

**Occupational Health & Safety
Inspection Programs & Services**

**2013/2014 Ski Resorts/Gondolas Project Report
Industry Code 85904**

Inspection data time frame: October 2013 & January 2014.

Report Date: February 28, 2014

1.0 Introduction

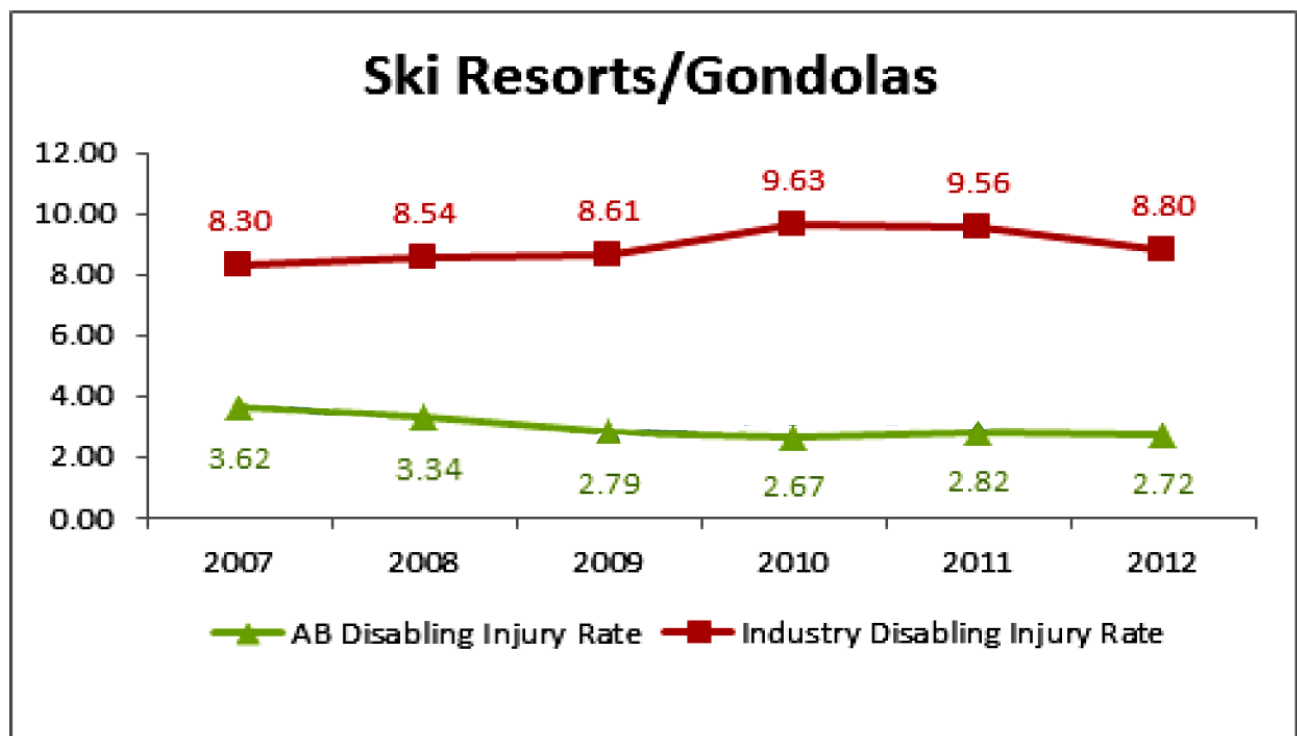
Jobs, Skills, Training, and Labour (JSTL) through Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) has introduced a Risk Based Programs Strategy to improve inspection and compliance outcomes in areas where there exists a high frequency of incidence of injury or illness and where known hazards present risk to workers. This risk-based strategy uses a variety of education, compliance and enforcement tools when dealing with Alberta work sites and the parties engaged in work at those sites to ensure legislated safety and health standards are met. OHS identified the ski resorts/gondolas industry as a key area in the Risk Based Programs Strategy for a proactive concentrated inspection campaign in 2013/2014.

