

## Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare Volunteer Members Working Alone Policy



### Purpose:

To ensure the safety and accountability of Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare (CHRL) volunteers working alone on site.

### Policy Statement:

Volunteers are generally encouraged to work in pairs or within a group. However, if working alone is necessary, the following procedures must be adhered to. This policy aims to enhance volunteer safety and ensure proper record-keeping.

When working alone, the volunteer must undertake their duty of care and responsibilities for their own health and safety before starting any work activities. This includes ensuring that all procedures are followed, the work environment is safe, and all communications are completed as outlined below. There are added responsibilities when working alone, which include heightened awareness and accountability for your own safety.

If the volunteer has a pre-existing medical condition, it is essential for them to notify the CHRL office as soon as possible if this was not recorded on the volunteers CHRL membership application. If the volunteer has a non-life-threatening medical condition and they choose to work alone it is done so at their own risk. To ensure volunteer safety CHRL strongly encourages volunteers to avoid working alone on site.

For those with a life-threatening medical condition, you will only be permitted to work on a Landcare site as part of a group, not individually.

### Procedures:

#### 1. Notification to Site Coordinator:

- Prior to commencing work, the volunteer must inform the site coordinator of their intent to work alone. The following information must be provided:
  - **Time of Starting:** The exact time when the volunteer begins their work.
  - **Expected Finish Time:** The estimated time when the volunteer expects to complete their work.
  - **Location:** Notify the precise location of where the volunteer will be working and tasks to be undertaken.

#### 2. Notification to a Family Member or Emergency Contact:

- The volunteer should inform a family member or emergency contact about their work plans, including the start time and expected finish time. This ensures that someone can check on the volunteer if they do not return as expected. This is particularly important for Site Coordinators, as they do not have a supervisor to report to.

#### 3. Communication Upon Completion:

- Upon finishing their work, the volunteer must contact the site coordinator and family member/emergency contact by text message or phone call. This communication should confirm the safe completion of their activity.

#### 4. First Aid Kit:

- The volunteer is required to personally provide and have a first aid kit on hand while working alone, which must include a snake bandage.

#### 5. Mobile Phone, Water, and Medication:

- The volunteer must have a charged mobile phone, adequate water supply, and any required medication with them whenever they are on site.

## 6. Requirement to Have Emergency Plus App:

- The volunteer is required to have the Emergency Plus app installed on their phone. This app is crucial for providing accurate location information to emergency services if needed.

## 7. Site Selection and Risk Assessment

- The volunteer must select a suitable area for their work or carry out a risk assessment of the work location. This includes considerations such as:
  - Keeping away from steep cliffs and creek edges.
  - Choosing areas that are not too isolated, near facilities like a carpark, walking track, or residences where help can be sought if needed.

## 8. Record Keeping:

- The site coordinator is responsible for recording the start and finish times in the CHRL logbook for any volunteer working alone.

## Responsibilities:

### • Volunteers:

- Adhere to the statement and procedures outlined in this policy.
- Ensure timely communication with the site coordinator.
- Inform a family member or emergency contact of their work plans.
- Install and have the Emergency Plus app installed on their phone.
- Prioritise personal safety while working alone – first aid kit with snake bandage.
- Ensure they have a charged mobile phone, water, and any required medication with them on site.
- Select a suitable work area or conduct a risk assessment of the location, considering safety factors like terrain and accessibility.

### • Site Coordinators:

- Same responsibilities as volunteers above if working alone (excluding point 2)
- Maintain accurate records of volunteer activities in the CHRL logbook.
- Ensure volunteers are aware of and comply with this policy.
- Respond promptly to communications from volunteers working alone.

By following these procedures, all CHRL volunteers can enhance their safety and minimise their risk while working alone on site.

*CHRL Working Alone Policy  
Adopted by CHRL Executive  
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