

**Avalanche**

## Survivors Rescuing the Avalanche Victims

If you survive, witness, or come upon an avalanche accident there are four primary stages that must be carried out immediately:

- **Organizing the rescue**
- **Initial Search**
- **Transceiver Search**
- **Pinpoint and Recovery**

If victims are not found using these steps, secondary search procedures are implemented.

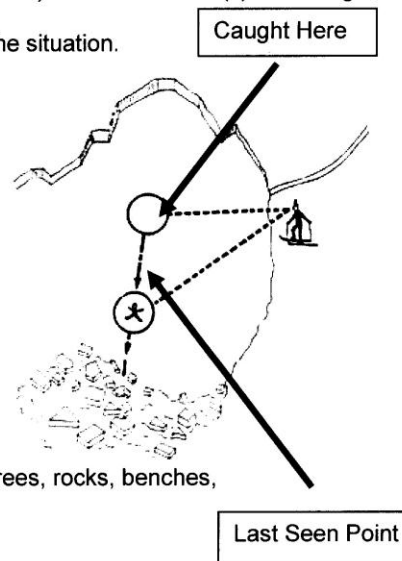
### Organizing a Self Rescue

How the following tasks are organized and assigned will depend on the size of the rescue group and the experience of its members.

In small groups it may be necessary for one or two people to carry out all the tasks in a suitable order.

In larger groups, tasks can be undertaken simultaneously or in conjunction with other stages of the self rescue

- Observe (or determine by clues / interviewing a witness) where the victim(s) was caught, their line of travel, and the "last seen point".
- Assign a leader or rescuer who will take charge of the situation.
- Determine if further avalanche hazard exists.
- Carefully assess whether the risks of carrying out the rescue are reasonable.
- It may be prudent to minimize the number of people working in areas where avalanches may strike them as they search.
- It may be necessary to modify some or all of the following procedures to adequately protect rescuers.
- If necessary, establish a spotter to watch for further avalanches and establish a warning signal and escape routes should another avalanche occur.
- Determine how many people are missing.
- Mark the "last seen point" if practical.
- Determine likely burial areas (for example, around trees, rocks, benches, and in the flow line down from the "last seen point".



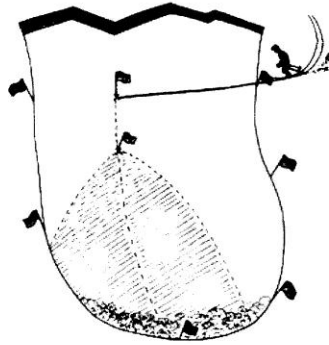
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- Organize people to carry out the following tasks:
  - Call for help (if radio, cell phone, or other immediate means of communication are available)
  - Prepare rescue equipment (1st aid kit, probes, shovels, etc.)
  - Carry out an initial search
  - Carry out a transceiver search
- Ensure everyone has transceivers turned to receive, unless they are in a hazard zone

### Initial Search

The initial search involves a fast scan of the entire area where victims might be found (that is, from the last seen point, within the perimeters of the avalanche, and in the deposition areas).

It concentrates on likely areas of burial in addition to listening for transceiver signals and looking for clues on the surface.



Initial searchers should be equipped with transceivers, probe, and shovel as well as a few wands if available.

- Do a visual search for clues on the surface (that is, hand, foot, clothing, and equipment).
- Call out occasionally and listen for responses from victims
- Pull any items found out on the snow to see if a victim is attached.
- Mark the location of found items and bring them to the attention of the rescue leader.
- Listen carefully for transceiver signals in these locations. (If victims were not wearing transceivers or it is unknown, whether transceivers were used, quickly probe the area around found items.)
- If a transceiver signal is found, carry out a transceiver search. If there is more than one person buried, the initial search continues to look for visual clues, etc.
- Probe likely burial areas.