

Kosciuszko National Park

Alpine safety



nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

The Australian Alps aren't as high or steep as mountains overseas, but strong winds, rain, snowfall, and extreme temperatures make our alpine and sub-alpine areas dangerous year-round.

Search and rescue operations occur in Kosciuszko National Park every year. Many of these are for visitors who underestimate conditions and overestimate their capabilities.

Safety is your responsibility.

Be prepared

- Take extra water and food. Purify all stream water before drinking.
- Take layers of warm, waterproof clothing, even in summer and on day trips.
- Wear high factor sunscreen and sunglasses all year. UV is high and snow reflects the sun, even on overcast days.
- Take a topographic map and compass. Be sure you know how to use them. It's a good idea to carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB).
- Understand risks when backcountry walking, skiing and snowboarding, including unstable and deep snow; steep icy slopes; cornices; avalanches; and extreme weather.
- Take a bivouac bag or space blanket for emergencies.

Get advice

- Check weather before you set out:
bom.gov.au/australia/alpine
- Contact national parks visitor centres for conditions, closures, and for detailed maps.
Jindabyne: (02) 6450 5600 or
Tumut: (02) 6947 7025
- If you're advised not to go – don't.

Personal Locator Beacons

- Even experienced travellers should carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB).
- You can loan a free PLB at Jindabyne, Perisher, Khancoban or Tumut visitor centres.
- **Only activate a PLB if you're in danger or injured, and then stay where you are.**

Plan your trip

- Always travel with at least two people in a group. Make sure at least one person is experienced.
- Tell a reliable friend your travel plans, including:
 - the number in the group and experience level
 - planned route
 - equipment
 - when you plan to return.
- Fill in the trip intention form at the Jindabyne, Perisher or Tumut NPWS visitor centres. **It's free.** A summary of your trip will be sent to your nominated emergency contact.
- Advise when you're back or if you stay longer.



Don't rely on technology

- Mobile phone coverage within the park is patchy and the cold can severely affect batteries.
- Global Positioning System (GPS) can be unreliable. Batteries are affected by cold so only use with a topographic map and compass.
- Technology won't guarantee your safety. Conditions may restrict rescue efforts. Always be prepared - even on day trips.

If you get caught out

- Stay calm, assess your situation and consider your options.
- Stay where you are. You'll be harder to find on the move and will use a lot of energy.
- Find a shelter, stay out of the wind.
- Leave something visible for searchers, like colourful clothing.
- If you're above the tree-line, don't drop down into the trees except for temporary shelter. Rescue helicopters won't see you.
- If you can, dial Triple Zero (000) in an emergency. Download the Emergency+ app before you go. It helps emergency services locate you using your smartphone's GPS.
- Don't delay your call, it can seriously hamper rescue efforts.
- Know the signs of hypothermia, and how to treat it. Find out more at:

nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alpine-safety

General enquiries:

Snowy Region Visitor Centre, Jindabyne. Ph: (02) 6450 5600
Tumut Visitor Centre, Tumut. Ph: (02) 6947 7025
Khancoban Visitor Centre, Khancoban. Ph: (02) 6076 9373
Perisher Visitor Office, Perisher Valley. Ph: (02) 6457 4444
Yarrangobilly Caves Visitor Centre. Ph: (02) 6454 9597

Photography:

Page 1. Main Range, Kosciuszko National Park. Page 2. Cross country skier, Perisher Range, Kosciuszko National Park. Photos: John Spencer/OEH. Hiker at Lake Albina, on Main Range walk, Kosciuszko National Park. Hiker on Illawong walk, Kosciuszko National Park. Photos: Murray Vanderveer/OEH.

Published by:

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
Office of Environment and Heritage
59 Goulburn St, Sydney, NSW 2000

ISBN 978-1-925753-05-9 OEH2018/0043 January 2018