



The Alpine Club of Canada

Toronto Section

TRIP LEADER MANUAL

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Abstract. This manual provides organization, administration and policy information for ACC Toronto Trip Leaders.

DISCLAIMER: READ THIS

The Alpine Club of Canada and the Alpine Club of Canada, Toronto Section, including the Board and Leadership Committee accept no responsibility or liability for the interpretation and the use of any of the procedures and information in this handbook.

Rock climbing, ice climbing, mountaineering and all related outdoor activities are complex and potentially dangerous activities. This handbook is designed to be augmented by training, appropriate skills, personal experience and good judgment.

The guidelines presented in this manual do not replace actual outdoor experience and training.

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INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) states that: *“The encouragement and practice of mountaineering and mountain crafts and the promotion of these skills through participation in the activities of the Club,”* is a primary goal of the Club.

To put it simply, “We just want to get out there!” Key to getting out there is the trip leader: someone who has the desire and the initiative to gather a group of people and head out into the “hills”.

If you are new to leading trips with the ACC, or a seasoned leader who wants to brush up their skills, this manual is for you. Here you will find the basic requirements to become a Trip Leader, the roles and responsibilities of a Trip Leader, a quick guide to new leaders, checklists, information about the ACC and the Section, the Club’s and the Section’s Polices, and advice about what to do if something goes wrong.

We hope that after reading this, you will feel more comfortable and more prepared to lead an ACC trip.

Without people like you the ACC and the Toronto Section could not function! Your willingness to get outdoors with others is greatly appreciated.

Good luck, and have fun!

Acknowledgements

This work is based on similar Trip Leader manuals developed by the Toronto, Ottawa and other ACC Sections. Many experienced ACC Trip Leaders have contributed its creation. In this regard we wish to acknowledge contributions from Adam Phillips, Alan Dimond, Bill Barrett, Bill Scott, Grant Blanchard, Hai Pham, Helen Tsai, Karen Choy, Stan Rosenbaum, Steve Dods. Sandra Bowkun, Bryan Thompson, Ron Rusk, Boris Kaschenko, Gary Norton and countless others.

Trip Leader Manual and Guidelines

This manual is one of two resource documents for ACC Toronto Section Trip Leaders:

1. A *Trip Leader Manual* (this document) which is a consolidated source of information for Trip Leaders regarding club organization, administration and policy, and;
2. A *Trip Leader Guidelines* (acompanion document to be available in the fall of 2015) providing "best practices" guidance for all those involved in running Section trips. Specific guidelines are tailored to each of the three trip categories.

Note: This manual and the associated Trip Leader guidelines are living documents that will be updated periodically based on experience, evolving best practices, and changes in club policy. Questions, concerns and suggestions for improvements are welcome and can be directed to the Leadership Committee at any time at leadership@alpineclubtoronto.ca.

TRIP LEADERS

How to Become a Trip Leader

The Section is always looking for new Trip Leaders and Assistants. If you think you are ready for this challenge here are the basic requirements:

- Trip Leaders must be eighteen years of age or older
- Trip Leaders must be current Section members
- Trip leaders should have strong communication, group management, and leadership skills
- Trip leaders should have a technical skill level that comfortably exceeds that required for the difficulty of the trip they wish to lead
- Trip leaders should be committed to the progressive improvement of their personal leadership and technical skills
- Trip Leaders should be familiar with appropriate, “Leave No Trace,” and other wilderness conservation principles
- Trip Leaders need to be familiar with the ACC and The Toronto Section’s Activity policies
- Ideally, Trip Leaders should have formal wilderness first aid, navigation and directly related training in climbing or other activities being undertaken.

In the Toronto Section, the pathway to leadership starts with:

- Getting training appropriate to the activity
- Raising your skill and experience level by getting some mileage under your belt
- Volunteering to assist an experienced Trip Leader and asking for their mentorship
- Or bringing to the Section your previous outdoor leadership skills.

This is a challenging role, though, so you will need to be honest about your motives for wanting to become a Trip Leader.

Please DO Become a Trip Leader If ...

- You have skill and experience in any of the activities of the Alpine Club.
- You enjoy sharing your passion for the outdoors with others.
- You enjoy volunteering and making a contribution to your club.
- You enjoy working as a team.

- You have a strong commitment to protecting the wilderness environment so that it will be available for generations to come.
- You enjoy the challenge and rewards of leadership.
- You are open-minded and tolerant of feedback.
- You are committed to continuing self-improvement of technical and leadership skills.
- And you have strong team leadership and communication skills.

