Missing or Unaccounted Participant Policy & Procedure

1. PURPOSE

Life Skills & Adventures seeks to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants being cared for in our programs and services. We aim to achieve this by ensuring clear communication and cooperation between the organisation, parents and camp if applicable. In the circumstance where a participant appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for, the following procedure outlines steps to be taken to ensure that the participant is located as soon as possible.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to all approved Camp Programs undertaken by Life Skills & Adventures.

3. PROCEDURE – MISSING OR UNACCOUNTED CAMPER ONSITE REQUIREMENTS

Should a Life Skills & Adventures staff member identify or be made aware that a camper is missing or unaccounted for while onsite, the following process is to be followed;

- Conduct a head count to ensure that the camper is actually missing.
- Establish when and where last seen, by whom and wearing what? This information should be recorded.
- Alert 2nd LSA Staff member of the missing camper and request assistance, if no staff member available, engage a group leader to assist.
- Alert the Camp Leader that you have a missing camper and may require assistance of Emergency Services, and event timelines should be recorded from this point forward.
- Undertake a full search of the site, including bunk rooms, activity areas (including common off site locations e.g. beach, bike track), driveway and out on to the road, and check in after 15 minutes.
- If Camper is thought to have likely absconded, 2 LSA staff should use a site vehicle to check the roads around camp and potential locations e.g. bus stop, local roads.
- After 15 minutes of searching, if the camper is not located call 000; at any stage if you believe a participant is in immediate danger; call 000 straight away.
- Group/Camp Leader should contact the Company Director.
- Camp continues with some form of programming, maybe adjusted as required.
- Wait for the police to arrive and follow their instructions/guidance.

Following the incident;

- Document the incident via LSA's Incident Report Form, including witness statements and other relevant information.

Missing or unaccounted camper offsite:

Should a LSA staff member identify or be made aware that a camper is missing or unaccounted for while offsite, the following process is to be followed;

- Conduct a head count to ensure that the camper is actually missing.
- Conduct a brief search of the immediate area initially.
- Establish when and where last seen, by whom and wearing what? This information should be recorded.
- Alert 2nd LSA Staff member of the missing camper and request assistance, if no staff member available, engage a group leader to assist.
- Alert the Camp Duty Manager or Company Director that you have a missing camper and may require assistance of Emergency Services, and event timelines should be recorded fromthis point forward.
- Ensure the remaining group are well supervised by the teacher / group leader.
- If more than one camp leader/instructor is present, the more senior instructor should assume responsibility, whilst the other instructor assists in the search. The search should be undertaken in pairs wherever possible.
- Undertake a full search of the offsite area, including car park and in cars, public toilets, bushy or shrub areas, other trails, bodies of water and check in after 15 minutes.
- Camp site's Duty Manager should coordinate a search of the campsite in case they have returned including bunk rooms, activity areas, driveway and out on to the road, and check in after 15 minutes.
- If Camper is thought to have likely absconded, 2 LSA staff should use a site vehicle to check the roads around camp and potential locations e.g. bus stop.
- After 15 minutes of searching from initial report of missing camper call 000; at any stage if you believe a participant is in immediate danger; call 000 straight away.
- An LSA staff member and a Camp Leader should remain behind with a vehicle and phone, where the camper was last seen, while the rest of the group returns to camp and continues with an alternative program.
- Group/Camp Leader should contact the Company Director.
- Wait for the police to arrive and follow their instructions/guidance.

Following the incident;

- Document the incident via LSA's Incident Report Form, including witness statements and other relevant information.

4. LEGISLATIVE AND INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

- Children's Services Act 1996
- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

5. DEFINITIONS

Missing Child	A child whose whereabouts cannot be accounted for
Absconded Child	A child who has, by choice, left the licensed area of the Camp
Responsible Person	A person who meets the minimum requirements outlined in Regulation 117B of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and who has consented in writing to being placed in day to day charge of the camp under this legislation.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department/Area	**Role/Responsibility**
Operations	All Carers/Camp Leaders will be provided with this policy annually and are responsible for the daily implementation of the policy when directly supervising children.
Company Director	Is responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this policy. Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the policy. Responsible for the development, monitoring and review of the Policy and related systems, ensuring all content meets all legislated requirements.
Company Director	Approve the Policy and Provide official sign off on the Policy

7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- **Children's Services Act 1996**
- **Children's Services Regulations 2009**

Child Supervision Policy
Excursion and Routine Outing Policy
Arrival and Departure in Child Camps Policy and Procedure