

Canberra Ornithologists Group Guidelines for Field Trips & Tours

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Definition:

A “COG Field Trip and/or Tour” is defined as one that has been organised by the COG Field Trips Coordinator (or delegate) and has been formally advertised in *Gang Gang* or on the COG E-mail chatline.

Rationale:

Field trips and tours are an important component of COG’s activities and the Committee has both a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that, as far as possible, reasonable care is exercised as to how they are advertised and conducted so as to ensure the satisfaction of, and minimise risks to, members.

While COG has, to date, had few serious incidents during its field trips or tours, should one occur, it is important that its officers can demonstrate that all reasonable steps had been taken to avoid such an incident. In the absence of such steps, such an incident is inevitably more distressing and potentially damaging to the reputations of COG, its officers and the field trip or tour organiser. The occurrence of a serious incident may also have legal consequences if negligence can be demonstrated. In such circumstances COG has public liability insurance to protect itself, field trip leaders and participants financially. Many organisations offering outdoor activities have, in recent years, independently, or at the behest of their insurers, already developed risk management policies so that they are able to demonstrate that they have assessed the risks of the activities they offer and have put in place strategies to manage those risks.

These Guidelines bring COG into line with modern practice. They demonstrate COG’s determination to minimise risks to members attending COG field trips or tours by ensuring that an effective strategy is in place.

COG is affiliated with Bird Observation and Conservation Australia (BOCA) and outings and tours are covered by insurance provided through BOCA.

Duty of Care:

Duty of Care is something that we all owe to our fellow human beings in our interaction with them. As well as being a condition of our public liability insurance policy there is a community/common law expectation that when organisations such as COG organise and lead people in activities, COG and its Leaders will exercise their duty of care. In the same way, there is an expectation that each participant will be responsible for their own safety and exercise a duty of care to his or her fellow participants.

In terms of birdwatching trips, all leaders and members need to take reasonable care to avoid exposing any person, including other members and the public, to risk of injury or loss. However if COG, a leader or one of its members makes a mistake our insurers (subject to any exclusions noted in the policy) will indemnify us with respect to claims made against us.

Code of Conduct:

COG wishes to encourage wide participation in its Field Trips and Tours program, while seeking to minimise risks to participants’ well being by:

- Providing potential participants with information about every Field Trip or Tour sufficient for them to assess whether it meets their interests and level of ornithological knowledge, and whether they have the physical capability to participate.
- Ensuring that Field Trip Leaders understand and implement basic requirements for a field trip that maximise enjoyment and minimise risk.
- Ensuring that participants understand that they partake in COG Field Trips at their own risk, and are responsible for assessing whether a field trip is suited to their abilities.

Guidelines:

Responsibilities of COG Field Trip Coordinator

The COG Field Trips Coordinator is responsible for the implementation of these Guidelines, for monitoring their effectiveness, and for advising the COG Committee of any necessary changes.

The Coordinator should:

- Ensure that the Annual List of COG Field Trips and Tours provided to members includes a standard disclaimer advising of the potential risks of participation, advising members of their responsibility for ascertaining whether a Field Trip is suitable to their physical capacities, and that they will be required to sign a Registration Form before the start of each Field Trip.
- Ensure that *Gang Gang* advertising of Field Trips is accompanied by a brief statement that participation in Field Trips is at members' own risk, they are responsible for ascertaining whether the Field Trip is suitable for their fitness level, and should contact the organiser if they require additional information on which to make a judgement.
- Ensure that every Field Trip Leader is briefed on, and provided with, a copy of these Guidelines.
- Review advertisements prepared by each Field Trip Leader to ensure they meet these Guidelines.
- Obtain from the Field Trip Leader a registration form for each Field Trip, signed by every participant, and file this as a permanent record together with any incident reports arising from Field Trips.

Responsibilities of Field Trip Leaders:

Field Trip Leaders are responsible for planning, advertising and conducting COG Field Trips within these Guidelines.

A Checklist is included with these Guidelines to assist Leaders to plan and organise an outing. It is recommended that a separate Checklist be used for each outing. Copies of the Checklist can be downloaded from the COG website.

Planning COG Field Trips:

Ensure the Field Trip is planned carefully and that adequate information is provided to potential participants in line with 'Informing members about COG Field Trips' below.

To be covered by the BOCA insurance policy all outings (including surveys) must be notified to BOCA National Office. If appropriate they can be advertised in the Bird Observer, in which case it is necessary to make sure notice of the outing gets to the Editor in time for printing in the Bird Observer Calendar. For the publishing deadline check the current issue.

After the notice has been published, check to make sure there are no mistakes.

Field Trip Co-Leader:

If you anticipate a large group may attend, consider whether you need to appoint one or more Co-Leaders:

Your Co-Leader should be:

- Familiar with the route to be taken;
- Responsible for the completion of the Registration Form;
- Prepared to be 'tail-end Charlie';
- Responsible for opening and closing any gates; and
- Keep an eye on anyone who seems to be unsure of themselves, or who might need help.

Speakers:

It may be helpful if a knowledgeable person gives a short talk at the beginning of the outing. This could be the leader or a person responsible for the venue, e.g. Park Ranger or Land Holder. The length of the talk should be agreed beforehand and the speaker kept to this timetable.

Maps:

A good map of the area can make a Leader's job easier and can add a great deal of interest for the group. Check the phone book for map suppliers in your area, or ask someone with local knowledge what is available. Some State & Territory mapping authorities now have facilities to view and purchase maps over the Internet.

