

# Tour Guide Safety Induction

## Watarrka National Park

### HANDBOOK



# Welcome to the Watarrka National Park Safety Induction

Watarrka National Park (“the Park”) is a rugged place. This means that while the Park is beautiful, there are risks involved in visiting it.

The Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security (DEPWS), Parks and Wildlife Division (PW) has created this Safety Induction for Tour Guides working under a Tour Operator Permit (TOP) who bring tour groups to the Park, in an effort to reduce those risks. It points out Park rules and highlights common causes of injuries and other issues that may occur in the Park.

However, given the nature of the environment and the activities that occur in the Park, the Safety Induction cannot cover every risk and the appropriate response. Completing the Safety Induction does not guarantee safety or remove an individual's responsibility for his or her own safety. Remember that while in the Park you are responsible for your safety and that of your tour group.

While you are required to complete the Safety Induction and comply with it, PW will not be liable for any loss, damage or injury suffered which is connected in any way with this Safety Induction and we refer you to the disclaimer clause on page 21.

## Who is required to complete the Safety Induction?

It is a condition of each Tour Operator Permit that any Tour Guide conducting tours in Watarrka National Park must successfully complete this Safety Induction.

## Why is the Safety Induction necessary?

The decision to implement a Safety Induction for Watarrka Tour Guides was triggered by the 2014 fatality of Zoe Woolmer and the subsequent findings of the coronial inquest. As a result, a zero tolerance policy has been adopted for all Tour Operators who breach permit conditions and/or jeopardise the safety of tourists in Northern Territory Parks. Zero tolerance means that permit holders should expect to have to answer why their Tour Operator Permit should not be revoked if a breach has occurred.

## What is the process for completing the Safety Induction?

Tour Guides must read this handbook diligently, and then complete the online test and declaration. An email will be sent advising of the successful completion of the Induction to each guide's nominated email address. This email (digital or hardcopy) must be carried at all times when in Watarrka National Park, along with a photo ID such as a driver's licence. This is a condition of the permit granted to Tour Operators (who may employ or otherwise engage each guide conducting tours at Watarrka National Park). Failure to do so will result in an on the spot warning, a copy of which is sent to the guide's employer.

## How will PW check that Tour Guides have completed the Safety Induction?

Monitoring Tour Operators to ensure that compliance with permit conditions is satisfactory will include: monitoring of social media and websites, random surveys of park visitors and using Rangers in plain clothing to observe tour group activities. Spot checks will also be conducted to ensure only guides that have completed the Safety Induction are operating within the Park.

## What if there is a breach to the Tour Operator Permit?

Without limiting any action that may be taken by PW against a permit holder under the Permit, a permit holder suspected to be in breach of the conditions of the permit may receive a letter with details of the suspected breach. The operator may then be asked to provide a detailed explanation of the alleged breach and may be asked to provide reasons as to why their permit should not be revoked. All reports of activities in contradiction with safety related permit conditions will be passed on without notice to NT Worksafe for action as the regulatory authority for work health and safety issues.

## How long is the Safety Induction valid?

It is the intent of PW that the Safety Induction will only need to be completed once by each Tour Guide. However, in the event of any significant change, PW may require Tour Guides to undertake the Safety Induction again. If this is the case, PW will notify Tour Operator Permit holders and provide instructions on what to do.

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## PROCESS FOR COMPLETING THE TOUR GUIDE SAFETY INDUCTION FOR WATARRKA NATIONAL PARK

### 1: READ

- 1) Handbook (PDF)
  - 2) Tour Operator Permit
- + ENSURE YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE:  
*Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011*  
& the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976*



### 2: LOAD THE INDUCTION

- 1) Paste this link into an internet browser:  
Watarrka National Park safety induction | NT.GOV.AU
- 2) Follow the instructions and select the link to load the Safety Induction form OR...



### 3: CREATE AN ACCOUNT

- 1) Copy & paste the following link to the induction in your browser:  
<https://ntgcommunitylearningportal.nt.gov.au/login/index.php>
- 2) Create a new account



### 4: COMPLETE ONLINE TEST

- 1) Once in the learning portal select 'Find Learning'
- 2) Search for 'Watarrka National Park Safety Induction Course'
- 3) Complete the course. Allow 30-45 minutes to work through the course tabs and complete the assessment



### 5: PRINT CONFIRMATION

A certificate of completion will be available to download from the course site. Have a printout or screen shot of this certificate on your person along with your licence (or other form of photo ID) when conducting tours at Watarrka National Park.

