Association of
Canadian Mountain Guides

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Scope of Practice

A member of:
IFMGA: International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations
IVBV: Internationale Vereinigung der Bergführerbände
UIAGM: Union internationale des associations de guide de montagne
http://www.ifmga.info

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Introduction

The Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG) is a professional, self-regulating organization that aims to protect the public interest and represent professional guides working in various mountain related activities and climbing instruction in Canada. The ACMG is the only association in Canada that is a member of the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations.

All ACMG members and employers of ACMG members must be familiar with the Scope of Practice for their stream and intended activities. As professional members of a self-regulating association, it is the responsibility of individual guides, instructors and employers to ensure that every effort is made to work within these guidelines.

The ACMG is comprised of thirteen different membership categories within five separate *streams*. The Canadian Mountain and Ski Guide (CMSG) program at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) delivers the training and assessment required for ACMG membership. The standard for these courses is set by the Technical Committee of the ACMG and maintained in cooperation with CMSG staff at TRU.

The CMSG offers nine separate *certificate* programs including Climbing Gym Instructor (CGI) Levels 1, 2 & 3, Top Rope Climbing Instructor (TRCI), Assistant Hiking Guide, Hiking Guide, Rock Guide, Alpine Guide and Ski Guide. After some initial training and assessment courses in any of the Rock, Alpine and/ or Ski Guide programs, candidates are able to join the ACMG as *Apprentice Guides* in their chosen *stream.* This provides *Apprentice Guides* the means to gain the experience, skills and mentorship necessary to complete the *certificate* program and their ACMG *certification*. The title of Mountain Guide is granted to candidates who have successfully completed both the Ski Guide and Alpine Guide *Certificate* programs. This is the only ACMG *certification* officially recognized by other IFMGA countries.

The ACMG Scope of Practice is divided into four sets of documents: Qualifications, Supervision, Cross Certification and Variances.

Qualifications: The Qualifications documents outline the activities members from each stream are qualified to perform in various types of terrain. These qualifications are based on the competencies that are trained and assessed in the *CMSG programs*.

Individual members must also take into account their own personal experience, skill level and physical abilities when determining the complexity and type of work they are qualified to undertake.

Supervision: All Apprentice Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and TRCI's must work under supervision at all times. There are several different types of supervision outlined in detail in the Supervision document. Appropriate supervision is determined by considering several factors including but not limited to: the experience level of the supervised guide/ instructor, the supervisor's familiarity with their experience and skills, and, the complexity of the terrain/conditions on the proposed trip.

The time in a member's career where supervision is mandatory is not only meant to be a means of controlling the actions of less experienced members but also to provide them with the direction, feedback and mentorship necessary to become successful *certified* ACMG members in the future.

Cross Certification: The Cross Certification document addresses the potential Scope of Practice issues relating to members who:

- are members in more than one ACMG *stream*
- *hold one certification in the Mountain stream and an apprenticeship for a second certification in that stream*
- hold *certificates* in related fields from organizations outside of the ACMG

Variances: The Variance document addresses the issues related to situations where, due to special circumstances, a member or employer is not able to comply with the ACMG Scope of Practice.

Glossary: Each individual document includes a list of definitions relevant to the subject. Words that are italicized in the document will be found in the definitions section at the end of the document.

Definitions

CMSG Program: The Canadian Mountain and Ski Guide Program (CMSG) at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) delivers training, apprentice and certificate courses in the Mountain, Hiking and Climbing Instructor Programs.

Mountain Program: This includes the training and assessment courses relating to the Rock Guide, Alpine Guide and Ski Guide certificates, including the Apprentice training courses and exams, delivered by the CMSG program at TRU.

Hiking Program: This includes the Assistant Hiking Guide and Hiking Guide certificate courses delivered by the CMSG program at TRU.

Climbing Instructor Program: This includes the Climbing Gym Instructors level 1, 2 and 3 courses and the Top Rope Climbing Instructor certificate courses delivered by the CMSG program at TRU.

Stream: ACMG membership is divided into three certification streams: Mountain Guide (Rock, Ski and Alpine combined), Hiking Guide and Climbing Instructor.

Certificate: Someone who has successfully completed a program receives a certificate. The CMSG issues certificates for CGI 1,2,3, TRCI, Assistant Hiking Guide, Hiking Guide, Rock Guide, Alpine Guide and Ski Guide. Apprentice Guides do not receive a Certificate.

Certification: A Certificate in combination with ACMG membership (CPD, Scope of Practice, Code of Conduct) results in Certification. See Certification Terminology Document.

Certified: Describing someone who has received certification through the ACMG

Apprentice Guide: Apprentice Guides have not yet completed their training and certification in a given stream. They have, extensive personal experience, received intensive training and demonstrated a high level of skill and decision making on the apprentice exam and need to further develop their skills as guides under the supervision of certified guides. An apprentice guide may be a certified guide in another stream but must work under supervision when working within the scope of practice of their apprentice certification.

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Mountain Guide

Overview

ACMG Mountain Guides have competed both the Alpine Guide certification and Ski Guide certification.

They are qualified to work unsupervised in all mountain terrain within their personal experience and skill level.

Guides are required to inform potential employers and clients in which mode of travel (alpine skis, telemark skis or snowboard) they completed their Ski Guide certificate.

Mountain Guide

- Hiking
  - All hiking activities
- Skiing/snowboarding
  - All terrain and activities
- Technical and non-technical climbing ascents and descents:
  - Rock, ice, snow, mixed and alpine climbs
  - *Bouldering*
  - Short sections of *aid climbing* (generally less than one pitch in length)
- Indoor and outdoor *artificial rock and ice climbing walls*
- All seasons

Supervision

- May supervise Top Rope Climbing Instructors, Assistant Hiking Guides and all apprentice guides

Additional Activities

There are additional activities that the core training received by Mountain Guides addresses in a limited manner, but where supplementary knowledge and practice is required before accepting work in these pursuits.

The following are examples of activities that Mountain Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with additional personal experience and self-directed training:

- Guiding on equipment other than what the guide used to obtain his/her original certification (eg snowboard, alpine or telemark skis)
- Steep skiing/snowboarding involving high-consequence fall potential
- High altitude skiing and climbing involving trips with overnight stays above 3000 m in elevation
- Climbs involving extensive and/or difficult aid climbing
- Climbs requiring the client using extensive or complex mechanical rope ascending techniques
- *Via ferratas*

The following are examples of activities that Mountain Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with further certification and/or professional apprenticeship:

- Industrial mountain safety consulting
- Industrial avalanche forecasting and consulting
- Organized mountain rescue
- Industrial rigging/rope access/fall protection
- Canyoneering
- Caving

Choosing appropriate objectives

The Mountain Guide's scope of practice covers most of the terrain and activities outlined in other membership qualification statements. There are still limitations however, based upon the individual guide's personal experience and skill level.

Newly certified Mountain Guides should consider their own background before accepting work where they have lesser amounts of experience. This may include working in isolation in unfamiliar regions, countries, terrain or activities. In these environments they should consider first working with other guides from whom they can learn the pertinent standard operating procedures.

More practiced guides may need to consider their more recent activities and experience to ensure they still meet standard operating procedure criteria for the work they are considering.

Definitions of terms used in this section

- *Artificial climbing walls*:
    - Walls created specifically for simulating rock or ice climbing activities
    - May be indoor or outdoor

- *Aid climbing:*
    - Climbing using fixed or self-placed gear to ascend instead of handholds/footholds on rock or ice tools and crampons on ice
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting or a rope may result in serious injury or death

- *Bouldering*:
    - Climbing of various degrees of difficulty where spotting and/or crash pads rather than ropes are used to safeguard the client

- *Via ferrata*:
    - A climbing route that is equipped with cables, stemples, ladders, bridges and other fixed structures that help safeguard climbers against falls
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting, a rope or specialized equipment may result in serious injury or death

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Alpine Guide and Apprentice Alpine Guide

Overview

Alpine Guides are qualified to instruct and guide climbing and other mountain travel activities on rock, ice, snow, mixed and alpine climbs within their personal experience and skill level.

Alpine Guide (AG)

- All hiking and mountain travel activities on foot or snowshoes:
    - On and off trail
    - Rock, snow and ice
    - Use of skis is appropriate as a means of approaching a climb, on roads or relatively flat ground where downhill ski skills are not required
- Technical and non-technical climbing ascents and descents:
    - Rock, ice, snow, mixed and alpine climbs
    - *Bouldering*
    - Short sections of *aid climbing* (generally less than one pitch in length)
- Indoor and outdoor *artificial rock and ice climbing walls*
- All seasons

Supervision

- May supervise:
    - Apprentice Alpine Guides
    - Apprentice Rock Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Top Rope Climbing Instructors within their individual scopes of practice.

