

ExploreSafe Framework v2.0: evidence and provenance annex

Companion to: ExploreSafe Framework for Outdoor Decision-Making, Version 2.0

Revision: 24 September 2026, following corpus review and targeted primary-source checks

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How to read this annex

There is one entry for each of the framework's 29 substantive positions. Each identifies its label, what it says, what supports it, the limits of that support and what was actually checked.

Published position means the named authority publishes the stated advice within its scope. **Established practice** identifies a recurring message in specified sources, not universal adoption. **Recommendation** means ExploreSafe has selected or extended the advice, scope, number or trigger. A mixed position identifies the published and chosen elements separately.

The September 2026 jurisdiction files are a working record, not primary-source certification. Agreement with that record alone does not establish accuracy, currency or effectiveness. A named-walk rule is not a statewide policy; a listed equipment option is not an operating protocol.

Evidence status. “Corpus only” means the supplied record was used but the underlying source was not freshly checked for this revision. V01–V23 identify the targeted primary-source and research checks made on 24 September 2026. They cover consequential or disputed claims, not every link in the corpus. Sources that were merely linked or listed were not treated as read.

The supplied research notes do not include a reproducible review. The lost-person/search papers were subsequently obtained from their publishers, and supporting provenance checked as recorded at V20–V23. Other research leads remain unverified. This revision does not claim that no research exists for numerical rules, that the mechanisms have all been validated, or that ExploreSafe itself has demonstrated effectiveness. Recommendations can be useful practical judgements without being presented as tested thresholds.

Deciding between conflicting sources

Compare the precise claim, audience, location and purpose first. A trail-specific quantity and a general day-walk quantity may differ without contradiction. Separate access rules, general preparation advice, medical guidance and device instructions.

Use an explicit effective date, withdrawal or replacement notice where available. An “updated” date, current navigation link or newer-looking page is supporting context, not proof of supersession. Prefer the responsible authority for the subject, while recognising that two resources from the same authority may remain unresolved.

Record both versions and the reason for any precedence decision. If the conflict cannot be settled, preserve it as unresolved and avoid writing a permission or safety assurance from the more permissive wording. Authoritative clarification would be needed to call one version stale. No agency was contacted in this revision.

AMSA's dated no-expiry announcement is a resolved example. Parks Victoria's “high” fire wording is an unresolved one. Victoria Police's page illustrates a corpus omission: the displayed page date predates the corpus, so the additional material is not evidence that the advice changed after collection.

Position records

Principle 1

1.1 Track grades

Label. Published position for the grading function; recommendation for the combined assessment.

What it says. Use the land manager's grade and full route description alongside the group's actual capability and current conditions.

What it rests on. Parks Australia's current grading page includes required experience as a criterion, and warns readers to select walks suited to fitness and experience (V15). The WA corpus records DBCA's separate classes; the current DBCA page links to its classification material (V04).

Limits and unresolved questions. The earlier wording wrongly separated grades entirely from capability. Required experience is different from the actual capability of today's walkers. This revision removes universal distance descriptors and claims about Queensland never naming AWTGS. It does not certify equivalence between systems or every jurisdiction's adoption.

Verification. V04, V15 checked 24 September; classification details beyond those pages remain corpus evidence.

1.2 Minimum group of three beyond easy access

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. At least three beyond ExploreSafe's defined access boundary, with no automatic instruction to split the group.

What it rests on. DBCA's general walking page recommends three and gives the injured-person rationale (V04). Queensland publishes both three and four in different places. NSW material in the corpus also supports three. The QLD corpus records three as desirable in a remote-walking form and about four as ideal in Great Walks advice; these are different scopes, not a single statewide minimum. NT examples are route-specific; AAAS classes in the national file are not the public grading system. Other bodies favour four.

Limits and unresolved questions. The boundary is ExploreSafe's. Three does not guarantee that anyone can safely travel alone for help. The files do not validate this minimum against outcomes. The rationale is preserving assistance and communication options, not proving an optimum.

Verification. V04 checked 24 September; other examples retained as corpus support.

1.3 Upper group ceiling of 16

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. A general ceiling, not a target; use fewer where management or environmental demands require it and obey lower local limits.

What it rests on. The contested register identifies Canberra Bushwalking Club as the source of a 16-person maximum. The ACT corpus contains that club's practice; other route and permit limits are smaller. ExploreSafe chooses a general ceiling to prompt group management decisions.

Limits and unresolved questions. A club maximum is not an agency standard or an evidence-based safe size. No outcome validation is supplied. Its suitability should be tested with experienced leaders and varied walking scenarios before stronger claims are made.

Verification. Corpus only; the club's current rule was not rechecked.

1.4 Walking alone

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Walking alone increases risk because immediate companion assistance, alarm-raising and shared decisions are unavailable if something goes wrong. Prefer company on remote, difficult and off-track walks; if solo, use the stated precautions without treating them as assurance.

What it rests on. The corpus records both prohibitions or strong discouragement and conditional acceptance. Parks Victoria's current hiking page accepts experienced solo walking (V05).

Limits and unresolved questions. The framework states a mechanism, not a quantified comparison of solo and group risk. It does not estimate the size of the increase or claim that incident proportions account for route, conditions, experience and exposure. Nor does it establish that named precautions make a solo walk safe.

Verification. V05 checked 24 September; other agency positions remain corpus evidence.

Principle 2

2.1 Fire danger ratings and the walking table

Label. Published position for rating information and named local advice; recommendation for the national walking table.

What it says. High: avoid bushfire-risk areas where practicable and follow stricter advice. Extreme: do not start there. Catastrophic: do not be there. Lower ratings are not clearance.

What it rests on. CFA explains the current ratings and actions (V06). ACT Parks advises no entry at Extreme or Catastrophic (V07); DBCA says not to go or remain on trails at those ratings (V04). Parks Victoria's hiking page says not to hike with a high fire danger rating (V05).

