

A large number of group and club activities are regularly conducted in State Forest. Such activities include mountain bike riding, horse riding, scout events, weddings, social club outings, orienteering, and fossicking. Many of these activities occur on a casual basis, however there are a number of organised or club type events occurring regularly throughout the state.

This information sheet outlines the conditions for regulating the conduct of club and large-scale events (generally greater than 25 people). Specific events such as Car Rallies and Music Events are covered by other more specific conditions.

Events and functions may also be allowed in some national parks and other reserves, where they do not pose a significant threat to conservation or the use of these areas by other visitors. If considering conducting an event in parks you must contact Parks Victoria. For further information, contact the Parks Victoria hotline on ☎ 131 963.

Can I hold an event or function in State forest?

- Recreational pursuits and club activities are generally permitted in State Forest.
- Special conditions may apply in some zones within forests.
- Where Code of Practices exist, such as the Bushwalking Code, the Car-based Camping Code etc, these codes should be adopted by all users of State Forest.

When are permits required?

Permits are required for:

- events that are of a competitive nature or pose a risk to public safety.
- events for which a fee is charged.
- club or group activities involving more than 25 persons (for low impact events such as bushwalking, permits are only required for groups of more than 30).
- any activity involving constructions or the marking of a course.
- any activity requiring the total or near total exclusive use of DSE picnic or campgrounds.
- events which are advertised outside of the host club

Permits are not required for:

- small scale, non-competitive, non-profit events (ie. fossicking). However a courtesy call to the contact officer for the relevant Forest Management Area is requested for the benefit of both the club and DSE. Information will be made available on condition of tracks, bridges, etc and of other possibly conflicting activities in the area. DSE requires information of forest use in event of emergency situations such as fire.

Do fees apply?

No application or event fee is required unless the event is run as a commercial event or is considered to be an activity that is not reliant on public land. A good example of the latter is a wedding event which is typically held at reception venues or churches where a fee is payable. In such cases, a permit fee to hold such an event on public land should be paid to DSE.

Where spectator admission prices are charged, a fee of \$1/spectator/day will be payable in advance to DSE (to be based on expected attendances - where numbers vary significantly from that predicted, an additional fee or refund will apply).

Non-commercial events are events for which event participants and spectators pay no fees and for which there is no prizemoney or sponsorship.

Determination of whether an event is a commercial or charity event can be blurred. As a guide, when event organisers receive payment of their duties or where only part of the monies raised go towards a charity event, then the event may be treated as a commercial event. In such cases, a reduction to the normal fees that would apply may be granted at DSE's discretion.

Are bonds required?

In order to cover possible compensation claims by DSE for the rehabilitation of any damaged assets, a bond may be required for events deemed to have the potential to cause damage beyond normal wear and tear. This requirement is at DSE's discretion. Typically, bonds may be set at \$500-\$1000, though higher bonds are commonly set for larger scale or competitive events.

How do I get a permit?

1. Clubs/groups should make contact with DSE prior to any activities. For many activities an initial call to establish if a permit is required may be all that is needed.
2. Permit applications events should be made to DSE a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event.
3. For those events deemed as requiring a permit, an events application form will be sent to the applicant.
4. Once a completed application form has been received by DSE, the application will be processed. Further communication with the applicant may be required to adequately assess the application. Once the application has been assessed, if a permit is deemed appropriate, an events permit should be sent to the applicant for his/her signature and return. This permit may contain specific conditions to be followed in the running of the event.

For more information

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is responsible for managing Victoria's State Forest. For further information and maps about where to go in State forest, contact DSE's Customer Service Centre on ☎ 136 186.

Visit DSE's website

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au>
then select "Forestry".

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