

FRIENDS OF THE GREAT VICTORIA DESERT PARKS
INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS PARTICIPATING ON FIELD TRIPS
Version Nov 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

Friends of the Great Victoria Desert Parks (FGVD) was formed in 1994, and is an affiliated member of Friends of Parks SA Inc to “provide voluntary assistance ... in caring for the parks and reserves in the SA section of the Great Victoria Desert” and “promote and provide educational material”.

As well as providing useful general information, this Document has been collated to help members of FGVD understand:

1. The important relationships with DEW, Friends of Parks and the MT Lands Council
2. The frameworks and conditions imposed upon us to ensure safe, respectful and successful volunteering
3. The processes of field trip organisation, and
4. The insurance cover provided by DEW to trip participants.

Website

The home page link to Friends of the Great Victoria Desert Parks is:

www.fgyd.org.au

You must be a member to log in to the Members’ Area of this website.

2. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATER (DEW)

Friends of Parks SA operates under a Memorandum of Understanding with DEW in part to ensure volunteer activities are directed towards DEW's priorities, plans and programs.

The relationship between DEW and FGVD is through the Alinytjara Wilurara Regional Resource Management Board (AWNRM) via its office and Staff in Ceduna.

The AWNRM Region incorporates

- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands
- Maralinga Tjarutja (MT) Lands
- Mamungari Conservation Park
- Tallaringa Conservation Park
- Nullarbor National Park
- Nullarbor Regional Reserve
- Yellabinna Regional Reserve
- Yellabinna Wilderness Area and
- Yumbarra Conservation Park

DEW has a *Volunteer Occupational Health and Safety Framework*, which requires all volunteer activities to be endorsed and authorized. In particular, within the Framework, the DEW needs to know:

- Why we are going
- Where we are going
- When we are going
- Who is going
- When any health, safety and hazard issues are identified with participants.

The Framework requires completion in different sections by the executive, field trip leaders and trip participants for each field trip.

Please note that the Framework requires a detailed itinerary.

3. FRIENDS OF PARKS

Friends of Parks, of which we are an affiliated member, has a website which is frequently updated and contains useful information about volunteering activities. The link is www.friendsofparkssa.org.au/.

In addition, Friends of Parks members are provided with a unique code number, which is changed every July 1 by Friends of Parks.

The FGVD unique code can be seen on the full version of this document by logging in to the Members' Area at www.fgvd.org.au

The unique code number allows the holder a concession to the following facilities of DEW:

- a) Free entry to all parks in the State where vehicle entry fees apply (*excluding the Simpson Desert*).
- b) Desert Parks Pass: 25% concession on the Desert Parks Pass and 50% concession on the Desert Parks Pass for Desert Parks Friends Groups. You must buy your own booklet with the pass. To apply for a Desert Parks Pass please contact the Desert Park Pass Officer at the Natural Resource Centre - Port Augusta, Phone: 8648 5300 Email: DesertParks@sa.gov.au and quote

your unique number code and someone from the Desert Parks team will contact you to process the purchase.

- c) 25% concession on the cost of personal access and guided tours in parks, statewide, where such tours are operated by the Department for Environment and Water).
- d) 25% concession on the use of facilities in parks, statewide.
- e) Free camping for up to five nights in any one location, statewide.

4. MARALINGA TJARUTJA (MT) LANDS

FGVD has an important relationship with the traditional owners of the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands. Their governing body is the MT Lands Council and its office and staff in Ceduna.

The MT Lands are prescribed in the South Australian Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act 1984, which “provides for the vesting of title to certain lands known as the Maralinga lands in the people who are acknowledged as the traditional owners”. Since 2017 the Act has incorporated the Maralinga Prohibited Area.

Entry to the MT Lands without permission is an offence against the Act.

In 2018, a more prescriptive description of the “Conditions of Approval” and “Conditions of Permit” was detailed in the “Tourist Access Application Form”. Access permits are required for all roads and no access is granted from Emu Junction to Maralinga Village. Permission to travel in the MT Lands may be suspended from time to time to protect people or property.

