



RiverConnect OH & S Policy

for Schools completing on-ground works in the RiverConnect area.

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In partnership with: Parks Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Central Sub Region, Yorta Yorta Joint Body, Yorta Yorta Nations, Rumbalara Cooperative, Word and Mouth and Goulburn Murray Landcare Network.

1. Introductory summary.

Schools are encouraged to undertake a range of activities within their “reach”. For most of these activities schools are able to organise and undertake them independently themselves, with RiverConnect staff available to provide suggestions, advice and on some occasions assist with the activities.

However, if schools wish to undertake activities that are classified as “on-ground activities”, this will require consultation and/or direction from the appropriate land managers. These activities include revegetation (including watering, mulching and tree guarding), weeding, placement of nesting boxes or picnic tables, seed collection and other activities as directed by land managers. It is important that these activities are consistent with existing land management plans to avoid difficulties arising such as students planting in an area that was set down for a fuel reduction burn or weeding in an area just recently sprayed. Therefore to ensure that such activities occur smoothly and safely, certain procedures need to be in place. These are detailed in this document and schools are required to follow them. Every endeavour has been made to make these as easy as possible and the RiverConnect Education Coordinator is available to assist schools.

Please read this document carefully and follow all of the requirements.

In summary

- 1. At all times schools are responsible for the safety of students and staff.**
- 2. Permission must be sought to complete on-ground works in the Shepparton Mooroopna RiverConnect environment.**
- 3. This OH & S policy applies to schools planning to conduct on-ground activities.**

For more information about the RiverConnect Adopt-a-reach program and any aspect regarding the education component of RiverConnect please contact:

RiverConnect Education Project Officer
Ph: 03 58 32 9493
Email: (riverconnect@shepparton.vic.gov.au)
Postal address: Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton Vic 3632

2. Risk Management disclaimer.

Note for Principals and teachers

All schools are asked to please note the following disclaimer:

The RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee and the people listed below endeavour to support schools in their Adopt-a-reach projects:

- Bonny Schnorrenberg – RiverConnect Education Project officer
- The RiverConnect Project Officer, and
- the relevant RiverConnect Land Managers from:
 - Greater Shepparton City Council
 - Parks Victoria
 - Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.
 - Department of Sustainability and the Environment
 - Yorta Yorta Nations

As such they encourage schools to undertake activities with their students within their RiverConnect Reach or the general Shepparton Mooroopna river environs, by suggesting a wide range of possible activities schools may wish to undertake. They also may actively assist with on-site school activities.

However, it is important that schools understand that RiverConnect staff, the City of Greater Shepparton, Parks Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority cannot accept any responsibility for the safety of students and staff when they are undertaking activities in the river environment.

Therefore to ensure the safety of their students, it is vitally important that schools follow ALL the required liability, risk management and/or safety procedures of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, as well as their own internal school procedures, in addition to any such procedures they may be requested to follow by the Greater Shepparton City Council, the Parks Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment, the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and/or Yorta Yorta Nations.

3. Prior approval process.

If you wish to complete on-ground works in “your reach” you are requested to gain prior approval and advice from the appropriate Land Manager before proceeding. Unless a school has a prior agreement with their Land Manager this is to be done by contacting RiverConnect Project Officer several weeks in advance. You are requested to do this by phoning or emailing to discuss your proposal or by completing the form as attached as Appendix 1.

4. Risk Management processes

a. Parks Victoria

Processes to be followed for Schools completing on-ground works on land managed by Parks Victoria.

1. The school is to ensure that both ALL the appropriate Department of Education and Early Childhood Development procedures and ALL the required school internal processes for the activities are followed.

2. In addition Parks Victoria (PV) requires the following
 - a. Preliminary preparation:
 - i. Prior to any student participating in the program, a letter is to be sent to his/her parents with a permission form to be signed and returned giving consent for the students to participate. Where the students will be involved with spraying, the form is to include parental permission to do so.

