



# Behind the Log

Issue No. 35

May 2012

A0002548Y

Bush Search And Rescue Victoria, P O Box 1007, Templestowe Vic 3106

www.bsar.org

## In this issue:

Call-outs and alerts in the last six months	1
BSAR Training Weekend, November 2011	2
Steep Snow and Ice Training, 22 and 28-29 July	2
BSAR Annual Report to Bushwalking Victoria	3
Tomahawk Gap Cold Case Search, October 2011	4
Welcome to New Individual BSAR Members	4



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 2012 - deadline 30 Sept

## Call-outs and alerts in the last six months

### Call-out for 75 Y O man, Hotham, 5 Dec.

At 8.00pm on Monday 5 December 2011, Ryan Hartshorne from the Police Search and Rescue Squad requested that an 'alert' be sent to advise of a potential callout later that night. A 75 year old man became separated from a party near Mt Hotham airstrip at midday. When he had not returned to their vehicle at 6.00pm, he was reported as missing.

The man was local to the area and knew it well. He had links to the MacNamara family. He was searching for an old grave of a child.

At 10.00pm the 'alert' was upgraded to a full callout. Departure from Northcote was set for 2.00am on Tuesday, 6 Dec. Duncan Brookes was to be FO.

At 10.26pm, the Police called to advise that the man had been found alive and well. He had found his way back to the Mt Hotham – Omeo Rd and was picked up by a passing police car.

The callout was cancelled at this time.

Thanks to the 8 searchers who responded with names and clubs by the time the cancellation had been sent.

*Merv Trease, PLO*

### Search for Lone Hiker, Mt Donna Buang

On Sunday 15 April, there was a call-out and search for a missing hiker in which 17 BSAR members attended. The hiker was found just as the BSAR teams were being deployed. A full report in the October BTL.

### Alert for missing walker Mt Bogong, 16 Jan.

Police SAR requested that BSAR send an 'alert' advising that a bushwalker was missing on Mt Bogong. He walked on his own on a regular basis. After failing to return home on Sunday evening and not turn up for work on Monday morning, the alarm was raised. It was known that his intended route was to walk from Mountain Creek up the Staircase Spur, camp at Cleve Cole hut and return via Eskdale Spur. If preliminary searching had not found the man by mid afternoon on the Monday, a full callout was planned to depart Green St early on Tuesday morning.

Almost as soon as the 'alert' was sent, the missing man was found. He was to be winched out from the location where found. A 'stand-down' message was then sent.

*Merv Trease, PLO*

### Alert for day walker at Woods Point, 24 Feb.

A 62 yo female day walker had departed at 8.30 am for a walk along Brewery Track close to town. The lady had not returned by mid afternoon and she was reported as missing.

If initial searching was not successful it was planned to proceed with a full callout at about 8.00 pm for an early am departure to enable searching to begin at first light Saturday. The lady returned unassisted at 6.15 pm.

The alert was cancelled by SMS and email at 6.20 pm.

*Merv Trease, PLO*

## BSAR TRAINING WEEKEND NOVEMBER 2011

Seventy participants took part in BSAR's annual training weekend held last November in the Wombat Forest. It was our largest training event in a long time. Thirteen BWV Clubs were represented, plus BWV individual members. It was especially pleasing to welcome 25 new and prospective members on their first BSAR training event.

The program was a mix of workshops and field exercises, built around a new activity that developed fine map reading and GPS skills in a rogaine style navigation exercise. This was very successful, with impressive levels of skill with the GPS shown by members. The program also included new sessions in observation and tracking, the group leader role, and "sound and light" night searching. A specific program was provided for our new and prospective members.

Some heavy rain periods on Saturday provoked the inevitable "typical search weather" comments and caused some curtailment of the afternoon program.

With the large number of participants and the streamed program, lots of assistance was required in roles ranging from planning to session organisers and presenters to Field Organisers. Special thanks to the 19 members who contributed in one way or another - and sometimes in several ways - to the planning and conduct of the weekend. Thanks also to our expert visitors from the Australian Deer Association for their sessions and participation in the weekend.

Thank you to Acting Sergeant Jason Ball for his participation and assistance, and to the Victoria Police Search and Rescue Squad for organising the bus transport, radios, shelter tents, maps and handouts.

And finally, to the new and prospective members, welcome again to BSAR and we hope to see you on a search bus.

*Duncan Brookes, Field Organiser  
on behalf of the organising team.*



*Getting started, Saturday morning.*



*Observation training workshop.*

---

## Steep Snow and Ice Training 2012

There are two Steep Snow and Ice training sessions this year:

- **22 July 2012.** Dryland training day covering theory and some exercises, Williamstown.
- **28-29 July 2012.** Steep snow and ice rescue skills in an alpine environment at Mt Buller, camping overnight on snow. Departing from Green Street.