Adherence to the new conditions of the permit maintains our relationship with the MT Lands Council and the traditional owners they represent. We have as an organisation been fortunate to travel in prohibited areas, but only in the company of traditional cultural advisers, the cost of which has been borne by DEW.

Provision of an agreed detailed itinerary ensures we do not access culturally sensitive areas. Note there are important culturally sensitive areas, both within the MT Lands and its surrounds. Of these areas we have some knowledge, but there are many that we necessarily do not.

4.1 Condition of Approval (Division 3 of the Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act 1984)

A person is required to comply with the conditions of a permit to be within the MT Lands. Entry into the MT Lands without a permit or breaching the conditions of the permit will result in a fine of up to \$2000, and a fine of \$500 per day of unauthorised entry into the MT Lands,

1. The applicant shall, at the request of Maralinga Tjarutja, furnish such further information as it may reasonably require determining the application.
2. Upon an application under this section, Maralinga Tjarutja may by in instrument in writing:
 - (a) Grant permission to enter the lands unconditionally
 - (b) Grant permission to enter the lands subject to such conditions as it thinks fit,
 or
 - (c) Refuse permission to enter the lands.

4.2 Conditions of Permit

1. Possession of alcohol and drugs in the MT Lands is strictly prohibited.
2. The holder of the permit must:
 - (a) ensure that persons in the MT Lands under the permit are aware of the conditions of the permit; and
 - (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure:
 - (i) that persons in the MT Lands under the permit comply with the conditions of the permit; and
 - (ii) that persons who are subject to the holder's control are not at places in the MT Lands without permission to be at those places.
 - (c) notify Maralinga Tjarutja of:
 - (i) any death of any person; or
 - (ii) any serious injury or illness of a person; or
 - (iii) any dangerous incident arising from a person's access to the MT Lands.
3. A person in the MT Lands under the permit must not:
 - (a) be at a place that is not covered by the permit, including leaving established roads; or
 - (b) be in a zone during an exclusion period for the zone; or
 - (c) carry out activities other than those for which the permit was issued, including private commercial activities; or
 - (d) intentionally remove, touch, interfere or tamper with, any local flora or fauna,
 - (e) enter any area enclosed by the Commonwealth with wire or other material;
 - (f) without the written approval of the Maralinga Tjarutja Council have in his or her possession, or operate, an unmanned aerial vehicle, or have in his or her possession a firearm or explosives.
4. A person in the MT Lands under the permit must:
 - (a) comply with all reasonable directions in relation to the MT Lands given to the person by a Maralinga Tjarutja employee
 - (b) comply with all applicable laws of the Commonwealth and South Australia relating to safety, security, native title, heritage and culture; and
 - (c) have in his or her possession written proof of the person's identity that includes a photograph of the person.
 - (d) have in his or her possession a current license for all firearms and explosive

5. ORGANISATION OF FIELD TRIPS

The following summarises the steps and responsibilities required to provide for a successful trip. Unfortunately it is necessarily complicated.

A. Summary of Permits (not all will be required but depend on the areas to be travelled)

- (a) MT Lands Tourist Access Application Form
- (b) Mamungari Conservation Park Permit
- (c) Desert Parks Permit for Tallaringa Conservation Park
- (d) Ngaanyatjarra Transit Permit
- (e) Access through Woomera Prohibited Area
- (f) Transcontinental Railway Service Access Track (required when travelling any section west of Goog's Track turnoff)
- (g) Dog Fence –please note that access is prohibited on the outside service track along the entire SA section of the Dog Fence

B. Executive Responsibilities

1. Liaison with DEW re potential scientific surveys (prior to Feb General Meeting)
2. Summary of trips for the year and appointment of trip leaders (Feb General Meeting)
3. General information summary on proposed trips sent to members prior to calls for expression of interest (Secretary after Feb General Meeting)
4. Call for expressions of interest to members (Secretary after general information distributed)
5. Covering letter and application forms to AWNRM Ceduna and MT Lands Board

