



## Mt Ruapehu Safety Management Checklist for Schools and Groups

Use this checklist to ensure you get the most out of your visit to Mt Ruapehu this winter with your school/group.

Prior to arriving:

- ☐ Carry out risk assessment (RAL has supplied a generic one which can be utilised by schools and groups as a start point, you will need to add to this for your school).
- ☐ We suggest doing this as a team (don't plan alone)
- ☐ Consider using the MOE resources for EOTC trips: <http://eotc.tki.org.nz/EOTC-home/EOTC-Guidelines/Tool-Kit>
- ☐ RAL Safety Management System is available here: <https://sway.com/H4ltmqWi8mm5MfO1>
- ☐ Check student to adult ratios as per your Schools Safety Policy: RAL recommends Ratio 1:5 for primary/intermediate and 1:8 for secondary schools

Prepare the kids by reviewing safety material on internet:

- ☐ Watch snow code (international) video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erqQkSgfJ3U>
- ☐ Link to RAL's Snow Code of Conduct: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14oujfRj3KmcvJiL-A-WOSeK6d91QiZL9/view?usp=sharing>
- ☐ Go over mountain Signage here: [Appendix 1](#) (bottom of this document)
- ☐ Get familiar with the trail maps for Whakapapa and Turoa here: <https://www.mtruapehu.com/winter/trail-maps/>
- ☐ Watch the Volcanic Hazards video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B832VwO0UWE>

Prepare your drivers by:

- ☐ Read our winter driving tips here: [Appendix 1](#) (bottom of this document)
- ☐ Confirm what pre-start vehicle checks your school requires.
- ☐ Confirm licences and registrations of drivers and vehicles



#### Preparing for the alpine environment:

- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Eye wear - sunglasses and goggles
- ☐ Gloves and or mittens
- ☐ Thermal layers top and bottom - polypro or wool is best (avoid cotton!)
- ☐ Socks (again, polypro or wool is best - these need to be smooth ideally for comfort)
- ☐ Footwear - waterproof/resistant - tramping boots or gumboots are good for getting from car parks/shuttles to rentals

#### On the day:

- ☐ Check conditions here: <https://www.mtruapehu.com/winter/snow-reports/>
- ☐ Check weather forecast here: <http://www.metservice.com/skifields/whakapapa> or <http://www.metservice.com/skifields/turoa>
- ☐ Make a meeting point for anyone who gets lost and arrange for times to meet at.
- ☐ Confirm your supervisors / adult helpers all know how to get hold of each other and ski patrol for any injuries that might occur.

Qualified Instructors: All of our Snowsports Instructors hold a NZSIA/SBINZ Level 1 qualification or higher (or international equivalent).

#### In the event of an injury to one of your group:

- ☐ Send someone to the bottom of the nearest lift to ask for ski patrol assistance
- ☐ When the ski patrol arrive, they will assess the injury and may transport the person to the Urgent Care Clinics at the base of the ski area.
- ☐ Make sure you leave someone in charge of the rest of the group.
- ☐ In order to treat any minor (under 16 years old), we need consent of guardian (parent or written approval for a teacher or caregiver). **We will need someone (adult) to come to the urgent care clinic with them at this time.**
- ☐ There are charges associated with visiting the Urgent Care Clinics.
- ☐ The patient will then be seen by appropriate medical professional and either discharged at that time or referred for further assessment at a hospital. This may be by private car, ambulance or helicopter depending on the nature of the injury.

#### After your visit:

○ Feedback Link –

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DKa52SmVoES4t25T4effqY04ismhYGIKkF4VAI7VYWBURe9QVDU5RUJVODBLs1FVTkRLTk4xTzFJSi4u>



Risk Assessment Template – use this as a guide and add to it if need be.