Apprentice Alpine Guide (AAG)

- All activities listed above
    - Special considerations must be made for remotely supervised trips in complex avalanche terrain. See Supervision Documents.

Supervision

- An Alpine Guide or Mountain Guide must supervise all climbing activities.

- Hiking Guides may supervise AAGs during hiking activities as described in the Hiking Guide Scope of Practice - Qualifications. A Rock Guide may supervise AAGs during rock-climbing activities as described in the Rock Guide Scope of Practice -Qualifications.

Additional Activities

There are additional activities that the core training received by Alpine Guides and Apprentice Alpine Guides addresses in a limited manner, but where supplementary knowledge and practice is required before accepting work in these pursuits.

The following are examples of activities that Alpine Guides and Apprentice Alpine Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with additional personal experience and self-directed training:

- Climbs requiring extensive and/or difficult *aid climbing*
- Climbs requiring the client using extensive or complex mechanical rope ascending techniques
- High altitude climbing involving overnight stays above 3000 m in elevation
- *Via ferratas*

The following are examples of activities that Alpine Guides and Apprentice Alpine Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with further certification and/or professional apprenticeship:

- Industrial rigging/rope access/fall protection
- Industrial mountain safety consulting in the terrain and activities outlined above
- Canyoneering
- Caving
- Industrial avalanche forecasting
- Organized mountain rescue

Choosing appropriate objectives

Choosing appropriate objectives for Alpine Guides and Apprentice Alpine Guides is usually straightforward. If the trip involves any sort of mountain travel it is within the scope of practice, unless skis are required for approach or descent. Skis may be used on roads or relatively flat ground where downhill ski skills such as turning, snowplowing or sideslipping are not required.

In theory this means virtually any climb is allowed, although in practice some may be impracticable due to limitations imposed by foot travel. Perhaps the most obvious issue involves winter mountaineering ascents where a long approach and/or descent may be difficult on foot or even snowshoes.

Most commonly guided waterfall ice climbs can be approached on foot or snowshoes, although in some high-snowfall seasons these methods may also be difficult. In this respect the Alpine

Guide's activities may be limited by certain conditions; what was an appropriate objective one year may not be the next.

Newly certified Alpine Guides should consider their own background before accepting work where they have lesser amounts of experience. This may include working in isolation in unfamiliar regions, terrain or activities. In these environments they should consider working initially with other guides from whom they can learn the pertinent standard operating procedures.

More practiced guides may need to consider their more recent activities and experience to ensure they still meet standard operating procedure criteria for the work they are considering.

Typical ski approach objectives

Examples of where an approach on skis is appropriate include:

- Takkakaw Falls
- Whiteman Falls
- Slipstream

Examples of where an approach on skis is inappropriate include:

- Mt Columbia
- Stanley Headwall

Definitions of terms used in this section

- *Artificial climbing walls*:
    - Walls created specifically for simulating rock or ice climbing activities
- *Aid climbing:*
    - Climbing using fixed or self-placed gear to ascend instead of handholds/footholds on rock, or ice tools and crampons on ice
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting or a rope may result in serious injury or death
- *Bouldering*:
    - Climbing of various degrees of difficulty where spotting and/or crash pads rather than ropes are used to safeguard the client
- *Via ferrata*:
    - A climbing route that is equipped with cables, stemples, ladders, bridges and other fixed structures that help safeguard climbers against falls
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting, a rope or specialized equipment may result in serious injury or death

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Ski Guide and Apprentice Ski Guide

Overview

Qualified to instruct and guide backcountry skiing and snowboarding in all mountain terrain in *winter/spring snow conditions,* within their personal experience and skill level. This includes:

- Ski-touring
- Mechanized (e.g. helicopter or cat) skiing/snowboarding
- *Ski/snowboard mountaineering* ascents and descents, using *simple technical systems*
- Some specified and limited hiking activities

Ski Guides and Apprentice Ski Guides are required to inform potential employers and clients on which mode of travel (alpine skis, telemark skis or snowboard) they completed their certificate.

Ski Guide (SG):

- Travel with skis/snowboard or snowshoes on in *winter/spring snow conditions*
- Travel on foot, as part of *ski/snowboard mountaineering* activities, *in winter/spring snow conditions* and using *simple technical systems*:
    - *1st and 2nd class* travel on snow, rock and ice
    - *3rd class* snow
    - Short sections (generally less than a rope length) of *3rd class* hard snow or ice requiring boot crampons
    - Very short sections of *3rd class* rock (generally <10 m)
- Day hiking activities as an alternative to scheduled skiing activities:
    - On commonly used trails and routes
    - *1st – 2nd class* terrain

Supervision

- May supervise:
    - Apprentice Ski Guides
    - Assistant Hiking Guides working in winter

Apprentice Ski Guide (ASG)

- All activities listed above
    - Special considerations must be made for remotely supervised trips in complex avalanche terrain. See supervision documents

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised by one of the following:
    - Ski Guide
    - Mountain Guide

Additional Activities

There are additional activities that the core training received by Ski Guides and Apprentice Ski Guides addresses in a limited manner, but where supplementary knowledge and practice is required before accepting work in these pursuits.

The following are examples of activities that Ski Guides and Apprentice Ski Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with additional personal experience and self-directed training:

- Guiding on equipment other than that on which the guide was originally assessed(eg snowboard, alpine or telemark skis)
- Steep skiing/snowboarding involving high-consequence fall potential
- High altitude skiing/snowboarding involving trips with overnight stays above 3000 m in elevation

The following are examples of activities that Ski Guides and Apprentice Ski Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with further certification and/or professional apprenticeship:

- Industrial mountain safety consulting
- Industrial avalanche forecasting and consulting
- Organized mountain rescue

Choosing appropriate ski mountaineering and ski traverse objectives

The difference between ski mountaineering routes and ski traverses that may or may not be considered appropriate objectives for Ski Guides and Apprentice Ski Guides can be subtle.

When assessing whether a route should be guided, asking the following questions may help. If doubt persists it is recommended to default to a more obvious objective until clarification may be obtained from the Technical Director.

- *Will you be taking your skis/snowboard off?*
    - If you can accomplish the objective on your skis/snowboard, both up and down, it is within the Ski Guide scope of practice
- *Does the route involve climbing on foot?*
    - If it does, carefully review the definitions of 1st through 5th class climbing, ski/snowboard mountaineering, winter/spring snow conditions and simple technical systems.
    - If foot crampons are required for more than a very short (generally less than a ropelength) section of snow then the route is outside the Ski Guide scope of practice.
    - Some routes, like the north face of Mt Matier (Coast), south face of Mt Rogers (Interior) or Mt Joffre (Rockies) may be within the Ski Guide scope of practice in soft conditions when it is possible to skin or bootpack most of the way up, but in hard spring conditions when boot crampons are required, they are outside the scope of practice. Attempting a route like this without being confident that it is in the proper condition is not in the best interests of you or your client, as you may need to turn back if snow conditions are too hard or ice is encountered.
    - Routes with shorter and less exposed sections of 3rd class are better options for Ski Guides and Apprentice Ski Guides. Examples would include Snowspider (Coast), Terminal Peak (Interior) or North Twin (Rockies).
- *Does the route involve rock or ice climbing?*
    - If so, only very short sections (<10 m) of 3rd class rock or ice terrain should be encountered. Examples might include the Crescent traverse (Bugaboos) or Mt Hector (Rockies).
    - If the route involves 2nd class rock or ice it is within the Ski Guide scope of practice. An example is Mt Olive (Rockies) or walking up an icy tongue of a glacier.
- *Does the route involve a technical descent?*
    - If the route involves roped lowers and/or rappels for the guide as well as the client, only very short descents (generally less than a ropelength) are within the scope of practice. This means a route like the normal Bugaboos-Rogers Pass traverse is outside the scope of practice due to the descent down the Deville Headwall.

- *Is the route a commonly guided traverse?*
    - Traverses that are guided regularly on skis or snowboard with little or no foot travel are generally within the Ski Guide scope of practice. Examples include the Spearhead Traverse (Coast), Bonnington Traverse (Interior) or the Wapta Traverse (Rockies).
    - Traverses that are less commonly guided, where there is the possibility of climbing on foot in big 3rd class terrain, where it is less certain what terrain will be encountered, and where it is unknown what hardness of snow will be encountered may be outside the Ski Guide scope of practice. Examples of these traverses include the Great Divide (Rockies), or Cariboos (Interior).