 - ii. For ongoing programs such as VCAL community projects, students are to complete an OH & S course at the school prior to commencing work in the river environment.

 - b. Orientation:

Schools are to organise an on-site familiarisation session with the students at the commencement of their project. This session is to be led by a PV staff member and will include the completion of Parts 1 & 2 of the PV Volunteer Activity form by the PV staff member. This will necessitate teachers giving the PV member a list of all the people who will be participating on-site in their program.

 - c. Supervision:

When working on-site, it is the responsibility of the school to have a teacher present to take overall supervision responsibility for the students at all times. If no teacher is present with the students during a RiverConnect run activity the school is still responsible for the students present. At no time will the RiverConnect staff be held responsible for the actions of students who are unsupervised during the activity.

 - d. Attendance records:

Teachers are to keep an attendance roll for each session and store at the school. The records are to be kept for 12 months after the program has concluded.

e. Risk Assessment

A site survey is to be completed at the commencement of each on-site session (See attached form. Appendix 2)

The required processes are as follows.

i. For secondary school level

At the commencement of each session the Site survey form will be completed verbally with the student group and the results recorded. This is to include a discussion of the appropriate safety procedures to be followed for any potential risks that are thus identified as relevant for the activities to be undertaken.

ii. For primary school level

The Site survey form will be completed by staff prior to the commencement of each session. The results will be recorded and staff will then discuss with the students the appropriate safety procedures to follow for any potential risks that are thus identified as relevant for the activities to be undertaken.

f. Personal protective equipment:

i. All students will be required to wear filled in shoes when working on-site. Students not complying will be given the option to wear provided gumboots with sox or not work on-site. In addition during spraying activities students will be required to wear eye goggles, elbow length PVC gloves and overalls when mixing and to wear overalls and eye goggles when spraying. RiverConnect will provide these items for student use.

ii. When students are involved with spraying PV will provide water on-site for washing .

iii. Students are to follow the school's Sunsmart policy.

iv. The school is to take a first aid kit and mobile phone on-site.

g. Recording of incidents:

Any incidents are to be recorded by the school and a copy faxed to the RiverConnect Education Project Officer who will forward a copy to Bruce Wehner (Parks Vic Land Manager). See Appendix 3 Fax cover sheet.

h. Photographs:

Schools are to forward the names of any students who are not to be photographed to RiverConnect Education Project Officer.

i. Advance funding insurance:

If relevant, schools to complete the necessary Advance Funding form re Community Partner organisation \$10 million insurance cover and ensure that this is in place.

Bruce Wehner
Parks Vic Land manager
Ph: 5832-0222
Mob: 0419 533 220
Fax: xx
Email: bwehner@parks.vic.gov.au

RiverConnect Education Project Officer
Ph: 03 58329493
Mobile: 0488 313 152
Fax: 5831 1987
Email: riverconnect@shepparton.vic.gov.au



b. Greater Shepparton City Council

Processes to be followed for Schools completing on-ground works on land managed by the Greater Shepparton City Council.

1. The school is to ensure that both ALL the appropriate Department of Education and Early Childhood Development procedures and ALL the required school internal processes for the activities are followed.

2. In addition The Greater Shepparton City Council (COGS) requires the following
 - a. Preliminary preparation:
 - iii. Prior to any student participating in the program, a letter is to be sent to his/her parents with a permission form to be signed and returned giving consent for the students to participate. Where the students will be involved with spraying, the form is to include parental permission to do so.

 - iv. For ongoing programs such as VCAL community projects, students are to complete an OH & S course at the school prior to commencing work in the river environment.

 - b. Orientation:

Schools are to organise an on-site familiarisation session with the students at the commencement of their project. This session is to be led by a COGS staff member and will include a discussion of the potential hazards of working in the environment.

 - c. Supervision:

When working on-site, it is the responsibility of the school to have a teacher present to take overall supervision responsibility for the students at all times. If no teacher is present with the students during a RiverConnect run activity the school is still responsible for the students present. At no time will the RiverConnect staff be held responsible for the actions of students who are unsupervised during the activity.

