

IFMGA training for interested people from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe

A concept

Initial situation:

The IFMGA is the organization of all associations with an internationally recognized mountain guides training and has been existing for 50 years now. At the beginning the members were the classic countries where mountain guiding was practiced in the Alps: Switzerland, France, Austria, Italy and Germany. Over time also member countries from outside the Alps and also from outside Europe achieved this recognition and hence became members of the IFMGA: Great Britain, Norway, Canada, USA, Peru, Japan...

After the European opening at the end of the 1980s soon also the countries of Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Slovenia joined our international organization as member associations. Currently the IFMGA has got 23 member associations from all continents.

For years there have been made attempts by mountain guides and their associations to reach the international standard in particular from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, but they have failed several times due to the missing organizational structures which are mostly a consequence of the small number of mountain guides in the different countries. Greece was for example a member that was not able to fulfil this status in the long run for these reasons and was therefore suspended.

According to the currently valid bylaws and regulations it is only possible to become a member of the IFMGA if a national mountain guides association is founded in a country that sets up a recognized training system and association structures with the help of the IFMGA. Only if the mountain guides are trained according to international standard and also the association is able to organize these mountain guides and their training in a sustainable way and for years, a full membership within the IFMGA will be possible. This takes many years also in well organized countries with a relatively high number of interested people in being a mountain guide. But especially in countries with a small number of mountain guides that mostly also have financial difficulties and are rather weakly organized concerning their structure, this establishment does often fail also after several attempts.

Certainly, there is however potential of capable mountain guides in these countries who don't have any possibility - due to the above mentioned reasons - to follow an internationally recognized mountain guides training and to come to the possibility of a legal professional practice in the mountains of the world across this IFMGA recognition. The consequence is that these mountain guides still guide illegally in different sectors and therefore often put their guests and also themselves at risk.

The IFMGA has been aware of this problem for years and for many years one has been thinking about a possibility to stop this tendency. On the occasion of the last general meeting of the IFMGA in fall 2014 in Norway the fundamental decision was now taken to create a new way of access for candidates from these countries to an internationally recognized mountain guides training.

Idea:

The idea of the project is that an international training should be created under the direct control of the Technical Commission of the IFMGA where interested people may participate from countries that have no own national association that gives them the possibility to attend a training. The main focus will be on candidates from Eastern and South-Eastern European countries because the problem is the most serious there. The training shall correspond to the trainings in the currently recognized countries in all points. This level is defined in the platform of the IFMGA and described more in detail in the reference manual concerning the competences and skills for the training and certification of mountain guides. This level will be guaranteed by the fact that the training will be organized directly by the experts' team of the Technical Commission of the IFMGA. These experts are experienced instructors from different member associations of the IFMGA who do not only shape their own national training system in responsible positions by international exchange programs, but also know different training systems of other countries.

The candidates for this international training will pass the same path until they will be admitted to their mountain guide exam as it has been practiced in the current member associations for years. First there will be an admission test where everyone has to prove his personal skills as a mountaineer in the disciplines of rock climbing, ice climbing and alpine skiing. Additionally every candidate has to present a "curriculum vitae as an alpinist", so that the experience in the different sectors of mountaineering may be assumed as existing. Subsequently the basic training up to the level of a mountain guide aspirant takes place in different summer and winter courses. Then every aspirant has to do a certain number of practical tours under the supervision of an experienced IFMGA mountain guide, in order to learn about the daily life in guiding and make experiences with clients. In the last part of the training until getting to the mountain guide exam the candidates will attend additional courses and acquire all competences that are necessary for the certification as a mountain guide. The standards of mountain guides trainings are specified in the platform of the IFMGA (appendix to this letter) and more detailed in the reference handbook for training and certification of guides.

According to our experience it will probably be necessary for this special training to have a first look at the candidates in the different disciplines already before the entrance exam and to offer direct preparation and improvement courses for capable mountaineers in different sectors (f. ex. skiing), in order to make it possible to them to pass the entry exams and to have access to the training. First testings should already take place in winter 2015/2016 to evaluate the potential for this training.