Limits and unresolved questions. Parks Victoria is not evidence for an Extreme-only threshold. Its lower-case high wording does not clearly settle whether it means the formal High category; no agency clarification was obtained. The table therefore does not license walking contrary to that advice. Earlier High tactics—early finish, cleared areas and road configuration—were removed as a generic assurance. The table is not an evacuation plan or a safe route guarantee.

Verification. V04–V07 checked 24 September. Parks Victoria wording remains unresolved, not declared stale.

2.2 Total Fire Bans

Label. Published position for named local advice; recommendation to check local access and fire-use rules.

What it says. Treat fire rating, ban status, land access and cooking restrictions as separate checks.

What it rests on. ACT Parks explicitly advises no entry on Total Fire Ban days (V07). The corpus also records Booderee walking-track closures with named exceptions. These qualify the earlier statement that a ban is not automatically a walking ban.

Limits and unresolved questions. This is not a national legal interpretation. The former South Australian 15-metre stove-clearance statement was removed: the annex and SA corpus disagree on its scope and it was not necessary to the general instruction. Current CFS rules, applicable park rules and any exemptions would be needed before reinstating it.

Verification. V07 checked 24 September. Other legal and operational details not revalidated.

2.3 Heat involves more than the maximum temperature

Label. Published position for multifactor heat risk; recommendation for the walking checks.

What it says. Consider the route's conditions, effort and people alongside forecast and heatwave information.

What it rests on. BOM explains that heatwaves account for unusual daytime and overnight temperatures, local climate and recent conditions (V08). NT Parks gives walking-specific preparation and heat advice (V09). The national corpus records SMA's additional heat-balance factors.

Limits and unresolved questions. A sports tool is not validated for every bushwalk merely because its factors are relevant. This revision does not retain the earlier claim of a separately verified SMA model or research audit. Heatwave intensity and instantaneous route exposure answer different questions.

Verification. V08–V09 checked 24 September; SMA material not freshly checked.

2.4 Heat decision points

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Around 30°C adapt; mid 30s avoid long, exposed or remote walks; high 30s or a severe/extreme heatwave warning avoid exposed or remote country, with downward adjustment and local advice taking precedence.

What it rests on. These bands are ExploreSafe's graded prompts for changing plans as exposure rises. NT Parks advises considering postponement above 32°C (V09). The NT corpus also records named-walk, time-dependent restrictions at 36°C.

Limits and unresolved questions. Published temperature advice exists; the earlier absence claim was wrong. Named-route closures cannot establish a nationwide temperature limit. The bands have not been validated for sensitivity, false reassurance or varied climates and people. Being below a band, or outside a severe heatwave warning, does not establish safety.

Verification. V09 checked 24 September. Route-specific closure details and cited heat research were not revalidated; exact examples are not operational instructions here.

2.5 Definition of remote

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. About an hour until help can reach the group, or substantial communication, terrain or evacuation delay; uncertainty warrants conservative planning.

What it rests on. The national corpus records AAAS consideration of access, contact and response time. It also records a superseded 2016 Victorian standard's one-hour-to-medical-care threshold. ExploreSafe changes both the scope and the endpoint.

Limits and unresolved questions. This is a preparation trigger, not a forecast or a current agency definition. A walker cannot reliably infer response time from distance to a road. The threshold does not automatically require extra days of food, but it does require considering the consequences of a plausible overnight delay.

Verification. Corpus only. A current rescue-service assessment and scenario testing would be needed to validate this trigger.

2.6 Collected water and tank supplies

Label. Recommendation for the general collection rule, informed by published positions.

What it says. Verify availability and quality; treat collected water unless identified as potable, using appropriate methods and local instructions.

What it rests on. ACT Parks advises treating creek and tank water (V07). The corpus distinguishes rainfall-dependent tanks from maintained Larapinta supplies. NSW Health describes rainwater risks and treatment limitations (V10).

Limits and unresolved questions. Not every tank is rainfall-fed, and not every source can be made safe by any one of boiling, filtering or tablets. NSW Health notes that few filters remove all harmful microorganisms; its general rainwater guidance is not a portable-treatment specification. Water declared unsuitable locally is not authorised for use by this framework. Product instructions and contaminant-specific advice are needed for a treatment plan.

Verification. V07 and V10 checked 24 September; named supply operations remain corpus evidence.

Principle 3

3.1 Navigation and independent backup

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Navigate if the phone fails; use an independently usable backup on longer, remote or less clearly marked walks.

What it rests on. The corpus records widespread map and compass advice and phone-reliance warnings. DBCA recommends map-and-compass competence (V04). NT Parks advises printed map and compass on extended walks, with apps as backup (V09).

Limits and unresolved questions. The scope and failure-independence rule are ExploreSafe's synthesis, not a single published national instruction. Mobile reception and satellite positioning are different: downloaded maps may work without reception. This revision does not test specific apps, receivers or navigation skill.

Verification. V04 and V09 checked 24 September; other examples remain corpus evidence.

3.2 First aid capability

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Scale capability and kit to the group and possible delay; have current remote-area first aid training within groups on walks meeting ExploreSafe's remote definition.

What it rests on. ACT Parks explicitly mentions remote first aid (V07). The QLD corpus records remote-walk training advice; NT school-group provisions and AAAS concern particular audiences.

Limits and unresolved questions. The exact qualification boundary is ExploreSafe's, not a national requirement. School and dependent-group requirements do not automatically apply to independent walkers. Course quality, retained skills and kit suitability were not assessed; no medical treatment protocol is supplied.

Verification. V07 checked 24 September; other training provisions remain corpus evidence.

3.3 Knowing the equipment

Label. Published position for equipment familiarity; recommendation for applying it across the kit.

