

# **WELLINGTON TRAMPING and MOUNTAINEERING CLUB Inc.**

## **POLICIES**



### **Last updates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>Who</b>
19/06/22	New section on Refunds as agreed by Committee 4 April 2022. Update PLB policy and various emergency procedures as agreed by Committee 4 May 2022. 3.5, 3.9, 8.1 updated to reflect other decisions made over the last 12 months. New section on scholarship to reflect current practice. Format and insert new logo.	AdF

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# 1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 The club has these categories of membership that have the following conditions:

- a) Adult: An individual aged 18 or over on the day that the current year's subscription is due.
- b) Household: 1-2 adults and all children who live in the same household.
- c) Junior: Individual aged under 18 on the day that the current year's subscription is due (for instance, a teenager whose parents are not members).
- d) Veteran: A member who has been an adult financial member for 20 years or more; excluding Friend of the Club membership.
- e) Veteran Household: A household with at least 1 person who qualifies as a Veteran member.
- f) Friend of the Club: Members who are not currently active in the club but who want to continue their connection. Friends of the Club receive newsletters and journals, but no other membership rights.
- g) Life Member: A select few of our members are elected Life Members (as per the requirements in the Constitution) to acknowledge outstanding service to WTMC. Membership privileges are extended to the Life Member and everyone in their household. Life Members are exempt from payment of the subscription.

1.2 The following conditions apply to gain membership of the WTMC:

- a) The appropriate membership fees are paid, this may include a one-off entrance fee as determined by the Committee.
- b) Applicants should be voted in by two thirds of the committee.
- c) Applicants for Friend of the Club membership shall be current or previous club members

1.3 Changes of membership category may be made as follows:

- a) Junior, to Adult – after attaining the age of 18 years.
- b) Adult, to Household – on application.
- c) Child members of a Household, to Adult – on application after attaining the age of 18 years.
- d) Household or Veteran Household, to Junior or Adult – on application provided the applicant fulfils the requirements for the relevant membership category.
- e) Household, to Veteran Household – on fulfilling the requirements of Veteran Household Membership.

- f) Adult, to Veteran – on fulfilling the requirements of Veteran Membership.
  - g) Friend of the Club, to a previously held membership category – on application.
- 1.4 Dates of birth shall be included in membership applications for children (whether Household or Junior applications).
- 1.5 Members located overseas receive trip schedules, newsletters and journals. However, postage for the annual journal is to be paid by the recipient.
- 1.6 A list of ex-members who the committee considers would be interested in receiving information regarding Club celebrations shall be kept.
- 1.7 The contact list of club members may be made available with the approval of the Committee, taking into consideration the club's privacy statement.



## **2 TRIPS**

### **Costs**

- 2.1 The trip fee covers the cost of transport to and from a trip: this may include club or hired vehicles and/or ferries. Some transport, e.g. flights, may be additional.
- 2.2 Hut fees are usually not covered by the trip fee. However, trip fees might be increased at the Chief Guide discretion, to reflect the cost of accommodation that is booked in advance by the club, for example for a trip to the Ruapehu Lodge or to popular bookable huts.
- 2.3 Unless stated otherwise on the trip sign-up sheet, liability for trip payment arises:
  - a) two Wednesdays before departure, for a weekend trip in the North Island.
  - b) three Wednesdays before departure, for a weekend trip in the South Island.
  - c) For longer trips or day trips, the date is at the discretion of the Chief Guide and Trip Leader and will be stated on the sign-up sheet.

### **Cancellation**

- 2.4 Trip leaders have the discretion to cancel their trip, in the case of adverse weather or for other serious reasons. Prior to cancelling a trip, Trip Leaders:
  - a) are encouraged to consider alternative options.
  - b) are encouraged to consult with trip attendees.
  - c) should consult with the Chief Guide because refunds of the trip payment will only be given if the Chief Guide has given approval of cancellation prior to the trips planned departure.

### **Official club trips**

- 2.5 Non-members may only lead a club trip if they have received prior permission of the Chief Guide for the specific trip.
- 2.6 A group of club members wishing to have their trip officially recognised by the club must obtain approval of the Chief Guide prior to the trip running.

### **Other policies**

- 2.7 Refunds for cancellation by the trip leader or individuals may be granted subject to section [6. REFUNDS](#).
- 2.8 An Emergency Contact Person will be on duty each weekend that a club trip runs. They will be a club member who is contactable most or all of the weekend. The duties of the Emergency Contact Person are set out in the Emergency Contact Procedures, available on the club website.

- 2.9 Persons under the age of 18 may take part in club trips if they are accompanied by an adult and have the permission of the Chief Guide.
- 2.10 No alcohol is to be taken or consumed on club trips without the prior approval of the Chief Guide.
- 2.11 Rifles or dogs can only be taken on club trips with the permission of the Chief Guide and the Trip Leader.

### **3 TRANSPORT**

#### **Drivers**

- 3.1 Drivers on club trips must have been approved by the transport officer or be under the supervision of an approved driver.
- 3.2 Drivers must follow the Club Driver Protocols (attached as an addendum to this policy). The Protocols apply to driving club vehicles, hired vehicles, and private vehicles when driven as part of official club trips.
- 3.3 There must be at least two authorised drivers available for trips with an anticipated journey time of more than 3 hours.

#### **Club Vehicles and Hired Vehicles**

- 3.4 Club vehicles may be used for non-club trips only if there is space remaining after providing for the transport needs of official scheduled club trips.
- 3.5 Non-club trips must have at least one club member to use space remaining in club vehicles.
- 3.6 The minimum number for using the club vehicle is determined by the Transport Officer, in consultation with the Chief Guide.
- 3.7 Additional vehicles may be hired for club trips if required. Vehicle hire costs are covered by the club, with trip attendees paying the standard trip rate.

#### **Private Transport**

- 3.8 Private transport will only be used on club trips when authorised by the Transport Officer, following consultation with Trip Leaders and the Chief Guide.
- 3.9 If a private vehicle is used in combination with a club vehicle for a trip, then all people on the trip pay the trip transport fee to the club. Private vehicle owners will be reimbursed by the club at the jury service mileage rate (2022: 50ct per km).
- 3.10 If all people on a trip are in private transport, they should agree amongst themselves on transport cost sharing. The jury service mileage rate, shared between all car occupants is a recommended option.
- 3.11 The club bears no responsibility for any other costs relating to use of private transport, e.g. insurance, damage, break-downs, thefts.

#### **Lodge Transport**

- 3.12 The Lodge Subcommittee may offer a transport option for people travelling to the lodge outside a formal club trip. Booking and payment for transport will be collected using the same processes as lodge bookings and subject to the same rules and policies.

- 3.13 Lodge van drivers will adhere to the Club Driver Protocols (found in the 'Vans' section of the WTMC website).
- 3.14 The pool of lodge van drivers will be approved by the Lodge sub-committee.
- 3.15 Lodge van drivers will not be charged for the transport component of the lodge trip.
- 3.16 The lodge booking officer will be responsible for:
- arranging the van - either a rental van, or a club van if one is available through the club transport officer;
  - liaising with the lodge van drivers;
  - Liaising with the club Treasurer on any costs.
- 3.17 Lodge van pricing will be set by the Lodge Subcommittee, taking into consideration the existing WTMC club trip fees.