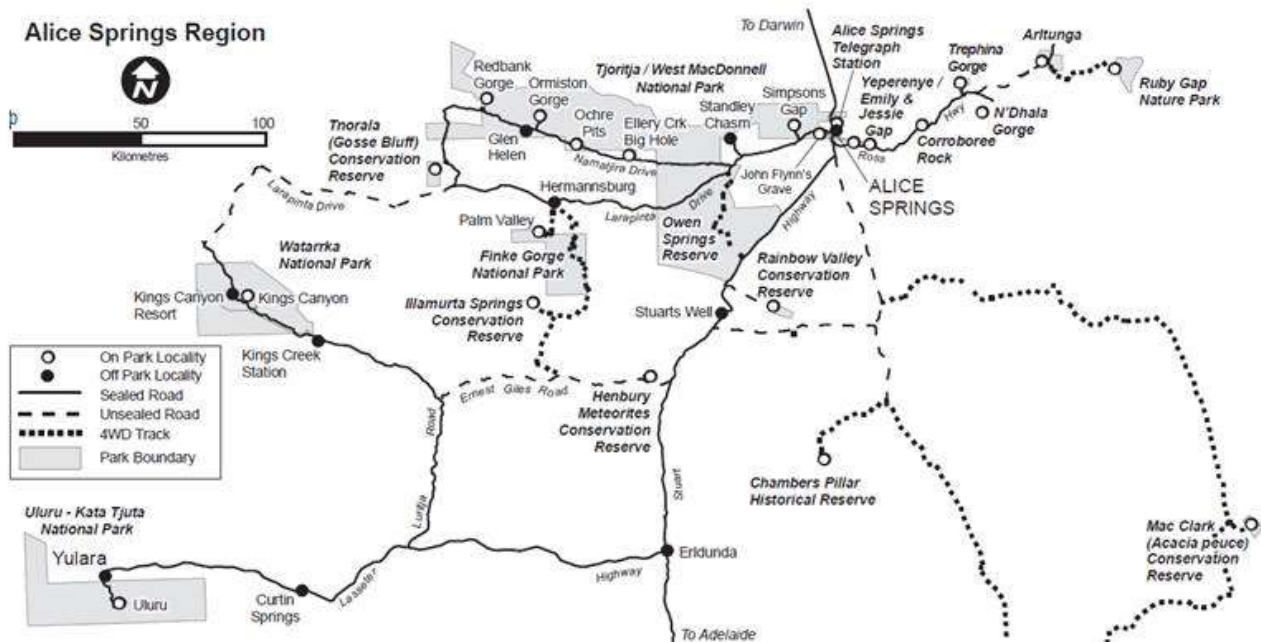
## Introduction

Watarrka National Park contains the western end of the George Gill Range. This scenic landscape of rugged ranges, rock holes and gorges acts as a refuge for many plants and animals, making the 105,200ha park an important conservation area and major natural attraction of Central Australia. The Park averages 250,000 visitors per year and approximately 45 – 50% of these arrive as part of an organised tour.

Watarrka National Park has been jointly managed by Parks and Wildlife (on behalf of the Northern Territory of Australia) and Watarrka's Traditional Owners since 2012, working together to protect and manage this rich natural and cultural asset.

The shared goal between Tour Operators, PW and Traditional Owners is to ensure maximum visitor enjoyment without compromising visitor safety. We value the support and compliance of the tourism industry. Together we can ensure the protection of the natural and cultural values of the Park, keep the tourism economy thriving and expand the experiences on offer.

While much of the information in this handbook applies to the Park in general, the majority of emergency, walk preparation and safety advice relates specifically to the Kings Canyon Rim Walk and the South Wall Return Walk. Most accidents and illnesses within Watarrka National Park are entirely preventable and this Safety Induction aims to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience in the Park for you and your clients.