What it says. Practise before relying on equipment and use approved test modes.

What it rests on. The QLD corpus advises knowing how to use GPS and beacon equipment. AMSA explains deployment and registration separately (V01–V03).

Limits and unresolved questions. Unfamiliar equipment may be ineffective but does not inevitably fail. An unregistered beacon does not stop transmitting because its owner omitted registration. The earlier simultaneous-failure claim has been removed. No competence assessment is prescribed.

Verification. Corpus plus V01–V03 checked 24 September.

Principle 4

4.1 Core kit, additions and scope

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Use the combined core kit when a foreseeable problem could leave the walker exposed or out after dark; add equipment for the route and consequences.

What it rests on. Individual items appear in various corpus lists: water, first aid and sun protection recur broadly; map, clothing, torch, whistle and shelter have differing coverage. Tasmania provides walk-specific tiers and an Overland minimum; Outdoors Queensland supplies a Ten Essentials model. Victoria Police expressly lists a headlamp (V11).

Limits and unresolved questions. The complete core kit is not published by all or nearly all jurisdictions. Nor is headtorch selection an unprecedented agency omission. Agencies do publish scoped lists. The consequence-based trigger and combination remain useful author choices without an outcome study. A space blanket is not equivalent to suitable overnight shelter. Sleep equipment should match foreseeable adverse conditions, not just the forecast.

Verification. V11 checked 24 September; kit detail and Tasmania tiers otherwise corpus only.

4.2 Water quantities

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Start with 1 litre up to two hours, 2 litres for longer/harder day walks, or 1 litre per walking hour in the stated demanding settings; use the higher applicable allowance and local minimum, then add route-specific reserves.

What it rests on. The corpus contains hourly rates and daily or route quantities with different scopes. DBCA and NT currently publish 1 litre per hour including drinking advice (V04, V09). ExploreSafe deliberately presents its figures as carrying allowances. Better Health Channel addresses both under- and over-hydration (V12).

Limits and unresolved questions. An hourly number and a daily number are not necessarily contradictory without matching duration, setting and purpose. Carrying capacity is not a drinking prescription. The older annex's attribution of drink-to-thirst guidance to Better Health Channel was not supported by the checked hydration page, which warns against relying on thirst alone. Clinical adequacy of ExploreSafe's quantities and reserves is not established; no child-specific dose is implied.

Verification. V04, V09 and V12 checked 24 September; other numerical examples remain corpus evidence.

4.3 Trip plans and monitoring

Label. Recommendation for the combined arrangement; published precedents for particular unmonitored records.

What it says. Use a trusted contact with an action plan; do not assume a registration or logbook triggers an alert.

What it rests on. The corpus records warnings about unmonitored forms and logs, but also ACT club check-in procedures and permit exit arrangements. DBCA says site registration is additional to telling reliable contacts (V04).

Limits and unresolved questions. Nobody checks these records was an unjustified absolute. Neither all systems are monitored nor all are unmonitored follows from the files. A service-specific policy, timing and escalation procedure would settle a particular arrangement. Existing permit or monitoring duties must still be followed.

Verification. V04 checked 24 September; operational arrangements elsewhere not revalidated.

4.4 Overdue action

Label. Recommendation for an agreed action plan; published position that a missing-person report need not wait 24 hours.

What it says. Agree a latest action time and route-specific steps; earlier concern overrides the time. If no time was agreed, a few hours past expected return is a reasonable point for the contact to act, sooner with any other concern, and without waiting overnight for someone due before dark.

What it rests on. DBCA and Victoria Police both publish an agreed contact time (V04, V11). ACT Policing states no 24-hour waiting requirement and provides non-urgent and emergency channels (V13). QLD is therefore not the only source supporting an agreed trigger.

Limits and unresolved questions. The fallback is retained as an ExploreSafe recommendation so a contact without an agreed time still has a practical point to act. A few hours is a judgement, not a tested optimum, an agency deadline or permission to postpone action despite concern. The explicit sooner-if-concerned and no-overnight-wait qualifications address that risk. Action means contacting police through the channel appropriate to urgency and sharing the plan, not waiting until the fallback before seeking advice. Current

club or permit deadlines are not universal public reporting rules, and the research below does not derive this interval.

Verification. V04, V11 and V13 checked 24 September.

Principle 5

5.1 Signs of strain and decision problems

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Use observable changes as prompts to stop, ask and reassess.

What it rests on. The listed prompts apply ExploreSafe's design approach. The corpus contains scattered pace and group advice; Victoria Police explicitly identifies fatigue and leadership problems among factors in lost-person incidents (V11).

Limits and unresolved questions. These are neither diagnoses nor a validated scale of deteriorating judgement. The earlier division between tiredness and more dangerous judgement failure was too certain. No agency advice exists was also too strong. HSSF and the cited human-factors studies were not supplied for direct validation of each cue.

Verification. V11 checked 24 September; empirical validation remains open.

5.2 Tracks and off-track planning

Label. Published position for track and access advice; recommendation for planned off-track travel conditions.

What it says. Stay on the planned permitted track; skill alone is not permission to leave it.

What it rests on. The NT and TAS corpus contains direct stay-on-track instructions. ACT Parks and Parks Australia also give track/access advice (V07, V15).

Limits and unresolved questions. The original unless-you-have-navigation-skills exception was not carried by those sources. Lawful off-track travel requires checking the specific place and access arrangements as well as capability. A generic framework cannot decide permission for a route.

Verification. V07 and V15 checked 24 September; no route permissions assessed.

Principle 6

6.1 Turn-back criteria

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Agree prompts to reconsider before departure, including time, weather and progress.

What it rests on. Tasmania is one published precedent, not the only government example. Parks Australia's current grading page includes turning back when conditions or difficulty change (V15); the NSW corpus contains a river-crossing turn-back prompt.

