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 Neil Tredwell

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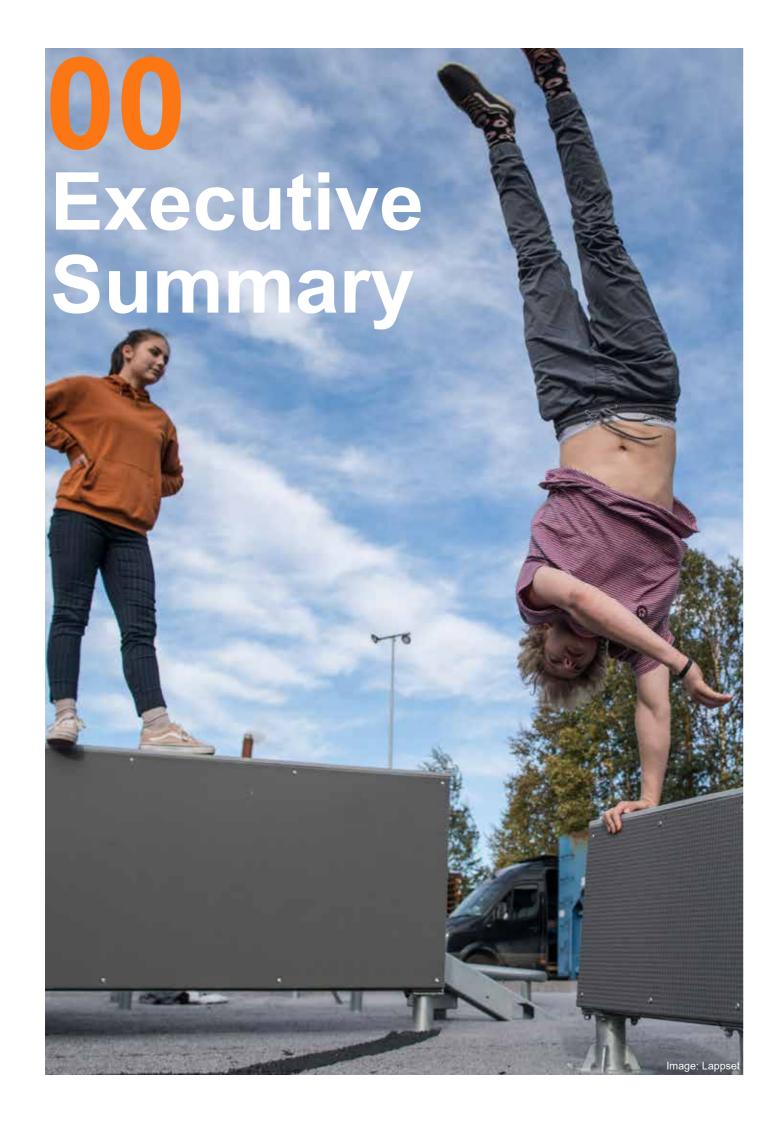
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## 00 Executive Summary

## **Executive Summary**

Parkour, also known as "freerunning" and "Art du Déplacement" was founded in the 1980's and is a non-competitive sport which involves participants using their bodies to move freely and efficiently over and through obstacles and features found in urban and natural environments by running, jumping, climbing, vaulting, swinging and rolling.

Parkour provides numerous mental and physical benefits to practitioners including building confidence, determination, self-discipline and self-reliance, strength, speed, endurance, balance and cardiovascular endurance, it also requires quick thinking and improves hand-eye coordination. Parkour fosters creativity, reduces anti-social behaviour, improves risk evaluation and encourages autonomy, social interaction and self expression. Most importantly it is suitable for all ages and abilities and encourages respect for others and for one's environment.

Parkour has grown in popularity dramatically over the past few years across the world. Parkour is the most Google searched and YouTubed unstructured sporting code in comparison with skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking worldwide. The global level of interest in parkour has remained consistent since 2005 and it is expected to continue and could potentially grow as the awareness of parkour continues to increase.

Within Australia parkour has had the highest number of YouTube searches since 2008 in comparison with other unstructured sports including skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking, and it has been the second most popular Google search behind rock climbing since 2010. Parkour has also been found to be popular across all Australian states and AusPlay data has identified that it is ranked the 8th most popular unstructured sport for children aged between 0 and 14 years old. This showcases a high level of national interest in parkour and supports the need to provide suitable parkour facilities across Australia.

In recent years there has been a huge shift in industry and lifestyle trends across Australia which support the development of more unstructured sporting facilities such as parkour. These include higher participation rates in unstructured sports to better suit busy lifestyles, higher safety standards and community expectations with new built infrastructure, the need to address higher inactivity and obesity levels across all ages, easier access

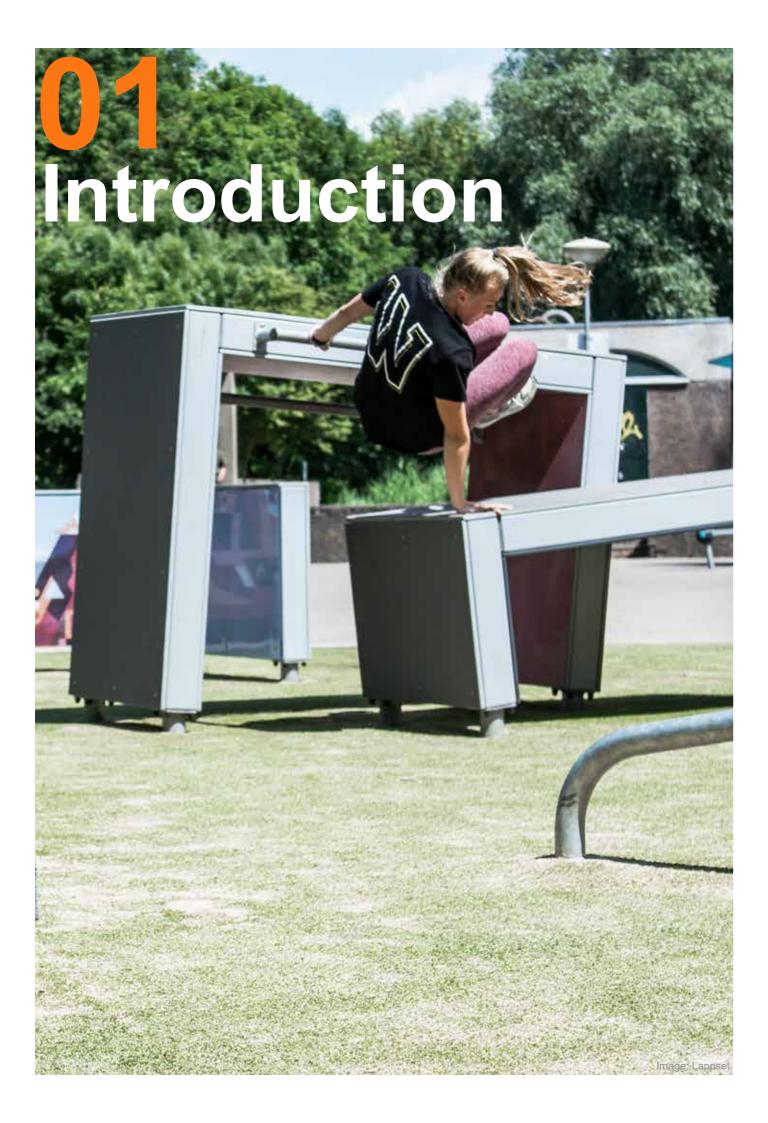
to user-generated content and web-based systems which can be used to inspire, and governments at all levels being able to utilise sport and recreation to achieve policy objectives.

A targeted online survey aimed at council's across Australia and a key focus group workshop were facilitated. The results identified that 87% of people surveyed knew of parkour, however only 17% of them had installed parkour equipment in their council area. This much lower installation rate was shown to be due to those surveyed not knowing the popularity of parkour amongst young people and adults in Australia and globally, being restricted by project budgets and also not knowing who to consult when developing parkour spaces.

65% of participants identified that they see a need for the development of infrastructure that encourages children and young people to get outside and get active. With knowledge that there are new Australian Standards for parkour which ensure facility safety and reduce liability for councils, and that some parkour equipment can be incorporated into playspace facilities, it was recorded that in the long term, the majority of participants (59%) would consider, and 35% would maybe consider installing parkour equipment as part of future play and youth spaces.

It has been proven that parkour is no more high risk than numerous other popular sporting codes such as basketball, football (soccer) and tennis and that injuries sustained during parkour generally have a faster healing time than those sustained in other sports such as football (soccer).

Despite parkour being highly popular across all age groups it is often overlooked and under-catered for in public open space developments in favour of skate parks or playgrounds. Parkour is a relatively new sport that has grown in popularity quickly to rival other highly established sports across the world. It is a viable and versatile recreation option for parks and urban areas, that provides numerous benefits to the community and should be considered as part of all public open space and recreation projects moving forward.



## Project Background and Vision

The Parkour White Paper developed by Tredwell Management in collaboration with Lark Industries, is a study to demonstrate the value and benefits parkour can offer to local government, schools and communities.

The White Paper gives a detailed understanding of parkour and aims to inspire local councils, organisations and designers to ask the question "Why would we not consider parkour?".

In recent years, parkour has become one of the most practiced unstructured recreational activities across the globe by both genders and a diverse age group.

