

# THE IFMGA PLATFORM-2009



The female and male mountain guides and aspirants are hereafter called mountain guides or he in this document. The term “IFMGA member” refers to the body that represents the IFMGA in the member country. Individual guides are referred to as mountain guide, card holders or he, this also represents the female and male gender.

## Preamble

The IFMGA platform is the reference document which aims to make operational the objectives fixed by the IFMGA statutes (Cf. Annex A), notably in the development and the upholding of the high level of quality required to access the profession of mountain guide, as well as facilitating the practice of the profession in all member countries. The platform is subdivided into five sections:

- Access to the profession of mountain guide
- Work authorisation
- Rights and obligations of IFMGA member country
- Admission of a member country in the IFMGA
- Expulsion of an IFMGA member country

Added to this text are five annexes:

- Annex A: The IFMGA statutes
- Annex B: IFMGA conditions relating to the minimum standards of mountain guide training
- Annex C: IFMGA regulations relating to the conditions of practising in a professional capacity
- Annex D: the IFMGA Code of Professional Practice
- Annex E: Conditions relating to the process of countries being accepted or expelled from the IFMGA

## I-Access to the profession of mountain guide

### Article 1

Access to and the practice of the profession of mountain guide are inextricably linked to:

- Respecting the requirements detailed hereinafter;
- That the professional activity be undertaken as a principal or secondary occupation, on a regular, seasonal or occasional basis.
- The requirements laid out in this IFMGA platform document.

### Article 2

A mountain guide is a professional whose competence has been certified. He is capable of leading and instructing any member of the public who wishes to undertake activities specific to the profession in a secure, responsible and autonomous manner, against remuneration. He can practice on all the types of terrain which correspond to his responsibilities and capabilities, within the rules and regulations of the profession.

### Article 3

Access to the profession of mountain guide is open to all holders of the mountain guide diploma. This diploma recognises that the mountain guide has successfully completed all aspects of the training and assessment programme as listed in annex B.

### Article 4

The professional training in IFMGA member countries is based on a common minimum standard required of all candidates at the end of their training. The full training programme and the conditions of eligibility for this training are described in annex B.

## II-The right to practice

### Article 5

The right to practice the profession is subject to authorisation. This authorisation is delivered by the national, regional or independent organisations that are in charge of the profession. The procedure related to obtaining this certificate authorising the right to practise the profession, as well as the social and professional obligations are defined in annex C.

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## Article 6

The professional with the right to practice and being a member of an IFMGA association, is the holder of the IFMGA mountain guide card. The description of this card is given in annex C.

### III- Rights and obligations of IFMGA member countries

## Article 7

All IFMGA members must uphold the national/regional rules and regulations relating to the profession.

## Article 8

All IFMGA members should show and provide mutual reciprocity and assistance.

## Article 9

Members of the IFMGA must take it possible to all IFMGA card holders the right to practice the profession while respecting the national/regional laws in force.

## Article 10

All IFMGA members promise to apply the code of professional practice when practising the profession, as described in annex D.

### IV-Admission of a country into the IFMGA

## Article 11

Any organisation which represents the mountain guide profession in their country, on the national scale or federal scale in federal countries, can become a member of the IFMGA. The conditions and the timescales involved for admission of a mountain guide association into the IFMGA are defined in annex E.

### V-Expulsion of a member country from the IFMGA

## Article 12

Any member of the IFMGA can be expelled from the association in the case of a gross breach of their obligations. The process of expulsion is detailed in annex E.

## Annex A

### The IFMGA statutes

*Representatives of the mountain guides from Italy, France, Switzerland and Austria decided at the occasion of the centennial celebration of the first ascent of the Matterhorn in July of 1965 to form an International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations. The federation enacted its first by-laws at the meeting of the delegates on October 22, 1966 in Sitten.*

### NAME AND OFFICE OF THE FEDERATION

1. The federation calls itself „International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations“ (IFMGA). It is incorporated under the Laws of Switzerland, particularly Para. 60-79 of the Swiss Civil Code.
2. Seat of the federation is the current domicile of the federation secretary.

### PURPOSE OF THE FEDERATION

3. The purpose of the federation is to strengthen relations with the authorities who on a national basis are responsible for the profession of mountain guiding:
  - Through assimilation of the mountain guiding regulations
  - Through promoting as much as possible uniform training standards for mountain guides
  - To ease for the mountain guides the exercising of their profession abroad, among through issuance of a uniform international identity card



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- To appoint when necessary a board of arbitration which has an advisory function during disputes among members or by members with third parties
- To study general and economic problems that affect the profession of mountain guiding
- To further closer camaraderie and exchange of ideas among mountain guides from all nations

### MEMBERSHIP

4. Membership in the Federation is open to that organization in every country that is recognized officially as representing the interests of the mountain guides on a national basis in so far as it has the status of a legal entity, and whose members receive a mountain guide certificate after an exam given by the state or by a state authorized agency.

