

Bankstown Bushwalking Club Inc.

Risk Management Policy and Procedure

As approved by the Management Committee on 12 September, 2021.

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1. Introduction

The Club is committed to organising safe and enjoyable outdoor activities, in accordance with the aims and broad procedures laid out in the [Bushwalking NSW Risk Management Guidelines](#).

Experienced Club members mentor new members and leaders and help them learn bush skills such as navigation and safe walking practices. The Club provides abseil instruction, conducts information sessions, and provides guidelines for activity participants and leaders on the Club web site. This training is of an informal nature, and the people providing it are not professional trainers in the field. Rather, they are experienced members passing on what they have learnt through experience.

This Risk Management Procedure (“the procedure”) guides how Bankstown Bushwalking Club Inc. (“the Club”) manages the risks associated with Club activities.

Risk management activities conducted within the Club aim to ensure that:

- All participants understand their role and responsibilities when involved in Club activities,
- Effective emergency plans are formulated and implemented when needed,
- Training and/or guidance is provided to members as necessary.

2. Scope

The procedure will apply to all Club activities, other than social activities. Social activities do not require inclusion in this procedure as the risk management procedure and practices of the appropriate venue or land manager will apply.

The procedure applies to all Club members and visitors participating in these events. It also outlines the role and responsibilities of committee members and leaders in managing risks associated with Club activities.

3. Approach to Risk Management

Identifying Hazards and Assessing Risks

Risks associated with most classes of Club activities are identified by the walks and abseil committees. Those committees provide guidance and training to activity leaders to enable them to manage those risks. Activity leaders assess the risks associated with the particular activity they are leading and ensure that they proactively manage risks for that programmed activity.

Activity leaders and participants are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the hazards, risks, risk ratings and potential risk mitigation actions set out in section 4 of the [Bushwalking NSW Risk Management Guidelines](#) in order to properly identify, assess and manage risks.

Where risks are identified these should be clearly communicated to potential participants prior to the commencement of the activity. This should be done both prior to the activity date and during a briefing prior to the activity commencing on the day of the activity. The briefing will include a description of the risks to be encountered and the proposed mitigation actions.

Controlling and Managing Risks

Each participant in a Club activity contributes towards the proper management of risks on that activity. Leaders consider and manage the risks associated with the Club activity they are leading.

The Club has procedures in place which are followed in order to control risks. These procedures:

- Ensure that the leader is suitably skilled to lead the programmed activity,
- Provide a record of details of activity participants and their emergency contacts,
- Address particular circumstances such as the presence of children on activities, and analysing incidents and training,
- Address incident reporting,
- Ensure that legal and insurance requirements are adequately considered, and
- Manage impacts on the environment in which activities are conducted.

These procedures are outlined in Section 4, Club Procedures. A summary of the roles and responsibilities of Club members is provided at Section 5, Roles and Responsibilities.

Location of Activity

The club recognises that there is a different risk profile associated with activities held in urban areas and those held in non-urban areas.

We define an **urban activity** as one where the bulk of the activity takes place within a short distance of a road or footpath and there is mobile coverage at all times. Should an incident or accident occur it would be possible to contact emergency services by phone.

We define an activity as taking place **outside of urban areas** where all or part of the activity takes place away from roads and footpaths. Mobile coverage is not reliable. Should an incident or accident occur emergency services would most likely be contacted by PLB, due to the inherent uncertainty of the ability to contact emergency services by phone.

Communicating Good Practice

The Club provides resources relating to safety and risk management for activity leaders and participants on its web site at <http://www.bankstownbushwalkingclub.org.au/>.

Regular Review

This procedure and associated web site content is subject to an annual review by the incoming management, walks and abseil committees after each Club Annual General Meeting.

4. Club Procedures

Activity Description and Grading

Activity leaders are required to provide the walks committee with a description of their intended activity which includes sufficient detail to enable potential participants to assess their suitability for the activity. This information may include distance, height gain and loss, terrain, exposure and particular risks associated with the activity. All walks will be assigned a grading using the Club's published walks grading system. Other activities (for example abseil trips or bike rides) will include a description of difficulty and specific associated risks.

The walks committee will review the description and grading of all activities prior to publication of the activities program.

Suggested Equipment

Where particular equipment is required this should be specified by the leader in the activity description or when contacted by potential participants.

Activity Leader Guidelines

Where the activity is held outside of urban areas Activity Leaders are required to:

- provide the Club with the contact details of their emergency contact for the activity prior to the commencement of the activity, and
- provide the emergency contact with a detailed trip plan.

The emergency contact is responsible for notifying emergency services if the party is overdue.

After the completed activity (whether held in an urban area or outside of an urban area) the signed activity register should be emailed to the walks committee at bankstownbushwalks@gmail.com.

The Club web site includes Trip Leader Instructions.

Activity Participant Guidelines

The Club web site includes information about safe walking practices.

Activity Intentions and Reporting

These guidelines apply to all walks and rope-related activities.

Activities to be held outside of an urban area

Where the activity is to be held outside of an urban area, the leader should assign a trip emergency contact person for the activity and provide them with a detailed description of the activity and an estimated time out. They should also make them aware of their role, and direct them to the emergency contact resources on the Club web site.

A list of participants on the activity should be emailed to bankstownbushwalks@gmail.com so the club has an accurate listing of activity participants and contact information for personal emergency contacts in the event of an incident or emergency.

