



Frank Zipfinger &lt;frank.zipfinger@gmail.com&gt;

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## SLOPES - FRNSW Alpine Resorts Education and Training - Update #2

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SLOPES <slopes.au@gmail.com>  
Bcc: frank.zipfinger@gmail.com

27 June 2013 at 09:11

Dear SLOPES Members

Further to our last email, the Village meetings took place last Saturday and FRNSW presented to those meetings.

We also, in co-operation with FRNSW and the Department of Planning, arranged for trials of the Training to be conducted on several lodges, 2 at Guthega and 1 at Perisher.

Based on those experiences, in summary our recommendations are:

- 1. Subject to the comments in points 2 and 3 below, SLOPES recommends that Clubs participate in the Training program offered by FRNSW. To do that you need to complete and return to the Department of Planning Schedule 1 to the letter your Club received from them on this issue recently. The contact person is Daniel James at Planning on 02 6456 1733 or 0438 441 671.*
- 2. Each Club needs to make it's own decision whether to participate or not, and the timing of that participation. While the Training is directed at educating lodge owners on fire protection measures and evacuation plans, the trials conducted so far indicate that a full lodge inspection can be expected. This could identify more serious structural issues, the remediation of which could be costly and disruptive. But on this issue please note point 4 below. It is also worth noting that this Training is being conducted by the firefighters based at the Perisher Valley Fire Station, and not the people within FRNSW who are specialists in compliance with the Building Code of Australia.*
- 3. SLOPES has been informed that FRNSW want to do the Training with all 88 of our Clubs spread, for logistical reasons, over 2 winter seasons ie 2013 and 2014. So, the option is there to defer the Training until next year. This might be an attractive option if, for example, a Club will have difficulty arranging for a suitable representative to be present this season for the Training (see point 5 below) or if a Club has fire safety works scheduled to be done post this winter season.*
- 4. By way of background to the above, it needs to be remembered that FRNSW clearly has local enforcement powers and rights of inspection in relation to matters of fire safety ie ensuring the adequate provision of fire safety and compliance with relevant laws. Further, the usual limitations on inspection (to occur only when requested or following a complaint) do NOT apply in the case of "places of shared accommodation", such as our Club lodges. So, an inspection without notice potentially could occur at any time. Apart from a consideration of this legal position, as a matter of good governance and prudent management SLOPES, our Clubs and their Board members would all be concerned to ensure that there is adequate provision of fire safety in our lodges and compliance with applicable laws. This compliance will be relevant also to issues like the proper performance of directors' duties and the continuation of Club insurances (such as building and D&O cover).*
- 5. A lesson from the trials is that they are likely to be of most use if a Club sends to the Training someone in authority, and preferably having some familiarity with fire safety issues. This will assist in getting the most out of the FRNSW commentary and in conveying the critical messages to Club management. SLOPES is pressing the Department and FRNSW to provide some form of written report following the Training, but for now it appears that FRNSW is not intending to do that.*

A more comprehensive summary of relevant issues is set out below for those interested in more detail.

SLOPES would like to closely monitor the operation and outcomes of the Training sessions as we anticipate we may need to have further discussions later on with FRNSW on these issues and the program generally.

Accordingly, a short email from Clubs on their particular experiences would be appreciated after you have completed the Training.

Regards

Frank Zipfinger  
President  
SLOPES

## **MORE COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY**

### **Village meetings**

The fire safety inspection and training program was presented at Guthega on Sat 22 June by Ken Murphy, SE Commander (KM) and Assistant Commissioner Rob O' Neal of FRNSW and afterwards they conducted the scheduled trial of the program.

The purpose of the program is to educate lodge owners on fire protection measures and evacuation plans. Key measures might include proper fire separation (eg unimpeded rated doors), display of fire ratings, fire safety certificates and orders: proper use of fire protection spaces, best location and protection for risk appliances (eg electrical wall heaters), essential services (such as sprinklers where installed or mandatory), hoses, alarms, detectors, clear lighting for exits, etc).

All occupants and transient residents should be familiar the fire safety rules and procedures, including evacuation, smoking and cooking safety.

KM spoke of the value of sprinkler systems in all buildings of shared occupation whether mandatory or not. He reiterated no one has died where installed and more on the lessons from the NSW nursing home disaster. The argument here is that better prevention strategies will move the fire protection load somewhat to the owners and away from FRNSW

Guthega is distinguished from Perisher and Smiggins by its isolation and more so in adverse weather, and so protection measures here may be the only realistic and practical line of defence in a fire event. It may be an option for FRNSW to leave equipment at Guthega for firefighters arriving by say oversnow vehicles in a emergency event.