## **4 RUAPEHU LODGE**

- 4.1 The Lodge will always be operated in strict accordance with its DOC Licence.
- 4.2 At all times when the lodge is open, a designated Lodge Leader will be responsible for opening, closing and operating the Lodge. The Lodge Leader will be a club member and will have satisfied the Lodge Convenor or Lodge Bookings Officer that they have sufficient training to operate the lodge.
- 4.3 Bookings, accommodation, cancellation, refunds and other rules for individuals and small groups, whether club members or not, will be subject to the booking rules shown on the Lodge section of the WTMC website. These rules apply to all bookings unless noted below.

### **Lodge working parties**

- 4.4 People who are at the lodge for the purposes of repair, maintenance or improvement to the lodge will be provided free accommodation and food. Transport may be subsidised by prior arrangement and at the discretion of the Lodge Convenor.

### **Club bookings**

- 4.5 Bookings for club trips are subject to the Trips policy
- 4.6 During trip planning, the Chief Guide will pencil in club trips with the Bookings Officer (who will advise if there are clashes with pre-existing bookings).
- 4.7 Once the schedule is finalised, the Chief Guide will confirm these trips and the Bookings Officer will reserve some or all of the lodge bunks as appropriate.
- 4.8 All punters on a club trip to the lodge in winter must have confirmed and paid by two Wednesdays before the trip runs. At this point, the Trip Leader will provide the following information to the lodge leader for punters who have paid: names, email addresses, phone numbers, whether member or non-member.
- 4.9 From this point, other bunk spaces will be freed for booking by other members and non-members. Any punter who signs up after this deadline will need to book on a first come first served basis following the normal rules for casual bookings.
- 4.10 Cancellations and refunds are as per normal rules for casual bookings. Any refunds outside these rules, such as those allowed for by the Trip Refunds policy, will be paid for from WTMC general funds.
- 4.11 People actively involved in instruction on club training trips, such as Snowcraft and AIC, will have free food and accommodation while staying at the lodge, and their transport paid for. The price charged for the club trip will cover the instructors' expenses.

### **Group bookings – more than 15 non-club members**

- 4.12 Non WTMC group bookings of more than 15 people are to be accompanied by up to two club reps, who act as Lodge Leaders while this party uses the lodge.
- 4.13 The club reps will have free accommodation and food, and their transport paid for. The price charged for the group booking will cover the club reps' expenses. Groups who self cater are requested to allow additional food for the club reps' meals.
- 4.14 The price paid for a group booking will be set by the Lodge Bookings Officer and Lodge Convenor, based on the standard rates and the expenses of the club reps. For larger groups, exclusive use of the lodge may be offered.

## **5 CLUB GEAR**

### **Gear hire**

- 5.1 Club trips have priority for the loan of gear.
- 5.2 There will be no charge for party gear issued for club trips. A fee will be charged for gear issued for personal use, eg: crampons, ice axes.
- 5.3 Gear may be issued to non-members participating in club trips, or to other clubs, with the approval of the Gear Custodian.
- 5.4 Non-members are required to pay a deposit and hire fee prior to the issue of personal gear. Fees are set out in the fee schedule.
- 5.5 Gear will be issued for a period of one week unless agreed in advance with the Gear Custodian.
- 5.6 For trips of more than one week in duration, the hire fee shall be determined by the Gear Custodian, using the schedule of fees as a basis. Gear issued for such trips must be returned by the club night after returning to Wellington.

### **Overdue gear**

- 5.7 Gear not returned by the due date may be charged at the weekly hire fee per week overdue.
- 5.8 Gear not returned by non-members by the due date will result in the forfeiture of the deposit.
- 5.9 Gear will not be issued to anyone (member or non-member) who has not returned outstanding gear by the due date or has unpaid fees.

### **Other policies**

- 5.10 The Gear Custodian shall carry out an inventory of gear annually and provide details to the Treasurer. The timing of the inventory shall be co-ordinated with the Treasurer for insurance purposes.
- 5.11 If club gear is damaged, the trip leader or individual who borrowed the item should let the gear custodian know when returning gear on Wednesday and make sure damaged gear is labelled and put aside.
- 5.12 If a club first aid kit has been used, the trip leader or individual who borrowed the first aid kit should:
  - a) top up the first aid kit with spare items available at the gear room
  - b) re-seal the kit with a plastic tie (also available from the gear room)
  - c) let the gear custodian know when returning the first aid kit on Wednesday.
  - d) if the first aid kit could not be replenished, make sure it is labelled and put aside.
- 5.13 Other issues or concerns about club gear should be reported to the Gear Custodian.

- 5.14 Where club gear is lost or damaged due to negligence, the club may seek to recover the cost of replacing this gear from the person involved.
- 5.15 The club will not reimburse members for loss or damage to personal gear.



## 6 REFUNDS

### Trip refunds

- 6.1 A person withdrawing from a trip before the payment cut off date (e.g. 2.5 weeks for South Island trips and 1.5 weeks for the North Island,) will receive a full refund.
- 6.2 After the payment cut off date, refunds may be given in the following circumstances:
  - a. Refunds will be given to all people on a trip if the Trip Leader cancels the trip in the case of adverse weather or for other serious reasons.
  - b. Refunds will be given to an individual if they have COVID-19, are symptomatic, or are required to self isolate.
  - c. Refunds may be given to an individual on compassionate ground at the Chief Guide discretion, who may consult with the Committee to decide whether a refund should be issued or not.
- 6.3 The Chief Guide will not normally agree to refund fares if the cause of cancellation is a change of schedule or short term illness (unless covid-related). It is generally expected that refunds will be given only on compassionate grounds.
- 6.4 If a refund is agreed then the Trip Leader is responsible for collecting the names and bank account details of all those on their trip and forward in one email to the Treasurer, with amounts to be refunded.

### Making a claim for an expense

- 6.5 The person seeking to be refunded should provide the Treasurer with their name and account number, and also provide:
  - a. a tax invoice if the amount is \$50 and above
  - b. a tax invoice, receipt, bank statement or other proof of expense if the amount is under \$50

*Note: Often, tax invoices are the same as receipts but not always. A tax invoice should include:*

- *The words 'Tax invoice' and the date of transaction,*
  - *The name, address and GST registration number of the supplier,*
  - *A description of the goods or services provided with an amount charged,*
  - *Either the words "GST" or the GST amount separately identified.*
- 6.6 Regular expenses incurred with club activities (e.g. petrol) will be fully refunded.
  - 6.7 Ad-hoc expenses (e.g. catering for a club event, gear replacement) will be refunded provided that they are approved by the Committee a. Approval should be sought prior to the expense being made.

## 7 JOURNAL, NEWSLETTER AND FACEBOOK

- 7.1 The club publishes an annual journal, that will be mailed to club members before the end of the year. The annual amount to be spent on the journal shall be decided by the General Committee.
- 7.2 The club maintains a web-based newsletter blog containing trip reports and items of general club interest. The club also maintains a Facebook page with items of immediate interest to club members and non-club members.
- 7.3 The editors of the journal, newsletter and Facebook page have discretion over the articles and news items that are published. Substantial edits to contributors' articles will be discussed with the writer as a matter of courtesy these edits should be.

## **8 TRAINING**

### **Instruction courses**

- 8.1 For liability reasons, access to training courses organised by the club is limited to individuals with a current membership.
- 8.2 Training courses may be organised by volunteer instructors, be contracted to external providers, or jointly run with another club or organisation.
- 8.3 The course fee will reflect the cost of the course (e.g. transport, accommodation, equipment, external provider). In some instances, the Committee may decide to subsidise a course in part or in totality.
- 8.4 Volunteer instructors on club instruction courses may have the whole or part of their trip fees waived at the discretion of the Chief Guide.

