

Upper Blue Mountains Bushwalking Club

Emergency Response Guideline

This process is designed to provide a pathway for the UBMBC committee or nominated members to follow in the case of an emergency. The process should be followed whenever significant injury, illness, death, or property damage occurs on a Club activity.

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Overdue Parties and Other Emergencies

Under UBMBC guidelines all leaders must comply with the club's 'late returns' procedure which is:

1. Email the list of participants to the Walks Recorder prior to the activity *late-returns-ubmbc@googlegroups.com*
2. If, after the activity there were any changes to trip participants or trip was canceled, forward the late returns email with amendments to the Walks Recorder.
3. As soon as practical after the walk, the leader emails Late Returns to inform of safe return of all participants (or otherwise).

Groups Late Return

A group is late when any of the following scenarios apply:

1. The leader or a participant notifies the club, or notifies a friend/relative who then goes on to inform the club.
2. The group is 4 hours late for a day walk, 24 hours late for a multi-day walk and we have not heard from the leader.
3. The club is contacted by friends/family of participants on the activity.
4. The emergency contact person linked to a PLB/EPIRB receives a call from emergency services.
5. Someone has called 000.

Club incident response

Follow this procedure in an emergency, it will depend on the situation. The following scenarios suggest guidelines for what might typically occur depending on the specific circumstances.

Scenario 1

1. Ascertain as much information as possible in terms of location, any injured parties, food and water supplies, weather conditions and if the group is capable of continuing. Then determine if a rescue is required and if necessary, contact emergency services on 000 and ask for police (police coordinate all rescues).
2. Notify emergency contacts and advise them what is happening and that we will update them as information comes to hand.

Scenarios 2 & 3

1. Check phone messages and contact the other club's contact persons to see if anyone has been notified. Check the website for information about the activity - where did they go, when are they due back, how well were they equipped, how has the weather changed?
2. Ring the leader (or participants), they may have returned home and if not, contact emergency services on 000 and ask for police
3. Notify emergency contacts and advise them what is happening and that we will update them with information as it comes to hand.

Scenario 4

1. Find out as much information as possible from emergency services.
2. Notify emergency contacts and advise them what is happening and that we will update them with information as it comes to hand.

Scenario 5

1. Find out as much information as possible from emergency services.
2. Notify emergency contacts and advise them what is happening and that we will update them with information as it comes to hand.

Club contacts

The club's emergency contact persons are:

Ruth East	0427 863 976
Jim O'Keeffe	0407 775 298
Geoff Fox	0400 628 063

Emergency contact officers are the first point of contact in the case of overdue parties, incidents, or other emergencies. They have access to member databases, activity details and emergency contacts.

In the event of an emergency, they:

1. Assess the situation and accumulate as much information as possible.
2. Brief other Committee members, particularly the President, Secretary and Vice President and decide on a course of action and when appropriate.
3. Call and reassure friends / family members and as necessary, check the person of concern is on the activity.
4. Attempt to contact the leader or other members of the party.
5. Keep all information confidential within the committee until the family or injured party has been consulted.

N.B. If emergency contacts need to be notified, everyone on the committee can access this information on the website under *Club Directory*.

Appropriate incident response

1. Leaders ensure that the details relating to their activity listing on the club website are sufficiently detailed and current. If the activity is changed for any reason, the on-line activity listing should be appropriately modified through the Activities Secretary.
2. If a contingency plan is in place, leaders make sure it is part of the activity description. However, once the activity has been added to AMSA, the group must not deviate from the plan unless deemed necessary for safety reasons.
3. The name and contact details of the emergency services person spoken to and the person who is likely to oversee the search/rescue should be obtained.

Information required to mount an effective search and rescue operation

- A detailed description of the activity and its route, including the start and finish location/s, number of participants, including experience, skill, and fitness level.
- Any special or safety equipment the party will be carrying (note the Club policy that carrying a PLB, map, mobile phone and first aid kits are a requirement for club activities).
- Updating the trip details online through AMSA is very beneficial to the rescue services. Include where you park your car (s) and car rego number (s)
- An indication of the latest time that contact will be made to confirm that the activity has been safely completed. Use a SAT communicator to at the very least to keep rescue informed.

Incident Investigation Process

See this document for high-level objectives required for effective incident response: *UBMBC Incident Investigation Process*.

Guidelines for Participants

A good way to handle an emergency is for each participant to plan for the possibility of an injury, accident, being benighted or other unforeseen risks. Know where you are going, when you are expected back, what conditions you will expect and notify someone. Detailed trip information is available via the trip leader, and initial trip information is available in the trip program. Trip details may also include links to external sources, such as OZUltimate and RopeWiki. Follow the published guidelines for walkers and canyoneers as applicable.

After a trip incident

If an incident or emergency occurs on a club activity:

1. The leader is required to forward an Incident Report to the Risk Management Sub-committee and Secretary as soon as possible after the incident.
 - If the incident requires an on-going response, this will be coordinated by the Secretary or designated committee member.
2. The Committee will appoint a spokesperson who will phone the nominated emergency contact to update and reassure.
 - In the case of serious injury or death, the spokesperson maintains contact with the family to offer support and assistance.
3. Should the media be involved, the President, Vice President or Secretary will act as spokesperson.
4. The Risk Management Sub-committee will investigate the incident, identify and propose and work with the club to implement steps that can be reasonably taken to prevent further similar incidents.

Change Control

This may be removed from released documents

Document Changes	Revision	Who	Date
Final	1	Risk Sub-Committee	24/09/2024

Reviewer Comments	Revision	Who	Date
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