



KOKODA TRACK AUTHORITY

A Special Purposes Authority of the Kokoda and Kolari Local-level Governments

Kokoda Track Pre-Departure Information Guide

July 2013



Disclaimer of Liability: The information provided in this pre-departure information guide is general advice only. The Kokoda Track Authority accepts no liability for any injury or loss sustained by trekkers, guides or porters on the Kokoda Track. Trekkers considering undertaking the Kokoda Track should contact their licensed tour operator and discuss all information with them.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea (PNG) offers an emotional and physical challenge, with pleasures and rewards for those who prepare properly.

The purpose of this Pre-Departure Information Guide is to prepare trekkers to undertake a responsible trekking experience on the Kokoda Track by providing comprehensive and practical information on how to prepare for and complete a safe, culturally appropriate, and enjoyable trek that honours the Track's wartime historical significance and protects and promotes its special values.

1.1 HISTORY OF THE KOKODA TRACK

The fighting on the Kokoda Track, against a Japanese invasion force, was perhaps the most significant battle fought by Australians in World War II. Between 21 July and 16 November 1942, the Australian Army halted the furthestmost southward advance by Japanese forces in PNG. The Japanese landed near Gona on the north coast of Papua on 21 July 1942. In the next two months, the Japanese drove the Australians and their Papuan allies back over the mountains towards Port Moresby. Port Moresby was vital to the defence of Australia. If the Japanese took Port Moresby, their plan was to begin a bombing offensive against North Queensland and, had they decided to invade Australia, the invasion would have been launched from Port Moresby. The Japanese approached to within 40 kilometres of Port Moresby but the Australians, in a series of costly engagements, pushed the Japanese back the way they had come. By mid-November 1942 the Japanese were forced to abandon their plan to take Port Moresby and were forced back to the northern beaches. For more information about the history of the Kokoda Track see [Australian Government's Kokoda Track](#) website.

1.2 THE KOKODA TRACK TODAY

The Kokoda Track region appears much the same as it did in 1942 when the Australian soldiers and Papuan allies fought there. Along the Track, trenches and rusted weapons can still be seen. There is no electricity, there are no shops, and streams are generally crossed by means of a simple log bridge. This is a

remarkably beautiful, pristine and historic environment. For more information see the [Australian Government's Kokoda Track](#) website.

1.3 TREKKING ON THE KOKODA TRACK

The Kokoda Track is open all year; however the wet season occurs from about December to March. Most licensed tour operators conduct treks between April and November. Expect to walk uphill and downhill on steep trails approximately 6-8 hours a day, depending on the group's fitness levels. It is important that you walk at a comfortable pace. Discuss these requirements with your tour operator.

Walking the Track independently is not recommended, and all trekkers should use a licensed Kokoda Track tour operator. A Kokoda Track Authority (KTA) trekking permit is mandatory and will be provided by your tour operator on payment. See Section 1.5 Choosing A Tour Operator.

It is possible to trek independently, but as noted above, it is not recommended. Should you choose to trek independently an 'Independent Trekker' form must be completed and a permit purchased from the KTA.

1.4 RESPECT THE CULTURE: RESPECT THE LAND

More than 600 islands and 800 indigenous languages provide a vibrant and colourful culture in PNG. PNG is made up of four regions and 20 provinces. The main languages spoken throughout the whole country are Pidgin (*Tok Pisin*) and English, although *Motu* is the mother tongue (*Tok Ples*) of most people in the Kokoda Track region. The population of PNG is approximately five million with a third of these people living in the rugged highlands. Traditional culture is kept alive with rituals and ceremonies and many people still live in small villages making a living from subsistence agriculture, gardening, fishing, and craft. Most of the land is owned by a community or villages; visitors will need to ask for permission to enter their land.

