

Canadian Motorized Backcountry Guides Association

Course Outline

Level 3 - Lead Guide

Winter 2024

DESCRIPTION

This is an advanced snowmobile guiding exam. Participants will be expected to be competent in the topics covered on the Assistant Guide training course. This includes: risk management, navigation, rescue, travel techniques, terrain selection, guiding techniques and emergency procedures.

The exam will assess all the topics covered during the training course. Participants will be assessed as they take turns guiding the group.

NOTE: This is a shortened training and certification process based on an elevated level of participant expertise.

COURSE/LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this course, the students will be able to:

- Conduct AM and PM hazard assessment meetings
 - Prepare daily route plans.
- Use a variety of field tests for assessing snow stability and hazard.
- Apply navigation skills in the field. (Map, compass and GPS)
- Apply route finding and track setting skills to ensure group safety and enjoyment.
- Apply snowmobile guiding leadership principles.
- Rescue a person from a treewell, embankment or creek.
 - Rappel, belay, ascend a rope, raise (2:1, 3:1, 6:1), lower
- Improvise transportation of an injured rider.
- Rig a dead sled for heli and trail evacuation.
- Demonstrate winter living skills
- Maintain a high level of professionalism

PREREQUISITES

CAA Level 2 Operations, 80-hour first aid

Participants must submit a resume of experience.

Participants must have significant personal winter mountain travel expertise in complex terrain. They should already be working for a guiding operation, with a minimum of two seasons and 100 days working with guests.

Technical skills should include – ropework (rappel, ascend a rope, raise a victim using mechanical advantage), map and compass navigation.

Applications will be reviewed based on:

Backcountry riding experience in a leadership role in a variety of regions and snowpacks. This is the most heavily weighted application element.

Snowmobile/Avalanche industry experience. Some examples include:

Guiding / tail guiding /apprenticeship / practicum

Avalanche control/forecasting

Avalanche course instruction

Riding camps

Other relevant mountain or outdoor experience. Some examples include:

- *Other guiding/instructional experience*
- *CAA certificates*
- *ACMG certificates*
- *CSGA certificates*
- *Mountain programs from educational institutions or guiding companies*
- *Rope rescue training / certificates*

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Snowmobile in good working order

See Guide's Pack content list

EVALUATION

See Assessment Rubrics for details

There are eight assessment categories. All categories must be passed to pass the exam.

Movement skills

Rescue skills

Hazard management

Navigation

Terrain travel

Winter living skills

Leadership

Professionalism

DAILY PROCESS

Guidelines for Candidate Leads

- Brief the candidate group at the end of the PM Meeting as to the destination, goals, expectations, and leading assignments for the following day.
- Assign the Lead role. This person will be guiding the group at the start of the day.
 - Responsibilities of the Lead
 - Prepare the group for departure
 - Complete pre-departure checks/briefing
 - Lead out from the lodge
 - Navigation and route selection
 - Hazard management
 - Communication
 - Changes of travel techniques
 - Pacing, stops and regroup
- The other candidates will take the role of highly capable participants/guests.
 - When in this role
 - Let the leader (guide) lead.
 - Be a good guest.
 - Remain vigilant regarding risk management.
 - Only speak up if the leader's terrain selection / risk management compromises group safety.
- Inform the other candidates where and when they will take over the lead.
- The examiner will generally follow right behind the leader (second in line)
 - Continually assess the leader candidate's comfort level, ability relative to the assignment, and situational awareness.
 - If the situation requires examiner input
 - If it is an emergency
 - Take over immediately
 - If a discussion is needed
 - Gather the group
 - Ensure clear communication
 - This may require sleds off, helmets off

Daily Debrief (1-1.5 hours)

- Setting – Travel group, quiet, no distractions
- Process – Sequentially through each lead
- Discussion items
 - Describe the lead (from A to B)

- Identify critical decision points
- Decision process used
- Achievement of learning outcomes
- Insight from instructors
- CAA PM Form Questions
 - How did you address avalanche and travel risk in the terrain?
 - When were you most exposed today, what were the consequences?
 - Were you too aggressive or too conservative for the given conditions and operational risk band?
 - Describe how your group managed problem terrain to reduce risk.
 - Did any human factors influence our plan today?
 - Could we have better managed the team?
 - Did we consider the whole team, other contributing factors, teamwork?
 - Are there any factors affecting your teams plan tomorrow that you need to consider?
 - What key concepts did I learn today?
 - What did I do today that promoted my learning and focus; and what can I do differently tomorrow to better retain concepts and gain knowledge?