



# Ski Patrol

## Operations Booklet



# Introduction

This booklet is intended to provide skiers and snowboarders with a brief overview of Perisher's Ski Patrol Operations.

## Quality of Recreational Use

A most important element of recreational quality is the provision of a safe environment for skiing and snowboarding activities.

An issue of critical importance to skiing and snowboarding guests is safety. Safety is important not only for visitors to the resort, but for resort staff also.

Ski Patrol performs a key safety role within resort operations.

## What is a Ski Patrol?

A Ski Patrol is an organisation that is primarily concerned with the safety of visitors to the Alpine areas during winter. This includes providing first-aid, ski slope monitoring and maintenance, public education on safety, policing the ski/board area for reckless or dangerous behaviour and assisting with search and rescue.



*Providing emergency care to visitors to the Perisher Range*

# Overview of the Perisher Ski Patrol

Perisher is the largest ski resort in the southern hemisphere with 48 lifts over an area of 1,245 hectares. The Perisher Ski Patrol covers four areas; Perisher, Smiggins, Blue Cow and Guthega.

The Perisher Ski Patrol has a core of full time staff (professional) assisted by a large number of volunteers.

In order to cover this area, 40 full time professional and 150 volunteer patrollers are utilised. During busy periods a mix of approximately 60 professionals and volunteers can be on duty on any one day.



Ski Patrollers can be identified by their distinctive uniform; a red jacket with a white cross and black pants. They are highly trained to deal with injured skiers and boarders, both within the resort and beyond the resort.

Whilst the provision of first aid assistance and rescue from the mountain remain the core activities of the Ski Patrol, the experience gained in undertaking these functions has led to more pro-active assistance to skiers and snowboarders through risk management.

Management of risk is an integral part of Perisher's Ski Patrol through logical and systematic methods of identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and communicating risks associated with alpine activities such as skiing, snowboard riding and tobogganing.

The four main functions performed by Ski Patrol are:

- Provision of first-aid
- Mountain safety – risk management
- Incident Investigation
- Customer Service

## **Overview of the Perisher Ski Patrol (Continued)**

### **Provision of First-Aid**

First-aid assistance can vary from minor injuries, such as, cuts and bruises, to injuries involving major trauma.

Provision of first-aid assistance also involves retrieval of injured and distressed skiers and snowboarders from the mountain and evacuation to the Medical Centre.

Modes of transport for injured guests can include; an akja and cascade/sled, over snow vehicle and in the case of major trauma an over snow ambulance.

### **Mountain Safety – Risk Management**

A safe mountain is achieved mainly through constant surveillance of the slopes for changing conditions and reckless and dangerous skiing and snowboard riding.

Functions performed by Ski Patrol essential to the safety of skiers and snowboarders include but are not limited to:

- Marking potentially dangerous areas or obstacles (hazard marking).
- Constantly monitoring and reporting hazards and snow conditions throughout the day.
- Avalanche and cornice control.
- Control of reckless or dangerous skiers and snowboarders (Mountain Awareness). After the lifts close, “sweep” the runs making sure that no skiers and snowboarders remain on the mountain.

### **Incident Investigation**

All incidents are recorded and whilst most incidents require little or no further action, some incidents need more attention. This is known as a “Double I” or incident investigation.

A “Double I” covers a variety of situations that occur without regard to severity or fault. The process is fact finding. A “Double I” can include reports such as Injured Persons Statement, Witness Statements, Ski Patrollers Statements, photos and diagrams.

Statistics and information obtained from these investigations enable Perisher to take a pro-active approach to risk management.

### **Customer Service**

Helping guests navigate their way around the resort and answering a variety of enquiries from guests form part of a Ski Patroller’s day as well as, in the case of incidents, reassuring injured guests and locating and relaying information to friends and family.

# Mountain Safety

## On Slope Marking (Hazard Marking)

On slope marking mainly consists of using orange conduit (hazard poles (HP's), rope line, nylon fences, tower pads, caution signs, closed signs and slow signs to effectively and safety warn skiers and snowboarders of hazardous or potentially unsafe areas.

Boundaries are identified by rope lines and boundary signs such as "RESORT AREA BOUNDARY NOT PATROLLED BEYOND THIS POINT".



## Avalanche Control

Snow avalanches are usually considered to be a non-existent problem in Australian resorts.

However, the potential for snow avalanches exists wherever snow falls onto steep slopes. Therefore, some avalanche danger exists in all Australian ski resorts.

## Cornice Control

Cornices are formed by wind driven snow. Ski Patrol usually control cornices by ski cutting. This is done by traversing backward and forward along a chosen line to cut a groove with the ski to weaken the overhanging lip.