Please be mindful of such things as:

- Be respectful of the local customs and religious beliefs. Approximately 96% of the population is Seventh Day Adventist (SDA). People observe prayer daily between 5.00pm and 6.00pm. The SDA Sabbath is from 5.00pm Friday to 6.00pm Saturday. Do not put requests to the communities at these times. You

are welcome to join their church services. Traditional culture also observes local native tribal beliefs.

- Modesty is important. Revealing clothing is not acceptable.
- In general, alcohol is not tolerated within the villages and is not advisable when trekking.
- Respect wildlife laws and maintain a safe distance when observing wildlife, including marine animals and birds.
- Trekkers should abide by the '[Leave No Trace](#)' principles for minimal impact on the environment and local communities.

1.5 CHOOSING A TOUR OPERATOR

Licensed tour operators play a vital role in promoting and providing access to the Kokoda Track. Their guides will enhance your journey and local connection. Choosing the right group to travel with is an important decision, as they will guide you through the preparation, the experience and ensure you remain safe throughout your trek. The KTA provides a full listing of [licensed tour operators](#) on their website. Licensed tour operators on the Kokoda Track abide by the Kokoda Track Commercial Operations Licence requirements.

The greatest influence on your trekking experience will be your tour operator. Each operator supplies a different experience and prospective trekkers should invest sufficient time in researching what is on offer. In general, there is a strong relationship between the cost of the trek and the level of service supplied. We recommend you think carefully before you approach operators and determine what experience you are seeking.

Items to consider about tour operators that determine your experience will include:

- Trek emphasis (military history, physical challenge, cultural experience, natural history). Some operators offer a balanced experience providing information on all aspects of the Kokoda Track;
- Level of overall support and your desired level of independence;
- Their type of insurance and the level of cover;
- Group size – Operators must indicate maximum group sizes in their promotional material;

- Support prior to the trek in ongoing advice, physical preparation, pre-trek meetings and pre-departure information;
- Training and experience of the company, leader, guides and porters;
- Level of 'backup support' in case of an emergency;
 - Larger operators will have a base in Port Moresby with staff based there;
 - Do they have risk management strategies? If so can you see them?
 - What is their plan if you need a medevac?
- Philanthropic activities undertaken whilst on the Track and by the Operator;
- Australian trek leader or PNG trek leader;
- Food and accommodation supplied;
- Duration of the trek: Tour Operators offer treks from a 'speed trek' of 3 days through to a more leisurely 10 days with all the variations in-between. Average is between 7 and 8 days;
- Do you want a broader PNG experience such as a Northern beaches extension, a diving holiday or link in with a cultural performance?

Once you have decided the experience you are seeking then we recommend you seek recommendations from people you know or 'friends of a friend'. Trekking the Kokoda Track is a very powerful experience and most people who have undertaken a trek are very happy to discuss their experience with you.

Ask the questions of your tour operator to ensure all your effort and expense delivers what you are seeking. All licensed tour operators are listed on the [Kokoda Track Authority](#) website.

Ensure the tour operator provides a trek permit in return for fees paid. The KTA has stationed rangers along the Track to check adherence to licence conditions.

The [KTA](#) can be contacted on telephone (+675) 323 6165 regarding payment of the applicable fee. Information can also be obtained from the [PNG Tourism Promotions Authority](#) on (+675) 320 0211. You should register with the [Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) before attempting to hike the Kokoda Track.

2. CLIMATE AND TERRAIN

2.1 CLIMATE

PNG has a monsoonal climate characterised by high temperatures and very high humidity. The conditions on the Track will vary due to the seasons but expect rain and mud on the Track at any time of the year. The seasons are broken up into the dry season (May to October) and the wet season (December to March). Good conditions can still be expected in April and November. The average annual rainfall for PNG is 2,500mm to 3,500mm. Daytime temperatures range from 24 to 32 degrees Celsius. Night time temperatures range from 18 to 2 degrees Celsius in the higher areas. Humidity is generally 80-95%.



Figure 1: Kokoda Track.