Newly certified Ski Guides should consider their own background before accepting work where they have lesser amounts of experience. This may include working in isolation in unfamiliar regions, countries, terrain or activities. In these environments they should consider working initially with other guides from whom they can learn the pertinent standard operating procedures.

More practiced guides may need to consider their more recent activities and experience to ensure they still meet standard operating procedure criteria for the work they are considering.

Typical objectives

The following are examples of common ski mountaineering and ski traverse objectives that are within the Ski Guide scope of practice in most *winter/spring snow conditions*:

Coast

- Spearhead Traverse
- Phalanx Mountain via Stairmaster
- Lillooet Icefield traverse
- Snowspider Mountain
- Mt Duke
- Other objectives that are similar in character as those listed above

Interior

- Bonnington Traverse
- Terminal Peak
- Nordic Mountain
- Mount Ymir
- Other objectives that are similar in character as those listed above

Rockies

- Wapta Traverse
- Mt Castleguard
- North Twin
- Mt Balfour
- Pope's Peak shoulder
- Other objectives that are similar in character as those listed above

The following are examples of objectives that are condition dependant, requiring mostly soft snow that allows good kick stepping to be within the Ski Guide scope of practice:

- Fissile Peak, Mt Matier (Coast)
- Iconoclast Mountain, Mt Rogers (Interior)
- Mt Hector(Rockies)
- Other objectives that are similar in character as those listed above

The following are examples of objectives that are outside the Ski Guide scope of practice:

- The Deville Headwall on the Bugaboos-Rogers Pass traverse
- Mt Columbia due to complex, exposed shortroping around crevasses near the summit
- South Twin due to technical climbing on the summit ridge
- Other objectives that are similar in character as those listed above

Definitions of terms used in this section

- *1st class:*
    - Terrain: low angled rock, snow or ice
    - Movement: walking
    - Fall possibility: none
    - Exposure/consequence: no exposure; may include a minimal chance of injury if a stumble occurs
    - Guiding techniques: coaching
    - Examples:
        - Most well-used hiking trails
        - Easy off-trail travel such as along a flat creek or flat snow

- *2nd class:*
    - Terrain: short sections of rougher, steeper and/or mildly exposed rock, snow or ice
    - Movement: rough walking; a few moves may require the use of hands or trekking pole for balance
    - Fall possibility: low
    - Exposure/consequence: May include low exposure to a short drop or a short sliding/tumbling fall; low chance of serious injury if a slip occurs
    - Guiding techniques may include: coaching, spotting
    - Examples:
        - Rough walking on a little-used trail
        - Rough off-trail walking such as boulder fields
        - A well-used, wide trail with good footing above a small cliff
        - A low angled snow slope (generally less than 15 degrees)
- *3rd class:*
    - Terrain: rock, snow or ice of generally moderate steepness; may include short, steeper steps generally less than 10 m in height
    - Movement: climbing. Requires the use of hands or ice axe for balance; occasionally requires pulling on a handhold or use of an ice axe to aid the ascent. Negligible upper-body effort or practiced climbing technique needed
    - Fall possibility: moderate, self arrest is likely with help from short roping techniques
    - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, short sections of exposure to a fall. Serious injury or death may occur in the event of an unroped fall.
    - Guiding techniques may include: coaching; spotting; moving together on a short rope; occasional short pitches; stances and body belays
    - Examples:
        - Snow slopes that are soft and/or low-angled enough where self-arrest is easily accomplished by a trained client
        - Ice or hard snow slopes where slope angle/surface roughness will stop a fall after a short distance
        - Most clients can downclimb 3rd class terrain
- *4th class:*
    - Terrain: generally more sustained, steeper rock, snow or ice. May include short, very steep sections generally less than 4 m in height
    - Movement: Climbing; requires pulling on handholds, plunging the ice axe in the snow, or swinging the pick of the ice axe to aid the ascent. Some upper-body effort and practiced climbing technique needed
    - Fall possibility: moderate, self arrest is unlikely – the guide would need to prevent or arrest the fall with a rope

- Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, sustained sections of exposure to a long fall. Serious injury or death is likely to occur in the event of an unroped fall.
- Guiding techniques may include: short pitches; long pitches; anchors used for belaying
- Examples:
  - Terrain where self-arrest by a client or a guide holding a fall while moving together on a short rope is unlikely
  - Most clients can downclimb 4th class terrain

- *5th class:*
  - Terrain: generally very steep to vertical or overhanging terrain.
  - Movement: Climbing of increasing difficulty; requires pulling on handholds, plunging the ice axe in the snow, or swinging the pick of the ice axe to aid the ascent. Strenuous upper-body effort and specialized climbing techniques required, especially at the upper levels of the grade
  - Fall possibility: high, a rope is required to hold a fall
  - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, sustained sections of exposure to a long fall. Serious injury or death is likely to occur in the event of an unroped fall.
  - Guiding techniques may include: short pitches; long pitches; anchors used for belaying; intermediate points of protection
  - Examples:
    - Terrain where down climbing is difficult
  - Includes “M” grades for mixed climbing and ice grades of WI/AI 2 and greater
- *Ski/snowboard mountaineering*:
  - Mountaineering ascents and descents that are accomplished mostly on skis/snowboard but also involve foot travel, in winter/spring snow conditions, using simple technical systems
  - Terrain includes:
    - 3rd class bootpacking in snow
    - Very short sections (generally less than a rope length) of *3rd class* snow or ice requiring boot crampons
    - Very short sections of *3rd class* rock (generally <10 m)
- *Winter/spring snow conditions*:
  - Snowpack depth typical of the ski season for the given region
  - Little bare ice on glaciers
  - Boot generally penetrating the snow
- *Simple technical systems:*
  - Shortroping on 3rd class terrain involving simple stances with low fall potential and consequence
  - Technical pitching and descents less than one rope length
  - 3rd class terrain involving simple belaying methods
  - Anchors: snow, ice, terrain (eg horns) and fixed rock anchors

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Rock Guide and Apprentice Rock Guide

Overview

Rock Guides and Apprentice Rock Guides are qualified to guide and instruct climbing and *technical descents* on rock climbs that have no *alpine hazards,* on trips that have no overnight backcountry camping component, within their personal experience and skill level.

Approaches and non-technical descents are generally on *commonly used trails and routes.* Off-trail travel may require *simple navigation techniques*.

Routes are predominantly *5th class free climbing* but may include short sections of *aid climbing*. They may also include short sections of simple *shortroping* on easier terrain but overall the climb will have few transitions between pitched climbing and *shortroping.*

Rock Guide (RG)

- Terrain free of alpine hazards. Examples of alpine hazards include:
  - *3rd/4th/5th class* snow or ice
  - Snow avalanches
  - Cornices
  - Icefall
  - Glacier travel
- *1st* and *2nd class* approaches and descents:
  - On *commonly used trails and routes* that may or may not be marked or maintained
  - Includes short (generally 1 hr or less) non-trail approaches and descents where *simple navigation skills* are required, such as:
    - Basic map reading
    - Dead reckoning
    - Routefinding in forested and rough terrain
  - Includes snow-covered *1st* and *2nd class* terrain
- *Pitched climbing* on *3rd, 4th* and *5th class* rock
  - Top rope climbing
  - Lead climbing
  - Single and multi-pitch routes
- Climbing and descending short sections on rock using *shortroping* techniques.
- Few transition points between pitched climbing and shortroping (generally only a few of transitions over the course of the entire approach, climb and descent)
- Short sections of *aid climbing*, (generally less than one pitch in length)

- Technical roped descents including belayed down climbing, rappelling and lowering
- Indoor and outdoor *artificial climbing walls*
- *Bouldering*
- Day hiking activities as a poor conditions option to scheduled rock climbing activities only:
    - On established, marked and maintained trails
    - *1st – 2nd class* terrain

Supervision

- May supervise:
    - Apprentice Rock Guides
    - Apprentice Alpine Guides within Rock Guide Scope of Practice as defined above
    - Top Rope Climbing Instructors in the terrain and using the techniques described in the Top Rope Climbing Instructor Scope of Practice

Apprentice Rock Guide (ARG)

- All activities listed above

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised by one of the following:
    - Rock Guide
    - Alpine Guide
    - Mountain Guide

Additional Activities

There are additional activities that the core training received by Rock Guides and Apprentice Rock Guides addresses in a limited manner, but where supplementary knowledge and practice is required before accepting work in these pursuits.

