



Photo: Synnøve Haga



Photo: Arild Lyssand



Photo: Arild Lyssand

Field safety in Svalbard

This folder outlines the main safety precautions you need to consider when making your way around Svalbard. You will not find exhaustive answers to every question, or detailed descriptions about how to act in any eventuality, so it is extremely important that you arm yourself with sufficient information and skills to be able to cope with the challenges described here.

Tour operators in Svalbard offer a range of tours with experienced local guides, and they are responsible, not least, for the safety of participants. The guides explain about the natural surroundings and culture of Svalbard, and may well be able to add to the visitor's experience. If you suspect you lack sufficient knowledge and experience to make your way about on your own, you should join such an organised tour.

The folder will emphasise safety issues. It follows that aspects of peril will be highlighted. However, it is far from our intention to discourage you from exploring Svalbard. Most trips have ended well because every individual participant understood that he or she was responsible for his or her own safety, and bore in mind the very particular conditions of Svalbard.

Experience Svalbard on nature's own terms

Trips in Svalbard are not only a matter of evading threats and avoiding risk. Above all, Svalbard represents unique and magnificent scenery, diverse and fascinating fauna and intriguing cultural heritage. However, the Arctic environment is extremely fragile and demands particular consideration from travellers. A number of laws and regulations are designed to protect nature and cultural artefacts on Svalbard. In some areas, travel is restricted. You will need to familiarise yourself with these laws and regulations before you go on expeditions.

Please note that when visitors go off on their own to places other than in central parts of Spitsbergen (Management Area 10) the law demands they be insured and that they notify about their travel plans. Please contact the Governor of Svalbard well in advance of your trip.

You will find references to further information on the last page.



Photo: Inge Meløy

Tripwire with flares
 Used to fence in a camp. The fence, as such, consists of four poles with attached flares. The flares are linked by a tripwire. If a polar bear comes too close to a camp it will hopefully trip over the wire and trigger a flare so that you wake up. The scheme has its drawbacks and should not be trusted blindly.



Photo: Brynjulb Eide



Photo: Arild Lyssand

PREPARING AN EXPEDITION

Clothing and gear

Your clothing should be adapted to the season and, as a rule, it should be waterproof and wind-resistant. Obviously, additional clothing for heavy weather has to be included. During winter, all naked skin needs to be covered by insulating wind-resistant garments. Several layers are generally better than one very thick layer. Garments and footwear must be large enough to accommodate additional layers.

There is no such thing as a miracle garment that will meet all requirements, so you will need to bring a variety of clothes that suit your needs. Amongst the most common injuries in Svalbard we find frostbite, due, more often than not, to insufficient or inappropriate clothing. Always bring extra mittens/gloves and a cap, even on short trips. The table below outlines minimum equipment demands for field safety in Svalbard. However, no amount of cutting-edge gear can substitute knowledge and skills. A sober assessment of your own limitations, and carefully considered decisions that keep you out of dangerous situations, are your most important protection.

Firearms and pyrotechnical devices

Due to the risk of polar bear encounters, firearms are common in Svalbard. However, careless handling of firearms represents a far greater hazard than the bears. It is imperative

that safety rules be adhered to when firearms are stored, transported or used.

For protection from polar bears, a rifle calibre .308 Win, or higher, is recommended, but unless the user is familiar with the weapon and has had sufficient training with a gun, the sense of safety provided by weapons is deceptive. Never embark on a trip without necessary know-how in this field.

To frighten away a polar bear, a flare gun or emergency signal flare pen (with crack cartridges) is more suitable than a rifle, but flares can not replace a rifle; they only complement it. Moreover, flares are useful for alerting about imminent danger or accident.

Taking loaded weapons into settlements is prohibited and weapons must be carried in such a way that everybody can see they are unloaded.

You should also carefully consider whether to keep your weapon loaded when you are out on an expedition. As a rule, you should carry it unloaded. Situations that demand special precautions (for example at night in a tent or in areas where you have limited visibility, or during polar bear monitoring) you should have ammunition in your weapon, keeping it half-loaded. Flare guns also represent a hazard for humans and should not be loaded unless you need them.