## Mountain Safety (Continued)

### Mountain Awareness

The objective of Mountain Awareness is to educate and urge skiers and snowboarders to understand and obey the Alpine Responsibility Code and Perisher's Lift Usage Policy ensuring an enjoyable and safe experience.

Skiers and snowboarders who:

- Ski or snowboard in a dangerous or reckless manner.
- Jump in obstructed areas without an observer.
- Ignore or do not comply with the Alpine Responsibility Code and Perisher's Lift Usage Policy.
- Ignore instructions from lift staff concerning loading, riding and other company policies.
- Remove hazard markers, for example, hazard poles (orange conduit), fences and ropes.
- 'Disregard accepted courtesy practice,' which make the visit of our guests an unpleasant one, may have their passes cancelled or suspended.

Perisher has designated Mountain Awareness staff who are supported by all Ski Patrol and Mountain staff. Designated Mountain Awareness staff can be easily recognised by their lime green coats and vests.



You may have your pass cancelled or suspended if you do not observe the Alpine Responsibility Code and Perisher's Lift Usage Policy.

All Perisher's guests can help to make Perisher a safe place to ski and board by obeying the Alpine Responsibility Code and Perisher's Lift Usage Policy, and report any unsafe skiing, boarding or lift usage immediately to any mountain staff.

The Alpine Responsibility Code is displayed on walls of lift huts, at various locations throughout Perisher and on the trail map. Refer to page 7 of this booklet for a copy of the Alpine Responsibility Code and page 8 for a copy of Perisher's Lift Usage Policy.

# Alpine Responsibility Code

Regardless of how you enjoy your snow sport, always show courtesy to others and be aware that there are inherent risks in all snow recreational activities that common sense, protective equipment and personal awareness can reduce. These risks include rapid changes in the 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 share with others the responsibility for a great experience.**

1. Know your ability and always stay in control and be able to stop and avoid other people or objects. It is your responsibility to stay in control on the ground and in the air.
2. Take lessons from professional instructors to learn and progress.
3. Use appropriate protective equipment to minimise the risk of injury.
4. Before using any lift you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely and always use the restraining devices.
5. Observe and obey all signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails or runs.
6. Give way to people below and beside you on the hill. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
7. Do not stop where you are not clearly visible from above. Look uphill and give way to others when entering/exiting a trail or starting downhill.
8. Always ensure your equipment is in good condition and use suitable restraining devices to avoid runaway skiing/boarding equipment.
9. Do not ski, board, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity if your ability is impaired by drugs or alcohol.
10. If you are involved in, or witness an accident or collision, alert Ski Patrol, remain at the scene and identify yourself to the Ski Patrol

**KNOW THE CODE.  
IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.  
FAILURE TO OBSERVE THE CODE MAY RESULT IN CANCELLATION OF  
YOUR TICKET OR PASS BY SKI PATROL OR OTHER AUTHORISED  
PERSONNEL.**

*'Respect gets respect' from the lift line, to the slopes, through the park and the resort.*

# Lift Usage Policy

Persons who behave in an unacceptable manner when using a ski lift, who place themselves and other persons in danger, who ignore instructions from lift staff, or who ignore the Alpine Responsibility Code or Perisher's Lift Usage Policy when loading, riding and unloading a lift may have their mountain passes cancelled or suspended.

Alpine Responsibility Code Point 4:

"Before using any lift you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely."

Alpine responsibility Code Point 8:

"Always ensure your equipment is in good condition and use suitable restraining devices to avoid runaway skiing/boarding equipment, even when riding chairlifts."

Comply with the Code by adhering to the following:

## All Lifts

1. Obey all signage.
2. Do not load or attempt to load onto a lift when the Lift Operator is not in attendance at the loading point.
3. Do not load onto any lift any person carrying a baby in a backpack
4. Do not load onto any lift any skier or boarder carrying a baby in their arms.
5. Obey all instructions from Lift Operators.
6. If you require assistance, speak to a Lift Operator
7. Snowboarders, ensure your back foot has been released before loading.
8. Ensure your clothing and equipment are secured before loading and that it is free before unloading the lift.
9. Only load or unload at a designated load or unload station\*.
10. Move to the loading point promptly.
11. Automatic Gates – be ready to move forward before the gate opens.
12. Move away from the unload area promptly.

