



Blue Light Overnight Camping & Camp Skills Standard Operating Procedures

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Authorised By:	Brendon Crompton

Purpose

This policy outlines the safe practices for Blue Light when taking participants on overnight camping trips and camping skills activities. It is essential that all staff and contractors adhere to this policy to ensure the safety and well-being of participants. Compliance with Blue Light's Safety Management System (SMS) is mandatory. This is a "living document" that will be updated as needed to reflect new safety guidelines or equipment standards, ensuring it remains relevant and effective for all camping activities.

Responsibilities

Blue Light Rock & Ropes

Scope

Participants will go camping overnight to learn basic skills and enjoy a camping experience under the supervision of Blue Light staff or a Blue Light instructor. This hands-on approach allows them to develop essential outdoor skills while ensuring their safety and well-being throughout the experience.

Location

Tent sites & Campgrounds - **You have reviewed the AMP and checked Evacuation points**

Lead Instructor Competency

Bush leader NZOIA or Blue Light internal competency or experience and competencies from other outdoor centers.
First aid certificate.

Support Instructors

Inducted into the Overnight Camping & Camp Skills SOP & AMP. First Aid Certificate

Adult Helper Competency

Physically and mentally capable of following and performing the duties outlined in the adult induction.



Participant Competencies

Physically able

Technical Advisors

Internal TA: Dominic Crow - 0220326887

Ratios – Overnight Camping

One lead instructor can oversee up to five support instructors working alongside them, provided that effective communication is maintained among all team members. This structure ensures that participants receive adequate supervision and support during their camping experience

A minimum of two instructors is required for overnight camping trips, with a ratio of one staff member for every seven participants. This ensures adequate supervision and support for all participants throughout the experience.

During an overnight program, there must be at least one adult male and one adult female present if there are mixed-sex participants. This ensures appropriate supervision and supports a comfortable environment for all participants.

If there are participants with different abilities or behavioural challenges that may affect their ability to complete activities safely, the instructor should consult with the lead instructor to determine if additional support is needed. At any point during the activity, if the instructor perceives an increased risk, they should halt the session and discuss the situation with the lead instructor to arrange for extra assistance. The required number of instructors and support staff may change based on participant needs, weather conditions, and other relevant factors.

Ratios – Camp Skills (Cooking & Setting up tents)

One instructor is required for every 14 participants, with the presence of one adult supervisor for every instructor. This ensures adequate support and supervision for the group during activities.

Risk Management

Refer to Overnight Camping & Camp Skills AMP

If instructor feels session is unsafe, they have full authority to call a halt to the activity

This can be but not limited to:

- Weather: Heavy rain, high winds, and thunderstorms
- Participants not listening or physically unable or medical issues
- Equipment or facilities unsafe
- Harassment from members of the public

Consult with Lead instructor if ever unsure

Before a remote overnight camping experience takes place, a Blue Light instructor must conduct a physical check no earlier than two months prior to the camp. Additionally, the instructor should communicate with the venue owners during the week of the camp to confirm that there have been no changes to the conditions or facilities. This ensures the safety and suitability of the location for the participants.

The instructor needs to assess if the site is:

- Enough space for the number of participants planning to stay at the venue
- Hazards identified and passed on to all other instructors running the camp
- Toilet and water facilities



- Coverage and decide if PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) is necessary
- Evacuation points
- Locations of fire restrictions / Availability of water
- How the elements will alter the camp

Personal Safety

Instructors must prioritize their personal safety at all times and should never put themselves in harm's way. It is essential that they assess risks and take necessary precautions to ensure both their safety and the safety of the participants during all activities.

Blue Light Staff Responsibilities

- Blue Light staff must receive training on how to effectively manage participants, with ongoing training as needed to enhance skills and group management capabilities.
- Consent for the campsite must be organized and secured prior to the trip.
- Blue Light staff are responsible for all safety aspects during overnight camping experiences.
- Staff must ensure that all safety equipment and facilities are safe and well-maintained.
- All procedures outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Activity Management Plan (AMP) must be followed.
- A First Aid Kit must be available, and a First Aid certified individual should be assigned to the group.
- Staff must maintain cell phone communication with the Lead Instructor and base; if in an area without reception, a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) should be with the group for emergencies.