To protect your camp, the use of tripwire is recommended. Test your weapon, the flare gun/pen and pyrotechnical gear prior to, and, by all means, also during your expedition.

Gear	Brief trips near settlements	Lengthy trips
Firearms, rifle .308 Win or higher cal	x	x
Devices to drive off polar bears, ie a flare gun or emergency signal flare pen (with crack cartridges)	x	x
First aid kit adapted to the length of the trip	x	x
Wind proof personal survival bag, e.g. the "Jerven" bag	x	x
Groundsheet	x	x
Gear for glacier hikes (or rescue operations)	For activities on glaciers	
Maps and compass	x	x
GPS		x
Trip-wire with flares to protect camp		x
Emergency provisions and liquid		x
Additional clothing depending on length of trip; NB: mittens/gloves and cap	x	x
Emergency beacon		x
Other means of communication (VHF radio, cell phone, satellite phone)	x	x
Matches in a watertight container		x
Burner and fuel for heating and cooking		x
Pots		x
Tent for harsh conditions		x
Sleeping bag suitable for the season		x
20 metres of rope for hauling, rescuing, attaching vessels and tents, anchoring, for splinting fractures etc	x	x
Survival suit	For travel in an open boat/small vessel	
Additionally, during the polar night / winter conditions		
Avalanche transceiver	x	x
Avalanche search rod	x	x
Head torch with extra battery	x	x
Ice spikes for personal rescue from channels in the ice	For activity on ice	
Snow shovel	x	x
Candle		x

Means of communication

Means of communication are limited in Svalbard. The range for cell phones only covers the settlements Longyearbyen, Sveagruva and Barentsburg.

For lengthy expeditions in Svalbard, carrying an emergency beacon is mandatory. It can be turned on **if life and limb are at stake**, and will trigger a rescue operation. In other contexts, the satellite telephone may come in handy. It does not replace the emergency beacon, but complements it nicely. A VHF radio has a limited range in Svalbard but is useful for communication with rescue helicopters, aeroplanes and ships.

Means of navigation

The scale of Norway Main Charts for Svalbard is 1:100 000, meaning that many topographical details are hardly discernible on the map. Moreover, the surface tends to change as a result of erosion and water flow. Glaciers advance or withdraw and fail to coincide with the map. Skewness of compass readings varies considerably from area to area in Svalbard and is around 4° East in central areas around Longyearbyen. Some charts may be inaccurate, not least with regard to the progress of glacial fronts.

GPS is extremely useful, but yields no information about topographical details and should thus always be used in conjunction with a map.

Renting weapons and gear

Some weapons, pyrotechnical devices, and means of communication can be rented in Svalbard, but not all. If you are counting on renting equipment, you should make enquiries in advance. If you are renting gear, you should make sure to get instructions as to how to use it. There are a number of models for each type.

Notification protocol

The population density in Svalbard is very low. Even when you are close to a settlement you may not see other humans for days on end while in the field. What's more, your means of communication are limited so that you need to let somebody know where you are going, how long you plan to be away, what gear you have with you, and what alternative routes you may be taking. You should have a binding agreement with somebody you trust so that you are reported missing if you fail to turn up within a set time. Travelling alone in Svalbard is inadvisable.

Legislation

Svalbard is part of the kingdom of Norway and is thus by and large subject to the same laws and regulations as the mainland. The speed limit for cars in the settlements is 50 km/hr. The speed limit for snow-mobiles on free land is 80 km/hr. In the river bed of Longyearbyen it is 50 km/hr, whereas it is 30 km/hr elsewhere in Longyearbyen, both on and off road.

The same restrictions apply to drunken driving on snow-mobiles as for cars (a blood alcohol limit of 0,2 ‰).

Using a helmet when driving a snow-mobile is mandatory.

Svalbard has a number of laws and regulations the purpose of which is to protect nature and cultural heritage. Statutory provisions regulate motorised off-road travel on snow-mobiles. This is also the case for camping, hunting, fishing etc. Please acquaint yourself with relevant legislation before you set off. The Governor of Svalbard can provide further information.

