

## **Guidelines for Host Clubs organising SEANA Camps**

These guidelines have been prepared to assist field naturalists clubs when organising camps on behalf of SEANA. Camps should be run as South East Australian Naturalists Association camps hosted by an individual field naturalists club or two or more clubs jointly. The camp is then covered by South East Australian Naturalists Association's public liability insurance policy.

The guidelines are suggestions only, and host clubs may find better methods for the organisation of a camp. Any suggestions for improvement should be sent to the SEANA secretary so that updated guidelines can be forwarded to future host clubs.

Guidelines for running an 'organisationally simpler' camp are included as an appendix.

After your offer to host a camp has been accepted by the SEANA Committee, the SEANA secretary will confirm the arrangement by letter.

The SEANA secretary will also send the documents:

- *Guidelines for SEANA Inc. Camp Treasurers (including Microsoft Excel spreadsheet) and*
- *List of past attendees with contact details*
- *Risk Management for SEANA Camps*
- *Excursion Facilitator and Leader and Convoy Guidelines*
- *Excursion Risk Assessment and Safety Briefing forms*
- *Personal Record Form*
- *Individual Membership Form for 'individual' members'*
- *Sample of a previous registration form as a guide*

### **1. 12 months ahead of the camp**

- 1.1 Establish a local organising committee. A group of 6 works well, and this could be president, secretary, treasurer and 3 ordinary members or an organising sub-committee of 6 members.
- 1.2 Investigate possible venues, bearing in mind possible excursions and current State/Federal health emergency (e.g. COVID-19) rules. Aim for a central venue to accommodate 100 people and feed up to 120 allowing for non-accommodated participants. Alternatively, participants could organise their own accommodation from a list of motels, caravan parks or other accommodation suggested by the host club.
- 1.3 Confirm venue/accommodation and pay initial deposit. An advance of \$1000 to cover initial expenses will be made available by the SEANA Treasurer. If a larger advance is required please contact the SEANA Treasurer.
- 1.4 Form two working parties, one for Accommodation and Catering, one for the Program of speakers, excursions, displays, etc.
- 1.5 Begin planning excursions. Consider locations, cost if using outside leaders or commercial venues, site risks, degree of difficulty (information about the fitness required to do walks, equipment which should be carried should be communicated to the participants before they select excursions) This will help to protect the organisation from claims in the event of mishap.  
If using outside leaders, consider what support can be provided to them in the planning stage.
- 1.6 If there are areas of cultural sensitivity in the sites being considered for excursions, the local indigenous community should be consulted, and, where possible, involved in the organisation and running of the excursion(s).
- 1.7 All financial transactions must be recorded as outlined in *Guidelines for SEANA Inc. Camp Treasurers (2023 update)*.
- 1.8 Obtain costing for venue, transport, etc.
- 1.9 Prepare a budget to cover accommodation, meals, transport, photocopying, postage, telephone, gifts to guest speakers and excursion leaders, contribution of \$5 per adult participant for South East Australian Naturalists Association, modest profit for the work done by the host club, etc.
- 1.10 Make initial contact with excursion leaders and speakers.
- 1.11 Prepare draft program of activities.
- 1.12 Keep SEANA committee updated so that advance publicity can be given at previous camp.
- 1.13 Arrange with host club of preceding camp to display information to promote your camp.
- 1.14 Arrange with host club of preceding camp for collection of signs, ribbons, first aid kits etc.

## **2. 4-5 months ahead of the camp**

- 2.1 Mail out First Circular (including SEANA Secretary in the mailout), containing program cost, booking/registration form, information about accommodation in area if participants are to arrange own accommodation, tourist information, etc. Addresses of Field Naturalists Clubs and previous camp participants is available from South East Australian Naturalists Association (contact SEANA Secretary). This could be sent by email for contacts that have provided email addresses.  
**Note that SEANA Camp registrants are required to take out individual SEANA membership or join a SEANA-affiliated club if not already a member of such a club. The registration form should require each registrant to affirm their club membership or else pay the SEANA individual membership subscription.**
- 2.2 Confirm arrangements with venue based on estimated numbers.
- 2.3 Arrange for contents of first aid kits to be checked by an appropriately qualified person such as a pharmacist. Update contents as required and request reimbursement of costs from SEANA. (See Risk Management guidelines for more details.)  
If there are insufficient kits for the number of excursions you are planning to have running at any one time, prepare new kits as required and request reimbursement of costs from SEANA.

