

**3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020**

Dear Leaders,

This is an update to the COVID-19 SNW guide for leaders circulated in May. There have now been more than 23 Short Notice Walks (including repeats) offered to Ramblers' members, which is an impressive number in just over a month. These have, as expected, been extremely well-received, with participants very grateful to the leaders who have enabled them to once again enjoy walking with Ramblers.

Some leaders have been gradually increasing their walk number limits, as both they and their fellow walkers have been readjusting to being on the track again, under COVID-19 constraints. This transition has been very smooth so far, and has encompassed the important aim of providing a safe experience for all walkers, as well as comfortably complying with Government restrictions. Leaders continue to be in charge of determining the maximum numbers of participants that they feel comfortable with including on their walks, reflecting both the type and location of each walk, as well as their own preferences. Numbers are generally somewhere within the 10-15 range at the moment, including the leader. (Government limits are 20).

For those of you who are beginning to feel that you may soon be ready to consider leading again, it may be helpful for you to be in touch with one or two of the leaders who now have some experience under their belt with "COVID-19" walking and can give you first-hand accounts of how they have found it. As always, there is no pressure on anyone to resume leading until it feels right for you.

The general processes and related issues outlined below should assist leaders in managing all aspects of walks during this time. The revised (June) version of the attached *COVID-19 Walk Protocols* is the principal guide for both leaders and participants, so it's obviously important for you to be very familiar with everything that's outlined in it, including the wording of the Walks Risk Waiver. It is available for download at: <http://wearamblers.org.au/leaders.htm>

### **Walk set-up**

- We continue to recommend that, where at all possible, the walks you offer be accessible both for those using public transport and participants who choose to drive.
- Circuit walks are preferable, but if that is not always feasible, it is recommended that public transport links between the start and finish points are as short as possible.
- If you feel you need a 'refresher' on some of your walks, or would like to explore new options along the way, consider doing some pre-walks with a small group of other Ramblers.
- As indicated above, the number of participants you feel would be appropriate for you to manage on a particular walk is your own choice, within the allowed limits.
- Even with a relatively small number of participants, it is recommended that a tail be put in place. This will assist in managing appropriate social distancing during the walk.
- It will be important to be aware that participants may not have been able to walk a great deal, or have had experience on a variety of track / path surfaces during the past few months, so some may take a little while to regain their full bushwalking skills.

### **Short Notice Walk information to include**

- As usual, please provide general details of your walk's location, approximate distance, Grade level and any other details of the terrain that might assist potential participants in deciding if it's a good fit for them.
- Please don't provide the starting time for your walk in the Short Notice Walk details. It should be given only to people whose walk bookings you have accepted. (You may also prefer to provide the exact meeting point only to this group). This is intended to reduce the possibility of others just turning up unexpectedly for the walk, and then having to be turned away.
- Give clear information about your preferred contact details, including any general restrictions on timing of phone calls.

### Walks booking process

- Members interested in a particular walk can contact the leader named in the Short Notice Walk e-mail they have received, using the leader's preferred contact details.
- If there are still places available for the walk when they contact you, and you both decide that it is a suitable walk for them to undertake (*with the proviso that, as leader, your opinion on this must take precedence*), you can let them know the starting time and meeting point for the walk.
- You will also need to request their basic contact information, both so that you can be in touch with them again if needed, and for the **No touch sign-on** process, to facilitate your completion of the usual Walks record. It's recommended that you fill in as much of this as possible before the walk, so that it can be completed more easily and discreetly.
- If all places available for the walk have already been filled (on a first come, first in basis), you can add people to a Reserve list, in case someone has to withdraw before the walk takes place (and has let you know about it in good time). Make sure you record contact details for the Reserve group.
- In attempting to increase the number of Ramblers who can access walking opportunities, we ask that you also use the Reserve list to offer first choice of booking for your next suitable walk, to those on your list.

### Other walk issues

- During your circle time at the start of the walk, make sure you go through the routine of reading out the current Walks Risk Waiver to everyone and then tick off each person's individual verbal agreement to this on your sign-on sheet.
- Check that your First Aid kit includes an intact face mask and disposable gloves, in case any kind of physical assistance is required for a participant during your walk.
- As part of any potential need for contact tracing, please note any encounters with non-Ramblers during your walk which last for more than 15 minutes. All available details should be noted (time, location and any personal contact information provided) and sent with the sign-on sheet to the Walks Co-ordinator, following the walk.

If there's anything you are unsure about, please be in touch with either Jeanie Lai, Walks Co-ordinator: [wearamblerssydney5@gmail.com](mailto:wearamblerssydney5@gmail.com) or me, and we will do our best to assist in any way we can. All feedback will be really welcome, both on the process itself and how walks are going. We can then look at making adjustments, as required. And of course as government directives change, we will keep you up-to-date on any implications they might have for Ramblers' walks.

Very best wishes,

Rosemary

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