Aerial-photos are expensive; however, when provided they can help preliminary planning and will generate much interest for campers. Images of the area can be downloaded from Google Earth or Google Maps.

Reconnaissance:

Reconnaissance of the proposed site builds the Leader's confidence and helps to indicate:

1. The species of birds which may be present on the day of the outing; and
2. Walks which may be appropriate. Try some out and be aware that single file is only suitable for small groups. Walks do not have to return over the same route.

Bird List:

A list of known birds from a previous outing or likely birds could be compiled and copies prepared beforehand for distribution on the day. This seems to be much appreciated by people as they are then aware of the birds in the area and know what to look for. A mark could be put beside the interesting or special species as they are often the highlight of the day, if observed.

If a list for each participant is not practical, a bird-list held by the Leader can be an alternative.

Name Badges:

All Leaders need to wear a name badge.

The outing can be improved if the participants also have name badges. You cannot insist but providing labels, pins or stick on labels can help. They do encourage quicker social contact. The reverse side of name-tags is a good place for emergency contact details.

Informing COG Members about COG field trips:

Advertisements in *Gang Gang* should be prepared by the Field Trip Leader and reviewed by the COG Field Trips Coordinator to ensure they meet these Guidelines. Advertisements should clearly state:

- Area to be visited, date, meeting time and place;
- General description of the types of habitat and/or target species (include any special objectives for field trip: surveys, nests, learning calls etc.);
- Who is the field trip designed for? E.g. beginners and new members;
- Duration of field trip, any entry fees;
- Description of terrain: distance to be walked, hilly/flat, track conditions, on/off track;
- Advice on food, water, clothing, equipment to ensure safety and comfort (with particular regard to possible climatic conditions);
- Transport mode, including car pooling and shuffles;
- Limits on numbers attending;
- Requirements for bookings, including closing date/s;
- Contact details for Field Trip Leader; and

- Details of further information available and how to obtain it.

For campouts or extended excursions/tours, a detailed information pack should be prepared by the Field Trip Leader, advertised, and made available to potential participants by email or mail. This should include:

Campouts:

- Maps and/or clear instructions for reaching the camp, and a description of the camp area, suitability for campervans and caravans;
- Details of facilities at the camp (availability of water, toilets (type), rubbish disposal, showers etc, nearest shops/fuel);
- Entry and camp fees/booking requirements;
- Outline program of bird walks and other activities (including any activities/attractions for non-birding partners), including shared meals;
- Bird list for the area; and
- Details of the Field Trip Leader's knowledge of the area and its birds.

Extended excursions/tours:

- Detailed itinerary;
- Details of tour operator, and/or accommodation arrangements;
- For Costs, Charges and Aquittals, see page 14.
- For the COG Tours Cancellation Policy, see page 16.
- Bird list for the area; and
- Details of the tour operator's/leader's knowledge of the area and its birds.

Where costs are involved, the money aspects should be co-ordinated between the Field Trip Leader, COG Field Trips Coordinator and the COG Treasurer, with payments being made directly to the Field Trip Leader.

Field Trip Conduct:

Before the Field Trip:

A couple of days before the outing, check again with the property owner or other persons involved in the proposed outing, to remind them that the outing is going to take place. If the outing is on private property, find out about stock and gates. Where other people are involved, double-check on the times.

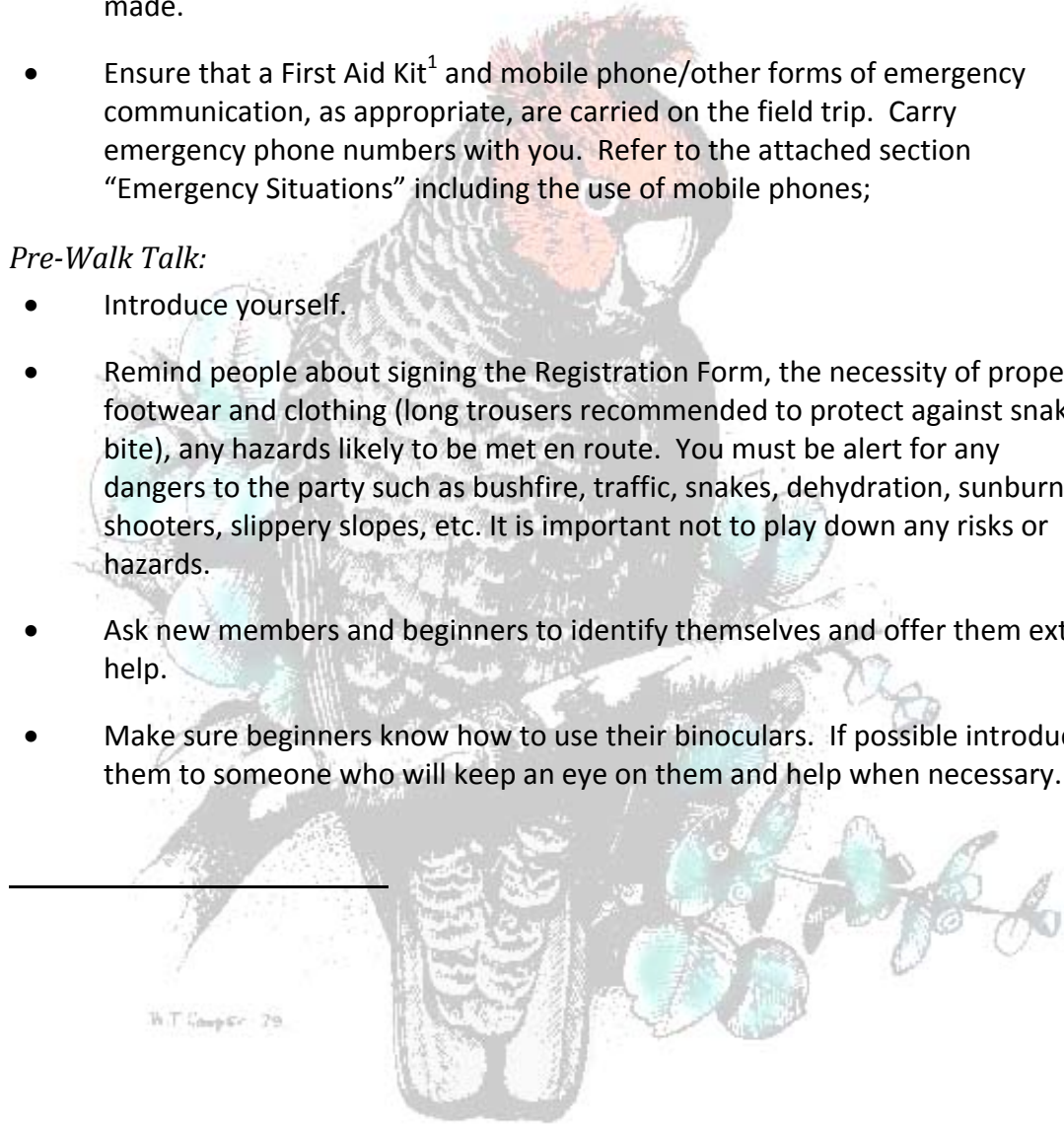
Arrive early. It is normal for the Leader to be at the venue before participants are due to arrive. If it is necessary to put up directions, this should be done well before the first participant could be expected to get there.

