



PROFESSIONAL, TERRAIN and SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

Version v2406

Revised June 2024

This version replaces all previous versions

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1. Introduction

The New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA) is recognised as the professional association for certified mountain guides in New Zealand. It sets and maintains standards for admission to, training and certification, and practice of the mountain guiding profession. The NZMGA is affiliated with the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA) and aligns with the international benchmark of the IFMGA's training and certification scheme. The IFMGA membership now totals national associations of 26 mountain countries around the world. The result is a rich flow of skill and knowledge dedicated to protecting the safety of and public interest in guided mountain travel.

1.1 Document Control

Date	Version #	Changes
January 2019	1901	Updates to Alpine Trekking Guide Terrain Guidelines and Supervision including Avalanche
June 2020	2005	Updates to recommended ratios, supervision, revalidation and Technical Advisor
January 2021	2101	Revalidation and operational supervision updated
June 2024	2406	Alpine Trekking Guide Pathway update, update guiding ratios

1.2 Published

The NZMGA Professional, Terrain and Supervision Guidelines are available publicly online at www.nzmga.org.nz and referenced by [Support Adventure](#), a website managed by [Tourism Industry Aotearoa](#) and [Recreation Aotearoa](#) and endorsed by [WorkSafe New Zealand](#), the government's workplace health and safety regulator.



1.3 Consultation

These Guidelines have been developed in consultation with industry experts. All changes to the Guidelines are approved by the Technical Sub Committee (TSC) and ratified by the Executive Committee (Committee) of the NZMGA.

The TSC consists of:

- All the members of the Committee that are fully qualified IFMGA guides. Committee members are elected by NZMGA membership and serve a term of 2 years;
- The Training Officer of the NZMGA who, as an employee of the Association, is a non-voting member of the Committee and TSC;
- Additional members may be co-opted by the Chair of TSC so that there are around 10 contributing members at any time for robust decision making. Co-opted members are fully qualified IFMGA guides that may be industry leaders, respected experts in their field, current or past Assessors/Trainers for the Association and/or past Committee members for continuity.

The TSC responsibilities include establishing standards of competence applying to different grades of certificates and recommending these to the Committee for ratification. For further information on the governance procedures of the NZMGA refer to the **NZMGA Constitution**, available from the Administrative Officer (admin@nzmga.org.nz).



2 Professional Guidelines

The framework of the NZMGA Professional, Terrain and Supervisions Guidelines (the Guidelines) defines the professional limitations of the various stages of NZMGA guiding qualification and seeks to clarify the relationship between Guides in training and fully qualified Guides. It establishes the good practice application of the NZMGA qualifications with respect to terrain, supervision and Guide:Client ratios when operating an activity in glaciated terrain or uncontrolled alpine environments.

It should be recognised that in accepting to work under these Guidelines, Guides are entitled to the full support of the Association in its role as an advocate for their interests and as a network for professional support.

If they have an incident while operating within the scope of these Guidelines, then they can expect a supportive and constructive investigation on their behalf.

2.1 Safety Management Systems

The Association has assessed its members as competent within the scope of their NZMGA qualification as defined in these Guidelines.

Due to the complexities of operating any activity in glaciated terrain or uncontrolled alpine environments, The Association recognises the established good practice that:

- Only a fully certified IFMGA Mountain, NZMGA Climb or Ski Guide with Avalanche Risk Management (ARM) Level 6 (Avalanche 2 or overseas equivalent) has the knowledge, skills and experience to operate autonomously within the framework of a robust Operational *Safety Management System* (SMS);
- Operational Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) must involve the input of a suitably qualified **Technical Advisor** being a fully certified IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb or NZMGA Ski Guide with Avalanche Risk Management (ARM) Level 6 (Avalanche 2 or overseas equivalent);
- The minimum qualification of a **Technical Expert** involved in the auditing of such an activity shall be an NZMGA Assessor or equivalent (see NZMGA Assessor Policy).

If an Operation is using NZMGA qualified Guides in terrain that is beyond their NZMGA scope then the Operation has a responsibility to ensure that their SMS meets the requirements of the Adventure Activities Regulations with respect to defining appropriate *Site or Activity Specific Standard Operating Procedures* (SOPs). These SOPs are to:

- Be informed by a suitable qualified **Technical Advisor**;
- Include route options, training progressions, assessment and currency requirements appropriate to the Guide qualification and the assignment;
- Include risk management procedures and decision making relating to terrain and conditions (including avalanche) should be appropriate to the skills and experience of that Guide;
- Include appropriate supervision that meets the requirements of these Guidelines. Defining roles and responsibilities of the Guides and their *Supervising Guides*.