The following are examples of activities that Rock Guides and Apprentice Rock Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with additional personal experience and self-directed training:

- Climbs requiring extensive and/or difficult *aid climbing*
- Climbs requiring the client using extensive or complex mechanical rope ascending techniques
- Climbs requiring bivouacs en route
- V*ia ferratas in terrain free of alpine hazards*

The following are examples of activities that Rock Guides and Apprentice Rock Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with further certification and/or professional apprenticeship:

- Industrial rigging/rope access/fall protection in the terrain and activities outlined above
- Canyoneering
- Caving
- Organized mountain rescue

Choosing appropriate objectives

The difference between routes that are appropriate and inappropriate for Rock Guides and Apprentice Rock Guides can be subtle. When assessing whether a route should be guided, asking the following questions may help. If doubt persists it is recommended to default to a more obvious objective until clarification may be obtained from the Technical Director.

- *Are there alpine hazards?*
    - Alpine hazards that need to be avoided mostly have to do with snow and ice
    - Approaches, descents and climbs involving travel over snow or ice that require an ice axe or crampons, or involve the potential for a sliding fall that could result in injury, are outside the Rock Guide scope of practice.
    - Some routes may be suitable only at certain times of the year when all the seasonal snow and associated hazards have melted away. Examples include Yak Peak on the Coast or Tower of Babel in the Rockies (snow slopes on approach or descent) or routes on EEOR in the Rockies (cornices).
    - Other routes may be outside of the scope of practice year-round even though they are generally considered to be rock climbs. Example: The Grand Sentinel in the Rockies, where the year-round potential for rockfall generated from nearby snow/ice gullies is unobvious even though it is avoidable.
- *How complex is the approach and/or descent?*
    - Significant amounts of off-trail travel should not be required
    - Routefinding in non-technical terrain should not require advanced navigation techniques

- *How much shortroping is required to complete the objective in a reasonable length of time? How many transitions between short roping and long pitching are there?*
    - Many common objectives do not require shortroping at all
    - If shortroping is used it is only for short sections a few times over the course of the entire climb. Therefore the Gmoser and Homage to the Spider routes on Mt Louis in the Rockies are appropriate for a Rock Guide experienced in this region because they only require a short section of simple shortroping near the top and again on the lower descent. The Kain Route on the same mountain requires more extensive shortroping with several transitions between shortroping and pitched climbing and is considered Alpine Guide or Mountain Guide terrain.

Newly certified Rock Guides should consider their own background before accepting work where they have lesser amounts of experience. This may include working in isolation in unfamiliar regions, terrain or activities. In these environments they should consider working initially with other guides from whom they can learn the pertinent standard operating procedures.

More practiced guides may need to consider their more recent activities and experience to ensure they still meet standard operating procedure criteria for the work they are considering.

Typical objectives

This is a list of typical climbs that Rock Guides and Apprentice Rock Guides are qualified to guide:

Coast

- Sea to Sky Corridor:
    - All routes listed in “The Climber’s Guide to Squamish” and “Squamish Select” or “Canadian Rock”.
    - Mt Habrich
- Marble Canyon routes
- Yak Peak routes
- Other routes and climbing areas in the region that are similar in character to those listed above

Interior

- All routes listed in “Skaha Rockclimbs” and other similar climbing areas in the Okanagan
- All routes listed in “Revelstoke Rocks” and “Canadian Rock”
- Routes listed in “West Kootenay Rock Climbs” with the exception of peaks in the Valhalla Range
- Spillimacheen (Golden)
- Other routes and climbing areas in the region that are similar in character to those listed above

Rockies

- All routes listed in “Sport Climbs in the Canadian Rockies”, “Bow Valley Sport”, “Canmore Sport Climbs”, “Yamnuska Rock”, “Canadian Rock”, “Bow Valley Rock” and “Bouldering in the Canadian Rockies”
- Routes listed in “Ghost Rock”, with the exception of climbs listed in the “Alpine Rock” chapter
- Routes listed in “Banff Rock”, with the exception of some peak climbs such as The Finger
- Mt Louis: Gmoser Route and Homage to the Spider but not the Kain Route
- Castle Mountain: Most routes with the exception of Castle Tower via the Dragon’s Back
- Crags in the Jasper area such as Lost Boys, Rock Gardens, Hidden Valley
- Other routes and climbing areas in the region that are similar in character to those listed above

Definitions of terms

- *Commonly used trails and routes:*
    - Approaches and descents to routes that are utilized regularly by rock climbers in the region
- *Simple navigation techniques:*
    - Basic map reading, dead reckoning, off-trail routefinding in forested or rough terrain.
- *1st class:*
    - Terrain: low angled rock, snow or ice
    - Movement: walking
    - Fall possibility: none
    - Exposure/consequence: no exposure; may include a minimal chance of injury if a stumble occurs
    - Guiding techniques: coaching
    - Examples:
        - Most well-used hiking trails
        - Easy off-trail travel such as along a flat creek or flat snow
- *2nd class:*
    - Terrain: short sections of rougher, steeper and/or mildly exposed rock, snow or ice
    - Movement: rough walking; a few moves may require the use of hands or trekking pole for balance
    - Fall possibility: low
    - Exposure/consequence: May include low exposure to a short drop or a short sliding/tumbling fall; low chance of serious injury if a slip occurs
    - Guiding techniques may include: coaching; spotting
    - Examples:
        - Rough walking on a little-used trail
        - Rough off-trail walking such as boulder fields
        - A well-used, wide trail with good footing above a small cliff
        - A low angled snow slope (generally less than 15 degrees)
- *3rd class:*
    - Terrain: rock of generally moderate steepness; may include short, steeper steps generally less than one or two body lengths in height
    - Movement: climbing. Requires the use of hands or ice axe for balance; occasionally requires pulling on handholds or use of an ice axe to aid the ascent. Negligible upper-body effort or practiced climbing technique needed
    - Fall possibility: moderate, self arrest is likely with a little help from the rope
    - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, short sections of exposure to a fall. Serious injury or death may occur in the event of a fall.
    - Guiding techniques may include: coaching; spotting; moving together on a short rope; occasional short pitches; stances and body belays

Examples:

- Snow slopes that are soft and/or low-angled enough where self-arrest is easily accomplished by a trained client
- Ice or hard snow slopes where slope angle/surface roughness will stop a fall after a short distance
- Most clients can downclimb 3rd class terrain

- *4th class:*
  - Terrain: generally more sustained, steeper rock. May include short, very steep sections generally less than one or two body lengths in height
  - Movement: Climbing; requires pulling on handholds, plunging the ice axe in the snow, or swinging the pick of the ice axe to aid the ascent. Some upper-body effort and practiced climbing technique needed
  - Fall possibility: moderate, self arrest is unlikely – the guide would need to hold the fall
  - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, sustained sections of exposure to a long fall. Serious injury or death is likely to occur in the event of a fall.
  - Guiding techniques may include: short pitches; long pitches; anchors used for belaying
  - Examples:
    - Terrain where self-arrest by a client, or a guide holding a fall while moving together on a short rope is unlikely
    - Most clients can downclimb 4th class terrain
- *5th class:*
  - Terrain: generally very steep to vertical or overhanging terrain.
  - Movement: Climbing of increasing difficulty; requires pulling on handholds, plunging the ice axe in the snow, or swinging the pick of the ice axe to aid the ascent. Strenuous upper-body effort and specialized climbing techniques required, especially at the upper levels of the grade
  - Fall possibility: high, a rope is required to hold a fall
  - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, sustained sections of exposure to a long fall. Serious injury or death is likely to occur in the event of a fall.
  - Guiding techniques may include: short pitches; long pitches; anchors used for belaying; intermediate points of protection
  - Examples:
    - Terrain where downclimbing is difficult
- *Aid climbing:*
  - Rock climbing using fixed or self-placed gear to ascend instead of handholds and footholds
  - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting or a rope may result in serious injury or death

- *Free climbing:*
    - Rock climbing using handholds and footholds to ascend
- *Pitched climbing:*
    - Climbing of various degrees of difficulty that is protected by belayed roped climbing using anchors and often intermediate protection points
- *Shortroping:*
    - Climbing of various degrees of difficulty where the guide protects the client with the rope while either moving together or in short pitches where the guide may be unprotected and/or unanchored
    - Methods to safeguard against the client falling include a variety of belay techniques from anchored or unanchored stances
- *Bouldering*:
    - Climbing of various degrees of difficulty where spotting and/or crash pads rather than ropes are used to safeguard the client
- *Technical descents*:
    - Descents protected by the rope, including belayed down climbing, rappelling and lowering
- *Artificial climbing walls*:
    - Walls created specifically for simulating rock climbing activities
    - May be indoors or outdoors
- *Alpine hazards*: includes one or more of the following –
    - Snow or ice on route
    - Snow avalanches
    - Cornices
    - Icefall hazard
    - Glacier travel
- *Via ferrata*:
    - A climbing route that is equipped with cables, stemples, ladders, bridges and other fixed structures that help safeguard climbers against falls
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting, a rope or specialized equipment may result in serious injury or death

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Hiking Guide, Assistant Hiking Guide and Day Hiking Guide

Overview

Hiking guides are qualified to lead groups on hikes with *spring/summer/autumn conditions* in *1st and 2nd class* terrain that is free of *alpine hazards*.

