

CODE OF HONOUR OF THE MOUNTAIN GUIDES OF THE IFMGA

(Proposal as at 8th May 2007)

1. GENERAL REMARKS

- 1.1. The code of honour of the IFMGA is a set of rules about good behaviour. It promotes the good image of the mountain guides in the public, in front of their guests, different institutions and a good, loyal relationship among the guides.
- 1.2. The female and male mountain guides (called mountain guides in this paper) respect these rules of behaviour.

2. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MG

- 2.1. The field of activity of the mountain guide includes the following activities:
Mountaineering, climbing, hiking, tours and activities with snow sports equipment as for example ski touring and variant skiing / off-piste skiing. With the corresponding supplementary trainings also canyoning, activities in education through practical experience in the sectors of mountaineering or rope techniques.
- 2.2. The mountain guide leads or accompanies a roped party or a group. He decides about the number of participants according to the local norm, about the abilities of his guests, about the degree of difficulty, about the risk and the length of the route as well about the climate conditions of the mountain.
- 2.3. The mountain guide teaches the sporting activities which are mentioned under point 2.1., for this he uses the most appropriate pedagogical methods.
He gives his participants an appropriate learning situation with regard to the fact that they get more and more independent.
He can let them climb either as leaders or as an independent roped party, as long as they don't take an unusual risk.
The number of the students that he has to take care of may not exceed his capacity of supervision.
- 2.4. The mountain guide can also work as a coach in all the sporty activities which are mentioned under point 2.1.
- 2.5. The mountain guide can function as a technical adviser for his participants, for municipalities and other private and public collectives, especially with regard to the organization of courses, expeditions etc.
- 2.6. The field of work of the mountain guide applies to
 - Mountains and high-mountains, adventure areas, rock, snow and ice
 - All the artificial and natural structures which allow the mountain guide to execute his activities such as cliffs, boulders, artificial facilities...
 - Snow-covered areas: variant skiing / off-piste skiing, steep-wall-skiing, winter ascents using all kinds of aids.

- 2.7. The mountain guide is also allowed to practise his activities in foreign countries. Doing this he has to know and respect the local facts.
- 2.8. The mountain guide respects the limits of the fields of activities of other professional groups and follows the current legal requirements.

3. THE POSITION OF THE MOUNTAIN GUIDE

- 3.1. The mountain guide can work as a director of a mountaineering school, as a freelancer or as an employee.
- 3.2. He can also work freelance for an institution. His position allows him to keep his autonomy concerning the organization of his work.
- 3.3. Independently of his position, the mountain guide is responsible for all his decisions and has to reject every project which is too risky for him or which seems ethically doubtful.
In case of a problem that concerns security he informs the responsible organizations. He can refer to the code of honour of the IFMGA.
- 3.4. As an employee he is subject to the instructions of his employer as long as they don't go against point 3.3.

4. GENERAL PROFESSIONAL DUTIES

- 4.1. All activities require caution, guardedness and a certain respect concerning the assessment of the conditions and the skills of the humans. A certain residual risk is unavoidable in the field of activities of the mountain guide. The mountain guide can neither preview the precise risk, nor is he allowed to guarantee an absolute security to his participants.
- 4.2. The mountain guide informs himself about the current conditions and uses the corresponding appropriate and functional equipment according to the current situation.
- 4.3. The mountain guide always carries along first-aid material or has immediate access to it. The same is valid for all the material that is necessary for a responsible undertaking of the corresponding activity.
- 4.4. He constantly keeps his knowledge and his technical skills up-to-date, especially in the sector of security, rescue and orientation.
- 4.5. In the mountains he has to inform and to answer questions of other mountaineers. He informs the adequate organizations about risks and abnormal dangers that he has discovered during his tour.
- 4.6. In case of an accident the mountain guide has personally to inform the closest rescue centre or to engage somebody else to do so. He has to help persons who had an accident in a reasonable way, if this does not impact a danger for his own guests.
- 4.7. With his behaviour the mountain guide contributes to conservation of nature.

- 4.8. The mountain guides behave in a loyal and helpful way among themselves.
- 4.9. The mountain guides avoid „competitions“ among each other and mutual pushing of the risk level caused by competitive thinking.
- 4.10. Within the bounds of his professional activities the mountain guide reveals himself through wearing visibly the mountain guides sign. He also carries his mountain guide licence on himself.
- 4.11. The points 4.2. to 4.8. are also valid for sporting alpine activities which do not take place during the professional work.
- 4.12. The mountain guide endeavours to have a good relation to the people associated with his profession.

5. THE RELATION TO THE GUESTS

- 5.1. The mountain guide owes his guests care and esteem.
- 5.2. The guests have to be aware that there is a residual risk also in activities that are undertaken with mountain guides. Particular dangers should be mentioned.
- 5.3. The primary goal of the mountain guide should be an optimal experience for the guest. Therefore the expectations and the skills of the guests have to be reconcilable with the real conditions.
- 5.4. The mountain guide takes especially care of the security of minors and the specific capacities of the different stages of development.
- 5.5. The mountain guide pays attention that there are clear agreements with the guest, f. ex. aim of the tour, honorary, additional costs etc.
- 5.6. He teaches his guests responsible behaviour according to the conditions and develops their ability for self-control and self-responsibility.
- 5.7. If the mountain guide has f. ex. to help or to organize a rescue or if special guiding techniques are demanded, he is allowed to leave his guests alone in the mountains. A responsible assessment of the situation is the precondition for this.
- 5.8. The decision to stop a tour or to change a route should be done in accord with the guests. The mountain guide has though the right, to take a decision for security reasons also on his own.