At the beginning of the Field Trip:

- Ensure every participant signs the Registration Form (COG Field Trip Leaders have the right to refuse potential participants who will not sign or, in their judgement, present an unacceptable risk in undertaking all or part of the proposed trip). Every outing must have an attendance record (most groups use a book for convenience). It is necessary to keep a record of names and other details of participants for the purpose of establishing proof of a person's attendance at an authorised activity should an insurance claim be made.
- Ensure that a First Aid Kit¹ and mobile phone/other forms of emergency communication, as appropriate, are carried on the field trip. Carry emergency phone numbers with you. Refer to the attached section "Emergency Situations" including the use of mobile phones;

Pre-Walk Talk:

- Introduce yourself.
- Remind people about signing the Registration Form, the necessity of proper footwear and clothing (long trousers recommended to protect against snake bite), any hazards likely to be met en route. You must be alert for any dangers to the party such as bushfire, traffic, snakes, dehydration, sunburn, shooters, slippery slopes, etc. It is important not to play down any risks or hazards.
- Ask new members and beginners to identify themselves and offer them extra help.
- Make sure beginners know how to use their binoculars. If possible introduce them to someone who will keep an eye on them and help when necessary.



¹ At its meeting in February 2005, the COG Committee agreed to meet part or all of the costs of a first aid course for leaders, with the extent of the assistance to be reached by agreement with the Field Trips Coordinator. Leaders are to be encouraged to carry their own first aid kits.

Make sure they have someone to talk to at lunchtime. First timers can easily become disillusioned and give the club a reputation for being unfriendly.

- Welcome any visitors or guests.
- Try to identify members who will be able to assist you.
- Ask if there are any birds anyone particularly wants to see.
- Ask for the group to help in spotting birds. Remind them that, while you are leading them on a walk, they must help find the birds and that you will identify as many as possible, but there may be some birds that you will have to look up later.
- If it is a small group ask them to keep together, otherwise try to arrange to split into groups with designated Leaders. Ask members to let you know if they leave the group to return to their car, so that you can be aware if any one is missing. However, leaving the group should be discouraged.
- Inform the group that a person leaving the group because they are feeling unwell will be escorted to the starting point and provided with assistance.
- Count the number of participants.
- Arrange any car pooling/shuffles/convoys. Ensure drivers are briefed: where are they going? Explain convoy procedure, i.e. always keep the car immediately behind you in sight and stop if it disappears.

During the field trip:

- Ensure that the Field Trip Leader or some other person keeps a list of species and abundance;
- Balance finding the birds with concern for the safety and comfort of the group;
- Lead the group from the front but ensure stragglers behind don't get lost; keep the pace down to that of the slowest participant;
- Ensure bird sightings/birds heard are conveyed to all, and that those that need help in locating/identifying a bird get it;
- Keep to the promised program/objectives, and move people on to ensure timings are met;
- Ensure rest/refreshment breaks are taken in line with program and conditions;
- Attend to any incident of illness or injury, making any necessary arrangements; and

- Be prepared to change plans if necessary, but consult with or explain to the group before doing so.

Some Hints:

Beware of people who monopolise your time, but be aware that they may be doing so because they are keen. Be careful also not to devote too much time to people who need more help at the expense of the majority in the group. Only in small groups is it possible to try to restrain chatter, noise and quick movements. The first time any one moves ahead of the group, ask them to wait and then ask everyone to stand with, or behind you. Make sure you explain that this gives everyone the best chance to see the birds. The only exception to this is if one of the party is sent out to one side, to cover more territory or turn the birds towards the group.