 - d. Attendance records:

Teachers are to keep an attendance roll for each session and store at the school. The records are to be kept for 12 months after the program has concluded.

e. Risk Assessment

- i. The appropriate Risk Assessments as per Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and school internal requirements are to be completed prior to the commencement of an on-ground works activity and it is to be reviewed prior to each subsequent activity. Copies of the assessment are to be kept at the school for 12 months after the program has concluded.
- ii. A site survey is to be completed at the commencement of each on-site session (See attached form. Appendix 2)

The required processes are as follows.

- For secondary school level
At the commencement of each session the Site survey form will be completed verbally with the student group and the results recorded. This is to include a discussion of the appropriate safety procedures to be followed for any potential risks that are thus identified as relevant for the activities to be undertaken.
- For primary school level
The Site survey form will be completed by staff prior to the commencement of each session. The results will be recorded and staff will then discuss with the students the appropriate safety procedures to follow for any potential risks that are thus identified as relevant for the activities to be undertaken.

f. Personal protective equipment:

- v. All students will be required to wear filled in shoes when working on-site. Students not complying will be given the option to wear provided gumboots with sox or not work on-site. In addition during spraying activities students will be required to wear eye goggles, elbow length PVC gloves and overalls when mixing and to wear overalls and eye goggles when spraying. RiverConnect will provide these items for student use.
- vi. When students are involved with spraying COGS will provide water on-site for washing .
- vii. Students are to follow the school's Sunsmart policy.
- viii. The school is to take a first aid kit and mobile phone on-site.

g. Recording of incidents:

Any incidents are to be recorded by the school and a copy faxed to the RiverConnect Education Project Officer See Appendix 3 Fax cover sheet.

h. Photographs:

Schools are to forward the names of any students who are not to be photographed to the RiverConnect Education Project Officer.

i. Advance funding insurance:

If relevant, schools to complete the necessary Advance Funding form re Community Partner organisation \$10 million insurance cover and ensure that this is in place.

Appendix 1:

RiverConnect – Adopt-a-reach

Request to complete on-ground works in “our reach”

Please either phone or email RiverConnect to discuss the proposed works OR post the completed form to council. Alternatively there is a digital version on the CD of your Adopt-a-reach Information kit which you may use.

School:

Contact Name:

Email:

Phone:

Location within your reach where activity is to occur:

Proposed on-ground works you wish to complete:

Date of activity:

Time of activity:

Any assistance required:

Appendix 2: Site Safety Survey for schools when completing on-ground works.

To be completed on-site by staff and students before commencing the job

Please consider if any of the following hazards are present on-site or involved on the job?

If so discuss with students the appropriate safety procedures to be followed for any potential risks that are thus identified.

Date																				
Manual Handling (Lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, throwing, carrying & repetitive work)																				
Plant & Equipment																				
Hazardous Substances/ Dangerous Goods / Asbestos																				
Loud or excessive noise																				
Potential to Fall from height																				
Animals (especially snakes) / Infectious diseases																				
Electrical wires (overhead/underground)																				
High Pressure Equipment (Fluid/Air/Gas)																				
Fire/Explosion																				
Hit or Struck																				
Vibration																				
Confined spaces																				
Slips/Trips/Falls																				
Contractors/General Public																				
Traffic Conditions / Traffic Management																				
Extreme weather conditions (heat/cold/storms)																				
Site conditions (dusty/ wet/slippery/etc) (access/egress/terrain/canopy/roads)																				
Exposure to excessive UV / Sun																				
Working in Isolation																				
Communication issues																				
Welfare of individuals (fatigue/stress/hydration)																				
Experience level of employees																				
Other																				
Can these hazards be appropriately controlled and the job done safely? Yes Proceed No. Contact Land Manager.																				
Initialled sign off.																				



