

Trip Captain's Manual

Peninsula Ski Club of Virginia, Inc.

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Foreword

A primary objective of the Peninsula Ski Club is to provide skiing opportunities at reduced prices or greater value than otherwise available. Also, it is important for all of the Club's members to have enjoyable trips. The trips must be well managed for this to occur. The purpose of this manual is to help the Trip Captain to successfully manage the processes of planning, pricing, marketing, conducting, and financing the trip. The guidance presented herein comes from the varied experiences of many successful trip captains over the past four decades. As such, the Club's experienced Trip Captains are already well aware of the instructive content of this document. It is the goal of this manual to provide the basic and detailed information needed for enabling first-time Trip Captains to successfully conduct any ski trip. Many possible pitfalls and hazards to be avoided are identified. Much detailed advice is given for planning, pricing, and conducting the trip.

In order for a trip to be considered fully successful, its finances must also be well managed. As much attention should go into managing the finances as to planning and conducting the trip. First, the trip participants deserve the best value for their money and this means that the Trip Captain must do his or her "homework" during the planning phase to ensure that occurs. Second, the Club deserves and expects full and accurate accountability. There are certain approvals that are required during planning and contracting. The requirements for financial accounting and reporting are presented.

*Even though this manual is oriented towards ski trips, the requirements that are presented in this document relative to planning, pricing, approvals, contracting, marketing, conducting, accounting, and financial reporting apply **to all overnight PSC-sponsored trips** including cruises, sightseeing tours, biking trips, etc. unless specifically exempted. To be deemed exempted, a non-skiing trip must have: a justified reason presented to the PSC board, the exemption recommendation of the Non-Skiing Activities Chairperson, and the voted approval of the board. This manual does not apply to local outings, but does apply to **day ski trips**. The Skiing Activities Chairperson and the Non-Skiing Activities Chairperson are responsible for providing oversight for all overnight PSC trips, as well as day trips, that fall in their respective subject areas. The term "Trip Captain" used herein refers to the leader of any PSC-sponsored trip.*

The Skiing Activities Chairperson is responsible for updating the Trip Captain's Manual per PSC Board approved policy and provide an updated, PDF copy of this manual to be posted on the PSC website. It is important for Club Members who are considering conducting trips to study this manual to become familiar with the Club's expectations.

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List of Attachments

- A. PSC Trip Pricing Worksheet
- B. Payments Received from PSC Trip Members
- C. PSC Income/Expense Voucher
- D. Itemized Check Payments to PSC Treasury
- E. Trip Income Summary – Payments to PSC Treasury
- F. Trip Expense Summary – Payments from PSC Treasury
- G. PSC Trip Financial Statement
- H. Archival PSC Trip Information

Introduction

This manual is divided into sections which address trip planning, trip pricing and financing, trip marketing, trip conducting, financial accounting and reporting, contingencies, and other advice.

Planning the Trip

There are many aspects to planning a ski trip. The obvious are selecting the ski resort and planning for the lodging and transportation. But prior to getting into serious planning, the Trip Captains Meeting must be held.

Trip Captains Meeting

The Club's Skiing Activities Chairperson will schedule and conduct a meeting each spring for members interested in conducting ski trips the following ski season. In addition to the potential trip captains, the Club President will attend.

A primary reason for this planning meeting is to develop a schedule of trips for the next ski season. The schedule should include a mixture of week, weekend, day, and, perhaps, mid-week trips. In order to provide the most skiing opportunities and choices to the Club's members, it is important that the schedule avoids trip overlapping whenever possible, particularly for the week trips. Thus, trip captains should not come to the planning meeting with a fixed date for running his/her trip. Keeping the members' best interests in mind requires cooperation and flexibility during the scheduling process. The national holidays are another consideration affecting the scheduling, since the resorts often have premium rates for holiday weekends and weeks. Those weeks are often very crowded and, therefore, not as desirable for trip participants. Although, it is good for a trip captain to do a little research prior to the meeting, it is not required that a specific resort be selected and no commitments should be made prior to trip approval. Following approval by the President and the Skiing Activities Chairperson, the ski trip schedule will be presented no later than at the May membership meeting. However, additional trips or changes to planned trips may be added later.

Another important purpose of this meeting is to familiarize the trip captains with the Club's expectations and requirements as presented in this manual. The Skiing Activities Chairperson will give an overview and answer questions.

Sources of Information

General and specific information relative to a ski resort, lift tickets, accommodations, restaurants, ground transportation, etc., may be obtained by contacting (by web site, email, telephone, or writing) one or more of the following sources:

- The ski resort
- The local Chamber of Commerce
- State tourism bureau
- Skiing magazine articles and ads
- On-line searches (Google, e.g.)
- Travel agents and brokers experienced in ski tours
- Other trip captains
- Prior trip reports

The more information a trip captain has in hand relative to a ski area, the better position he or she will be in to negotiate the best value and to conduct a successful trip for the members.

Planning Considerations

Of course, there are many obvious factors that go into planning a trip. Among these are:

- Transportation to the resort (ground and air)
- Lodging accommodations (condos or hotel rooms)
- Transportation between lodge and ski slopes, if needed
- Lift tickets
- Meals
- Accessibility of restaurants, grocery stores, shops, ski rentals
- Group parties and dinners
- Lodging amenities (pool, hot tub, sauna, laundry, bar, restaurant, fitness center, party room, fireplace, housekeeping services, shuttle service, Internet access, etc.)
- Other outdoor activities (cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, sightseeing, etc.)

All trips, as a minimum, must include transportation to the resort and slopes, lodging, and lift tickets. Also, at least one group dinner should be included for trips other than day or weekend trips. For week trips, members generally prefer to have two or more group dinners.

Resort Selection

The first item in trip planning is to select the ski resort (or resorts). Some considerations are:

- resort size
- suitable terrain for all levels (including an adequate amount of skiable terrain for the length of time at the resort)
- traveling ease

- availability of convenient accommodations
- snow reliability
- costs (transportation, lift tickets, lodging)
- available non-skiing activities
- restaurants and shops
- prior experiences
- length of time since Club's last visit (and number of people on previous trip)

For week trips, members prefer a ski resort large enough to keep their interest for a week. They do not want to ski the same trails over and over each day for a week. In many ski areas, skiing at two or more resorts can easily be arranged from the same accommodations base. This is especially true of Summit County in Colorado and certain areas of Utah. At other locations, a day trip to a nearby resort may provide adequate variety. Because the Club's trips usually have skiers of all ability levels, it is good to choose a resort that has a sufficient number of green and blue slopes. Depending upon the latitude and altitude, the skiing conditions may not be reliable at some resorts during early and late seasons. For late season skiing, it is better to choose a high-altitude resort. However, high altitudes are a health concern to some of our members.

The ease of traveling to a resort should be a significant consideration. Although good flight schedules have become more difficult to obtain, the Trip Captain should strive for only one plane change and should not accept more than two changes. Also, most members would prefer not to ride a bus more than three hours following airline flights. In planning, the Trip Captain should look at total time since sometimes a bus ride may preclude an extended airport delay for an onward flight. In some instances, a longer bus ride may be justified to avoid the exorbitant cost of a flight to a small local airport.

Costs should be a major consideration in selecting the ski resort. Lift tickets are expensive at all resorts and they are considerably more expensive at some resorts. But the variation in lift ticket costs from one resort to the next will probably not be as large as the differences in the magnitudes of the accommodation costs or the transportation costs. It is very costly to stay slope side at some of the more exclusive resorts. Likewise, traveling to a resort that is only accessible by a small airport is likely to be appreciably more expensive. None of these considerations, by themselves, should preclude selecting a resort – however, it is important to look at the overall package, price, and value.

Ground Transportation

The Transportation Coordinator (usually the Skiing Activities Chairperson or his/her designate) is responsible for making contract arrangements for all buses departing from our local area. Bids will be solicited for the Club's trips and the Coordinator will select the best value bid based upon cost and past performance. Normally, a single company will provide the services.

For local departures, the trip captain should provide the Transportation Coordinator as early as feasible with the following information:

- Destination
- Expected number of passengers
- Dates and times for departure and return
- Any special requirements for transportation after reaching the destination (e.g., transportation between lodging and slopes)

The Coordinator and the bus company will determine the local pick-up point.

It is the bus company's responsibility to pay for the overnight accommodations for the bus driver, if needed. This understanding should be confirmed with the bus company. The Trip Captain may offer to assist the bus company in making a reservation for the bus driver.

The Coordinator will inform the Trip Captain of the transportation cost and this amount must be factored into the trip's price. Although the transportation will be billed directly to the Club, it will be included in the trip accounting.

The Trip Captain should contact the bus provider directly to make all detailed arrangements such as pick-up time and place. Prior to departure, the Trip Captain should contact the bus company regarding the bringing of food, snacks, liquid refreshments (particularly alcoholic beverages), and other supplies on board the bus. The Trip Captain should offer assistance to the bus driver in loading and unloading the bus. If assistance is accepted, the driver may want the loading to proceed under his/her direction.

It is the Trip Captain's responsibility to ensure that the bus company has all of the correct information. Just prior to the trip, the Trip Captain should reconfirm the pick-up time and place. Also, before returning, the pick-up should be verified.