Parkour has a very broad range of participants, from those who participate in parkour casually outside of their structured sporting codes to those who focus on it as their main source of exercise and movement. Parkour is particularly popular amongst young people who do not engage in, or are not motivated by organised sports. It is appealing to many due to its autonomy, sociability, free bodied self expression and that it can be undertaken where and when one wants and at their own pace.

Parkour can be undertaken when participants want and at their own pace, it also can be a highly social sport with meet-ups happening at popular parkour spots around the world on a weekly basis. Meet-ups usually consist of participants passing on advice, skills and encouragement to help one another achieve their own personal parkour related goals.

The aim of the White Paper is to provide a resource which can be used to advocate for parkour and its associated equipment, specifically for local governments, councils, organisations and developers of open green space and community-based facilities such as landscape architects. The report is supported by consultation and market research and examines best practice case studies. It outlines the numerous benefits parkour provides to its participants mental and physical health.

The paper can be utilised to provide a strong case for why parkour equipment should be installed into the community, its diversity, and how its growing popularity provides justification as to why parkour should be considered as an alternative to/addition to typical local government and council projects such as skate parks, pump tracks and single use playspaces.

A constantly overlooked aspect of parkour equipment is that some of the equipment can double as play equipment. This removes a considerable amount of risk for councils, organisations or designers considering specifying or installing parkour equipment, as it removes the concern that the equipment would be a poor investment. Select parkour equipment is guaranteed to be popular with a broad range of users and age groups.

This White Paper includes research and discussions around the following topics:

- Where and how parkour was founded
- The various types of parkour practiced
- Parkour Modules and equipment
- Key user groups and demographics
- Successful case studies
- Industry and lifestyle trends
- Consultation and key focus group workshop findings

Parkour is becoming an increasingly popular choice for schools, councils, developers and even youth correctional facilities due to its health and well-being benefits becoming more widely known. The vision of the White Paper is to see parkour equipment and spaces more commonly incorporated alongside facilities such as playspaces, skate parks and youth spaces or within public open space or the urban environment.



## **VISION STATEMENT**

"Demonstrate the numerous physical and mental benefits parkour can offer to local government, schools and the community"

## 01 Introduction

## **Project Aims and Objectives**

The objective of the Parkour White Paper is to support the advocation for, and the development of parkour equipment by local governments/ councils and developers of open green space and community-based facilities by providing evidence-based data that details how parkour is a beneficial and in-demand investment for the community. The following objectives have been met in this paper to provide a case for parkour and why it should be considered by all moving forwards:

## • Parkour Background and Origin

Detail the origin of parkour, what it is and where is it practised.

#### Research and Standards Review

Review the current AS EN 16899:2020 Standards 'Sports and recreational equipment - Parkour equipment - Safety requirements and test methods' to understand the requirements for parkour equipment and installation and review relevant documents that provide a detailed background and understanding of parkour.

## Participation and Demographics

Analyse the current participation numbers of parkour within Australia and review the Google trend data in relation to parkour and other unstructured sports in Australia and globally.

#### Case Studies

Provide examples of successful parkour facilities which illustrate how parkour has been seamlessly incorporated into the community and as part of broader projects.

#### Parkour Modules and Equipment

Showcase the different styles, modules and equipment of purpose-built parkour equipment required to construct a successful parkour space.

## Industry and Lifestyle Trends

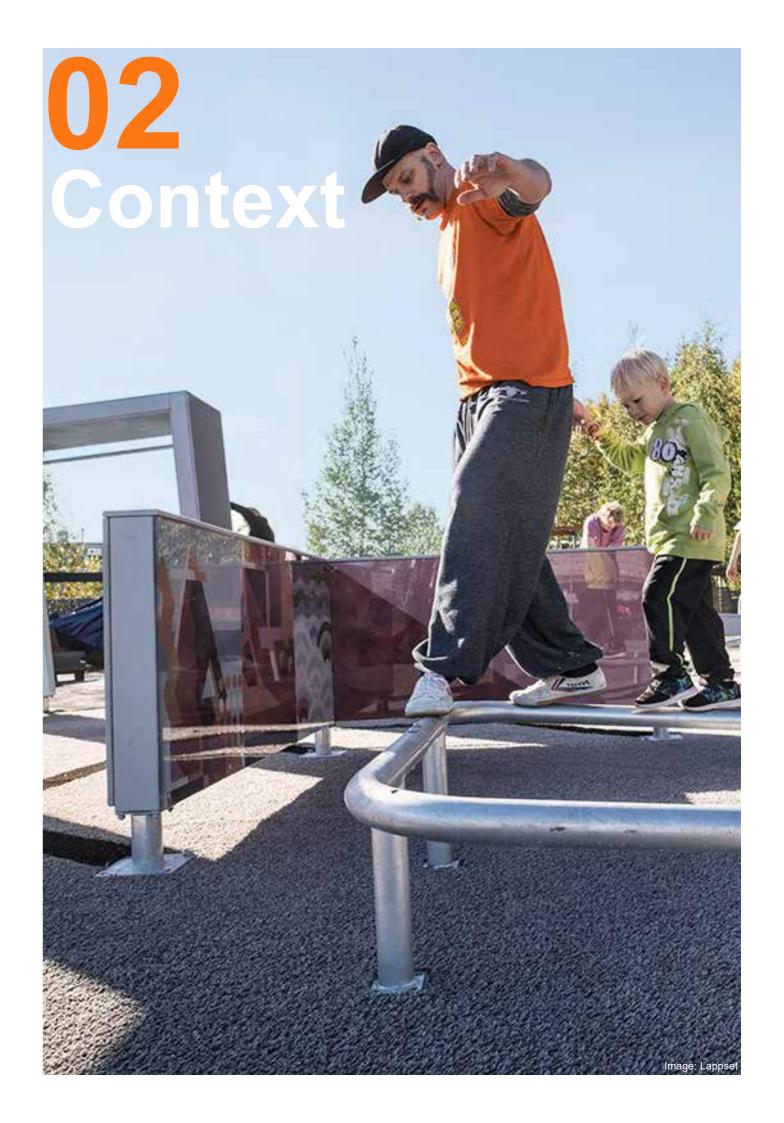
Show the current global industry and lifestyle recreation trends and demonstrate how parkour is at the forefront of these changes.

#### · Benefits of Parkour

Provide a detailed look into the mental and physical benefits parkour provides to participants and how these benefits and new skills learned through parkour can be applied to everyday life.

## Targeted Survey and Workshop Results

Demonstrate the results captured from the targeted online survey and key focus group workshop to show current perceptions of parkour, issues with the sport and willingness to install it as a recreational option for youth and adults.



## What is Parkour?

The below excerpts have been taken from the Australian and European Sports Standards 'Recreational equipment - Parkour equipment - Safety requirements and test methods' (AS EN 16899:2020)

## Parkour as sports

Parkour, also known as "freerunning" and "Art du Déplacement", is the non-competitive sport of training to move freely over and through any terrain using only the abilities of the body, principally through running, jumping, climbing and quadrupedal movement. In practice, it focuses on developing the fundamental attributes required for such movement, which include functional strength and fitness, balance, spatial awareness, agility, coordination, precision, control and creative vision.

It is a sport that encourages self-improvement on all levels, revealing one's physical and mental limits, while simultaneously offering ways to overcome them. It is a method of training one's body and mind in order to be as completely functional, effective and liberated as possible in any environment.

The sport aims to build confidence, determination, self-discipline and self-reliance, and responsibility for one's actions. It encourages humility, respect for others and for one's environment, self-expression and community spirit, and emphasizes the importance of discovery and safety at all times.

### Founding of parkour

The sport, originally termed l'Art du Déplacement, was founded in France in the 1980s by a group of nine young men who called themselves "The Yamakasi". "Yamakasi" is a Lingala word loosely meaning "strong man, strong spirit", and summed up the core aim of the sport: to be a strong individual: physically, mentally and ethically.

The Yamakasi founders are Yann Hnautra, Chau Belle, David Belle, Laurent Piemontesi, Sebastien Foucan, Guylain N'Guba Boyeke, Charles Perriere, Malik Diouf and Williams Belle.

The term "parkour" was first introduced by David Belle in 1998. "Parkour" derives from the French word "parcours" meaning "route" or "course".

The term "freerunning" was coined by Guillaume Pelletier, a representative of a group of French practitioners involved in the production of the 2003 documentary, Jump London, to communicate this new sport to an English-speaking audience.







## Where is Parkour Practised?

Parkour practitioners do not have the same outlook on spaces or objects as many people do, what many may consider as just an ordinary bench seat, tree, wall or rock/boulder, a parkour practitioner sees a challenge and ponders how they could overcome it or what possible movements could incorporate the element. This means that parkour can be undertaken almost anywhere and does not have a specific place it has to be practiced, it can be practiced anywhere from urban environments to purpose-built parkour spots to natural environments such as forests or mountains.

Regardless of where parkour is being undertaken, whether it be an urban or natural environment, practitioners can tweak their existing repertoire

of core movements to tackle new objects and environments. Practitioners will generally focus on training one skillset or tackling one obstacle at a time by focussing on a particular movement or object by breaking a larger movement down into smaller movements and repeating this numerous times until they can safely complete it as a whole, perfect it and then invent something new with it or apply it to a different object within a different environment.

