

## Risk Management for Schools, Groups and Interschools Snow Sports Championships

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## **1 Introduction**

Mt Buller is the most accessible major alpine resort in Australia, an easy and scenic three hour drive from Melbourne. When you arrive, you'll be greeted by a beautifully-situated alpine village that offers so much to do on and off the snow.

On the slopes, Mt Buller has Victoria's largest lift network (with 22 lifts), and more than 300 hectares of patrolled ski area and over 80km of ski runs. The mountain has a great mix of terrain for all skiers and boarders, from beginner to expert.

Our average annual snow depth of more than 1.3m and our state-of-the-art snowmaking infrastructure (216 snowmaking guns) is backed by the reassurance of our Snow Guarantee, which means your school or group, can book your snow trip with confidence.

Our ski & snowboard school is Victoria's largest, with over 300 friendly, professional ski & snowboard instructors. We're also home to Australia's major Interschool's Snow Sports Championships every winter.

On top of all that, we have the most competitive kids pricing in Australia and generous group packages.

## **2 Risk management and commitment to safety**

The Alpine regions of Australia provide fun activities such as skiing, snowboarding and hiking for people of all ages. Of course, there are a number of inherent risks in all of these activities but we always do our best to make sure that you and your group are safe at all times. This is a two-way street and we always make sure that our guests are aware and understand what these risks are and how to best do them safely.

As an organization we continually work on identifying potential risks that could have a detrimental impact on safety. To this end, risk management is vitally important to ensure the effective delivery of our leisure and tourism services and for the safety and well-being of our staff, guests, the broader community and our stakeholders. Fortunately, serious accidents are very rare and we have an excellent ski patrol and first aid teams who are always available to respond to any emergency.

Our risk management methodology is provided in Appendix 2.

## **3 Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)**

We enforce the requirements of the Working With Children Act 2005 (Vic) across our organisation and events. During the ski season we operate the Buller Kids Centre catering for up to 175 children from the ages of three months to six years. The Centre incorporates the popular 3-6 Bunyips Ski Program and our full accredited Crèche for 3months to 3 year olds.

## **4 Safety, first aid and medical treatment**

### **4.1 Ski Patrol, first aid, rescue services and emergency communications**

At Mt Buller we have our own highly trained and fully equipped Ski Patrol team who are available to assist in the rescue and first aid treatment of skiers and boarders throughout the mountain and maintain emergency communications via radio. Our team are on constant patrol and are easily recognisable by their red jackets with the white cross.

## 4.2 Emergency evacuations and medical treatment

We are able provide communications to emergency services to effect time critical emergency evacuations including air ambulance. We recommend that all participants have their own ambulance cover (including air ambulance). Both Victoria Police and the Country Fire Authority have permanent bases on Mt Buller and are staffed at peak periods.

## 4.3 Mt Buller Medical Centre

The Mt Buller Medical Centre has everything you need in case of an injury or illness and also has a limited pharmacy capability. It is located at 196 Summit Road, Mt Buller, phone 03 5777 6185 or call 000 for an emergency.

## 4.4 Snow surface hazard strategies

During the late and early hours Mt Buller's grooming team is hard at work on the slopes, flattening the lumps and bumps created on the runs during the day and turning them into a smooth, corduroy finish. Every night, our fleet of grooming machines travel up and down the slopes, moving and flattening the snow to create a uniform finish to produce the best possible skiing conditions.

Mountain Operations and our Ski Patrol complement the great work of the groomers by patrolling and identifying hazards on the ski runs. We provide "slow zones" in some areas to ensure that beginner guests can ski more safely. While we make our best endeavours to find all obstacles, it is important for all skiers and boarders to keep a close lookout and ski at safe speeds as snow conditions can change throughout the day.

## 5 Rental equipment standards

We ensure that all of our rental equipment hired through our six outlets is checked prior to the start of the snow season and periodically throughout the season. All of our Buller Sports Rental outlets comply with international DIN standard.

## 6 Ski & snowboarding lessons

We strongly recommend that **ANYONE** who has never skied or snowboarded before have a lesson before attempting to "take to the slopes". Skiing or snowboarding is fun, challenging and rewarding but the quickest way to increase your confidence and enjoyment on the slopes is to allow our ski and snowboard professionals to show you and your group some quick tips or expert opinions on improving technique.

