

The responsibilities of a weekend Trip Leader

Firstly, thanks for leading an OTMC weekend trip. These notes are for your guidance, and to help you plan a successful trip. Also enclosed is a checklist, which you should find useful in planning your trip. The Chief Guide is available to help and offer suggestions when needed. Please consult with the Chief Guide regularly as you plan your trips.

The following notes are based on past experiences, and are presented here to be of benefit to all trip leaders. Hopefully everyone who reads these will lead a trip someday.

⇒ **TRIP LEADERS MUST BE FULLY AWARE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES!**

- Leading a weekend trip is a responsible role, and one that must be done in accordance with club guidelines, with a view to running a safe and enjoyable trip for the participants. Leading a trip does take time. We recommend that you start 6-8 weeks prior to the departure date. This time is used for publicity, and discussing various ideas intending participants may have. The following points are listed here to help you with your preparation.

⇒ **PREPARATION**

- For major trips, start 6-8 weeks in advance.
- Ascertain sources of information about the area to be visited. Guidebooks, especially Moirs Guide books in the Southern region are an excellent source of information, especially with regard to track times and likely terrain. Maps are very useful, and are actually very interesting to pore over. You can get a good feel for an area that you haven't visited before by studying a map. The best tramping maps are the 1:50,000 scale, 260 series metric ones. DoC field centres can provide current information on various routes within their conservancy. Club members can be useful if they have been to the area, especially recently. Bulletins, and probably more importantly, the Outdoors magazine can be good sources of inspiration. Don't forget the Chief Guide can help you out with information, or tell you where you can get it information from.
- Obtain information about terrain, tracks, distances, times, available huts and campsites. Points to look out for include whether you will be on private property. It is club policy to always ask property owners prior to departure from town. To maintain good relations this is very important. Use the guide books to gauge what the terrain may be like. Find out what the tracks are like - are they well formed and marked, or are they a route, with markers only for guidance, and no track to speak of. Are there huts that parties can stay in?. Are these private huts?. Where are the good campsites?. Look at various escape routes from the area should they be needed, for example if you are stuck by a rising river. Check out major features such as rivers. Think about access to the area - from what direction do you intend to approach it from. Somewhere to camp upon arrival on the Friday night will be needed, with water available. The Chief Guide will help you, and he/she can probably put you on to someone who has been to the area before if you or the Chief Guide hasn't.
- The Chief Guide will provide a trip list 4-6 weeks prior to the trip. Trip leaders, in conjunction with the Chief Guide, need to publicise their trips. The options available are:
 - The monthly club Bulletin. The Chief Guide will organise this, but the Trip Leader is encouraged to provide a promo for their trip. This is the best way to inform members who don't come to club about an upcoming trip. Keep in mind the lead in times with regard to publication of the Bulletin.

- A display on the wall in the clubrooms - a very effective means of publicity. Colour photo's with captions, as well as a map, and brief information on the area is all that is needed.
- Slides/Photos during the business part of the club meeting. Use this option only a couple of times to prevent meetings starting late. It is effective to direct the whole meetings attention to the trip. A map can also be displayed with the Direct Projector
- Try and encourage a sufficient number of experienced people on the trip - you will need them. If you have doubt's about someone who has signed up, then talk to the Chief Guide.

⇒ **After the trip list closes.**

The trip list will close in most circumstances the Thursday night 8 days prior to the trip departing. Accept no latecomers if the inconvenience arrangements - but sometimes they help to even up transport numbers and food parties.

If possible, provide the Treasurer with a list of names for the purpose of collecting trip charges the night the list closes.

The following needs to be done once the list has closed:

- Appoint party leaders in conjunction with the Chief Guide.