Hazard/Task	Location or Hazardous Activity	Risk Pre-controls	Expert Assistance	Controls	Risk Post Controls	Review and Audit
(Injury Type)			(Internal or External)			(who/when)
				Eliminate or Minimise		
<b>Driving to/from ski area</b>	Various			Appropriate vehicles / speed / safety checks / seat belts / vehicle familiarity / distraction management / drive to the conditions / Licensed Drivers / consider use of shuttle from National Park or Ohakune		School / RAL annually
<b>Vehicle / pedestrian accident</b>	Walking from carparks etc			Students are actively supervised during play times, gate and fences.		School / RAL annually
<b>Chairlift / lift related incidents</b>	Lift Stations (top and bottom)		RAL	Lift familiarisation / take lessons / group management / back packs on the front / obey signage / safety of loose items / bar down		RAL annually
<b>Falling on Ice</b>	Carparks, various		RAL	Be aware of alpine conditions, suitable footwear, use drop off zones.		RAL annually
<b>UV Exposure</b>	All Mountain Locations			Sunscreen / education / protective eye wear /		School
<b>Volcanic Eruption</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL	Watch 'Staying Safe' video on lahar safety prior to arriving, brief groups on action plan - get to high ground if you hear alarm.		DOC, RAL - annually
<b>Lost Children/students</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol, Police	Group management / uniforms / communication / kids briefing / meeting point / call ski patrol for assistance		School
<b>Abduction/ Child protection risks</b>	All Mountain Locations		Police, MOE	Ensure appropriate supervision is in place at all times when students are on site (hours of school), School Vulnerable Children's Act Policy and Procedure, RAL Ski and Ride School Staff are police vetted annually		School / RAL annually
<b>Skiing/Snowboarding/sliding injury</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	RAL Safety Services Teams (Ski Patrol) on duty at all times when ski area is operational		RAL - weekly audits



<b>Ski Area Boundaries</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Obey all signage - review trail maps with group before you arrive.		RAL - daily trail checks
<b>Poor visibility</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Group Management / Terrain familiarisation & choices / Obey all Signage / Stay in open terrain and on marked trails		RAL - weekly audits
<b>Cliffs and other terrain Hazards</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Group Management / Terrain familiarisation & choices / Obey all Signage / Stay in open terrain and on marked trails		RAL - weekly audits
<b>Flat Light</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Group Management / Terrain familiarisation & choices / Obey all Signage / Stay in open terrain and on marked trails		RAL - weekly audits
<b>Avalanche</b>	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Stay in the boundary and open terrain / signage / familiar with the RAL systems / RAL communication		RAL - weekly audits



## Appendix 1 - Mt Ruapehu Safety Information

### ROAD SAFETY

Conditions on the mountain can change rapidly and without warning, affecting visibility and traction on the roads. All of the variables that we deal with on the road normally are amplified in the alpine regions and in order to have a safe, enjoyable ski or snowboard trip to Mt Ruapehu we recommend the following:



- ☐ Plan your trip: Take a little time to check on current road conditions before you leave. Ensure that your vehicle is in good working order and that you have good wiper blades, antifreeze in your radiator, tyre tread and brakes.
- ☐ Extra Gear: Always carry extra clothing, food and water. In the event you are held up for some reason you will be glad to be able to stay warm and hydrated. Carry an ice scraper or something that can function as one – a day in the parking lot at 1600m can deposit amazing amounts of snow and ice on your windows.
- ☐ Obey Road Signs: These are here for your safety, if the road is closed it is for good reason and will be open again as soon as it can be made safe.



- ☐ **Slow Down:** This is driven into our heads day in and day out on TV. When it comes to winter driving, speed will be the difference between staying on the road and not. Slow Down. Avoid sudden movements, accelerate and brake smoothly and gently – before you really need to.
- ☐ **4WD's:** Just because your vehicle is 4WD doesn't mean that it's any better at coming down the hill. Be very conservative on the way down at the end of the day, mistakes are not often forgiven in poor winter conditions. Use the engine to brake smoothly and constantly.
- ☐ **Chains:** Occasionally, all vehicles (4WDs included) will be required to fit chains in order to drive on the mountain roads. Ruapehu Alpine Lifts does not offer chain hire at either ski area, however there is a paid snow shuttles service from Ohakune to Turoa Ski Area & National Park to the top of the Bruce Road. Please do not hesitate to contact customer services on 07 892 4000 for more information.
- ☐ 24-hour breakdown services - AA 0800 224 357
- ☐ 24-hour road conditions hotline - AA Highway Reports, 090033 222 (calls cost \$1.00 / min)
- ☐ Or AA Roadwatch site: <https://www.aa.co.nz/travel/roadwatch/>



