

Verbal Presentation to WorkSafeBC

June 3, 2008

Scott Davis – ACMG President

- Good Afternoon. My name is Scott Davis and I'm the president of the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides – the ACMG.
- I am here today on behalf of workers, specifically Professional Guides who's workplace involves avalanche risk^{O.N.P.} daily basis. My comments pertain to the Amendments in Part 4 General Conditions regarding Avalanche Assessment,
- I am thankful for the opportunity to speak with you today as well as for all the effort that WorkSafeBC has put into reworking these amendments in the name of increased worker safety.
- WorkSafeBC and the ACMG share a great deal of common ground with respect to safety – ensuring the highest possible safety standards for guides and their clients is paramount for us. Indeed, it is the fundamental premise of the rigorous training and assessment that guides undergo.
- The ACMG has been in existence since 1963 and currently has over 600 members many that work as Ski and Alpine guides in BC's mountains. As an accountable and responsible organization, we set standards for the practice of mountain guiding related activities and define its scope for our members.
- As a professional association of trained and certified guides and instructors, we are also internationally recognized as leaders in the area of backcountry safety.
- At last years Public Hearings we supported WSBC initiative to manage avalanche risk in the BC workplace but voiced our concerns over proposed regulations as they were presented at that time. We thank WSBC for deciding to consider more stakeholder feedback before enacting regulations on this matter.

- I commend both WSBC and George Matheson as well as the CAA and Clair Israelson for their efforts to facilitate this process and appreciate the inclusion of the ACMG in these discussions.
- We are in general agreement with the March 2008 version of the proposed regulations and feel that this will improve worker safety for the wilderness operations in which our members work.
- As a professional association, the ACMG takes its duties around accountability very seriously. We have worked hard to meet the best practices of a regulated body. We are pleased to see this recognized in the current wording of the new Regulations.
- We will be adopting the training and experiential requirements developed in conjunction with the CAA into our Terrain and Professional guidelines at our AGM this fall.
- We are also committed to continuing our participation as a major stakeholder in the development of any guidance for avalanche risk assessments or safety plans that pertain to wilderness operations.
- While we are in general agreement with the current version of the proposed amendments, we suggest that a 5 year review of wilderness safety plans by a QAP will suffice given the daily nature of its implementation rather than the 3 years currently proposed.
- My other concern regards the implementation date of these regulations. There is still considerable work to do in organizing the agreed upon framework for these safety plans as well as a limited number of professionals that will qualify and or be interested in this particular work.
- Therefore I urge the board to consider a minimum of 1 year for industry to complete these avalanche safety plans and to

consider a grace period of an additional year to the fall of 2010 for those that cannot complete it by fall 2009.

- I feel that this will give people enough time to develop high quality plans that fully address any concerns for worker safety
- In closing I would like to commend WSBC once again for pursuing a collaborative approach as a means to improving worker safety and for creating this opportunity for comment.