

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SKI LODGES ASSOCIATION OF PERISHER, SMIGGINS AND GUTHEGA INC. (SLOPES) HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2015 AT CHATSWOOD RSL COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

**PRESENT:**

President – Frank Zipfinger (Mirrabooka)

Committee – Bill Coombes (Hus-ski), Andrew Cutler (Kandahar), John Pinkerton (Tate), David Read (Aurora), John Illy (CSIRO), Paul Schott (Clancy), David Macdonald (Kosciusko Alpine), Roland Everingham (Perisher Huette), Noni de Carvalho (Turnak)

Member Clubs and their representatives:

ACT Police Jagungal (Jill Newby)  
Australian Ski Club (Glen Dogao, Valeria Dogao, Andre Gogosevic)  
Alexandra Ski Club (Sue Thorley)  
Avalanche (Stuart Mountford, Steve Branch)  
Boonoono Chez Jean (Justin Mulvey, Carl Mulvey)  
Brindabella (Bryan Collis)  
Canberra Alpine (Ross Smith)  
Caloola (Dave Allison)  
CSIRO (Neil Watkinson)  
Cooma Ski Club (Michael Salmon)  
Dulmison (Arthur Carson)  
Eremo Lodge (Rocco Taffaridos)  
Fellowship/Moerlina (Mark Bradford, Winton Kurrle)  
Fjellheim (Belinda Hansen)  
Guthega Ski Club (Ross Downes)  
Illawong (Alex Kingston)  
Karralika (Jeremy Crisp)  
Kiandra Pioneer (Maurice Carter)  
Kosciusko Alpine (Dianne Cree)  
Kosciusko Snow Revellers (Peter Nowland)  
Kunapipi (Mike Williamson, Ian Shaw)  
Kuringgai (Phillip Woodman)  
Langlauf (Tim Alexander)  
Mawabu (Stephen Mulvogue)  
Muniong (Rob Holdaway)  
Oldina (John Brockhouse, Wendy Brockhouse)  
Parrawa (Brett Fawcett, Richard Charlton)  
Royal Navy (Michael Pike)  
Rugby (Andrew Harding)  
Snow Country (Gavin Boyd)  
Southern Alps (Rod Peile, Kim Easdale, Joe DiFalco)  
Southern Cross (Ann Collins)  
South Perisher (Sarah Elliott)  
Technology (Richard Beattie, Andrew Dunn)  
Telemark (Peter Bunting, Fiona Bunting, Pernille Jensen)  
Thirroul (Bruce Norton)  
Trissana (Brad Sparrow, James Daniel)  
Turnak (Roger Lucas)  
Warrugang (Rob Stephen)  
Wildspitz (David Beverley)  
Yaraandoo (Michael Owen, Warren French)

Yeti (David Heftor, Michael Tinlon)  
Apologies:

Sundowner (Jenny Newman),  
Hus-ski (Ian Ward, Bill Hargreaves, Warwick Dean)  
Kandahar (Graeme Anderson)  
Kiandra Pioneer (Steve Illek)

Guests:

Nick Kennedy – Perisher Chamber of Commerce – Guthega Alpine Inn  
Peter Brulisauer – General Manager, Perisher Pty Ltd  
Ryan Petrov – Manager Municipal Services, NPWS  
Stuart Schramm – Office of Environment and Heritage  
Daniel James – Department of Planning and Environment  
Sven Erikson – Disabled Winter Sports Australia  
Eric Bickerton – Disabled Winter Sports Australia

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Frank Zipfinger opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He introduced the guests and thanked them for their attendance.

Frank introduced the Committee and thanked them for their work through the year.

#### **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2014:**

The Minutes of the previous AGM held on 27 November 2014 at Chatswood RSL were circulated to member clubs prior to the meeting and copies were available at the meeting.

**The Minutes were adopted – Moved David Macdonald (KAC) and seconded David Read (Aurora)**

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

A full copy of the President's Report prepared by Frank Zipfinger was distributed to member clubs prior to the meeting and copies were available at the meeting.

Frank confirmed that as in past years the report is a detailed summary of events during the year for members' information. As the report had been circulated, Frank focused on a few key matters from during the year in his presentation. These included:

1. The importance of continuing to maintain 100% club membership of SLOPES to preserve its strength and relevance as the body representing the Clubs' interests.
2. Frank noted that the financial situation of SLOPES was maintained so that funds were ready and available so that SLOPES was in good shape to act quickly when any issues that may be of concern to the Clubs arise. The potential matters currently include the Governance Review.
3. Frank advised that the SLOPES website has been in the process of being upgraded through the year to make it more usable for the clubs. He acknowledged the delay and cost in completion due to problems requiring a change of consultant service but advised that the Committee was committed to completing the upgrade.