Upon motion by the executive or a national association the general meeting can bestow honorary membership upon persons who have given valuable service to mountain guiding or the International Federation.

4. *b* **Members who don't fulfil their obligations according to the by-laws can be expelled from the IFMGA.**

5. The members are represented in the federation by a delegation of three: The president or director of the respective national association (defined in 4.) and two elected members.

### GENERAL MEETING

6. The general meeting is the highest authority of the federation. It is made up of the delegates who represent the members. The regular general meeting is called twice a year by the secretary at the instruction of the president. They set the agenda.

Further the president can, whenever he deems it necessary or a member asks in writing, call an extraordinary general meeting.

7. The general meeting decides on the acceptance or expulsion of members, appoints the members of the executive and deals with all business not under authority of other executive bodies. It controls the actions of the executive bodies and can dismiss them at any time. It approves the agenda.

During the fall meeting at least the following items have to be put on the agenda:

- Minutes of the last meeting
- Annual report of the President
- Budget
- Setting of the annual dues
- Motions
- New Business

8. Decisions of the general meeting become effective by a simple majority vote. Amendments to the by-laws are only possible if two thirds of the members agree.
9. Each delegation as representative of the members of the federation during the general meeting has one vote for each 100 members of it's association, or fraction thereof.

In case of a tie the president casts the deciding vote.

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## EXECUTIVES OF THE FEDERATION

**10.** The executive of the federation consists of the president, the vice president, the secretary/treasurer as well as the president of the TC, who as a rule belongs to the same association as the president; they are voted into office for four years during the general meeting by the delegates of the member associations. The five alpine countries nominate the president in the following order: France, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Germany. It is mandatory that the secretary/treasurer is a mountain guide with domicile in Switzerland.

The technical commission (TC) of the federation consists of two members from each affiliated association. They are delegated by their associations to the TC. The president of the TC gives a report on the activities of commission at each general meeting.

## DIRECTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE FEDERATION

**11.** The president directs and represents the federation in all actions in accordance with the purpose of the federation. He arranges for the meetings to be called and directs them.

**12.** The secretary keeps the membership roster and deals with all documents and receipts that concern the administration of the federation. He takes care of the correspondence and can sign at the request of the president. He edits the minutes of the meetings.

The records of the federation are deposited in the National Archives of Valais in Sitten (VS/CH).

**13.** The treasurer manages the assets of the federation, collects the membership dues, issues receipts for payments, pays for the expenses endorsed by the president and keeps the accounts throughout the year. The accounts are presented for approval on the occasion of the spring meeting. The association which organizes this meeting designates two auditors. The financial year corresponds to the calendar year. The budget will be approved on the occasion of the general meeting in fall.

**14.** The travel costs of the executive members are paid by the federation.

The travel costs of the delegates of the associations are paid by these associations.

**15.** In case of disagreement among the members of the executive, the general meeting has the final decision.

**16.** Every year the general meeting sets the annual dues and they have to be paid to the treasurer before 15<sup>th</sup> April. The fixed dues have to be paid by all the members until their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**17.** The revenue of the federation consists of:

- The normal yearly dues
- Donations from authorities, corporations or individuals
- The proceeds from chattels and real estate

## LEGAL PROTECTION FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION

**18.** Every dispute between a member and the federation goes before an arbitration board whose make up is decided upon by the two parties.



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19. The federation strictly rejects any discussion on questions of politics, religion or race. It will not get involved in the internal rules of the national associations in as far as they are not contrary to the purpose and the spirit of the IFMGA.
20. The federation can dissolve itself upon motion by the president and two thirds majority vote. The executive takes on the liquidation of the assets and the general meeting decides on the use of the net proceeds according to the law.
21. **The guidelines for the admission of applicant countries are represented in the appendix of the statutes. They were approved at the meeting of May 9<sup>th</sup> 2003 on top of Schilthorn, Mürren.**

*These by-laws were approved at the general meeting IFMGA on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2004 in Chamonix (F) and become effective immediately.*

*The President: Peter Geyer*

*The Secretary: Armin Oehrli*

### Annexe B:

#### COMMON STANDARDS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR MOUNTAIN GUIDES

##### **B0- GENERAL**

###### Article B0.1

A Mountain Guide is a professional whose competence has been certified. He is capable of taking and instructing any person in a secure, responsible and autonomous manner for activities specific to the profession, especially in alpinism and mountaineering. His ability, based on his expert knowledge of the mountains and his experience allows him to fulfil five types of functions:

- The role of supervisor for sporting or leisure purposes
- The role of teacher
- The role of coach in a sporting context
- The role derived from being a technical advisor or mountain sports consultant
- The role link to mountain rescue

The structure of the training

###### Article B0.2

The holder of the International Mountain Guide diploma is certified during and after his structured training programme on a collective and individual basis.