2.2 GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF THE KOKODA TRACK

The Kokoda Track is a physically challenging 96 kilometre walk that crosses the Owen Stanley Ranges between Kokoda, a government station west of Popondetta in Oro Province, and Owers' Corner, 30 kilometres northeast of Port Moresby (Figure 1). The Kokoda Track can be traversed from Owers' Corner to Kokoda or from Kokoda to Owers' Corner.

Mountain peaks are as high as 2,250 metres. Sharp, timbered ridges, steep-sided valleys and fast flowing rivers all provide the trekker with an opportunity to discover PNG's unique wilderness. River crossings will be necessary along the Track.

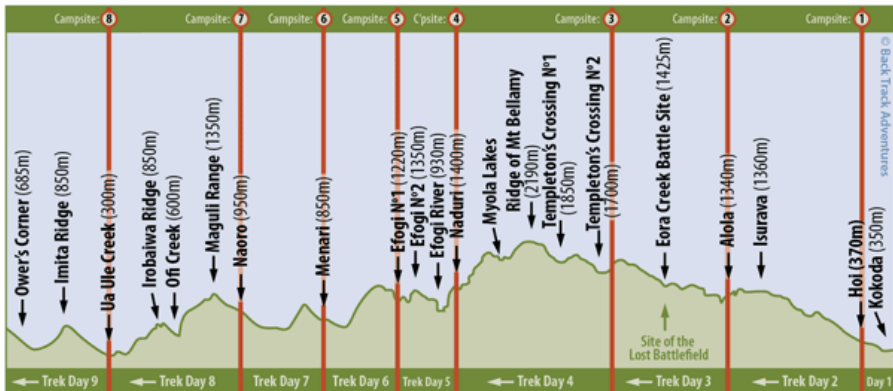


Figure 2: Typical topographic map of the Kokoda Track.



3. PREPARING FOR YOUR WALK

Walking the Kokoda Track requires extreme physical exertion and requires a very high level of fitness. Each year, trekkers are medically evacuated, and some deaths have occurred. Trekkers need to undertake considerable training and seek medical advice/medical fitness testing before attempting the walk.

3.1 FITNESS AND ENDURANCE

Training is essential prior to trekking the Kokoda Track.

- Allow 1-6 months of training before your trek.
- Any training program should consist of aerobic exercise, strength building and endurance. Increase the weight in your backpack progressively during your preparation.
- Your training should include long walks, uphill and downhill – the steeper the better, or walking up and down stairs.
- You should train in the shoes/ boots that you will wear for the trek.
- Talk to your tour operator about a suggested training schedule. Some trekking companies provide training programmes designed to prepare you for your trek. If you are unsure, a qualified personal trainer will be able to assist you in your preparation.

3.2 HEAT ACCLIMATISATION

Heat acclimatisation is the ability to adapt to repeated daily exercise (4-8 days) in heat to reduce the impact of heat on the body. Acclimatisation produces physical changes to the body to optimise performance in hot, humid conditions, such as improvements to sweating and cooling; electrolyte balances; and reduces stress on the body. Becoming acclimatised will result in a lower heart rate during heat and exercise sessions, help maintain your core body temperature, reduce your sweating threshold and increase your sweat rate, and reduce the loss of water

and electrolytes from the kidneys. Acclimatisation over 6-12 days can increase tolerance time in the heat.

To become acclimatised to the tropical humid heat of PNG, consider the following suggestions:

- Exercise in an internally heated room (25-30°C) or while wearing warm heavy clothing.
- Wear heavy clothing during exercise to condition the mind to accept the feeling of constantly moist skin.
- Exercise daily or at intervals of no more than three days apart during your preparation.
- Exercise sessions should last between 60-90 minutes either in hot conditions or wearing heavy clothing.
- To prevent dehydration during the acclimatisation process, an electrolyte replacement sports drink should be consumed.
- Arrive in Port Moresby at least a few days before commencing the Kokoda Track.

For more information refer to the Australian Government's [Australian Sports Commission](#) website.