But DO NOT Become a Trip Leader If ...

- You have something to prove.
- You don't take constructive criticism well.
- You are not open to learning new skills – you already know everything there is to know.
- You are looking for a date.
- You want to be the hero.
- You want to prove your climbing/skiing/hiking prowess.
- You have a need to show-off.
- You want the adulation of others.

A Trip Leader's Responsibilities

So what does being a Toronto Section Trip Leader ultimately entail?

- Developing all aspects of a trip plan, including objectives, routes, acceptable number of participants, required experience, fitness, qualifications and equipment, logistics, cost sharing, trip rules and other factors [See Appendix F]
- Seeking trip approval from the Activities Chair and the Board
- Advertising and promoting the trip and responding to enquires from members
- Assessing the suitability of potential participants' experience, training, expertise, fitness, equipment and personal compatibility with trip objectives and team composition and accepting or rejecting applications to join a trip
- Preparing an emergency plan and ensuring the appropriate safety equipment is available
- Managing the trip in a conservative manner and managing any emergencies or incidents as well as reporting them in accordance with Club policy
- Changing trip plans before or during a trip in the interests of safety, trip enjoyment, trip participant issues, logistics or other factors and communicating them effectively even in the face of controversy from participants
- Managing the trip's finances and reporting
 - Asking, or requiring, if necessary, participants to refrain from activity which is contrary to club policy, the law, human rights, or that is environmentally irresponsible, disruptive of the trip, harassing or dangerous to themselves or fellow participants, or threatening to the Club's reputation
 - Being receptive to criticism and feedback
 - Showing good judgment in adapting "best practices" as outlined in the companion Trip Leaders Guidelines document

- Communicating effectively with the trip participants and other Club volunteers

So if you think you have the basic requirement and would like to become a qualified Trip leader contact the Leadership or Activities Chairs (leadership@alpineclubtoronto.ca or activities@alpineclubtoronto.ca). They will answer your questions about what is involved and provide further guidance on the mentoring and training support available.

A QUICK START GUIDE FOR NEW TRIP LEADERS

Introduction

Congratulations on making the decision to become an ACC Toronto Section Trip Leader and big Thank You of behalf of the Section. Trip Leaders are at the core of our Section. They ensure that we all “get out there” as much as we can and, as unpaid volunteers, they donate their time, energy and expertise to plan, organize and implement trips for the benefit of others.

We know this is all a bit intimidating. We were there ourselves a few years ago but we know you will do well. This guide is devoted to help make this process easier.

This section of the Trip Leader manual lays out the steps involved in planning, organizing and running a typical club day trip – be it climbing, hiking, or skiing. Some trips will be more or less complicated than what is described here.

For example, a return trip to a local climbing crag for the umpteenth time can be quite straight forward. a day trip up a trail-less peak in the Adirondacks , however, can be quite serious and challenging. The tools you find here will be valuable in either case.

Later on in the manual we will provide the “fine print” – the details on club policies and standard practices.

You will also find activity-specific information for each category of club trip offered by ACC Toronto Section in the companion Trip Leader Guidelines document. So, let’s get started.

Trip Planning

- The first step is to come up with a trip concept. Initially, make it an activity, location and route with which you are well familiar. Start with easy trips and work up to more adventuresome outings as you gain experience.
- If you are unfamiliar with the area in which your activity will take place, you should familiarize your self with it in advance of the activity through guide books, maps, communicating with others who have been there or by actually scouting out the area.
- A similar approach should be taken if you are leading a new or unfamiliar activity.

