

# MEDIA RELEASE

14 September 2009

## RECENT DEATHS IN THE TARARUA RANGES

The recent deaths in the Tararua ranges have sparked a number of inquiries as to what lessons can be learnt from this tragic incident. I have kept these lessons generic so as not to place blame or responsibility on any person. These are lessons that we as trampers should know and adhere to already but it is a timely reminder to all. I have added the Trampers' Code for your information please use this as a guide for your future trips.

### **"Nature has no Friends and no Enemies, Respect It"**

#### **Lessons to learn**

Even the most experienced people can come to grief in the bush.

- Plan your trip thoroughly.
- Know your limitations.

#### **Hypothermia can kill very quickly.**

- Understand the importance of taking ample clothing and good food during any trip in to the outdoors.

#### **Take advice from other trampers**

- Particularly if they have through the area you are heading into.

#### **Trampers need to be prepared for the area that they are going into**

- Regardless of the season.
- Areas include: Alpine, above the Bushline, below the Bushline

#### **Have a backup plan especially in case the weather turns nasty**

- Always check the weather in the days prior to going out and be able to recognise the danger signs during your trip.
- Never attempt trips when the Met Service has issued "severe weather warnings"

#### **Always have an emergency shelter**

- You may not make the hut you intend to stay at that night
- An emergency shelter can provide protection from the elements

#### **Always carry a compass and an up to date map and know how to use them.**

- New Topo50 map series will be released 23 Sept 09

#### **Always carry a reliable means of communication**

- Mountain radio
- Satellite phone or
- Personal locator beacon



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# THE TRAMPER'S CODE

1. **Plan your Trip Thoroughly**
  - **Leave your Intentions Form with a responsible person. Include:**
  - **The Route you intend to take**
  - **Bad weather alternative route**
  - **The Party details – names, experience, local knowledge**
  - **Time of return**
2. **Check track and hut conditions**
  - **Check with DOC, locals, tramping clubs, Regional Authorities or District Councils.**
3. **Check the weather forecast**
  - **Monitor the weather forecast in the days before you leave**
  - **Watch and respond to weather conditions during the trip**
4. **Carry sufficient clothing, equipment, food and water**
  - **Take appropriate clothing and equipment for the areas you intent to go in to**
  - **Take extra food for emergencies**
  - **Take navigation equipment and know how to use it**
  - **Take a personal first Aid Kit and know how to use it**
5. **Carry a means of communications**
  - **Mountain radio**
  - **Satellite phone or**
  - **Personal locator beacon**
6. **Beware of rivers – if in doubt “STAY OUT”**
  - **Know when, where and how to cross**
  - **Attend a River Safety Course**
7. **Plan for Emergencies**
  - **When things go wrong, use the STAR Model for making decisions:**

**Stop:** Take a breath, sit down and remain calm

**Think:** Look around you, listen, brainstorm options

**Assess:** Evaluate the options, and their potential consequences

**Respond:** Take the best alternative.

**REMEMBER:** water, shelter, warmth and the will to survive are the essential elements to your survival if in doubt - stay put. Your trip planning will help you deal with the situation, and your Intentions Form will initiate help if you are overdue.

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