4. Frank noted the success again this year of Back to Perisher Weekend held at Easter. He encouraged all Clubs to continue to support the event that is organised by SLOPES with the assistance of NPWS. He noted the increasing profile of the Fun Run and increased sale of ducks for the Duck Race where the profits are donated to the Perisher Ski Patrol and at the request of the local Fire Brigade, the Children's Hospital Burns Unit.
5. Frank acknowledged the success and growth of the Perisher Peak Music Festival over the June long weekend and advised that SLOPES would continue to be a sponsor of the event in accordance with the Clubs' wishes advised at the last AGM.
6. The meeting was advised that in accordance with the wishes of the Club members at last year's AGM, SLOPES had spent some of its funds on sponsorship of skiing events including the Perisher Cup, the Balmain Cup, Smiggins Bowl, Illawarra Inter-club and the Guthega Inter-club. The sponsorship of skiing is consistent with the member Clubs' objectives and purpose to encourage the sport of skiing.

There were no questions arising from the President's Report.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT 2015:**

The Financial Statements and Auditor's report were circulated to members before the meeting and copies were available at the meeting. The changes to the expenses during the year as noted in the President's Report were reflected in the Statement such as the website upgrade costs. The additional cost of the Back to Perisher Weekend related to insurance for the Fun Run but since the weekend an offer has been received from SLOPES insurer to donate the cover for next year.

**The Financial Statements were adopted – Moved David Macdonald (KAC) and seconded David Read (Aurora)**

**The Auditor's Report was adopted and Stirling International was nominated as SLOPES auditors for 2016 – Moved David Macdonald (KAC) and seconded David Read (Aurora).**

#### **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

As there were no other nominations, the current Committee was re-elected.

**Moved David Macdonald (KAC) and seconded David Read (Aurora)**

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS:**

There were no questions arising or matters raised by the Members.

**THE 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SLOPES CLOSED AT 7.45 PM.**

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**Following completion of the formal business of the AGM the Guest Speakers addressed the Meeting**

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## Stuart Schramm – Office of Environment and Heritage

Stuart addressed the meeting on the Governance Review that was recently announced. He advised that there were a number of options being looked at and that a head lease system was only one of those options.

He advised that stakeholder engagement including with SLOPES and Perisher Pty Ltd was key to the process. The IPART model from the previous review has not worked as the cost of services upgrade has been greater than the IPART methodology indicated. Thus a simple review of the IPART methodology would mean prices would go up but this may not be appropriate for the area or for NSW so other options will be looked at.

Stuart advised that consultation would commence in February 2016 to avoid the holiday season as requested by SLOPES. A range of workshops are proposed and OEH will be engaging "Straight Talk" to manage the initial feedback and seeking of opinions. He advised that a Steering Committee is being set up that must resolve a way forward to cover the debt but he emphasised that at the moment the commitment is to review and the outcome is not final. He acknowledged that the other option is to involve IPART.

He stressed to the meeting that feedback from Member Clubs of SLOPES at the meeting was to indicate their preferred approach for engagement with them through "Straight Talk" as well as advising SLOPES of their opinions. The other matters requiring consultation are the preferred times for the consultation and the location of sessions.

He advised the meeting that the lease for Charlottes Pass expired on 20 June 2015 but it has been extended. He noted that Charlottes Pass will also be engaging in the process.

The meeting was advised that information and questions would be circulated before meetings and that consultation will be ongoing with SLOPES through emails and discussion. He acknowledged that circumstances were different for the Clubs compared with other stakeholders.

Frank Zipfinger followed Stuart's comments with the advice that SLOPES is committed to protecting the club member interests noting that most clubs have leases in place to 2058. Frank noted that any review has to take account of the existing lease position for clubs even if considering a head lease. Frank acknowledged that it is important to have the review and worthwhile to potentially have a better model but he noted that SLOPES needs to work through the process on behalf of the lodges.

## Peter Brulisauer – General Manager, Perisher Pty Ltd

Peter advised that it has been a busy 12-18 months with the Vail transaction and Freedom Passes giving people the opportunity of skiing in Vail as well as the general good value of the Freedom Pass. Peter noted that the participation of Vail is good for Perisher Valley as it expands the expertise, commitment and experience with the additional value of overseas opportunities.

