

# Ben Cruachan Walking Club – Walk Leading Checklist

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## Before The Walk

This 'Checklist' assumes that the Club Member has decided that they would like to lead a walk and have discussed this with the Walks Coordinator, or they have been asked by the Walks Coordinator to lead a walk and have agreed to do so, and the walk has been scheduled on the Walks Calendar. If the Member is unfamiliar with BCWC's requirements in walk leadership, the Walks Coordinator will provide the Club Member with resources and support relevant to the nature and complexity of the intended walk. This may include arranging an appropriate Mentor to assist/support the Walk Leader in planning and during the walk.

Useful resources include:

- 👤 BCWC website, particularly the following Menu Items: [Guidelines & Forms](#), [Useful Info & Links](#), and [Walk Previews Plans & Reports Archive](#).
- 👤 Bushwalking Victoria's [Walk Safe](#), and [Walk Leader Training Materials and Handbook](#)
- 👤 ['Bushwalking and Ski touring Leadership'](#) Handbook of the Bushwalking and Mountaincraft Training Advisory Board Inc.

## At Least Three Months Before The Walk

- Read / revisit 'BCWC- Bushwalking Etiquette', this 'BCWC – Walk Leading Checklist', 'Walk Preview' and 'Walk Plan' templates. (Download from Club website or obtain from Walks Coordinator).
- Complete research into the walk using the 'Walk Plan' template as a guide, preferably documenting your research into the 'Walk Plan' template, so that this can be used for future reference by yourself and others.
- Determine preliminary style and grade of walk – this can be refined after the reconnaissance.
- Identify a Whip for the walk and a reconnaissance (recce) team. This should include the Whip if possible, yourself and preferably 2 others. (The Whip should be someone who will become as familiar with the walk as the Walk Leader, can support the Leader in managing the walk, and be able to stand in for them if required).
- Conduct a reconnaissance of the walk. Take a publicity photo which must be a minimum of 200 KB.
- Prepare the Walk Preview, including publicity photo, and forward to the Walks Coordinator.

## Lead Up To The Walk Day

- Refine walk plan.
- Decide if Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) will be required. (See 'Personal Locator Beacon' guideline.) If to be taken on walk,
  - Contact Walks Coordinator to identify its custodian and obtain the PLB.
  - Confirm the availability of the Club's 3 AMSA registered PLB emergency contacts on the day/s of the walk. If not available, ask Walks Coordinator to arrange alternate emergency contacts.
- Receive inquiries and registrations:
  - Check if registrants have a medical condition of which the Walk Leader should be aware and obtain details.
  - Discuss / confirm suitability to participate in walk.
  - Visitors – Email the 'BCWC – Bushwalking Etiquette' document and the 'Emergency Contact and Medical Information' form for them to complete and to bring the latter on the walk.
  - List participants as they register and, if taking a PLB, record their emergency contact details as they register. ('Walk Attendance Sheet' downloaded from Club website can be started for this.)
- Confirm arrangements with participants, advising of any special requirements, confirming meeting place/s and time/s and directing them to useful information and website links.
- Put people in touch with others from a similar locality so that they can share transport.

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- Prepare maps and information sheets eg park notes, and, if possible, copy for participants.
- Confirm the Whip and brief.
- Obtain Walk Bag (If not possible until the day of walk, ask the holder of the Bag to do the next task on your behalf.)
- Check contents of Walk Bag:
  - UHF Radios are operational, fully charged and you are familiar with their operation. (Obtain replacement from other bag and advise the Walks Coordinator if faulty.)
  - Forms and pens are sufficient:
    - ‘Membership Application / Renewal’ form
    - ‘Walk Attendance Sheet’
    - ‘Emergency Contact & Medical Information’ form
    - ‘Incident Report’ form
  - Download extras from the Club website or obtain from the Club Secretary.
  - Visitor ‘Acknowledgment of Risk’ book, Club brochures, and ‘Tread Softly’ brochures are sufficient; obtain extras from the Club Secretary.
  - First Aid Kit – Inform the Club President if incomplete and extra items are required.
  - Cash float of \$50 – contact Treasurer if cash required..
- Obtain memorabilia box – for sales.

## Day Before The Walk

- Check track conditions, weather forecast, fire warnings and road closures for the area of the walk and approaches. If the walk is to be cancelled, inform participants immediately, ensuring receipt is acknowledged.
- If the PLB is to be taken on the walk, email the emergency contacts with your walk intentions / plan, and the ‘Walk Attendance Sheet’ listing participants and their emergency contacts.
- Pack in your personal pack to carry on the walk :
  - From the Walk Bag, First Aid Kit, Radios, and ‘Incident Report’ form.
  - Completed ‘Walk Attendance Sheet’
  - If the PLB is to be taken, the PLB and phone numbers for the Club’s 3 AMSA registered PLB emergency contacts, and the AMSA phone number to cancel the PLB if it is accidentally activated, or activated and circumstances change where search and rescue is no longer required after activation.
  - Mobile Phone which is fully charged
  - Map and compass, and, if you wish a GPS.
  - This ‘BCWC Walk Leading Checklist – On the Day Of The Walk’ section, and ‘BCWC – Bushwalking Etiquette’ document.
- Take the Walk Bag and memorabilia box with you in the car on the walk day.