###### Article B0.3

No person can take the final stage of the Mountain Guide training programme without having first fully completed the admission tests for the Aspirant Mountain Guide diploma, and without having first gained a minimum amount of professional practice (see annex B2).

Equally, no person can take the Aspirant Guide training programme without having first passed the Aspirant Mountain Guide entry exam (see Annex B1).

###### Article B0.4

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Structured training is understood to be all instruction given in the form of reputable training based on the legislative guidelines, regulatory or administrative, or failing this, the guidelines laid down by an association or organisation which is recognised in a specific form by a member state.

The structured training is given:

- under the form of Collective Structured Training (CST)
- or, under the form of the above plus Individual Structured Training (IST)

## Article B0.5

Structured Collective Training is understood to mean any type of teaching given to a group of students within the structure of an organisation or a specific structure in charge of providing professional training.

Structured Individual Training is understood to mean any type of teaching in a professional situation given to an Aspirant Guide by an instructor/advisor. All individual training must be preceded by a structured collective training.

- The instructor/advisor must be a holder of the Mountain Guide diploma and have a minimum of three years professional experience
- An instructor/advisor can only be responsible for one trainee at a time

## Duration of the training and assessment programme

### Article B0.6

The training, including all exams, should number a minimum of 80 effective days spread out over a period of three years minimum, five years maximum. The group section of the training cannot be less than 60 days, including exams.

### Article B0.7

The training programme includes both theory and practical elements.

### Article B0.8

The practical sections are of a minimum of 60 days spread out over the entire training programme. They contain:

- At least 20 days of "rock" training (alpinism/athletic climbing)
- At least 20 days of snow, ice and mixed terrain training
- At least 20 days of winter training (for example: ski mountaineering, off-piste, ski touring, snowshoeing, etc).

This takes place in the high mountain zones for a minimum of 40 days.

## B1- THE ENTRANCE EXAM

### Article B1.1

To be eligible for the entrance exam candidates must fulfil the following requirements:

- Be over 18 years of age
- The candidate must produce all and any documents which confirm his physical and moral capacities enabling him to undertake the routes required by the body in charge of training.
- Possess a very good level of: mountaineering experience (rock, snow, ice and mixed terrain); athletic rock climbing skills; skiing ability in all types of snow and on all types of terrain. This experience is certified by their list of routes, as described in article B1.3.

### Article B1.2

Access to the Aspirant Guide course is subject to passing the entrance exam. The requirements set in the exam as well as the minimum technical requirements are defined below:



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- A rock climbing test of level V minimum, in mountaineering boots
- A rock climbing test of level VI+ minimum, in climbing shoes
- An ice climbing test with ice axe, using the classic technique
- An ice climbing test with one or two ice axes, using the front point technique
- A skiing test, mastering all types of snow on all terrains. This test is not required for countries where no professional skiing activity takes place.

The entrance exam is either integrated into a pre-training programme or organised specially.

## Article B1.3

The mountaineering experience of a candidate is confirmed by their list of routes, established on the following model:

Minimum requirements for presentation at the entrance exam:

The candidate must provide a list of at least 35 varied mountain routes which they have carried out over a period of at least three years and spread out as follows:

- Mixed, snow and ice: minimum of 10 routes of which five must be of difficulty D and with a vertical drop of at least 800 meters.
- Rock: Minimum of 10 routes with a vertical drop of at least 250 meters (or at least 10 pitches), of minimum difficulty IV, with protection to be added to at least one part of the climb, in mountaineering boots.
- The ascent and descent for these routes must have taken place on mountainous terrain or and/or glaciers.
- The descent of part of these 20 routes must have taken place by a route other than that of the ascent and must have been of an alpine character.
- Ten days in the mountains are ski touring (if the country is a “No-Ski” country, the activity could be hiking in the winter period) with a minimum of 1000 meters acclivity/declivity; of which a minimum of five days on glacier terrain.