Limits and unresolved questions. Those examples support reconsideration, not necessarily ExploreSafe's group method or a numerical turnaround rule. Keeping this as a recommendation does not require proving that no agency has ever described such a method. Its effectiveness has not been measured here.

Verification. V15 checked 24 September; other precedents corpus only.

6.2 Anyone can raise a concern

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Make room for every participant's concern and avoid a decision driven only by the person most committed to finishing.

What it rests on. Author judgement consistent with the framework's practical purpose. Corpus and current Victoria Police material contain partial group/leadership advice; they do not establish this exact informal-group procedure.

Limits and unresolved questions. The revision does not claim agencies say nothing about group decisions, or that the proposed procedure has demonstrated effectiveness. It invites a concern, not a guarantee that every participant's preferred solution will be feasible.

Verification. Corpus; V11 supplies context, not validation of the procedure.

6.3 Daylight planning

Label. Established practice for the recurring message; recommendation for a delay margin.

What it says. Plan to finish in daylight and allow for slower progress.

What it rests on. Government examples are recorded for ACT, Victoria and WA; ACT is directly confirmed at V07. The corpus also records relevant NGO advice in Queensland. These are identified examples rather than an exhaustive prevalence count.

Limits and unresolved questions. The old four-of-eight count mixed unlike evidence. NSW call-before-dark rescue advice is not a finish-before-dark planning rule. This position does not prescribe a tested time buffer or cover planned night walking.

Verification. ACT checked 24 September; other examples corpus only.

Principle 7

7.1 Calling for help

Label. Published position for service selection and reporting channels; recommendation to explain walking access difficulties.

What it says. 000 for a serious or urgent emergency; police for an urgent search, ambulance for a medical emergency, fire for fire. Use local police reporting for non-urgent missing-person concerns.

What it rests on. Official Triple Zero material identifies the three services (V16). Healthdirect explicitly advises ambulance for medical emergencies (V17). The Victorian corpus supports police for search; ACT Policing distinguishes emergency from non-urgent reporting (V13).

Limits and unresolved questions. All jurisdictions publishing 000 does not support asking for police in every medical emergency. This revision removes that blanket inference and the universal police-coordination claim, which was unnecessary to the action. Operators and responders should be told the circumstances and followed.

Verification. V13, V16–V17 checked 24 September; search-specific police instruction also corpus supported.

7.2 Communication devices

Label. Recommendation for scope and device arrangement.

What it says. Carry off-network emergency communication where mobile coverage cannot be relied on; use a registered PLB as independent distress backup and understand available two-way/SOS functions.

What it rests on. Agency carriage advice varies by route, remoteness and reception. AMSA gives two-way communication an emergency role (V02). Victoria Police explains inReach functions (V11). Apple documents phone satellite SOS and limitations (V18).

Limits and unresolved questions. An options list does not establish a device hierarchy. Neither does AMSA establish that a PLB must be every walker's primary device. The independent-PLB preference is ExploreSafe's redundancy judgement, not a comparative reliability finding or denial of phone SOS. Model, country, subscription, battery, sky view and service details need checking for the actual device and trip.

Verification. V02, V11 and V18 checked 24 September. No complete product comparison or field test.

7.3 Beacon registration

Label. Published position, AMSA.

What it says. Register free and keep details current; registrations no longer expire from 4 November 2024.

What it rests on. AMSA's homepage explicitly gives that effective date; its registration page explains the value of current contacts and trip/ownership updates (V01).

Limits and unresolved questions. The effective-date statement, not a presumption that homepages outrank PDFs, settles the renewal question. Earlier copies of two-year wording were not all revisited in this revision, so their continued presence is not asserted. Some legal requirements exist, but this is not a finding that every recreational PLB is subject to the same law. Registration does not enable transmission.

Verification. V01 checked and rechecked 24 September; the no-expiry statement remains current. Conflicting historic wording is retained only as provenance.

7.4 Activation and deployment

Label. Published position for AMSA threshold/deployment and NPWS staying advice; recommendation for combined procedure.

What it says. Use two-way emergency contact where available; activate a beacon for grave and imminent danger when it is unavailable. Deploy safely and remain with it after deliberate distress activation, following instructions.

What it rests on. AMSA distinguishes distress and accidental activation (V02–V03). NSW NPWS expressly tells a user to stay after activation (V19). The QLD corpus records two alternatives in a remote form: life-threatening circumstances OR aiding an already commenced search.

Limits and unresolved questions. The old annex omitted the first QLD alternative and wrongly claimed staying after activation was unpublished. Different activation formulations remain; no national harmonisation was obtained. Device-specific operation duration was not checked across models. Do not turn off a deliberate distress alert simply because accidental-activation guidance says to switch off.

Verification. V02–V03 and V19 checked 24 September; QLD form only checked against the supplied corpus.

7.5 If lost

Label. Published position for named agency steps; recommendation for restrictions and combined procedure.

What it says. Stop; only a certain, short and safe retrace is an option before rescue-location instructions apply. Otherwise stay, signal and call early.

What it rests on. WA publishes stay-put advice (V04); Victoria Police also includes a short retrace step (V11). NSW corpus material supports visibility and early contact, while NSW SES/BSAR contains a different nearby-campsite suggestion.

Limits and unresolved questions. Government wording is not unanimous. The short retrace has a direct agency precedent, but ExploreSafe's conditions and three-blast whistle procedure are its choices. The former half-found-on-tracks justification did not establish a benefit from retracing and remains excluded. The restored research paragraph draws only on the scoped findings checked at V20–V21; it does not turn their observations into a causal test of staying versus moving. The unverified three-quarters-moving-for-four-hours figure remains excluded.

Verification. V04 and V11 checked 24 September; NSW procedural variants otherwise corpus evidence. Original research checked at V20–V21 and provenance traced at V22–V23; see the research assessment below.

