BirdLife Australia
Guidelines for Leading Groups on Outings

birdlife
AUSTRALIA

Contents

These guidelines should also be read in conjunction with the following BirdLife documents:

- Occupational Health and Safety Policy

- Ethical Birding Guidelines

Available on the BirdLife Australia Intranet: http://www.birdlife.org.au/intranet/

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1.   Purpose

These Guidelines have been prepared to assist Branches and regional Group leaders to plan and co-ordinate activities, for the enjoyment and safety of all participants. They are of a general nature, raising possible issues that Leaders may need to address when planning and leading an event. Leaders will need to interpret and apply them to the particular circumstances of each event. They are also written to help Branch committees, Special Interest Groups and leaders in developing procedures to suit the conditions in which they operate so as to manage risks and meet duty of care obligations including any OHS requirements.

Duty of Care is something that we all owe to our fellow human beings in our interaction with them. As well as being a condition of our public liability insurance policy there is a community / common law expectation that when bodies such as BirdLife organise and lead people in activities, that they will exercise their duty of care. In the same way there is an expectation that each participant will exercise a duty of care to their fellow participants.

This means that leaders and members need to take reasonable care to avoid exposing any person including other members and the public to risk of injury or loss. However if a leader or activity participant makes a mistake our insurers, (subject to any exclusions noted in the policy, details of which are available from National Office), will indemnify us with respect to claims made against us.

2.   Pre-Plan

In order to ensure a smooth and successful activity, it is necessary to take an extra moment during the planning stage to consider all of the logistical requirements. The below checklist has been provided to help get you thinking about the kinds of things that may need to be considered in order to run a successful event.

Checklist

☐   Choose the venue/ route for the event or activity

☐   Notify Ranger/seek permission from the Land owner/Traditional Indigenous land owners

☐   Check risks, Fire Danger Ratings / bushfire warnings/ extreme weather danger in the area for the date proposed and advise participants of specific risks. See Section 3.1 (Bushfire Safety) for further information and advice.

☐   Consider the remoteness and emergency arrangements, including access to emergency services and best means of communication. E.g. how far to the nearest town, mobile phone coverage, use of a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) Refer Appendix 4

☐   Check the outing has been approved by the Branch committee to enable insurance coverage

☐   Confirm the event details in the calendar

☐   Do a reconnaissance of the intended activity area

☐   Prepare a bird list

☐   Obtain direction signage (if needed)

☐   Register known contact details of persons wishing to attend for branch record

☐   Prepare and distribute pre-activity information to participants, including;

☐   The organiser's contact details

☐   Dates, times and location of activity

☐   Meeting point

☐   Equipment needed (e.g. Field Guide, water bottle, lunch, folding chair, binoculars, telescope, tripod, sunscreen and protective clothes, mobile phone, torch, insect repellent, whistle). Make sure you indicate what is essential.

☐   Participant safety information See appendix2

☐   Check emergency contact details   Refer Appendix 4 for example.

☐   Organise a First Aid Kit (also see BirdLife First Aid Policy)

3.   On the day

Think about specific things you and your group might need on the day of your outing or activity, the below list is intended to prompt your thinking about the kind of activity you are undertaking and kinds of resources you may need to bring. It is however, not exhaustive:

☐   Name tags

☐   A First Aid Kit

☐   A mobile phone with full battery and signal to maintain communications and monitor Fire Danger Ratings and Bushfire Warnings/Alerts.

☐   Complete a 'List of Attendees' record sheet (found on the Intranet and also at the end of this document) including 'in case of emergency' contact details of participants and carry it on the outing.

☐   Field guide, camera, tripod, bird list etc.

☐   Snacks, lunch, water

☐   Vehicle Convoy details: Refer appendix 5

4.   Bushfire Safety

It is essential that you understand Fire Weather Services offered in Australia, including what information is available, what it means for you and your activities in relation to bushfire risk, and where to find this information for your local area or activity area.

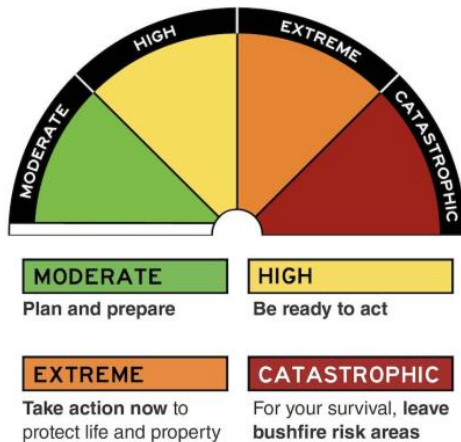## What are Fire Danger Ratings, Total Fire Bans and Bushfire Warnings?