Registrations close **16 July 2012**. Late registrations will not be accepted.

The Dryland Training is compulsory for all intending to take part in the training at Mt Buller, 28-29 July.

Who should attend?

- BSAR members with Steep Snow & Ice rating "T" (technical) or "C" (competent)
  - Full BSAR members keen to acquire SSI "C" rating.
- Register online: <http://bsar.org/steepsnowandice2012>.

Further details re arrangements and gear needed will be sent to you following registration.

## Bush Search and Rescue Victoria 2011-2012 Annual Report

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

- An extensive search over five days for a missing deer hunter at Tomahawk Creek near Mt Stirling (95 searcher days).
- A snow search for a missing teenage girl on Mt Erica who was found and evacuated by helicopter (40 searcher days).
- A follow up search at Tomahawk Creek in small teams searching with Police and Corrections dogs (15 searcher days).

Over 2011 there were 4 searches and 3 alerts. 161 search and 202 training person-days were recorded. 118 people attended training events. There were 240 searchers available for call-out as at 31/3/12, and 14 new members joined.

I would like to thank David Prideaux's family, friends and associates for their very significant and welcome donations totalling \$3000 to Bush Search and Rescue following our contribution to two searches at Tomahawk Creek.

Steep snow and ice training was held on 8-9 July 2011 at Mount Stirling. Twenty-eight members participated in activities including self arrest practice, roping up, "Sound and Light" searching at night, avalanche search and rescue techniques and stretcher hauling.

Duncan Brookes led our very successful annual training weekend in the Wombat State Forest on 19-20 November 2011 with 70 attending. The centrepiece activity was a GPS rogaine, utilising software developed by Wayne Merry. It provided extended and intensive training and practice in fine map reading and the accurate use of the GPS. The program included observation and tracking, the "Sound and Light" night searching technique, and a session on Group Leader skills.

Bush Search and Rescue's strategic plan is close to completion and has already prompted some important initiatives, including increasing our membership, simplifying the joining process, enhancing our identity in the field, obtaining safety clothing, taking steps to increase the number of searchers we provide for call-outs and

developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Police Search and Rescue. Rod Lawlor and the Strategic Plan Working Group have put a lot of effort into developing this plan and consulting widely with Bush Search and Rescue members and key stakeholders.

The Bush Search and Rescue Executive have tackled several administration and organisational development activities. Eric Krista is now Treasurer and has finalised our budget for the coming year.

The Executive is also leading work on developing several operational policies and procedures and sourcing additional funds to implement initiatives arising from the strategic plan.

Rod Costigan has completed a major overhaul of our membership processes and database.

I also thank all members of the Bush Search and Rescue Committee for their significant ongoing contributions to the work and governance of the organisation, and the Bushwalking Victoria Board and Victoria Police Search and Rescue Squad for their continued support.

Anne Casey resigned as Membership Secretary. Anne's contributions to and work for Bush Search and Rescue were greatly appreciated. We wish her well for her work in the United Kingdom.

Sergeant Greg Paul left the Police Search and Rescue Squad. Greg provided Bush Search and Rescue with excellent support and assistance during his time with the Squad. We wish him well for his posting at Marysville. I am pleased to welcome Sergeant Victor Velthuis as our new primary contact with Police Search and Rescue.

Bush Search and Rescue continues to provide effective and specialised volunteer search and rescue services to the Victorian community. For the coming year we will focus on increasing the initial number of searchers we provide to call-outs and on acquiring new safety equipment and clothing.

*Peter Campbell, Convener*

## Tomahawk Hut Cold Case search, October 2011

David Prideaux disappeared while deer hunting near Tomahawk Hut on Sunday 5 June 2011. No trace was found of him, despite the extensive 5 day search involving BSAR members.

Police resumed the search effort following the winter. Four BSAR members were requested to act as navigators for Department of Corrections dog handlers, searching with dogs, over a three day period in early October. David Prideaux was Governor of Barwon Prison and had been a Corrections dog handler earlier in his career. Two Police Dog Squad members with their dogs were also involved, along with members of the Police Search and Rescue Squad.

Police selected some higher and flatter areas north of Tomahawk Hut as more likely deer stalking areas for

further searching. Operating in three person search teams with a dog, these areas were swept at intervals of up to 100m. About 7 square kilometres was covered. No trace of David Prideaux was found.

*Duncan Brookes Field Organiser*



---

## Welcome to new BSAR members

BSAR warmly welcomes the following new Individual Members:

David Matters

Asher Knee-Rintel

*Monica Chapman*

*Individual Membership Coordinator*

---

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

**Behind the Log**