3.3 MEDICAL CHECK UP AND HEART STRESS TEST

A medical test will not guarantee your safety while trekking in PNG, however there are steps you can take to minimise the risk. All trekkers should have a full medical assessment **completed by their preferred health professional** and ensure the tour operator is fully aware of any potential health risks.

It is recommended that:

- All trekkers be examined by their local doctor and have an electrocardiograph (ECG) performed.
- All trekkers over the age of 40 have an exercise stress echocardiogram prior to commencement of training.

- Those with risk factors such as obesity, smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or strong family history of cardiac disease should have an exercise stress echocardiogram if over the age of 30.
- Trekkers with known cardiac disease should see their cardiologist and have a stress echocardiogram or myocardial perfusion study prior to commencement of training.
- Trekkers with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of greater than 35 are advised against trekking in a remote mountainous jungle. BMI is used to estimate your total body fat. BMI is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in metres squared. [BMI calculators](#) are available online.

3.4 VACCINATIONS AND IMMUNISATIONS

It's important that you discuss your travel plans to PNG and the Kokoda Track with your GP or travel doctor and complete the recommended vaccinations at least **three months prior** to leaving Australia.

It is important to remember:

- It's never too late to vaccinate; however, some vaccines require a long period to take effect and more than one dose may be needed. You may need boosters for childhood vaccines as well.
- Check the latest travel advice and travel bulletins from the Australian Government's [Smart Traveller](#) website for your destination before you depart and while travelling so you can ensure you have the latest information, register your travel plans before you leave and check for health information.

To find out more about healthy travel and vaccinations, contact your nearest travel doctor or visit the [World Health Organization](#) or [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#).

3.5 MOSQUITOES AND MALARIA

Malaria is a significant problem throughout PNG, in the cities and the remote jungle regions. The mosquito that transmits malaria is small and frequently not noticed when biting.

Prevention of mosquito bites is by far the most effective method for preventing malaria infection and involves:

- Wearing light-coloured loose-fitting long sleeve shirts and long pants – particularly in the afternoon and evening when the mosquito is most active.
- Applying tropical strength mosquito repellent first thing in the morning and then reapplied at lunch time and again in the evening.
- Sleeping in a tent with mosquito netting.
- Soaking clothes and sleeping bag liners in pyrethrum prior to departing for your trek (see your local trekking supplies store).
- Consulting your doctor for anti-malaria medication prior to your trek as there is a range of medication options available.

3.6 MEDICAL AND TRAVEL INSURANCE

All trekkers must carry comprehensive medical and travel insurance. Prospective trekkers must provide proof of their personal travel and medical insurance cover to their tour operator. For more information see Section also 3.3 Medical Check Up and Heart Stress Test.



4. PACKING FOR YOUR WALK: WHAT TO TAKE AND WHAT NOT TO TAKE

Trekkers can often arrange to leave their main travel luggage or excess luggage in storage with their accommodation in Port Moresby prior to embarking on the Kokoda Track. Check if your tour operator already has arrangements in place for luggage storage.

4.1 GROUP PORTERS AND PERSONAL PORTERS

Porters on the Track are local PNG men and women who assist in carrying supplies and equipment during the walk. Tour operators pay group porters to carry equipment such as tents, food and cooking equipment. A personal porter is paid to carry your main backpack while you carry your day pack and drinking water. Trekkers should consider engaging a personal porter through your tour operator, which also provides employment for local people and you will learn more about the PNG culture. At times when the going gets tough, your personal porter will be able to help you as well! If you would like to thank your personal porter, gifts such as trekking poles, boots and other equipment in good condition are welcome.

Kokoda Track Authority Rangers will check pack weights to ensure porters are not overloaded. This is a requirement of the [Tour Operators Code of Conduct](#).

4.2 MAIN BACKPACK

These are suggestions only – check with your tour operator on what they supply and what they recommend you to bring. The maximum weight permitted for a main backpack is 22.5 kilograms.

