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Alpine Club of Canada  
Edmonton Section  
**EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN POLICY**

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Occasionally, trips sanctioned by the Edmonton Section may have a relatively higher potential for incidents along with additional difficulty arranging for rescue, or carrying out a self-rescue. These situations can increase the risk to all involved if emergency response is not effectively planned for.

In order to mitigate this risk, the Safety Committee may require a written Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to help reduce the potential consequences of an incident on a trip.

The following policy provides key definitions, ERP triggering criteria and minimum submission content, and guidelines for ERP communication and documentation. A blank ERP form is also attached

### **Definitions**

**Camp:** Multi-day (at least 4 days) trip which is based in one central location, where the role of the trip coordinator is primarily logistical, and the participants are expected or allowed to conduct their own activities or plans within the context of the camp. The trip coordinator is often called the camp coordinator.

**Course:** A trip of any length which is primarily instructional in purpose, and where the participants are in a learning role. The trip coordinator may be a participant in the course, or an instructor.

**Emergency:** Any abnormal event which threatens the life, or limb, of a participant, trip coordinator, or a member of a public through the course of a Section activity.

**Emergency Response Plan (ERP):** A written document which outlines the location, leadership, communication, and rescue resources of a trip in an emergency event.

**Participant:** A participant is a person who has signed on to the trip waiver, and is present during the backcountry activities.

**Trip Coordinator:** A participant who is responsible for administering the trip waiver, and may provide logistical, leadership, instructional, decision making or rescue support during a trip.

**Trip:** Any event listed on the club trip schedule.

## Requirement for An ERP

An ERP may be requested by the Safety Committee from the Trip Coordinator when the trip is located outside of an urban area and at least one of the following conditions are met:

1. Based on an assessment by the Safety Committee of:
  - a. the ratio of participants to coordinators; or
  - b. the risk of the activity; or
  - c. a combination of the preceding factors.
2. Trips where:
  - a. The trip location is not accessible by personal vehicle for multiple days; and,
  - b. The trip location does not have cell service or reliable VHF radio coverage.
3. Camps where:
  - a. The camp location is not accessible by personal vehicle for multiple days; and,
  - b. The camp is not supervised, or otherwise lead, by a qualified ACMG/IFMGA guide within their guide:client ratio.
4. Courses where:
  - a. The course is not supervised, or otherwise lead, by a qualified ACMG/IFMGA guide within their guide:client ratio; and,
  - b. The coordinator:participant ratio exceeds 1:5; or the course exceeds more than 10 total people; or
  - c. Any instance where participants do not have the necessary skills to effect a rescue in the terrain they are being instructed on.

## Content for an ERP

An ERP should contain sufficient information so that trip coordinators and participants understand who to turn to, and what to do, in an emergency. At the least, an ERP should define:

1. **Designate Person(s)-in-Charge:** In the event of an emergency, the person-in-charge should be identified in the ERP. This is likely to be the Trip Coordinator, but may be any participant who is sufficiently qualified and experienced. It may need to identify rope leaders, or alternative designates in the event that the Person-in-Charge is incapacitated.
2. **Means of Communication:** In the event of an emergency, the process of communicating between parties, and for emergency assistance should be identified.
3. **Rescue Contact Information:** Location of the nearest hospital, and contact information necessary for rescue services or helicopter extraction.
4. **Qualified Rescue or First Aid Persons:** Persons qualified to perform first aid, or rescue should be identified.
5. **Identify Pertinent Hazards of the Trip:** Hazards common or specific to the trip activity should be identified; however, there is no expectation that this is an exhaustive list to replace judgement, experience, or mountain sense.
6. **Mitigation:** Planned mitigations to the hazards identified above.

## **Briefing & Posting**

When an ERP is required, it may be necessary to brief either the participants or other rope team leaders on the trip about the contents. This may be delivered during the trip waiver process, or on the first day of the trip, or no more than one day before the first trip date.

For a trip or camp, it may only be necessary to brief the other rope team leaders. For a course, trip, or camp without designated leadership, it may be necessary to brief all participants.

A copy of the ERP should be made available to participants by either posting it in a central location or making a limited number of copies available to some participants (such that it is unlikely there will be no rope teams without copies if necessary).

## **Limitations**

Nothing in the ERP should be construed to limit trip participants, coordinators, rope team leaders, or professional rescuers from effecting the necessary measures to respond to an emergency.

<b>Trip Name</b>			
<b>Trip Dates</b>		<b>Trip Coordinator(s) or Rope Team Leaders</b>	
<b>Trip Objective or Location</b>			
<b>Designated Person(s)-in-Charge</b>			
<b>Means of Communication (type, location, any necessary instruction)</b>			
<b>Rescue Contact Information and Nearest Hospital</b>			
<b>List Persons Qualified to Provide Rescue or First Aid</b>			
<b>Pertinent Trip Hazards</b>			
<b>Hazard Mitigation</b>			