

# **Instructions of the Mountain Rescue Service to ensure the safety of persons moving in the mountain areas**

Pursuant to Section 11 subsection 2 paragraph a) of the Act No. 544/2002 Z. z. (Coll.) on the Mountain Rescue Service, in order to ensure the safety of persons moving in the mountain areas, the Mountain Rescue Service hereby provides as follows:

## **Clause 1**

### **Obligations of persons moving in the mountain areas**

(1) A person in the mountain area (except for persons staying in the settlements, on public roads and pathways, on downhill and cross-country tracks) is bound:

- a) to follow instructions of the Mountain Rescue Service;
- b) to respect the warning, information and other devices related to the safety of persons in the mountain area;
- c) to obtain information of the Mountain Rescue Service or to use any information sources available relating to the movement conditions on the hiking trails, avalanche danger and other issues related to the safe movement, avalanche risk and other issues relevant for the safe movement;
- d) to obtain weather forecast from the Slovak Hydrometeorology Institute or the Mountain Rescue Service;
- e) to avoid endangering his/her own life, health or property, or endangering the life, health or property of other persons;
- f) to accommodate the gear and equipment to fit the difficulty grade of the hike, trekking or ascent (hereinafter referred to as “the hike“) and weather conditions;
- g) to take a first aid kit on the hike containing first aid tools;
- h) to take sufficient quantity of food and drink for the hike;
- i) to accommodate the difficulty grade of the hike to their health conditions and physical fitness;
- j) to avoid going for a hike when grade 4 or 5 avalanche danger has been announced;
- k) to interrupt the hike and return back if the weather is getting worse;
- l) to avoid walking close to the edges of the trails since the edges may slide;
- m) to avoid leaning against the rails, mainly when exposed to steep sections, and sitting on the rails;

- n) to avoid overloading the bridges in big groups and staying on them if not necessary;
- o) to cross the summer snow fields with the maximum care and avoid sliding on them;
- p) to use hands to hold the terrain hand-holds or to be rope-secured when taking photographs and filming in a steep terrain;
- q) to avoid throwing stones or other objects;
- r) to avoid shortcutting the trails;
- s) to avoid overtaking when moving in the sections safeguarded with artificial technical aids and to move so that only one person is between two anchoring items at a time;
- t) to give way to pedestrians when skiing or cycling;
- u) to go only along marked trails, when moving in the walking terrain and above the upper forest line;

(2) it is suitable to take a mobile telephone on the hike, especially if a person is to be alone during the hike;

(3) the only persons allowed to move off the marked trails or in the climbing terrain of up to grade I of the UIAA International Climbing Scale, inclusive, (the UIAA International Climbing Scale is annexed to these Instructions as Annex No. 1) are the following:

- a) a UIMLA Leader,
- b) a person accompanied by the UIMLA Leader,
- c) a person performing other activities during which it is necessary to leave the marked trail) (e.g. sports flying, rafting, canoeing, diving, fishing, hunting, ...),
- d) other authorised person (for example: nature reserve rangers, members of forest guards, land owners, foresters, geodetic officer, policemen, firemen, ...),

(4) the only persons allowed to move off the marked trails or in the climbing terrain of grade II of the UIAA International Climbing Scale, inclusive, are the following:

- a) an Alpine Trekking Instructor,
- b) a person undergoing a training of alpine trekking accompanied by an Alpine Trekking Instructor,

(5) the only persons allowed to move off the marked trails or in the climbing terrain are the following:

- a) a member of Mountain Rescue Service;
  - b) other persons (civil association, legal entity and natural person) cooperating with the Mountain Rescue Service in performing the roles defined in the Act No. 544/2002 Z. z./Coll./, or a member of an organization associated with the IKAR-CISA International Organization,
- a) Mountain Guide (UIAGM/IFMGA),

- b) a person accompanied by a Mountain Guide (UIAGM/IFMGA),
  - c) a mountaineer, ski-mountaineer,
  - d) a person undergoing a mountaineering training or ski-mountaineering training accompanied by the Instructor of Mountaineering or Ski-Mountaineering,
  - e) a person or an organization in performing special roles after discussing them with the Mountain Rescue Service and after meeting the conditions for the safe movement,
- (6) the only persons allowed to move in the caves (save for the caves accessible to the public), including the section between the entrance to the cave and the hiking trail, are the following:
- a) a member of a speleological association,
  - b) a person during the training accompanied by a member of a speleological association,
  - c) a person or an organization in performing special tasks after discussing it with the Mountain Rescue Service and after meeting the conditions for the safe movement,
  - d) a member of the Mountain Rescue Service,
  - e) other persons (civil association, legal entity and natural person) cooperating with the Mountain Rescue Service in performing the roles defined in the Act No. 544/2002 Z. z. /Coll./.

