



## **BEST and PROMISING PRACTISES**

**Principles:** 4 - Respects and involves local community  
6 - Promote quality & safety in all business operations

**Practices:** - Implementing a quality, safety and environment system  
- Cooperating with the local stakeholders on land-use issues  
- Employment and expertise and participating several projects

**Company:** Snow Games Ltd                      **Website:** [www.snowgames.fi](http://www.snowgames.fi)  
[www.aurorachalet.fi](http://www.aurorachalet.fi)

**Region:** Luosto area/ Lapland, Finland

**Operation:** Winter safaris and treks to reindeer and husky farms, ice fishing

### **General Summary:**

Snow Games Ltd is a company specializing in winter treks and experiences in Lapland. Most of the activities are motorized and company operates mainly by offering winter activities such as snowmobile, snowshoe and enduro safaris, safaris to visit reindeer and husky farms and ice fishing. The company work cooperatively and closely with the local community and as well is working towards improving the safety and quality of the company's operations.

### **Operator's Testimonial / General Details:**

Snow Games Ltd is owned and operated by Jukka Hirvonen and his wife within the Luosto tourism destination of Sodankylä municipality. The company was established in 1984 .

Managing director Jukka Hirvonen tells about the way that the company operates:

#### **\*Safety, quality and the customer**

The company implemented a Quality, Safety and Environment system for their operation 3 years ago. During that time, all the operative processes have been documented and those process descriptions work as a corporate guidelines and are used in training all the staff for use in operation models in their daily activities (example: measurements have been made in the consumption of oil and fuel for snowmobile safaris).

As well, details of accidents are recorded and monitored and they are been compared to the facts in the safari or trip reports. Customer surveys have been implemented especially for safaris lasting several days and are added to by oral feedback to help us to

evaluate the service. If anything out of ordinary happens, for example accidents among the staff or customers during snowmobile safaris, they will always be dealt with. In addition, if the costs have been reduced, staff is awarded by giving them a bonus to the salary.

Activities and trips are well prepared beforehand. The effects are mostly seen (in) with the customers: when the service is good and things work well, the feedback is positive. The customer is provided with information before the trip (local weather, what to wear, rules in driving snowmobiles). Tour operators and internet-pages are the channels of distributing pre-trip information. At the location and before the safari begins, customers are again briefed on the same topics. The quality system has been implemented mainly because it gives functional and economic benefits. System has worked well as a sales argument in meeting new customers. Risk analysis is undertaken for different product categories.

#### **\*Involving the local community**

Local stakeholders are consulted, when snowmobile and enduro-safaris are being planned. These stakeholders include: Forest and Park Service, private land-owners, reindeer owner's association and environmental organizations. As a result of negotiations, agreements were reached to arrange safaris on property of the landowners. The operator always informs reindeer herders about safaris beforehand.

Local subcontractors are used, whenever possible. About 25% of business' s turnover goes to subcontractors. From the customers and staff's feedback we are able to recognize, if something does not go well with the partners. We are also board members in both marketing organisations in the area, Pyhä-Luosto association and Luoston Syli. We are participating in several projects at the time. One project has been about creating a new master plan for Pyhä-Luosto area. The master plan will be important for the company in the future, because it enables us to map out new routes and areas for tourism activities.

Local culture and nature are being highlighted in the products that we develop and based on the customers' interests. Different customers like different things; for some the safari is the main attraction and for others it is the nature and they only use snowmobiles for transportation. An old logging site house of Forest and Park Service has been used for tourist groups. Local lumberjacks who used to work there were invited to share stories about the local history and the stories have been documented to save the traditions and culture. We also hire local reindeer herders for the visits to the reindeer farms. In their part, the herders advise the customers to sustainable development issues. We aim to prioritise hiring staff and buying goods and services locally. We encourage our staff to become citizens of the local municipality and thus pay taxes to the local municipality.