



Bushwalking NSW

Annual Report 2015

President's Report

Well, what a tumultuous year it has been for the administration of Bushwalking NSW! We finish the year with a different President than we started with, we have had three different administrative officers, and now have our first executive officer. Despite these changes, we have managed to keep the organisation ticking over quite well, and each of these people has contributed significantly to support of bushwalking clubs and bushwalkers in NSW. It speaks volumes for the organisation to keep functioning smoothly even while undergoing so many changes. Each of these people has played a positive role and we are in great shape to build on the work over the last year.

It's an exciting time to be a bushwalker in NSW, and statistics released earlier this year by Destination NSW indicate that over 5.5 million people went bushwalking in NSW in the 12 months leading up to September 2014 – that's a lot of walkers! With so many walkers and so much walking, it is important to have strong and coordinated representation in an organisation such as Bushwalking NSW, and we're excited about some of the work we have been doing this year.

“Over 5.5 million people went bushwalking in NSW in the 12 months leading up to September 2014”

Our key focuses in this past year have been to improve support for bushwalkers' access to, and the protection of and public land; reviewing our functions and prioritising our work to ensure we tackle sensible and achievable goals; and finally the engagement of an executive officer to provide strong and dedicated leadership to ensure that we provide strong support and services to our clubs.

Kirsten Mayer is our new executive officer, and while she has only been in the role for a few weeks, she's jumped straight into the deep end at the busiest time of the year, and we're looking forward to some breathing space after the AGM so that she can develop and oversee the implementation of a new strategic plan. Bushwalking NSW drew on experience and advice from other state bushwalking bodies in a Bushwalking Australia face-to-face meeting in November, and it is good to see the relationships developed through Bushwalking Australia providing this assistance across the broader bushwalking community

Both presidents have been fortunate to be supported by good committee members, administrative and executive officers, and we take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts over the last year. This is a great time to get involved in the management of an organisation such as Bushwalking NSW, and we always love to see new faces and fresh talent in the Committee, so I encourage you all to consider putting your hand up and having a go!

Presidents: **David Morrison**: August 2014 – January 2015 and
Mitchell Isaacs: February – August 2015



Mitchell Isaacs
President
Bushwalking
NSW
February –
August 2015

Achievements

- Executive Officer position created and filled
- Providing support for Bushwalkers on public land, including crown (paper) roads and input to the current review underway on crown land, and further development of a policy on development in National Parks
- Successfully liaised with Blue Mountains City Council to ensure that clubs would not face the burden of a licensing scheme in order to walk on council land
- Increased use of social media through Facebook and Twitter
- Developed a media policy to help increase the voice and representation of Bushwalkers in NSW
- Significant review of the Risk Management policy undertaken
- Increased use of technology such as videoconferencing to enable more effective management
- Regular dissemination of news and updates to members through monthly newsletters and social media
- Rejuvenated General Meeting format with guest speakers and interactive discussion on bush issues and club matters
- Continued support to the Bushwalkers' Wilderness Rescue Squad, which has provided a separate report

Future directions

Development of the strategic plan for Bushwalking NSW will commence immediately following the 2015 AGM. The strategic plan will outline the future directions for Bushwalking NSW alongside a financial plan. It is known from previous engagement with clubs that the following objectives are important and should be part of Bushwalking NSW's future direction:

- Develop and publish Bushwalking NSW Strategic Plan
- Collect feedback from clubs on our direction and performance; and provide an annual report card
- Make our general meetings more engaging and useful for clubs - including sharing information amongst clubs on recruitment, leadership and training
- Continue to strengthen our safety and risk management advice - including publishing the Bushwalking NSW risk management policy
- Continue to strengthen our conservation message - including publishing the Bushwalking NSW policy on development in National Parks
- Strengthen our profile and broaden our connections to all Bushwalking NSW stakeholders
- Capitalise on the popularity of The Bushwalker to achieve more of Bushwalking NSW's objectives
- Increase our engagement with clubs in regional areas
- Broaden our income sources and increase our income to allow our services to increase
- Use technology to improve our services and support to our members

Management Committee Members

Bushwalking NSW would like to thank all its committee members, without whom Bushwalking NSW could not operate.