Figure 1. Fire Danger Ratings (FDR) in Australia

Fire Danger Ratings (FDR) are a measure of the difficulty in controlling or supressing fires given environmental conditions. They are provided to each state or territory fire service by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) up to four days in advance and are renewed at regular intervals depending on changing conditions.

The BOM and emergency services use four (4) FDR to communicate the level of bushfire risk (see figure 1). The higher the rating the more dangerous the conditions are likely to be. Each FDR has corresponding actions that people should take depending on the predicted Fire Danger for the district. This information indicates what you need to do and what you need to look out for to ensure your safety during these periods.

Total Fire Bans set the legal restrictions on what activities can or cannot occur in a particular district on that day. Total Fire Bans can be declared per region or state-wide, and people must obtain a permit for any high-risk activity during these days. Total Fire Bans are a precautionary tool to prevent fire on a high-risk day, rather than a risk-based measure. You must obey any legal requirements of Total Fire Bans while they are in force (e.g. rules about lighting fires, not entering areas closed by local or state authorities).

Bushfire Warnings (called **'Alert Levels'** in New South Wales and Tasmania) are issued by state or territory fire services to provide information once a bushfire has taken hold. This is communicated with affected communities using radio, television, and internet (warning / alert maps and social media links can be found in Appendix 7). There are three levels of fire warning that are consistent across Australia: '**Emergency Warning'**, '**Watch and Act'**, and '**Advice'** (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Bushfire Warnings/Alert Levels in Australia

It is important to remember that bushfires can start and spread quickly so you should not depend on a single source for your information and you should be ready to act with little no warning. There may be situations where an 'Emergency Warning' is issued first, or even where there is no time for any warnings to be issued at all.

How do Fire Danger Ratings, Total Fire Bans and Bushfire Warnings affect my BirdLife activity?

This information is applicable to all non-project, volunteer organised activities (including outings, bird, walks, events, the Twitchathon, and campouts) across the BirdLife network in high fire danger (HFD) areas where there is a high risk of bushfire.

As defined by the Victorian Country Fire Authority (CFA)- high fire danger (HFD) areas are areas within or close to grassland or paddocks; dense or open bushland / forest; coastal scrub; suburban areas on the edge of grassland, parks, reserves, bushland, and forest.

FDR, Total Fire Bans, Bushfire Warnings/Alerts, and extreme weather warnings (also available from the BOM website) should be considered when assessing bushfire risk for BirdLife activities. See Appendix 1 for further information about how to conduct a risk assessment to plan for participant safety.
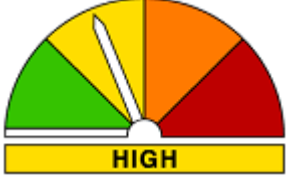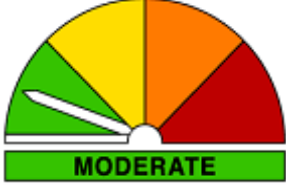
You must obey any legal requirements of Total Fire Bans while they are in force (e.g. rules about lighting fires, not entering areas closed by local or state authorities).

If an '**Emergency Warning'** or a '**Watch and Act'** warning is issued for the area you are planning/undertaking an activity in or travelling though- you should avoid or leave the area straight away, so long as it is safe to do so.

If an '**Advice'** warning is issued for a travel/activity area, you should monitor conditions and be ready to leave with little to no warning, so long as it is safe to do so. In addition, even in the absence of an official Bushfire Warning/Alert, you must vacate the area if fire is close/likely to be a threat.

In addition to the above, BirdLife's policy regarding BirdLife Activities when FDR have been declared is summarised in the table below. If an FDR is increased to Severe, Extreme or Code Red/Catastrophic for your activity in a HFD area before or during your activity, you must cancel the activity or vacate the area, so long as it is safe to do so.

Fire Danger Rating (FDR)	BirdLife Activities allowed?	Conditions and Risk Mitigation
CATASTROPHIC (CODE RED)	None	**No BirdLife activities** (i.e. camps / day outings / activities / bus trips) are allowed in areas where **Catastrophic (Code Red) Fire Danger Ratings** are in place.