A number of locations parkour is commonly practiced have been outlined below.

#### Urban

Urban parkour takes place in a public place such as in cities or suburban areas. Urban parkour represents the truest form of parkour, as it originated from the streets. This unstructured sport can be undertaken as an individual or in groups of people. Many people participate in groups via meet-ups in urban areas to encourage one another and pass on skills. Urban parkour consists of utilising urban objects to run, vault, jump, climb or roll to travel from one point to another in the quickest and most efficient way possible. Examples of urban features used for parkour include handrails, benches, ledges, stairwells and any other unique item that can be found. Urban parkour provides an endless supply of locations to train and develop skills.

### Natural

Parkour is not just restricted to the urban environment, it is also regularly undertaken in natural landscapes or more rural areas. Instead of utilising man-made objects such as benches and walls to maneouver through a space, practitioners will use natural items such as large boulders and trees found in forests, on hill sides or mountains.

The expanse of the natural environment gives a practitioner an endless amount of opportunities, a short walk in the park or hillside could reveal numerous locations and possibilities.





#### Park based

Park based parkour is unstructured and generally takes place within a purpose-built parkour area located in public areas such as parks and reserves. A well designed purpose-built parkour area will allow a practitioner to train all skillsets including balance, vaults, jumps, landings, hanging, swinging and underbars. The ability to train all skillsets in one location is generally never achievable in an urban or natural environment and the equipment can usually be utilised by all ages and abilities. Features often include rails, poles, boxes, balance beams and various other obstacles. The ground surface of park based facilities are typically treated with a rubber softfall or bark surface to reduce injury and provide a safer training environment.

#### Competition

Competition parkour is a form of parkour where participants go head-to-head against one another in an urban or purpose-built environment. There are various types of competitions which can take place, including racing one another's times over a set course, or games such as tag. There are numerous worldwide parkour competitions such as the Red Bull Art of Motion, which is a parkour and freerunning competition, established in 2007, that judges competitors creativity, flow, execution and difficulty over a set course. This competition is watched on a global scale and advances in technology allow for anyone to enter via a video submission which is then accepted or declined by a panel of expert judges.





## Parkour Movements

A number of frequently used parkour moves have been detailed below. Practitioners will practice each move individually and will then attempt to link multiple moves together seamlessly across numerous obstacles.

### **Wall Techniques**

Using a wall to undertake movements including climbing over the wall, using a wall to jump or leap to another wall or object (catleap) or performing spins on or flips off the walls vertical surface.



#### **Underbars**

Using horizontal bars to jump and swing yourself between and/or under a set of bars or other obstacle. A classic example of this in the urban environment is a handrail.



## **Jumps and Landings**

Perform a jump without a run up using either one or two legs. Generally jumps will be made from one object with the purpose of landing on another object with precision whilst maintaining balance and composure.



#### Balancing

Balancing for as long as possible on an object such as a bar, wall or any other object using 1 to 4 limbs.



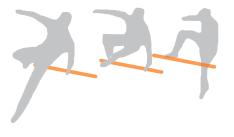
## Hanging and Swinging

Using vertical bars or objects to hang, swing and move between structures in a fluid and efficient way.



#### **Vaults**

Climbing over a wall, bar or object at approximately waist height in one fluid movement with the aim of reaching the other side.



02 Context

#### Parkour Risk Assessment

A study was undertaken by the Likes Research Centre for Sport and Health Sciences to investigate the incidence and types of acute and stress injuries suffered in parkour.

A 12 month retrospective questionnaire was used to investigate the occurrence of sports and parkour related musculoskeletal injuries. The questionnaire received 419 replies in total which revealed that in total 222 (53%) individuals reported suffering from at least one injury (47% only acute, 26% only stress injury and 27% both) during the last 12 months.

Total incidence of parkour related injuries was 4.56 injuries per 1,000 hours of training with 3.11 for acute injuries and 1.45 for stress injuries.

The most common type of acute injuries were contusion 22.3%, unspecified pain 17.1%, ligament tear 12.4% and fracture 7.9%. The most common types of stress injuries were muscular 24.3%, joint 20.0%, tendon 18.3% and bone 9.7%.

The most common parkour related inciting event for both acute and stress injuries was trying to land a jump/movement. Vaults and acrobatic movements were also common inciting events for acute injuries, and conditioning training and jumping for stress injuries.

Of the injuries suffered 30% did not require any treatment, 22% required minor first aid, 18% required physiotherapy treatment, 12% required pharmaceutical and 2% required surgery treatment.

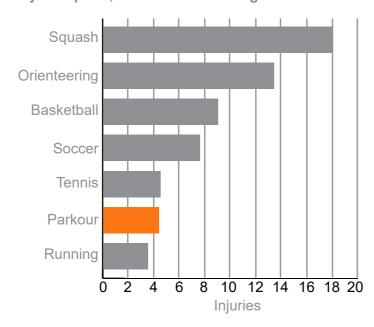
For the stress injuries sustained it was most common for participants to have no interruption to training or 1-3 days recovery. Overall, acute injuries required more time to recover with participants most commonly suffering an interruption from parkour training for 1 to 3 weeks or 1 to 3 days, however, a large portion of the acute injuries sustained did also not require an interruption from training.

Acute injuries accounted for a higher proportion of all injuries with a large majority of injuries being located in the lower limb with knee, ankle and feet as the most commonly injured parts of the body. Injury incidence in parkour was identified to be similar to that of football, however, injuries suffered in parkour do not seem to cause as long interruption to training as those injuries suffered in football<sup>1</sup>.

The Finnish Medical Journal identified that over a period of 1,000 training hours parkour had a much lower rate of injury in comparison to other popular sporting codes.

The below table illustrates the injuries per 1,000 hours of training/participation in a number of different activities including squash, orienteering, basketball, football (soccer), tennis, parkour and running.

## Injuries per 1,000 hours of training



Out of the eight studied activities squash received the highest rate of injuries with on average approximately 18 injuries per 1,000 hour of training. Orienteering was 2nd with just under 14 injuries per 1,000 hours of training, basketball 3rd with 9 injuries, soccer 4th with just under 8 injuries, tennis 5th with just under 5 injuries and parkour 6th just behind tennis at 4.56 injuries per 1,000 hours. Parkour was ranked as receiving slightly higher rate of injuries than running which received just under 4 injuries per 1,000 hours of training<sup>2</sup>.

References: (1) Acute and stress injuries in parkour, 2012 (Waller, Pihlaja, Tammelin). (2) Finnish Medical Journal 41/2014 VSK (Parkkari, Kannus, Fogelholm)

## Research and Standards Review

The review of background information and documents is an important component in the development of the Parkour White Paper to ensure context and alignment with wider objectives and standards.

A range of documents have been reviewed for consideration, including:

- AS EN 16899:2020 sports and recreational equipment – Parkour equipment - Safety requirements and test methods
- Parks and Leisure Abstract Parkour -Reconnection Redefined

# AS EN 16899:2020 – sports and recreational equipment – Parkour equipment - Safety requirements and test methods

The Australian European Standards - 16899:2020 (the Standards) is a document primarily intended for manufacturers of parkour equipment, operators and designers of parkour parks. It also can be applicable to supervisors of parkour lessons who are appropriately qualified and experienced and have sufficient knowledge of parkour as a sport.

The Standards specify the requirements of parkour equipment for use by participants starting from approximately 8 years of age. The Standards recognise that parkour movement is personally determined by users, using controlled physical exertion from, to and through equipment elements and structures; both permanently installed and portable.

The requirements ensure the safe development of parkour facilities which will protect users from hazards that they might be unable to foresee when utilising the equipment.

The Australian European Standards also specify the requirements for the installation and maintenance of parkour equipment, including area, height, flow, location and separation from other facilities, including children's playgrounds and multi-use games areas.

The Standards state that the design and layout of parkour facilities requires a good understanding of the sport and the interrelationship of equipment and 'flow' routes. To ensure the safety of equipment, the Standards recommended that design advice is obtained from a competent person and that appropriate risk-benefit assessments are carried out.

## Parks and Leisure Australia Abstract Parkour - Reconnection Redefined

The Parks and Leisure Australia (PLA) abstract 'Parkour – Reconnection Redefined' presents a number of learning outcomes including; providing an understanding of what parkour is, what the European Parkour Standards mean for Australian parkour now they have been adopted, and how councils can help with parkour participation and the benefits from this participation.

02 Context

It states that Australia has many parkour practitioners and there are a number of teaching-oriented communities already present. It details how these dedicated groups of practitioners work to share their passion for movement and encourage others to reconnect with not just the urban landscape but also their bodies and their health. The abstract also notes how many Australian youth from all backgrounds are attracted to parkour for its innate freedom, capacity for creativity and exploration.

The abstract notes that despite parkour being highly popular with the youth demographic, it is often overlooked and under-catered for in urban space development in favour of skating or similar facilities. It states that as parkour gains more mainstream popularity amongst youth, future youth zones and urban plaza designs should consider it, as it promotes wider use and activation. It also notes that the gateway to parkour is best achieved through a structured facility, where participants can learn in a safe environment that builds their skills and confidence as they progress.

It notes that the adoption of the European Parkour Equipment Standard in Australia, which took place in late 2020, will help to support the development of parkour facilities within Australia as council's and organisations can develop these facilities with confidence that there is a recognised standard providing coverage from a liability perspective.

