



Behind the Log

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www.bsar.org

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Welcome to new BSAR members

BSAR appreciates the annual funding from the Department for Victorian Communities to Bushwalking Victoria, a component of which is put towards BSAR administration and training activities.

Editor of Behind the Log – Ren Millsom
Next issue October 2011 - deadline 30 Sept

Combienbar Search, 6-8 December 2010

On Sunday 5 December 2010, BSAR was called to assist in the search for a 40 year old Doncaster man who had become separated from his two elderly parents while on a family weekend away in East Gippsland.

Fourteen BSAR members responded to the first callout. On Monday, BSAR groups searched the valleys each side of the low ridge on which the man was last seen. A group led by David Mitchell found one clear footprint early on day one, with other footprints or marks nearby. However the direction of this trail appeared to run uphill towards a road, making its significance unclear.

On Tuesday evening, FO Karl Hradsky and six other BSAR searchers returned to Melbourne and were replaced by 15 early on Wednesday, giving us a team of 22. This allowed us to put nine teams into the upper half of Tiger Snake Creek catchment, tasked to search almost every significant gully and spur.

Two and a half hours into their tasks, BSAR teams started to pick up footprints along different branches of the creek. Shortly after these discoveries were made, a BSAR search party of Ben Cebon and Tim Chiu heard the missing man reply to their calls. He was sitting by one of the two main branches of Tiger Snake Creek, conscious, tired, hungry and thirsty and

suffering some soft tissue injuries, but alert and in good spirits.

Four other BSAR groups converged on the point as a Police team set out from base. BSAR paramedic Kerryn Wratt attended to the patient's immediate needs while the combined team stretchered the man about 100m to a point identified as suitable for helicopter access. By late afternoon an air ambulance arrived and extracted the patient. He was treated for renal failure in Latrobe Valley Regional Hospital before returning to Melbourne.

Some interesting features of this search were the deployment of BSAR personnel in groups of two, thereby extending search coverage significantly as against the usual three or four person groups.

It was an impressive and rewarding effort for BSAR personnel on site and in Melbourne, working from Sunday through to Thursday on the operation, and for BSAR as a whole. The man's family have expressed their gratitude to BSAR for its part in the rescue.

Rod Costigan Field Organizer Day 3

Editor's note:- Ann Bardoel, the missing man's sister, attended the BSAR February meeting to express her family's gratitude to the searchers and to BSAR. She advised that her brother was in a serious condition when found, and that he has now fully recovered.

Frank Zgoznik steps down as Convener

Frank joined BSAR via MUMC while studying in 1987.

Frank became a Field Organiser in 1999. One of his most challenging searches as a Field Organiser was for a missing paraglider around Tawonga Gap in 2001. Frank and his assisting Field Organisers on the search (Monica Chapman, Rik Head and Bruce Vine) were responsible for coordinating 63 Bush Search and Rescue searchers over three days. Frank also coordinated over 100 Australian Army soldiers who participated in the search.

Frank has developed and delivered radio and GPS training for Bush Search and Rescue over several years.

Frank became Convenor in April 2009 and has overseen the commencement of our strategic planning process in addition to attending to the ongoing duties of the Convener.



Frank stepped down as Convener in December 2010, but he is still active as a Field Organiser, searcher and committee member. Frank's significant and past and ongoing commitment and contributions to Bush Search and Rescue are greatly appreciated.

Peter Campbell, Convener

Introducing BSAR's new Convener: Peter Campbell

Peter Campbell hardly needs introducing to BSAR members. He joined BSAR over 30 years ago, as a member of the Latrobe Mountaineering Club and he has participated in numerous searches and training weekends since. He served on the BSAR committee as LMC club delegate for 15 years and more recently as a Field Organiser since 1993. With the demise of LMC, he was one of our first individual members through Bushwalking Victoria.

Peter's preferred outdoor activities range from mountaineering and photography through to cycling and kite surfing. As with all of Peter's interests, each is approached with passion and energy.

Peter's particular interest in mountaineering saw him take on organising of the BSAR steep snow and ice training weekends since 1995. During this time he has reviewed and developed our processes around

SSI, clarifying the level of specialist skill and experience that members require for these searches.

Peter recognised the need for BSAR members to have a higher profile. During the 1990s he organised the purchase of the BSAR badged polar fleece jacket for members. At that time fluoro green arm bands and packcovers were all we had to identify ourselves, so the jacket was a big step forward.

More recently Peter undertook the complete revision and update of the BSAR website. His work has substantially improved BSAR's interface with members and our profile in the community.