## **3. 2 months ahead of the camp**

- 3.1 Mail or email Second Circular to those who have booked (including SEANA Secretary in the mailout). This may include an updated program, excursion details, receipt for deposit, reminder of balance owing, reminder of what to bring (including club name tags), map, medical form (up-to-date information should be carried by each participant during the camp), convoy rules, regional tourist information. If emailing Second Circular, receipts can be provided to participants when they register at the camp. Include health emergency (e.g. COVID-19) guidelines for participants, according to any current State/ Federal rules/guidelines. This should include an instruction to participants not to come if they feel unwell or are isolating, as well as requesting participants to bring facemasks and personal sanitiser and reminding them to maintain a safe social distance during the camp. Remind participants to bring suitable clothing, including long shirts and trousers and closed-toe shoes. Request participants to bring personal locator beacons if they have them. Recommend to participants that they should take out an ambulance subscription if it not already included in their health insurance.
- 3.2 Finalise speakers, excursions, menu, etc.  
Where difficulties with convoying have been identified, consider preparing maps of excursion routes in place of convoying.
- 3.3 Book buses or boats if required.
- 3.4 Set up database of registrants, allocate accommodation, and allocate participants to excursions if this is being done in advance.
- 3.5 Arrange a facilitator for each excursion. Duties are to assist the excursion leader by checking roll, forming convoy, toilet stops and general organisation. Separate Facilitator Guidelines are available.
- 3.6 Decide which members of the host club will be present at registration point to generally provide information and assistance to visiting participants.
- 3.7 Contact the host club of the following SEANA camp to arrange space and/or time for the club to display promotional material for the next camp.

## **4 1 month ahead of camp**

All money should be paid to the host club one month prior to the camp. This will avoid the work and security problems of handling money during the camp.

## **5 During the Camp**

- 5.1 Host club members who are prepared to assist but who have not attended a South East Australian Naturalists Association Camp would benefit from a detailed plan of action about what needs to be done. This can be very reassuring for them. In other words, don't presume that they are clear about their duties.
- 5.2 A busy time for the organising club is at reception when the camp participants are arriving. Ensure that you have sufficient people available so that those delegated to collect late fees have no other duties to perform to distract them from this important duty. If anything out of the ordinary happens make sure that they know to make a note of what happened so that it can be followed up if necessary.

- 5.3 A group of people could be delegated to answer questions about the program, assist with selection of excursions and general information about activities.
- 5.4 If the organising club is arranging the accommodation, have people on hand to personally take people to their room. This is a good gesture to weary, long distance travellers who may get confused and take the wrong room.
- 5.5 Convoys are often used on excursions. To reduce the possibility of lost cars Convoy Rules should be prepared for leaders/facilitators and included for participants in the second mail out.
- 5.6 Arrange for written reports and photographs of excursions, speakers and other Camp activities. This is best done and collected on the day and could be one of the facilitator's duties. Reports should be sent to the Webmaster for inclusion on the website.
- 5.7 Don't Panic. Remember that Field Naturalists are easy-going people who enjoy the opportunity to visit natural areas and will themselves find interesting flora and fauna. They will be willing to share knowledge if given the opportunity.