White out

Due to light and weather conditions you cannot distinguish topographical features or the dividing line between land, the sea and the sky. You lose your visual bearings and further travel needs to be interrupted.

ON SITE

Weather conditions

Perhaps the greatest challenge in Svalbard is its harsh and unstable weather. Svalbard is situated in a zone where cold air from the north meets warm air from the south, meaning that weather changes abruptly. During the summer this may involve heavy fog.

In addition to white-outs, the severe cold of winter, added to the wind, is a heavy challenge. The effective temperature may be far lower than what is indicated on the thermometer (cf. the table below).

In summer, the average temperature is about +5 degrees Centigrade, whereas it is -12 degrees in winter. Weather conditions may cause delays and malfunction of equipment. So you should allow for a wide time margin when planning expeditions.



Photo: Inge Skjevik

Frost injury

Frostbite can develop from one moment to another and tends to affect, above all, the face, fingers and toes. The first symptoms are prickling cold sensations of the skin. Pain dulls when the frostbite is a fact at which time the skin will have turned white (white spots). Treatment requires that heat be applied to the injured area. Untreated superficial frostbite may develop into serious injury. If you feel or see that frostbite is under way you should take immediate action. Check each other regularly.



Photo: Inge Meløy



Photos: Trond Berg



Photo: Roar Hilde

Wind force in Beaufort	Air temp.	5°	0°	-5°	-10°	-15°	-20°	-25°	-30°	-35°	-40°	-45°	-50°
	Metre/sec.	Index											
Light air to light breeze	1,5	4°	-2°	-7°	-13°	-19°	-24°	-30°	-36°	-41°	-47°	-53°	-58°
	3	3°	-3°	-9°	-15°	-21°	-27°	-33°	-39°	-45°	-51°	-57°	-63°
Gentle breeze to moderate breeze	4,5	2°	-4°	-11°	-17°	-23°	-29°	-35°	-41°	-48°	-54°	-60°	-66°
	6	1°	-5°	-12°	-18°	-24°	-31°	-37°	-43°	-49°	-56°	-62°	-68°
Moderate to fresh breeze	7,5	1°	-6°	-12°	-19°	-25°	-32°	-38°	-45°	-51°	-57°	-64°	-70°
	9	0°	-7°	-13°	-20°	-26°	-33°	-39°	-46°	-52°	-59°	-65°	-72°
Fresh breeze	10,5	0°	-7°	-14°	-20°	-27°	-33°	-40°	-47°	-53°	-60°	-66°	-73°
	12	-1°	-7°	-14°	-21°	-27°	-34°	-41°	-48°	-54°	-61°	-68°	-74°
Strong breeze	13,5	-1°	-8°	-15°	-21°	-28°	-35°	-42°	-48°	-55°	-62°	-69°	-75°
	15	-1°	-8°	-15°	-22°	-29°	-35°	-42°	-49°	-56°	-63°	-70°	-76°
Near gale	16,5	-2°	-9°	-15°	-22°	-29°	-36°	-43°	-50°	-57°	-63°	-70°	-77°
	18	-2°	-9°	-16°	-23°	-30°	-37°	-43°	-50°	-57°	-64°	-71°	-78°

Mountains

Mountains in central parts of Svalbard consist of sediments that erode quickly. What with so much loose rock, the mountains in Svalbard are not suitable for mountain climbing. When hiking in mountains, you should be prepared for a lot of loose and slippery ground. Due to erosion, loose matter and rocks tend to tumble down the slopes. Hence, hiking and camping close to such mountain slopes are not recommended.

In the fjords, too, icebergs from calving glaciers are a common sight. Only one ninth of the mass of an iceberg, which can be very unstable, stands above the surface of the water. When it disintegrates or tips over, it can give rise to tidal waves that are dangerous for small boats in its proximity.

It may be tempting to approaching a glacier front that rises straight up from the sea, but it is perilous since glaciers calve. Injuries may be incurred from falling ice or tidal waves. Hence you should keep at a safe distance from all glacier fronts terminating in the water. Please note that the difference between high and low tide can be as much as two metres.