## Parkour Participation and Demographics

Due to parkours unstructured nature it has been difficult in the past to gather detailed participation statistics, however, data on parkour participation has been more readily available over recent years with its rise in popularity.

Participation data has been provided on the following pages, including the 2019 to 2020 AusPlay sports participation data, the 2020 Finnish Government's Ministry of Education and Culture's School Survey and Google search trend data from 2004 to 2021.

Schools are more increasingly choosing parkour as part of their outdoor play and exercise range across Australia and Europe and the available data clearly indicates that both boys and girls enjoy parkour, or are very interested in trying it.

Many parkour associations within Australia and overseas list female participation at 15-20%<sup>1</sup>, however, these associations mainly operate events a couple of times a year and these statistics are more limited to more die-hard practitioners. It is important to note that due to parkours mostly unstructured nature, female participation is expected to be higher than this. This is evident in the U.K with more than a third of parkours participants being female. A full half of U.K. parkour participants are people of colour and in cities, where the activity is most popular, parkour courses for families and "forever young" parkour-inspired classes for seniors fill up regularly.2

A 2017 report from the U.K government's Department for Culture, Media, and Sport showed that almost 100,000 Britons over 16 years old had participated in parkour twice in the previous 28 days, which was significantly higher than the number who skateboarded (47,900), wrestled (23,200), trained for a triathlon (25,400) or an obstacle course race  $(14,700).^{2}$ 

¹https://medium.com/@alicebpopejoy/ recommendations-for-increasing-the-number-ofwomen-and-girls-in-parkour-4a14879e30e5

2https://www.outsideonline.com/health/trainingperformance/we-should-be-building-more-parkourparks/

## AusPlay survey results July 2019 - June 2020

The below statistics have been taken from the 'AusPlay survey results July 2019 - June 2020'. The data includes parkour participation across Australia for both adults (15+ years old) and children (0-14 years old).

It is important to note that some data, particularly for unstructured sports such as parkour is unavailable and the estimates have relative margin of error between 50% and 100% and should be used with caution.

Children - Organised participation by activity (Male and Female)

Ranking (out of 133 activities)	Activity	Total Participation number
29	BMX	23,700
30	Walking (Recreational)	22,900
31	Bush walking	22,200
32	Skate	18,700
33	Ski & snowboard	18,600
34	Parkour	16,900
35	Volleyball (indoor and outdoor)	15,800
36	Rock climbing/ Abseiling/Caving	15,700
37	Triathlon	15,400
38	Mountain biking	15,200

\*Estimate has relative margin of error between 50% and 100% and should be used with caution.

The above table illustrates the participation in parkour for children aged between 0 and 14 years old. Parkour has ranked a total of 34th out of a total of 133 organised and un-organised sports.

Parkour is ranked the 8th most popular unstructured sport behind Fitness/Gym, Cycling, Surfing, Walking (Recreational), Bush walking, Skateboarding and Ski & snowboarding.

Adult - Organised participation by activity (Male only)

Ranking (out of 133 activities)	Activity	Total Participation number
83	Paintball	7,500
84	Rodeo	7,500
85	Handball	7,200
86	Sport climbing	7,000
87	Parkour	6,700
88	Diving	6,400
89	Wrestling	5,700
90	Kung fu wushu	4,800
91	Lacrosse	4,600
92	Petanque	4,600
93	Scootering	4,500

\*Estimate has relative margin of error between 50% and 100% and should be used with caution

The above table illustrates the participation in parkour for adult males aged 15+ years old. No female data was available for this age bracket.

Parkour ranked a total of 87th out of a total of 133 organised and un-organised sports for males and is ranked the 18th most popular unstructured sport.

## Finnish Government (valtioneuvoston statsrådet), Ministry of Education and Culture, School Survey, 2020

A research survey undertaken in December 2020 by the Government of Finland's 'Department of Education' produced some excellent statistics on the popularity of parkour within the younger age brackets, particularly for females.

A total of 1,759 schools and 197,040 school children were included within the survey. Of the total students 119,709 were elementary (primary) school students and 75,399 were high school students.

The participants were asked to identify their favourite hobbies/activities and those they would like to try from a list of 76 options. Overall parkour ranked as the most preferred hobby/activity that the participants currently actively partake in from the 76 activities listed.

22% of all elementary school girls wished to try parkour, placing it as the 3rd most popular activity to try out of the 76 activities listed, sitting just behind visual arts and film and animation.

For High School Girls, parkour ranked as the 9th most popular activity that they wished to trial with 22% wanting to give it a go.

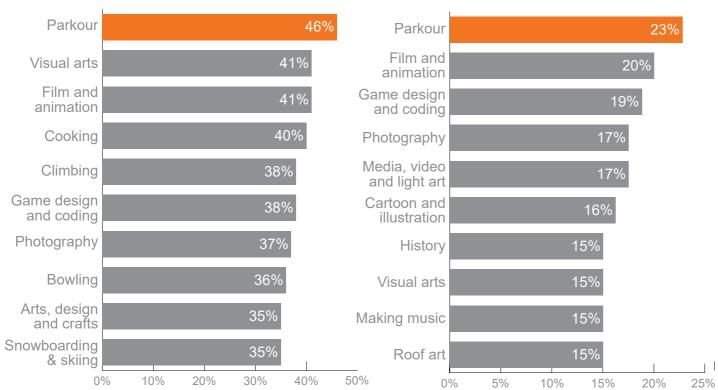
Parkour ranked as the number one activity that elementary school boys wanted to try the most out of the 76 activities listed, with 23% total interested.

Parkour was also ranked the number one activity for high school boys to try out of the 76 activities listed with 24% vote rate.

A select few graphs from the report have been included on the following pages.

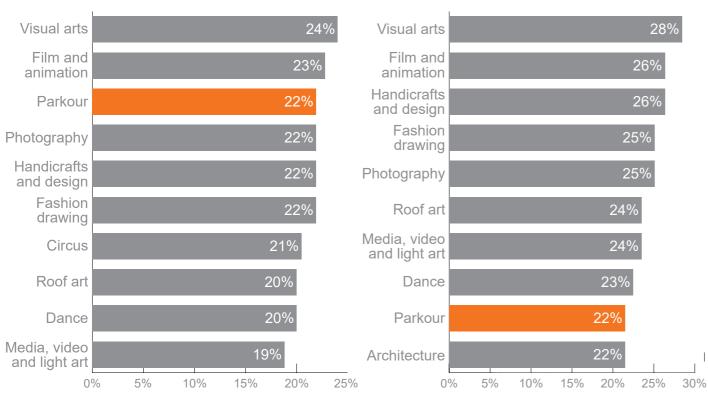
# Overall hobbies of school children (top 10 activities)

# Elementary school boys want to try (top 10 activities)

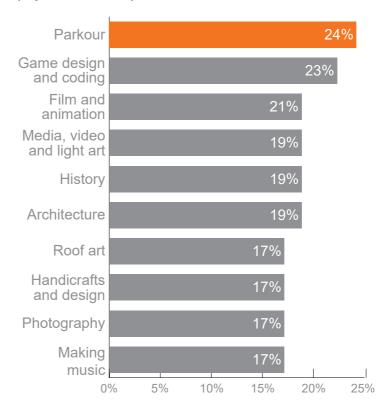


Elementary school girls want to try (top 10 activities)

High school girls are interested in trying (top 10 activities)



# High school boys are interested in trying (top 10 activities)

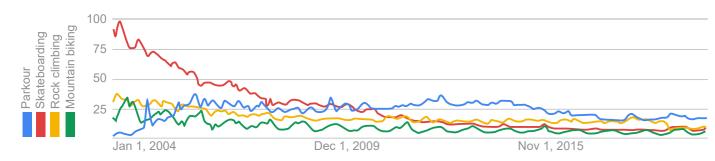


## Parkour Google and YouTube Trends

There is minimal data revealing the overall participation in parkour within Australia and worldwide. However, the analysis of Google Trends allows for the long term analysis of the popularity of sports by country and state. Google Trend data allows for the comparison of interest into multiple sporting disciplines at once over a set time period.

The below graphs represent the Google searches for a number of unstructured recreational activities including parkour, skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking from 2004 to 2021.

## Interest Overtime - Worldwide (2004 - Present)

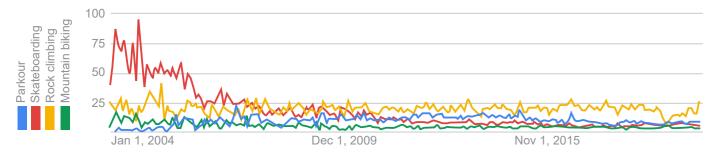


Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A value of 50 means that the term is half as popular. A score of 0 means there was not enough data for this term.

This data illustrates the popularity of Google searches for parkour in comparison with other popular unstructured recreational activities across the globe, including skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking.

As illustrated above, parkour had a large spike in search popularity around 2004/2005 which has remained consistent since then. From 2009 to this day parkour is the most popular searched sporting code in comparison with skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking.

### Interest Overtime - Australia (2004 - Present)



Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A value of 50 means that the term is half as popular. A score of 0 means there was not enough data for this term.