For Western and other trips involving air transportation, the trip captain must make all arrangements for ground transportation, unless that service is being provided by a tour agent. The usual procedure is for the Trip Captain to contact the bus company again upon arrival at the airport. The bus company or the driver will then provide instructions regarding where the group should meet the bus. The two paragraphs above pertaining to pick-up confirmations, loading the bus, and food/drinks also apply to trips where the bus ride is preceded by air travel. If there are more than 38 people in the group, then a 55-passenger bus should be reserved. A 47-passenger bus usually does not have enough luggage space for more than 38 skiers. Frequently the bus company will provide the larger bus at no extra cost because of awareness of the quantity of ski luggage.

If the group is staying in condos, the Trip Captain should consider the need to make a stop at a grocery store prior to arriving at the condos. This needs to be planned ahead and arranged with the bus company. There may be an additional charge for this, but a half-hour stop is often allowed without a charge. If the bus ride is unusually long, rest stops and/or food stops should be planned with the company.

It is customary to give the bus driver a gratuity. Tour packages typically do not include tips for the drivers. A gratuity in the range of \$30 to \$50 (about one dollar per rider) each way is appropriate and depends upon the length of the trip and upon the amount of luggage the driver handles. Often, hotels offering portage (which may be included in the cost of your accommodations) will unload and load the buses.

Air Transportation

Travel by air has become increasingly more difficult each year. For trips involving air transportation, this is probably the Trip Captain's greatest concern and requires much attention, although he/she may not have much control. Flights are usually completely full and are often overbooked. Most of the airlines are currently in financial difficulty and many have filed for bankruptcy. This has resulted in airlines changing or canceling flights to reduce expenses. For ski trips, it is not unusual for the flight schedule to be changed repeatedly since the seats are typically booked well in advance of the ticket purchase and flight. Some airlines are increasing their revenue by charging for over-weight and over-sized baggage. The charge for a name change has become more expensive. Also, trip captains should anticipate possible fuel surcharges.

Prior to contracting for air ticket purchasing, the Trip Captain should review and become familiar with the various flight options (and prices) that are available for arrival at the destination airport. The airline web sites are useful for this purpose. The cheapest ticket may not be in the best interest of the Club, particularly if it means reaching your lodging at midnight or several plane changes. The Trip Captain needs to pay attention to the size of the aircraft for the various flight legs. Flying on a small regional jet may result in some of the luggage not arriving with the group because of the limited cargo capacity of the smaller planes. The more the Trip Captain knows regarding the available flight options, the better position he/she will be in when booking reservations.

The Trip Captain may make the airline bookings by:

1. Contacting the airline directly by going to the web site or by calling the group reservation office. The Trip Captain will often find that the quoted airfares fluctuate from week to week. As a certain flight fills with bookings, the price generally rises. But apparently, if the flight is not filling as rapidly as desired, the airfare may drop. Airlines usually hold only a limited number of seats for group bookings. For this reason, it is generally advantageous to make the booking as early as possible. Sometimes an airline will hold a group booking

for up to two weeks without a deposit; at other times, an airline will require a deposit within 24 or 48 hours of making the booking. The deposit amount is usually \$40 per seat. Because of this, it is important to have members sign up as early as possible. The Trip Captain may find that he/she can obtain very competitive fares directly from the carrier when flying to larger cities. But for schedules that end with flights to small airports near some ski resorts, it may not be possible for the Trip Captain to purchase seats at reasonable rates. Apparently, many of the seats on flights to the resorts are purchased, or reserved, in advance by airline ticket brokers. The trip captain must be especially careful regarding cancellation and/or change penalties.

2. Contacting an airline ticket broker. One may go on-line to search for ticket brokers.
3. Contacting a tour agent. The agent will be pleased to make all of your reservations including accommodations, ground transportation, and lift tickets for a fee. A tour agent will often purchase the airline tickets through a ticket broker, is normally able to lock in seats with little financial payment (often \$10 per seat), and can usually offer cancellation options at nominal or no cost until close to the actual travel date.

Regardless of the purchase arrangements, the Trip Captain should inquire of the cancellation and/or change provisions. Usually, the number of booked seats for groups can be reduced by 10% without a penalty.

Airlines normally make adjustments to their flight schedules from time to time and these cannot be avoided. If the Trip Captain contracts with a tour agent, the Trip Captain should emphasize the importance of afternoon arrival and the need to schedule all flights on larger jet aircraft having a capacity of 100 or more passengers whenever possible (smaller regional jets often cannot carry all of the ski gear and this means that skis may not arrive with the skiers). The Trip Captain may or may not be able to include these conditions in a contract, but the air schedule (subject to change by the airline only) should be included in the contract and he/she can make the tour agent aware that satisfying these conditions is a consideration for repeat business.

Lodging Planning

There are numerous factors for the Trip Captain to consider in selecting the accommodations. Some of the more important ones are:

- Cost
- Condos vs. hotel rooms
- Accessibility to the slopes
- Accessibility to restaurants, grocery store, shops, etc.

- Amenities (included meals, pool, hot tub, laundry facilities, meeting room, daily housekeeping services, Internet connection, etc.)

At most resorts there will be many lodging choices available over a large price range. The Trip Captain should research and investigate the lodging options to determine which lodge best meets the needs of the group and offers the best value.

Everyone likes ski-in and ski-out accommodations. Some housing is within walking distance to the slopes and other places necessitate a shuttle ride. Of course, ski-in/ski-out locations are usually more expensive and are extremely so at some resorts. It is the job of the Trip Captain to investigate and determine the best overall value. If slope side accommodations are not chosen, then the slopes should be readily accessible by either a short walk or frequent shuttles. Often, accommodation complexes will have their own convenient shuttle service. In many instances, accommodations away from the slopes are nicer and more spacious than the more expensive slope side accommodations. Again, that means the Trip Captain must evaluate the relative value, not just the cost, of lodging on the slopes or off.

The Trip Captain may arrange for accommodations in either hotel rooms or condominiums and should consider the relative prices of hotel rooms versus condos, whether slope side or not. In either situation, **the Trip Captain must make arrangements that provide for each single person to have his/her own bed in a bedroom. Also, there should be at least one full bathroom for every two people.** The Club members expect and deserve this. The selection of accommodations should depend upon the willingness of the reservation personnel to work with the Trip Captain to ensure that the above conditions are met.

A recent survey of Club members has shown an equal preference for condos and hotel rooms. At some resorts hotel rooms have been better for the Club, while condos have worked better at other resorts. The costs are often comparable, but can be significantly different. If a hotel is chosen for accommodations, it is important to consider the ready availability of breakfast. If the hotel does not have a restaurant open for breakfast, then there should be one very close since trip members like to return to their rooms before going out to ski. The Trip Captain should consider negotiating with the hotel for inclusion of breakfasts since this would be a significant cost item for the members if not included. However, at some resorts, breakfast is readily available and often offered inexpensively on the mountain in conjunction with "first tracks" programs. Also, because members do not want to spend all of their non-skiing time in their rooms, the hotel should have a large comfortable lobby with a fireplace for reading or socializing with friends. When booking hotel rooms, the Trip Captain should make certain that the hotel has a sufficient number of two-bed rooms available to accommodate the trip's single members.

Privacy is important in condo accommodations. The Trip Captain should ask for floor plans that show the relative location of bedrooms, bathrooms, and living areas. One should not have to walk through the living area, nor use stairs, to get from the

bedroom to the bathroom. If one of the bedrooms of a condo is actually a loft, make sure that privacy is assured. However, it is much better not to use a loft for a bedroom unless a family prefers the arrangement for children.

Condos should have a well-equipped kitchen including dishwasher, microwave, toaster, and coffee maker. The living and dining areas should be adequately sized. Two-bedroom units are generally preferable to three-bedroom or larger units. Sometimes, the second bedroom is smaller than the master bedroom to the extent that adequate storage for ski gear/clothing is not available. The Trip Captain should inquire about the size of the rooms before booking. Also, because of singles on the trip, at least one of the bedrooms should have two beds (this is usually the case in condos). In some instances, there may be four singles that would like to room together. To be prepared for this situation, the Trip Captain may want to reserve a number of condos that have two beds in each bedroom, if possible.

Sometimes, the hotel or condo property management company will be able to offer a package for groups that includes lift tickets at a better price than can be obtained with separate procurements. It is not unusual for the hotel/condo to offer a free welcoming wine & cheese party and/or a skiing tour of the mountain to groups. The Trip Captain should inquire about these.

Group pricing can often be configured to either include or not include complimentary lodging/meals for the Trip Captain. Generally, it is better not to have the complimentary lodging reflected in the per room cost. Having a comp included raises the price of all rooms based on some minimum number of rooms/units being utilized. If the actual number of rooms/units utilized is greater than the minimum, then the overall cost of the reservation is larger than it would be otherwise.

When negotiating for group rates with the hotel or condo property management company, the Trip Captain should inquire about refund and cancellation policies. Often, a small number of units may be canceled without penalty. After narrowing your accommodations search and providing the group's accommodation needs (i.e., trip dates, number of participants, etc.), the Trip Captain should ask for a signed written quote (or contract) that addresses the following:

- Number of rooms or condo units
- Number and type of beds per room
- Number of room keys (key for each member)
- Policy on telephone charges
- Meal arrangements (breakfasts, dinners, children's meals, etc.), if included
- Housekeeping services and frequency
- Porter services, if included
- Applicable information for condos (no. of bedrooms, no. of baths, kitchen, dining area, living area, laundry, fireplace, etc.)
- Shuttle service, if provided
- Welcoming party, if included

- Skiing tour of the mountain, if included
- Lift tickets, if included in a package
- Complimentary lodging/meals for Trip Captain (if price based on a “comp”)
- Expected gratuities, if any
- Cost including all taxes
- Deposit and payment schedule
- Cancellation and/or change penalties
- Point of contact

The Trip Captain should negotiate the deposit, payment schedule, and cancellation agreement to meet the Club’s needs.