C. Trip Leaders' Responsibilities

1. Detailed information sheet for participants including general information and specific trip details
2. Volunteer Activity Registration & Risk Management (Form 1) to AWNRM Ceduna
3. AWNRM Board Field Trip Itinerary & Information Log Form (AWHR-08) to AWNRM Ceduna
4. On-site Hazard Identification and Risk Management (Form 2) completed and provided to AWNRM Ceduna on site first day
5. Volunteer Induction Checklist (Form 4) completed on site, first day
6. OHSW Risk Assessment Worksheet discussed with trip participants
7. Volunteer Attendance Record (Form 3) completed and returned to AWNRM Ceduna on return
8. Ensure participants have copies of relevant permits

D. Participants

1. Ensure receipt of and have read and understood the Trip Information Sheet
2. Volunteer Registration Form (form 5) completed and provided to trip leader
3. Volunteer Medical Management Form (Form 3a) completed, if necessary, and provided to trip leader
4. Purchase Desert Parks Permit (at reduced rate for members, and only if required)
5. Ensure copies of relevant permits in vehicle

6. FIELD TRIPS – GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

Participants

To ensure everyone is covered by the DEW Volunteer Framework and insurance, every person taking part in a trip must either be a financial member of FGVD or be covered by another government department or other institution. Paperwork relating to another agency must be available at the time paperwork is submitted to the DEW and the MT Lands Board.

If you do not have transport and would like to attend as a passenger every attempt will be made to accommodate you. However this may not always be possible. If you can provide transport please advise the secretary as soon as possible and we will put you in touch with a possible passenger.

Expressions of interest

Once your expression of interest form has been received by the trip leader you will be sent further information on your particular trip. This will include:

- Trip travel summary
- Objectives of the trip
- List of participants including vehicle registration and communication information mobile phone, sat phone, HF radio .
- Itinerary summary
- Proposed distances
- Suggested fuel requirements
- Other information specific to your trip, equipment required etc.
- Form 5 DEW Volunteer Registration Form (2 pages)
- Form 3a DEW Management Form

Oak valley

Oak Valley is a closed Aboriginal Community. On some trips, you will be passing through by invitation to refuel.

Fuel is now managed by Outback Stores in Oak Valley and not the town office. Store hours are strictly Mon – Fri 9.00 to 4.30 and Sat 9.00 to 11.00. Out of hours may be negotiated by contacting the store phone 08 8670 4221

Oak valley is a dry community. Please remember that alcohol is not to be carried during the trip.

DEW Volunteer Management Framework (VMF)

The safety of yourself, your passenger(s) and your vehicle is your responsibility.

You must comply with the DEW Volunteer Management Framework (VMF).

The Framework includes ensuring you have completed the attached forms:

1. A VMF Volunteer Registration Form (Form 5) for each participant and
2. A Volunteer Medical Management Form (Form 3a) where a medical condition may affect you while participating in the Trip activities (this Form outlines contingency plans but maintains your medical confidentiality).

Safety

A DEW Spot check GPS safety monitor will be carried during the trip and safety messages relayed to Ceduna twice daily. A DEW satellite phone will also be carried.

Make sure you have ample fuel to cover the suggested distances as shown in the itinerary including the estimated amount shown for inter-waypoint estimations, heavy conditions, detours etc.

Be aware that you are required to work and play in a safe manner, not only for your own safety but also for the safety of those around you.

Each vehicle should be a high clearance 4WD in sound working order (not overloaded) and equipped with the normal outback emergency repair/recovery kit, spares and tools. These include jacks, spare tyres, tubes, puncture repair kit, tyre pump, long handled shovel, first aid kit etc. Assistance in this area can be sought from the following websites: – www.exploroz.com and www.arb.com.au

Each vehicle will need to be self-sufficient in food and water for the whole period planned. A reserve supply of food and water is necessary for at least one week in the event of vehicle breakdown or rain.