## MOUNTAIN SIGNAGE

Our goal is to stop as many 'preventable' accidents as we possibly can here at Mt Ruapehu and part of our hazard management strategy includes the use of various safety signs to convey messages to you, our customers.

We have included some of the most common signs you will see while visiting the ski area, we recommend that you become familiar with what they look like and what they mean. It is also a great idea to talk to any children that you are bringing to the snow about these basic signs to ensure they also know what they mean.

### Trail Difficulty Indicator



Green Circle: Signifies easiest terrain more suitable for beginner skiers and boarders.



Blue Square: Signifies more difficult terrain more suitable for intermediate skiers and boarders



Black Diamond: Signifies very difficult terrain which is more suitable for advanced skiers and Boarders. Beyond this sign are unmarked obstacles such as rocks, cliffs, fracture lines and Hazardous surface conditions ride within your ability and stay in control so you can avoid obstacles. You are now taking the terrain on its own terms.



### EXPERT

Double Black Diamond: Signifies the most difficult terrain which is only suitable for expert skiers and boarders. Beyond this sign are unmarked obstacles such as rocks, cliffs, fracture lines and Hazardous surface conditions ride within your ability and stay in control so you can avoid obstacles. You are now taking the terrain on its own terms.



**Ski Area Boundary:** Signifies the edge of the ski area and the services of Safety Services. This means that if you travel past these signs, no hazard marking or other risk management system exists. We recommend that schools stay within the ski area boundary at all times unless with a qualified guide.



**Danger Cliff:** Signifies that a cliff or drop is in the immediate vicinity. Do not proceed beyond these signs.





K1

**Keep Out Hazardous Area:** These are used to mark potential hazards such as waterfall holes and or operational risks where customers are not permitted.



**CLOSED:** There are a number of reasons why we need to close parts of the ski areas and this is the sort of sign that you will see.



**Caution ICE:** This sign warns you that the the snow surface ahead is very icy. Slow down and or avoid this area.



**Caution ROCKS:** This sign denotes potential for rocks as a hazard these may become hazardous if caution is not used beyond the sign.



**Caution Trails Merge:** This sign denotes that trails merge somewhere in the area of the sign. These will usually be placed uphill of the merge location.



**Caution Marginal Conditions:** This sign denotes that the area beyond has marginal access or conditions are not great for skiing or riding.



