

# International Commission for Mountain Emergency Medicine

ICAR MEDCOM

Spring Meeting, Bansko, Bulgaria  
March 25-29 2009

## 1. WELCOME

The president welcomed members to the meeting and thanked **Oleg Tcholakov, Vitan Vlachov, Martin Ivanov and Krassen Demizev**, the sponsors of this meeting (**Balkan Holidays**, the leading Bulgarian Tourist Company) and the **Bulgarian Mountain Rescue Service** for arranging and supporting this meeting.

## 2. MEMBERS AND ADDRESSES Update

Address should be up dated on the ICAR web site. Members are responsible to keep themselves in contact with the MEDCOM. A password can be obtained from G. Barbisch (ICAR web master) to the member's area. Once a member has correctly registered, he can be sure that he will receive all correspondence.

**Apologies:** Jan Beaufort, Jeff Boyd, Ramon Chioconi, Tigran Elezovic, Xavier Ledoux, Peter Mair, Maria Antonia Nerin, Oliver Reisten, Inigo Soteras, Ken Zafren.

**Present:** Gege Agazzi (I), Hermann Brugger, President (I), Tore Dahlberg (N), Krasen Demirev (BG), John Ellerton (E&W), Fidel Elsensohn, Vice President (A), Herbert Forster (D), Martin Ivanov (BG), Mario Milani (I), Peter Paul (A), Gunther Sumann (A), Oleg Tcholakov (BG), Steve Teale (SCO), Iztok Tomasin (SLO), Vlahov Vitan (BG).

## 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Ellerton)

There were no comments and the minutes were approved.

## 4. OUTLINE OF THE MEETING'S PROGRAMME (Tcholakov)

Oleg outlined the program including the special dinners, Saturday excursion, and Sunday transport (including tourist trip) to the airport. The expenses of the meeting were discussed; Hermann said that the organizers should not personally bear any of the costs. (Attendees were asked for a contribution of 100 euros at the end of the meeting.)

## 5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Brugger)

Remarks on the Fall meeting 2008 in Chamonix from 08<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> October. Thanks to the French Mountain Rescue Service. We discussed Fidel's draft on the "Initial assessment of casualties in the mountains" and Iztok's "Recommended Standards in Helicopter Emergency Medical Services in Mountain Rescue" in our commission and together with the Air rescue commission. John Ellerton's comprehensive and well prepared paper about "Immobilization and Splintage in Organized Mountain Rescue" finalized for submission in the meanwhile. Oliver presented a draft of the "First Aid Kit for Alpinists, Mountain Guides and Physicians". UIAA MEDCOM has not responded to our request so that we can continue developing this paper. Finally, Fidel presented a draft of the "Medical rucksacks in mountain rescue". Jeff proposed a "Statement on the process in developing papers to be made". **Publications:** in the meantime three new publications. Günther Sumann's paper on "**Fluid management in traumatic shock: a practical approach for mountain rescue**" published in the High Altitude Medicine and Biology, a landmark paper in mountain emergency medicine. John Ellerton's "**Prevention and on site treatment of eye problems in mountain and remote areas**" accepted for publication in the WEMJ and Fidel's "**Current status of medical training in mountain rescue in America and Europe**" also accepted by the High Altitude Medicine and Biology. Jeff has published a study about "**Trauma mortality among avalanche fatalities in Western Canada**" in the Canadian Medical Association Journal. 24% of deaths were ascribed to trauma in avalanche victims in Western Canada in contrast to European and US figures of only 5% trauma mortality. This brings up the question whether trauma has been undervalued so far and that our algorithm on on-site management of avalanche victims should be reviewed to address trauma care. Congratulations to all authors.

**ILCOR recommendations 2010:** On January 6<sup>th</sup> 2009, Jeff Boyd and Hermann invited by the ALS Taskforce of ILCOR to a Webinar on Internet with 25 ALS experts, moderated by Laurie Morrison from Toronto (Co-Chair of the ALS Taskforce of ILCOR and Chair of the ACLS Committee of the

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American Heart Association). After the debate Laurie Morrison announced that the recommendations are accepted by the ALS taskforce with some minor suggestions. Next step is to suggest the ICAR MEDCOM algorithm for the on-site triage of arrested avalanche victims be incorporated into the guidelines. **ICAR Executive Committee:** meeting in Benken, Switzerland on Jan 30<sup>th</sup> 2009. A special ICAR rescue team for rescue missions in extra-European countries was suggested. Hermann suggested reinforce ICAR MEDCOM's initiatives of education and practical training of rescue organisations in these countries. This would be much more efficient, less expensive and would promote a sustainable development in these countries. The faculty of the ICAR MEDCOM's specialty courses should be enlarged with members of other commissions. A long-range objective could be to offer a complete rescue course that covers all technical and medical aspects of mountain rescue. From 2010 it will be possible to register for the yearly ICAR Congress only, independent from the Hotel reservation. Money can be saved. ICAR issues should be published on Wikipedia. Toni Grab announced Gerold Biner as the candidate for the next ICAR president as Toni will step back in 2010. Gerold Biner is the mayor of Zermatt and should be elected to the executive committee. Dr. David Tingay, neonatologist from the Department of Neonatology of The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia has applied for ICAR membership.