Photo: Arild Lyssand



Photo: Roar Hilde



Photo: Frigg Jørgensen



Photo: Svalbard Reiseliv as

Rivers and valleys

There are many valleys with water-bearing rivers in Svalbard. Due to the permafrost, water is prevented from draining deep into the ground: instead it spreads out across the bottom of the valley. This, in turn, means that topsoil disintegrates and obstructs travel and that water turns brown so it may be hard to assess the depth of rivers. The flow can vary considerably in the course of 24 hours due to variations in run-off and melt-water from the glaciers. Even in winter, in severe frost, you may come across open water in the terrain, particularly under glacier fronts at the foot of glacier termini or near pingoes. Spots of fog covering an area may indicate the existence of open water.

Permafrost

In Svalbard, the ground is permanently frozen (permafrost). Only the top layer (about 1 m) thaws during summer. As a result, water is prevented from seeping deep into the ground and the terrain may grow extremely soggy.

Pingo

A pingo is one or more gravel mounds of several metres' height formed by water that is squeezed through a weak layer of the permafrost. The water shoves loose matter up, and a mound is formed.

Coastal waters

Coastal waters off Svalbard are dotted with shallows, shoals and islets, drift-ice and ice-fronts coming to a head in the bottom of fjords. This may complicate the process of landing since mountainsides are precipitous and run straight into the water. Early in the season an "ice foot" may make it impossible to go ashore. Temperature in the water is about 0 - 7 °C during summer. Driftwood of varying size floats around in the surface of the water, and drift ice, often in large quantities is common off Svalbard during the summer. Belts of drift ice can move swiftly and block boat traffic at short notice.

Ice Foot

At low temperatures, water that washes up onto the shores will freeze and form an edge that will gradually swell, sometimes to a height of several metres, making it virtually impossible to go ashore. Such formations need weeks to thaw in summer.

Calving

In Svalbard many glaciers have practically vertical ice fronts the height of which are tens of metre and which run straight into the sea. Such glaciers are always on the move, and during the summer, particularly, colossal blocks (icebergs) and smaller pieces occasionally break loose and crash down to the foot of the glacier.



Photo: Frigg Jørgensen

In a kayak or some other small vessel it is possible to come within a short distance of animals. It is important that you realise that the walrus can be aggressive and dangerous for humans, and that it is perfectly capable of destroying both dinghies and kayaks. Conditions such as those described above, added to the unstable weather with strong winds or fog make demands on whoever travels in small boats. In open sea and small vessels you should always wear a survival suit.

Glaciers

Approximately 60 % of Svalbard is covered by ice. Hiking on glaciers demands special skills and knowledge, and also suitable equipment. In all glaciers, regardless of their size and locality, you will find crevasses and melt-water channels which, during the better part of the year, are covered by "snow bridges". Crevasses and other cracks in the glacier can be hard to detect.

Crevasses and melt-water channels might be anywhere on a glacier, but the largest tend to be at glacier termini where there are glacier falls and where the terrain under the glacier is uneven. You will also find crevasses at intersections between glacier and mountain. Glaciers are not necessarily flat and may have very steep and slippery sections.



Photo: Brynjulv Eide



Photo: Frigg Jørgensen

Glacier falls

Extremely steep parts of the glacier. Due to velocity and shear stress in the area, the ice will tend to crack.



Photo: Pierre Fialkowski

If you are driving a snow-mobile across an unfamiliar glacier, you should not stop until you finish crossing. When stopping on a glacier, you should probe the area with an avalanche search rod before you dismount from your snow-mobile or dog sleigh, take off your skis or pitch a tent. Always bring a search rod and rope with you. People are usually roped together in a team when travelling on skis or on foot across glaciers.

When there are few fixed points of reference, orientation may be tricky. In bad weather, visibility might be almost nil, in which case travelling on a glacier is extremely dangerous.

It is imperative to realise that glaciers are for ever changing, that crevasses and melt-water channels keep opening and closing. Thus you should not count on a route's being safe year after year.

