

# **Sydney Christian Bushwalkers Inc.**

## **Association Policies**

*The term "clause" refers to clauses of the club's constitution*

### **1. Membership**

#### **1.1 Membership generally**

When determining whether an applicant for full membership has participated in 3 club activities the committee shall only consider activities which have been run during the previous 3 years

#### **1.2 Visitors**

(a) A non-member may participate as a visitor in a maximum of 3 outdoor activities of the club, after which they are required to apply for membership.

(b) Visitors who attend multiple activities which have been organised as joint walks with other organisations, are not required to join Sydney Christian Bushwalkers

(c) If a person ceased to be a member of the club by resigning or failing to pay their membership fee, they must re-apply for membership and pay the current membership fee before participating in an outdoor activity,

(d) A former member may participate in a reunion activity as a visitor.

#### **1.3 Register of members**

The register of members shall contain the following additional information (clause 10 (1)(f)) on each member:

- (a) due date for payment of their membership fee
- (b) preference for email address privacy
- (c) method of receiving the club newsletter
- (d) preference for receiving "The Bushwalker" magazine
- (e) leadership status
- (f) first aid qualifications

A person who became a member of the club prior to 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006 did not require their membership to be approved by the committee. The date of approval for such a member shall be the year in which the member joined.



## **2. Fees**

The annual membership fee shall be:

- (a) \$30 for a full member
- (b) \$22 for a full member who is largely dependent upon a Centrelink benefit
- (c) \$22 for an associate member
- (d) \$45 for a family, which may include up to 2 full members plus any of their children who are associate members.

The service fee for posting the club newsletter to a prospective member shall be:

- (a) \$0 for the first period of prospective membership
- (b) \$5 for subsequent periods of prospective membership

The service fee for posting Confederation's magazine ("The Bushwalker") to a member over a 12 month period shall be \$5.

The due date (clause 11 (1)(b)) for a person who became a member prior to 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006 shall be the first day of same month they were previously requested to pay their membership fee.

When a member decides to pay at the family rate then:

- (a) the due date (clause 11 (1)(b)) for the other members covered by the payment shall become the same as the due date for the paying member
- (b) credit shall be given on a pro rata basis for any membership fees paid by the other members of that family during the preceding 12 months

## **3. Affiliation with Bushwalking NSW**

The club shall be affiliated with the Bushwalking NSW Inc and through our delegate(s) shall work constructively on matters of interest to the wider bushwalking community.



## **4. Risk management**

### **4.1 Framework**

The club shall seek to manage risk by adhering to the principles contained within the Risk Management framework issued by the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc.

### **4.2 Waivers**

Prior to an activity each adult participant must complete and sign an entry on the *activity risk waiver form (page 1)* and each child participant must have an entry completed and signed on their behalf by a parent, guardian or responsible adult on the lower portion of the *activity risk waiver form (page 1)*.

Each associate member, whilst participating in an activity, must be under the care of either:

- (a) a parent or guardian, or
- (b) a responsible adult, who must complete and sign a *responsible adult risk waiver form* prior to participating in the activity with the associate member. The responsible adult must be named on a:
  - i. *Parent/guardian risk waiver form, or*
  - ii. *Authorisation of responsible adults for an associate member form.*

Each child visitor must have a parent or guardian complete and sign a *parent/guardian risk waiver form* prior to the activity and, whilst participating in the activity, must be under the care of either:

- (a) a parent or guardian, or
- (b) a responsible adult, who must complete and sign a *responsible adult risk waiver form* prior to participating in the activity with the child. The responsible adult must be named on a *parent/guardian risk waiver form.*

All waiver forms shall be kept by the public officer until:

- (a) in the case of an adult participant, at least 7 years have elapsed
- (b) in the case of a child participant, they have attained the age of 21

### **4.3 Child protection**

- (a) The issue of protecting children from abuse is a responsibility we must all undertake, especially when children participate in sport and recreation. Our club is committed to the safety, welfare and well being of children and aims to promote a safe environment for children and to assist all members and volunteers to recognise child abuse and report this. Activity leaders will be required to complete the Prohibited Employment Declaration (PED) and will be made aware of their responsibilities in providing a safe environment. THE PROHIBITED EMPLOYMENT DECLARATION IS A GOVERNMENT FORM WHICH CANNOT BE AMENDED except to add a club logo. Signed PED forms shall be kept by the public officer. All leaders are expected to manage risks of harm to children with strategies for Child Protection and intervention if necessary. They are informed that it is an offence for volunteers not to declare that they are a prohibited person or if they become one. As a prohibited person by law must not work with children, in our case they must not lead walks or activities if children are present.
- (b) Our club will manage risks of child abuse by awareness of the issues and communication, leading to understanding, recognition and management of the issues and showing the way to reduction of the incidence. Everybody should be aware of the definitions and indicators of child abuse and foster open communication to create confidence in recognising and reporting incidences. These may be incidences that have occurred away from and not connected with the club but become obvious during club activities. Adults other than a child's parent or guardian should avoid being alone with a child especially in an isolated setting or during travel or changing. Lack of adequate supervision and equipment, particularly in risky activities, is a form of neglect and abuse.
- (c) Our club will be aware of the types and indicators of child abuse, which are physical abuse, the non-accidental harm of a child resulting in physical injuries, emotional abuse which may psychologically harm a child, sexual abuse which is any sexual act or threat imposed on a child by an older person, and domestic violence, both resulting in psychological harm, and neglect where basic care is not given or supervision is lacking.
- (d) The committee will appoint a Child Protection Officer and suspected breaches should be reported to this person who will report the matter to the Dept of Community Services & the NSW police, followed up with written notification within 24 hours. Confidentiality must be maintained. If the designated officer is not available, then the most senior official available in the club should be notified. If proceedings involving child abuse are completed against a volunteer, the Commission for Children and Young People must be notified.