The Trip Captain should remember to obtain the check-in and check-out times since he/she will need that information to coordinate the bus drop-off and pick-up times.

Lift Tickets and Lessons

Multiple day lift tickets are usually priced appreciably less than the daily rate. In addition, group rates are generally much lower than individual purchases. The number of tickets that must be purchased in order to qualify for the group rate varies from one resort to the next and depends upon the source. For some resorts, there are various sources available for the purchase of lift tickets. The Trip Captain should first contact the ski resort to determine the group rate when purchasing directly from the resort. There are lift ticket brokers (do a Google search) in the skiing industry, just as there are airfare brokers, that may be able to give a better price. But, the Trip Captain should be cautious in dealing with an unknown since a large amount of Club money is involved. If the Trip Captain utilizes a tour agent in arranging the trip, the agent may be able to purchase the lift tickets at a lower price. Also, as mentioned above, the hotel (or condo complex) may be able to make the purchase at a savings.

Most resorts offer a free ticket with the purchase of some minimum number, usually 25. For week trips, the Trip Captain typically will purchase a 5-day ticket for each member which may be used for any five days within a six or seven day period. Also, for some resorts, the multiple-day ticket may be used at other resorts in the skiing area. Although most week trippers will only ski five days, there are others that prefer to ski six days. For this reason, the Trip Captain should inquire of the cost of an “add-on” ticket and how it is to be obtained. The cost should be appreciably reduced from the daily rate. It may not be available, depending upon how the original ticket was purchased. Another option is for the Trip Captain, prior to ticket purchase, to poll the members to determine who would like to pay extra for a 6-day ticket.

Some resorts offer discounts to seniors. The eligible age for discounts varies. There may still be a few resorts that offer free skiing to those over 70. The senior rates may not be less than the group rate, but it is worthwhile for the Trip Captain to check on senior rates and on free skiing to determine the possible savings for the trip members.

Prior to purchasing lift tickets, the Trip Captain should obtain a written quote for the number of desired tickets. He/she should be sure to inquire about cancellations and/or refunds for unused lift tickets. Also, how and when the lift tickets will be received should be considered; many resorts consider them a negotiable instrument and any loss is not their responsibility.

Upon the receipt of the lift tickets (whether at the resort, hotel, or mail), the Trip Captain should immediately count and verify the correct number. After the trip is over, totally unused lift tickets may usually be returned for a refund. There may be a processing fee for the returned tickets.

The Trip Captain should contact the ski resort regarding ski lessons, whether or not lessons are included in the trip package. The lessons are sometimes relatively inexpensive if bought in a package with the tickets. Information on lessons and costs should be passed onto the trip members.

Planning by Tour Agent

For western and European trips, the Trip Captain may want to utilize the services of a tour company agent (sometimes called a tour operator) in planning the trip. The tour agent offers the benefit of dealing with a single point of contact at a single company instead of dealing with several companies for accommodations, lift tickets, and air and ground transportation. However, this also means that the Trip Captain may not have direct contact with the service providers and becomes dependent upon a third party (the tour agent) for ensuring that all details have been taken care of to the Trip Captain's satisfaction. The tour agent is often more familiar with the accommodations in a ski area and can provide good advice. The agent may be able to purchase airline and lift tickets considerably cheaper than the Trip Captain can because of his knowledge of purchase sources. The tour agent will often purchase the airline tickets through a ticket broker rather than directly from the airline. Also, a tour agent can usually book and hold airline seats for as little as \$10 per seat. This means less upfront money and lower cancellation costs if it becomes necessary to reduce the number of seats. However, the tour company may have its own hefty cancellation cost if the entire trip is canceled since it needs to be compensated for the time and effort expended. The agent will usually provide an itemized list of the per person costs (for airfare, accommodations, lift tickets, etc.) and then will add a per person fee for his/her services, which may vary from \$40 to \$75. The agent can configure the per person cost based on either including or excluding a complimentary trip for the Trip Captain. As noted elsewhere, it is generally to the Club's advantage to have the agent not include a complimentary trip for the Trip Captain, but to reduce the overall per person cost by the value of the "comp".

Prior to contacting a tour agent, the Trip Captain needs to do his/her "homework" rather than putting complete trust in the agent to deliver the best value. This means that the Trip Captain should take time to become familiar with the accommodation offerings and prices, with the airline flights and prices, with ground transportation

costs, and become familiar with discounted prices of group lift tickets. Being knowledgeable enables the Trip Captain to better negotiate with the agent. In addition, the Trip Captain may become aware of a saving unknown to the agent. It is particularly valuable for the Trip Captain to investigate the lodging options to determine which appears to be best suited for the trip's needs. The tour agent is usually knowledgeable, but may not be familiar with all available lodging at the resort.

It is good for the Trip Captain to consult with more than one tour agent. By experience, it has been found that one agent may be aware of significant savings while another is not. After obtaining proposals from tour agents, the Trip Captain should compare the agent's price with the price of the trip he or she could arrange. When comparing, the Trip Captain should take into consideration the upfront cost requirements (i.e., when deposits are required and the amounts) as well as non-refundable cancellation costs.

During the early communications with a tour agent, the Trip Captain should send a written statement (by email or letter) to the agent stating that no financial commitment is made by the Club until the Club returns a signed contract. In the past, agents have interpreted communications (verbal and written) to mean that the Trip Captain has agreed to let the agent have the job and have gone so far as to commit the Club to airline seats without having a signed contract. Also, the Trip Captain should be aware that the booking of airline seats by an agent may be a hindrance to the Trip Captain getting a competitive bid from another agent. If the first agent books the airline's group seating to the destination, then the second agent probably will be at a disadvantage in competing because his/her airfares will most likely be higher.

The Trip Captain should contact the Skiing Activities Chairperson or other trip captains for the names of tour agents that the Club has contracted with successfully in the past.

Pricing and Financing the Trip

A number of costs go into determining the price of a trip for Club members. Among these are the obvious costs of lodging, transportation, and lift tickets. Other contributors are the costs of any included meals, bus refreshments, gratuities, the pre-trip party, the Trip Captain's free trip, the Club's operating overhead, and miscellaneous expenses such as printing, postage, and telephone calls.

Calculating the Price

Each of these costs is classified as either a 'fixed cost' or as a 'shared cost'. **Fixed costs** are the per-person costs that each pays regardless of the number of people on the trip and include such items as lodging, airfare, lift tickets, Club overhead fee,

a small contingency amount to cover unanticipated expenses, and meals and dinners in which the cost per person is fixed. **Shared costs** are costs that are divided among the trip members equally. Examples of shared costs are the bus transportation costs, bus refreshments, gratuities for bus drivers and others, the Trip Captain's trip cost, the pre-trip and other parties, and the miscellaneous expenses identified above. The per-person shared cost calculation depends upon the estimated number of people expected to be on the trip. The per-person shared cost decreases as the number of participants increases. The total per-person cost of the trip is the sum of the fixed and shared costs. Attachment A is the PSC Trip Pricing Worksheet that the Trip Captain should use to calculate the trip price. Instead of using Attachment A, the Trip Captain may prefer to use an electronic spreadsheet to calculate the price provided the same approach is used.

As noted above, the calculated trip price depends upon the estimated number of participants. This number should be a conservative number (i.e., on the low side). The smaller the estimated number of trip participants is, the higher the price will be; the larger the number is, the lower the price will be. The number to use should be the minimum number that the Trip Captain expects to sign up for the trip. This number used in the price calculation is often referred to as the "planned" number or the "break-even" number. Factors affecting the planned number are the popularity of the resort, the location of the resort, the timing of the trip within the ski season, and the following that the trip captain has. If many more people sign up for a trip than anticipated, the trip captain may be able to reduce the price before the final payment is collected. But an increase in price due to fewer people signing up will not be well received. Note that when using a tour agent, the per-person cost will be affected by the estimated number of participants for the trip (e.g., the agent will determine the unit cost of included ground transportation based on minimum utilization). Failure to meet the minimum number will increase the individual cost of the trip, but vastly exceeding the number will result in an excessive charge to the members. The Trip Captain should consider having the agreement with the tour agent include a refund of the cost of ground transportation for each person exceeding the minimum.

For ski trips taken by bus in the eastern U.S., the Trip Captain should normally base the price on 34 paying participants. If fewer than 34 are anticipated, then the Trip Captain may drop the planned (or break-even) number to 30 in calculating the trip's price using Trip Pricing Worksheet. If more than 34 are definitely expected, then the Trip Captain may base the price calculation on 40 participants. With fewer than 30 participants, the cost of the bus almost becomes prohibitive. The Trip Captain should consult with the Skiing Activities Chairperson regarding any concerns over the appropriate number. For trips involving air transportation, this manual does not give a guide to use for the break-even number.

If fewer people sign up than the planned number on which the trip price is based, then enough money will not be collected to cover the trip's expenses, unless there is sufficient contingency included in the pricing. The Trip Captain needs to consider

the consequences of having fewer people sign up than anticipated. In the event that there is a shortfall, the Club would have to increase the quoted price, or deliver less than promised, or absorb the loss, or cancel the trip (which may still cost the Club). Each of these scenarios is unacceptable.

