



# Behind the Log

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[www.bsar.org](http://www.bsar.org)

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BSAR appreciates the annual funding from the Department for Victorian Communities to Bushwalking Victoria, a component of which is put towards BSAR operations and training activities. The Victorian Department of Justice also provides grants for search equipment and safety clothing.



Editor of Behind the Log – Ren Millsom

Next issue October 2015 - deadline 30 Sept

## CALL-OUT FOR THE STAIRCASE SPUR, MT BOGONG, 3 NOVEMBER

As I passed the Mt Beauty police station at 5pm on my way home from work on 3 November and seeing two Bright S.E.S. out the front of the station, I wondered what was happening.

Half an hour later, I found out when the BSAR text came through at 5:37pm for a carry out from Bivouac Hut, leaving at Mt Beauty police station at 6:30pm. Five BSAR members answered the call - Aaron Knight, Julien Atherstone, David Panozzo, Martin Eriksson and Ian Franzke. Parks Victoria staff and members of Falls Creek S.E.S. were also at the police station for the 6:30pm departure.

Bright S.E.S., local police and a paramedic had left earlier and were already on their way up the Staircase Spur. On the drive to Mountain Creek we could see the helicopter flying around the Staircase spur. We started to walk up the spur and we got about 2.5km up when we met the Bright S.E.S. who had started coming down carrying an empty stretcher. The helicopter was able to winch the injured person out.

The injured person was a 33 year old female who had injured her knee and was unable to walk. So we helped the S.E.S. carry the stretcher down. Not long after meeting up with the S.E.S. we got a phone call from Mt Beauty Police station telling us that the helicopter was successful and to return to the station.

By this time it had got dark and we were descending by torch light. We were moving at a slow pace as even when carrying an empty stretcher, it is not quick going over rough ground in the dark. A group of runners caught up to us. They were making their way down the spur using the light in one of their mobile phones to guide them. They had very little gear with them and were definitely not prepared to stay out the night or walking in the dark.

We returned to the Mount Beauty Police Station for a debrief.

*Ian Franzke, Field Organizer*

## Welcome to New BSAR Members

BSAR warmly welcomes the following new members:-

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Andrew Bishop       | BV   |
| Claire Gilder       | BV   |
| Emma Harold         | MUMC |
| John Hillard        | BNSC |
| Andrew Hodgkinson   | BV   |
| Brett Longmuir      | BV   |
| Cameron Millsom     | VMTC |
| Nicholas Slijkerman | BV   |
| Jason Strouts       | BV   |
| Joel Sullivan       | BV   |

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## SEARCH FOR MISSING BOY NEAR EILDON, 4-7 APRIL 2015

An intensive four day search involving more than 50 BSAR searchers concluded successfully with the finding of the boy alive 5 days after he went missing. The 11 year old autistic child disappeared a few hundred metres from near the family campsite next to Lake Eildon on Easter Friday around 9:30am.

By 3pm BSAR were called to assist. There were fears that he may have wandered into the nearby bush or that he had fallen into the water. BSAR were initially asked to attend Friday night but this was delayed to Saturday morning due to heavy Easter traffic delaying travel to the area. Over the next four days a steady presence of BSAR personnel assisted the Victoria Police to cover nearby bush areas.

BSAR undertook feature searching and line searching of likely areas near the place where the boy was last seen. Other agencies including the SES, CFA, Parks Victoria, DELWP and various Police Units combed nearby areas and roads. The situation seemed dire until the fourth day of the search (Monday), when Rodney Polkinghorne of MUMC found the boy's beanie in dense bush about 10 metres down the side of scrubby spur during line searching.



BSAR Searchers going down Auriferous Spur Sunday

The area had been feature searched two days previously but the beanie was small and in an unlikely location. It was an important find and spurred a big effort that evening and the next day to extend the search to new areas surrounding the new location.

The missing boy was subsequently spotted by helicopter around lunchtime on day 5, about 300m from a prominent unsealed road – Skyline Road. Nearby police and DELWP staff quickly attended to the boy. A few BSAR personnel including Tanya Craig, Tim Martin and Bernie Mills assisted with the 300m stretch carry out to the road, whereupon he was thrust into the waiting arms of his mum and subsequently into the waiting

ambulance. Dr David Tingay was on hand to provide primary care of the boy until the ambulance reached Alexandra Hospital.



Stretcher carry Tuesday

The boy was found in a dehydrated and hypothermic state. He was sitting when found and was able to eat and drink when the first responders arrived. However he was shivering and very cold to the touch and required careful handling. While he warmed up once inside the ambulance he quickly lost core temperature in transit to the emergency ward. He was released from hospital a few days later and two weeks later is nearing full recovery.

