



Information for Employers

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria is part of Bushwalking Victoria and is set up to provide a pool of experienced bushwalkers and cross-country skiers for use in searches for lost people in the bush areas and snow-fields of Victoria.

Our objective is to make available to the Victoria Police those members of walking clubs and individual members who have the experience, fitness and personal equipment to safely participate in prolonged searching in adverse conditions.

Members are called out to a search only in response to an official request for assistance from the Victoria Police, as a part of the State Emergency Response Plan. Our members work under Police direction at all times, and are registered as emergency workers as required by the *Emergency Management Act 1986*.

Members responding to a call-out are instructed to attend for two days. Return transport to Melbourne in under two days is not assured unless the search is called off.

A member is free to decline any particular call-out for any reason.

Employers are encouraged to give members special paid leave to cover attendance on searches. Bush Search and Rescue Victoria has been in operation since 1949 and such leave has routinely been provided by many government and private employers during that time. However, any employer should feel free to ask a member to decline call-outs if absences are excessive or work requirements make it undesirable. It should be noted that most call-outs occur in the evening or early hours of the morning and it is rarely practical for a member to contact their employer when a call-out is received.

It is the member's responsibility to ensure that their employer is fully aware of the implications of being listed for call-out to attend searches.

Victorian Public Service regulations specifically allow for attendance by employees at emergencies and Commonwealth Public Service employees have been granted paid leave for many years.

A Certificate of Attendance will be issued to members responding to a call-out confirming the dates and nature of the emergency.

Peter Campbell
Convener
Bushwalkers Search and Rescue

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