It is imperative as a general rule that the group or groups stay together in a minimum number of three vehicles. Where there is a reason to divide, e.g. for travelling to survey sites, at least two vehicles will travel together for safety.

Unless there is a major vehicle breakdown, family reason or sickness, the group will remain as a unit.

Sand flags are to be fitted to all vehicles when appropriate.

Safety Equipment Provided by Friends of GVD

1. Hivis safety vests
2. UHF handheld radios
3. Garmin hand held GPS
4. Friends of GVD magnetic car door badges

Personal protection and safety

Bring a shady hat, fly net and sun block. The days may vary between cold and warm, but the nights are certain to be cold, so some warm clothing is essential.

Carry sufficient water and drink frequently to avoid dehydration.

Be prepared for rain: occasionally it happens

When on foot in the desert, ensure you know where you are and always carry a whistle, a box of matches, a compass and wear coloured safety vests (supplied). They are more easily seen amongst the terrain. Wear boots that support the ankles. Wear protective glasses and gloves when appropriate.

When walking away from the group, let someone know and carry a handheld UHF radio.

Permits

A permit to travel the nominated route in the itinerary will be submitted and approved by Maralinga Tjarutja Land Council. Only approved camp sites will be used.

If entering Woomera Prohibited Area a permit to enter will be submitted by the trip leader.

Generators

Use of generators is not permitted without prior authorization.

Drone

Permission to fly a drone in DEW parks must be obtained prior to the trip, likewise if entering Woomera Prohibited Area.

Campfires

The preferred campfire is small and in a fire pit or trench. Please share fires where possible. When departing the camp, please ensure the pit is covered with soil after first cooling it with waste water.

Basic convoy procedures

The safety of yourself, your passenger(s) and your vehicle is your responsibility.

Drive in a responsible manner.

Convoy procedures to be followed:

1. Each survey group of vehicles requires a nominated trip leader and “tail-end Charlie”
2. Convoy position is to be maintained for that day
3. UHF Radio checks need to be performed within the group prior to departure
4. When using the UHF radio first identify yourself and then give the message
5. Be aware of departure times for your group
6. Each vehicle has responsibility for the vehicle behind them – always keep the vehicle behind you in sight
7. At any turn wait for the vehicle behind to see you
8. Always advise the trip leader when stopping or leaving the convoy – feel free to stop and look or take photos but advise the leader when stopping and when continuing on
9. Keep on the main tracks
10. Gates are to be left as they are found
11. Drive in a responsible manner

Communication

1. UHF RADIO

All vehicles must be equipped with UHF radios. The UHF Channel for the trip will be determined by the trip leader at Ceduna.

2. HF Radio

Emergency contact is via the VKS737 radio network only when a member of the Field Trip has an HF Radio.

VKS737 RADIO NETWORK

Contact can be made to the group by leaving a recorded message on telephone number 0882876220 leaving the following details –

1. Name of VKS737 member.
2. Call sign of member.
3. Approx. location of member (i.e. “In the vicinity of Oak Valley”).
4. Name of caller.
5. Telephone number of caller.
6. Detailed message to be passed on to VKS737 member.

A designated person will be contacting VKS every morning or evening for messages. VKS737 members on the trip will be advised by the trip leader.

3. Satellite Phone

A Satellite Phone is provided to the trip leader and the number provided to each trip participant.

If you have your own satellite phone please ensure the trip leader is provided with the phone number. We realise not everyone wants their phone number to be used by everyone on the trip; but in an emergency, others knowing your number may save your, or another member’s life.

If you do have a satellite phone please check it daily for messages.

Vehicles

Each trip will comprise a minimum of three vehicles. Ideally large vehicles should be accompanied by another vehicle of similar size/weight to enable easier recovery in the case of mechanical breakdown. However there should be no expectation or assumption that other members have a role in repairs and recovery other than helping with personal safety.

In all cases, vehicles are entirely the owner’s responsibility for recovery and repairs and each owner should to have their own contingency plans and contacts for recovery. It is recommended that owners consider taking out insurance cover expenses of vehicle recovery/repair.

