection of climbing activity in Victoria.

The growth in the interest in climbing is also reflective of an overall trend toward participation in outdoor recreational activities² (or a nature-based outdoor-oriented lifestyle) and this is of economic importance. A 2016 report on Victoria's nature-based outdoor economy found that these outdoor activities make a \$6.2 billion p.a. contribution to Victoria's economy, and support around 71,000 direct and indirect full-time equivalent jobs.³

Despite the significant and growing participation in recreational activities, and specifically climbing, there is no governance structure, such as a peak body, that represents the interests of all outdoor recreational climbers, climbing clubs and related organisations, and commercial climbing businesses who facilitate climbing activities for thousands of school students, as well as domestic and international tourists. Without a peak body that encompasses the full scope of the climbing industry, individual climbing related organisations with focused participant groups

¹ Based on Ausplay data retrieved from:

<https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/smi/ausplay/results/sport>

² CSIRO (2013) *The future of Australian Sport*. Australian Sports Commission.

https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/564073/The_Future_of_Australian_Sport_-_Full_Report.pdf

³ Marsdon Jacob Associates (2016) *Victoria's nature based outdoor economy Key estimates and recommendations*. Outdoors Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria. <https://outdoorsvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Outdoor-Economics.pdf>

are constrained in their ability to understand and anticipate the needs and desires of the wider climbing community as well as address current issues and challenges with the required resources and professionalism to facilitate strong positive relationship with external stakeholders to secure the future of Victorian climbing.

Sport Climbing Victoria and Outdoors Victoria have led efforts to establish a recognised governance structure with outdoor recreational climbing activities within its scope. The efforts have included the formation of a Founding Council, with invited representatives from all established climbing community organisations. With funding support in the form of a grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria, Outdoors Victoria and Sports Climbing Victoria employed a project manager to undertake a community consultation project that explores the benefits of having a peak body for rock-climbing in Victoria and how such a body would most effectively and sustainably be structured to best meet the needs of the broader climbing community. This document has been produced as a direct result of this project.

The consultation process revealed that there is a strong desire in Victoria for a representative governance structure that assumes the functions and responsibilities of a peak body with outdoor recreational climbing within its scope, but indoor competitive climbing outside of scope. Further, that the function of this peak body should support existing organisations and work to address common issues, including working alongside Traditional Owners to protect areas of cultural significance and negotiate appropriate access, safeguarding the environment and encouraging diversity. The peak body should also be sustainably funded to have sufficient resources to address member concerns and needs.

Based on the consultation findings, the following high-level recommendations were formed.

1. Create a governance structure for outdoor recreational climbing.
2. Function and activities of the governance structure should focus on supporting the common interests and needs of existing climbing clubs and organisations.
3. Pursue financial sustainability through a mixture of government and grant funding, membership fees, commercial activities, and fundraising to accomplish desired functions.

Guided by how these recommendations could be best implemented, the following four options for a governance structure for recreational climbing were explored.

Option 1: Create a de facto climbing peak body within Outdoors Victoria.

Option 2: Restructure Sport Climbing Victoria (the existing climbing State Sporting Association) to include outdoor recreational climbing within its scope.

Option 3: Create a new organisation as the Victorian climbing peak body.

Option 4: Maintain the current status quo (do not set up anything new)

Seven criteria were analysed to evaluate the 4 options relative to one another:

Evaluation Criteria		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
1.	Clear purpose and scope	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆
2.	Effective governance	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆
3.	Financial sustainability	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆
4.	Time to become operational	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆	☆☆☆☆☆
5.	Existing relationships with key stakeholders	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆☆
6.	Track record in executing peak body activities	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆
7.	Cost effectiveness	☆☆☆	☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆

Based on these criteria, option 1, creating a de facto climbing peak body within Outdoors Victoria, is the recommended option. Option 1 enables:

- The greatest focus on supporting the common interests and needs of existing clubs and organisations as the most resources could be dedicated to this. The other options resulting in a peak body would require significant resources to be committed to running an organisation and everything that entails. This is the case whether a new peak body was volunteer run or had paid staff as the administrative needs of operating an organisation would still demand the same resources.
- Explicit representation of the climbing community with existing climbing clubs and organisations being members of Outdoors Victoria and electing a Climbing Advisory Group to directly guide the work of the de facto peak body.
- A specific focus on outdoor recreational climbing with the ability to easily increase scope to include other mountain activities (if desired)
- The ability to maintain a clear delineation with coordinating climbing competitions. Coordinating climbing competitions would remain the purpose of Sport Climbing Victoria, who would have a strong formal relationship with the de facto peak body.

- The opportunity to build on and leverage Outdoors Victoria's reputation and experience in advocating strongly for the outdoor sector within federal, state and local government levels to influence legislation, policy and curriculum change.
- The most immediate and significant opportunity to develop positive stakeholder relationships through building on Outdoors Victoria's existing relationships with relevant stakeholders, including Parks Victoria, DELWP, DET, DJPR, and SRV. Comparatively a new organisation would need to establish all these relationships and it would take time to build this rapport and trust.
- The most cost-effective option for the Victorian climbing community to establish a peak body as there is the least amount of overhead costs.
- The most sustainable option as the de facto peak body would have the direct support of Outdoors Victoria.

This review has concluded that this option would best suit the needs of the climbing community. The establishment of a Climbing Victoria Advisory Group within Outdoors Victoria does not preclude the possibility of transitioning to another option in the future. Outdoors Victoria has an existing history of supporting and nurturing initiatives such as those proposed in option 1, with the intent of seeing those initiatives prosper to a point that they can become independent from Outdoors Victoria. The Outdoors Victoria board has provided in-principal support for the concept of the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group transitioning to an independent peak body.



Introduction

In May of 2019, representatives from community climbing organisations gathered to discuss improving governance processes and becoming a more organised activity. Following the initiation of this discussion, this document's purpose is to:

- Explore the current context related to climbing activity governance.
- Summarise key findings from consultations to date and additional research.
- Provide recommendations; and
- Detail implementation options and recommend a preferred option.

This review is intended to initiate wider climbing community engagement and seek input and feedback related to the recommendations and implementation options. Thank you to all those that have engaged with the consultation process to provide input and contribute to this governance review.

Climbing Governance in Victoria

For many climbers, climbing is a pastime free from rules and regulations where the singular focus is applied to moving over rock. Victoria's high-quality rock and stunning setting has nurtured a vibrant climbing community that has collectively shared endless adventures and developed strong camaraderie. Since the first climbing organisations in Victoria were created in the 1940s, climbing has changed significantly. Now climbing is exploding in popularity, driven largely by a tripling of indoor climbing facilities since 2015, as well as general recreational trends that have Australians increasingly interested in non-traditional sport and unstructured physical activity. Many people who start their climbing journey at indoor facilities, then become outdoor recreational climbers as their climbing networks, skills and interest develops. This growth pattern which reflects climbing facility establishment suggests continued growing and unmet demand for participation in climbing into the future.

This surge in participation requires re-thinking how the climbing community is organised to strike a balance between a desire for the freedom of the hills and managing our collective impact on the places we love.

Despite the growth of climbing, we know very little about the climbing community in Victoria. Extrapolation from Ausplay surveys suggests there are an estimated 52,620⁴ climbers in Victoria with an annual growth rate of 8% per year. Ausplay survey data only goes back to 2016 and so the current extreme growth rate is likely new and normal baseline growth rates are unknown. There is also insufficient information to understand the typical climbing behaviours of these

⁴ Based on Ausplay data retrieved from:
<https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/smi/ausplay/results/sport>

52,620 climbers such as frequency and where they are regularly climbing. Without better data about climbers in Victoria, anticipating the needs of the community and emerging issues is very difficult. A peak body for recreational climbers in Victoria would be in a good position to develop more accurate data collection methods to better inform decisions that affect the climbing community.

Currently, in Victoria there is a collection of over a dozen climbing organisations that serve climbing communities around the state. These organisations are formed for a diverse range of reasons, for example: geographic location, university clubs or gender diversity. Services and activities include trip organisation, educational workshops, social events, and community service such as crag clean-ups and trail maintenance. There are no formal relationships between climbing community organisations. Historically, the Victorian Climbing Club (VCC) and Cliffcare (a trust of the VCC) have fulfilled some governance roles and managed relationships with Parks Victoria, Traditional Owners, private landowners and climbing businesses operating as licensed tour operators. Before recent surges of participation rates, this approach successfully managed these relationships despite a lack of resources and financial support from the broader climbing community. This work was therefore driven, and dependent on, the passion and dedication of those involved in these organisations. However, the significant and ongoing increase in participation rates highlights that this approach requires reform to provide a clear governance process and accountability to the wider climbing community.

Sport Climbing Victoria (SCV) is a State Sporting Association recognised as a peak body for sport climbing in Victoria. The current scope of SCV is limited to climbing on artificial structures and this activity is now recognised as an Olympic sport. Although there is a crossover between people who climb indoors and outdoors, competitive climbing is still a distinctive sport and addressing issues, such as access, is out of scope for SCV. Current strategic priorities of SCV include improving operational capacity and sustainability, expanding access to world-class climbing facilities, developing stronger athlete pathways and taking a leadership role in improving governance across the climbing community. These priorities reflect the current challenges and opportunities to achieve SCV's vision and mission.

Outdoors Victoria was founded in 2012 to establish the outdoor sector as a connected, vibrant, and valued profession that delivers improved health, well-being and education outcomes for all Victorians, and strong environmental and economic benefits across the State. Outdoors Victoria is a recognised State Recreation Organisation with a wide breadth of scope to support the outdoor active recreation sector particularly in shared areas of interest such as outdoor education and contributing to standards and good practice guidelines development. Key benefits of being a recognised State Sporting Association or State Recreation Organisation include meeting eligibility criteria for support and grants from Sport & Recreation Victoria,

having a voice in consultations related to the development of the active recreation industry in Victoria, and establishing clear communication channels with government stakeholders.

Since 2019, SCV and Outdoors Victoria have led efforts to establish a recognised peak body with outdoor recreational climbing activities within scope. The efforts have included the formation of a Founding Council with invited representatives from all established climbing community organisations and holding initial discussions about governance structure and process. In early 2020, a Climbing Development Officer was employed to objectively undertake further consultation, document key findings, develop high level recommendations and potential implementation options, as discussed in this report.



PRIMARY CONSULTATIONS

The aim of our consultation was to assess whether there was a need for some form of climbing peak body for Victoria, and if the answer to this was yes, to then explore:

- the purpose of a peak body,
- what key functions it should serve,
- whether it should include competitive climbing or if that should sit separately,
- how it could be most effectively structured,
- and how it could be funded.

