

2016-2017 Annual Report

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria

Peter Campbell, Convener



Bush Search and Rescue Victoria contributed 84 searcher person-days and 232 training person-days, a total of 317 volunteer days during the year from 1 May 2016 to 30 April 2017.

Searches

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria participated three times with search and rescue operations.

Monbulk, 23 May 2016. Twenty BSAR searchers participated in the search for a missing woman near Monbulk who was found deceased.

Yea, 21 August 2016. Sixteen BSAR members attended a search on bush and farmland around Yea for a missing elderly man who was not found during the search but was later found deceased.



Grampians, 26 September 2016. 21 BSAR members attended a search for a missing person in the Grampians. Police and family members held grave fears for the missing person's wellbeing from the outset. The search was scaled down after three days, the missing person was not found.



Training

Rod Costigan led the **BSAR Annual Training weekend** at Korweinguboora in March 2017 with 43 visitors, prospective and current members attending, including instructors and organisers.

Duncan Brookes, Eric Krista, Lachlan Shield, Rodney Polkinghorne, Wayne Merry, Roger Palmer and Kirilee Chaplin assisted with planning and running the event. Support from Victoria Police Search and Rescue was also much appreciated with 6 Police SAR members attending.

The training included workshops on searching and equipment and a GPS Rogaine on Saturday followed by a simulated search on Sunday.



Eric Krista, Ian Franzke, Trevor Key and Peter Campbell organised and led the **Steep Snow and Ice training weekend** at Bogong Village and Heathy Spur on 29 – 31 July 2016. Exercises over the two days included roping up, self-arresting, searching using avalanche transceivers. Victoria Police Search and Rescue provided a hands-on exercise with stretcher hauling on steep terrain at Windy Corner.



Equipment

Our new equipment store has been fully fitted out by Roger Palmer, Lachlan Shield and Duncan Brookes and six search kits standardised and replenished. We have purchased additional search and rescue equipment and safety clothing using funds provided by Bushwalking Victoria, and a Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program Grant from the Department of Justice.

BSAR members

BSAR has 236 searchers available for call-out as at 30 April 2016.

John Retchford was awarded an Emergency Services Medal in the 2017 Australia Day honours for his outstanding contributions to search and rescue since 1961.

Bush Search and Rescue Committee and Executive members continue to make ongoing contributions to the operation and governance of BSAR.

Future activities for 2017-18

We are developing a new BSAR Strategic Plan and are assessing options for refreshing of our website.

Sergeant Greg Paul of Police Search and Rescue has advised that Police SAR intend to make greater use of BSAR during earlier stages of searches.

I again thank Bushwalking Victoria, the Victoria Police Search and Rescue Squad and the Victorian Department of Justice for their continued and much valued support for Bush Search and Rescue Victoria.