- Determine your trip difficulty/classification (i.e. A, B or C; refer to the [Trip Classification Matrix](#) for details) . Feel free to solicit ideas from, and bounce proposals off, experienced Trip Leaders. They will be more than happy to assist. You may also be able to talk one of them into being your mentor while you learn the ropes.
- Select a date for the trip and, perhaps, an alternative in the advent of bad weather.
- Have a good idea of what you expect from participants in terms of fitness, experience, skill level, equipment, training, etc. (should be relevant to the trip classification). Don't hesitate to seek advice from experienced leaders.
- Carefully consider the numbers of participants you will be comfortable leading on this venture. Small groups are more manageable in the beginning and easier on the environment. Some activities have specific recommendations on group size (see the Trip Leader Guidelines). Additionally, some land managers such as National, Provincial or State parks have group size limitations.
- Ensure you will have a sufficient number of experienced assistants for the required "leader/participant" ratio, if guidelines specify this. Even if there is no specific guidance, it will be reassuring to have some experienced, familiar faces in the group.
- Consider enlisting the help of a co-leader. Many experienced Trip Leaders start from that point – getting a trusted co-leader on board – and then proceed from there.
- Consider what essential items of personal and group gear will be appropriate. Do you anticipate using some section gear?
- Is there a need for pre-trip fitness or technical skill refresher training?
- Consider financial matters e.g. entry fees, camping fees, hotel or hostel accommodation, rental gear etc. Would a non-refundable deposit be required?
- Additional trip considerations:
 - ✍ Transportation: carpooling, costs, driving time ,parking, shuttle times, park/area fees and restrictions, car, van or bus rentals, tolls
 - ✍ Guide or instructor costs, insurance coverage, qualifications, experience, references, risk management plans
 - ✍ Daylight, turnaround, camping times
 - ✍ Food, water supplies
 - ✍ Seasonal conditions
 - ✍ Bail out /alternate routes
 - ✍ Waste management
 - ✍ Local emergency services and phone numbers
 - ✍ Cancellation policy
- Consider how you would handle an accident. Prepare an emergency plan. Can you expect cell phone coverage? If not, how would you handle communications in an emergency? Do you need to do some more research about the area of the proposed trip? Who should you advise as to where you are going, what you are doing and when you will be back?
- Finally when you have got a good handle on your plan, draft up an outline [See Appendix F or use one of the Trip Descriptions on the Section's Calendar on the website]. If your trip requires the payment of a non-refundable deposit, state the amount and date it must be received by, and point out that no one's place is guaranteed until the deposit has been received.
- Then contact the Activities Chair (Activities@alpineclubtoronto.ca).The Chair is responsible for seeking approval of the trip from the Toronto Section's Board and seeing that the trip is posted on the Section's Calendar by the Calendar Coordinator

- They may discuss details with you, perhaps suggest changes and, if your trip is accepted, publish the notice in the e-letter and on the web site.
- In communicating about an activity and its relative difficulty, writing an activity announcement, providing information to participants, describing the meeting place and time, and detailing the cancellation procedures – strive to be accurate, complete, concise and clear.
- Trip leaders should be certain to communicate the activity plan, guidelines and safety procedures to the participants as well as the participants' responsibilities before the activity begins.
 - During the activity the Trip Leaders should clearly communicate to the participants any changes made on the “fly”.
- Depending on the novelty and complexity of the trip, anticipate many email and phone enquiries from interested members once the event is publicized.

Screen Trip Participants

- Suitable screening of prospective participants has a big impact on the likelihood of success or problems in the field. As Trip Leader, you have full authority to screen participants as you see fit but you must make decisions objectively and without personal bias.
 - Leaders may not exclude persons from an activity on the basis of race, religion, colour, national origin, gender, sexual preference, marital status, age (except minors), or physical disability that can be reasonably accommodated on the proposed activity.
- Remember participants have trip responsibilities as well and you will be required to remind them of some of them either before and/or during the trip.
 - ✓ Participants must acknowledge through signing of the Waiver the risks involved in an activity (see below)
 - ✓ Participants must inform trip leaders before or on a trip of their ability and or willingness to continue with an activity.
 - ✓ Participants are expected to facilitate positive group interactions
 - ✓ Participants are expected to conduct themselves in manner that is consistent with “Leave No Trace” environmental and conservation principles and local area regulations.
 - ✓ Participants have a responsibility to inform you any pre existing health conditions.
 - ✓ Participants are expected to pay all agree and unexpected costs.
 - ✓ Participants' equipment needs to be in good order and appropriate to the activity.
 - ✓ Participants must not break THE LAW!
 - ✓ Participants are expected to behave appropriately.
- Here are some questions to also consider asking:
 - ✓ Are you an ACC member? What is your membership number?
 - ✓ How much relevant experience do you have?
 - ✓ Do you have any medical conditions we should be aware of? (You need to know if someone carries an epi-pen, heart medication etc. and so does at least one other individual in the group, perhaps your co-leader. This information though must at the same time be kept confidential.)
 - ✓ Have you taken any outdoor/climbing courses?
 - ✓ Have you taken any First Aid courses?
 - ✓ What equipment do you have? Be specific

- Don't hesitate to contact other trip leaders who previously led a participant before.
- If a potential participant has not previously been on any section trip contact them to discuss their experience
- See [ACC Policies](#) for dealing with non-Section members, minors, pets and other special cases or situations.
- Please be aware that the Toronto Section allows non-member participation on a one-time basis only (i.e. one day trip) but priority is always given to ACC members when there is high demand for a trip. ACC members from other sections across the country are always welcome on our trips if space allows.
- If the number of members interested in your trip begins to exceed your stated maximum, set up a waiting list. People can be fickle. Last minute changes are a common occurrence.

