

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING FIELD ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY AND REMOTE AREAS

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure the identification, assessment and control of risks associated with field activities in country and remote areas undertaken by staff and students at Monash University in accordance with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004).

Field activities are an essential part of many of the research and teaching activities at Monash University. Country and remote field activities can, however, present an increased risk to health and safety as the work or study carried out in the field is often significantly different to normal on-campus work practices. It may also be remote from well-established and familiar environments where hazards and risks are well known and controlled. These guidelines have been developed to highlight the additional risks that may be encountered when working or studying in the field and to provide guidance as to appropriate ways to control these risks.

Staff who elect to manage the risks associated with country and remote field activities in a different manner to that described in these guidelines must use practices that provide at least equivalent, or a better, level of safety. Staff and students may only participate in collaborative field activities or field activities run by another organisation if the field activity is in compliance with Monash University OHS policies and procedures or if the OHS policies and procedures of the organising body are of equivalent, or better, level of safety.

2. SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all country and remote field activities involving staff and students from the Australian campuses of Monash University and to Monash controlled entities.

3. ABBREVIATIONS

ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
AM	Amplitude modulated
CB	Citizens Band
EPIRB	Emergency position indicating radio beacon
km	Kilometre
MF/HF	Medium frequency/High frequency
MHz	Megahertz
OHS	Occupational health and safety
OHSE	Occupational Health, Safety & Environment unit
PFD	Personal flotation device
TAC	Transport accident Commission
UHF	Ultra high frequency
VHF	Very high frequency

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 COUNTRY FIELD ACTIVITIES

Country field activities comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by the Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers that are undertaken off-campus **outside** urban areas. Field activities include field excursions, field trips, field camps and fieldwork.

NB Country field activities do not include off-campus activities that occur at, or in close proximity to, urban areas, ie cities or country towns (see definition below). These activities are covered by the Monash University [Guidelines for health and safety during off-campus activities undertaken in urban areas.](#)

4.2 EMERGENCY

An emergency is an adverse situation where the potential for injury, threat to life or severe damage to property is imminent.

4.3 FIELD ACTIVITIES

Field activities include all field excursions, field trips, field camps and fieldwork teaching and/or research activities authorised by the University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers

4.4 HEAD OF ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

For the purposes of these guidelines, head of unit/entity is used to denote the head of the area that is undertaking the activity. For academic areas, this term includes head of faculty, department, school, institute or centre. For administrative areas, the term includes head of division, branch, centre or unit.

4.5 INCIDENT

Incident is defined as any occurrence that leads to, or might have led to, injury or illness to people, danger to health and/or damage to property or the environment.

For the purpose of these procedures, the term 'incident' is used as an inclusive term for incidents, accidents and near misses.

4.6 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

International activities comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers from Australian campuses that take place abroad or incorporate travel to and from international locations.

4.7 MONASH CONTROLLED ENTITY

Monash controlled entities (eg companies) include entities where Monash can control decision making, directly or indirectly, in relation to the financial and operating policies so as to enable the entity to operate with it in pursuing the objectives of Monash University.

For the remainder of this document, a Monash controlled entity will be referred to as an entity.

4.8 NEAR MISS

A near miss is defined as any occurrence that might have led to injury or illness to people, danger to health and/or damage to property or the environment.

4.9 OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES IN URBAN AREAS

Off-campus activities in urban areas comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by the University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers that are undertaken off-campus in urban areas or within 5 km of an urban area in Australia.

For the purposes of these guidelines, urban areas are defined as populated areas such as cities, towns, suburbs, country towns or centres where medical assistance and communication is readily available.

Off-campus activities in urban areas include excursions, field excursions, study tours and site visits to places such as industry locations, hospitals and factories.

NB Off-campus activities in urban areas do not include visits by staff members or students to another site for the purpose of lectures, seminars or meetings.

4.10 OFF-ROAD

Off-road is any location other than a major or minor formed road.

4.11 OHS HAZARD

An OHS hazard is a situation with the potential to cause injury or illness to people or damage to property.

4.12 OHS RISK

An OHS risk is the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in injury or illness to people or damage to property.

4.13 OHS RISK CONTROL

OHS risk control is action taken to eliminate or reduce the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in injury or illness to people or damage to property.

4.14 REMOTE FIELD ACTIVITIES

Remote field activities comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers that are undertaken off-campus outside urban areas:

- more than 5 km from a frequently trafficked road, farmhouse or other facility with telephone or radio communication; or
- off-road in areas including river, inland waterways, estuarine and oceanic locations where very little traffic is likely or where hills, dense timber or other topographic features would make it difficult to summon help; or
- where it would take more than one hour to obtain medical and other emergency support without a vehicle.

4.15 SUPERVISOR

4.15.1 Supervisors are those who are responsible for overseeing:

- the work program of other staff;
- the study program of honours and postgraduate students; and
- undergraduate students in lectures, tutorial and practical classes and on field trips.

4.15.2 The supervisor of staff or students has a particular responsibility for safeguarding the occupational health and safety of those in their charge. The supervisor can delegate the supervision or training of a staff member or student to a suitably qualified and/or experienced person, as appropriate for the task. The supervisor is, however, responsible for ensuring that the staff member or student has received appropriate training and has gained sufficient competence to undertake the task.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

A comprehensive list of OHS responsibilities is provided in the document [OHS management at Monash University: Structure, functions, roles and responsibilities](#) . A summary of responsibilities with respect to country and remote field activities is provided below.

5.1 HEAD OF ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

It is the responsibility of the head of the unit/entity to ensure that satisfactory provisions for health and safety are made for country and remote field activities organised by their unit. Heads of the academic/administrative units must institute a system for assessment, approval and review of all field activities in their unit and ensure that occupational health and safety issues are reported to the safety officer, the zone OHS&E committee or OHSE Consultant for resolution as required.

5.2 STAFF MEMBER IN CHARGE (ORGANISER)

The staff member in charge of a country and remote field activity must:

5.2.1 ensure that the risks associated with country and remote field activities are managed effectively. To do this they must:

- identify possible hazards that may be encountered during the activity;
- assess the risks associated with those hazards;
- incorporate strategies to minimise the risks to health and safety using the hierarchy of control.

Hazard identification and risk assessment forms, as well as training in their use, are available from OHSE. Many of the hazards likely to be encountered on field activities and appropriate risk controls are discussed in these guidelines.

5.2.2 ensure that the responsibilities for health and safety are communicated to all participants;

5.2.3 provide appropriate information, instruction and training to all participants.

5.3 SUPERVISORS

Supervisors of country and remote field activities must:

- ensure that safe working practices are developed and maintained at all times;
- arrange for participants to be instructed in safe and healthy working procedures;
- ensure that participants are warned about hazards, and how to avoid, eliminate or minimise them;
- ensure that participants under their control use the safety equipment provided in the correct manner.
- ensure that at least one supervisory participant remains alcohol and drug free at all times during the field trip

5.4 INDIVIDUALS (STAFF, STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS)

Each staff member, student and volunteer has a moral and legal responsibility for ensuring that his or her work environment is conducive to good occupational health and safety by:

- reading any notices relating to the field activity, attending any briefing sessions and returning any forms to the staff member in charge;
- taking action to avoid, eliminate or minimise hazards of which they are aware;
- reporting all hazards, incidents and accidents to the supervisor in charge, safety officer or OHSE consultant
- complying with all occupational health and safety instructions;
- making proper use of all safety devices and personal protective equipment;
- not wilfully placing at risk the health and safety of any person at the workplace;
- maintaining dress standards appropriate for the work undertaken.

A volunteer information sheet is provided in 14.1 that can be used to record the details of authorised volunteers.

6. STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH DISABILITIES

Monash University is committed to being fair, equitable and sensitive to the diverse needs of its students and staff in all its policies and practices and to supporting access by disadvantaged groups with due regard and respect for the sensitivities of all stakeholders (Monash University Global Equal Opportunity Policy; <http://adm.monash.edu/sss/equity-diversity/equal-opportunity/policies/globaleopol.html>).

With respect to off-campus activities, it is the responsibility of the University to avoid discrimination against people who have a disability by making reasonable adjustments to the working environment and arrangements.

When students are undertaking a field activity as part of their course requirement, reasonable accommodations must be made to ensure that students who have a disability can participate. Some students may not, however, be able to undertake some activities. Alternative arrangements must be made to ensure that these students can meet the inherent requirements of the course. Advice and assistance can be obtained from the Disability Liaison Unit by phone on 9905 5704 or by email on dlu@adm.monash.edu.au.

Adjustments to the working environment and arrangements for students and staff with disabilities may include:

6.1 TRANSPORT

- The type of transport used for the field activity must be accessible for the students and staff with disabilities attending the activity.
- Alternative forms of transport or frequent, scheduled breaks may be required for participants who have disabilities.

