

Winter Tukino Road Travel Guidance

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Background

Making the trip to the Tukino ski field needs preparation for vehicle and driver. The Tukino ski field is 14kms off state highway 1 (Desert Road) on a mixture of 2 and 4 wheel drive roads. While this can usually be navigated with minimal risk in summer, in winter the risks are increased considerably due to the variability driving and weather conditions along with the time of the day of the trip, usually at night.

This document sets out some considerations for all aspects of the trip to Tukino ski field and give some pointers around what you might encounter. The decision to travel on the Tukino Road is made by the driver.

Vehicle Preparedness

	Task	Notes
1	Check all fluids, radiator and window washer water, engine oil, power steering fluid, clutch fluid.	For 4x4's check diff and drive train fluids
2	Check drive belts	
3	Check windscreen wiper blades are good condition	Could carry spare blades for front and back
4	Check tyre tread depth and pressures, including spare	Need better than warrantable tread depth, pressure needs to be correct
5	Check head lights are functional and they all work	Check high and low beam, also if additional lights are fitted, these should be functional
6	Check spare wheel, and jack functionality	Make sure all the jacking components are present and functional
7	Check tow points are present and accessible	Some vehicles have screw in towing eyes and these need to be screwed into position to tow the vehicle, these are usually located with the spare wheel
8	Snow chains that fit your vehicle, minimum of one set	Chains for all wheels is advantageous in marginal conditions, not all vehicles (4x4 included) can take chains on all wheels, so check. Make sure that when chains are fitted and the vehicle is loaded with gear there is still clearance around the wheels.

Driver/Personnel Preparedness

	Task	Notes
1	Driver has driven vehicle on gravel roads and rough terrain before	Some experience of driving on snow is best. Could complete a 4x4 driving course
2	Know how to drive at night effectively	
3	Know how to pack a vehicle and access spare wheel and jack	There may be a requirement to change wheel in the dark, or rain, so need to know where everything is located
4	Know how to drive through water safely	There is 2 or 3 river crossings on the first part of the Tukino road, this is

		dependent on weather and could change the depth of water
5	Good wet weather coat, trousers, and boots	Sometimes need to work in the rain
6	Head torch and spare batteries	LED head torch to work at night
7	Gloves	A couple of pairs of good quality leather gloves
8	Beanie (close fitting hat)	Keep head warm
9	Be familiar with towing a vehicle and being towed	There is a big difference between these two.
10	Know how to fit chains on your particular vehicle before you need them	Check you chains fit and are adjusted at home before you travel

Recovery Equipment

	Item	Notes
1	Shovel	Should be of a size to be effective removing snow, long handle
2	Tow strop (7m)	Tow strop not snatch strop, snatch strops are used for sand and mud, not snow
3	D shackle x 2 (or soft shackle)	Min 2, rated at 3500kg (35kN, SWL 350kg) or better. If rated then the connecting pin will be coloured. Do not use stainless steel shackles!
4	Gloves	A couple of pairs of good quality leather gloves
5	Portable light (torch) with spare batteries	Good quality LED torch that can be put down and still shine light on work site

Driving Modes

	Item	Notes
1	If you are in a 4WD vehicle, please engage full 4WD at the start of the road - including locking hubs	Most of the road can be driven in High range, only really soft slushy snow will require diff locks
2	If you are not in a 4WD, please observe all signs and do not pass 4WD signs if you are in a 2WD vehicle	2WD vehicles slip and create holes in the road that need to be repaired
3	Avoid driving in the "tracks" and drive so one set of wheels is in the centre of the road	
4	Put on chains at earliest opportunity	This is before you need them and there is level ground to put them on
5	Drive around water sitting on the road, the hydraulic force of the vehicle hitting water breaks up the road	Caution as the puddle off to the side of the road could be very deep and with a soft mud bottom, so do not go there
6	Drive to the conditions, if you cannot see ahead, slow down	The road has marker poles at every 25m which are numbered, useful to know the pole number if you are requesting assistance. Pole 1 is at the Tukino car park.
7	Keep your speed down, this also breaks up the road surface	It is recommended that max speed on the road is 40kph, or slower depending on weather and snow conditions

Getting Help

	To Know	Notes
1	If you come across a vehicle needing assistance and you can provide assistance it is recommended you stop and help	You may need help some day
2	There is limited cell phone coverage on the road	You may have to walk to a good reception area, which could be a way so dress appropriately
3	Know where you are on the road.	This could impact if help comes from the village or another vehicle behind you.
4	Know what the problem is, so it can be communicated	This could impact the type of help and the vehicle required
5	Severe issue may result in the vehicle being left on the road and people transported	There is no tow service on the mountain, the nearest 4x4 tow service is at Horopeto, National Park
6	Minor rescue/recovery is likely to be attempted	This may happen if the vehicle is driveable after a potential rescue/recovery and there are people who know what they are doing available
7	By cell phone ring 06 8258118, Aorangi=3, DAC=4, TASC=5	Make sure you identify yourself to the person receiving the call and they understand the situation. Confirm they are going to assist and supply help if it is needed

General Information

	Item	Notes
1	Road is 14 km long with some steep and exposed sections.	
2	There is a 2WD carpark at the 7km mark which is sign posted	This is the limit of travel of a 2WD vehicle up the road. Will need to shuttle people and equipment from this point.
3	Shuttle from the 2WD carpark will need to be arrange prior to travelling to Tukino	There is a shuttle that can be booked from the Tukino web site, make sure it is running for when you plan to go to Tukino first. Contact details are on the web site.
4	There is often other vehicles on the road especially Friday night so convey where possible	Travelling in a group minimises risks and there are other t help out if needed.
5	When using chains it is a good idea to stop after a few kms and tighten them	This could avoid some costly vehicle damage if one is loose
6	If travelling in convoy it is a good idea to observe a minimum of a 4 vehicle length gap between vehicles	
7	Have a check list of all the additional equipment you need for the trip so nothing is left behind	Important for the recovery gear and chains
8	Make sure that all passengers are appropriately dressed for the trip up the Tukino road before starting up the road.	This may require a stop to put on warm clothing and footwear before getting to the Tukino access road
9	Have strategies to deal with wind and rain when driving to Tukino	This includes deep snow and white out conditions, slow down, travel in convoy