Peter brings to the BSAR Convener role a breadth of experience in a variety of active and progressive community organisations, in addition to his understanding of what makes BSAR tick

Duncan Brookes

Important note - Police Field Catering Unit

Bush Search and Rescue members are expected to be fully self-sufficient, including all equipment and food, for three days in the field. On several recent searches we have been provided with excellent meals by the Police Field Catering Unit. This service has been greatly appreciated. However, as of May 2011, the Field Catering Unit will not be available on

searches in the future until changes in progress within Victoria Police are finalised. Searchers are reminded that they must take three days food on a search and not rely on the police or others for meals.

Peter Campbell, Convener

Eagles Peaks Rescue, 4 December 2010

In the early hours of Saturday 4 December 2010 BSAR responded a team of ten members to assist Police S&R in case an injured walker just south of the Eagle Peaks could not be evacuated by helicopter. The walker was injured in a cliff fall on the Friday afternoon. He was unconscious for approx 40 mins and sustained other injuries. His walking partner was able to call for assistance by mobile phone. Helimed1 was dispatched and was unable to winch them out at around 2030hrs on the Friday night due to lack of visibility and a rainstorm.

BSAR, together with Police S&R, SES and Ambulance Victoria walked in the 3km early on the Saturday morning to be ready in case the conditions prevented Helimed completing the evacuation. Fortunately, Helimed was able to winch in a paramedic and then winch out the walkers, their gear

and the paramedic. After returning to Mansfield by 4WD and an early lunch provided by the SES, the BSAR team arrived back in Melbourne.

Had the helicopter evacuation not been successful it would have been a very tough long-duration rescue due to the extremely steep and rugged terrain.

The exceptional skill of the Helimed pilot is to be commended while working in close proximity to the edge of the cliff for an extended time during the winching operations.

Feedback from the injured person indicates he was very appreciative of the efforts of the combined agencies to evacuate him.

Photos and a video of the rescue can be found on the BSAR website www.bsar.org

Rik Head, Field Organizer

Steep Snow and Ice Dryland Training Day, Sunday 26 June

Time: 0930 to 1600 hrs.

Location: Surrey Hills Scout Hall, 909 Riversdale Road, Surrey Hills, Melway 60G2.

The Dryland Training day is **compulsory** for members attending the Steep Snow and Ice Training on the weekend of 9-10 July 2001 at Mount Stirling.

This training is an important opportunity for all BSAR members with steep snow and ice skills to keep them current, and for other members to acquire the skills.

Theory and practice for steep snow and ice rescue techniques and equipment will be covered, including roping up for travel, setting up a z-pulley and using avalanche transceivers.

Please bring:

- Your ice climbing, ropes and rescue gear
- Avalanche transceiver, if you have one
- You can either bring your lunch or visit a nearby café.

More information including an equipment check list at www.bsar.org.

All intending participants need to register by 14 June – register with your club contact or at <http://bsar.org/steepsnowandice2011>.

Late registrations will not be accepted.

Steep Snow and Ice Training Weekend 2011 – 9-10 July

Location: Mt Stirling

Transport: The Police bus will leave Green Street, Northcote at 1900 hrs Friday, returning Sunday about 2000 hrs.

The Bush Search and Rescue Steep Snow and Ice training weekend is being held at Mount Stirling this year.

This training is available to members who have a steep snow and ice grading.

Take special note:-

- Snow camping and ice climbing gear is required

- We will be snow camping on Mt Stirling on Saturday night. Bring a snow shovel.
- Cooking equipment and food is required for Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast. Bring food for lunch on both days too.
- Groups of two or three will be formed to share tents and cooking equipment.
- Skis or snow shoes are required – BSAR snow shoes and skis will be available at Green Street.

Again registration by 14 June and more information at <http://bsar.org/steepsnowandice2011>.

Peter Campbell, SSI Field Organizer

Meet the retiring BSAR Equipment Officer – Chris Jarvis

In previous BTLs, we have featured BSAR members having leading roles in BSAR. This time we seek Chris' ideas as he hands the baton to John Baillie.

Why are you standing down as BSAR's Equipment Officer?

After around fifteen years in the role I felt it was time to let somebody else have a go, with fresh ideas and new enthusiasm. Shrinking spare time was also making it harder to give equipment the attention it needs.

When did you first join BSAR?

In 1985, soon after Essendon Bushwalking Club joined the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs (VicWalk), as BV was known then. I have been EBC's S&R Delegate ever since.

