

# CHAPTER 13: Australia takes control of Kokoda Tourism

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## Preamble

Australia's indifference has continued with their management of the Kokoda Trail under a joint agreement, developed in Canberra and signed in PNG in 2008.

While our initial involvement was welcomed it was soon evident they were not aware of the traditional realities of the *Melanesian Way*.

Officials selected for management positions had no previous experience with PNG or any commercial business qualifications. Their previous experience was related to national parks environment management.

Ms. Annette Dean was the first Australian official appointed CEO of the Kokoda Track Authority. She was recruited because of her previous experience with Tasmanian walking tracks! She only lasted five months in the job before returning to Tasmania – see Chapter 14.

Dean was replaced by Rod Hillman who had extensive experience in management of National Parks, mainly in Canberra and the ACT – see Chapter 15.

Both Dean and Hillman spoke about the 'corruption' they had to address however their record shows they dodged their responsibilities in this regard. Neither had trekked across the Trail so they had no idea of the cultural complexities of village life or their needs.

Hillman was presented with evidence of rogue Australian tour companies trekking without permits and rogue Kokoda Track Authority board members misappropriating funds on a large scale as well as lodging vexatious land claims.

Rather than act against the rogue tour operators he negotiated confidential deals which let them off the hook and then claimed to have resolved the issue.

He was aware of evidence that a KTA Board member had misappropriated around K250,000 from Kokoda Track Authority bank accounts but failed to prosecute him.

Neither Dean nor Hillman sought advice and seemed to unwilling to accept that which was given in the form of submissions and discussions.

They were unaware that the former CEO, Warren Bartlett, maintained meticulous financial records due to his previous 39 years' experience in PNG Government administration. Rather than consult with him they attempted to smear his reputation with vague references to the 'corruption' they inherited. The facts tell a different story – see Chapter 12.

It was not as if they were not made aware of the issues that needed to be addressed as the following letter to The Minister for Environment, Water, Heritage, Heritage and the Arts on 8 May 2009 shows.

The issues outlined in the letter remain outstanding 14 years later which has contributed to the 46 percent

fall in Kokoda trekker numbers since then.

## Email to Sandy Hollway re Misappropriation on 2008 Trek Fees

**From:** Charlie Lynn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 12 August 2008 2:07 AM  
**To:** 'Sandy Hollway'  
**Cc:** 'James Shelvin'; 'Warren Bartlett'  
**Subject:** Kokoda Track Authority - Misappropriation of 2008 Trek Fees

Dear Sandy,

I have just returned from two treks across the Kokoda Trail and can report that nothing has been done to improve the situation in regard to local villagers along the track. Nothing.

This is because we seem to have failed in our endeavours to assist the PNG government to put a competent interim management structure in place for the 2008 trekking season. This failure has resulted in the misappropriation of almost all trek fees paid this year.

Warren Bartlett has estimated that approximately \$115,000 was reimbursed to Board Members of the Kokoda Track Authority earlier this year as a result of fraudulent claims. Tonight he has advised that a further \$70,000 has been fraudulently withdrawn from the KTA Account at the Bank of South Pacific in Port Moresby between the 18 July and 7 August 2008 by one or more Board Members.

I am concerned because these latest examples of fraud were both predictable and preventable.

On 13 June 2008, Warren Bartlett wrote to Mr Andrew Bokame, Manager of the Bank of South Pacific in Port Moresby:

***'Suspension of Withdrawal of Funds from Kokoda Track Authority Bank Accounts Due to Expiry of Terms of Office of Four Appointed Board Management Committee Members'***

*'Kokoda Track Authority operates the following three accounts at Douglas Street Branch:*

- *Kokoda Track Special Purpose Authority – Trek Permit Fee A/c: 1000981336*
- *Kokoda Track Special Purpose Authority – Operating A/c: 1000981338*
- *Kokoda Track Special Purpose Authority – Kokoda Day A/c: 1001228150*

*The Kokoda Day A/c has a NIL balance per the 3 June, 2008 statement and is presumed to be closed. The account is no longer required.*