The participants of this training will probably come from different countries, from the Balkans to Bulgaria, Romania and the Baltic States. To make a common training actually possible and also to treat everybody equally and not to favour anybody concerning language due to his origin, it will basically be a training that is held in English. This is also important regarding the fact that everyone who wants to work as a mountain guide with international permit in the future, has to be able to speak at least English as a foreign language. Only like this the participants will consequently have the skills to organize and guide tours in the most different countries.

Since the candidates from most of these countries will financially rather not be able to carry the full costs of this training system due to the low income situation in parts of this regions, it will get necessary to find additional financial sources for the organization and execution of the courses. These may be government subsidies of the different participating countries, maybe contributions from EU structural support funds or also money from private sponsors, especially from the sector of alpine equipment providers. The training shall in no case be offered for free to the participants, but it will be necessary to adapt the costs in relation to the current living expenses in the particular home country of the participants. We hope that this way it will not generally be impossible for interested people to participate in this training only due to financial reasons.

Participants:

Subsequently, it will certainly be necessary to consider precisely how the participants of this training system will be organized later. Since the IFMGA is always only the umbrella organization of different mountain guide associations, the individual mountain guides may not be direct members of it. It always needs a professional association that supports the individual mountain guides in their work and also supervises their activities. Part of that are also the compulsory insurance and the obligation to attend regularly professional further educations which are prescribed for all mountain guides. Here it is imaginable that the participants get the possibility to become members of an already existing national member association of the IFMGA. It is also possible that existing member associations assume the function as sponsor countries and help to set up association structures for new member countries when a sufficient number of participants from a certain country has concluded the training after a certain time, so that it makes sense to found a national association.

On the other hand it has to be considered if an independent "multi-national" mountain guide association shall be founded that is – under the supervision of the IFMGA - responsible for all these tasks for all those mountain guides who have no own association. This association would then assume the role of the national association for all these mountain guides and be present as a member association at the IFMGA. One of the tasks of this association is certainly also the supervision of the professional activities, the observance of the self-imposed rules of the „code of conduct“ including the duty of further education, control of the liability insurance, collecting the membership fees ...

Thereby it would as a consequence be guaranteed that the participants of this training also have an organization after their mountain guide exam that represents their rights and supports and controls their work.

Goals

The primary goal of this project is the creation of a controlled way to training and to the international recognition for mountain guide candidates from countries that have no regulations up to now. As a result the awareness about this profession and the competences of a mountain guide shall also be improved in these countries. As a consequence, illegal guiding from these regions should diminish, because a legal training will be possible then and the participants will personally pay attention that the professional image of the mountain guide will be consolidated in their home countries.

Finally it is above all the consumer who will benefit from this, because more safety during guiding work and consequently also more legal certainty will be created based on a professional and recognized training.

Of course it can also be a possibility for current member countries of the IFMGA that have relatively few candidates to send their interested candidates from their country to the international IFMGA training, because they are only able to organize training courses from time to time. Of course these associations are strongly interested in integrating also their own instructors in the new structure!

If this project works well, we can consider to realize similar models in the future also in other regions such as for example Asia or South Africa. We get more and more requests also from mountaineers from countries like India, Iran, China, Pakistan ... who would like to become mountain guides and have no working structures for that in their home countries.

Next steps:

The information about the possibility to take part in this new training should be spread in the different countries. Interested alpinists can get in touch with the IFMGA without commitment in the next months, then we have the number of potential participants and we can organize the date and place of the first tests.

The candidates will then get detailed informations about schedules, costs, places where the courses will take place etc. and after this they can decide to subscribe to the entry tests and the training course.

Contact:

IVBV UIAGM IFMGA

Hanno Döenz
Gantschierstr. 74
A 6780 SCHRUNS
AUSTRIA

hanno.doenz@uiagm.info
office@uiagm.info

Please send this document also to all of your friends that could be interested in the training to become a IFMGA qualified mountain guide.



INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER BERGFÜHRERVERBÄNDE
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN GUIDES ASSOCIATIONS
UNION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE GUIDES DE MONTAGNE
UNION INTERNACIONAL DE ASOCIACIONES DE GUIAS DE MONTAÑA

IFMGA Platform

This Platform outlines the Objectives and Rules of the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA).

1. Basic Principles
2. Code of Professional Conduct
3. Training and Assessment of Mountain Guides
4. Practising as a Guide
5. Joining the IFMGA

Basic Principles

An IFMGA Mountain Guide is a professional whose competence has been certified by an official institution, accredited by the IFMGA. He may lead, instruct, advise and coach members of the public in a variety of mountain situations, for example general mountaineering whether on foot or on skis, or more technical activities like rock climbing and ice climbing.

To ensure that this is done as safely and responsibly as possible, the IFMGA has a Training Scheme, setting a common standard worldwide. The training is at a high level in the four disciplines of general mountaineering, skiing, rock climbing and ice climbing.

Recognising that individual countries may have their own individual requirements as regards the training of their own Mountain Guides, a degree of autonomy exists within the IFMGA Training Scheme. While the Scheme covers technical skills in depth, the IFMGA attaches equal importance to the non-technical or 'soft' skills of a Mountain Guide. Also, each and every IFMGA Mountain Guide is expected to observe the Code of Professional Conduct.

Any country with an existing and substantive Mountain Guiding Association may join the IFMGA, provided it complies with the entry requirements, and indeed is encouraged to do so; and the IFMGA has guidelines for interested associations outlining the application procedure. It is an objective of the IFMGA that there is free movement of Mountain Guides within its member countries.

In addition to training Mountain Guides in the core skills of mountain guiding, the IFMGA also runs courses for professionals in Canyoning and in Rope Access.

An IFMGA Mountain Guide's skills are transferable to situations away from the mountains, for example to give specialist support to the Fire and Rescue Services.

In addition to this Platform are the IFMGA Bylaws, which set out the Statutes or Constitution of the IFMGA, and which can only be amended by a two-thirds majority of votes at a General Assembly; whereas the Platform can be amended by the Management Committee.

2. IFMGA Code of Professional Conduct

This Code of Professional Conduct outlines the roles and obligations of a Mountain Guide in the execution of his/her profession. The term Guide refers to any category of membership.

Article 1. Client's Objectives.

- Before starting an engagement, a Guide assesses the client's level of ability, previous experience and objectives.
- A Guide tries to encourage a spirit of self-reliance in the client.

Article 2. Contract. A Guide agrees a contract with the client, either in writing or verbally.

Article 3. Duty of Care. A Guide has a legal duty of care to his/her clients, but also wider professional responsibilities and obligations to mountaineers and mountaineering in general, which in some circumstances may also constitute a legal duty of care.

Article 4. Environment. A Guide encourages respect for the environment through advice and personal example.

Article 5. Equipment.

- A Guide ensures that the client is appropriately equipped for the intended activity.
- A Guide's own personal equipment is appropriate for the intended activity, is reliable, is periodically checked.

Article 6. Field of Competence.

- A Guide's Field of Competence includes all of the core mountain skills (general mountaineering, rock climbing, ice climbing and snow activities) and related activities associated with and appropriate to a Guide's skills and training (including, for example, indoor climbing walls, rope access and canyoning)
- A Guide leads, instructs, advises and coaches clients

Article 7. General Obligations. A Guide upholds the status of the profession and is mindful of the consequent obligations and issues of professional integrity at all times. A Guide observes IFMGA recommendations.

Article 8. Identification. When working as a mountain guide, a Guide wears the IFMGA badge and carries the IFMGA identification card.

Article 9. Insurance and CPD. A Guide observes the IFMGA's requirements on Insurance and CPD.

Article 10. Other Mountain Users.

- A Guide is friendly and helpful to other Guides and mountaineers
- If asked for help or information from another mountaineer, a Guide is polite and helpful
- A Guide informs the relevant authorities of any abnormal events or hazards observed
- A Guide tries to have a friendly relationship with other mountain users (e.g. ski patrol, mountain rescue, lift operators, park wardens etc.)
- A Guide respects the relationship between other guides and their clients

Article 11. Ratios, local customs and Regulations. When working with clients, a Guide decides the appropriate number of participants taking into account safety, the terms of the engagement, any customs as to ratios, and any regulation or legislation observed by local guides. Where it exists, the established practice of local IFMGA Guides is followed.