### **Scholarships**

- 8.5 The club offers scholarships of up to \$500 to help club members gain experience and skills to further their tramping adventures. Eligibility criteria and scope of the programme are published on the WTMC website.
- 8.6 Applicants must have a current membership and actively support club activity to be eligible for a scholarship. A person may only apply once every 12 months for a scholarship.
- 8.7 Applications are reviewed and recommended by the Scholarship Panel to the Committee for decision. The Committee reserves the right to decline the application.
- 8.8 Payment of the scholarship amount will only be made upon reception of acceptable proof of expense (see section 6.7).

## **9 BULLYING**

### **Introduction**

- 9.1 WTMC prides itself on the relaxed and informal atmosphere in which members participate in club activities. This is an environment built on respect and trust.
- 9.2 The club has zero tolerance for bullying or harassing behaviour in any club-related activities, including club trips, social events, volunteer work or any other club organised activity, as well as the volunteer work involved in running the club. All members of the club and individuals who participate in club activities are expected to treat one another with respect and dignity.
- 9.3 This policy is designed to sit alongside the club's existing Sexual Harassment Policy.

### **Purpose**

- 9.4 The purpose of this policy is to outline WTMC's position on bullying and to document the processes to follow should incidents of bullying occur.

### **What is bullying?**

- 9.5 Bullying is behaviour that is offensive, humiliating, intimidating, aggressive or threatening. It makes people feel unwelcome, uncomfortable, distressed or unsafe.
- 9.6 Bullying can be directed at a person or group of persons.
- 9.7 Bullying can be made up of a pattern of episodes that when taken in isolation do not constitute bullying but in their totality do, whether carried out by an individual or group of individuals
- 9.8 Bullying can be carried out via a number of channels, including but not limited to:
  - o verbal comments
  - o email
  - o social media
  - o physical behaviour.
- 9.9 The essential elements are that the victim feels intimidated and unsafe.
- 9.10 Bullying can constitute "gross misconduct" as per the club Constitution.

### **Addressing bullying behaviour within the club**

- 9.11 The club seeks to create and maintain a safe and respectful environment during club-related activities. If incidents of bullying occur, the club can intervene in the interests of maintaining this environment.
- 9.12 The person experiencing the behaviour is encouraged to make it clear to the person responsible that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- 9.13 If this is not effective, or if the nature of the behaviour makes this kind of confrontation inappropriate, then the person should raise the matter with the club President or another committee member.
- 9.14 The committee may form a subcommittee to investigate and develop a recommendation on the matter or the matter may be discussed at a Committee meeting.
- 9.15 Reports of bullying will be dealt with in confidence as far as is possible and reasonable.
- 9.16 All parties will be treated with respect.
- 9.17 The person who has been accused of bullying will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story.
- 9.18 The committee has a range of options available for resolving concerns, including stand-down periods, restriction from certain activities and expulsion from the club.
- 9.19 Where a crime has been committed, the police should be contacted by the complainant.
- 9.20 The club may involve the police if there are reasonable grounds for believing the safety of members is at risk.

## **10 SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

### **Introduction**

- 10.1 WTMC prides itself on the relaxed and informal atmosphere in which members participate in activities. As a participant in club activities you have the right to expect that this atmosphere should be free of any sexual harassment.
- 10.2 WTMC will not tolerate behaviour amounting to sexual harassment within the Club's domain of activities.
- 10.3 The Club has devised and will maintain a framework for resolving complaints of sexual harassment, within the Club where possible, that is flexible, fair and user friendly for those in need of support.

### **What is Sexual Harassment?**

- 10.4 For WTMC's purposes sexual harassment is - any unsolicited behaviour of a sexual nature which a person feels is personally offensive and unwelcome, and which distresses, or makes that person feel uncomfortable.

It includes:

- sex orientated jibes or abuse;
- offensive gestures or comment;
- unwanted and unnecessary physical contact;
- requests for sexual favours.

It does not include:

- genuine compliments about appearance;
- friendly repartee.

- 10.5 The essential elements are that the behaviour is unwanted and offensive to the person concerned.

### **Complaints**

- 10.6 Because accusations of sexual harassment have serious consequences, WTMC
- 10.7 encourages informal resolution of complaints where appropriate. The exception to this is where the behaviour concerned may amount to a criminal offence or involves sexual abuse (see below).
- 10.8 Your first step should be to make it clear to the person responsible for the behaviour that it is unwelcome and unacceptable. If the behaviour continues, or is of such an upsetting nature that confrontation is not possible, you should contact a complaints officer.
- 10.9 The Club has nominated a male and female club member as complaints officers. They may or may not be a member of the General Committee. Their role is to hear your complaint and offer you advice in strict confidence. They will be able to advise you of

how your complaint will be dealt with by the Club and the range of options available for resolving the complaint.

### **Criminal Conduct or Sexual Abuse**

- 10.10 If you have been the subject of behaviour that constitutes a criminal offence (i.e. Sexual violation, assault, sexual abuse of a child) or have witnessed such behaviour on a club activity and you have decided to make a complaint, your first step should be to contact the Police.
- 10.11 The Club would also appreciate being informed directly via a complaints officer if a complaint has been made to the Police. This helps ensure that others participating in club activities are not placed at further risk.

### **Confidentiality**

- 10.12 All communication between a complainant, the person subject of the complaint, complaints officers and General Committee members dealing with the complaint shall be kept in strictest confidence.
- 10.13 The exception to the above is where in the event of expulsion of or restrictions on Club activities of a member as a result of a complaint the identity of that person will not be revealed except for as is necessary for the enforcement of that expulsion or restriction, and where disclosure is necessary to prevent harm coming to others.

## 11 PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACONS (PLB)

### Summary

- 11.1 It is compulsory to carry a personal locator beacon (PLB) on all club trips unless the trip leader has determined that mobile phone coverage is available during the time of the trip—and that a party member is carrying a working mobile phone.
- 11.2 PLBs may be activated in situations of grave and imminent danger, immobilisation due to injury or illness, or serious delay ( refer to section 9.3 below). However, each situation is different and the trip leader should decide what is best for the particular circumstances, and discuss this with the rest of the group, particularly experienced trampers. The basic rule is “if in doubt, get them out”.
- 11.3 While the decision to activate a PLB will be made by the trip leader, he or she should consult with others in the group, particularly other experienced trampers. If the trip leader is incapacitated, the person who has assumed the leader’s role will make the decision in conjunction with others on the trip.
- 11.4 If a PLB is negligently activated outside the criteria in 3 below then, at the discretion of the committee, the person responsible for the activation may be held liable for any costs associated with getting the PLB checked and the battery replaced, or purchasing a replacement PLB.

