OTAGO TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

Day Trip Leadership

OTMC Guidelines and Information for club leaders

OTMC Day Trip Leadership

The very first trip the Otago Tramping Club ran was a day trip from Ross Creek to Flagstaff in 1923. It is said that by the time the leaders reached the summit, the end of the party were still emerging from the bush. While it is understandable the first trip was so popular with 50 participants, it also showed that sound leadership was required to ensure safe tramping trips.

Having club members available to lead the OTMC's day trips is an essential part of the club's activity. This guide outlines the club's rules and guidelines (some are mandatory), as well as providing advice and information that will lead to successful trips.

The OTMC Trip Card

The OTMC aims to publish a six-monthly trip programme - currently this is released as a summer programme (November to April), and a winter programme (May to October) to coincide with the committee year *(this allows the incoming Chief Guide and Day Trip Convenor to compile their own programmes once they take office).* Prior to the release of the programme, the Day Trip Convenor will seek members to lead the day trips. This is your chance to choose where you want to go tramping, and also contribute to the running of the club.

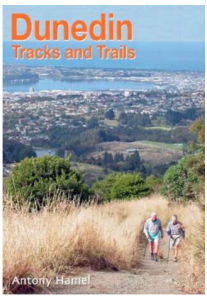
Choosing where to lead a trip

There are many different reasons people lead trips. It may be that they have been to a destination without the club and thought it would make a good club trip. It may be somewhere they have always wanted to go, but it never ends up on the OTMC programme.

For your first few day trips as leader it is recommended that you pick an area you are familiar with, or is a straight-forward trip. Leadership can be complex, so by removing the need for extensive navigation or route-finding on the day increases the safety factor. Another alternative is to co-lead a trip, or do a reconnaissance trip prior to the actual day trip - this will confirm current track conditions and times.

Also take into account things like transport (do you need transport at each end, how will you provide for this), distance to travel, tides, amount of daylight available etc. Be aware when a trip will be in a cold valley or in water for a lot of the time, and plan these trips for the warmer months.

Researching a trip



There are not many places the OTMC have not been to, so chances are someone will be able to help you with information for your trip. A good place to start is with Antony Hamel's local guidebook, Dunedin Tracks and Trails (sold out now, a new edition is in production). Other ways to seek information is to use the OTMC email list (you can sign up to this via the OTMC website), the OTMC Facebook page or ask at a club meeting.

If you are stuck for ideas, consult past Bulletins or Outdoors.

Trip Grades

The OTMC have developed a series of trip grades - these are based on tramping time rather than distance. As the grades are listed alongside the trips, the trip leader and Day Trip Convenor need to ensure they are accurate - people will choose trips based on the advertised grade. The OTMC official grades are:

- **EASY (E):** Generally suitable for beginners but proper clothing and equipment are ESSENTIAL. About 3-5 hours tramping per day.
- **MODERATE (M):** A reasonable standard of fitness and experience needed. About 5 -7 hours tramping per day.
- **FIT (F):** These trips are expected to be longer and may be more difficult. About 7-9 hours tramping per day.
- **FITNESS ESSENTIAL (FE):** A high level of fitness, experience and self-reliance is essential. Most available time will be spent tramping. 10-24 hours per day!

Other grades can be used, for example E-M or M-F, but they have no 'official times' against them. E-M would be around 4-6 hours, while M-F would be 6-8 hours per day.

Bad weather (cold / rain / wind etc.) will make trips longer or harder - have a 'Plan B' or a turn around time / back out plan, and follow it.

From a Day Trip Convenors perspective, it is a good idea to try and run a range of day trips across all grades (although this does depend on the enthusiasm of the leaders). It is also good to try and run a few trips suitable for beginners

Departure time

OTMC Day Trips departures points and times are now variable. For trips to the north of the city, you can choose to meet at Woodhaugh Gardens (George St entrance, near the Water of Leith bridge). Southern and Peninsula trips can still leave from the clubrooms. Some leaders make a point of leaving dead on the advertised departure time, in the scheme of things being 5-10 minutes later is not the end of the world - it's up to you, the leader.

Day Trip Convenors Role

Once all the trips have been filled, the Day Trip Convenor will work with the Chief Guide to publish the trip programme. This is posted / emailed to all members, and is available on the OTMC website.

At this stage the trip costs are added - the day trips are run on a private car basis, where the passengers pay the cost indicated on the trip card to the driver. If your trip has other costs associated with it (entry fees or other transport costs, for example) then make sure

the Day Trip Convenor knows this, so they can be published on the trip programme.

Publicise your trip

It is the responsibility of the trip leader to publicise the trip. This is normally done via the weekly update, and is discussed at one or two club meetings prior to the trip. For the Weekly Update, aim to have your trip included at least two times prior to the trip.

