

What if I'm not prepared?

Action- S.T.O.P

This principle is easy to remember and can help reduce the chance of panic under stressful situations. Just follow these simple steps:

Stop:

Analyse the full situation and remain calm. If lost, look at last known location on map and do not move.

Think:

Decide the most appropriate actions to take and if any external assistance is required. Refer to risk assessment management statement if the hazard is included.

Observe:

Look at the situation, see if the action is an appropriate response. Survey the environment, look for familiar landmarks if destination is unknown.

Plan:

Decide and act upon the best course of action. Do not wait until dark to act upon a plan. If unsuccessful, repeat the principle from the beginning.

Useful Resources:

Outdoor Education Australia

<https://outdooreducationaustralia.org.au/hub/adventure-activity-standards/>

Victoria State Government Education and Training- Bushwalking Risk Management

<https://education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/excursions/Pages/outdoorwalk.aspx#link6>

The Crux of Risk Management in Outdoor Programs – Minimising the Possibility Of Death And Disabling Injury by Rob Hogan

https://www.outdoorsvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/TheCruxofRiskManagement_Hogan_AJOE_2002.pdf

Preventing Fatal Incidents in School and Youth Group Camps and Excursions- Understanding the Unthinkable by Andrew Brookes

Safe Adventuring!



HAZARDS IN OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

WHAT TO KNOW AND HOW TO PREPARE FOR ANY HAZARD

Presented by Samara Golder



Hazard	Common Bushwalking Hazard Explanation
<i>Natural Hazards</i>	
Flooding	Flooding from heavy and consistent rain may cause rivers and flowing water to overflow.
Intense wind	Intense wind can cause trees to fall over, which is a risk but also creates potential obstacles.
Wildlife threats	Possibilities for bushwalking members to have allergies to certain wildlife creates potential hazards for a group. Depending on the severity, this could require serious medical attention.
Thunderstorms	Thunderstorms have potential to involve intense rain and lightning, this could lead to potential flooding and even fires.
Fires	Fires are an intense and severe bushwalking hazard, these could range from bushfires to smaller fires from tranguias. It is important to implement risk management plans in order to minimise the potential harm from this hazard.
<i>Human Hazards</i>	
Pre-existing illness	Pre-existing illness covers a large range of potential hazards, these could include things such as diabetes or asthma. In order to minimise this potential hazard, appropriate management plans should be implemented prior to a bushwalk.
Pre-existing injury	Pre-existing injuries may result in participants becoming hurt and impacting the bushwalk. Appropriate measures should be taken prior to a bushwalk to negate further potential harm.
Getting lost/displaced	A group getting split or separated has potential for risk and harm, as staff may be carrying certain medication or supplies.

How to prepare for hazards

The most effective way to prepare for hazards is to identify all possible situations where a hazard may occur and evaluate the impact. This process can be used for any circumstance by any participant. This layout can be used for any activity and can be understood by any reader. The design allows the ability to implement controls to reduce the chance of a hazard occurring and to rethink if the activity can be safely conducted. This process should be taken to identify and plan around potential risks by any adventure planner (Victoria State Government Education and Training, 2020):

Step 1: Establish context of the activity
Why this activity, the activity outcomes, who has the roles and responsibilities, if any additional expertise is needed.

Step 2: identify the risks
Document potential health and safety risks relevant to the area, activity and demographic. Usually in the form of a risk assessment management statement, they can include the risk, any existing policy or procedure or an act that minimises the risk. Also evaluate how effective the controls of the risk are.

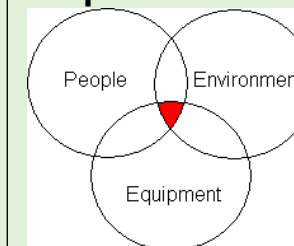
Step 3: Risk Evaluation
Consider not proceeding with the activity or finding an alternative if risks are extreme or high. Consequences of the risks should be assessed, also taking into account the controls being in place.

Step 4: Monitor and Review
This involves continuously monitoring the risks and controls throughout the activity. Risks should also be updated if the context changes or if any activities are modified or delayed.

What are Hazards?

In an outdoor setting, hazards are defined as anything that provides potential danger or risk to group members participating on a bush walk.

According to Education Victoria, this encompasses potential risks and hazards involving sickness or injury to participants or other natural hazards, such as fires, flooding and intense wind. Hazards can severely impact the overall experience of a bushwalk and it is important to identify potential hazards and prepare accordingly, as well as establish management plans for the potential hazards.



Contributing Factors to Hazards