

## Avalanche Reporting

Reporting avalanches and avalanche incidents to the Canadian Avalanche Centre serves a number of purposes:

- CAC Public Forecasters use this information to aid in the creation of accurate and useful public avalanche forecasts which can help save lives.
- The information is used to record incidents and accidents for research purposes.
- Avalanche accident and incident information is useful as a learning tool to help others understand how and why accidents occur and, hopefully, to help prevent further accidents.
- Avalanche data in general is a useful tool for the Canadian Avalanche Centre in its efforts to educate Canadians about the dangers that avalanches present to people and property.

There are two pages included in our avalanche reporting forms. The first page is a notable avalanche report form. This form is intended for use by anyone who has seen an avalanche that they feel is worth reporting and which will help avalanche forecasters prepare a better, more accurate, and timely public avalanche forecast. The forecasters are interested in hearing about avalanches that:

- Are unusually large.
- Occur in unusual places.
- Occur at unusual times.
- Are indicative of or representative of many other similar slides in the same place or same time.
- Are isolated or singular events when there is very little other avalanche activity at a given place or time.
- Stand out for any reason.

The second page is an incident report form. This form gathers information about avalanches where people or property are involved or which are close calls and therefore might be good learning tools for others.

There are two versions of the form: a print version and a non-print version. The print version is identified by the words "Print Version" beside the name of the form at the top of the page. Print version forms are designed for people who want to print a form on paper and complete it by hand. Print version forms are available on request from the Canadian Avalanche Centre by calling (250-837-2435) or emailing us ([forecaster@avalanche.ca](mailto:forecaster@avalanche.ca)). We can email, fax, or mail a copy of the form. In the near future, these forms will be available online from our website as well.

The non-print version is for people who can open an MS-Word document and who would like to complete the form using a computer word processor. This version is available by email at this time and will be available online from our website soon. In the future, we hope to have a web form that can be completed online.

It is important that you not try to complete the non-print version as a hard-copy form that is filled in by hand. The forms are different. The print version will be very frustrating for you if you try to complete it using a computer word processor. The non print version will be incomplete and won't make sense if you try to print it and complete it by hand.

When you are filling out the forms, do the best you can and include as much information as possible within the form itself. Photos are extremely helpful and we encourage you to send those to us as well. In addition, if there is information you feel is important and the form does not seem to capture it, we welcome additional information—written comments, video, or anything else you feel is useful.

Questions about the forms and the information we are asking for can be directed to any of the avalanche forecasters at:

The Canadian Avalanche Centre  
Box 2759  
Revelstoke BC, V0E 2S0  
Canada  
250-837-3733  
[forecaster@avalanche.ca](mailto:forecaster@avalanche.ca)

We thank you for providing us with this crucial and important information.

## Avalanche Report Form Part 1: Notable Avalanche

Submit this form to: [forecaster@avalanche.ca](mailto:forecaster@avalanche.ca) or fax: 250-837-4624 or Canadian Avalanche Centre, Box 2759, Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0

Note: This information will be used for public education and information. It may be summarized and published by the CAC.

The reporter's name will not be published by the CAC without written permission.

**OPTIONAL INFORMATION:** (Provide contact details below if you are willing to provide more information, should it be necessary.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov/Terr: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**PHOTOS:** (If you have photos or video, please send a copy with your report. We'd like to see the start zone, path, and runout zone if possible.)

Photos included with this report  Video included with this report

Photos to follow  Video to follow Details: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to release any images for public use by the Canadian Avalanche Centre. (We'll contact you to obtain a signed release form.)

I DO NOT agree to release images for public use. They are only for internal use at the Canadian Avalanche Centre.

**DATE:**

Date of Occurrence: Known \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_ (DD) OR Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_ (DD)

Time of Occurrence: Known \_\_\_\_\_ OR Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ (Use 24 hour clock format, i.e. hh:mm)

Date of this report: \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_ (DD)

**LOCATION:**

Prov/Terr: \_\_\_\_\_ Range: \_\_\_\_\_ Valley: \_\_\_\_\_ Peak: \_\_\_\_\_

Lat/Long: \_\_\_\_\_ UTM Grid Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ UTM Zone: \_\_\_\_\_

Map Datum: Map Datum:  Unknown  NAD27  NAD83 Avalanche Path Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**START ZONE:** (Check all that apply)

Aspect:  Unknown  North  NE  East  SE  South  SW  West  NW facing slope

Vegetation Zone:  Unknown  Alpine  Treeline  Below Treeline Elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ metres

Incline:  Estimated  Measured \_\_\_\_\_ degrees Terrain features:  Unknown  Convex  Planar  Concave

Rocky outcrops  Clumps of trees  Lee slope  Windward slope

Crossloaded slope  Other (describe in comments below)

Start Zone Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**AVALANCHE DESCRIPTION:**

Size:  0.5  1.0  1.5  2.0  2.5  3.0  3.5  4.0  4.5  5.0 (If unfamiliar with size categories, choose from below)

Was relatively harmless to people  Could bury, injure or kill a person  Could bury or destroy a car/damage a truck

Could destroy a rail car, large truck, several buildings

Trigger:  Unknown  Skier/Boarder  Sledder  Climber  Snowshoer  Natural  Cornice fall

Comment about trigger: \_\_\_\_\_

Type:  Unknown  Slab  Loose Slab Width: \_\_\_\_\_ metres Average Thickness: \_\_\_\_\_ cm Linear Run Distance: \_\_\_\_\_ metres

Avalanche Description Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

This avalanche is:

A single incident  Indicative of a few other similar slides in the area  Indicative of many similar slides in the area

**FAILURE:**

Bed Surface:  Unknown  Storm snow  Old snow  Crust  Ground

Failure Plane Grain:  Unknown  New snow  Rounded grains  Facetted grains  Depth hoar  Surface hoar  Wet grains

Other grain Describe Other Grain: \_\_\_\_\_ Failure Plane Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_ (DD)

Failure Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** Please write comments on back of this sheet or attach a separate sheet.