BSAR searchers are reminded that cold temperatures and dehydration can play havoc with internal organs so care must be taken during the rescue phase. Greg Paul of Victoria Police who was on site during much of the search highlighted the important of the finding of the beanie on day 4. The finding led to a reassessment of the lost boy's likely location and the chances of him being found alive.

It was a tremendous effort from all those involved in the search. BSAR searchers endured long and hard days, often late into the night in difficult terrain and demanding circumstances. The BSAR Committee, the Board of Bushwalking Victoria, senior representatives of Victoria Police, the Emergency Services minister, Jane Garrett and the Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews have all thanked all BSAR personnel involved for their valuable contribution on this search.

*Frank Zgoznic Field Organiser*

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## 2014-2015 Annual Report, Bush Search and Rescue Victoria

### Searches

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria was called out six times during the period 1 May 2014 to 30 April 2015 and participated in the three major search and rescue operations.

**Lake Eildon National Park 4-7 April 2015:** Sixty three BSAR members contributed to the extensive search for a missing autistic boy who was located after several days searching. BSAR and other emergency services workers involved in the search were thanked in the Victorian parliament by Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Emergency Services Jane Garrett.



Premier Daniel Andrews and BSAR members

**Mount Bogong, 5-6 July 2014.** Five BSAR members based in Mt Beauty ascended Staircase Spur and located two missing men who were escorted to Bivouac Hut the next morning. Police Search and Rescue and additional BSAR members along with local SES assisted in getting the men off Mt Bogong.

**Mount Bogong, 13-15 July 2014.** Two snowboarders reporting missing were eventually located deceased after being buried by an avalanche off Eskdale Spur.



BSAR search group on Eskdale Spur. Source: HeraldSun

For the last 12 months, 150 searching and 159 training person-days were recorded, a total of 309 volunteer days. 21 new members joined and 22 resigned. 221 searchers are available for call-out.

### Training

Duncan Brookes and Merv Trease led the BSAR Annual Training at Korweinguboora in May 2014 with 46 members and prospective members attending. Three search exercises were conducted in “typical search weather” - cool and showery conditions in the Wombat State Forest. Field exercises incorporated feature and line searching, patient management and a stretcher carry evacuation. A rotation of practical workshops covered tracking and observation, hypothermia field treatment and helicopter extraction. Navigation skills were also honed with a GPS Rogaine.



Eric Krista and Peter Campbell led **Steep Snow and Ice training** on the Razorback near Mount Hotham in September 2014. 23 BSAR members conducted self-arresting, stretcher hauling, alpine travel and avalanche rescue exercises on steep slopes. Victoria Police Search and Rescue provided us with excellent instruction and support.



Practice with avalanche probes



Priority actions implemented from our 2012-16 BSAR Strategic Plan included:

- Duncan Brookes managed the provision of safety clothing to all active members.
- Patsy Borton now supports new BSAR members by providing a new member welcome pack
- An annual information evening and members social night is held in October.
- A Letter of Understanding was signed with Victoria Police.

Rod Costigan diligently scanned and stored digital copies of all available historical BSAR search reports to create a valuable archive.

Cameron Plant, Kirilee Chaplin and Geoff Williams contacted several university outdoors clubs and provided presentations to their members about BSAR, which will hopefully result in some new keen searchers joining our ranks. Rod Costigan and I have also provided presentations to several bushwalking clubs to raise awareness of BSAR and how people can participate.

Jack De Vries, Membership Secretary and Ren Millsom, Behind The Log newsletter editor both continue to quietly and efficiently provide important volunteer services to BSAR.

Specialist rescue stretchers were kindly donated by local community groups to our members based in Mt Beauty and North East Victoria following the 2014 Mt Bogong search and rescue operations.

I would like to thank all members of the Bush Search and Rescue Committee and Executive for their ongoing contributions and commitment to the operations and governance of the organisation.

I also thank Bushwalking Victoria Board, the Victoria Police Search and Rescue Squad and the Victorian Department of Justice for the continued and much valued support they provide to Bush Search and Rescue Victoria.

*Peter Campbell, Convener*

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## ORANGE SMOKE FLARES FOR BSAR SEARCH GROUPS

Police Search and Rescue have recently provided BSAR with orange smoke marine distress flares. These will be issued to search groups; to be used to indicate a location and wind direction to a helicopter crew. A flare should only be set off when a helicopter is expected at the search group's location, and is known to be nearby and with likely line of sight.

Instructions for use are on each flare body. These are straightforward but must be followed with care.

A demonstration will be made on the training weekend. A flare should not be used in circumstances where a bush fire risk exists, as the flare emits sparks.