When did you become the Equipment Officer?

Around 1996. About that time our volume of equipment had a dramatic increase, mainly the new pack covers, a legacy from the search for James O'Shea in the Wongungarra. At that time our equipment was stored in Rik Head's garage in Glen Iris, but the larger volume, and the opportunity provided by VicWalk opening an office in Richmond with capacity for equipment storage, solved the storage problem. At the time I was the Convener, and lived nearby, so for convenience I slipped into the role of Equipment Officer.

What changes have you seen in equipment since you took on the EO role?

Mostly the introduction of large volumes of electronic 'gadgets', first the GPS's, then the radios, and to a lesser extent, the avalanche beacons. Quantities of 'gadgets' have increased to the point where we can now issue a CB radio to nearly every searcher on a large-scale search, greatly helping with field communications.

We have also seen the equipment storage move twice. I think our Northcote location is the best we have had, as access to half of a shipping container has given us the capacity we were long looking for.

What does the Equipment Officer do?

Quite a lot really! The key role is to ensure equipment is 'search ready' at all times. Over the years I aimed to have the gear stored in such a way that FO's could 'grab and go', assuming it would be in the early hours of a cold, wet, windy night. Stumbling around in the dark looking for numerous scattered bags and boxes is not the way to go. It needs to be kept simple. I think we are getting there. It's an evolving process.

After a search or practice it is important to ensure the kits are re-stocked with consumables, like batteries

and marking tape, and also high-attribution items, such as scrub gloves, safety glasses, waterproof notepads, etc.

Battery management is now the biggest individual task. There are a lot of 'gadgets', and even more batteries. They all they have to checked and sorted into 'full', 'partially used' and 'discard', depending upon their level of charge. We have to ensure we have enough 'full' batteries in the kits to support all gadgets on a long, remote-area deployment, such as the recent search at Combienbar. The 'partially used' batteries are to be used mainly on practices, and as last-resort power on a search.



Chris Jarvis

What are the major challenges facing equipment in general?

I think it is very easy to be dazzled by the gadgets and to lose sight of what we do best – searching scrubby gullies. If we are distracted by the equipment then our core strengths, self-sufficiency and strong field capability, could suffer. Gadgets will fail, or we may forget how to drive them, but regardless of what happens to our equipment we need to find a way to continue operating, like we did for fifty-five years before the gadgets were issued, (excluding Police radios).

Next, we need to improve returning equipment after a search or practice. It is very easy, and tempting, after a hard search or practice, to 'dump and run', dropping equipment back into storage without ensuring it is 'search-ready'. We need to assume it will be needed tomorrow. With more equipment this becomes harder and more arduous, with pack covers dried, batteries checked, kits re-stocked and re-balanced etc. And in recent times I have indeed noticed improvements here.

It is tempting to acquire more equipment, such as more radios, GPS's, high-visibility vests, etc. But when transporting and managing all this gear in the field and in storage becomes a major burden then we need ask "Is this extra gear really essential to our core business - searching scrubby gullies?"

2010-2011 Annual Report, Bush Search and Rescue Victoria

Bush Search and Rescue participated in several successful searches over the last year, including:

- A search for a missing woman at Lake Mountain on 12 July 2010, who was located safe and well.
- The rescue and evacuation by Air Ambulance of an injured walker at Eagles Peaks on 4 December 2010.
- The search and rescue of a missing man at Combiobar, East Gippsland from 5 to 8 December 2010 with 29 members participating. A Bush Search and Rescue team found the missing man after he had been lost for three days and assisted on the ground with his evacuation by an Air Ambulance helicopter.
- A search for a missing boy who was found near Buninyong on 19 March 2011 just before Bush Search and Rescue members arrived by bus at the search location.

Articles, photographs and some video footage of recent searches and training activities have been published on our website.

The Bush Search and Rescue Manual is also now available online on our website. We are updating and adding content to this online version to reflect changes and new search processes, techniques and equipment.

A winter skills training weekend was held on 24-25 July 2010 at Mount Hotham. Fifty-one members, including twenty-one new members, participated in activities including navigation, GPS and radio usage, snow skills, steep snow and ice rescue.

Frank Zgoznic stepped down as Bush Search and Rescue Convener in December 2010. Frank presided over a busy period at Bush Search and Rescue which included the high profile search for Minister Tim Holding at Mount Feathertop in August 2009 and commencement of a strategic plan for guiding Bush Search and Rescue's future directions.

Peter Campbell was appointed Convener in early 2011.