Call a halt to the activity if conditions or facility become unsafe

Instructor Positioning

Blue Light staff will set up their tents on the outskirts of the camp and will be the last individuals to enter their tents in the evening. This practice ensures they can monitor the campsite effectively and remain available for any participant needs or emergencies

Pre-Activity

- The lead instructor will assess the weather conditions and determine if the camp can proceed as planned.
- Instructors staying overnight with participants must read and understand the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Activity Management Plan (AMP).
- The lead instructor is responsible for checking that group numbers are accurate and that medical risk acknowledgment forms have been signed.
- The lead instructor and team must review the group's medical information and develop plans for participants who may need additional support or specific protocols.
- The lead instructor will make a phone call to the emergency contact at base to confirm their availability in the office or for calls throughout the duration of the program.
- If a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) is required for overnight camping, the lead instructor will send the Risk Assessment and Management Strategy (RAMS) and itinerary to Willie, Debbie, and Brendon to ensure they are informed about the program.



Set Up

- Complete a full equipment pre-use check (*refer to equipment section*)

If you are unsure of anything consult with lead instructor

Instructor equipment - Items always carried:

- Appropriate clothing & shoes for the weather
- Personal Medication
- First Aid kit
- Cell Phone (PLB if tramping outside of reception)
- Rubbish Bag
- Sunblock

If going Overnight Camping, Instructor to take all items below:

- Power bank
- Water & Food
- Warm evening clothes & comfortable shoes (jandals or slides)
- Spare pair of thermals & beanie

Camp cooking

- Gas Cooker
- Bunsen Burner
- Camping Pot & Lid
- Cutlery
- Matches
- Fire blanket
- Fire extinguisher

Practice hiking and tenting

- Overnight Pack
- Pack liner
- Sleeping Bag
- Tent
- Bed Roll

Participant Equipment - Items always carried:

- Appropriate clothing & shoes for the weather
- Personal Medication

If going Overnight Camping, participant to take all items below:

- Water & Food
- Warm evening clothes & comfortable shoes (jandals or slides)
- Spare pair of thermals & beanie
- Rain Jacket

Camp cooking

- Gas Cooker
- Bunsen Burner
- Camping Pot & Lid
- Cutlery

Practice hiking and tenting

- Overnight Pack
- Pack liner
- Sleeping Bag
- Tent
- Bed Roll



Adult Brief

Cover emergency procedure if instructor is incapacitated to call the appointed staff member on the day (number will be given to adult helper on the day) or pull the PLB if there is no reception.

To manage participants until help arrives

Responsibilities during activity:

- Pastoral care
- Assistance to monitor participants/ensure no participant gets left behind or is unsupervised
- Reinforcing boundaries or other guidelines the Lead instructor may put in place

Managing overnight stay

- There must be a clear separation between tents and cabins designated for opposite sexes.
- Staff are not permitted to enter bathrooms, bunk rooms, or tents unless conducting an emergency fire sweep; only male staff may sweep male rooms and tents, while female staff will sweep female rooms and tents.
- Only same-sex staff may approach same-sex cabins, tents, and bathrooms, and they must be accompanied by another same-sex staff member or remain in visual distance of another staff member.
- All participants will be informed of where staff are sleeping and are instructed to knock or call out and wait outside unless it is an emergency (e.g., fire or medical injury).
- No staff member should be alone with a participant at any time