Role	Person	Period
President	David Morrison	August 2014 – January 2015
President	Mitchell Isaacs	February 2015 – August 2015
Vice-President	Mitchell Isaacs	August 2014 – February 2015
Vice-President	Sierra Classen	February 2015 – August 2015
Secretary	Margaret Covi	Full year
Treasurer	Vacant	August 2014 – February 2015
Treasurer	Alex Allchin	February 2015 – August 2015

Ordinary committee members:

	Keith Maxwell	Full year
	Alex Allchin	August 2014 – February 2015
	Sierra Classen	August 2014 – February 2015
	David Trinder	Full year
	Dick Weston	Full year
	Jim Callaway	August 2014 – February 2015
	Bruce Lyeman	February 2015 – June 2015
	Peter Hart	February 2015 – August 2015

Appointed Positions

Bushwalking NSW would like to thank all its volunteers in appointed positions, without whom Bushwalking NSW could not operate.

Position	Person
Conservation Officer	Sierra Classen
Tracks and Access Officer	Alex Allchin
Risk Management Officer	Margaret Covi
Media Officer	Mitchell Isaacs
Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (ex-officio)	Keith Maxwell
Training Officer	David Trinder
The Bushwalker Editor	Roger Caffin
Website Manager	David Morrison

Treasurer's Report

OVERVIEW. After an extending period of time without a Treasurer for the organisation, my time in the role after the February EGM sure has been interesting. Trying to find my feet and chasing up loose ends from years past has kept me busy.

Besides gaining a Treasurer, much change has occurred in Bushwalking NSW since the 2014 AGM. We've had significant staffing changes in the year and now have an Executive Officer. All payments have been made for our new website and the mail-out process for The Bushwalker has been simplified, freeing up more time for our Executive Officer to focus on the running of Bushwalking NSW. An overdue activity statement from 2011 was also rectified with the ATO.

The attached profit and loss statement shows an operating cost of \$7,144.87 over the 2014 – 15 financial year for Bushwalking NSW, and accumulated funds at the end of the financial year sit at \$94,564. This gives the organisation a future reserve for unexpected expenses and continued fulfilment of our objectives, serving both our clubs and the wider bushwalking community.

THE BUSHWALKER. Along with the additional cost due to the simplification of The Bushwalker mail out, printing costs have also increased. Combined with a drop in advertising revenue, the magazine has become a greater cost than previous years. Currently, around 2200 magazines are printed each issue.

GRANTS. We unsuccessful applied for a grant to undertake environmental education in March of 2015, however much was learnt in the process. It is expected that the number of grant applications applied for over the next financial year will increase, with the aim of providing additional funds to enable the organisation to better pursue our objectives.