Fire Danger Rating (FDR)	BirdLife Activities allowed?	Conditions and Risk Mitigation
EXTREME EXTREME	None	**No BirdLife activities** (i.e. camps / day outings / activities / bus trips) are allowed in areas where **Extreme Fire Danger Ratings** are in place.
HIGH HIGH	All, with risk controls / bush fire safety plan in place.	Check FDR prior to activity. If activity goes ahead, keep yourself informed and monitor conditions through local radio and broadcasters and your state or territory fire service website/information hotlines. Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return. Limit distance travelled from vehicle. Be ready to act, leave the area if necessary.
MODERATE MODERATE	All	Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions. Be ready to act, leave the area if necessary.

Where can I find further information on Bushfire Safety and Fire Danger Safety Ratings?

Guidance on compiling a bushfire safety plan as well as a list of useful resources can be found in Appendix 7. Additionally, information is available online from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) National Weather Service Fire Weather Knowledge Centre website: http://www.bom.gov.au/weather-services/fire-weather-centre/index.shtml or your state/territory fire authority (a list of which can be found in Appendix 7).

For more information on Fire Safety Ratings visit Australian Fire Rating System website: https://www.afac.com.au/initiative/afdrs/afdrs-faqs

5. Severe Weather

It is essential that you understand the Severe weather services offered in Australia, including what information is available, what it means for you and your activities in relation

to Severe Weather, and where to find this information for your local area or activity area.

What are Severe / Extreme weather warnings?

These are provided for potentially hazardous or dangerous weather that includes but is not solely related to severe thunderstorms, tropical cyclones or bushfires. They are issued whenever severe weather is occurring in an area or is expected to develop or move into an area.

How do Severe weather warnings affect my BirdLife activity?

This information is applicable to all non-project, volunteer organised activities (including outings, bird, walks, events, Twitchathon style activities, and campouts) across the BirdLife network in areas where there is a high risk of severe weather

Severe weather warnings (available from the BOM website) should be considered when assessing BirdLife activities. See Appendix 1 for further information about how to conduct a risk assessment to plan for participant safety.

If a '**Severe Weather Warning'** or a '**Watch and Act'** warning is issued for the area you are planning/undertaking an activity in or travelling though- you should avoid or leave the area straight away, so long as it is safe to do so.

If an '**Advice'** warning is issued for a travel/activity area, you should monitor conditions and be ready to leave with little to no warning, so long as it is safe to do so. In addition, even in the absence of an official Extreme Weather Warning/Alert, you must vacate the area if extreme weather is close/likely to be a threat.

What to do in the event of a lightening or electrical storm?

Check the Bureau website or app and listen to your local radio station for storm warnings and updates.

Risk of a lightning strike is managed in accordance with the '30:30 rule'; when the sound of thunder follows less than 30 seconds after a visible lightning flash.

If Outdoors seek immediate shelter inside a 'hard top' (metal bodied) vehicle or solid building and remain there for at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash is seen.

- Avoid small open structures or fabric tents.
- Never shelter under small groups of (or single) trees
- If far from shelter, crouch (alone, feet together), preferably in a hollow
- Remove metal objects from your head and body
- Don't lie down flat but avoid being the highest object in the vicinity
- If your hair stands on end or you hear 'buzzing' from nearby rocks, fences etc, move immediately
- Be especially cautious at night – a blue glow may show if an object is about to be struck (St. Elmo's fire).

If Indoors stay inside and shelter well clear of windows, doors and skylights for at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash is seen. Don't use a fixed telephone during a thunderstorm due to lightning danger. Avoid touching brick or concrete, or standing bare foot on concrete or tiled floors.

What to do in the event of Thunderstorm Asthma?

Asthma thunderstorms can dramatically increase the pollen content in the air, resulting in

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severe respiratory issues for allergy sufferers. This can be fatal in extreme cases. Asthma thunderstorms are particularly likely during October-December when pollen is typically most abundant.

- If you are an asthma sufferer, ensure that you are carrying appropriate asthma medication (e.g. reliever/preventer) on your person at all times.
- If you suffer from hayfever, ensure that you are carrying and taking appropriate medication to manage respiratory symptoms when conducting fieldwork in hayfever conditions.
- Each day during times of an asthma thunderstorm risk, check the asthma thunderstorm danger rating for your local area. Asthma thunderstorm forecasts and pollen ratings are also provided in some weather apps available for your smartphone. Further information – including pollen counts – are available at:
  - Victoria: Vic Emergency website (http://emergency.vic.gov.au/prepare/#thunderstorm-asthma-forecast) and the Vic Emergency app. https://www.melbournepollen.com.au/
  - NSW: https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/thunderstormasthma https://www.sydneypollen.com.au/ and the Sydney Pollen Count app.