Article 12. Risk.

- A Guide recognises that, in mountain guiding, there is an element of variable risk
- A Guide makes sure that the client is aware of any likely risks
- A Guide is careful and alert
- In matters of safety, all decisions are made by the Guide
- A Guide rejects projects which appear too risky or which are unethical; and if working for an employer, informs the employer accordingly
- Where a Guide cancels or changes a tour on safety grounds, the Guide informs the clients as soon as possible with a full explanation as to the reasons for the decision

Article 13. Rescue. Where others are injured, a Guide's primary responsibility is with his/her own clients. Subject to that, and where possible, a Guide helps other injured climbers and if necessary alerts Mountain Rescue.

Article 14. Snow + Avalanche and Weather Forecasts and Conditions.

- Where appropriate, a Guide obtains snow + avalanche and weather forecasts
- Where appropriate, a Guide assesses relevant snow + avalanche and weather conditions
- A Guide establishes the condition of the proposed route/itinerary as appropriate

Article 15. Young People. When working with young people, a Guide is fully aware of relevant legislation and guidelines, and adheres to them.

3. Training and Assessment of Mountain Guides

General

3.1 The IFMGA Mountain Guide receives professional training in all guiding, technical and climbing skills; and while under training, opportunities are provided for the Guide to gain further experience.

3.2 He is tested and examined in all subjects. The complete skills of a IFMGA Mountain Guide are listed in the actual version of the reference handbook "Skills and Certifications IFMGA Mountain Guides".

3.3 Any experienced mountaineer who complies with the requirements of the IFMGA standard can start the training to become a qualified IFMGA Mountain Guide. Training, assessment and certification are organized by the responsible institution in a Member Association. By being a member of a Member Association, the qualified Guide will obtain IFMGA recognition.

3.4 Member Associations, may train applicants from other countries under certain requirements, they are encouraged to inform the home association of the candidate.

The Training Scheme

3.5 Individual Member Associations have some discretion as to how the Training is delivered, but the following is the minimum required by the IFMGA.

3.6 Training is a mixture of Group and Individual Training. The group training has to take place before the Individual Training. Group Training are courses delivered to a group of people by a collective of instructors, covering all aspects of the syllabus, whereas Individual Training is training delivered to an individual Aspirant by a trainer teacher, giving an opportunity for the Aspirant to refine guiding skills on actual routes with real clients.

3.7 Once the entry exam has been passed, the overall training, including all exams, must be 80 days minimum, and it has to be completed within 3 years minimum and 5 years maximum. In addition there must be a minimum of 14 days practice by individual training.

3.8 The training includes theory and practical. The practical elements must be at least 60 days spread out over the entire training programme, and must consist of at least:

- 20 days of general mountaineering terrain (snow, ice, rock)
- 20 days of ski/winter (e.g. ski mountaineering, off-piste, ski touring, etc.)
- 20 days of rock (alpinism/technical rock climbing)

At least 40 of these 60 days must take place in classic mountaineering terrain including glaciers, for example the Alps.

Summary of Skills Taught

3.9 A Mountain Guide is trained and assessed in both technical and soft skills, each contributing equally to safety, quality and to a Guide's general professionalism.

Examples of technical skills taught:

- Avalanche Evaluation
- Environment (fauna, flora, geology, ecology, culture)
- First Aid
- General Mountaineering, Trekking and Expedition
- Meteorology
- Mountain Rescue (self rescue, crevasse rescue, avalanche rescue etc.)
- Navigation
- Personal technical skills (general mountaineering, skiing, rock, ice etc.)
- Practice Guiding Skills
- Rope handling
- Route Choice

Examples of soft skills taught:

- Coaching
- Communication
- Feedback
- Information
- Leading and Teaching
- Motivation
- Organisation
- Relations and Social Skills
- Risk Management

The required competences in detail are listed in the reference handbook.