6.2 FACILITIES

The facilities and accommodation for the field activity must be accessible for the participants who have disabilities attending the activity.

6.3 COMMUNICATION

- Communications regarding the field activity must be provided in a form that is accessible for the participants who have disabilities attending the activity.
- Alternative formats may have to be provided for specific participant's eg written information for participants with hearing-impairment, Braille version or audio for participants with vision impairment.
- Participants with hearing-impairment may find the Short Message Service on mobile phones useful for communication while attending field activities.

6.4 STUDENT SUPPORT WORKER PARTICIPATION

Some students may require a Student Support Worker to accompany them on the field activity to assist as interpreters or note takers.

7. FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR STAFF, HONOURS AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

7.1 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1.1 A comprehensive identification of the hazards to be encountered on country and remote field activities and an assessment of the risks associated with these hazards must be undertaken during the planning for the trip. Forms to assist with this process are provided by OHSE.
- 7.1.2 Staff members in charge of country and remote field activities and supervisors of students are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment procedure has been completed **before** the commencement of the field activity.

- 7.1.3 Following assessment of the risks likely to be found during the field activity, risk control measures must be adopted to minimise the risk associated with each hazard. The hierarchy of hazard controls, as described in the OHSE risk control program, must be used to determine the appropriate risk controls to be adopted.
- 7.1.4 Potential hazards identified by the staff member in charge of the field activity must be disclosed to participating staff, students and volunteers before departure, together with the risk control procedures to be adopted.
- 7.1.5 The effectiveness of risk control measures must be reviewed and improved following any incidents that occur during a field activity and before the activity re-occurs and when any aspect of the field trip changes.
- 7.1.6 **Research/teaching projects involving field activities**
An overall risk assessment must be completed of all types of hazards involved in a specific research or teaching project, including the various field activities, before the activities commence. The head of the unit/entity must be notified of the general area of the project, personal contact details and the completion of all requirements before commencement of the field project. The specific details of each of the excursions that occur as part of the field project must then be notified just prior to each excursion (see 7.4.1.4).

7.2 EMERGENCY PLANNING

- 7.2.1 The risk assessment must include a section that outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency such as an injury, a deleterious change in the weather, a natural disaster such as a bushfire, etc.
- 7.2.2 **First aid requirements**
Details of first aid requirements for field activities are given in the Monash University [Procedures for first aid](#) and in section 11.4.
- 7.2.3 The emergency plans must include:
- emergency protocols for personnel in the field, at the base camp and in the academic/administrative unit;
 - emergency procedures for participants who have disabilities;
 - communication protocols;
 - emergency services contact numbers (An emergency contacts proforma is provided in 14.2) for local emergency services and within the academic/administrative unit.

7.3 MANAGING SAFETY MATTERS DURING THE FIELD TRIP

- 7.3.1 When postgraduate students take part in a country or remote field activity, all participants must maintain an overview of safety issues during the planning and progress of the field activity.
- 7.3.2 All safety issues that arise during the field activity should be directed to the supervisor or unit safety officer for further advice.
- 7.3.3 In the event of changes to the proposed itinerary or activities occurring whilst the field activity is in progress, the participants must review the risks associated with the new route or work or study proposed and communicate any health and safety warnings to other participants. The head of the academic/administrative unit/controlled entity must be advised of all changes in writing as soon as is practicable.

7.4 NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

7.4.1 Before departure

7.4.1.1 Pre-departure notification

- Before departing on a country or remote field activity, the staff member in charge of the activity must complete a pre-departure notification form (an example is provided in 14.3) and submit it to the head of academic/administrative unit/controlled entity or their nominated delegate.
- The head of academic/administrative unit/controlled entity or their nominee will authorise the field activity if all steps required have been completed.
- The form must be submitted at least 7 working days prior to the intended day of departure to allow time for the head of the unit/entity or their nominee adequate time for assessment and approval before departure.

7.4.1.2 Itinerary

Immediately before departure, staff members or students must provide their supervisor and/or the head of the academic/administrative unit/controlled entity with a written itinerary of the field activity. A form is provided in 14.3 for this purpose.

- The staff member in charge or the supervisor must know the exact location of every person's study site. If necessary, staff or students must provide maps with grid references.
- Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the system of notification is working effectively.

7.4.1.3 Provision of contact details

Every staff member and student must nominate a personal contact (eg flatmate, parent, partner), who is not attending the field trip, and provide the name and phone number of the contact person to their supervisor or a specified departmental contact person before commencing the field activity. These details will be used in the case of an emergency. An information and consent form is provided in 14.4 for this purpose.

7.4.1.4 Regular excursions that are part of an overall field project

- The head of the academic/administrative unit/controlled entity or their nominee must be notified of the general area of the project, personal contact details and completion of the pre-departure checklist before the commencement of the field project.
- The specific details of each of the excursions that occur as part of the field project must then be notified just prior to each excursion.

7.4.2 **During a field activity**

7.4.2.1 If necessary, on arrival at the site of a country or remote area field activity, the police and/or Royal Flying Doctor Service or other agencies must be notified of the dates, location and number of personnel attending the field activity.

7.4.2.2 Small (1-3) groups of staff and/or students working in isolation in the field must stay in daily contact with their supervisor or a specified contact person. The specified contact person may be located at the unit/entity or at a location in the vicinity of the

field activity or may be a personal contact of the field worker. It is recommended that contact be made twice a day.

7.4.3 **Upon return from a field activity**

7.4.3.1 On their return from a field activity, staff members and/or students must notify a specified contact person from their unit/entity (eg their supervisor).

7.4.3.2 If a staff member or student fails to return from a field activity at the pre-arranged time and has not notified a change in arrangements, the specified contact person is responsible for notifying a representative of the academic/administrative unit/controlled entity (eg the resources manager).

7.4.3.3 The representative of the unit/entity is responsible for notifying:

- emergency services;
- family/friends of the staff member and /or student.

7.4.3.4 For daily excursions into the field from campus, a personal contact of the field worker should notify a representative of the unit/entity if they fail to return by a pre-arranged time.

7.4.4 **Site of field activities**

With the exception of emergency services, information regarding the whereabouts of field activities, including precise directions should not be given out to people outside the unit/entity who are not known to the person being approached for this information

7.4.5 **To participants of the field activity**

7.4.5.1 Safety aspects must be discussed among all participants (staff, students and volunteers) before the commencement of field activities.

7.4.5.1.1 The following must be included as a minimum:

- a discussion of the completed risk assessment for the project/field activity, including discussion of potential hazards which are likely to be encountered and the steps individuals must take to minimise the risks associated with these hazards;
- a discussion of the emergency procedures (see 7.2) developed for the field activity;
- introductions to the safety officer and/or first aider(s) attending the activity if applicable;
- general safety guidelines, including:
 - the need to act lawfully at all times;
 - the need to follow all regulatory and advisory signage and traffic regulations;
 - the need to follow common sense practices;
 - the need to follow all explicit directives from staff members in charge, site controllers and transport operators (eg bus drivers);
 - the need to follow all other instructions as given by staff or workers on site that do not conflict with the above;

- rules relating to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
- 7.4.5.1.2 Specific information regarding safety aspects of the activity must also be included:
- minimum dress requirements, including a warning that correct dress is mandatory for participation in activities;
 - discussion of correct maintenance and use of safety equipment required for the various activities that are to be carried out.
 - the completed risk assessment for the activity;
 - written guidelines and/or safety procedures relevant to the activity being undertaken, e.g. use of equipment or vehicles; communication protocols;
 - emergency contact numbers and procedures.
- 7.4.5.1.3 Participants may also be provided with information detailing:
- organisational arrangements, including information about field site, travel, personnel, weather, etc;
 - practical requisites for the activity, eg clothing, sun screen, insect repellent, sunglasses, footwear, weatherproof coat, water bottle.
- 7.4.5.1.4 The discussion is an educational exercise aimed at making participants aware of potentially dangerous situations. It should be conducted in such a way that participants appreciate the need to follow the correct safety procedures. It is necessary to take reasonable steps to ascertain that the information is understood.
- 7.4.5.1.5 It is essential that all participants in the field activity attend the safety discussion and that attendance at such a discussion is recorded. Separate sessions may have to be held for participants who are unable to attend the main session.
- 7.4.5.1.6 The information must be provided in a form that is accessible for participants who have disabilities attending the activity. Alternative formats may have to be provided for specific participants eg written information for participants with hearing-impairment, Braille version or audio for participants with vision impairment.

8. FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

This section of the guidelines is designed to cover field activities in country and remote areas that are part of an undergraduate subject or course.

8.1 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1.1 A comprehensive identification of the hazards to be encountered during the field activity in a country and remote area and an assessment of the risks associated with these hazards must be undertaken during the planning for the trip. Forms to assist with this process are provided by OHSE.