**HUMAN INVOLVEMENT:**

Were people caught in the avalanche?  YES  NO

Were vehicles, structures, or equipment struck by the avalanche?  YES  NO

Was this a close call where people, vehicles, structures, or equipment narrowly escaped?  YES  NO

If you checked YES any of the human involvement questions, please complete an Avalanche Incident Report form (following page).

Report Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_ (DD) Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Avalanche Report Form Part 2: Avalanche Incident

Submit this form to: [forecaster@avalanche.ca](mailto:forecaster@avalanche.ca) or fax: 250-837-4624 or Canadian Avalanche Centre, Box 2759, Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0

Note: This information will be used for public education and information. It may be summarized and published by the CAC.

The reporter's name will not be published by the CAC without written permission.

**NOTABLE AVALANCHE REPORT FORM:**  Notable Avalanche Report Form completed and submitted.

A Notable Avalanche Report form should be included. PLEASE NOTE: Some of the questions on this form are similar to or the same as ones asked on the Notable Avalanche Report Form, this is necessary because each form is used for specific purposes and data may go to different offices in the CAC.

### REPORTER:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov/Terr: \_\_\_\_\_

**REPORTER'S LEVEL OF TRAINING:** Course  less than 2day  2-3day  4-5day  more than 5day

CAA Level 1  CAA Level 2

Other: Describe Other Training: \_\_\_\_\_

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE GROUP:

Commercial Operation  Club Name of Commercial Operation or Club (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Family/friends  Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

# of: Females: \_\_\_ Males: \_\_\_ Juveniles (<18 years old): \_\_\_ Skiers: \_\_\_ Snowboarders: \_\_\_ Snowmobilers: \_\_\_ Other activity: \_\_\_

specify other activity: \_\_\_\_\_

# of people with: Transceivers: \_\_\_ Probes: \_\_\_ Shovels: \_\_\_ Avalungs: \_\_\_ Balloon flotation devices: \_\_\_ RECCO devices: \_\_\_

Helmets: \_\_\_ Other safety equipment: \_\_\_ specify \_\_\_\_\_

Did you meet any other people on your trip previous to the avalanche?  Unknown  Yes  No

Was your group pressured into actively pursuing a stated goal because of time or other constraints?  Unknown  Yes  No

How familiar was the group or decision maker with the area you were travelling in?  Unknown  Very  Somewhat  Not

Did your group have a clear, identifiable leader?  Unknown  Paid  Volunteer  Group member  No

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE AVALANCHE INCIDENT

Were you in an obvious avalanche path when the avalanche occurred?  Unknown  Yes  No

Was there a terrain trap (e.g. gully, cliff, trees, crevasse) below your route when the avalanche occurred?  Unknown  Yes  No

Was your group reducing the risk when the avalanche occurred (e.g. spaced apart)?  Unknown  Yes  No

# of people who were: Caught but not buried: \_\_\_ Partially buried, breathing not impaired: \_\_\_ Partially buried, breathing impaired: \_\_\_

For people caught but not buried, length of time buried: \_\_\_ min, burial depth (face) : \_\_\_ cm

# of people who were: Completely buried: \_\_\_ length of time buried: \_\_\_ min, burial depth (face): \_\_\_ cm

# of people who were injured: \_\_\_ specify injuries \_\_\_

The avalanche (select largest applicable)  Was relatively harmless to people  Could bury, injure or kill a person

Could bury or destroy a car/damage a truck  Could destroy a rail car, large truck, several buildings

The avalanche was triggered by:  Unknown  Member of our group  Member of another group

No apparent trigger (spontaneous, natural avalanche  Another trigger Describe Other Trigger: \_\_\_\_\_

If triggered by your group or another group, were several people together in the same place?  YES  NO

Date of avalanche: \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_\_ (DD) Time of avalanche: \_\_\_\_\_ (Use 24 hour clock format, i.e. hh:mm)

Detailed Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_ UTM Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Datum:  Unknown  NAD27  NAD83

### SNOWPACK AND WEATHER INFORMATION:

Were you aware of any whumpfs or cracking on your route within 24 hrs previous to avalanche? 

	Unknown	Yes	No
Were you aware of any whumpfs or cracking on your route within 24 hrs previous to avalanche?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were you aware of drifting snow on the avalanche slope within 24 hrs previous to avalanche?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were you aware of any avalanche activity in the same mtn. range within 24 hrs previous to avalanche?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**INFORMATION ABOUT PREVIOUS SLOPE USE:** Tracks on slope:  None  From same day  Since last storm  Old tracks

visible  Unknown

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** Please write comments on back of this sheet or attach a separate sheet.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Diagrams attached (draw on back of this sheet, include a separate sheet, or draw on a photograph the fracture line, deposit outline, significant terrain features, locations of people before and after the avalanche, etc. with measurements if possible).

Further technical information attached (include weather history, snowpack test results, snow profiles, etc. if you made any observations before, during, or after the incident).

Report Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_ (MM) \_\_\_\_\_ (DD) Time: \_\_\_\_\_