Sequence of the training

3.10 The training is done in the following sequence:

- Entry Requirements
- Entry Exam
- Aspirant Guide Course
- Practice
- Mountain Guide Course

Entry Requirements

3.11 An Applicant must:

- have reached the age of majority, which varies between countries and is normally 18 yrs.
- have extensive experience in the disciplines of general mountaineering, skiing, rock and ice. Skiing must be replaced in “No Ski” countries by winter mountaineering (see 5.15)
- provide a list of at least 35 routes which includes varied mountain routes, ski tours, technical climbs, and other experience carried out over a period of at least three years. During these climbs, the applicant must either have been the rope leader with full responsibility or have been doing alternative leads with shared responsibility
- be in very good physical shape

3.12 The list of 35 varied mountain routes must contain:

Summer Mountaineering

- general mountaineering, snow and ice: a minimum of 10 routes of which five must be of difficulty D and with a vertical height gain of at least 800 metres
- rock: a minimum of 10 routes with a vertical height gain of at least 250 metres (or at least 10 pitches), of minimum difficulty 4, with protection to be added to at least one part of the climb, in mountaineering boots
- the ascent and descent for these routes must have taken place on mountainous terrain and/or on glaciers
- the descent of part of these 20 routes cannot be done by rappelling and must have taken place by a route other than that of the ascent and must have been of an alpine character

Winter Mountaineering

- ski touring: a minimum of 10 days, each day having at least 1000 metres ascent/descent. At least 5 of these days must be on glacier terrain
- For “No Ski countries”; a minimum of 10 days mountaineering each day having at least 1000 metres ascent/descent. At least 5 of these days must be on glacier terrain

Technical Climbs

- multi-pitch rock routes, grade 6a (VI) minimum
- several pitches on steep ice, grade 4 (IV) minimum

Other Experience

- An Applicant must provide any other relevant experience, for example via ferratas, expeditions or climbs abroad/overseas, and training undertaken in Alpine type terrain

Entry Exam

3.13 Having met the Entry Requirements, an Applicant takes the Entry Exam, which includes:

- a rock climbing test of grade 5a minimum in mountaineering boots
- a rock climbing test of grade 6b minimum in rock shoes
- an ice climbing test with ice axe, using classic techniques
- an ice climbing test with one or two ice axes, using front pointing techniques
- a skiing test with rucksack, mastering all types of snow on all terrains. (This test is not required for countries where no professional skiing activity takes place, No-Ski countries)
- a general ability test in mountain terrain

3.14 Having passed the Entry Exam, an Applicant becomes a Candidate.

Aspirant Guide Course / First part of the Formation

3.15 A Candidate who, at the discretion of the responsible training institution of the Member Association, has sufficient experience and training, goes on to the Training Scheme for Aspirant Guides.

3.16 This includes at least 50 days of Group Training covering the following subjects (minimum number of days in brackets):

- snow and avalanches (6)
- self-rescue (4)
- First Aid (2)
- practical winter (skiing / alpinism) (12)
- practical summer (20) , i.e. 10 days general mountaineering in mixed terrain and 5 days of high altitude rock and 5 days snow/ice/glacier

The remaining 6 days are at the discretion of the Member Association.

3.17 Having passed all courses and assessments of the Aspirant Guide Course, the Candidate becomes an Aspirant Guide. The status of Aspirant Guide is a transitional status of a minimum of 1 year and maximum of 5 years. The possible activities of an Aspirant Guide are subject to restrictions.

Practice/ Second part of the Formation

3.18 During the period of Practice, an Aspirant must complete at least 14 days of Individual Training (7 in general mountaineering/summer and 7 in skiing/winter); and the following requirements must be observed:

- these 14 days training are delivered by at least 2 different IFMGA trainer teachers. The trainer teachers have to be IFMGA mountain guides, each being high quality mentors of experience
- the Aspirant must be under direct supervision, by which is meant that the IFMGA Guide and the Aspirant are in close visual and verbal contact with each other
- when delivering this Individual Training, the IFMGA Guide can only be responsible for one Aspirant at a time on difficult routes.
- the Aspirant keeps a record of routes and experience in a logbook which has to be signed by the different IFMGA Guides
- this Individual Training must be recognised and approved by the Member Association

Mountain Guide Course / Third part of the Formation

3.19 Having completed the 50 days of Group Training followed by the 14 days of Practice, the Aspirant can go on to the Mountain Guide Course, which is a minimum of 16 days allocated at the discretion of the Member Association, but including both summer and winter.