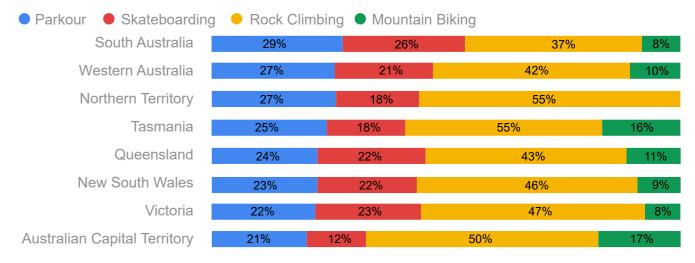
Within Australia, parkour followed a similar trend to worldwide data with an increase in Google searches for the sport in 2004/2005. Since this increase in popularity, parkour has remained a popular Google search within Australia all the way through to 2021.

In comparison with Google searches for other unstructured recreational activities within Australia.

including skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking, parkour has remained the second most popular Google search behind rock climbing since approximately 2010. The consistent and steady search history for parkour means we can expect its popularity to continue or potentially rise in the future.

#### **Compared Breakdown by Australian State**

The graph below shows the percentage of parkour Google searches by Australian state in comparison with other selected unstructured activities including skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking.



From 2004 to 2021 rock climbing is the most Googled unstructured recreational activity out of the parkour, skateboarding and mountain biking across all Australian states. Parkour is the second most searched sport of these activities, with the highest search rate for parkour being in South Australia with 29%.

Search results for parkour remain fairly consistent across all states, with the minimum searches being made for parkour in the Australian Capital Territory with 21%.

# Global YouTube Searches - Google Trends (2008 - Present)

The below graph shows the worldwide YouTube searches for parkour in comparison to other selected unstructured recreational activities.

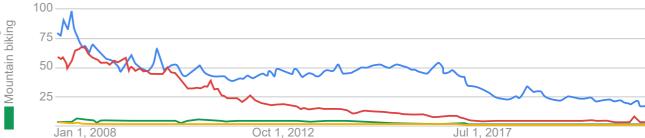
Parkour has had and maintained the highest number of YouTube searches out of skateboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking since 2008.

The large volume and consistency of searches across all states for parkour showcases a national level of interest in the sport, supporting the need to provide suitable parkour facilities across Australia.

Considering parkour is a relatively new sport, with many only discovering it in recent years, the fact it has grown in popularity this quickly to rival other highly established unstructured recreational activities shows that it is a sport which has the ability to grow quickly and is here to stay.

In 2013 the combined audience of the top 10 viewed unstructured sport videos on YouTube by keyword found parkour to be the most popular with 222,688,664 views, Freerunning with 113,072,699 views, Skateboarding with 73,992,745, Surfing 70,457,389, Mountain biking 69,328,950, BMX 39,835,564 and Snowboarding 17,145,817 views.





Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A value of 50 means that the term is half as popular. A score of 0 means there was not enough data for this term.

## Case Studies

A number of Case Studies have been analysed to determine effective ways in which parkour has been implemented into different scenarios across Australia.

## Fremantle Esplanade Youth Plaza Esplanade Reserve, WA - 2014

The Esplanade Youth Plaza is a large youth space featuring a skate park, table tennis, rock climbing and parkour elements. This project has won multiple PLA awards and demonstrates the successful implementation of parkour equipment into a broader project. The themed parkour equipment includes bars, box culverts, low walls and more to provide a unique space suitable for all age groups and abilities.







## Balwyn Park Youth Space Balwyn Park, VIC - 2020

Balwyn Park is an active youth space designed by Lark Industries in collaboration with Boroondara Council. This moderately sized parkour park effectively offers balancing, climbing and jumping across some key Lappset Cloxx parkour items and other fitness equipment. This youth space provides a great all-round active and vibrant experience and insight into parkour whilst also providing a unique play experience.







## Pelican Waters Central Park Caloundra, QLD - 2021

Situated within a 2 hectare precinct which caters for basketball, netball, soccer, football, bocce and parkour. The parkour equipment promotes creative movement including climbing, jumping, swinging, balancing and vaulting. The course includes climbing frames, balance rails, platforms and walls. QR Codes are provided on the accompanying signage that play instructional YouTube videos on how to warm up and use each piece of equipment.







## **Ballum Park** Frankston, VIC - 2018

Designed by Playce for the City of Frankston, this park won multiple PLA awards and demonstrates how parkour can be incorporated as part of a broader design. This vibrant and unique design features numerous bars, ledges and mounds for parkour which are seamlessly worked into the surrounding activities, including a large regional level playground, basketball court and minor skate elements.







## Clayton Station Clayton Road, VIC - 2018

Lark Industries in collaboration with ASPECT Studios designed this vibrant parkour spot, fitness node and children's play environment which includes items from Lappset's parkour range. This project supports another 11 activation nodes of fitness and exercise equipment along the new 17km of pedestrian and cyclist paths that were created by the transformation and elevation of Melbourne's busiest rail line.







## Hogans Road Reserve Playground Hoppers Crossing, VIC - 2014

Hogans Road combines elements of Lappset's parkour equipment for a high energy fitness and workout circuit. This equipment is equally suited for children to utilise as traditional play equipment. The equipment is designed to withstand the rigorous demands of active bodies from all generations. To compliment the space the Lappset Cloxx range continues the galvanized steel look to provide more traditional play pieces in a truly unique design.







## Purpose-built Parkour Equipment

Purpose-built parkour equipment offers practitioners features to practice on outside of the urban environment, designed by experts in the sport. These features can be combined in ways to create 'spots' or 'modules' which allow practitioners to fine-tune their skills in a safe and challenging environment that cater for all skill levels.

Purpose-built parkour areas tend to provide the possibility of training multiple different skills and techniques at one location, as well as allowing and encouraging these techniques and movements to be incorporated together to form a single flowing run/movement. Purpose-built parkour areas generally provide a lot more opportunities for skill development and learning in one place than your typical street spot as they can provide features which develop wall technique, balance, vaulting, jumping, landing, hanging, swinging and underbar skills. This variety provides motivation to train and is one of the main reasons practitioners find well designed parkour areas so appealing.

Parkour 'spots' and 'modules' encourage a sense of community which is an essential part of the sport. When people with varying abilities get together, those who are more advanced can serve as examples to the younger ones, and they do so in more than just parkour.

There are various types of parkour equipment available, the following pages provide details on the Cloxx parkour range (images 1,2) and Dash parkour range (image 3) that are available through Lark Industries and Lappset parkour. Examples of 'spots', 'modules' and 'features' have also been included.







#### **Cloxx Parkour**

Cloxx is the original range of off-the-shelf parkour equipment, comprised of sturdy, galvanised steel and durable HPL boards. Cloxx parkour equipment is great for inner city areas, parks and reserves and is compliant with the British and European Standard for playground equipment and surfacing is BS EN 1176.

The Cloxx parkour range can withstand constant use in a tough environment, and it's unique shapes and vibrant colours enrich the landscape or broader project.

The Cloxx range has been developed in collaboration with parkour professionals who train people with different abilities and skill levels to ensure that the equipment caters for all abilities from beginner to expert. The Cloxx range is designed with the requirements of the sport in mind by offering participants precisely designed equipment which allows them to practice different series of movements over and over until they can be performed smoothly.

Cloxx parkour consists of bars and rails, tic tac cubes, precision balls and walls to provide something for all skill levels from beginner to advanced.

Cloxx parkour comes in a variety of options, including spots and features.

Spots are professionally pre-layed out parkour spaces consisting of a variety of elements and features for all skill levels which are ready to be installed.

Features are individual parkour elements which can be installed in various combinations or as an addition to existing facilities or spots.

The following graphics illustrate selected examples of spots and features available via Lark Industries and Lappset.

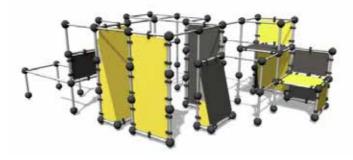
## **Cloxx Parkour Spot Example 1**



**Cloxx Parkour Spot Example 2** 



**Cloxx Parkour Feature Examples** 



Large Spider Cage



#### Dash Parkour

Dash parkour is a range of purpose-built parkour equipment by Lappset which is AS EN 16899:2020 compliant. Dash parkour equipment is meant for parkour training in public areas and can be installed in both large and small spaces. The equipment is highly versatile and provides a multitude of different experiences, challenges and opportunities for parkour technique and skill growth.

Dash parkour was designed in close association with the Parkour Academy of Finland which is currently the worlds largest parkour teaching establishment. The parkour professionals from the Academy train people of all skill levels and abilities and have ensured that the Dash range caters from beginners to advanced level users. The design and the feeling of the equipment draws from parkour culture itself and are comprised of clean, minimalist features that give a modern twist to the ever evolving sport. The overall look and feel of the equipment is praised by practitioners as it looks familiar and inviting.

The Dash parkour equipment consists of ledges, walls, boxes, beams and rails and comes in a variety of options, including spots, modules and features.

Spots are professionally pre-layed out parkour spaces consisting of a variety of elements and features for all skill levels which are ready to be installed.

Modules are affordable, pre-determined microlayouts which include equipment based on developing specific skill sets. Modules can be customised and combined with one another to increase their size and create different experiences for users.