- 8.1.2 Staff members in charge of field activities in country and remote areas are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment procedure has been completed before the commencement of the activity.
- 8.1.3 Following the assessment of the risks likely to be found during the activity, risk control measures must be adopted to minimise the risk associated with each hazard. The hierarchy of hazard controls, as described in the OHSE risk control program, must be used to determine the appropriate risk controls to be adopted.
- 8.1.4 Potential hazards identified by the staff member in charge of the activity must be disclosed to participating staff, students and volunteers before departure, together with the risk control procedures to be adopted.
- 8.1.5 The effectiveness of risk control measures must be reviewed and improved following any incidents that occur during a field activity and before the activity recurs.

8.2 EMERGENCY PLANNING

- 8.2.1 The risk assessment must include a section that outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency such as an injury, participants becoming separated from the main group, a deleterious change in the weather, a bushfire etc.
- 8.2.2 **First aid requirements**
- Details of first aid requirements for field activities are given in the Monash University [Procedures for first aid](#) and in section 11.4.
 - It is recommended that at least one person trained in mental health first aid or an equivalent course attends undergraduate field activities. Information about mental health first aid courses is available at the [OHSE Training website](#).
- 8.2.3 The emergency plans must include:
- emergency procedures for participants of the activity and for the academic/administrative unit;
 - emergency procedures for participants with disabilities;
 - communication procedures;
 - emergency services contact numbers (A proforma is provided in 14.2) for local emergency services and with the department, school or centre.

8.3 APPOINTMENT OF A FIELD ACTIVITY SAFETY OFFICER

- 8.3.1 When groups of honours or undergraduate students take part in a field activity in a country and remote area, one of the supervisory participants must be appointed as a field activity safety officer. The role of the field activity safety officer is to maintain an overview of safety issues during the planning and progress of the field activity.
- 8.3.2 It is recommended that the field activity safety officer is someone **other** than the staff member in charge of the activity. The field activity safety officer should keep the staff member in charge of the activity informed of any safety issues and make recommendations to ensure the safety of participants.
- 8.3.3 All safety issues that arise during the field activity should be directed to the field activity safety officer.

- 8.3.4 In the event of changes to proposed itinerary or activities occurring whilst the field activity is in progress, the field activity safety officer must review the risks associated with the new route or work or study proposed and communicate any health and safety warnings to staff and students.

8.4 NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

8.4.1 Head of unit/entity or designated representative

- 8.4.1.1 Before departing on field activities in country and remote areas, the staff member in charge of the activity must provide the head of the unit/entity with the following information. Forms are provided in 14.2 - 14.4 that can be used for this purpose.

8.4.1.1.1 *Written itinerary*

8.4.1.1.2 *Details of participants*

- Details of all those attending the field activity, including the staff member in charge, staff or students acting as supervisors, volunteers and students;
- Names of field activity safety officer and first aider(s);
- Name and phone number of a contact person (eg flatmate, parent, partner), not attending the field trip, for each participant. These details will be used in the case of an emergency.

8.4.1.1.3 *Details of the safety briefing provided to participants*

8.4.1.1.4 *Emergency procedures, eg*

- Details of procedures for participants who become separated during the activity;
- Action to be taken if a participant is injured.

- 8.4.1.2 The head of the unit/entity or their nominee will authorise the field activity when all procedures have been completed.

- 8.4.1.3 The information must be submitted well in advance of the trip to allow time for the head of the unit/entity or their nominee adequate time for assessment and approval before departure.

8.4.2 To participants

8.4.2.1 Information sheet

Participants must be provided with an information sheet detailing:

- written guidelines and/or safety procedures relevant to the activity being undertaken, eg use of equipment or vehicles, communication protocols;
- emergency procedures and contact numbers;
- rules relating to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs;
- written policies regarding actions that will be taken if students do not comply with safety instructions or display disruptive behaviour while attending the activity;
- organisational arrangements, including information about the field site, travel, first aid, catering, names of supervisors, and first aiders;

- practical requisites for the activity, eg clothing, laboratory coat, safety glasses, sun screen, insect repellent, sunglasses, footwear, weatherproof coat, water bottle;
- personal accident insurance cover.

8.4.2.2 Students attending the activity must be provided with 'Student guidelines for safety on undergraduate field activities' (14.5)

- These guidelines are provided as a reference document for staff members in charge of field activities to provide to students before attendance at an undergraduate field activity. Staff members in charge of field activities should include relevant sections and develop further guidelines as appropriate to their specific field activity;
- The guidelines and their implications must be fully explained to students;
- Students should be asked to sign a form to acknowledge that they have read and understood the guidelines as a requirement to attend the field trip. An example of a form that could be used for this purpose is shown in 14.4.

8.4.2.3 Safety briefing

A safety briefing must be given to all participants (staff, students and volunteers) before the commencement of field activities.

8.4.2.3.1 The safety briefing must include as a minimum:

- a discussion of the potential hazards which are likely to be encountered and the steps individuals must take to minimise the risks associated with these hazards;
- a discussion of the emergency procedures developed for the field activity (see 8.2);
- introductions to the field activity safety officer and first aider(s) attending the activity;
- general safety guidelines, including:
 - the need to act lawfully at all times;
 - the need to follow all regulatory and advisory signage and traffic regulations;
 - the need to follow common sense practices;
 - the need to follow all explicit directives from staff members in charge, site controllers and transport operators (eg bus drivers);
 - the need to follow all other instructions as given by staff or workers on site that do not conflict with the above;
 - rules relating to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

8.4.2.3.2 Specific information regarding safety aspects of the activity must also be included in the safety briefing:

- minimum dress requirements, including a warning that correct dress is mandatory for participation in activities;

- discussion of correct maintenance and use of safety equipment required for the various activities that are to be carried out.

8.4.2.3.3 The briefing is an educational exercise aimed at making participants aware of potentially dangerous situations. It should be conducted in such a way that participants appreciate the need to follow the correct safety procedures. It is necessary to take reasonable steps to ascertain that the briefing is understood.

8.4.2.3.4 It is essential that all participants in the field activity attend a safety briefing and that the attendance at the briefing session is recorded. Separate sessions may have to be held for participants who are unable to attend the main briefing session.

8.4.2.3.5 The safety briefing must be provided in a form that is accessible for participants with disabilities attending the activity. Alternative formats may have to be provided for specific participant's eg written information for participants with hearing-impairment, Braille version or audio for participants with vision impairment.

8.5 SUPERVISION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GROUPS

The staff member in charge should determine an appropriate staff/student ratio when planning a field activity.

- The staff/student ratio will depend on the type of activities being undertaken. Generally, a ratio of 1:10 is suitable for most situations. A ratio of less than 1:20 is not recommended.
- Where possible, there should be male and female supervisors for field activities involving male and female students.

8.6 KEEPING FIELD PARTIES INTACT

Once at the site of a field activity, the main group may split up into smaller groups travelling in different directions. To avoid the possibility of a participant becoming separated from the field party, the supervisor of the group must ensure that appropriate procedures are in place. These should *at least* include:

- Lists of names of participants in each group;
- Head counts before groups go out to study sites and before leaving sites to return to camp.

9. HAZARD AND INCIDENT REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING

9.1 Before commencement of the field activity, the staff member in charge must be familiar with the Monash University [Procedures for hazard and incident reporting, investigation and recording](#) .

9.2 All hazards & incidents that cause or have the potential to cause physical or psychological injuries or illnesses or serious property damage must be reported.

9.3 A [hazard and incident report form](#) must be used to report all hazards and incidents.

9.4 The supervisor of the group, the staff member in charge of the field activity or the field activity safety officer must undertake an investigation of the incident on site and assist with the completion of the hazard and incident report form. A thorough

investigation of the immediate and underlying causes of an incident is essential to prevent a recurrence.

- 9.5 The results of the investigation following an incident must be incorporated into the next review of the risk assessment of the field activity.
- 9.6 Completed hazard and incident forms must be returned to your departmental/school safety officer on return from the field activity.
- 9.7 The presence of any disturbing or suspicious people at study sites should be reported immediately both to a specified contact person at the unit and to the police.

10. INSURANCE

- 10.1 Accidents involving motor vehicles on the road are covered in part by Transport Accident Commission (TAC) insurance and, in part for staff, by WorkCover insurance. TAC insurance covers Victorian drivers who are travelling in all states of Australia.
- 10.2 For accidents occurring off-road or not in vehicles, staff are insured via WorkCover which applies for staff on a work-related activity.
- 10.3 All enrolled students are members of a personal accident insurance scheme (see <http://www.firm.monash.edu.au/insurance/studentpersonalaccident/> for details), which applies in off-campus situations that are specifically university-run activities.
- 10.4 Voluntary workers are insured under the University's personal accident insurance policy whilst engaged in activities officially organised or under the control of the university, including travelling to and from such activities. The details of the benefits provided under this policy are given at the financial services web site (<http://www.firm.monash.edu.au/insurance/>) under Schedule of Benefits for Category C workers.
- 10.5 The University has public and products liability insurance protecting it from claims by third parties for personal injury or damage to property. The policy extends this protection to:
 - Employees and voluntary workers whilst acting within the scope of their duties in such capacity;
 - Students engaged in practical training both on or off campus including but not limited to practical placement, community placement, enterprise experience, work experience or off campus field assignments.