## **Clause 2**

### **Book of Hikes and Ascents**

- (1) Before the start of the hike, trekking or ascent, a person is bound to enter a record in the Book of Hikes and Ascents; this shall not apply to the movement in settlements and on the roads between them.
- (2) The following particulars shall be entered in the Book of Hikes and Ascents:
- a) name and surname,
  - b) goal,
  - c) route,
  - d) time of beginning and expected time of return,
  - e) other relevant particulars, for example, a telephone number.
- (3) If a person has no chance to make a record in the Book of Hikes and Ascents, s/he is bound to inform the Mountain Rescue Service of the particulars mentioned in subsection (2), or his/her close person who shall inform the Mountain Rescue Service thereof in case where such a person starts to be missing.
- (4) The goal, route and expected time of return must be observed.

(5) If a person fails to return back until the time specified in the Book of Hikes and Ascents, legal entities and natural persons providing accommodation or catering services, or a close person mentioned above, must announce it to the Mountain Rescue Service.

(6) The missing status lasting for more than 6 hours shall be considered as a direct request of an intervention of the Mountain Rescue Service.

(7) After returning from the hike, it is necessary to check out from the Book of Hikes and Ascents and to duly inform the Mountain Rescue Service or a close person of the return.

### **Clause 3**

#### **Accident in the mountain area**

(1) In the case where an accident occurs in the mountain area, it is necessary to follow the following instructions:

##### *A) Missing status*

If a person fails to return from the hike in time, after the expiry of a reasonable waiting time, it is necessary to announce his/her missing status to the call-centre of the Mountain Rescue Service; the reporting is urgent mainly in bad weather.

##### *B) Getting lost and getting stuck in a difficult terrain*

If a person gets lost or gets stuck in a difficult terrain, it is necessary to determine the place as precise as possible, and to announce it to the Mountain Rescue Service; if circumstances permit, stay in contact with such a person until the arrival of mountain rescue rangers. It is recommended that a person who has got lost should stop moving on, especially if the terrain is steep.

##### *C) Light injury or fatigue*

Place the person injured in a safe place, provide him/her with first aid and after some rest help him/her descend to the next cable-lift station, chalet or settlement; or announce the injury to the Mountain Rescue Service.

##### *D) Serious injury, incapability of further walking*

Place the person injured in a safe place, provide him/her with first aid and protect him/her from the cold; promptly announce the injury to the Mountain Rescue Service and consult the next step with them; do not leave the injured person alone in bad weather.

#### *E) Avalanche accident*

Start the examination of the avalanche and its surroundings immediately, however, taking into account a bad chance of another avalanche; if the search is unsuccessful, start searching with avalanche search equipment or start an improvised probe search and promptly announce the event to the Mountain Rescue Service.

#### *F) Death*

A deadly injury or finding a human corpse should be promptly announced to the Mountain Rescue Service or to the nearest Police Ward.

### **Clause 4**

#### **Announcement of accident**

(1) Any accident should be announced in person or by telephone to:

- a) **NON STOP call-centre of the Mountain Rescue Service, Telephone No.: 18300**
- b) as an emergency call in the Integrated Rescue System, Telephone No.: 112

### **Clause 5**

#### **Particulars of accident**

(1) The following particulars should be announced about the accident:

- a) determination of the place where the intervention is to be conducted;
- b) information about the calling person:
  - 1. name and surname,
  - 2. address of permanent residence,
  - 3. place of accommodation in the mountain area,
  - 4. place from where the person is calling,
- c) information about the injured person:
  - 1. name and surname,
  - 2. age,
  - 3. nationality,
  - 4. address of permanent residence,
  - 5. place of accommodation in the mountain area,
- d) information related to the request of intervention:
  - 1. current condition of the injured person,

2. kind of injury,
  3. mechanism of accident,
  4. precise determination and description of the place,
- e) other information,
1. current weather,
  2. precise description of terrain,
  3. possibility of transport,
  4. possibility of self-rescue.

