



RAC News



[Avalanche Awareness Days](#)

<http://avalanche.ca/default.aspx?DN=364,15,3,Documents>

Upcoming Events / CAC Information

Avalanche Awareness Days

Avalanche Awareness Days presented by Canadian Pacific Railway is scheduled for January 13-15th 2006. Approximately 30 venues including resorts, towns and businesses will participate this year with events and fundraisers so please check in your local area for opportunities to volunteer. Information on events will be posted on the CAA website as details become available.

Our national event will be held at Big White Ski Resort. Based on the energy and enthusiasm of the Big White staff and our sponsor, Canadian Pacific Railway, this event promises to be our best to date, with lots of activities planned for the entire weekend. This year our focus is on youth issues in avalanche awareness.

We also have a call out to any of our Okanagan-based members who are interested in volunteering at Big White to lend a hand in preparation for their weekend. Please call Matthew Atton at 250- 862-1247 if you are interested in volunteering for Big White's Avalanche Awareness Days.

To find out if a venue near you is participating, please call Jennifer George at 250-837-2435.

Backcountry Avalanche Workshop: Feedback & Future

Once again, our annual Columbia Brewery Backcountry Avalanche Workshop was held in Vancouver and Calgary in mid-November and the weekend was a success. Our speakers presented on a variety of topics from Bruce Jamieson's Yellow Flags to Grant Statham's virtual ski touring trip. We created an exit survey in Calgary to help us better assess the program and to give us guidance for the future. We also feel that this feedback is important to RAC providers as many in this audience are your future RAC course participants.

To summarize the poll, we appear to have attracted an extremely diverse audience. Participants ranged from people with very low-level training all the way to professional guides. In terms of what they wanted more of, terrain and slope evaluation were mentioned most, followed by "practical information" and case studies. But there were also a significant number requesting more theory, research findings and snow profile interpretation. We also received numerous suggestions for topics that weren't covered, including equipment analysis and weather.

Going forward, the Backcountry Avalanche Workshops will be designed to zero in on our target audience more effectively, and tailor the day for their needs with more "take away" practical skills. In our debrief session, we began creating a working model for next year, which include the following points:

- The location will change from city centres to core mountain communities like Nelson, Whistler, Bow Valley or Jasper.
- The one-day event will be split between theory and practice.
- The practical sessions will include audience participation and may be in a “station” format, where small groups move between presenters who target topics such as beacon use, terrain evaluation, trip planning, etc.
- As much as possible, the information will be tailored to the area. For example, terrain exercises will use photos of local destinations.
- Calgary and Vancouver presentations will be limited to once every three or four years.

If you have any suggestions, we'd love to hear them. Please contact Jennifer George at programservices@avalanche.ca

ITP Level One Upgrade

- [Fernie 1/15 – 1/17](#)
[Golden 3/5 – 3/7](#)

CAC Memberships

<http://avalanche.ca/shop/membership.html>

RAC Provider Courses

The CAC offered three separate provider training courses in November and December. If the demand is evident, we will develop more RAC provider courses targeting the West Coast and Kootenay areas. A brief reminder about a course currently running that is ideally suited for RAC providers. The Level I Upgrade has been designed specifically with the RAC provider in mind and will present new material which was added to the Level I curriculum in the latest rewrite. Topics will include fracture character and objective profile considerations. Also, recent developments in terrain description and classification will be discussed in combination with content on human factors. Please register on line. Tuition: \$525.00.

CAC RAC Initiatives

RAC Reminders, Youth Programs, CAC Membership

Canadian Avalanche Centre Membership- Available Now

2006 Friends of the Canadian Avalanche Centre Memberships are now available. The “Friends” memberships are now on sale on our website for \$20.00. This membership is valid for one year; membership renewals will be based on anniversary date. Member fees will be instrumental in providing funding for public avalanche services at the CAC.

As membership grows we dream of a time when communities of members will form Friends groups and work with us to provide tailored services specific to their needs. For instance, we anticipate the time when 1500 members in a region could ensure a special regional forecast or information product. Additional benefits of becoming a Friend include access to our public and technical meetings at the CAA-CAC AGM, email updates of CAC activities and the right to vote in the election of a Friends Director on the CAC Board of Directors. Please pass on this message to your RAC students.

The Supporter category of CAC membership is also available on line for \$200.00. This membership is appropriate for groups and businesses. There are many organizations, businesses and groups that depend on public bulletins and safety products. The Supporter category of membership is a good way for these groups to show their interest and involvement. Supporters also elect a member to the CAC Board of Directors, and therefore have a voice in steering

RAC Agreement

<http://avalancheinfo.net/membersPublic/RACMaterialsLicenseagreement.pdf>

AdventureSmart

<http://adventuresmart.ca/>

Smartrisk

www.smartrisk.ca/

Canada West Ski Areas

Association

www.cwsaa.org

Snow Safety Education

Program

www.adventuresmart.ca/kids.php#SSEP

Canadian Ski Patrol System

<http://www.csps.ca/english/index.php3>

the CAC.