Nests:

Showing nests to groups has several dangers including:

- Upsetting the parent birds' routine;
- Allowing the eggs or young to get too hot or cold;
- Frightening the birds, leading to abandonment;
- Innocent destruction of protective twigs or grasses;
- Attraction of predators to the nest, such as hawks, currawongs, cats, foxes and lizards; and
- Sadly, the collection of eggs by humans.

Showing nests to groups has several advantages including:

- The ease and predictability of good sightings;
- The opportunity to study diagnostic patterns;
- Comparison of male and female; and
- Study of nesting behaviour.

Each Leader is responsible for the welfare of birds and the nests and contents. Leaders must ensure that no person puts any pressure on nesting birds. When a nest is found everyone must move away at least fifty metres. Remember that even if the bird's behaviour does not seem to be affected, predators can be attracted by you.

Two firm rules:

1. Move people on as soon as possible – do not linger.
2. Avoid showing people vulnerable (low, exposed etc) nests which you have found. If a nest is pointed out by one of the group, then go ahead, because its secrecy has already been violated.

Directing Attention to Birds:

It is far better to give your party a chance to see a bird, than to spend your time making a positive identification first, by which time the bird has flown.

Therefore, direct attention with “there’s a good bird” and then identify it – sometimes call the first name that comes to mind and then, having got everyone looking, proceed to identify.

To give a wrong name for a species at first, providing a correction is made as soon as possible, can be good leadership, because it leads to:

- Discussion of points that led to the wrong identification;
- Discussion of the features that led to the correct identification; and
- Closer relationships with the group, because they are pleased to find that their Leader has similar identification difficulties as their own!

If 3 or 4 species of birds appear at the same time, always point out the unusual or rarest first.

Secret Hints:

- Avoid pointing out distant birds – work the party closer and then make the exciting sighting.
- Listen twice as hard as anyone else for bird calls: it does not matter which birds, again working close as before.
- Look well ahead for suitable habitat and bird food sources.
- Remember that your party will find the nearby active birds for you, therefore, concentrate most of your own search elsewhere.
- Keep challenging your group to find birds for you.
- Listen for and investigate alarm calls. Occasionally, do a general sweep of the sky above for raptors etc.
- Ignore any bird that would be too difficult to locate (depending on the average experience of your group).
- Move to the side of the tree where the sun is behind you, if possible.
- Never, never, never be afraid to say “I do not know”!

Education:

Urge everyone, beginners especially, to check every bird that is strange to them. You can also choose a bird which you can suggest ‘your’ group could look up for themselves over lunch, or when they get home – ‘bird distribution’ can be a spur for this activity. After a species has been sighted several times on an outing, press for identification from members of the party. Far too often we concentrate on markings. Try to direct attention to actions, activities, flight, calls, habits etc.

The “Impossible” Bird:

It often happens that a participant on an outing reports a species that the Leader regards as unlikely. This will be reported on most outings. You have several options:

- State that the sighting requires confirmation because of its value, if correct;
- State that our present knowledge is not exhaustive and that unexpected sightings are possible;
- Suggest the individual fills out an unusual sighting record sheet;
- State why you think the identification is either incorrect or important.

Whilst it is necessary to get accurate records, do not make members feel uncomfortable about mentioning their sightings in front of a group. After all, they might have seen something out of its normal range. Once ‘put down”, members may be unlikely to open their mouths in public again. It is much better to speak to them privately afterwards and explain why you are unsure of their observation, but be careful not to be needlessly pedantic.

Children:

Remember, all children (i.e. persons under 18 years) must be accompanied and supervised by a parent or guardian. Always make children welcome, remember that some adults could not attend unless they bring their youngsters and that some of the children will be the stalwarts of the future. Be tolerant but firm, when necessary. Most children (and who can blame them) soon become bored with the slow progress of the party, but they must be kept behind the main front because of their obvious movements, noise and the distraction they cause to others. Encourage them to find birds for you: try not to ignore them. Be sure to acknowledge them when they are helpful and watch their eyes light up with pleasure. If you have to admonish them, this must be done through the accompanying adult.

Gates:

Always leave gates as you find them. It is the job of the Leader to make sure this is done, either by doing it themselves, or by delegating to a responsible person, such as your Co-Leader.

The Inevitable:

Every Leader strikes an outing when bird activity seems to be frustratingly slow. Remember two things: better days will come, and more importantly, the Leader may be the only one who is frustrated. The group may be very pleased with the birds seen. While the ideal may well be to have a glut of birds – not knowing which one to point out next – there is nevertheless, satisfaction in good sightings of few birds.

At the end of the field trip:

- Ensure that all participants are accounted for;
- Conduct a bird roll-call to ensure all species seen and heard are recorded. Ask if anyone has a new bird. This is a great time to discuss any unusual

sightings, bird behaviour, use of habitat etc. Don't be scathing with wrong observations – be patient!

- Ensure that the Field Trip Leader, or some other person, has been nominated to write a report of the field trip for *Gang Gang*;
- If relevant, prepare and forward bird lists to appropriate bodies. As soon as possible write any necessary thank-you letters to Leaders, rangers, or property owners involved. This is most important as it demonstrates interest as well as appreciation, and maintains goodwill. If appropriate and if possible, send them a copy of the bird-list. They will usually be delighted to discover what birds the group found on their property or park.
- Make a written record of any incident involving illness or injury and forward this to the COG Field Trips Co-ordinator together with the Registration Form.

