



Cave Rescue Responder's Workshop

If a large-scale cave rescue effort were needed, could you help?

Cave rescues happen rarely, but when they do, they require large numbers of trained volunteers. As a provincially recognized specialist SAR team, Alberta/British Columbia Cave Rescue organizes and trains those volunteers through its annual Cave Rescue Responder's workshops and biannual cave rescue seminars. If you want to join cave rescue in Western Canada, or be able to help in the event of a major rescue call-out, this 20-hour workshop is for you. It is intended for experienced cavers or SAR personnel with rope rescue training; novice cavers with strong vertical skills are also welcome. The workshop is an introduction to the key disciplines of cave rescue:

- Rescue organization and management
- Vertical and horizontal stretcher transport
- Patient sheltering and packaging for transport
- Procedures for responding to call-out
- Surface and in-cave communications
- Cave search and initial response techniques

The workshop is designed around hands-on practice of skills and scenario-based learning, and culminates in a joint mock rescue with local ground SAR and RCMP. All facilitators have considerable cave rescue and/or SAR experience, and several hold EMBC Rope Rescue Instructor, Team Leader, or Search Manager certifications. Certificates of completion are issued, but skill proficiency is not certified because no time is available for formal evaluation in the tight schedule.

Proficiency in caving single rope techniques (SRT) is required for the workshop: Participants must be able to progress on rope in any direction, changeover in any direction mid-rope, and pass any mid rope obstacle in any direction (knots, rebelay, traverses, deviations, etc.). A no-cost intensive one-day SRT clinic may be held for participants who are not familiar with SRT. Registration in the clinic is limited to **five** people, and prior rope experience is required. If demand exceeds the number of spaces, organizers may allocate spaces at their discretion.

The workshop fee is \$50 for members of the BCSF or ASS but may be waived some years. Non-members can join a club and pay the associated membership fees upon registration. Participants are responsible for their own meals. The workshop schedule allows ample time for cooking breakfast and dinner, but field lunches are required for Saturday and Sunday.

Registration is limited to 20 participants. Spaces in the workshop are not guaranteed until registration fees have been received; these fees are charged to cover organizational costs and equipment for cave rescue training and response in Western Canada. Members of caving clubs affiliated with the British Columbia Speleological Federation and members of the Alberta Speleological Society are given priority for the workshop. If you are new to caving or are not yet a member of a BCSF club or the ASS, we strongly encourage you to register early so as to join a club and go caving before the workshop.

To register or more information, contact Doug Munroe, BC Provincial Coordinator:
Doug.Munroe@questu.ca

Program: Cave Rescue Responder Workshop

SRT Clinic

10:00-15:00 hrs. SRT clinic (specific schedule TBD based on participant experience and skill levels)

Day 1 (Saturday)

10:00-15:00 hrs. SRT clinic (specific schedule TBD based on participant experience and skill levels)

16:00-18:30 hrs. Check-in for workshop and equipment/skill safety check. Time for participants to set up camp and prepare dinner.

18:30-21:30 hrs. Workshop starts: Introduction of participants; orientation to workshop objectives and approach; overview of rescue operations from call-out to demobilization; role and tasks of initial response teams

Day 2 (Sunday)

08:00-11:00 hrs. Concurrent sessions (all participants do both sessions)

- Equipment and rigging principles
- Patient care and packaging

11:00-12:30 hrs. Horizontal stretcher handling techniques

12:30-13:00 hrs. Bag lunch

13:00-17:30 hrs. Vertical stretcher movement techniques (raises/lowers/Tyroleanes)

17:30-18:30 hrs. Evening meal

18:30-20:30 hrs. Communications in cave rescue

Day 3 (Monday)

08:00-13:00 hrs. Mock rescue

1300-1500 hrs. Debriefing of mock rescue; equipment cleanup; review and close of workshop

Note: This program may be adjusted to best meet the needs of the participants.

Required Equipment

All equipment must bear your name or ID marks. Equipment can be supplied (in limited numbers) for those wishing to borrow. Please indicate any equipment needs on registration form. If you are building your vertical rig or have any questions about required equipment, please contact Doug Munroe (doug.munroe@questu.ca; 604-966-4441.)

- An approved helmet with chin strap,
- A helmet mounted electric light, plus 2 backup lights with spare batteries & bulbs
- A whistle
- A caving sit harness with connecting chest harness (chest harness may be either off-the-shelf or improvised)
- 2 cowstails, made from **single-rated dynamic rope**, minimum 9mm diameter recommended, with two carabiners (one locking and one non-locking)
- Ascending system (Frog-style SRT system, with a hand ascender/footloop combination and a chest ascender)
- Descender (Petzl SIMPLE or STOP strongly recommended; other in-line descenders acceptable e.g. mini-rack. Do not plan to use a Figure 8, Grigri, ATC or similar device.)
- Minimum of 2 locking carabiners in addition to those used for cowstails and vertical rig.
- Prusik loop, ~1m long untied 6mm cord (will grab on 8mm handlines)
- 1 pulley, personal size, Petzl Microtraxion preferred but all kinds accepted
- Cordelet / waistlength: a 10 m. length of 8 mm low-stretch rope, or 25 mm tubular nylon webbing.
- Small sidepack or caving pack containing pocketknife, foil space blanket, lighter, candle, thermal balaclava, snacks
- Rugged, warm clothing for caving: waterproof coveralls, fleece top and bottom, wool socks. No cotton!
- Knee pads for caving: gardener's or light roofer's pads are recommended; porous sport-style discouraged.
- Gloves: warm gloves for damp caves (rubber-palmed construction gloves are commonly used, as are rubber electrician's gloves for wetter caves); all gloves should allow easy operation of carabiners and tying of knots
- Boots: waterproof rubber boots, cayoneering boots, or sturdy hiking boots – good grip is essential

Participants must be in good physical health and condition and, although covered by an EMBC Training Task Number, they must also be willing to sign liability waivers. Additionally, participants should be prepared to work in difficult situations and while under supervision, negotiate drops of up to 30 metres during the workshop. All exercises will be outside or underground and may subject to rain and cool temperature.