Event Co-ordination

- About 1-2 weeks in advance, send participants the trip details by email:
 - ✓ Event logistics i.e. meeting time & place, transportation, accommodation, meals, etc.
 - ✓ Gear, clothing and supplies appropriate for the trip
 - ✓ Include a link to the copy of the waiver on the National ACC website. Ask participants to read it and be prepared sign it in front of you, as witness, at the meeting place and presenting a valid membership
 - ✓ The trip leader will witness the participants' signing their waivers.
 - ✓ If the trip is in the US, remind participants to bring suitable identity documents.
 - ✓ Ask participants to provide personal details (e.g. emergency contact, health status, allergy information, food restrictions, etc.)
 - ✓ If appropriate, arrange to pick up whatever club gear you need. Check with Rock Climbing coordinator from April to November, and Ice Climbing coordinator from December to March as required.
- In the days before the trip:
 - ✓ Review the weather forecast and give a reminder about the waiver
 - ✓ 1-2 days before the trip - a final "GO, NO-GO" decision and any last minute details.
 - ✓ If it is a No-Go notify appropriate coordinator and Calendar Coordinator ASAP.

At the Meeting Place and/or Trailhead

- Make introductions amongst the group and confirm the final number of participants.
- Provide an overview of the activity and expectations (objective and subjective dangers, time, route, weather, etc.)
- Brief participants on activity-specific safety hazards and safety procedures. For a climbing trip this would include areas of objective hazards where helmets are to be worn. For a hiking or skiing trip, it could include discussion of the route and the anticipated challenges. Explaining the "why" behind a desired course of action is always helpful.
- In winter buddy people for frostbite checks,
- Review the rules/guidelines toileting, environmental considerations, trail or hut etiquette.

- Establish roles and duties of: Leader, co-leader, sweep, etc. and ensure that they are managed appropriately.
- Ensure all participants read the trip [waiver](#) prior to the trip and have them sign a copy in front of you. Collect and retain the signed waivers in a safe and accessible place with you, and ensuring that they are available if you as leader are injured.
- Review the participants' personal details (e.g. emergency contact, health status, allergy information etc.) and ensure they are with you in a safe and accessible place while on the trip and ensure that they are available if you as leader are injured.
- At the same time be certain to respect the private nature of this information.
- Ensure that you have a copy of the Incident Form (see ACC Policy Section).
- Check personal and group gear, safety equipment (first aid kit, walkie talkie, whistle, vhf, etc. as appropriate).
- Ensure individuals have appropriate medication (carry some sugar), footwear and foot care in place.
- Ensure that you and the participants have the appropriate permits , etc.
- Final check of weather and seasonal conditions.
- Confirm emergency procedures and remind the participants of appropriate rules and behaviour at the trailhead and throughout the trip
- Ensure that the group or groups stay together
- Complete appropriate safety checks (.e.g. beacons, etc.)

At the Activity Location or Along the Route

- Engage other experienced participants to assist with supervising the activity. Don't lose sight of the big picture. You are responsible for overall supervision.
- Constantly check on the condition of the participants and their commitment to continue.
- Where circumstances permit, mentor less-experienced participants on proper technique.
- By monitoring participants, weather, time of day and conditions, determine an appropriate time to wrap up the event.
- Don't get so focussed on your responsibilities that you forget that the purpose of the whole exercise is for everyone to have a good time. That includes you!

