

Essentials of reporting

As the name of our Track maintenance program suggests, you are our 'Eyes on the Ground' to identify, assess, rectify, report and monitor issues which need fixing.

Reporting should be a straightforward process – but we realise that knowing a bit about what goes on behind the scenes will help you to give us the most useful information – and increase the chances the issue will be progressed!

First, let's explain the usual reporting pathway. This should give you a foundation for understanding the best way to report issues:

1. Your inspection report lands in a waiting list in the back end of our website
2. It is reviewed by one of our office volunteers specially trained in report processing – we call them 'MAdmin' (for maintenance admin).

To ensure reports are processed, each MAdmin looks after a particular district.

Processing includes:

- a. Reading through each report and noting any issues
 - b. Identifying if the location and details provided are enough to send the task for actioning – or whether more information is needed
 - c. Adding all details to a summary spreadsheet
 - d. Triaging the problem/issue
 - e. Identifying who can best address the task - the sectional volunteers, support volunteers, or PaWS
3. A monthly summary is sent to each PaWS district contact for attention, or to the Support Volunteer coordinator for work allocated to them



Based on that foundation, **here are the essentials of maintenance reporting:**

- **Please submit a report for each visit** – even if there are no outstanding problems – so we can keep track of section condition. It's also the most efficient way for us to calculate visitation rates. If your inspection of the whole section stretches over consecutive days, then one report will be sufficient (for the complete traverse).
- **Please report all issues you find**, even if you were able to fix/clear them yourself. This provides an inventory of the typical issues/wear and tear along the Track. In this case, you would enter "No" under "Assistance required".
- **ONLY use the inspection report form on the website to report** any issue, problem, or task - DO NOT use email to report a problem in the first instance! Use the comments box at the bottom of the report form if the details don't naturally sit in any of the problem categories or if you need extra space.
- **An accurate location is very important.** Enough information needs to be given to locate the task to within 500m, although more accurate than this is preferred. If the location given is too vague, you'll be asked to identify it in more detail before it can be actioned. This might involve collecting more information on a subsequent visit. Our factsheet ***Accuracy of location data*** has some great tips!
- **A description of the issue/problem needs to contain enough detail** that a work crew can figure out what tools and people may be required without having to do an inspection. Exactly what details are required varies depending on the type of issue. Training will help you know the details required for typical issues on your section.

- For this reason, **photos are extremely helpful** – ‘a picture paints a thousand words’ – as long as they contain the necessary information.
- You should **indicate in your inspection report that you have photos** associated with any reported issue/problem. The MAdmin then knows to expect them.
- **Only use email for:**
 - **Photos** to illustrate any issue included in the report
 - For any **follow-up communications** with MAdmin (once initiated by them)
- **The correct email address for this purpose** is maintenance@bibbulmuntrack.org.au
- You should use a **standard email subject line** when sending an email to maintenance@..., so that each MAdmin picks up the emails they need to see. The format is:
 - [your MAdmin’s name] [the section number/campsite] [the date of the associated inspection report] [a few words identifying the issue]
 - e.g. Keith TS144 16/7/22 broken step
- **Your confirmation that previously reported problems/issues have been resolved is important.** We suggest that you take on each visit a list of the things you’ve previously reported and make a note where they have been resolved. Let us know in your inspection report. The downloadable version of your report, only available immediately following submission, is one way to keep these records.
- **If something hasn’t been fixed, please continue to report it** so we know it still needs attention

Some other things to be aware of:

- It is the preference of both the BTF and PaWS that issues/problems are reported as described above. Please don’t communicate them directly to your district office. By following the standard process, maintenance tasks are most effectively captured and attended to.
- If you find an issue on a section or campsite which is not your own, feel free to submit a report. Simply look in the dropdown menu to locate the right one. It’s helpful if you include a comment that it isn’t your normal section/campsite.
- Reporting of issues by the public (maintenance or otherwise) occurs through the Track Problem Report page on our website – so let all your walking friends know! There is a separate form for each region of the Track; these can all be accessed at www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au/contact/.
- Action on an issue may be delayed by insufficient detail, complicated logistics, competing priorities or the need to engage contractors (e.g. for pumping out toilets).
- You might be aware of an app called Snap.Send.Solve. This should not be used for reporting any track maintenance issues. The use of Snap.Send.Solve. will be discussed in an upcoming article.

We thank you very much for your contribution to Track maintenance. The program is growing and expanding – the MAdmin are doing a great job, and you might have noticed more feedback on your reports. There is direct liaison with each district PaWS office monthly, to progress the actioning of tasks.

A lot of thought has gone into the maintenance reporting process in recent years, during planning for a new BTF website. We have already earmarked significant and substantial improvements to be implemented; we hope we’ve thought of everything you could possibly want! However, if you have any suggestions for functionality you’d like to see, please get in touch via volunteer@bibbulmuntrack.org.au.