

# PACIFIC NORTHWEST OUTDOOR ASSOCIATION

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**TO:** Board Members Timothy, Wan, Roy, and Yolanda

**FROM:** Patrick Ni, PNOA Event Leader

**DATE:** August 12, 2026

**SUBJECT: Formal Statement of Non-Confidence Regarding President Paul Tan and Demand for Resignation**

**Dear Timothy, Wan, Roy, and Yolanda,**

I am writing directly to you as members of the PNOA Board of Directors to formally present a statement of non-confidence in President Paul Tan, and to request that the Board call for his immediate resignation from the presidency and his position on the Board.

As an active event leader within PNOA, maintaining safety protocols, transparent communication, and reliable group governance is vital to our organization's mission and survival. Mr. Tan's continued leadership represents a direct liability to participant safety and a severe dishonor to the association.

## **1. Gross Negligence and Safety Protocol Failures (Mount Brunswick Incident)**

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During the tragic March 21 incident on Mount Brunswick that resulted in the death of our dear member, Rock, Mr. Tan demonstrated a complete failure to adhere to PNOA safety protocols:

- **Failure to Apply the Swiss Cheese Model:** Mr. Tan failed to follow our core risk-management framework. He appears not to understand its basic principles—or, if he does understand them, his deliberate disregard of them is even worse.
- **Ignored Avalanche Hazards:** Mr. Tan failed to check Avalanche Canada forecasts on March 20 or 21. He either does not understand how to interpret an avalanche bulletin or showed total indifference to critical alpine hazard data.
- **Lack of Participant Screening:** He failed to screen participants, bringing a female member who was not physically fit or qualified for Mount Brunswick under winter conditions.
- **Failure to Abort or Turn Back:** Despite clear opportunities to cancel or turn around at any point prior to reaching the true summit—starting at the trailhead—he pressed forward recklessly.
- **Lack of Technical Gear:** Despite advancing into hazardous terrain, no group members were equipped with mandatory winter alpine gear, including ice axes, crampons, or helmets.

- **Preventable Tragedy:** Rock lost his life attempting to save the falling participant. This loss was directly preventable had PNOA safety protocols been enforced.

## 2. Lack of Judgment and Leadership Stability

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Mr. Tan's decisions on Mount Brunswick reflect a broader pattern of poor operational judgment and emotional/psychological instability required of a leader:

- **Pattern of Instability:** It is my observation that a lack of fundamental leadership qualities and emotional stability contributed not only to the death of Rock, but also to the bicycle accident in 2025 that left his wife, Karen, injured.
- **Logistical Failures for Upcoming Trips (Mount Assiniboine Expedition):** Ahead of our upcoming August 15 expedition to Mount Assiniboine, other board members actively encouraged participants to meet or complete test hikes with me. While Mr. Tan endorsed a participant named Charlie in our WeChat group, he did not encourage Charlie to meet with me. Charlie subsequently proved highly erratic and difficult to communicate with, creating unnecessary logistical friction right before a complex backcountry trip. Endorsing a participant while failing to foster critical pre-trip communication demonstrates a total lack of operational foresight.

## Conclusion and Call to Action

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The fact that Paul Tan remains President of PNOA is a disgrace to the memory of Rock and an active hazard to our members. His lack of judgment, failure to follow safety protocols, and lack of emotional stability render him unfit to hold any leadership position in PNOA.

I urge you—Timothy, Wan, Roy, and Yolanda—to act swiftly to demand Paul Tan's immediate resignation as President and remove him from the Board of Directors to restore integrity, safety, and accountability to our organization.

**Patrick Ni**

PNOA Event Leader