Tenting & Campsite Overnight stay

- Introduction to self and the location
- Group management
- **Rules, Safety, and Expectations:** Participants will be briefed on the rules, safety procedures, and expectations for behaviour during the camping experience to ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone.
- **Out of Bounds Areas:** Clearly defined out-of-bounds areas will be communicated to all participants to prevent access to potentially hazardous locations.
- **Facilities:** Participants will be informed about the locations of bathrooms and drinking water to promote accessibility and hygiene.
- **Lost Protocol:** If anyone becomes lost and cannot see other members of the group, they should sit down, put on their warm clothes, and wait in place for assistance. This will help ensure their safety while waiting for the group to locate them
- Instructors to check all gear brought is suitable for camping (Clothing and footwear)
- Instructors to check all equipment needed for camping is in participants packs (including personal medication)
- Choosing a site for their tents:
 - Is it a safe place to pitch a tent. Not close to rivers that may flood or trees that may fall
 - Sleeping arrangements
 - Who is in each tent (males and females are separate)



- Leave No Trace Principles

- Plan and Prepare
- Travel & Camp on Durable Ground
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimise Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife

Campfires

If planning to have a campfire at the camp site, instructor to ensure that they have fire blanket and fire extinguisher (*refer to equipment section*)

Before creating a fire, it is essential to research whether you are in a fire ban location and to discuss this with the landowners. Additionally, ensure that the environment and location are suitable for a fire, taking into consideration factors such as wind conditions, proximity to flammable materials, and any specific regulations or guidelines set by local authorities.

- Tents, plant life and fuel sources is at least 3m from the fire
- Fire doesn't exceed 0.5m wide and 0.5m high
- You have a water source in immediate accessibility
- No more wind than a light breeze is present
- Consider a rock ring around the fire

When monitoring the campfire, it is crucial to ensure that participants wearing flammable clothing, such as puffer jackets, maintain a safe distance from the fire. Additionally, participants will never be left alone around the fire at any point to ensure their safety and prevent accidents.

When leaving the fire ensure it is completely out.

1. Douse with water
2. Stir embers and ashes (to ensure no hot embers beneath)
3. Remove logs/sticks with a spade or another stick to ensure they are not hot
4. Continue dousing the fire with water and stirring embers until no more warm embers can be found

At any time if instructor feels like the session is unsafe, they can call a halt to the session

Gas Cookers

Before taking any of the gas cookers with you for overnight camping ensure you do a pre-use check and have fire blanket and fire extinguisher (*refer to equipment section*)

When using gas cookers ensure the environment and location is suitable:

- Competent adult is always supervising
- Water and burns treatment are accessible
- Only use in a ventilated area
- A 1m buffer between flame and other flammable things. E.g. tents, clothing and dry grass etc.

At any time if instructor feels like the session is unsafe, they can call a halt to the session



Pack Down & Post Activity

- Ensure equipment check is done and in clean condition
- All staff on PLB contact list are informed group is back
- All gear stored back in shed
- Any equipment issues or issues that arise on session are written on a debrief sheet and given to programme coordinator
- Any incidences are recorded in Audit
- Debrief with participants at the end of the activity
- Debrief activity with team as soon as practicable

Equipment

Equipment	Pre-Use Inspection
Tramping Packs	Ensure that all straps are not frayed or broken, and that all buckles, adjustments, and zippers are functioning properly. Additionally, check that there are no major rips or tears in the pack.
Tramping boots	Ensure that the soles of the boots are sturdy, with no tears and not lifting from the boot. Additionally, check that the laces are in good condition and that the padding is intact.
Tents	Confirm that all poles and tent pegs are included in the bag. Additionally, check the tent for any rips or tears, and ensure that all zippers are functioning properly
Gas Cooker	Ensure that there is enough gas in the canister and that no damaged gas canisters are being used.
Trails/Tracks no sooner than 2 months prior	
Tracks	Ensure that there are no slips or broken steps along the path, and that the route is suitable for the age and fitness level of the group. Additionally, check the locations of the closest evacuation points, bathrooms, and drinking water to ensure accessibility. Assess the quality of mobile reception in the area to ensure reliable communication in case of emergencies.