- One or two man tent (the lighter the better)
- **Clothing:** 2 lightweight shorts/trousers; 2 quick dry long-sleeve shirts; 1 thermal top; 5 pair good trekking socks; normal underwear; non-chafing pants (lycra gym shorts) if you want; light thermal top

- **Shoes:** 1 pair waterproof bushwalking boots with good grip; 1 pair sandals or thongs for days end; 1 pair old runners or Crocs or similar for creek crossings
- 1 pair of swimmers for washing in the rivers – nothing too revealing
- 1 sarong for women to wrap around during and after washing
- Light compact jumper or jacket
- Gaiters or anklets (optional)
- Hat (for sun protection and rain protection)
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Tarpaulin ground sheet to lay tent on in case of rain
- Sleeping bag (5 degrees Celsius) and 'Therma-rest' or similar (inflatable mat for sleeping)
- Dry bags (to keep your backpack and day pack contents dry)
- Plate, mug, bowl, cutlery (not breakable and heat resistant)
- Quick dry towel
- Basic toiletries: tooth brush and small tube toothpaste; soap; small shampoo; deodorant; comb optional; ladies hygiene products
- Headlight (LED ideally) and spare batteries or small torch
- 1 roll toilet paper in a resealable plastic zip-lock bag
- Personal first aid kit and medication (see below)
- Pack covers (1 large and 1 small)

Personal porters can legally carry a maximum of 22.5 kilograms. You need to allow 15 kilograms for your pack and your personal gear, 4 kilograms of porter's gear, and up to 3 kilograms for wet gear (clothes, towel, etc.). Please remember this when packing your main backpack to be carried by a porter.

4.3 PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT

Your Tour Guide will have a First Aid Kit in case of emergency. However each trekker **must have a personal first aid kit** in their main backpack that includes:

- Personal medications
- Doctor prescribed medications
- Tropical strength mosquito repellent (non-aerosol) essential

- 2 tubs electrolyte powder (essential)
- Foot powder anti-fungal or baby powder
- Blister tape
- Water purification tablets
- Travel calm tablets (optional)
- Vaseline small (optional)
- Pain relief tablets
- Sun block
- Lip balm
- Packet of glucose tablets
- Antiseptic cream or powder
- Anti-malarial tablets
- Anti-diarrhoea tablets

4.4 DAY PACK

Your day pack (including your water) should weigh less than 8 kilograms. A day pack is only required if you pay for a personal porter to carry your main backpack.

You will need to be able to carry at least four litres of water daily in your day pack. A CamelBak® or similar hydration pack is highly recommended along with 2x1 litre drink bottles to mix electrolyte replacement hydration powder. Passports are regularly damaged from water and sweat. Ensure your passport and travel documents are stored in a waterproof bag or container.

Suggested items for your day pack are:

- Small Quick dry towel
- Camera with spare lithium batteries
- Kina cash (K200 in small bills will be plenty)
- Passport
- Credit Card
- 6-8 days of small packs of trail mix or lollies (not chocolate) to nibble on during the day (optional)

- 1 roll toilet paper in a resealable plastic zip-lock bag
- Anti-bacterial wipes and hand sanitiser
- Small trowel (tour operator may supply this)
- Drinking mug
- Whistle

4.5 TREKKING POLES

Trekking poles (1 or 2) are beneficial for taking a lot of strain off your legs as you can 'load' your upper body to assist with the steep ascents and descents. Using two trekking poles can save up to 40% of the load on your knees. Light aluminium trekking poles can be purchased from any good adventure sports store or on-line.

Alternatively, you may be able to purchase a hand-made trekking pole from the local people. Some tour operators have arrangements in place. Please check with your tour operator.

4.6 DO NOT TAKE

- Alcohol
- Heavy food items
- More than 200 Kina
- Balloons, sweets or trinkets for local children

If you would like to make a donation to the local villagers, money to community leaders such as school teachers and pastors will be gratefully accepted. Some tour operators already have donation arrangements in place with some villages.