It is suggested that the Trip Captain calculate the price based on various numbers of participants. This will show the sensitivity of price to the number of participants.

The receipt of complimentary components of the trip complicates the calculation of the trip price. For example, free lodging for one person may be given for a group of 20, a free lift ticket may be received after purchasing 25 tickets, and a free airfare may be awarded for a group of 40. The group may be eligible for one or more of the "comps", but not all. Thus, the Trip Captain needs to be aware of the complimentary offerings and factor them appropriately into the price calculation. If, for example, the Trip Captain receives "comps" for lodging, meals, and lift tickets from sources outside the Club, but not for airfare, then the Club's cost of the Trip Captain's airfare needs to be entered under the Shared Costs on the Trip Pricing Worksheet. An alternative approach in completing the Worksheet is to list the Trip Captain's full trip cost and then list the total of any "comps" provided to the Club on the designated line and subtract that amount as indicated. If no "comps" are involved, then the total cost of the captain's trip needs to be entered under shared costs. However, if the Trip Captain contracts with a tour agent, the calculation may be somewhat simplified because the agent will usually offer a complete complimentary package for some given number of sold spots. In this case, no "comps" will be received until that number of spots is sold. If requested, the tour agent can usually provide a per-person rate with no "comps" included. This rate should be lower than the rate that includes a "comp", but there may still be a minimum of slots that must be sold. The Trip Captain may request that the agent figure the per person price both ways. If the Trip Captain expects to exceed the minimum number, the Club will usually be better off financially by having the rate based on no "comps" unless the agreement includes a reduction for exceeding the minimum.

Unless the Trip Captain is extremely confident that he/she will fill the trip to the level needed to qualify for a "comp" trip (or "comp" component), then he/she probably should not factor the "comp" into the trip price calculation since not receiving an expected "comp" can have a major impact on the financing. In that situation, as noted above, the Trip Captain's costs are factored in under Shared Costs. If a "comp" is later obtained for the Trip Captain, then the trip price may be reduced for all.

Because of uncertainties, all prices should be advertised initially as estimated prices.

Trip Captain Remuneration

In return for planning and conducting a ski or other overnight trip for the Club, the Trip Captain receives, free of charge, the complete trip package that he/she has

planned and offered to the membership. The cost of the trip will be borne by the other trip participants. The minimum number of trip participants required for a free trip for the Trip Captain is 20. A smaller number of participants would put too much burden on the other trip participants. However, a Trip Captain may conduct a trip with fewer than 20 people, but he/she must pay his/her own way.

The above requirement of a minimum number of 20 participants does not apply to cruises or other types of trips that normally offer a “comp” for fewer participants. This exception is made because a cruise line may offer a free trip for as few as 10 participants. However, only one free trip is allowed. If the company’s offer includes a free trip for the Trip Captain’s partner or additional “comp(s)” for a larger number of participants, then this savings must be distributed to all. The Trip Captain’s partner must pay the same amount as others for the trip. The Pricing Worksheet has a line for entering the value of “comps” that are received.

The value of the above Trip Captain package currently varies from about \$1200 to about \$1500 for captains of Western and European ski trips. It is recognized that trip captains of less expensive trips have previously been rewarded disproportionately less for their efforts. Thus, trip captains for day, weekend, and mid-week ski trips will now receive two free slots on the trip: one for the trip captain and one for his or her partner. This cost is to be borne by the other trip participants. However, so as to not unfairly overburden the other participants, the second comp will be allowed only for trips having 30 or more paying members. Also, it is thought that the time and effort devoted to planning and conducting a week ski trip (i.e., five full days of skiing) in the Eastern U.S. is comparable to that of a Western trip. Thus, ski trip captains will receive two free slots up to a total value of \$1300 for any Eastern ski trips. If the value of two comps is greater than \$1300, then the Trip Captain’s partner must pay the difference. Again, so as to not unfairly overburden the other trip members, the second comp will be allowed only for week ski trips having 35 or more paying participants. It is noted that these second comps are only available for ski trips. Since the Board may change these numbers at any time, Trip Captains should check with the Skiing Activities Chairperson.

For ski trips utilizing air transportation and having 60 or more participants, one and one-half free trips will be allowed to help compensate for the extra work involved with managing a trip having this many members. Compared to a typical air trip of 30 to 40 members, a group trip of this size requires more administrative work, more coordination, more worries, and sometimes more assistance in managing transportation because all participants may very well not be on the same flight or same bus. For such ski trips by air having 80 or more participants, two free trips will be allowed for the same reasons. Care must be taken in completing the Trip Pricing Worksheet to ensure that adequate funds are collected to cover any free trips.

While planning and negotiating for elements of his/her trip package, the Trip Captain acts as a representative of the Peninsula Ski Club; **under no circumstances** shall a Trip Captain realize a personal profit as a result of these activities. If a

complimentary trip is provided by the airlines, or free lodging, or free lift tickets due to the number of trip participants, these “freebies” must be converted into an equal reduction in the overall per person cost of the trip. All reasonable effort must be made to convert any fringe benefits offered to the Trip Captain into a lower cost for the trip participants. Acceptance of any fringe benefits that cannot be so converted is otherwise permissible, but should be reported in the financial statement. In addition, the Trip Captain’s lodging should be very similar to that of the other trip members. If “upgraded” lodging is offered to trip members at an increased price, and the Trip Captain chooses to use such upgraded lodging, the additional cost of his/her lodging will be the Trip Captain’s responsibility.

Only one Trip Captain is authorized per trip. With the exception of the free trips noted above, everyone on a trip **must** pay the full participant's trip price. The Trip Captain is **NOT** authorized to give away any portion of a trip package to anyone at the expense of the trip participants or the PSC.

Trip Overhead Fee

The Club’s operating expenses (for meetings, newsletter, insurance, etc.) have historically exceeded the income from dues by a significant amount. The Club has relied on net income from the ski trips to offset the operating expenses. Some trips have contributed more profit than others. Some years, the Club’s trip profits are much reduced and this results in a net loss for the Club’s entire operations for the year. In order to stabilize the Club’s finances and to ensure that each trip contributes equitably, the board decided to collect a fee from each trip member to subsidize the Club’s operations, instead of further increasing the dues.

The Trip Captain should include in the trip pricing calculation an overhead fee of \$15 for each week trip participant and \$10 for each weekend or mid-week trip participant. This fee should be treated as a Fixed Cost in the Pricing Worksheet. There is no overhead fee for day trips. These fees are subject to change by the Board.

In order to follow IRS non-profit rules, a specific and separate escrow account has been established by PSC to handle all trip finances of PSC designated trips. The purpose is to ensure that trip dollars are not considered PSC gross income or gross receipts but are placed in a separate account for trip related transactions only. Trip related transactions shall include all trip deposit and payments made by trip members and all trip related cost and assessments submitted by the Trip Captain. PSC policy is to have as close as possible a zero net balance between member-paid trip fees deposited into the escrow account and trip costs and assessments withdrawn, for each and all trips.

Therefore if the profit on any trip (over and above the overhead charge) is as much as \$1.00 or more per person, it shall be refunded to each paying member on that trip. If there is a trip profit that is less than \$1.00 per person, it will be treated as an incremental addition to that trip’s overhead fee. It is incumbent upon the Trip

Captains to carefully and conservatively price and conduct their trips to avoid a net trip deficit.

Trip Promotions

The Club has an interest in promoting and encouraging recreational skiing, particularly for families with children and other young people. For this reason, the Board of Directors may occasionally decide to subsidize a day trip or a weekend trip in order for the trip to run. A profit will not be expected and the overhead fee would be waived. For a trip designated as a promotional trip, the price will be calculated conventionally. However, if enough members do not sign up for the trip to break even financially, the Club's Board of Directors may decide to absorb the loss, depending upon its magnitude, rather than cancel the trip. Close coordination between the Trip Captain and the Skiing Activities Chairperson is required.

Note on Opting Out of Air Transportation

Some trip participants may ask to secure their own air transportation to allow travel deviations (e.g., earlier date of departure and/or later return, prior or subsequent routing from or to a different point) or use of frequent traveler mileage. The Trip Captain is not required to, but may allow such arrangements at no expense to the Club. For example, if there is a cancellation/underutilization fee chargeable for not using all reserved airline seats, the fee should be considered in establishing the trip price reduction for nonuse of the air transportation. Whenever possible, such individually arranged flights should be on the same outbound flights so that arrival at the destination airport is with the group. In addition, the individual opting out of the group flight must assume **all** responsibility for onward transportation should their air travel not coincide with the group movement. The group should not be delayed waiting for a member not using the group flight. The Trip Captain must make members flying independently aware of these conditions.

Note on Opting Out of Bus Transportation

The bus used for a ski trip is leased for a flat fee. The trip price includes a portion from each participant to help pay for the bus. When calculating the price, the Trip Captain uses a "planned number" of participants, which may be 34 or some other number. On many trips, there will be some participants that prefer to drive their own vehicles rather than ride the bus. The Trip Captain should tell the participants up front that they will not be compensated in any way for not using the bus unless the bus is "filled" with the "planned number" of participants. Providing a discount for not using the group ground transportation is not always possible. Sometimes the ground transportation is a part of the cost of the trip and should not be excludable (e.g., a trip by air with bus transportation to the resort). If someone lives in the area and chooses to drive, they should not be guaranteed a reduction in trip cost.