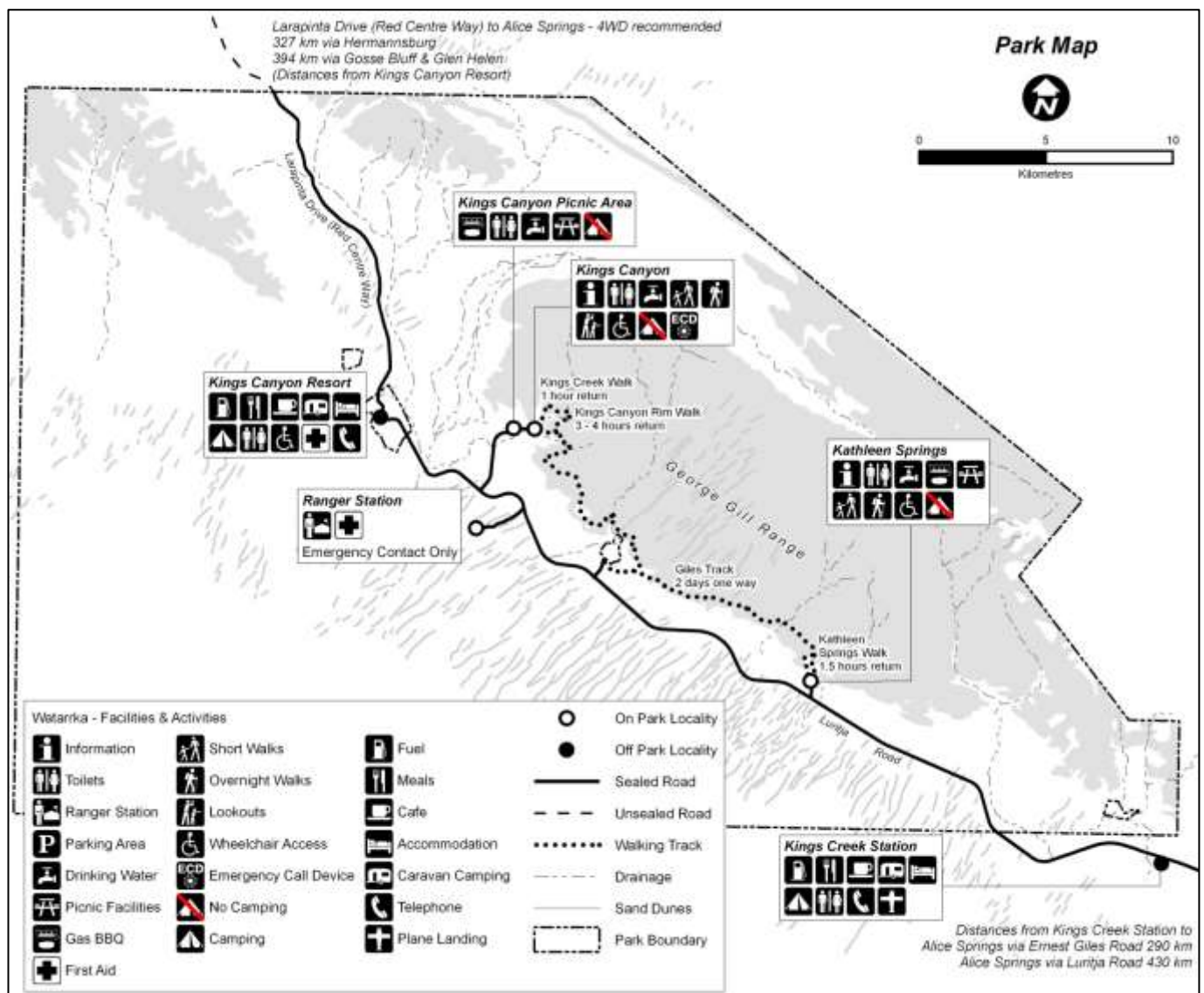


## Walks Overview

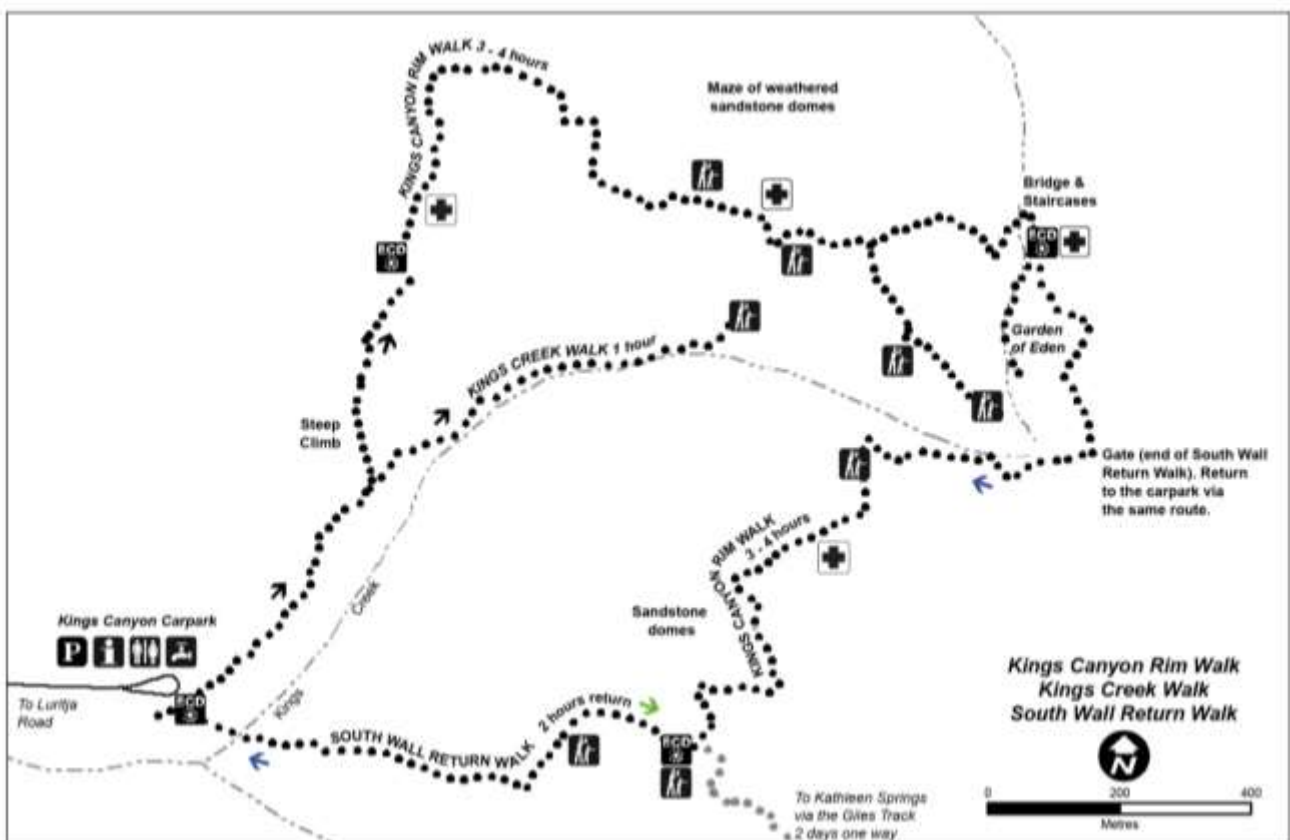
There are 5 main walks in Watarrka National Park:

Name of Walk	Distance	Walk Time	Grade	Track markers
Kings Canyon Rim Walk	6km loop	3 – 4 hours	Grade 4: Moderate to Difficult	Blue arrows
Kings Creek Walk	2km return	1 hour	Grade 2: Easy	Red arrows
South Wall Return Walk	4.8km return	2 hours	Grade 3: Moderate	Green arrows
Kathleen Springs Walk	2.5km return	1.5 hours	Grade 1: Easy	Sealed path without markers
Giles Track	22km one way	Allow 2 days	Grade 4: Moderate to Difficult	Orange arrows

All walking times are provided as a guide only and are based on a steady walking pace, allowing for some brief stops but no long rests. Refer to page 6 for grade description.



<b>Australian Walking Track Grading System</b> <b>User Guide for Northern Territory Parks</b>				
<b>Grade 1</b> Easy (Disabled access)	<b>Grade 2</b> Easy	<b>Grade 3</b> Moderate	<b>Grade 4</b> Moderate - Difficult	<b>Grade 5</b> Difficult
No bushwalking experience required. Flat even surface with no steps or steep sections. Suitable for wheelchair users who have someone to assist them. Walks no greater than 5 km.	No bushwalking experience required. The track is a hardened or compacted surface and may have a gentle hill section or sections and occasional steps. Walks no greater than 10 km.	Suitable for most ages and fitness levels. Some bushwalking experience recommended. Tracks may have short steep hill sections a rough surface and many steps. Walks up to 20 km.	Bushwalking experience recommended. Tracks may be long, rough and very steep. Directional signage may be limited.	Very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills, including navigation and emergency first aid. Tracks are likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. Walks may be more than 20 km.



The above map shows the Kings Canyon Rim Walk, Kings Creek Walk and South Wall Return Walk including walk direction.

## From the Traditional Owners

This is Aboriginal land, this is our home. You are welcome to this place - relax and enjoy this spectacular and diverse landscape. Respect each other and the land - we all have a responsibility to respect and look after this country. There's more to this place than just the Canyon - you can learn about country and culture. This is a very important place for culture, country and history. There are plants and animals found here that are not found anywhere else. Be comfortable with Aboriginal people. This place is jointly managed.