What to do in the event of a Tropical Cyclone?

Check the Bureau website or app and listen to your local radio station for Cyclone warnings and updates.

A tropical cyclone Severe Weather Warning is issued when the onset of gales is expected within 24 hours, or are already occurring.

A tropical cyclone Watch and Act is issued when the onset of gales is expected within 48 hours, but not within 24 hours.

You can access a pre-recorded message of the latest Tropical Cyclone Advice from BOM at regular intervals by phoning the numbers listed on the BOM website for your state or territory.

You can view any current cyclones on the BOM live Cyclone index: http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/index.shtml

Follow any BOM advice or local evacuation orders.

What to do in the event of a flash flood?

Check the Bureau website or app and listen to your local radio station for flood warnings and updates.

If Outdoors move immediately to higher ground or stay on high ground.

- If driving, turn around and go another way
- Stay away from floodwaters

- If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car quickly and move to higher ground. Most cars can be swept away by less than two feet of moving water
- If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, stop, turn around and go another way
- Be especially cautious at night when it's harder to see flood danger

Follow any BOM advice or local evacuation orders.

What to do in the event of a Bushfire?

See 4. Bushfire Safety

Where can I find further information on Severe Weather?

Remember that the weather can change quickly, so check your local weather forecast and radar (if available) and keep up to date with the latest warnings on the Bureau of Meteorology's website http://www.bom.gov.au/, app and Twitter feed.

Access the Bureau of Meteorology Knowledge Centre
Know your weather - Know your Risk
BOM knowledge centre for Severe Weather
Preparation and Safety During Thunderstorms
Tropical Cyclone Knowledge Centre
Flood Knowledge Centre

Where can I find further information on State and Territory Emergency Support Services?

New South Wales NSW SES 132 500
Victoria VIC SES 132 500
Queensland SES 132 500
Western Australia DFES 13 3337
South Australia SA SES 132 500
Tasmania Tas SES 132 500
Australian Capital Territory ACT ESA 13 22 81
Northern Territory SecureNT 132 500

6.   After the Activity

Incident and Near Miss Reporting

In the event of an accident, illness or near miss, outing leaders are required to complete the BirdLife Australia 'Incident/Hazard report form' and return the completed form to the BirdLife OHS Coordinator ohs@birdlife.org.au and your Branch Secretary within 48 hours. This form be found on the OHS section of the BirdLife website:
http://www.birdlife.org.au/who-we-are/our-organisation/occupational-health-and-safety

Note: Near misses describe incidents where, given a slight shift in time or distance, injury, ill-health or damage easily could have occurred, but didn't this time round. This is for us to record to avoid accidents in future circumstances. Again this is for branches to use their discretion in what a near miss is and what threat it will pose.

Post-Activity Checklist

☐   Ensure participants' rubbish is taken with them and the area is left how it was found

☐   Thank the respective Ranger/Land Owner for allowing you to use their land

☐   Consider whether an article should be submitted to Australian BirdLife or local Press

☐   Log a bird list for the Branch website or quarterly newsletter and submit data to the BirdLife Atlas

☐   Return participant registration sheet to the Branch Secretary, to be kept in the Branch records for seven years

7.   Emergency Situations

Emergencies may arise for many reasons, such as:

- Illness
- Injury
- adverse weather conditions
- lost part or whole of the group
- failing to make your objective on time
- being caught out by failing light

Refer to Appendix 4 for advice about dealing with emergency situations.

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Appendix 1 Participant Safety Planning

The purpose of this section is to raise awareness of potential hazards to participants and to proactively consider the health and safety of all those who attend.

Conduct a risk assessment prior to undertaking any activity and consider the potential risks to participants. Hazards associated with outdoor activities may include but are not limited to:

- Ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure
- Adverse weather conditions (rain, wind, ice, temperature extremes etc);
- Natural disasters (storms, fire, floods etc);
- Animals and insects;
- Noxious plants;
- General environment (sharp objects, trip hazards, terrain etc);
- Participants with pre existing medical conditions; and
- Injuries and accidents.

It is the responsibility of activity leaders to consider the safety risks to participant and to outline those risks and their controls prior to commencement of any activity. If in doubt, consult the BirdLife OHS Coordinator ohs@birdlife.org.au

Sample risk assessment

Potential hazard	Identified risk:	Recommended control action for participants:
e.g. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure	Sunburn/heatstroke	e.g. Wear a hat and sunscreen (reapply every two hours), drink lots of water
e.g. Animals and insects	Snakes	e.g. Do not handle, wear boots & long pants, avoid hollow logs or thick grass

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Appendix 2 Participant Responsibilities.

