

AVALANCHE SEARCH AND RESCUE (INTERIM)

General

The following interim policy supersedes that contained in:

- PEP Policy and Procedures Manual (Article 2.10) dated July 15, 1998; and
- PEP Policy Bulletin No. 99-1 dated February 1999

The interim policy will be implemented any time a SAR Group is tasked to a known avalanche incident or if an avalanche occurs during any other SAR.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- reduce the risk to search and rescue responders and to create a greater margin of safety to the local and responding SAR Groups;
- increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the local SAR Groups and the field response operations to avalanche incidents; and
- ensure SAR Groups have an Avalanche Response Pre-Plan and to promote an integrated layered response to avalanche incidents¹.

Definition

Avalanche Technician – an individual certified by the Canadian Avalanche Association to a minimum technician 1 level.

SAR Manager – a Justice Institute of British Columbia certified SAR Manager recognized by PEP.

¹ PEP Avalanche Response Pre-Plan Template to be developed prior to the fall of 2000.

Policy

A task number will be issued to the SAR Manager of a SAR Group that meets the following criteria:

- has developed an Avalanche Response Pre-Plan² .
- has a CAA Avalanche Technician on site or one has been contacted and is en route, with experience in avalanche search and rescue operations and knowledge of the local area.

Conditions

1. The CAA Avalanche Technician will conduct a hazard assessment and assume the role of Site Safety Officer.
2. No SAR personnel are to proceed onto an avalanche site prior to the approval and direction of the Avalanche Technician.
3. All SAR personnel on the avalanche site should have completed, as a minimum, the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) Organized Avalanche Response course.
4. Only certified CARDA/RCMP/ Parks Canada Avalanche Search Dogs will be used during a SAR Response.

² PEP Avalanche Response Pre-Plan Template to be developed prior to the fall of 2000.