**Be safe – it's your responsibility.**

## Visitor Safety

### Walks and safety information shelter

All visitors to Kings Canyon are required to pass through the walks and safety information shelter to ensure they are well informed about the walk options, terrain, level of difficulty, preparation and fitness required. Giving visitors a correct and accurate account of the walk before they set off will reduce the risk of an incident along the way, making it a more enjoyable experience for everyone. You are required to give pre-walk information, as a condition of the Tour Operator Permit. This includes informing your clients about any significant hazards or risks they may encounter and how to reduce or eliminate them.

You can use the information in the shelter to highlight the terrain and basic necessities such as sunscreen, sturdy walking shoes, hat and sunglasses. Many visitors underestimate the amount of drinking water required due to the exposed nature of the walk. Reinforce this prior to setting off so they have a realistic understanding of the conditions and adequate water carrying capacity. Water can be topped up at the shelter. The forecast temperature for Watarrka is available on the screen in the safety information shelter.

### Walk direction

The Kings Canyon Rim Walk must be walked in a clockwise direction. This assists visitor flow, reduces the risk of falls when passing one another (particularly on the ascent and stair cases), reduces the trampling that occurs when large groups pass one another and reduces overcrowding. Doing the main climb first makes for a safer experience (rather than coming down the very steep steps at the end when most tired).

The Giles Track can be done in either direction. The Kings Creek Walk, South Wall Return Walk and Kathleen Springs Walk are there and back along the same path (return walks).

### Fitness and choosing a walk

A well informed group is a safe group. For the sake of each individual, the group as a whole and you as the guide, spend some time making sure your group is aware of the walk details, the distance, grade and alternatives. The Kings Canyon Rim Walk and South Wall Return Walk are the most strenuous day walks and visitors should have at least a moderate level of fitness and be in good health. Ask your group if there are any pre-existing medical conditions that may impact on their ability to complete their chosen walk and offer alternatives if necessary. If members of your group choose a different walk to the main group, ensure they are briefed on what to expect including difficulty of the terrain, expected duration and the time and location of meeting up again.

If a member of your group is unable to continue and needs to turn back you should assess whether they are capable of safely returning alone, with another person or with you escorting them. If the group splits up, each member of each group should be clear on the walk direction and the time and location you will regroup. Tour Operators who conduct regular tours within Watarrka National Park are encouraged to develop a standard operating procedure for Tour Guides in the event the walk cannot be continued as a complete group.



## Cliff safety

All visitors are required to keep to the marked tracks, which are identified by signs posted with directional arrows.

There are several detours along the Rim Walk - Cotterill's Lookout, the Garden of Eden and the Giles Track. All of these detours are well sign posted with directional arrows. The Rim Walk has been created with the safety of visitors as the priority, with maximum potential to see the views Kings Canyon is famous for. Climbing on the fragile sandstone domes is not permitted for both safety and conservation reasons.

Visitors are required to remain at least two metres from the edge of the Canyon and other drop offs at all times, unless behind a rail or on a track. Accidents can occur as a result of people stepping backwards, being caught off balance by a gust of wind, reaching for a hat that blows off, unstable sandstone or lack of awareness. Accidents involving a fall can be completely avoided by simply staying at least two metres from the edge at all times.



On-site signs reinforce the need to stay at least two metres from the edge at all times



In the past, tour groups and individuals have been photographed lying down at the edge of the Canyon. While this may be perceived as a safer option than standing, it is high risk behaviour and not permitted. Explain the risks to your clients and don't suggest or allow it as a photo opportunity.

Any instances of violating the 2 metre rule (unless behind a rail or on a track) will be followed up immediately and may result in a personal fine for the guide involved and your company's Tour Operator Permit being revoked, and/or notification to NT Worksafe.

If you take your group to the Garden of Eden, tell them that there is no access to the rear of the waterhole / waterfall area. Serious accidents have occurred here in the past as the loose sand and water can make it slippery and rocks can dislodge underfoot.



An example of an inappropriate promotional image showing visitors within two metres of the Canyon Rim, which may result in your company's Tour Operator Permit being revoked.





An example of an inappropriate promotional image of visitors sitting in an unpermitted and unsafe location.

## Rock throwing

Do not allow members of your group to throw rocks of any size into the Canyon or from a high point. Directly below the rim wall is the Kings Creek Walk and persons below could be seriously injured or killed.

## Your obligations under the *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act*

Tour Operators and Tour Guides have responsibilities under the *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011* ("the Work Health Act"), the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976*, By-laws and the PW Tour Operator Permit. You are responsible for complying with each of these responsibilities and should be aware that penalties can apply for non-compliance. If you are unsure of your obligations under the Work Health Administration Act 2011, you should contact NT WorkSafe on 1800 019 115. NT WorkSafe are responsible for administering the Work Health Act and can provide comprehensive information and guidance.

The Work Health Administration Act 2011 imposes obligations on employers, workers and others to ensure that the health and safety of any person is not put at risk as a result of work carried out as part of a business or undertaking. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with all of the obligations that are imposed on you under the Work Health Administration Act 2011. Particular attention should be paid to sections 19, 28 and 29 of the Work Health Administration Act 2011.

A '[Work Health and Safety Handbook](#)' (to access, select link) for professional Tour Operators in Central Australia is also available. A worker who has a health and safety duty commits an offence under the Work Health Administration Act 2011, if the person:

- (a) without reasonable excuse, engages in conduct that exposes an individual to whom that duty is owed to a risk of death or serious injury or illness (s 31);
- (b) fails to comply with the duty, which exposes an individual to a risk of death or serious injury or illness (s 32); and/or
- (c) fails to comply with the duty (s 33).

Penalties apply to an offence committed by an individual (other than a person conducting a business or undertaking or as an officer of a person conducting a business or undertaking), which depending on the offence may include a fine of up to \$300,000 and/or five years imprisonment.

## Following directions from a Ranger:

In the case of an emergency, please follow all written and verbal directions from a Ranger including signs, notices and temporary roadside signs. An example of this might be in the event of a bushfire or flood. Notices will be placed on the information board of the walks and safety information shelter or in some situations there may be a road closure. For your safety, always obey signs and notices and never drive around a road block. Updates are also available on the '[Check a Park is Open](#)' page of the PW website and it is advisable to check this prior to arrival at the Park (updated during office hours only). Road conditions for Watarrka and surrounding areas can be checked by phoning the Road Condition Hotline on 1800 246 199 or by visiting the [Road Condition Website](#).

