



Calling in “safe and well”

Consistent with ***Our Safety Mindset***, it is of the highest priority that all volunteers return safely and well from Track maintenance trips. Particular responsibility should be acknowledged for your own safety and wellbeing when working in locations with poor phone reception, or if you choose to work alone (or it is difficult to avoid).

In situations like these, explicit arrangements around communication will reinforce your wellbeing – and your family’s peace of mind – when added to the usual preparation you’d make for any trip (see ***Preparation for a maintenance trip***).

We strongly recommend that you make these key arrangements:

Ensure that someone at home has accurate details on your intended trip

Your family (or close friends) are the most reliable and appropriate people to be notified of your trip intentions.

If there is any concern for your whereabouts, wellbeing or safety, your family/friend will need to follow up with the relevant emergency services. This will be the police or ambulance service in the first instance. Local PWS staff or the SES may be called to assist with route-finding, access or search if required. In other words, the situation would be treated as it would for any walker. The Bibbulmun Track Foundation is secondary in this particular process.

So that your family/friends have adequate information to give emergency services, use our ***Trip Intention Form*** designed specifically for Track maintenance trips. Your family/friends may not be as familiar as you are with the geography, access route and maintenance visit schedule of your section. Completing the form provides a range of necessary details – which could save your life.

Plan scheduled calls to confirm your location and wellbeing

Scheduled – or ‘sched’ – calls are a staple of WHS practice for geographically remote work and/or working alone.

Knowing your likely movements and the expected phone reception, identify times and places where you will message or call your contact person at home. Include this plan on your ***Trip Intention Form*** and bring your contact’s attention to it. These messages/calls don’t have to be anything more than letting your contact know you are proceeding according to plan, finished and back in from the field, or getting on the road for home (as appropriate). Emergency communication devices (see below) fulfil the same function.

With your contact, identify a plan of action to be triggered if you don’t make contact at any scheduled time. This is where a well-prepared ***Trip Intention Form*** is critical.

We have been asked about making sched calls to your PWS District office. We have been advised that this is not seen as practical, for various reasons.

Carry an emergency communication device

You should always carry an appropriate device, for significant emergency situations.

Refer to ***Distress beacons*** for more information (note that an update of that factsheet is imminent).

