



Mt Ruapehu Safety Management Checklist for NIPS

Use this checklist to ensure you and your students are familiar with the safety items you will need to know about during your visit.

Prior to arriving please review this relevant safety material:

- ☐ Familiarise yourself with relative risks - RAL has supplied a generic risk assessment which can be utilised to share with student & other event personnel, we encourage you to add to this and carry out any further risk assessments as a team.
- ☐ Watch the Snow Code (international) video here: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Link to RAL's Snow Code of Conduct: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Go over mountain **Signage** here: with a video [LINK HERE](#) and/or see [Appendix 1](#) (bottom of this document)
- ☐ Get familiar with the trail maps for Whakapapa: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Watch the Volcanic Hazards video here: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the NIPS website: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Ensure everyone in the group is familiar with the NIPS Rule Book: [LINK HERE](#)

Prepare your drivers:

- ☐ Read our winter driving tips here: [Appendix 1](#) (bottom of this document)

Prepare for the alpine environment:

- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Waterproof outer layers
- ☐ 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 shoes with decent tread the car parks and surrounding areas can be slippery.

The day before:

- ☐ Volunteers Team Captains/Course Assistants attend pre-event meetings
- ☐ Complete ski equipment checks for racers



On the day:

- ☐ Check conditions here: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Check weather forecast here: [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Check NIPS Facebook for Updates in the morning and throughout the day – [LINK HERE](#)
- ☐ Meet with RAL Event Representative for the daily volunteer event brief
- ☐ Respect and follow relevant RAL rules – Smokefree Ski Area, RAL Snow Code of Conduct, Ski & Ride Helmet worn by volunteers & all competitors
- ☐ If you have any rubbish or recycling place it in the appropriately label bins stationed around the mountain. Make sure that it is always secured in so that it cannot be blown away if there is any wind.

In the event of an injury to one of your group: **Follow the Racer down process (NIPS RULE BOOK)** and understand:

- ☐ If Ski Patrol is required, 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 your group.
- ☐ In order to treat any minor (under 16 years old), we need consent from a guardian (parent or written approval for a teacher or caregiver).
We will need someone (an 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 to a Hospital for further assessment. This may be by private car, ambulance or helicopter depending on the nature of the injury.



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

Hazard/Task - (Injury Type)	Location or Hazardous Activity	Risk Pre-controls	Expert Assistance - (Internal or External)	Controls Eliminate or Minimise	Risk Post Controls
Driving to/from Ski Area	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	
Vehicle / Pedestrian Accident	Walking from carparks etc			Follow identified pedestrian paths, suitable footwear, obey signage	
Chairlift / Lift Related Incidents	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	
Falling on Ice	Carparks, various		RAL	Be aware of alpine conditions, suitable footwear, use drop off zones.	
UV Exposure	All Mountain Locations			Sunscreen / education / protective eye wear	
Volcanic Eruption	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.	
Lost Children/Students	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol, Police	Group management / uniforms / communication / kids briefing / meeting point / call Ski Patrol for assistance	
Skiing/Snowboarding/Sledding Injury	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Obey Mt Ruapehu Snow Code, Helmets worn by all competitors, RAL Safety Services Teams (Ski Patrol) on duty at all times when ski area is operational	
Ski Area Boundaries	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Obey all signage - review trail maps with group before you arrive.	
Poor Visibility	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Group Management / Terrain familiarisation & choices / Obey all Signage / Stay in open terrain and on marked trails	
Cliffs and Other Terrain Hazards	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Group Management / Terrain familiarisation & choices / Obey all Signage / Stay in open terrain and on marked trails	
Flat Light	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Group Management / Terrain familiarisation & choices / Obey all Signage / Stay in open terrain and on marked trails/ Suitable low light lenses in goggles	
Avalanche	All Mountain Locations		RAL Ski Patrol	Stay in the boundary and open terrain / signage / familiar with the RAL systems / RAL communication	
Competitors collisions	Racecourse		RAL Ski Patrol	Follow NIPS Rule book guidelines/ course familiarisation	
Bystander collisions	Racecourse		RAL Ski Patrol	Follow RAL Guidance & Course Assistance/ Group Management/ Bystanders to remain off course / perimeter fencing in place	



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 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 (low gears).
- ☐ 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 shuttle service from National Park to the top of the Bruce Road (Whakapapa). 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 Road watch site: [LINK HERE](#)

Snow Shuttle services run daily from Whakapapa Village and National Park to Whakapapa Ski Area. We highly recommend you use this service if you're not confident driving in alpine conditions.