Ocean ice and inland ice

During a large part of the year, both the sea and lakes will be covered with ice. Sea ice is normally weaker and more elastic than fresh water ice. The extent of ocean ice, and its thickness, will vary in most areas from year to year. Please note that the thickness will also vary within each area. Shallows, currents, gas emissions from the ocean bed, glacier front developments, promontories and islands all contribute to thin ice or patches of open water. It might be useful to study charts of the surrounding waters so as to get an idea of how the ice might vary.

"Surface water"

Water on top of the ice as a result of the ice having been pressed down by the weight of the snow so that salt water is forced up, or water from rivers or glaciers floods over the ice.

Here and there "surface water" may be encountered, and, in spring, the ice will be eroded from below by warm ocean currents entering the fjords. Before crossing ocean ice, you should scan the area from an elevated observation point. Look for open water or changes of colour in the ice or the snow covering it. Measure the thickness before you set off and also regularly as you go along.

If you are uncertain about the thickness of the ice as you drive a snow-mobile, or if you find yourself in an area where the ice is thin, it is important that you do not stop or loose speed and that you drive out of the area. In order to get out of a hole in the ice you will find that ice spikes are important gears for travelling on ocean ice. A long rope is also useful for rescuing both people and gear.



Photo: Synnøve Haga



Photo: Synnøve Haga



Photo: Frigg Jørgensen



Photo: Arild Lyssand



Photo: Arild Lyssand

Snow and avalanches

Normally there is little precipitation in Svalbard. Yet, snow drifts move with the wind, and in some areas there is a lot of snow. Locally, blizzards can bring heavy precipitation. In such conditions, added to brief but extreme fluctuations of temperature and heavy winds, the avalanche frequency grows. Several of the popular routes from Longyearbyen pass through areas where there, from time to time, is a clear risk of running into an avalanche. Please pay particular attention after periods with heavy snow, winds and high temperatures. Avoid steep mountain slopes with heavy snow and narrow gorges where the incline ends in an overhang cornice. During the polar night, this is no easy task since you can hardly see the mountainside. Carrying an avalanche transceiver is recommended. Even relatively small avalanches can be fatal. A search rod and a spade should always be at hand.

The fauna

Polar bears can be encountered all over the archipelago at all times of the year. The polar bear is the world's largest predator and it is dangerous for humans. Outside the settlements you should have a rifle for self-defence. Also bring a flare gun with crack cartridges or some equivalent in order to frighten bears away.

Above all, you should avoid getting into "bear-situations" that could turn critical. You get the most out of the polar bear when it is undisturbed as you examine it, from a distance, with good binoculars. Always keep your distance from bears.

Should you find yourself in close proximity of a polar bear you should observe the following:

1. When you catch sight of a polar bear, do not under any circumstances approach it. Leave the area swiftly and coolly. Stay together and keep an eye on the bear.
2. If the bear follows you and you have no chance of getting away, you should try to frighten it off. Stay together and make as much noise as possible. Behave firmly and make use of whatever means you have to intimidate it. Make sure you do not send flares behind a bear that is on its way towards you.
3. If a bear refuses to be intimidated, so that lives are at stake, prepare to kill it.
4. Define some dividing line in your surroundings, and prepare to shoot if the bear crosses it. You should target vital organs, such as the heart or lungs, if possible. Continue shooting till you are sure the animal has been put down.

Polar bears are a protected species and may only be put down for purposes of self-defence. Should you find you have had to kill or fire at a polar bear, you need to notify the Governor of Svalbard at once.

There is rabies in Svalbard and dead animals must not be touched. Animals that act peculiarly - that seem strangely aggressive or sociable - or appear to be ill, must be shunned. Notify the Governor of Svalbard about such animals.

The walrus population is growing and you can run into walruses anywhere along the shores of Svalbard. They can be aggressive and dangerous for small vessels. Make sure to keep a safe distance, both at sea and on land.

The sibling vole parasite is found in Svalbard and can infect humans. If you want to be guaranteed against infection you need to boil all your water near cottages and settlements, regardless of whether they are still inhabited. Wash your hands properly before meals.