### Personal Locator Beacons

- 11.5 WTMC owns a number of PLBs. These are kept in the club gear lockers and are available for use on club trips along with other club gear.
- 11.6 It is compulsory to carry a personal locator beacon (PLB) on all club trips, unless the trip leader has determined that mobile phone coverage is available during the time of the trip and that a party member is carrying a working mobile.
- 11.7 We expect all club gear to be treated with care. PLBs may not function as intended if mistreated, and additionally they are a particularly expensive piece of equipment.
- 11.8 A PLB is not a substitute for thorough trip planning and execution. The club expects all trip leaders and club trip participants to abide by the club’s policies and procedures relating to club trips (these are available on the WTMC website [www.wtmc.org.nz](http://www.wtmc.org.nz)). Our policies and procedures are designed to keep trip participants safe and are consistent with the principles set out in the NZ Mountain Safety Council Outdoor Safety Code:
  - o Plan your trip
  - o Seek local knowledge. Plan the route you will take and the amount of time you can reasonably expect it to take
  - o Tell someone your plans and leave a date for when to raise the alarm if you haven’t returned (see club procedures for club contact people)
  - o Be aware of the weather. NZ weather can be highly unpredictable. Check the forecast and expect sudden weather changes



- o Know your limits
- o Challenge yourself within your physical limits and experience (WTMC grades its trips to help you decide which trip is suitable for you)
- o Take sufficient supplies
- o Make sure you have enough food, equipment and emergency rations for the worst case scenario. Take an appropriate means of communication. In some circumstances mobile phone coverage is available, for longer trips to remote areas hiring a mountain radio is an option  
<http://www.mountainradio.co.nz/bookings.html> (South Island)  
<http://www.wmrs.org.nz/wmrsfaq.htm> (Wellington).

### **When to activate a PLB**

#### 11.9 PLBs should be activated in the following situations:

- o There is grave or imminent danger to a member(s) of the tramping party or others encountered in the backcountry. Examples would be a major injury to a party member, or a party that has become dangerously trapped by rising floodwaters.
- o A member(s) of the tramping party has become injured or unwell and will not be able to walk out. In these situations, consideration should be given to the timing of beacon activation; if they are not in danger of immediate harm or the situation worsening (e.g. by going into shock) waiting until daylight/improved weather may be recommended. Conversely, if there is the possibility for the situation to worsen during the night, activating the PLB while it is still light may be more appropriate than waiting to see if the situation resolves.
- o Your tramping party is overdue to the extent that a search will be certainly launched for you (usually at least more than one night overdue). Note that being late out does not, in most circumstances, constitute a life-threatening situation. There is a club emergency contact system in place to deal with instances when a trip is overdue.

11.10 However, each situation is different and the trip leader should decide what is best for the particular circumstances, and discuss this with the rest of the group, particularly experienced trampers. The basic rule is “if in doubt, get them out”.

11.11 Before activating a PLB consider whether a mobile phone call to 111 is a practical option. If you are able to talk to the Police you will be able to provide context and receive advice.

## What to do when you have decided to activate a PLB

- Activate the PLB following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Position your beacon in a clear and open area, pointing the aerial vertically towards the sky, away from trees, buildings and mountains.
- While waiting for rescue you should look after injured person(s) and attempt to make the party as safe and comfortable as possible.
- Give consideration to clearing a helicopter landing site if possible, and making yourself visible with smoke, flares, reflectors, lights pointed downwards, bright colours or shaking trees.
- Take steps to ensure the wellbeing of all members of the tramping party; if the weather is poor, a helicopter may not be able to reach you, and you may have to wait until a Land Search and Rescue team can walk in to you.
- If a PLB is inadvertently activated, or it is activated and then decided it was not necessary to do so, **do not** deactivate it. If the signal from a PLB disappears a search will still be launched and it is preferable for SAR personnel to be able to track an actively transmitting beacon than have to search a wider general area.
- If a PLB is activated the trip leader (or leader's delegate) must inform the club contact person when the group is safe, as soon as is realistically possible, and then provide a full written account of the incident to the Chief Guide.

## Care of PLB

- 11.12 The Emergency Contact Coordinator is responsible for maintaining club PLBs, including checking their working condition, replacing batteries before expiration and ensuring registration and contact details are up to date.
- 11.13 Generally the trip leader is responsible for looking after the PLB during the trip.
- 11.14 The trip leader must agree to abide by this PLB policy.
- 11.15 If the PLB is activated, damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen the trip leader is responsible for notifying the Gear Custodian and the Chief Guide or Assistant Chief Guide as soon as possible. If the trip leader is unable to do so another member of the party should do so.
- 11.16 If the PLB is activated in a manner consistent with this policy, the club will meet the cost of getting the PLB checked and any battery replacement.
- 11.17 If the PLB is damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen through an act of negligence, the committee has the discretion to determine whether the trip leader or other accountable person shall be responsible for paying for the PLB to be replaced by an equivalent make/model.
- 11.18 The trip leader must return the PLB on the date indicated to the Gear Custodian or their delegate. This will usually be the Wednesday evening following the end of the trip.

- 11.19 If the PLB is not returned on the date specified the Committee reserves the right to charge the trip leader a late fee. This fee is to cover the cost of the club having to hire a replacement PLB to cover trips until the PLB is returned.

#### **When a personal PLB is substituted for a club PLB**

- 11.20 A personal PLB can only be taken instead of a club PLB if the trip leader agrees and the PLB owner:
- o agrees to abide by the WTMC PLB policy; and
  - o advises the club emergency contact person that the PLB is theirs and that it has been registered with RCCNZ; and
  - o temporarily add the club's emergency contact as their #1 listed emergency contact, which can be done [online](#).
- 11.21 If the conditions above are satisfied and a personal PLB is activated in accordance with the WTMC PLB policy or damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen, the PLB owner may request that the Committee, at its discretion, approve the cost of having the personal PLB checked and its battery replaced or replacement cost as appropriate.

#### **When a personal PLB is additional to a club PLB**

- 11.22 If you are taking a personal PLB in addition to a club PLB on a club trip you should:
- o Ensure it is registered with RCCNZ; and
  - o advise the trip leader so they can include this fact in the trip plan; and
  - o temporarily add the club's emergency contact as their #1 listed emergency contact, which can be done [online](#).
- 11.23 If your PLB is activated in accordance with the WTMC PLB policy you may request that the Committee, at its discretion, approve the cost of having your personal PLB checked and its battery replaced
- 11.24 The club will not meet the cost of replacing an additional PLB on club trips in circumstances where it is damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen.

#### **Use of WTMC Personal Locator Beacons on Private Trips**

- 11.25 Club PLBs are not to be taken on private trips. PLBs are available for hire from various sources including many local outdoor shops (see the [Beacons.org.nz](http://Beacons.org.nz) website for a full list of hire locations).

#### **Review of PLB policy**

- 11.26 This policy for use of WTMC Personal Locator Beacons on WTMC trips will be reviewed by the committee after any PLB activation.

## 12 EMERGENCY CONTACT PROCEDURE

### Duties of the Emergency Contact Duty person

This is a description of what is involved when a person is the Emergency Contact for the weekend:

- The Emergency Contact Duty Person will ideally be a club member who is on duty for the weekend of the tramps and must be contactable most or all of the time, in particular on Sunday night when trip leaders will be calling/sending a txt to say their group is out safely.
- You should not be doing a remote day walk or anything else that could potentially involve you needing rescuing yourself.
- The Emergency Contact Duty Person receives the Intentions sheets by email from all trip leaders by Thursday night. The plans should include the PLB letter, good weather plan, alternative plans and the emergency contact numbers for all people on the trip. (Do not be afraid to chase this up, if a leader doesn't get in touch by Friday lunch time). Give the Emergency Contacts Co-ordinator a call if you need help chasing up leaders for their intention forms.
- The Emergency Contact Duty Person should retain a copy of this information at home (with them at all times, this can be in the form of an email as long as you can access the information quickly if you are out and about).
- The people on the trip would give the Emergency Contact Duty Person's details to their family/flatmates. This is who should be rung if there is an incident or party is late returning to Wellington.
- The leader may decide to change the trip plan on Friday night. Where possible, the leader should make a call to the Emergency Contact Duty Person, to inform them of the change of plan.
- **If an incident arises, follow the procedures set out below.**
- Never speak to the media without consultation of the committee. Say you can't talk right now, take their numbers and say a committee member will call them back.