### **The Trial**

After the Village meeting, the two FR officers were shown through the two lodges of Brindabella Ski Club over the course of an hour or so and gave the owners advice on standards, requirements and rectification measures as the party moved from room to room. The three senior people from the club, including its Guthega lodge manager, were impressed by the value of the inspection and advice they were given. One of the lodges was recently refurbished, including a sprinkler retrofit. The other is a large new lodge with state of the art technology.

Afterwards at special request on the day the FR personnel visited a third Guthega lodge.

KM will send a note to SLOPES on the trial (yet to be received)

Is the program an audit in different clothes and what about private certification? It could be. FRNSW no doubt will exercise powers to compel compliance if they think fit and all else fails. The accent observed is to go down a co-operative path with this Training. If that fails in a specific case, presumably FRNSW won't just sit on its hands. One cant expect every club to get a favourable impression and come away smiling as there are just too many variables and FRNSW must find some serious and challenging things to fix given the number of lodges we have.

Re private certification, the FRNSW view seems to be that the standard of assessment in some quarters is hard to assess because there is no minimum qualification required to be a private assessor. However this issue does not seem to be the main driver behind the Training program.

It may be a challenge for FR to manage consistency in execution if retained staff are used to conduct the program.

Finally, Clubs will be best served if they send someone in authority when their lodge is inspected under the program. Clubs will have some control over timing. It is not for whoever might be resident on the day unless that person can do and ask what is necessary and pass the key messages from FRNSW on to the club management group. It is not clear whether FR would provide written reports. Even if they do, they may be limited to key issues and not canvass all advisory points made as the inspection party moved through a lodge or afterwards on wrap up.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **SLOPES** <[slopes.au@gmail.com](mailto:slopes.au@gmail.com)>

Date: 17 June 2013 17:13

Subject: SLOPES: FRNSW Alpine Resorts Education and Training/Fire Alarms - Update #1

To:

Dear SLOPES Members

We update you as follows:

## 1. Fire Safety Education and Training

FRNSW will be attending the Village meetings this Saturday.

We have asked the FRNSW representatives to present to those meetings with detail on the background to this proposal, their objectives and how they plan to implement it.

SLOPES representatives will attend those meetings. Clubs are encouraged to do so too.

We will report to you after those meetings and copy you on any materials provided.

In the meantime, we reiterate our recommendation that you do **NOT** return Schedule 1 of the letter until after that further update.

## 2. Fire Alarms

This letter (copy attached) follows an earlier letter from FRNSW which we circulated on 14-9-2012.

We have clarified now with FRNSW as follows:

a) the only change is the **increase of the fine from \$750 to \$1250**: the rest of the text is substantially as sent by FRNSW last year

b) the fines only apply to back to base alarms

c) the fines do NOT apply to lodges which only have an alarm that goes off at their fire monitoring board. However, while these alarms are not affected now, we are told there is a proposal to change the Act to extend fines to them too

d) so in all cases, for financial and other reasons, there is merit in taking steps to avoid alarms being triggered incorrectly

e) this is not a case of more rigorous enforcement of the fines now by FRNSW - that change in approach was commenced last year by FRNSW

f) the letter is useful in setting out the circumstances in which fines will be imposed and where leniency can be anticipated.

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There will be an update on the Fire Safety and Training proposal next week after the Village meetings, if not before.

Regards

Frank Zipfinger  
President  
SLOPES

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From: **SLOPES** <[slopes.au@gmail.com](mailto:slopes.au@gmail.com)>

Date: 15 June 2013 19:00

Subject: SLOPES: FRNSW Alpine Resorts Education and Training/Fire Alarms

To:

Dear SLOPES Members

You will probably have received in the last day or so emails titled:

1. Fire and Rescue NSW - Fire Safety Education and Training - issued by Daniel James, Team Leader of the Alpine Resorts Team, and

2. NSW Fire & Rescue - Fire Alarms - issued by Susan Brown of NPWS.

Copies of the emails are set out below and the attachments referred to are attached to this email.

There is a lot of history on these issues. Much of it stems from the protracted and difficult negotiations SLOPES had last year in connection with the operational changes to the Perisher Valley Fire Station which we opposed and which

were nevertheless imposed by FRNSW.

We are preparing some background information for Clubs to consider in responding to the Fire Safety Education and Training email.

We expect to issue an update to Clubs on Monday or Tuesday at the latest.

In the meantime we recommend that Clubs defer responding to this email (and do **NOT** return Schedule 1 of the letter) until we have sent you that update.