7.6 Injured but not lost

Label. Recommendation.

What it says. Assess injury and immediate hazards, provide first aid within capability and seek appropriate advice; known location alone does not decide movement.

What it rests on. The corpus contains injury and evacuation-related advice, including NSW material. It was incorrect to say nothing published addresses the situation. Healthdirect supports urgent medical contact (V17).

Limits and unresolved questions. This is a decision distinction, not a self-evacuation protocol or permission to move a seriously injured person. Injury-specific clinical guidance and advice from responders are required. The files do not validate a universal stay/move rule.

Verification. Corpus and V17 checked 24 September; clinical protocols not audited.

7.7 Confirming return

Label. Established practice.

What it says. Close the loop with the contact and complete required check-out arrangements.

What it rests on. General return-confirmation messages appear in at least NSW, ACT, QLD, TAS and WA corpus material. ACT is directly confirmed at V07. NT additionally records a permit-specific notification duty.

Limits and unresolved questions. The earlier count of three was incomplete. General advice, club procedures and permit conditions are distinguished rather than treated as identical statewide systems. The instruction does not impose a universal time limit.

Verification. ACT checked 24 September; other examples corpus only.

Targeted primary-source verification register

All checks below were made on **24 September 2026**. A check confirms only the passages used for the listed question. It is not certification of the entire website or proof of the page's historical state. Where a page displays a date, that is identified separately from our access date.

ID	Source	Page	Result and limit
V01	AMSA — registration status and details	Beacons homepage · Registration	Confirmed: no-expiry statement with explicit effective date of 4 November 2024; free registration and keeping details current. This resolves the historical two-year renewal conflict. It does not rely on a generic homepage-over-PDF rule.
V02	AMSA — activation	Using your beacon	Confirmed threshold, two-way emergency role and separate accidental-activation procedure. The latter says switch off and call 1800 641 792. This is not the procedure for ending a deliberate distress activation.
V03	AMSA — deployment	Correct deployment	Confirmed positioning guidance; device and terrain constraints remain. Did not establish a universal operating duration.
V04	WA DBCA — bushwalking	Bushwalking safety	Checked group minimum, water, fire, navigation, trip-contact and lost-person wording used above. Page displays 30 March 2026 update; that date alone does not establish precedence over every other DBCA resource.
V05	Parks Victoria — hiking	Hiking and bushwalking	Checked solo and fire wording. The phrase “high fire danger rating” remains ambiguous as to the formal category. Not recast as Extreme-only, and not declared superseded.
V06	CFA — ratings	About Fire Danger Ratings	Current four-category system and general community actions checked. These inform, but do not constitute, ExploreSafe's walking table.
V07	ACT Parks — bush safety	Safety in and around the bush	Checked the specific positions cited in entries 2.1–2.2, 2.6, 3.2, 5.2, 6.3 and 7.7. Scope is this ACT advice, not all national parks.
V08	BOM — heatwave	What is a heatwave?	Confirmed how heatwaves account for local and recent conditions. Does not validate the framework's temperature bands.
V09	NT Parks — heat	Stay safe in the heat in parks	Confirmed 32°C postponement advice, hourly water wording and extended-walk navigation advice. No nationwide threshold inferred.
V10	NSW Health — tank water	Managing rainwater tanks	Checked contamination, safe-supply and treatment qualifications. Not a certification of any field filter, tablet or source.
V11	Victoria Police — outdoor safety	Outdoor and bush safety	Page displays 18 November 2025 update. Its retracing, equipment, communication and group material exceeds what the corpus captured. It cannot simply be dismissed as a post-corpus change.

ID	Source	Page	Result and limit
V12	Better Health Channel — hydration	Exercise: the low-down on hydration	Checked advice on individual fluid needs and both over- and under-hydration. Does not support citing this page for a thirst-only rule.
V13	ACT Policing — missing persons	Missing persons	Checked reporting and no mandatory 24-hour wait. Contact numbers on this page are ACT-specific; the framework directs readers to their relevant police channel.
V14	Outdoor Council of Australia — AAAS	Australian Adventure Activity Standard	Confirmed voluntary status and possible contractual or management conditions. The page announces an AAAS review; it does not establish that a replacement standard has taken effect. Individual Good Practice Guide provisions were not re-audited.
V15	Parks Australia — grading	Walking Track Grading System	Confirmed experience criteria and turn-back advice. A current transition statement is not proof every sign and route already uses the same grading system.
V16	Australian Government — Triple Zero	Emergency calling poster	Primary search retrieval confirmed emergency service selection. An initial attempt to open a different Triple Zero page failed. The old poster is corroborated by V17, not used as evidence of a newly issued procedure.
V17	Healthdirect — emergency calls	Calling triple zero	Direct page check confirmed medical emergency routing and operator procedure. Page displays last reviewed August 2025. This does not validate every ancillary telecommunications statement on that page.
V18	Apple — satellite connection	Connect to a satellite with your iPhone	Manufacturer page checked for the existence of phone satellite emergency functions and connection limitations. It is not a comparison proving PLBs superior, nor confirmation of every model, account, country or future service.
V19	NSW NPWS — PLBs	Personal locator beacons	Confirmed stay-after-activation instruction. Its last-resort/danger-or-injury wording differs from AMSA's formulation; both are represented rather than silently merged into a claim of consensus.
V20	Dacey, Whitsed & Gonzalez (2023)	Publisher full text · Paper PDF	Methods, results and limitations checked; see research assessment.
V21	Adams et al. (2007)	Publisher article · Paper PDF	Methods, results and limitations checked; see research assessment.
V22	Twardy, Koester & Gatt (2006)	Final report to the Australian National SAR Council	Supporting report examined for attribution; not the source of the restored survey percentage.
V23	Dacey, Whitsed & Gonzalez (2022)	Model paper	Provenance check of the four-hour claim; not evidence for the deleted percentage.