Responsibilities of Participants:

COG Field Trips are designed for the pleasure and enjoyment of all participants. To ensure this is the case participants need to be aware of their responsibilities:

- Make yourself fully aware of any risks that the proposed trip may present to them, and acknowledge your obligations through the signing of the Registration Form;
- Inform the Field Trip Leader of any medication you are taking, or any physical limitation or condition that may affect your participation in a particular trip;
- It is wise to insure yourself for ambulance and medical treatment – COG's insurance does not cover you for these expenses.
- Provide assistance and support to others on the activity. Field Trips are generally not competitive and the success of the activity is dependent on Members providing mutual support and encouragement.
- If you are at the front of the group and the Leader is not with you stop at all track/road junctions, signs, or whenever there is doubt about the correct route and wait for instructions from the Leader.
- Irrespective of where you are in the group, ensure that you can see the person behind you [and vice versa]. If not slow down and wait.
- Carry appropriate clothing, water and food for the expected weather and activity;
- Follow any reasonable direction from the Trip Leader;
- Do not stray from the group and do not leave for any reason without expressly informing the Field Trip Leader of your intentions;
- Carry a personal First Aid Kit comprising a minimum of:

- Band aids, 2 crepe bandages; 7.5cm x 2.3m (for snake bite);
- Roll-on RID, or similar (for insects and leeches);
- Sunscreen and personal medication.
- Carry a whistle at all times (for emergency use only) and remember the code:
 - Three blasts – EMERGENCY.
 - Two blasts - stop and regroup.
 - One blast – acknowledge.
- Adhere to the COG carpooling policy².

Costs, Charges and Aquittals

Trips involving a COG and a commercial operator must have a clear agreement specifying the responsibilities of each party and covering, as a minimum:

1. Advertising;
2. The charging structure for the trip (e.g. whether the price varies with the number of participants, whether the operator offers any discounts to the organiser and/or leader, and whether COG receives some portion of the overall monies);
3. That COG has no liability if a participant defaults on payments, or if a tour is cancelled because of insufficient numbers, or for any other reason;
4. Alternative arrangements if the tour has to be cancelled;

² At its May 2005 meeting, the COG Committee noted that on field trips where car pooling is encouraged, or otherwise occurs, there was a clear expectation that drivers should be recompensed for both fuel and running costs. Rather than set formal rates it was concluded that the exact amount should be agreed at the start between the driver and passengers. This policy applies to car pooling both for travelling to and from a venue, and for sharing car seats, often in the 4WDs, when moving around to different sites once at the venue.

5. Responsibilities of each party for arranging itinerary, accommodation, transport, meals, etc.;
6. The role of the Leader, if the Leader is not the commercial operator;
7. Recruitment and briefing of participants;
8. Collection and payment method of monies;
9. Cancellation policy (see page 16); and
10. Schedule of key dates (e.g. when commitments have to be made, when deposits are due and when final payments are due).

Charges

There are no charges for field trips where the costs to COG are minimal; for example, for day outings where COG does not provide transport, or for weekend campouts where participants provide their own transport, food, accommodation, park entry fees etc.

Where the trips involve some communal costs, charges to participants should cover all costs incurred (e.g. accommodation, food, bus and equipment hire) and an administrative fee to cover documented expenses incurred by the trip organiser and COG's administrative costs. As a general guide, the administrative fee will be of the order of \$2 per day, per participant.

Field Trip Leaders are not entitled to any discounts and/or waiving of charges in recognition of their role, but are exempt from any administrative charges levied by COG to participants to cover COG's costs incurred for the trip. They are also entitled to claim back from COG any documented expenses incurred in organising the trip in line with the previously approved budget.

There are no discount rates (e.g. for pensioner, senior, unemployed, etc.).

Charges for non-COG members are at the same rate as for COG members.

Budgets and acquittals

For all trips where the total cost of the trip exceeds \$2,000, the organiser of the trip must seek approval of a budget from the committee prior to any commitment being made to either participants or third parties. The budget should show total anticipated income, costs and surplus/deficit and must include:

- Estimated number of participants;
- Itemised costs, both of the tour and any related costs to COG;
- Any discounts or considerations to be received; and
- Anticipated price per participant.

For trips involving commercial operators or other third parties, the budget must be supported by relevant correspondence.

Where charges apply, the tour organiser must provide a statement of acquittal to the COG Treasurer showing participant names, monies paid by each participant, suppliers' charges, costs incurred, any discounts or other considerations received and net surplus/deficit.

Where bookings are required, the Field Trip Leader must send out a general reminder early in the week before the outing for all participants to confirm their booking 2 days before the event. If the place cannot be filled then the participant pays half price. If there is no or a late notification the participant pays the full price if the vacancy cannot be filled.

Other

- Transport arrangements to and from the start of any trip are the responsibility of the individual participants.
- Travel insurance is the responsibility of the individual participant.
- For commercial tours, the operator's cancellation policy will apply. Otherwise, where a booked participant cancels, COG reserves the right to charge a cancellation fee. The level of this fee will depend on the circumstances.

COG Tours Cancellation Policy

A condition of accepting a booking on a COG tour is that you confirm, with a deposit, within one month of booking, unless other arrangements are made with the Organiser. Details of the amount and where to send payment, etc. are provided in *Gang Gang*; individual reminders to pay deposits are not given.

