

## QS-1 Daily Morning Routine

When	Action
On waking	Check weather against overnight observations. Any significant change?
Before breakfast	Check group, any overnight medical issues, blisters, concerns?
During breakfast	Review today's route plan: legs, timing gates, water sources, key hazards.
Pre-departure brief	Brief group on today's plan, key decision points, and turnaround time. Confirm today's communication check time and who holds the PLB.
10 minutes before leaving camp	Group gear check. Packs on. Water topped up. Everyone accounted for.
Departure	Note actual departure time against planned time. If significantly late, recalculate timing gates and turnaround.

## QS-2 Timing Gate Decision Framework

At each timing gate waypoint, ask three questions:

### **1. Are we on time?**

- On time or ahead: proceed as planned.
- Behind by less than 30 minutes on an easy leg: proceed with awareness.
- Behind by more than 30 minutes, or any amount on a difficult leg: assess whether the remaining route is achievable before turnaround time.

### **2. Is the group in good condition?**

- Check for fatigue indicators: pace has dropped, conversation has stopped, people are stumbling, mood has shifted.
- Any medical issues developing?
- If group condition has deteriorated significantly, a timing gate that looks achievable may not be safe.

### **3. Have conditions changed?**

- Weather deteriorating beyond thresholds set in the plan?
- A hazard you encounter is worse than assessed?
- Water source dry?

If the answer to any of these is a meaningful concern;

- stop
- make the assessment

don't keep moving and hope it resolves.

## QS-3 Turnaround Decision Framework

**Calculate your turnaround time before you leave camp each morning.**

Work backwards from last light:

- Identify today's campsite or exit point and the estimated time to reach it from your current position.
- Subtract that from last light (check BOM or calculate from sunrise + ~12 hours).
- The result is your latest acceptable departure time from your current position.
- Set this as today's turnaround trigger. Write it down. Tell the group.

**If you reach the turnaround time and have not reached the next waypoint:** turn around. Not in five more minutes. Not after the next rise. Now.

**The hardest version of this decision** is when the destination is visible, morale is high, and turning around feels unnecessary. That feeling is the social pressure that has contributed to most serious bush incidents. The plan had a turnaround time. Trust it.

See Chapter 5 for the full decision framework.

## QS-4 Emergency Action Sequence

### **STOP. Breathe. Do not rush.**

1. **Secure the scene.** Move the group away from ongoing hazard. Ensure no-one else is at risk.
2. **Assess the patient.** Is there immediate life threat? (Airway, breathing, circulation, major bleeding.)
3. **Assign roles.** Incident Commander. First Aider. Group Supervisor. Communications Officer. (See Ch 9 of this guide.)
4. **Stabilise.** First aid. Warmth. Shelter if needed. Do not move a patient with suspected spinal injury unless there is an immediate threat to life at the current location.
5. **Communicate.** Assess communications options: mobile (check coverage), satellite communicator, PLB.
6. **PLB activation threshold:** Activate when: there is a life-threatening injury or illness, the group cannot self-evacuate, or you cannot reach help by any other means. Once activated, stay at the location or move to the nearest clear, open ground.
7. **Document.** Time of incident. Patient condition. Location (6-figure grid reference). Actions taken. This information goes to emergency services.

**Emergency contacts are in your route plan. You briefed them before departure.**

**They know the trigger time.**

## **Appendix A:**

### **Daily Field Checklist (Laminated Card)**

#### **Morning**

- Weather check - conditions vs go/no-go thresholds
- Group physical check - overnight issues?
- Review today's legs, timing gates, key hazards
- Brief group - route, turnaround time, roles
- Water filled, departure time confirmed
- Note actual departure time vs planned

#### **At each timing gate**

- Am I on time? (If behind: what is the response?)
- Is the group in good condition?
- Have conditions changed?
- Position confirmed against route plan

#### **Before any creek crossing**

- Visual assessment from bank
- Conditions vs no-cross threshold
- Crossing protocol briefed
- Rescue position identified downstream

#### **Evening**

- Camp site assessed (drainage, overhead, wind)
- Group physical check - feet, hydration, morale
- Scheduled check-in sent to base contact
- Tomorrow briefed - before everyone goes to bed

#### **Completion**

- All participants accounted for at vehicles
- Emergency contacts notified - safe return
- Transport return leg confirmed - drivers, passengers
- Field notes captured for debrief

## Appendix B:

# The Decision Framework - Route Modification

Situation	Response
Behind timing gate by < 20%	Proceed with awareness. Reduce rest time. Monitor next gate.
Behind timing gate by > 20%	Stop. Assess. Choose: adjusted route, alternative route, or turnaround.
At turnaround time, not at target	Turn around. No exceptions.
Water source dry	Use contingency source. If also dry: ration, exit.
Hazard worse than assessed	Stop. Apply no-proceed threshold. Alternative route or return.
Weather exceeds threshold	Seek shelter. Assess duration. Decide: wait, alternative route, evacuate.
Medical situation developing	Assess: treat and continue / treat and shelter / evacuate.
Group pace significantly below plan	Reduce daily target. Rest more frequently. Reassess route.

# Appendix C:

## Emergency Communications

### Reference

**Before activating PLB:** Attempt contact via mobile and/or satellite communicator first.

**PLB - activate when:**

- Life-threatening situation AND
- Cannot reach help by other means

**When contacting emergency services (000 or POLICE RESCUE):**

1. Location: 6-figure grid reference or What3Words + description
2. Nature of incident
3. Patient number and condition
4. Group composition
5. Communications capability
6. Your resources (first aid, shelter, water, daylight)

**After PLB activation:**

- Stay at activation location if safe
- Move to nearest open ground for helicopter access if not
- Maintain PLB with clear sky view
- Prepare landing zone (30m+ clear area)

**Your emergency contacts have:**

- Your route plan
  - Your intended daily positions
  - Your planned check-in times
  - Your trigger time - the time after which they will call for help
- They are waiting for your call. Make it.

## **Appendix D:**

# **Post-Incident Notes Template**

Complete as soon as practicable after the incident.

**Date and time of incident:**

**Location (grid reference):**

**Description of what happened:**

**Patient(s) - name and condition:**

**Actions taken (first aid, communications, evacuation):**

**Time of communications:**

- Base contact notified: \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency services contacted: \_\_\_\_\_
- PLB activated (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Resources used:**

**Time of resolution / evacuation:**

**Follow-up actions required:**

- Medical follow-up for patient?
- Incident report to organisation?
- Risk assessment update needed?
- Route plan update needed?

**Observations for debrief:**