Disposition of the adversarial review

The original Astra-findings.md, jurisdiction files, comparison and contested-questions register are unchanged historical records. This table records what was done with each finding; it does not mark every evidence question closed. “Retained recommendation” means the practical judgement remains visible and contestable, not that validation has been supplied.

Finding	Disposition	Revised location	Action or remaining limit
A-01	Corrected	5.2	Navigation skill no longer grants an exception to access rules.
A-02	Corrected	4.3	Removed universal non-monitoring claim; require a known contact and verified service arrangements.
A-03	Corrected; partly open	7.4	NPWS stay-after-activation advice confirmed. Device-specific operating duration remains to be checked.
A-04	Corrected	6.1	Removed Tasmania-only claim; Parks Australia precedent verified.
A-05	Corrected	2.4	Recognised NT temperature advice; no national threshold inferred.
A-06	Corrected	2.1	Acknowledged partial High guidance; national table labelled recommendation.
A-07	Corrected; wording unresolved	2.1	Removed Extreme-only attribution to Parks Victoria; its high wording remains unresolved.
A-08	Relabelled	4.1	Combined kit is an ExploreSafe recommendation, not near-universal publication.
A-09	Corrected	4.1	Recognised existing agency scope and tiers; retained consequence trigger as author choice.
A-10	Corrected	4.1	Removed uniqueness claim; current Victoria Police headlamp precedent recorded.
A-11	Corrected	2.6	Separated supply types and source-specific reliability.
A-12	Corrected	7.6	Removed no-published-advice claim; retained the decision distinction.
A-13	Corrected	6.3; 7.7	Named traceable examples instead of the inconsistent prevalence counts.
A-14	Corrected	2.4	Removed denial of NSW heat advice; original corpus remains unchanged.
A-15	Reconciled for revised documents	Label definitions	Scope changes are recommendations. Historical register labels are not the revised label record.
A-16	Clarified	4.2	Two-hour water allowance does not define short walk; higher applicable allowances prevail.

Finding	Disposition	Revised location	Action or remaining limit
A-17	Corrected	3.3; 7.3	Removed guaranteed simultaneous failure; distinguished registration from transmission.
A-18	Retained author choice	Definitions; 4.1	Preparation responds to plausible delay; no automatic extra day of food solely from the remote label. Historical register differs.
A-19	Corrected	7.5	Removed claimed unanimity and acknowledged NSW procedural differences.
A-20	Corrected	2.5	Acknowledged historical definition, with different endpoint and scope.
A-21	Primary confirmation	7.3; V01	AMSA effective-date statement resolves no-expiry status; old pages not all rechecked.
A-22	Narrowed	Evidence status	Corpus is selected material spanning jurisdictions, not exhaustive national absence evidence.
A-23	Targeted research checked; wider review open	Research assessment	Original papers now checked for the restored passage; no comprehensive research review claimed.
A-24	Partly restored after verification	7.5; V20–V23	Scoped findings restored with citations and limitations. The unverified four-hour figure remains out.
A-25	Rationale replaced	7.5	Victoria Police supplies a direct retrace precedent; no benefit inferred from where walkers were found.
A-26	Retained recommendation; validation open	2.4	Bands are prompts, not safe limits; local advice and earlier danger prevail.
A-27	Revised recommendation	2.1	Removed Moderate clearance implication and generic High-day tactics.
A-28	Retained recommendation; validation open	4.2	Explicit carrying allowances, overlap rule, route reserves and feasibility check.
A-29	Narrowed	4.2	Different quantities not declared contradictory without matched scope.
A-30	Qualified; product questions open	2.6	Removed interchangeable-treatment implication; source and method limitations remain essential.
A-31	Retained recommendation; validation open	2.5	One-hour trigger explicitly uncertain, not an estimate walkers can necessarily make.
A-32	Relabelled	3.2	Exact first-aid boundary is ExploreSafe's choice.
A-33	Relabelled	3.1	Independent backup requirement is a recommendation, not a map-message count.
A-34	Relabelled	7.2	No-coverage trigger is ExploreSafe's scope.

Finding	Disposition	Revised location	Action or remaining limit
A-35	Reframed; comparison open	7.2	PLB preference rests on independence, not a proven device hierarchy; two-way and phone SOS roles recognised.
A-36	Partly resolved	7.4	AMSA and NPWS checked; no claim of national reconciliation or all-model procedure.
A-37	Corrected	7.1	Emergency service chosen for the problem; medical emergencies not universally routed to police.
A-38	Fallback restored with override	4.4	A few hours remains a recommendation, with earlier concern taking priority and no overnight wait for a walker due before dark.
A-39	Retained recommendations; validation open	1.2–1.3	Three and 16 retain declared scopes and limits; neither is an optimum proved by the files.
A-40	Mechanism wording restored	1.4	Risk increase explained through absence of immediate assistance, alarm-raising and shared decisions; no quantified comparison asserted.
A-41	Narrowed	5.1	Behavioural prompts are not diagnoses or a danger ranking.
A-42	Reframed; lineage verification open	Development account	HSSF treated as a design lens; no universal incident model asserted. Original HSSF not supplied.
A-43	Removed	Environments	Unsupported hazard and near-town incident rankings deleted; retained practical cautions.
A-44	Corrected	1.1; V15	Grade can encode required experience; actual people and changing conditions still need assessment.
A-45	Primary confirmation and correction	Scope; V14	Voluntary AAAS status distinguished from possible contractual/management requirements.
A-46	Clarified; specification open	4.1	Shelter and sleep equipment matched to foreseeable adverse conditions; no numerical rating or product certification.
A-47	Acknowledged	Development account	No effectiveness evaluation claimed; user/scenario testing remains future work.
A-48	Corrected against corpus	7.4	Restored the QLD form's two alternatives; current form not independently rechecked.
A-49	Partly resolved	2.2	ACT ban-related advice confirmed; disputed SA appliance detail removed, not declared settled.