Whether you are a first-time skier or boarder or a long-time enthusiast, the Mt Buller Ski & Snowboard School has a lesson program to help you achieve your aims.

Our ski and snowboard professionals come from more than a dozen countries around the world, and they all share the same commitment to help you improve your skills and to make the most of your time on the slopes.

All of our instructors are either APSI (Australian Professional Snowsports Instructors) qualified or a recognised equivalent in their home country. Our Ski and Snowboard School continually offers ongoing professional development training for all instructors during each winter season.

## 7 Helmets

Helmets are compulsory for all children participating in Ski & Snowboard School lessons, seasonal programs or any snow racing. Children not wearing an accredited helmet will not be able to participate in skiing or snowboarding lessons, race training or coaching.

Accredited helmets are included with all ski or snowboard rental packages from any Buller Sports outlet for children through to Year 12.

All ski and snowboard instructors, race coaches and other seasonal program partner instructors are required to wear an accredited helmet while on snow and providing instruction.

## **8 Recommended clothing**

It is important that all participants in snow sports or visiting the Alpine regions are dressed for the conditions that they may potentially encounter. Alpine weather can be unpredictable and can change quickly. Appropriate clothing will not only increase the enjoyment of the participant but will reduce the likelihood of hypothermia.

We suggest that each individual have the following when outdoors:

- Ski pants, waterproof jacket with a hood
- Waterproof over-pants
- Warm woollen socks
- Water proof shoes
- Woollen or synthetic trousers (not jeans)
- Warm underclothing
- Warm shirt (woollen or thermal)
- Woollen jumper or polar fleece top
- Warm woollen beanie, balaclava and/or neck warmer
- Mittens or ski gloves
- Sun hat and SPF+30 sunscreen
- Change of clothing (particularly socks, shoes and trousers)

## **9 Racing and Events and Interschools Snow Sports Championships**

Mt Buller has a long history of hosting various racing and events dating back to Victorian Interschools Snowsports Championships in 1958.

### **9.1 Event Safety and Incident Reporting**

Event safety is managed by Buller Ski Lifts and we hold appropriate insurances for public liability and snow racing. It remains paramount to BSL that all race courses are safe for all competitors. All courses are set by BSL and the race and events department and are designed to minimize risks to competitors.

In the event of an accident involving a competitor, the Chief of Course or an adult witness of the incident, must submit an incident report to BSL who have designed a form for this purpose. Any incident which involves assistance from the Ski Patrol will be documented by them as a matter of course. These records shall remain kept and archived for future reference by the Ski Patrol.

### **9.2 Code of Conduct for Interschools**

Interschool sports at Mt Buller are conducted under the **Victorian Interschools Events and Programs Code of Conduct** which available in full on our website.

This code outlines the expected conduct of competitors, parents, school snow sports coordinators and teachers, coaches, administrators, officials, team managers, spectators and media.

## 10 Alpine Responsibility Code

# YOUR ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE

There are inherent risks in all snow recreational activities. Common sense, staying in control and personal awareness can reduce these risks. Risks include rapid changes in weather, visibility and surface conditions, as well as natural and artificial hazards such as rocks, trees, stumps, vehicles, lift towers, snow fences and snowmaking equipment. Observe the code and ski and ride with courtesy to others.

1. Stay in control and avoid other people and hazards.
2. Use appropriate protective equipment, especially helmets, to minimise the risk of injury.
3. You must have the ability to use each lift safely. If in doubt ask the lift attendant.
4. Obey all signs and warnings, and keep off closed trails and areas.
5. It is your responsibility to avoid and give way to people below and beside you.
6. Do not stop where you are not visible from above or where you obstruct a trail.
7. Before starting downhill, or merging into a trail, look uphill and give way to others.
8. Use care to prevent runaway snowboards.
9. If you are involved in or see an accident, alert and identify yourself to Resort Staff.
10. Be aware that it is dangerous to ski, board or ride lifts if your ability is impaired by drugs or alcohol.

