



# Avalanche Canada Sled Mentorship Program Information Sheet

## Goal

Avalanche Canada recognizes the challenges for emerging sled-based avalanche professionals to access mentorship opportunities similar to those available to their ski-based counterparts.

This program aims to provide avalanche industry mentorship to select snowmobilers interested in professional level avalanche practice.

## Strengths and limitations

Avalanche Canada forecasters and field techs have expertise to share in areas such as data collection, snow study, hazard analysis, risk mitigation, risk communication, and avalanche forecasting. However, we are not snowmobile guides and don't have unlimited time for mentorship during the busy operational season.

With this in mind, our mentorship program will focus on sharing knowledge in specific areas that are strengths for AvCan and known to be challenging for sledders entering the avalanche industry. Applicants need to accept there will be some holes in what Avalanche Canada can provide with the resources available and time allotted. Participants are expected to seek other mentorship, training, internship, or employment opportunities beyond this program.

## Location

This program will be run by our field teams in the South Rockies, based out of Fernie, BC; and the North Rockies, based out of McBride and Prince George.

## Two way street

Avalanche Canada recognizes that some of the best relationships have mutual benefits where both parties have opportunities for reinforcement.

### What is in it for the sledders?

- Interact with professional members of the Canadian Avalanche Association, some of whom are instructors in the CAA's Industry Training Program.
- Gain familiarity with professional hazard analysis, trip planning, and InfoEx.
- Have opportunities to practice collecting professional-level field weather, avalanche, and snowpack observations, with feedback from experienced avalanche professionals.
- Develop and strengthen relationships within the professional avalanche community.
- Get AvCan swag (e.g., sweatshirt, ballcap) upon completing the program as a token of appreciation.

### What is in it for AvCan?

- Broaden relationships, create goodwill, and give back to the snowmobile community.
- Aid in developing avalanche safety influencers who can act as role models within their snowmobile communities.
- Help develop professionals within the snowmobile community for future job opportunities with AvCan.
- Help train sled-based avalanche professionals who will then be qualified to teach Avalanche Canada Training courses.
- Promote the MIN in sled culture, and get more MIN posts for our forecasters
- Testing MIN features that may appeal more to aspiring professionals and high-end recreationists.

### Sledders applying to the program need:

- CAA Avalanche Operations Level 1 (in some cases AST 2 might be considered) or be signed up for this course.
- Sledders with a CAA Level 2 may also consider applying if working towards CAA professional membership
- Two references
- Professional grade transceiver, shovel, and probe
- Your own sled and truck for transportation
- A willingness to sign a contract that outlines the expectations for mentor and mentee
- Curiosity and openness to feedback for professional development

## Office Based Opportunities

Participation in some morning and afternoon meetings are integral to this program. Some remote (online) meetings will also be used to help us keep in touch with mentees who are not able to attend multiple in-person meetings due to geography, or other commitments. Mentees should expect to attend AvCan meetings at least twice per month. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Professional-level hazard analysis and trip planning
- InfoEx familiarity

- Feedback on field obs that have been posted to the MIN
- Feedback on risk communication

## On-site opportunities

AvCan will provide limited in-person mentorship. Mentees must commit to a minimum of one field day per month. The field days will focus on:

- Professional level rescue practice
- Field weather and avalanche observations
- Snow craft and snowpack tests
- Matching terrain use with avalanche hazard
- Risk communication for public and professional audiences

## Mentees will be required to provide

- Three MIN posts with photos a month
- MIN posts in all four categories (quick, avalanche, snowpack, and weather)
- One snow profile a month uploaded to snowpilot
- Sharing of eight of AvCan social media posts on their personal or business accounts over the winter
- Feedback about the program at the end of the season

We only have room for a few people to enrol this season. If the program is successful, it may be rolled out on a larger scale in the future. It is very important to review the requirements and be honest about your ability to commit to this program, in both time and motivation. Being selected and not completing the program will mean someone else did not get an opportunity.

If you have any questions about the program, please email [jcoulter@avalanche.ca](mailto:jcoulter@avalanche.ca).

To apply for this opportunity, [click here](#).

Thank you for your interest!

Jennifer Coulter,  
Avalanche Canada