Trip leaders will appear obvious on the list as people that you know and have tramped with in the past, or people who have been on several trips in the past. The Chief Guide will approve the people you select, as well as advise you of any problems encountered in the past with a particular leader. The OTMC has a standing policy of trying to use the co-leader system as much as possible. This means that in effect two leaders are appointed to a party. One of these people will be less experienced than the other, but the club recognise that with proper guidance they will become a good future leader. Organising a party of this nature is generally done by the person being trained. This applies to the actual trip as well, with the more experienced leader present for guidance and encouragement as required. Unfortunately, numbers of people on a trip may mean that this system won't work, because there just isn't enough leaders on the list. On the other hand, if your trip list contains a lot of potential leaders, it is ideal. In this situation it may only be necessary to appoint one person to be in charge, to organise all the details, and to make a decision only when required. An experienced party will generally make decisions together through discussion.

⇒ **Organise parties for the weekend.**

This does not mean that the trip leader has to arrange every person on the trip, but rather work out, in conjunction with the Chief Guide party composition. When you take the list home, sit down and work out tentative parties. Run these by the Chief Guide before any further arrangements are made. The following points should be take into consideration when planning parties:

- Match similar grades together as much as possible. In a perfect world your trip would divide up into evenly numbered parties of the same grade, but in reality you may need to make slight alterations to what people have indicated on the list. Every effort must be made though, to match grades as closely as possible. For your information here is the OTMC descriptions of grades:

E - EASY: Generally suitable for beginners, but proper clothing and equipment are **ESSENTIAL**. About 3-5 hours tramping per day.

M - MODERATE: A reasonable standard of fitness and experience needed. About 5-7 hours tramping per day.

F - FIT: Trip is expected to be longer and may be more difficult. About 7-9 hours tramping per day

FE - FITNESS ESSENTIAL: High level of fitness, experience and self reliance is essential. Most available time will be spent tramping. Between 10 and 24 hours tramping per day.

C - CLIMBING: Climbing experience, equipment and fitness essential.

Attendance on **FE** and **C** trips is by prior arrangement with the trip leader only.

There are grades such as **E-M** and **M-F** which are obviously grades in between the ones listed above.

Be mindful that these times are guides for trips, carrying weekend packs over sometimes untracked terrain. Newer trip participants need to be aware of the difference between tramping with a full weekend pack as opposed to a day pack only.

If you have to change someone's grade, it is always best to down grade them. For instance, if someone wish's to go on a M-F trip and there are no other people in this grade, it is better to place them in a moderate grade party rather than a fit party. Obviously this will depend to some extent on the person involved.

- If you think that someone has put down an inaccurate assessment of their grade, discuss this with the Chief Guide.
- If people have requested a particular trip in the area, then this should be the second consideration. People spend a lot of money going on a trip, so they can rightly expect to be able to do the trip they are interested in. Sometimes though, a shortage of party leaders, or relatively few numbers on a trip mean this may not be possible.
- If people request who they wish to tramp with, make this a consideration, but don't sacrifice safety and enjoyment of others to achieve this.
- Try to avoid people conflicts where you know they exist. The Chief Guide may also know of possible conflicts.
- Remember if you are not happy with taking a person on your trip, you have the right to refuse them. This rule is not to be taken lightly, and any occurrences must be reported to the Chief Guide, who will inform the Committee at the next monthly meeting.
- If you cannot fit someone in a party for reasons such as no parties being available of a similar grade, then it may be best that these people be excluded. This has happened in the past, and it is a very hard decision to make. This decision has to made in conjunction with the Chief Guide. The persons feelings must be respected, and the matter handled with the most care. If someone is excluded through no fault of there own then the Committee do not expect a letter explaining there absence on the trip. Fortunately, this is a rare occurrence.
- The ideal party number is 4 persons, for safety reasons. The club recommends parties be 4-6 people. Some party leaders think 6 is too many, so try and make the majority of parties 4. Parties of 6 should only be given to leaders who are more experienced, as they are harder to maintain control over in the hills. Obstacles such as rivers are unsafe, and other obstacles such as swing bridges take longer to cross. Parties with co-leaders can often be the best ones to have 6 people in them. The club does not have a hard and fast rule, hence in some instances parties of 3 may be considered. If this is done, try and ensure that there is back up available in the same area. Trips to the likes of Macetown can cater well for 3 person parties. Some people have reservations about parties larger than 3 in winter because the majority of tents are three person, but it more important on winter trips to have parties of 4 for safety reasons. Do the best you can.
- Once you have made up your parties, inform the Chief Guide of your intentions, before contacting the party leaders.