2.2 Specific Guidelines

IFMGA MOUNTAIN GUIDE

These are Guides who have completed both NZMGA Ski Guide and NZMGA Climb Guide qualifications and have been accepted as IFMGA Guides. This is the highest level of qualification awarded by the NZMGA and is the only mountain guide qualification recognised by all IFMGA nations.

IFMGA Mountain Guides must be self-regulating, prepared to make an honest appraisal of their personal abilities, and willing to work within these limitations. They must be current and practised in the activities they undertake, and they must be able to document their standard.

NZMGA training and certification courses do not cover all aspects of guiding in depth, for example, high altitude, big walls, competitive and sport climbing. For these, an IFMGA Guide may require further training or practice.

IFMGA Mountain Guides should be aware of their responsibilities highlighted by these Guidelines when employing and working with *Assistant Guides*, including the allocation of guiding work and the provision of supervision and training.

NZMGA SKI OR CLIMB GUIDE

These are Guides who have completed both NZMGA Level 1 and Level 2 courses in either the Ski or Climb disciplines, other associated courses, and the supervised guiding experience as required by the Training and Certification Programme.

They are Guides who have the ability or desire to specialise in only one of these facets of guiding. These specialist Guides should receive the same professional respect and privileges in their chosen discipline as IFMGA Mountain Guides.

NZMGA Climb or Ski Guides should also be used as a valuable asset by *Assistant Guides* in the role of training and supervision.

ASPIRANT GUIDE

The NZMGA recognises the status of Aspirant Guide as the international qualification of a mountain guide in training.

Aspirant Guide is the status awarded to Guides who are on the IFMGA pathway and have successfully completed Climb Guide Level 1 course and Ski Guide Level 1 course since 2011. They are not yet fully qualified, being considered Guides in Training. No more than five years may have elapsed since their first Level 1 course and Aspirant Guides always work under the direct or indirect supervision of a fully certified IFMGA Mountain Guide.

ASSISTANT CLIMB GUIDE AND ASSISTANT SKI GUIDE

Assistant Guides have successfully completed the prerequisite training courses for, and one assessment course in either Ski or Climb disciplines. They are not yet fully qualified, being considered Guides in Training. No more than five years may have elapsed since their Level 1 course and always work under the direct or indirect supervision of a fully certified Guide.

Assistant Guides are responsible for ensuring that all work they carry out is adequately supervised¹. *Assistant Guides* must keep full documentation of trips completed and have this verified and signed by the *Supervising Guide*. Some responsibility for the actions of the Assistant is with the *Supervising Guide*.

Several important considerations must be kept in mind when *Assistant Guides* are guiding or instructing:

- The safety of the client has first priority;
- The quality of experience offered has second priority.

¹ Including avalanche supervision, see: *Supervision Guidelines/ Avalanche Supervision*



ASSISTANT HELI-SKI GUIDE

NZMGA Assistant Heli-ski Guides have completed a level 1 Ski Guide assessment course and have met further prerequisites in order to apply to the Technical Sub-Committee for this status. It is an endpoint qualification for those in the NZMGA Ski Guide Pathway who have no desire to lead guide in the heli-ski industry nor to undertake ski touring guiding.

The NZMGA still encourages Guides to work towards achieving full NZMGA Ski Guide status as a primary objective.

ALPINE TREKKING GUIDE AND ASSISTANT ALPINE TREKKING GUIDE

These are Guides who have completed an Alpine Trekking Guides Level 1 or Level 2 assessment course.

HARD ICE GUIDE

Hard Ice Guides have a very specific work environment. The Training and Certification Programme recognises this.

Employers of Hard Ice Guides should be aware of the limitations set by the Association on these members and are encouraged to provide adequate training and supervision to enable Hard Ice Guides to progress through the NZMGA Training and Certification Programme as a complement to their hard ice skills.

ASSISTANT HARD ICE GUIDE

Assistant Hard Ice Guide status is given to guides trained internally by a company who has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Association. It is only valid whilst the Guide is employed by that particular company and is not transferable.