When the group completes the activity, the leader should promptly advise the trip emergency contact.

All activities

At the start of each activity, all visitors on the trip are to read, complete and sign the Activity Register to acknowledge their acceptance of the club's risk waiver. Club members are not required to sign as they have signed to acknowledge their acceptance of the club's risk waiver on their annual membership renewal form.

Following the activity, the leader emails the completed activity register to the walks committee at bankstownbushwalks@gmail.com in electronic format as soon as is practicable.

Completed Activity Registers are kept for a period of 5 years. The walks, abseil and management committees use these forms to collate information regarding Club activities if needed, e.g. for insurance purposes.

New Activity Leaders

The walks and abseil committees will decide if a prospective new activity leader has the skills and personal attributes required to lead a Club activity prior to including their activity on the program. A member of the walks committee or a more experienced leader will accompany a new leader the first time they lead a Club walks activity. The abseil committee will provide training and support for leaders of rope-related activities. A member of the abseil committee will accompany a new leader the first time they lead a Club rope-related activity.

Forms

The Club membership form contains an acknowledgement of risks and obligations which is to be signed by all Club members on an annual basis.

The Activity Register also contains an acknowledgement of risks and obligations which is to be signed by each visitor participating in the activity.

Where a club member or participant is under 18 years of age a parent or guardian must sign on their behalf.

Incident Reporting

An incident is where an event takes place which may result in an insurance claim being made, such as serious injury, death, damage to third party property or loss of possessions.

An accident is where a person is injured. A serious injury is one requiring medical attention.

If an incident occurs details should be recorded on the rear of the Activity Register. The club management committee should be notified in writing, as soon as possible. This could be through emailing details or a scanned copy of the Activity Register record to the club secretary at bankstownbush@gmail.com. The Club's web site provides guidance on the information which should be provided in the incident report.

If the incident occurred on a walk, the walks committee should also be notified. If the incident occurred on a canyon, cave or other rope-related activity, the abseil committee should also be notified.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Management Committee

After each AGM, the incoming management committee will review and, if required, update the following documents:

- This procedure,
- The activity intentions and reporting procedure,
- The incident reporting procedure,
- The Club web site and arrange for any required updates.

Walks Committee

The walks committee will:

- Consider the skills and suitability of all potential leaders prior to placing the activity on the activities program,
- Review activity descriptions and gradings and ensure that these adequately describe the activity and associated risks prior to placing the activity on the activities program,
- Provide support and guidance to all walk leaders,
- Provide input for the management committee review of applicable procedures, guidelines and web site content.

In the event of an overdue party, any member of the walks committee will:

- Provide advice and support to the trip leader's emergency contact, and
- Access information about activity participants emergency contacts and communicate with them and with emergency services as required.

Abseil Committee

The abseil committee will:

- Nominate at least one member of the abseil committee to attend each walks committee meeting,
- Review each draft activities program and ensure that all potential leaders of canyons, caves and rope-related activities have the necessary skills to lead the programmed activity. The abseil committee will advise the walks committee of any concerns about leaders prior to finalisation of each activities program,
- Conduct regular training sessions for Club members,
- Provide input for the management committee review of applicable procedures, guidelines and web site content.

After each AGM, the incoming abseil committee will review and, if necessary arrange for any required updates to the Club's web site.

Activity Leaders

- Conduct their programmed activities in accordance with trip leaders instructions, published on the Club web site,
- Review the background and experience of potential activity participants and advise them if they are not suitable for the activity,
- Where an activity is held outside of urban areas, the leader nominate an emergency contact for the activity they are leading, and ensure that this person has contact phone numbers for members of the walks committee, adequate information about what to do in case of an overdue party, and a detailed description of the proposed activity,
- Contact the emergency contact promptly when the activity is complete,
- Provide the Club with the contact details of their emergency contact for participants on their activity prior to the start of the activity by emailing bankstownbushwalks@gmail.com,
- Ensure that the activity register is completed and signed by any visitors prior to the activity, and that related procedures are followed,
- Following the activity, emailing the completed activity register to the walks committee at bankstownbushwalks@gmail.com in electronic format as soon as is practicable.
- Follow the appropriate incident reporting procedures, in the case of an incident,
- Manage impacts on the environment the activity is being held in.

Trip Emergency contact

In the event of an overdue party, the trip emergency contact is responsible for:

- notifying emergency services that the party is overdue,
- providing emergency services with the detailed trip plan if required,
- contacting a member of the walks committee so that they can liaise with emergency services and the emergency contacts of activity participants as required.

Activity Participants (both members and visitors)

- Inform the leader of any medical condition (including any medication being taken) which may affect their participation in an activity,
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety,
- Exercise a duty of care to all other participants,
- Ensure that they have the health and fitness levels sufficient to safely complete the activities they undertake,
- Carry any medication and equipment appropriate to the activities they undertake,
- Follow all reasonable instructions from the leader,
- Adhere to the guidelines for activity participants published on the Club web site,
- Ensure a risk waiver form is signed upon becoming a Club member, and annually when renewing membership,
- Provide the activity leader with contact details of their emergency contact either by email prior to the activity or by completing the relevant part of the Activity Register,
- Sign the activity register prior to each activity (visitors only),
- Respect the environment the activity is being held in.