*'The Trek Permit Fee A/c and Operating A/c have five authorised signatories of which three must sign cheques as follows:*

- *Either Chairman Alfred Amuli OR Vice Chairman Norris J Selu*
- *Either Committee Member David Soru OR Gary Imri*
- *Compulsory Executive Officer Warren R Bartlett*

*'Under the Proclamation and Constitution of the Authority, the term of office of Messrs Amuli, Selu, Soru and Imri have expired and the term of the Authority under the Constitution expires on 10 June 2008. The Proclamation and Act do not specify a term of the Authority.*

*'The Department of Provincial & Local Government Affairs is conducting a review of the Authority as per advice of their Acting Secretary's attached letter dated 10 June, 2008.*

*'The Department's legal officers have requested I advise the Bank that the two accounts remain open for deposit of trek fee another funds, but the withdrawal of funds by cheque or other means be frozen until a new Board of Management Committee Members be appointed and sworn in and new bank signatories are approved.*

*'Any outstanding cheques issued on the two accounts are to be honoured up to and including the following cheque numbers:*

- *Kokoda Track Authority – Trek Permit Fee A/c: 1000981336 – Cheque #044958*
- *Kokoda Track Authority – Operating A/c: 1000981338 – Cheque #048068*

*'There is the possibility that the Proclamation of the present Authority will be revoked by NEC decision and new management body, currently under consideration and to be discussed with stakeholders, be established and the accumulated funds be transferred top such new organisation.*

*'I have been requested by the Department of Provincial & Local Government Affairs to continue accepting Trek Permit Applications and fees from Kokoda trekking groups and banking such in the Trek Permit Fee account. The Operation A/c will remain dormant for the time being.*

*'Please contact Mr Tau Vali, the Acting Secretary of Dept of Provincial & Local Government Affairs on phone 301 1004 or myself on 323 6165, 325 1887 or mobile 685 7685 should you require further information.'*

On 9 July 2008 the Secretary of the PNG Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs wrote to Kokoda Trek Operators and advised:

*'Some serious allegations of mismanagement within the Authority have been brought to the attention of this Department and the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations. The Department and the Minister is currently consulting with landowners and other affected parties to develop some interim arrangements that would address the immediate concerns about any financial mismanagement and the track.*

*'At the moment the Government is planning to vary the membership of the Authority, this would reduce the size of the membership and put in place senior government officials. The new members could then instigate stricter financial controls. In the meantime, the KTA is still operating and the track will remain open.'*

On 20 July 2008, Warren Bartlett, Executive Officer of the KTA, wrote to Mr Andrew Bokame, Manager of the Bank of South Pacific in Port Moresby:

*'Reference my letter of 13 June 2008 requesting the freezing of the following bank accounts operated at the Douglas Street Branch:*

- *Kokoda Track Special Purpose Authority – Trek Permit Fee A/c: 1000981336*
- *Kokoda Track Special Purpose Authority – Operating A/c: 1000981338*

*'I attach a copy dated 9 July, 2008 from the Secretary of the Department of Provincial & Local Government Affairs to Kokoda Trek Operators. The Government has proposed to vary the membership of the Authority by decision of the National Executive Council. As such, the present board (Management Committee Members) will be replaced with new members who will address the immediate concerns about financial mismanagement of the Authority and the Kokoda Track Administration.*

*'I have been advised that the submission is currently before the NEC for deliberation and decision.*

*'There are a number of the present board members who are upset about being replaced and have made moves to convene a Special Board Meeting with the following agenda:*

1. Termination of Mr Warren Bartlett as KTA manager.
2. Cheque books for KTA (Operations and Trek Permit) to be surrendered to the Board.
3. Interim Board and Management structure.
4. Collection of Trek Fees
5. Restructure of the Authority
6. Unpaid allowance since 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (minimum K44,130.00 of unjustified claims).
7. Any other business.