Places may be allocated to others on wait lists where deposits are not made within a month. COG arranges tours with companies that operate under commercial conditions (e.g. they may have to outlay deposits for accommodation and services etc. provided by other people, which may not always be fully refundable).

Whether a tour goes ahead is dependent on a minimum number of people and we encourage wait lists to draw upon in the event of cancellations. In the past, it has been possible for COG to arrange refunds where cancellations have occurred (less a small cancellation fee to cover admin costs in some cases) due mainly to being able to find replacements, either through a wait list or by advertising.

However, deposit refunds depend on the cancellation/refund of deposit conditions of the particular operator, and are not automatic. Conditions are specified for each tour either in *Gang Gang* or in a special flier for the tour. This is a summary of the policy:

Deposits

- Due within one month of booking a place.

Cancellations

- Conditions of the tour operator will apply to cancellation and refund of deposit; in most instances, cancellation and deposit refund will be possible up to a specified date (less cancellation fee).
- A cancellation fee between \$15 and \$30 (to cover costs) will generally apply.
- After final monies are due, refunds (less a cancellation fee) are dependent on tour vacancies being replaced.
- Cancellation should be advised at the earliest possible time by phoning the COG Field Trip Coordinator.
- Travel insurance is recommended, particularly for long tours.

Overseas Tours

- Expressions of interest are sought first to ensure there is enough interest; this does not require an immediate deposit.
- Deposits are due once participant numbers are adequate, travel dates are confirmed and draft itinerary are agreed with the operator; this can be some months after expressions of interest and a firm commitment must be given at this time.
- Cancellation after a deposit has been paid may result in forfeit of all or some deposit monies, depending on the timing of cancellation, and if there is any loss to the operator or COG; the minimum cancellation fee is \$30.
- Once final monies are paid, refunds are dependent on vacancies being replaced on the tour (travel insurance should be acquired).

Acknowledgements:

These Guidelines were written with reference to the Bird Observers' Club of Australia (BOCA) Guidelines for Promoting and Leading Field Trips, and with contributions from Jack Holland, Chris Davey, Tony Lawson, Beth Mantle and the 2009 COG Committee.

W.T. Cooper 79

Appendix 1 – Field Trip Checklist

Prior to the Field Trip	Completed By	Date Completed
Choose the venue/ route for walks		
Notify Ranger/seek permission from Land Owner		
Lodge notice for <i>Gang Gang</i> calendar		
Confirm details in printed notice		
Arrange pre-walk speaker (if applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Telephone number • Reminder close to outing 		
Do a reconnaissance of the area		
Prepare a bird list		
Contact the Field Trip Coordinator (if applicable)		
Obtain direction signs (if needed)		
Prepare or organise pre-walk talk		
Organise First Aid Kit		
On the Day of the Field Trip, ensure you have		
Your name tag		
The First Aid Kit (refer to Appendix 4)		
Registration Form		
A Field Guide		
A water bottle		
Lunch		
A folding chair		
Binoculars		
Telescope and tripod		
A squeaker (if you use them)		
Your prepared notes for the Introduction		
A mobile phone, if possible		
If a Total Fire Ban is declared – refer policy		
After the Outing		
Write thank you letters		
Arrange article for <i>Gang Gang</i>		
Send bird list to the Field Trip Coordinator and the Ranger/Property Owner		

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Appendix 2 – Emergencies

Emergencies may arise for many reasons, such as:

- Illness;
- Injury;
- Adverse weather conditions;
- Lost part or whole of the group;
- Failing to make your objective on time;
- Being caught out by failing light.

In the event of an emergency, make a careful assessment of the situation, of the options available and make a firm positive decision. Consult others in the party if advice is required. But you, as Leader, should make the decision and manage the situation.

Where possible there should be at least two, preferably three, in any group sent out to obtain help or explain the late return from an activity.

In case of injury or sickness, render whatever assistance is possible.

Keep written details of all incidents, injury or illness. This can assist medical authorities with diagnosis and application of effective treatment.

Requesting Assistance from Emergency Services:

When contacting emergency services, or sending people for help, be prepared to provide the following information:

- Best possible location details - see details below.
- Number of people requiring assistance.
- Nature of the problem or injuries and condition of each person.
- Whether the casualty is conscious.
- Whether the casualty is breathing.
- Any known medical conditions.
- Age and sex of injured person.
- Name, address of injured person.
- Call back phone number, if available.

When calling emergency services from a phone make sure you know the number of the phone you are calling from because the service may need to phone you back. Do not hang up until instructed to do so by the emergency service operator.

If you are in a “remote” location, it is best to contact police. They are in the best position to mobilise other services such as ambulance or specialised evacuation teams.

Many leaders and participants now carry mobile phones. These may be the quickest way to obtain assistance but **make sure batteries are always charged**. If you are in the bush, try to get as high as possible to improve the chances of making contact.

Using mobile phones for emergency contact:

If you are using a mobile phone to access emergency services, please note the following advice that is on the 24 hour services page of your local telephone directory. Under the heading Digital Mobile Phone Emergency Services it states:

“In a life threatening or time critical emergency, always dial 000. You should only dial 112 as an alternative to 000 if you have a GSM digital mobile phone and you are outside your own provider’s GSM network coverage area. You may not be able to access 112 from your CDMA phone or if you are outside of all network coverage areas”.