The remaining 5 days/routes are left for each training body to define in the type of the particular specificities of the terrain of practice.

b) In addition to these 35 routes, the candidate will present his list of technical climbs, divided out as follows:

- rock: routes of several pitches, difficulty 6a (VI+) minimum
- ice: several pitches on steep ice, difficulty minimum 4
- Off-piste
- Via ferrata
- Expeditions or climbs abroad/overseas
- Training undertaken in the Alps

## B2 - COMMON STANDARDS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF ASPIRANT GUIDES

Preamble

### Article B2.1

The Aspirant Guide diploma is a transitional diploma of a minimum duration of one year and a maximum duration of five years, allowing the progressive learning in certified routes and experience in order to take the final Mountain Guide diploma. The holder of the aspirant diploma is certified as having the required level of competence in the domains described below; this limits what he can do and the difficulty he can undertake, as follows:

### The amount of instruction given to Aspirant Guides.

### Article B2.2

The title of Aspirant Guide authorises a structured group training course of a minimum duration of 50 days, during which the

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following disciplines should be taught for these minimum numbers of days:

- |   |                     |        |
|---|---------------------|--------|
| - | Snow and avalanches | 5 days |
| - | Self-rescue         | 4 days |
| - | Emergency First Aid | 2 days |

The nine days which remain are left for each training body to choose the training necessary, depending on the discipline and the terrain of practice.

## Abilities taught and certified on the Aspirant Guide course

Article B2.3

The list of competences is as follows:

### I Lead instruct and train all members of the public

#### 1. Overall skills

Learning goals/skills

- Pedagogical aspects of the profession with regard to teaching and client relations

Contents:

- Risk management
- Communication
- Personality
- Social skills

#### 2. Techniques and tactics

Learning goals/skills:

- Guiding techniques in different terrains and situations
- Tactics and approaches in different terrains and situations
- Adaptation of the planned tactic and technique to the actual situation
- Expansion and maintenance of the own technique in all kinds of terrains in the range of the required skills

Contents:

- Rock/ice/snow/mixed terrain/ski
- Tactics and technique without rope during ascent and descent
- Tactics and technique with rope during ascent and descent

#### 3. Methodology and didactics

Learning goals/skills:

- Pedagogical methods and didactic procedure
- Planning and implementation of the different pedagogical ways with regard to one or several learning goals

Contents:

- Basic skills in methodology
- Own behaviour in the role of instructor
- Pedagogical measures
- Planning and implementation of the lesson

### II. Specific knowledge and abilities connected to the mountain world

#### 1. About safety and rescue



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## 1.1 Navigation

Learning goals/skills:

- Different techniques of Navigation
- Adaptation of these techniques and their possible combinations to the respective situation

Contents:

- Navigation without technical aids
- Navigation with technical aids

## 1.2 Meteorology

Learning goals/skills:

- Weather forecast: Reading, interpretation, own observations
- Consideration of the weather forecast for the planning of the tour
- Observation of the weather development and adaptation of the tour

Contents:

- Basic knowledge in meteorology
- Sources of information and own observations
- Making forecasts

## 1.3 Avalanches

Learning goals/skills:

- Discernment of the avalanche situation
- Analysis and assessment of the situation
- Responsible behaviour considering the risk

Contents:

- Basic knowledge snow and avalanches
- Analysis and assessment of the avalanche situation
- Involvement of the analysis of the avalanche situation into a strategy of the risk management

## 1.4 First aid

Learning goals/skills:

- Dealing with the different survival and rescue techniques

Contents:

- Basic knowledge in anatomy and physiology, including altitude physiology
- Organization of rescue and survival situations
- First aid equipment of the Mountain Guide

## II Nature and environment

Learning goals/skills:

- Basic knowledge of environmental friendly practice of mountaineering
- Understanding of the mountains as a multi-cultural area
- Environmental friendly planning and implementation of a tour

Contents:

- Fauna
- Flora

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- Geology
- Ecology
- Culture

Certification of abilities

Article B2.4

The practical and theoretical experience listed above must be certified. The knowledge and capacity of the candidates is evaluated based on a training programme which is in effect supervised and obligatory. Validation may be organised, depending on the teaching method, under one or several methods:

- Continuous assessment (candidates are evaluated over a long length of time)
- Organised exam (candidates are evaluated over a determined length of time): practical test and/or written test and/or oral test

Article B2.5

Having passed all of the tests/exams the trainee then becomes the holder of the Aspirant Guide diploma.

Professional practise and Aspirant Guide rights

Article B2.6

The practical course is to be considered as a structured, individual course. It is an important part of the training programme and allows the trainees to gain progressive and controlled autonomy.

Aspirant Guides must undertake a practical course of at least 14 days (7 in winter and 7 in summer) accompanied by a certified IFMGA guide.

