

Upper Blue Mountains Bushwalking Club

Leaders' Guide

Thank you for offering to lead a walk for the club. Without your generosity there would be no club. The following are a few tips that will help you, and the club, to give participants a more enjoyable walk.

If you wish to lead a walk at short notice, contact the club's Short-Notice Walks co-ordinator, Mike 9948 0836.

Leaders should leave their route and intended return time with a responsible person who should then contact Roger on 4787 7432 or Richard on 4784 3765 if the party has not returned by the following morning. They will then contact BWRS.

Before the walk. Fully inform potential participants of the type of terrain, probable duration and activities needed to accomplish the walk. Stipulate the hazards (for example: steep descent, rock hopping, dense undergrowth), activities, clothing, drink, and food needed to accomplish it. Is the walk correctly graded? Err on the hard side, if the leader has not done the walk in the last five years and it is off track, then the participant should be informed and told that the walk has an exploratory component.

Question potential participants as to their experience to assess whether a participant will be able to accomplish the walk. Leaders have the right to refuse to accept a participant if they believe the participant would not be able to accomplish the walk in a way that is safe for them and/or be a hazard to others.

All participants of club activities **MUST** be paid-up members. This ensures compliance with the club's insurance policies. If new members join on the day of your walk, please have them fill out a membership form, and read and sign the disclaimer on the form.

The disclaimer on the membership form does not cover abseiling, canyoning or skiing. If you are leading one of these activities, ensure that each participant signs an abseiling, canyoning or skiing waiver form. Each participant must read and sign a form prior to every activity.

If you are leading a remote walk, consider taking the club's PLB (Personal Locator Beacon), available from Richard 4784 3765. A PLB can also be borrowed from Katoomba or Springwood police station.

If you postpone your walk for any reason, please do not choose a date on which another walk of the same grade is already in the club's activities programme.

For a walk to be an official club activity, i.e., covered by the club's insurance, it will be either in the published activities programme or be approved by the Short-Notice Walks co-ordinator, and have at least three participants.

During the walk. Count the number of people in your walk at the start. Be in contact with the party at all times or aware of where they are. Designate someone to be at the rear of the group and ensure that they are able to communicate with the person leading the group. If the leader wants to reconnoitre, then inform the party and tell them to wait.

Allow adequate rest breaks and ensure that participants know the walk schedule and rest breaks.

Always detour to avoid taking unnecessary risks (i.e., steep descents, rock scrambles, deep pools, slippery rocks, etc.). Warn people of hazards as they arise.

Carry or ensure someone is carrying a basic first-aid kit. The club has purchased two first-aid kits for leaders to carry on walks; they are available from Roger 4787 7432 and Stephen 0425 244 240 (email: cheppen@hermes.net.au).

After the walk. Please provide Ann Mikkelsen 4757 3111 with a list of those who attended and details of injuries or incidents, if any. You might also write a trip report or share your photos with other members through the club's web site.