Bus Refreshments

Snacks, liquid refreshments, and certain other supplies should be provided for consumption and use during the bus trip. These, of course, must be accounted for when pricing the trip. As a guide to helping the Trip Captain estimate the cost of refreshments and supplies, the following quantities have been found to be representative of how much will be required for a full bus:

<u>Item</u>	<u>LENGTH OF TRIP</u>	
	<u>4 – 6 hours</u>	<u>10 or More Hours</u>
Snack Food		
Beer	2 Cases	4 Cases
Wine (3liter size)	2 White, 1 Red	6 White, 4Red
Bottled Water	2 Cases	4 Cases
Soft Drinks	1 Case	2 Cases
Juice	1 Case	2 Cases
Ice		
Cups	4 Dozen	6 Dozen
Trash Cans	1	1
Trash Bags	1 Dozen	2 Dozen

Financial Plan

After all of the pricing details for the trip have been worked out, the financial plan for the trip should be presented to the Skiing Activities Chairperson for review and approval. The financial plan is basically the Pricing Worksheet, or its equivalent, along with all information related to comps, contracts (if any), payment schedules for both income and expenses, and any other pertinent financial information. The financial plan must be approved before the trip's price may be advertised.

Contracts and Commitments

Many trips (especially to Western U.S. and European destinations using tour agents) require agreements or contracts, which often amount to tens of thousands of dollars. The Board of Directors has determined that for any trips involving agreements or contracts which result in significant obligations or commitments by the club, the agreements/contracts should be expeditiously and closely reviewed and signed by either the President or the Skiing Activities Chairperson in addition to the Trip Captain. The Trip Captain should advise the company that the contract/agreement should be prepared to allow for two signatures by the Club's representatives. Until contract signing, no commitments (verbal or written) are to be made to an agent and no deposits are to be made to the tour company. However, the Trip Captain still has the same freedom and responsibilities for conducting the trip as always.

Reviews and signatures are not needed for day-trip agreements (only a review of the trip's Financial Plan) or other commitments involving relative minor expenditures.

In the event the Skiing Activities Chairperson is running a trip, his or her financial plan and any contracts are to be reviewed and approved by the Club's President.

The procedure described above means the reviewing Board member shares responsibility to some extent with the Trip Captain for the success of the trip. Thus, the Board member should provide a careful and thorough review of the trip's financial commitments.

Although a contract/agreement may be signed by the President, instead of by the Skiing Activities Chairperson, it remains the job of both the Trip Captain and the Chairperson to closely scrutinize the contract. Particular attention should be given to the wording regarding cancellations and penalties. The contract should allow for significant reductions, without penalties, in the number of reserved accommodation spaces and airline seats up to about three months prior to the trip. The fee for cancellation of the entire trip should be in the range of \$250 to \$500. The costs associated with having fewer than the planned number of participants should be examined. When dealing with a new company and in doubt, the Trip Captain may want to compare the company's contract's wording with that of other contracts signed previously by the club.

Often commitments must be made for a trip before all deposits for the trip are received. For a week trip, the Trip Captain usually needs to make contractual arrangements very early for reservation of accommodations and airline seats. Thus, it is necessary for the Club to accept some risks in running trips. It is the responsibility of the Trip Captain and the Skiing Activities Chairperson to minimize the risks to the extent possible. They need to consider the risks in planning and approving the trips and associated contracts. There is the risk that the cost may increase because not as many members sign up as anticipated. There is the risk that the trip could be canceled because of insufficient sign-ups. Early and late season ski trips, as well as trips to less popular resorts, have increased risks because fewer members than anticipated may sign up. There is substantial risk for a Trip Captain to make commitments for airline seats and accommodations without deposits in hand when making reservations directly without utilizing a tour company. When the Trip Captain makes direct reservation commitments for a given number of spaces, he/she should have deposits from the same number of members (with this condition met, this approach becomes very risk free to the Club and to the trip members). When the Skiing Activities Chairperson has significant concerns regarding the viability of a proposed trip, the matter should be discussed with the President and/or Board before making a decision.

Deposit and Payment Requirements

A deposit must be collected from each participant when he or she signs up for the trip. A person is not considered signed up until the Trip Captain receives a deposit. This deposit amount must be large enough to cover any deposits that the Trip Captain needs to make to reserve an individual's airline seat, accommodations, etc., plus the participant's portion of the shared costs. It is recommended that the initial deposit be set at about 20% of the price of the trip, which is usually much more than the amount needed to cover the above items. The Trip Captain needs to establish a payment schedule for the trip members that will keep well ahead of the payments to be made for accommodations, airfares, lift tickets, etc. The Trip Captain usually schedules three payments (but, sometimes four) including the initial deposit.

Also, the Trip Captain needs to establish a refund policy and a refund cut-off date that prevents the Club from losing money due to the withdrawal of a member. This is done by closely reviewing all agreements, commitments, and contracts that may have been entered into. For example, a person may cancel out and there may not be a replacement to fill half of a hotel room that the Club is committed to pay for. The Club's standard cancellation fee may be only \$25 but the hotel room obligation may be well over \$400. This example also shows that the Trip Captain needs to collect sufficient funds from the participants ahead of the date at which the Club becomes liable for large non-recoverable expenses even though the Club may not have yet made the payments. The refund cut-off date should be prior to the date at which the Club will be committed to a large expense or to a large cancellation fee. After the refund cut-off date, the person withdrawing will not be refunded any expense incurred by the Club that is not recoverable. The Trip Captain should include the refund cut-off date in all ads along with the payment schedule.

PSC Trip Cancellation/Refund Policy

Peninsula Ski Club's refund policy is necessary so that PSC ski trips pay for themselves and the membership funds are reserved for uses that serve all members. Charges to the Club for unused lift tickets, airline re-ticketing cost, nonrefundable deposits, and other costs must be passed on to the individual who cancelled. In other words, the Club will not be responsible for any cost caused by an individual canceling participation.

Any trip cancelled by an individual after payment has been made will be assessed a cancellation fee. Unless greater cancellation fees are indicated by the Trip Captain, the standard cancellation fees for the Club are:

- For trips priced at \$100 or less: \$5
- For trips priced greater than \$100, the fee depends on the cancellation date relative to the trip departure date as follows:
 - o \$25 up to the date of the September General Membership Meeting
 - o \$50 if after the September Meeting
 - o After the Trip Refund Cutoff Date the individual is liable for any

nonrecoverable trip cost incurred. In that case the individual will be charged whichever is the greater: the nonrecoverable trip cost incurred up to the time of cancellation or the applicable cancellation fee.

Trip cancellation fees collected shall be treated as income for that specific trip.

Occasionally a trip member will have to cancel within a week or two of the departure date. Even though the Trip Captain may have maintained a waiting list, there may be difficulty in finding a replacement with such short notice because those on a waiting list have often made other plans. The Trip Captain should assist the person in the attempt to find a replacement. There may be time to send a message to the Club membership. Often times in this situation, the canceling person is willing to "sell" his/her slot to someone at significantly reduced price rather than to lose everything. And there may be another member who is willing to go on short notice only if he/she is offered a reduced price. The Trip Captain may help in facilitating a meeting of the two members and needs to make it clear that the Club will not bear any costs associated with the change. However, it is strictly up to the members to do their own negotiating. After a price is agreed upon between the two parties, the replacement will pay the Club that amount. Then, the Club treasurer will refund this amount to the canceling member less the cost of airline re-ticketing (and any other non-recoverable charges that may be associated with the change) and less the cancellation fee. The Trip Captain needs to advise the canceling member of this process before any price negotiation takes place so that he/she is aware of the re-ticketing and other charges.

In the event the PSC cancels a trip, all monies will be refunded to the members.

The Skiing Activities Chairman will (in cooperation with the Trip Captain) resolve any unexpected circumstances associated with cancellations and refunds.

Marketing the Trip

An important part of running a trip for the Club is the "selling" of the trip to the members. The Trip Captain should promote the trip at the Club meetings, in the Club's newsletter, and at the Club's web site. He or she may also post a trip flyer at his or her place of business or elsewhere.

The Trip Captain should begin marketing the trip as soon as the Skiing Activities Chairperson is satisfied that the ski schedule is set for the next season. As noted earlier, the price should not be advertised until after the Skiing Activities Chairperson has reviewed and approved the trip's financial plan. Also, after approval, the price should be advertised as approximate (or estimated) because of uncertainties regarding the number of participants and the availability of "comps". Also, for some trips, caveats should be associated with the advertised price stating the price may change due to fuel surcharges and/or variation of currency exchange rate. Later,

after the Trip Captain is certain that the price will not change, the price may be advertised as fixed.

Ski News and PSC Web Site

First, the Trip Captain should provide information for the creation of a flyer (or ad) for the Club's web site. It is suggested that a new Trip Captain visit the PSC web site and take a look at the trip flyers for the previous ski season. The information contained in the flyers is in the same format for all of the trips. Therefore, it is helpful to provide the same type of information in the same order as that of the typical flyer. The information should be provided in an electronic file (preferably Microsoft Word) to the Club's Web Master.

All ski trips will be listed in a table in Ski News (the Club's electronic newsletter) each month. This table provides the trip dates, price information, and trip captains' names along with telephone numbers.

