



# THE BUSH CLUB INC.

## NOTES FOR LEADERS

### PLANNING A WALK

1. Choose areas and walk levels that are within your capabilities as a leader.
2. Submit your walk details preferably via the online form on our website - <http://www.bushclub.org.au/OnlineForms/WalkSubmissions/WalkSubmissionForm.htm>  
Use the Grading Guide <http://www.bushclub.org.au/down/GradingGuide.pdf> (3 pages)  
See end of this document for suggestions to use in describing your walk.
3. Pre-walk the route if possible and identify hazards and assess risks. Look for good morning tea and lunch spots. If you wish to do a recce for a walk, you will be covered by Bush Club insurance if you notify the Walks Secretary by email beforehand and have a total of at least 2 Bush Club members on the walk.
4. Control and manage risks. Try and have an alternate plan in case of unforeseen circumstances. e.g. flash flooding, track erosion, transport changes etc.
5. Leave comprehensive details of the walk with a reliable person including instructions on what to do if you do not return at the expected time.
6. A few days prior to your walk check transport details, expected weather conditions and in summer, fire conditions, park closures etc. Walks should be altered or cancelled if conditions are unsafe.
7. **Remote walks** - consider whether it is appropriate to carry a PLB and for at least one person other than leader to carry a map or GPS device.
8. **First aid kits\***

\* It is mandatory for leaders to carry a first aid kit but for higher grade/remote area first aid kits needs to be more substantial. It is recommended that the leader confirm that walkers are carrying an appropriate first aid kit.

eg grade 1-2-3NR (lesser requirement); NR=non remote

grade 3R-6 (more substantial requirement); R= remote##

## Remote area definition from Remote Area First Aid Course which is medical assistance is likely to be more than 30 minutes away. Also subject to leader discretion eg the Harbour Bridge to Manly grade 4 walkers to carry a NR first aid kit.

### CONDITIONS FOR HOLDING A WALK

1. All day walks must be held unless conditions are unsafe. See Risk management in Planning a walk.
2. A minimum of four (4) Bush Club members or prospective members, including leader, is required for a Club walk. If fewer than four, including leader, a walk, if continued, is not an official Club activity and the Club's insurance arrangements do not apply.
3. To be covered by insurance all bush walks conducted under the auspices of the Bush Club must either be listed on the regular Bush Club or Short Notice Programs. For any other unpublished change eg a change of route, a second leader, contact with the Walks Secretary or a committee member must be made prior to the walk commencing in order to ensure insurance coverage.
4. The leader must advise the cancellation of a walk via the online program. This can be done without waiting for the update email.
  - The Leader has no responsibility to turn up at the start of a walk if a cancellation notice has been recorded with the online program, even for a non-contact walk.
  - Before the walk is cancelled, the leader should try to find a substitute (list available from the online program) or advertise for one in the Program updates email (contact [bushclubsnw@gmail.com](mailto:bushclubsnw@gmail.com))
  - An alternative walk can also be offered if there is a substitute leader who is not familiar with the original walk.
  - Some of the more difficult walks cannot have leader substitutes. In such cases these walks should be listed as Contact Leader Walks and all members notified that the walk has been cancelled.

5. **Joint walks** can be listed on the Bush Club program, but only if they are held in conjunction with another club that is affiliated with the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs, and holds appropriate insurances (check at <http://www.bushwalking.org.au/clubs.html> ). If this is not the case, the activity cannot be listed as a Bush Club event.