*'It is obvious that certain Board Members (present bank account signatories) wish to access the KTA bank accounts and deplete them before the new board takes over. Similarly any future trek fees collected could be misappropriated instead of being destined for community development projects.*

*'In consultation with the Department of Provincial & Local Government Affairs and the Task Force for the review of the Kokoda Track administration and Kokoda Track Authority, it has been considered advisable to inform you of possible attempts to sabotage the bank accounts of the Authority.*

*'These two accounts remain frozen for any withdrawal of funds but open for the deposit of Trek Fee and other income until the new Board is appointed by NEC Decision. At the first meeting of the Board after such appointment, signatories to the bank accounts will be made by resolution of the Board and formal notice given to the Bank.*

*'It would be appreciated if any attempt to change the present banking arrangements is made, that such be clarified with the Secretary of the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs through Legal Officer, Varimo Saka on phone: 325 0233 Ext 1038.*

On 25 July 2008 the following Public Notice was placed in The Weekend National Newspaper (page 42):

**KOKODA TRACK AUTHORITY**

**To: ALL TOUR OPERATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS OF KOKODA TRACK**

*Re: Termination of Mr Warren Bartlett as Acting Manager KTA*

*NB: Mr Bartlett is terminated from KTA as of Tuesday, July 15, 2008. No further transaction or issues pertaining to the Kokoda Track or the Authority should be entertained.*

*Authorised by  
BOARD OF KOIARI TRACK AUTHORITY*

The following news article appeared on page 7 of the same newspaper on the same day:

*'KTA man in court over fraud*

*'A Kokoda Track Authority (KTA) board member, alleged to have misappropriated about K53,000 from the authority, appeared before the District Court in Port Moresby last Friday, police said yesterday.*

*'KTA deputy chairman Norris Selu, 37 from Kagi Village in Central province, was suspected with two others of having created a ghost KTA cheque account with the Waigani Drive Bank South Pacific branch in Port Moresby on March 23, 2006.*

*'They had allegedly created the account with forged meeting's minute without the full board's approval.*

*'Selu is out of K1,500 bail and will appear before the Waigani District Court again next Friday.*

*'Police said Selu had deposited K3,900 into this ghost account on June 6 last year after picking the cheque from Sagric International.*

*'He had also deposited a K25,000 cheque into this ghost account on Dec 11 last year.*

*'The cheque was from the Central Provincial Government.*

*'Selu later cashed an official cheque for K24,000 at the same bank on Dec 19 last year and did not return the money to the KTA chairman for tourism development projects.*

*'The monies allegedly misappropriated were for the administration and projects for the villagers living along the famous Second World War rugged and mountainous 96 km Kokoda Track that runs between Kokoda in Oro province and Owers Corner in Central province.'*

On Friday, 8 August 2008 the 'Chairman' of the Kokoda Track Authority, Mr Alfred Amuli, wrote the following letter to Kokoda Trek Operators:

*'As you are aware the Board has terminated Mr Warren Bartlett's services as of 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and any further business transaction of Trek Permits and other Kokoda Track matters are deemed illegal and legal actions will be taken against the parties involved.*

*'The current situation with the closure of the office is due to Mr Bartlett's frustration of his termination by the Board, as obviously his interest along the Kokoda Track is now being threatened and is action unwarranted and requires investigating, which the Board has sought legal advice and will act within the next week to open the office.*

*'We have been informed that many Tour Operators are NOT paying their Trek Fees and therefore their has been complaints raised by the Landowners that the rogue Tour Operators have to pay and if no further actions will be taken against them.*

*'For that matter please arrange for all Trek Fees to be paid to the account mentioned above and to call me 636-2433 to give the deposit slip as a record of that transaction and the Trek Permits will be organised once the office is open.*

*'Also find attached the letter from the Secretary of the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs clarifying the issue.'*

*'For your information and action.'*

On 11 August 2008, Warren Bartlett wrote to Mr Manasupe Z. Zurenuoc OBE, Secretary, Department of Provincial & Local Government Affairs:

*In preparation for the new KTA board coming into existence, I collected on 8 August, bank statements for the two Kokoda Track Authority bank accounts operated at the BSP Douglas Street branch, namely the Trek Permit Fee A/c 1000981336 and the Operating A/c 1000981338. I was astounded to note that there had been unauthorized payments from the Trek Permit Fee A/c commencing on 18 July, 2008 with K56,120 and further transactions to 7 August, leaving a balance of K11,622.51. There had been three telegraphic transfers between 16 July and 4 August from Trek Operators paying for their trek permits and the balance should have been K152,715.51. A total of K141, 093 of Trek Fee moneys has been misappropriated between 18 July and 7 August!*

It beggars belief that trek fees could be fraudulently misappropriated from the KTA bank accounts so easily despite the warnings and instructions contained in the above correspondence.