Include the basic information that is on the trip programme (destination, grade, departure time, cost etc.) Also include more information about your trip such as the route, terrain, tramping time and anything that will make the trip special. You can also use the OTMC email list and Facebook page to promote your trip - but be aware that these both contain a number of non-members.

Before the trip

If you find you are unable to lead your trip, then it is your responsibility to find a replacement leader - liaise with the Day Trip Convenor to do this. The trip can be changed to another location (swapping with another leader is an option). You can also seek a new leader via the email list or by asking at the weekly meetings. In the event the trip does have to be cancelled, then use the weekly update and email list to advise this, and arrange for a note to be put on the door if you are unable to be at the clubrooms at the arranged departure time.

The OTMC requests that non-members contact the leader prior to the trip - the purpose for this is for the leader to discuss the persons experience, and go through the gear required. It is not unreasonable to ask about any medical conditions for all people in party (keep this information confidential, but as a leader you need to be prepared).

The club has an information sheet for all day trip participants on the OTMC website - check 'OTMC Day Trip Notes and Guidelines' on the OTMC Resources page.

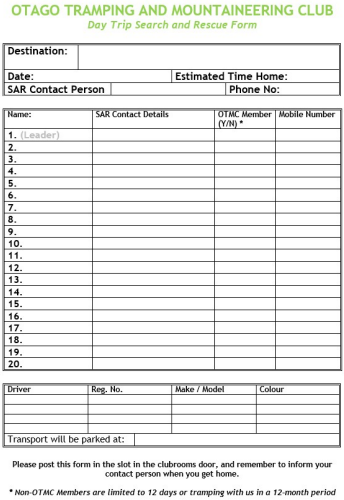
If your trip is traversing private property, then seek permission beforehand, and thank the owner afterwards. Whilst on the property remember to avoid crops and leave gates as you find them.

In the days before the trip keep an eye on the weather forecast - they are normally pretty accurate for our day trip destinations.

The OTMC does not allow dogs or guns on club trips (although dogs are allowed on trips that are advertised beforehand as 'dog trips')

OTMC Search and Rescue Policy (SAR)

The OTMC use the same system as for weekend trips in regard to a SAR contact for your trip. The trip leader needs to appoint someone who will remain in Dunedin to act as a SAR contact - this person can be a relation or friend. Leave the details of your trip with this person (destination, car parking location, any alternative options, and expected time home). Arrange a time to be home with this person, and advise them to call an OTMC committee member if they don't hear from you by the time you have arranged. The committee member will then obtain the SAR list from our PLB contact list) - this is the official trip list, and will contain the participants names and contact numbers. In the event that we don't hear from the trip the Police will be contacted - the Police are responsible for all SAR operations, and will advise what to do.



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Day Trip Search and Rescue Form

Destination:	
Date:	Estimated Time Home:
SAR Contact Person	Phone No:

Name:	SAR Contact Details	OTMC Member (Y/N) *	Mobile Number
1. (Leader)			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

Driver	Reg. No.	Make / Model	Colour
Transport will be parked at:			

Please post this form in the slot in the clubrooms door, and remember to inform your contact person when you get home.

** Non-OTMC Members are limited to 12 days or tramping with us in a 12-month period*

OTMC SAR List

It is important that a list of participants be compiled and emailed to the PLB list (see below) There is a SAR form available at the clubrooms, or via the 'OTMC Resources' section of the OTMC website. The following information needs to be collected: Date, destination, estimated time home, SAR contact person and contact number (this is someone who is not on the trip and needs to be pre-arranged), names of participants and their SAR contact details, whether they are an OTMC member and their own mobile number. Additional information needs to include the vehicles used (make / colour / registration) and where they will be parked (this is where SAR will start looking).

Remember to include anyone who has arranged to meet you en-route, or at the starting point on the list.

Take a copy of the SAR list with you by photographing the form with your phone. Additionally, email a copy of the form before you depart to your SAR contact and otmcplb@gmail.com if you can (or ask someone else to do this) - emailing this address will automatically forward your SAR list to the current OTMC PLB contact list).

Required gear

The OTMC list the minimum gear requirements on the day trip page on the OTMC website.

As a trip leader, you need to check that all participants have the correct clothing and equipment. The most important items to check are: raincoat, fleece layer, no cotton layers (especially jeans), strong footwear suitable for your trip (not all trips require boots), warm hat, food and water. All OTMC leaders have the authority to refuse to take people

who you feel do not have sufficient clothing and / or gear. Be particularly careful in the colder months. For the trips outside of daylight saving it is a good idea to have a torch / headlamp.

First aid equipment should also be considered. Items like plasters and paracetamol are considered personal items, so each tramper should bring their own, based on their needs.