The sibling vole parasite

"*Echinococcus multilocularis*" is a tapeworm for which the sibling vole is the intermediate host. The parasite's primary hosts are dog, cat and fox. A human can suffer severe damage to the liver if eggs of this tapeworm enter his system. The eggs are in the faeces of the primary host.

Setting up camp

Your choice of a site for your camp is important for various reasons. As far as polar bears are concerned, you need to pick a site from which you can thoroughly scan the surroundings. Polar bears tend to keep to the ice or the shore. Tents and other alien elements in the area raise the bear's curiosity, so you should keep well away from the sea. The camp should be protected by trip-wire with flares or dogs that give the alert. Another alternative is to have a "bear-watch" routine.

If possible, food should not be cooked inside the tent, as the smell of food may linger in the tent canvas and attract bears. Store your food and keep your latrine at a good distance from the camp, but no further than that you can keep an eye on both food storage and latrine from your tent opening.

Bear in mind the possibility of rock falls and avalanches when choosing a campsite. You should also consider local conditions, such as accumulated snow behind steep ridges, or heavy winds through ravines. Always check if there are crevasses on glaciers and mark out the safe area before you set up camp on a glacier.

Campsites need to be cleared so that no visible traces are left.

Snow-mobile trips

You need a driver's licence, and a helmet is mandatory.

There have been many accidents from snow-mobile driving. It is important that you realise that driving a snow-mobile might appear to be a cinch on level ground, but the vehicle can be unmanageable at high speeds and over rough or sloping ground.

The snow-mobile will rapidly cover large distances. An hour's drive will take you far enough to need a day to walk back. Do not forget the snow-mobile might stop. Knowledge about the terrain, spare parts and emergency equipment is absolutely essential on all snow-mobile trips.

The most challenging aspects of snow-mobile riding in Svalbard are the unstable weather and terrain. Please note that "flat light", white-outs, fog and ice on your visor and goggles can veil details in the terrain. Moreover, the terrain as such can change as a result of the weather. Holes can be scooped out of the snow by the wind, and snowdrifts bury your tracks. Many snow-mobile accidents occurred because people were straining their limits. If the weather or the visibility is so poor that you cannot see where you are going, you should stop and await improved conditions. For such a wait to be possible you need sufficient gear to set up camp. Always plan your trip and pack with this in mind, since you may be delayed by several days.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENT

Notifying

Make sure you have sufficient means of communication so that you can send an alert in case of accident. Your emergency beacon should accompany you on all but short trips and it can be used **if life and limb are at stake**.

Make sure to indicate your exact position, if this is possible. This may be crucial, if the rescue service is to be able to reach you swiftly, and can enhance chances of salvaging life and limb. In addition it reduces waste of time and resources for the rescue services.

Should you be detained and if you are able to deliver a message by means of, for instance, a satellite telephone, do so, even if you have no need of assistance. Somebody back home may have got worried and needlessly contacted the rescue services. Please phone someone you know or the Governor and inform about the delay.

Take care of yourself

Make sure you know first-aid and that you have brought first-aid equipment. It may be a while before help reaches you. The weather and transport conditions may temporarily preclude all efforts to salvage you. Suitable emergency gear and knowledge and experience about first-aid may be crucial for you and your comrades. Do not hesitate before scooping out a shelter in the snow or setting up an emergency bivouac.

The rescue service

The Governor of Svalbard supervises the local rescue services for the archipelago. To this end, the Governor has at his disposal helicopters, tracked personnel vehicles, snow-mobiles and other means of transportation. The Longyearbyen Red Cross Emergency Patrol and other institutions and organisations also play an important part in rescue services. With respect to rescue operations, Svalbard is well-equipped as far as emergency gear and human resources are concerned, but there are some limitations. The area to be covered is very large; natural conditions and the weather are harsh, so situations can arise when rescue is impossible or extremely tricky since we will never risk the lives and limbs of our rescue personnel. That is why you should do your utmost to avoid situations that will trigger rescue operations and why you need to remember that your safety is your responsibility.