### Club Committee Contacts :

Role	Name	Phone	Email
President			president@wtmc.org.nz
Vice President			vicepresident@wtmc.org.nz
Chief Guide			chiefguide@wtmc.org.nz
Assistant Chief Guide			assistantchiefguide@wtmc.org.nz
Emergency Contact Coordinator			emergencycontacts@wtmc.org.nz

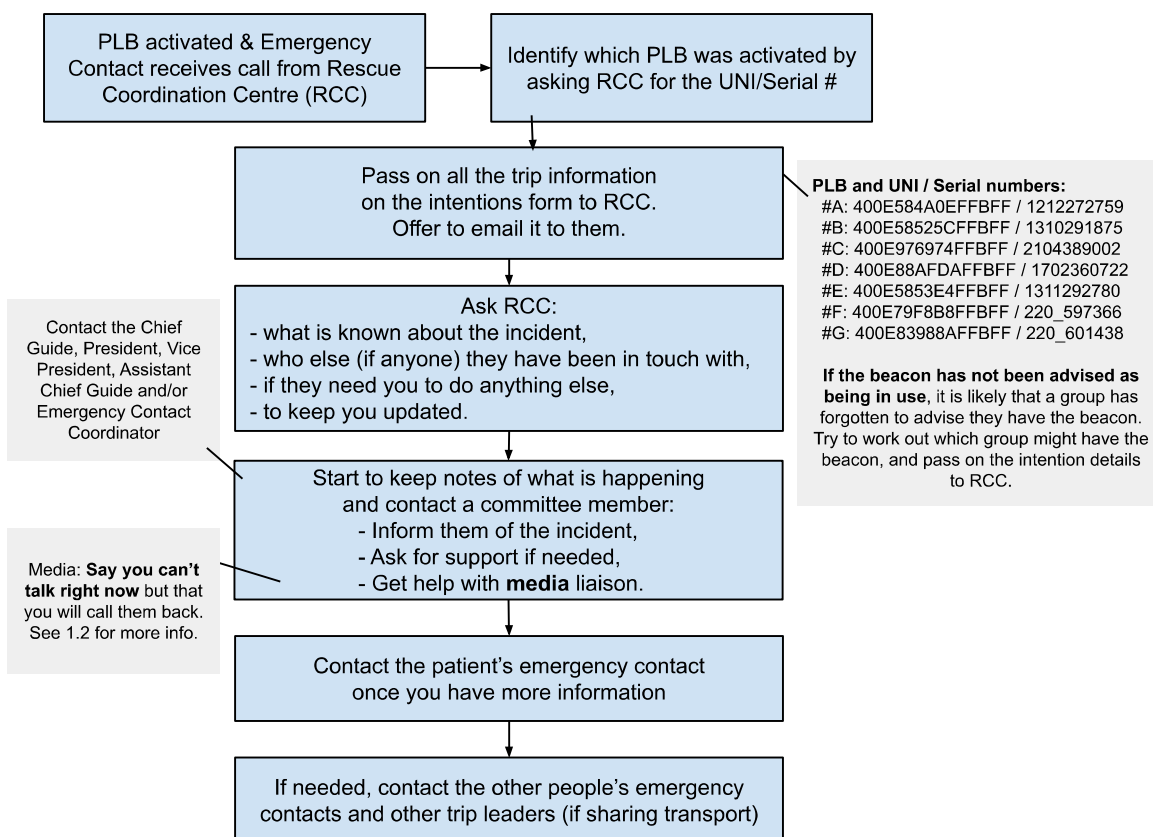
## Calls from the media

(What to do if the Emergency Contact is called by the media)

1. **Say you can't talk right now**, but that someone from the club will call them back.
2. **Get their contact details**, who they are working for + what type of media, what they want to talk to you about and when their deadline is.
3. **Buy time** - They will likely press you for information on the spot, but be clear that you can't talk right now. (This is to buy you time to contact others, understand what the situation is and prepare the key messages).
4. **Let the Committee know the details** (i.e. President, Vice-President, Chief Guide or Assistant Chief Guide) and they will pick up the enquiry from there.

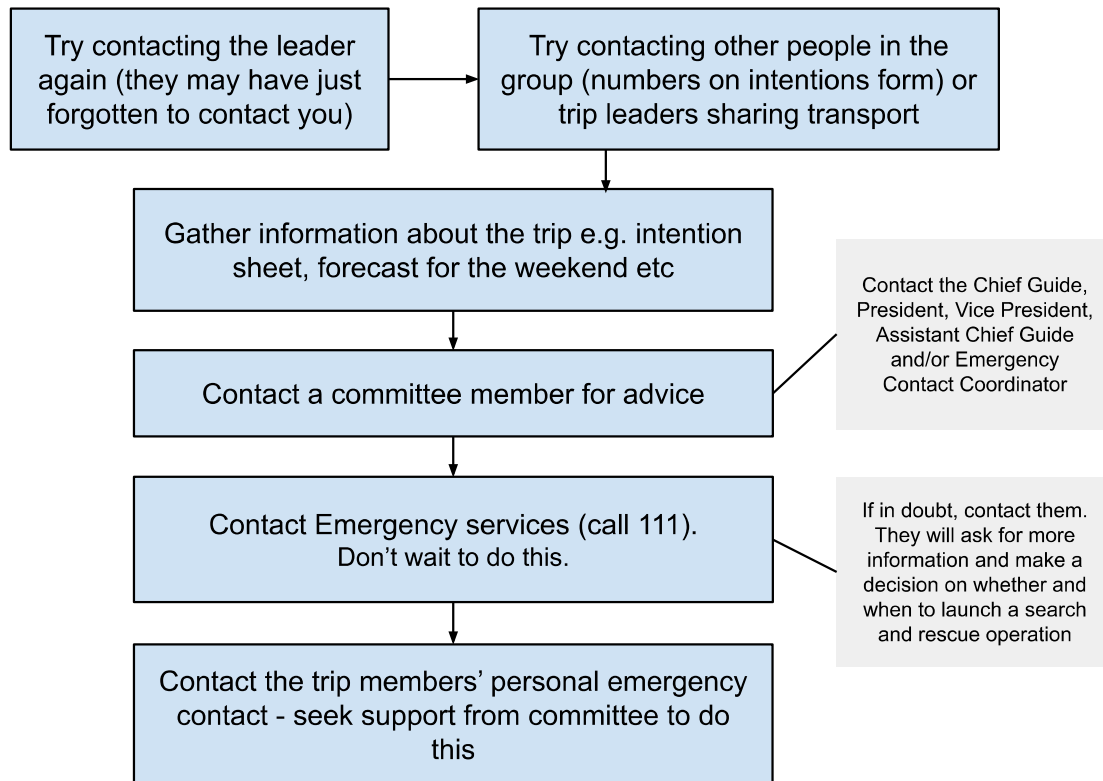
## PROCEDURE FOR PLB ACTIVATION

(What to do when a PLB is activated and rescue services get in touch with the Emergency Contact.)