I have a number of concerns over the current situation:

- The fraudulent activities leading to the misappropriation of trek fees for 2008 were both predictable and preventable.

- Warren Bartlett's position is currently untenable. Despite this he continues to devote most of his time and energy in trying to do the right thing in the hope that an effective interim management body will be put in place. Although he is an Australian citizen he works on a PNG salary of around \$12,500 per annum to manage an industry which generates an estimated \$12 million per year - without any effective support staff.
- Over the past year I have recommended a number of people who have the experience and qualifications to begin work immediately to provide assistance to the KTA as part of an interim arrangement. None of these people have been contacted to date.
- During the past month on the track I had to convene a meeting of landowners to resolve a dispute over the wartime track to Imita Ridge; provide a pledge to provide medical supplies to the aid post at Kagi village; give an assurance that I would try to ensure the teacher at Menari can be paid in order for the school to be reopened; assist with school supplies at Alola and Abuari, etc, etc. Trek Operators should be able to refer these issues to management but this is not possible.
- Despite the fact that we now have highly paid Australian officials based in PNG there are no known plans to conduct workshops with landowners and clan leaders in Koiari or Orokaiva villages along the track.

Our neglect of the needs of the people who live along the track and our failure to establish an effective interim management authority in partnership with the PNG government does not reflect well on us. With the fraudulent misappropriation of trek fees and the lack of a proper management body the villagers along the track are now worse off than they were before we signed the Joint Agreement in April.

I know that some trek operators are now refusing to pay their trek fees because they have no faith in the current system. I share their concerns and will now seek to allocate our trek fees directly to projects that will deliver shared benefits to villagers along the track.

Any assistance you can provide to get qualified personnel with previous experience in PNG into an interim management body – even in an advisory capacity - as a matter of urgency - would be much appreciated.

Best regards,

Charlie

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## Letter to The Hon Peter Garrett MP of 8 May 2009



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8 May 2009

The Hon Peter Garrett MP  
Minister for Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

During the battle of Brigade Hill, the Regimental Medical Officer of the 2/16<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Major Steward, wrote in his diary:

*'Looking as dispassionately as possible at that man's throat, I hoped he couldn't sense the lump in mine. Emotion clouds calm clinical judgement but the hardest thing is not to flinch from the gaze of a man you know is going to die.'*

If I was to allow my emotions to dominate my opinion over the performance of the Australian contribution to the operation of the Kokoda Track Authority in PNG, frustrated expletives would be the order of the day.

One of the trekkers who died on the track last month would most probably be alive today if the Kokoda Track Authority had a proper operational Trek Permit system in place.

This has not happened and a young Australian mother is dead.

I have been advised that the KTA issued a trek permit to an operator who did not have anybody trained in remote area first aid; did not have an appropriate first-aid kit; did not have a satellite phone; did not have a VHF radio; did not submit a trek itinerary with their application; and did not have a reliable rear-link in Port Moresby for emergency purposes.

If this is the case then the KTA could be exposed to some legal liability for the young woman's death.

Yesterday's announcement that the track has been closed at Kovello has caused me to put pen to paper yet again because, like the young mother's death on the track, it was preventable if the KTA had effective

procedures in place for the practical operation of the track.