## 6 After the Camp

- 6.1 Refund money as appropriate to people who paid but were unable to attend the camp. A portion of deposit may be retained to cover administration and other costs.  
Guidelines for full or partial refunds:  
When registered and fully paid up intending participants advise of inability to attend a Camp after the final payment was due, and have a valid reason (e.g. illness of participant or close family member, vehicle breakdown, etc.), it is suggested that partial refunds be offered as follows:  
Registration/admin component – no refund  
Provided accommodation – refund up to 50% if host club has already committed to payment, otherwise 100%.  
Catered meals – as for provided accommodation.  
However, the host club has the final decision on such requests.
- 6.2 Return reports and photographs of the camp to the SEANA webmaster, preferably within a month of the camp.
  - Return, to the SEANA Treasurer, information requested in *Guidelines for SEANA Inc. Camp Treasurers (2023 update)* including a financial report showing income and expenditure for the Camp.
  - Allocation to SEANA (\$5 per adult Camp participant).
- 6.3 Forward to SEANA Secretary a list of camp attendees including names, email addresses, home clubs and other relevant contact information, preferably within a month of the camp so it can be prepared for the next host club.
- 6.4 Organise handover of first aid kits, signage, ribbons etc. to the next host club.
- 6.5 Prepare and send to SEANA Secretary all documentation concerning any incidents that occurred during the camp for which an insurance claim may be needed. (See *Risk Management for SEANA Camps.*)

Further information can be obtained from the SEANA Secretary or Treasurer.

Confirmed at February 2009 Committee meeting and updated at July 2014 and July 2022 Committee meetings. Confirmed at February 2023 Committee meeting.

## APPENDIX

### GUIDELINES FOR AN 'ORGANISATIONALLY SIMPLER' SEANA CAMP

#### Background

Discussions at recent SEANA General Meetings and in the Management Committee have indicated that some member clubs find that they lack the resources required to host a traditional-style Autumn or Spring Camp with a wide range of knowledgeably-led excursions and multiple expert evening presenters. This has led to the idea of an 'organisationally simpler' gathering as an option for such clubs to consider. This approach was trialled at the Autumn 2019 gathering at Port Fairy which was organised by the Committee with good local input from the Hamilton FNC.

This document outlines the format for a simpler gathering, to encourage a wider range of clubs to host future gatherings.

#### Suggested format for a simpler Camp

The organisation of the Camp would involve:

- Arranging for a venue of sufficient capacity for Saturday late afternoon and evening for registration and tea/coffee from (say) 3:30pm or 4:00pm, SEANA General Meeting (preceded by the AGM if applicable) at 5:00pm, a catered dinner at 6:30pm and a welcome and presentation from around 8:00pm.
- Well ahead of the Camp, sending out (via e-mail) an Invitation (First Notice) to the SEANA member clubs and individuals who have been recent past Camp participants – both sets of addresses can be obtained from the SEANA Secretary. This notice would provide brief information about the venue(s) for evening gathering(s), the natural history attractions of the visited region, advice about accommodation options and include a registration form.
- Preparing a list of local sites that can be visited comfortably in a half- or full-day car outing, preferably with maps and outlines of key features of natural history interest.
- Arranging for a meeting place on Friday evening at which the above-mentioned trips information would be available to participants. This could be a local hall or preferably a hotel bistro or reasonably priced large capacity restaurant which gives participants the opportunity to order and pay individually for dinners.
- As an *optional enhancement*, the host club might nominate facilitators (not expected to be knowledgeable leaders) for some at least of the suggested trips, with a designated meeting time and place; this would assist folk who would rather undertake visits in the company of other like-minded folk. It is suggested that such facilitated trips would be particularly helpful on the Saturday of the camp.
- Participants would organise their own accommodation and all meals apart from Saturday dinner.

It would not be essential for the host club to set up a separate designated Camp bank account, as with modern financial record keeping systems it may be convenient to operate within the on-going club account.

Existing guidelines for host clubs would apply, in particular the availability of a refundable advance payment from SEANA to help cover such early expenses as a deposit to secure a venue booking.

The First Notice would typically be sent out about six months ahead of the Camp, or earlier if accommodation is likely to be under pressure.