To explore these questions, we have collected both quantitative and qualitative data through the form of a survey and in-depth phone conversations.

Representatives ⁵from the following stakeholder groups have been involved in engagement:

- Victorian Climbing Club
- Western Victorian Climbing Club
- Melbourne University Mountaineering Club
- Climbing QT's
- Melbourne University Outdoors Club
- LaTrobe University Mountaineering Club
- RMIT outdoors club
- Alpenverein Melbourne
- Mountain Safety Collective
- Australian Climbing Association Victoria
- Gariwerd Wimmera Reconciliation Network
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association
- Crag Stewards Victoria
- Vertical Life (Climbing Community Media)
- Adventure Guides Australia (LTO)
- Melbourne Climbing School (LTO)
- Absolute Outdoors (LTO)
- Hangin' Out (LTO)
- Sport and Recreation Victoria (Vic Gov)
- Parks Victoria (Land Manager)
- Paddle Victoria (Peak Body)
- Four-Wheel Drive Victoria (Peak Body)

⁵ It is expected that representatives responded and participated in the consultation process on behalf of their perspective group.

- Sport Climbing Victoria (State Sporting Association)
- Outdoors Victoria (Peak Body)

The following summary of consultations are presented within themes that emerged throughout the consultation process.

1. Agreed need for a climbing governance structure in Victoria.

100% of stakeholders felt there is a need for some form of climbing peak within Victoria.

This first theme indicates the strongest level of support from the climbing community in favour of the creation of a peak body for climbing in Victoria and therefore rules out the possibility of maintaining the current status quo.

Approximately 16% of stakeholders also felt that a peak body, or equivalent governance structure, should not be limited specifically to rock climbing and should more broadly include mountain activities.⁶

"Our constituents feel the need for advocacy for all mountain sports."

~ mountain sports community organisation stakeholder

"Needs to represent all crag / rock and rope stakeholders."

~ Licensed Tour Operator

"I think that 'climbing' only is narrow in that there's cavers, mountaineers etc. that all enjoy recreation across the state."

~ mountain sports community organisation stakeholder

2. Primary purpose to represent climbers and manage stakeholder relationships.

Stakeholders generally considered that the primary purpose of some form of any governance structure for climbing would be to represent climbers and climbing as a sport/recreational activity to key stakeholders and manage these relationships.⁷

"Represent climbers as a whole with a clear voice, a source of information for the community and to lobby for climbers around issues that matter."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

⁶ This percentage is based on the number of stakeholders who commented on this in one of the open-ended questions in the survey. There was not a question specifically about this in the survey.

⁷ This statement is based on stakeholders' responses to the survey question 'How would you describe the purpose of a Climbing Peak Body?'

"Oversee relations between climbing organisations and relevant stakeholders such as land managers and funding agencies."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"To be the initial point of contact for external bodies / relationships regarding all things recreational climbing."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"To represent all climbers, boulderers and lovers of cliffs."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

3. Desired functions of a climbing governance structure

In the survey, stakeholders were asked what they would consider to be the primary functions of a Climbing Peak Body. This was asked in two parts. Firstly, as a closed question where stakeholders were asked to tick all that apply from the following options:

- Negotiating appropriate access to climbing areas
- Working alongside Traditional Owners
- Training and Accreditation (such as to be a climbing coach or route setter)
- Coordinating state climbing competitions
- Providing support to encourage participation of diverse communities.
- Conservation and safeguarding the environment.
- Providing support to clubs

In a follow up question, stakeholders were then asked what other areas/functions they thought a Victorian Climbing Peak Body should include. This was asked as an open question. The combination of these questions provided for both quantitative and qualitative data and stakeholder responses are summarised below.

3.1 Provide support to clubs and provide access to insurance.

In considering what would be the main functions of a peak body, all climbing stakeholders (representatives from existing climbing clubs and organisations) agreed that providing support to clubs would be a primary function. In considering how a peak body could work effectively with clubs, stakeholders felt that as well as being representative of their needs, other value adds such as offering insurance would be especially beneficial.

"For a club like Climbing QT's that is relatively new and has a small budget the one thing we struggle with the most is affording insurance. If a peak body could include small clubs in their PLI then it would really open up the doors for us to provide events and programs for a lot more people."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"Personal Insurance for recreational climbers and travelers."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

3.2 Safeguard the environment and encourage diversity.

94% of all stakeholders agreed that conservation and safeguarding the environment and providing support to encourage participation of diverse communities would also be primary functions.

"Working with experts in the field to advocate for inclusion of underrepresented groups in climbing for LGBTQ+, CALD, Low-SES, people seeking asylum, differently abled folk and indigenous."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"Promote diversity in the climbing community."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

3.3 Work alongside Traditional Owners to protect areas of cultural significance and negotiate appropriate access.

88% of stakeholders considered working alongside Traditional Owners would be a primary function, while 82% considered negotiating access to climbing areas would be a primary function.

3.4 Offer training and accreditation

Offering training and accreditation for climbing industry professionals was considered to be a primary function by a lesser extent of stakeholders (64%).

"Point of contact for external public relations. Create guidelines for approved common practice. Liaise regularly with other climbing bodies to ensure a consistent message and cohesion within the climbing community."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"Overseeing the sustainability of the recreation in all facets. From approving appropriate accreditation to approving appropriate standards in the outdoors, by providing the space for organisations and industry representatives to come together and grow together. Bring all the necessary organisations, land managers and owner's together to mitigate any concerns and working with government to provide a respectful regard to the recreation as a whole."

~ Licensed Tour Operator

"Training standards for guides."

~ mountain sports community organisation stakeholder

These outlined potential functions for a Victorian outdoor climbing peak body are substantial and diverse. The functions will require prioritisation as well as significant resources to achieve. This highlights the need to establish an organisation with a sustainable financial model to plan

and act strategically, resource actions appropriately and more broadly elevate the professionalism of the climbing community.

4. Preference for delineation between outdoor recreational climbing and competitive climbing

47% of all stakeholders considered that coordinating climbing competitions should be a function of a new climbing peak body. In the survey stakeholders were asked what they considered would be both the pros and cons of including coordinating state climbing competitions as a function of a peak body, as opposed to this operating separately through SCV.

Stakeholders who felt that coordinating climbing competitions should be a function, expressed that this could increase the profile of climbing and provide clarity to stakeholders. One stakeholder also commented that this could increase contact between indoor and outdoor climbing activities and through this build climbers' awareness of outdoor impact. Two stakeholders felt that this could simplify administration and allow for sharing of resources.

53% of stakeholders thought that coordinating climbing competitions should not be a function of a peak body, with multiple stakeholders commenting how SCV already manages this well.

"I think SCV does this well already, peak body probably has a lot of other areas to focus on so I don't see this as a priority - but perhaps down the track peak body could support SCV with their state events with funding, volunteers, training and accreditation and advocating for inclusion eg. updating the SCA trans and gender diverse guidelines."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"Running competitions is vastly, vastly different from coordinating anything to do with outdoor climbing. It really seems like a different sport overall. Resources that could be spent on managing more important things than competitions would be misspent if they were diverted to running competitions at all. Leave SCA and SCV to run the competitions, the wider climbing space has no capacity for that to be taking energy away."

~ Climbing school stakeholder

"I think this sort of work should be left to groups like SCV and the peak body should focus on a strategic plan, tracking it and ensuring clubs and orgs are supported and aligned to the values of the peak body."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"Others already do this. Competitions are a relatively niche activity in the spectrum of climbing and could take up a lot of resources."

~ Reconciliation organisation stakeholder

Other stakeholders raised concerns that combining competitive climbing with the governance for recreational activities could create conflict over resource allocation, less opportunities for funding, and that such a broad scope may make it difficult to find people with all the necessary skill sets to cover such ranging roles.

5. Ensuring membership representation is a priority in structuring a governance body

In regard to how a peak body would be structured, stakeholders felt that the most important thing was that members (climbing clubs and organisations) are adequately represented.

"You'd want a large membership base from all varieties of climbing with knowledgeable representatives to represent those members interests."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"Made up of 1 rep from each of Victoria's bodies/orgs (invited not mandatory) plus 3-6? standalone board members not necessarily associated with any other org. This body would be the peak body for all things recreational climbing and would handle all things access, safety, environment, training, etc, although in some cases indirectly by passing to the appropriate org/body/club if in their scope of work."

~ Victorian Climbing organisation/club stakeholder

"The head of the peak body should not be a representative of any of the organisations that it represents. All of the organisation that it represents should have an equal say as committee members."

~ Licensed Tour Operator

It was also suggested that there should be working party's/groups to stay connected with the local community.

6. Importance of learning from comparable peak bodies

One stakeholder suggested that it would be helpful to look at the structure of Paddle Victoria and Four-Wheel Drive Victoria. Both Paddle Victoria and Four-Wheel Drive Victoria are funded through a combination of membership fees and government funding.

Paddle Victoria

Paddle Victoria is governed by a board of directors, with five board members elected by affiliated members (paddle clubs) and between 4-5 board members appointed by the board themselves to ensure all necessary skill sets are covered and to increase diversity. Any individual who is a member of a paddle club is also expected to be a member of Paddle Victoria and this provides the individual with access to insurance. Providing insurance is recognised as a key value proposition for people to become members. Paddle Victoria then has seven paid staff members, who perform the roles of: Executive Officer, Project Manager, Accounts and Finance Officer, Membership and Club Administration Coordinator, Communications Officer, Education Manager, and Equipment Maintenance. The Executive Officer is effectively employed by the Board Chair.

Four Wheel Drive Victoria

Four Wheel Drive Victoria is also governed by a board of management and clubs are affiliated members, with individuals in these clubs required to be members of Four-Wheel Drive Victoria. Similar to Paddle Victoria, the value proposition to individuals and families is that they are then able to access four different types of insurance. The Four-Wheel Drive Victoria board is composed of only club members who each have a two-year term. The board members are elected by the affiliated members (clubs) with voting allocation worked out based on the club size (1 vote per 100 members). Four Wheel Drive Victoria has five paid staff who perform the following roles: Chief Executive Officer, Officer Administrator, Accounts and Project Officer, Training Manager, and Editor.

Learning from overseas examples

The issues of climbing activity governance are not unique to the climbing community in Victoria. There are countless examples of mature peak climbing organisations that work effectively on behalf of the climbing community. The major learning from overseas examples as it relates to governance of climbing in Victoria is in relation to whether climbers are best served with a single peak body with both outdoor recreational climbing and indoor competition climbing within scope.

The Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme (UIAA) is an international federation of national peak climbing bodies and was founded in 1932. There are currently 86 member associations with a number of interesting examples of how various other organisations have managed the governance of climbing in their respective countries. As climbing competitions emerged in the 1980s and matured in the 1990s, the UIAA governed competitions through a subcommittee. As competition climbing grew in popularity, in 2007 the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) was formed to take on international competition governance. This process highlights the considerable difference in activity between organising climbing competitions and managing the impact of climbing outdoors and negotiating access.

Similar experiences have recently occurred in a number of national federations. The British Mountaineering Council recently undertook a governance review with one of the recommendations being that competition climbing be governed separately. Austria recently went through this process as well, resulting in two organisations with Austria Climbing governing competition climbing and the Alpine Club of Austria continuing to support outdoor recreational climbing.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the consultations and learnings from overseas examples, it is suggested that the following recommendations guide and underpin any option of governance structure for recreational climbing in Victoria.

1. Create a Victorian governance structure for outdoor recreational climbing.

- 1.1 The governance structure should have a clear and defined purpose.
- 1.2 The governance structure should fairly and accurately represent the interests and needs of Victorian outdoor recreational climbers and climbing clubs and organisations.
- 1.3 The governance structure should have a defined scope and specify which mountain activities are within or outside its scope.

2. Function and activities of the governance structure should focus on supporting the common interests and needs of existing climbing clubs and organisations.

- 2.1 Existing climbing clubs and organisations should have a clear avenue to express their interests and needs to the governance structure.
- 2.2 The governance structure should support forums, whether that is working groups or subcommittees, to operationalise the functions and activities.
- 2.3 The working groups or subcommittees should be accountable to the governance structure.

3. Pursue financial sustainability through a mixture of government and grant funding, membership fees, commercial activities and fundraising in order to accomplish desired functions.

- 3.1 The governance structure should recognise the need for sustainable funding sources to ensure that the functions of the peak body are pursued with reliability and professionalism.
- 3.2 The governance structure's main source of income should be raised from a mix of affiliation fees from climbing club/organisation memberships and individual supporter memberships.

The cost-modelling exercise within the 'Implementation Options' section of this document is indicative only and the actual costs would depend on decisions made about the best way to

structure the peak body. The cost-modelling has been carried out with the following assumptions:

- The key driver of expenditure will stem from resourcing staff time in order to carry out peak body functions with reliability and professionalism.
- Other expenditures will be driven by the strategic priorities of the peak body and so for the purposes of cost-modelling are hypothetical. Access focused activities are embedded in all activity subtotals in the current cost-model.
- Only income sources from membership fees and fundraising are estimated. Grants available will depend on the implementation option chosen and will need to be pursued with the objective of covering the difference between estimated expenditure and income. This would have no impact on the ability of the peak body to make independent decisions.

Strategic Priorities

- Advocating for climbing access to landscapes we love and maintaining that access underpins all activities and all activities will consider access objectives and implications.
- Climbing is a recreational activity and sport for everyone. Our organisation will aim to build and support an inclusive and diverse climbing community and include diverse perspectives and viewpoints in decision making. This means meaningfully engagement and consultation with the entire Victorian climbing community, both members and non-members in decision making.
- Climbing has environmental impact that must be mitigated. We are committed to building an organisation which strives to protect and conserve the beauty of our environment and by facilitating climbers spending time in nature, expanding our knowledge about nature to cultivate connection to the land
- We aim to build cultural awareness and implement reconciliation activities for our organisation, members and the wider climbing community. We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners across Victoria, their Elders past, present and emerging and their continuous connections to the lands where rock climbing activities occur.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

The following implementation options are based on a consideration on how the above recommendations can be most effectively implemented and are ideas that were suggested by stakeholders during the primary consultation process.

Evaluation Criteria

To compare and evaluate the implementation options, seven evaluation criteria were chosen based on the recommendations in addition to: time to become operational, relative cost-effectiveness, existing relationships with key stakeholders and track record executing peak body activities. The table below outlines a brief description of each criteria.

Evaluation Criteria		Description
1	Ability to clearly define purpose and scope	The implementation option should enable a clear purpose for the peak body as defined by constituent organisations and/or members.
2	Ability to have a clear avenue for climbing organisations to express their interests and needs to the governance structure and direct activity.	This evaluation criteria refers to the governance structure enabling membership to effectively direct activity of the peak body and elect and appoint leadership that directs that activity.
3	Financial sustainability, such as ability to access grants	The implementation option should enable a path towards financial sustainability.
4	Immediacy in which the governance structure can become operational	This evaluation criteria refers to the ability of the implementation option to be executed in a relatively short amount of time.
5	Existing relationships with key stakeholders, including Parks Victoria, DELWP, DET and DJPR	This evaluation criteria reflects whether or not the implementation option leverages existing organisational relationships in order to carry out peak body activities relative to the other implementation options.
6	Track record in executing peak body activities, such as effective advocacy	This evaluation criteria reflects whether the implementation option leverages historical experience of carrying out peak body activities relative to other implementation options.
7	Cost effectiveness, such as reduced overheads	This evaluation criteria will reflect the outcome of the cost modelling exercise to evaluate relative cost effectiveness.

1. Create a de facto climbing peak body within Outdoors Victoria.

Overview

Outdoors Victoria is the recognised peak umbrella body for all Outdoor activities in Victoria. Outdoors Victoria's purpose is to build a valued and sustainable outdoor sector for the benefit of the community and natural environment by enhancing, connecting, and advocating on behalf of professionals and businesses in the fields of outdoor education, outdoor recreation State activity peaks, Bush Adventure Therapists and nature-based tourism businesses and organisations. Outdoors Victoria is recognised as a State Recreation Organisation (SRO) by Sport and Recreation Victoria and nature based outdoor activities are estimated to contribute \$6.2 billion p.a. to Victoria's economy.⁸

In this proposed structure, a de facto peak recreational climbing body, 'Climbing Victoria', would sit within the existing structure of Outdoors Victoria. Outdoors Victoria has a history of housing initiatives in this manner.

One example is the Nature Stewards initiative connecting local people with their local environments. Outdoors Victoria was selected as the host of that program across Victoria by the programs advisory group. This occurred because it was identified that Outdoors Victoria was ideally placed due to its superior governance, multi-tiered government connections and its strong established experience and advocacy in outdoor learning. In years to come Outdoors Victoria's ultimate goal is for this to become a standalone program that is rolled out nationally.

Outdoors Victoria also has a strong history of advocacy for the groups it represents. Below are some examples of instances where Outdoors Victoria has been able to leverage its pre-existing reputation and contacts to implement change in government policy and legislation.

- In 2017, the Victorian Minister for Ports passed a Bill through the Lower House of Parliament that enabled Marine Safety Victoria to fine leaders of a group of water vessels for not appropriately communicating their purpose of operations. This for example could have resulted in a school teacher being fined thousands of dollars or jail time for not appropriately communicating through signage, the activity of a school group paddling along the banks of Lake Eildon.

Outdoors Victoria, along with several other peak bodies and not for profit organisations were able to highlight these unintended consequences of the Bill, had it paused from heading to the Upper House and amended to provide the fairness needed of any new legislation.

⁸ <https://outdoorsvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Outdoor-Economics.pdf>

- From March to June 2020, Outdoors Victoria in partnership with other peak bodies, advocated strongly to the Victorian government the safe practice of having school children go on camps and related outdoor activities when returning to onsite learning. In mid-June, Premier Andrews announced that when school returned in term 3, camps would also return. Sadly, Victoria then experienced a second wave of Stage 3 and 4 lockdown restrictions needing to be imposed.

Outdoors Victoria worked hard with the Education department, Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions and related Minister's offices. As a result of the work lead by Outdoors Victoria, Deputy Premier Merlino announced with Premier Andrews on 21 September, that camps would return when school returned to onsite learning in term four. Outdoors Victoria's advocacy work has enabled 7,200 outdoor professionals to return to work in term 4 of 2020.

Proposed Structure

Incorporating the representation of recreational climbing into Outdoors Victoria, would involve creating a new position of 'Climbing Victoria Coordinator' and forming a Climbing Victoria Advisory Group (a formally recognised Advisory Group of Outdoors Victoria).⁹ The Climbing Victoria Advisory Group would then act as the de facto peak body for recreational climbing within Victoria, and the Climbing Victoria Coordinator as the de facto CEO - with their direct leader the CEO of Outdoors Victoria and being accountable to the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group and ultimately the Outdoors Victoria Board.

Working Groups would also be established within the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group to focus on specific issues, such as Diversity and Inclusion. Working groups would aim to include representatives from existing clubs, organisations and individuals that would bring with them a wealth of experience and history of working within their specific focus area. This would allow the de facto peak body to complement and support existing initiatives.

⁹ The 'Climbing Victoria Coordinator' position would be a new position for the distinct purpose to act as a de facto CEO as outlined in this document. This is different from the 'Project Manager' position currently within Outdoors Victoria which has led the consultative process and the drafting of this document.