**The purpose of this letter is to outline the failings of the KTA from a trek operators' point of view and secondly to support the people of Kovello in their claims for a greater share of benefits from the Kokoda trekking industry.**

It seems the Australian Government is using a 'top down' approach from Canberra to Port Moresby as its modus operandi. Whilst there have obviously been a number of conferences, consultations, workshops and overseas visits there is no evidence of anything being filtered past the KTA office in Port Moresby. For example, after 12 months in-situ:

- There is no effective Trek Permit System
- There is no requirement for applicants to submit an appropriate medical certificate with their application for a trek permit;
- There is no requirement for applicants to submit a trek itinerary with their application for a trek permit;
- There is no list of accredited camp sites along the track;
- There is no campsite booking system;
- There is no requirement for trek operators to have remote area trained first aid personnel accompany each group;
- There is no requirement for trek operators to carry a recommended standardised medical kit with each group;
- There is no requirement for trek operators to have a VHF radio with each group;
- There is no requirement for trek operators to have satellite phone with each group;
- There is no requirement for trek operators to submit a list of emergency contact details for each trekker;
- There is no requirement for trek operators to submit the Travel Insurance Policy Number and Company for each trekker (essential for emergency evacuations in PNG);
- There is no understanding of the needs of trekkers who pay for the Kokoda experience;
- There is no understanding of the needs of villagers along the track;
- There has been no action taken in training villagers to value-add from the trekkers passing through their villages.
- Etc., etc., etc.

Most of the above issues were detailed in a Discussion Paper I submitted on 1 September 2007. I cannot recall a single outcome from this document that enhances trek operations or benefits villagers along the track. Needless to say, all the issues contained in the Discussion Paper remain relevant.

I am not sure who is responsible for practical decision making in regard to the effective operation of the Kokoda Trail – but whoever it is they are operating in a parallel universe and taking advice from the wrong people.

I am not sure how much money the Australian Government has invested in its assistance package towards the Kokoda Track Authority thus far but I do know that the outcomes on the track would generate a nil return.

I would hope that the rumour we have recently heard about a couple of 'consultants' being sent across the track to assess village needs '*before the end of the financial year*' is indeed just that - a rumour. If it has any



substance I would request that it be cancelled immediately and whoever approved it be removed from any further decision-making in regard to the Kokoda Trail.

This information already exists and can only be updated through the conduct of clan workshops in villages. Such workshops should be facilitated by people familiar with Melanesian culture and language and attended by credible trek operators who have established a degree of trust with the villagers over a long period of time. If the information is required *'before the end of the financial year'* a call to a couple of the credible Australian trek operators would provide it.

Kovello is not the only dispute on Kokoda. Last month landowners on Imita Ridge used a sorcerer to stop our scouts from proceeding along the original track because they want all trekkers to use their campsites. Our scouts bolted into the bush and lost one of our large cooking pots in their bid to escape his spell. This is difficult for us to understand but it is reality on the track!

We are working to resolve this issue and have hosted a meeting in Port Moresby, provided funds for campsite development and held meetings between our guides and landowners. The KTA should take a lead role in resolving these disputes but is currently dysfunctional in this regard.

I offer the following suggestions in assisting the KTA to fulfil its proper role in managing trekking operations along the Kokoda Trail:

- The fundamental building block of trek operations along the Kokoda Trail is the trekker. These people invest a substantial amount of time and money in the venture. All they want in return (in addition to a safe and informative military historical experience) is access to basic hygiene facilities along the track i.e. environmental toilets and appropriate ablution facilities at campsites. Thus far they have paid more than A\$2 million in trek and campsite fees and there is not a single environmental toilet for them to poop into.
- The next most important building block is the villager along the track. They own the land that is sacred to us and therefore need to receive shared benefits from the trekking industry. Thus far most of the money has been 'ambushed' or misappropriated in Port Moresby – the closure of the track at Kovello is a symptom of the angst that exists on the track today.
- To understand village needs the KTA has to be aware of the complex social/community relationships between clans, landowners, luluai's, sorcerers, pastors, teachers, local councillors and Provincial Government officials. This can only be achieved by having people with an understanding of Melanesian culture and language living in villages for periods of at least three months. In the interim, experienced trek operators could be used as a resource to collect information via their PNG guides and carriers who are the sons of the clan leaders, landowners, luluai's, sorcerers, pastors, teachers, local councillors and Provincial Government officials.
- The only way to draw out village needs is via the conduct of Koiari and Orokaiva clan workshops in appropriate villages in each province. These must be conducted by professional facilitators with experience in Melanesian culture.
- All plans for any development work along the Kokoda Trail should be put on hold until a critical review can be conducted with trek operators. Improvements to the track should be completed in partnership with relevant local landowners – once they have been identified.