## **AT THE START AND DURING A WALK**

1. Carry map, compass, first aid kit, torch and any other equipment appropriate for the planned activity.
2. Sign-on for walks - Ensure all participants fill out walks attendance form, and guest waiver form for visitors. Without it both the member and the leader may be vulnerable to claims, and not protected by the Bush Club insurance arrangements.
  - **PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS** are expected to contact the leader before attending any walk: they are advised to commence with Grade 2 or easier grade 3 walks if new to bushwalking, to work up to qualifying walks. There is a separate space on the form for prospectives to sign on.
  - **VISITORS** may take part in walks only if invited by a full member (who must be present on the walk) and subject to the leader's prior approval. Approval should be requested by the member, not the visitor. A leader has the right to refuse to take visitors on walks. Visitors will be granted temporary club membership to enable them to take part in the activity, after signing the Guest Waiver form (this can be printed from the For Leaders web page as part of the Walk Report form).
3. Ensure that you have accounted for all those you know are coming, or have thoroughly checked the advertised meeting place(s) if no prior contact with the leader was required.
4. Hold an introductory circle prior to setting out and advise details of walk including expected terrain, distance, possible hazards, expected return time etc.
5. If away from built-up areas, explain the route in general terms to the group and endeavour to establish if there is someone who could lead the walk if the nominated leader is unable to continue
6. Ascertain if anyone is carrying a mobile phone for emergency use and whether any participants have a first aid certificate and/or medical training.
7. Control and manage risks.
  - The leader has the right to refuse participation to any persons they consider may present a risk to themselves or other participants.
  - Check that all participants are able and suitably equipped for the activity.
  - Ensure everyone has adequate water, at least one litre. In hotter conditions carry two litres or more, plus electrolytes, food, electrolytes, hats, sunscreen
  - Ensure group have adequate warm clothing e.g. hats, thermals, jacket
  - Have a reliable person act as "tail" for the group and advise participants never to fall behind this person.
  - Wait at track junctions to ensure nobody goes the wrong way or appoint a person to wait.
  - Carry out regular head counts to ensure you have everyone.
  - Take extra time over crossings and assist inexperienced walkers. Consider alternate route if possible
  - Have regular drink/rest breaks and allow walkers to regroup.
  - Ensure everyone is comfortable with the pace and conditions. Remember it is easier for faster walkers to slow down rather than slow walkers to speed up.
  - Take regular drink stops
  - Carry snake/pressure bandage
  - Wear gaiters

## **SEARCH AND RESCUE**

Contact the police or other emergency agency only if life or limb is endangered.

In the event of a party being overdue or some other incident, phone Bush Club contacts

Graham Conden 0418 647951; Keith Maxwell 0431 262101; Lynn Dabbs 0408 214669

**TEXT EMERGENCY CALL - Dial 106**

## **Bush Search and Rescue NSW 0427 455 897.**

Wait for the number to connect. It takes around 10 seconds to do so as its rings through a few phone diversions, so don't hang up! The previous BWRS paging service has been shut down.

## AT THE END OF THE WALK

1. Ensure that all participants have arrived at the finishing point.
2. **Send in your walk report**
  - Include reports of any unusual incidents/injuries.
  - If there are prospectives on a qualifying walk, mention whether they completed it satisfactorily.
  - Add a brief comment to be included in the online report (optional).

### **Preferred method:**

Send email to Jacqui Hickson [bushclubwebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:bushclubwebmaster@gmail.com)

List the members, prospectives and guests in a paragraph across the page, separated by a comma and space.

You don't need to send the original form unless you can't read the names or make a guess.

Keep the original if there was an incident on the walk.

If you have to send the original, scan and email it to [bushclubwebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:bushclubwebmaster@gmail.com).

### **OR**

Post completed walks forms to Bush Club Reports, 32 Bellevue St Chatswood 2067

## DETAILED SUGGESTIONS FOR DESCRIBING A WALK

**When you fill in the online form you'll be specifically prompted for some of this information.**

### **What to include in the description column**

1. Route to be followed (points visited along the way)
2. Description of route (bush tracks, streets, parklands, footpaths, roads, firetrails, cycleways, walkways, reserves, wetlands, ridges, creeks, gullies, off-track, GRs to be followed)
3. Features (views, swims, canyons, caves, forests, rock art, waterfalls, lookouts, plateaus, pagodas, chasms, history, lunch, coffee etc)
4. Challenges (abseiling, steps and stairs, cliffs, ladders, rock scrambling, exposure to heights, rivers, rock hopping, wet feet, steep terrain, thick scrub, spikes and chains, ropework etc)
5. Special features or difficulties of the walk
  - special terrain including off-track, creek crossings,
  - emphasise if the walk includes an abseiling or walk-through canyon. If there is one, give the grading for the canyon here
  - large/steep ascents and descents or exposure
  - for pack walks, a combination of grades/descriptions or the highest grade of walk on the trip
  - a more detailed pace description e.g. 'experienced walkers only' if necessary
  - if the walk is exploratory (this can only be in higher grades)
  - limits on numbers eg in national parks, wilderness areas or for logistical reasons
  - joint walk details
  - any other special variations eg "Stops to look at views, flowers"
6. Special requirements (leg and body protection, gaiters, fitness, comfort with heights, shoes for slippery conditions, helmet, harness, wetsuit etc)
7. Any other details
  - assistant leader if abseiling involved
  - costs
  - overseas insurances
  - booking arrangements and deadlines
  - vacancies
  - early start
  - full details to follow
  - contact leader for itinerary
  - expressions of interest sought etc