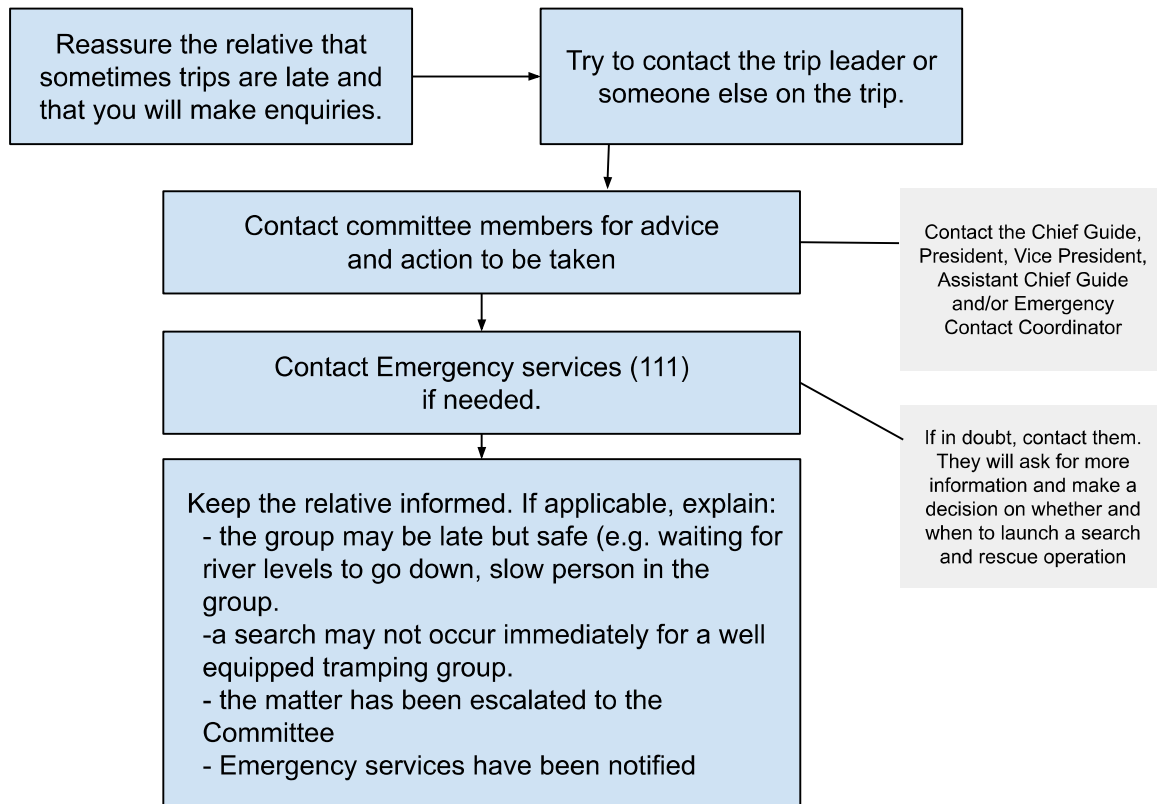
## PROCEDURE WHEN A GROUP IS OVERDUE

(What the Emergency Contact should do if they haven't heard from a group by the Raise the Alarm Time OR if the group missed the transport meet-up.)



## PROCEDURE WHEN RECEIVING A CALL FROM A CONCERNED RELATIVE

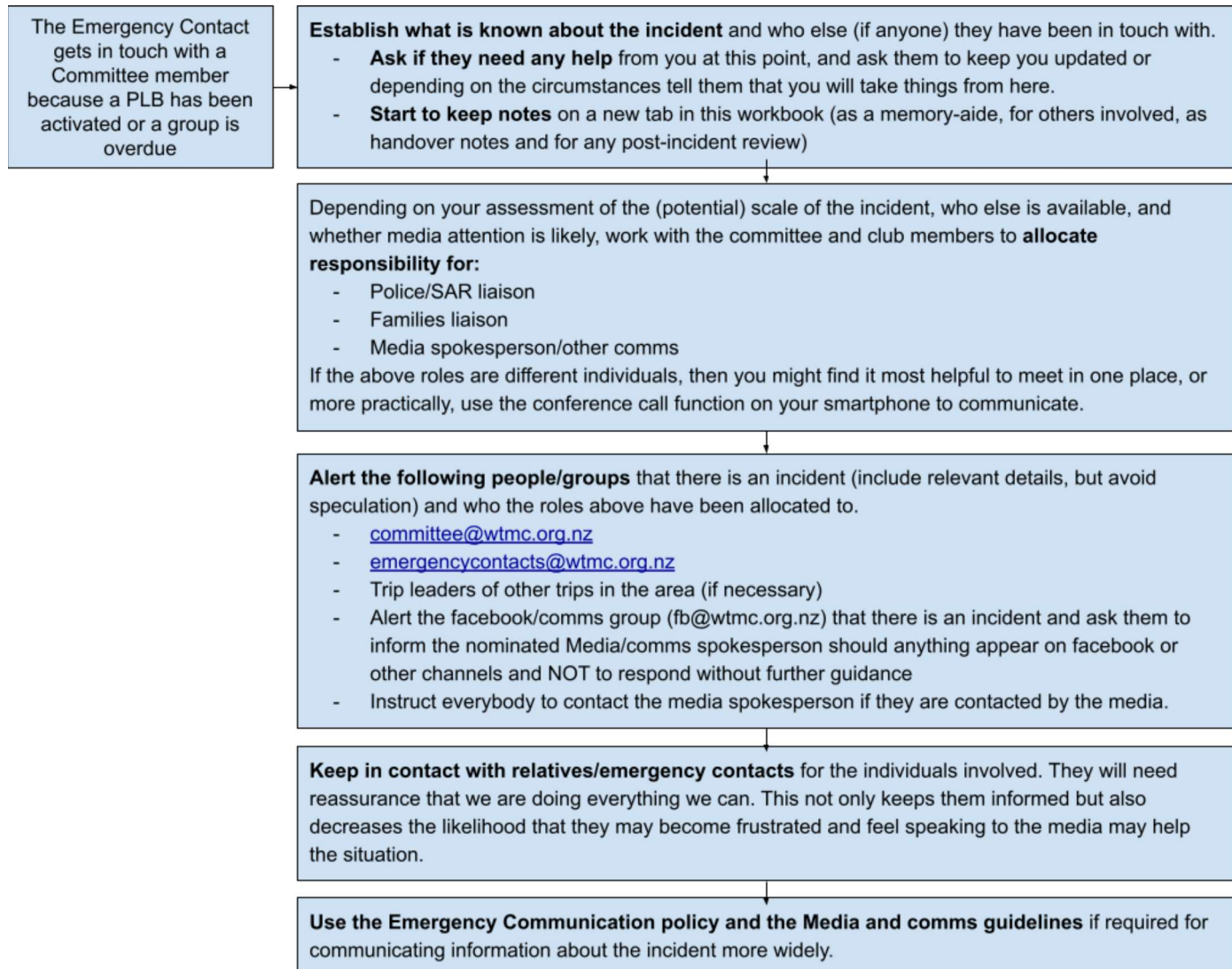
(What the Emergency Contact should do if a family member or friend calls because they haven't heard from the person they know on the trip.)



## 13 COMMITTEE EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

### Incident management procedure for Committee members

(This procedure provides information for WTMC committee members or wider members which may be of help should an incident arise.)





