

Trip Leader Guidelines



Trip Leaders – the heart and sole of The Club

The most important people in The Club are the volunteer Trip Leaders.

Volunteers are not perfect! They do their best. The Club needs *LOTS* of Trip Leaders.

So volunteer to be a Trip Leader even if you do not have all the competencies. Ask someone else to do bits for you eg get help for the planning, appoint someone to take care of recoveries, ask someone to organise the campsite and the communal fire, etc. You don't have to do it all – just coordinate it!

It's about teamwork – buddy systems – anything that works!

An ideal club is one where most members are competent in some aspect of trip leading - a bit like the best team players are leaders who are followers, people who can step up and take the lead anytime, knowing all the time when to lead and when to follow.

The Club will be weak if members rely on only a few volunteers to be trip leaders.

Some clubs have formal trip leader training and only allow those who have completed the training to be trip leaders. However, making this role too formal and complex deters many from having a go.

A system that supports learning by experience with on-the-job mentoring and coaching works best. The aim is to continually grow the number of club members who are experienced Trip Leaders, or experienced in one aspect of the Trip Leader's role.

So, your Trip Leader may make mistakes and may not be perfect. He/she is having a go! If you can increase a Trip Leader's confidence, please do it. Please praise these people, never criticise them! They are the heart and soul of the Club.

The Club cannot function without everyone sharing the load

Trip Leader Guidelines

What skills do you need?

- Ability to take responsibility and authority
 - 4-wheel driving competency, driving instructor skills
 - Organisation skills, ability to plan and research the itinerary
 - Ability to correctly classify the trip using trip rating system
 - Communication and negotiation skills
 - People management skills, make sure everyone is happy
 - Map reading skills, including GPS competency
 - Ability to apply safety controls and take control of an emergency
 - Vehicle recovery techniques
 - Knowledge of the Club's Trip Rules including convoy and radio etiquette
- Bush mechanic skills are desirable but not essential. The vehicle is the responsibility of the vehicle owner.

You might not have all the above skills. Buddy with someone who can help you. Working as a team is great. However, one person must take the authority for the role.

The Trip Leader is responsible for the planning and safe running of the trip.

What authority does the Trip Leader have?

- The Trip Leader has authority to refuse any vehicle if he or she deems that vehicle unsuitable for the advertised trip. And, the Trip Leader has authority to refuse anyone to participate on the trip if they do not have a confirmed booking.
- Use common sense. If the planned trip does not meet conditions expected, make a judgement about what to do.

Committee authorisation, advertising and taking bookings

- Once the idea for a trip emerges, the Event Manager will appoint a Trip Leader
- The Trip Leader prepares a Trip Notice and itinerary (route with timeframes)
- The Event Manager authorises the Trip Notice and itinerary (this means the Committee has authorised the trip)
- The Trip Notice is then published. The Club must give at least **14 days** for any weekend or long trip or event, and at least **7 days** for any one day or short trip or event.
- The Event Manager takes the email bookings and confirms successful and unsuccessful bookings
- The Trip Leader is given the final list of all participants on the trip.

Emergency Planning

Ground Charlie is a person that the Trip Leader contacts when the trip has concluded. This is just a safety practice to ensure you are all heading toward home safely. The Trip Leader and Event Manager decide who will be Ground Charlie for your trip, and what the phone number to use will be.

Planning the Trip

Pre-trip planning ensures that the event is both enjoyable and safe for everyone. Selection of the route is the most important consideration. The Trip Leader should research factors such as hazards, points of interest, campsites and expected weather conditions etc. Other activities may be included in the trip

Consideration should be given to the following:

Duration	Determine the trip duration, ensuring there are plenty of breaks (toilet breaks and time for hot drinks)
Route	Plan route and plan alternate routes in case of adverse conditions. Check tracks conditions using DSE Website
Trip Rating	Rate the trip to the highest expected standard and be prepared to make changes on route to suit weather or track conditions. Four wheel driving is unpredictable by its very nature and variation
Vehicle Numbers	Decide on the vehicle number limit. Usually the more vehicles in a convoy, the longer it takes to complete the route. A second Trip Leader, running another group, commencing an hour or so later, can help manage large numbers.
Special Requirements	Consider, fuel, food, water, clothing, camping requirements, accommodation, snow chains
Permits	Check if permits are required for any areas that you may pass through
Maps & GPS	Obtain relevant and current maps of the areas. Program GPS.

Useful contacts for planning

Parks Victoria	Ph 13 19 63	www.parkweb.vic.gov.au
Bureau of Meteorology		www.bom.gov.au/weather/vic
Departments of Primary Industries, Sustainability & Environment	Ph 13 61 86	www.dse.vic.gov.au
Four Wheel Drive Victoria	61 3 9857 5209	www.fwdvictoria.org.au

Also contact the local pub, post office, store or local Park Ranger in the area you are going.

At the Meeting Point

The following activities should be carried out at the Meeting Point:

Check weather	Make a last minute weather check before you head out
Head count	Check the <i>Participants List</i> . Are all present AND all participants are members of the club and have a confirmed booking?
Introductions	At the meeting point, ensure all participants are introduced
Vehicle Checks	Make a quick inspection to ensure all vehicle appear to meet the requirements for the trip Check equipments and loads are secured
Briefing	Provide a set-off briefing. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief overview of the planned daily activities • Appoint at least one participant to provide a report of the trip for the Website • Decide the convoy order and Tail End Charlie • Remind participants of convoy procedures • Decide on a radio channel, usually channel 10

- Remind participants of Club Values, especially re the environment

Once participants are in their vehicles and ready to set off, do a radio check.

Setting camp

- Make sure you stop and set up camp well before sun set
- Ask someone to organize the communal campfire (unless fire restrictions)
- If possible, allow time for Happy Hour before dinner
- Set a time for an end-of-day briefing. Announce the program for the next day, including the time to set off.

Breaking camp

- Organise someone to make the fire place safe
- Check for rubbish and leave the camp site in good condition
- Do a radio check before the convoy moves on

Ending the Trip

- When planning the trip, choose a place where participants can stop and say good bye. Announce this is the end point of the trip
- Provide instructions on how to get back to a known point or road. Participants often travel in different direction from this point.
- Contact Ground Charlie to report the trip has ended with or without incident

After the Trip

- Return any borrowed equipment
- Complete the *Trip Leader Report*, send to the Event Manager