

# Lead Ride / Trail Ride Responsibilities

The performance of the leader is a critical factor in the safe conduct of an outdoor activity. The leader is required to accept responsibility for the planning, preparation and conduct of the activity by:

- Maintaining current skills, qualifications and experience as required;
- Implementing and/or supervising activities that are suited to the individual/ group/ environment; and
- Taking responsibility for the environmental preservation of the sites and surrounding areas.

The leader's overall responsibility does not negate the duty of dependent participants, who should be responsible for their own actions and have agreed to participate knowing the inherent risks and circumstances involved.

## THE LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The leader takes overall responsibility and coordinates the entire group. They supervise and aim to achieve the objectives of the group or individual participants' session. The leader may delegate individual tasks but they maintain ultimate responsibility.

### RECOMMENDED LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- working within the policies, procedures and activity standard operating procedures (SOPs) of the organisational stakeholders and land managers (where applicable)
- Confirming the activity plan (Section 4)
- Researching and planning for likely hazards, incidents and emergencies
- Confirming that an emergency strategy has been lodged with an appointed external contact
- Checking the first aid kit and communication equipment before the activity
- Checking all group equipment before departing and after returning
- Carrying out a full briefing session and ensuring that all participants and staff understand it (Section 5.1.1)
- Assessing that each participant's level of knowledge, ability and skill is appropriate for the difficulty and complexity of the activity, and that the equipment is adequate
- Obtaining each participant's acknowledgement that the leader has the role of leading the group
- Ensuring that participants and staff have completed all documentation, and that it has been collated
- Ensuring that the message of minimal impact to the environment is conveyed and adhered to • managing and minimising the activity's effect on the environment (Sections 4.1.1 and 4.12)
- Ensuring that the group knows where to access safe drinking water
- Conducting a practice session of required skills and ongoing coaching of technical skills
- Managing last-minute checks, including weather and equipment checks
- Taking a head count before, during (regularly) and immediately after the activity
- Maintaining a constant awareness of the group's physical and psychological condition
- Managing the group to avoid or minimise the effects of hazards
- Complying with any land manager's requirements, including permits and approvals (Sections 4.1 and 4.3)
- Controlling the pace of the group and resting the group if necessary
- Maintaining observation of participants
- Maintaining communication between the participants
- Facilitating the achievement of objectives (e.g. through a post-activity debrief)
- Monitoring participant experience and following up with the group
- Delegating responsibility to any support personnel and ensuring that any vehicle used is suitable
- Notifying external contacts when the group has completed the activity and returned safely
- Ensuring any incidents are managed, documented and reported
- Ensuring equipment is logged and packed away.

## PRE-ACTIVITY BRIEFING

The leader should clearly communicate all information about an activity to potential participants, leaving sufficient time for them to make an informed decision about their participation.

Each leader and organisation may have a preferred way to deliver a pre-activity briefing. The method may depend on an activity's length and complexity.

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### THE BRIEFING SHOULD MAKE PARTICIPANTS AWARE OF:

- the identity and role of activity leaders
- activity objectives
- the activity's nature and inherent risks
- current and anticipated conditions (e.g. environment, remoteness, weather)
- the land managers' requirements (e.g. specific conditions that apply to the site)
- procedures for following (spacing, pace, verbal calls, hand signals, use of indicators)
- participants' responsibility to have adequate safety gear relevant to the activity (refer Motorcycling Australia's Guidelines for Protective Clothing: [www.ma.org.au](http://www.ma.org.au))
- rider etiquette (refer Motorcycling Australia's Code of Conduct: [www.ma.org.au](http://www.ma.org.au))
- essential equipment and clothing
- correct use and/or fit of equipment including
  - helmets that comply with Australian Standard 1698 to be worn
  - participants instructed to wear fastened helmet at all times
  - ensure that participants have appropriate fuel for the trip being undertaken
- how the session will be managed (timings, procedures)
- the agreed methods of communication within the group (signals and calls), which they will devise before commencing the activity
- ride position/tips for the terrain to be encountered (where relevant)
- the type of food, the amount of food and water they will need and water availability
- conservation strategies, including protecting flora and fauna, removing rubbish and being aware of sanitation
- emergency procedures so participants behave appropriately in an incident or emergency, including emergency communication methods
- the leader's expectations of participants, and their responsibility to behave as requested (e.g. conduct, safety zones, equipment)
- Any restrictions to participation
- Dependent participants to be aware they have a responsibility to call obstacles and communicate all incidents, accidents and near misses.

Leaders should ask participants to acknowledge that they understand the content of the briefing, and ask them to voice any concerns and ask questions about the activity. Leaders should consider an alternative briefing method for participants from non-English speaking backgrounds.