11. CONTROLLING RISKS DURING FIELD ACTIVITIES

A table summarising risk control strategies frequently used during field activities is provided in 14.7.

11.1 TRANSPORT

11.1.1 Hire of buses

- 11.1.1.1 Whenever possible buses or coaches must be used to transport large numbers of students on field activities.
- 11.1.1.2 All buses or coaches hired or used must be fitted with seat belts.
- 11.1.1.3 Transport used must be accessible to participants with disabilities attending the activity.

11.1.2 Vehicle use

11.1.2.1 University vehicles must be used whenever possible:

- The staff member in charge of the field activity must ensure that each driver is appropriately licensed and suitably trained for the driving required for the field activity.
- Anyone driving 4 wheel drive vehicles off-road must have attended an accredited 4 wheel drive training course in the last 5 years. Companies providing accredited courses that have been used by Monash University include 'Key to Adventure' and 'SafeTrek 4WD Services'.
- Evidence of attendance at appropriate training course(s) must be held with a designated person in the academic/administrative unit/controlled entity.
- Two or more drivers must be in each vehicle.

11.1.2.2 Private vehicles should only be used as a last resort. The staff member approving the use of private vehicles must ensure that:

- Drivers are made aware of any special requirements, eg off-road driving;
- Drivers are made aware that there are no university provisions for the insurance of private vehicles. The insurance of private vehicles is the responsibility of the owner;
- Drivers are made aware that responsibility for the roadworthiness of the vehicle lies with the owner of the vehicle.

11.1.2.3 Each vehicle (private or university) must be checked before departure:

- All vehicles must be checked before use to ensure that they contain oil, water and fuel, spare tyre (inflated), the car manual and tyre changing equipment;
- All vehicles and caravans used on field trips (excluding those to other workplaces, eg factories) must travel with an appropriate first aid kit (see 11.3, 14.6);
- It is recommended that a fire extinguisher be carried in all vehicles;
- In extremely remote situations, spare radiator hoses and fan belt must also be carried in vehicles.

11.1.2.4 The seat belts in all vehicles must be worn, properly adjusted and securely fastened by all students and staff (Road Safety (Traffic) Regulations 1988).

11.1.2.5 Vehicles taken on field trips must be appropriate for the conditions encountered, eg 4 wheel drive for off-road conditions.

11.1.2.6 Students and staff must be made aware before starting the trip that smoking, the consumption of alcohol and the misuse of drugs is strictly prohibited in university vehicles (including any transport used to move students and staff while on official trips).

11.1.3 Driving guidelines

(Vicroads 'Plan your drive and stay alive' brochure (1992))

11.1.3.1 Planning the trip:

- Start a long trip in the morning, after a good night's sleep.
- Plan to drive at times you are normally awake; avoid driving late at night and very early in the morning.
- Plan time for rest breaks and to stop and rest overnight on long trips.
- Don't travel for more than 8-10 hours in any one day.
- Avoid alcohol and medication that may cause drowsiness (check with your doctor) before and during the trip.

11.1.3.2 On the trip:

- Take regular breaks (at least every 2 hours). Get out of the car and walk around for a while.
- Take a power nap if drowsy.
- Share the driving when you can.
- Eat properly - not too much and not too little; don't drink any alcohol during rest breaks.
- If you feel tired and sleepy, find a suitable place to stop and sleep as soon as possible.

11.1.3.3 Log book of trip

It is recommended that a record of the driving times and scheduled breaks be recorded in a logbook for each trip.

11.2 MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS

11.2.1 Staff and students who participate in country or remote field activities should be reasonably fit and have no existing condition that could reasonably be expected to give rise to a life-threatening situation in the course of field activities.

11.2.2 **Medical concerns of participants**

11.2.2.1 Information regarding the types of activities, the nature of the exercise and the climatic conditions likely to be encountered in the field must be provided to the participants of all country or remote field activities.

11.2.2.2 If a staff member or student has any concerns regarding their medical status or mental or physical fitness for a country or remote field activity, they should consult the Occupational Health Physician regarding the appropriateness of their attendance on the field activity.

11.2.2.3 Following discussions with the Occupational Health Physician, OHSE the nature of the medical condition and its treatment may be discussed in confidence with the first aider(s) attending the country or remote field activity, with the permission of the staff member or student.

11.2.2.4 Staff and students with particular medical conditions that cannot be orally explained in the case of an accident (eg allergy to penicillin) should wear 'medical alert' or similar bracelets, pendants, etc.

11.2.3 Adequate supplies of any **prescribed medication(s)** required for the duration of the country or remote field activity must be taken. Approximately 1.5 - 2 times the normal supplies should be packed in case

return from the field activity is delayed. The first aider will assist in providing appropriate storage of the supplies, if necessary.

11.2.4 **Exposure to venomous animals, disease vectors and plants** likely to cause allergic reactions must be avoided as far as possible. Participants must be informed if there is a risk of exposure and should take steps to minimise risk (eg wear appropriate clothing, apply insect repellent, carry antihistamine drugs).

11.2.5 **Vaccinations** against tetanus are highly recommended for all participants in country or remote field activities. Vaccinations are available at the University Health Service.

11.3 FIRST AID

11.3.1 Details of first aid requirements for field activities are given in the Monash University [Procedures for first aid](#). The relevant sections of this procedure are provided below.

11.3.2 First aid assessment

11.3.2.1 Each unit/entity must undertake a first aid assessment for each field activity to determine:

- The number of first aiders required;
- The number and location of first aid kits required.

11.3.2.2 First aid assessment forms, guidelines for the completion of forms and examples of completed first aid assessments are provided in the Monash University [Procedures for first aid](#).

11.3.2.3 The first aid assessment must be completed by the first aid or field activity coordinator in consultation with the local safety officer, the health & safety representative, staff and students. The OHSE consultant for the area will assist with first aid assessments, if required.

11.3.2.4 A copy of completed first aid assessments should be sent to the Occupational Health team at OHSE.

11.3.2.5 First aid assessments must be reviewed whenever:

- the number of staff and/or students (or others) changes significantly;
 - the nature of the hazards and the severity of the risks change; or
- at least, every 3 years.

11.3.3 First aid assessment for off-campus activities in country areas

11.3.3.1 Off campus activities in country areas should include as many first aiders as practicable and these should be trained to at least Level 2 with additional appropriate modules as determined by the first aid assessment.

11.3.3.2 Guidelines for minimum numbers of first aiders for off-campus activities in country areas:

- **Groups up to 9 people**
1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher
- **Groups of 10 to 30 people**
2 people trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2 or higher)
- **Groups of over 30 people**

2 people trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2 or higher), plus an additional person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher, for every additional 30 people or part thereof

11.3.3.3 It may be necessary to alter the number and level of qualification of the first aiders required, dependent on the outcome of the first aid assessment.

11.3.3.4 Whenever practical, first aiders should not travel in the same vehicle.

11.3.4 **First aid assessment for off-campus activities in remote areas**

11.3.4.1 Off campus activities in remote areas should include as many first aiders as practicable and these should be trained to at least Level 2 with additional appropriate modules as determined by the first aid assessment.

11.3.4.2 Guidelines for minimum numbers of first aiders for off-campus activities in remote areas:

- **Groups up to 9 people**
1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher with additional remote area first aid training.
- **Groups of 10 to 30 people**
1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher with additional remote area first aid training plus an additional person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher.
- **Groups of over 30 people**
1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher with additional remote area first aid training plus an additional person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher for every 30 people or part thereof.

11.3.4.3 It may be necessary to alter the number and level of qualification of the first aiders required, dependent on the outcome of the first aid assessment.

11.3.4.4 Additional remote area first aid training is recommended for all first aiders who work in this context.

11.3.4.5 Whenever practical these first aiders should not travel in the same vehicle.

11.3.5 It is recommended that at least one person trained in mental health first aid or an equivalent course attends undergraduate field activities. Information about mental health first aid courses is available at the OHSE Training website (<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/training/a-z>).

11.4 **COMMUNICATION**

11.4.1 **Communication must be provided between:**

- groups/vehicles in the field and the main base camp;
- the main base camp and the academic/administrative unit/controlled entity at Monash University or a nominated communications base;
- the main base camp and emergency services.

