

# MEDIA RELEASE

17 August 2009

## LACK OF PREPARATION POTENTIALLY FATAL FOR TRAMPER

The Mountain Safety Council and LandSAR are disappointed that a 59-year-old Hastings man had to be rescued for a second time from the same area in less than a month.

Mountain Safety Council Programme Manager Outdoor Leader & Bush, Chris Tews, said the man was ill-equipped and under-prepared to be in tramping above the bush line in conditions of snow and extreme cold and could have died.

“The potentially fatal situation occurred as a result of poor planning, poor preparation and a poor appreciation of winter conditions in the Ruahine Ranges. The man has failed to learn the lessons of the previous rescue. He was very lucky that weather conditions at the time allowed a rescue helicopter to be able to pick him up,” says Mr Tews.

Hadyn Smith, CEO of LandSAR, the organisation that supports the police in such operations, shared the Mountain Safety Council’s concern: “The trumper’s decision to go back into the snow-covered Ruahine Ranges put not only his own life in danger but also the lives of the rescue teams sent in to assist him,” says Mr Smith.

Mr Tews says: “Mountain Safety Council encourages people to enjoy the outdoors safely. This incident reinforces the importance of good planning, good equipment and a good understanding of your capabilities and limitations in the back-country environment.

“The man’s misjudgement about weather conditions and the trip length highlight once more the importance of checking the weather forecast prior to going into the bush, of packing appropriate equipment and provisions for all possible outcomes,” says Mr Tews.

When venturing into the outdoors both LandSAR and the Mountain Safety Council advise:

- Plan your trip thoroughly, Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return. If you have not returned, your contact person will inform the police who can arrange for search and rescue.
- Be prepared, and plan for an extended stay. Take adequate clothing, extra food and drink, a communications device such as mountain radio or personal locator beacon and other equipment appropriate to the terrain and conditions.
- Ensure you have the appropriate experience, local knowledge and navigation skills – know how to use a map and compass
- Check track and hut conditions. Check with DOC, locals, tramping clubs, Regional Authorities or District Councils before venturing in to the outdoors.
- Check the weather forecast, Monitor the weather in the days before you leave. Continually monitor weather conditions during the trip

For more information about outdoor safety visit, [www.mountainsafety.org.nz](http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz) or [www.landsar.org.nz](http://www.landsar.org.nz) or 406 MHz beacons visit, [www.beacons.org.nz](http://www.beacons.org.nz).

Contact:

Chris Tews  
Programme Manager Outdoor Leader & Bush  
NZ Mountain Safety Council  
Phone (04) 385-7162 ext 223  
Mobile 027 443 7557  
[chris.tews@mountainsafety.org.nz](mailto:chris.tews@mountainsafety.org.nz)

or  
Hadyn Smith  
Chief Executive  
LandSAR

Mob: +64 276 915107



**MOUNTAIN SAFETY COUNCIL**

**DISCOVER  
MORE, SAFELY.▲**