3.20 On successful completion of the Mountain Guide Course, the Aspirant becomes a fully qualified Mountain Guide and receives the Diploma of the IFMGA Mountain Guide. The certification level is described in the actual version of the reference handbook “Skills and Certifications IFMGA Mountain Guides”.

CPD (Continual Professional Development)

3.21 CPD is training recognised and approved by a Member Association as contributing to the continued professional development of a Mountain Guide.

3.22 Each Member Association (subject to any national or federal laws) can set its own requirements as to how often CPD should take place. However, the IFMGA recommendation is that a Mountain Guide does CPD at least every 2 years and that it is on the basis of at least 1 day per year.

4. Practising as a Guide

In order to practise professionally, an IFMGA Mountain Guide must have:

- a Diploma
- a valid IFMGA Mountain Guide Card
- up to date CPD
- Public Liability Insurance
- Authorisation (depending on the country where the Guide is working)

Diploma: the Mountain Guide Diploma is proof of competence and is issued by the competent authority. A competent authority varies from country to country, maybe a state authority, a federal authority or a Guide Association.

IFMGA Mountain Guide card: the Member Association on behalf of the IFMGA issues the IFMGA Mountain Guide Card. The Card contains the Guide's name, date of birth, Member Association, passport type photograph and Licence Number.

Authorisation: some Countries require an Authorisation to Work, issued by a National or Federal Government Department. It is a Mountain Guide's personal responsibility to find out if Authorisation is required and, if so, to comply with it.

5. Joining the IFMGA

Application by an Association to Join the IFMGA

5.1 An application for membership may be made either by a National Association representing the Mountain Guide profession in a country, or by a Transnational Association representing the Mountain Guide professions in more than one country. The Association may be authorised or regulated by the State, but in any case it must, if a National Association, be the main one in the country, and, if a Transnational Association, be the main one in the countries it represents.

5.2 The IFMGA then establishes the status of the Interested Association and the level of training currently being given in general mountaineering, skiing, rock and ice. In order for an Interested Association to be accepted as a Candidate Association, the following Pre-conditions must be established:

- the Association must have at least 20 mountain guides as members
- their personal skills in the disciplines of general mountaineering, skiing, rock and ice must be at the IFMGA's required minimum levels, although an application can be made to replace Skiing with Winter Travel (see 5.15)
- the association must have a training programme in place
- 3 of the 4 disciplines must be available in the country of the interested Association, or in the case of an interested Transnational Association, in one of the countries it represents.
- recognition by Government should be an objective
- the association must proof the real potential of mountain guides activities

5.3 It is the responsibility of the Management Committee and Technical Committee to establish whether these criteria are satisfied.

Candidate Association

5.4 Once the Association has become a Candidate Association, it submits a Training Programme to the IFMGA Technical Committee for approval. This Training Programme must comply with the IFMGA's Objectives and with the minimum standards of Training as laid down in this document.

5.5 The IFMGA supports the Candidate Association in establishing a viable Training Programme by:

- members of the Candidate Association attending Training Courses in an IFMGA Member Association
- expert IFMGA Guides attending Training Courses in the Candidate Association, either as instructors or as consultants

Ideally both are used; and the costs are paid by the Candidate Association.

5.6 It is beneficial if the Candidate Association attends meetings of the Instructors' Conference.

Final Assessment

5.7 The Candidate Association makes an application to the IFMGA for the Final Assessment, which will be done in the 4 main disciplines of general mountaineering, skiing, rock and ice. For “No ski countries”, see 5.15.