This practical course will be subject to a written report which will be examined by the appropriate authorities. It will be countersigned by the supervising guide.

Article B2.7

The Aspirant Guide can be remunerated for guiding and teaching. Due to a lack of experience the Aspirant Guide's activities are subject to the following conditions:

- \* His training in the professional domain must be validated
- \* The preparation for an activity should remain simple
- \* The teaching techniques should remain simple
- \* The teaching strategy should remain simple
- \* The risks incurred should not be too high and their management should be simple

It is up to the member country to apply and enforce these rules while respecting the regulations. These conditions become null and void when the Aspirant Guide accompanies an IFMGA certified guide.

### B3 ABILITIES TAUGHT AND CERTIFIED TO MOUNTAIN GUIDES

Article B3.1

The list of competences is as follows:

I Lead, instruct and train all members of the public

1. Cross-disciplinary competence



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Objectives/skills:

- The perfecting of the non-technical aspects of the job such as the instruction and the leading of clients.
- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the choice and practice of these aspects.

Content:

- Risk management
- Communication
- Leadership Styles
- Social skills

## 2. Techniques and tactics

Objectives/skills:

- Confirm the independence of the trainee in his choice and practice of the teaching techniques and support in the different terrains and situations.
- Confirm the independence of the trainee in his choice and means of progression and the tactics employed in the different terrains and situations.
- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the adaptation of the tactics and techniques of each situation.
- The maintenance and the perfecting of personal progression techniques on all types of terrain, based on skills already mastered.

Content:

- Rock/Ice/Snow/Mixed/Ski
- Tactics and technique without the use of a rope, ascent and descent
- Tactics and technique with the use of a rope, ascent and descent

## 3. Methodology and didactics

Objectives/skills:

- Perfecting the teaching methods and the educational approach.
- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the planning and practice of the different forms of teaching, adapted to one or several objectives.

Content:

- The basics of teaching
- Behaviour of the supervisor
- Teaching aids
- Planning and leading teaching séances

## II. Specific knowledge and abilities connected to the mountain world

### 1 About safety and rescue

#### 1.1 Navigation

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Objectives/competence:

- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the adaptation of different techniques of Navigation and of their possible combinations to the situation encountered.

Content:

- Navigation without technical support
- Navigation with technical support

## 1.2 Meteorology

Objectives/competence:

- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the setting out and interpretation of the weather forecasts and of his own observations.
- Confirm the independence of the trainee in his ability to take into account the weather forecast when planning a course, as well as his ability to adapt to the weather changes during the course.

Content:

- The basics of meteorology
- Sources of information and personal observations
- Forecasting

## 1.3 Avalanches

Objectives/competence:

- Confirm the independence of the trainee in his ability to recognise, analyse and evaluate a possible avalanche risks.
- Responsible behaviour taking into account the risk factor.

Content:

- Basic knowledge of snow and avalanches.
- Analysis and interpretation of possible avalanche risks
- The integration of the analysis of a possible avalanche risk into the strategy of risk management.

## 1.4 First Aid

Objectives/competence:

- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the management of survival and rescue situations.

Content:

- Basic knowledge in anatomy and physiology, including altitude physiology.
- Taking charge of a survival and rescue situation.
- Mountain Guide first-aid kit



## II Nature and environment

### Objectives/competence:

- Basic knowledge of the fundamentals allowing the participation in mountain sports in harmony with the environment and nature.
- Understanding of the mountain environment as a multicultural space
- Confirm the independence of the trainee in the planning and undertaking of routes while respecting the nature and the environment.

### Content:

- Fauna
- Flora
- Geology
- Ecology
- Culture

### Certification

#### Article B3.2

The practical abilities and competences listed above need to be certified. The knowledge and the capacity of the candidate will be evaluated based on what is, in effect, ongoing and obligatory training.

Validation can be organised, depending on the teaching method, under one or several methods:

- Continuous assessment (on a long term basis)
- Organised exam/test (evaluation of the candidate over a pre-determined length of time): practical exam and/or written exam and/or oral exam.

#### Article B3.3

Once the Aspirant Guide has passed all the exams/tests he will become a holder of the full Mountain Guide diploma.

### B4: Professional Development

#### Definition and aims of Professional Development

#### Article B4.1

The term professional development is understood to mean training courses given by an organisation or qualified person.

#### Article B4.2

These days serve to deepen and enlarge knowledge as well as to exchange experiences.

#### Periodicity and duration of Professional Development

#### Article B4.3

The minimum duration of these professional development courses is fixed by each member country. The ratio of the number of professional development days provided, to each civil year gone by must not be less than 1:2. The interval between these professional development courses must not exceed six years. It is recommended to count one day per year and to put a professional development course into place at least every four years.