Remember you, as participants in a voluntary activity, also have a responsibility to ensure your own health and safety and act in a manner that as far as possible does not compromise the safety of other participants. Check that the activity is within your capability. If in doubt check with the Leader before you decide to participate.

- Follow all reasonable instructions given by the Leader.

- Persons under 18 years are required to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

- Ensure you have adequate ambulance and private medical insurance (as BirdLife insurance does not cover these expenses).

- Arrive at the meeting place in time to depart for the activity at the designated time stated

- Advise the Leader if you feel unwell or cannot cope with the activity.

- If you suffer any medical condition that may require special action, please ensure you notify the activity Leader prior to commencement. If necessary, carry the required medication and written instructions regarding its use.

- Provide assistance and support to others on the activity. Branch events are generally not competitive and the success of the activity is dependent on Members providing mutual support and encouragement.

- If you are at the front of the group and the Leader is not with you, stop at all track/road junctions, signs, or whenever there is doubt about the correct route and wait for instructions from the Leader.

- Irrespective of where you are in the group, ensure that you can see the person behind you [and vice versa]. If not slow down and wait.

- Bring all the correct clothing, equipment, food & water with you; don't rely on others to lend you items or carry them for you. If in doubt about what to bring ask, the Leader when registering for the event or before departure.

- Drink water regularly

BirdLife recommends that all participants carry a personal First Aid Kit comprising a minimum of:

- Band aids, 2 crepe bandages; 7.5cm x 2.3m (for snake bite)

- Roll on RID, or similar (for insects and leeches)

- Sunscreen and personal medication

Carry a whistle at all times (for emergency use only) and remember the code:

- THREE SHORT BLASTS regularly spaced   - Emergency signal from person/s in distress

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- ONE LONG BLAST   - Acknowledge distress signal
- FOUR SHORT BLASTS regularly spaced immediately   - Emergency, regroup with leader

Tail end Charlie (last person in the line) is there to assist and to ensure that nobody is left behind.

- If you need to leave the track, for any reason, inform the Leader or Tail end Charlie

- Ensure you leave details of the activity and the names and phone numbers of BirdLife

- Contacts with your family or friends and make them aware of your program.

- Carry with you details of your name, address and the person to contact if you are evacuated for medical treatment. This information can be kept in a film container or in a zip lock plastic bag in accessible place on your person or in your daypack.

By following these few simple procedures you will contribute to the safety and enjoyment of the whole group.

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Appendix 3 Participant Checklist

(Add or delete items as appropriate for your activity)

- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Water-bottle
- ☐ Clothes appropriate for physical activity (e.g. raincoat)
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Lunch / snacks

- ☐ Personal medications
- ☐ Folding chair
- ☐ Blanket
- ☐ Field guide
- ☐ Bird check list
- ☐ Notebook and pen
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Telescope

- ☐ Tripod
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Memory card
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Mobile Phone
- ☐ Torch
- ☐ GPS

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Appendix 4 Advice for dealing with emergency situations

In the event of an emergency, make a careful assessment of the situation, of the options available and make a firm positive decision. Consult others in the party if advice is required. The Activity Leader is responsible for managing the situation.

Where possible there should be at least two, preferably three, in any group sent out to obtain help.

In case of injury or sickness, render whatever assistance is possible.

Keep written details of all incidents, injury or illness. This can assist medical authorities with diagnosis and application of effective treatment - best to carry a log book for such instances.

When calling emergency services from a phone make sure you know the number of the phone you are calling from because the service may need to phone you back. Do not hang up until instructed to do so by the emergency service operator.

If you are in a "remote" location, it is best to contact police. They are in the best position to mobilise other services such as ambulance or specialised evacuation teams.

Communicating with Emergency services

When requesting assistance from emergency services or sending people for help, be prepared to provide the following information:

- best possible location details

- number of people requiring assistance

- nature of the problem or injuries and condition of each person

- whether the casualty is conscious

- whether the casualty is breathing

- any known medical conditions

- age and sex of injured person

- name, address of injured person

- call back phone number if available.

Careful assessment of the particular situation should be made to decide the best means of communicating with rescue authorities. E.g. it may be quicker to walk out to contact authorities than trying to find mobile phone reception.

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The options for contacting emergency services include:

Mobile phone or satellite phone

If these services are available it will probably be the quickest means of contact and has the advantage of two way communication.