Post-Trip

- Notify appropriate Activity Coordinator of the outcome of the trip. Send a report to the Activities Chair the week following the event setting out the number of participants, feedback, future suggestions, and any other pertinent information.
- Pass signed waivers along to the Activities Chair at the same time.
- Clean and return club gear to the Rock or Ice coordinator and report any damage or lost equipment
- If an emergency or other incident occurred applicable submit incident report to the Activities Chair ASAP.
- Encourage participants to submit a trip report and/or photos to the e-letter/website etc.
- Settle financial matters (if required)

Conclusion

Congratulations on a trip well done. Kick up your feet and relax. Now that you have any idea of what's involved in running a trip let's take some time to look at who in the Toronto Section is responsible for Trip Leaders and what the Club's Policies are in detail

TRIP LEADERSHIP ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

As previously noted trip approvals are ultimately the responsibility of the Board of The Toronto Section. Trip Leaders are required to submit their Trip Proposals to the Chair of the Activities Committee. The Chair is responsible for managing the Board Approval process and ensuring that the Activity is posted on the Section Calendar and advertised to the members via the Section's eBulletin. The Leadership Committee Chair is responsible for the development of Trip Leaders within the Section.

Set out below is a brief description of the responsibilities of the Activities and the Leadership Committees and a description of the Treasurers responsibilities associated with trip leadership.

Activities Committee

The Activities Committee oversees all aspects of the Section's indoor and outdoor activities associated with rock and ice climbing, mountaineering and skiing including the approval and posting of approved activities on the Section's Calendar.

Leadership Committee

The Leadership Committee oversees all aspects of leadership development, training and trip safety. The Committee plans and implements training courses and clinics for Section members. This includes courses given by professional instructors as well as informal clinics offered by Section members with particular skill and experience in various areas. It is also the contact point for information about courses offered by ACC National.

Committee approves training subsidies for eligible trip leaders. Training subsidies will be offered to the following, in priority order:

- 1)** Trip Leaders with an established track record of leading past club trips
- 2)** New Trip Leaders who make a credible case for leading future club trips
- 3)** Section volunteers with an established track record of volunteering for the club
- 4)** Active Section members with the potential to become future Trip Leaders

Training subsidies are planned and discussed by the Committee and are included in the Committee's annual budget. Each subsidy has a set of defined conditions that have to be met in order to receive the subsidy. Typically recipients of training subsidies are expected to lead a number of activities after completion of a training course to become eligible for the subsidy.

If required the Leadership committee forms a Safety sub-committee from its members. The sub-committee may also include other section members. Sub-committee reviews accident reports and makes recommendations.

Treasurer

Trip Leaders normally personally manage day trip expenses. On longer trips trip leaders will often appoint someone to act as a “treasurer” and in certain cases the Section’s Treasurer has become involved. A policy that governs Trip Expense Management is in development.

TRIP ADMINISTRATION POLICIES

ACC trips are governed by a number of ACC National Trip Administration policies:

- ACC Policy on Minors
- ACC Custodial Groups
- ACC Events in the US
- ACC Participant Policy
- ACC Liability Waiver Administration,
- ACC Incident Management and Reporting Policy
- ACC Travel in Avalanche Terrain Policy

The most up to date versions of all relevant policies can be found on [Trip Administration](#) page and elsewhere on the National site.

This section helps with the interpretation of the policies, but by no means should be used as their replacement. Also it is your responsibility to ensure that you are up to date on the latest changes and additions to Club and Section Activity Policy.

MINORS POLICY

The ACC believes that children benefit from participating in appropriate club activities and has established a comprehensive policy for persons under the age of majority. Any Trip Leader contemplating including children in a club trip should familiarize him/herself with the policy well in advance of the trip and discuss the trip proposal with the applicable Activity Coordinator. It would also be advisable to seek out other Trip Leaders with experience in this area and to be informed by their experience.

Here are highlights of the ACC policy regarding the participation of minors in club events:

- The parents of minors should be encouraged to participate in the proposed activity if at all possible or practical. If minors under the age of 12 years will be participating, the trip leader must insist their parent or guardian accompany them for the duration of the activity.

- Proper parent/guardian permission forms must be completed. Parents must be informed of the full nature of the activities proposed and the associated risks. At present, the ACC does not have a specific format for this.
- Relevant medical information should be acquired i.e. allergies and sensitivities, medication, significant physical conditions, etc.
- Consider whether the minor concerned has the experience and physical ability to handle the activities planned. Where possible, it would be helpful if minors could be assessed on easier, shorter Club outings before taking part in major activities.
- Adequate supervision is even more essential with minors than with adults. Consider what would be an appropriate supervision ratio.
- All matters relating to safety must be more conservative when minors are involved.

The full ACC policy regarding participation of minors in club events can be found [here](#). In particular, note provisions regarding the signing of waivers.

