



Health and Safety Guidelines

v04.17

Introduction

All endorsed activities shall be carried out in a manner which will protect the health, safety and wellbeing of the volunteer members of Conservation and Wildlife Management (SA) Inc. (referred to as *Branch* or *C&WM* for the remainder of the document). Health and safety is the responsibility of all activity participants. To facilitate the implementation of this policy participants shall:

- Maintain safe work areas and conditions,
- Be provided with information and supervision to ensure the safety of all members,
- Maintain required qualifications and competencies,
- Adhere to all safety regulations, procedures and Safe Work Instructions (SWI),
- Develop and maintain emergency procedures which, in the event of accident, minimises harmful effects,
- Report hazards, or hazardous practices, to their coordinators; and
- Accept that safe work practice is the responsibility of every person taking part in any Branch activity.

Unless specifically stated, the safety procedure guidelines that follow apply to all endorsed Branch activities.

When a situation arises for which the team does not have specific safety policy guidelines the Coordinator shall refer to any partner agency safety procedures, relevant state Codes of Practice or Advisory Standards, or consult with the relevant authority before determining an appropriate course of action.

The following policy and guideline statements have been developed to cover all reasonably foreseeable situations.

Safety management responsibilities

Every C&WM member has a responsibility for the creation and maintenance of a safe hunting environment. For any endorsed activity there are three roles; that of the Activity Coordinator, Team Leader(s) and the activity participants (team members).

- Activity Coordinators are responsible for the planning and delivery of practical projects, associated safety processes and in the field supervision of all activity participants. However, responsibility may be designated to Team Leaders for in-field supervision and daily team management where multiple teams are involved, or the coordinator is not present.
- Activity participants must declare pre-existing injuries and medical conditions that may affect their participation. All participants will operate as a team and cooperate with the creation and maintenance of safe practices and a safe operating environment. Adherence to policies and procedures, the reporting of any unsafe situation(s) or practice(s) to the Activity Coordinator or Team Leader is the responsibility of everyone involved in the activity.
- All activity participants undertake activities of their own free will and do so knowing and acknowledging the various risks associated with these activities.

Qualifications and competencies

All team members should have the following qualifications and competencies when undertaking field activities:

- *C&WM Field Operative Course* accreditation (essential).
- C&WM marksmanship, safe handling and use of firearms competency (essential).
- Current Firearms Licence with POU 7 – Wildlife Management/Category 7 (contract shooter) licence endorsement (essential).
- Current Senior or Applied First Aid certificate (desirable).
- Advanced GPS and map reading (desirable).

C&WM Council (referred to as *Council* for the remainder of the document) must maintain a sound understanding of the practical tasks undertaken by the members in the field, the risks associated and how these are managed.

Council needs to be satisfied that teams have the necessary skills and competency to complete their activity safely. This consideration is a component of the risk assessment process prior to the commencement of any activity.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment will be undertaken prior to any activity commencing. Hazards must be identified and pointed out to all participants, with risk control measures explained.

Once hazards are identified, the following risk control strategies shall be considered in sequence:

- Eliminate the hazard.
- Substitute the hazard with one of lesser risk.
- Isolate the hazard.
- Use engineering controls.
- Use administrative controls.
- Use of personal protective equipment.

Special factors for higher risk considerations will include remote location and travel, reasonable possibility of extreme climate and associated conditions, flood, extreme heat, and bushfire, etc. Possible exposure to herbicides, zoonotic diseases, 1080 fox baits, etc., should also be considered. With reference to zoonotic diseases, Q-fever, a disease caused by an organism named *Coxiella burnetii*, is a disease that members may encounter. It is potentially a very debilitating disease which can be easily picked up by contact with an infected animal (i.e. goats, cattle, kangaroos, etc.) that will have no visible signs of infection. An effective vaccine is available and it is recommended that members who participate in field activities are tested (to identify pre-existing immunity) and vaccinated for Q-fever, if required.

Unacceptable risk

Where the risk assessment process leaves a coordinator with no reasonably practicable solution, the coordinator should suspend action on the activity, or that component which is the source of concern, until the risk is satisfactorily controlled.

At no time will the achievement of the activity intention be allowed to compromise safety.

Emergency response planning

Every site is required to have an emergency response and evacuation plan that is communicated to all team members. Consideration must be given to any reasonably foreseeable emergencies so that a response plan can be developed. The plan needs to identify strategies for both getting assistance to team members and the safe evacuation of that team.

No member should offer, or be drawn into, any media comment in respect of an emergency, unless specifically authorised by the C&WM President or nominee. A polite "No comment" is all that should be offered and the enquiry directed to the C&WM Media representative.

Emergency communications protocols

The purpose of communications should be to arrange assistance as quickly as possible and minimise harmful effects to individuals. The National 000 should be backed-up with local emergency service numbers as well as 112 (GSM standard or GSM compatible phones) and 106 (text-based relay service for people who have a hearing or speech impairment) emergency numbers for mobile phones.