Bush Search and Rescue formed an Executive in February 2011 to assist with ongoing support, administration and development of the organisation. Duncan Brookes, Monica Chapman, Eric Krista, Rod Costigan and Peter Campbell were appointed to the Executive as inaugural members.

Rod Lawlor is leading the strategic review working group which is progressing with developing our

strategic plan. The priority areas identified so far are membership, search effectiveness, budget and finance, the function of the BSAR committee and risk management. The strategic plan will be important for guiding future directions and priorities for Bush Search and Rescue.

Chris Jarvis retired as Equipment Officer early in 2011 after several years in this role. His dedication and attention to detail on all equipment matters has been greatly appreciated. I thank Chris on behalf of Bush Search and Rescue for ensuring that our equipment was well organised, serviced and available for searches. John Baillie and Rod Lawlor have taken over as Equipment Officers.

Rod Costigan has recently implemented improvements to our vitally important call-out systems, including new SMS, email and automated telephony features.

Anne Casey, as Membership Secretary, continues to improve the management of the membership and SMS lists and is preparing a detailed database of training and search activities.

Ren Millsom, as Editor, has again ably produced *Behind the Log* (BTL), our regular newsletter.

Senior Sergeant Barry Gibson, Sergeant Greg Paul and other members of the Police Search and Rescue Squad have provided significant ongoing support for Bush Search and Rescue activities.

Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) continues to provide funds to Bushwalking Victoria for Bush Search and Rescue administration and operations. Bushwalking Victoria also continues to provide ongoing support for our activities.

On Australia Day, 26 January 2011, Rik Head, a long serving Bush Search and Rescue member and Field Organiser, was awarded the Emergency Service Medal for his lifetime commitment to search, rescue and safety in the bush and mountains. This medal is very significant recognition for Rik's tireless commitment and effort dedicated to providing volunteer search and rescue services for over 4 decades.

There are now 281 dedicated people actively involved with Bush Search and Rescue from over 20 clubs. We are also steadily recruiting individual members - a process now managed by Monica Chapman.

I would like to thank all Bush Search and Rescue members for their contributions and support over the last year that enables Bush Search and Rescue to continue to provide effective and specialised volunteer search and rescue services to the Victorian community.

Peter Campbell, Convener



Bush Search and Rescue Victoria Media Policy, 12/07/2010 - ss1-5

1 Introduction

Media exposure confers many benefits but carries many risks. BSAR's practice is to engage appropriately with media in mind of the potential benefits. However the media are focussed on material that their audiences want. This will not always be in the best interests of BSAR, the public, BSAR's associates, the search subject or the subject's family.

During searches it has been noted that the media seek someone who personifies the situation. This means that a searcher, perhaps the searcher who finds the missing person, is more likely to be approached than those BSAR members who might be better prepared, such as a Field Organiser or Police Liaison Officer.

Each reporter will also seek a different angle to the story and will therefore be particularly interested in controversy. That might be the possibility of a searcher missing or returning late, an area not searched or differences of opinion between organisations involved in a search. A BSAR member, untrained in media or partially informed, might easily contribute unintentionally to a minor or fabricated conflict.

Visual media always want images. The power of an image in comparison to text is such that BSAR must continue to present a favourable appearance and as a coherent group.

In general, it is rare for media to publish supplied images, but the inaccessibility of the search area together with the new capability many BSAR members have to transmit images, presents new and untested possibilities. This development warrants caution.

This document is not intended to discourage BSAR initiatives for the purposes of promoting BSAR. But it does create the framework with which all contact, including such initiatives, must comply.

2 Aims

2.1 BSAR actively engages media for the following purposes:

- recognition eases funding applications
- exposure strengthens employer support
- public recognition fosters morale
- exposure aids recruiting
- recognition reinforces BSAR's profile and role within the S&R community

2.2 In relation both to active media engagement and to unsolicited media exposure, BSAR wishes

- to optimise the image presented

- to avoid unwanted impact on other parties, including VicPolSaR and the search subject.

2.3 In relation to active or unsolicited media contact, BSAR will use these guidelines to ensure that it continues to apply a controlled and measured approach to all media contact.

3 Core Messages

3.1 BSAR's core messages will be:

- BSAR is participating in the search in question
- BSAR is distinguished by high level of expertise; experience; 60 year history; drawn from experienced bushwalkers, skiers and climbers.