CUSTODIAL GROUPS POLICY

Parks Canada has established mandatory policies and regulations for "Custodial Groups" planning winter backcountry travel in National Parks. These policies and regulations for custodial groups have been adopted by ACC National and apply to ACC Section trips as well. A Parks Canada public information package is available [here](#).

Trip Leaders planning travel in potential avalanche terrain must be familiar with these guidelines as well as the Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale ([ATES](#)).

Other parks and reserves have special policies governing outdoor activities. The Trip Leader and the participants are responsible for ensure that the Trip Activities are in compliance.

EVENTS IN THE UNITED STATES POLICY

US citizens and US residents who are ACC members are welcome to participate in ACC National and Section events, which take place in Canada.

Due to liability insurance constraints, the situation regarding ACC events which take place in the United States is more complex. The following table (verified by ACC National) specifies the ACC liability insurance coverage for ACC members on official club events in the US, depending on citizenship and residency. Members falling into categories which are not covered by ACC liability insurance cannot participate in ACC National or Section events which take place in the US. Please note that, in some cases, these restrictions apply to Canadian citizens or dual Canadian/US citizens, depending on residency.

Liability Insurance Coverage for ACC Members on ACC National or Section Trips to the United States

Citizenship	Residency	Coverage
Canadian	Canada	Covered
Canadian	US	Not covered
US	Canada	Covered
US	US	Not covered
Dual Canadian/US	Canada	Covered
Dual Canadian/US	US	Not covered
Neither Canadian or US	Canada	Covered
Neither Canadian or US	US	Covered

PARTICIPANT POLICY - SPECIAL NEEDS

Occasionally, ACC members with special needs will enquire about signing up for Section trips. Each case is unique. The experience can be rewarding to all involved. Before making decisions regarding participation, the Trip Leader should discuss the matter with the applicable Activity Co-ordinator at the earliest possible time. It would also be advisable to seek advice from other Trip Leaders with experience in this area and to learn from their experience.

Limited experience has shown:

- It will need to be determined if the nature of the trip is compatible with the member's special needs or whether reasonable accommodations can be made to trip plans to facilitate participation. The primary consideration is the safety of all concerned.
- Both the participant and Trip Leader need to be realistic about what is achievable.
- It will be necessary to obtain clarity on relevant medical issues in advance.
- Anticipate that routine things, such as gearing up, may proceed much more slowly than normal. It will be appropriate to assign one or more assistant leaders to assist and monitor the special needs participant.

LIABILITY WAIVER AND INSURANCE POLICY

Liability Insurance

The ACC has a comprehensive liability insurance policy similar to the liability insurance most homeowner's carry. This liability insurance is essential to the ACC's ability to run club trips. Trip Leaders should be familiar with the scope and general coverage of the insurance policy.

As an overview of the liability insurance policy:

- The coverage is in place only when club members are engaged in an official club activity or are acting on behalf of the club.

- An official activity could be any club activity that is part of a Section's or ACC National's published program.
- The maximum coverage is five million dollars per incident (including any legal costs awarded), subject to a \$5,000 deductible.
- Part of ACC membership dues is directed to liability insurance coverage.
- The liability insurance policy is contracted for by ACC National on behalf of the entire club, which includes activities run by National and by Sections.
- The liability insurance protects club officials, Trip Leaders and trip participants from legal claims arising from club activities.

It is to be noted that the liability insurance policy:

- Is not intended to pay any injured party's medical expenses directly.
- Does not apply to personal activities by club members i.e. when not engaged in an official Club activity.

Details on the ACC liability insurance policy can be found [here](#).

Waiver Administration

Trip waivers are an integral component of the club's liability insurance. Trip Leaders are on the front lines of waiver administration. The ACC insurance policy requires trip waivers to be signed by all participants on all club events. If an individual refuses to sign the waiver, the Trip Leader must advise them that he or she will not be able to participate in the activity.

Trip Leaders are required to have participants in all activities sponsored by ACC Toronto sign the waiver in their presence before the activity begins. The importance of this document to the ACC cannot be overemphasized. The way Trip Leaders conduct themselves in dealing with participants signing the Waiver is of great importance to whether the document would stand up in court later on, should a lawsuit arise from the activity.

Trip Leaders are strongly advised to read the full ACC National policy on [Waiver Administration, Incident Management & Reporting](#).

