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## PUBLIC SAFETY BULLETIN

For Immediate Release  
Dec. 31, 2007

BC Coroners Service

### **AVALANCHE DEATHS PROMPT SEASONAL WARNING**

VICTORIA – Two people died last week from an avalanche in B.C., and the Coroners Service is urging all backcountry skiers, snowmobilers and other outdoor enthusiasts traveling in mountain terrain to exercise caution.

Unstable snowpacks in many areas of the province have resulted in a number of avalanches. The fatal incident took place Dec. 24, 2007, and involved a group of snowmobile riders in the Caribou Mountain Range.

In many of the incidents, a buried layer of weak snow was sitting on top of a crust. In these conditions, an avalanche can be triggered when a skier or snowmobiler travels over a weak spot. The snowpack in some areas is difficult to predict this season and the Coroners Service is advising people to take precautions before heading out into the backcountry.

All backcountry travelers should carry appropriate avalanche rescue gear, and check the latest weather forecasts and regional avalanche information on the Canadian Avalanche Centre website at [www.avalanche.ca](http://www.avalanche.ca) or by phone at 1-800-667-1105.

Avalanche safety skills such as recognizing avalanche terrain and being able to carry out self rescue are essential to recreating safely in the backcountry. Avalanche skills training programs are offered in many communities across the province. Some of the courses and safety seminars are designed specifically for snowmobile riders. Information on these programs is also available on the Canadian Avalanche Centre's website.

The BC Coroners Service is responsible for the investigation of all unnatural, sudden and unexpected, unexplained or unattended deaths. It makes recommendations to improve public safety and prevent death in similar circumstances.

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