

Risk Management Plan for Ipswich Bushwalkers Inc.

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Ipswich Bushwalkers Inc. (hereafter referred to as the "Club") is an incorporated club based in the City of Ipswich, Queensland, which aims to provide its members with the opportunity to undertake recreational activities, primarily bushwalking, in the natural environment, in accordance with the principles of safety and minimum environmental impact. The scope of this Risk Management Plan shall be limited to the activity of bushwalking.

The Club acknowledges that the undertaking of its bushwalking activity in the natural environment, and especially in remote or wilderness areas, may result in its members encountering hazards, and accordingly this Risk Management Plan documents the processes the Club employs in reducing the risks associated with the activity.

1. Bushwalking Trip Planning.

Bushwalks are selected and planned based on existing club knowledge, information obtained from external sources, such as bushwalking literature and other bushwalking club publications, and supplemented by a pre-walk when necessary to confirm conditions that impact on the walk grading.

Also taken into account when planning walks is the distance required to be travelled before the walk can commence, walk length, and expected time required to complete the distance over the terrain type.

All non-graded track walks require a minimum of 4 adult participants.

2. Bushwalk Grading.

The Club publishes an upcoming bushwalks calendar in its bi-monthly newsletter. Every bushwalk receives a grading, which takes into account the length of the walk, the terrain type likely to be encountered, and the fitness level required to complete the walk in the required time duration. This objective grading system is intended to provide Club members with an indication of whether a particular bushwalk they may wish to nominate for is within their capabilities.

The grading of a particular bushwalk is established by the nominated leader for that walk, and is reviewed by the Club executive committee prior to the publication of the bushwalking calendar. Under By-Law 19 of the Club, a nominated bushwalk leader is required to exclude members from the bushwalk if they consider that bushwalk to be unsuitable for that member. New members with no recent and verifiable history of bushwalking are encouraged to initially nominate for lower grade bushwalks, in order to establish their capabilities.

3. Bushwalking Leadership.

From time to time or as when required the Club provides basic in-house bushwalking leadership training to interested members. This training is intended to provide members with sufficient knowledge to be able to lead low grade bushwalks on tracks up to Class 3 of AS 2156.1-2001, "Walking Tracks - Part 1: Classification and Signage", as well as information regarding the Club emergency contact system and how to deal with emergency situations in the natural environment such as bushfires and extreme weather conditions.

Members wishing to lead more difficult bushwalks shall demonstrate that they have appropriate higher level skills such as navigation, required to lead these walks. These skills may be obtained via a number of avenues, which may include the participation in a series of higher grade bushwalks with skills mentoring by the more experienced leaders of these bushwalks.

The Club executive committee reviews the nominated leaders of each bushwalk prior to the publication of the bushwalking calendar.

4. Navigation.

A bushwalk leader shall have the navigation skills necessary to undertake the particular bushwalk they have nominated for, and shall have upon them the appropriate materials required to safely navigate that walk. These materials may include, where appropriate, basic graded track diagrams, topographic maps, compass, detailed walk notes. Leaders shall conduct a pre-walk shortly before the bushwalk proper, if there are concerns regarding navigation, current condition, or possible presence of new hazards of the bushwalk.

5. Communications.

The Club has established a Contact Officer, who is responsible for advising authorities if a bushwalking party has not returned by a designated time. The detailed procedure is published in the Club bi-monthly newsletter. A mobile telephone is carried on every bushwalk for emergency contact purposes. A Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) to be carried at the discretion of the walk leader

6. First Aid and Health.

The Club bi-monthly newsletter outlines the minimum items that members are required to bring with them on bushwalks; a personal first aid kit is one of the nominated items. In addition, the leader of each bushwalk shall take with them on that bushwalk an up-to-date Club first aid kit. Club members who obtain their first aid certificates shall have 50% of the fees incurred in obtaining that certificate reimbursed by the Club.

The Club membership application/renewal form contains a section in which intending or renewing members must declare if they have anything to disclose which may affect their ability to safely undertake Club activities. All members must complete and sign this form on an annual basis.

7. Individual responsibilities.

Individual members have the responsibility of bringing with them on bushwalks the items listed in the 'minimum requirements for day walks' section published in every edition of the Club bi-monthly newsletter.

The Club membership application/renewal form contains a statement of an acknowledgement of risks and obligations. This statement requires that members agree to endeavour to ensure that the activity is within their capabilities; that they are carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for the activity; that they will advise the activity leader if they are taking any medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect their participation in the activity; and that they will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the activity. All members must sign this form on an annual basis.

Club members:

- Need to take responsibility for their own safety.
- Exercise a duty of care to all other participants. Duty of care is the responsibility to refrain from causing other persons injury or loss.
- Ensure they have health and /or fitness levels and equipment suitable for the activities they undertake.
- Follow club operating procedures.