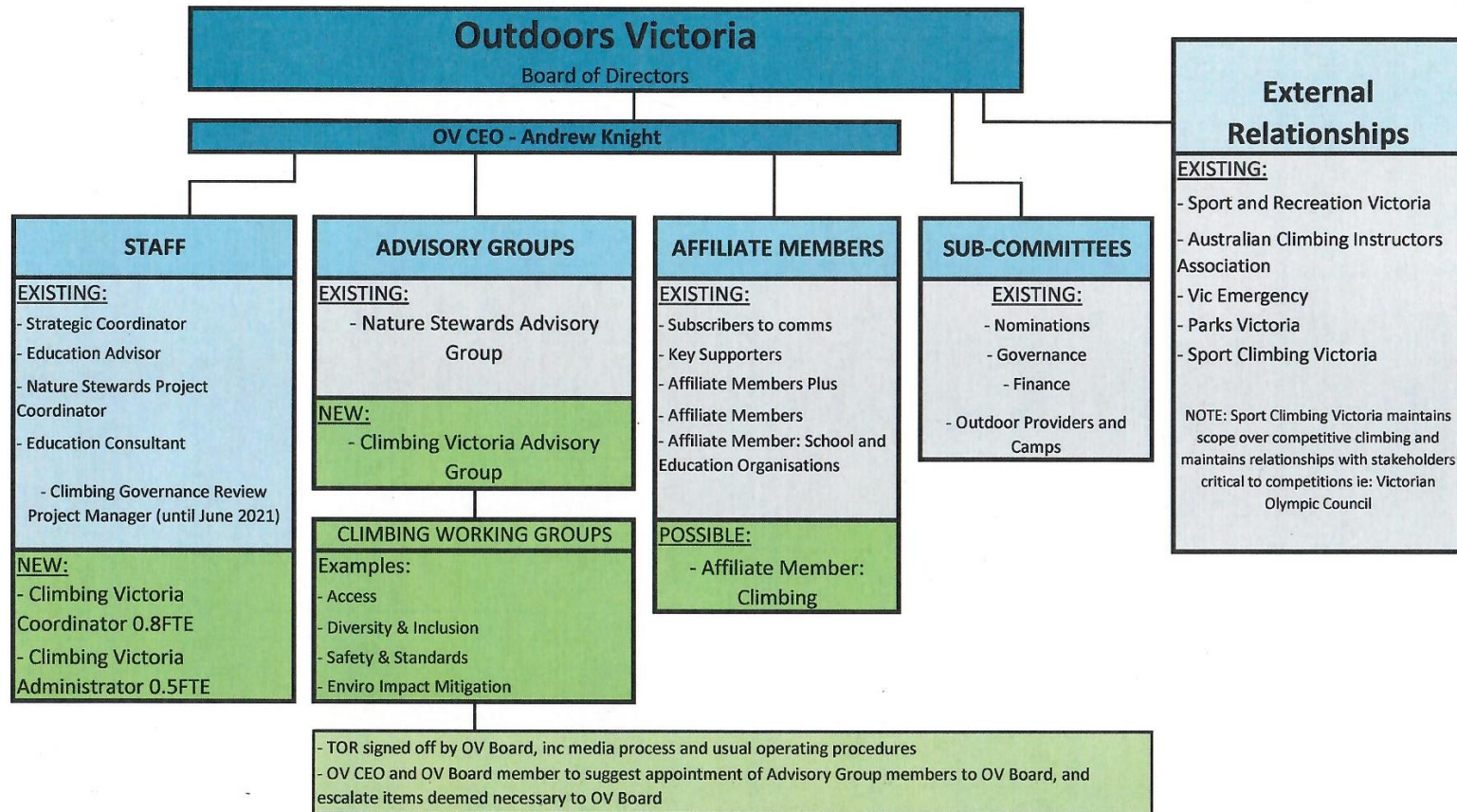
DRAFT Position Description – Climbing Victoria Coordinator
Scope of the Position
<p>The Climbing Victoria Coordinator has responsibility for the overall development and management of the operation of Climbing Victoria and for supporting and promoting strategic development and growth. The position works closely with, and is accountable to, the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group and is responsible for building and maintaining strong partnerships with key stakeholders and Affiliate Climbing Members.</p>
Primary Responsibilities
<p>The Climbing Victoria Coordinator is the principal officer, leading and managing the operations of Climbing Victoria to represent the interests and serve the needs of Affiliate Climbing Members and fulfill the strategic intentions of Climbing Victoria.</p> <p>Specifically, the position is required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective partnerships are established through genuine consultation and collaboration. • Advocate on behalf of Affiliate Climbing Members on agreed issues and with specified stakeholders. • Provide leadership and support to Working Groups as required • Initiate, develop and implement sound business practices, supported by sustainable financial practices for the long-term benefit of the climbing community. • Build the membership base of Climbing Victoria through marketing, consultation and delivery of service. <p>Manage Climbing Victoria, including business and financial planning and reporting</p>
Required Skills and Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated leadership experience to build trust and work collaboratively with the climbing community. • Demonstrated ability to build productive and professional relationships with diverse groups, including government, sector organisations and peak bodies, media, and volunteers. • Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to the climbing sector. • Demonstrated record in working effectively with a Board of Management or Advisory Group • Demonstrated senior management experience within a complex operating environment. • Experience in developing strategic, financial, and business plans including demonstrated ability to attract, manage and acquit government and non-government funds

How the proposed structure would work in practice.

- Victorian climbing clubs and organisations could register to be climbing specific Affiliated Members of the new de-facto peak body. New types of Outdoors Victoria membership could be specifically created for this purpose. There would be a cost to this membership.
- Individuals may also be able to register as members. The fees associated with membership would be ultimately dictated by the level of benefits and entitlements that membership provided to the individual, club or organisation.
- The Climbing Advisory Group members would be elected by the affiliated clubs/organisations who have voting rights. Voting would take place at a special meeting following Outdoors Victoria's AGM each year in late November. Advisory Group Member term would be for two years, with staggered terms to ensure there is always some continuity across the committee. Five to six of the elected Advisory Group members would be representatives from the climbing affiliated members while three to four would be interested persons appointed by the advisory group itself with the aim of recruiting people with specific skills and/or to increase diversity. The elected advisory group roles would be stipulated roles to ensure fair representation of all stakeholders. For example, one position may be stipulated as a representative of Climbing Clubs or of Licensed Tour Operators.
- The Climbing Coordinator would be a paid position and also sit on the Climbing Advisory Group. Representatives from the Climbing Advisory Group, alongside the CEO of Outdoors Victoria, would be part of the recruitment process for the Climbing Coordinator. Outdoors Victoria's CEO would be the personnel leader for the Climbing Coordinator, and the CEO and Climbing Coordinator would be advised at a high level by the Climbing Advisory Group, of what activities should be undertaken.
- The Working Groups would report into the Climbing Advisory Group and do more operational work on agreed focused areas. These would initially be volunteer positions, although this could potentially change in the future.
- Climbing Victoria would have its own designated section on the Outdoors Victoria website and its own branding.

Summary of Proposed Structure

Climbing Victoria Advisory Group within Outdoors Victoria



Benefits

- Outdoors Victoria is already a State Recognised Organisation, which means that the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group would have this same recognition and could apply for grants from Sport and Recreation Victoria and potentially other government agencies.
- Through becoming part of an established organisation there would be reduced overheads, initially and ongoing, as Outdoors Victoria already has a physical office, administrative support and insurances, management supervisory capacity, governance processes, online tools and a website.
- Outdoors Victoria already has a positive reputation and strong relationships with key stakeholders, including Parks Victoria, DELWP, DET, DJPR, and SRV, which would support the Climbing Advisory Group to also build these relationships.
- This approach allows a lot of flexibility with structure, including making refinements or changing processes as needed, as the Climbing Advisory Group would not be limited by the same legal requirements as an independent peak body. Furthermore, this approach does not preclude moving to another implementation option in the future as the needs and desires of the Victorian climbing community evolves.
- This option could be implemented swiftly and therefore, would be able to start work more immediately to focus on the issues that are most important to climbers.
- This option may make offering climbing organisations access to insurance more plausible as Outdoors Victoria already has trusted relationships with several industry Insurance Brokers.

Challenges

- The key challenge with this approach may be getting buy-in from the climbing community. The climbing community may query whether this option will provide an effective and accurate representation of their needs if they fear that the de facto peak body may get 'lost' if part of a bigger organisation.
- There is a risk that other outdoor organisations who are members of Outdoors Victoria feel that climbing is being unfairly favoured by Outdoors Victoria, and this could jeopardise those relationships.

Conclusion

This option provides the chance to leverage Outdoors Victoria's positive reputation and existing structure and resources, while also providing the potential to meet the key needs identified by climbing stakeholders. This option is also the most feasible and financially viable.

The critical success factor for this option would be that the climbing community trust that their needs will be fairly represented. Outdoors Victoria is well placed to gain the trust of the climbing community given their proven history of advocating for the organisations and user groups that they represent as has been detailed above in the overview.

Provided that the climbing community was supportive of this option and subject to the support of this option by the board of Outdoors Victoria, this option is recommended as the overall best approach.

Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria		Rating	Justification
1.	Clear purpose and scope	☆☆☆☆☆	Constituent organisations and/or members would define the purpose and scope of the governance structure at the outset, while the Advisory Group would ensure the actions of the de facto body stay true to this.
2.	Effective governance	☆☆☆☆	The strategic direction of the work of the de facto peak body would be driven by the Advisory Group, and members would also have a representative vote on key issues.
3.	Financial sustainability	☆☆☆☆☆	Outdoors Victoria is already a State Recognised Organisation, which means that the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group would have this same recognition and could apply for grants from Sport and Recreation Victoria and potentially other government agencies.
4.	Time to become operational	☆☆☆	Creating a de facto peak body under Outdoors Victoria would not require any legal process and could therefore commence relatively quickly.
5.	Existing relationships with key stakeholders	☆☆☆☆☆	Outdoors Victoria has existing relationships with key stakeholders, including Parks Victoria, DELWP, DET and DJPR, and these relationships could be leveraged for the benefit of the de facto peak body.

6.	Track record in executing peak body activities	☆☆☆☆☆	Outdoors Victoria was registered in June 2012 and in this time has effectively executed peak bodies activities.
7.	Cost effectiveness	☆☆☆	Through becoming part of an established organisation there would be reduced overheads, initially and ongoing, as Outdoors Victoria already has a physical office, administrative support and insurances, management supervisory capacity, governance processes, online tools and a website. However, it is acknowledged that this option is still expensive.



2. Restructure Sport Climbing Victoria to include recreational outdoor climbing.

Overview

SCV is the Victorian chapter of Sport Climbing Australia and is the peak body for coordinating state-wide climbing competitions and supporting climbing on artificial structures. As previously mentioned, this is now recognised as an Olympic sport and SCV is the only body entitled to prepare and enter Victorian teams in national sport climbing competitions. SCV is recognised as a State Sporting Association by Sport and Recreation Victoria and is currently governed by an elected board of directors. Subcommittees, largely composed of board members, drive the operational work of the organisation. In the current structure, there is no CEO, and only one part-time employee (0.2 FTE).

In this option, SCV would be restructured to encompass outdoor recreational climbing.

Proposed Structure

Incorporating the representation of recreational climbing into SCV, would require restructuring and rebranding of SCV, including amending the organisation's constitution. This would also involve creating two new positions: a CEO position and a Recreational Climbing Coordinator.

SCV would then create additional subcommittees to work on agreed focus areas, such as Access.

To rebrand, at the very least, SCV would need to rebrand their website, although they may also need to change their name, depending on the sentiment of the climbing community.

Benefits

- SCV is an established organisation with a positive reputation among the climbing community and external stakeholders, such as Outdoors Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria.
- Due to there not being a recreational climbing peak body, SCV has already played a guiding role in some outdoor climbing issues, so the board already has some knowledge in these areas.
- In the longer term, this option could increase the profile of climbing and provide clarity to stakeholders as the single go to body for all things climbing in Victoria.
- In the longer term, this option may also simplify administration.