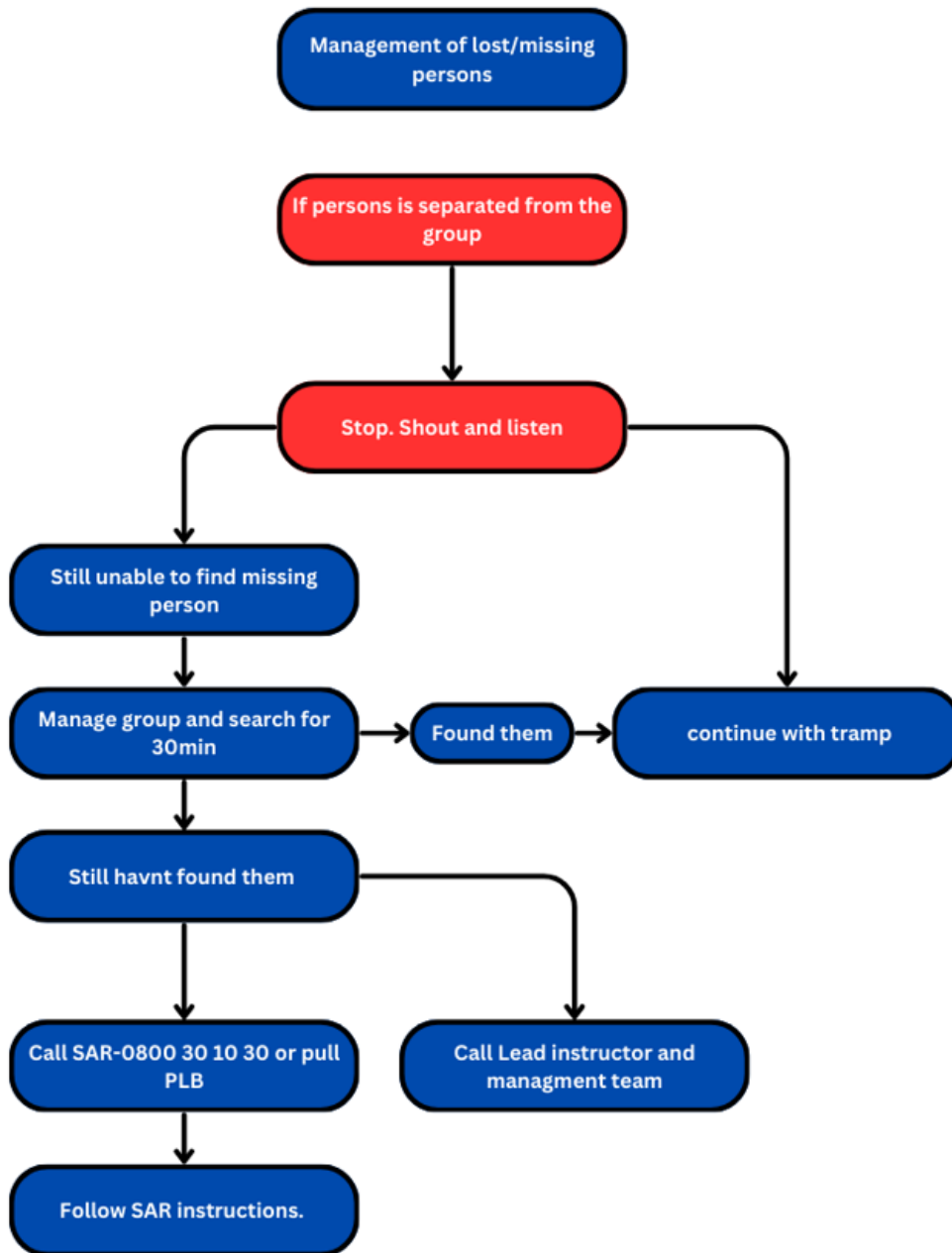


INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE





Lost Participant Management





Employee Declaration

The Safe Operating Procedure for **Overnight Camping & Camp Skills** has been covered in this session and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and review the information provided. I fully understand the procedures and agree to comply with them.

Employee Name	Signature	Date