



January 7, 2008

We have received confirmation of three avalanche fatalities that occurred in British Columbia on January 6, 2008. An additional fatal avalanche occurred in Banff National Park on January 7.

1. A single snowmobile rider near Grand Forks, BC
2. A single snowmobile rider near Midway, BC
3. A snowboarder at Big White Ski Resort
4. A skier in Banff National Park

As yet we have no details on the specific snowpack structure, aspect, elevation or avalanche dimensions associated with these incidents. We will post this information as it becomes available.

Although we do not have specific information about the fatal incidents listed above, we have information about several incidents resulting in near misses from areas with similar snowpack conditions. In almost every one of these incidents, there's a pattern.

- A crust was created in early December, and a weak layer then developed on top of it.
- As more snow falls, the layer becomes buried deeper in the snowpack, and becomes more difficult to predict.
- Avalanches were triggered by human activity such as the passage of a snowmobile or skier
- Avalanches were triggered in a relatively thin snowpack area that spread into areas where the snowpack is much thicker resulting in large avalanches