As stated in the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation By-laws 1984* (By-law 47 compliance with directions), 'A person must not contravene a lawful direction given to the person by a conservation officer or honorary conservation officer in relation to the person's: use of the park or reserve; or conduct or behaviour within the park or reserve; or safety within a park or reserve.' Failure to comply with a direction may result in the issuing of a Personal Infringement Notice to the offender and carries a maximum penalty of 8 penalty units.

Specifically marked signs within the Park also constitute a direction by a conservation officer.

## Responsible Photography and Social Media

Individual guides and tour companies must not post any photographs or statements on social media depicting dangerous and prohibited activities within the Park. A zero tolerance policy applies. Posting such pictures is a breach of the Tour Operator Permit conditions and may result in the permit being revoked.

## Heat Management

The majority of heat related illnesses and injuries have been a result of people being poorly prepared for the conditions. Fitness, hydration, exposure and time of day are all critical factors in safely completing the Rim Walk and other activities in the Park.

Free WiFi is available in the shelter near the carpark and you can use this service to check the temperature for Watarrka. It is also displayed on the screen in the safety information shelter.

This will allow you to gauge how hot the walk will be and help you decide whether to proceed.

The Rim Walk in particular is extremely exposed with very little shade. When gauging weather conditions it is important to consider exactly how much hotter it will be at the top, especially an hour or two into your walk. If it is going to be hot, start your walk as early as possible – first light is best. With this in mind, it is a good idea to check the forecast before leaving Alice Springs or Yulara so that you can prepare for the logistics and timing of your walk in advance.





## Watarrka Walks Hot Weather Management Strategy:

In June and July, walk temperatures are usually cold to freezing, especially in the early morning and evenings. In all other months, great care should be taken to avoid walking in the hottest part of the day. The Rim Walk will be closed from 9am when the forecast is predicted to be 36°C or above. No visitors are permitted to begin the Rim Walk after 9am and any person caught doing so may be prosecuted under By-law 47 of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation By-laws 1984*. If the person is employed by a permitted Tour Company, that Tour Company may have their Tour Operator Permit revoked.

An alternative – The South Wall Return Walk – is available in order to view Kings Canyon. This has been designed as a there and back walk, with a clearly marked turn around point. A self-latching gate at this point prevents access to the rest of the Canyon. If the temperature is forecast to be 36°C or above, the South Wall Return Walk will be closed to the general public from 11am and to Tour Operators from 12pm. Alternative walks in hot weather are the Kings Creek Walk (with a shaded path and good views of the Canyon from the viewing platform) or the return walk at Kathleen Springs (also exposed, but less difficult).



Closure of the Kings Canyon Rim Walk and South Wall Return Walk is based on the temperature forecast by the [Bureau of Meteorology for Watarrka](#).

Please remember that the approximate walking time for the Rim Walk is 3 to 4 hours, so departing at first light is the recommended time to begin your walk. Temperatures typically reach their maximum between midday and 3pm. It is recommended that you do not start your walk any later than 3 to 4 hours before sunset. If there is an emergency, first aid or recovery becomes difficult and potentially unsafe for both the casualty and the rescue personnel. After sunset any recovery involving a helicopter has to be postponed until the following day meaning a long and uncomfortable night in the Park.



Free WiFi makes it possible to get up to date weather forecasts before beginning your walk

## Drinking water:

Drinking an adequate amount of water the day before and the morning of your walk is equally as important as the water consumed on the walk itself. Ensure your clients are aware of this and encourage them to hydrate well, with water, the night before and in the morning. While everyone is different, it is recommended that visitors consume a minimum of 1 litre of water per hour of activity in warm weather. Make sure they have adequate water carrying capacity prior to arriving in the Park as there is no opportunity to buy extra bottles once you arrive. There are no refill points along the way, so visitors need to carry their full water requirements for the walk/s with them from the walks and safety information shelter.

Visitors often underestimate the amount of water they will require, putting them and the rest of their group at risk. As their guide you should carry some extra for emergencies. There is spare water in the first aid boxes on the Rim Walk (remember this is for emergency use – please notify Rangers if this is used so it can be replaced as soon as possible). In addition, visitors need food to provide the energy required to complete their chosen walk. Replacing lost electrolytes is essential.

## Protective clothing:

Ensure your group wears protective clothing such as a long sleeved cotton shirt, broad brimmed hat and sturdy well worn in shoes. Thongs are not advised due to the rocky and uneven nature of the terrain. A twisted ankle might seem a simple injury, but when the casualty is in a remote area and the only way back is via steps, rocks and a long walk, a simple injury can become a long, complicated and hazardous rescue effort. Sunscreen should also be applied, carried and reapplied after two hours.

## Emergency Response Procedures

Being familiar with Emergency Call Devices (ECDs), Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and first aid boxes located on the Kings Canyon Rim Walk could mean the difference between life or death in the case of an emergency. Having a good emergency plan and being familiar with the emergency response procedures of Watarrka National Park is essential.

## In the case of an emergency:

Guides will be responsible for providing initial first aid to the casualty while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the rest of the group until assistance arrives. Ranger response time will vary depending on their location within the Park and your location on the walk. Be prepared for the response time to be an hour or more. Please be aware that locally based helicopters cannot fly after dark, therefore any evacuations would be via stretcher carry or postponed until first light when a safe evacuation can be made. Also be aware that not all locations along the walks can be accessed by helicopter and they are not equipped with winches. Potential helipad sites are shown on the map on page 16.

*If Ranger assistance is required, please follow these procedures:*

- After you have made sure that there is no danger to yourself or your other clients, begin first aid as per your first aid training.
- Gather as much information as possible on the incident and the casualty. This will include: nature of the incident; casualty's name, date of birth, medical history and nationality; current medication, conscious level, breathing and whether they have travel insurance in case of the need for a helicopter. *(Helicopter retrievals will be at the expense of the casualty)*

All of the track markers are numbered – take note of which is closest so the Rangers know exactly where you are.