**Things to be aware of:**

- 13.1 The Emergency contact for the weekend may be the least experienced or knowledgeable about the club and therefore is not expected to manage an incident.
- 13.2 Their role is to provide emergency services with information about our trips out on a particular weekend. All the information they need for this should be provided by trip leaders in the Trip Intentions sheet.
- 13.3 Because most of us like to be out tramping at the weekends, it is not possible to nominate the role of incident manager, media spokesperson etc to any one individual. It will be a case of who's available at the time.
- 13.4 It is therefore important that our systems are flexible enough for whoever is available at the time of an incident to have the information and skills they need to manage it. This comes through having a system in place.

## **14 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION**

### **Purpose**

- 14.1 To coordinate our response to emergency incidents involving both club members and other outdoor users.

### **Context**

- 14.2 The way that we manage both media and social media comments can have a significant impact on our reputation.
- 14.3 There are many scenarios where we could be asked for comment by media or posed questions by members of the public. They could include:
- o An outdoors incident that we have no involvement in
  - o An outdoors incident where our members are witnesses or responders
  - o An outdoors incident where our members are at risk or victims
  - o Complaints relating to the driving of club vehicles
  - o An accident involving a club vehicle
- 14.4 Media or concerned members of the public may try to contact the club by multiple channels that are all managed by different club members. It's important that a consistent response is provided.
- 14.5 Club members who are contacted may not be sure how to respond to a situation or who on the committee they should ask or inform. In terms of media, club members may not be used to dealing with the media and unaware that anything they say to a journalist is on the record.
- 14.6 The emergency contact person sits at the centre of our emergency coordination system and needs to be in the loop, as do key committee roles. It's important that the President/VP/CG have access to the emergency contact's roster so they can look up who is on it.
- 14.7 Media spokespeople should hold a committee role and have received media guidance or training before doing an interview. There are several people in the club with professional media management experience who can provide advice.

### **Objective**

- 14.8 Our response to any crisis situation positions the club as credible, competent and caring, and has a positive effect on our reputation.

## Stakeholder analysis

<i>Stakeholder</i>	<i>Stake</i>	<i>Channel</i>
Media	Want strong stories, details, facts, colour Have tight deadlines	Reactive queries Facebook Proactive media releases
Public	May be concerned about safety of members they have come across May be concerned about driving of club vehicle May have a personal stake in an issue that we have been asked to comment in (eg family of victim) Generally concerned about the safety of people in the outdoors	Media Facebook Emails via website Website forum
Members	Concerned for reputation of the club Want to be kept informed about any media/public issues	Newsletter Website Club night announcements Facebook
Loved ones of members	May be concerned in the event of an incident	Emergency contact system Media Facebook
Club committee and people in other roles	Want to effectively manage the reputation of the club May be unsure of what to do if an incident occurs	Committee meetings Emails Phone calls/texts

## Strategy

14.9 That key people know what to do:

1. ***Agree process and roles*** - see flowchart below.
2. ***Make sure everyone understands their role*** - and include this in handovers
3. ***Practice*** - run a desktop/simulation/media training session every couple of years, the first one in 2017.

## Spokespeople

The President is the primary spokesperson- if the President is not available, the Chief Guide or Vice President are the spokesperson. Another committee person should also be designated

a backup spokesperson, in the event that none of these people are available.

## Key Roles

- President
- Chief Guide
- Vice President
- Back up spokesperson
- Facebook admin
- Webmaster
- Emergency contacts coordinator
- Club members with professional media expertise

Contact the Communications Officer ([communications@wtmc.org.nz](mailto:communications@wtmc.org.nz)) for the current contact details.

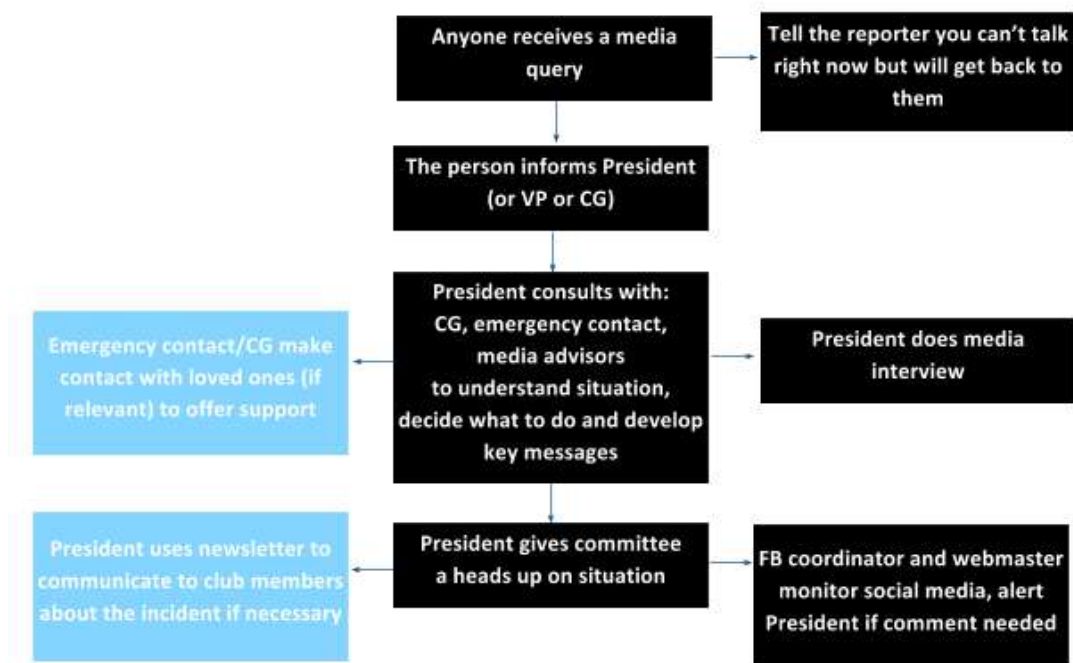
## Basic media tips

- 14.10 Remember that anything you say to a journalist is on the record. If you receive a phone call from a journalist, always say that you can't talk right now/need to check up on this, but will give them a ring back very shortly. Get their name and details.
- At this point, It can also be useful to ask the journalist: what their deadline is, who else they are talking to, and what kinds of questions they are interested in asking. However, do not let the act of asking these questions draw you into discussion. When they ask questions, just repeat that you'll give them a ring back shortly.
  - If they keep asking questions, just repeat this politely. Never say anything to a journalist off the cuff – always take the time to prepare your thoughts and check in with others.
- 14.11 Talk to other key people and agree whether you should do an interview. In some situations, it might be better not to do an interview. However, if the club bears some responsibility for the situation, then not being visible in the media also carries a reputational risk. Talk through all these implications before you make a decision.
- 14.12 If you decide to do an interview, discuss what your key messages need to be. This is a very important step.
- 14.13 When you ring the journalist back and do the interview:
- Always acknowledge the people affected/their loved ones first.
  - Don't speculate or make judgments. Immediately after an incident, the facts will be unclear. Speculation is painful for the families of those involved and detracts from the club's credibility.
  - Repeat yourself. If you don't have anything to say in response to a question, just repeat your key messages. Never say 'no comment', you sound guilty or