4.7 HOW TO PACK FOR GOOD WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION

Look for a good backpack that can be adjusted so approximately two-thirds of the weight will sit on your hips and one-third on your shoulders. Ensure the belt is well padded to avoid chafing. As you will be hiking uphill and on rocky or uneven surfaces, it is best to keep the heavy weight slightly lower in the pack. It's all about keeping your balance and preventing a fall by keeping the weight near your centre of gravity and close to your back.



5. KEEPING HEALTHY WHILE ON THE TRACK

5.1 WATER SUPPLIES AND WATER PURIFICATION

Most creeks have clear clean drinking water but we strongly advise you to check with your tour operator and porter on the suitability of water supplies. Gastrointestinal disease (including diarrhoea) is very common. The vast majority of these diseases are transmitted through contaminated food and water. Carry water purification tablets in your main backpack.

5.2 FLUIDS AND AVOIDING DEHYDRATION

Your body's fluid balance will be placed under considerable stress while hiking in the humid mountain jungle of the Kokoda Track. You will need to drink 3½ to 4 litres of fluids a day including rehydration mix. Strenuous exercise in a hot climate, illnesses such as diarrhoea and some blood pressure medications can increase your risk of dehydration. Symptoms of dehydration include increased thirst, dry mouth, decreased urine output, weakness, fatigue and confusion. Severe dehydration can lead to seizures, coma and death.

5.3 EXERCISE ACQUIRED HYPONATRAEMIA

EAH is the result of drinking excessive amounts of water causing a low concentration of sodium in the blood. Low salt levels occur when individuals drink too much water while exercising and sodium is lost from sweating. This can lead to serious illness and even death if left untreated. The best way to avoid EAH is to drink **ONLY WHEN YOU ARE THIRSTY** to prevent dehydration, but don't overdo it. Drink sports drinks containing sodium, or eat salty foods such as salty nuts. As noted above, a period of heat acclimatisation prior to commencing your trek is strongly recommended.

A recent Coroner's Court of Victoria finding has found that an otherwise healthy and fit person died on the Kokoda Track in 2009 from Exercise Acquired Hyponatraemia (EAH). Trekkers should be aware of the following risk factors and symptoms.

Recognised risk factors of EAH are:

- Excessive drinking behaviour
- Weight gain during exercise
- Female sex
- Low body weight
- Slow running or performance pace
- Event inexperience
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents
- Greater than four hours' exercise
- Unusually hot environmental conditions
- Extreme cold temperatures

Signs and symptoms of EAH are:

- Early non-specific symptoms such as bloating, puffiness, headache, nausea and vomiting
- As the severity of EAH progresses more serious signs and symptoms develop and may include a lack of ability to coordinate movement; agitation; confusion; delirium; reduced consciousness; seizures; coma and death

5.4 FOOT CARE

Foot care is vital while trekking on the Kokoda Track. Worn-in, supportive waterproof boots are necessary. It is recommended a pair of socks be changed at least every second day. Ensure toenails are trimmed throughout the trek. Where possible, allow your feet to dry (e.g. lunchbreaks, during the evening). When crossing or bathing in the creeks and streams without your boots on, be sure to wear reef sandals or old runners to avoid cuts and scratches from submerged rocks. Fungal infections can be prevented by the application of antifungal powder or cream in the evenings.

5.5 CHAFING

Chafing is a potentially serious problem in the moist jungle environment of PNG, leading to bleeding, skin infections and extreme discomfort. It can be prevented

by the wearing of bike-pants-style elastic undergarments. Careful, early attention should be given to any areas that appear to be chafing with liberal use of barrier ointments like Vaseline.

5.6 FOOD

- Check with your tour operator on what meals they supply. Many provide sample menus on their website.
- You may be able to request specific (but basic) food – ask your tour operator.
- Some operators provide ration packs supplemented with available fresh fruit and vegetables.
- You may be able to pay villagers for any fresh vegetables and fruit they are happy to supply.
- Other food items are limited.