The rationale for selecting ski resorts/gondolas as a project included a comparison of the industry Disabling Injury Rate (DIR) with the provincial average DIR. The comparison is indicative of a high incidence of injury associated with the industry. This comparison is depicted in Figure 1.

The industry also employs a younger and often transient workforce, is seasonal in nature and has known work place hazards. Additionally, OHS has identified opportunities to impact DIR through addressing training and supervision aspects of the operations.

The goal of this inspection project was to ensure compliance with *OHS Act, Regulation and Code* requirements and to enhance employers' awareness of their obligation and responsibility to protect the health and safety of workers.

Figure 1: Ski resort/gondola DIR compared to provincial average.



2.0 Overview of Ski Resorts/Gondolas Inspection Project

As part of a risk-based approach to OHS, ski resorts and gondolas were identified as an industry requiring action and intervention. This industry has taken interest in improving their performance since the introduction of the project in 2012/2013. The industry traditionally employs a transient workforce with a high percentage of temporary foreign and young workers.

This project focused on a number of areas related to issues concerning safety of workers within the industry. Training and supervision of workers, and the appropriate care, use and maintenance of equipment were key focus areas during the project.

In the province of Alberta there are 54 employers classified under industry code 85904, defined as “Ski Resorts/Gondolas”. Of these 54 employers, 28 operate ski resorts. These 28 ski resort employers were identified for OHS inspections in 2013/2014, and all 28 employers were inspected.

The project comprised two distinct phases. OHS officers completed inspections in October 2013, prior to the ski season beginning, with a second set of follow-up inspections in the January 2014 during peak season.

The October inspections focused on hazard assessment, implementation of controls, ensuring workers were adequately trained and whether equipment was maintained and operating in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications prior to the start of the ski season.

The January inspections focused on the inspection of appropriate hazard controls, assessing worker competency, adequacy of supervision and the safe operation of the equipment.

During the inspections officers concentrated on but were not limited to the following sections of the OHS legislation:

- OHS Act Section 2 (1) - Obligations of the employers, workers, etc.

- OHS Regulations Section 12 - Equipment
- OHS Regulations Section 13 - General protection of workers
- OHS Regulations Section 14 - Duties of workers
- OHS Regulations Section 15 - Safety training

- OHS Code Part 2 - Hazard Assessment, Elimination and Control
- OHS Code Part 9 - Fall Protection
- OHS Code Part 15 - Managing the Control of Hazardous Energy
- OHS Code Part 19 - Powered Mobile Equipment

Officers addressed hazards observed during their inspection and orders were issued where appropriate to do so. Officers followed operational procedures in the course of this project. Upon completion of each inspection, officers issued a written Contact Report to the employer documenting the results of the inspection and orders that may have been issued to correct observed deficiencies.

OHS Officers followed up in cases where orders were issued with re-inspections of the worksite to verify compliance with all issued orders.

3.0 Results of Inspection Activity

Number of Inspections

This project took place between October 1, 2013 and January 31, 2014. On-going inspections and re-inspections continue to ensure compliance with orders issued is validated. For the purpose of this report, inspection data is included up to and including February 21, 2014.

In 2013/2014, OHS officers conducted 34 inspections and 6 re-inspections for a total 40 initial and follow-up inspections across 28 ski resorts. By way of comparison, in 2012/2013 the project focused on 26 employers who operated ski resorts. The 2012/2013 project resulted in a total of 59 inspections and re-inspections.

Re-inspections for the 2013/2014 ski resorts project continue beyond February 28, 2014 to verify compliance with orders. Therefore the re-inspection total will adjust up as these inspections are completed.

Table 1 below outlines the type of OHS intervention at the work sites inspected over the 2 years.

Table 1: Ski Resorts/Gondolas Project Activity Summary 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

Activity	2012/2013 Total	2013/2014 Total
Inspection	29	34
Re-Inspection	30	6
Investigation	1	0
Total	60	40

OHS Inspection Findings

During the 2013/2014 OHS ski resorts/gondola inspection project, a total of 18 orders were issued across the province against industry code 85904.

An additional four (4) Notices to Produce documents related to occupational health and safety information were issued to employers. Notices to Produce documents are not viewed as orders in the provincial legislation.

