

2015-2016 Annual Report

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria

Peter Campbell, Convener



Bush Search and Rescue Victoria contributed 134 searcher person-days and 239 training person-days, a total of 373 volunteer days during the year from 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2016.

Searches

Bush Search and Rescue Victoria was called out five times during the period and participated in resulting search and rescue operations.

Mount Bogong, 12 August 2015. BSAR members participated in the rescue of an injured skier on Mt Bogong on 12 August 2015 following a local call-out by Mt Beauty Police. The rescue involved a stretcher haul down Eskdale Spur to Michel Hut under the supervision of Police SAR.



Mount Erica, 26 August 2015. Five BSAR members attended a search for a missing woman on Mt Erica who was located on 26 August. Twenty-five more members were ready to assist but were not deployed as the woman was found.

Mt Burrowa, 5 October 2015. Fifteen BSAR searchers travelled to Corryong on Tuesday 6 October for the search for a missing bushwalker in the vicinity of Mt Burrowa in the Burrowa-Pine National Park. The missing person was spotted by helicopter just as the BSAR team arrived in Corryong.



Lerderderg, 18 February 2016. Twenty-four Bush Search and Rescue volunteers participated in the search for a missing person in Lerderderg State Park who was found at 11 a.m.



Merrijig, 26 April 2016. Late on ANZAC Day, BSAR was called to join a search that was underway for a man who had gone missing out of Sawmill Settlement between Merrijig and Mt Buller. Eighteen members joined the search at dawn the next day. Thirty-three members participated in the search over the two days that followed. Sadly the missing man was found deceased on day 4 of the search.

Training

Eric Krista led the **BSAR Annual Training weekend** at Fryerstown in July 2015 with 95 visitors, prospective and existing personnel attending, including instructors and organisers. Duncan Brookes, Peter Campbell, Eric Krista, Ross McKinnon, Roger Palmer, Merv Trease and Wayne Merry assisted with planning and running the event. Support from Victoria Police Search and Rescue was also much appreciated.

Search and rescue training including search tasks, radio and GPS exercises and first aid were conducted on Saturday. On Sunday BSAR teams participated in the 6 hour Rogaine to develop and improved off track navigation skills.



Peter Briggs, Eric Krista and Peter Campbell led the **Steep Snow and Ice training weekend** at JB Plain on 24 - 26 July 2015 in inclement weather. Exercises over the two days included self-arresting, setting up snow belays and a z-pulley haul, rescues using avalanche transceivers and probing followed by digging out a simulated buried patient. A simulated search was also conducted near JB Plain. Victoria Police Search and Rescue again provided us with excellent instruction and support.



New equipment store and equipment refresh

Our equipment store at the Northcote Police Bands compound that served us well for many years had to be vacated due to sale of the site. We moved our equipment store to a commercial premises as no suitable alternative Police site was available.

Roger Palmer, Lachlan Shield and Duncan Brookes have worked diligently to establish and fit out the new equipment store and to replace and refresh our search and rescue equipment and safety clothing thanks to funds provided by Bushwalking Victoria, a Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program Grant from the Department of Justice and a donation from the Shambrook family.

BSAR members

BSAR welcomed thirty-seven new members and thanked the 24 members who resigned during the year. 234 searchers are available for call-out as at 30 April 2016.

I am pleased to welcome BSAR Committee Delegates from Latrobe University Mountaineering Club, Swinburne Explorers Club and RMIT Outdoors Club.

Duncan Brookes was awarded an Emergency Services Medal on 18 June 2015 for his outstanding search and rescue service to BSAR and Victorian community over 42 years.

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

Activities being planned for 2016-17 include development of a new BSAR Strategic Plan and refresh of the BSAR Manual.

I thank again the 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.