

# Queenstown Mountain Guides End of Season Report & SMS review – September 2025

## SMS version & reviews.

QMG is now working with SMS version 2.7. The SMS was reviewed in September 2025.

## Recommendations from Audit 2024

It may be beneficial to include guide equipment checks recorded in the pre-trip checklist to ensure it is checked and fit for purpose prior to the activity commencing.

## Actions from recommendations from Audit

Equipment checks are already part of the trip checklist

## Incident review

### Incident reporting culture:

3 x minor incidents reported.

### Ratio of near misses to accidents:

Nil near misses

### Serious incidents:

No serious incidents

### Recommended changes from reviews:

No recommended changes from reviews.

### Review of incident trend:

3 x minor incidents reported. Recent incidents have all been skiing related and on backcountry skiing trips.

### Operational recommendations from incident trends:

Additional messaging during booking process that clients need to be strong skiers to avoid injury if they want to book a backcountry skiing trip.

### Other incidents in the sector:

January 2025 – anchor failure guide belaying client on the full NW ridge of Mt Aspiring lead to a significant fall. 2 x cams placed in same crack in poor rock. Extra force of 2 x cams creating bottle jack effect causing expansion of crack and failure of both cams. Best practice 1 x cam only in rock unless it is solid beyond doubt.

August 2024 – Death of NZMGA heliskiing guide in the Arrowsmith mountains. Guide was buried deeply in avalanche debris, he did not deploy airbag and his trigger was zipped up. Recommendation is that air bag triggers should be unzipped in avalanche terrain and pack worn correctly.

November 2019- Rope failure on the Remarkables Grand Traverse. In this incident a guide was end roping 2 clients on a steep section of rock that required a short traverse. The clients fell and the rope holding the 2 clients cut. The clients died in the fall. The recommendation from the technical experts that investigated the incident is that guides should not end rope 2 clients with a single strand of rope on sections of steep rock where the rope might be cut by sharp rock. The best practice is doubling up rope or using individual strands.

#### **Improvements to QMG SMS past 12 months**

- Updated risk register
- Updated natural hazards section in SMS including trigger points

#### **Health & Safety Goals.**

- 1 goal achieved – implementing WorkSafe Natural Hazard Guidelines
- Goal - To purchase more new ropes
- Goal - To purchase more new hard wear specifically crampons
- Goal - Additional messaging during booking process that clients need to be strong skiers to avoid injury if they want to book a backcountry skiing trip.

#### **Client Feedback & Complaints**

Client complaints are logged in the incident register so they can be captured for review and improvements of the SMS. No safety complaints past 12 months.

#### **Testing of the QMG emergency plan.**

Accident and Emergency response plan training with Mike and Marina 9/9/2025

- 1 x knee injury on a ski touring course
- Client unable to support weight on knee so unable to move from the location
- Outside assistance required

The QMG emergency plan is clearly displayed on the QMG office wall and is a step-by-step procedure.

#### **Changes to Standards and Guidelines in Mountain & Ski Guiding, and Hiking**

March 2025 WorkSafe natural hazards guidelines

#### **Risk register**

- Risk register has been updated with natural hazards section and trigger points.

#### **Equipment**

QMG has continued to improve equipment with the purchase of new ropes