

Fei Sheehy Challenge

Health and Safety Plan

Statement and Strategy

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Outline of Health and Safety Responsibilities

Hillwalking challenges are activities that can be dangerous and may result in person injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

The *Fei Sheehy Challenge* acknowledges their responsibilities in ensuring the safety of all participants. It will take every action necessary as is reasonably practicable in ensuring the safety, health and welfare of all participants and those involved in the event, including members of the public. It is paramount that organisers need to be conscious of the personal safety of themselves and the people around them at all times.

Health and Safety procedures

The event organisers have identified a number of potential serious incidents that may occur throughout the course the challenge. The following procedures have been devised in responding to such occurrences.

First Aid/ Medical

The event avails of the services of South Eastern Mountain Rescue (SEMRA).

Participants should inform the organisers of any medical condition, injury or medication needed, prior to participation. It is the participants responsibility to bring any medication required.

It is incumbent on participants to have the required level of fitness/training done in order to safely participate/finish their chosen number of days walking.

Actions on serious incidents

Broken or dislocated limb:

The injured party will summon help of the nominated person (facilitator) on stand-by at base.

This person will take control and phone for help as appropriate.

If ambulance access cannot be achieved, an alternative method will be used by SEMRA.

A follow up report will be prepared by the event organisers as soon as all facts have been gathered.

Cardiac Arrest / Heart Attack:

Any person nearby will assist and raise the alarm.

A facilitator will take control and phone for help as appropriate.

SEMRA will be contacted and dispatched to the area from where the casualty will be transported to the nearest hospital.

A follow up report will be prepared by the event organisers as soon as all facts have been gathered.

Persons Lost or Disorientated

The person disorientated will be required to stop, take shelter and summon the help of the nominated facilitator.

The facilitator will take control and phone for help as appropriate.

The facilitator will assist their return to safety.

Where necessary, SEMRA will be contacted.

The Country Code for Walkers

Respect the people who live and work in the Irish countryside. Respect private property, farmland and all rural environments.

Do not interfere with livestock, machinery and crops. Respect and, where possible protect all wildlife, plants and trees. When walking, use approved routes and keep as closely as possible to them. Take special care when walking on country roads.

Leave all gates as you find them and do not interfere with or damage any gates, fences, walls or hedges.

Do not enter farmland if you have dogs with you, even on a leash, unless with the permission of the landowner. Guard against all risks of fire, especially near forests.

Take all litter home - leaving only footprints behind.

Keep the number of cars used to the minimum and park carefully to avoid blocking farm gateways or narrow roads.

Minimise impact on fragile vegetation and soft ground. Take heed of warning signs - they are there for your protection.

Walk Route Planning

To get the most from your day/s in the mountains you will probably wish to spend some time in advance deciding on the most suitable route/s.

Factors to be considered include:

1. Distance and height gain of route, and time required for completion.
2. Amount of daylight available and estimated time of return.
3. Your fitness and experience.
4. Nature of the terrain, and possible conditions underfoot
5. Possible escape routes.
6. Weather forecast and poor weather alternatives.

You may or may not wish to prepare a detailed route card, but at the very least you should

let someone know your intended route and your estimated time of return. **Do not forget to**

sign out on your safe return! If you leave word of your intended route, it also goes without saying that you should stick to your plan, unless, of course, you feel that this will place you at risk.

When selecting the best route line during your walk there are many obvious dangers to be avoided, such as cliff tops in windy weather and icy slopes, however you should also be conscious of less obvious hazards. This includes such things as grassy slopes and lichen covered rock slabs, which may look innocent, but which can be every bit as dangerous as the more obvious hazards, particularly in wet weather. It is a good idea to get into the habit of asking yourself how great are the chances of a slip, and what the likely consequences of that slip might be. Remember that a simple slip is the cause of a large proportion of serious mountain accidents.

If you are on a slope where rocks could potentially be dislodged, keep your group bunched tightly together so that any dislodged rocks do not have the opportunity to build momentum, but can be stopped immediately by the person behind.

Be particularly aware of the danger you may pose to other persons below you, and of the danger you may be facing from careless persons above you. If a rock is accidentally dislodged, the standard procedure is to shout "Below!" as a warning to all others.

Safety Advice for Participants

There are many risks associated with participating in strenuous outdoor pursuits and participants need to be aware of these risks and take sensible precautions.

