

2010-2011 Annual Report

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria

Peter Campbell, Convener



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 Combienbar, 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 Convenor 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.

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.