⇒ **Appoint a reliable SAR person who will remain in town.**

⇒ **Information you need to provide to every party leader.**

Your party leaders are the one's that pass on all the relevant information to the trip participants. They need to have all the necessary information from the trip leader if they are to do this:

- Firstly, make sure the party leaders you have selected are happy to fulfil this role.
- They need to know the names of their prospective party members, along with their telephone numbers.
- They need to know who are non members. Non members must pay the Treasurer before departure. Failure to do so may exclude them from the trip. Party leaders need to inform non members of this Non members pay 20% of the current full subscription as a non member surcharge. Currently this is set at \$9.00, (2000).
- Tell them about the transport arrangements and departure time, and expected time back in Dunedin. Ask them to get back to you if any special transport arrangements are needed, i.e. if someone would like picked up en route, and drop off and pick up points.
- Inform them that it would be helpful for you (the trip leader) if you know their intended route by the Wednesday before the trip. This is also to allow the trip leader to okay each parties intended trip.
- If you are aware of any medical problems any participant may have, then inform their party leader.
- Remind party leaders that they need to check with their party members that they have adequate equipment and clothing - don't leave it to chance
- One of the more important points that we must be very careful about is the Search And Rescue contact system. Our club prides itself on practising safe tramping and part of this is the SAR responsibility we all have. Outlined here is the OTMC official policy on SAR with regard to weekend trips. It includes information for trip participants, party leaders, trip leaders, and the Chief Guide.

OTMC SEARCH AND RESCUE PROCEDURE

1. BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME. (For all participants)

When you sign the trip list, ensure that you enter an alternative contact number - somewhere where we can contact someone and tell them you may be late home etc.

Upon deciding on the parties, the trip leader will contact all party leaders and advise them of the arranged Dunedin contact. Your leader will convey this to you. You should note down the name and number. Now is the time you should tell your own contact person (spouse, parent, flatmate etc.) who the arranged OTMC contact person is. If someone is worried about you, then enquires should be directed to the contact person. The main reason this would happen is trips arriving late home. Usually a trip is just that - late (early hours of the morning). It does happen that a trip will be completely held up because of various conditions - such as rain/uncrossable rivers, terrain or an accident of some kind. In this case the OTMC contact person will endeavour to find out what he/she can from the likes of the Department of Conservation, the Police or other sources. Once information is gained, the contact person will ring trip participants contact number, informing them of the situation. Your contact person should then ring your work, or whatever your situation might be and inform them of your late arrival. The OTMC contact will follow your progress until everybody is back in Dunedin.

Remember, our search and rescue system works both ways. Make sure the people at your end know the situation. This system is in place for your safety.

2. THE CONTACT TRIP LIST

The trip leader must provide the SAR contact person with a trip list, listing all of the following:

- Parties and leaders
- Names
- Addresses
- Phone Numbers
- SAR contact phone numbers
- All party's intentions
- Vehicle information - including car/van parking positions
- Expected date and time of return
- Any other information (e.g. special arrangements)

As a copy of this list is to be left in EACH vehicle, and the Department of Conservation Field Centre (where applicable), also include the following:

- **SAR contact person's name, HOME and WORK phone numbers.**

This list will be useful for any party who gets out, whilst others may not. Included is a form that can be used to compile the correct information.

If intentions change during the trip to your destination, where at all possible, notify the Department of Conservation.

3. DURING THE TRIP

Obviously there is not much for you to do when you are tramping, in regard to SAR, but before this happens there is one very important thing everyone on the trip is responsible for:

SIGN THE INTENTIONS BOOK OR CARD AT THE NEAREST DoC OFFICE. The best way of doing this effectively is to note on their card details of your trip, and attach a full list as outlined earlier.