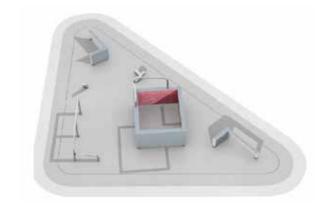
Features are individual parkour elements which can be installed in various combinations or as an addition to existing facilities, modules or spots.

The following graphics illustrate selected examples of spots, modules and features available via Lark Industries and Lappset.

## Dash Parkour Spot Example



**Dash Parkour Module Example - Vault and Jump** 



**Dash Parkour Feature Examples** 





## Industry and Lifestyle Trends

A range of broader industry and lifestyle trends have been identified that should be considered when planning for forms of active recreation. A number of key relevant trends that support the development of parkour spaces have been summarised below.



## **Changing Participation Preferences**

Increasingly busy, time fragmented lifestyles mean that people are becoming more involved in individualised recreational activities (such as walking, jogging, cycling, yoga and gym or sports such as parkour) rather than traditional, structured sports. These unstructured activities can generally occur at any time of day, individually or in groups.

It is important for governments and planning agencies to be aware of this shift to ensure that unstructured sports and recreation are catered for in order to meet increased demand.



#### **Standards and Community Expectations**

Today's society places high expectations upon community facilities, including recreational infrastructure and there are increasing standards for public safety, risk mitigation and environmental/cultural management measures.

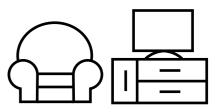
Designers and installers are required to exercise due diligence and refer to the latest standards when designing and installing parkour related infrastructure to ensure the safety of the community. The latest parkour standards to be released are the Australian European 'Sports and recreational equipment - Parkour equipment - Safety requirements and test methods' (AS EN 16899:2020).



## **Leveraging from Sport and Recreation**

Governments at all levels are increasingly utilising sport and recreation to achieve policy objectives. Sport and recreation services and programs are increasingly incorporated to tackle a range of issues such as childhood obesity and social inclusion.

Parkour can be used as a tool to engage wider sectors of the community. Programs involving parkour-based activities can stimulate interest in topics such as active lifestyles, as well as bring physical and mental health benefits. These opportunities should not be looked at in isolation, particularly when objectives of such initiatives can support each other.



## **Inactivity and Obesity**

Inactivity is the fourth largest cause of noncommunicable disease in Australia. Inactivity in children is growing, linked to a decline in physical activity in schools, less active commuting & changing behaviours.

Provision of active recreation opportunities is a role of all levels of governments which is becoming increasingly acknowledged and valued in the community. It is important that investment in popular recreational activities and associated infrastructure is well planned and aimed at all ages, to encourage maximum community participation and healthy, active lifestyles.

# 

## **Web-Based Systems**

Recreation and physical activities are being transformed by technology. For example, social technologies have created online communities (e.g. Strava), and GPS enabled apps and wearable technology (e.g. Fitbit) allow users to track their performance and share this with others. QR Codes are also being more frequently included on signage, allowing immediate access to relevant information and downloads by the click of a button.

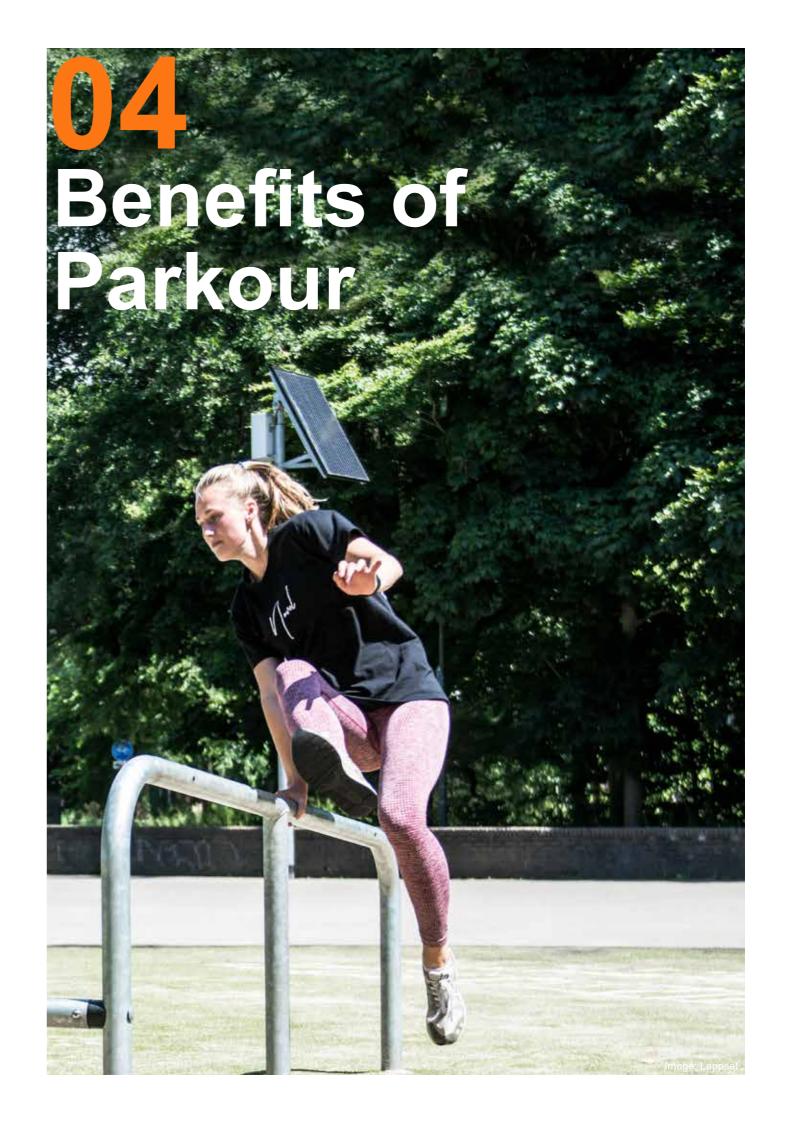
The widespread availability of this technology is enabling the development of virtual user communities which are providing motivation and discovery of new places and ways to be active. A great example of this is at the Pelican Waters Central Park in Caloundra, QLD, which features QR Codes on the accompanying parkour signage that play instructional YouTube videos on how to warm up and how to use each piece of equipment.



## **User-Generated Content**

Online parkour information and content is becoming increasingly accessible via third-party websites and apps (e.g. you tube, Instagram).

This can aid in advertising new facilities or suitable locations for parkour extremely quickly. Parkour has become of the most viewed sports in the world through user-generated content shared online and demonstrates the success a well designed, fit for purpose parkour facility could have if shared through the right avenues.



## Benefits of Parkour

There are numerous mental, physical and social benefits parkour provides. Due to the sport requiring the participant to utilise a range of different skillsets and the entire body, parkour provides benefits not offered by many sporting codes.

A number of health benefits provided by parkour have been outlined below.



## Parkour is a full body workout

Parkour requires participants to utilise multiple major and minor muscle groups to pilot themselves through various features and spaces. The use of these muscles in quick short bursts and lifting body weight aids in muscle growth and development and can increase a persons stamina and all round fitness.

Parkour not only gives the body a workout but also the mind as participants are forced to quickly solve problems and react creatively to navigate spaces whilst on the move. This provides a deeper and more rewarding workout than a static gym session due to utilising brain power and muscles at once.



## Cardiovascular endurance

Parkour encourages play, and play often comes with long spans of quick movement, which can provide cardiovascular benefits. The constant movement, and jumping requires stamina and improves oxygen supply throughout the body through strengthening the heart muscle, deep breathing exercises are also often associated with parkour whilst assessing and navigating a feature or element.



### **Increased Bone Strength**

Parkour can aid in developing bone strength and density. Participants will endure numerous lower and upper body high, medium and low impacts throughout the course of a parkour session, enabling your body to build stronger bones from the impact they endure. Parkour is to be undertaken with particular techniques which reduce shock on bones and when done correctly aid in developing and strengthening them.



## Promotes quicker thinking with fewer mistakes

Parkour is a mental sport as much as it is physical. Parkour participants are required to make fast and on the spot decisions regarding their next movements. Many parkour movements train participants to make logical and calculated decisions quickly in order to successfully navigate spaces. By training movements and progressions, participants can increase their base reaction times and accuracy which can also be applied to everyday life.



## Fosters creativity

Parkour encourages participants to use their creativity. Every element or obstacle encountered in parkour is different and may not have an obvious solution, hence requiring the participants to use their creativity to identify the most effective or visually appealing way in which to tackle it. This eventually allows athletes the ability to find parkour value in everyday environments and objects. Subconsciously, participants will utilise the creativity and way of thinking learned through parkour in their everyday lives such as school, work or other sporting codes.



#### **Boosts confidence**

Parkour is a sport which requires patience, progression and training. At the beginning, parkour may seem difficult and some objects unachievable, but over time participants will find themselves improving and developing new skills and discovering their bodies hidden talents. This improved confidence within themselves and deeper understanding of their bodies allows them to tackle the once difficult elements and apply this to real life situations.



#### Skill-related fitness

Skill-related fitness refers to an athlete's repertoire of movements or skills that they can utilise to conquer different situations and obstacles. The skills required for parkour are not typically required for everyday life such as balancing, jumping, landing and therefore build on a participants overall abilities and agility. Parkour participants will learn over time to quickly utilise their new skills to tackle features and obstacles, these techniques can also be applied and adapted to suit everyday life and other sports to reduce the risk of injury or improve performance. Parkour participants not only become mentally fit, but also enjoy a sense of security and improvement in everyday life and movement.