Giving details of your location:

When quoting a location to emergency services consider the following:

- If in an urban area quote street and suburb name, street directory references or name of venue, e.g. Jerrabomberra Wetlands, Fyshwick.
- If outside the metropolitan area, some of the following can help pinpoint your position:
 - Name of the nearest town.
 - Distance and direction from that town.
 - Name of a road you are on or near.
 - Your position in relation to a well known land mark, e.g. Lake George.
 - The name of the property or national park and your location on that property.

If you are competent in the use of a GPS then map coordinates can also be useful particularly in remote areas. Always give them in addition to the above information not instead of it. However, remember that the accuracy of a GPS is questionable in heavily forested areas, valleys and gorges.

Remember that if the GPS has not been turned on for sometime you will need to let it update its system from the satellites and it may be some minutes before you get an accurate reading.

If quoting coordinates from a GPS it is important to:

- Always state the datum for which the GPS is set.

- The map zone number which precedes the coordinate numbers if quoting map grid [UTM] coordinates.

Take great care when quoting latitude and longitude. Remember an error of one degree represents up to 60 nautical miles [108km] on the ground. Also check whether the GPS is set to read actual degrees, minutes and seconds or decimal degrees, minutes and seconds and quote the data accordingly.

If you own a GPS learn how to use it properly.

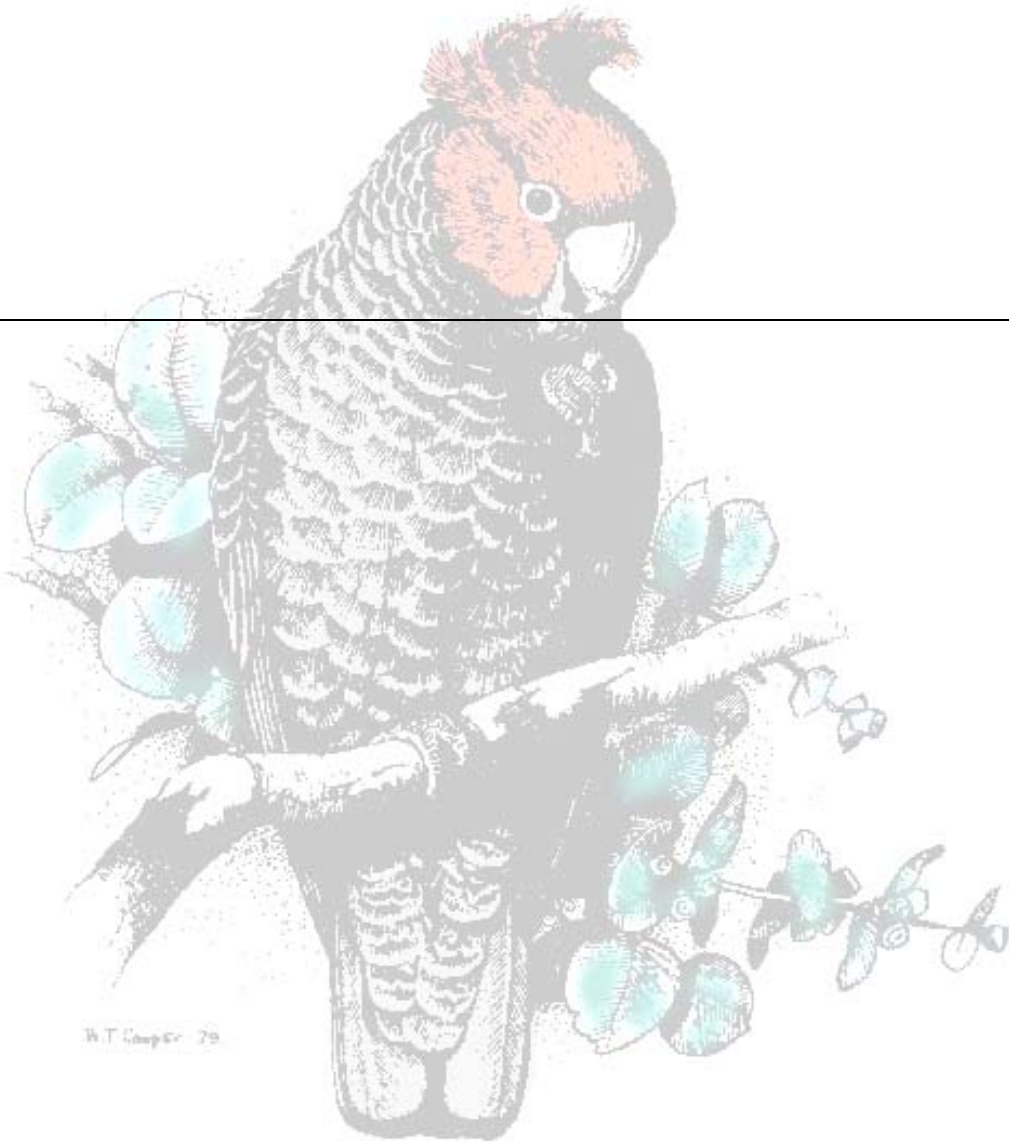


Appendix 3 – Incident Report Form

To be completed by Field Trip Leader or Coordinator as soon as practical after the incident and sent to the COG Secretary. This report is to be sent to the BOCA National Office and a copy kept by COG’s Secretary as a formal record.

Report prepared by: Contact Details: Signature:	Date Prepared:
Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:
Type of Event (walk, camp etc.)	
Location:	
Type of Incident (injury, missing person, damage to property, theft, fire, etc.)	
Incident Details: Name, address & contact details of injured persons or damaged property owners and actions taken:	
Final Outcome: What was the final outcome of the incident?	
Future Prevention: How can this type of incident be prevented at future events?	
Supplementary Information:	

This section can include a list of attachments, such as a map, witness statements, police or emergency services involvement etc.