All calls to the emergency numbers, whether from fixed, mobile, and pay phone services are free-of-charge.

So far as practicable, each team should have access to two forms of communication: mobile phone and UHF radio for local UHF repeater to local essential services. In remote areas, access to an HF radio or satellite phone is encouraged.

Where possible, a vehicle should be parked in an area where the strongest communication signal has been determined and should have sufficient fuel to reach the nearest point of emergency assistance.

All members are to have GPS and paper map backup to be able to give concise directions to a site where an emergency evacuation may be required.

Disclosure of pre-existing injuries or medical conditions

Any personal information disclosed to the Activity Coordinator must be treated in strict confidence and used only for the purpose of safely and discreetly managing the condition disclosed. Pre-existing injury or medical information will be provided when registering for the activity through submitting the completed and signed *Activity Registration and Pre-existing Injury or Medical Condition* form.

Activity participants must complete and sign the "Activity Induction, Registration and Attendance Record" form prior to participating in any activity. If applicable disclose any medical conditions, an appropriate management plan must be developed and agreed as practicable by the member.

Activity Coordinator responsibilities

The Activity Coordinator is responsible for the development of a risk assessment for the activity, with the actions or events within the activity having a Risk Assessment developed for major activities, also, the general safety and welfare of activity personnel for the entire activity duration.

In addition to general induction that is completed as part of the activity registration process, a site briefing must be completed at the beginning of each activity, as a guide the following minimum should be applied:

- Context and aims of the activity.
- Risk assessment and site safety.
- Individual tasks and duties.
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) advice.
- Emergency procedures, first aid, communications and reporting.

Notwithstanding responsibilities detailed elsewhere in this policy and other documents, it is expected the Activity Coordinator will demonstrate the following positive safety behaviour:

- On arrival and throughout the activity, as far as is practicable and reasonable, make the team aware of possible site hazards.
- Ensure that a safety vehicle is on site and parked in an unobstructed exit.
- Have escape routes planned.
- Ensure that the vehicle has sufficient fuel to reach the nearest hospital or doctor.
- Ensure that first aid kits are accessible at all times.
- Intervene immediately when unsafe practices are observed.
- Constantly enforce the importance of firearm safety.
- Make notes of any accidents, incidents, and recommendations that need to be brought to the attention of the Safety Committee (referred to as Safecom for the remainder of this document), with reports being lodged within 72 hours of the completion of the activity.

Bullying and harassment

When referring to the implementation of this policy a contact person or persons should be established to receive complaints. Everybody is entitled to a positive activity, so ridicule and harassment will not be tolerated.

If you are uncomfortable about any situation, make your feelings known and deal with it there and then. Members should feel free to report any situation, hazard, or hazardous practice to their coordinator. You may leave any situation that you do not feel safe in and report your concerns directly to the coordinator.

The branch has a process established to resolve all complaints respectfully, confidentially and fairly. Refer to the "*C&WM Grievance Procedure*" document and if applicable lodge any grievances within 72 hours of the completion of the activity.

Investigating a member incident report

Where an incident has occurred, or an incident report has been lodged, Safecom shall:

- Ensure all corrective actions identified in an investigation are authorised with signed documentation.
- Allocate responsibility against each corrective action, to ensure everyone is aware of what is required of them. Any lack of response shall be tracked to the responsible person.
- Ensure any corrective actions have a time frame allocated to them for completion.
- Ensure all members concerned have received sufficient training, or arrange for retraining, as deemed necessary by the findings of the investigation.
- Where a specific task or process has caused the incident, an analysis will be undertaken in order to re-assess the risks associated with in the area.
- After implementing corrective actions, ensure they are evaluated at a future time. This is to ensure that the controls have not caused any further hazards, and that they are in fact appropriate to reducing the likelihood of a recurrence of the same event.

Smoking, drugs (illegal or prescription) and alcohol

Smoking will not be permitted where any activity personnel may be affected. Smoking on activities may be banned completely by the Coordinator if it is deemed an unacceptable fire risk.

Persons found in possession of, or using illegal drugs will be asked to leave the activity immediately and may be reported to Safecom for further action. When using prescription drugs individuals need to be aware how these may affect them and not participate or handle firearms if adversely affected/impaired.

Alcohol may only be consumed after the day's activity is completed. Participants must have a 0.00% blood alcohol level when undertaking shooting activities, these include: active shooting, handling firearms and ammunition, handling a spotlight for the purposes of shooting, and driving a vehicle from which shooting or spotlighting is being undertaken. Please refer to the *Drug and Alcohol Policy* for the full details.

Extreme weather conditions

An extreme weather condition (both hot and cold) refers to situations where conditions have a reasonable potential to cause stress or extreme discomfort.

The standard risk assessment must take into consideration the expected duration of the extreme conditions, the quality of protective clothing and proximity of shelter. Pre-existing medical conditions and injuries must also be taken into account.

Lightning – Electrical storms may be managed by the 30-30 rule, when the sound of thunder sounds less than 30 seconds after a visible lightning flash all outdoor members should seek immediate shelter inside a building or vehicle and remain there for at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash. Research indicates that more than half of lightning deaths occur after the thunderstorm has passed.

