

BOD Approved Field Trip Policy For RAC Under The Canadian Avalanche Centre
(Version June 11, 2006)

Issue Statement

For more than a decade two conflicting core values have frustrated administration and delivery of Canada's Introductory Recreational Avalanche Course (IRAC) program.

They are:

- 1) The need for avalanche education – the CAC and IRAC instructors' humanitarian desire to reduce injury or loss of life in avalanches through IRAC as a nationally standardized, basic avalanche training program for non-professional back country recreationists that is broadly available across Canada in both official languages.

- 2) The need to prudently manage risk – the shared obligation of the CAC and IRAC instructors to demonstrate due diligence in the administration and delivery of the IRAC program consistent with “current best practices,” as a first line of defense against potentially catastrophic liability claims that could result if any IRAC participant suffered injury or death while on a course.

For the past several years CAC staff, Board of Directors, RAC Committee and CAA Education Committee have worked hard to address ethical and risk management issues of the IRAC program. Several recent developments will fundamentally change the way the IRAC program is administered and delivered.

A most important development is the creation of the Canadian Avalanche Centre (CAC), a new nationally incorporated not-for-profit organization designed to deliver all of the “public service” programs previously delivered by the CAA. The purposes of the CAC are:

“To serve as Canada's national public avalanche safety organization by:

- a. Coordinating public avalanche safety programming;*
- b. Providing public avalanche safety warnings;*
- c. Delivering public avalanche awareness and education;*
- d. Providing avalanche training for non-professional winter recreation;*
- e. Serving as point of contact for public, private and government avalanche information; and*
- f. Encouraging avalanche research.*

Board of Directors Direction - RAC Programs Administered By The CAC

Beginning in the fall of 2004 program administration responsibilities for IRAC and ARAC were transferred from the CAA to the CAC. RAC support is specifically mandated under point (c) of the CAC's purposes, above. Benefits of moving RAC to the CAC include:

1. CAC support funding will cover some of the costs of RAC program administration and instructor support.

2. Effective October 2006, CAA *Active Membership* (c/w Continuing Professional Development requirements) is the basic qualification for IRAC instructors. It is expected that IRAC instructor qualifications may continue to evolve over time, in consultation with the Staff and Board of Directors of the CAC, RAC Committee, the CAA Education Committee, and others.
3. The RAC Committee terms of reference have been approved by the CAC Board of Directors, will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary.

Board of Directors Approved Field Trip Policy For RAC Instructors

A CAC field trip policy for RAC course instructors has been approved by the CAA/CAC Board of Directors, as follows:

- **Instructors leading Introductory or Advanced RAC field trips assume full and sole responsibility for the care and safety of their students.**
- **Instructors leading Introductory or Advanced RAC field trips are responsible to ensure their activities are in full compliance with all regulations set by the managers of the land on which the field trip takes place.**
- **Instructors leading Introductory RAC field trips who are CAA Active Members are responsible to ensure those field trips take place:**
 - a. **On non-avalanche terrain ; or,**
 - b. **On terrain inside ski area boundaries or on a public road which is open for public use; or,**
 - c. **On terrain which has been rated as “SIMPLE” according the Avalanche Terrain Evaluation System (ATES), in guidebooks or other documentation produced by a responsible third party.**
- **Instructors leading Introductory or Advanced RAC field trips who are CAA Professional Members (Canadian Avalanche Association Training Schools – Level 2 graduates) may choose to take those field trips onto avalanche terrain, provided that those instructors are in compliance with terrain guidelines set by all professional or certifying organizations that they are a member of.**
- **The CAC reserves the full and sole right to cancel the Instructors Agreement of any Introductory or Advanced RAC instructor found violating the terms and conditions of their Instructor Agreement.**

Proposed Next Steps & Timelines, IRAC & ARAC Program Management

What	By When
1. Develop processes / strategies for RAC program management and issue resolution; CAC and RAC Committee	July 2006
2. Identify interim RAC materials upgrades and associated instructor training priorities, develop 2006-07 programs	June 2006
3. Comprehensive curriculum revisions, IRAC and ARAC to incorporate ADFAR (Avalanche Decision Framework for Amateur Recreation) project findings and results	2006-07?

Approved – June 11, 2006
CAC Board of Directors

Review date June, 2007