#### **4.4 Leader's responsibilities**

When planning a bushwalk or other outdoor activity the leader should:

- (a) choose an activity which is within their capabilities
- (b) research the intended route by various means and, if possible, walk the route prior to the advertised date
- (c) provide an accurate description of the activity to the newsletter secretary
- (d) decide upon an alternative plan in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Clearly communicate the alternative plan to intending participants and, if possible, exchange mobile phone numbers
- (e) clearly describe potential hazards to intending participants and exclude any person who, in the leader's judgement, may have difficulty completing the activity. Prospective members and visitors are not permitted on grade 3 or higher walks or on any walk which has an off-track element, unless they can demonstrate they have successfully participated in such walks with another club or a Sydney Christian Bushwalker's member can vouch for their fitness
- (f) check for possible problems like hot weather, fire outbreaks, park or track closure and rail maintenance work a few days prior to the activity
- (g) leave comprehensive details of the activity with a reliable contact person including instructions on action to take if the party does not return by the expected time

Just prior to the activity the leader should:

- (a) ensure that all risk waiver forms have been completed
- (b) ensure they have a map, first aid kit, compass or GPS and any other equipment appropriate for the activity
- (c) conduct an introductory circle to pray and to explain various aspects of the bushwalk, including distance, expected terrain, potential hazards and the expected time of return
- (d) satisfy themselves that each participant is capable of undertaking the bushwalk
- (e) ascertain if anyone is carrying a mobile phone or PLB and whether any participants
- (f) have a current first aid certificate or medical qualifications
- (g) ensure each participant has adequate food and water
- (h) when relevant, ensure that cars are secured, lights turned off and keys securely stowed
- (i) appoint a reliable person as the tail of the group and advise participants that they should not fall behind this person

During the activity the leader should:

- (a) manage the group and monitor any unexpected hazards by ensuring that each
- (b) participant is comfortable with the pace and conditions
- (c) have regular drink or rest breaks to allow participants to regroup and perform a head count to ensure that everyone is present
- (d) appoint a person to wait at track junctions to ensure that nobody goes the wrong way
- (e) assist participants to abide by Confederation's bushwalker code
- (f) organise the reading of a devotional text and/or prayer



At the end of the activity the leader should:

- (a) ensure that all participants have finished the activity
- (b) when relevant, ensure that all cars start before anyone leaves
- (c) advise the contact person of the activity's completion
- (d) forward all completed risk waiver forms to the public officer

#### **4.5 Participants' responsibilities**

Participants should ensure, in consultation with the leader, and prior to the bushwalk or other outdoor activity that they:

- (a) are fit enough for the grade of difficulty
- (b) arrive at the starting point on time or even early
- (c) carry sufficient food and water
- (d) wear or carry suitable clothing and footwear
- (e) take suitable sun protection measures which will usually include a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses and lip balm
- (f) carry suitable equipment which may include rainwear, first aid kit, whistle and torch

During the activity participants should:

- (a) follow the leader's instructions
- (b) behave in a courteous, cooperative and helpful manner towards other members of the group
- (c) avoid leaving the activity early unless the leader has agreed and has assigned someone to accompany them
- (d) aim to stay with the group and avoid falling behind the person designated by the leader as the tail of the group

After the activity participants should:

- (a) ensure the leader is aware of the participant's safe return
- (b) thank the leader for organising the activity



## **4.6 Activity Grades**

### **Day walks**

#### **GRADE 1**

Opportunity for large number of walkers, including those with reduced walking ability to walk on well marked and even tracks. Tracks are man-made and may have a few steps. Should not be steep. Suitable for beginners. Distance should not exceed about 10km.

#### **GRADE 2**

Easy walk, mostly on tracks of low gradient. Opportunity to walk easily in natural environments on well marked tracks. Tracks should not be steep. Distance should not exceed about 15km.

#### **GRADE 3**

Medium walk with some hilly sections and/or rougher terrain. Opportunity to walk on defined and distinct tracks with some steep sections requiring a moderate level of fitness. Suitable for fit and agile beginners with walking experience. Distance should not exceed about 20 km.