The September issue of Ski News contains a flyer (or ad) for each of the ski trips. A hard copy of this issue is also mailed out to all members. The Trip Captain should prepare up to a full-page ad and submit it to the Ski News Editor by the newsletter's input suspense date (usually mid-August) for inclusion. Again, as a help, a new Trip Captain may want to review the previous year's September issue. The ad should be prepared according to the newsletter guidelines and submitted electronically whenever possible.

If your trip changes in any way (such as price or dates), the Trip Captain should immediately update the web site ad, as well as notify the Ski News Editor and the Skiing Activities Chairperson. Of course, all participants should be notified, also.

There is certain specific information that should be included in the ads:

- The ski resort and town
- Dates of departure and return
- Information about the mountain(s) including stats
- What the trip price includes (e.g., airfare, airline schedule if available, ground transportation, number of nights of lodging, number of days of skiing, and any parties, dinners, and breakfasts)
- Lodging information (include description and amenities)
- Price (after approval of financial plan)
- Deposit and payment schedule
- Refund cut-off date and any special cancellation fees
- If appropriate, notes regarding fuel surcharges and currency exchange rate
- Related web sites that may be visited for more information
- Trip Captain's name, telephone number, and email address

The ad may include additional information that will increase the appeal of the trip such as other available activities.

Membership Meetings

During PSC monthly meetings, the entire ski trip schedule will be described to the membership in general terms (i.e., ski areas, dates, Trip Captains). The May and September meetings are particularly important. All ski trips must be represented by their respective captains or a knowledgeable substitute. Each Trip Captain is expected to give a 2-to-3 minute overview of his/her trip to the membership. In addition, an area will be set aside at the meeting place for Trip Captains to display ski area brochures, talk with members about trips, and take trip reservations. Attachment B, titled "Payments Received from PSC Trip Members", should be used to sign up members and to record payments. This form will also become a part of the trip's financial records. A comparable, if not exact, electronic spreadsheet is an acceptable substitute for Attachment B.

Past experience has shown that the trip captain, or his/her designee, must be present at all of the membership meetings to sell their trip in order for the trip to "go."

A well-conceived poster that presents the features of your trip can be extremely valuable in attracting potential participants. A one-page "Fact Sheet" or flyer should be prepared for distribution to interested members at each of the Club meetings. This may be the same as the ad used in Ski News. If a laptop computer is available, the Trip Captain may want to show a video or slide show of the ski resort. A well-prepared Trip Captain can save himself/herself a lot of time, effort, and frustration in "selling" the trip - it will sell itself!

Reservations/Eligibility

Trip reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. **A reservation request is valid only when accompanied by a monetary deposit equal to the deposit requirement established for the trip.** Verbal reservation requests cannot be accepted. Again, the Trip Captain should use the Attachment B form titled "Payments Received from PSC Trip Members" (or an equivalent electronic spreadsheet) for recording reservations and payments. More than one copy of this form will be needed because there is space for only nine names on each sheet.

The name of each trip participant should be entered on a line in this Payments Received form. There is a column for entering the Total Due (i.e., the price) for each. Each deposit or payment received, along with the date, should be entered. There are columns for up to four payment entries for each participant. Often one spouse will write a check for two. In this instance, record half of the payment for each unless instructed otherwise by the couple. In some instances, spouses will have different trip prices. Having a separate entry line for each simplifies the record keeping. For various reasons, the trip price may not be the same for every

participant. The reason for the variation from the advertised trip price should be noted in the Comments column.

Only members of the Peninsula Ski Club (PSC) may sign up for a PSC sponsored ski trip, unless trip has been sanctioned by the Blue Ridge Ski Council (BRSC), in which case members of other member clubs of the BRSC are also eligible to sign up. It is the responsibility of the Trip Captain to verify membership. He/she may ask the Membership Chairperson for a roster, which is normally updated monthly. Membership in other clubs must be validated through the BRSC.

Waiting List

When all available spaces have been reserved, the Trip Captain should maintain a waiting list with complete information (name, address, phones) of persons wishing to participate in the trip. Some people may reserve space on a trip early (merely to protect their option to participate on that trip) and then cancel their reservation at a later date. This is why the Club has a cancellation policy. And this is another reason that deposits must be collected at sign-up. The Trip Captain should be prepared to readily fill spaces that become available because of cancellations. Past experience has shown that it is very good for the Trip Captain to have a waiting list of several people.

Rooming Concerns

Assigning people to share hotel rooms or condos is one of the largest concerns for Trip Captains. Often times, the trip members do not know each other. (Other times, they know each other too well!) Placing incompatible people together can ruin a vacation. Sometimes the Trip Captain may be aware of these incompatibilities.

When hotel rooms are utilized, the Trip Captain may want to suggest, or even require, that singles find a roommate. But singles usually have the same concerns and will often tell the Trip Captain with whom he/she would like to room. As noted previously, hotel rooms for singles must have two beds. The Trip Captain should have a single supplement rate available in the event a person desires a room to himself or herself.

Placing a group into condos is usually more difficult than arranging hotel rooms. In addition to putting people together into bedrooms, there is the concern that the available bedding may not mesh well with the people that you need to assign. Serious difficulties arise occasionally in meeting the requirement that each single person have his/her own bed in a bedroom. Condos usually have one bedroom with one bed and a second bedroom with two beds, but not always. Sometimes there may be one bed on both rooms and, at other times, there may be two beds in both rooms. Problems usually arise when there are a large number of singles on a trip.

Because units having four beds are rare, the Trip Captain will need to place two compatible singles with a couple into a condo.

The bedding problem associated with having many singles on a trip involving condo accommodations is exacerbated by two couples desiring to share a condo. It is understandable that two couples would like to share a condo together just as two singles prefer to share a room with someone they know. The situation for some couples is that they would not sign-up and take a trip if it means the possibility of being placed with people that may not be compatible. Trip Captains may be approached by two couples stating they only want to sign up if they can be assured of being placed together in the same condo. It is up to the Trip Captain to decide whether or not to agree. It is suggested that the Trip Captain agree since the bedding dilemma for singles will not change whether they sign up or not. Also, the Trip Captain will have fewer compatibility concerns. But after sign-up, it is advisable for the Trip Captain not to agree to such an arrangement for two couples until he/she has the bedding arrangements worked out for all participants.

No-Smoking Policy

The Trip captain should make trip members aware at sign-up, that the Club has a no-smoking policy. **No smoking is allowed on any bus trip, nor is smoking permitted in any hotel room or condo occupied by a non-smoker.** When booking lodging, the Trip Captain should request for all rooms to be non-smoking rooms.

Trip Insurance

Trip members may desire to purchase travel insurance. There are numerous companies that provide such insurance. Each member should arrange his/her own insurance independently of the Club. The Club President has insurance application forms available from a company that members of the Club have used in the past. The Trip Captain should ask for a few forms to distribute to interested trip members. If a trip is arranged through a tour company, the tour agent may offer trip insurance at an attractive price geared specifically to that trip. Trip Captains may offer interested members the insurance options and let each member evaluate and choose.

Conducting the Trip

The Trip Captain has absolute authority over and responsibility for the conduct of the trip. Order must be maintained and any action that is deemed offensive to the majority must not be tolerated. All decisions related to the conduct of the trip shall be made solely by the Trip Captain. (Ski trips are not democratic processes.)

Provide Information

Prior to departure, the Trip Captain should prepare a document that informs the trip member of all the events that will be taking place in route, at the resort, and during the return. It should address airline flights, bus transportation, resort arrival, accommodations, the ski resort, lift tickets, pertinent hotel/condo information, meals, and any scheduled events. A novice Trip Captain may want to consult with an experienced one in preparing the information. The Trip Captain needs to keep the participants informed of the when, where, and how of what's happening. More information in the hands of participants means fewer questions and problems for the Trip Captain. The Trip Captain has the role of ensuring that the atmosphere is pleasurable for all throughout the trip.

It is recommended that a pre-trip party be planned for the trip participants when feasible. Such gatherings are often planned for trips involving airline flights. It provides not only an opportunity for the participants to meet each other, but it gives the Trip Captain the opportunity to pass out information, make specific announcements, and to answer any questions that the group members may have. Also, the Trip Captain usually provides airline e-tickets at this time.

Departure

Timely departure may well set the tone for the success of a trip. The Trip Captain should take roll to assure that all participants have checked in at the airport or are aboard the bus. For airline flights, the participants should be at the airport at least two hours prior to scheduled departure, unless a different time is recommended by the airline. For an early morning departure, the Trip Captain should consult the airline to determine when the desk will be staffed for check-in. For bus trips, the Trip Captain should ask participants to be at the meeting site at least 30 minutes before the scheduled departure time to allow time for loading the luggage. Bus departure should not be delayed for more than 15 minutes beyond the advertised departure time to wait for a no-show.

For both bus and air travel, the Trip Captain should provide his/her cell phone number (if applicable) to the participants so that he/she can be contacted in the event one of the participants has trouble arriving at the departure point due to weather or automotive problems.

Bus Trips

All supplies (ice, snacks, beverages, trash bags, etc.) for a bus trip should be on board the bus at least 45 minutes prior to departure. The Trip Captain should arrange for coolers to be on board for drinks and large trash bags should be placed in the front and rear of the bus.

Before assisting bus driver in loading luggage onto the bus, the Trip Captain should always ask the driver if he/she would like to have help.

The Bus Driver is responsible for operation of the bus and the safety of the persons on board. While aboard the bus, the Bus Driver is in charge. Although the bus and driver are at the Club's complete disposal, their services should not be overused or abused.