If you get into trouble, DoC will possibly be the first to know of your situation. They will ring the Dunedin contact person - from the trip list provided, and inform them of your situation.

EQUALLY IMPORTANT, WHETHER ON TIME, OR LATE OUT IS TO SIGN OUT AGAIN - THE COST OF A MOUNTED SEARCH BECAUSE YOU NEGLECT TO DO THIS COULD BE QUITE EXPENSIVE.

You do not need to sign out at the same office - any DoC office in the applicable area will do.

DoC's system is there for our protection - please follow it correctly.

4. WHAT IF?

We always plan our trips to be successful and achievable, but there will always be something that happens that is outside our control. These can include rivers becoming uncrossable, parties late out for what ever reason,

accidents, or just a trip taking longer than expected because of unexpected terrain/bush. As we are looking at SAR at present, we will look at what you should do in any of these situations.

The first thing to remember on all trips is to look after your own safety - never put yourself in a dangerous position, just so that you are out on time.

It is impossible to plan for all possible scenarios, but the following outlines some possible solutions for a particular problem. Remember that every trip will be different, and the Trip Leader, if present needs to make firm and correct decisions as he/she sees fit.

Situation 1: Most of the parties get out on time - including the trip leader.

In this case the trip leader will assess the situation, discuss with other experienced people and inform everyone of any decisions.

The OTMC recommend the trip remain in the area for at least one hour after the expected time out. Trips with more than one means of transport can send some people home, usually leaving experienced people to assist in locating the delayed party(s). The people heading out will notify the Dunedin OTMC contact of the situation (remember, the list/ number is in the transport). These people headed out will also notify DoC through the intentions book of the changed situation. The remaining people can check likely exits, and perhaps head up the expected route(s) out. Once darkness falls, it may be best to head to a town and notify the Police. They may prefer you to remain in the area to search, or they may wish to use any local SAR team. In any case, inform the Dunedin contact of the current situation.

Situation 2: Only one or two parties make it out on time (excluding the trip leader).

The principles are much the same as the first situation, but one of the party leaders must make the decisions usually made by the trip leader. It may be better to consult with the other party leaders and reach a unanimous decision. You should remain in the area, check exits as before, but endeavour to notify the OTMC contact person and DoC as soon as practical.

There are some cases where you may not be able to get out because of fords - in this case you can only do your best. Do not put yourself or your party at risk. **Be prepared for an extra day on all trips.**

If the OTMC contact person in town does not hear anything from you, he/she will find out what he/she can from DoC and the Police, and let your people know at home.

Remember - keep in contact with the SAR contact - call them collect if necessary, especially when you have problems/late problems.

In the case of accidents or lost parties/party members - follow the procedure set out in the Safety in The Mountains booklet (which you do carry, don't you?), and contact the nearest Police by phone, or in person

5. GENERAL RULES:

- **ALWAYS PUT YOUR SAR NUMBER ON THE TRIP LIST**
- **TELL PEOPLE AT HOME WHAT THE SAR CONTACT IS FOR**
- **MAKE SURE THE TRIP LEADERS KNOWS THE CORRECT INTENTIONS**
- **MAKE SURE THE DUNEDIN CONTACT HAS THE SAR TRIP LIST WITH ALL CORRECT INFORMATION**
- **HAVE A SAR LIST FOR EACH VEHICLE**
- **SIGN IN AT DoC HEADQUARTERS (Where Applicable)**

- **SIGN OUT AT DoC ON THE WAY HOME**
- **ALWAYS LEAVE KEYS WITH VEHICLE, MAKING SURE EVERYONE KNOWS THEIR LOCATION**
- **IF YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE(S) OUT - ENDEAVOUR TO CONTACT THE DUNEDIN CONTACT PERSON ASAP**
- **YOU NEVER HAVE TO RISK YOUR OWN SAFETY JUST SO YOU CAN BE OUT ON TIME - OTHER PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND**
- **LET THE CONTACT PERSON KNOW WHEN YOU ARRIVE HOME**

⇒ **It is the trip leaders responsibility to make up copies of the SAR list as for the following:**

SAR contact person, each vehicle, DoC Office and the Chief Guide for club records. The Treasurer needs a list of names, addresses and phone numbers for trip cost collection.