With a Winter Travel upgrade course they may lead trips on foot, snowshoes or cross-country skis in *winter conditions*.

In 2008 the Hiking Guide training program was changed to address an increasing demand for guides that were able to lead overnight trips. As a result the Day Hiking Guide certificate was discontinued and replaced by the Assistant Hiking Guide certificate. However, the Day Hiking Guide certification still exists and has a different scope of practice than that for Assistant Hiking Guides .

Day Hiking Guides who have taken the Assistant Hiking Guide upgrade course hold both the Assistant Hiking Guide and the Day Hiking Guide certifications and must work under supervision only on overnight trips.

Hiking Guide (HG)

- All hiking and backcountry camping activities:
  - On and off trail
  - *1st* and *2nd class* travel including on rock and snow
- Terrain free of alpine hazards. Examples of alpine hazards include:
  - Areas of extensive rockfall hazard
  - *3rd/4th/5th class* terrain
  - Snow avalanches
  - Cornices
  - Icefall
  - Glacier travel

Supervision

- Hiking Guides may supervise the following:
  - Assistant Hiking Guides
  - Apprentice Alpine Guides while working within the Hiking Guide Scope of Practice

Assistant Hiking Guide (AHG)

- All activities listed above

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised by one of the following:
    - Institution
    - Hiking Guide
    - Alpine Guide
    - Mountain Guide

Institutional Supervision: Institutional Supervision is defined as a situation where primary supervision is provided by a company or institution that may or may not employ certified ACMG guides to act as supervising guides.

The institution provides permits and insurance and therefore assumes the responsibility and risk. To qualify, an institution must:

- Obtain their own insurance and permits
- Provide seasonal staff training including review of specific site management and protocols for acceptable trails, conditions and guide/client ratios
- Have written operational and risk management protocols for specific sites covering ratios, supervision of site and authority
- Have written communication protocols including scheduled check-ins, a list of phone numbers or radio frequencies and whom to contact in specific situations
- Have written first aid and emergency response protocols including minimum number and contents of first aid kits and an emergency call list
- Have documented check-in and briefing/ de-briefing protocols
- Recognize and adhere to the ACMG Scope of Practice for Assistant Hiking Guides

Day Hiking Guide (DHG)

- All day hiking activities:
    - On foot
    - On and off trail
    - *1st and 2nd class* travel including on rock and snow
- Terrain free of alpine hazards. Examples of alpine hazards include:
    - Areas of extensive rockfall hazard
    - *3rd/4th/5th class* terrain
    - Snow avalanches
    - Cornices
    - Icefall
    - Glacier travel

Supervision

- No supervision required
- Not qualified to supervise other members

Day Hiking Guide-Assistant Hiking Guide (combined certification)

Qualified to work unsupervised:

- All day hiking activities:
  - On foot
  - On and off trail
  - *1st and 2nd class* travel including on rock and snow
- Terrain free of alpine hazards. Examples of alpine hazards include:
  - Areas of extensive rockfall hazard
  - *3rd/4th/5th class* terrain
  - Snow avalanches
  - Cornices
  - Icefall
  - Glacier travel
- Not qualified to supervise other members

Qualified to work in a supervised or institutionally supervised setting:

- All overnight hiking activities:
  - On foot
  - On and off trail
  - *1st and 2nd class* travel including on rock and snow
- Terrain free of alpine hazards. Examples of alpine hazards include:
  - Areas of extensive rockfall hazard
  - *3rd/4th/5th class* terrain
  - Snow avalanches
  - Cornices
  - Icefall
  - Glacier travel
- Overnight hikes must be supervised by one of the following:
  - *Institution*
  - Hiking Guide
  - Alpine Guide
  - Mountain Guide

Winter Travel

Any of the above certifications, with the Winter Travel Accreditation

- Winter travel:
    - ATES class 1- Simple Terrain when Public Avalanche Bulletin rates danger as Low, Moderate or Considerable
    - Non-avalanche terrain when Public Avalanche Bulletin rates danger as High or Extreme
    - On foot or snowshoes
    - On cross country skis, with additional CANSI Level 1 Certificate. Terrain should be generally level where no downhill skiing techniques are required

Additional Activities

There are additional activities that the core training received by Hiking Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Day Hiking Guides addresses in a limited manner, but where supplementary knowledge and practice is required before accepting work in these pursuits.

The following are examples of activities that Hiking Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Day Hiking Guides are not specifically trained in but may be qualified to perform with additional personal experience and self-directed training:

- High altitude hiking involving trips with overnight stays above 3000 m in elevation (Does not apply to Day Hiking Guides)
- Hiking involving environments not covered in the training and certification process (e.g. deserts, tropical forests, intertidal zones)

Choosing appropriate objectives

Choosing appropriate objectives for Hiking Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Day Hiking Guides is usually straightforward. If the trip does not involve using hands to ascend or descend, significant exposure to a fall, and does not expose the group to alpine hazards as defined here, it is likely within the Hiking Guide's scope of practice.

Newly certified Hiking Guides and Assistant Hiking Guides should consider their own background before accepting work where they have lesser amounts of experience. This may include working in isolation in unfamiliar regions or countries, terrain or activities. In these environments they should consider working initially with other guides from whom they can learn the pertinent standard operating procedures.

More practiced guides may need to consider their more recent activities and experience to ensure they still meet standard operating procedure criteria for the work they are considering.

Examples of appropriate terrain for Hiking Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Day Hiking Guides:

Summer

- Mount Fairview- Rockies
- Ha-Ling Peak (West Side)- Rockies
- Flow Lake Rockwall- Rockies
- Traverse of Auyuittuq National Park- Baffin Island
- Skoki Lodge- Rockies
- Most trails in Glacier National Park

Winter

- Johnston Canyon- Rockies

Examples of inappropriate terrain for Hiking Guides:

Summer

- Moraine Lake to Lake O'Hara- Rockies
- Lady MacDonald (beyond tea house)- Rockies
- Yamnuska Traverse- Rockies
- Heart Mountain- Rockies

Winter

- Skoki Lodge- Rockies

Definitions of terms used in this section

- *Spring/summer/autumn conditions:*
    - Snow coverage, weather and ground conditions typical of the season.
- *Winter conditions:*
    - Snow coverage, weather and ground conditions typical of the season.
- *Alpine hazards:* in regards to Hiking Guides, includes one or more of the following –
    - Areas of extensive rockfall hazard
    - 3rd/4th/5th class terrain
    - Snow avalanches
    - Cornices
    - Icefall
    - Glacier travel

- *1st class:*
    - Terrain: low angled rock, snow or ice
    - Movement: walking
    - Fall possibility: none
    - Exposure/consequence: no exposure; may include a minimal chance of injury if a stumble occurs
    - Guiding techniques: coaching
    - Examples:
        - Most well-used hiking trails
        - Easy off-trail travel such as along a flat creek or flat snow
- *2nd class:*
    - Terrain: short sections of rougher, steeper and/or mildly exposed rock, snow or ice
    - Movement: rough walking; a few moves may require the use of hands or trekking pole for balance
    - Fall possibility: low
    - Exposure/consequence: May include low exposure to a short drop or a short sliding/tumbling fall; low chance of serious injury if a slip occurs
    - Guiding techniques may include: coaching; spotting
    - Examples:
        - Rough walking on a little-used trail
        - Rough off-trail walking such as boulder fields
        - A well-used, wide trail with good footing above a small cliff
        - A low angled snow slope (generally less than 15 degrees)
- *3rd class:*
    - Terrain: rock, snow or ice of generally moderate steepness; may include short, steeper steps generally less than one or two body lengths in height
    - Movement: climbing. Requires the use of hands or ice axe for balance; occasionally requires pulling on handholds or use of an ice axe to aid the ascent. Negligible upper-body effort or practiced climbing technique needed
    - Fall possibility: moderate, self arrest is likely with a little help from the rope
    - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, short sections of exposure to a fall. Serious injury or death may occur in the event of a fall.
    - Guiding techniques may include: coaching; spotting; moving together on a short rope; occasional short pitches; stances and body belays
    - Examples:
        - Snow slopes that are soft and/or low-angled enough where self-arrest is easily accomplished by a trained client
        - Ice or hard snow slopes where slope angle/surface roughness will stop a fall after a short distance
        - Most clients can downclimb 3rd class terrain