The Trip Captain should take a map in case it is needed when approaching the ski area. The bus drivers are not always familiar with the locations of resorts and accommodations.

The Trip Captain must maintain reasonable order and cleanliness on the bus. He/she should make sure that trash bags are available throughout the trip.

At any stop along the way, a time for re-boarding the bus should be established. The Trip Captain should stress punctuality and be stern. A head count must be made to assure that everyone is back on board the bus before continuing.

Air Travel

The Trip Captain needs to be aware that any re-ticketing must be done prior to the date of departure and that the time, opportunity, and cost to do so, depends on the airline.

The Trip Captain should frequently check with the airline for schedule changes. Changes may take place up until the day of the flight. The Trip Captain should ask the trip members to check the day before the flight also. He/she will need to provide information for contacting the airline to the members.

Well ahead of the flight, the Trip Captain should provide the trip members with information on luggage restrictions (size, weight, and number of pieces), as well as the flight schedule. The luggage limitations may be found at the airline's web site (the appropriate web site should be provided to the participants). Also, the Trip Captain should attempt to obtain the seat assignments for each person. Sometimes, the itinerary for each member will be available from the airline's web site by entering the confirmation code. If available, the Trip Captain should print out the itinerary for each member. It will provide the flight schedule, seat assignments for all legs, and the confirmation code. If unable to obtain seat assignments before day of departure, the Trip Captain should ask the participants to be certain they obtain seat assignments for all flights to the final destination during the initial check-in.

Airlines usually seat the group passengers in the same vicinity of the aircraft, but tend to make the seat assignments without accepting any input or requests from the Trip Captain. It is better for the Trip Captain to advise the participants ahead of time that spouses may be separated and that there is not much he/she can do about it. But airlines will normally attempt to make seat adjustments when asked at check-in and do allow passengers to change seats once on board.

Airlines now fly nearly, if not completely, full on all flights and often overbook. In overbooked situations, the Trip Captain should be aware that groups have priority over others in the event that the airline attempts to deny a seat to a member. The best proof that your member has a seat is to have the itinerary available showing the seat assignment. Under no circumstances should the Trip Captain allow a participant to be placed in a stand-by situation.

As noted elsewhere, members should arrive at the airport two hours prior to flight. A good practice is for the Trip Captain to check with the airport counter personnel a few weeks before departure to determine the local requirements and, especially for early morning departures, to ensure the counter will be staffed. This is also a good time to ensure the desk personnel are aware you are bringing a group and to coordinate any special procedures they may suggest. Sometimes the processing for groups goes exceedingly slow at the ticket counter and other times it is quick. Also, the passengers should be warned to be at the gate and ready to board 30 minutes before departure time (this is true for plane changes also). Otherwise, a reserved seat could be given to someone else if the flight is overbooked. If a member is at fault in missing a flight by not arriving at the airport or at the gate on time, then the member is responsible for any additional cost incurred in getting to the final destination.

The trip members should be reminded to bring a government issued photo ID with them to the airport. For trips outside the U.S., they should be made aware of the need to have their U.S. passport with them.

Regarding frequent flyer mileage registration, some airlines will take frequent flyer numbers for group members at the time of group ticket purchase and other airlines prefer to take the numbers at the check-in counter. Those providing numbers to the Trip Captain should be advised to check at the counter to be certain the miles are credited.

The trip members should be advised of what to expect and what to do after arrival at the destination airport. Instructions may be appropriate for locating and boarding a bus to reach the resort. The Trip Captain may want to go on-line to determine the layout of the destination airport in order to be aware of the bus pick-up points.

In the event that skis and/or ski boots (or other luggage) do not arrive at the destination airport along with the group, the Trip Captain should press the airline to provide free rental vouchers for the members involved. Also, before departing the airport, the Trip Captain should make sure that all members have retrieved all luggage. If any luggage is missing or damaged, claims should be filed with the airline before departure from the airport. Because of this possible delay, the Trip Captain may want to make sure that everyone has his/her luggage before having the bus leave the airport's bus holding area and proceed to the loading point (some airports do not allow buses to wait for extended periods at the pick-up curb).

Grocery Store Stops

Most condos have full kitchens and, therefore, it is important to make arrangements for the bus to stop at a full-service grocery store on the way between the airport and the lodge. Usually these grocery stores are not within walking distance of the lodge. The Trip Captain may need to contact the local community and/or the bus company to find such a grocery store. The participants will want to obtain fixings especially for breakfast and maybe lunch and dinner. A grocery store stop will have to be quick (30 minutes or less). Therefore, the members need to be advised to have a prepared list of items.

Bus Arrival at Ski Area

Upon arrival at the ski area, participants should remain on the bus while the Trip Captain checks in. This procedure can get messy enough even without people straying from the bus. (Some ski areas require this procedure for bus groups.)

After identifying skiers requiring rentals and/or lessons, the Trip Captain should provide these persons with directions to the rental shop and ski school. Particular attention should be given to beginners and persons on their first trip. The Trip Captain should help make their first PSC ski experience a pleasant and memorable one!

Neither the Trip Captain nor any other trip member should adjust another skier's bindings. Doing so may make one liable in the event of an injury. Skiers should be referred to a ski shop for all binding adjustments and equipment repairs.

Arrival at the Lodge

Prior to trip departure, the Trip Captain should inquire of the lodge check-in procedures for the group. Some lodges prefer the participants remain on the bus while the Trip Captain confirms pre-arranged accommodations and obtains room keys. Most places will require a credit card imprint from one resident of each hotel room or condo.

The Trip Captain should inform the lodge of expected arrival time. It is good for the Trip Captain to have a cell phone available for contacting the lodge in the event of a delay.

The Trip Captain should make certain that all participants understand they are responsible for all costs charged to their rooms/condos (e.g., phone calls, movie rentals) not included in the basic room charge.

After arrival, the Trip Captain should keep participants informed of meal times (if provided), shuttle bus schedule, and all planned activities. Also, a list of the participants' room/condo numbers should be provided to each unit.

If lodging is located at the ski area, but rooms are not available at the times of arrival and departure, make prior arrangements for use of a couple of rooms for changing clothes and storing luggage.

Newsletter Trip Report

Early in the trip or while in route (perhaps on the bus) the Trip Captain should ask for a volunteer(s) to write an article about the trip for publication in Ski News and the web site. The article should be entertaining, informative, and may include humorous or unusual happenings.

Bus Return Trip

The return plans and schedule need to be emphasized to all trip members. For overnight trips, details for check-out of hotel/condos should be provided. The Trip Captain must keep the bus trip on schedule because the airline will not wait and, for trips exclusively by bus, there may be members on board that must return to jobs or other commitments following the trip. The bus departure time should be set to allow skiing until the slopes are closed unless the trip is advertised otherwise. Trip departure time may be advanced if the ski slopes are closed for some reason or if there is a clear concern about transportation safety as a result of weather conditions.

After termination of the trip, the Trip Captain should check the bus for any belongings left behind by trip participants.

Leftover beverages, beverage containers, trashcans, unused trash bags, etc., should be passed on to the next Trip Captain for use.

Financial Accounting and Reporting

Financial accounting and reporting is an important part of the Trip Captain's job. Complete and accurate records, including documentation of agreements, should be maintained. The reporting requirements presented below apply to every overnight trip sponsored by the Peninsula Ski Club, regardless of whether or not it is a ski trip.

Deposits to and Withdrawals from the Treasury

The Club's Treasurer will provide the Trip Captains with special voucher forms (see Attachment C titled "PSC Income/Expense Voucher". This voucher form is to be used for each transaction between the Trip Captain and the Treasurer. This form, which comes with a carbon copy attached to it, is used for recording both income

and expense transactions. The Treasurer maintains a supply of these forms. All monies paid to the Trip Captain by the trip participants shall be deposited with the Treasurer by using the Voucher form as soon after receipt as is practicable. The Trip Captain should not withhold monies from the Treasurer for a time longer than the next membership meeting, or for a period in excess of one month following receipt of the monies. Also, payments to airlines, hotels, ski resorts, etc., by the Treasurer can be made by the Trip Captain completing this same Voucher form. The Treasurer signs the form when receiving deposits and payments from the members. The Trip Captain signs the form when receiving (or authorizing) a check for payment of trip expenses.

Trip Captains may use the electronic version of this document to make a copy of the Voucher form (Attachment C). He/she may then complete the form and email to the Treasurer for the Treasurer to make payment for expenses. To ensure that the email message was received and payment made, the Treasurer should send a response to the Trip Captain confirming receipt and payment.

When submitting checks (for deposits and payments) from trip participants to the Treasurer, the Trip Captain must list each check either on the Voucher or on a form attached to the Voucher. The Voucher form may not have space to list a large number of checks that the Trip Captain may wish to submit at one time. For this reason, Attachment D, titled "Itemized Check Payments to PSC Treasury", is provided and may be used instead. Columns are provided to record the check writer's name, the dollar amount, the date of the check, and the check number. The total dollar amount of deposits and payments should be entered on the PSC Income/Expense Voucher, the completed Attachment D form should be attached to it, and both along with the checks should be submitted to the Treasurer. The Trip Captain should keep copies of both forms for his/her records.

When a Voucher is submitted to the Treasurer for expenses (i.e., for the Club to make payments for the trip's accommodations, transportation, lift tickets, and other expenses), the appropriate billing statement(s), receipt(s), etc., should be provided. Check payments prepared by the Treasurer may be mailed to the payee by either the Treasurer or the Trip Captain.

