

RUAPEHU MOUNTAIN CLUBS ASSOCIATION (INC.)

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Hon Shane Jones  
Minister for Regional Development  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington 6160

Via email: [S.Jones@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:S.Jones@ministers.govt.nz)

### **Requesting update on Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Liquidation**

Dear Minister Jones

I write to you in your position as Minister for Regional Development concerning the liquidation of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts (RAL).

The Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association is a key stakeholder of the Mt Ruapehu region, representing 46 tramping and ski clubs based on Mt Ruapehu. The clubs are integral to the fabric of Iwikau and Whakapapa villages within Tongariro National Park. They comprise about 15,000 active members. The clubs and their members value the region, spend in the area and with RAL, and therefore economically support the area and the ski fields.

You will no doubt be aware of the severe socioeconomic impacts on the Central North Island if ski field operations cease at Mt Ruapehu. RMCA wrote to the previous minister for Regional Development on several occasions since RAL entered voluntary administration on October 2022 and was advised that Kānoa RDU would continue to work closely with administrators and stakeholders throughout the process.

Despite being a key stakeholder, RMCA has received very little communication from Kānoa over the past 18 months and we are now seeking an update and a firm commitment that Kānoa will keep RMCA regularly informed of progress going forward.

Many clubs are about to hold their annual meetings and issue annual subscription invoices for membership. With no news about the future of ski field operations at Ruapehu this coming season, club

committees are concerned that members will choose to spend and travel elsewhere this winter. This is the second year clubs are facing a high level of uncertainty over operations of the ski fields. This affects their ability to retain and attract members and generate income to maintain their club lodges.

Pre-Covid, the clubs collectively generated approximately \$1.6M per annum in on-mountain accommodation revenue. The Covid disruptions and the subsequent liquidation of RAL has reduced this on-mountain revenue (by up to 50% for some clubs) while fixed costs such as insurance have risen.

This letter seeks your assistance for an update on the Kānoa RDU progress on the receivership/liquidation of RAL and a commitment that they will keep us informed of progress. We acknowledge that the liquidation/receivership process is complex but can't stress enough how important ongoing operations of the ski fields are to the health of the clubs and region.

We ask that this matter is treated with urgency to ensure clubs have certainty of ongoing ski field operations at Whakapapa and Tūroa for the upcoming winter season and beyond.

I and the RMCA Council look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

Jude Hamblyn  
Acting Co-President  
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association