Guide For Trip Leaders

Before the outing

(a) If unfamiliar with the area you intend to walk in, consult a guide book and/or talk to someone who is familiar with the area.
(b) Ideally survey or pre-walk the route, especially if off-track. Be aware of the need for any shortcuts/escape routes in case of illness/accident/bad weather/etc.
(c) Seek the permission of landowners, and/or obtain camping permits, if applicable.
(d) Prior (at least 10 days) to the meeting and prior to the closing date of 'Footprint', write an article for 'Footprint' and give it to the editor. The article should include:
   - Location of the walk, and the quality/distance of road access to it.
   - Time and place of departure.
   - Distance, approximate time, and degree of difficulty of the walk - overstate rather than understate. Include a grading for the walk as a summary.
   - Any special requirements, such as swimming gear, protection from unfriendly vegetation.
   - For a weekend trip, facilities available at the campsite and costs involved.
   - Any other applicable costs, such as canoe or bus hire.

(e) Contact a National Parks ranger or other local person a few days before the trip for an update on track and camp conditions.
(f) Assess whether it is necessary to carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)

At the meeting

At the meeting before the outing (or sooner for popular campsites, canoe trips etc, where early bookings may be required):

(a) Give a description of the trip and answer any questions that may arise. Include information on suitable footwear, and the likely need for water.
(b) Collect deposits from intending participants where booking of campsites/canoes/bus/etc is required.
(c) When necessary, get a cheque from the Treasurer for National Park permits or booking campsites/canoes/bus/etc.
(d) Be prepared to help inexperienced/novice walkers on equipment/gear they will need, and on the suitability of the trip for them. **If in doubt, advise them to take an easier option.**
(e) Collect the sign-on sheet for your outing before leaving the meeting.
(f) Look at the participant list. Where you have concerns that a walk is beyond the capabilities of a walker, or you are uncertain of a walker's abilities, you may advise the walker that they are not eligible for that particular walk under club by-laws.
(g) Pick up club PLB if required. The last person using the PLB should ensure it is available.

During the outing

At the departure point:

(a) ensure non-members sign the *Acknowledgment of Risks and Obligations by Non-Members (Visitors)* forms.
(b) Check all have signed the walk registration sheet and provided emergency contact details.
(c) Check walkers, particularly inexperienced walkers, are adequately equipped- eg. have water, not wearing thongs, carrying first aid kit, etc
(d) Ensure that any minors are under the care and supervision of a responsible adult.
(e) Check to see if any GPS unit, mobile phone, or PLB is being carried.

On the walk:

(a) Count heads at the start, and regularly during the walk.
(b) Keep the group together with an experienced walker as "Tail-end Charlie", especially if off-track walking.
(c) Keep an eye on new or inexperienced walkers
(d) Adjust the pace to allow for the slowest walker. Be aware of the possible need for unplanned rest stops.
(e) Be prepared to abort the outing at any time, if necessary.
(f) Navigate and generally walk safely.
(f) Leaders are responsible for ensuring that any walker who cannot complete the walk is assisted in returning to an appropriate point.

After the outing

(a) Get each participant to sign-off on the trip sheet, to ensure all are accounted for.
(b) Encourage someone to write a trip report for "Footprint".
(c) Ensure all vehicles start OK before leaving for the trip home.
(d) Contact the leader of the next walk on the program to arrange handover of the PLB.

Incidents

Leaders should be aware of the potential need to manage an incident. In this context, an incident is an accident leading to injury of one or more of the party. For any incident, it is recommended that an Incident Report Form be completed to support any subsequent accident insurance claim.

In general, consider two types of incident: minor and major incidents.

A minor incident is one in which the injury can be managed adequately using the resources within the group (for example, a sprained ankle that needs strapping, or a gashed arm that requires control of the bleeding). For a minor incident, the group is able to recover the injured party without outside assistance.

A major incident is one in which assistance beyond the resources of the group is required to achieve recovery of the injured party. This assistance could come from ambulance, SES, police, and/or national Park rangers.

Management of an incident could include some or all of the following:

(a) Ensure the rest of the group is not in danger from the same or another cause.
(b) Appoint a responsible person(s) to manage the injury, apply first aid, etc
(c) Regardless of group size, try to avoid becoming the one person doing everything. If necessary, nominate/delegate the most experienced/suitable person to take responsibility for managing the incident. Avoid having only one person who is in charge and also doing all the work, so that neither is done effectively. Your role as trip leader does not change.
(d) In the event of a serious life threatening emergency, and phone coverage is not available, activate the PLB. Expect a delay of up to 24 hours before help will be available.
(e) If phone coverage is available, ensure the authorities are notified in a clear and concise manner. Ascertain their estimated time of arrival.
(f) The emergency service will ask the following questions:
  1: The exact location of the incident
  2:What has happened
  3: How many involved
  4: The nature of the injuries
  5: How old are the injured
  6: Are they breathing
  7: Are they conscious
(g) Appoint at least two people to go for help if necessary.
(h) Provide details of current location, nature of injury, number and names of people injured, services to contact, and any other relevant details, to the party going for help.
(i) Ensure the rescue authorities are given every assistance possible in locating and accessing the injured persons.
(j) Reserve a phone or communication device for use only in management of the emergency, so that communication capability is preserved as long as possible. The emergency mobile phone should remain off to conserve battery power when not in use.
(k) Consult the remainder of the party on the steps to be taken to manage the incident, ensure that everyone knows the problem, and the steps being taken to mitigate it. Make plans for managing the rest of the party until help arrives. Appoint people to do any appropriate tasks, such as set up camp, collect water, firewood, etc.
(l) If on a day walk, it may be necessary to improvise a shelter and pool resources so that everyone gets a share of available food and shelter.
(m) If a big group is involved, ensure a responsible person is in charge, and able to answer queries, discuss options and the current course of action. This person would normally be the trip leader, unless the leader is actively involved in other aspects of the incident.
(n) Debrief the incident with the rest of the group, to ensure they are coping with the stress of the accident, particularly if injuries are severe. Encourage them to talk over their actions and responses to the incident.