Peter advised that he was pleased to see the Governance Review occurring. He noted that there have been attempts in the past but these tended to focus on a head lease. He considers it smarter to look at all the options and through a consultation process. He noted the questions must be;

"Where would we like Perisher to be in 30 to 40 years?"

"What should it look like summer and winter?"

"What do we need for it to be the best place?"

Peter advised that he did not know the answers but was committed to having the discussion and to making Perisher great into the future. He considered that we should all approach the review with open minds.

Peter reminded the meeting to book their Freedom Passes and Epic Australia Passes before the price rises after the early bird period closes. He commented that the Freedom Pass has been very good for Perisher giving more value and increasing skiing numbers.

Later in the meeting Peter noted that the season this year had had a slow start relying on snow making on the runs for the July school holidays (grass between runs) but the snow eventually arrived mid-July such that late July, August and September were busy.

#### Ryan Petrov – Municipal Services, National Parks and Wildlife Service of OEH

Ryan advised that the year has been a good year operationally for NPWS with few problems arising. He advised that there is no significant expenditure planned for the coming year and that his team will be focussing on procedural improvements.

Ryan noted the improvement of grease trap maintenance around the resort. He also noted that the introduction of waste huts and waste separation has increased the amount of recycling. He advised that 65 tonnes or 15% of recycling organics has been used within the park.

Frank commented to the meeting that SLOPES circulated the MSU report to the Clubs and many clubs noted the information and read the report. Frank encouraged the Clubs to circulate the reports and information internally to all their members.

#### Daniel James – Department of Planning

Daniel advised that the Department has recommitted to keeping the Jindabyne office and fully resourced as a team. This has enabled appointment of additional building surveyors and planners to the team.

He reinforced his advice from past years for the Clubs to talk early to his team if they are considering any works to the Club lodges. He noted that his office can involve other agencies early to be able to establish the key issues up front, for example, Rural Fire Service requirements or Parks requirements, so matters can be planned rather than there being surprises late in the process. Daniel also advised that some older projects that the team has been working on have been cleared and that applications should progress faster.

Daniel James advised that the fire safety campaign was successful and that all the lodges were up to date with their Annual Fire Safety Statements. This should be a comfort to Clubs to know the fire safety features of their lodges are in working order.

Daniel advised that a review of planning policy has commenced with high-end stakeholder discussion prior to the Alpine SEPP review. He noted that further consultation will be occurring as the work progresses as well as consultation with RFS and NPWS. The intention is also an attempt to bring the Alpine SEPP more in line with the rest of NSW for exempt development provisions for repairs and maintenance to reduce the need for full development applications.

### Nick Kennedy – Chamber of Commerce

Nick advised that the Chamber welcomed the Governance review and noted that the Chamber has similar interests to SLOPES and the Club lodges. He acknowledged and thanked SLOPES for the active efforts it undertakes to represent the interests of its members and coincidentally also those of the Chamber members.

Nick thanked SLOPES for its support of the Peak Music Festival advising that the mismatch in the ratio of the cost of the Festival to the revenue return was substantially reduced this year. He advised that the feedback from the 2015 Festival was very positive.

Nick welcomed SLOPES and club support again for next year's Festival. He noted the incentive for supporting the Festival is to continue to drive activity and occupancy in Perisher.

Nick outlined the arrangements for ticket sales for 2016 Festival noting that sales commence on 1 December 2015. He advised that a 4 day pass for SLOPES members is only \$89 if purchased before end of February 2016. Nick circulated the 2016 Festival brochure for information.

### Questions from the Floor

Frank invited questions from the floor for Stuart, Peter, Ryan, Daniel and Nick.

To Peter:

Perisher needs to address the issue of early closing of Accelerator in Blue Cow and Guthega lifts at end of season?

Peter advised that timing is a difficult decision because of staffing. He has to rely on the weather reports to make decisions and once staff have been released the maintaining of all lifts operational is not possible.

To Stuart:

Why doesn't NPWS look at an E-tag system to stop congestion at entry gates?

Stuart advised the OEH is currently looking at alternatives for all Parks including number plate recognition. The intention is also to stop leakage and the staff requirements for checking vehicles. He noted the current system is inefficient and an E-tag is worth considering. Security of equipment and potential vandalism at isolated sites is an issue.

To Ryan:

Can there be a system to allow parking at lodges in the valley the last week in September and first week in October?

Ryan advised that it depends on the weather conditions and the situation needs to be judged at the time and based on all potential vehicles that may seek access including a small 2WD. NPWS can only open the roads when it is safe for all.

