

2. SAFETY FIRST

EVERY STEP, EVERY STEP

The Wild Women On Top Sydney Coastrek follows a stunningly beautiful route, but it includes bush tracks, soft sand, stairs, and many potentially hazardous surfaces under foot. While we encourage you to enjoy the exquisite scenery, we also stress that you need to watch every step on uneven surfaces to ensure you don't trip, fall or sprain an ankle. This becomes even more important when you're trekking by torch light. Watch every step, every step to stay safe. Trekking poles are highly recommended.

ROAD CROSSINGS

The Coastrek route has been designed to minimize road crossings and walking along road reserves. However, you will be required to cross some roads, and also to walk along footpaths and road side reserves. As an adult, it is accepted that you're highly skilled at crossing roads and that you have signed a Risk Waiver accepting the risk associated with this activity. However, to ensure that we minimize all possible risk you will be required to wear a fluorescent vest (with reflective strips for night walking) for all road crossings and for all walking along road reserves. We also request that you obey pedestrian lights en route.

TREKKING BY TORCH LIGHT

Trekking by the light of a head torch requires extra focus and concentration to ensure that you stay safe and injury free. We recommend you select a good quality head torch that casts a strong pool of light in front of you and that you start the event with fresh batteries and carry replacement batteries. If you are doing the 100k event, it is essential that you practice with your head torch and do lots of night walking on the track.

FIRST AID

You are advised to carry your own First Aid kit with you on Coastrek. Each team member should carry a personal First Aid kit and each team should also carry a group First Aid kit. Your team First Aid kit should include a triangular bandage, a pressure bandage, a space blanket, bandaids and blister protection tape. Your personal First Aid should include bandaids, blister tape and any personal medication you might require, such as Panadol. Coastrek will ensure that St Johns 1st Aid volunteers are stationed at the 25k, 50k, 75k mark and the finish. However, it is strongly recommended that you learn a few basic First Aid techniques such as how to strap a sprained ankle and we recommend that you have ambulance cover.

COMMUNICATION

All teams must carry two mobile phones on different networks. You should use these phones to contact HQ if someone in your team is withdrawing from the event, or to contact emergency services or your support crew in case of injury or illness. When you contact HQ, you will be asked to give the name of the team member withdrawing and the location and reason for withdrawal. All team members are also advised to carry personal mobile phones in case of emergency.

PACE

You are only as fast as your slowest trekker, so take care to ensure that your team walks together at an appropriate pace. You should never lose sight of your team members and you must keep an eye out for signs of exhaustion during the event. It's far better to stop for a cappuccino break than compromise personal safety by pushing on until somebody drops from exhaustion. We recommend putting your slowest trekker at or near the front because this will energize them and empower them to set the pace.

TIDES

There are a couple of locations where you might be tempted to cross lagoons or walk along the foreshore to improve your efficiency en route. If you choose to get wet feet, please ensure that you

don't undertake any water crossings above your knees, particularly at night. Take the alternate route and stay safe.

BUSH FIRE PREVENTION

Coastrek will be conducted towards the end of the bushfire season so it is essential that trekkers adhere to bush fire regulations including not smoking or lighting fires. Should a bushfire affect the trail during the Event, trekkers will be notified via mobile phone. We are not in remote bush at any time, but it is still wise to take care in this regard.

WEATHER ISSUES

There are two potential weather issues which could compromise your safety. Firstly, heat. If the temperature forecast is above 36 degrees, you will need to exercise extreme caution in this regard. Please read the chapter on Heat Issues carefully and ensure that you understand the signs and symptoms of heat illness so you can stay safe. By simply drinking regularly, jumping under cold showers at surf clubs or council locations, wearing a cooling collar and walking slower, you can prevent heat issues.

The other weather issue is wind. The Coastrek route links up many Sydney Harbour National Parks which are forested with many species of eucalyptus trees. These trees are prone to dropping their limbs in high winds. Please be extremely careful as you pass through these areas if you experience gale force winds or gusts. You should also be aware of these issues when training.

SNAKES AND SPIDERS

It is essential that you're thoroughly conversant with First Aid techniques for handling snake and spider bites. January and February are mating season for snakes, which means they will be active and can be aggressive if provoked. Take extreme care during training. If you see a snake, freeze, and slowly back away, keeping your eye on the snake at all times. Do not attempt to frighten, capture or touch the snake in any way. Most snakes will disappear when they feel the vibrations of your feet, but if they don't, you must move away or take an alternate route.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The Wild Women On Top Sydney Coastrek is not a remote event in the wilderness. It is at all times within 500 metres of a suburban road. Therefore you will never be far from help. However, if you become navigationally challenged, stay calm, use your compass to find south, keep the coast on your left, and continue to walk until you come to a road.

If you require emergency assistance because you're sick or injured, please refer to our Emergency Procedures in our Rules & Guidelines. These will be further reinforced our Information Night leading up to the event.