# Ice Park Advisory Team
# Guide Training Policy Working Group

At the April, 2022 Ice Park Advisory Team (IPAT) meeting OIPI updated its high-level preliminary policy on guide training with a set of competencies required for guides to operate in the Park, based on consultation with several local experts. It was determined that additional information would be useful and a working group (WG) was chartered to define subsidiary skills and example situations to inform the Park's Contracted Guiding Operators (CGOs) as they manage their personnel development.

IPAT Core Team chartered the Guide Training Policy Working Group, comprising themselves and two subject matter experts to advise OIPI on expanding the technical content of the policy and deeper understanding of its implications.

> Angela Hawse is IPAT At-large member, guide, former CGO Chicks Climbing proprietor, and President of the AMGA.

> Mike Gibbs is guide, current CGO Rigging for Rescue proprietor, and OIPI founding Board member.

> They have graciously agreed to dedicate significant time and energy to the project. They each have extensive, intimate knowledge of the Park, and exquisite understanding of the dynamics of climbing and guiding. They are exactly qualified to help OIPI get this work in progress right, and are completely transparent about contributing to the policy without advocating for either AMGA or RfR.

> Core Team members Silas Clarke and Tamara Gulde represent the interests of the City of Ouray, and Peter O'Neil and Frank Robertson, as OIPI owners of the policy, bring Park management perspective to the WG process.

The OIPI Board is very pleased with the WG's output so far, and has agreed to release this further update as interim policy for application in the coming 2022-23 season. OIPI will continue to improve understanding of the subject in consultation with the community and update the policy going forward.

# OIPI Interim Policy on Guide Training for 2022-23 CGO Ice Park Operations
## (Work in Progress, August 1, 2022)

**Background and Purpose**

The Ouray Ice Park's Users have a reasonable expectation that the Guide Services we permit to operate in the Park are competent to do so as safely as possible. We all have baseline expectations for professionalism, observing rules, LNT practices, and respectful behavior. This policy is meant to establish a standard of care for guiding in the Park that addresses operational safety in particular. This initial release is applicable for the 2022-23 season and will be updated as understanding improves.

**OIPI requires CGO personnel using the Park to be trained consistent with accepted best practices for climbing, guiding, and ropework.**

- Not all CGO personnel operating in the Park are guiding.
- OIPI requires separately that CGO personnel in the Park have certification of first aid / CPR training.
- OIPI relies on the CGOs to manage their personnel development to meet our requirement.
- OIPI does not specify any particular certification, nor the source of training.

**OIPI has specified the competencies for which training must be obtained:**

- Climbing on ice and rock in winter conditions
- Operating in a single-pitch environment, not in remote terrain
- Using fixed anchors approached from terrain without back-country hazards
  - Typically sling-shot belays from the ground
  - Top-down approach on some anchors
  - Leading on some routes

Some guides with extensive experience are already well-qualified to operate safely. We trust the CGOs to determine where that level lies, independent of how many years. All guides must have a foundation of climbing and guiding experience sufficient to be working in that capacity; we expect those with less than extensive experience to undertake a formal training program addressing this policy. See guidelines on amount of training by experience level in Table 1. Training may be either through established outside training organizations or in-house from experienced instructors.

**Implementation and Compliance**

CGOs, in accepting their permits, are representing to OIPI that their guides operating in the Park
1) have been trained for the competencies and subsidiary skill required by OIPI policy, or
2) are actively undertaking such training and are being supervised by a trained / experienced guide.

Supervising guides must be available for contact in the Park by guides in training and by OIPI (CGO must identify supervising guides and provide cell #).

CGOs must provide progress reports on guides in training prior to their second season operating in the Park. Guides in training must complete it by the end of their second season.

OIPI may request details of training progress of CGO at any time for any guide in the Park, will provide a uniform means to fulfill that request, and will consult with CGOs on any questions, but has sole discretion in determining if any guide operating in the Park is in compliance with the policy and for determining action on any guide out of compliance.

The following reference tables give additional information on the skills involved in Park operations, to inform CGOs as they run their personnel development programs and represent to OIPI.

## Table 1

| Required Competencies | Subsidiary Skills | Example Situations |
|---|---|---|
| Climbing on rock and ice in winter conditions | Foundation of personal climbing experience and guiding in ice and alpine terrain | Guidelines for amount of classroom / field training by experience level:<br>   < 3 years  5-6 days<br>   3-5 years  2-3 days |
| | Assessing client preparedness for conditions | |
| | Assessing client skills for the terrain | |
| | Agreed climbing / belay communications | |
| Operating in single pitch terrain (and not remote) | Risk management<br>Problem solving | See Table 2 for Risk Management / Hazard / Problem Solving Inventory |
| Using multi-point fixed anchors typically approached from flat walkways and railed catwalks, free of avalanche exposure, i.e. an environment much less hazardous than the backcountry | Basic rigging and anchor arrangement | Constructing a suitable well-focused, load sharing anchor / directional system appropriate for 2-person loads |
| | Top belay station construction and management | Use of top anchor for either bottom or top belay, including for lead climbing |
| | Belay escapes and tension transfer methods | Taking over a belay from a client via transfer of tension and/or a device exchange |
| | Edge access systems in place or ability to construct as required in a timely fashion | Contingencies for gaining client visual from a top belay (i.e. a pre-built edge access system) |
| | | Accessing client on rope to attend to a need such as a detached crampon |
| | Ground-based slingshot belay systems and methods of managing typical client scenarios | Use of ground anchors to secure belayer away from base of ice climbs, as necessary |
| | | Ascending to client on rope to perform a pickoff in a slingshot belay scenario where lowering client is not possible |
| | Lead climbing | Ice screw placement, managing gorge bottom and top anchor station |
| | Constructing and using a mechanical advantage system (i.e. pulley system) to raise a client in a top-belay scenario who cannot otherwise complete the climb on their own power | Raising an exhausted climber and/or raising someone who dropped PPE like an ice tool and requires assistance to gain the top |

## Table 2

### Risk Management / Hazard / Problem Solving Inventory

management of areas with potential icefall or rockfall hazard
situational awareness; current and changing conditions
guide security; attachment based on terrain and exposure, establishing anchors, on climbs
client security; equipment (PPE), briefings, access and egress from OIP, belaying and positioning
trips/slips on canyon access routes
iced-up ropes
off-route vs. climbing protection system (i.e. big swing)
closed systems for rappels, lowers, belays
climbers on adjacent routes
river-related hazards such as crossing improvised bridges
cold injuries / appropriate PPE
client communication (i.e. poor set-up that affects comms)
client PPE (loose clothing around legs causing trip hazard with crampons)
facial cuts from dislodged ice and/or ice tools
emergency response plan specific to CGO and OIP