- If the Australian government has any money to spend it should be allocated to improving the road between Depo and Owers Corner. This road is a disgrace. It is more dangerous than any section of the Kokoda Trail and Australian lives are at serious risk whenever rain falls on the road – which happens on most days of the year. The diversion of trek fees to fix this road, which is an Australian/PNG Government responsibility, is akin to misappropriation!
- Rogue Australian trek operators who have not paid their trek fees should not be issued with trek permits until their debt has been settled in full. It is immoral to expect subsistence villagers to indirectly subsidise their trek operations.

In addition to the above a Kokoda Trail Memorial Plan should be developed for the longer term. We should keep in mind that the military history of the Kokoda campaign is the reason the majority of Australian trekkers undertake the pilgrimage. There are many other challenging tracks in PNG for those who wish to have an environmental or other type of eco-trekking experience.

**I understand AusAID has already completed a survey of the Kokoda Trail. I would request that a copy be provided to all trek operators for review and comment before any action is taken on the report.**

As I said earlier, the Australian Government, via the Kokoda Track Authority, is currently operating in a parallel universe to trek operators and villagers on the track. There are people and organisations outside the Canberra clique who have the expertise and the desire to assist in a productive and meaningful way. It is time they were invited to tender for the job.

The KTA has just advised that a 'Track Analysis' will be undertaken shortly to determine the works program to repair the track to Australian Standards for class 4 walking trails (Newsletter No 1 – May 2009). I have attached a copy of this standard with my comments. **I am most concerned that this allows for a licensing system that limits campsites to four tents and trek groups to six trekkers!**

This standard poses a greater threat to the track than the recent proposal to operate a gold mine. It will effectively close down every Australian trek operator because it will be economically unviable for them to operate. It will also deny the Kokoda experience to Australians who wish to trek in the footsteps of the brave and learn more about our military history.

**I would like an assurance that plans for a Track Analysis 'to repair the track to Australian Standards for class 4 walking trails' will be scrapped. I plan to keep the ex-service community, all veterans' organisations and former trekkers apprised of the Governments agenda for Kokoda so would appreciate your clarification in this regard.**

Back to Kovello. The spokesman for the landowners is Ori Kennia. We have a very good relationship with him and with the people at Kovello. Ori's wife is Sister Margaret at the Kokoda Hospital and we have donated thousands of dollars of medical supplies to them over the past couple of years. We employ guides and carriers from Kovello village; we camp at the village; and we have donated large amounts of school supplies and musical instruments to their small school. Ori's statement in today's Cairns Post that the KTA '**need to realise this is PNG, not Australia**', should be heeded. Ori was a major positive contributor to workshops we conducted in Efogi, Port Moresby and Kokoda during 2004 – 2005. No action has been taken since then and his frustration has culminated in the closure of the track. I fully empathise with him and his people.

I am available to further discuss any of these issues in more detail at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlie Lynn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CHARLIE LYNN

Enc.

cc:

Jason Clare MP, Member for Blaxland

Scott Morrison MP, Member for Cook

H.E. Chris Moraitis, Australian High Commissioner to PNG

H.E. Charles Lepani, PNG High Commissioner to Australia

James Shelvin, First Assistant Secretary, Heritage Division, Dept of Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts

James Enage, Chairman of the Kokoda Track Authority

Rod Hillman, Chief Executive, the Kokoda Track Authority

Ted Rowley, PNG Department of Conservation

Warren Bartlett, former Chief Executive of the Kokoda Track Authority

## Australian Parks and Wildlife Services Walking Track Classification System

The Kokoda Track Authority operating with Australian assistance from the Heritage Division of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Arts has advised of the following plans for the Kokoda Trail in its Newsletter No 1 of May 2009:

### ***Track Analysis***

*A Track Analysis will be undertaken shortly to determine the works program required to repair the Track to Australian Standards for class 4 walking trails. This is a minimum standard and seeks to provide sustainable use for the Track. Once this report is complete it will be circulated.*

Following are the Australian Parks and Wildlife Services specifications for Class 4 walking tracks and my comments on each one.