Challenges

- This option would require careful legal consideration given how significantly the organisation would need to be restructured. This will be time consuming and potentially costly.
- This option also requires creating a CEO role (as SCV is currently volunteer based) and this would be a substantial additional cost.
- The restructure may also create confusion over roles and responsibilities as it would be a completely new way of operating.
- This option may struggle to get buy in from the climbing community as reflected in the consultation process over 50% of stakeholders consider that competitive climbing should not be a function of a recreational climbing peak body.
- Competitive climbing and activities concerning outdoor recreational climbing are vastly different and including them together risks the organisation being spread too thin or not having people with the right skill sets. Related to this is that it may create discord among the climbing community as there may be concern over allocation of resources and focus. For example, existing members may feel that too much emphasis will be placed on recreational outdoor climbing activities, while others may feel that SCV is too invested in competitive climbing to operate more broadly.
- In other countries where there was a single governance organisation, there are examples of internal conflicts that have arisen from competing priorities to utilise resources on outdoor recreational priorities versus competition climbing and climbing on artificial structures.

Conclusion

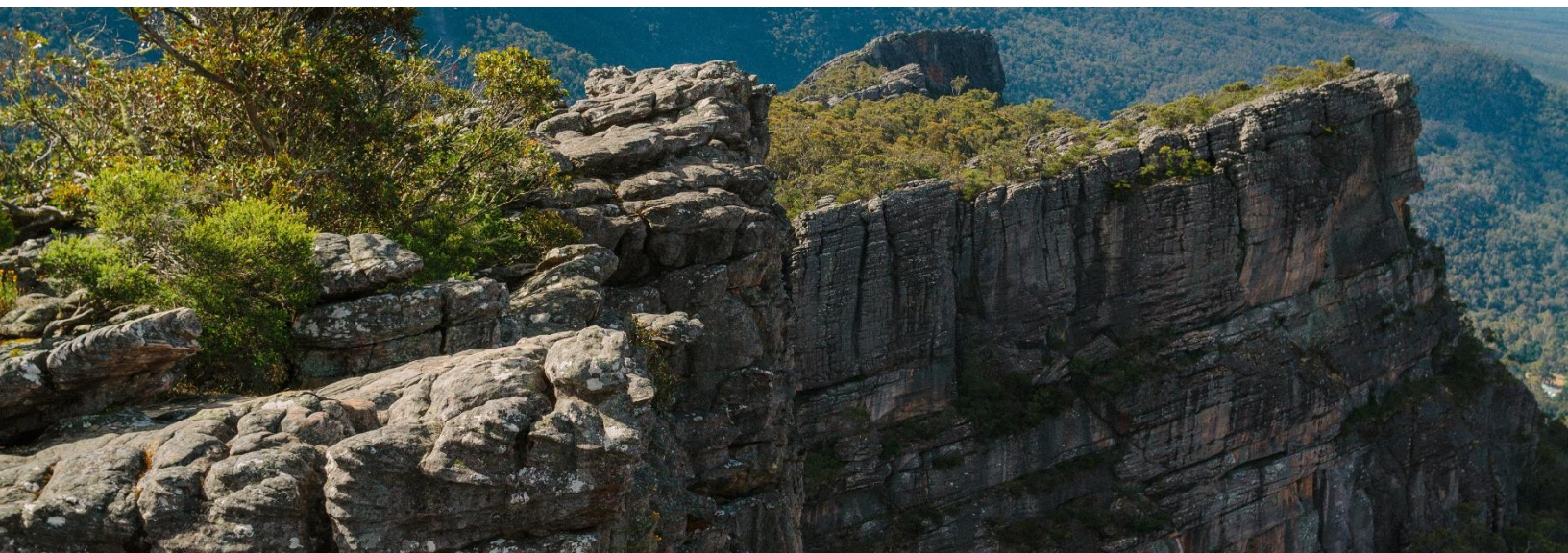
While there is a temptation to try and build on SCV's success by restructuring the organisation to include outdoor recreational climbing, the challenges to implement this approach far outweigh the benefits. This approach may even be legally and pragmatically more difficult than establishing an entirely new organisation. Cost modelling indicates that this may also be the most expensive option.

Further, this option is not widely supported by the climbing community. Just over half of the stakeholders felt that coordinating climbing competitions is best to sit separately and there are several overseas examples that also illustrate this.

Given these challenges, this option is not recommended.

Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria		Rating	Justification
1.	Clear purpose and scope	☆☆☆	Constituent organisations and/or members would define the purpose and scope of the governance structure at the outset of the restructure, however this may take time to become widely understood given SCV's history as being the peak body for competitive climbing only.
2.	Effective governance	☆☆☆☆☆	The strategic direction of the work under this structure would be driven by the Board, and members would also have a representative vote on key issues.
3.	Financial sustainability	☆☆☆	SCV is recognised as a State Sporting Association and would therefore be eligible to apply for some grants through SRV.
4.	Time to become operational	☆☆☆	SRV would require a restructure, including constitutional changes, to implement this option and this would require some time.
5.	Existing relationships with key stakeholders	☆☆☆	SCV has an existing relationship with SRV, and is known by other key stakeholders through its involvement in the Round Table discussions.
6.	Track record in executing peak body activities	☆☆☆	SCV was founded in January 2015 and since this time has operated as the peak body for state-wide competitive climbing in Victoria, including coordinating the lead, speed and boulder state competitions each year.
7.	Cost effectiveness	☆	This option is relatively expensive as it requires a complete restructure of SCV and the employment of a CEO.



3. Create a new Victorian climbing peak body.

Overview

With this option, a new peak body, 'Climbing Victoria' would be formed. This peak body would represent the interests of all outdoor recreational climbers.

Proposed Structure

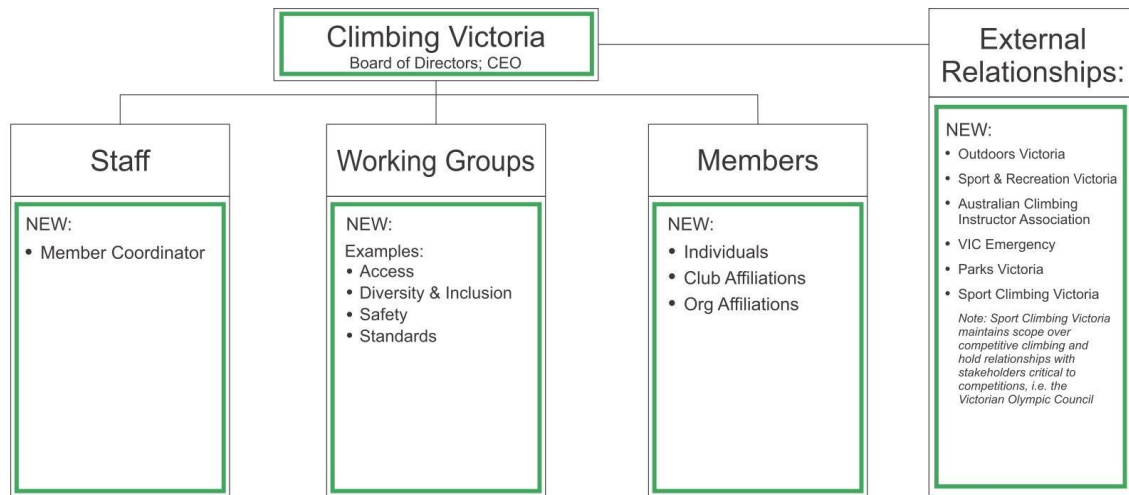
The new peak body would register as a not-for-profit incorporated association and take steps to become recognised as a State Recreation Organisation. The peak body would have a strong relationship with, but operate independently, from SCV (who are a State Sport Association). That is, coordinating climbing competitions and supporting climbing on artificial structures would remain the remit of SCV and would not be within the scope of the new peak body.

The Creation of a new Victorian climbing peak body could be implemented in two different ways depending on the level of funding that is made available. These are outlined below as a volunteer-based model and a funded model.

Funded Model

A Funded peak body would be governed by a board of directors and there would be two different forms of membership: one type of membership for climbing clubs/organisations and another type of membership for individuals. The peak body would be led by a CEO, and there would also be a part time staff member who would help coordinate membership. There would also be committees and working groups, composed of volunteers, to focus on specific issues, such as Safety and Standards.

Summary of Proposed Structure
Option 3: Climbing Peak Body - New State Sporting Association



Benefits

- This option arguably creates the clearest identity for recreational climbing and as such, may more easily build momentum both among the climbing community and other stakeholders.
- As this option involves building something from scratch, there is flexibility in how to best structure and brand the organisation. This flexibility means that the climbing community could be further consulted, and their views strongly incorporated into how the new peak body is formed. This may also increase buy in from the climbing community, specifically in building trust that their voices will be fairly heard and represented.
- The paid positions of a full time CEO and part time staff member included in this model create a clear level of expectations and performance that the climbing community can have confidence in. It would be difficult to achieve the same level of commitment and accountability required in order to start up and manage a peak body through utilising a team of volunteers.

Challenges

- This option will be resource intensive, both to set up and for an ongoing capacity. This may create challenges for sustaining the organisation and may mean resources are

largely allocated to sourcing additional funds, as opposed to just getting on with the work.

- Under the current Sport and Recreation Victoria criteria, a new peak body would not be able to apply for recognition as a State Recreation Organisation until the organisation has been operational for a minimum of three years and is financially solvent. Without this recognition, the organisation would not be eligible for Sport and Recreation Victoria grants, and this would make it incredibly difficult to fund a new peak body.
- This option may also struggle to get buy-in from the climbing community who may feel skeptical about how effective the peak body could be. There is a sentiment in the climbing community that too many new organisations have already been established in recent years.

Volunteer Model

A volunteer based peak body would be structured in the same way as the funded model, with the obvious lack of a paid full time CEO and part time member coordinator. This model would require a volunteer chair position overseeing board operations, and the member coordinator would also be a volunteer position.

Benefits

- A volunteer model would not rely on grants and funding for its operation and therefore would avoid any perceptions of conflict of interest that may inhibit buy in from the climbing community.

Challenges

- The climbing community would not be able to expect the same level of commitment, performance and accountability from a team of volunteers compared to the expectations that would go with a paid CEO and part time staff member.
- A volunteer based peak body could struggle to gain support from the climbing community as it will be more likely to be seen as just another start-up organisation due to the lack of the differentiation that professional paid positions provide.

Conclusion

When comparing the two models of option 3, at first thought, the funded version of this option seems like the natural solution to provide clear representation for outdoor recreational climbers,

and to meet the additional needs identified by stakeholders. The key challenge is whether this model could be adequately resourced, both initially and in an ongoing capacity, as this option would require substantial government funding and support.