#### **GRADE 4**

Steeper, rougher terrain and may have off-track sections (no more than one quarter of the walk) or a longer distance track walk. Opportunity to explore and discover relatively undisturbed natural environments mostly along defined and distinct tracks. Tracks can be steep. There may be short sections of rock scrambling involved. Leaders should have map reading abilities and/or ability to use a compass. Distance depending on circumstances. Not suitable for most beginners.

#### **GRADE 5**

Off-track or difficult terrain. Opportunity for walkers with advanced outdoor knowledge and skills to find their own way along often in distinct tracks or off track in remote locations. May include steep sections of unmodified surfaces. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking and crossing involved. Distance should not exceed 30 km, but may be short and difficult. Not suitable for beginners.

#### **GRADE 6**

Strenuous off-track walk or very long distance. Opportunity for highly experienced walkers to explore remote and challenging natural areas without reliance on managed tracks. Terrain may be steep, uneven and no track. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking and crossing involved. Distance covered is unlimited, but may be short and difficult. Only for experienced walkers and not suitable for beginners.



## **5. Leaders Accreditation**

### **5.1 Committee Duty of Care**

- Before the committee gives approval for a member (aged 18 years or more) to lead an outdoor activity or type of outdoor activity (clause 49) the committee must be satisfied that the member:
  - a) Is familiar with the club's risk management policies and willing to abide by the same
  - b) Has suitable map reading skills for the type of activities they plan to lead
  - c) Has basic first aid skills and preferably holds an appropriate first aid certificate (senior, advanced or remote area)
  - d) Is familiar with confederation's minimal impact bushwalking code and willing to encourage activity participants to abide by the code
- Before the committee gives approval for a member (aged 18 years or more) to lead one or more social activities the committee must be satisfied that the member is willing to lead such activities in a manner which shows proper duty of care towards participating members and visitors.

### **5.2 Leading children on activities**

- An activity leader must sign a Prohibited Employment Declaration (PED) form if they intend to lead activities (whether outdoor or social) and permit persons under 18 years to participate. Only Accredited Leaders will be permitted to lead activities in which persons under 18 are participating.

### **5.3 Procedure for Leader Accreditation**

- All members wishing to become leaders should contact a committee member to make a verbal or written application and to discuss their qualifications and experience to lead specific types of activities for Sydney Christian Bushwalkers.
- The committee will consider the application for leadership after contacting any referees the member can provide, although it is not essential to provide references for leading the lower grade activities.
- The committee will vote on whether to accept the application and may then grant Provisional Leader status for the types of activity they are qualified to lead, entering their name into the Leaders Register as a Provisional Leader
- The Provisional Leader will be contacted by the Secretary and issued with a copy of Confederation's Leaders Guidelines and the current waiver forms.
- Regardless of the leader's experience, a committee member or person appointed by the committee will attend the Provisional Leader's first 2 walks (minimum) in the role of Leader Support. The Leader support will talk to the Prospective Leader prior to the activity to discuss walk preparation. They will be available for assistance and advice on the walks and will observe whether the Provisional Leader follows the Leaders Guidelines. If the Provisional Leader is inexperienced, the Leader Support will give ongoing help enabling the Provisional Leader to gain



experience in a supportive environment until such time as they qualify to become an Accredited Leader.

- A checklist will be used to report to the committee whether or not the Leader Support considers the Provisional Leader competent to be granted full Accredited Leader status in the types of activity specified. The checklist should be shown to the Provisional Leader prior to commencement of the walk/activity.
- The Secretary will contact the Provisional Leader to advise them of their success in becoming a Sydney Christian Bushwalkers Accredited Leader. They will be permitted to lead activities of the type specified.
- The new leader will have their name entered into the Sydney Christian Bushwalkers Leader Register as an Accredited Leader, specifying the types of activity they are competent to lead.
- If the Provisional Leader is unsuccessful, the Leader Support will advise the member how to increase their skill level in order to achieve accreditation in the future
- A Provisional Leader must be accompanied on an activity by a Leader Support person appointed by the Committee (not necessarily the same one each time)
- An Accredited Leader can apply to lead different types of activities as their skill level and experience increases.

## **6. Reimbursement of vehicle and park entry expenses**

Passengers in private vehicles should reimburse the vehicle owner for reasonable vehicle running expenses and any other expenses incurred by the driver such as park entry fees incurred on an activity.

## **7. Joint Walks**

(a) Sydney Christian Bushwalkers welcomes joint walks with groups from other bushwalking clubs, church groups or other organisations of similar interests.

(b) Sydney Christian Bushwalkers Members and individual Visitors should read and sign the Sydney Christian Bushwalkers waiver form, and are covered by the Sydney Christian Bushwalkers insurance policy.

(c) Members of the joint group should sign their own activity waiver (if applicable) and will be covered by their own insurance policy. If the joint group does not have their own insurance policy, they will be regarded as Visitors and should sign the Sydney Christian Bushwalkers waiver form

(d) Individuals holding membership in both groups should sign the Sydney Christian Bushwalkers waiver.

(e) Any incidents or accidents on the walk should be reported to the committees of both groups as soon as possible.

## **8. Dogs**

For the safety and comfort of all activity participants, dogs are not permitted on Sydney Christian Bushwalkers activities.