Flares issued are to be returned at the end of the search. The flares are date expired, but perfectly suitable for BSAR's purpose.

*Duncan Brookes*

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## CHEAPER GEAR THROUGH VSPA MEMBERSHIP

BSAR members are able to join the Victorian Ski Patrollers Association (VSPA) as affiliate members for a fee of \$15 P.A. Membership grants you access to the VSPA equipment purchasing scheme. I have purchased clothing, tents and packs through them.

Over the years the VSPA has established a close relationship with many of the major ski equipment

distributors in Australia. Equipment can usually be sourced at extremely attractive prices.

For details refer to:

<http://vspa.org.au/VSPA/Join.html>

*Cameron Plant*

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## CALL-OUT SYSTEM TEST, 13 FEBRUARY 2015

BSAR's Strategic Plan requires that in quiet periods we make a 'Test Call' to all members via the electronic callout system. This is intended to remind all members to remain ready for callouts.

On this test we added a request for all members to respond. This was aimed at ensuring you are all familiar with the reply process. Please note this was a one-off request. During actual callouts only those who are available to attend are requested to reply.

During a callout you will be asked to reply in the same short format. Key points to remember are:-

1. Reply only if you can attend at the nominated times
2. Reply only if you can attend for two days
3. Name, club and pickup only. Nothing else. If replying by email please delete the text of the incoming message
4. For individual members of Bushwalking Victoria (not aligned with a club), we suggest you nominate your club as 'BV'

5. During a callout the PLO will nominate the pickup points from the list on BSAR's website. These will be en route to search base from the initial start point (Typically Northcote). No other pickup points will be available.

Why do we ask for your club? This assists the FO with early planning, sometimes prior to departure, assembling club-based search teams so you can work with familiar faces.

Finally, a reminder for everybody to visit BSAR's website [www.bsar.org](http://www.bsar.org) and become familiar with departure points, contained within 'Callouts'. Some recent changes have been made to the list. The website also has lots of other interesting goodies, so spend a few extra minutes to explore it.

*Chris Jarvis, Police Liaison Officer*

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## BSAR ANNUAL TRAINING WEEKEND 20-21 JUNE 2015

This year's BSAR Annual Training weekend is being held on 20-21 June 2015 in the **Fryers Ranges** near Castlemaine.

The weekend will provide BSAR members and other interested experienced bushwalkers with training in skills for bush search and rescue. The program is designed to be active and hands-on for all participants and includes:

- **Saturday 20/6:** Workshops, search exercises, night navigation
- **Sunday 21/6:** Participation in Victorian Rogaining Association (VRA) 6 hour rogaine (event entry fee will be covered by BSAR).

### *Who should attend?*

**Current BSAR members - you!** Please register **Deadline:** Friday 12 June

Please also inform your Club BSAR Delegate that you are attending.

**Prospective members** - if you know any experienced bushwalkers interesting in joining BSAR and meet or are close to meeting the requirements for BSAR membership and who would like to attend please advise your Club BSAR Delegate or ask them to send an email to [training@bsar.org](mailto:training@bsar.org).

### **Transport, departure and return times**

A bus will be provided by Police Transport Branch. Details are:

- **Location:** Police Bands Compound, end of Green Street, Northcote
- **Time/date:** 07:00 hrs, Saturday 20 June
- **Parking:** Available in compound, please park as directed.

- **Return:** Green Street 18:30 hrs Sunday 21 June.

### *Please bring*

- Day pack, packed ready for exercises off track in scrub, commencing on arrival Saturday morning
  - Full water bottles
  - Your copy of the BSAR manual, notebook, folder, pens and paper
  - Garmin GPS and a handheld CB radio if you have them.
  - Equipment for camping on Saturday night (a gear bag or pack can be left at search base)
  - Food for the weekend; a meal will be supplied by the VRA at the conclusion of the Rogaine on Sunday.
  - A folding chair is handy for the workshop sessions and in camp.
- A reminder of BSAR Policy: no shorts please

### *What will be supplied*

- Maps
- Fresh water will be available at search base
- A meal will be provided by the VRA after the Rogaine on Sunday at the Hash house

*If you have any questions about the weekend, please don't hesitate to ring one of the organisers:*

- Eric Krista 0419 986 878
- Peter Campbell 0409 417 504

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## STEEP SNOW AND ICE TRAINING JULY 2015

**Sun 19 July 2015.**

Dryland training day in Williamstown.

**24-26 July 2015.**

Steep snow and ice training (specialist training not for all members). Departing 7pm Friday 24 July

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If undeliverable, please return to:  
Bush Search and Rescue Victoria  
Bushwalking Victoria  
P O Box 1007  
Templestowe, Vic 3106

**Behind the Log**