This option also raises the question of whether the formation of new peak independent bodies for each emerging recreation activity is the way of the future. While this question is highly relevant to this review in relation to governance for climbing, it is beyond the scope of this project to explore this further.

If funding is likely to be an issue, which would make this option not plausible or sustainable, then the focus must be how else can the needs of recreational climbers be facilitated. The lack of paid staff driving the peak body represents the greatest challenge of a solely volunteer based model and it is for this reason that it is not recommended as an option that will meet the needs of what is required of a peak body for recreational climbers. It is with this in mind, that Option 1, incorporating a de facto peak body within Outdoors Victoria, is the overall recommended option.

Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria		Rating	Justification
1.	Clear purpose and scope	☆☆☆☆	Constituent organisations and/or members would define the purpose and scope of the governance structure at the outset, while the Board would ensure the actions of the peak body stay true to this.
2.	Effective governance	☆☆☆☆	The strategic direction of the work of the peak body would be driven by the Board, and members would also have a representative vote on key issues.
3.	Financial sustainability	☆☆	The new peak body would need to apply to be a State Recognised Organisation to be able to apply for grants. While this is possible, it would be a lengthy process.
4.	Time to become operational	☆	A new peak body would likely be registered as a not for profit incorporated body. This registration process could commence immediately with the support of the current Project Officer (Climbing Development Officer), however from the commencement of this to becoming an operational body would be a slow process.

5.	Existing relationships with key stakeholders	☆	A new peak body would need to establish all relationships but may be able to leverage any existing relationships of Board members or member clubs.
6.	Track record in executing peak body activities	☆	A new peak body would need to establish this track record, but may be able to leverage the successful history of member clubs as the VCC.
7.	Cost effectiveness	☆☆	Developing a new organisation would involve significant overheads, initially and ongoing. The cost of a CEO would also be high. While it may be possible to run the organisation entirely by volunteers, it is questionable whether this would be a sustainable model.



Option 4: Maintain the current status quo (do not set up anything new)

Overview

Currently in Victoria there is a collection of over a dozen climbing organisations that serve climbing communities around the state. Some of these organisations have an incredibly long-standing history, such as the Victorian Climbing Club, which was formed in 1952, and others have emerged in more recent years.

Both the well established and emerging organisations have formed for a diverse range of reasons, for example: geographic location, university clubs or gender diversity. Services and activities include trip organisation, educational workshops, social events and community service such as crag clean-ups and trail maintenance.

These organisations have done, and continue to do, incredible work for the climbing community and beyond.

While there is a tremendous amount of activity that collectively goes on among these organisations, there are no formal relationships between climbing community organisations. Nor is there an organisation that is representative of all outdoor recreational climbers to then manage the relationships with key stakeholders such as Parks Victoria.

Proposed Structure

Under Option 4 of Maintain the Status Quo these existing organisations would continue to operate as they are and no formal relationships nor governance structure would be established.

Benefits

- This option requires no action so in that sense it is already implemented.
- The climbing community may prefer that things remain as they are if they feel connected to the existing organisations and feel that the needs of the climbing community are already being met.

Challenges

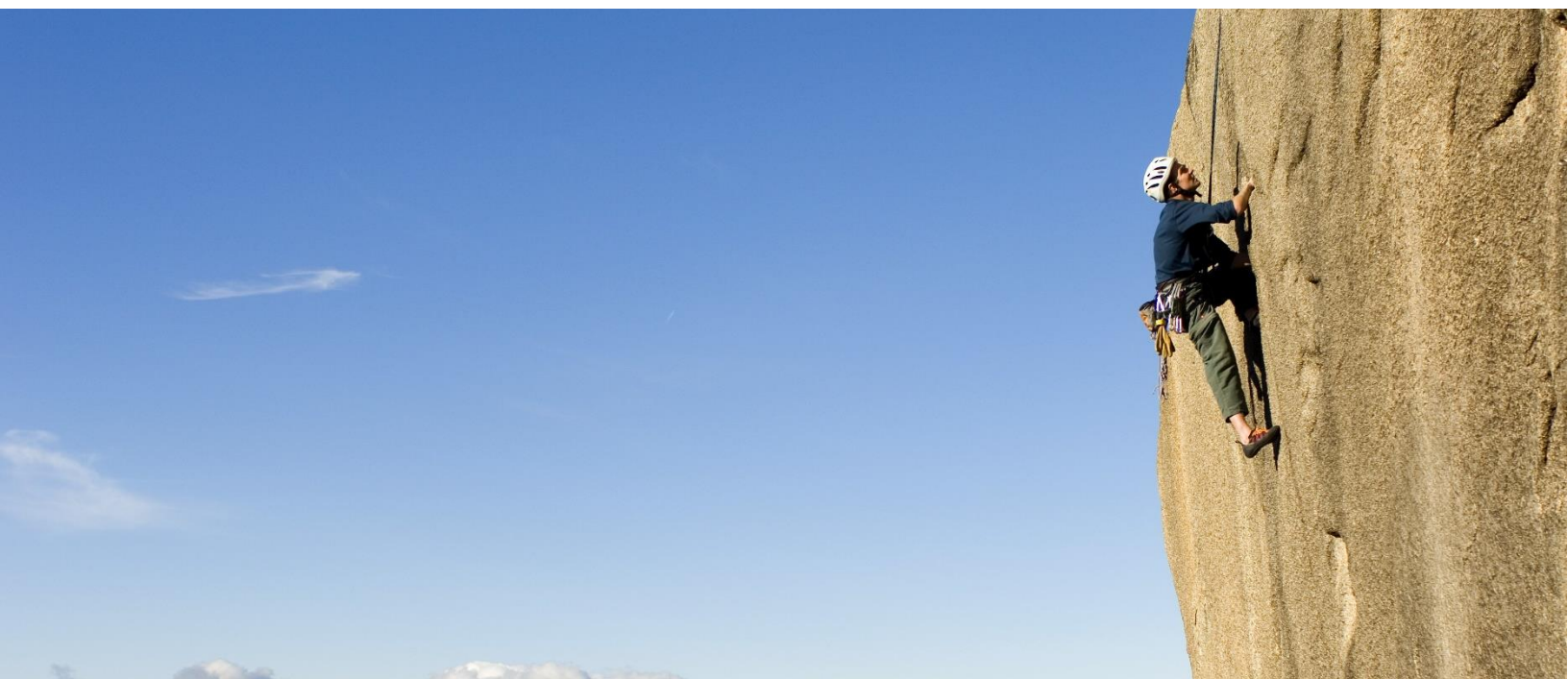
- Without a formal governance structure, the climbing community risks not being consulted by the government on critical issues, including access.
- Without a peak body that encompasses the many different organisations and clubs in Victoria, any consultation that occurs with one particular organisation or club is at risk of not being representative of the broader climbing community.
- 100% of responses from the consultation survey indicated a desire for the establishment of a peak body.

Conclusion

There is a long history of some representative organisations within the climbing community in Victoria, as well as a broad range of organisations that have been established to manage individual issues. However, taking into account the purpose and scope of this consultation, the fact that 100% of respondents to the consultation survey showed the desire for the establishment of a peak body for recreational climbing in Victoria indicates that option 4 should not be considered as a viable option.

Summary Evaluation Comparison Table

Evaluation Criteria		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
1.	Clear purpose and scope	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆
2.	Effective governance	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆
3.	Financial sustainability	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆
4.	Time to become operational	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆	☆☆☆☆☆
5.	Existing relationships with key stakeholders	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆☆
6.	Track record in executing peak body activities	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆
7.	Cost effectiveness	☆☆☆	☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆



PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The public consultation was conducted between the 11th of Nov and 13th of Dec 2020, to the wider climbing community in Victoria. The distribution of the public draft of the climbing governance review and recommendations document for public consultation, occurred through several different channels including:

- Presentation to Founding Council members and climbing organisation representatives for distribution to their respective member bases.
- Option of facilitated online engagement Q&A forums to Founding Council Members and members of climbing clubs and organisations (Facilitated online due to COVID19 restrictions)
- Distribution of the document and call for feedback via:
 - Sport Climbing Victoria's social media platforms
 - Outdoors Victoria's Newsletter (2780 subscribers)
 - Outdoors Victoria's Licensed Tour Operator network mailing list (30 recipients)
 - Outdoors Victoria's email list of other clubs and organisations with an interest in climbing.
- Sport and Recreation Victoria's Representatives
- Parks Victoria Representatives
- Traditional Owner Representatives (through G.W.R.N)
- Interviews and resulting published article by Vertical Life (Australian Climbing Media Publication) including calls for feedback on the document.
- Presentation to the Outdoors Victoria Board.

In lieu of the ability to conduct public, face to face forums due to restrictions enforced as a result of the COVID19 pandemic, a survey was included with the distribution of the governance review document in order to collect feedback from the wider Victorian climbing community.

A summary of the findings from the public consultation and analysis of feedback survey can be found on page 41, and the feedback survey questions can be found in Appendix D.

Feedback showed a strong majority of support for the following conclusions made in the document, from which the recommendation of Option 1 was based:

- The Victorian climbing community needs a peak body.
- The Review contains an accurate analysis of the options.
- Fair criteria were used to compare the options.
- Outdoors Victoria's reputation and relationships would be valuable to a peak body.
- Priority should be on swift implementation and representation on climbing related issues.
- There are valuable benefits to having a peak body lead by someone in a paid position.
- Respondents would be willing to become a financial member of a peak body for climbing.

The final question of the feedback survey allowed respondents to provide feedback comments. These comments provided the following recommendations regarding the direction and focus of the peak body:

- Focus on access issues needs to be conducted in a way that respects indigenous culture and people.
- There should be a dedicated working group to focus on relationships with Traditional Owner Groups.
- Work with the ACIA is important in the training / certification space.
- The peak body should be forward looking and build relationships to bring groups together.
- The peak body should engage respectfully, not antagonistically with other stakeholders.
- Concepts of diversity and inclusion should be integral in the establishment of a peak body.

NOTE – there were also many comments that reiterated feedback that has been included and considered in the recommendation analysis from the initial consultation.