Treasurer: **Alex Allchin:** February – August 2015



Alex Allchin
Treasurer
Bushwalking
NSW
February –
August 2015



Bushwalking NSW Profit & Loss Statement

JULY 2014 THROUGH JUNE 2015

Prepared by Chrissy D Bookkeeping on 5/08/2015 8:30:12 PM

Income	
Advertising Income	\$3,560.00
Annual Affiliate Dues	\$40,847.21
Bank Interest	\$2,525.32
Donations	\$10.00
Insurance - Public Liability	\$41,378.45
Insurance - Personal Accident	\$44,580.22
Total Income	<u>\$132,901.20</u>
Cost of Sales	
Gross Profit	<u>\$132,901.20</u>
Expenses	
Accounting & Bookkeeping	\$1,056.00
Advertising	\$75.00
Bank & Government Charges	\$284.25
Dues & Subscriptions	\$656.00
Donations	\$2,575.00
Insurance	
Insurance - Public Liability	\$43,666.85
Insurance - Personal Injury	\$45,716.02
Total Insurance	<u>\$89,382.87</u>
Levy - Annual	\$7,935.42
Magazine Costs	\$5,565.00
Meetings & Conferences	\$1,346.80
Employment Expenses	
Travel Allowance	\$73.44
Wages & Salaries	\$15,483.51
Workers' Compensation	\$175.00
Superannuation	\$1,475.82
Total Employment Expenses	<u>\$17,207.77</u>
Postage & Shipping	\$4,730.51
Rent / Electricity/ Outgoings	\$3,548.03
Rent - PO Box	\$115.00
Stationary / Office Supplies	\$122.95
Telephone/ Internet	\$1,066.42
Website	\$4,275.58
Suspense Need Information	\$103.47
Total Expenses	<u>\$140,046.07</u>
Operating Profit	<u>-\$7,144.87</u>
Other Income	
Other Expenses	
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	<u>-\$7,144.87</u>

Bushwalking NSW Balance Sheet

AS OF JUNE 2015

Prepared by Chrissy D Bookkeeping on 5/08/2015 8:28:45 PM

Assets

Current Assets

Cash On Hand

NAB Chq Acc # 198489998

\$7,113.45

ING Interest Acc#60134750

\$87,338.42

Petty Cash

\$151.91

Total Cash On Hand

\$94,603.78

Total Current Assets

\$94,603.78

Total Assets

\$94,603.78

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Payroll Liabilities

Superannuation

\$39.82

Total Payroll Liabilities

\$39.82

Total Current Liabilities

\$39.82

Total Liabilities

\$39.82

Net Assets

\$94,563.96

Equity

Retained Earnings

\$4,445.63

Current Year Surplus/Deficit

-\$7,144.87

Historical Balancing

\$97,263.20

Total Equity

\$94,563.96

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad Annual Report

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) was founded as the self-help and self-contained search and rescue section of the NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs in 1936 by Paddy Pallin and a number of prominent bushwalkers of the time. As usual this report will cover from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. BWRS is held in high regard with the NSW Police. BWRS is respected as a specialist remote area bush search and rescue squad of the VRA (Volunteer Rescue of NSW Inc.)

CALLOUTS. As usual, BWRS had long periods of inactivity but some busy times. In October / November 2014 there was an exceptionally long search of 16 days that eventually required assistance from bushwalking clubs. Several days had elapsed since a young Armenian man, Sevak, had left his car at the Kanangra Walls carpark before the search commenced. Helicopters were used to transport teams to remote areas. Despite these resources this man was not located. BWRS appreciates the assistance of 66 club members many of whom were present on multiple days. The resultant difficulties caused within the VRA have led to a new Temporary Volunteers procedure for future occurrences of this type of search.

In December 2014 there was a shorter multiday search at Ku-ring-gai Wild Flower Gardens. An elderly volunteer left her car but failed to meet up with her bush care group.

NAVSHIELD. On the first weekend of July each year, BWRS runs NavShield as a major bush navigation training event for the Emergency Services and bushwalking club teams. Typical attendance is around 400+ personnel. Teams participate in either a one day or two day event to find as many as possible checkpoints (within the allocated time) previously set by BWRS in a 100 square km area. Additional aims are to provide publicity and showcase the navigation and co-ordination skills of BWRS. NavShield 2014 had windy but dry weather at Yalwal outside Nowra. NavShield is a great training event for all concerned.

TRAILWALKER. BWRS provides first and second safety response teams over shifts for this event of 500 teams of four persons (2,000+)!! TrailWalker provides excellent member training along with practice in co-ordination of BWRS teams whilst being involved in community outreach / potential publicity for BWRS. TrailWalker is a 100km track / fire road walkathon that uses bushland on the northern fringe of Sydney. It is held over 48 hours (on the last weekend of August) as a major fundraiser for the Oxfam charity. In 2014 there were two evacuations requiring a stretcher



Keith Maxwell
President
Bushwalkers
Wilderness
Rescue
Squad

**“In October /
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carry. The evacuation of a 120kg man injured at night was especially challenging. Paramedics and some BWRS members stayed with the patient until extra personnel arrived in the morning. The atmosphere at TrailWalker, like NavShield, is very friendly.