Australian Trek Standard for Class 4 Walking Trails	Comment
<p><b>Overview</b> Opportunity for visitors with advanced outdoor knowledge to find their own way along often indistinct tracks in remote areas.</p> <p>Users can expect frequent opportunities for solitude with few encounters with others.</p>	<p>This opportunity exists for eco-enviro trekkers to use the Kapa Kapa track across the Owen Stanley Ranges to the east of the Kokoda Trail.</p> <p>Kokoda is not about '<i>solitude</i>' and '<i>few encounters</i>'. It is a military historical pilgrimage that should not be denied to Australians other than bushwalking purists.</p>
<p><b>Length</b> No minimum width. Maximum 0.5m.</p>	<p>Are we serious about instructing the landowners and villagers of Kokoda how wide their tracks can be?</p>
<p><b>Gradient</b></p> <p>Guidance for managers</p> <p>Gradient limited by environmental considerations only</p>	<p>?????????</p>
<p><b>Surfacing &amp; Drainage</b> Improved surfacing/drainage minimal – for environmental purposes only</p>	<p>Self evident along the track</p>
<p><b>Scrub Clearance</b> Minimal. As a general rule living woody vegetation will not be cut except where to ensure the track continues to be navigable</p>	<p>Self evident along the track</p>

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<p><b>Facilities</b></p> <p><b>Bridges and Water Crossings</b> Bridges or other constructed crossings generally not provided, except for essential environmental purposes.</p> <p>Where possible natural crossings are preferred.</p> <p>Flood delays acceptable and expected under normal conditions.</p>	<p>Agree</p>
<p><b>Track Markers</b></p> <p>T4 tracks may be marked but markers should be in a low key manner.</p> <p>Some tracks may be difficult to follow in places.</p> <p>No other facilities except where necessary for environmental purposes – eg ‘fan out’ signs.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>No doubt about that – that’s why we use PNG guides ?</p>
<p><b>Signage</b> Signage is limited and only for management purposes.</p>	<p>Agree</p>
<p><b>Campsites</b> Visibly impacted (long-term) sites for up to 4 tents.</p> <p>Toilets of minimal design to be provided only where necessary for environmental purposes.</p>	<p>The ‘green extreme’ agenda is starting to emerge here. Whilst we cannot stop customary landowners from providing for more than four tents ‘big brother’ can obviously restrict the number of trekkers through a licensing system.</p> <p>This is obviously why there is not a single environmental toilet along the track.</p>
<p><b>Maximum Usage</b> To be defined where required for social, environmental and management purposes.</p>	<p>Obviously to be decided according to the ‘extreme green’ agenda.</p>
<p><b>Recommended Maximum Party Size</b> Recommended max party size 6.</p> <p>Party size of four will be encouraged.</p> <p>Parties of up to 8 acceptable on some T4 tracks in the Central Plateau SRRZ, subject to environmental conditions.</p>	<p>This restriction makes it economically unviable for all trek operators apart from eco-enviro evangelists.</p>
<p><b>Publicity</b></p>	

<p>All publicity to be discouraged. Not to be included on maps except for internal management purposes.</p> <p>Authors will be encouraged to keep route descriptions vague (eg in accounts of past expeditions).</p> <p>Photographers and publishers will be encouraged not to identify the precise location of photographs taken in areas accessible only by T4 tracks.</p>	<p>Difficult to comment on without using a range of expletives!</p>
<p><b>Route Guides</b> Inclusion of T4 tracks in route guides will be strongly discouraged.</p>	<p>Does this mean a mass burning of Lonely Planet books and our own trek guides?</p>
<p><b>Guided Tours</b> Licences may be issued on condition that guided parties conform to the recommended party-size limit and to the guidelines relating to the publicity of tracks and destinations.</p>	<p>This is the sting in the tail – an instrument that will limit trekking operations to a few long-haired friends of Jesus and mung-bean advocates from the green movement!</p>

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