Assistant Hard Ice Guides are not full members of the Association, not be listed on the website, not hold a certificate to practise/membership card or have access to pro deals.



2.3 General Guidelines

Currency of Certification (Certificate to Practice)

IFMGA members are required under the guidelines of IFMGA membership to be involved in ongoing professional training

To practice mountain guiding in New Zealand and/or other IFMGA countries, NZMGA Guides must hold a Certificate to Practice. These are the size of a driver's licence, identify the Guide and their qualification and are issued annually. The Certificate to Practice is valid as long as Guides are:

- Current financial members of the Association;
- Able to demonstrate currency in first aid through holding a current Pre-Hospital Emergency Care (PHEC) certificate (or equivalent).

Guides agree to operate inside the rules of the Association. The Association may take action against Persons identifying themselves as having NZMGA status without Currency of Certification.

The Association has a retirement policy (see below) for Guides who wish to remain involved in the affairs of the Association but who no longer wish to guide.

REVALIDATION

To remain Revalidated, guides must maintain currency in the disciplines that they have been assessed in (climb/ski/alpine trekking/hard ice) and meet the NZMGA's minimum requirements for Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Guiding assignments must be given appropriate to a Guides' currency. When Guides are regaining currency for purposes of Revalidation or becoming familiar with new locations and procedures, Level 2 guides may require some level of supervision (see also Supervision).

The Association recommends at least 10 days guiding work per discipline every two (2) years to remain current for that discipline.

The Association recommends that all NZMGA Guides with Level 2 qualifications undertake a minimum of two days of CPD every year.

LAPSED MEMBERS

The Association allows for members who have formally resigned, or where due to circumstances will take a break from their guiding career, to re-enter the Association subject to certain conditions. Members should refer to the *Lapsed Member Policy* for details.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

This status will be for Guides with their primary Guide's Association membership with another country to obtain a secondary membership affiliation with the Association. Members should refer to the *Associate Member Policy* for details.

RETIRED MEMBERS

The Association recognises the status of Retired Members. They are members of the Association who have retired from active guiding. They pay 1/3 of the full Guides' annual levy, maintain full voting rights, but no longer hold a certificate to practice.

INTERNATIONAL WORK

The Association supports the right of IFMGA Mountain Guides to work internationally and NZMGA Climb and Ski Guides to work internationally within their specialist field.

The IFMGA nations recognise the value of Guides in training being exposed to a variety of experiences and Aspirant Guides are encouraged to work internationally under a programme of supervision. All Guides must make themselves familiar with, and abide by, the rules of other IFMGA affiliate countries if they intend to guide there.

The NZMGA will not endorse or support the work of any Guides operating outside the Guidelines internationally.

The Association will accept some appropriately supervised overseas work as *Quality Supervised Days*.



IDENTIFICATION OF STATUS

It contravenes the rules of the Association to misrepresent status. The Committee will take disciplinary action where such misrepresentation occurs (For example, if you are an NZMGA Assistant Climb Guide, it is not permissible to be identified as an NZMGA Climb Guide).

In all advertising, it is essential that Guides clearly and accurately identify their NZMGA status.

Training Roles

A training role without specific Level 1 qualification can occur if the Guide is under the direct supervision of an IFMGA Guide or NZMGA Ski or Climb Guide. It is primarily an observation role and can only take place where the person in the training role has no responsibility for clients and is outside of the guide:client ratio.

Training roles for non-NZMGA members can only occur if they can be accommodated as a client in the guide:client ratios.

Assistant Climb or Ski Guides wanting experience outside their discipline should only assume a training role under direct supervision at all times.

Logbooks

Guides are responsible for maintaining a complete set of all documents relating to their qualifications and work experience.

Detailed and accurate Logbooks of all guiding assignments and supervision during an *Assistant Guide's* training pathway should be kept including their own learning points.

The *Supervising Guide* is responsible for:

- Signing the log as direct or indirect supervision;
- Evaluating whether there was a sufficient guiding component to a day's work for it to be eligible as a *Quality Supervised Day* (see below);
- Providing feedback and specific observations of the Guide's performance and competencies related to the guide training programme.

Logbooks must be submitted to the Training Officer in the format available on the NZMGA website² in support of entrance onto NZMGA Training and Assessment courses.