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## Annex C: IFMGA CONDITIONS RELATING TO THE CONDITIONS OF PRACTISING IN A PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY IFMGA Standards for practising the Mountain Guide profession

Practising the profession is subject to respecting the all the following requirements:

- Holding certification for their profession, which is composed of:
  - The presentation of the mountain guide or aspirant guide diploma, as defined in annex B of the platform.
  - The undertaking of periodic re-training courses as defined in annex B of the platform.
- Subscribing to the socio-professional obligations in place, in the region/country where the guide resides.
- Taking out Public Liability insurance under the conditions defined by the authorities in charge of the profession, covering all aspects of the profession.

Subject to meeting the above requirements, the qualification allowing practice of the profession is presented in the form of a national/regional mountain guide card.

Contained on this card is:

- The last name of the guide (or aspirant guide)
- The first name of the guide/aspirant guide
- Date of birth
- A passport type photo
- The number of the national card
- The annual identification mark
- The name and address of the authorities who delivered the national/regional card
- Qualification allowing practice of the canyoning
- An IFMGA sticker, subject to the payment of an annual subscription fee by the national/regional association to the IFMGA.

### THE IFMGA CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (Edited tr, Tuesday, 12 May 2009)

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Code of Professional Practice outlines the responsibilities of a mountain guide whether with clients, members of the public or fellow guides. It forms the Duty of Care owed by a Guide.
- 1.2. Within this Code all references to the masculine gender shall include the feminine. All references to the “mountain guide” shall include the male and female mountain guides and aspirant mountain guides.

#### 2. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MOUNTAIN GUIDE

- 2.1. A mountain guide’s sphere of activity covers, amongst other things, mountaineering and all the activities which this involves, taking place in the mountains and high altitude mountains, on adventurous terrain of rock, snow, ice or a mixture of all three, using a variety of equipment and methods to progress. The activity is motivated by the desire to explore and develop the mountain milieu and its great open spaces, in every corner of the globe and in every season of the year.
- 2.2. The mountain guide teaches the activities mentioned in 2.1., using the most appropriate teaching methods. He provides his participants an appropriate environment so they can safely develop their skills. He can choose to let them climb either as leaders or as an independent roped party, as long as they don’t take any unnecessary risk. The number of the students that he has in his care must not exceed his capacity for adequate supervision.
- 2.3. The mountain guide leads or accompanies a person or a group. He chooses the guiding ratio according to:
  - a) The local customs and/or regulations.



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- b) The abilities of his clients.
  - c) The difficulty, the risk, the length of the route.
  - d) The weather and conditions on the mountain.
- 2.4. The mountain guide can also work as a coach in all the activities mentioned under point 2.1.
- 2.5. The mountain guide can function as a technical adviser for his clients, for municipalities and other private and public collectives in his field of competence, especially with regard to the organisation of courses, expeditions, teaching sessions etc.
- 2.6. The field of work of the mountain guide applies to:
- a) Activities in mountains (including high altitude), adventure areas, rock, snow and ice.
  - b) All the artificial and natural structures which allow the mountain guide to execute his technical skills in activities held on structures such as cliffs, boulders, artificial facilities...
  - c) Snow-covered areas incorporating: skiing (off-piste skiing, ski touring and ski mountaineering, extreme skiing), and winter ascents using all kinds of equipment.
- 2.7. The mountain guide is allowed to practise his activities in all countries, but in doing so must observe any local customs or laws.
- 2.8. The mountain guide respects the boundaries of other professional groups and follows the current legal requirements.

## 3. THE POSITION OF THE MOUNTAIN GUIDE

- 3.1. The mountain guide can work as a director of a mountaineering school, as an independent guide or as an employee.
- 3.2. He can also work freelance for an institution. He can keep his autonomy concerning the organization of his work.
- 3.3. Independent of his position the mountain guide is responsible for all his decisions and has to reject any projects which are too risky for him or which seem unethical.  
He should inform the relevant organization if he has concerns regarding security. He can refer to the code of honour of the IFMGA and/or to the local rules and customs.
- 3.4.1. As an employee he must respect the instructions of his employer as long as they don't contravene point 3.3.

