



**JUSTICE
INSTITUTE**
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Organized Avalanche Response - Team Leader

Course Description: The Organized Avalanche Response Team Leader course provides participants with the skills necessary to work effectively and safely as a team leader during an organized rescue in avalanche terrain. The course focuses on go-no-go decision making criteria, different aspects of communications with team, base and other outside resources involved, ongoing collection of weather data and the use of hasty pits and stability analysis. Navigation in mountainous terrain and varying weather conditions including route finding, route flagging and track setting are also discussed. Participants are exposed and assessed on their leadership skills and ability to respond safely and effectively as a team leader in mock scenarios. The 4-day course, one quarter classroom based and three quarters in the field, is demanding and intended for Search and Rescue volunteers who will be acting in a leadership capacity.

Upon successful completion, the participant will be able to:

- Work effectively and safely as a team leader traveling in avalanche terrain
- Follow and/or develop safe route plans before leaving staging area
- Flag safe routes through avalanche terrain
- Communicate efficiently and effectively all relevant observations and data to base
- Gather relevant snow pack and weather data
- Analyze collected data and relay to base
- Lead and participate in avalanche rescue scenarios

Prerequisites: Participants must be a member of an EMBC recognized SAR group and have completed EMRG-1700 (formerly SAR100) Ground Search & Rescue and EMRG-1751 (formerly SAR500 or SAR151) OARTM courses. Participants should:

- Have strong map and compass skills
- Have strong radio communications skills
- Be a experienced backcountry winter travellers with own gear
- Be physically fit, capable of travelling at least 10km and elevation gain of at least 800m per day
- Be proficient at locating multiple buried beacons

Costs: Participant course fees are covered by BCSAR and EMBC for eligible SAR members. Students are responsible for arranging their own travel, meals and accommodations.

Students from WITHIN the course region, may apply for travel reimbursement through BCSARA upon submission of an [expense reimbursement form](#). Mileage is reimbursed at \$0.52 per km for student from within the course region, and CARPOOLING is strongly encouraged. Your efforts to carpool will help BCSARA manage the travel expenses more efficiently.

Mileage reimbursements for out-of-region students, MUST be pre-approved by your BCSARA Regional Director and are considered on an individual basis. Contact your Regional Director directly for details. If you do not know who your Regional Director is, contact sarsupport@bcsara.com. For general BCSARA inquiries/comments, contact vice-president@bcsara.com.

Personal Equipment List: The following is a minimum list of personal equipment that should be brought by each participant in addition to any SAR gear and/or team gear that would normally be brought on a winter mountain call-out (first-aid kits, emergency packs, extra food/clothing, shelter, etc.).

- Backpack large enough to hold all equipment plus some extra (approx. 30-40 litres)
- Mountain jacket with hood – waterproof/breathable fabric
- Outer pants – waterproof/breathable fabric (non-insulated full zip pants are preferred)
- Personal clothing for all weather – layering works well, no cotton
- Gloves – wool or synthetic (1 pair plus 1 extra pair)
- Overmitts (1 pair)
- Gaiters to fit over boots (1 pair)
- Warm jacket or sweater – wool or fleece, no cotton
- Toque – wool or fleece
- Hat with sun visor (baseball cap, etc.)
- Sunglasses with 100% UV protection (1 pair)
- Sunscreen
- Ski goggles (1 pair)
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Water bottle (3 litre)
- Compass and map in waterproof bag
- Waterproof note pad and pencil
- Knife
- Matches or lighter
- Avalanche Rescue Shovel
- Avalanche Rescue Transceiver
- Avalanche Rescue Probe

- Snow Profile Equipment
- Route Marking wands and survey tape
- Emergency Signaling Device – Whistle, Mirror, Flare
- Equipment Repair Kit

Method of travel: (Must be experienced in the use of the equipment!)

- Skis for backcountry touring - alpine touring or Nordic, must be metal-edged
- Climbing skins for skis
- Appropriate boots (must be suitable for use in deep snow conditions without skis)
- Ski poles

OR

- Snowshoes - must have crampons for travel in icy conditions
- Appropriate boots (must be suitable for use in all conditions without snowshoes)
- Ski poles

All participants will be required to have the capabilities to ski or snowboard downhill.