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## **Apus Peru Emergency Training & Safety Guide**

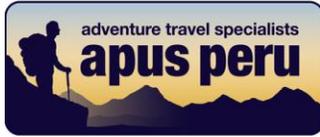
The Apus Peru Emergency Training and Safety Guide represents the standard of service expected of all field and office staff during normal operations. Below we outline the steps we have taken as a company to identify and evaluate risks, and the preventative and corrective measures we have in place to mitigate those risks.

### **GUIDES**

#### **How Apus Peru Selects Its Guides**

A guide's knowledge and ability is critical to the successful operations of tours. Before a new guide is even granted an interview with Apus Peru, they must fulfill the following criteria:

- Hold a *Carnet de Guía*, which is a license to guide treks and tours in the Cusco region or all of Peru. Obtaining this license involves either a three year academic program at an institute and a one year internship, or a five year program at a university. Courses for either of these programs include
    - History
    - Geology
    - First aid
    - Search & Rescue
    - Hospitality
    - Wilderness training
  - Be authorized with the Ministry of Culture to guide/enter the Inca Trail. This requires the following
    - To have your Carnet de Guía
    - Participate in annual training with SERNANP (Servicio Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas por el Estado), equivalent to a National Parks Service. These courses include first aid, environmental protection, protection of national heritage (Inca trail and Machu Picchu) amongst other topics.
  - Be affiliated with one of the following guide associations. Entry to these associations require letters of reference from employers.
    - Coltur
    - Agotur
    - Progatur
- Or be a registered freelance guide with DIRCETUR.
- Have the following language skills
    - Spanish
    - English (intermediate to high level)
    - Quechua (preferred, as we work with indigenous people as our trekking staff)
    - Other language (preferred intermediate to high level)



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Having fulfilled the above conditions, guides are comprehensively interviewed. Interviews cover the following topics:

- knowledge of routes
- evacuation procedures (role-play scenarios)
- English competence (conducted by a native English speaker)

Having the correct qualifications and passed the interview process, the guides are sent as an assistant guide with a large group and then as a guide with a small group.

### **Ongoing Evaluation**

- Guides are evaluated after each trip through client reports which are completed by each participant in Apus Peru treks and tours. Any negative feedback related to a guide or assistant guide's conduct is followed up on immediately.
- Guides have access to ongoing professional development provided by the authorities.
- In addition, Apus Peru carries out its own training program that includes themes like
  - Wilderness First Aid
  - Altitude Sickness and its treatment
  - Mountain Rescue
  - Map reading
  - Emergency Evacuation

(Note: due to guides often being in the field when courses are held, not all guides participate in all courses every year.)

## **TRANSPORTATION**

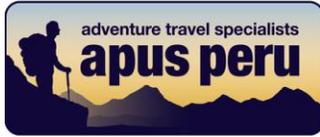
Apus Peru works with trusted transport contractors, many of which have worked as drivers exclusively for Apus Peru during many years.

### **Transport Risks**

- Speed
- Poor maintenance of vehicle
- Poor tires
- Driver error
- Drowsiness
- Inattention

### **Preventative Measures**

- Communication of Apus Peru's Driver Safety/Risk Prevention Policy
- Training for drivers regarding the risks of speeding
- Sufficient pay for drivers, to discourage speeding
- "Report my bad driving" sticker on back of car
- Regular vehicle maintenance
- Require maintenance records from fleet manager for contract drivers
- Communicate if repairs are required
- Change tires as soon as they lack tread and check air pressure regularly



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- Visually inspect all tires of contractors vehicles before each departure (Apus office staff and guides should be aware and collaborate on this item)
- Ensure that drivers are not requested to drive for exceptionally long periods. Apus Peru follows European Union standards of 5 days of 10 hours, 1 day of 12 hours and one day off a week.
- Drivers are taught to recognize signs of inattention / risk. If feeling tired or making mistakes they are trained to get out, walk around the car and exercise.
- Apus Peru follows a zero tolerance policy regarding the consumption of alcohol while on the job or in the hours preceding a departure.
- Drivers must begin a shift well rested, and are prohibited from using a cell phone or eating while driving.

## **HEALTH**

Although there are multiple potential risks involved with Andean trekking, the great majority can be avoided through careful planning and preventative action. Apus Peru guides and assistant guides are trained to make their clients aware of the following health and safety issues, to be aware of warning signs, and how to properly deal with any emergency situations that may occur.