Quality Supervised Days

For workdays to be eligible to count as prerequisite guiding days for NZMGA courses, they must be recognised by the Training Officer as *Quality Supervised Days*. These are days when Guides are in the field actively guiding or instructing. Hut days on mountaineering trips, film safety work, travel days, and non-flying heli-ski days are not acceptable as guiding days.

² www.nzmga.org.nz



3 Terrain Guidelines

3.1 IFMGA Mountain Guide

There are no specific terrain limitations except those imposed by personal or experience limitations.

As new activities emerge, IFMGA Mountain Guides should be able to document their experience before involving clients in such activities.

3.2 NZMGA Ski Guide

All skiing (and snowboard) activities in New Zealand, including ascents of non-technical peaks (no harder than grade Seriousness II, Technical 1³ in normal winter/spring conditions), as part of a ski tour.

Non-technical ski peaks are such that in normal conditions they can be ascended mostly on skins. For short sections client(s) may be safeguarded by belaying, lowering, the use of a fixed line or short roping (1 or 2 clients at a time). Non-technical peaks do not require multi-pitch climbing techniques.

3.3 NZMGA Climb Guide

All climbing and mountaineering activities in New Zealand where skiing is not the main objective.

NZMGA Climb Guides have the guiding and instructional skills needed to work in alpine rock, snow and ice terrain, in both summer and winter.

3.4 Assistant Guides

For *Assistant Guides* working under indirect supervision, there are some specific terrain limitations:

- Less experienced *Assistant Guides* should be familiar with the proposed guiding location and have worked there previously under direct supervision. Guiding in unfamiliar or more demanding terrain is only appropriate for experienced *Assistant Guides* who are ready for the challenges to complement their training apprenticeship;
- **Assistant Climb Guides** with less than 20 days guiding experience may not guide more than one client on routes harder than grade Serious II, Technical 2. For example, it is inappropriate for an inexperienced Assistant to guide the NW Ridge of Mt Aspiring with two clients;
- **Assistant Climb Guides** may not guide on routes graded above Serious III, Technical 2+ unless directly supervised by an IFMGA Mountain Guide or NZMGA Climb Guide. On Ascents grade III 3 or above, supervising Guides can only directly supervise one Assistant Climb Guide at a time;
- **Assistant Ski Guides** should not be a heli-ski lead guide (in charge of multi groups *or* solo in charge of one group with no other heli-ski group in the immediate vicinity);
- **Assistant Heli-ski Guides** are not permitted to guide ski touring.

Assistant Climb or Ski Guides wanting experience outside their discipline should only assume a training role under direct supervision at all times⁴.

³ All grading refers to the two-tier (seriousness/technical) NZ mountaineering grades. For further information refer to Aoraki/Tai Poutini: A Guide for Mountaineers (2018)

⁴ See: *Professional Guidelines/ General Guidelines/ Training Roles*



3.5 Foreign Aspirant Guides

Foreign Aspirant Guides working in New Zealand are subject to the *Guidelines*. This requires Aspirants working in New Zealand to be bound by the same terrain limitations as an *Assistant Guide* in each specialised field.

3.6 Alpine Trekking Guide

Alpine Trekking Terrain

Alpine Trekking Guides (ATGs) are able to lead trekking groups through non-technical trekking terrain - bush, subalpine, max grade I (new Mount Cook guide book grading) (where permanent or seasonal snow may be encountered).

They may also be under supervision, guide technical trekking terrain, including “easy” glaciated neve trekking terrain, as well as suitable hard ice areas of lower glaciers.

The use of learnt, trained and assessed guiding techniques for such trekking, as per the NZMGA training and assessment scheme, could/will be used, and the basic skills of alpinism may be required. These include: use of ice axe, self-arrest and crampon techniques

Some examples of non-technical trekking terrain (where, in general, rope guiding techniques would not be expected/ required) are:

- Three Pass trip (Arthurs Pass);
- Mueller Hut, Mt Wakefield, Mt Sebastopol, Sefton Biv (AMCNP)
- Cascade Saddle, up to Brewster Glacier, (Mount Aspiring National Park);
- Five Pass trip, Gertrude saddle (Mt Aspiring/Fiordland National park)

Technical Trekking Terrain

Technical Trekking Terrain is where the use of the rope is included in guiding techniques (expected), including “easy”* neve glacier terrain.