Cost Refunding to Participants of Field Trips

Both DEW grant money and FGVD general funds are provided for defraying some of the costs including fuel on our field trips.

The amount to be allocated from FOGVD general funds is as follows:

Grant money given to us by DEW less camping & entrance fees is fully distributed to all vehicle owners who attend any field trips in any one year.

The contribution to all vehicle owners who attend any field trips in any one year is a maximum of \$100 from general funds on the following basis:

1. If there is no grant from DEW then \$100 out of general funds is distributed.
2. If there is a grant from DEW then:
 - a) If the division of the DEW grant is greater than \$300 per vehicle then no top up from the general fund will be made
 - b) If the division of the DEW grant is less than \$300 per vehicle, then the allocation will be topped up by general funds to either \$300 in total or to a maximum of \$100.

7. FIELD TRIPS - INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL TRIPS

Each Trip Leader will provide participants with detailed information on individual trips.

See **Attachment C** for an example collated for the 2018 trip to Serpentine Lakes.

The trip leader will provide information to all participants for each trip as follows:

- Dates – designated start point to designated finish point (usually Ceduna to Ceduna)
- General location of the trip
- Trip summary
- Objectives
- List of participants, and vehicle make, colour and registration number.
- Teams – if relevant
- Itinerary outline – day by day, date what we will do and location of campsite.
- Details for return to Ceduna if relevant, e.g. separate alternative routes for return trip keeping in mind that the minimum requirement is two vehicles and preferably three.
- Summary of distances for all alternative routes, plus 20% for heavy conditions and unknown detours and information on where fuel is available
- Communication – when any participant(s) have HF radios, decision on who is the designated person contacting VKS every morning or evening for messages, who the VKS737 members on the trip are, and their call sign.
- List of mobile and satellite phone numbers for each member of the trip.

8. VOLUNTEER INSURANCE COVER OFFERED BY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATER (DEW)

This information is from the relevant DEW document.

8.1 The insurance arrangement

Volunteers across South Australia work on projects that make a significant contribution to the management of the state's natural and heritage assets as well as engaging with local communities. In recognition of this, DEW has an agreement with Natural Resources Management Boards and the State Government to provide volunteer insurance cover to volunteer activities that are in direct strategic alignment to the DEW Corporate Plan and Regional NRM Plans. In this scenario DEW has legal obligations under the Volunteers Protection Act 2001 which states:

‘...A volunteer incurs no personal civil liability for an act or omission done or made in good faith and without recklessness in the course of carrying out community work for a community organisation.’

Therefore, any civil liability incurred would attach to the community organisation to which the volunteer is associated- in this case DEW. This would be covered under the Volunteer section of DEW's agreement with the insurer. This extends to include volunteer group committee members.

8.2 The Insurer

SAicorp is the captive insurer for the Government of South Australia. It provides comprehensive insurance protection, insuring the risks of South Australian Government Agencies and provides insurance advice and assistance to those agencies.

DEW has an agreement with SAicorp to provide a level of volunteer cover to registered volunteers working on projects endorsed by DEW staff.

8.3 The insurance product

Volunteers are considered workers under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012. Personal accident cover for volunteers is similar to compulsory Return to Work cover for paid employees however volunteers are not considered as workers for workers compensation purposes.

The insurance cover offered to volunteers under DEW's agreement with SAicorp includes:

1. Personal Accident Cover (bodily injury)
2. Civil Liability

Benefits for personal bodily injury or death are equivalent to the benefits that would have been payable to a worker under the Return to Work Act 2014 (the Act) if the Volunteer were an employee of DEW.

Any liability to a third party arising from the action or advice of a volunteer acting in accordance with DEW or NRM Board instruction is treated as if the action or advice were that of an employee.

8.4 Who can be covered by the insurance?

Volunteer insurance cover is not unconditional. It is approved for specific activities and is reviewed and endorsed on a case by case basis, usually annually.