4 Framework

4.1 Media contact shall only be made by Search PLO, Search FO and/or by the Convenor between searches.

4.2 The Search FO and Search PLO may delegate authority to specified individuals for specific media tasks.

4.3 BSAR members may not comment publicly on search and rescue matters, either during searches or between searches, except under Convenor's authority, whether or not their connection with BSAR is disclosed.

4.4 Authorised BSAR personnel may provide the following information to media:

- BSAR background information
- BSAR participation, numbers and movements
- information already legitimately in the public domain
- weather and terrain
- other direct responsibilities of the Search FO

except where any of the above information reflects on

- search strategy
- information or speculation about the missing person's background or actions
- speculation about the prospects of success

and except where the information is

- subject to confidentiality
- controversial

5 All BSAR Members

Authority to engage with media

- 5.1 All active engagement with media during or in relation to a search will be at the direction of the Search FO or the Search PLO
- 5.2 Any BSAR member to whom authority is delegated by the Search FO or Search PLO must ensure that the delegation is received directly from the FO or PLO.
- 5.3 A member should decline delegation of media tasks if not comfortable in the role.

Image

- 5.4 BSAR members are expected to make reasonable efforts to have their appearance reflect their commitment and competence and in all ways to be appropriately turned out at all times during a search. BSAR members are expected to wear such BSAR apparel as is available while at search base, to maximise exposure.
- 5.5 BSAR members on searches must wear/display BSAR livery, when available, in preference to other uniforms and/or insignia or product branding
- 5.6 BSAR members (eg FO's) actively engaging with media should try to display BSAR insignia.

Privacy

- 5.7 BSAR members are requested to restrict photographs to BSAR activities as opposed to other organisations' activities

5.8 BSAR members may not photograph a found person or a missing/found person's family and supporters except when instructed to by VicPoSAR command

5.9 BSAR members must not supply or distribute photographs or provide photographs for publication except via the Search FO or Convener.

Casual media contact

5.10 BSAR members should not engage in public discussion of search related matters in the news media.

5.11 Open online discussions have the effect of permanent public statements which may have implications for the individual, BSAR and Victoria Police. BSAR members should not engage in public discussion of search related matters in any forum, including online media, and should discourage close associates from doing so.

Confidentiality

5.12 BSAR members must respect the confidentiality of search information at all times, including in private communications, eg phoning home.

General

5.13 All BSAR members are expected to act within both the letter and spirit of the BSAR Media Policy.

Additional clauses describe responsibilities of the Field Organisers, Police Liaison Officers, BSAR and BV and are available from the Convener.

Bush Search and Rescue strategic plan

Bush Search and Rescue is currently developing a Strategic Plan to provide directions and set our strategic priorities for three years from 2012 to 2014. All members will have opportunities to provide input by email and via club delegates to help determine the direction that we take over the next few years.

I encourage you to discuss how you would like to see BSAR develop with other members and while on searches and training events.

Questions, feedback and input to the Strategic Plan can be sent to strategicplan@bsar.org.

Bush Search and Rescue Manual now online

The entire Bush Search and Rescue manual is now available at <http://bsar.org/manual>. A PDF version of the manual can also be downloaded. The manual has been recently updated to reflect changes to call-out technologies and procedures and a new section has been added for steep snow and ice rescues.

Welcome to new BSAR members

BSAR warmly welcomes the following new Individual Members:

Amanda Smith
Bron Willis
Kelsy Gibos
Rudi Michelson

Monica Chapman
Individual Membership Coordinator

BSAR Training Weekend –19-20 November 2011

Our annual training weekend this year will be held on the 19-20 November. BSAR members are strongly encouraged to attend; please note this weekend in your diary.

The training program will cover bush search specific skills; through a differentiated program that caters for both our newer members and the more experienced members. We are planning new elements in the program, including a rogaine type exercise using a GPS rather than a compass, and sessions on bush tracking.

Just as important as the training imperatives, these weekends are the best opportunity for BSAR members to get to know each other and to catch up with old friends.

We particularly encourage appropriately experienced club members who are considering or who anticipate joining BSAR in the near future to attend the weekend. You will be made most welcome. The level of skill and experience required for joining BSAR is on the website.

The venue will be in a forest area near Melbourne. We anticipate that Police bus transport will be provided, departing early Saturday morning from our rendezvous and parking area at Green Street, Northcote and returning early evening on Sunday. Saturday night will be camping at a communal area.

Further details will be provided over the coming months, through Club Delegates, by email to members and on the BSAR website at <http://bsar.org/training>.

Duncan Brookes, Field Organizer

If undeliverable, please return to:
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Bushwalking Victoria
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Templestowe Vic 3106

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