[* Non-technical glacier neve where a guide ropes up clients in glacier mode, and walks them up or down glacier expecting the terrain and route to be reasonably flat or low angle, route finding straightforward, not expecting to negotiate challenging bergschrunds or not traversing ice falls (yes, stopping to take photos of such features as picturesque seracs from a safe position)]

It is expected that the guide enters into the intended spirit of these terrain guidelines to reflect their basic training and experience of such terrain. If their clients wish to explore more technical or challenging terrain, a NZMGA climb or IFMGA guide should be engaged.

Technical trekking terrain requires supervision of ATG guides by either NZMGA Climb or IFMGA Guides

Activity providers may develop Site Specific SOPs for their terrain that encompasses technical trekking terrain.

The NZMGA very much supports a program where an ATG first works under direct supervision at a particular Technical Trekking Terrain site. Then, they may continue to work under the indirect supervision of an IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb Guide.



Guidance for Supervising/Chief Guides:

Examples of technical trekking terrain suitable for a well site trained and supervised NZMGA Alpine Trekking Guide is:

- Neve walk/trekking in summer from Tasman Glacier Kelman landing zone or upper neve landing zone, and trek down glacier to aircraft pick up.
- Ball Pass
- Pioneer Hut to Pioneer Pass
- Overnight to Plateau Hut and gentle neve walk onto Grand Plateau.
- Chancellor Dome
- Barron Saddle exit via lower glacier route
- Brewster Glacier to Mt Top Heavy
- Mtns Ruapehu, Tongariro, Taranaki
- Rabbit pass

Technical Terrain conditions for ATG changes daily, seasonally and annually, significantly changing the hazards and technical difficulties. On the ground supervision and assessment of conditions is vital.

3.7 Hard Ice Guide

A Hard Ice Guide has training and a specific qualification relating to their part of the guiding industry. Hard Ice Guides are qualified to work on the lower, hard ice areas of glaciers. Their work encompasses guided walking trips, instruction, and ice climbing. Hard Ice guiding encompasses guided walking trips, instruction, and ice climbing on the lower level hard ice areas of glaciers. Clients may have little experience and be guided in large groups on maintained tracks or 'free guiding'.



3.8 Guide: Client Ratios - All Statuses

In addition to the Terrain Guidelines, the Association recommends maximum guide:client ratios. Guide experience, prevailing conditions on the mountain and client expertise will also be important factors to be taken into consideration when choosing to extend ratios under unusual circumstances. For mountains and terrain not listed below, reference should be made to mountains and terrain of similar difficulty. For Assistant Guides, maximum ratios are for Indirect Supervision.

ASCENTS AND SKI MOUNTAINEERING

Peaks / Terrain (Examples)	Grade	IFMGA/ Aspirant	Climb	Ski	ATG	HIG
i) Serious peaks (eg Aoraki/Cook, Hicks, Tasman, Tutoko)	IV, 3	1:1 (Aspirant under DIRECT supervision)	1:1 (Assistant under DIRECT supervision)			
ii) Technical peaks (eg Aspiring, Dixon, Elie de Beaumont, Green, Haidinger, Lendenfeld, Minarets, Sefton)	Standard routes III, 2+	1:2 (Aspirant with 20+ days)	1:2 (Assistant with 20+ days)			
iii) Non-technical peaks (eg Hochstetter Dome, Mt Sydney King)	II, 1	1:4	1:4	1:4⁵		

MOUNTAINEERING INSTRUCTION

Peaks / Terrain (Examples)	Grade	IFMGA/ Aspirant	Climb	Ski	ATG	aATG	HIG
On moderately technical ground with ascents of peaks as per Asc.iii	II, 1	1:4⁷	1:4⁶				
Normal Alpine Trekking Terrain	N/A	1:6	1:6	1:6	1:4	1:4	
On non-technical ground (e.g. snow craft/avalanche education) in a controlled / SIMPLE ATES ⁷	N/A	1:8	1:8	1:8	1:8	1:6⁹	

⁵ See: *Terrain Guidelines/ NZMGA Ski Guide*

⁶ Assistant Climb Guides with less than 20 days logged Quality Supervised Days should not be the senior Guide on an instruction course on glaciated terrain with more than four clients

⁷ Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale



ROCK AND ICE CLIMBING

Peaks / Terrain (Examples)	Grade	IFMGA/ Aspirant	Climb	Ski	ATG	HIG
Multi-pitch rock and ice climbing	All	1:4	1:4			
Single-pitch rock climbing	All	1:6	1:6			
Single-pitch ice climbing	All	1:4	1:4			