### **General Illness - Risks**

- Altitude sickness (see below)
- Vomiting, nausea
- Traveller's diarrhea
- Blisters
- Falls; injured limbs.

### **Preventative Actions**

- Education to properly prepare client for the trip: avoid eating street food; make sure food is cooked thoroughly; wear proper, worn-in footwear, etc.

### **Corrective Actions**

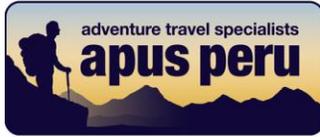
- Effective first aid treatment
- Use of emergency horse
- Evacuation if necessary

### **Altitude Sickness Risks**

- Client does not acclimatize sufficiently
- Client has particular susceptibility to altitude sickness
- Client has other sickness exacerbated by altitude
- Failure to identify, and treat altitude sickness with first aid procedures which can result in mild illness, hospitalization or death.

### **Preventative Actions**

- Client acclimatizes sufficiently – at least 2-3 days at altitude prior to starting a hike
- Clear communication about the need for sufficient acclimatization by sales staff to client
- Clear communication about the risk of insufficient acclimatization by sales staff to client, and that client assumes this risk.
- Guide will build trust in the client from the Pre-Trek Briefing, ensuring that the client feels comfortable to be honest with the guide about how they're feeling on the trek.



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### Corrective Actions

- Assessment of condition on Day 1 of trek is key. Watch for symptoms of fatigue (such as labored breathing), changes in the color of the skin or lips, etc.
- **If symptoms are minor:** client should rest, stay hydrated, drink coca tea, and eat light meals.
- While walking, the guide stays by client's side, ensuring that the client walks at a suitable pace and doesn't try to exert more than they should, encouraging them to take breaks, etc.
- **If symptoms are severe** (e.g., edema): client needs medical attention. Depending on where they are on the trek, the guide will turn back; take the nearest route out; or use the satellite phone to arrange an emergency evacuation. Evacuation costs are borne by the clients.

## **WET SEASON TREKKING**

The Andes experience an annual wet season which starts at the end of November, and typically ends in March, with the majority of the rain received in January and February. Depending on the weather patterns, several risks can arise.

### Wet Season Trekking - Risks

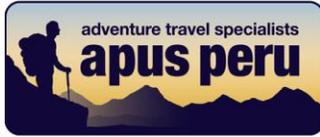
- Rivers and streams become swollen, and under normal conditions can make crossings difficult and dangerous when there are no bridges. In extreme circumstances, bridges are also threatened.
- High passes are snow covered, and visibility poor.
- Canyons have rockfalls due to the canyon sides being loosened or waterlogged from consistent rain. Even a trail as developed as the Classic Inca Trail has dangerous conditions, with a rockfall killing a guide in January 2010.
- Trails and paths are more slippery than usual, meaning that trekkers are more likely to slip or fall.
- Frequent landslides all through the Andes mean many roads are closed – sometimes for a day, sometimes for weeks.
- Even the rail tracks and access to Machu Picchu can be closed due to the effects of the rain.
- Sudden, unexpected snowfalls (especially risky during dry season).
- Electrical storms.

### Preventative Actions

- Remind clients that it is likely to rain, and that conditions will be wet and muddy!
- Advise client of increased risks involved with trekking during the wet season.
- Advise clients of unpredictability of the weather and difficulty in knowing exact conditions, given the remoteness of the areas where we trek. (Even if we check conditions a few days before departure, they can change again before departure.)
- Encourage client to book trekking routes most suited to wet season trekking, with fewest risks.
- Remind clients of our booking conditions, that we have the right to cancel or change a trek due to weather conditions, if we think that the route is unsafe due to the weather.

### Corrective actions

- Guides are constantly watching the surrounding mountains to assess changing conditions and predict potential issues before they happen.
- Change of route, in case of danger. This "Plan B" route should be explained to the client at the outset, even before any problems arise.
- Alternatively, the guide may try to shorten or lengthen a particular trekking day in order to avoid bad weather predicted on a certain part of the trail.



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- Guides go prepared – with picks, shovels and rope to be able to dig out of snow or face other weather-related issues.
- Muleteers may be sent ahead to scout the trail, or the guide will discuss with locals that they meet on the trail, to learn about potential problems and plan alternative routes, as necessary.
- Guides and field staff carry walkie-talkies to be able to communicate with each other about route conditions.
- If necessary, guides can use the satellite phone to arrange for emergency evacuation. Evacuation costs are borne by the clients.