- ☐ Whakapapa Shuttle: [LINK HERE](#)

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:



Beginner

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

Intermediate

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

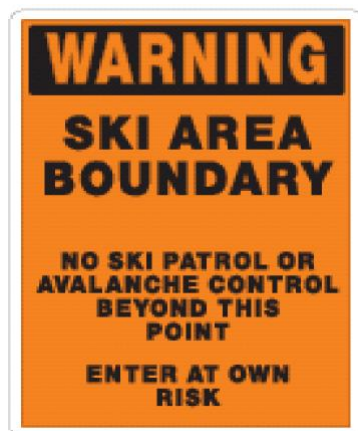
Advanced

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, Avalanche control or other risk management system exist.** We recommend that schools stay within the ski area boundary during your visit. Areas outside the ski area boundary require knowledge of snow safety and of backcountry gear.



Danger Cliff: Signifies that a dangerous cliff or drop is in the immediate vicinity.

Keep Out Hazardous Area: You **MUST NOT** enter these areas. These signs are used to mark potential hazards such as waterfall holes and or operational risks where customers are not permitted.



K1



CLOSED: You **MUST NOT** enter a closed area. There are several reasons why we need to close parts of the ski area, going into these areas is **not acceptable**, you may lose your pass or be referred to the NZ police. Talk to Ski patrol if you have a question about a closed area.



Caution Trails Merge: This sign indicates 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**. Conditions may be icy, have exposed rocks or have limited access back to ski area.

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 the same speed they would go as if they were jogging. These areas are policed by Safety Services and failure to adhere to the requirements can result in loss of pass privilege





CHAIRLIFT SAFETY: Children **less than 135CM** tall **must be accompanied by an Adult** when riding the chairlifts. Please review the below signs for safe and enjoyable riding experience

CHAIRLIFT SAFETY

Follow these simple steps to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone

TO RIDE THE CHAIRLIFT YOU MUST BE PHYSICALLY FIT AND IN GOOD HEALTH

01 BOARD SAFELY
The chairlift does not slow or stop for boarding. If you require assistance, please ask a member of staff. Stand on the red **WAIT HERE** board and wait for the next chair. Take a seat, **lower the safety bar** and enjoy the ride.

135CM HEIGHT REQUIREMENT
Children less than 135cm must be accompanied by an adult.

02 ON BOARD THE LIFT
Please remain seated at all times with the safety bar down.

03 DISEMBARK SAFELY
The chairlift does not stop or slow down to disembark. **Raise the safety bar when instructed.** Only get off the chair once you are at the unload point in the station. Please **move away from the unload zone** as soon as you can.

WHAKAPAPA



Volcanic Hazards Signage:



HAZARDS

Ruapehu is an active volcano.

Eruptions generate lahars (volcanic mudflows).

Lahars flow **down valleys** in a flash flood.

During an eruption, **gas** and **flying rocks** may occur within the **summit hazard zone**.

A lahar in 1995 narrowly missed the bottom of the Far West T Bar.



IF YOU ARE:

IN A BUILDING/CAR PARK

> **Stay put** and await further instructions.



IN A VALLEY

> **Move out** of the valley to a ridge top.



IN THE SUMMIT ZONE

> Move **down** the mountain following ridges.



WARNING SYSTEM

An Eruption Detection System (EDS) is operating in the ski area. The system will set off sirens and loudspeaker messages.

Disclaimer

This map covers expected events. Volcanic activity and other unforeseen factors may alter features on this map, so safe and hazardous areas may change without notice.

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Ataurua





OPERATING CONDITIONS

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

Regarding 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 daily.