## Chair lifts

1. When loading, do not hang off or hold the back of the preceding chair.
2. Sit back in the chair properly.
3. Remove bulky backpacks and hold them on your lap in order to sit back in the chair properly.
4. Make sure you lower or fit the restraining device.
5. Do not:
  - Swing or bounce the chair.
  - Stand, kneel or lie on the chair.
  - Drop or throw anything including snow or snowballs



- from the chair.
6. If you fail to unload at the designated unload point, stay on the chair, and do not jump from the Chair.

### **T Bars and J Bars**

1. Always ensure your skis or board are pointing uphill at all times.
2. Do not:
  - Zigzag up the lift track.
  - Swing out of the lift track (this can cause the cable to fall).
  - Straddle the T Bar when riding.

### **Skier Conveyors**

1. Riders must have skis or board ON while riding the conveyor\*\*.
2. Persons must not walk up the sideboards of the skier conveyor to help or offer advice to riders.
3. Remain standing at all times. Do not sit down on the conveyor.
4. No snow skates are allowed on skier conveyors.

Note:

\*Persons participating in a Ski or Board Lesson, Instructors when conducting a lesson, and Ski Patrol Staff are authorised to unload prior to the designated unload area.

\*\*Riders participating in a Ski or Board Lesson, when directed by their Instructor, may ride in ski or board boots, but only under the supervision of the Instructor.

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OF YOUR TICKET OR PASS BY SKI PATROL OR OTHER  
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# Policy on the use of Toboggans at Perisher

Perisher is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees, contractors, visitors and guests.

The use of toboggans is strictly prohibited in all Perisher areas.

Tobogganing is only permitted on the Toboggan Slope located on Piper's Ridge beside the Perisher Car Park. The Toboggan Slope may be closed due to insufficient snow or inappropriate conditions.

## Reporting an Incident

Crossed skis or a snowboard standing upright identify an incident.



If you are involved in or witness an incident:

- Place crossed skis in an “X” pattern, or stand a snowboard upright, in the snow above the incident or have someone else do this.
- Do not remove the injured person’s skis/board.
- Do not move the injured person or attempt to treat them unless you are qualified in first-aid.
- Remain at the scene and identify yourself to Ski Patrol.
- Assist Ski Patrol with any enquiries. *Alpine Responsibility Code, Point No. 10.*

## Raising the Alarm

Know the exact location of the incident. While one person remains with the injured skier/boarder, make sure another person reports the incident to any Ski Patroller or skis or boards to the nearest lift station where the lift staff will be able to notify Ski Patrol.

# The Ski Patrollers

Ski Patrollers work in all kinds of weather and are frequently exposed to severe conditions and incidents involving major trauma.

Perisher and members of the Ski Patrol hope this information helps you to understand more about the challenges of Ski Patrol as well as the goals that are strived for.

The Ski Patrollers will be out there seeking to provide a safe and happy experience.

*Enjoy.*



# Some Holiday Tips

Plan your holiday carefully and you will have a great time.

## Driving

Like skiing and snowboard riding, driving in snow and ice conditions is an acquired skill. Extreme care is required when driving on alpine roads in winter.

## Lost Car Keys

Always carry a spare set of car keys. Should you lose your car keys, to receive assistance can be expensive and time consuming.

## Clothing

Alpine weather is unpredictable and a fine sunny day can quickly deteriorate into cold, wet, high wind or blizzard conditions. Your clothing, therefore, must be versatile and you should have ready access to protective clothing.

## Skin and Eye Protection

Sunburn can be a serious problem, even on cloudy days. In addition to protective clothing always use a good sunscreen with a high SPF to protect skin exposed to direct or reflected sunlight. To protect your eyes from the glare off the snow (which can lead to “snow blindness”) the use of high quality sunglasses or goggles is essential. Wear a wide brimmed hat to protect your face on sunny days. If you are dependent on spectacles, carry a spare pair, in case you lose or damage your glasses.

## Helmets

Helmets are encouraged for children and a growing number of adults are also using them for down-hill skiing and snowboarding. But remember, a helmet does not guarantee freedom from injury. Always stay in control and be able to stop and avoid other people or objects (Alpine Responsibility Code, Point No. 1.)

## Children

Warm, protective clothing and head gear (preferably a helmet) should always be worn by children. Young children should always be in the care of an adult rather than an older child. If you are not skiing/boarding together, be sure your children know where to find you. Having a name tag in an obvious place (with your mobile phone number, ski lodge or home address) can help the Ski Patrol locate you should your child be lost or injured. Children should not be piggy-backed in child carriers while skiing or boarding as there is an increased risk of injury to both the skier/boarder and the child if the skier/boarder falls. Adults with children in backpacks, front packs, or being carried, will not be allowed access to lift