American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education

2017 AIARE Recreational Avalanche Instructor and Course Leader Qualifications

Effective November 1, 2017

Revised August 19, 16

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AIARE Avalanche Course Leader

Qualified to course lead the following AIARE programs:

- Avalanche Awareness
- Avalanche Rescue
- AIARE REC 1
- AIARE REC 2

  A qualified AIARE Course Leader is required to be present for the entirety of any AIARE courses that include travel in or near avalanche terrain, as well as all AIARE REC 1 or 2 programs.

Qualification Category	Minimum Required Qualification
Experience	• 7 seasons of winter backcountry experience involving leadership and decision making in avalanche terrain • Experience instructing AIARE REC 1, REC 2 and Avalanche Rescue courses • Letter of recommendation from an AIARE Course Leader outlining competence delivering AIARE curriculum and leading avalanche course students.
Avalanche Education & Certification	• Pro 2 certificate
Instructor Training	• AIARE Course Leader Training • Annual AIARE Instructor Refresher, each subsequent season following the Course Leader Training • Update AIARE teaching materials as they become available • Attend a fall 2017 New Curriculum Update session, which will be widely available adjacent to each of the regional Snow and Avalanche Workshops (SAW's).
Professional Association	• Current AIARE Instructor membership • Current American Avalanche Association (AAA) professional membership
Recommended Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	• Annual attendance at a regional Snow and Avalanche Workshop • Bi-annual attendance at the International Snow and Avalanche Workshop (ISSW) • AAA Certified Instructor credential • AIARE CPD seminars • AMGA Ski Guide course

AIARE Avalanche Instructor

Qualified to instruct the following programs:

- Avalanche Awareness
- Avalanche Rescue
- AIARE REC 1
- AIARE REC 2

  On every AIARE program, AIARE Avalanche Instructors are mentored under the direct supervision of an AIARE Course Leader. AIARE Instructors can lead Avalanche Awareness courses, including field sessions so long as no activities are conducted in or near avalanche terrain. Any AIARE courses that do travel in or near avalanche terrain require an AIARE Course Leader present.

Qualification Category	Minimum Required Qualification
Experience	• 5 seasons of winter backcountry experience involving leadership and decision making in avalanche terrain • Recent (within 4 years) attendance on an AIARE REC 1, REC 2 and Avalanche Rescue course (or equivalent AIARE 1 & AIARE 2 program if taken prior to Nov 1, 2017)
Avalanche Education & Certification	• Pro 1 certificate
Instructor Training	• AIARE Instructor Training • Annual AIARE Instructor Refresher, each subsequent season following the Instructor Training • Update AIARE teaching materials as they become available
Professional Association	• Current AIARE Instructor membership • Current American Avalanche Association (AAA) professional or affiliate membership
Recommended Continuing Professional Development	• Annual attendance at a regional Snow and Avalanche Workshop (SAW) • Bi-annual attendance at the International Snow and Avalanche Workshop (ISSW) • AAA Certified Instructor credential • AIARE Pro 2 certificate • AMGA Ski Guide course

Apprentice Instructor

AIARE supports the long-held tradition of mentorship of aspiring avalanche instructors or apprentices. AIARE defines Apprentices as aspiring instructors who do not yet meet the AIARE 1 Instructor qualifications. One Apprentice can assist in each field group, under the direct supervision and mentorship of an AIARE Course Leader or Instructor. During this apprenticeship, individuals gain familiarity with the AIARE curriculum, as well as building reference experiences that form an essential foundation for engaged participation in the AIARE Instructor Training. Apprentice instructors with no less than 5 years of personal backcountry travel experience may register for the Instructor Training once they have observed at a minimum one AIARE 1 and AIARE 2 program.

Following participation in the Instructor Training, individuals may then progress through two levels of avalanche instructor qualification: AIARE Instructor and AIARE Course Leader.

AIARE Avalanche Course Leader and Instructor qualifications explained

Experience

a. Experience is defined using AAA guidelines. 20 or more days of backcountry travel constitutes one *season*. These are documented days where the applicant is making decisions in avalanche terrain. Those who travel to South America or New Zealand during the North American summer can accumulate 2 seasons in one calendar year.

b. Experience can be verified by documentation or by a letter from a professional member of the AAA, and can involve a combination of professional and recreational backcountry travel.

Education & Certification

a. All AIARE REC program instructors are required to have a PRO 1 certificate. All REC program course leaders are required to have a PRO 2 certificate.

b. AIARE 1 instructors, who currently qualify as instructors prior to Nov. 1st, 2017, have 3 years from this date to obtain the PRO 1 certificate.

c. Current AIARE 1 and 2 course leaders who have the (pre Nov. 1st, 2017) AIARE 3 certificate meet or exceed the new qualifications as AIARE Course Leaders.

d. Course Leader or Instructor applicants who feel they have the equivalent training and certification can apply for a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and equivalence.

Instructor Training

a. Current (pre Nov. 1st, 2017) Course Leaders that attend the REC Program New Curriculum Update (NCU) are *not* required to take the Avalanche Course Leader training. Note that course leaders who do *not* attend the curriculum update, or observe the new three-module course structure will become "inactive." Course observation of all three REC modules (Avalanche Rescue, AIARE REC 1 & 2) is required to reactivate course leader status.

b. Each provider's course leader is expected to conduct an in house training session to update his or her local instructor team with the new curriculum.

c. Instructors that meet the *current* instructor qualifications and are currently practicing at the time of the Nov. 1st, 2017 roll out are not required to take the AIARE Instructor Training. Those applying for AIARE instructor status after Nov. 1st, 2017 will be required to attend the AIARE Instructor Training.

d. The year after completion of the Instructor Training, attendance at the annual Instructor Refreshers will be required. These 1-day events will be timed with the regional Snow and Avalanche Workshops to encourage attendance at both events and continued professional development. Note, the Instructor Refreshers can be

attended online or remotely; and that "in-person" attendance is only required every two years. Exceptions to "in-person" attendance are granted on an individual basis.

Professional Association

a. All instructors are required to be AAA members. Current course leaders are required to have AAA *Professional* Membership. The AAA provides opportunity for continued professional development and networking. Currency and association membership are considered hallmarks of professionalism.