SAFETY IN THE SETTLEMENTS

Traffic safety

Vehicle density in Longyearbyen is fairly high. During the polar night, when roads are slippery and visibility is poor, it is important to use a reflector. Headlights on bicycles are also imperative. If you drive in Svalbard you will need to watch out for pedestrians. Longyearbyen is a small town, but it is permanently active, night and day, with people and animals frequenting all roads. There are many children here, which you should particularly bear in mind, since there are sleigh runs, skiing slopes, nurseries and schools in close proximity of the road.

For snow-mobile drivers, special attention is called for, as the snow-mobile can be unwieldy in crossings or traffic.

Polar bears in settlements

On rare occasions, polar bears may be encountered in the settlements. Particularly during the polar night when visibility is limited, this is an eventuality that has to be taken into account. In the event of polar bear sightings in or near settlements, the Governor needs to be notified at once.

BOW TO THE FORCES OF NATURE IN SVALBARD - SHOULD YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY.

We wish you an enjoyable and safe stay.

Photo: Brynjulv Eide

Photo: Synnøve Haga

Photo: Arild Lyssand



THE GOVERNOR OF SVALBARD



NORSK-POLARINSTITUTT



SVALBARD REISELIV AS



UNIS
UNIVERSITETSENTER I SVALBARD
THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE IN SVALBARD



LONGYEARBYEN RØDE KORS
HJELPEKORPS

Further Information

Sysselemanden på Svalbard (Governor of Svalbard)

P.O. Box 633, N-9171 Longyearbyen
Tel. +47 79 02 43 00
Day and night +47 79 02 12 22
Emergency number 112

Administration of Svalbard, information about laws and regulations, notification routines and insurance requirements for trips outside Management Area 10. Headquarters of local rescue services
www.sysselemanden.svalbard.no

The University Centre in Svalbard

P.O. Box 156, N-9171 Longyearbyen
Tel. +47 79 02 33 00

Research and training in Svalbard. For questions about field safety in Svalbard.
www.unis.no

The Norwegian Polar Institute

P.O. Box , N-9171 Longyearbyen
Tel. +47 79 02 26 00

A consultative body for the management of Svalbard. Information about environment and information for researchers, maps and manuals.

miljo.npolar.no/mis
miljo.npolar.no/mosj
www.npolar.no

Svalbard Tourism

P.O. Box 323, N-9171 Longyearbyen
Tel. +47 79 02 55 50
Tourist information; information about available tours
www.svalbard.net

Photo: Sysselemanden på Svalbard

Longyearbyen Røde Kors Hjelpekorps (Red Cross)

P.O. Box 246, N-9171 Longyearbyen
Tel. +47 79 02 12 88
Emergency patrol based on volunteer work
Norges Røde Kors
www.rodekors.no

Field log for Svalbard

Updated information about safety issues during the winter
www.svalbard.net/feltlogg

Weather and ice conditions

Weather reports and "ice maps"
www.met.no

Avalanche watch

www.snoskred.no

Snow avalanche information in Svalbard

www.unis.no

Polar bears

www.npolar.no search: "polar bear"



Photo: Frigg Jørgensen

*Front page pictures:
Brynjulf Eide: rescue operation
Arild Lyssand: skiers
Synnøve Haga: snow-mobile
Frigg Jørgensen: campfire*

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SAFETY IN SAFETY IN SVALBARD SVALBARD



**THE GOVERNOR
OF SVALBARD**

Photo: Arild Lyssand



Photo: Synnøve Haga



Photo: Synnøve Haga



MOUNTAIN CODE

1. Do not set off on long trips unless you have had training.
2. Report where you are going.
3. Be mindful of the weather and the weather report.
4. Take heed of experienced mountaineers.
5. Bring gear for storms and cold weather, even on short trips. Always bring a rucksack and the gear demanded for mountain hikes; on longer trips, this includes a spade.
6. Remember your map and a compass.
7. Do not go off on your own.
8. Turn back in good time. There is no shame in returning.
9. Save your strength and dig a burrow in the snow, if necessary.

Have a good trip!



Photo: Inge Meløy



Photo: Arild Lyssand



Photo: Arild Lyssand



Photo: Brynjulo Eide