Volunteers will be covered by this insurance only when DEW staff have endorsed the volunteer activities, either through the DEW Volunteer Safety Framework or independent volunteer group insurance process.

Volunteers that work in direct partnership with DEW will operate within the Volunteer Safety Framework procedure. The insurance cover begins when DEW staff endorse the activities planned to be undertaken by volunteers as captured on Form 1 of the Volunteer Safety Framework procedure.

Volunteer groups that work independently of DEW but their activities contribute to DEW business or targets in the NRM Plan may receive insurance cover. This requires agreement and documentation between parties involved and is captured through an annual application for volunteer insurance.

8.5 Covers provided

8.5.a Personal accident cover (bodily injury)

Personal accident cover will provide a level of compensation to a volunteer should accidental bodily injury or death occur whilst engaged or undertaking voluntary work authorised by DEW staff.

What it covers:

- ✓ Registered volunteers following accidental bodily injury or death while volunteering. Benefits are paid on an out of pocket basis after other entitlements have been used with regard to medical and reasonable rehabilitation costs. Note, other entitlements include Medicare, private health insurance, personal insurance, superannuation, employment sick leave entitlements, compulsory third party bodily insurance and so forth.
- ✓ Lump sums for death or serious disability which are paid on the same basis as the Act.
- ✓ Weekly income is paid to volunteers who can demonstrate a loss of income. Benefits take account of actual lost income up to the Act ceiling of twice the State Average Weekly Earnings. For long-term incapacities, benefit reductions in line with the Act rules apply.
- ✓ All benefits, except weekly income benefits for long-term incapacities, are payable regardless of age.

What is not covered:

- ✗ No benefit is payable in respect to the gap between payment made by Medicare and charges incurred.
- ✗ Damage to equipment or property other than during the incident that caused the bodily injury or death (e.g. stolen from a shed).
- ✗ Claims following a bodily injury or death if, if the injury is wholly or predominantly attributable to serious and wilful misconduct on the part of the worker.
- ✗ Claims following a bodily injury or death, if the injury is wholly or predominantly attributable to the influence of alcohol or a drug voluntarily consumed by the worker (other than a drug lawfully obtained and consumed in a reasonable quantity by the worker).
- ✗ Claims involving vehicle accidents that occur between home and the place of work.

8.5.b Civil liability cover

Civil liability cover is insurance to cover the legal liability to pay or indemnify volunteers, DEW and the NRM Boards if they are sued for negligence or a civil claim is lodged for damages under common law, contract or statute. The cover amount is without limit.

What it covers:

- ✓ Liability of a registered volunteer following an action that results in personal injury, death, damage or loss to a third party.
- ✓ All legal costs, charges and expenses incurred in the management of a civil liability claim where such costs, expenses and charges are incurred by SAicorp or DEW with SAicorp's prior written approval.

What is not covered:

- ✘ Civil claims against the organisation or an individual for defamation.
- ✘ Claims that fall within the ambit of a scheme of compulsory third-party motor vehicle insurance.
- ✘ Claims where the volunteer's ability to carry out the work properly was, at the relevant time, significantly impaired by a recreational drug.
- ✘ Claims where the volunteer was acting, and knew or ought to have known that he or she was acting, outside the scope of the activities authorised by the community organisation or DEW.
- ✘ Claims if the volunteer was acting, and knew or ought to have known that he or she was acting, contrary to instructions given by the community organisation.
- ✘ Claims involving vehicle accidents that occur between home and the place of work.

