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In collaboration with BE.PRA.S.A. Project European Commission/ULSS 20 Verona
Italian National Health Institute

Consensus Conference: Ski Accidents a Mounting Planetary Challenge

THE TURIN CHARTER ON SKIING SAFETY

Turin, Italy

5th February 2006

The “**Turin Charter on Skiing Safety**” herewith presented is the output of the *Consensus Conference ‘Skiing Accidents: a Mounting Planetary Challenge’* held in Turin on February 5th in the context of the **Winter Olympic Games 2006**.

The Charter was prepared by a panel of experts and specialists delegated by Governments who worked under the coordination of TOROC, BE.PRA.S.A. (European Commission/ULSS 20 Verona co-financed Project) and the Italian National Health Institute.

It is understood that the Charter is not intended to lay down new rights with legal value. Rather, the aim of the Charter is to tie existing fundamental liberties and principles together and render them more visible to citizens and institutions.



PREAMBLE

The participants of the Consensus Conference on ‘The Turin Charter on Skiing Safety’,

Concerning Sport in general

- Aware of the important contribution of sport and physical exercise to health and well being;
- Convinced that both the promotion of sportive exercise and the reduction of injury risk can be achieved simultaneously;
- Believing that a high level of safety facilitates the promotion of sport by reducing concerns about the potential health risks of sport;
- Considering injury prevention in all types of sporting activities a fundamental tool for increasing the health benefits of sport;
- Pointing out that the right to life includes the right to live in good health and safety in line with currently available knowledge and technology;
- Knowing that accidents and injuries in general have been identified as a major health problem at a global level and that injuries cause a huge financial burden to health care and welfare systems and economies as well as a considerable social burden to societies;

Concerning Skiing activities

- Aware of the significant improvements already achieved in skiing safety over the last decades and that there is significant investment in making skiing a safe sport;
- Believing that it is possible to raise the level of safety for skiers by consequent implementation of existing effective measures and by the development of new measures;
- Aware that the identification and diffusion of best practices of skiing-related injury prevention are of paramount importance in achieving the goal of greater safety;
- Believing that not only the personal behavior of those practicing sport, but also the safety of the environment within which people perform skiing and the safety of products and services involved in skiing activities are of utmost importance;
- Realizing that effective prevention of skiing injuries requires an integrated and sustainable approach, joining forces among all sectors and between stakeholders and fostering collaboration and coordinated actions between all the relevant international, national and regional players;
- Affirming that it is necessary to develop and share a common vision and to implement global norms and standards for all relevant aspects of skiing safety;



hereby agree as follows:

Art. 1 Objectives of the Charter

The aim of this initiative is to lay the foundations for articulating a common universal vision and implementing global norms and further developing these standards for all relevant safety aspects for skiing activities, in order to genuinely reduce the burden of related injuries and promote sport activities and their related benefits on health also through the promotion of safety. From common platforms to create incentives for effective injury prevention.

Art.2 Responsibility

Safety in skiing activities is the responsibility of practicing individuals, as well as of legislation and governments at all levels, businesses and non-profit organisations related to these sports (e.g.: cable car operators, snow sports schools, sports retailers and rental service providers, accommodation providers in skiing resorts, producers and retailers of sporting goods, marketing organisations at all levels, sports associations, media, insurers, standardisation organisations), and organisations in the field of health and safety promotion and any other subject related to skiing sports.

Art. 3 Non-discrimination

No discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, shall be permitted in the access to skiing and other snow sport activities and related safety measures.

Art.4 Vulnerable groups

Special attention shall be given to the needs of vulnerable groups and, if necessary, additional prevention measures shall be taken, aimed at enabling vulnerable groups and disadvantaged/disabled individuals/groups, to perform skiing activities with a high level of safety.

Art.5 Children

Among vulnerable groups, special attention should be devoted to child safety. Children start skiing before they are completely aware of the risks involved, of their ability or of their limits. Particular support needs to be given to children by families, educational institutions and highly specialized personnel. Children need to be taught about behaviors and rules during skiing activities. This will contribute to the improvement of children's approach to mountain activities with positive effects on their physical and mental health.

Art.6 Operational areas

To achieve a high level of safety, guidelines or standards are needed in the following areas:

- Education and Information
- Equipment and equipment-related services
- Infrastructure and infrastructure-related services.



Art.7 Information diffusion

All sectors mentioned in Art.2 have the responsibility to contribute to having well-informed and safety-oriented customers or citizens, members, guests, or readers. The responsibility for information does not lie solely within one sector. The information given must be appropriate to the specific situations. The effectiveness of information should be managed.

Art.8 Right of safety

Each individual has the right to be free from harm caused by unsafe services, unsafe structures or materials, incorrect behaviors of other snow sport participants and each individual has the right to access materials, services, structures, training and treatments that meet high safety standards.

Art.9 Right of information and education

Every individual has the right to be provided with information regarding risks and available preventive measures, adopted preventive measures, available services and materials and appliance norms and injunction to use them, adoptable rules of conduct and every other type of information, such as emergency numbers, considered useful for decreasing the risk of injury and, eventually, for receiving proper treatment. Information should be correct and easily understandable, positive, encouraging and helpful.

Art.10 Right of choice

All individuals should be given the possibility to choose among a range of products and services of high quality and safety standards and to choose what is clearly recognizable as best practice with respect to the environmental, physical, social, cultural, legal, economical and technological conditions.

Art. 11 Responsibility of Individuals

It is the duty of service suppliers to the sport to make participating individuals aware of relevant safety information and regulations. All individuals have the duty to follow existing codes of conduct aimed at minimizing the risk of accidents. Standardized rules for conduct for safety in skiing sports (e.g. the FIS-rules) should be known and followed.