Weather changes occur the higher you go on the hills, the dry air temperature drops 1 degree for each 100 metres of ascent. The wind is stronger up there, 2 to 3 times the speed of the valleys. Also there is more risk of mist and cloud on top which can lead to poor visibility. Weather conditions can change in minutes therefore participants need to be prepared and equipped to cope with changing conditions. It is advisable to be aware of pending weather conditions in advance. We recommend the 5 Day Irish Forecasts on the Met Éireann website

In cold and wet weather the greatest danger is hypothermia or exposure. This occurs where the body temperature is chilled to a life threatening level and could be aggravated by wind chill factor. To avoid this make sure you have enough warm clothing extra food and plenty water. In warm weather the principle hazards are sunburn, windburn and dehydration. Sun hats, sun cream and water can prevent serious sunburn and heatstroke.

Don't underestimate the amount of **water** you need. Doctors recommend 1.5 to 2 litres of water a day even for an ordinary active lifestyle. If you are walking strenuously or weather is hot you will need substantially more water. Avoid drinking unboiled and unpurified water from streams. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Still mineral

water or tap water is adequate, fizzy drinks are not recommended as take longer to drink if you need to hydrate quickly.

Personal gear

Walking boots with good ankle support are essential. Always wear suitable clothes for outdoors and carry spare warm clothes at all times. Jeans and cotton clothing should not be worn. If they get wet they will not dry, causing loss of body heat and energy and possibly contributing to the onset of hypothermia. A waterproof jacket, over trousers, warm hat and gloves are essential irrespective of the weather starting out.

Rucksack requirements

Water

Food and hot drink.

Some high energy snacks such as chocolate, glucose sweets or energy bars.

Spare clothes (in plastic bag in rucksack)

First aid kit

Whistle and phone

Survival Bag

Head torch and spare batteries

Blisters

Blisters are simply a result of friction. They can make a walk a painful/miserable experience. In order to prevent blisters these simple steps should be followed.

Wear walking socks correct size

Wear comfortable good fitting worn in walking boots

Quickly remove foreign bodies, from your socks or footwear.

Act immediately if you feel any friction or discomfort as blisters can form very quickly
(blister plasters essential)

Emergency Procedure

Stop and Think!

If you are lost, try to work out where you are on the map – take your time and don't panic as this will affect your judgement. If you need to cut your walk short, take time to plan a safe way down and notify the facilitator of a pick-up point .

If your problem occurs late in the day it may be unwise to continue and you may be forced to stay out for the night.

Emergency Bivouacs:

Seek shelter – there will be sheltered spots nearby.

Keep warm – put on all spare clothing before you get too cold and insulate from ground ie the padded area of your rucksack.

Get into a bivvi bag.

Ration food and drink throughout the night.

Emergency bivouacs are at best long, cold, uncomfortable and worrying. Avoid them by having the requisite fitness and navigation skills needed to complete the challenge.

In case of a Third Party accident:

Look after the victim first, administering First Aid if necessary and keeping victim as warm and dry as you can.

Assess if you can handle the problem yourself or if you need help.

If you can manage without help, take time to plan a safe route down and take your time in getting there to avoid further accident.

If you need help plan, take time to plan the next steps carefully:

Decide on exact plan for getting help. Stick to this as far as possible.

Who will stay with the victim

Best place to go to report accident and safest route

Write down the information you wish to give to rescue team:

Exact location, time of accident, injuries sustained, name of victim/s and person/s with them.

When you reach a telephone **dial 112** and ask for Mountain Rescue. Pass on the information carefully **and stay there until help arrives.**

Remember that in case of an accident people get confused and panicked so it is important to stop and think. Carefully plan what steps you will take. Write down essential information as in the confusion vital facts can be forgotten.

All Rescue Takes Time

The internationally recognised distressed signal is six blasts of a whistle (or flashes of a torch) followed by one minute's silence. This sequence is repeated. The answer is three blasts or flashes followed by one minutes silence. This sequence is repeated.

Risk Assessment

Associated Hazards	Controls
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Traffic and public roads2. Uneven rocky/rough tracks and undergrowth/slippery surface3. Bridges /stiles/stone walls, steps etc.4. Electrical fencing/barbed wire5. Animals/Livestock6. Weather (expect 4 seasons in 1 day)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All participants to adhere to instructions given by walk facilitators.2. All participants must have appropriate footwear.3. Exercise caution.4. Exercise caution.5. Be aware and avoid.6. Be prepared. Carry appropriate gear, food and liquid.

Insurance

The event has its own Public Liability insurance for its duration ie 3 days

Other Recommendations

We strongly recommend that participants are individual or club members of Mountaineering Ireland. This membership carries a Civil Liability and Limited Personal Accident cover insurance policy.

Reporting Incidents / Accidents

All incidents involving injury or damage to a participant or a third party must be immediately reported to the event organisers.

Any incident / accident should be reported as soon as possible but must be submitted within 28 days.

To submit an incident / accident report, please, email gerard_sheehy@hotmail.com