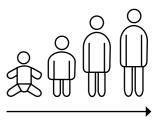
## **Builds core strength**

Parkour requires participants to utilise their core muscles repetitively over the course of a parkour session. Parkour helps to build core muscles which promotes better posture and reduces the risk of lower back injury through bending, twisting and transferring power and strength across the body.



#### Reduces antisocial behavior

Parkour has been proven to reduce anti-social behavior. A youth incentive study in Westminster in conjunction with parkour coaching discovered that crime rates had reduced by 69% in youth aged 8-19 who had undertaken parkour training and instruction. Parkour aids in building mental strength and fortitude and teaches participants to approach situations from different angles/view points. These mental benefits can reduce anti-social behaviour as participants are able to asses real life situations from multiple angles, often resulting in a more positive outcome.



#### Suitable for all ages and abilities

Parkour is suitable for all age groups and abilities. Lots of people associate parkour with needing to perform highly technical stunts they have seen on the internet, whereas in reality parkour can be undertaken at all levels. Parkour equipment can be utilised by both beginner's and highly experienced parkour professionals. The same approach that is required for a beginner to learn a new skill is required for an experienced professional. Participants begin with the strength and mobility they currently have, and through progression, practice and by breaking down the desired movement into achievable steps they eventually are able to achieve it.

The multi-dimensional nature of parkour means that a large variety of people can enter the sport, this means that the parkour community is generally more diverse than communities in more skill-specific disciplines which adds social diversity and multiple benefits to parkour.

## 04 Benefits of Parkour





Parkour requires good hand-eye coordination as participants are required to effectively judge distances and objects whilst quickly and efficiently moving through a space. Practicing parkour requires the use of both brain and body which helps to improve overall reaction times which can be applied to everyday tasks and other sporting codes.



#### Risk evaluation

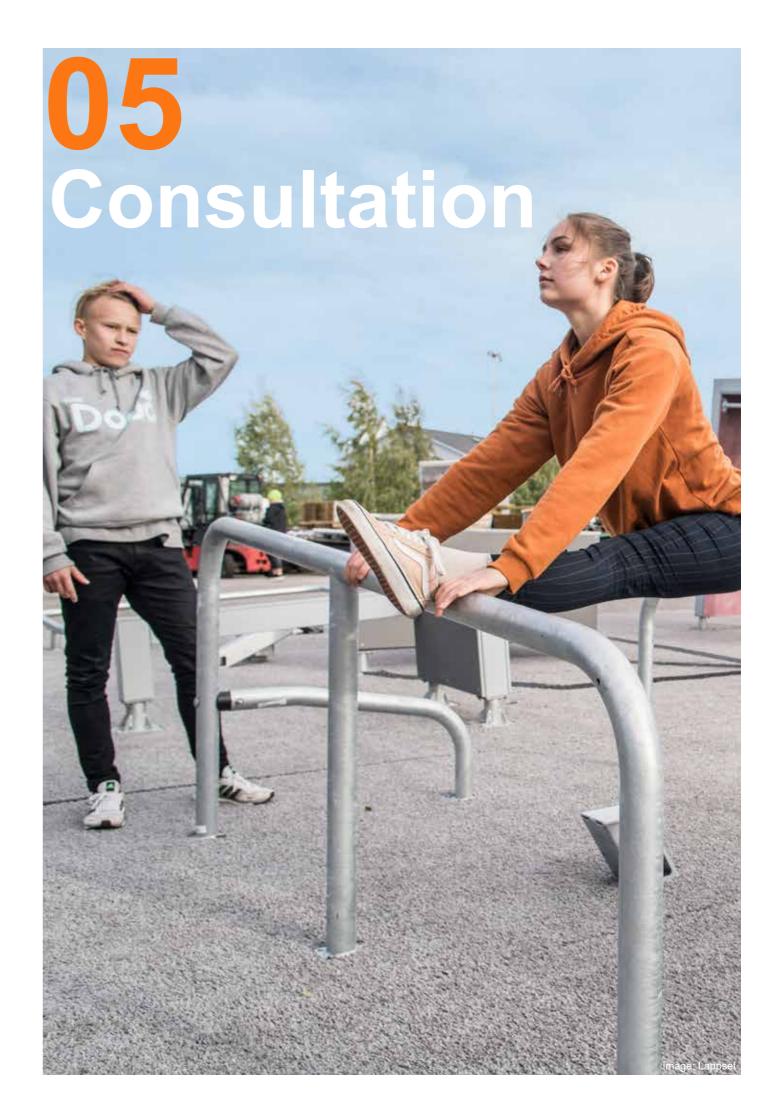
Parkour teaches risk management. Before attempting any obstacle, parkour participants are required to assess it first in order to find the most suitable and safest way to conquer it. Over time, participants will learn new risk evaluation techniques, allowing them to assess an obstacle or potential movement in relation to their personal skill level.

Developing risk management skills reduce the risk of injury in not only parkour but everyday life, as participants are aware of what their body is capable of and when they should say no to certain tasks or obstacles that are beyond their skill level. By understanding their own limits, participants are able to improve themselves in these areas. Parkour requires participants to break an overall move down into parts and practice the individual elements of it that they struggle with, eventually piecing it all back together to complete the move in one motion and hence expand their abilities.



#### Cost

Unlike many sporting codes parkour can be a completely cost free sport and can be completed almost anywhere and at any time. This means it can cater to anyone, particularly young people who are not yet earning money in the workforce. Participants require a good set of running shoes with good grip to aid with agility and traction but outside of this do not require anything else, many practitioners are also known to undertake parkour in bare feet. Parkour can be undertaken for free in urban, rural or natural environments or on purposebuilt parkour equipment, removing expensive club or membership fees. It is important to note that there are purpose-built indoor parkour training facilities where participants are required to pay if they desire.



## 05 Consultation

## **Consultation Approach**

Consultation has been an important factor in the development of the Parkour White Paper as it aids in understanding the existing perceptions, issues and key considerations held by local government councils and key stakeholders across Australia in relation to parkour.

The consultation process included:

- Targeted online survey which was distributed via email to all LGA councils across Australia
- Key Focus Group Workshop including targeted interviews/liaison with key stakeholders



Parkour White Paper Online Survey Banner



Parkour White Paper Key Focus Group Workshop Presentation

## Key Consultation and Key Focus Group **Outcomes Summary**

The targeted online survey and key focus group results have been summarised below.

The results identified that 87% of people surveyed knew of parkour (to varying degrees), however only 17% of them had installed parkour equipment in their council area. This much lower installation rate was shown to be due to those surveyed not knowing the popularity of parkour amongst young people and adults in Australia and across the globe, being restricted by project budgets and also not knowing who to consult when developing parkour spaces. Another deterrent for people installing parkour is concerns with the safety of the sport, it was voted that participants observed the risk of parkour being just over average at 62 out of 100.

Many of the participants (85%) were not aware that there are Australian/European Standards for parkour equipment which provide recommendations for equipment type, distances, surface finishes and installation that have been developed to reduce the risk of injury and create safer and more family friendly facilities.

The survey and key focus group identified that councils typically opt for installing play equipment for children aged under 12 years old, followed by skateparks for beginners, outdoor gym equipment, play equipment for teenagers, skateparks for intermediate and advanced users and BMX tracks. Many were are not aware that some parkour equipment can cater to all age groups, allowing for it to provide for a larger user group than typical play equipment.

65% of participants in the targeted online survey identified that they see a need for the development of infrastructure that encourages children and young people to get outside and get active. It was recorded that within the next 12 months, 6% of participants would be highly likely to install parkour equipment in their council area, 38% were to moderately likely to install parkour equipment and 53% were unlikely to. However, in the long term, the majority of participants (59%) would consider, and 35% would maybe consider installing parkour equipment as part of future play and youth spaces.

This demonstrates that councils acknowledge that parkour is a viable and versatile recreational option for parks and urban areas and that it is becoming a more popular option as people discover its benefits.

## **Targeted Online Survey Results**

The below infographics represent the results from the online survey sent out to council's across Australia.

## **Total Responses:**



Have you heard of parkour?



spaces?

parkour? (Average)

100%

50%



**Budget restraints** 

parkour?

You are unaware of its growing popularity

What are your reasons for not catering for

16%

21%

parkour design

You are unsure of what parkour is

You are unsure who to consult about



You do not think parkour is suitable activity to include in parks, reserves, playspaces or open spaces

5%



Safety

26%



Demographic profile of the area

association present in Australia? (Australian **Parkour Association**)









Have you installed any parkour equipment

in your parks, reserves, playspaces or open

How would you perceive the level of risk of

High Risk

**-62%** 

**Medium Risk** 



23%







Were you aware there is a professional parkour



Low Risk

Are you aware that there is a European standard for parkour equipment?





How likely would you be to install parkour equipment in your parks, reserves, playspaces or open spaces over the next 12 months?



Highly likely

5.77%



Moderately likely



38.46%



Unlikely

53.85%



Parkour will not be considered

1.92%

What types of permanent outdoor activity solutions your organisation typically considers/ provides.



