

Health & Safety Risk Assessment for Night Search and Rescue.

At all times the following guidelines should be followed:

1. The FST should establish an effective method of halting the activity immediately should there be an accident or emergency situation.
2. The FST must carry a fully charged mobile phone at all times
3. FST should check the Area of Activity prior to any activity taking place, the nature of the activity should be matched to the group, weather and light conditions. This decision should be made between the FST and VSA.
4. FST to ensure all group are wearing clothes adequate for night time temperatures

Night Search and Rescue						
Hazard/Risk	Who could be affected by hazard.	Likelihood of being affected	Worst consequence of being affected	Risk Level	How hazard/risk is mitigated	Residual risk level
Slip, trip, fall or collision.	FST VSA VC	2	20	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FST to check area prior to activity to ensure that there are no tree stumps or other objects onto which an individual may fall and cause injury. FST to ensure that VC are warned of danger at the beginning of the session. FST and VSA to maintain visual contact with all children in their group at all times, and to directly supervise all VC. Prevailing weather and ground conditions are taken into account by the VSA and FST to reduce risk. FST should consider the light conditions during the search and rescue, this should be reviewed continually throughout the activity by the FST FST warn VC of the danger of shining torches into the eyes of others in darkness, VSA and FST monitor the behaviour of the group at all times. 	LOW
Individual becomes hypothermic whilst outside.	FST VSA VC	1	20	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FST/VSA ensure that all participants during the activity wear suitable clothing. FST/VSA monitor the weather conditions before and during the activity, cutting it short if felt necessary. 	LOW
Child falls into water and drowns	FST, VSA VC	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FST to ensure that the VSA are clear on the expectations for the safe running of the activity. VSA to accompany groups at all times especially in the event of low light or darkness. VSA to ensure that all group members stay 	LOW

					<p>together at all times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSA sustain frequent head counts throughout the activity to monitor group numbers. • FST use a whistle or other signal to alert all participants that the activity has ended, or that they must all return to the predetermined meeting place. 	
Child gets lost in the dark.	VSA VC	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FST/VSA ensure that they conduct regular head counts at intervals throughout the session. • Each FST know and are aware of the action that should be taken in the event of a child going missing. • FST/VSA directly supervise the VC at all times, each child has a partner for the activity and that clear boundaries are given by the FST. • FST/VSA have powerful torches in the dark and know exactly where they will be taking part in the activity. • Other torches will be distributed amongst the VC if they don't have their own. 	LOW

Date Reviewed: January 2026
Next Review Date: January 2027