- Send someone with these details to activate the nearest ECD. If in doubt as to whether to use the ECD, please always activate it. Do not wait until it is too late! You should be carrying a map with ECD locations with you in your first aid kit for use in these situations.
- Do not move the casualty until directed by Ranger staff. You may make the casualty recovery more difficult if you move away from helipads or the place specified in the ECD call.
- If possible, make sure the casualty is shaded from the sun or insulated from the cold.
- Stay calm, take some deep breaths and utilise the people around you. Never leave the casualty alone.

## Emergency Call Devices and Automated External Defibrillators:

There are four ECDs & AEDs located on the Rim Walk (refer to the map on page 16). The ECDs are activated by lifting the clear plastic cover and pressing the red button for four seconds, until the alarm sounds and then releasing it. The alarm will be received by the hand held radio of the Park Rangers. To talk to the Ranger, press and hold down the red button – to listen to the Ranger's response, release the red button. Should you need to utilise the AED, advise the Ranger who will provide a code to open the combination lock.

The ECD will time out after 10 minutes if not being used, but can be reactivated by pressing the red button again.

The initial response from the Ranger will be:

*"You have reached the Watarrka Ranger Station, please state your name and the nature of your emergency."*

- They will ask for the incident and casualty details you collected.
- Please remember to remain calm and relay information in a clear and concise manner.
- Follow the instructions given by Park Rangers.
- Park Rangers will notify Kings Canyon Medical Clinic, organise casualty retrieval as required and attend the scene as soon as possible.
- Continue to provide assistance to the casualty until stood down by Park Rangers.



An ECD (Emergency Call Device) with AED (Automated External Defibrillator)

## First Aid Boxes:

There are four large metal first aid boxes located on the Rim Walk (refer to map on page 16). A small quantity of water and basic first aid supplies (including rehydration salts) are stored in the top of these boxes. These supplies are available to you or any visitor who may need them urgently. It is important that you let the Park Rangers know which items have been used, so they can be replaced as soon as possible. You can do this by phoning the Rangers or by filling in the first aid usage folder located inside the top section of the first aid box.



One of the four first aid boxes. An open first aid box showing first aid supplies and emergency water.

## Kings Canyon Medical Clinic:

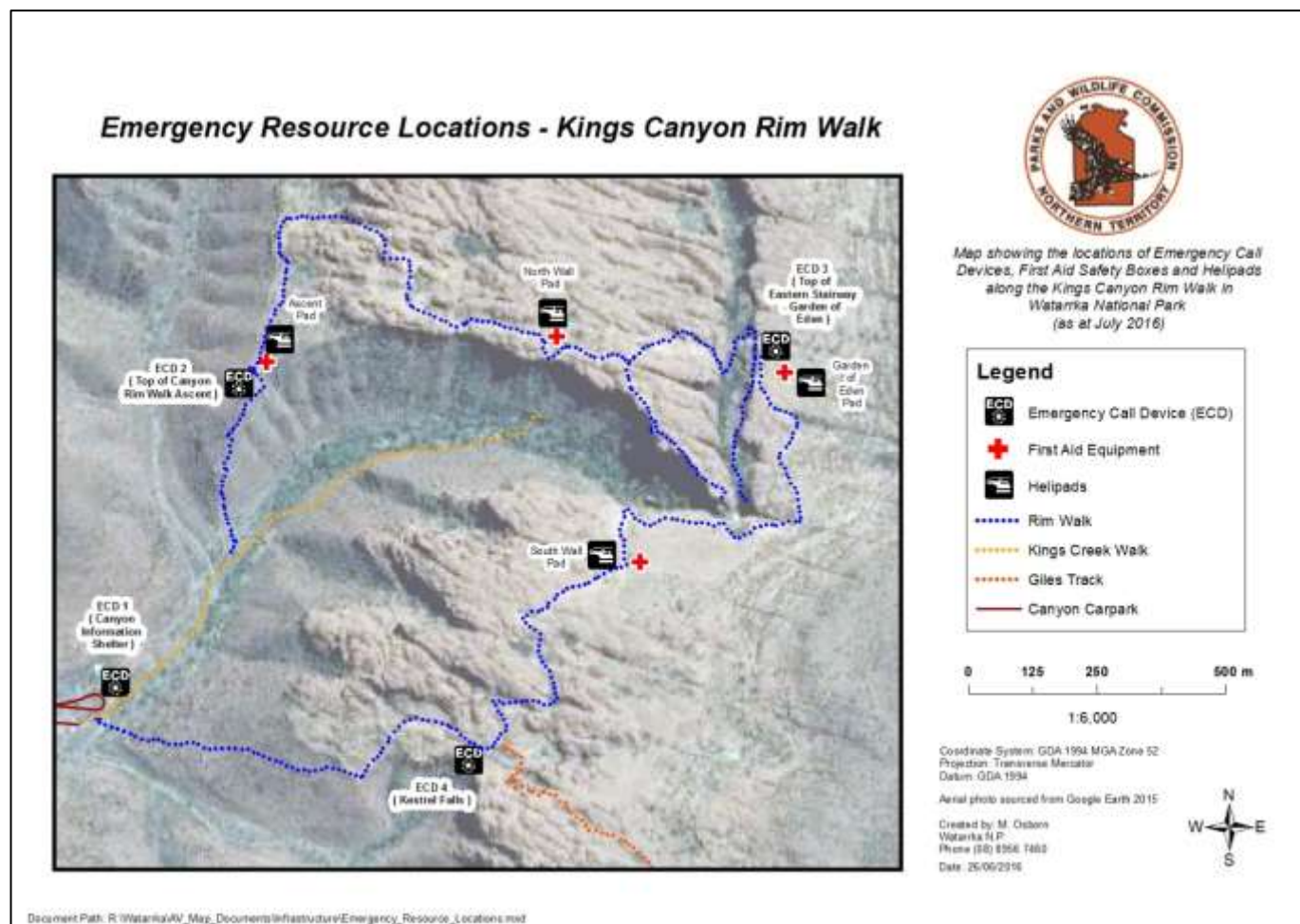
Another way to request assistance in an emergency is by calling the Kings Canyon Medical Clinic. The phone number (08) 8956 7807, is only to be used in the case of an emergency. The line is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The phone line does not replace the use of an ECD, but is another useful option if you carry a satellite phone and want to avoid the delay of getting to an ECD and/or the uncertainty of splitting your group in order to send someone to the ECD.