One stop use order was issued.

The number of orders issued in 2013/2014 was lower than the number issued in 2012/2013. Table 2 below presents this comparison.

Table 2: Ski Resorts/Gondolas Project OHS orders and Notices to Produce documents

Type	2012/2013 Total	2013/2014 Total
Orders	64	18
Stop Use	-	1
Stop Work	-	-
Notice to Produce	4	4
Demand	1	-
Total	69	23

The inspection results of 2013/2014 indicate that employers in the industry are focusing more diligently on ensuring compliance with legislated standards. Fewer orders were issued relating to observed non-compliance. It should be noted that the total number of re-inspections in 2013/2014 will increase over the next few weeks as final follow up to verify compliance occurs through site visits.

The stop use order in 2013/2014 related to worker noise exposure (Part 16).

Applicable Legislation

OHS Officers focused on sections of legislation that were known hazards and present risks to workers in the industry. Officers were not limited to these sections of the legislation when conducting inspections. Orders and Notices to Produce were issued across several sections of OHS legislation, as summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. OHS Legislation (by Part and Section) Applied in 2013/2014.

Part	Section	Description	Total
1	15	General – Safety Training	1
2	8	Hazard Assessment, Elimination and Control – Worker Participation	1
3	12	Specifications and Certifications - Following Specifications	2
6	62	Cranes, Hoists and Lifting Devices – Rated Load Capacity	1
7	115	Emergency Preparedness and Response – Emergency Response Plan	1
9	140	Fall Protection – Fall Protection Plan	1
10	171	Fire and Explosion Hazards – Compressed and Liquefied Gas	2
12	187	General Safety Precautions – Pallets and Storage Racks	1
16	219	Noise Exposure – Noise Exposure Assessment	2
18	245	PPE – Respiratory Protective Equipment – Code of Practice	1
21	294	Rigging – Inspection	1
22	310	Safeguards – Safeguards	3
29	397	Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) – Training	1
29	406	WHMIS – Information Current	1
TOTAL			19

The inspection results indicate four areas of legislation are responsible for 47% of all orders. These four areas are equipment use and maintenance (Part 3, section 12); fire and explosions (Part 10, section 171) relating to compressed /liquefied gas containers; noise exposure (Part 16, section 219) worker exposure to noise; and safeguards (Part 22, section 310) relating to protecting workers from moving parts of equipment.

OHS Management Actions

The project focused on inspection activity and assessing the employers' safe work practices, equipment use and maintenance, training of staff and supervision. OHS also used senior executive level meetings with some employers

to demonstrate the economic benefits and social value of implementing strong health and safety programs, as well as the consequences when adequate training, proper supervision and committed leadership are not part of organizational culture and business plans.

OHS management presented at the 2013 annual Canada West Ski Areas Association (CWSAA) conference on the findings of the initial inspection project and the “Business Advantages of Building a Strong Health and Safety Management System”. OHS has been invited back to present the 2013/2014 project results and analysis at the 2014 CWSAA conference.

Additionally, OHS Delivery and Policy management has partnered with Alberta Municipal Affairs (AMA), and Alberta Elevating Devices and Amusement Rides Safety Association (AEDARSA), to inspect elevating devices, specifically chair lifts. A joint inspection campaign in the summer of 2014 focusing on maintenance of chair lifts is planned.

4.0 Summary

Next Steps

A joint inspection of chair lifts at ski resort operations will be conducted in the summer of 2014.

OHS is planning to attend the Canada West Ski Areas Association Alberta conference in 2014. The topic of discussion will be “The OHS Ski Resorts/Gondolas Risk-Based Inspection Project and Other Initiatives Relevant to Alberta Ski Areas.”

OHS officers continue to conduct inspections to ensure occupational health and safety compliance at ski resorts on an on-going basis.

OHS will continue to implement OHS risk-based inspection projects directed at industries where specific hazards are known to exist, and where OHS observes continued non-compliance. Future OHS risk-based inspections are planned for 2014/2015 as part of the OHS 2014/2015 Risk Based Programs Strategy.

Original signed
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Date: _____ 2014