- *4th class:*
    - Terrain: generally more sustained, steeper rock snow or ice. May include short, very steep sections generally less than one or two body lengths in height
    - Movement: Climbing; requires pulling on handholds, plunging the ice axe in the snow, or swinging the pick of the ice axe to aid the ascent. Some upper-body effort and practiced climbing technique needed
    - Fall possibility: moderate, self arrest is unlikely – the guide would need to hold the fall
    - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, sustained sections of exposure to a long fall. Serious injury or death is likely to occur in the event of a fall.
    - Guiding techniques may include: short pitches; long pitches; anchors used for belaying
    - Examples:
        - Terrain where self-arrest by a client, or a guide holding a fall while moving together on a short rope is unlikely
        - Most clients can downclimb 4th class terrain
- *5th class:*
    - Terrain: generally very steep to vertical or overhanging terrain.
    - Movement: Climbing of increasing difficulty; requires pulling on handholds, plunging the ice axe in the snow, or swinging the pick of the ice axe to aid the ascent. Strenuous upper-body effort and specialized climbing techniques required, especially at the upper levels of the grade
    - Fall possibility: high, a rope is required to hold a fall
    - Exposure/consequence: exposure to sliding or tumbling, sustained sections of exposure to a long fall. Serious injury or death is likely to occur in the event of a fall.
    - Guiding techniques may include: short pitches; long pitches; anchors used for belaying; intermediate points of protection
    - Examples:
        - Terrain where downclimbing is difficult
        - Includes “M” grades for mixed climbing and ice grades of WI/AI 2 and greater

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Climbing Gym Instructor (CGI)

Climbing Gym Instructors
CGI's are qualified to instruct rock climbing on indoor and outdoor *artificial climbing walls* in both lead and top-rope scenarios.

Climbing Gym Instructor Level 1 (CGI 1)

- Instruction of rock climbing skills on artificial walls:
    - Introductory rock climbing movement skills
    - Instruction of top rope climbing skills

Supervision

- No supervision required
- Not eligible to supervise any other certifications

Climbing Gym Instructor Level 2 (CGI 2)

- Instruction of rock climbing skills on artificial walls:
    - Intermediate rock climbing movement skills
    - Instruction of top rope climbing skills
    - Instruction of bolt protected single pitch lead climbing skills

Supervision

- No supervision required
- Not eligible to supervise any other certifications

Climbing Gym Instructor 3 (CGI 3)

- Instruction of rock climbing skills on artificial walls:
    - Advanced rock climbing movement skills
    - Instruction of top rope climbing skills
    - Instruction of bolt protected single pitch lead climbing skills
    - *Experiential rappelling*
    - Gym management and advanced program development

Supervision

- No supervision required
- Not eligible to supervise any other certifications

Definitions of terms used in this section

- *Artificial climbing walls*: indoor or outdoor walls created specifically for rock climbing activities.
- *Experiential Rappelling*: Rappelling as a facilitated activity where little instruction is necessary for the client to participate.

Terrain, Activities and Supervision Qualifications

Top Rope Climbing Instructor (TRCI)

Primary Practice:
Conduct experiential rock climbing programs

Activities:
A TRCI can instruct and manage the following *experiential rock climbing* activities:

- Top rope climbing
- Rappelling
- Roped and un-roped movement lessons

Activity terrain:

- Top rope climbing on cliffs less than half the ropes length (generally < 30m)
- Rappels with bottom belay on cliffs less than half the ropes length (generally < 30m)
- Rappels with top belay on cliffs less than half the ropes length (generally < 30m)
- Un-roped movement lessons on terrain with smooth landing, good spotting and very short fall distance
- Climbs must allow for visual and verbal communication at all times

Activities area:

- Established instructional, top rope venue
- Approach via established trail on 1st or 2nd class terrain
- Minimal external hazard all of which can be easily managed or avoided
- No fall hazard for participants when they are not climbing
- Reliable direct communication (phone, radio) with supervisor and emergency services
- Easy and rapid access to venue by emergency services

Activity Rigging:

- Anchors use in-place bolts (3/8” or larger) or trees
- Accessed by instructors from below with lead belay and bolt protection
- Accessed by instructors from above via rappel, belay, fixed line or lower
- Unroped access by instructors via low risk, established approaches on 1st, 2nd or 3rd class terrain from above or below

Supervision

All TRCI activities must be supervised by an established institution (see **Institutional Supervision**) or; they must work under the Direct, Local or Remote supervision of an ACMG certified Rock, Alpine or Mountain Guide (see **Supervision Guidelines**)

Additional Activities:

Under **direct supervision** from a Mountain, Alpine or Rock Guide; TRCI's can assist in the instruction of *top rope climbing skill courses* (see **Direct Supervision**). It is important to note that TRCI's do not have access to the ACMG group permits for National and Provincial Parks. Guides and companies employing TRCI's must have their own business license, permit and insurance for the area where the work is to be completed.

Institutional Supervision:

Institutional Supervision is defined as a situation where primary supervision is provided by a company or institution that may or may not employ certified ACMG guides to act as supervising guides.

The institution provides permits and insurance and therefore assumes the responsibility and risk. To qualify, an institution must at a minimum have the following in place:

- Obtain its own insurance and permits
- Provide seasonal staff training including review of specific site management and protocols for acceptable routes, anchor type and construction, instructor/ student ratios
- Have written operational and risk management protocols for specific sites including instructor/ student ratios, supervision of site and authority
- Have written communication protocols including scheduled check-ins, a list of phone numbers or radio frequencies and whom to contact in specific situations
- Have written first aid and emergency response protocols including minimum contents and minimum number of first aid kits
- Have documented check-in and briefing/ de-briefing protocols
- Recognize and adhere to the ACMG Scope of Practice for TRCIs

Direct Supervision

Direct supervision is defined as a certified guide working directly alongside the TRCI in the field

Definitions of terms used in this section

- *Experiential Rock Climbing Activities*: These activities are generally short term (1/2 – 1 day) with the intention of giving the participants some exposure to outdoor climbing. Instruction is limited to belaying, rappelling and basic movement skills. This approach is common with camps and schools.
- *Top Rope Climbing Skills Course:* The intention of these courses is to teach the participants how to top rope climb on their own and may include instruction on building anchors. TRCIs may only participate in the instruction of this type of course under the direct supervision of a certified Rock, Alpine or Mountain Guide
- *Unroped movement session*: climbing close to the ground where spotting rather than ropes are used to safeguard the climber.
- *1st class*:
    - Walking with a low chance of injury if a fall occurs (e.g. most hiking trails or easy off-trail travel)
    - May include travel on snow
    - No exposure
- *2nd class*:
    - Walking on or off trail with minor exposure to a fall or where a few moves may require the use of hands or hiking poles for balance
    - A fall may result in minor injury (e.g. low likelihood of a free fall or a sliding/tumbling fall)
- *3rd class*:
    - Rock climbing requiring the use of hands for balance
    - The occasional use of hands to aid the ascent or descent (i.e. pulling on handholds)
    - Minimal upper-body effort or climbing technique required
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting or a rope may result in serious injury or death
- *4th class*:
    - Rock climbing with long sections requiring use of hands to aid the ascent or descent (i.e. pulling on handholds)
    - Basic climbing technique and minimum upper-body effort required
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting or a rope may result in serious injury or death

- *5th class*:
    - Rock climbing of increasing difficulty where, on longer sections of terrain, a guide usually begins to require belays/protection when leading or belays/protection and/or rappelling when descending
    - Strenuous upper-body effort and specialized climbing techniques required at the upper levels of the grade
    - Includes significant exposure where a fall unprotected by spotting or a rope may result in serious injury or death
- *Artificial climbing walls*: indoor or outdoor walls created specifically for rock climbing activities.