⇒ **Appoint drivers for vans in consultation with the Transport Officer.**

The Transport Officer authorises drivers for rental vans hired by the club. The trip leader may be asked to collect photocopies of potential persons driving licenses. These will be held by the Transport Officer and are used solely for insurance purposes.

⇒ **One problem you may come across is whether or not to cancel a trip because of weather, or because people have pulled out, leaving only a few people left.**

At times the decision will be quite straightforward - the conditions are just not suitable, and DoC may be advising people not to go to a particular area. Respect DoC's advice, they are in the best position to assess the situation. Sometimes DoC err on the side of caution. On the other hand, if you think that it will rain all weekend, then you may wish to cancel, or divert the trip to somewhere else. This is a decision the trip leader and Chief Guide have to make at the time. If there are no huts in an area, that may be a plus for going elsewhere, but if there are good huts, then maybe you should chance it. Think of the safety aspect when deciding on the fate of a trip.

⇒ **Discuss any problems you have with the Chief Guide**

⇒ **Discuss individual parties planned trips with the Chief Guide to ensure trip is within the capabilities of all the party. This is very important.**

⇒ **Try and be at club the Thursday night before departure - many people will probably want to talk to you.**

⇒ **Set your departure time as 6pm, and intend to have all parties out by 4pm on the last day of the trip. If you have different arrangements, make sure everyone is aware of them.**

⇒ **Be clear with instructions about where you are going to meet up with other vehicles.**

⇒ **Be strict about a maximum time for tea on Friday night - don't linger unnecessarily!**

⇒ ON THE WAY

YOU ARE THE LEADER. You are responsible for:

- SIGNING IN AND OUT AT THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
- The safety of your party. Safety is one of the most important aspects of tramping, and it is up to the trip and party leaders to ensure that sensible decisions are made. The OTMC will endeavour to train people in this respect so that the right decisions are made at all times.
- The enjoyment of your party. It goes without saying that we all go tramping for enjoyment. Everyone has different goals, and if we want people to continue tramping with us, we must run enjoyable trips for everyone. Of course, we can't control the weather.
- You must try to ensure the successful accomplishment of your trip as a whole. People will go home a lot happier if they have had a good trip, and succeeded in their intentions.
- In addition you are responsible for ensuring that at all times the party's behaviour is such that it will deserve credit. To achieve this there are some basic OTMC rules:
 - * Do not permit alcohol or smoking on Club Transport
 - * See that property is respected.
 - * See that no litter is left.
 - * Ensure that no firearms or dogs are taken on trips.
 - * Hut charges must be paid where applicable ASAP
 - * Follow the minimum impact code.

⇒ Upon return to town:

- Ensure that the SAR contact person is notified as soon as possible.
 - If hired transport was used, leave it clean.
 - Write a report, stating any problems for the Chief Guide.
 - Report back on Thursday night about your trip. After all the promotion you have given it, it is nice to provide the club meeting with a brief verbal report on the outcome of your trip.
 - Write (or delegate people to write) a trip report for the Club Bulletin
- * **On behalf of the OTMC, thanks for leading a weekend trip. Your efforts are appreciated.**

Trip Leader checklist for weekend trips:

TRIP:

DATE:

LEADER:

Receive information, and this list from the Chief Guide:

Confirmed:	Date:

Plan publicity with the Chief Guide:

Confirmed:	Date:

Research the area to be visited:

Confirmed:	Date:

Check with DoC in the 2 weeks before the trip:

Confirmed:	Date:

Close the list the Thursday 8 days prior to the trip:

Confirmed:	Date:

Provide a list of names to the Treasurer 8 days before trip:

Confirmed:	Date:

Appoint party leaders in conjunction with Chief Guide:

Confirmed:	Date:

Organise parties, with the Chief Guide:

Confirmed:	Date:

Arrange transport with the transport officer:

Confirmed:	Date:

Confirm with transport officer re. authorised drivers:

Confirmed:	Date:

Arrange for the vans to be picked up and dropped off:

Confirmed:	Date:

Confirmed:	Date:

Arrange a suitable SAR contact person:

Pass on relevant information to party leaders:

Confirmed:	Date:

Compile trip lists for SAR, vans, CG and Treasurer:

Confirmed:	Date:

Write report for the Chief Guide once home:

Confirmed:	Date:

Make sure someone writes a trip report for the Bulletin:

Confirmed:	Date:

The responsibilities of the OTMC Party Leader

These notes are intended to be a guide for newer party leaders on OTMC weekend trips. They may also be helpful for day trip leaders. Every weekend trip needs several party leaders, and the more experience we have in this respect, the better off the club will be.

You may be alarmed when you get a phone call from the trip leader which goes something like this 'Hi, I want you to lead a party on this weekend's trip'. Panic may set in, but if you have been asked, it means that both the Chief Guide and trip leader think that you are ready to lead a party. You will have been on several trips before, and you will know a bit about the OTMC system. The trip leader and the Chief Guide are there to help you if you have any questions.

Your first party will most likely be a fairly experienced one as opposed to a relatively inexperienced party, so it will not be too demanding. If the party is fairly experienced, then leadership will be fairly straightforward. It may be that the leader just confirms all arrangements, but if he/she has been delegated by the trip leader, then that leader is the one who makes the final decisions when needed. If the party is less experienced, then you will have to go through a lot of different points to make sure the trip you have planned is safe and enjoyable.

Included here is a checklist for you to use. It contains all the points you need to think about before leaving town.

The following outlines what you are required to organise:

⇒ Organising a route.

Once the trip leader has told you who is in your party, and your grade, then you can decide on a route. There may be people in your party who have some ideas, or you yourself may have a destination in mind. It is best to get a consensus from everyone in the party. In some cases, some members in your party may have no idea where to go. Guide your party, and choose a destination that is suitable for your fitness grade, and also within the capabilities terrain-wise of everyone in your party. The Trip Leader, Chief Guide or other club members may have suggestions, especially if they have been to the area recently. Make sure information you use, either through other people, DoC or guide books such as Moirs is up to date. Other considerations to take into account with planning your trip is medical conditions anyone in your party may have. Transport arrangements are important in respect to drop off and pick up points. Check with the trip leader. Escape routes may be looked at, in case a river becomes uncrossable or something else isn't as expected.

Planning alternative trips for bad weather may not be a bad idea - at least you may have the appropriate map with you.

⇒ **Organising gear and food.**

The party leader is responsible for ensuring that all party members have suitable clothing and equipment for the trip in question. Refer to the reverse of the trip card for lists of the appropriate gear. For newer trampers you may have to go through every item to ensure it will be suitable. It does not pay to leave it to chance.

The party leader is also responsible for arranging the party gear. This includes a tent or fly (if you intend using one), a primus, complete with billies and fuel. (The club gear hire has flies, 2 and 4 person tents, first aid kits (to supplement personal ones only) cookers, billies and fuel bottles - you will need to purchase the fuel. The costs of hiring gear is distributed amongst all party members, along with the food). The leader should provide a map (1:50,000 scale) of the area, and bring (and know how to use?) a suitable compass. If you are stuck for gear, please contact the trip leader.

There are differing thoughts on how to handle food on weekend trips. This is something the party leader must decide upon. Options may be:

- Arrange for someone to buy all the food.
- Arrange every party member to bring a meal each.
- Bring your own lunches, and have someone buy breakfasts and dinner (or other similar combinations).
- * Make sure that the person who buys the food knows enough about bush cookery to do something practical.
- * The Bushcraft manual is helpful for quantities per person per day.
- * The cost of food is divided evenly, and party members should be prepared to pay the person who bought the food at the conclusion of the trip.