## **GETTING LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS**

### **Risks**

There is a risk of clients wandering off and becoming lost in the mountains, especially when there is fog. If they are seriously lost, then they can suffer exposure, hypothermia, hunger and eventual death.

### **Preventative Actions**

- Explain to clients the importance of sticking together and the dangers of becoming lost in the mountains.
- With groups in excess of 8 passengers, there is a lead guide and an assistant guide.
- With smaller groups, clients are asked to hike together.
- In campsites, guides give orientations to stay on the paths.
- If a client wishes to leave the trail or campsite (e.g., to take photos), they must tell the guide, no matter what time of day or night.
- Guides and staff undergo practice drills to simulate situations of clients getting lost.

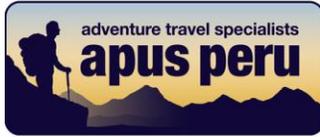
### **Corrective Actions**

- **If a client falls behind on the trail:** the guide may have the rest of the group continue on until a specific meeting point (e.g., “Walk for another hour and wait for me at X point”) while he waits for the person who has fallen behind to catch up.
- **If a client goes too far ahead of the rest of the group:** the guide will have the group wait at a specific meeting point while they go ahead to find the missing hiker.
- **If a client leaves the trail or takes a wrong path and becomes lost:** the guide will organize for the entire party to search until they are found. If they are not found within 3-4h, the group will go to the nearest campsite. With the rest of the group safe, the guide and some of the field staff will continue looking, and send word to any nearby locals to look for a lost hiker. If necessary, the guide will use the satellite phone to inform the office which can then call in the appropriate authorities.
- **If a client goes missing from the campsite:** the guide and some field staff will go searching until the client is found before proceeding with the day’s hike. The rest of the hiking itinerary will be adjusted as necessary (longer days or alternative routes) in order to make up for any delays caused by the search.

## **ASSAULT**

### **Risks**

- There is a risk that groups can be assaulted or robbed either violently or passively.
- Theft of items can also occur in campsites.



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### **Preventative Actions**

- It is likely that any theft or assault would be opportunistic.
- Clients receive adequate pre-trip information about storing shoes and valuables inside tents.

### **Corrective Actions**

- It is for the guide and field staff to take leadership.
- In the case of assault, to not provide struggle or provide resistance or reason for clients to be harmed.

## **EVACUATION POLICY**

The decision to evacuate is usually made by mutual decision between guides and client, in extreme circumstances. **Evacuation costs are the responsibility of the client.** For this reason, we strongly recommend that clients obtain comprehensive travel insurance prior to travel.

If the decision to evacuate is made, then the guide will take into consideration a number of different factors:

- Severity of illness/reason for evacuation
- Location and easiest evacuation point
- Access to telephone or communication method
- Remainder of passengers in group
- Depending on the best course of action the evacuated clients are likely to be accompanied to an exit point by a muleteer or cook. These staff are likely to be non-English speaking, but are trained in first aid and more importantly, familiar with the mountains.
- A vehicle will be sent to the evacuation point, but depending on the location, clients may need to wait for a period until the arrival of the car.
- In serious cases, the most efficient manner may be for clients to take local transport.

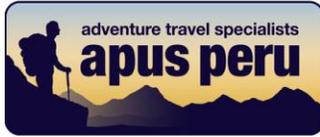
## **OFFICE SAFETY STANDARDS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Fire Prevention**

- No smoking inside the office.
- Space heaters to be kept at least three feet from other objects when in use.
- Chimneys and stoves are inspected yearly.
- Frayed cords on electrical equipment are replaced immediately.
- All outlets must have covers and no frayed or exposed wiring.
- Fire detectors are checked regularly for proper functioning and battery strength.

### **In Case of Fire**

- Immediate call emergency services: Fire Department - 116
- Calmly advise anyone in the office where the fire is, and what the route of evacuation is.
- Do not attempt to get too close to the burning area, and advise clients of the same.
- If your clothes catch on fire: stop, drop to the ground and roll until the fire is extinguished.
- Office Personnel will use the office fire extinguisher to control or put out the fire.
- If possible, disconnect the electrical circuits.
- Get as far away from the fire and surrounding area.
- If the fire is in the kitchen, disconnect gas and electricity.



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- When firemen arrive, give them all information about the fire you are aware of. Include the presence and location of any people that need to be rescued.
- Once you are out of the building, stay out.

#### **ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

- Police Emergency Hotline: 105
- Clínica Peruana Suiza: 237009
- Tourism Police: 249659