Supervision

Intent

Proper supervision is an important element in the development of all apprentice guides, Top Rope Climbing Instructors and Assistant Hiking Guides. As a largely judgment-based profession, the progression from *apprentice* guide to certified guide requires a great deal of training, coaching and mentorship. As apprentice guides work towards completing the certification, much of their learning should come in the form of proper supervision from experienced certified guides. Proper supervision is a critical factor in ensuring effective risk management when hiring and working with apprentice guides.

Apprentice guides have not yet completed the training and certification process. Although the training courses and exams offered by the Canadian Mountain and Ski Guide program at the Thompson Rivers University are a large part of this process, a significant amount of the development of an apprentice guide's experience, skill and judgment must come from proper supervision and mentorship at their place of work. The goal is not only to help them pass their next exam, but to help them gain the necessary experience to become a successful certified guide.

An additional and important goal is to ensure accountability for the actions of apprentice guides. In order to maintain the trust of the public, government and the guiding industry, it is necessary to ensure that there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability in the structure of the system.

Types of Supervision

Supervision may be achieved in many ways and the structure is designed to be dynamic and flexible. The requirements for supervision may vary greatly depending on many factors. These may include the apprentice guide's level of general experience and aptitude, knowledge of the route or area, severity and commitment level of terrain, current and forecast conditions, client experience and the apprentice guide's relationship with the supervising guide. All of these factors must be weighed when deciding what level of supervision is required.

Ultimately, the type of supervision employed must be that which is best suited for helping apprentice guides learn new skills and gain experience while maintaining high level of safety and satisfaction for the client.

Apprentice guides may work under the supervision of several different certified guides at the same time and throughout their career.

Direct Supervision: Direct supervision is defined as a certified guide working directly alongside the apprentice guide in the field.

Apprentice guides must document, in their field book, a minimum of 10 days of guiding (not instructional) work under direct or local supervision in their certification stream before they are able to work under remote supervision within that stream. The signature of the supervising guide must accompany this documentation. The apprentice and the supervisor should view this as an important time and opportunity for meaningful feedback and coaching.

Direct supervision should also be used when hiring an apprentice guide to assist on more committing and complex objectives.

Local Supervision: Local Supervision is defined as working in the same general area as the apprentice in the field. This could mean that the supervising guide and apprentice guide are on different routes or mountains but can communicate easily via radio or phone during the day, and have face-to-face meetings before and/or after the day is complete.

This type of supervision should be undertaken when the supervising guide is familiar with the apprentice guide's abilities and confident in their ability to guide the objective in question without direct supervision. Local supervision is particularly appropriate when changeable conditions and/or moderately complex objectives make it important to have daily, face-to-face meetings to discuss terrain, techniques and conditions.

Remote Supervision: Remote Supervision occurs when the apprentice guide is working on his or her own at a location away from where the supervising guide is located. Remote supervision is a significant step away from direct and local supervision. Many serious considerations must be made before hiring an apprentice guide to work under remote supervision, in particular, the complexity and commitment level of the terrain.

The following criteria must be considered when using this type of supervision:

- Supervising guide is familiar with area
- Apprentice is familiar with the area
- Apprentice has attended a staff training or worked directly in the field with supervising guide
- Terrain is limited in complexity with low commitment or apprentice has extensive training and experience in the specific piece of terrain
- Varying conditions will not significantly change hazard or low risk options exist nearby
- There is a documented discussion prior to the trip about: conditions, weather, emergency protocols, objective and client(s)

- In potential avalanche conditions, it is possible for the apprentice and supervisor to have documented communication about conditions and objectives at least every second day by phone or radio
- In Complex avalanche terrain, consideration should be given to whether the apprentice guide has completed the CAA Level 1 or Level 2 training program.
- The duration of the trip is no greater than 5 consecutive days in typical summer or melt/freeze conditions without concerns for persistent weak layers, deep instabilities or the objective is in non avalanche terrain.
- The duration of the trip is no greater than 3 consecutive days in potentially changeable or complex avalanche conditions (regardless of season)

It may also be appropriate to use remote supervision when the apprentice is teaching **instructional courses** or **schools** in recognized training areas. These areas are commonly used by ACMG members and have minimal objective hazard, easy access, communication and emergency response should a rescue be required. Remote Supervision can be used for up to seven days in these areas.

Institutional Supervision: Institutional Supervision is defined as a situation where supervision is provided by a company or institution that may not employ recognized ACMG supervising guides. This type of supervision can only be used for Top Rope Climbing Instructors and Assistant Hiking Guides.

The institution provides permits and insurance and therefore assumes the responsibility and risk. To qualify, an institution must:

- Obtain its own insurance and permits
- Provide seasonal staff training including review of specific site/ trail management and protocols
- Have written operational and risk management protocols
- Have written communication protocols
- Have written first aid and emergency response protocols
- Recognize and adhere to the ACMG Scope of Practice for TRCIs and/or Assistant Hiking Guides

Please see the TRCI and Hiking Guide Qualifications documents for more details.

Who Must Work Under Supervision

All ACMG Apprentice Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Top Rope Climbing Instructors must work under supervision for all activities they undertake.

Who May Provide Supervision

Any certified ACMG or IFMGA guide may supervise apprentice guides who are working in the stream in which they are qualified to work and in terrain familiar to the supervising guide. For Example, an ACMG Rock Guide may supervise an Apprentice Rock Guide or Top Rope Climbing Instructor but may not supervise an Apprentice Ski Guide. Please refer to the Scope of Practice- Qualifications document for details of which certifications are qualified to supervise which types of apprentice guides.

Newly certified guides acting as *Managing Guides* should gain at least 2 seasons of experience in their certification before taking on the greater responsibilities of remote supervision or being the sole supervisor responsible for several apprentice guides. It is important for new, certified guides to focus on gaining experience in their field before accepting the role of mentor, coach and supervisor.

This does not apply to *lead guides* in larger operations but is an important consideration when working independently without the advantage of having other, more experienced guides involved in the decision-making process.

Responsibilities, Accountability and Expectations

Supervising Guide's Responsibilities:

The supervising guide is ultimately responsible for the safety of the groups being guided by the apprentice and can be held legally liable for their actions. This is a critical element of risk management and the role must be taken seriously. The supervising guide must be confident that they are employing the correct level of supervision and that the apprentice guide will work within what would be considered common practices of certified guides.

There is no requirement for funds to be exchanged for the relationship to be legitimate but, in all types of supervision, all preparatory meetings, daily guide meetings and communications between apprentice and supervisor must be documented.

Although the terms supervision, coaching and mentorship are often used synonymously, they must be considered separate. Coaching and mentorship are considered desirable elements of supervision but it is important to note that the first responsibility of the supervising guide is to ensure the apprentice is working within his/her scope of practice and personal abilities.

Apprentice Guide's Responsibilities:

Apprentice guides share the responsibility for the safety of the group as well as ensuring that they are working within what would be considered common practice for professional guides and their scope of practice. This includes communicating with their supervisor, documenting meetings and seeking feedback from more experienced guides.

It is also the apprentice guide's responsibility to ensure that they are working within the ACMG Supervision Guidelines regardless of their supervisor's desires. If in doubt, ask your supervisor, peers or the Technical Director for clarification.

Supervising Practicums

Practicums are an important part of the development of guides and instructors and are a requirement for application to some CMSG programs. Practicum students who are already apprentice guides in the stream under which they are participating in a practicum may undertake all activities as described in their scope of practice while under supervision.

Students who are not apprentices in the stream under which they are participating must not take on any responsibilities or activities for which the supervising guide cannot immediately take complete control. In this situation, supervising guides must not have more clients than they can manage on their own.

Documentation

It has long been considered common practice for guides working for larger guiding operations to document their observations of weather and conditions as well as the hazards they anticipate encountering during the day in some format of a guide meeting form. Although there is no requirement for funds to change hands for the apprentice/supervisor relationship to be official, there is a legal expectation that this information will be recorded and saved as proof that the meetings and discussion took place.

Examples of Appropriate Terrain

The following examples are meant to describe the upper limit of what is considered acceptable supervision with experienced apprentice guides working in familiar terrain with a supervisor who is familiar with their experience and skills.