A clinic nurse will answer the call.

- They will ask for information about the incident and casualty details you collected.
- Have ready the number on the nearest trail marker if there is one close by.
- Please remember to remain calm and relay information in a clear and concise manner.
- Follow the instructions given by nurse.
- The Kings Canyon Medical Clinic nurse, will organise casualty retrieval as required and will advise Rangers to attend the scene as soon as possible.
- Continue to provide assistance to the casualty until stood down by the nurse or by Park Rangers.





## Minimising Environmental Impact

### ***Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976 (the TPWC Act) and By-laws***

The TPWC Act and By-laws are in place to protect the natural and cultural values of the Northern Territory and control actions or activities which may impact on these values. Park Rangers are Conservation Officers with powers to enforce the TPWC Act and By-laws, as are NT Police Officers. Penalties apply for breaches to the Act.

### **Fragile rocks / building stone cairns:**

One of Watarrka's most striking features is its unique and conspicuous geology. Visitors will be able to see at close range the layers of different sandstone, the effect of water in carving the land and how the minerals in the rock manifest. There will be many natural opportunities to show the very soft and fragile exposed sandstone without having to break it open yourself. Please wait until you find an example to interpret this to your visitors. This will ensure that the landscape remains intact and doesn't prematurely erode. This form of environmental vandalism can also encourage others to follow suit. Please don't allow visitors to collect rocks or remove them from the Park. Tour Guides can play an important role in helping Park Rangers protect the values of the Park.



Examples of deliberately broken rocks and interfering with the natural landscape by building rock cairns.

### Graffiti:

Graffiti is inappropriate, ugly and detracts from the beauty and natural value of the Park. It is also an offence under the TPWC Act. If you see a visitor committing any vandalism or graffiti, please report it to a Park Ranger.



Examples of graffiti on rocks and etched into trees.

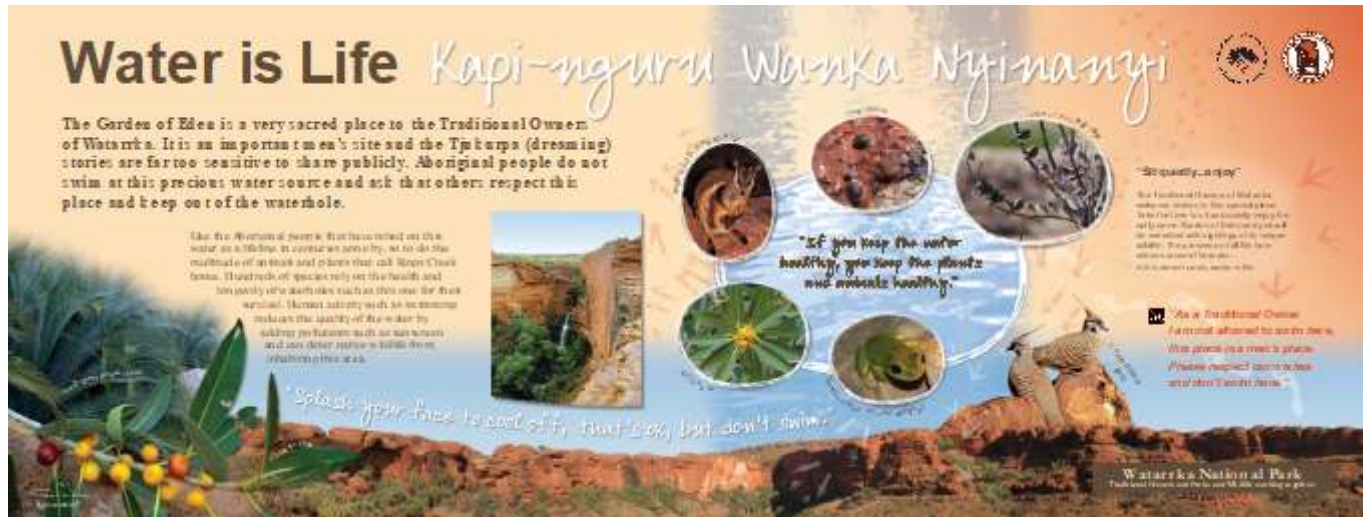
### Interfering with wildlife:

20 species of native mammal, 126 species of birds, 71 reptiles, 7 frogs and 109 types of invertebrates have been recorded in the Park. Spotting wildlife is a treasured part of any Park experience. We encourage guides to interpret and maximise these opportunities, but to do so within the boundaries of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976*. Animals and plants must not be interfered with in any way, so please look, but don't disturb them. This also relates to picking plants or fruit, collecting seeds and breaking off branches to use as flyswats. Visitors are not permitted to feed wildlife under any circumstances. Interfering with wildlife is a breach of the Tour Operator Permit conditions and a finable offence under the TPWC Act.



## Swimming:

Swimming is not allowed in the Garden of Eden. It is the shared opinion of Traditional Owners and PW, that healthy water sources result in healthy plants, animals and people. We encourage tour operators to portray the Garden of Eden as the special place it is – to enjoy and respect it as a haven and source of life in an arid environment. Please ensure that visitors do not walk or climb around the back of the waterhole or near the top of the waterfall, not only for their safety, but also to avoid trampling the fragile wetland plants and seedlings that occur here.



## Rubbish:

Bins are not provided. Please take all rubbish out of the Park with you. Remind clients that this also includes tissues, cigarette butts, food scraps and all other wrappers and packaging. It is not possible to dig holes for toilet paper so this needs to be carried out in a plastic bag and disposed of appropriately.