11.4.2 Field personnel must make contact on a regular pre-arranged basis. It is highly recommended that daily contact be made with groups working in the field.

11.4.3 More than one person in each group must be trained in the use of the communications equipment carried with the group. Training must be

carried out before the field activity commences, which will provide a useful check as to the functioning of the equipment.

11.4.4 Equipment provided must include two-way radio or portable telephone wherever possible. All equipment must be inspected and in correct working order before the field trip commences. Examples of types of equipment and its use include:

11.4.4.1 Mobile phones

The effective coverage of mobile telephones in the area of the field activity must be checked before leaving for the trip.

11.4.4.2 Citizen Band (CB) radio (UHF, AM)

Under normal conditions the use of these radios is limited to a short range (7-10km), eg the study area.

11.4.4.3 State-wide mobile radio

- Network covers 97% of the state of Victoria, used by Country Fire Authority, Police, Department of Natural Resources & Environment;
- Can be both hand-held or vehicle mounted;
- Effective over 2-3 km distance between units;
- Can use radio or make emergency phone calls;
- Approx cost: \$1000 – 1500 per unit, plus monthly fee
- Used by several departments at Monash University.

11.4.4.4 Very high frequency (VHF) radio (Flying doctor radio)

- Range: ~600km;
- Vehicle mounted, requires large antenna;
- Appropriate for remote area usage.

11.4.4.5 Satellite phones

- Full coverage across Australia
- Approx cost: ~2000 to purchase or ~\$150/week rental, calls cost \$3-10/minute.

11.4.4.6 Marine radio

- Marine radios using 27MHz, VHF or MF/HF are available;
- All marine transmitters are required to be licensed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA); ph. 1300 850 115;
- The operator of any MF/HF and VHF marine transceiver is required to hold a Restricted Operator's Certificate of Proficiency. Information is available from the ACMA.

11.4.5 **Other types of communication available:**

- Radio handsets are available for use in some National Parks. Individual rangers need to be contacted prior to the commencement of a field trip to ascertain their availability and to organise their use.
- If intending to use the Royal Flying Doctor Service, prior registration with the service is necessary.
- Emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB)
 - These are devices that emit a signal on a monitored emergency frequency, providing the location of the beacon on land or at sea;
 - Especially suited to small groups working in remote areas where deviation from known routes is unavoidable;

- All vessels venturing more than 2 nautical miles from the coast are required to carry an approved EPIRB.
 - Distress flares
 - When operating on coastal waters, all craft are required to carry approved, current distress flares;
 - The staff member in charge of the vessel must ensure that everyone on the craft knows the location and operation of the distress flares.
- 11.4.6 Back-up equipment such as spare radio, mobile phone, additional battery packs, EPIRB or flares must be provided in case equipment damage or failure occurs in the field.

11.5 GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

11.5.1 General requirements

- 11.5.1.1 The staff member in charge of a country or remote field activity is responsible for ensuring that adequate supplies of water, oil, fuel and food are carried.
- 11.5.1.2 The staff member in charge of a country or remote field activity must ensure that permits required and/or permission for access to the area of field activity, eg to work in National Parks, on railway land, for use of firearms, explosives are obtained before leaving for the field activity.

11.5.2 Numbers attending field activities

- 11.5.2.1 Two or more people must attend the country and remote field activity. It is preferable that at least 3 people attend so that if an accident occurs, one person is available to attend the injured party while another person notifies emergency services.
- 11.5.2.2 Project study sites can be chosen that require work in the same area as another student or staff member, allowing them to accompany each other on field trips.

11.5.3 Navigation systems

- 11.5.3.1 Maps of suitable scale and navigation systems must be provided both for the group as a whole and for vehicles or small groups working away from the main group.
- 11.5.3.2 Back-up systems such as compasses must also be provided.

11.5.4 Safety equipment

- 11.5.4.1 The wearing of specialised safety equipment will be required in a number of country or remote field situations:
- Safety vests - brightly coloured vests with reflective surfaces. These should be worn in all situations when visibility is a safety issue (eg, anywhere near roads or traffic, moving machinery), regardless of ambient light conditions.
 - Hard hats - should be worn as appropriate in situations where risk of head injury is present (eg falling objects, low headroom).
 - Safety glasses or goggles - must be worn whenever there is a risk of eye injury.

- Hearing protection - must be used whenever there is a risk of noise-related injury.
- Respiratory protection - must be used where necessary (eg exhaust fumes in tunnels or droplet infection in sewers).

11.5.4.2 Safety equipment must be:

- of approved design (ie, meet Australian Standards as a minimum);
- of suitable quality for the conditions to be encountered in the field;
- inspected and maintained regularly. The staff member in charge of the field activity or the field activity safety officer must ensure that all safety equipment has been inspected and undergone maintenance before commencing a field activity.

11.5.4.3 Essential safety equipment:

- On field activities, certain clothing and equipment may be considered essential for personal and group safety. The staff member in charge of the field activity must ensure that all participants are aware of the possible neglect of the duty of care principle should they allow a person to take part in a field activity *without essential safety equipment* (eg safety glasses, hats) where the wearing of such equipment has been advised as essential.
- Before the field activity commences essential safety equipment must be checked to ensure that it fits correctly.
- Training in the use of safety equipment must be given *before* the field activity commences.

11.5.5 **Protective clothing and footwear**

It is the responsibility of individual students, members of staff and volunteers to ensure that adequate protection for the environment to be encountered is carried and used.

Examples of protective clothing and footwear include:

11.5.5.1 Hat, sunglasses, lipscreen and sun screen, for protection against ultraviolet radiation (all seasons) (Information Sheet No. 19: Working outdoors).

11.5.5.2 Waders, preferably with a boot-like sole pattern, or wetsuit for aquatic field activities.

11.5.5.3 Rain/windproof jacket where appropriate. A change of clothing should be carried if a person is likely to become wet.

11.5.5.4 Appropriate footwear:

11.5.5.4.1 Bare feet, thongs and sandals provide no protection against dropped objects, sharp objects or collision and, in many cases, will provide less than adequate grip.

11.5.5.4.2 The minimum standard appropriate for a range of situations would be:

- immersion in water – waders, thick-soled sport shoes (eg runners) or wet-suit boots;
- wet conditions - gumboots or boots;

- work sites - solid boots (steel capped toe if possible);
- other situations - thick-soled sports shoes as a minimum.

11.5.5.5 Appropriate clothing:

- Loose, baggy clothing and ties can be dangerous around machinery as they can become entangled. Well fitting and secured clothing that covers the torso would be appropriate.
- Long hair and jewellery can become entangled in machinery with dangerous results. Hair can be tucked into caps or hairnets and jewellery must be removed or safely relocated (eg tuck necklace under jumper).
- Long sleeves and trousers would be appropriate when there is a risk of abrasion, being scratched from low-lying shrubbery, snake or insect bite or sunburn.
- In cold, wet and windy conditions, cotton clothing may not provide sufficient protection to maintain body warmth, particularly when wet. Wool or polar fleece is recommended, together with thermal underwear.

11.6 WATER SAFETY

11.6.1 General safety requirements

- 11.6.1.1 People participating in field activities in marine, stream or lake environments, where the work is carried out in deep water, must be able to swim strongly or should wear an approved personal flotation device (PFD, life jacket).
- 11.6.1.2 If swimming is required on a field activity, participants must demonstrate their ability to the staff member in charge before attending the field activity. A suitable demonstration of swimming ability is given in the Monash University Code of Practice for Underwater Diving (page 11), ie swim 400 metres in 10 minutes.
- 11.6.1.3 On aquatic field activities where strong currents or wave action are present, safety lines must be carried and used when appropriate.
- 11.6.1.4 Staff or students working in streams or treatment plants where there is a risk of infection or disease caused by sewage-contaminated water should be vaccinated against typhoid and hepatitis.

11.6.2 Boat safety

- 11.6.2.1 The staff member in charge of field activities using boats must be familiar with and must comply with the Monash University Code of Practice for Boating Safety and the Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook.
- 11.6.2.2 All staff members, students or volunteers who operate a motorised boat must hold a current general boat operator licence.
- 11.6.2.3 Before use, the staff member in charge of the field activity must ensure that the boat contains at least the minimum requirements of safety equipment as specified in Victorian

Recreational Boating Safety Handbook. The equipment taken must include a first aid kit, be in good working order and be readily accessible at all times.