Additional result of the targeted checks. The earlier annex's attribution of drink-to-thirst advice to Better Health Channel was not supported by the hydration page checked at V12. The revised wording allows regular drinking and individual needs while distinguishing carrying reserves from forced consumption. This is an example of why consistency with the corpus was not treated as verification.

Research assessment for the restored passage

These are checks of what the original publications establish, not a reanalysis of their data. They supplement agency advice; they do not independently validate ExploreSafe's complete procedure.

Dacey, K., Whitsed, R. & Gonzalez, P. (2023). *Understanding lost person behaviour in the Australian wilderness for search and rescue*. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, 38(2), 29–35. doi:10.47389/38.2.29. The restored result is from the online survey, not the separate 189-incident rescue dataset. Most survey participants reoriented without rescue. Small numbers and retrospective self-report limit generalisation. The results appear on pp. 31–33; limitations on p. 34. No stay-versus-move survival comparison is presented.

Adams, A. L., et al. (2007). *Search Is a Time-Critical Event: When Search and Rescue Missions May Become Futile*. Wilderness & Environmental Medicine, 18(2), 95–101. doi:10.1580/06-WEME-OR-035R1.1. The retrospective Oregon analysis covered 1997–2003 and 3,287 people, with mixed activities and search types. Time ran from missing-person reporting to search completion, not necessarily from becoming lost. Roughly half the time values were missing and imputed; unknown outcomes were excluded. See methods pp. 96–97, results p. 98, limitations p. 100. Its 51-hour model cut-point is neither a survival deadline nor an overdue-contact waiting period; survivors were found later. The study does not isolate a causal effect of early reporting or of staying still.

What remains excluded. The claim that three quarters of Australian lost walkers continue moving for at least four hours was not verified in the checked papers or the Twardy report. Dacey et al. (2022) runs theoretical scenarios for four hours; that is not the claimed observation. Without a traceable result, denominator and measurement definition, the figure stays out.

What the research supports here. It supplies behavioural and search-outcome context for stopping unplanned movement and seeking help promptly. The operational inference remains ExploreSafe's: reducing further location uncertainty and starting assistance earlier are reasons for the advice, not benefits quantified by these studies. Being found on a track does not establish that retracing caused a better outcome. That inference remains rejected, regardless of whether a track-location percentage is accurate.

Other research references inherited from the earlier draft

These are retained as research leads, not as studies independently read or validated in this revision. The earlier references were incomplete; titles, populations, methods, denominators and applicability need checking before any associated empirical claim is restored.

- McCammon (2002, 2004): heuristic traps in recreational decisions.
- Buttke et al. (2023) and Noe et al. (2013): park visitor heat illness.
- Bennett et al. (2020), Wilderness Medical Society: exercise-associated hyponatraemia.
- Blanchi et al. (2014): Australian bushfire fatalities.
- WA Coroner [2022] WACOR 29: Mount Augustus.

The HSSF original and the research-review working records were not supplied. The mapping in the framework is the author's stated design lineage; this revision has not independently established derivation or tested the model.

What remains to assess

The targeted checks settle some publication and attribution questions. They do not validate ExploreSafe's heat bands, carrying quantities, one-hour remoteness trigger, group sizes, behavioural cues or combined lost-person procedure against outcomes. Those remain recommendations.

Before stronger claims are made, prioritise scenario review with relevant rescue, medical and land-management expertise, particularly heat, hydration, delayed help and movement after becoming lost. A useful next step is testing whether walkers understand the distinctions and avoid treating lower bands or minimum quantities as clearance. An outcomes claim would need a suitable evaluation, not merely favourable feedback.

Unresolved publication questions include Parks Victoria's high-fire wording, all-model beacon continuation instructions, current QLD permit wording and the removed SA fire-appliance detail. An exact dated source or clarification from its responsible publisher would settle each. No contact was made with agencies, and no operational response time was verified.

The review did not re-audit every route, forecast, closure, regulation, medical protocol, device or original study. It did not verify authorship, endorsement status or every historical version statement beyond the supplied files. The three revised documents carry the current positions for Version 2.0; the unchanged register may therefore record superseded author decisions.

Historical source inventory

The following inventory is retained from the supplied annex for traceability. **Recorded date** means the date claimed by the earlier draft, not a fresh verification in this revision. Use V01–V23 above to identify sources checked on 24 September. Descriptions of older conflicting pages below are historical descriptions, not assertions that those pages still contain that wording. An inherited URL may redirect or no longer resolve.

National

Source	Page or document	URL	Recorded date
AMSA	Beacons homepage (no expiry since 4 Nov 2024)	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/	24 Sep 2026
AMSA	Beacon registration	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/registration/	23 Sep 2026
AMSA	Using your beacon (activation threshold)	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/activation/	23 Sep 2026
AMSA	Correct deployment	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/activation/deployment.asp	23 Sep 2026
AMSA	Beacon types and models	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/about/beacon-types.asp	23 Sep 2026
AMSA	Beacons flyer (carries superseded two-year renewal wording)	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/documents/BeaconsFlyer.pdf	23 Sep 2026