5.7 TOILETS ON THE TRACK

Toilets on the Track are minimal. If you need go to the toilet off the Track, please consider the environment and others. If there is no toilet, then walk 50 metres away from water and 10 metres from the Track, dig a 15 centimetre hole and bury your waste and the toilet paper as well. Toilets in villages are usually ‘pit’ or ‘drop’ style. Toilet seats are not standard and if there is one it is advisable not to sit on it. Anti-bacterial wipes, a small trowel and hand sanitiser are items you need.



6. MEDICAL – WHAT IF I GET SICK OR INJURE MYSELF ON THE TRACK?

6.1 INJURIES

You will be trekking along slippery, steep, uneven slopes and sometimes treacherous river crossings. Almost any injury is possible. Those suffering serious injuries will require evacuation, usually by a combination of jungle stretcher and helicopter. Unpredictable weather conditions including low cloud cover and poor services can delay evacuations for several days. Comprehensive medical and travel insurance is essential.

Your Tour Operator must carry at all times:

- Appropriate first aid equipment.
- VHF radios and/or satellite phones.
- Next of kin, medical insurance details and emergency contact details for all trekkers.

Some illness may present after returning home. Inform your doctor about your recent travel to PNG if you become unwell after the trip.

Many guides and porters have received First Aid training – funded through the joint PNG-Australian Kokoda Initiative Safety Package. Every Tour Operator must ensure that all trekkers have a full medical assessment and clearance completed by their preferred health professional prior to trekking.

6.2 HEALTH CENTRES

There are several village-based health centres that may be of assistance along the Kokoda Track, however opening hours and staffing of the health centres is not guaranteed, and their meagre stocks are for the village people. All trekkers should aim to be self-sufficient and must carry a personal first aid kit.

7. COMMUNICATIONS ON THE TRACK

Communication networks on the Kokoda Track are limited.