- 11.6.2.4 One of the staff members or students participating in the field activity must have either received training or had extensive experience in the use of the craft. This person must check the 'seaworthy' condition of the craft, the engine reliability and the fuel supplies before setting out where applicable. Advice on local rules, local conditions and weather forecasts must be obtained before each outing.
- 11.6.2.5 Except for large ocean-going vessels, staff members or students on board boats must wear an approved PFD.
- 11.6.2.6 As specified in 11.5.5 all participants must wear appropriate protective clothing and footwear.
- 11.6.2.7 At least two or more people must be present.
- 11.6.2.8 Staff members or students working from a boat must not wear waders.
- 11.6.2.9 The number of people carried by the craft must comply with the limits recommended by the Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook (2001).
- 11.6.2.10 Communication and navigation systems must be carried as appropriate to the field activity. Back up systems in case of failure should also be carried (11.4.6, 11.5.3.2).
- 11.6.2.11 Any problems associated with the craft, eg lost equipment during use or leaks must be reported to a designated departmental/area/centre person immediately on return from the trip.

11.6.3 Safe use of waders

- 11.6.3.1 Staff members or students who use waders in deep water (above knee height) during field activities must be able to demonstrate their swimming ability or, alternatively, wear an approved PFD.
- 11.6.3.2 Where waders are worn, they must be quick-release and easy to remove if the wearer falls into the water (unless they are neoprene and specifically designed to be worn whilst swimming). Safety equipment should include a 'rescue' rope.
- 11.6.3.3 When alone, a staff member or student wearing waders may only enter the water if it is shallow (less than knee deep).
- 11.6.3.4 Two or more people must be present if the depth of the water will be greater than knee deep:
 - Before entering the water, other members of the field activity must be notified.
 - Staff or students must leave the water if the depth reaches waist deep or if a strong current is flowing. In this case sampling must be conducted from a boat or when the water level falls.
- 11.6.3.5 Staff members or students working from a boat must not wear waders.

11.6.3.6 It is recommended that inexperienced staff or students try out the waders while being supervised, in shallow water before using them in the field. The aim is to familiarise wearer with the problems associated with waders filling with water and to give them experience in staying afloat.

11.6.4 Diving safety

11.6.4.1 The staff member in charge of field activities involving diving must be familiar with and must comply with the Monash University Code of Practice for Underwater Diving.

11.6.4.2 Scuba divers must be adequately trained and hold an Open Water Diver's certificate of competency.

11.7 PREPARATION AND HANDLING OF FOOD

(Guidelines for Personal Hygiene and Food Safety in Schools (1999))

11.7.1 Introduction

11.7.1.1 Safe handling, storage and preparation of food is essential to prevent the risk of food poisoning. Food naturally contains bacteria in small numbers. For food poisoning to occur, bacteria must have warmth, food and moisture. Food poisoning can be prevented if these conditions are avoided.

11.7.1.2 Common bacteria that cause food poisoning include:

- *Salmonella* – found in meat, poultry and eggs
- *Bacillus cereus* – found in cereals, rice, meat products and packet soup
- *Staphylococcus aureus* – meat, poultry, mayonnaise based salads and cream-filled desserts

11.7.1.3 These guidelines have been developed to assist staff prevent food poisoning on field trips and camps.

11.7.2 Planning

The following factors must be considered in the planning for the field activity:

- Number of people;
- Length of trip/camp;
- Facilities available, eg camp kitchen, refrigerator, freezers;
- Availability of daily/weekly purchase;
- Transportation of supplies to site, eg cold box in the vehicle.

11.7.3 Menus

When planning menus, the following issues should be considered:

11.7.3.1 Water supply available in the field:

- Required both for drinking and food preparation;
- Water must be stored and transported in containers kept solely for that purpose.

11.7.3.2 Food storage facilities at field site.

11.7.3.3 Special dietary requirements:

- Special needs of students and staff should be discussed prior to the field activity;
- Provision should be made for special dietary requirements in preparation of menus and in the purchase of supplies for the field activity;

- Students should be discouraged from bringing and storing their own food.

11.7.3.4 Food Allergies

- Exclude peanuts and peanut products as much as possible.
- Clearly warn participant's that if they have food allergies, they should avoid suspect foods.

11.7.3.5 Foods must be suitable for the conditions and the facilities available, eg do not plan chicken meals if refrigeration is not available.

11.7.3.6 Storage of supplies prior to the trip/camp:

- Food supplies must be stored in a food only facility, not in a laboratory area/fridge/freezer;
- Food must be stored in containers used and kept solely for that purpose.

11.7.4 **Preparation of food**

A list of these requirements must be displayed prominently in the food preparation area. All those involved in food handling and preparation must be given instruction prior to assisting.

- Look out for damaged food packaging. Do not use dented cans, leaking packages, cracked eggs, etc.
- Wash hands thoroughly before preparing any food.
- Cover any abrasions, cuts or skin rashes with a dressing and wear gloves.
- Separate preparation of different types of foods, especially meats from other foods and raw from cooked foods.
- Use separate utensils and chopping boards for raw meat and other food, eg keep one board for meat only (the board could be colour coded). If this is not possible, thoroughly wash and sanitise equipment between uses.
- Cooked or ready to eat foods must be handled with utensils such as tongs, spoons or disposable gloves.
- Never touch food with gloves that have been used for cleaning.
- Any leftover food must be refrigerated immediately or disposed of.
- Pest controls:
 - Do not leave food uncovered prior to serving;
 - Control flies, etc. in preparation area.

11.7.5 **Waste Disposal/Cleaning**

11.7.5.1 Benches and tabletops must be cleaned prior to use for preparation or eating.

11.7.5.2 Rubbish must be:

- Contained in a sealed bag;
- Removed from the preparation and eating areas as soon as possible;
- Placed into securely fastened bags or rubbish bins, which are away from preparation and eating areas whilst waiting for removal.

11.7.5.3 Washing of kitchenware:

- Ensure adequate water is available;
 - Change the water during the washing up process;
 - Wash chopping boards, utensils and plates separately.
- 11.7.5.4 Tea towels must be hung separately to dry in the fresh air after each use and washed regularly. Disposable cloths may be used.
- 11.7.5.5 Floors in preparation and eating areas must be cleaned after each use.

11.7.6 **Personal hygiene during food preparation and handling**

Even healthy people carry bacteria capable of causing food poisoning. Poor personal hygiene, especially lack of hand washing, increases the risk of contamination of food by passing on these bacteria.

11.7.6.1 Hand washing:

All staff and students ***must*** wash their hands thoroughly (including backs of hands, wrists and under fingernails) using soap and water:

- before handling or preparing food
- before eating
- after toilet
- after smoking
- after blowing nose
- after handling animals
- after handling rubbish

11.7.6.2 Disposable towels rather than cloth towels must be used to dry hands wherever possible.

11.7.6.3 Gloves must be used by all staff and students for food preparation.

11.8 **CAMPING GUIDELINES**

11.8.1 **Selection of the campsite**

- Select a campsite that is flat, sheltered from the wind, but away from hazards such as dead trees and overhanging branches.
- Pitch tents at least 50 metres from running water.
- Ensure that toilet areas are at least 100 metres from camp and water sources and that everyone knows the location of these designated areas.
- Do not camp in dry river/stream courses as these can flood without warning.

11.8.2 **In camp**

- Pitch tents appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions.
- Ensure that all participants have a minimal impact on the environment and on other groups with whom they may be sharing the campsite.

11.8.3 **Fire safety**

11.8.3.1 Fires and open fireplaces must be used in accordance with the requirements of the fire brigade or local land management authorities.

11.8.3.2 If you have checked with the authorities and fires are allowed:

- Where possible, place the fire in an existing fireplace and keep it small;

- Build the fire in an open area, down wind from tents;
- Leave a 3m clearance from overhanging branches, flammable ground material, logs, stumps and trees;
- If not using an existing fireplace, build the fire in a trench at least 30 cm deep;
- Never leave fires unattended;
- Before leaving the campsite, completely extinguish the fire with water so that it is cool to the touch.

11.8.3.3 Stoves and cooking should be in a designated cooking area to minimise movement near stoves.

11.9 SPECIAL FIELD ACTIVITIES

11.9.1 Certain field activities will require special precautions to ensure the health and safety of those involved. These activities may include:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| ➤ boating | ➤ SCUBA diving |
| ➤ snorkelling | ➤ bush walking |
| ➤ canoeing | ➤ caving |
| ➤ handling of explosives | ➤ use of firearms |
| ➤ cliff walking | ➤ rock climbing |
| ➤ tractor driving | ➤ farm work |

11.9.2 Staff members in charge of these field activities should ensure that appropriate safety arrangements are organised in advance.

11.9.3 Such arrangements should include:

- completion of a documented risk control program;
- training of participants using accredited courses;
- provision of essential safety information and equipment required;
- documentation and distribution of in-house safety procedures;
- completion of an acknowledgement form by participants (see 1.4);
- provision of appropriate supervision/surveillance for the activity;
- provision of appropriate permits and licences required for the activity (eg explosives, firearms, entry to railway land).