5.8 The Final Assessment takes place on an Aspirant and/or Mountain Guide Course(s) with a minimum of 5 participants and it is carried out by a minimum of 2 expert IFMGA Guides from different Member Associations. It is recognised that considerable co-ordination is required between the Candidate Association, the Technical Committee and the Management Committee.

5.9 The expert IFMGA Guides assess:

- the Candidate Association’s own instructors (i.e. both their technical and their soft skills)
- the participants of the course (i.e. their experience and their skills)
- the organisation of the course (i.e. location, process, finances)

5.10 The experts’ fees and travelling expenses to the Candidate Association’s country are paid by the IFMGA; while their accommodation, food, travelling expenses during the course, and other extra fees are paid by the Candidate Association. If further visits are required in order to complete an Assessment, the full costs are paid for by the Candidate Association.

5.11 The expert IFMGA Guides write a detailed Report for the Technical Committee.

Admission of the Candidate Association

5.12 Subject to a positive Report by the expert IFMGA Guides and subject to the Management Committee being satisfied that the Pre-conditions have been met, a resolution is put to an IFMGA General Meeting that the Candidate Association can be accepted as a Member Association.

5.13 For existing Guides in the Candidate Association who already meet the IFMGA standards, a shortened transitional programme of Training and Assessment may be arranged in co-operation between the Association and the Technical Committee of the IFMGA.

The First 5 Years

5.14 Technical support from the IFMGA continues for the next 5 years, mainly in a consulting role, but also checking that the IFMGA procedures are being followed. At least one Training Programme should be run during this time and the shortened transitional programme of Training and Assessment for existing Guides must be completed within these first 5 years.

“No Ski Countries”

5.15 Subject to Conditions, which are carefully considered on an individual basis, a Candidate Association can be accepted into the IFMGA without skiing.

Conditions:

- due to an absence of infrastructure, skiing cannot be practiced in the Country of the candidate association.

- skiing is not a discipline of the Candidate Association`s existing Guides
- skiing will not in the foreseeable future be a discipline of the Candidate Association`s existing Guides
- the standard of the other disciplines is unaffected
- in the place of skiing, a Winter Training Course on snow in high mountains will take place, preferentially with snow shoes
- ‘Snow and Avalanches’ is included in the Winter Training and has to be thoroughly covered, including the Theory of Avalanches, Avalanche Hazard Evaluation and Route Choice

5.16 Countries with a working infrastructure of skiing are in principle excluded from this exception - i.e. skiing must be included as a discipline. Countries in Europe and North America, as well as all countries with a working infrastructure of skiing or a skiing culture, are considered as ski countries.

5.17 An IFMGA Mountain Guide card with the note “NO SKI” identifies a Mountain Guide without the discipline of skiing. A “NO SKI” Mountain Guide has no reciprocal rights as regards skiing with other Member Associations. A “NO SKI” Member Association is not allowed to train applicants of any Ski country.

5.18 A Mountain Guide of a “NO SKI” Member Association can later opt to do the discipline of skiing, provided that:

- the training takes place in a Member Association where the discipline of skiing is practiced
- in order to guarantee CPD in skiing, the Mountain Guide takes out a second membership of that Member Association

Joining the IFMGA

Suspension or Expulsion

5.19 If it is suspected that a Member Association is in breach of any aspect of the IFMGA Platform, the Management Committee will in the first place invite the Member Association to respond. If after a reasonable amount of time this fails to resolve the issue, the Management Committee will put in place an investigation. If the issue is to do with Training or any other technical point, the Technical Committee will normally carry out this investigation.

5.20 If the investigation identifies a serious failing(s) by the Member Association, and if the Member Association fails after a reasonable amount of time to address the failing(s), the General Assembly may vote on whether to suspend or expel the Member Association.

5.21 If a Member Association is expelled from the IFMGA, a Mountain Guide of that Member Association may apply to join any other Member Association and is then subject to that Member Association’s entry requirements.

5.22 A Member Association may leave the IFMGA at any time, of its own freewill.

5.23 Whether a Member Association is expelled or leaves the IFMGA of its own freewill, no monies paid are refunded.

1st May 2014