



**THE INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING FEDERATION**  
UNION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS D'ALPINISME

Office: Monbijoustrasse 61 • Postfach  
CH-3000 Berne 23 • SWITZERLAND  
tel.: +41 (0)31 3701828 • fax: +41 (0)31 3701838  
e-mail: office@uiaa.ch

---

## **THE INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING FEDERATION (UIAA)**

### **CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING GUIDEBOOKS FOR INTERNATIONAL USE:**

### **THE UIAA GUIDEBOOK STANDARDS**

**The UIAA Mountaineering Commission  
Union Internationale des Associations d' Alpinisme (UIAA)  
Postfach  
CH- 3000 Bern 23  
Switzerland**

**2 August 2001**

# **CONTENTS**

- 1 CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING GUIDEBOOKS FOR INTERNATIONAL USE**
- 2 PROCEDURES FOR THE APPROVAL OF GUIDEBOOKS AND THE: AWARD OF THE UIAA LABEL**
- 3 ANNEXES**

**CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING GUIDEBOOKS  
FOR INTERNATIONAL USE:  
THE UIAA GUIDEBOOK LABEL**

**1. CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING GUIDEBOOKS FOR INTERNATIONAL USE**

- 1.1 **Climbing in different countries.** The UIAA is keen to promote the ability of climbers and mountaineers to enjoy their sport in different countries, despite the difficulties arising from the use of different languages.
- 1.2 For this reason, the UIAA particularly wishes to encourage the development and use of the UIAA international comparative scale of difficulties (Annex A); and of the UIAA examples of symbols for diagrams and topos (Annex B).
- 1.3 It also wishes to encourage the production of guidebooks to climbing and mountaineering areas, by Member Federations and others, which include these comparative standards and the symbols, together with a minimum of other essential information important for mountaineers visiting the region who may not understand the language used there.

**The UIAA-label for guidebooks.** In order to assist these policies of encouraging climbing internationally, the UIAA is willing to allow the use of the UIAA label on any climbing or mountaineering guidebooks which meets the requirements outlined below.

- 1.4 These requirements are:
- (a) The guidebook is endorsed by the Member Federation for the area concerned.
  - (b) It includes a table showing the relationship between the UIAA scale of difficulties (Annex A below) and the scale of difficulties used in the guidebook.
  - (c) Diagrams and topos are compatible with the UIAA examples of symbols (Annex B below) (i.e. either they are based on them or may be readily understood in terms of them).
  - (d) It contains:
    - a sketch-map of the area;
    - accident and rescue information (including telephone numbers); and
    - a summary notification of any access or environmental restrictions, preferably in the principal UIAA language (English).
- And
- (e) The guidebook will carry a disclaimer of UIAA responsibility (Annex C below).

The purpose of these requirements is to ensure that the guidebook may be reliably understood by a visitor who is not familiar with the language of the area concerned.

- 1.5 **UIAA environmental guidelines.** The UIAA assumes that any Member Federation, in giving its endorsement to a particular guidebook as in para 1.5(a) above will satisfy itself that the guidebook is compatible with the UIAA Environmental Guidelines.
- 1.6 **UIAA consultative guidelines on fixed equipment.** Member Federations are also invited to consider the relevance of the UIAA Consultation Paper on fixed equipment in mountains; and to draw them to the attention of guidebook-writers so that they may take them into account as appropriate to the circumstances of the location concerned.

- 1.7 The UIAA sees advantages from these proposals not only to visiting climbers and mountaineers, but also to Member Federations and the UIAA, who may be seen to be making a sustained commitment to assist them in this way.

## **2 PROCEDURES FOR THE APPROVAL OF GUIDEBOOKS AND THE AWARD OF THE UIAA LABEL.**

- 2.1 The UIAA Mountaineering Commission has responsibility on behalf of the UIAA for allowing the use of the UIAA label on climbing and mountaineering guidebooks, on the basis outlined in Section 1 above.
- 2.2 It aims to discharge this responsibility in collaboration with Member Federations and will establish a dialogue with any Member Federation interested in the use of the UIAA guidebook label. Accordingly it invites Member Federations to assist in developing these proposals; and to nominate a representative of the Federation to take the discussions forward.
- 2.3 **Three forms of approval.** It is envisaged that the Mountaineering Commission may arrange with a Federation for 3 methods of approval of guidebooks.
- 2.4 These are:
- (a) **A Federation scheme of publication.** Where a Federation publishes guidebooks itself or in collaboration with another publisher, it should be possible to agree on a programme of publication within which all of the guidebooks are adapted to meet the requirements in para 1.5 above. In that case, approval would be given for the Federation to use the UIAA label on the whole series of guidebooks meeting these requirements.
  - (b) **Federation individual approval.** A Federation may also be authorised; following agreement with the Mountaineering Commission, to authorise the use of the UIAA label on other guidebooks for areas within its own territorial responsibility meeting the requirements in para 1.5 above. This would be done by the named representative of the Federation in para 2.2 above. And
  - (c) **Approval by the Mountaineering Commission.** This remains as a possible means of awarding the UIAA label, in cases where neither (a) nor (b) is available. This would be on the basis of the requirements in para 1 (5) above, including the requirement at 1.5(a) that the guidebook should be endorsed by the Federation concerned.

These would each be operated in a flexible way to meet the requirements of the particular situation, but any proposal to vary the requirements in para 1.5 above would need a decision by the Mountaineering Commission as a whole.

- 2.5 **Award of the label.** In the event that a Member Federation obtains UIAA agreement to the use of the UIAA label in accordance with the procedures in para 2.4(a) or (b) above, that Federation will be authorised to allow the use of the label on such guidebooks as meet the requirements in para 1.5 above. The Federation may impose such conditions

as it thinks fit, but these should include some provision concerning the continuing use of the label in the event that the guidebook is to be revised.

- 2.6 The UIAA may require a fee, or fees, from the Member Federation concerned for the use of the UIAA label.
- 2.7 A Member Federation participating in these arrangements should inform the UIAA Mountaineering Commission of the titles of guidebooks for which use of the UIAA label has been allowed.

# Annexes

## **A THE UIAA TABLE OF INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS OF DIFFICULTY**

Can be downloaded from the UIAA website

## **B EXAMPLES OF SYMBOLS FOR TOPOS AND DIAGRAMS**

Can be downloaded from the UIAA website

## **C EXAMPLE OF NOTICE OF DISCLAIMER OF UIAA RESPONSIBILITY:**

The UIAA encourages the inclusion of information in guidebooks that helps visitors from overseas to understand the most important information about local access, grades and emergency procedures. The UIAA also encourages climbers and mountaineers to share knowledge and views on issues such as safety, ethics, and good practice in mountain sports. The UIAA is not responsible for, and accepts no liability for, the technical content or accuracy of the information in this guidebook. Climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury and death. Participants should be aware of, understand and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

## **D EXAMPLE OF UIAA LABEL FOR USE IN GUIDEBOOKS:**



Full corporate reproduction guidelines with mono, whiteout, and horizontal versions are available from the UIAA office