12. RECORDS

<u>Record to be kept by</u>	<u>Records</u>	<u>To be kept for:</u>
Academic/administrative unit/controlled entity		
	Information & consent forms (Confidential files)	5 years
	OHS training records of training provided by unit/entity , including:	Indefinitely
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees • Short description of training content 	
	Pre-departure notification forms	Until return from activity
	Risk assessments	5 years or until reviewed

13. REFERENCES

13.1 LEGISLATION

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

13.2 MONASH UNIVERSITY OHS DOCUMENTS

Monash University documents are available from the Occupational Health, Safety & Environment web site

(<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/documents/Docum.htm>).

Guidelines for the development of safe work instructions

Guidelines for health & safety during field activities in country & remote areas

Guidelines for health & safety during international activities

Guidelines for health & safety during off-campus activities undertaken in urban areas

Guidelines for health & safety during student & staff placements

Information sheet No. 20: Ross river virus disease

Information Sheet No. 19: Working Outdoors

Monash University Code of Practice for Boating Safety (Available from OHSE)

Monash University Code of Practice for Underwater Diving (Available from OHSE)

Occupational health & safety policy

OHS management at Monash University: Structure, functions, roles and responsibilities

OHS risk management at Monash University

Risk Control Program

Procedures for first aid

Procedures for hazard & incident reporting, investigation & recording

13.3 AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS

AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems – specifications with guidance for use.

13.4 OTHER

Department of Education, Victoria, Safety Guidelines: Camping and Bush Activities (1998) Available from OHSE

Dunlevy, M (1981) 'Stay Alive: A Handbook on Survival' 3rd Ed AGPS Canberra

Guidelines for Personal Hygiene and Food Safety in Schools (1999)

Marine Board of Victoria, Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook (2001)

Public Health & Development Division, Department of Human Services, Victoria Road Safety (Traffic) Regulations 1988

Vicroads 'Plan your drive and stay alive' brochure (1992)

Western Australian Police Force (1984) 'Aids to Survival'

14. RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

14.1 VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET

For information regarding insurance for voluntary workers, please refer to section 10 on page 16 of these guidelines.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET

SCHOOL OF

Details of volunteer

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Emergency contact

Name:

Relationship: Phone:

Address:

Details of fieldwork

Date(s):

Location(s):

Monash student/staff member present (name):

Declaration: I have volunteered to accompany the Monash University student/staff member named above on field work as specified. I have been informed of the risks involved in doing this work and have read the risk assessment. I have been informed of the risk controls that have been implemented and I agree that I will comply with the risk control measures to the best of my ability.

Signature: Date:

The information on this form is collected for the primary purpose of enabling you to undertake the off-campus activity. If you choose not to complete all the questions on this form, it may not be possible for Monash to permit you to undertake the activity. Your personal information may be disclosed to a third party involved in the activity and in the event of an emergency. You have a right to access personal information that Monash holds about you, subject to any exceptions in relevant legislation. If you wish to seek access to your personal information or inquire about the handling of your personal information, please contact the Monash University Privacy Officer on 9905 6011.

14.2 EMERGENCY CONTACTS PROFORMA

Emergency numbers	
Police Fire Ambulance	000
If using a mobile phone	112
Monash Emergency Counselling Service	(03) 9621 2600
Poisons Information (24 hr)	13 1126
Police Search and Rescue Squad	(03) 9399 7503
Outside Metropolitan Area (Freecall)	1800 135 729
Water Police Squad (24 hr)	(03) 9399 7500
Freecall	1800 135 729
Victorian State Emergency Service (24 h) (Storms or floods)	132500
Victorian Roads Traffic Hazards (Emergency road conditions, State wide)	131171
Monash Security	(03) 99053 333
Unit/entity contact person (e.g. Resources Manager):	
.....	(bh)
.....	(ah)
.....	(Mobile)
Other contacts (e.g. Park Rangers etc)	
.....	
.....	
.....	
Date:	

MONASH UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF

This form must be lodged with the prior to the trip. All details must be supplied with the completed check list.

Field Activity: _____

Destination(s): _____ **Dates:** _____

(include map with refs) _____

Accommodation booked: _____

Participants: (number) For larger groups attach a list)

Indicate status of participant (staff member, postgraduate, honours or undergraduate student, volunteer)

Names: _____

Safety Officer: _____

Qualified first aiders (name & level): _____

Mental health first aider(s): _____

Vehicle 1

Make: _____ Model: _____

Colour: _____ Registration: _____ Fuel: _____

Vehicle 2

Make: _____ Model: _____

Colour: _____ Registration: _____ Fuel: _____

Equipment Carried :(tick box/number):

First aid kit Tent Food for (days) Water (Litres) Fuel (Litres)

Communication:

Transceiver/s (make & model type): _____

Phones (Make & model type): _____

Phone numbers: (1) _____ (2) _____

Communication schedule:

Trip details:

Departure: Time: _____ Date: _____

Proposed Route: _____

ETA Destination: Time: _____ Date: _____

Proposed Return Route: _____

Return ETA: Time: _____ Date: _____

Notification Deadline: Time: _____ Date: _____

Remember to inform upon your return

Leader's Name: _____ **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

1. Field activity details

- Itinerary attached
- Details of personal contact(s) attached
- Completed risk assessment of project to be undertaken, including details of risk controls attached

2. Weather Conditions

- Checked weather forecast. In cases such as extreme fire danger or total fire ban, advise supervisor.
- Checked for adverse field conditions e.g. flood, fire etc

3. Transport

- Arranged appropriate transport
- Details of licensed and trained drivers for vehicles attached (include a copy of licences)

4. First aid

- Arranged for sufficient, appropriate first aiders to attend field activity
- Arranged for sufficient, appropriate first aid kits to be prepared
- Checked that first aid kits are fully stocked

5. Access

- Obtained permits and/or permission for access to the area of field activity

6. Communication

- Provided appropriate means of daily communication and ensured its effectiveness in the proposed area of the field activity
- Developed communication protocols (attached)
- Provided back up means of communication

7. Safety equipment:

- Provided essential safety equipment (Attach list)
- Essential safety equipment has undergone checking and maintenance and is in good working order
- Provided appropriate navigation aids

8. Information provided to participants

- Provided all participants with information outlining safety issues (attached)
- Given safety briefing to all participants (attendance records attached)

9. Emergency procedures

- Details of appropriate emergency procedures attached
- Participants provided with a list of general emergency procedures and contact numbers (attached)

10. Undergraduate activities

10a Attached lists of:

- Student names
- Student identification numbers
- Personal contact details

10b Information:

- Developed and distributed 'Student guidelines for safety on undergraduate field activities' (attached)
- Provided all participants with an information notice outlining safety issues (attached)
- Given safety briefing to all participants (Copy of briefing and attendance records attached)
- Received acknowledgment forms from student participants (attached)

10c Supervision:

- Briefed all supervisors on their duties, responsibilities and obligations (Details of briefing and attendance records attached)

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF

OFF CAMPUS ACTIVITY:

Destination: Date(s):

Name: ID no:

Address: Phone no:

Name and phone number of person(s), not attending the field trip, to contact in case of illness or emergency:

Medical/mental health concerns (optional) / Specific allergies, eg peanuts / Disabilities:

Dietary requests (eg vegetarian etc):

I have read the information provided for this activity and agree to abide by the guidelines and procedures and the directions provided by supervisors during the activity.

I acknowledge that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during this activity. I understand that, in the event of serious misbehaviour during the activity, I will be informed and that I may be sent home and that any costs associated with this return will be my responsibility.

Signature: Date

The information on this form is collected for the primary purpose of enabling you to undertake the off-campus activity. If you choose not to complete all the questions on this form, it may not be possible for Monash to permit you to undertake the activity. Your personal information may be disclosed to a third party involved in the activity and in the event of an emergency. You have a right to access personal information that Monash holds about you, subject to any exceptions in relevant legislation. If you wish to seek access to your personal information or inquire about the handling of your personal information, please contact the Monash University Privacy Officer on 9905 6011.

14.5 STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR SAFETY ON UNDERGRADUATE FIELD ACTIVITIES

****NB These guidelines are provided as a reference document for staff members in charge of field activities to provide to students before attendance at an undergraduate field activity. Staff members in charge of field activities should include relevant sections and develop further guidelines as appropriate to the specific field activity.***

Each student has a responsibility for ensuring that his or her work environment is conducive to good occupational health and safety^{1,2}.