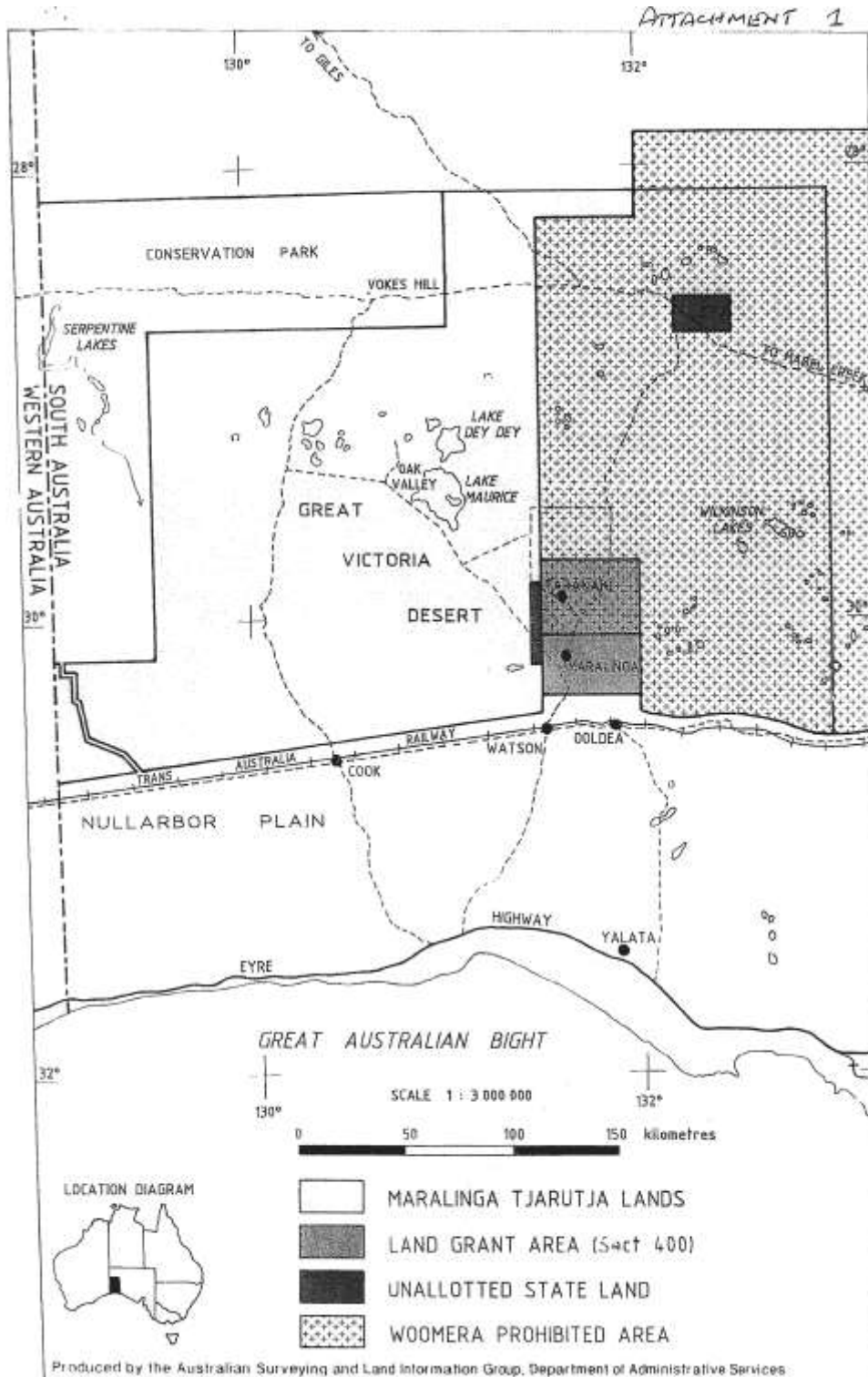
8.6 Making a claim

Volunteers discussing the incident with medical practitioners should not indicate this is a WorkCover related claim/incident.

To make a claim volunteers will need to provide detail of the incident and details of all medical treatment including dates, practice attended, fees incurred and personal benefits utilised and out of pocket expenses.

DEW staff can assist with lodging a claim to SAICORP.

ATTACHMENT A MAP OF THE GREAT VICTORIA DESERT (SA SECTION)



ATTACHMENT B
MAP OF PHOTOPPOINT VEGETATION SITES



ATTACHMENT C

Members wishing to view this attachment should log in to the Members' Area of the Friends of the GVD website – www.fgvd.org.au