The latest copies of waiver forms in English and French are available on the National site under the [Trip Administration](#) section

Trip notices in the e-letter and on the web site now routinely remind participants regarding the waiver, with a link to download and read the form prior to the trip. Trip Leaders can further reduce the waiver administration burden on themselves if they repeat this reminder, including the link to the e-waiver, when sending trip planning information to participants. Ask participants to bring their copy of the waiver to the meeting place. As some will forget nevertheless, print a few copies of the waiver and bring these to the meeting place. This dual track approach should lessen time spent sorting out waivers at the start of the trip.

Following the trip, the Trip Leader should pass the signed waivers to the Activities Chair. ACC National requires Sections to retain signed waivers for a period of six years.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

There are two components to dealing with accidents/incidents:

- 1) ~~_____~~ immediate response in the field, and
- 2) ~~_____~~ post-event administration and reporting

Immediate Response in the Field

Trip Leaders are responsible for carrying out or delegating whatever actions are necessary to manage the situation in the field until the victim has been turned over to the appropriate rescue, health care or other authorities. The Trip Leader's incident report will deal with events up to that point

Subsequently, the Trip Leader's involvement turns to post-event administration and follow-up, which are time sensitive activities.

Post-Event Administration and Reporting

While we treat the topic separately here, the ACC National policy on incident management and reporting is covered by the waiver policy document referenced earlier in this manual. Trip Leaders are strongly encouraged to read the complete [policy](#).

A synopsis of the accident/incident reporting process is as follows:

- ~~_____~~ The Trip Leader must inform the Board as soon as possible. The Chair of the Board is responsible for informing the ACC National Executive Director.
- ~~_____~~ A complete written report is to be prepared and submitted to ACC National by the Board. This should include the original, signed waivers of all persons who suffered (or might later claimed to have suffered) personal injury or property damage/ loss as a result of the incident. The report should stick to the facts. In normal circumstances, it is expected that the report will be in the hands of the Executive Director not more than three weeks after the incident.
- ~~_____~~ Any questions from the media should be referred to the Chair of the Board or a designated Board member.

Please refer to Appendix A for samples or reporting forms.

What Constitutes a Reportable Incident?

Trip Leaders are strongly advised to read the ACC National guidance on what constitutes a [reportable accident](#). The ACC Toronto Section Chair can provide further advice on this matter.

TRAVEL IN AVALANCHE TERRAIN POLICY

Avalanche Transceiver Policy

A C C National has established the following guidelines regarding avalanche transceivers.

- Participants on all mountaineering, skiing and ice climbing trips, camps and courses of the Alpine Club of Canada in avalanche terrain are required to use a modern avalanche transceiver, as recommended by the Canadian Avalanche Centre. Recommended avalanche transceivers are digital, multi-antenna transceivers; analog and single-antenna transceivers are no longer acceptable. This policy becomes effective with the winter avalanche season 2011/2012, as of November 1, 2011.
- A C C members are advised to take note of the manufacturer's recommendations for the expected useful service life of avalanche transceivers.
- A C C members are encouraged to upgrade avalanche transceivers to digital, three-antenna models such as the Tracker 2, Ortovox 3+, Barryvox/ Mammut Pulse, Pieps DSP ...; digital, two-antenna beacons (Tracker DTS, Ortovox X1 ...) are still acceptable.
- A C C members are also advised that the usefulness of any transceiver depends on the familiarity of the user with the transceiver. Regular practice throughout the season is strongly recommended.

Winter Travel with Custodial Groups

Refer to Parks Canada and A C C policies on winter travel with "[Custodial Groups](#)".

Avalanche Safety for Mountaineering and Alpine Backcountry Skiing

Specific guidelines relating to avalanche safety issues are provided for mountaineering, alpine backcountry skiing and snowboarding in the companion Trip Leader Guidelines document.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Field Accident Report Form

Appendix B Accident/Incident Report Form

Appendix C. Useful References

1. "Alpine Skills: Summer", Petzl Foundation and Alpine Club of Canada, 2013.
2. "Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills", The Mountaineers, Seattle, 8th Ed., 2010.
3. "Technical Handbook for Professional Mountain Guides", Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG) and American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA), 1999.
4. "A M C Guide to Outdoor Leadership", Alex Kosseff, 2nd Ed., Appalachian Mountain Club, 2010.
5. "Playing It Safe", Ed. Murray Toft, Alpine Club of Canada, 1998.

Appendix D. Useful Links

The following is a compilation of external hyperlinks included in either the Trip Leader Manual or Trip Leader Guidelines.