Appendix 4 – Fire Ban Policy

Policy in regard to activities on days when total fire bans have been declared:

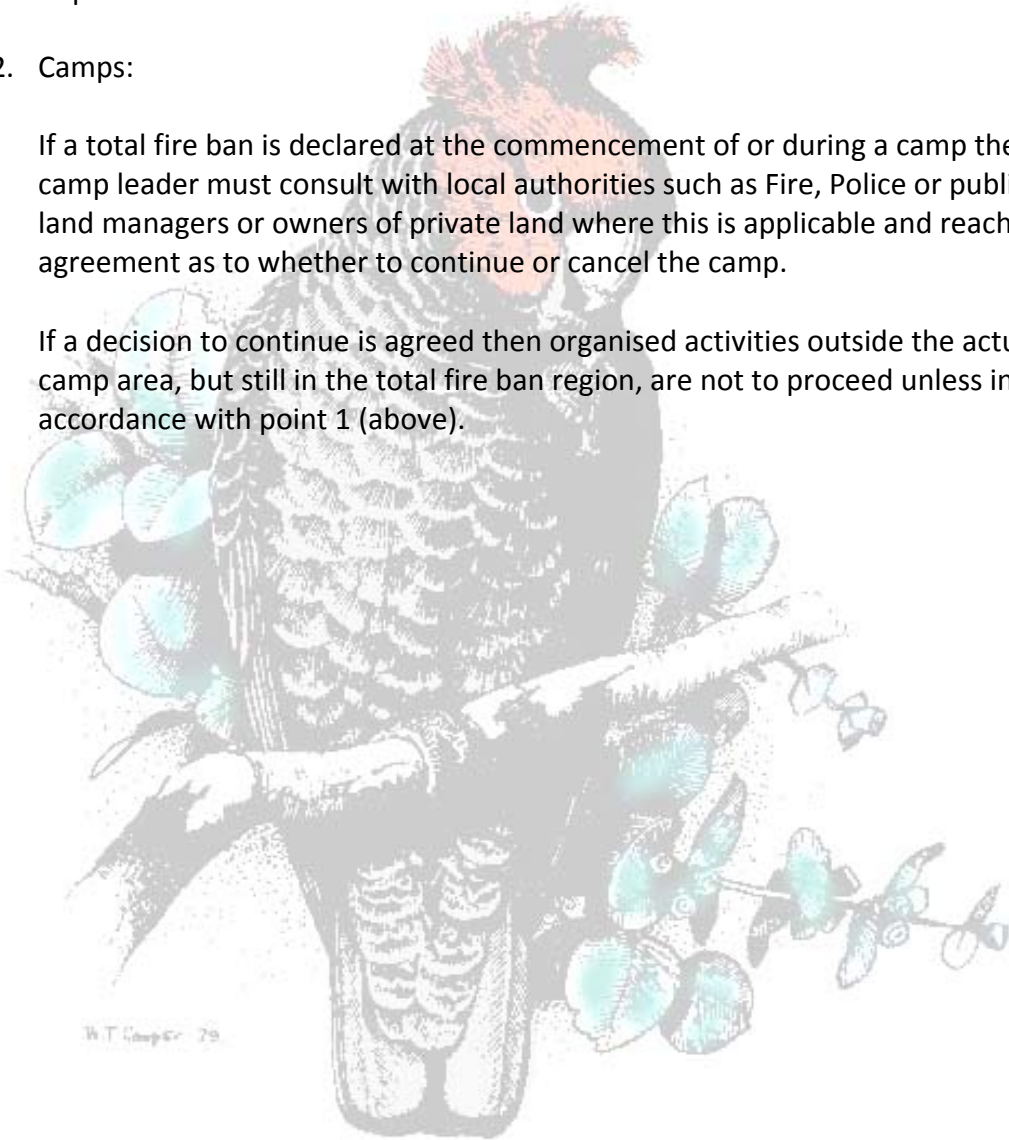
1. Day Outings / Activities / Bus trips:

These are cancelled unless advance approval has been given by the COG Field Trips Coordinator.

2. Camps:

If a total fire ban is declared at the commencement of or during a camp the camp leader must consult with local authorities such as Fire, Police or public land managers or owners of private land where this is applicable and reach agreement as to whether to continue or cancel the camp.

If a decision to continue is agreed then organised activities outside the actual camp area, but still in the total fire ban region, are not to proceed unless in accordance with point 1 (above).



Appendix 5 – COG Field Trip Registration Form

Field Trip Venue(s):		Date(s):	
Field Trip Leader(s):			

I am participating in this Field Trip as a volunteer in all respects.

I am aware that participation may expose me to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death, or to loss of or damage to my property.

To minimise these risks, I have endeavoured to ensure that this Field Trip is within my capabilities and that I am appropriately equipped. I have advised the Field Trip Leader(s) if I am taking any medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect my participation. I undertake to stay with the group and to advise the Field Trip Leader(s) if I decide to leave the group for any reason.

I have read and understand these requirements.

Full Name	Date	COG Member (Y/N)?	Car Registration	Mobile Phone No.	Next of Kin	Signature

This form is also available for download from <http://www.canberrabirds.org.au/COG%20field%20trip%20registration%20form.doc>