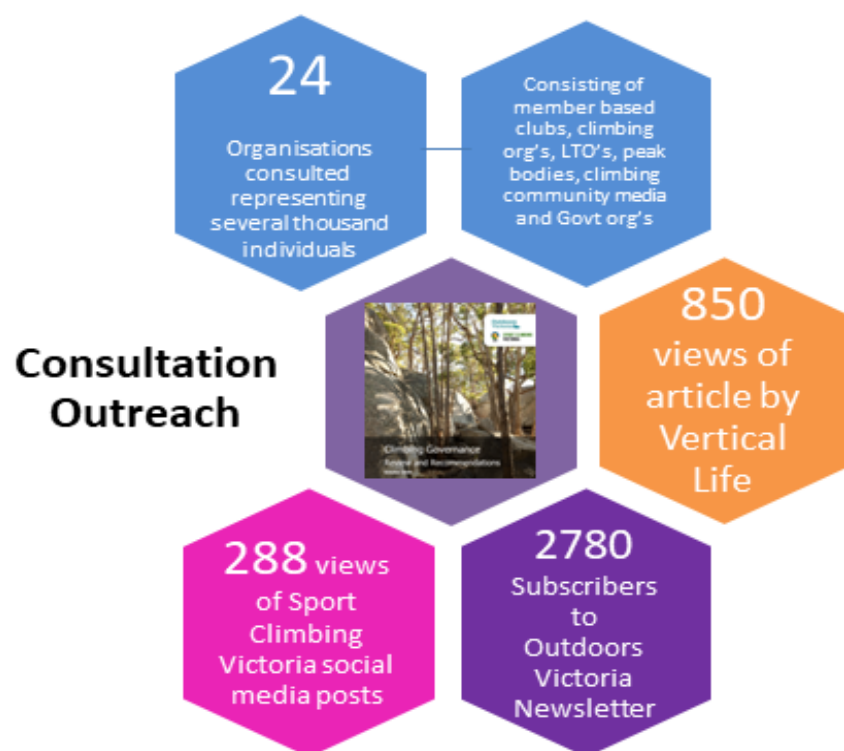
Comments relating to the implementation of Option 1 as the preferred option to move forward were centered around the concept of Option 1 being chosen in the short term due to its efficient implementation and cost effectiveness, however with a preference for Option 3 being the preferred long-term option.

“the option to create a climbing body within OV should be seen as an interim measure with the final goal being the creation of an independent organisation.” – Anonymous Survey Response

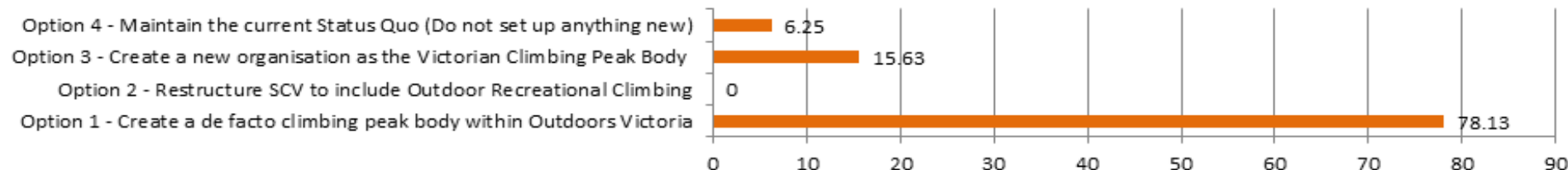
“I chose de facto group, but my next option would have been “Climbing Victoria” option” – Anonymous Survey Response

These responses are consistent with the feedback received from the Outdoors Victoria Board, who have provided in-principal support of the concept of using Outdoors Victoria as a launching pad in the short term, with the long-term outcome to be a transition towards an independent peak body for recreational climbing in Victoria. This is subject to more detailed plans and terms of reference being drawn up for the Climbing Victoria Advisory Group in the implementation stages as well as securing appropriate funding.

11th Nov – 13th Dec 2020 Public Consultation - Response Summary

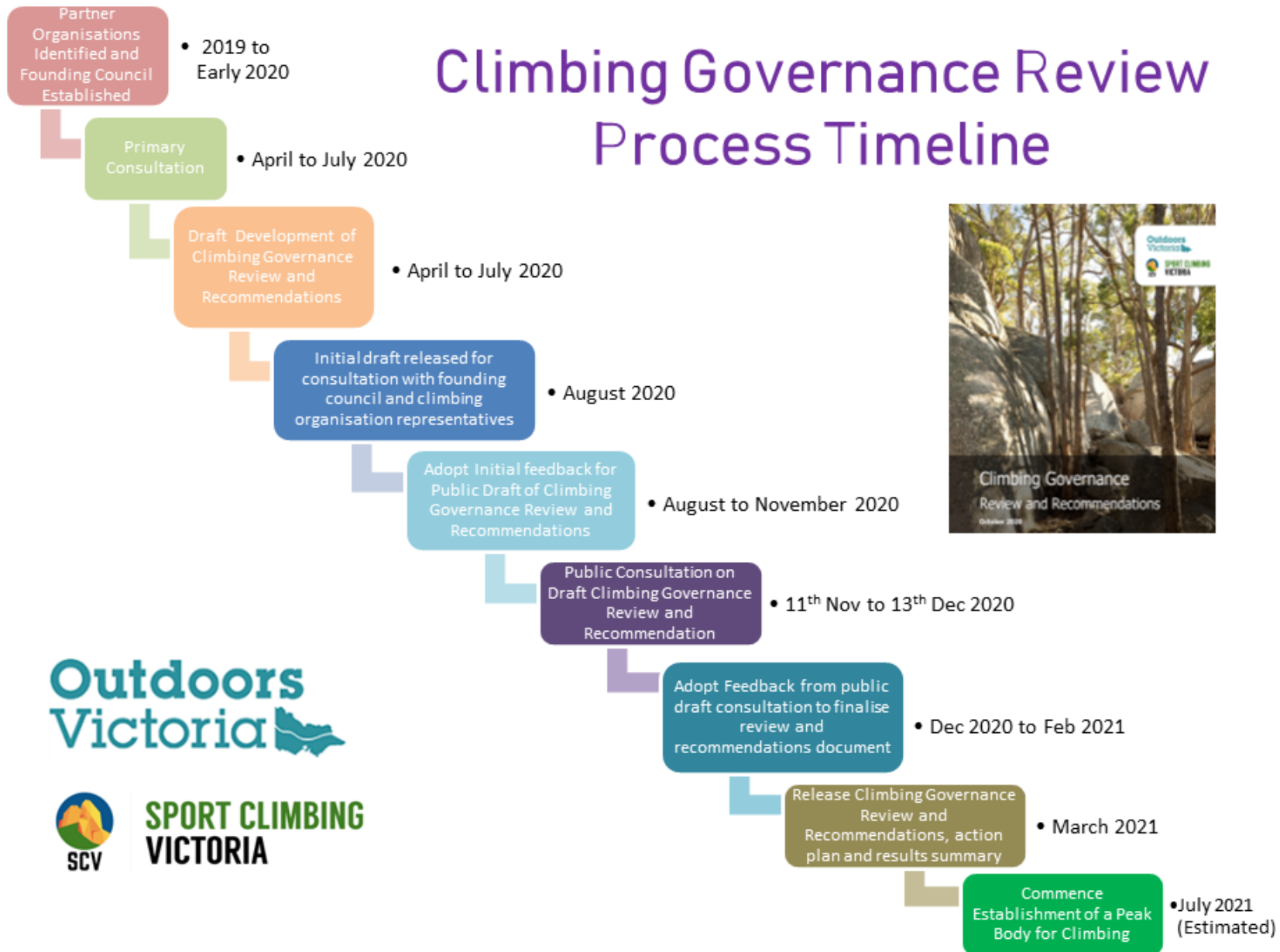


% of respondents preferred option for the creation of a peak body for recreational climbing in Victoria



CONSULTATION TIMELINE

Climbing Governance Review Process Timeline



SUMMARY

Based on the primary consultations and an analysis of the implementation options. The preferred option for implementation was option 1. The main reasons for this are that option 1 enables:

- The greatest focus on supporting the common interests and needs of existing clubs and organisations as the most resource could be dedicated to this. This is opposed to the other options where significant resources would need to be committed to initiating and running an organisation and everything that entails.
- Explicit representation of the climbing community with existing climbing clubs and organisations being members of Outdoors Victoria and electing a Climbing Advisory Group to directly guide the work of the de facto peak body.
- A specific focus on outdoor recreational climbing with the ability to easily increase scope to include other mountain activities (if desired) and maintain a clear delineation with coordinating climbing competitions. Coordinating climbing competitions would remain the purpose of SCV, who would have a strong relationship with the de facto peak body.
- The most immediate and significant opportunity to develop positive stakeholder relationships through building on Outdoors Victoria's existing relationships with relevant stakeholders, including Parks Victoria, DELWP, DET, DJPR, and SRV.
- The most cost-effective option for the Victorian climbing community as there is the least amount of overhead costs.

Feedback from the public consultation process (summarised on Pg.39-41) identified strong support for the recommendation of the review to implement Option 1 – Create a de facto climbing peak body within Outdoors Victoria.



Appendices

Appendix A: Indicative Membership Model¹⁰

The climbing community in Victoria is already home to a diverse range of climbing based organisations and clubs, as well as a number of organisations that have an interest in climbing amongst other areas of focus. Taking this into account, a membership structure would need to minimize resistance of individuals to sign up to multiple organisations while appealing to as wide of an audience as possible. This can be achieved by offering memberships in the following categories (In the case of Option 1, membership model would be introduced as part of the transition to an independent body).

AFFILIATE CLUBS - This could consist of clubs where climbing related activities are the primary focus of the club. These clubs would have their members participating in climbing and may have an interest in benefits such as representation and insurance¹¹ through a peak body for climbing. Eg- Victorian Climbing Club, Climbing QT's, RMIT Outdoors Club etc.

AFFILIATE ORGANISATIONS – This could consist of organisations that have been formed to manage broader or more specific climbing related issues and representation. These might have interest in being represented in working parties or sub-committees based on the organisation's main Focus. Eg- Cliffcare / ACAV / Crag Stewards (Access), ACIA and RTO's (Training & Accreditation) etc.

ASSOCIATE CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS – This could consist of organisations where climbing is not the primary focus of the organisation but where the organisations have some level of interest and need for representation within the climbing community. Eg- Schools and Educational Institutions, Licensed Tour Operators, RMIT Outdoors Club etc.

INDIVIDUAL – This membership category would be necessary to allow membership to those in the climbing community that are not also affiliated with clubs. This may include those with a more casual interest in climbing than those that would usually join a club, non-climbing supporters or possibly interstate or international climbing travelers interested in possible benefits of membership that may include networking, skill development or insurance.

Membership Type	Fees Based on:	Fee cost (indicative only)
Affiliated Club	Flat Rate + Per Member Fee	\$400 + \$15 per member
Affiliated Org	Flat Rate	\$400
Associate Club/Org	Flat Rate	\$200
Individual	Per Member	\$25

¹⁰ Based on consultation discussions with representatives from Mountain Bike Australia and Bushwalking Victoria.

