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Supervision of Apprentice Guides, Assistant Hiking Guides and Top-Rope Climbing Instructors

This document is intended to help members of the public understand the professional requirements for the proper supervision of ACMG members who have not yet completed their certification or are Top-Rope Climbing Instructors. ACMG members should refer to the complete Scope of Practice found on the ACMG member site for more details.

Proper supervision is an important element in the development of all apprentice guides, Top-Rope Climbing Instructors and Assistant Hiking Guides. As a largely judgment-based profession, the progression from *apprentice* guide to certified guide requires a great deal of training, coaching and mentorship. Proper supervision is a critical factor in ensuring effective risk management when hiring and working with apprentice guides.

Apprentice guides have not yet completed the training and certification process. Although the training courses and exams offered by the Canadian Mountain and Ski Guide program at the Thompson Rivers University are a large part of this process, a significant amount of the development of an apprentice guide's experience, skill and judgment must come from proper supervision and mentorship at their place of work. The goal is not only to help them pass their next exam, but to help them gain the necessary experience to become a successful certified guide.

An additional and important goal is to ensure accountability for the actions of apprentice guides. In order to maintain the trust of the public, government and the guiding industry, it is necessary to ensure that there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability in the structure of the system.

Types of Supervision

Direct Supervision: Direct supervision is defined as a certified guide working directly alongside the apprentice guide in the field.

Apprentice guides must document, in their field book, a minimum of 10 days of guiding (not instructional) work under direct or local supervision in their certification stream before they are able to work under remote supervision within that stream. Direct supervision should also be used when hiring an apprentice guide to assist on more committing and complex objectives.

Local Supervision: Local Supervision is defined as working in the same general area as the apprentice in the field. This could mean that the supervising guide and apprentice guide are on different routes or mountains but can communicate easily via radio or phone during the day, and have face-to-face meetings before and/or after the day is complete.

This type of supervision should be undertaken when the supervising guide is familiar with the apprentice guide's abilities and confident in their ability to guide the objective in question without direct supervision. Local supervision is particularly appropriate when changeable conditions and/or moderately complex objectives make it important to have daily, face-to-face meetings to discuss terrain, techniques and conditions.

Remote Supervision: Remote Supervision occurs when the apprentice guide is working on his or her own at a location away from where the supervising guide is located. Remote supervision is a significant step away from direct and local supervision. Many serious considerations must be made before hiring an apprentice guide to work under remote supervision, in particular, the complexity and commitment level of the terrain.

Institutional Supervision: Institutional Supervision is defined as a situation where supervision is provided by a company or institution that may not employ recognized ACMG supervising guides. This type of supervision can only be used for Top Rope Climbing Instructors and Assistant Hiking Guides.

The institution provides permits and insurance and therefore assumes the responsibility and risk. To qualify, an institution must:

- Obtain its own insurance and permits
- Provide seasonal staff training including review of specific site/ trail management and protocols
- Have written operational and risk management protocols
- Have written communication protocols
- Have written first aid and emergency response protocols
- Recognize and adhere to the ACMG Scope of Practice for TRCIs and/or Assistant Hiking Guides