However these devices are not always reliable and in some locations will not work at all.

Always try to get as high as possible to improve the chances of making contact.

Mobile phones that are locked can normally still call the emergency number triple zero 000.

Always have the battery fully charged and the phone switched off until it is needed.

Mobile phone coverage should always be considered prior to undertaking any event and alternative communication arrangements made where there is no coverage.

Special note about using a mobile phone for emergency contact

ALWAYS DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000)

Previously advice has been given that when using a mobile phone in Australia to contact emergency services via the phone network of a provider different to your own provider you should dial 112. This advice is no longer valid for the following reasons:

- Since 2002 phones in Australia have had the capability to roam to any available network when triple zero (000) is dialled.

- If you dial 112 in Australia using a mobile it automatically diverts to triple zero (000)

- Emergency authorities have spent considerable time and effort trying to educate the public to always dial triple zero (000) in an emergency.

- Having one emergency number across Australia makes sense. Advising people to dial

- 112 runs counter to this and causes confusion particularly as you cannot contact emergency services by dialing 112 from a wired in phone.

More detail on this matter can be accessed via the Australian Communications & Media Authority http://www.acma.gov.au

NB. Throughout this document the term Triple Zero (000) is used because it is the term preferred by the emergency services. Do not use the term Triple "oh" This is because most phones now have letters as well as numbers on the keys and there have been cases of people under pressure in an emergency trying to contact emergency services by the use of key 6 on their phone which also has the letter 'O'

Send people on foot to the nearest reliable means of contacting emergency services.

This requires a group (preferably 3 persons) who are competent to undertake this task.

This method is generally reliable but may be unsuitable if the emergency is time critical e.g. head injury, unconscious person, suspected stroke or heart attack.

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When sending people for help a written message signed and dated by the leader is important to brief emergency services regarding the situation. It should include the information in the section above. "Communicating with Emergency services"

Activation of a Distress Beacon

A distress beacon for use on land is called a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) but is sometimes incorrectly referred to as an EPIRB. An EPIRB is for marine use and to work effectively needs to float in water.

When a distress beacon is activated the device emits a signal that will be picked up by satellites. It is normally capable of emitting the signal for 24 hours

If using a GPS enabled beacon (preferred) registered with up to 3 emergency contacts this method of contact is generally reliable and fast.

However a PLB is a one way communication device. Therefore it will be helpful if the leader provides one of the emergency contacts noted on the PLB registration with full details of the outing.

Whether to activate should be a judgment made by the leader in consultation with other party members. In general the situation needs to be one that is either life threatening or in the opinion of the leader could become life threatening or result in some other form of serious distress if assistance is delayed.

Leaders are advised to make themselves familiar with guidelines for the use of beacons published by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) http://www.amsa.gov.au and the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) site. http://www.acma.gov.au

Giving location details

When quoting a location to emergency services consider the following:

- If in an urban area, quote street and suburb name, street directory references or name of venue e.g. Jells Park, Lake Wendouree

- If outside the metropolitan area some of the following can help pinpoint your position:

- Name of the nearest town

- Distance and direction from that town

- Name of a road you are on or near

- Your position in relation to a well known land mark e.g. Lake Mungo

- The name of the property or national park and your location on that property

If you are competent in the use of a GPS then map coordinates can also be useful particularly in remote areas. Always give them in addition to the above information not instead of it. However remember that the accuracy of a GPS is questionable in heavily forested areas, valleys and gorges. Remember that if the GPS has not been turned on for some time you will need to let it update its system from the satellites and it may be some minutes before you get an accurate reading.

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If quoting coordinates from a GPS it is important to:

- Always state the datum for which the GPS is set

- The map zone number which precedes the coordinate numbers if quoting map grid [UTM] coordinates

- Take great care when quoting latitude and longitude. Remember an error of one degree represents up to 60 nautical miles [108km] on the ground. Also check whether the GPS is set to read actual degrees, minutes and seconds or decimal degrees, minutes and seconds and quote the data accordingly.

If you own a GPS it is important that you learn how to use it properly.

Key Emergency Contacts

Ensure you familiarise yourself with the names and phone numbers of BirdLife Contacts and emergency services local to the event

Contact	Address	Phone
BirdLife		
Event Leader		
Event Leader		
Vehicle Repair/Retrieval		
Roadside services		
Hospital		
Local Hospital		
Royal Flying Doctor Service		Emergency: Local Base:
Police	Triple Zero 000	
Local Police station	e.g. 59 Sylvester St, Coolgardie	(08) 9026 6000

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Appendix 5 Vehicle convoy

When moving from one area to another at times it may be better for the group to travel to an agreed meeting point to regroup, especially if the route is, for example, through a busy town.