## 4. GENERAL PROFESSIONAL DUTIES

- 4.1. All activities require caution, awareness and a vigilance concerning the assessment of the conditions and the skills of the participants. An inherent risk is unavoidable in the scope of activities of the mountain guide. It is not possible for the mountain guide to predict the exact risk, or to guarantee absolute security to his participants.
- 4.2. The mountain guide must make himself aware of the current conditions and uses the appropriate means to do this.
- 4.3. When he is working, the mountain guide always carries a first-aid kit or has immediate access to it. He must also take all the necessary material needed for a responsible undertaking of the corresponding activity.
- 4.4. He constantly keeps his knowledge and his technical skills up to date, especially in the areas of security, rescue and navigation.
- 4.5. He must be open to communicate with other mountaineers. He should inform his colleagues and the appropriate organizations, about risks and abnormal dangers that he has discovered during his tour.
- 4.6. In case of an accident the mountain guide should inform the nearest rescue centre or ask somebody else to do so. He should wherever possible help anyone who has had an accident in a reasonable way, providing this does not endanger his own clients.
- 4.7. The mountain guide should respect the conservation of nature.
- 4.8. Mountain guides should behave in a loyal and helpful way towards each other. They should especially avoid competitive guiding and mutual increasing the level risk caused by competitive thinking.

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- 4.9. Whilst in professional activities the mountain guide should wear visibly the mountain guides badge. He should also carry his mountain guide's licence on his person.
- 4.10. The points 4.2. to 4.8. are also valid for sporting alpine activities which do not take place during times of professional work.
- 4.11. The mountain guide endeavours to have and maintain good relations with the people associated with his profession.

### 5. THE RELATION TO THE CLIENTS

- 5.1. The mountain guide owes his clients a duty of care and esteem.
- 5.2. The clients have to be made aware of the fact that there are inherent risks involved with activities that are undertaken with mountain guides. Particular dangers should be identified.
- 5.3. The primary goal of the mountain guide should be to offer a rewarding experience for his clients. The main priority of mountain guide is the security of his clients, the expectations and the skills of the clients have to be balanced with the conditions encountered.
- 5.4. The mountain guide should especially take care of the security of minors, and be aware of the different stages of their development.
- 5.5. The mountain guide must be prudent and ensure that there is a clear agreement with the client. This agreement could include for example: aim of the tour, guiding fee (even if the route is changed or stopped), additional costs etc.
- 5.6. He should teach his clients responsible behaviour according to the conditions and develops their ability for self awareness and self responsibility. He verifies the technical, physical standard and the equipment of his clients before, during and after the activity.
- 5.7. The mountain guide is allowed to leave his clients on the mountain should exceptional circumstances prevail, for example, to help or to organize a rescue or if special guiding techniques are demanded. A responsible assessment of the situation is the precondition for this.
- 5.8. The decision to stop a tour or to change a route should be done in dialogue with the clients. The mountain guide has the right to make a decision for security reasons on his own. He should however explain the reasons for this decision as soon as possible to his clients.

#### Guidelines for the membership at the IFMGA

### 1. Preconditions for an applicant country

#### 1.1. Application as an applicant country

A new country /association has in principle to make an application and to present itself with written documents.

#### Different preconditions should be fulfilled:

- The association has to have at least 20 members (mountain guides);
- The demanded level in the personal skills concerning the disciplines rock, ice/ mixed terrain as well as skiing has to be fulfilled, regarding minima required by IFMGA;
- A plan for an own mountain guide training has to exist;
- Two of the three disciplines have to be practicable in the own country;
- The association has to have the aim that the training and the profession of the mountain guide is recognized by the Government.

If these criterions are all fulfilled without exception, the country will be accepted as an applicant country and further steps can be taken.



## 1.2. Further procedure

- A selected “sponsor country“ will be assigned to the applicant country;  
The sponsor country will support the applicant country on its way to the admission as a member country. This concerns above all the priorities of the training (structure, scope and level). Before starting the training course, a project must be explained and presented to the technical commission for agreement. The project must consider both the goals of IFMGA and the particularities of the candidate country.  
A support concerning political questions regarding the associations is desirable.

There are two possibilities for the support through the sponsor country:

- a) Members of the applicant country attend a training in the sponsor country and realize the preconditions in their own country;
- b) Experts of the sponsor country visit the training of the applicant country, be it as consultants, be it as instructors.

Training using a) and b) would be ideal.

These costs have to be paid by the applicant country.

## 1.3. Expert profile

- Strong experience in the guides training
- Experience as director of the training course
- Good communication with the candidate must be guaranteed (language for example)
- Capacity of cultural empathy
- Knowledge of structures and goals of the IFMGA

## 2. Admission of an applicant country / association as a member country of the IFMGA

In principle it is the sponsor country that makes the application to the IFMGA for the final checkup.