SKI TOURING

Peaks / Terrain (Examples)	Grade	IFMGA/ Aspirant	Climb	Ski	ATG	HIG
All glaciated terrain and/or CHALLENGING ATES ⁹ terrain (eg Tasman /Murchison /Fox /Franz)	N/A	1:5		1:5		
Non-glaciated and SIMPLE ATES terrain (eg Two-Thumbs /Pisas)	N/A	1:6		1:6		

ALPINE TREKKING

Peaks / Terrain (Examples)	Grade	IFMGA/ Aspirant	Climb	Ski	ATG	aATG	HIG
Alpine Trekking Terrain	N/A	1:6	1:6		1:4	1:4	

HARD ICE

Peaks / Terrain (Examples)	Grade	IFMGA/ Aspirant	Climb	Ski	ATG	aATG	HIG
Hard ice trekking (free guiding)	N/A	1:6 ⁸	1:6 ¹¹		1:6 ¹¹	1:4 ¹¹	1:12
Top rope ice climbing	N/A	1:6	1:6		1:4	1:4	1:6

⁸ Without specific HIG experience



4 Supervision Guidelines

4.1 Operational Supervision

Within a guiding operation a key risk management function is provided through the provision of routine and continuous operational supervision by a suitably qualified Senior Guiding Staff (eg Chief Guide).

Senior Guiding Staff must be qualified equivalent to a Technical Advisor. The operational supervision responsibilities of Senior Guiding Staff may be shared amongst multiple roles but must include:

- Verify the competence and Revalidation criteria for all Guiding Staff;
- Confirm suitability of a guiding assignments at the time of booking/confirmation;
- Approve guiding assignments for all Guiding Staff. This person should have the judgement to understand both the assignment and the chosen guide's strengths and weaknesses. Commercial pressure should play no part in decisions to do with the suitability of work assigned to Guiding Staff. For example, when Guides are regaining currency for purposes of Revalidation or becoming familiar with new locations and procedures;
- Some operational supervision may be provided as appropriate by an *Activity or Site-Specific SOP* informed by a suitably qualified **Technical Advisor** (eg AT Guides in Technical Trekking Terrain).

4.2 Supervision Period

- Supervision of Guiding Staff commences on the assignment of the task and throughout the period of the assignment until the final debrief (Supervising Period);
- The **Senior Guide** who makes assignments is also included as a Supervising Guide for the Supervision Period, whether or not they are also indirectly or directly supervising or delegating this responsibility;
- Delegation of supervision may be done to appropriately qualified guiding staff for all or part of the Supervising Period;
- The delegation of supervision requires clearly defined responsibilities including duration and handovers;
- *Activity or Site-Specific SOPs* informed by a suitably qualified **Technical Advisor** are required for the supervision of non-NZMGA members⁹.



4.3 Assistant Guide Supervision

The NZMGA Training and Certification Programme is based on the apprenticeship model. It involves a long-term, ongoing process of training, supervision and assessment, with responsibilities on *Assistant Guides*, their supervisors and their employers. The Association believes workplace supervision to be a critical part of the training programme. The training and experience passed on by more experienced Guides is a valuable method of obtaining and refining the techniques, attitudes, and general practices of the guiding profession. There is mutual benefit in this culture.

Employers, by providing adequate training and supervision, decrease their exposure to accidents due to inexperience and benefit from increased commitment from *Assistant Guides*. *Assistant Guides* benefit from an employer directing resources to their career development.

Assistant Guides:

- Must work under direct or indirect supervision of an appropriately qualified and current Guide. Supervision should be appropriate to helping *Assistant Guides* gain experience whilst maintaining safety;
- Should be able to freely discuss their supervision requirements with their employers;
- Must ensure they are receiving supervision for the duration of the Supervision Period to stay within the scope of their qualification or be under the operational supervision of a *Site-Specific SOP* (eg with defined risk management strategies such as further training/assessment criteria);
- Are encouraged to contact the Training Officer if they are unhappy with the quality of supervision being provided.