RiverConnect Incident Report Fax Cover page.

Fax Transmittal Form: FAX to 58 311987

To:

**Greater Shepparton City Council
Attention: RiverConnect Education Project Officer**

From:

School.....

Teacher.....

Date sent.....

Time sent.....

Number of pages including cover page.....



In partnership with: Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Shepparton Network, Yorta Yorta Joint Body, Yorta Yorta Nations, Rumbalara Cooperative, Word and Mouth, Goulburn Murray Landcare Network, Parks Victoria, and Sir Andrew and Lady Fairley Foundation.





VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY FORM

Parks Victoria is responsible for

- ✓ **working with volunteers to develop appropriate activities and**
- ✓ **keeping accurate records of volunteer attendance**

WHY RECORD VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES?

Only Parks Victoria approved volunteer activities can indemnify the volunteer association & individual volunteers from public liability claims.

By completing this form the Ranger;

1. **Authorises the activity** - assuring that the activity is safe & appropriate & that the volunteers have the skills and or accreditation to undertake the task.
2. **Records attendance.**

How to coordinate volunteer monitoring

There are three stages to coordinating volunteer activities

1. Authorising the Activity

Parks Victoria will work with the volunteer(s) to develop an appropriate activity or series of activities. In authorising the activity Parks Victoria is agreeing that:

- ✓ the activity is appropriate to the location and the skill and experience of the volunteer(s)
- ✓ any risks associated with the activity have been considered and addressed

2. Recording Attendance in the event of a future liability claim for injury or accident, this form records who attended For groups or organisations (includes friends groups, corporate volunteers, schools)

- Give groups and organisations PART 2 to complete on the day of their activity. It is expected that all groups or organisations have full contact details of their members including emergency contact details.
- Groups need to return PART 2 after the activity
- If a non-member of the group attends a group activity they need to complete PART 3 in case of an emergency or incident.

For individual volunteers (eg work experience students)

- Complete PART 3 with the volunteer

3. Sighting Relevant Accreditation

PART 3 is designed to also record accreditation of individuals, particularly for marine activities.

Individuals (whether group members or not) complete PART 3 and present relevant accreditation for Parks Victoria staff to sight and authorise.

Parks Victoria will give the individual a copy of this page which they can re-present to Parks Victoria whenever they undertake an activity which requires particular accreditation. This page will stay current for 12 months or the date which accreditation expires (which ever is lesser).

PART 3 can also be given to groups if they require a tool to annually record details about their members. This is recommended if the group is regularly undertaking activities which require PV authorisation of accreditation (eg marine groups).

PART 1 - ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER PROJECT OR ACTIVITY

LOCATION: _____

NAME OF VOLUNTEER OR GROUP: _____

ACTIVITY DATE(S): _____

Activities authorised in advance of the actual activity day need to be confirmed by the group or individual with the ranger on the day of the activity to safeguard against unforeseen conditions which could impact on the safety of the activity (eg flash flooding predicted in proposed area) Contact 13 1963 to be directed to the relevant staff.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: _____

SPECIFIC SAFETY MEASURES

A Job Safety Analysis (JSA) must be completed for each activity. The JSA must be prepared by someone who is competent in the activity (this may be a staff member or a volunteer).

JOB SAFETY ANALYSIS COMPLETED FOR ACTIVITY?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	If YES, please ensure that the volunteers undertaking the activity have read the relevant JSA.
<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	If NO, please ensure that a JSA is completed before the activity begins.

