# Organisational priorities

## What are organisational priorities?

Organisational priorities can be considered as the most important actions, activities, products or services delivered by the organisation. In the sport and recreation sector it is difficult for an organisation, sector or leadership group to rank priorities in a clear order as a number of them are inter-related and reliant on each other. At times this can become a ‘chicken or egg’ discussion.

While difficult, it is still important to try to set the priorities for the organisation. The use of a high, medium and low priority list may be of benefit. For a number of organisations and sectors, this priority list may already exist through a previous strategic or operational planning process and so a quick review/re-order may be possible.

For a sector/industry approach, the priority may be to focus on a specific region or to target a specific demographic, for example, outdoor tourism in the south-west or physical activity for communities from a low socioeconomic background.

## Objectives

Identification of organisational priorities will:

* assist the organisation, leaders and staff to focus on what is most important
* identify what needs the most attention
* assist in the allocation of resources and time to a specific activity or priority area/demographic
* provide clarity on why some things are being done first.

## How are organisational priorities identified?

Again, this should be considered from a point in time — now. It may be difficult to anticipate what will happen in the future regarding the lifting of restrictions and/or consequences of actioning one priority over another. Regardless of the anticipated order and time frame for the lifting of restrictions, the priority list should be established based on there being no restrictions in place. The scenario mapping and recovery planning phases will help identify the relevance of the activity to each stage of the lifting of restrictions.

It will be useful to consider previous priority lists, strategic plans, operational plans and annual reports. However, now is a good time to review these in the current environment and to ask yourself ‘Was ABC really the most important thing?’ or ‘No one seems bothered about ABC now, they are more interested in DEF’. Do not be afraid to change how your sector or organisation operates or what its new priorities are.

You may wish to question the importance of one activity or demographic over another in the context of limited resources. For example, what if you cannot do everything? For some organisations and leaders this will be the actual situation so be critical of what the priorities are. Just because something is a low priority it does not mean that it cannot or should not be done in the future.

While the current environment may not lend itself to an extensive consultation process, some quick and targeted feedback or comments may be warranted from your members, stakeholders and partners including your next highest authority (for example, a national sporting association, State sporting association or local land manager).

This should be written as a public document that may be shared with stakeholders, clubs and members. It will show your members and stakeholders what is most important for the organisation or what is the first/priority area to receive support.

## Identification of organisational priorities

There are a number of options for this process and some organisations will already have their own preferred method. Here is one simple method that you may wish to consider.

High – Medium - Low

Using post it notes, ask each of the people involved to write down a key activity or part of your operations (eg junior training, office administration or senior fitness sessions etc) and place them on a board or butchers paper. Each area of the board or butchers paper should be marked as high, medium or low. Ask them to place the note on the area that they think is relevant.

The next step is to identify if any of the operations or activities are all in one area and start to work on areas of consensus. Enable some discussions on any that are in the low and high (as an example) as people may have good points on why they chose that area.

Consolidate the activities or operations into a final table that lists those that are high, medium or low.