Record Keeping

The Trip Captain must maintain complete records of all financial transactions and dates of occurrence. Two summary forms have been prepared to aid in this task. Attachment E, titled "Trip Income Summary – Payments to PSC Treasury", is to be used to summarize payments made to the Treasurer. The other, Attachment F, titled "Trip Expense Summary – Payments Made from PSC Treasury", is to be used to summarize payments made by the Treasurer to pay the trip's expenses. Each Voucher transaction (Attachment C) is recorded on one line of one of these two summary tables. The table provides for a running total of income and expenses to

be easily kept. In lieu of using these forms, the Trip Captain may utilize an electronic spreadsheet documenting the same transactions.

The Trip Captain must maintain good financial records throughout the trip process. The records should include:

- Copies of all quotes, contracts and agreements
- List of trip participants and price determination for each
- All Attachments (Attachment A through Attachment G)
- Financial statements and receipts for hotels, condos, lift tickets, airfares, tour company services, cruises, dinners, etc.
- Receipts for personal purchases made by the Trip Captain for the trip, such as bus refreshments and supplies, pre-trip party supplies, printing costs, long distance telephone charges, etc.

The Treasurer will reimburse the Trip Captain for personal purchases and expenses made in direct support of the trip. Receipts must be provided for reimbursement for expenditures in excess of \$25. As with other expenses, an Income/Expense Voucher form (Attach. C) should be submitted by the Trip Captain, with receipts attached, and the amount entered in the Trip Expense Summary (Attach. F).

For each trip, the Treasurer must retain all documentation submitted by the Trip Captain. All income and expense vouchers are to be saved along with any attachments such as those listing members' payments. It is suggested that the Treasurer set up a folder and/or file for each trip.

Financial Report

As soon as possible after the completion of the trip (preferably within two weeks) the Trip Captain and the Treasurer must compare their records for the trip's income and expenses. Any differences must be reconciled such that both show the same net income (or net loss).

After reconciliation of any differences, the Trip Captain must compile a Financial Report for review by the Treasurer, Skiing Activities Chairperson, and President. It will be available for review by any Board member. As a minimum, the report must include the following documentation (or the electronic spreadsheet equivalents):

- Attachment A, PSC Trip Pricing Worksheet, or equivalent
- List of trip participants and price for each
- Attachment B, Payments Received from PSC Trip Members
- Copies of Attachment C forms, PSC Income/Expense Voucher
- Copies of submitted Attachment D forms, Itemized Check Payments to PSC Treasury
- Attachment E, Trip Income Summary – Payments to PSC Treasury
- Attachment F, Trip Expense Summary – Payments from PSC Treasury

- Attachment G, PSC Trip Financial Statement

Except for the last brief form (Attachment G), all of these forms (or equivalent electronic spreadsheets) should be readily available from the Trip Captain's records. Normally, Attachments E and F are also relative brief forms. In lieu of copies of Attachments B - F, the Trip Captain may submit a **detailed** income and expense spreadsheet listing all transactions itemized on the forms (Attachments B - F) listed above. The total amount of income and expenses should match the income and expenses recorded by the Treasurer. Should there be any question of entries on the income and expense sheet, the Trip Captain and/or Treasurer will provide copies of the supporting documents necessary for clarification.

Other appropriate documentation may be included. The Treasurer should have previously received receipts, billing statements, etc., with the submitted Income/Expense Vouchers. If the Trip Captain worked with a tour company, the tour company's financial accounting statements for the trip should be included.

Refunds

If participants are entitled to any refund of monies, the refund amount and participant's full mailing addresses should be indicated on an attachment. Refunds should be treated as an expense.

Archival Trip Information

Within two weeks after completion of the trip, the Trip Captain must file the "Archival PSC Trip Information" form (Attachment H) with the PSC Skiing Activities Chairperson. This form is intended to provide useful information that will aid in the planning of trips in future years. The Skiing Activities Chairperson will collect and file the forms in a loose-leaf binder notebook for future reference and use by Trip Captains and is to be passed on to the Chairperson's successor.

Contingencies

Trip Captain Withdrawal

If, for any reason, a Trip Captain is unable to lead his/her trip, a new Trip Captain will be chosen by the Skiing Activities Chairperson. The new Trip Captain will assume full responsibility for the trip and will receive all benefits afforded to the Trip Captain just as if he/she had been the original Trip Captain. The original Trip Captain will forfeit his/her entire trip package and will receive no remuneration for work performed. Appropriate expenses incurred by the original Trip Captain in planning or running the trip up until the time of his/her withdrawal may be submitted and processed as expenses of the trip.

Trip Cancellation

The decision to cancel a trip will be made by a majority of the President, Treasurer, and Skiing Activities Chairperson. The Trip Captain may not make the decision to cancel a trip. A trip may be canceled as a result of insufficient participation, adverse snow, poor weather conditions, or other reasons that may be appropriate.

In the event of cancellation of a trip, the Trip Captain will, as soon as is practicable:

- Inform participants
- Inform lodging management, ground transportation, airlines, ski resort, and others with which the Club may have entered into agreements
- Notify Web Master and Ski News Editor

The Trip Captain will then:

- Arrange for refund to PSC of monies deposited with lodging operators, airlines, ski resort, etc.
- Arrange for full refunds to trip participants through the PSC Treasurer

The Trip Captain will be reimbursed for all personal expenses incurred by him/her in planning and selling the trip, but no remuneration for his/her work performed.

Additional Buses

If participant demand warrants, and if accommodations and buses are available, the Skiing Activities Chairperson may approve the addition of one or more buses for any planned trip. The Trip Captain will choose a Bus Captain for each additional bus authorized. The Bus Captain will assume the same responsibilities (for his/her bus and bus passengers) and will receive one half of the benefits as the original Trip Captain (i.e., one half of the trip price will be paid from Club revenue received from the participants and this cost must be factored into the pricing). This section applies only to trips in which all travel is by bus and none by air.

Some Sage Trip Conducting Advice from the Past

- A good word of advice for new Trip Captains is to contact an experienced Trip Captain or the Skiing Activities Chairperson regarding any questions or concerns.
- Provide all participants with an agenda of each day's activities (departure times, meal times and locations, ski lift hours, departure time for home, etc).
- Take care of all details personally. Do not leave anything to chance!

- Being a Trip Captain involves making good common sense decisions with all aspects of the trip. **Think !!!!!**
- Assume nothing. If you are not sure about something, ask someone!

PSC Trip Pricing Worksheet

Trip: _____ Dates: _____ Captain: _____

Fixed Per Person Costs

Room & Meals (Incl. tax)	\$ _____
Airfare	\$ _____
Lift Tickets (Incl. tax)	\$ _____
Club Overhead	\$ _____
Contingency	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Fixed Cost/Person: \$ _____

Notes: Include above other appropriate Fixed Per-Person Costs such as group dinner or party, tour agent fee, any per-person gratuities, and any other per-person expenses. A tour agent may only provide a per person package price for some combination of items listed above.

Shared Costs

Bus Transportation	\$ _____
Trip Captain's Room & Meals	\$ _____
Trip Captain's Airfare	\$ _____
Trip Captain's Lift Tickets	\$ _____
Trip Refreshments & Supplies	\$ _____
Gratuities	\$ _____
Additional Free Trip, if applicable	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
Less any "comps" provided to PSC	\$(_____)
Total	\$ _____

Notes: Include above other appropriate Shared Costs such as Trip Captain's group meals, Trip Captain's agent fee, other Trip Captain expenses, and any miscellaneous trip expenses. See Trip Captain Remuneration section of Trip Captain's Manual for applicability of a second (or partial) free trip. The above Total for Shared Costs should be divided by the number of trip participants less the number of free trips awarded to the Trip Captain to give the Shared Costs Per Person.

Shared Costs/Person: \$ _____

Total Price/Person: \$ _____

Payments Received from PSC Trip Members **Trip Name** _____

Trip Member	Total Due	First Payment, Date	Second Payment, Date	Third Payment, Date	Fourth Payment, Date	Comments

PSC Trip Financial Statement

Activity _____

Trip Dates _____

Activity Captain _____

Total Income from Attach. E \$ _____

Total Expenses from Attach. F \$ (_____)

Profit Plus Overhead \$ _____

Overhead, if applicable \$ (_____)

NET TRIP PROFIT (LOSS) \$ _____

Comments (opt.):

Trip Captain _____
(Signature and Date)

Archival PSC Trip Information

Ski Resort(s): _____

Dates: _____ Price: _____ Trip Captain: _____

Tour Co., Agent, & Contact Info: _____

Appraisal of Agent's Services: _____

Appraisal of Ski Resort(s) & Mountain(s): _____

_____ No. of Ski Days: _____ Lift Ticket Cost, If Known: _____

Appraisal of Resort Transportation: _____

Hotel/Condos, Sales Mgr., & Contact Info: _____

Appraisal of Accommodations & Incl. Meals (if any): _____

_____ Cost/Person, If Known: _____

Bus Co. & Contact Info: _____

Appraisal of Bus Service: _____

_____ Bus Cost, If Known: _____

Airline & Appraisal of Service: _____

_____ Airfare, If Known: _____

Restaurants & Contact Info for Group Dinners: _____

Appraisal of Dinners: _____

Any Significant Problems Encountered: _____

Other Comments & Recommendations for a Revisit: _____