

# Example safety briefing for Tongariro Alpine Crossing transport providers

We encourage all concessionaires taking walkers to the Tongariro Alpine Crossing to deliver a safety briefing about the hike. We suggest covering the following information for unguided hikers from November to late April.\*

## Make sure you have the right gear

The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is a stunning but tough walk - 20.2km through a mountain environment.

You need the right gear to do the hike safely and comfortably. This includes warm layers of clothing, a waterproof rain jacket, sturdy shoes, water, food and toilet paper.

It can get very hot. You need a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, and plenty of water (2-3L per person) to help prevent heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The water along the track is not suitable for drinking.

If you don't have the right gear, we recommend a short walk on the track instead, e.g. a return trip to Soda Springs. You'll still get to see the volcanic environment and we can pick you up from this.

## Watch the weather and turn back if needed

The weather forecast today is [provide forecast]. However, the weather changes quickly. It can become dangerously cold and wet very fast.

There are decision points on the track where we encourage you to look ahead and assess the weather. If it's bad, it's better to turn back. There are signs along the track showing you these decision points - please stop, read them, and look at the weather.

## This is an active volcano

The Tongariro Alpine Crossing goes over an active volcano. Te Maari, Red Crater and Ngāuruhoe vents have all been active within the last 100 years - the most recent eruption occurred from Te Maari in 2012. You can find more information about this on the DOC website

and signs along the track. *[Note: this message is for when the Volcanic Alert Level (VAL) is 0. Message would need to be altered if there was volcanic unrest and the VAL raised to 1 - seek advice from DOC on visitor messaging in this situation.]*

There is geothermal activity on the Crossing, especially near Emerald Lakes where you will see steam vents (fumaroles). Do not walk off track to these vents or get close to them - the ground is unstable and can collapse, risking severe burns.

## Turn back if you are struggling

This is a difficult hike and it's okay to turn back - plenty of people do.

The hike gets harder as it goes on, so if you are finding the early parts difficult or find you don't have the right gear for the conditions, then we advise turning around.

You can phone us at any time and we will return to Mangatepopo car park to pick you up. There is cell phone coverage on most of the track.

## Be careful between Red Crater and Emerald Lakes

The descent from Red Crater to Emerald Lakes is the most common place for injuries on the crossing. The track is down a scree (lots of very small stones) and it's easy to slip or twist an ankle. Go slowly and carefully.

## Call 111 in an emergency

Minor slips and trips are common, and people can usually finish the hike. However, if you are lost, having a medical emergency or so injured that you cannot continue hiking, call emergency services on 111. Put on all your warm clothes, find a sheltered place if possible, and wait as a group for help to arrive.