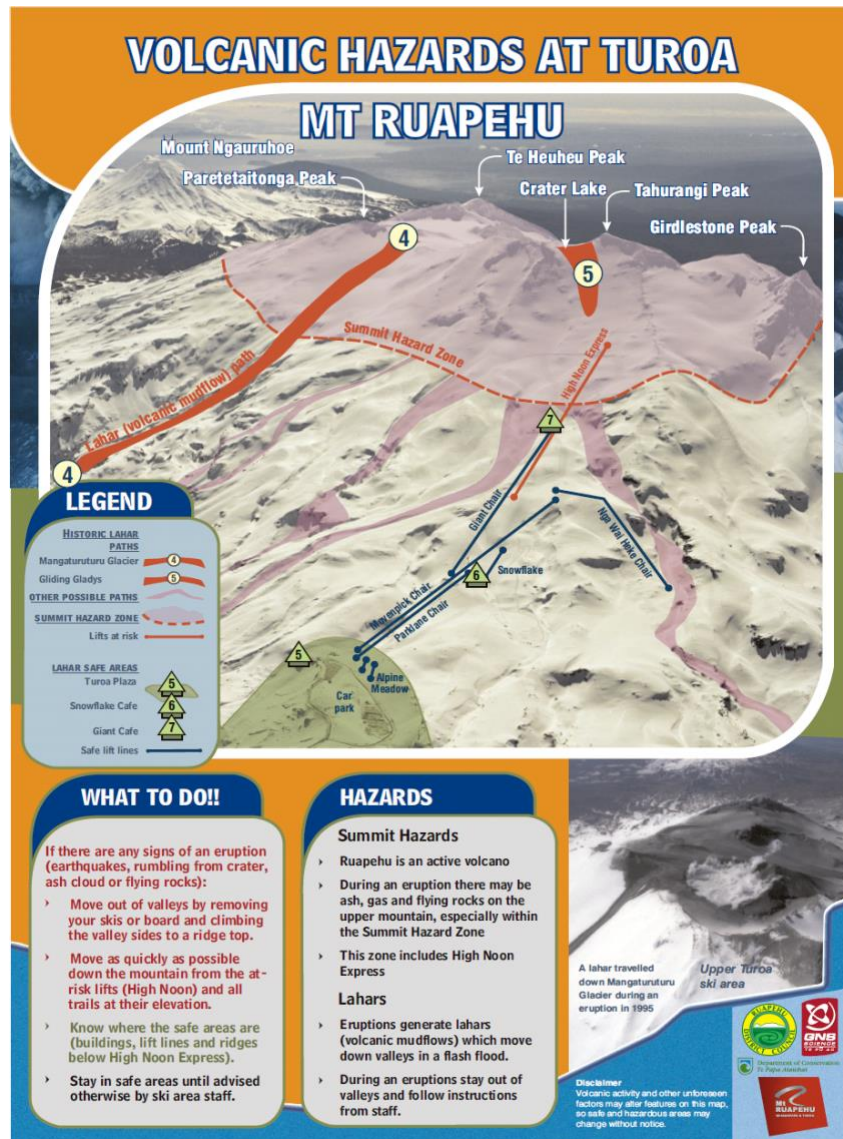
**Advanced Ability Only:** This sign denotes that this lift requires a certain ability level of the snow user.. It is generally used to notify Skiers/Boarders before they access the lift.



**SLOW:** These signs are used to inform all customers and staff that the area they are in is a SLOW ZONE. This means that everyone (even advanced skiers and riders) needs to travel at a slower speed than normal. These areas are policed by Safety Services and failure to adhere to the requirements will result in loss of pass privileges.



## Volcanic Hazards







## OPERATING CONDITIONS

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

The conditions on Mt Ruapehu can change from one extreme to another quite rapidly; reporting on the conditions is aimed to be a representation of the conditions at the time of print. Our main consideration when making operational decisions regarding the weather is the safety of our customers and staff. Each day decisions are made at critical points on the mountain and lifts on each of the ski areas by trained staff, for whom your safety and the safety of staff is of the utmost importance.

### WIND CONDITIONS

With regard to wind conditions there are many different factors - direction, speed, pressure and oscillations - that will affect the Ski Area's ability to operate different lifts. There are also the comfortable levels to which a chair will be run, revolving around such things as forecast trends, wind chill and temperature.

At Whakapapa ski area most of the lifts run in a North to South direction. This means a straight Southerly will blow directly down the line of most lifts, which is good because it means we can run them in stronger winds. A straight Westerly will blow directly across the lift lines, which means we would need to close the lifts or reduce speed. These speeds are only guides, with wind gusts and lull periods also being taken into consideration to determine operational speeds on a daily basis.

At Turoa, the lift lines run predominantly from the Southwesterly quarter. A forecast for Southwesterly winds at Turoa generally produces very little wind. We are affected far greater by wind from the Northwest through to the Southeast and can operate as a general guide in speeds of up to 55km/h. There are many gullies that funnel the wind, increasing its strength at certain points of different chair lifts. For example, a Northwesterly wind may read 55km/h at the top of the Movenpick Chair, but readings of up to 75km/h or more are not uncommon further down the lift line.