## **Clause 6**

### **Instructions to hikers**

- (1) Study the course of the route on a map or in a tourist guide.
- (2) Use the services of Mountain Guides or Mountain Leaders where mandatory.
- (3) Leave for a hike early morning and return until dark.
- (4) While descending it is necessary to take into consideration the time equalling about 70 % of the time of the ascent.
- (5) When moving in the mountain terrain, use hiking poles to facilitate the hiking.
- (6) Accommodate your clothes, footwear and gear to the season of the year, difficulty of the hike and its length. It is mandatory to wear the boots with a rough sole and a raincoat or an anorak. In the cold weather or during the ascent to a pass or summit, it is also necessary to wear a sweater, cap and gloves. In wintertime it is recommended to mount crampons, use an axe or adjustable poles. Do not forget to take sufficient food and drinks.
- (7) Use a tourist map (summer and winter) for better orientation which shows all the relevant data. Never use a summer map in winter, and vice versa. Always use the latest amended version of a map to avoid mistakes in the terrain.

## **Clause 7**

### **Instructions to mountaineers**

- (1) Mountaineering activities must comply with the methodological instructions of the training facility accredited for “mountaineering” and the UIAA International Organization.
- (2) In the climbing terrain, use an all-body or combined (sit and breast) climbing harness, protective helmet, rope, ancillary climbing material and means of improvised rescue.
- (3) In performing mountaineering and ski-mountaineering activities, use only the CE or UIAA certified material to prevent the fall and to ensure the climbing safety.

- (4) Always take a bivouac bag with you when setting out for a long climbing tour.
- (5) Plan the beginning of the ascent so that you could manage to return during the daylight if permitted by the character and difficulty of the ascent.
- (6) Never perform mountaineering activities if your condition is diminished due to alcohol, narcotic substances, drug, fatigue, nausea, bad health condition or disease.
- (7) The ascent in the alpine altitudes should be planned to fit your ability; the grade recommended is to be one below your climbing limit on the training rocks.
- (8) Study the course of the climbing route, possibility of escape and return in a climbing guide; where the ascent is difficult or terrain is unclear, examine the wall from the opposite slope. With a terrain demanding for orientation, make a draft in case the visibility gets worse.
- (9) Do not rely on the existing safety points.

## **Clause 8**

### **Instructions to ski-mountaineers**

- (1) The ski-mountaineering activities must comply with the methodological instructions of the training facility accredited for “mountaineering” or “ski-mountaineering” and the UIAA and ISMF International Organization.
- (2) Choose the gear and equipment suitable for the snow conditions, weather, difficulty and the nature of the route planned.
- (3) Use an avalanche beacon or another avalanche-protective device; the gear must also include the avalanche probe and shovel.
- (4) In the climbing terrain, use an all-body or combined (sit and breast) climbing harness, protective helmet, rope, ancillary climbing material and means of improvised rescue.
- (5) In performing ski-mountaineering activities, use only the CE or UIAA certified material to prevent the fall and to ensure the climbing safety.
- (6) Always take a bivouac bag with you when setting out for a long trek.
- (7) Plan the beginning of the ascent so that you could manage to return during the daylight if permitted by the character and difficulty of the ascent.
- (8) Never perform the ski-mountaineering activities if your condition is diminished mainly due to alcohol, narcotic substances, drug, fatigue, nausea, bad health condition or disease.
- (9) Study the course of the climbing route, possibility of escape, descend and downhill return in a guide; where the ascent is difficult or terrain is unclear, examine it from the opposite slope. With a terrain demanding for orientation, make a draft in case the visibility gets worse.

## **Clause 9**

### **Instructions to bikers**

- (1) Bikers must have the full control over their bikes while riding.
- (2) Pedestrians shall have the right of way; while riding their bikes bikers must not endanger or restrict other persons.
- (3) Use a protective helmet; use also protective means for other parts of the body in a steep terrain.
- (4) Never ride your bike if your condition is diminished mainly due to alcohol, narcotic substances, drug, fatigue, nausea, injury, bad health condition or disease.