## Toileting:

Please inform your clients that toilet facilities are provided in the main carpark area and are not available on any walk within the Park.



Littering the Park with tissues and toilet paper detracts from the overall visitor experience.

## Illegal camping:

Camping is not permitted in Watarrka National Park and offenders can be prosecuted under the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation By-laws 1984*. Accommodation and camping is available at Kings Canyon Resort, and Kings Creek Station.

## Fires and firewood collection:

In the interests of visitor safety and the ecology of Watarrka National Park, fires and firewood collection are not permitted.

## Pets in the Park:

Pets are only permitted in the car parks on a lead less than 3 metres long which must be attached to the car.

## Tour Operator Permit Conditions

One of the PW Tour Operator Permit conditions is that you as the guide must be fully informed of, and understand, the permit conditions before you commence taking part in the permitted activity (in this case conducting tours within Watarrka National Park). A copy of the permit and conditions must be carried in each vehicle of the permit holder, while the vehicle is in the Park.

As part of the permit conditions you must inform your clients about safety information and any significant hazards or risks that they may experience whilst in the Park, in verbal or written form as appropriate. This includes any local climatic conditions which may affect their safety, health or wellbeing. For more information refer to Section 5.2 of the Tour Operator Permit Schedule.

It is also a condition of the permit, that an incident where a client requires medical assistance whilst in a National Park, PW requires an incident report from the guide, via the Tour Operator within 24 hours.

All guides operating within the Park must hold a current first aid certificate, the minimum standard being 'Provide First Aid' or equivalent. There must be a comprehensive first aid kit in the vehicle and when the group is away from the vehicle a basic first aid kit must be carried. It is also a permit condition that each client carries sufficient water for the activity.

All of the topics mentioned in the 'Minimising Environmental Impact' section of this handbook are covered under the 'Environment' section of the permit and also form part of the By-laws under the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976 (NT)*. All Tour Guides should use reasonable endeavours to ensure minimal environmental impact is caused in any NT Park or Reserve.

The use of accurate and appropriate information and images in all web based material, pamphlets and brochures forms part of the permit conditions under the 'Awareness and Advertising' in Section 5.4 of the Tour Operator Permit Schedule.



## Where to from here? Completing the Safety Induction

Once you have studied this handbook, you will be required to complete an online test in order to pass the Safety Induction and conduct tours in Watarrka National Park. This will be electronically submitted and processed by PW. Once you have passed the test and it has been processed, a certificate of completion will be emailed to you. A print out or screen shot of this certificate is to be carried with you at all times in Watarrka National Park, including on walks, along with some photo ID such as a driver's license. The certificate of completion and photo ID, must be presented to Park Rangers on request.

## More information and useful resources

The information provided in this handbook only covers the subjects of safety and environmental impacts of visitors. Watarrka has a truly amazing wealth of flora, fauna, history and geology, all intertwined with the cultural importance of this spectacular place. We highly recommend you learn as much as you can about these aspects of the Park in order to provide an accurate and enriching experience for your clientele.

Follow the links to Watarrka National Park under the 'Find a Park' tab on the PW website or click the following link: [Watarrka National Park](#)

The following fact and information sheets can also be downloaded from the PW website:

[Watarrka National Park Fact Sheet](#)

[Walks of Watarrka National Park Information sheet](#)

[Giles Track Information Sheet](#)

A fauna checklist for Watarrka National Park is also available upon request.

Some excellent books and field guides are available to help you expand on your knowledge of the flora and fauna occurring at Watarrka National Park. Click [here](#) for a link to a categorised list of fauna reference books on the PW website.

- Van Oosterzee. P. (1995) *A field guide to Central Australia*. Reed Books.
- Thompson, R. B. 1991, *A guide to the geology and landforms of central Australia*, Northern Territory Geological Survey, Alice Springs
- Latz, P. K. 1996, *Bushfires & bushtucker : Aboriginal plant use in Central Australia*, IAD Press, Alice Springs, NT
- Urban, Anne. 2001, *Wildflowers & plants of inland Australia*, Alice Springs, N. T. Paul Fitzsimons; Alice Springs, N. T.
- Triggs, Barbara. 1996, *Tracks, scats and other traces*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne

## Useful Contacts

### PW Central Australia Office

Tom Hare Building, Arid Zone Research Institute  
South Stuart Highway, Alice Springs, NT 0871  
Phone: (08) 8951 8250

Web access Tour Guide Safety Induction: [Watarrka Tour Guide Safety Induction](#)

Email address for Tour Guide Safety Induction queries: [parks.touroperator@nt.gov.au](mailto:parks.touroperator@nt.gov.au)

Parks and Wildlife website: [Parks and Wildlife](#)

Parks and Wildlife Online Booking System – for camping, walking trails and park passes:

[Northern Territory - Northern Territory Parks Booking System](#)

### Watarrka National Park Ranger Station

Phone: (08) 8956 7460

Emergency Phone Line to Kings Canyon Medical Clinic: (08) 8956 7807

### PW Permits Office

(08) 8999 4486  
[pwpermits@nt.gov.au](mailto:pwpermits@nt.gov.au)

### NT WorkSafe

Phone: 1800 019 115  
[ntworksafe@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntworksafe@nt.gov.au)  
[www.worksafe.nt.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.nt.gov.au)  
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act

[WORK-HEALTH-AND-SAFETY-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011](#)

### Road Conditions

Road Condition Hotline: 1800 246 199  
Road Condition Website: [Road Report NT](#)

**Bureau of Meteorology** - [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

## Disclaimer

The Northern Territory of Australia and Parks and Wildlife Commission (“the Territory”) excludes liability and will not be responsible for any loss, damage or injury arising from or connected with anything done or not done in reliance on this Safety Induction.

Further, but only to the extent permitted by law, the Territory will not be responsible for loss, damage or injury arising from any negligent act or omission of the Territory or any person for who the Territory is responsible, in any way related to this Safety Induction.