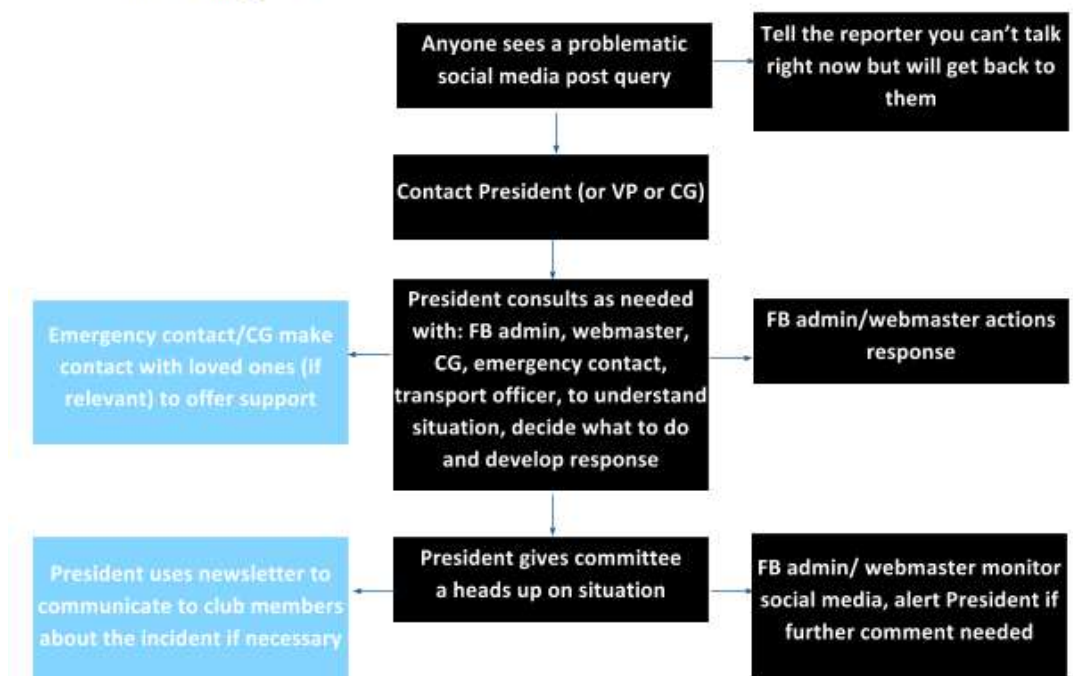
like you have something to hide. Instead, just repeat a key message.

## Processes and Roles

### *Media queries*



### *Social media post*



## 15 MEDIA AND COMMS GUIDELINES

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET CALLED BY THE MEDIA

- **Say you can't talk right now**, but that you can call them back.
- **Get their contact details**, who they are working for + what type of media, what they want to talk to you about and when their deadline is
- **Buy time** - They will likely press you for information on the spot, but be clear that you can't talk right now. (This is to buy you time to contact others, understand what the situation is and prepare the key messages that you want to share on behalf of the club).

#### Guidelines

- 15.1 Media engagement is about maintaining the club's reputation.
- 15.2 In general, as a club we do not want to engage in responding to media commentary eg Stuff comments or other social media comments.
- 15.3 However, if there are comments on our website forum, or Facebook page we may choose to respond directly or more likely make a more general statement to make it clear we are managing an incident
- 15.4 In general, information about the incident should only be shared with individuals who need to know. All some individuals need to know is that there is an incident which is being managed - this allows them to let the incident manager know if they are contacted eg by a journalist or through facebook etc.
- 15.5 **Do not share names of individuals** (or other confidential/sensitive information eg medical) involved with the media, or anyone other than police and their emergency contacts, and the WTMC committee members managing the incident
- 15.6 The good outcome from any media interaction is to have maintained (or enhanced) the reputation of the club.
- 15.7 Be wary when talking to a journalist or reporter - anything you say is on the record so don't comment off the cuff. Expect to see anything you say published.
- 15.8 It is fine to keep repeating yourself - don't feel pressured to make off the cuff comments.
- 15.9 Remember journalists don't (or are unlikely to) know anything about tramping, so you need to consider your audience. Some standard club activities will appear very extreme to them (and to their audiences)!
- 15.10 Bridge back to some of the standard lines about the club/incident if you are faced with a question you can't or shouldn't answer.
- 15.11 The first interaction with media is crucial as anything you say will likely be used repeatedly even as more information comes to light.
- 15.12 We can't control what others say to the media (eg other clubs, family members of those involved etc) but keeping in touch with family members of those affected can reduce the likelihood that they feel that going to the media will help the situation, or of them being negative in media comments.

## Standard lines you can use when speaking to the media

- What's really important is that we focus on the individuals involved. Our first concern is for their safety.
- Our role is to work with the emergency services to provide any information and assistance we can.
- At the moment, we're really focussed on ensuring the police have all the information they need to manage the incident.
- Our first concern is for the safety of everyone involved.
- Once we know what's happened, we'll be taking a look at our systems and processes to see if anything needs to change.
- We don't have all the facts at the moment, so I am not able to say. The important thing to focus on is that we're working with the Police and Search & Rescue to provide any information and assistance we can.
- We have safety and emergency systems in place and these have worked well in this situation

## General facts that can be shared with the media

You may be able to provide generic information about the club, which gives the media information but avoids speculation about the particular incident unfolding. For example:

- WTMC has over 600 members.
- We are a tramping club, with a long history of supporting adventure in the outdoors
- We have trips running every weekend, to destinations mostly in the lower North Island
- We have an emergency contacts system in place, and parties on club trips carry locator beacons and other safety equipment (first aid kits, flys etc)
- We are a tramping club. By nature our members spend a lot of time tramping. It's common for there to be two or three groups out on club trips every weekend.

## 'Template' for a standard WTMC media statement

- Once we have a reasonable understanding of an incident then it may be appropriate to put out a statement eg on our website or on the Facebook page especially if there has been media and/or public attention/interest in the matter.
- This can help stop speculation, and shows our followers that we are dealing with the situation.
- Below is an example statement which can be adapted for a particular situation:

*“A club PLB was activated on Sunday evening. Our emergency contacts system was activated and the police have been coordinating a search.*

*The group has now been located. Two members of the party were helicoptered out this morning and the other two party members are walking out today.*

*Our emergency contacts system worked well to manage this incident. Once we know more details about what's happened, we'll be reviewing our systems and processes to see if there's anything that we can learn from this weekend.*

*Thanks to everyone involved in this incident.”*

## **Basic key messages**

### ***An outdoors incident that we have no involvement in:***

- Our thoughts are with the victim/the victim's loved ones.
- At the moment it's not clear what happened.

### ***An outdoors incident where our members are witnesses or responders:***

- Our thoughts are with the victims/the victims' loved ones.
- When our members came across this incident, they did everything they could to help.
- At the moment it's not clear exactly what happened.

### ***An outdoors incident where our members are missing/unaccounted for:***

- We have an emergency contacts process so that we know when our trampers are overdue.
- We are in contact with SAR about next steps.
- At the moment it's not clear exactly what has happened.

### ***An outdoors incident where our members are victims:***

- At the moment our first priority is supporting those involved/the loved ones of those involved.
- We'd like to thank everyone involved in responding to this incident – SAR etc.
- It's not clear exactly what happened at this point. Our focus right now is on helping those involved.
- Later, when the facts are clear, there will be time for looking at policies and processes and what we can learn.

### ***Complaints relating to the driving of club vehicles:***

- We take feedback about our driving very seriously.
- Safety is our top priority.
- We'll be looking into what happened here and following up with those involved.

### ***An accident involving a club vehicle:***

- Our first priority is supporting those who have been hurt/the loved ones of those involved.
- At the moment it's not clear what happened.
- Once we know what happened, we'll be looking into what we can learn from this situation and whether any of our processes need to change.