Personal Locater Beacon (PLB) use on club trips

A PLB is now considered a standard item for trampers, and are mandatory on all club trips. The OTMC has a dedicated PLB available for all day trips, contact the Day Trip Convenor on how to access this (24/7 access is available). Associated with PLB's is a register of OTMC contacts that are held by the New Zealand Rescue Coordination Centre, these contacts will be who the NZRCC will immediately call upon an OTMC PLB being activated. To assist the OTMC contacts in providing up-to-date information to the NZRCC, take a photo of your SAR list before you depart with your smartphone (or ask another trip participant to do this), and email this list to your SAR contact AND otmcplb@gmail.com. This address is setup to automatically forward your email to the current OTMC PLB contact list. At the end of your trip, ensure the PLB is returned to it's storage location. If the PLB is not where it should be, contact the OTMC Gear Hire Officer.

Day Trip Transport

Transport for day trips is normally by carpool from the appointed departure point. Arrange all the participants into vehicles - try to minimise the number of vehicles required to keep costs down (particularly for trips further away). Passengers are required to pay the vehicle cost shown on the trip card to the driver - ideally this should be done at departure.

Safety Plan

The OTMC has a duty to outline any known and potential risks and hazards. A known hazard could be where we have been advised a piece of track that has slipped away, with a detour in place. Potential hazard's will exist on all trips, and generally be the same everywhere we go. Hazards could include rivers, muddy tracks, uneven ground, slippery rocks , off track travel or multiple tripping hazards. If we reasonably expect to encounter these types of hazards, then the leader should advise all participants before departure from Dunedin.

In the event of an incident on a trip, the trip leader must report this to the Day Trip Convenor.

Non members on Day Trips

We welcome non-members of the OTMC on our trips - in fact, before becoming a member, people have to complete two trips with us. We do encourage non-members to contact the trip leader before the trip. This is to confirm the plans for the trip, discuss experi-

ence and go over the clothing and equipment required.

The Healthy and Safety at Work (Adventure Activities) Regulations 2016 allow clubs to run trips and events for club members. Non members can participate in club activities for up to 6 days in any 12 month period (this is why we record OTMC membership information on the SAR list.).

Day Trip Leadership

Leadership is a skill that is learnt over time. The leadership required for an OTMC day trip will vary based on the number of participants and the terrain you are travelling across.

Larger parties can be difficult to keep track of, especially if you have different degrees of fitness on the trip. Avoid letting the party get too spread out - aim to move at the speed of the slowest person. It is also important not to leave anyone behind - appoint a person to keep an eye at the back (tail-end Charlie), and arrange meeting points along the route to allow the trip to regroup.

A larger party will often have other experienced trampers present - it may make sense to split the group into two parties, each with an experienced leader. This can reduce the frustration from the fitter trampers, but ensure you have clear places to stop and regroup. An example here could be a party of 12 travelling from the old Green Hut Site to Pulpit

Rock - a large group will typically become spread out here. An option would be to break into a faster and slower party for the uphill climb, but with a firm plan for everyone to meet at the track that leads up to Pulpit Rock. Sometimes leading from the rear is the best option.

At obstacles such as rivers, maintain control of the group (not many day trips encounter serious river crossings, if you expect to encounter them on your trip then ensure either you or someone else on the trip is a strong and competent river crosser). Mutual support

with day packs does work if the method is correctly followed. Day packs will also provide significant buoyancy.

In cold and wet weather, watch for signs of hypothermia - apart from the weather conditions, inadequate food and water can contribute to hypothermia. Other contributing factors can include lunch stops in cold conditions (especially if clothing is wet) or not travelling at an adequate speed to maintain body heat. Look for signs of party members becoming chilled, have goose bumps, shivering, clumsiness, slurred speech or responses and actions are slow. If you notice these, then you must stop the party, do what you can (as a party) to look after the patient. For more serious cases, you will need to use spare warm clothes and survival blanket.

If there is an incident on your trip (accident etc.) than ask the whole party for help - there may well be trained people who can assist.

As a leader, always assess the party, progress and time of day - a good leader will always turn back in good time, always allow a safety margin. Safety is the most important aspect of leadership - never let desire over-ride sound judgment. There can only be one leader - but do seek advice from others. In most cases consensus is a sound leadership method, but as the leader be prepared to make a decision for the whole party and stick to it - make sure everyone knows the plan.

The end of the trip

Once you are safely home, advise you SAR contact that you have returned home. If you encountered any issues that require follow up by the club, then advise the Day Trip Convenor.

Also arrange someone to write a report for the monthly Bulletin - trip reports are more informative and helpful if they contain a description of the track conditions, and times. It may be best to arrange someone to write the report before you set out - this allows notes to be made along the way.

Leading an OTMC trip is an essential part of the club's activity - without leaders there would be little point in running a tramping club. Thanks for being a leader!