Art. 12 Governmental Responsibility

Since skiing safety is a multi-sector issue, governments have the responsibility to develop, implement, enforce and evaluate overarching policies and programmes. Such policies and programmes should cover all fields of action in accordance with Art.6 (supportive environments, safe products and services, continuous information and education). Such policies and programmes need to be led by one designated sector (ie: health, sport or consumer sector).

Art. 13 Knowledge development

All decisions made regarding injury prevention measures should be based on evidence. Reliable and comprehensive injury surveillance as a matter of routine, according to international standards, is crucial for quantifying the problems, identifying risk factors and monitoring the effectiveness of interventions. Sustainable networks and information systems are needed for sharing experiences and knowledge of good practices. Dedicated institutions ensure the need for research, expert advice, advocacy and information dissemination which are of paramount importance in increasing a correct understanding of the matter at all levels.



Art. 14 *Human resources capacity building*

To enhance safety more capacity and better knowledge are needed. Members of involved sectors need to be informed, trained and motivated to fulfil their responsibilities. This needs professional support of an adequate capacity building process. The contemporary view of building capacity goes much further than the concept of training and includes: managing change, enhancing coordination, fostering communication, and ensuring that data and information are mutually shared, requiring a wide and holistic view of capacity development.

Art. 15 *Collaboration of stakeholders*

There is no successful injury prevention policies without a functioning collaboration of researchers, practitioners and policy makers. It is important to promote a permanent and constant collaboration and partnership of stakeholders from public and private sectors, as both sectors will find common interest from an improvement of safety in skiing activities.

Art. 16 *Regional, National and International collaboration*

In order to ensure an effective exchange of experiences and knowledge of good practices, a stable international network is needed. International benchmarking is also desired. This international network will be more effective if based on consolidated regional and national networks in each State.

Art. 17 *Best practices*

Of paramount importance is the adoption of evidence-based practices that, through a continuous process of monitoring, evaluating and experience-sharing, shall become the adoption of shared best-practices. The concept and identification of best practices are tightly linked with social, economical and technological changes. This means that what is a best practice today will not necessarily be the same tomorrow.

Art18. *Legal harmonization*

The adoption of measures towards a legal harmonization across countries in the field of snow sport safety should be promoted. A major effort toward legal harmonization is the basis for an effective and efficient best-practice sharing system. Nevertheless, this process can only be successful if it keeps the substantial differences in the economical, social, cultural and environmental situation of the different states in high consideration.



GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CHARTER

The participants of the consensus conference entitled BEPRASA project together with the European Association for Injury Prevention (EuroSafe) to submit the charter to the major national and international stakeholders as defined in Art.2 for consideration.

The Charter is submitted for consideration by civil society, regional, national and international institutions, and everyone who is able to contribute to the protection of these rights.

The Charter will be submitted for endorsement, adoption, and/or comments. The stakeholders are invited to support the implementation. BEPRASA will report about the progress to the participants on the occasion of the First European Conference on Injury Prevention in June 2006.

GLOSSARY

Definition: Skiing

For reasons of simplicity the term skiing always means skiing as well as snowboarding.

This charter deals with skiing and snowboarding on prepared slopes or on marked but not prepared routes. The focus is on these sporting activities, which are performed by hobby sportspersons, using tourist facilities and services. The Charter does not deal with racing and does not cover activities in the wilderness like ski trekking or helicopter skiing, where risk taking and safety precautions lay primarily within the responsibility of the adventurers. It also does not give specific advice on the assessment of risk of technical systems or natural dangers like avalanches.

Definition: prevention of skiing accidents

Prevention of skiing accidents is the result of a complex process, whereby humans interact with their environment, including the physical, social, cultural, technological, political, economical and organizational environments, in order to set up safer conditions when performing skiing activities and decrease, in this way, the risk of being injured.

Definition: safety

Safety is a state in which hazards and conditions leading to physical, psychological or material harm are controlled in order to preserve the health and well-being of individuals. Safety as meant by this Charter is such low level of risk, which can be achieved by a thorough implementation of available, affordable, acceptable effective measures.

Definition: safe product

Safe product shall mean any product which, under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions of use, including duration and, where applicable, putting into service, installation and maintenance requirements, does not present any risk or only the minimum risks compatible with the product's use, considered to be acceptable and consistent with a high level of protection for the safety and health of persons.



The following persons have participated in the working groups and endorsed the Charter:

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• Public Health Institute of the Republic of Slovenia	Albreht Tit
• FISI (Italian Federation of Winter Sports) – Communications and Public Relations	Baldessari Claudio
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• European Commission – Directorate General Health and Consumer Protection	Billaux Cecile
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• Region Val d’Aosta Region (Italy)	Brait Ulisse
• Swiss Council for Accident Prevention (Switzerland)	Buhmann Brigitte
• 118 Health Emergency Service Province of Verona (Italy)	Cipolotti Giovanni
• Italian Association of Skiing Resorts Managing Directors	del Bo Aldo
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• ASA CTO-CRF-ICORMA Turin (Italy)	Enrichens Francesco
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• National Institute of Health (Italy)	Giustini Marco
• Kuratorium für Schutz und Sicherheit - Institute Sicher Leben (Austria)	Kisser Rupert
• RAM Company (USA)	Mason John
• Chief Medical Officer TOROC	Massazza Giuseppe
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• CORIS Suisse	Mauron Daniel
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• CORIS International Insurance (Italy)	Pascazio Gianfranco
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The following persons have participated in the working groups as observers:

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