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## On The Day Of The Walk

### At The Meeting Point

#### Visitors:

- Explain and complete 'Acknowledgement of Risk' and receive \$5 contribution. White copy to visitor.
- Introduce visitors and members.

#### All Walkers:

- Introduce Walk Leader and Whip.
- Confirm suitability to walk (Eg. Footwear, water, clothing & equipment, specific requirements)
- Confirm 'Emergency Contact & Medical Information' form is carried – distribute and complete if necessary.
- All walkers to complete 'Walk Attendance Sheet'
- Confirm that any specific equipment & water requirements are carried.
- Highlight memorabilia for sale, and sell.
- Arrange car-pooling – Advise of Club guideline of \$7 per passenger per 100 km contribution to drivers.
- Explain travel arrangement to walk start.
- Allocate walkers to cars, counting the number of cars and walkers ensuring all present and accommodated.
- Designate a lead and tail end car for the convoy. Explain that each car must keep the car behind them in their sight. Cars are to wait at road junctions and other places of uncertainty until all are present.
- Make sure all cars are mobile before driving off.
- Check all cars are present before proceeding and at end.

### At Walk Start

- If car shuffle required, arrange and do, explaining arrangement to group.
- Distribute map and any prepared information, and explain route and walk details, points of interest, etc.
- Remind walkers of 'BCWC –Bushwalking Etiquette', safety protocols & considerations specific to the walk.
- Ask for a volunteer to write walk report.
- Hand out radios, turn on and check operation (Channel used is 69. Do not change or fiddle with settings)

### During The Walk - The Walk Leader and Whip Shall:

- Set and manage the walk / group pace in consideration of the mix of participants, terrain and distance to be walked, and time available.
- Communicate with each-other re status and progress of the group.
- Count the group before setting off, at rest stops, track intersections and at the end, to ensure all present.
- Wait at track junctions and all other places of any uncertainty until all are present.
- Allow time for the slower people to rest, when they catch up, before starting off again.
- The Whip shall wait for those lagging behind and ensure that no-one is left behind.
  - Recognise fatigue / distress in walkers, encourage and help any having difficulties.
  - Manage any walkers holding up the group unnecessarily.
- If an incident occurs, eg. first aid is required or a walker has strayed from the group, the Walk Leader shall nominate who is to take control of the incident management, and who is to manage the remainder of the group, remembering that the Walk Leader has overall responsibility and control. If first aid is required and the Walk Leader is not qualified or experienced, ask the group and nominate an appropriate person.
- Be confident to remind walkers of 'Bushwalking Etiquette' should the need arise.

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## At Walk End

- If an incident occurred, complete an incident report, whilst parties and witnesses are present, obtaining statements from them as relevant.
- Debrief and ask for feedback from participants for evaluation.
- Give a Club brochure & 'Membership Application' form to each visitor.
- Return radios and first aid kit to Walks Bag, remove day's documentation and cash taken leaving float in bag. If practical, hand Walks Bag on to the next Walk Leader. Otherwise take bag to arrange handover.
- If the PLB was carried, inform the Club's Emergency Contacts of safe return as soon as phone service available.
- Complete any car shuffle and arrange car pool back to meeting point.
- Make sure all cars are mobile, and cars leave in convoy, as arrived, and at the end.

## After The Walk

- If PLB carried, return it to its custodian as soon as possible.
- Scan & email or post 'Walk Attendance Sheet' to Walks Coordinator.
- Scan & email or post any 'New Membership Application / Renewal' forms to the Secretary
- Take cash received and bank, sending email to Treasurer detailing the deposit.
- If items are used from the First Aid Kit, email the President advising what was used so that the Kit can be restocked.
- Complete an Incident Report, if necessary, and send to President.
- Evaluate walk, and, if documenting a Walk Plan, finalise and forward to Walks Coordinator for loading onto website.
- Confirm that a walk report is being prepared for the clubs newsletter.

## What Is An Incident Which Should Be Reported?

An incident is:

- ✓ A situation which is likely to lead to an insurance claim
- ✓ An injury
- ✓ Anything which causes the walk to be modified or interrupted
- ✓ Blatant disregard of a Walk Leader's request.

Incidents occur, most often, without fault. Walk leaders are encouraged to complete incident reports, other than because they are a requirement for insurance purposes. Incident reports are extremely useful to evaluate and improve walks, Club protocols and member skills, leading to more enjoyable and safer bushwalking for all members.