All party food and party equipment should be split and carried evenly.

⇒ **Pre Trip phone calls.**

When you have been given all the information you need by the trip leader, then you can ring your party. Try to do this by the Monday preceding the trip. The more time you have for preparation you have, the easier it will be.

Make sure everyone knows when the trip leaves, and when they can expect to be back in town. If anyone wants picked up en-route, then get the details and pass them onto the trip leader.

Ensure that any non-members you have in your party have paid, or will do so before the trip leaves. This is a club rule. A non-member surcharge is payable by all non-members, even if they don't use club transport. Remind club members of the need to pay before the trip leaves.

Explain the purpose of the SAR contact person, along with their name and phone number. Make sure your party members write this down, and inform their people why the person is appointed.

Discuss arrangements and plans of the proposed trip.

Discuss any special food requirements they may have.

Ask about any medical conditions - this information must be kept confidential by you, but be prepared for any condition, which may pose a problem to the safety of your party.

Check that all party members are adequately equipped, both with clothing, boots etc., and equipment.

⇒ **Finally, report back to the trip leader about your plans, so he/she can pass them on to the SAR contact person.**

⇒ **During the trip.**

Your job is to ensure that everyone in your party has a safe and enjoyable trip. How this will occur will depend on the experience of the people in your party. If you have an experienced party, this will probably mean that your trip is no different than any other when you aren't the leader.

On the other hand, if you are taking newer people tramping, then you may have to be constantly keeping an eye on, and directing your party to ensure safety and enjoyment is attained. Here are some points to keep in mind during your trip.

- Keep the party together. A safe party is one where everyone sticks together. From a leader's point of view this may be difficult to achieve, as you may have a slightly mismatched party, and some members may get ahead, or others may lag behind. You need to stop this, and the order your party walk in is important. You may decide to place the slower person at the front, hence ensuring the party keep together. One school of thought is that the leader should be centrally located within the party when travelling.
- Leaders who follow this idea generally are seen to make decisions by consensus, and involve the whole group. Leaders who lead from the front may lose control of the tail end, and leadership from the rear may lose control of the front.
- Consensus is important. The whole party must be part of the decision making process. To arrive at a consensus, the more confident members have an obligation to check with the silent members. The leader should always try to be aware of whether the balance is being tipped in one direction or another through his or her own arrogance or anxious lack of confidence, and correct it where appropriate.
- The spoken word must be clear, and the intention understood.
- Close contact with party members is important.
- Don't shout, or be abusive. This will not help.
- Never permit your party to split itself up to do a side trip, unless this has been well thought through, and safety is not compromised.
- Always observe your party. Be on the lookout for blisters, injuries, dehydration, exhaustion or hypothermia. Remember, some people will not let you know they have a problem unless you ask.
- At obstacles such as rivers, maintain strict control. Use the appropriate method and follow correct procedures. **NEVER EVER TAKE RIVERS LIGHTLY.**
- **A GOOD LEADER WILL HAVE THE COURAGE TO TURN BACK IN GOOD TIME.**
- Remember to sign hut books as you pass through.
- **ALWAYS THINK OF AND FOR THE GROUP AS A WHOLE.**

⇒ **Upon completion of your trip:**

- Report any problems to the trip leader.
- Make sure any hut fees are paid.
- Write a trip report for the Bulletin

Party Leader checklist for weekend trips:

- **Make sure the trip leader provides you with the following:**
- Party details.
- Departure time.
- Trip cost.
- Whether you have any non-members.
- SAR contact person.

- **You need to inform/arrange with your party:**
- Suitable clothing, boots, pack and equipment.
- Who the SAR person and their role.
- Arrange food arrangements, include likes and dislikes.
- What time the trip leaves, and when it is expected back in town.
- Check any medical problems.
- Ensure non-members pay before departure.
- Remind members of the need to pay for the trip before departure.