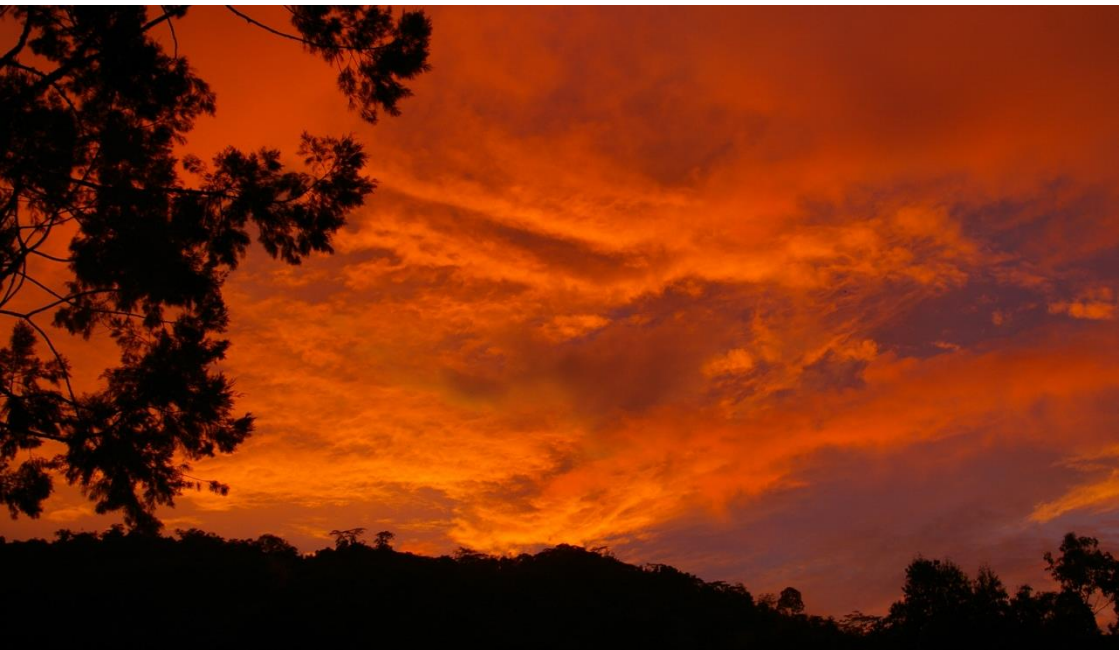
7.1 VHF RADIOS

Tour Operators must carry at all times a VHF Radio and/or satellite phone. A VHF Radio network linking villages and Ranger Stations has been set up along the Track by the Kokoda Track Authority, but will generally be out of contact when your group is low down in steep sided valleys.

7.2 MOBILE PHONE COVERAGE

There is very limited digital network mobile phone coverage along the Track.

Satellite phones may not work in some sections of the Track due to the geographical nature of the area. For more information see [Digicel Papua New Guinea](#).



8. SECURITY

Consult the Australian Government's [Smart Traveller](#) website for the latest safety and security information, and register your trip. Speak to your tour operator and accommodation provider in PNG for information about safety and security in Port Moresby and whilst on the Track.

8.1 IN PORT MORSEBY

The Australian Government advises travellers to Port Moresby to exercise a high degree of caution because of the high rates of serious crime. Large crowds and public gatherings should be avoided. Showing overt signs of wealth should be avoided. Walking at night is particularly dangerous.

8.2 ON THE TRACK

Listen carefully to your tour guide and porters. To minimise getting lost on the Track always tell your guide or porter where you are going (for example toilet break, getting water, taking a photo) so that he/she knows where you are. Alternatively, take your porter with you if it is appropriate (for example taking a photo or getting water). Your tour operator should brief you on what actions you and the guides and porters will take if you get lost on the Track.

If you have wandered OFF the Track, and are unsure in which direction to get back on the Track, it is better to sit down and stay put until someone locates you. If you keep moving, you may inadvertently keep moving away from the Track, thereby making it harder to find you.

If you are lost ON the Track and unsure of which way to go, again, sit down and wait for your guide or porter to come back for you. Use a whistle if you have one - blow a couple of blasts every few minutes. Yelling will only use up energy, and give you a sore throat.

8.3 UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE / EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) is any sort of military ammunition or explosive that has failed to explode as intended. It includes bombs, mortar bombs, mines, artillery shells, hand grenades or rifle bullets. Military ammunition is designed to explode at the time it is used, but for a variety of reasons some of it fails to do so. If disturbed, (touched, picked up, played with, kicked, thrown) UXO may explode without warning. For more information refer to the [Department of Defence](#).

UXO still exists in PNG, particularly along the Kokoda Track. The exact condition and stability of these items is largely unknown. If you come across UXO on the Track or in displays, do not touch them. Notify your porter, guide or tour operator.

It is illegal under PNG and Australian law to remove any war relics from the Track. Not only is it unethical to remove any relics from the Kokoda Track or its surrounds, it devalues the environment and the experience for others. KTA Rangers police this on the Track. If you see someone taking relics please report this to the KTA Rangers or your guide.



9. USEFUL LINKS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

WEBSITES

Kokoda Track Authority

<http://www.kokodatrackauthority.org>

Australian Government Smart Traveller

[http://smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Papua New Guinea](http://smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Papua_New_Guinea)

Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority

<http://www.papuanewguinea.travel/Australia>

Adam & Janna's Kokoda Track Experience

<http://www.kokodatrekkingreview.com/training-for-kokoda/>

The Kokoda Track

<http://kokoda.commemoration.gov.au/>

Kokoda Track Foundation

<http://www.kokodatrackfoundation.org/default.aspx>

Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/international-projects/kokoda/index.html>

Maps courtesy of Back Track Adventures www.trekkokoda.com.au

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: info@kokodatrackauthority.org

Web: www.kokodatrackauthority.org

Postal: PO Box 545
Boroko NCD 111
Papua New Guinea

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