

The method and frequency of communication shall be reviewed by Principal Investigator or Field Work supervisor. For remote locations outline a plan.

Devices include mobile phones, BlackBerrys, radios, satellite phones, etc.

Contact shall be made at agreed intervals with field work participants and their contact persons. With some types of field work it may be more appropriate to set up an alternative communication arrangement made with a reputable contact point. (e.g. Police Station, park ranger, other institution, mine site manager, ship's master, etc). Wherever possible, communication should occur daily. There shall be a documented emergency plan in the event that contact is not made.

- All persons undertaking field work activities must be instructed or trained in the use of the communication equipment and signalling devices to be used on the excursion.
- Regular call-in schedules should be agreed on prior to departure.
- Battery power for communication equipment should be sufficient to last beyond the expected duration of the field trip.
- Vehicles used for remote field work should be fitted with global positioning systems and a two-way radio, or the fieldwork party must be equipped with another suitable two-way communication system.

Contacts and Continuity of Contact

Before setting out on field trips, the schedules and methods for maintaining contact with the University and/or other contacts must be arranged and understood by everyone involved. Contacts at the University and elsewhere must be informed about the location of the trip, the expected duration of work, how to contact those on the field trip, the planned time of return and at what time subsequent to this an alarm will be raised. Maps and plans showing the locations and the circumstances of the field work (e.g. the registration numbers of vehicles, or boats, the place where boats are to be launched) shall be given to appropriate University staff and contact person.

For long trips, arrangements must be made to make contact on a regular basis, such as daily, or at some other regular interval if daily contact is impractical. The frequency of the regular contacts will depend on the length of the trip and where it is, how many people are involved and what sort of communication is actually available.

If a scheduled contact is not made, the contact at the University or home must be able to raise the alarm. If plans change, members of the field work party should alert their designated contacts to prevent false alarms.

No designated contact may pass on the responsibility simply by leaving a message for someone else to take over - if something changes, the new contact must be told personally and all the relevant information provided so that there is no break in the continuity of contact. The fieldwork party must also be informed of the change of contact person.

Notification of return from field work

Participants must notify a specified contact person (e.g., their Supervisor) on return from field activity. If a staff member or a student fails to return from a field activity at the pre-arranged time and has not notified a change in arrangements, the specified contact person is responsible for notifying a Department/Unit representative (e.g. the Head of the Department/Unit). This person is then responsible for notifying emergency services as applicable and next of kin.

Notification of changes to proposed field work

During a field activity, a specified contact person at the University must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the originally proposed itinerary or schedule, including changes of dates, location or number of persons attending the field activity. If the changes cause a flow-on effect to the existing risk assessment, then a revised risk assessment must be prepared.