

ITOH # 2 2021 – Wages in the Outdoors

Session Notes:

<p>Original Burning Questions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there pay standards for outdoor instructors, teachers and facilitators? • Do you think a union is viable for our work space ? • Should level experience and specialist skills be reflected in reimbursement of staff. Is this happening now? Is there a limit to this scaling of pay for experience? • Do people working in all levels of the outdoor sector receive a fair wage?
<p>Some Areas that affect current wage standards:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and government interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comments made on how history with the government and interaction with outdoor providers has played a significant role in the evolution of wage issues within Outdoor Education and Outdoor Recreation. • No standard award scheme for Outdoor Recreation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outdoor Educators and Recreation Professionals often sit under Miscellaneous Award and Amusement Award both of which do not fully cover the scope of what outdoor providers do. ○ Casual Staff often sit outside EBA (Enterprise Bargaining Agreement) rates ○ Is a federal award possible? Is it hard to define based on differences in the sector. • Competitive Neutrality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barriers to a level playing field across outdoor sectors ○ In several states they are having issues keeping staff even after training them because private schools are often able to pay wages much higher than the ability of the public and NFP sectors. ○ Competitive Neutrality issues have acted as barriers to a level playing field across outdoor sectors • Rules and regulations based on State • Casualization of the workforce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “As a freelancer, I personally believe the pay in the OE sector is sustainable. I believe there is a bigger issue with

	<p>the casualisation in the profession. Covid is a prime example, where committed casual staff are mistreated by the books when it suits employers.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Sustainable employment" really needs to be a sweet spot for staff, employers and the industry as a whole ○ This week a lot of casual staff are out of pocket, not on job keeper or job seeker. ○ Verbal Agreements vs. Contracts ○ I work directly for schools and find the commitment with OE staff is a one way affair. Schools want you to commit to as many programs as possible for various reasons. If I was to ring up on a Monday morning and say I won't be attending this week, it would be heavily frowned upon and more then likely impact future engagements with the employer. Where as this last week shows evidence that the commitment to OE staff is not equal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People Outside of Outdoor Rec/Edu Understanding what we do: (this blankets over the issue of how much people are willing to pay for a program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What's the fair rate for staff and what is the fair rate for participants? ○ marketing, communicating, measuring, valuing, understanding, representing. All challenges. ○ Insurance seems to be another issue moving forward as they all seem to be raising their rates to unsustainable prices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Federal government held an enquiry into small business insurance during 2020. The report was very critical of insurers, but yet to see what changes might be implemented to change things in that sphere ▪ Outdoors NSW do a weekly Zoom meeting each Friday and they again covered insurance issues about two weeks ago - it's on demand to view on their website
<p>Who should play a part in this overall discussion?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Freelancers, Casual Workers, part time and full time. ● Outdoor Rec and Ed Students at Uni's and TAFE – This is their future they need to be involved and have a say.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCA – Outdoor Council Australia (http://www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “This issue needs to be a national issue and the OCA should be the vehicle that brings us to a national solution” • FWO- Fair Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It's not that the FWO doesn't understand our industry (that of course may be true). The issue is that at the time of drafting the Fair Work legislation that we were poorly, measured, understood and represented in those conversations. We didn't have a voice. • Other Governing bodies
<p>Questions to consider:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It costs somewhere between \$11k-\$17k (full fee paying student) to complete a 1 year Cert IV in the TAFE sector in Victoria. Will a Cert IV graduate make that back in their 1st year out in the industry? • Should wages be based on an hourly rate OR a daily rate? • The churn in our system, particularly for young staff, is one of the key issues that needs to be addressed. How do we move work in the outdoors away from a fun job to do for a short while, and present the outdoors as a career? • Training and re-certification (WFA) costs - how are these factored into wages? • Do you think a union is viable for our work space to help solve some of the questions we've discussed today? • Is this field actually sustainable? As we know there are peaks and troughs throughout the year. Are the on weeks enough to make up for the off weeks? • How can the industry be more attractive for those who chose to be casual? • Do we need more research that highlights the importance of the outcomes we achieve through outdoor engagement?

**Options for
Moving Forward:**

- Visibility within these discussions. We are really valuable right now and now is the time to market and push our cause and moving that towards better wages and conditions
- Review of Federal Awards which affect Outdoor Recreation and Education:
 - In a complex industry is a federal award hard to define?
 - The time to be included in a modern award is when the awards are up for review. We had that option back in somewhere around 2012 but there wasn't a huge amount of interest at the time. I'm not sure when the next review would be happening
- Member suggested a pay structure like the following:
 - Asst Leader - Full Time \$29.00 hour - Casual \$34.00 hour.
 - Leader - Full Time \$37.00 hour - Casual \$43.00 hour
- Making the Outdoors a more Viable Career Option:
 - In part, as a stepping stone we need to think of sustainable employment from the view of an industry instead of just from the view of an employer.
- Conditions: Ways to reward and retain employees beyond wages:
 - First Aid Kits provided to staff not being a standard despite fair work standards stating that employers are required to provide these, and requiring staff to provide in any other industry would be considered unacceptable.
 - WFA and other training are not factored into our pay (I believe it's all the same regardless...). These are just costs to us as a casual, unless you are contracted and the company might pay for it or subsidise
 - My point is it's not just about wages but benefits as a whole and what employers can offer, non-monetarily to help make outdoor recreation more appealing.
 - It sounds like there is a theme that *pay* might not be the issue as much as it is the sustainability of the *work* - issues like underemployment and casualization of the workforce are huge, but there are many other facets. Physical, mental, social (i.e. the ability to have a partner and kids) and much more.
 - I love the work I do, but for a lot of people it is not sustainable for the amount of back-to-back weeks, hours, travel, pay, updates/ quals, for only 1-2 terms a year etc.

	<p>Being away from family, having to pay rent or a mortgage when you aren't there and the likes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A union is an option but there are probably better options • How we are paid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Daily, Hourly, - I would like see discussed in future are the grey areas of breaks and overnights? How many hours do people actually work? Should there be an overnight allowance? Is an expedition day 24 hours? 14 hrs? 8 hrs? I think once that's cleared up the use of miscellaneous award becomes a lot simpler. • Better Marketing of what we do and who we are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marketing and communication and what value we offer? We do a poor job as a whole to communicate to our communities and the government ○ Many of the Peak Bodies trying to do a lot of things for a lot of people. And they are doing some really wonderful things for the community. But they are not well enough resourced to sustain and do all the things needed.
<p>Resources to Look at:</p>	<p>Awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amusement Award • Miscellaneous Award <p>Governing Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCA – Outdoor Council Australia • Fair Work Australia • Ombudsman • Outdoors Queensland • Outdoors NSW/ACT • Outdoors WA • Outdoors SA • Outdoors Victoria • Outdoor Education Australia