If a convoy is considered necessary, it is important that the Leader explains how a convoy works, so that no one gets lost. The onus is on the driver of the car in front, to make sure the car behind is still following and can be seen. If the car behind can't be seen, don't turn at an intersection until the car behind is visible and has indicated their intention to turn. Only if this point is made very clear, will all drivers have the confidence to wait for the car behind. Suggest they keep to a reasonable speed. Advise participants not to leave a convoy without advising the leader. Nominate a UHF channel for communication if possible.

Appendix 6 Pre-Activity Planning and Information Sheet

Event Details

Event Name:	
Event Description:	
Venue or Location:	
Location Address:	
Event Time and Date/s:	

Event Organiser Details

Primary Event Organiser:	
Position:	
Branch / Group:	
Contact Phone Number:	
Email:	

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Appendix 7 Bushfire Safety: Planning and Resources

This section of the *Guidelines for Leading Groups on Outings* gives you information about:
- Putting together a Bushfire Safety Plan; and
- Fire Safety Resources.

Putting together a Bushfire Safety Plan

Group leaders are responsible for researching whether any Fire Danger Ratings (FDR), Bushfire Warnings/Alerts, Total Fire Bans (sometimes referred to as TOBANs), or extreme weather warnings have been announced for the intended activity area. They are also responsible for monitoring conditions both before and during the activity so that they can cancel the activity in line with information given in Section 4 of this document.

A bushfire safety plan is a vital tool to prepare for adverse conditions and to ensure participant safety during BirdLife activities. Below are some factors to consider when putting your bushfire safety plan together:

How great is the threat of fire? In addition to FDR, Bushfire Warnings/Alerts, and Total Fire Bans you should consider other factors such as vegetation in the activity area, current weather conditions and weather forecast. Working in forest, bushland, heathland or grassland on days of high FDR could increase bushfire risk, while work in urban or residential areas *may* be acceptable **when risk is properly assessed**.

Are there easily accessible escape routes? Fires are often unpredictable and can quickly change direction, so it is vital to have more than one exit point and for the group leader to know and communicate these before commencing an activity. Additionally, consider adapting your activity to limit how far you travel from your vehicle to ensure quick escape where necessary. It is also vital to check that vehicles have enough fuel for safe evacuation as well as other resources such as drinking water and woollen blankets for protection.

Are emergency communications and medical assistance available? The risk of injury from bushfire is greatly increased in remote areas (where medical assistance is not easily accessible). Mobile signal coverage maps are available online and can be used to check mobile reception in your activity area. Also consider having alternative methods of contact such as radios and ensuring all your participants have told their emergency contacts where they are going and when they plan to start and return from the activity.

Does the activity leader regularly monitor radio news reports, bushfire information lines or other sources to ensure that the threat of fire does not increase? Completing an activity is never more important than participants safety- so if risk of bushfire increases during your activity then you must be ready to evacuate the area if necessary.

Does the whole group know what to do in case of a bushfire? Communicating your bushfire plan to your activity participants is important so that everyone knows what to do in the case of bushfire. Specifying what will be your trigger to cancel your activity or leave the area (e.g. FDR of Severe or above, Bushfire Warning/Alert issued for your activity or travel areas) and a 'Bushfire Place of Last Resort' (sometimes called a 'Neighbourhood Safer Place') for your activity area is also a good idea. Although a 'Bushfire Place of Last Resort' must not replace your bushfire safety plan and is to be used as a last resort.

In addition to the above, lots of information around planning bushwalks or other activities during bushfire season is available online.

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Please email people&safety@birdlife.org.au with any questions about bushfire safety for BirdLife activities.

Please see the following pages for resources and websites with more information and to check the FDR and bushfire warnings/alerts for your state or territory.

Fire Safety Resources

The below resources are current at the time of writing and this list is not exhaustive. Please always check your state or territory fire agency website or the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) National Weather Service for the most up to date information.