Source	Page or document	URL	Recorded date
AMSA	Contact (accidental activation, 1800 641 792)	https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/contact.asp	23 Sep 2026
Outdoor Council of Australia	Australian AAS, Core Good Practice Guide	https://australianaas.org.au/read/core-gpg/	23 Sep 2026
Outdoor Council of Australia	Australian AAS, Bushwalking Good Practice Guide	https://australianaas.org.au/read/bushwalking/	22 Sep 2026
Bushwalking Australia	Walking track grading system	https://bushwalkingaustralia.org/walkers-info/walking-track-grading-system/	22 Sep 2026
AFDRS	Fire danger ratings	https://www.afdrs.com.au	22 Sep 2026
Bureau of Meteorology	Know your weather: bushwalking and camping	https://media.bom.gov.au/social/blog/2050/know-your-weather-bushwalking-and-camping/	23 Sep 2026
Bureau of Meteorology	Heatwaves: what you need to know	https://www.bom.gov.au/news-and-media/heatwaves-what-you-need-to-know	23 Sep 2026
Sports Medicine Australia	Extreme Heat Policy 2025 and heat risk tool	sma-heat-policy.sydney.edu.au	23 Sep 2026
Parks Australia	Walking track grading system	https://parksaustralia.gov.au/about/about-us/walking-track-grading-system/	22 Sep 2026
Parks Australia	Kakadu bushwalking permit conditions	https://onlineservices.environment.gov.au/parks/kakadu-national-park/bushwalking-permit-conditions	22 Sep 2026
healthdirect	Snake bites	https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/snake-bites	22 Sep 2026
Better Health Channel	Sporting performance and food	https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/sporting-performance-and-food	22 Sep 2026
Australian Institute of Sport	Sports Supplement Framework, electrolytes	https://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/nutrition/supplements/group_a/sports-foods2/electrolyte-supplement2	23 Sep 2026
Australian Alps	Safety	https://theaustralialpsnationalparks.org/experience/safety/	22 Sep 2026

States and territories

Jurisdiction	Source	Page or document	URL	Recorded date
NSW	NPWS	Bushwalking safety	https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/bushwalking-safety	22 Sep 2026
NSW	NPWS	Think Before You TREK	https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/bushwalking-safety/think-before-you-trek	22 Sep 2026
NSW	NPWS	Personal locator beacons	https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/bushwalking-safety/personal-locator-beacon	22 Sep 2026
NSW	NPWS	Alpine safety (if lost, call early)	https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/alpine-safety	22 Sep 2026
NSW	Bushwalking NSW	Bushwalkers code	https://www.bushwalkingnsw.org.au/bushwalkers-code/	22 Sep 2026
VIC	Parks Victoria	Changed conditions and closures	https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/safety-in-nature/changed-conditions-and-closures	22 Sep 2026
VIC	Bushwalking Victoria	Walk safely	https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/walk-safely/	22 Sep 2026
VIC	Bushwalking Manual	Heat illnesses	https://bushwalkingmanual.org.au/emergencies/heat-illnesses/	22 Sep 2026
QLD	QPWS	Walk with care	https://parks.qld.gov.au/before-you-visit/visit-with-care/walk-with-care	22 Sep 2026
QLD	QPWS	General safety	https://parks.qld.gov.au/before-you-visit/visit-with-care/general-safety	22 Sep 2026
QLD	QPWS	Track and trail classification	https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/164104/track-trail-classification.pdf	22 Sep 2026
QLD	Outdoors Queensland	Outdoor safety (Ten Essentials)	https://outdoorsqueensland.com.au/resources/outdoor-safety/	22 Sep 2026
WA	DBCA	Bushwalking safety (stay put if lost, groups of three)	https://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/bushwalking-safety	22 Sep 2026

Jurisdiction	Source	Page or document	URL	Recorded date
WA	DBCA	Walking trail classifications	https://exploreparcs.dbca.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-02/walking-trail-classifications.pdf	22 Sep 2026
SA	NPWS SA	Wild South Coast Way trail notes	https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/docs/Wild-South-Coast-Way-on-the-Heysen-Trail-Trail-Notes.pdf	22 Sep 2026
SA	Friends of the Heysen Trail	Safety (mandatory PLB)	https://heysentrail.asn.au/heysen-trail/safety/	22 Sep 2026
TAS	PWS Tasmania	Safety in parks	https://parks.tas.gov.au/safety-in-parks	22 Sep 2026
TAS	PWS Tasmania	Walking track classification policy	https://parks.tas.gov.au/Documents/Walking_Track_Classification_Policy_.pdf	22 Sep 2026
TAS	PWS Tasmania	Overland Track safety checklist	https://parks.tas.gov.au/Documents/Safety%20Checklist%20E2%80%93%20Signature%20for%20Overland%20Track.pdf	22 Sep 2026
NT	NT Parks	Bushwalking and hiking safety	https://nt.gov.au/parks/bushwalking-hiking/bushwalking-hiking-safety	22 Sep 2026
NT	NT Parks	Safety rules	https://nt.gov.au/parks/safety-rules	22 Sep 2026
NT	NT Parks	Beat the heat	https://nt.gov.au/parks/safety-rules/beat-the-heat	22 Sep 2026
NT	NT Parks	Walking track grading system	https://nt.gov.au/leisure/parks-reserves/plan-your-visit/bushwalking-hiking/walking-track-grading-system	22 Sep 2026
NT	NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services	Wet season travel reminder	https://pfes.nt.gov.au/newsroom/2026/police-issue-wet-season-travel-reminder-after-recent-rescues	22 Sep 2026
ACT	ACT Policing	Missing persons	https://police.act.gov.au/community-safety/missing-persons	23 Sep 2026
ACT	ACT ESA	Heatwave	https://esa.act.gov.au/be-emergency-ready/heatwave	22 Sep 2026

Jurisdiction	Source	Page or document	URL	Recorded date
ACT	Canberra Bushwalking Club	Grading and leader guidelines	https://canberrabushwalkingclub.org/for-leaders/guidelines-leaders/gradings/	22 Sep 2026

The original jurisdiction files contain fuller source inventories. Their presence records the review's coverage; it does not mean every linked source was independently retrieved during this revision.