## **Clause 10**

### **Instructions to operators of flying sports equipment**

- (1) The flying sport equipment shall include: non-powered paraglide, non-powered hand glide, powered paraglide and powered hand glide (hereinafter referred to as “flying equipment”).
- (2) Pilots shall be bound to perform their flying activities in compliance with the flying rules, except for the cases where the circumstances necessitate a deviation from the rules for the sake of the flying safety.
- (3) During the flight pilots must have a valid pilot card or a trainee card and a valid card of airworthiness of the equipment (technical card). Foreigners must have a document equivalent to the pilot’s card, trainee’s card, airworthiness card, document proving insurance of liability for damage caused by the operation of the equipment, and also document proving the pilot’s accident insurance.
- (4) Flying the equipment must be performed in compliance with the flying rules, under the visibility conditions, from the sunrise to the sunset and during direct visibility. Exceptionally, the flight may be conducted 30 minutes before the sunrise and 15 minutes after the sunset (according to the local meridian).
- (5) Pilots and crew members may not start the flight if their condition is diminished mainly due to alcohol, narcotic substances, drug, fatigue, nausea, bad health condition or disease. Before and during the flight, pilots and crew members may not drink alcohol, or take narcotics or drugs diminishing their flying abilities.
- (6) During the flight at an altitude over 150 m above the terrain, the flying equipment must be equipped with a rescue system and an altitude meter.

(7) During the flight it is prohibited to fly over highways, I-III roads and railways in an altitude less than 150 m.

(8) During the flight it is prohibited to perform sudden turns and sharp bows (more than 60°) close to the ground, or to approach another equipment in a distance smaller than 30 m.

(9) Any person performing activities related to the operation of the equipment must protect his/her health by suitable means. Mandatory protective means include a protective helmet and eye protection. Suitable clothes and footwear and other protective means are also recommended.

## **Clause 11**

### **Instructions to speleologists**

(1) Speleologists must comply with the methodological instructions of the Speleological Society.

(2) The cave must be entered by two at a time, knowing the rules of the safe movement in the cave environment; persons entering the abyss must know a single-rope (climbing) technique, self-rescue and application of first aid. Never enter the cave only on your own.

(3) In performing speleologist activities, use only the CE or UIAA certified material to prevent the fall and to ensure the safety movement.

(4) Enter the cave only after having studied the materials available about the cave, duly equipped, having a good spare – independent source of the light, spare dry clothes and a protective helmet.

(5) Take a first aid kit with you to the cave, along with an isolation film, food and drinks for one day more than the expected time of your stay.

(6) Setting fire in the cave is prohibited.

## **Clause 12**

### **Operation of specialised means of transport**

(1) Operation of snow scoters, quadricycles and other special equipment for other than industrial purposes (supply of material, track maintenance, wood processing, construction) off the road may be conducted only in a restricted and secured space so that the safety of persons moving in the mountain area could not be endangered.

(2) Drivers of open means of transport must wear protective helmets or other protective means in compliance with the instructions of the manufacturer.

### Clause 13

These Instructions shall come into force and become effective as of July 1, 2014.

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Director of the Mountain Rescue Service

#### ANNEX No. 6 - UIAA International Climbing Scale

I	<i>Easy</i>	the simplest form of rock climbing, but no longer a hiking terrain; hands must be used to ensure the balance;
	Light difficulty	beginners must be secured with a rope; they must not suffer from dizziness;
II	<i>Mild difficult</i>	here begins the real climbing where the three-point technique is required;
	Mild difficulty	it is necessary to ensure the safety with a rope in steep sections;
III	<i>Moderate difficult</i>	perpendicular places or overhangs with good handholds already require physical strength
	Moderate difficulty	in steep sections – inter-safety points are recommended; trained and experienced climbers may climb sections of this grade of difficulty without the use of a rope;
IV	<i>Difficult</i>	this grade means the real climbing; sufficient climbing experience is necessary;
	Hard difficulty	climbing sections usually require more safety points; the use of a safety rope is already usual also with trained and experienced climbers;
V	<i>Very difficult</i>	climbing is increasingly demanding as to the physical fitness, technique and experience; in the Alps long trips of this grade are considered the events;
	Very hard difficulty	the number of intermediate safety points is increasing;
VI	<i>Severe</i>	climbing requires above-average skills and good training; steepness is often associated with small resting posts;

	Severe difficulty	using the safety points is a commonplace;
VII	<i>Very severe</i>	can be done only with increased training and use of a special equipment; even excellent climbers need special training for a particular type of the rock to be able to climb the sections of this grade reliably, without falling;
	Very severe difficulty	a perfect safety technique is inevitable;
VIII-IX	<i>Grading of previous difficulties</i>	very high demands on the special training and equipment, ascents and climbing sections of extreme grades can often be handled only after previous drilling and getting appropriate climbing habits; reserved for top climbers;
X-XI	<i>The current climbing limit in free climbing</i>	previous drilling is necessary, even the best top climbers are not able to repeat the sections of this grade very often; both the ideal conditions (external and mental) as well as perfect concentration on the performance are necessary to climb these sections; this grade is climbed only with the upper safety roping or safety points installed in advance;