State/ Territory	Resources
ACT	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS and TOTAL FIRE BAN** Emergency Services Agency (ESA) home page: https://esa.act.gov.au/ **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** Fires Near Me NSW map: https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me **PHONE APPS** Fires Near Me NSW app. Available from Google Play (Android) or The App Store (iPhones). **MEDIA** • ESA Twitter: http://twitter.com/ACT_ESA • ESA Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/actemergencyservicesagency
NSW	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS and TOTAL FIRE BANS** NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) Website: https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fdr-and-tobans **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** Fires Near Me NSW map: https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me **PHONE APPS** Fires Near Me NSW app. Available from Google Play (Android) or The App Store (iPhones). **MEDIA** • NSW RFS Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/nswrfs • NSW RFS Twitter: http://twitter.com/nswrfs • NSW RFS YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/nswrfs • NSW RFS Instagram: http://www.youtube.com/nswrfs
NT	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS and TOTAL FIRE BAN** SecureNT website: https://securent.nt.gov.au/alerts **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** NT Fire Incident Map: https://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/incidentmap/

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State/Territory	Resources
	SOCIAL MEDIA • Bushfires NT Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BushfiresNT/ • Bushfires NT Twitter: https://twitter.com/BushfiresNT
QLD	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS** Rural Fires QLD FDR page: https://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/Pages/FDR.aspx **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** Rural Fires QLD incident map: https://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/map/Pages/default.aspx **TOTAL FIRE BAN** Rural Fires QLD Fire ban page: https://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/Using_Fire_Outdoors/Pages/Fire-Bans-and-Restrictions.aspx **MEDIA** • Find your local commercial radio: http://www.commercialradio.com.au/www-radioalive-com-au/find-a-station/state/qld • QFES Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/QldFireandRescueService • QFES Twitter: http://www.twitter.com/QldFES
SA	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS and TOTAL FIRE BAN** Country Fire Service (CFS) FDR page: https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bans_and_ratings.jsp **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** CFS incident map: https://apps.geohub.sa.gov.au/CFSMap/index.html CFS incident list: https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/warnings_and_incidents.jsp **MEDIA and OTHER RESOURCES** • CFS Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/countryfireservice/ • CFS Twitter: https://twitter.com/cfsalerts • CFS YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/SACFS1 • Bushfire Information Hotline (1800 362 361)
TAS	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS** Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) Forecast: http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colFireDangerRating **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** TFS Bushfire Map: http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colGMapBushfires **TOTAL FIRE BAN** TFS Total Fire Ban Map: http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colTotalFireBans **MEDIA** • TFS Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TasmaniaFireService/

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State/ Territory	Resources
	• TFS Twitter: https://twitter.com/TasFireService • TFS YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/TasmaniaFireService • TFS RSS feeds: http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=xmlFeedsHome • Bushfire Information Hotline (1800 567 567) https://www.police.tas.gov.au/news-events/media-releases/fire-assistance-phone-numbers/
VIC	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS and TOTAL FIRE BAN** Country Fire Authority (CFA): https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** Vic Emergency Incident Map: http://emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/ **PHONE APPS** VicEmergency App: https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/vicemergency-app **MEDIA** • CFA Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/cfavic • CFA Twitter: https://twitter.com/CFA_Updates • VicEmergency Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency • VicEmergency Twitter: https://twitter.com/vicemergency • ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters: https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/our-work/victorias-warning-system/emergency-broadcasters/ • VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
WA	**FIRE DANGER RATINGS and TOTAL FIRE BAN** Emergency WA FDR and Total Fire Ban map: https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/#firedangerratings **FIRE WARNINGS / ALERTS** Emergency WA incident list / map: https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/ **MEDIA and OTHER RESOURCES** • Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/dfeswa • DFES Twitter: https://twitter.com/dfes_wa • For recorded emergency info call DFES: (13 33 37)
National	• **If you are in immediate danger, call 000** • Further background information is available from the **Fire Weather Knowledge Centre** from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM): http://www.bom.gov.au/weather-services/fire-weather-centre/index.shtml • Find your **local ABC Radio**: https://www.abc.net.au/local/ • Download the **Emergency +** App: https://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au/ • Download a **First Aid App** e.g.: https://www.redcross.org.au/get-involved/learn/first-aid/first-aid-app

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Appendix 8 List of Attendees Sign-on Form

Note:
All participants undertaking a BirdLife Australia activity are required to sign on to be covered by BirdLife Australia's insurance policy. Signing on acknowledges you will follow BirdLife Australia's Policies and Procedures and reasonable directions given by the leader. Participants should only perform activities that are within their experience and ability. Participants also agree to disclose any medical conditions that may be adversely affected while undertaking the activity.

Activity: _____   **Location:** _____   **Leader:** _____

Date: _____   **Signature:** _____

Name	Address	Emergency Contact (name and number	Signature	I have declared any relevant medical condition to the activity leader (yes/no)