CAC membership dues are a critical source of funding that support public avalanche programs and the CAC outreach services.

RAC Demand on the Island

A few of the RAC providers on Vancouver Island have indicated they have a significant demand for RAC courses this season and will not be able to address all of the requests for classes. If you are a RAC provider located on Vancouver Island, and have not renewed your RAC Agreement for the 05/06 season, please download the agreement using the link to the left and fax it into 250-837-4624. We will add your name to the list of RAC providers on the Island.

If you cannot access the link to the left, email programs@avalanche.ca and we will send you the PDF document.

ARAC Provider Requested

The Yukon College in Haines Junction, Yukon is searching for a RAC Provider to teach an ARAC course in February. If there are any Professional Members who are interested in teaching this ARAC class in the Yukon, please email Steve Osborne at the college as soon as possible at sosborne@yukoncollege.yk.ca.

Youth Programs – Your Next RAC Audience

While there is no strict minimum age limit for participants in RAC classes, advice from legal counsel suggests a minimum age of 19 years old (18 in Alberta). Our CAA members who are well connected to their local ski clubs and schools often receive requests from community groups to present snow safety talks to school-aged kids. RAC may not be the best program in these cases as these materials are designed for adults.

The BC Provincial Emergency Program's AdventureSmart, Smartrisk, Canadian Ski Patrol System, Canadian Avalanche Association, Whistler-Blackcomb, Canada West Ski Areas Association, and other organizations have developed various snow sports safety materials for age groups from elementary school through young adult. The CAC will soon serve as a central access point for these youth-oriented snow safety programs. We are in the process of creating a "youth Programs" menu on our website with descriptions of these programs, and the ability to download some of the supporting material from the web.

The Snow Safety Education Program which is geared toward 4-6th grade students is a great example of what is available for young people. This comprehensive program includes topics such as the Alpine Code of Responsibility, ski resort closures/out of bounds areas, preparedness for backcountry recreation and it teaches about all backcountry hazards. Monica Nissan developed this program with funding from the Canadian Avalanche Foundation. Adventuresmart, a project initiated by the Provincial Emergency Program, has two teams of facilitators to administer this program. Also Adventuresmart is planning to develop presentation kits to be housed in the regional offices of search and rescue teams. Monica Nissan has also trained facilitators in her local Nelson area.

There are also a variety of snow safety programs for high school audiences. These programs cover not only avalanche safety, but teach ski resort and general winter recreation safety. Some of these programs are school based



RAC student survey

[http://avalancheinfo.net/R](http://avalancheinfo.net/RACimages/survey.pdf)

[ACimages/survey.pdf](http://avalancheinfo.net/RACimages/survey.pdf)

Please send feedback to:

Canadian Avalanche Centre

Box 2759

Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0

www.avalanche.ca

Programservices@avalanche.ca

curriculums to be delivered in physical education and science classes. The CSPS has been the main facilitator of many of these programs. As a RAC provider, a community group or club in your local area may inquire with you about snow safety education for a group of minors. We can guide you to the right youth program and help you locate a facilitator. There is no minimum requirement to be a facilitator for these youth program curriculums. Where no facilitator exists in your area, RAC providers and other CAA Members interested in community involvement and preparing their future RAC participants are encouraged to become facilitators.

Mountain Equipment Co-op and RAC

Mountain Equipment Co-op is the presenting sponsor for the CAC RAC program and has joined with the CAC on collaborative efforts to enhance the RAC program.

We recently developed a brief survey for your RAC students after they complete a RAC or ARAC course. We want to gain specific demographic information and better understand the overall makeup of the RAC student audience. In the near term, this survey information will provide us with an understanding of backcountry habits and the use of avalanche bulletins among RAC students. In the future, demographic information will help us best implement the ADFAR results into major curriculum changes in 2007. The survey contains mostly demographic questions and requests some basic information on their backcountry recreation. There are no questions on the delivery of the RAC course. We are not asking for any feedback on the instructor or method of instruction.

As an incentive to facilitating the distribution and collection of these surveys, MEC has a special offer for our RAC Providers. The first 100 RAC providers to return completed surveys back to the CAC will receive a MEC fleece jacket. Surveys will be sent with all new RAC orders starting on December 20th or they can be downloaded online from the website.

Also, your students who complete the survey will be entered in to a draw, with a chance to win a prize at the end of the season from the Canadian Avalanche Centre.

Quick reminder: RAC providers can utilize the MEC on line course registration to add their courses to MEC's on line course listing. Go to their main website at www.mec.ca and click Outdoor Resource Centre/Courses. You can enter your RAC course by province.

The staff and management at the CAC would like to take this opportunity to wish you happy holidays and a successful and avalanche-free new year!