ACC National

Waiver Form (English)	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/waiver-english
Waiver Form (Français)	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/waiver-french
ACC Liability Insurance Policy	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/liability-insurance
Waiver Administration, Incident Management and Reporting	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/waiver-admin-policy
Accident/Incident Reporting Guidelines for ACC Activities	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/incident-policy
Accident/Incident Report Form	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/incident-report-form
Field Accident Report Form	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/accident-report-form
ACC Policy on Minors	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/policy-on-minors
ACC Mountain Adventures Participant Policy	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/participant-policy
TNF/ACC Leadership Course	www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/adventures/leadership-training

Mountaineering and Avalanche Safety

Parks Canada Policy on Custodial Groups	http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/mtn/securiteenmontagnemountainsafety/gardiens-custodial.aspx
ATES Technical Model	http://www.avalanche.ca/resources/cac/attachments/atesmodel
Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (ATES)	http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/mtn/securiteenmontagnemountainsafety/avalanche/echelle-ratings.aspx
Avalanche Terrain Maps, National Parks	http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/mtn/securiteenmontagnemountainsafety/avalanche/terrainsav-avterrain.aspx
Public Avalanche Safety	http://www.avalanche.ca/cac/bulletins/latest

<u>Bulletins</u>	
<u>Avalanche Safety Training (AST)</u>	<u>http://www.avalanche.ca/cac/training/ast</u>
<u>Avalanche Self-Rescue Protocol</u>	<u>http://www.avalanche.ca/resources/cac/attachments/rescuequick-reference</u>
<u>Electronic Interference with Avalanche Beacons</u>	<u>http://www.avalanche.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=5c956bbb-c147-4aed-a002-6b5c1fb66a0e&MediaID=8c5ad7dd758d-406b-a3e1-3ef0769d68cc&Filename=Interference++Issues+Concerning+Avalanche+Rescue+Transceivers.pdf</u>
<u>Mountain Conditions Reports (MCRs)</u>	<u>http://acmg.ca/mcr/</u>
<u>Tree Wells and Snow Immersion Hazard</u>	<u>http://www.deepsnowsafety.org/index.php/</u>
<u>Parks Canada Mountain Safety</u>	<u>http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-mp/mtn/securiteenmontagnemountainsafety/accidents.aspx</u>
<u>Daily Avalanche Risk Assessment Worksheet</u>	<u>http://alpineclubottawa.ca/sites/default/files/ACC%20Ottawa%20Daily%20Avalanche%20Risk%20Assessment%20Worksheet%20v1_0.pdf</u>

Other Technical Resources

<u>Emergency and Radio Communications for Outdoor Guides and Leaders, Cyril Shokoples</u>	<u>http://www.rescuedynamics.ca/articles/pdfs/EmergCommLeader2.4.pdf</u>
<u>Shortroping 100 – Shortening the Rope, Cyril Shokoples</u>	<u>http://www.rescuedynamics.ca/articles/pdfs/Shortroping100.pdf</u>
<u>Shortroping 201: Advanced Rope Techniques for the Aspiring Excellent Leader, Cyril Shokoples</u>	<u>http://www.rescuedynamics.ca/articles/pdfs/Shortroping201.pdf</u>
<u>Backcountry Skiing Safety in the East, Bill Scott</u>	<u>http://alpineclubottawa.ca/sites/default/files/docs/BC_Ski_Safety_Jan07_R2.pdf</u>

Appendix E. Useful Commonly Used Definitions

ERNEST An acronym to remember the important points in building an anchor. The letters have the same meaning as in the acronym **SRENE**. **T** means *timely*; in other words, anchors should be simple and easy to build without giving up any of the other qualities.

SRENE An acronym to remember the important points in building an anchor. See also ERNEST.

- **S** means *strong* and *secure*.
- **R** means *redundant*. Every anchor component should be redundant so that, if one element fails, another will back it up and prevent failure of the anchor as a whole.
- **E** means *equalized*. Each component of the anchor carries an equal amount of the load.
- **NE** means *non-extension*. Anchors should be built so that if one component fails, the remaining components won't be shock loaded. In practice, it is not possible to simultaneously achieve *non-extension* and *equalization*. Therefore, we aim for an anchor that is *minimally-extending* upon failure on any component.

YDS The Yosemite Decimal System is a numerical rating scheme for North American rock climbing and scrambling grades. See the Scrambling Guidelines for more detail.

Appendix F. Trip Planning Check List

[SOME MODIFICATION REQUIRED]

