

## TRANSLATION OF PUBLIC AVALANCHE BULLETINS

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**ABSTRACT:** Parks Canada produces avalanche bulletins in four Mountain National Park regions; avalanche forecasters write these daily bulletins in English. All public material produced by the Canadian federal government is required by legislation to be available in both French and English. However, an insufficient knowledge, among translators, of avalanche phenomena and related terminology prevented the delivery of quality French avalanche bulletins - previous attempts were slow, and produced inconsistent French products. In 2005, Parks Canada undertook to solve this problem through a project to develop avalanche expertise within the federal Translation Bureau, with the ultimate goal of providing the public with accurate and timely French avalanche bulletins.

Terminology standardization was achieved through the collaborative efforts of a six-person committee representing the specialties of avalanche forecasting, translation, and terminology. Terminology usage samples were extracted from historic avalanche bulletins using extraction software and expert knowledge. A base list containing the terminology of 650 concepts was then sorted, translated, researched and extensively debated to consensus. Each term is accompanied with a context illustrating its use and providing readers with examples of clear idiomatic usage in both English and French. The resulting publication is the *Terminology Bulletin 263 - Avalanche Bulletin Vocabulary* and can be viewed through [www.pc.gc.ca/avalanche](http://www.pc.gc.ca/avalanche).

Translator training required two months of translating historic bulletins; all French bulletins were checked and revised by an experienced avalanche translator. Concurrent development of avalanche bulletin software allows forecasters from different regions to publish under a common template, archive in a national database, and facilitate the flow of information between Parks Canada and the Translation Bureau. In February 2006, Parks Canada began publishing avalanche bulletins in both English and French for all of its bulletin regions.

**KEYWORDS:** avalanche bulletins, translation, bilingual, terminology

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