To Stuart:

Noting that debt for NPWS is higher than revenues it is relevant for NPWS to consider that the IPART report that calculated fees did not take into account all circumstances such as

inaccurately assuming that all tickets for Perisher Valley would be purchased at the Sawpit entry when allocating funds from ticket sales to Perisher. There are leakages for purchases, for example, at Jindabyne and online purchases. This means an underestimation of the real income from Perisher ticket sales. The issue must be considered in the Governance review and the poor process acknowledged.

Frank added the comment that SLOPES has questioned the funds allocation from ticket sales income many times and especially the lack of transparency as to allocation of income within the Parks system.

Stuart advised Government has no fixed model for looking at ways to deal with the debt. It is still subject to the review but that Treasury is still looking at a user pays system. He advised that OEH has to look at paying back the debt.

Further comment from the floor:

The capital expenditure and debt pay-back is just allocating funds between one part of government to another part of government.

### **Guest Speakers Presentation – Sven Erikson and Eric Bickerton from Disabled Winter Sports Australia**

Eric and Sven shared the role of addressing the meeting and presenting a very interesting short video. The meeting was advised:

The Disabled Winter Sports Association was started 35 years ago in the Perisher and Thredbo area. For the last 4 years it has had between 500 to 950 active members including some Disabled Winter Olympians. The total community in the Association is more than 2,000 members.

The objective of the Association is to encourage participation in snow sports by people with a disability and to be able to participate and enjoy the programs offered. The Association is supported by the resort operators such as Perisher Pty Ltd. The Association seeks to inspire and speak to people with disabilities to understand how people can enjoy skiing and to provide the appropriate programs.

The Association has a \$500,000 investment in specialised equipment to assist skiers with a range of disabilities and its other role is to train volunteers to work in the programs it offers. The Association has a Resort Program Co-ordinator permanently located at each resort who manages the services provided.

The specialised equipment is to encourage and enable participation. The Association aims to create an equality of opportunity for different disabilities to learn to ski using appropriate equipment to suit the need. Each mono-ski sit-ski, for example, costs between \$5,000 and \$8,000 with outrigger ski poles and possibly equalisers.

The trained volunteers work mainly as guides who support the person with disabilities on the snow such as with directional guidance and speed control. The Association spends about \$50,000 each year training the approximately 300 volunteer guides. It was noted to be a challenging role to be a guide as some people with a disability are fearless. The Association is always looking for people to join and assist in the programs.

By way of general comment they advised that roughly 20% of the population has a disability at any time and there is a consistent demand for the Association's services.

Funding for the Association comes from diverse sources but the biggest contributors are the resort operators. Other funding sources are from membership fees and fundraising events. The assistance provided by the Resort operators includes such things as 50% reduction on the cost of tickets. Eric and Sven advised that any donations are welcome from the general skiing community.

Frank advised Eric and Sven that SLOPES would be happy to circulate more information on the Association and its activities to its Club members and information on fundraising events.

Frank thanked Eric and Sven for their attendance and very interesting presentation to the meeting.

#### Philip Woodman – Perisher Historical Society

Philip addressed the meeting reminding those present that the Perisher Cup will be run again this year on 18 September 2016. He noted that the Cup has been running for 64 years with this year being reinvigorated by a new organising Committee. He thanked SLOPES for its sponsorship and support of the event.

Philip reminded those present that the Perisher Cup is a multi-disciplinary event with various prizes (Plate, Cup and Bowl events) and the organising Committee would like to see increased participation in 2016. Posters are to be distributed around the lodges. Insurance for the event is organised through the Ski Association.

#### Final Comments from Frank Zipfinger

Frank thanked participating Clubs for their quick response to the recent Survey Monkey survey run by SLOPES. He advised the meeting that so far there were 60 responses from the 88 member clubs. He encouraged those who had not responded to please do so. He also advised that if some questions were left unanswered to go back and answer them but advise SLOPES so as to avoid any double counting. Frank advised the meeting that the survey information should preferably be completed within the next couple of weeks.


Frank reminded the meeting that unless the Clubs inform SLOPES of their situation SLOPES has no other way of knowing their circumstances to be able to effectively represent their interests especially with the forthcoming Governance Review. For example, Frank noted that unless provided by the member Clubs to SLOPES, SLOPES has no access to the financial statements of member Clubs although they are provided to NPWS under the requirements of the leases.

Frank also reminded those present of the recent release of the book on the "History of Jindabyne". Frank noted that the flyers were circulated by SLOPES to members.

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**THAT MEETING CONCLUDED AT 9.00PM AFTER WHICH MEMBERS CIRCULATED AND ENJOYED SUPPER.**

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Frank Zipfinger  
President