



canadianavalanchecentre

AST News

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Congratulations

Jennifer George and her partner Greg Paltinger had a baby boy on August 10. Noah Joseph Paltinger weighed in at 7lb 1oz. With his large hands and long legs, Noah promises to be a strong skier and climber.

CAC Information/Important Announcements

More than just a name change

RAC (Introductory and Advanced) has been re-branded to **Avalanche Skills Training (AST) Levels 1 and 2** signalling a significant evolution in content and curriculum. Renaming the program also removes any stigma attached to the word 'Recreational', enhancing public perception of AST as the first level of avalanche training for everyone in Canada. To support you in this transition from RAC to AST, the CAC will provide AST Instructor training (at ITP Instructor Training sessions) this fall in three locations (see below). This training will introduce changes to the curriculum that incorporates the Avaluator and terrain rating scale (ATES) elements into avalanche awareness education. As **AST** providers, you will be able to expand your customer base with the introduction of the Avaluator decision tool and upgraded curriculum, allowing you to attract new clients as well as retrain former students keen on refreshing their skills.

Introducing the Avaluator decision tool – Avalanche safety just got simpler!

After three years of research and development through the ADFAR project, the CAC is ready to introduce the **Avaluator** decision tool this fall. The science behind the Avaluator combines North American amateur avalanche accident data with the new CAC/Parks Canada terrain rating scale, expert opinion, and the social science of risk management as it applies to the Canadian public. AST providers have been kept up to speed on the development of the Avaluator in previous newsletters and can find background information on the Avaluator and ADFAR project at www.avalanche.ca > Knowledge Centre > ADFAR Project on the CAA website. Thank you to all who participated in Avaluator prototype test last winter – your input has been invaluable.

The CAC will be introducing the Avaluator decision tool (an inexpensive and easy-to-read card and booklet) this fall in a targeted media campaign, at conferences and public events, and by direct mail to clubs and groups. Encouraging recreational backcountry users of all stripes to seek out Avalanche Skills Training will be an important part of the launch. The Avaluator and terrain rating scale will become essential curriculum components of the AST programs for the upcoming season. The CAC encourages you to join us this fall for training on this indispensable new tool and the corresponding AST curriculum changes. **The CAC will sell the Avaluator and accompanying booklet to AST providers at a cost \$9 each, well below retail. Please adjust your course fees accordingly and see the 2006/7 Price List for more information at www.avalanche.ca>Members Only>CAC Information>AST Price List 2006/7.**

CAA Membership Fall CPD Seminar

There will be two important training opportunities for AST Instructors this fall in Whistler, Nelson and Canmore/Lake Louise. Final dates and times to be confirmed.

CAA Fall CPD Seminar: The New Avalanche Skills Training program (AST) (Sunday)

This full-day training session is in response to numerous requests to bring back fall CPD seminars for CAA Members and is open to all CAA/CAC Members. The focus will be on the new changes to the AST program including the addition of the Avaluator and ATEs terrain ratings. Pascal Haegeli will be presenting a session on how to teach use of the Avaluator to AST students and some more background on its development and future. It is anticipated that a short session on effective avalanche-oriented instructional techniques will also be covered. This session is open to all CAA/CAC members in good standing who are interested in learning more about advances in public-oriented avalanche safety initiatives. The session will cost \$50 (non-refundable) and includes an Avaluator/booklet, lunch, and the day of training. Pre-registration is required and specific registration information will be available shortly.

ITP Instructor Training – AST Providers invited (Monday)

AST Instructors who have signed their instructor agreements for 2006/7 season are invited to join the CAA's Industry Training Program Instructor training as in past years. While final agendas are still being developed, topics tentatively scheduled to be covered include:

- Risk Management Review: Review of ITP policies and procedures and a review of 05-06 incidents.
- Curriculum Updates to the Level 1, Level 2 and other new training initiatives under development.
- A half day of field work focusing on teaching snow profiles effectively is tentatively scheduled, and dependent on early season conditions in each venue.

This session will also cost \$50 (non-refundable) and includes lunch. Pre-registration is required and will be available on-line in the fall.

Reminder – Membership Changes

On July 5 the CAC sent an email to all Affiliate and Professional members to let them know of changes to the CAA membership structure:

- A new category of membership was created: **Active**.
- In order to instruct AST programs, members must be either **Active** or **Professional**.
- Affiliate members who wish to teach AST programs must apply to become **Active** members. The new application form can be found by signing on to the members only section of www.avalanche.ca, click on "Information" and click on "CAA Active Membership Information," where you will find a document titled "CAA Membership Application Form."
- **Active members:** Once you attain active membership status with the CAA, please email the programservices@avalanche.ca or call the CAC and we will e-mail the two revised AST license agreements, and 2006 AST materials price list. These two revised AST agreements must be signed and sent back to the CAC via fax, mail or e-mail (scanned with

signatures/initials) to the attention of CAC Program Services by Oct 31st, 2006. Once these agreements are signed and returned, we will add your contact information to our AST listing on the website and you can order course materials.

- **Professional members:** Must sign newly revised AST agreements due to changes in the field trip policy and license agreements. If you are a professional member and wish to continue teaching AST courses, please email programservices@avalanche.ca or call the CAC requesting the two revised AST agreements to sign. The new 2006/7 AST Materials Price list is available online under the members only section of the website. These two revised AST agreements must be signed and sent back to the CAC via fax, mail or e-mail (scanned with signatures/initials) to the CAC Program Services by Oct 31st, 2006.

If you have already signed the revised agreements prior to the RAC-to-AST name change, you do not have to re-sign to reflect AST.

Important Notice re: AST Student Release Forms

New student Release of Liability (Release) forms, reflecting the name change from RAC to AST, are mandatory for the upcoming season. Old RAC Release forms will be null and void. If you have any RAC Release forms in stock from last season the CAC will exchange them at no cost. Please mail old waivers back to the CAC at:

Canadian Avalanche Centre
Attn: Program Services
PO Box 2759
Revelstoke, BC
VOE 2S0

New AST Release forms can be purchased as per normal and are included on the 2006/7 price list at www.avalanche.ca>Members Only>CAC Information>AST Price List 2006/7.

CAC AST Initiatives

We Need Your Help – New AST Committee Solicits Input

Mitch Sulkers, chair of the newly formed AST Committee, is looking for input and recommendations from AST providers in making changes to AST Level 1 and 2 curricula to integrate the Avaluator and Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (ATES) elements. These curriculum modifications are needed quickly to move forward for publication. If you would like to help, please contact Mitch through programservices@avalanche.ca.

AST Course Materials Update

The Avaluator and accompanying booklet are mandatory components of the AST Programs Levels 1 & 2 for the upcoming season and will cost \$9 each (with your 10% member's discount). Please adjust your course fees accordingly and see the 2006/7 Price List for ordering information at www.avalanche.ca>Members Only>CAC Information>AST Price List 2006/7.

*In Jennifer's absence,
please send feedback to*

Karen Dubé at:

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