**KNOW THE CODE.  
IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

**Failure to observe the code may result in cancellation  
of your ticket or pass by Resort Staff.**



## Appendix 1 – Mt Buller Schools & Groups Risk Assessments and Controls

Activity and/or area	Hazards	Safety controls in place
<p><b>People:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructors</li> <li>• Hospitality staff</li> <li>• Ski patrol staff</li> <li>• Groomers</li> <li>• Snowmaking staff</li> <li>• Lift operators</li> <li>• Mechanics and technicians</li> <li>• Management</li> <li>• All other personnel</li> </ul> <p>Children and young adults</p>	<p>Not competent to complete the task required: eg instruction, teaching, repair, safe practices</p> <p>Young persons exposed to alcohol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff are trained and competent to perform their duties.</li> <li>• All instructors have completed the APSI course or their home country’s equivalent.</li> <li>• We provide competent managers and supervisors to monitor work performance.</li> <li>• All plant and equipment is operated as per the manufacturer’s specifications.</li> <li>• We ensure that our safety practices comply with the OHS Act 2004, OHS Regulations 2007 and all relevant Codes of Practice (both state and commonwealth).</li> <li>• Duties and activities, where appropriate, are completed as per written policies and procedures which have been developed using accepted risk management principles (ISO 31000).</li> <li>• All of our staff are subject to the BSL Code of Conduct.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are only allowed in areas that serve alcohol when accompanied by a parent, teacher or guardian and only until 10 pm.</li> <li>• All of our venues promote and abide by Victorian Responsible Serving of Alcohol Laws and photo ID is required at all times</li> </ul>
<p><b>Insurance cover</b></p>	<p>Inadequate liability insurance</p>	<p>We carry the appropriate level of public liability insurance at all times and a copy of a Certificate of Currency is available on request.</p>
<p><b>Environmental management</b></p>	<p>Poor treatment of the alpine environment leading to loss of habitat, soil erosion, pollution, etc</p>	<p>Mt Buller not only has a comprehensive environmental management plan but our systems have been certified by a third party to the international standard (ISO 14001). We are very proud of our environmental management program and our policy is available on line.</p>

Activity and/or area	Hazards	Safety controls in place
<b>Hire of gear and equipment</b>	<p>Equipment not a correct fit for the person or not for purpose</p> <p>Equipment not in good working order or in disrepair</p>	<p>Our rental staff are all highly trained in providing the correct fit for all types, sizes and ages of skiers and boarders.</p> <p>Equipment is checked and maintained prior to hire and again on return. All defective equipment is repaired prior to being re-hired.</p>
<b>Walking</b>	Slipping on ice, snow or water on walking surfaces	Walking in Alpine areas has inherent risk due to slippery surfaces. Increased care and appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.
<b>Variable weather in the alpine environment</b>	Alpine weather can expose people to extremes of cold, snow, wet, sun and wind.	<p>Ensure that you and your group have the recommended clothing (see above).</p> <p>Always consult the Mt Buller website <a href="http://www.mtbuller.com.au">www.mtbuller.com.au</a>, Snowsafe at <a href="http://www.snowsafes.org.au">www.snowsafes.org.au</a> and the Bureau of Meteorology <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au">www.bom.gov.au</a> before heading up to the mountain. Also, download our app from iTunes.</p>
<b>The built environment</b>	<p>Emergencies</p> <p>Stairs and steps</p> <p>Shedding snow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All buildings are fitted with the appropriate fire management equipment including alarms, personal fire extinguishers and water hoses.</li> <li>• CFA are based within the Village Area and Victoria Police have a permanent presence during our peak winter periods.</li> <li>• Many of our staff are trained in emergency management and coordination.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stairs and steps are provided with handrails.</li> <li>• When travelling up and down stairs always use the left side, holding onto handrails.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage is spread throughout the village near buildings alerting to snow shedding from building roofs.</li> <li>• Do not stand near building eaves or where ice has built up overhead.</li> </ul>