Objectives requiring Direct Supervision

- First ten days of *guiding* (non instructional) work
- Mount Robson (all routes)
- Mount Waddington (all routes)
- Bugaboos, Beckey-Chouinard
- Athabasca Glacier approach to Mount Columbia

Objectives and areas that may be appropriate for Local Supervision

- Most objectives in the Bugaboos (outside of Crescent Basin)
- Most routes on Mount Athabasca and Mount Andromeda
- Multi-pitch rock climbing in Ghost River
- Nemesis, Polar Circus
- Mount Victoria
- Mount Columbia
- Most trips in Rogers Pass in winter

Objectives and areas that may be appropriate for Remote Supervision

- Bow Hut area (as an instructional area)
- Athabasca- Lower North Glacier (instructional area)
- Wasootch, Back of the Lake
- Yamnuska, Kid Goat
- Squamish
- Some objectives around Cerise Creek/ Keith's Hut
- Bow Summit

Definitions of terms used in this document

Supervision: Supervision is the act in which a certified guide takes responsibility for the actions of an apprentice guide who is working in the field.

Apprentice Guide: Apprentice guides have not yet completed their training and certification in a given stream. They have, extensive personal experience, received intensive training and demonstrated a high level of skill and decision making on the apprentice exam and need to further develop their skills as guides under the supervision of certified guides. An apprentice guide may be a certified guide in another stream but when working within the scope of practice of their apprentice certification, must work under supervision.

Certified Guide: Certified guides have successfully completed the formal training and certification for their given stream/s and may work without supervision within their scope of practice. Previously referred to as “full guide”.

Lead Guide: In the context of this document, lead guides are certified guides who are in charge of daily operations in the field. They are part of a broader decision making framework within an operation that employs other certified guides.

Managing Guide: A managing guide is any certified guide who is working independently, or is the senior guide responsible for an operation while hiring and managing apprentice guides. The managing guide may be the sole person responsible for the supervision of an apprentice guide at any one time.

Coaching: Coaching is an important element of supervision and an integral part of the progression from apprentice to full guide. Almost all levels of supervision should include some formal feedback either during the day or at the end of the trip.

Mentorship: Mentorship is a very important component in an apprentice guide’s development and can be an important part of supervision. Mentorship can include all of the elements of coaching in addition to a more long term, big picture involvement in the development of the apprentice guide’s career. It is important to note that supervision and mentorship are not the same and are often provided exclusive of each other.

Cross Certification

Cross certification is defined as a situation where:

- An ACMG guide or instructor is a member in at least two different ACMG *streams*
- An ACMG member holds one certification in the Mountain *stream* and an apprenticeship for a second certification in that *stream*
- An ACMG member holds a certificate from a different organization in a related field

ACMG members may be subject to multiple scopes of practice due to cross certification. As a result they may need guidance when deciding what work is appropriate, and under what circumstances. This document addresses some of these issues but it is the responsibility of the member to contact the Technical Director if there is uncertainty.

ACMG members have an obligation to protect the public interest by working within their scope of practice. The policies and examples in this document support that obligation.

Cross Certification within the ACMG

Examples of ACMG cross certification include:

- An ACMG member who is *certified* in one stream and holds an apprenticeship for a different certification within the same *stream*.
- An ACMG member who is certified in different *streams* within the ACMG

Issue
ACMG cross certification requires policy in order to clarify confusion created by potentially combining the scopes of practice of more than one *stream*, which could be construed as broadening the scope of practice of the member in question.
In each of the following scenarios, the trip lies outside the scope of practice of each individual *certificate*, although in some instances the member could work on the trip with proper supervision.

- A Ski Guide who is also an Apprentice Alpine Guide may not use his/her combined qualifications to guide the Bugaboos-Rogers Pass Traverse via the Deville Headwall. This scenario would require *direct supervision* from a Mountain Guide.
- A Ski Guide who is also an Apprentice Alpine Guide may not use his/her combined qualifications to guide Mt Columbia without proper supervision from a Mountain Guide. This could be *direct, local* or *remote supervision*, depending on the experience of the guide in question and his/her relationship with the supervising guide.

- A Rock Guide who is also a Ski Guide may not use his/her combined qualifications to travel across a glacier in summer conditions to access a rock climb.
- A Hiking Guide who also holds the Top Rope Climbing Instructor certification may not use his/her combined certifications to access a remote climbing site.

Policy

ACMG members who are apprentices or who hold certifications in different *streams* within the ACMG may operate freely within the respective scopes of practice of each *stream*. However, multiple scopes of practice must be interpreted separately and may not be combined.

Cross Certification with other organizations in related fields

ACMG members are responsible for client safety in a variety of outdoor environments and on climbing walls. Other organizations also provide training and *certificates* in the same or similar fields. Some examples of organizations where an ACMG member may hold cross certification of this type include:

- Canadian Ski Guide Association (CSGA)
- Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA)
- Society of Professional Rope Access Technicians (SPRAT)

Issue
The scope of practice of these organizations may conflict with the ACMG member's scope of practice.

Policy
Cross certification between the ACMG and organizations with mandates in similar fields pose no conflicts as long as ACMG members work within the scopes of practice of both organizations. If there is doubt or conflict, priority must be placed on following the ACMG scope of practice. It is important that ACMG members not misrepresent themselves in these situations. For example, if an ACMG Alpine Guide is also a CSGA Ski Guide, he/she must not refer to him/herself as an ACMG Guide while working in the role of a Ski Guide. It is the responsibility of the member to contact the ACMG Technical Director as well as the other organization if there may be a potential conflict.

CSGA certifications
The CSGA trains and examines their guides to lead clients in uncontrolled alpine terrain in a mechanized ski guiding environment. The ACMG recognizes CSGA *certificates* and allows ACMG members who also hold a CSGA *certificate* to work within their CSGA scope of practice.

CAA certificates
The CAA Industry Training Program does not train or assess its students in the management of clients in uncontrolled alpine terrain. Therefore, unless the CAA *certificate* is used to manage personnel who also have some level of professional-level training, it is not appropriate for ACMG members to use their CAA *certificate* as a means to manage people in uncontrolled alpine terrain unless it is within their ACMG scope of practice.

Canadian Avalanche Centre (CAC) Avalanche Safety Training (AST) course providers
CAA Level 1 and Level 2 graduates are able to register through the CAC to offer AST1 and AST 2 courses. ACMG members undertaking this role must work within their ACMG scope of practice while doing so. Unless the CAA *certificate* is used solely to manage students in controlled terrain such as a ski area, it is not appropriate for ACMG members to use a CAA *certificate* as a means to manage AST students in uncontrolled terrain unless it is within their ACMG scope of practice.

SPRAT certifications
The relevant work of people with a SPRAT *certificate* includes outdoor, high angle activities in the natural environment. Rope access work on buildings and other physical structures is not relevant to this document.

Although these certificates may include some client safety training, it is not to the same standard as the ACMG climbing certifications. Therefore it is not appropriate for ACMG members to use a SPRAT *certificate* as a means to manage clients during outdoor activities in the natural environment unless it is within their ACMG scope of practice.

Variances

Occasionally ACMG members or their employers may find themselves in a situation where working outside the scope of practice is difficult to avoid. The ACMG is cognizant of these situations and, if asked, will consider issuing a variance to the member or employer so that, in a defined situation, they may work outside of the scope of practice in question.

Variances are subject to the following:

- They must be approved by the Technical Committee
- The applicant must demonstrate a need that is not able to be fulfilled without a variance
- They are subject to a timeline after which they will be reviewed
- They may include conditions for supervision and specific training requirements
- They will be listed on the ACMG website; the posting will include the variance conditions, timelines and other relevant details

Definitions used in this section

Program: The Canadian Mountain and Ski Guide Program (CMSG) at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) delivers training, apprentice and certificate courses in three separate programs. Climbing Instructor Program (CGI 1,2 and 3; TRCI), Hiking Guide Program and Mountain Guide Program (rock, ski and alpine certificates).

Stream: ACMG membership is divided into three certification streams. Hiking Guide, Climbing Instructor (CGI 1,2 and 3; TRCI) and Mountain Guide (rock, ski and alpine certifications).

Certificate: Someone who has successfully completed a *program* receives a certificate. The CMSG issues certificates for CGI 1, 2 and 3; TRCI; Assistant Hiking Guide; Hiking Guide; Rock Guide; Alpine Guide; and Ski Guide. Apprentice Guides do not receive a certificate.

Certification: A certificate in combination with ACMG membership (CPD, Scope of Practice, Code of Conduct) results in certification. See the *Certification Terminology* document.

Certified: Describing someone who has received certification through the ACMG.

Direct, local and remote supervision: See the *Supervision* document.