



**Information release
July 23, 2014**

Helmet usage increasing in snowsports

The Australian Ski Areas Association (ASAA), the peak body representing Australia's ski lifting and resort companies, is pleased to announce the continued increase in helmet usage in snowsports in Australia.

In a comprehensive survey conducted in July 2014 across every Australian ski resort, with a sample size in excess of 54,000 snowsports participants, a helmet usage rate of 67.0% was recorded. This is a marked increase over the same survey period in 2013, when helmet usage of 57.4% was recorded.

The ASAA Chief Executive Officer, Colin Hackworth said, "The increase in helmet usage follows a concerted public education campaign by all Australian ski resorts, where helmet usage is encouraged and recommended. There is no doubt that, in certain circumstances, wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of injury. Clearly there is now a widespread understanding of the benefits of wearing a helmet, with the majority of snowsports participants choosing to wear one".

The ASAA cautions that overseas studies indicate that there is no causal link between the uptake in wearing of helmets and a reduction in head injuries in snowsports. Recent credible studies have found that, despite helmet-wearing being adopted by millions of recreational skiers and snowboarders (ski helmet use in the US has tripled in the past 10 years), the incidence of catastrophic head and upper spinal injuries in skiing has not declined.

The Chairman of ASAA, Peter Brulisauer commented, "While all Australian ski resorts encourage the wearing of helmets, the most important safety consideration one can make is to **stay in control and to ride safely and considerately**. If everyone abided by the ASAA's Alpine Responsibility Code, there would be far less safety incidents. The wearing of helmets will not, in many cases, mitigate against the consequences of extreme or excessive risk-taking behaviour".

The ASAA is a non-profit industry body representing Australia's ski lift operators. Amongst other things, the ASAA works to promote snowsports in Australia as a safe and enjoyable recreation.

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