Activity and/or area	Hazards	Safety controls in place
<b>Snowfields</b>	<p>Marked and unmarked obstacles</p> <p>Variations in visibility due to weather changes</p> <p>Variations in snow cover</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Ski Patrol conducts regular inspections of the ski fields and identifies obvious hazards.</li> <li>• It is important for all persons to ski or board responsibly and follow the Alpine Responsibility Code.</li> <li>• Always keep a lookout for obstacles, particularly on trails.</li>   <li>• Always be flexible to weather changes.</li> <li>• Check the weather forecast before heading out to ski.</li> <li>• Seek out sheltered area in a snow storm.</li>   <li>• Open snow runs are groomed overnight to prepare a smooth surface for general ski traffic.</li> <li>• Where possible, snowmaking is conducted (we have 216 snowmaking machines).</li> </ul>
<b>Snow sports and other activities</b>	<p>Injury due to falls, trips, slides and/or collisions with other skiers/snowboarders</p> <p>Runaway equipment causing injury</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All skiers and boarders are required to travel at a safe speed and follow the Alpine Responsibility Code which is displayed prominently throughout the mountain.</li> <li>• Lessons are STRONGLY recommended for beginners (or refresher lessons for not regular skiers).</li> <li>• All hire equipment is regularly checked and maintained. All skiers and boarders are required to have well maintained and approved equipment.</li> <li>• Helmets are compulsory on all children undertaking lessons and are actively promoted for all skiers.</li> <li>• Wrist guards are highly recommended for snowboarders.</li>   <li>• Binding breaks to be put on when skis not in use</li> </ul>
<b>Chair lifts and magic carpets</b>	Falling from a chairlift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairlifts are all approved and are checked and maintained to the highest</li> </ul>



Activity and/or area	Hazards	Safety controls in place
	<p>Chair falls off cable</p> <p>Injuries while loading or unloading</p> <p>Chair stoppage (breakdown etc)</p> <p>Clothing or other stuck in chairlift</p>	<p>world standards (ie CSAZ98)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All lift staff are well trained in safety of passengers and provide advice or assistance as required.</li> <li>• The unload area is cleared immediately and all lifts (except for Blue Bullet and Northside Express) are ski/board passengers only.</li> <li>• All passengers are required to use the safety bar.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairlifts are all approved and are checked and maintained to the highest world standards (ie CSAZ98).</li> <li>• Inspections and maintenance is carried out by the Mt Buller lift maintenance team in compliance with the world standard (CSAZ98) and all government regulations.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All persons are required to follow the instructions of the lift operators.</li> <li>• Safety signage is placed throughout the lift areas.</li> <li>• The unload area is cleared immediately.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency evacuation and rescue procedures are in place and are regularly maintained.</li> <li>• Chairlifts are maintained according to world best practices.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back packs and loose clothing must be secured before boarding the chairlift.</li> <li>• Ensure all clothing and other gear is clear prior to unloading.</li> </ul>

<b>Activity and/or area</b>	<b>Hazards</b>	<b>Safety controls in place</b>
<b>Driving to, from and around Mt Buller</b>	Hazardous driving conditions due to weather extremes, ice and/or snow	Vehicles required to carry and use snow chains when appropriate  All drivers of vehicles capable of carrying 12 or more passengers are required to have completed the Vicroads "Hazardous Driving Course" or equivalent.

## **Appendix 2 – Buller Ski Lifts Risk Management Methodology**

### **Risk Identification**

The purpose of this step is to generate a comprehensive list of threats, hazards, opportunities and vulnerabilities based on the criteria that they might enhance, prevent, degrade, create or delay the achievement of the operational and strategic objectives of BSL.

### **Risk analysis**

This step involves analysing the impact of the risk identified, starting with an assessment of the likelihood (probability) and the consequences (impact) of the risk event occurring. The approach BSL will take will be to use a risk matrix which has been developed and agreed upon during the context establishment phase.

The risk analysis process is a two-step process. The first step in the process is to determine the “raw” risk. This is the level of inherent risk that exists as if there were no controls in place. The second step is to review the existing controls (if any) and determine residual risk. This will establish the verity of the existing controls and what the probable impact will be if the controls fail.

### **Risk evaluation**

Once the risks have been identified and analysed, they are then evaluated to determine which risks require treatment and the priority for treatment implementation. The different levels of risk arising from the analysis (extreme, high, medium and low) determine the evaluation process. When evaluating the risks it will be important to consider the following:

- The risk context of Alpine recreational and sporting activities
- The risk appetite of our stakeholders (eg employees, guests, competitors, officials, schools, regulators, etc)
- Compliance, legal and governance issues
- Sound safety practices.

### **Risk treatment**

Following the analysis and evaluation of the risks, appropriate risk treatments are required. These treatment actions are part of BSL's internal controls. The recommendations contained within this stage utilise risk elimination, substitution, acceptance, avoidance, transfer/share and reduction control measures that will help guide risk management practices during the life of the risk.