¹¹ Insurance is at this stage a concept benefit and would likely impact the indicative per member fees and/or flat rate fees of affiliated clubs.

Appendix B: Primary Consultation Survey Template

The purpose of this survey is to collect your input into whether Victoria would benefit from a climbing peak body, and if so, how that body should be structured and function.

We acknowledge that Sports Climbing Victoria already exists as a peak body for indoor climbing on artificial structures, and that many other climbing clubs and organisations also exist within Victoria and do great and important work. You may wish to consider this in thinking about how a climbing peak body could be most effectively structured and/or what sort of activities a peak body would undertake.

We look forward to reading your ideas and speaking further in the near future.

1. What is your name?

2. What is the name of your organisation/club?

3. What is your organisation's purpose?

4. When was your organisation founded?

5. What is your role within the organisation?

6. How many members does your organisation have?

7. What does membership involve? (That is, what are the benefits and rights of membership?)

8. Are there different types of paid membership?

9. Do you consider there to be a need for a Climbing Peak Body in Victoria?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. If no, why?

11. If yes, how would you describe the purpose of a Climbing Peak Body?

12. What do you consider would be the primary functions of a Climbing Peak Body? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Negotiating access to climbing areas
- ☐ Working alongside Traditional Owners
- ☐ Training and Accreditation (such as to be a climbing coach or route setter)
- ☐ Coordinating state climbing competitions
- ☐ Providing support to encourage participation of diverse communities
- ☐ Conservation and safeguarding the environment community
- ☐ Providing support to clubs

13. What other areas/functions do you think a Victorian Climbing Peak Body should include?

14. Are there areas that you consider would be outside the scope of a peak body?

15. What do you think are the pros of including coordinating state climbing competitions as a function of a peak body? (As compared to this operating separately through Sport Climbing Victoria)

16. What do you think are the cons of including coordinating state climbing competitions as a function of a peak body? (As compared to this operating separately through Sport Climbing Victoria)

17. What do you think would be the most effective structure for a Peak Body?

18. How do you think a peak body could be funded?

19. How could a peak body work most effectively with existing climbing organisations/clubs in Victoria?

20. Any other comments or ideas?

Appendix C: Public Consultation Feedback Survey Template

Victorian Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations Feedback Survey

Survey Context

This survey is designed to collect feedback from the wider Victorian climbing community in reference to the Victorian Climbing Governance Review and recommendations document. Please ensure that you have thoroughly read the document before completing this survey.

Feedback from this survey will be considered before the implementation of any of the options outlined in this document

*** 1. Have you read the Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations - October 2020 - Document**

☐ Yes

☐ No (Please thoroughly read the document before continuing with this survey)

*** 2. Is your primary place of residence in Victoria**

☐ Yes

☐ No (Please do not complete this survey unless you reside in Victoria)

*** 3. Please enter your full name**

*** 4. Please enter your postcode**

Victorian Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations Feedback Survey

Feedback Questions

* 5. A peak body is different from a climbing club or organisation in that it does not have a singular focus issue (i.e.- Training, access or events). Instead a peak body aims to have a broader range of functions such as:

- Act as an umbrella representative body for all parts of an outdoor activity.
- Have formally recognised links to government.
- National and international links to sister organisations.
- Working alongside Traditional Owners to protect areas of cultural heritage and to negotiate appropriate access to climbing sites.
- Have input into training and education.
- Promotion of the activity in the wider community.
- Support of clubs and organisations.

Does the Victorian climbing community need a recognised peak body in order to secure professional and effective representation on the entire range of issues affecting recreational climbers?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 6. The document outlines an accurate analysis of the options put forward for the creation of a peak body for climbers in Victoria

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 7. The criteria identified in the executive summary to compare the options put forward provides a fair analysis of the options

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 8. The Pre-existing reputation and relationships of Outdoors Victoria would be a valuable resource for a peak body for climbing in Victoria

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 9. Swift implementation and focus on representation on issues affecting climbers should be a priority in creating a peak body for climbers in Victoria

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 10. Having a peak body for climbing led by someone in a paid role is required as it provides a higher level of professionalism and accountability to members and allows a higher level of expectation from members

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 11. I would be willing to sign up as a paid member of a peak body for climbing in Victoria either as part of my Victorian based climbing club membership (indicative fee \$15 in addition to club membership) or as an individual member (indicative fee \$25)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Victorian Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations Feedback Survey

Opinion Summary

* 12. Based on the criteria outlined in the executive summary to compare the options, the best choice for peak body representation for recreational climbers in Victoria at this time is:

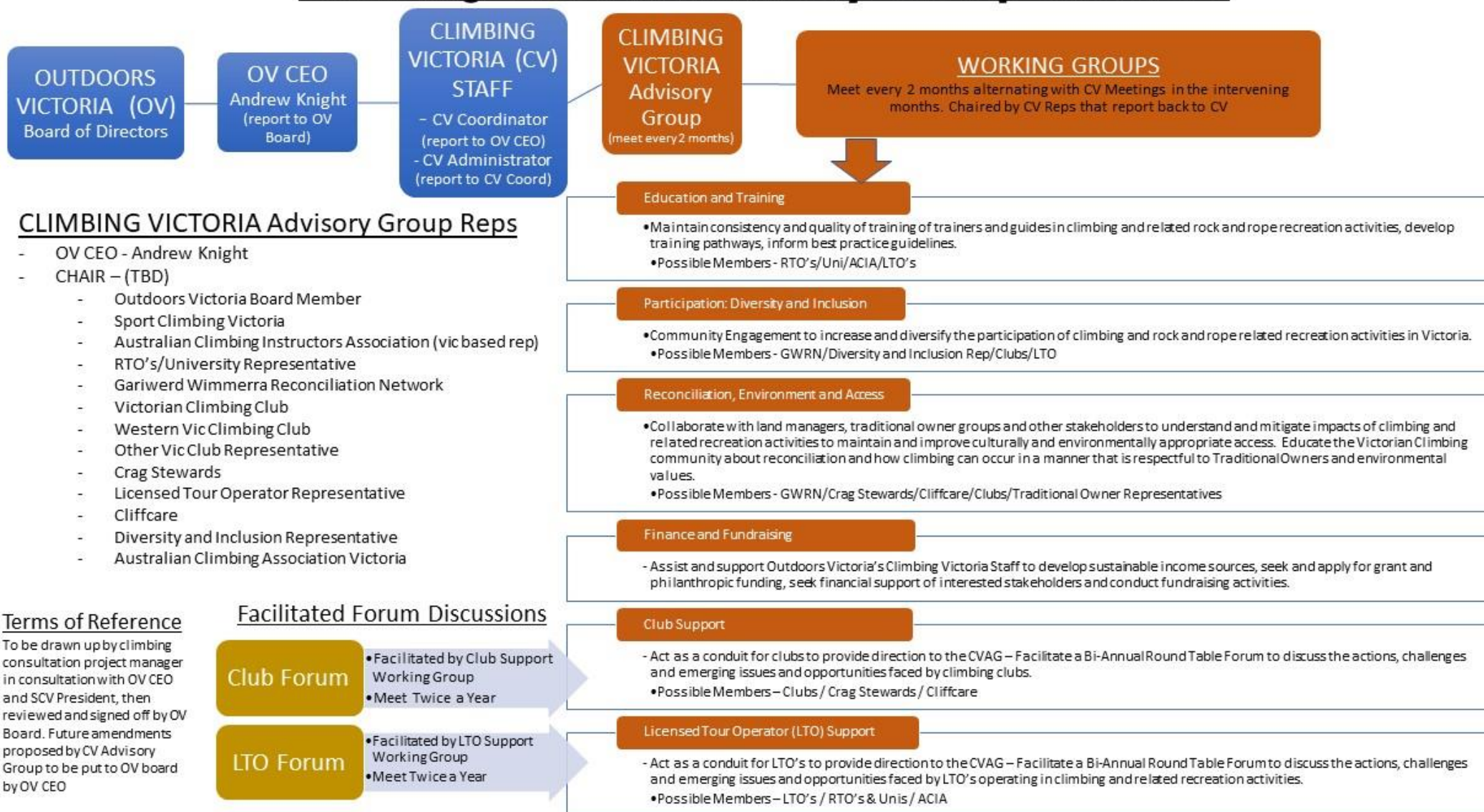
- ☐ Option 1 - Create a de facto climbing peak body within Outdoors Victoria (as per executive summary recommendation)
- ☐ Option 2 - Restructure Sport Climbing Victoria to include outdoor recreational climbing within its scope
- ☐ Option 3 - Create a new organisation as the Victorian climbing peak body
- ☐ Option 4 - Maintain the current status quo (do not set up anything new)

Victorian Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations Feedback Survey

Other Feedback

13. Do you have any other feedback on the content outlined in the Climbing Governance Review and Recommendations document

Climbing Victoria Advisory Group Structure



Appendix E: Victorian Climbing Governance Review Implementation Plan

Victorian Climbing Governance Review Implementation Plan

Phase 1:
Detail operational model and establish formal communication channels
(Current)

Phase 2:
Onboard affiliates and formally Launch Climbing Victoria

Phase 3:
Establish/Transition to Business as Usual (BAU) Activity

Purpose: Implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Victorian Climbing Governance Review document.

Key Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise Climbing Victoria Advisory Group structure and operational model Secure operational funding through granting process Appoint interim Climbing Victoria Advisory Group members Develop branding strategy Establish formal communication channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop affiliation guide and support toolkit Support onboarding activities at local climbing organisation level Plan and announce first Climbing Victoria conference Execute climbing conference plan which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dissolving the interim Climbing Victoria Advisory Group and establishing first formal Climbing Victoria Advisory Group - Establishment of standing Working Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of affiliate onboarding Development of climbing club/organisation creation toolkit Establish relationships with external organisations Work planning based on Climbing Victoria Advisory Group directions
Outcomes	Advisory Group Structure details Submitted Grant Application Interim Advisory Group establishment Branding & Communication Channel Launch	Affiliation Toolkit Climbing Victoria Conference	Club/Climbing Organisation creation toolkit Standing Working Groups Work Plans
Ongoing activities	Bi-Monthly Climbing Victoria Advisory Group Meetings Regular Communication with Climbing Community		

Note – The implementation plan timeline is dependent on timelines associated with securing operational funding from the grant applications process.

Further queries can be directed to Andrew Knight CEO Outdoors Victoria, who is supported by the Project Manager and President of Sport Climbing Victoria.

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