Periods of high fire danger:

- Stand down or cancel activity on days of catastrophic (code red) fire danger, may be required to leave the area.
- Do not walk in forest, bushland, grassland or other high danger areas on days of catastrophic fire danger.
- Limit distances walked from the vehicle in high or greater fire danger.
- Limit or stop any driving through long grass or over grown tracks on days of catastrophic fire danger (where possible).

Bushfire safety

Members are generally not trained to fight bushfire; procedures are therefore aimed at removing teams from contact with bushfires. It is essential that the possibility of bushfire is a prominent aspect of planning and risk assessment. In particular the following questions must be considered:

- How great is the threat of fire?
- Are there escape routes?
- Are emergency communications available?
- Does the coordinator regularly monitor the local radio station or contact other parties for information?
- Have the issues of emergency evacuation been discussed?
- While being mindful to the threat of fire from external forces, are the activity members acting in a responsible manner when using fire at the site accommodation?
- Does the team have access to appropriate equipment to deal with minor/spot fires, should they occur around camp or a vehicle?

First Aid

Legislation requires adequate provision for the welfare of activity members, an aspect of which is the provision of first aid in the event of injury or illness. Therefore, at least one vehicle per Field Team must be equipped with a suitable first aid kit. The provision of a personal first aid kit will also be a necessary consideration for members operating away from the team vehicle.

Each member has a responsibility to manage and carry a personal first aid kit. The Activity Coordinator or Team Leader is responsible for managing the activity's first aid kit by:

- Ensuring the first aid kit is complete and the contents are within 'expiry dates'.
- Ensuring that the first aid kit is loaded and accessible.
- Checking emergency contact numbers are included.
- Ensuring the adequacy of the first aid kit in relation to any member's pre-existing condition.
- Ensure that all members are aware of the first aid kit's location.

Aims of First Aid

First Aid is the act of providing initial assistance to the injured or ill prior to handing over to trained personnel.

Remember the following procedures:

1. Preserve Life
2. Protect the Unconscious
3. Promote Recovery
4. Prevent Deterioration
5. Seek Medical Assistance
6. Do No Harm

Protection and Hygiene

Be aware of danger to you, the patient and team members. Always wear first aid gloves and change for each patient. Wash hands before and after each treatment. Always use sterile dressings, swabs and single-use disposable items. If providing Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) use a face shield (where possible).

Principles of Assessment

- History: What happened? Accident or illness type obtained from scene, as described by the patient or bystanders.
- Signs: What can you see? Look for bleeding, bruising or deformities, etc.
- Symptoms: What the patient tells you e.g. pain or how they feel.

You are not expected to know everything, so call for help as soon as possible. Even treating big incidents is just a series of basic first aid steps.

Driver responsibilities

- All drivers of vehicles must have a current driver's licence.
- Drivers must comply with state/territory road laws.
- When considering blood alcohol content, State regulations must be adhered to when transporting members in a vehicle during an activity a 0.00% limited is applicable.
- Coordinators must not authorise the use of vehicles they know to be unsafe.

Safety with firearms and ammunition

In order to be a responsible user of firearms, the following basic firearm safety rules must be applied at all times:

1. TREAT EVERY FIREARM AS BEING LOADED

Check every firearm yourself to ensure that it is *clear* (having an empty chamber) at all times. Action to be open, or closed on an empty chamber, only chambering a round when in position to take a safe shot. Check that firearm is *clear* when accepting or passing between people. When removing from or returning to storage, or cleaning, check to ensure it is *clear* and unloaded.

2. ALWAYS POINT FIREARMS IN A SAFE DIRECTION

Whether loaded or unloaded, make sure that the muzzle is pointed in a *SAFE* direction.

3. NEVER HAVE LOADED FIREARMS IN THE CAR, HOME OR CAMP

Ensure that when entering a car, house or camp that all ammunition has been removed from all firearms and that those firearms have also been cleared by another member.

4. IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AND WHAT IS BEHIND IT

Make certain of your target before shooting. Be aware of what is behind your target.

5. NEVER FIRE AT HARD SURFACES OR WATER

Consider the area your target is in and the potential for ricochet.

6. STORE AMMUNITION AND FIREARMS SEPARATELY

When not in use, your ammunition and your firearm are to be stored separately under lock and key. Not only is this a safety requirement but it is also a legal obligation in South Australia.

7. NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS WHEN HANDLING FIREARMS

Alcohol and/or drugs and some medications impair judgment; good judgment is the key to the safe use of firearms. A 0.00% blood alcohol level when undertaking shooting activities is required, as well as not being impaired by drugs.

8. DO NOT CLIMB FENCES OR OBSTACLES WITH FIREARMS

Make sure before attempting to climb through a fence or negotiate any obstacle that your firearm is clear. Pass the firearm to a companion or lay on the ground when negotiating an obstacle.

9. DO NOT RELY ON SAFETY CATCHES.