### 2.1. Preconditions

- the structure, the scope and the level of the training correspond to the standards of the IFMGA-platform;
- this level has to be controllable during a training course;

### 2.2. Checkup for the admission

Basically the training will be checked in the main activities (rock, ice + mixed terrain and ski; for the “no-ski” countries, winter activity).

The different checkups take place during a mountain guide course. Therefore it needs a detailed arrangement between the TC, the managing committee of the IFMGA, the sponsor country and the applicant country.

- The different checkups are done by two experts of different countries, whereas one of them should be from the sponsor country;
- It is desirable, that different countries participate at the checkup;
- Priorities of the checkup:
  - Assessment of the instructors (didactic and methodical abilities, personal skills, experience a.s.o.)
  - Assessment of the participants of the training (personal skills, experience a.s.o.)
  - General assessment (standard and level of the training)
  - The TC gets a detailed report about every checkup;
  - The costs for the experts (travelling expenses + fees) for the first examination are paid by the IFMGA. Accommodation and food are paid by the applicant country. If further examinations are necessary because of insufficient subjects, all the costs have to be paid by the applicant country.

### 2.3. The admission of an applicant country

After the positive checkup of the training and the control of the structures of the association as a professional organization through the managing committee of the IFMGA, there will be a voting at the delegate’s meeting and then the applicant country can be admitted as a member.



## 2.4 Transitional training

A transitional solution for all those members who are already mountain guides has to be fixed with the managing committee of the IFMGA and has to be familiar to everybody („Grandfather System“).

### 3. Conditions after the admission

#### 3.1. Conditions during the first 5 years

After the admission, the support through the sponsor country should continue for 5 more years. It should have a consulting, but also a controlling function.

The following conditions have to be fulfilled:

- at least one training series have to be organized;
- the transitional rules for the members with the „Grandfather system“ must be concluded after 5 years;
- an examination or a control can be made;
- any deficiencies have to be eliminated immediately;

#### 4. Admission of member countries without skiing as discipline

The admission of member countries without the part of skiing is basically possible, but only under certain conditions.

These preconditions have to be individually and specifically checked for every new applicant country, then they have to be weighed and located.

##### 4.1. Preconditions

All the following preconditions have to be fulfilled without exception.

- a) Skiing is not present as a discipline in the job description of the mountain guides of the corresponding country and can not be practiced in the country because there is no infrastructure.
- b) It has to be evident, that the discipline skiing will not be a part of the profession of the mountain guides of the corresponding country in the future, neither.
- c) The standard of all the other disciplines has to be completely fulfilled;
- d) An adequate training has to be done in winter (on snow in high-mountain areas), f. ex. with snow-shoes. The subject „Snow and avalanche education“ (basics, assessment, decision, behaviour) has to be included in the training programme and has to be extensively taught;
- e) The European countries and the South American countries with a working infrastructure for skiing are in general excluded from this rule (f. ex. Argentina and Chile).

##### 4.2. Restrictions due to this regulation

- a) Mountain guides from countries without the discipline skiing have no reciprocal rights in other member countries in this sector;
- b) Associations without the discipline skiing are not allowed to train mountain guides of member countries with the discipline skiing;
- c) A mountain guide member card with the note “NOSKI” identifies the mountain guides of the countries without the discipline skiing.

##### 4.3. Further regulations

Mountain guides of countries without the discipline skiing have the possibility to do the ski training (qualification) later.

Preconditions:

- a) It takes place in a different member country of the IFMGA where the discipline skiing is practiced;
- b) So that the further education in the discipline skiing is guaranteed, the corresponding mountain guide has to get a second membership with the association;

c) In the mountain guide card this will be marked with: f. ex. „SKISWISS“ or „SKIUSA“.

### 5. Conditions for the member associations / countries

#### 5.1. General notes

The member associations / countries fulfil the conditions and the regulations of the platform of the IFMGA as minimal standards. It is also obvious that every member association makes active contributions to the IFMGA association work and with it to the requirements and to the further development of the professional interests of the professional mountain guides.

#### 5.2. Training

Within a rhythm of at least 5 years a time an own training should be organized. If this is not possible, the training should be done together with another member country.

#### 5.3. Measures in case of heavy deficiencies and offences

If it is highly probable that there are deficiencies concerning the training or if they are evident, a control can be directed, which will be made after a respective voting.

- a) If heavy deficiencies are established, they have to be compensated and eliminated after a realistic fixed period of time;
- b) If the deficiencies cannot be or are not eliminated after this fixed period of time, it is possible, after a voting of the delegate's assembly, to interrupt the membership or to finish the membership in grave and hopeless cases.

If an association is excluded from the IFMGA, the members of this association are allowed to join a different member association, always respecting the rights and duties.