1. Students shall, so far as is reasonable, (without derogating any common law right):

- ✓ Obey any reasonable instruction by a supervisor in relation to health or safety on the excursion.
- ✓ Use any equipment provided for health and safety purposes, eg boots, hard hat, waders, safety glasses¹.
- ✓ Alcohol consumption:
 - Not consume alcohol during working sessions.
 - Not cause danger to themselves or others whilst under the influence of alcohol.
 - Not consume alcohol in university, hired or private vehicles or operate a vehicle after consuming any alcohol.
 - At the instruction of a supervisor or responsible local (eg police, Park Ranger), cease further consumption of alcohol and desist from behaviour that in any way disrupts the excursion or well being of other parties.
- ✓ Illegal drugs:
 - Use of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited on all field trips
- ✓ Smoking:
 - A no smoking approach is recommended for field trips
 - Smoking is not permitted in any university vehicles
 - Students may be asked not to smoke in certain instances during the field trip where doing so may prove hazardous.
- ✓ Motor Vehicles:
 - Not operate a motor vehicle containing other students during any part of the excursion, without direct instruction from one of the supervisory staff.
 - Understand that undergraduate students (other than honours students) may not operate university vehicles unless specifically authorised by the Resources Manager or the staff member in charge of the activity.
 - Understand that the private operation of a vehicle after the formal conclusion of an excursion is at the risk of the driver and other passengers involved and removes from Monash University any responsibility (of the university) with respect to those persons and any external third party, and that damage incurred may require repair in respect of the good standing of the university
 - NB It is up to each unit's discretion as to whether an excursion is defined as formally beginning and ending upon arrival back at the university or at another point.

2. First aid and medical conditions

- First aid facilities (in the form of a comprehensive first aid kit) are available via the first-aider attending the field activity³.
 - Students with particular medical conditions that cannot be orally explained in the case of an accident (eg allergy to penicillin) should always wear 'medic alert' or similar bracelets, pendants etc.
 - Adequate supplies of personal prescribed medication(s) required for the duration of the field activity must be taken. Approximately 1.5 - 2 times the normal supplies should be taken in case return from the field activity is delayed. The first aider will assist in providing appropriate storage of the supplies, if necessary.
 - All accidents (no matter how minor) must be reported to the first-aider on the trip, and the Hazard & Incident Report Form filled out⁴.
3. Climbing (either with or without protection) of rock faces, overhangs, cliffs and entry tunnels and shafts at unused mines requires a recognised level of competency and approval of a staff member in charge of the field activity. In the event of an accident at such a place, do not climb down to the victim unless by circumvention of the cliff or decline, but alert supervisory personnel who will arrange to seek expert help.
 4. Stay clear of unprotected cliff edges, mine shafts, quarry faces or open slopes. Do not climb over fences or barriers placed at such sites or enter closed sections of mines.
 5. Under no circumstances progress beyond a sign warning of dangerous ground, or any other unseen hazard in the region beyond.
 6. Rolling of rocks or other objects down any slopes or inclines is forbidden.
 7. Do not leave or separate from field parties in scrubby regions where distance vision is obscured. Stay in one spot and call out if separated.
 8. Do not lower yourself by means of ropes (in any location) on your own.
 9. Do not progress onto wave-washed platforms or the frontal shore face of ocean coastlines where large ocean swells and spray from breaking waves is obvious without supervision. Be aware that on any open coast line exceptional waves (many metres higher than usual) may strike the coast at unpredictable intervals.
 10. Scuba diving is prohibited on undergraduate field trips. Students are not permitted to swim alone on open surf beaches, rivers, lakes, dams etc. Swimming and snorkelling activities must be under supervision. There must be at least one staff member per 6 students in the water.
 11. According to the Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook, all occupants must wear an approved personal flotation device (PFDs, life jackets) when in a boat.
 12. Firearms, (rifles, pistols) spring, gas or elastic powered spears and all explosives are forbidden.
 13. Students must not place themselves in any situation where they feel unsafe, for example, in respect to the steepness of the terrain, possible rock falls, or evident sea wash. If you consider a supervisor is placing you in such a situation, make this known.
 14. Under no circumstances start open fires without consulting a supervisor.
 15. Personal safety: It is the responsibility of individual students to ensure that they:
 - ✓ Avoid as far as possible exposure to venomous animals, disease vectors and plants likely to cause allergic reactions. If there is risk of exposure, steps must be taken to

minimise risk (eg wear appropriate clothing, apply insect repellent, carry appropriate treatment for hay fever and other allergic reactions).

- ✓ Wear adequate and appropriate footwear at all times. In terrestrial bush locations walking boots that have been 'broken in' are recommended. In aquatic situations, waders, Wellingtons, sneakers or wet-suit booties are more appropriate.
- ✓ Waders must only be worn when advised by a staff member in charge of the field activity.
- ✓ Ensure adequate protection from sun and cold weather is carried and used. This includes:
 - Hat, sunglasses, lip screen and sun screen for UV protection⁵;
 - Adequate warm clothing;
 - Rainproof or windproof jacket where appropriate;
 - A change of clothing if person is likely to become wet;
 - Appropriate footwear.
- ✓ Carry some water (about 1 litre), minor medical necessities (headache tablets, bandaids) and minor emergency food (eg chocolate bar), as supervisors suggest.
- ✓ Acquaint themselves with the available first aid facilities and personnel.
- ✓ Note the placement of vehicles that are used to return them from their study site.

16. Insurance

- Accidents involving motor vehicles on the road are covered by TAC insurance, which covers personal injury resulting from a car accident (not damage to property).
- For other accidents, enrolled students at Monash University are automatically members of a personal accident insurance scheme provided by the relevant student organisation. This applies for off-campus activities that are specifically university-run excursions.

17. Bibliography

- 1 Monash University Occupational Health and Safety Policy.
- 2 Monash University Student Information Handbook.
- 3 Monash University Procedures for first aid.
- 4 Monash University Procedures for hazard and incident reporting, investigation and recording procedures.
- 5 Information Sheet No. 19: Working Outdoors

14.6 FIRST AID KITS

14.6.1 Contents of first aid kits for field trips

(Appendix 6; Version 1, June 2006; Procedures for first aid)

- Emergency Services telephone no.
- Names of first aiders (participating in field trips)
- Communication procedures for contacting first aiders
- Basic first aid notes (supplied with kit containers)
- Survival handbook
- 1 pad of First Aid Record forms
- Pen and note pad

2 resuscitation mask
1 box disposable gloves (30 pairs)
2 set disposable eye protection shields
200 adhesive plastic strips
8 sterile eye pads
4 unmedicated sterile wound dressings (large)
8 unmedicated sterile wound dressing (medium)
4 unmedicated sterile wound dressings (small)
4 triangular bandages (fabric)
3 heavy elastic bandages, 12.5cm
4 crepe bandages, 10cm
4 crepe bandages, 7.5cm
2 crepe bandages, 5cm
2 gauze bandages 5cm
4 pkts gauze squares
5 normal saline ampoules, 50ml
5 normal saline ampoules, 20ml
2 chemical cold paks
2 litres of fresh water (if no onsite access to fresh water)

2 space blankets
1 plastic kidney dish
1 pair shears (round-nose)
1 pair stainless steel scissors
1 pkt safety pins
2 rolls adhesive tape, 1.25cm (hypo-allergenic)
2 rolls zinc oxide tape, 7.5cm
1 pkt disposable towels
1 plastic drinking vessel

2 Chux
2 large plastic bags

To be included where first aider is appropriately trained:

1 Savlon powder, 20gm
2 pkts Imodium Advanced tablets (12)

First aider clean up

(First aider should draw water and wash over dry land, ie not in a watercourse)

1 nail brush
1 pkt antiseptic hand wipes

14.6.2 Vehicle first aid kits

(Appendix 6; Version 1, June 2006; Procedures for First Aid)

- Emergency Services telephone no.
- Basic first aid notes (supplied with kit containers)
- 1 pad First Aid Record forms
- 5 Hazard and Incident Report Form
- Pen and note pad

1 resuscitation mask
8 pairs disposable gloves
1 set disposable eye protection shields
1 pkt adhesive plastic strips (50)
2 sterile eye pads
2 unmedicated sterile wound dressings (large)
2 unmedicated sterile wound dressing (medium)
2 unmedicated sterile wound dressings (small)
2 triangular bandages (fabric)
2 crepe bandages, 10cm
2 gauze bandages, 7.5cm
1 pkts non-adherent pads (medium)
1 bottle distilled water, 500ml
4 normal saline ampoules, 50ml
1 space blanket
1 pair shears (round-nose)
1 pkt safety pins
1 roll adhesive tape, 1.25cm (hypo-allergenic)

1 large plastic bag

14.6.3 Waist first aid kit for individual field workers

NB The contents of this kit assumes that field workers are carrying a means of communication with base camp at all times.

1 face shield
adhesive plastic strips
2 large sterile wound dressings
2 triangular bandages
2-3 heavy duty crepe bandages, 7.5 cm
1 roll of strapping tape
2 normal saline ampoules (20 mls)
1 pair small scissors
3 safety pins
2 pairs of gloves - medium to large
1 space blanket
matches/flint

Other items may be added to the kit as considered appropriate for the field conditions and as room allows.