DOES THE ACTIVITY REQUIRE PARKS VICTORIA SUPERVISION? YES NO

OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS (tick relevant box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaw licence	<input type="checkbox"/> Snorkelling Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> General level of fitness
<input type="checkbox"/> Drivers licence	<input type="checkbox"/> SCUBA Accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other accreditation (list)
<input type="checkbox"/> Boat operators licence	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Chemical Users Permit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Working with Children Check (WWC)	<input type="checkbox"/> High level of fitness	_____

Working with Children Check – if volunteers are regularly working with children (eg. school groups), if you answer yes to ALL questions below then volunteers will require a WWC check:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Does the position primarily involve contact with children? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 2. Does the position involve direct contact with children? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 3. Does any person performing the position mainly work with children unsupervised? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 4. Does the position involve regular work with children? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

PARKS VICTORIA AUTHORISATION OF ACTIVITY

NAME: _____ **POSITION:** _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY HOURS

REPORT THE VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR REGIONAL VOLUNTEER HOURS

COORDINATOR			
No. of Volunteers	<input type="text"/>	PV STAFF HOURS	<input type="text"/>
Activity Hours	<input type="text"/>	OUTPUT GROUP	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural values management <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural values management <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor services management



VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY FORM

PART 2 - VOLUNTEER GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS

RETURN THIS PAGE TO YOUR CONTACT RANGER AS A RECORD OF ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE

- Each member of the group needs to record their name & signature as a record of their attendance.
- Any non-members participating need to complete PART 3 (so that we have a record of emergency contacts)
- It is expected that all groups or organisations have full contact details of their members including emergency contact details.
(attach additional names if required)

GROUP NAME:		ACTIVITY DATE:	
MEMBER NAME		SIGNATURE	
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

Comments

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS TOTAL HOURS OF ACTIVITY

AUTHORISATION OF OFFICE BEARER (or agreed representative)
I declare that the information on this form is correct and the group has agreed to follow specific instructions, requirements & guidelines given by Parks Victoria staff in relation to volunteer activities.

NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

PART 3 - FOR INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS

- Complete this section for individual volunteers who are not part of a group (eg work experience student.)
OR
- To record specific accreditation details of individual volunteers.
Present this form for each time you undertake activities requiring accreditation

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____
RELATIONSHIP TO VOLUNTEER: _____

FITNESS TO UNDERTAKE ACTIVITY


Please provide details of any pre-existing illness, injury or allergy that could be relevant to volunteer activities.


SCUBA Diving & Snorkelling activities can be strenuous and require a good level of fitness and health.


*I consider that I am medically & physically fit to undertake
SCUBA Diving/Snorkelling activities* **YES** **NO**


ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

QUALIFICATIONS ARE TO BE SIGHTED AND SIGNED BY RELEVANT PARKS VICTORIA RANGER
PARKS VICTORIA AUTHORISATION OF ACCREDITATION IS CURRENT FOR 12 MONTHS FROM THE DATE SIGHTED OR THE EXPIRY DATE OF THE ACCREDITATION (whichever is sooner)

 **SCUBA DIVING** - Volunteer SCUBA divers require current recreational Diving Accreditation as a minimum standard (eg PADI Open Water).
SCUBA ACCREDITATION TYPE: _____
DIVER NUMBER: _____ DATE: _____
ACCREDITATION SIGHTED (sign by PV staff): _____ DATE: _____

 **BOAT HANDLING** - Boat operators require a current Victorian General Boat Operators Licence and have demonstrated competency and experience in boat handling.
BOAT LICENCE NUMBER AND DATE: _____
ACCREDITATION SIGHTED (sign by PV staff): _____ DATE: _____

 **SNORKEL** - Snorkel divers do not require formal accreditation, however demonstrated competency and experience in the waters is required. ***I am competent and experienced in snorkelling***

 **OTHER ACCREDITATION** - record or attach any other accreditation relevant to the volunteer activity.
ACCREDITATION TYPE: _____
ACCREDITATION SIGHTED (sign by PV staff): _____ DATE: _____
ACCREDITATION TYPE: _____
ACCREDITATION SIGHTED (sign by PV staff): _____ DATE: _____

VOLUNTEER'S DECLARATION

I declare that the information on this form is correct and I agree to follow specific instructions, requirements and guidelines given by Parks Victoria staff in relation to volunteer activities.

NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____