Play equipment/spaces for children under 12 years of age

98%



Play equipment/spaces for teenagers

67%



Play equipment/spaces for adults

35%



Skate parks (beginner)

77%



Skate parks (intermediate/ advanced)

60%



BMX tracks (recreational)

50%



Pump tracks

**52%** 



Outdoor gym equipment

77%



Outdoor table tennis



31%



Rock climbing walls/equipment



13%



Other

19%

Many play and youth spaces throughout the world and Australia are now incorporating parkour into their designs and installations. Would your organisation consider developing parkour into future play and youth spaces?



YES



**MAYBE** 

35%

Does your organisation see a need for the development of novel activities that will attract children and young people outdoors and encourage them to be physically active?







**UNDECIDED** 12%

## 05 Consultation

## Key Focus Group Workshop

A key focus group workshop was held over a Zoom video conference with numerous key stakeholders. The workshop introduced the project and provided an overview of the purpose of the study, detailed the different types of parkour and participation numbers, provided some key case study examples to demonstrate successful projects that have included parkour in their designs and summarised the targeted online consultation results. The workshop then allowed for an open discussion between Tredwell and participants where a series of questions were tabled that encouraged responses regarding the participants perceptions, issues, risks, benefits and investments associated with parkour.

The results from the discussions have been summarised below.

## Were you aware of parkour?

All participants were aware of parkour and had been considering including parkour in future projects to provide a different experience for the community. The participants stated that over recent years they had installed numerous skate park and BMX pump track facilities and that these areas were now well catered to, however, they were lacking in infrastructure to support less mainstream sports such as parkour.

## What do you see as the value + benefits parkour brings to the community?

The participants agreed that there are numerous benefits associated with parkour, including improving physical and mental health through body movement and exercise. The participants also agreed that the parkour case studies shown to them illustrated how versatile parkour equipment can be which they ultimately provides benefits to a broader age group than traditional style play.

## Has your council/organisation installed parkour before? Why/why not?

The participants councils had not installed parkour but were considering it for future projects. They were interested in learning more about parkour, particularly the types of parkour and how these can be incorporated in to parks and reserves.

## If you have installed parkour, do you see it as being a successful investment? Why/why not?

The participants were unsure of how successful the investment would be from installing parkour equipment due to not having previously installed it. Discussions were held about how parkour could be incorporated into broader recreation projects such as skate parks or alongside playspaces and how this may improve the investment benefits of installing parkour equipment. It was determined that installing parkour equipment onto existing recreation infrastructure could be a suitable way to test the success of parkour equipment as an investment.

## Do you see parkour as a risky investment due to the apparent risk associated with the sport?

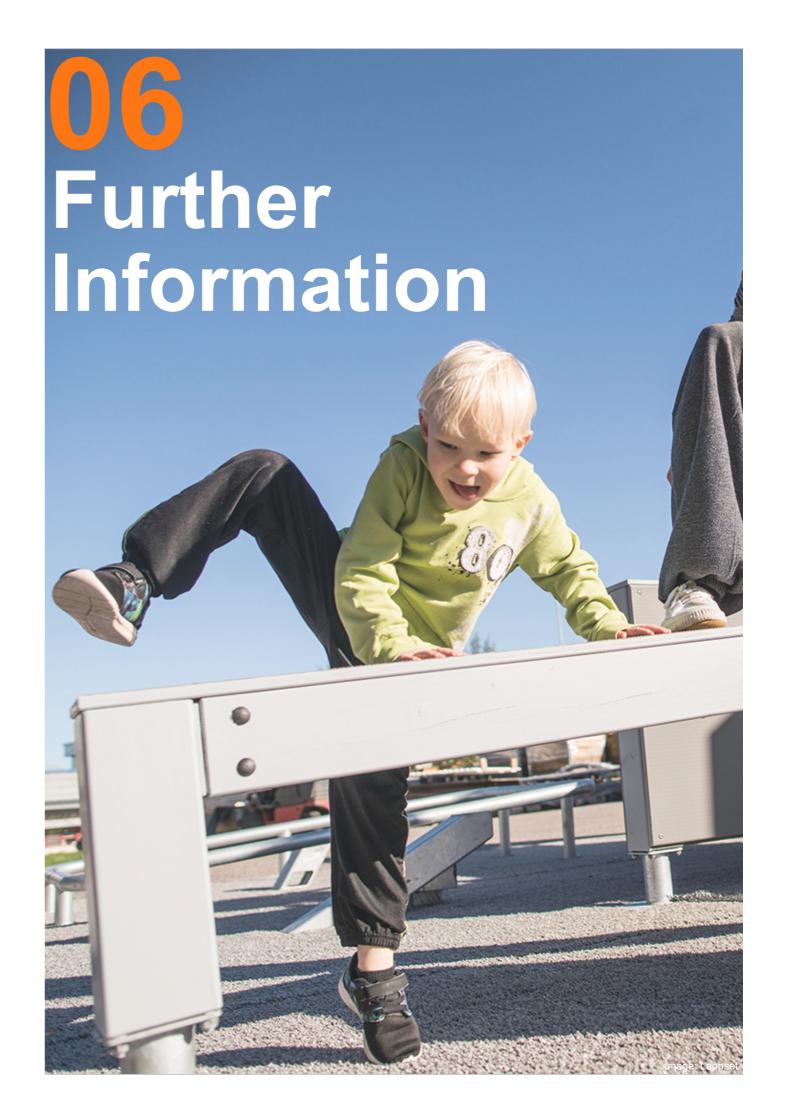
The participants noted that parkour seemed no less risky than skate park and BMX facilities that they had installed previously.

# What barriers does your council/organisation face to prevent parkour installation? E.G. Insurance/liability, budgets etc.

Budget restraints were raised as a large issue faced by participants. However, due to their recent installation of numerous skate park and BMX facilities they stated that future funding would be applied to alternate sports and recreational activities to provide a different experiences/opportunities for the community.

# Overall, would you consider installing parkour equipment as a stand alone project or as part of a broader project (e.g. Skate park)?

All participants voted that they would consider installing parkour as a part of a broader project or as a stand alone feature.



## 06 Further Information

## Websites and Contact Details

For further information on the sport of parkour, parkour ranges, projects and industry contacts please refer to the list below.

## Websites:

Lark Industries www.larkindustries.com.au

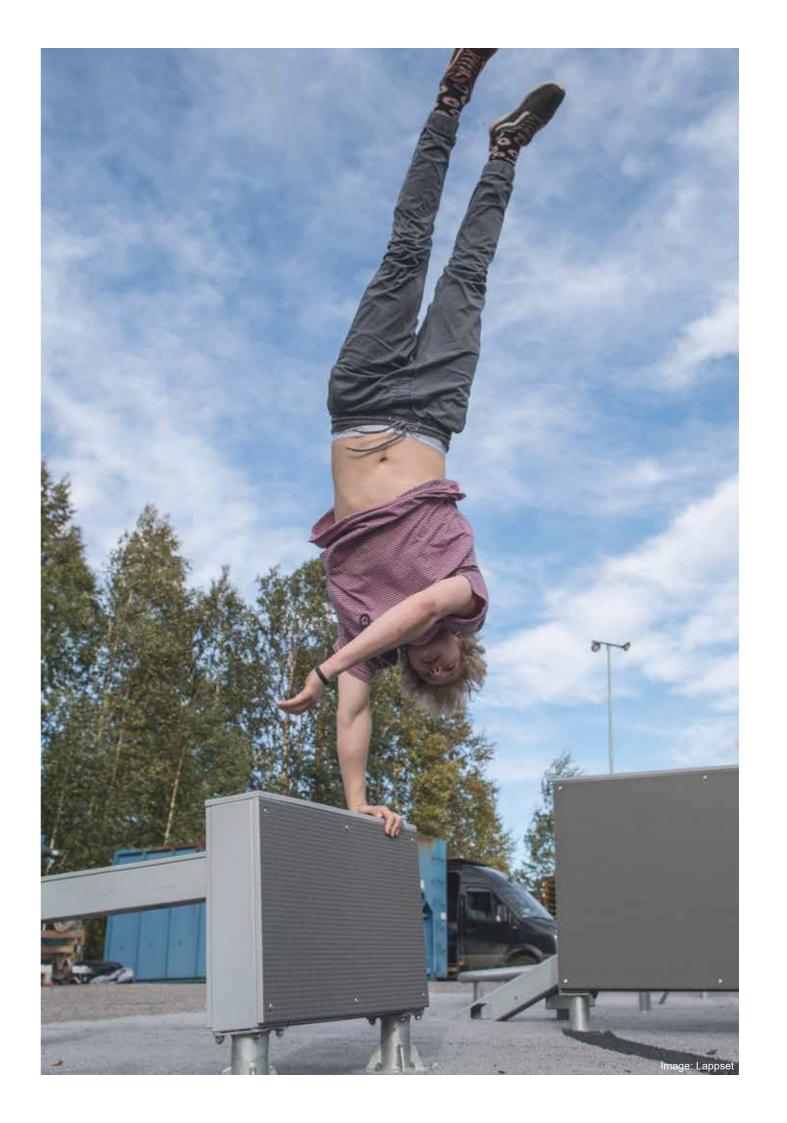
Australian Parkour Association www.parkour.asn.au

Lappset www.lappset.com

## Contacts:

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