

Incident Summary #II-1672016-2024 (#44218) (FINAL)

SUPPORTING INFORMATION	Incident Date	February 9, 2024	
	Location	Interior	
	Regulated industry sector	Passenger ropeways - Above surface ropeway	
	Impact	Qty injuries	1
		Injury description	Concussion, multiple broken bones, internal injuries that required long term hospitalization.
		Injury rating	Major
	Damage	Damage description	N/A
		Damage rating	None
	Incident rating	Major	
Incident overview	A social media video was viewed by an adolescent male, in which a passenger jumped from a ropeway and rode away on their snowboard. The young man was riding the same chairlift uphill with their friend. Over half-way up the ropeway, the adolescent male passenger jumped from the carrier, in an attempt to replicate the actions of the individual in the social media video.		
INVESTIGATION CONCLUSIONS	Site, system and components	<p>The passenger ropeway involved was a fixed-grip double chair lift. Passengers load chairlift by maneuvering to a designated loading point. An operator is positioned at this specific location, to aid passengers and operate ropeway controls. Snowboard passengers are instructed/required to detach their back foot to allow themselves to maneuver through the marshalling area and at the load and unload stations.</p> <p>The open carriers (chairs) are equipped with a restraining device, a lap bar that pivots down over passenger's head to their lap, to secure passengers seated within the chair while riding uphill. The lap bar is dependent on passenger engagement, instructed by signage, to lower after loading and raise before unloading.</p>	
	Failure scenario(s)	The two passengers loaded the chair safely at the specific loading point and began travel up the ropeway lift line. The restraining bar was not lowered by the passengers, and not verbally prompted to do so by the load operator standing at the load area. One of the passengers secured both feet to their snowboard while seated and riding in the chair. That passenger then jumped at the predetermined location, to match the social media video and fell over 8 meters (approximately 26 feet) from carrier to the ground.	

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Facts and evidence

As Reported by Ski Area Duty Holder:

- The incident occurred at 7:30 pm, during night skiing operation.
- On-site staff reported passenger had jumped from carrier between Towers 5 & 6 and had visibly injured themselves.
- Injured passenger sent to Hospital via ambulance with multiple injuries.
- Friend and injured passenger told on-site staff; they were attempting to mimic a social media video.
- Ski Area Duty Holder was unaware of video existence prior to incident.

As reported by second passenger on same carrier:

- Close friend of injured snowboarder.
- Both advanced snowboarders, ridden multiple chairlifts many times, aware of the restraining bar requirements.
- Fourth ride on the specific chairlift that evening, nothing unusual with the operation of the chairlift.
- Riding on the same carrier together, everything normal on the specific carrier.
- Friend mentioned a video of someone jumping from chairlift.
- Friend wanted to re-enact the social media video.
- Friend secured both feet to snowboard, positioned themselves to hang from carrier, dropped from carrier and landed flat on his back. He was unresponsive after landing.

As reported by witness (Ski Area Employee) from ground:

- Snow conditions were hard pack that evening.
- Heard yelling from passenger on chairlift.
- Looked over and saw a snowboarder hanging from a carrier, then drop between Towers 5 & 6, landing on their back.
- About 20 meters away from casualty, rushed over and found them unresponsive for about 15-20 seconds.
- Injured patron regained consciousness and attempted to stand up and ride away as their snowboard was secured to both feet, started coughing up blood.
- Called fellow employee and requested they get Ski Patrol.
- Convinced injured snowboarder to stay and wait for Ski Patrol (First Aid).
- Friend of casualty mentioned, he wanted to replicate a Social Media Video.

As reported by injured snowboarders' parent:

- Son and friend went out snowboarding around 5:30pm that evening.
- Learned from son's friend, he was attempting to re-enact a social media video.
- Concussion, multiple broken bones, internal injuries that required long term hospitalization.
- Son suffered memory loss including the incident and memories from up to a week prior to the incident.

Social Media Video:

- The video was posted 2 days prior to incident – February 7, 2024.
- The video was recorded during a previous season when the Boarder/Skier-Cross course was fully developed.
- Subject jumped from a carrier along ropeway lift line, landing on a snow-made inclined ramp feature, and snowboarded away.
- The berm, for a banked corner, of the Boarder/Skier-Cross course below the chairlift favored the dampening of the free-fall and contributed to a successful landing for the jumper.

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	<p>Safety Officer observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All required ropeway signage was in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restraining Device instructional signage was located on Tower 2. • The incident location was the same lift and location as the one that was highlighted in the social media video. • The Boarder/Skier-Cross course was still in development with minimal snow, and the area closed off. • The measured distance between the bottom of carrier and the incident landing location was 8.5 meters (28 feet). <p>Chairlift:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed-grip double chair. • Maximum ropeway speed 2.0 m/s. • Operating ropeway speed 1.7 m/s. • Upper half of ropeway lift line is above a Boarder/Skier-Cross course. <p>CSA Z98-14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ropeway location and alignment; Site Selection clause 4.3.1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When selecting the location and alignment of an installation, consideration shall be given to factors that are known to affect the operational requirements of the installation. The following shall be considered when necessary: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Ski slopes and trails. II. Control of air space below, above and adjacent to the installation. III. Carrier height above the ground or other surface. • Vertical Clearances clause 6.3.1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where persons are permitted under a ropeway, a minimum clearance of 4 m shall be provided between the underside of a carrier and the snow profile, ground, and any obstruction.
<p>Causes and contributing factors</p>	<p>An adolescent's eagerness to copy a social media video of a passenger jumping from a carrier certainly caused them to free-fall over 8 meters from a carrier and sustain major injuries.</p> <p>The ski area operator building a snow feature, a banked corner (ramp), for a Boarder/Skier-Cross course directly underneath chairlift likely contributes to encouraging passengers to jump from their chair. The inclined snow ramp certainly favored the successful landing of the person in the social media video.</p>



Image 1 - Incident Location.



Image 2 - View from carrier.