VERTICAL RESCUE. Many BWRS members are accredited to the NSW State Rescue Board recognised vertical rescue competency for personnel access (abseiling / prusiking) plus rigging, lifting and lowering patients in stretchers over cliffs. In February an exercise was done with a tracking line as a possible option to repeat the above difficult evacuation.

FIRST AID. Bushwalkers can now become qualified in "Provide First Aid" (formerly known as "Senior First Aid") in just ONE DAY. BWRS will continue to offer these courses to encourage members of Bushwalking NSW clubs to gain some skills in First Aid. BWRS aims to make getting

“Bushwalkers can now become qualified in "Provide First Aid" (formerly known as "Senior First Aid") in just ONE DAY”

First Aid qualified as bushwalker friendly (including a discount fee) and relevant as possible.

The required syllabus for Remote Area First Aid (RAFA) courses has changed. BWRS did not offer RAFA courses in the previous year but is continuing to explore options for future training to suit BWRS members and bushwalkers who visit remote areas.

EQUIPMENT. Our squad headquarters, opened in 2012, has been a great asset in storing equipment. It is now possible to better maintain equipment (eg. electrical "test & tag") as now required by all emergency services. A (dollar for dollar) grant has been received to replace our UHF field radios. These radios complement our very effective HF network of field team radios.

TRAINING. A major training activity was Operation Wittenoom in October 2014 which was a major co-ordinated search over three days to locate a small plane missing in Barrington Tops since 1981. Members of the Toyota Land Cruiser Club transported our strong group of searchers close to their search areas.

Like all emergency services BWRS members quantify their skills through Competency Based Training (CBT) Operational members are experienced bushwalkers with additional skills in radio communication, vertical rescue, observation, emergency management, First Aid and other bush search and rescue skills. This CBT training aims to meet national guidelines for recognition Australia wide.

PUBLICITY / OUTREACH. The BWRS website gets many 'hits' with its

detailed information on bush safety, distress beacons, recent callouts and links to other sites such as the VRA and Bushwalking NSW. BWRS is also active on Facebook with many followers. Publicity is also an important component of involvement in TrailWalker and NavShield.

As a safety service BWRS provided safety teams to a number of major rogaine / endurance events during the year such as the Paddy Pallin Rogaine.

RENEWAL. It is pleasing to note that in the past few years BWRS has been able to renew itself. A number of members have stepped forward to fill roles when long standing members have taken a break.

MEMBERSHIP. I would like more bushwalkers to consider joining BWRS. BWRS as part of Bushwalking NSW Inc. provides a valuable community service. We have tasks big and small to suit all levels of commitment. Be part of a great community asset!!

“[BWRS has] helped resist public pressure on government for controls on bushwalking”

Please note that our strong bushwalker based bush search and rescue organisation has helped resist public pressure on government for controls on bushwalking!!

CONCLUSION. BWRS with its great people and diverse events is held in high regard by NSW Police and the VRA for remote area search and rescue. During the past year BWRS was active in a wide range of activities from community outreach to training events. The Kanangra Walls search of November 2014 was exceptionally large. NavShield 2014 was another good event. TrailWalker had interesting / challenging evacuations. A number of BWRS personnel are trained to the vertical (cliff) rescue competency recognised by the State Rescue Board. There were successful (one day) St John Ambulance "Provide First Aid" courses. Remote Area First Aid (RAFA) instruction is under review. The CBT training program comprising internal and externally offered modules remains strong. Our storage shed in western Sydney has enabled us to better maintain and store our equipment. BWRS remains active in publicity and encouraging bush safety.

In conclusion, I trust that you will agree that BWRS remains an important community asset and is well placed to move forward into 2015 / 2016 with Bushwalking NSW to promote safe and enjoyable bushwalking. As always, for more information on BWRS, NavShield, bush safety, First Aid training etc. see our website at www.bwrs.org.au

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad President: **Keith Maxwell**