Assistant Heli-ski Guides:

- Must not lead guide;
- Must be directly supervised by an IFMGA or NZMGA Ski Guide. In the heli-ski context, this means that they are in radio contact with the Lead Guide or the helicopter that is with that Lead Guide that can relay messages between the Lead Guide and Assistant Heli-ski Guide;
- Must be skiing terrain that has been approved by the Lead Guide;
- Must attend all meetings run by the Lead Guide eg. Morning meeting, lunch time meeting and end of day meeting.

4.4 Supervising Guide's Responsibilities

- Supervising Guides should endeavour to create an environment where Assistant Guides can further their skills and experience without undue pressures or responsibilities;
- They should ensure that tasks assigned to Assistant Guides are appropriate to their personal abilities, level of training and experience;
- They should give consideration to factors such as objective hazards, access, good communication, and, should rescue be required, rapid response.



4.5 Appropriately Qualified Supervising Guides

Guide Status		Supervising Guide
Assistant Climb		IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb Guide ¹⁰
Assistant Ski		IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Ski Guide ¹⁴
Assistant Heli-ski		IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Ski Guide ¹⁴
Alpine Trekking	Normal Terrain	No supervision is required
	Technical Trekking Terrain	IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb Guide ¹¹
Assistant Alpine Trekking	Normal Terrain	IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb Guide ¹⁵ , or AT Guide
	Technical Trekking Terrain	IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb Guide ¹⁵
Hard Ice		No supervision is required in Hard Ice terrain
Assistant Hard Ice (Internal company qualification)		IFMGA Mountain or NZMGA Climb Guide ¹² or NZMGA Hard Ice Guide

At least 7 days under direct supervision in each/either discipline as an Assistant Climb or Ski Guides must be logged prior to attending a level 2 course; for Climb Guides 3 must be ascents. For Ski Guides, 3 must be ski touring.

At least 5 days under direct supervision as an Assistant Alpine Trekking Guide must be logged prior to attending a level 2 course.

¹⁰ For non-NZMGA guides, see also **Indirect Supervision** criteria

¹¹ Familiar with ATG skills

¹² Familiar with hard ice guiding



4.6 Avalanche Supervision

Avalanche terrain may be mapped in an operations SMS using the Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (ATES) with the input of an ARM Level 6 (Avalanche Stage 2 or overseas equivalent).

Operators should implement Avalanche Danger forecasting procedures in their SMS, appropriate to the terrain they are operating in.

Avalanche supervision may come from a different source to guiding supervision (eg Snow Safety Officer).

According to the *New Zealand Avalanche Terrain Operating Guidelines for Instructors/Guides*:

- NZMGA Guides with Avalanche Risk Management (ARM) Level 5 (Avalanche 1 or overseas equivalent) can operate in SIMPLE* avalanche terrain as defined in a Site-Specific SOP when the Avalanche Danger is LOW (*Or CHALLENGING if defaulted only by Glaciation variable);
- Otherwise an ARM Level 6 supervisor is required;
- An NZMGA Guide with ARM Level 6 can make their own avalanche assessments.

4.7 Direct Supervision

Direct supervision occurs when the *Supervising Guide* is in a position to oversee guiding activities throughout the day, that is, they are in close visual or verbal contact with the Guide under supervision.

The direct *Supervising Guide* must:

- Be the *Assistant Guide's* employer or the employers' representative. This means a permanent member of the employer's staff or contracted on the same conditions as the supervised guide (eg same or reasonable similar assignment);
- Be able to give detailed and quality feedback both during and at the end of the supervising period.

4.8 Indirect Supervision

Indirect supervision occurs when the *Supervising Guide* assumes professional responsibility for the *Assistant Guide* but is not physically present when the work takes place.

As well as the criteria below, qualified guides who are members of IFMGA affiliated overseas national mountain guide associations must meet the criteria and apply to the Technical Sub Committee to become Associate members of the NZMGA before indirectly supervising assistant NZMGA guides.

The indirect *Supervising Guide* must:

- Be the *Assistant Guide's* employer or the employer's representative. This means a permanent member of staff or contracted for a specific duration of the Supervising Period;
- Due to seasonal variation in conditions, have familiarity with the guiding terrain that the guides under their supervision are working in, in a range of seasons and under the current conditions;
- Must be familiar with *Assistant Guide's* skill set and experience;
- Be in a position to actively assess the current conditions and suitability of the guiding assignment;
- Be in a position to communicate with the Guides under their supervision throughout the assignment if necessary and offer guidance and feedback on work undertaken by these guides.