We have sought clarification from NPWS as to the "new initiatives" referred to in the Fire Alarms email. We will inform you once we hear back. We will also provide you with some commentary on the FRNSW letter regarding false alarm fines.

But we do encourage as many Clubs as possible to attend the Village meetings.

Regards

Frank Zipfinger  
President  
SLOPES

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### **VILLAGE MEETINGS AND FIRE ALARMS EMAIL**

From: [Susan.Brown@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Susan.Brown@environment.nsw.gov.au)  
Subject: NSW Fire & Rescue - Fire Alarms  
Date: Fri, 14 Jun 2013 07:43:15 +0000

NSW Fire & Rescue will also be attending the Village meetings scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> June at 10am at the Guthega Alpine Hotel, Guthega & 2pm at The Man from Snowy River Hotel, Perisher Valley to answer any questions and also explain some new initiatives they are undertaking with State Planning in regards to Annual Fire Safety Statements.

Kindly direct any questions regarding the attached letter to Ken Murphy on (02) 6284 2150  
[orkenneth.murphy@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:orkenneth.murphy@fire.nsw.gov.au).

Regards

*Susan Brown*

Property Officer|Property Services Unit|Visitor & Business Services Section|National Parks & Wildlife Service|Office of Environment & Heritage|Dept of Premier & Cabinet|✉ PO Box 2228 Jindabyne, NSW, 2627 ☎ 6450 5597 📠 6450 5630  
📧 [susan.brown@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:susan.brown@environment.nsw.gov.au)

[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/alpineresorts](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/alpineresorts) 📄 Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.



Office of  
Environment & Heritage  
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service



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### **FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING EMAIL**



Date: Fri, 14 Jun 2013 15:21:11 +1000  
From: [alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au)  
Subject: FRNSW Alpine Resorts Education and Training

Good Afternoon

Please find attached a letter regarding fire safety education and training to be held during winter 2013.

We would appreciate if you could return Schedule 1 to us at your earliest convenience.

Regards

Jennifer Stevenson  
Administration Officer

**Alpine Resorts Team**  
**Metropolitan & Regional Projects South**  
**NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure**  
Shop 5A 19 Snowy River Avenue |  
PO Box 36 | Jindabyne NSW 2627  
T 02 6456 1733 F 02 6456 1736  
[alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au)



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**Fire Safety Education & Training - Mirrabooka.pdf**

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Planning &  
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Office of  
Environment & Heritage  
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service

Fire &  
Rescue NSW

14 June 2013

Phone: 02 6456 1733  
Fax: 02 6456 1736  
Email: [alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Mr Garth Purdy  
Treasurer/Director  
Mirrabooka Co-operative Ski Club Limited  
85 Lantana Road  
ENGADINE NSW 2233

DP&I File: 13/09964  
FRNSW File: 13/5052

Dear Sir/Madam

### **FIRE AND RESCUE NSW – FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

During the 2013 winter ski season, Fire and Rescue NSW will be running fire safety education and training for lodges in Perisher, Smiggin Holes and Guthega.

This initiative is part of the Government's coordinated approach to fire safety in the Alpine Resorts and flows on from other State wide initiatives by Fire and Rescue NSW.

The education and training will take place at individual lodges throughout the season. Each lodge will have an opportunity to ask questions and seek advice in relation to fire safety obligations for shared accommodation buildings including;

- annual fire safety statements;
- fire exit requirements; and
- smoke detection systems.

Can you please assist by completing the attached contact details form in Schedule 1 and returning it within 14 days of the date of this letter.

If you have any enquiries in relation to this matter, please contact the undersigned on 6456 1733 or Superintendent Wayne Roberts, Zone Commander, Zone Office RS1 Batemans Bay, Fire & Rescue NSW on 4472 3042.

Yours sincerely,

**Daniel James**  
Team Leader  
Alpine Resorts Team





Planning &  
Infrastructure

Office of  
Environment & Heritage  
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service

Fire &  
Rescue NSW

**SCHEDULE 1**  
**FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING**  
**WINTER 2013**

Premises (Lodge) Name:	
Premises Address:	Lot No.: Street:  Suburb/Postcode:
Contact Name:	First Name: Surname:
Contact Details:	Telephone: Mobile: Email:
Preferred week for education and training?	
Preferred time of day for education and training?	
Any other relevant information:	

Please complete this form and return to the Department's Jindabyne Office within 14 days on fax number 6456 1736 or PO Box 36 Jindabyne NSW 2627 or via email to [alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alpineresorts@planning.nsw.gov.au)