## 6. *FINANCIAL REPORT & BANK ACCOUNT (Elsensohn)*

Bank account = 12,888 euros; money outstanding from Newport (DVD) about 1000 euros. Nepal subsidy discussed –suggested increase from 500 to 800 euros. This was accepted. It is anticipated that a similar subsidy would be available for Peru in 2010 and as other ICAR commissions join the training then ICAR money would become available.

## 7. *DVD "TIME IS LIFE" sale (Brugger)*

250 sold in the last month. Approach has been made for an internet download version – copyright is being explored. (Brugger)

## 8. *DIPLOMA IN MOUNTAIN MEDICINE UPDATE (Ellerton)*

No new applications received. Developing the common application form and minimum mountaineering requirements are progressing – these could be adopted at the joint meeting of UIAA/ICAR medcoms and ISMM in 2010. Hermann suggested a review of specialty rescue courses in a peer-reviewed paper; he will bring a draft to the next spring meeting. (Brugger)

## 9. *PAPERS & PUBLICATIONS SUBMITTED OR IN PRESS*

- Sumann G, Paal P, Mair P, Ellerton J, Dahlberg T, Zen-Ruffinen G, Zafren K, Brugger H. Fluid management in traumatic shock – a practical approach for mountain rescue. Published in High Alt Med Biol. 2009;10(1); 71-5
- Ellerton JA, Zuljan I, Agazzi G, Svajda D, Boyd J. Prevention and on site treatment of eye problems in mountain and remote areas. Wild Environm Med, in press (expected date - May 2009)
- Elsensohn F, Niederklapfer T, Ellerton J, Swangard M, Brugger H, Paal P. Current status of medical training in mountain rescue in America and Europe. High Alt Med Biol, in press – check that signatures are complete.

**Members are encouraged to translate and propagate the papers – permission from publisher is usually straightforward.**

## 10. *PAPERS IN PREPARATION*

- Ellerton J, Brugger H, Tomazin I, Paal P. Immobilization and splintage in organized rescue. The paper was reviewed in detail and minor amendments were agreed. The paper was approved for publication after one final circulation on the list server. Ellerton
- Elsensohn F, Zenruffinen G, Ellerton J, Sumann G, Zafren K, Nerin MA, Brugger H. Assessment of casualties in the mountains. The draft paper was extensively discussed; a final draft is to be presented in Zermatt. Elsensohn

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- Tomazin I, Ellerton J, Soteras I, Reisten O, Ledwidge M, Halvorsen D, Avbelj M, Biner G. **Recommended Standards in Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) in Mountain Rescue (co-operation with air rescue commission)**. The draft paper was discussed and the contributions from the Air and Terrestrial commissions incorporated into the paper. It will be circulated again in the next few weeks to all commissions and worked into a final version in Zermatt. **Tomazin**
- Elsensohn F, Soteras I, Paal P, Reisten O, Ellerton J, Brugger H. **Contents of mountain rescue doctor's rucksack**. The draft paper was reviewed in detail and a final version will be produced for circulation. The paper has been completed. **Elsensohn**
- Reisten O, Soteras I, Wiget U. **A Modular First Aid Kit for Alpinists, Mountain Guides and Alpinist Physicians**. Time prevented discussion of this paper – deferred to Zermatt. **Reisten**
- Boyd J, Brugger H. **Statement on the process in developing papers**. The frame for a worksheet is to be put on the list server, could act as a template for future papers. A comprehensive search for literature is the basis for the development of a review. From the review, together with the opinion of ICAR MEDCOM experts, comes the consensus on science. Every approved paper should clearly indicate the process in developing a recommendation. Process should be transparent and replicable. Hermann would like members to consider the issue of authorship, because this raises a number of questions. Usually we start determining a working group with up to 7 or 8 co-authors. The first author takes on the responsibility for the paper. The co-authors take different tasks e.g. the search for literature, statistics, language, revisions, but all of them must make a “substantial contribution”. The substantial contribution should be in accordance with the Manual of Style of the American Medical Association that is periodically published. If an author has only a little time to work on the paper and does not make this “substantial contribution”, it is justified and fair to skip his name from the list. Hermann would like to ask the members not to be offended by this procedure, as it is very important for the credibility of a paper. Another compulsory issue is the disclosure of Conflict of Interest. Every article must have this declaration. This is to clarify that the authors have no interest with any person or any producer of drugs or equipment mentioned in the article. This includes the participation as a consultant, advisor, officer etc. If there is a conflict of interest this does not necessarily mean that an author must be excluded but the conflict must be declared. **(Brugger)**

## 11. NEW PAPERS

- Teale S, Milani M, Paal P, Forster H. **Diagnosis of death in a mountain rescue situation by medical and non-medical personnel**. This paper is to be started using the above framework and progress reported in Zermatt. **(Teale)**
- Other papers on hold.

## 12. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### ICAR

- 2009 September 23-27 **ICAR MEDCOM fall meeting & general assembly (Zermatt, Switzerland)**.  
**NOTE: 01 JUNE 2009 ON-LINE REGISTRATION FOR THE FALL MEETING IN ZERMATT**  
**NOTE: THE ICAR MEDCOM MEETING STARTS ON WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER AT 8.30PM**  
Projected program – Initial assessment *final* (3 hrs), 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit *draft* (3 hrs), HEMS *final* (4.5 hrs = 3 hrs MEDCOM + 1.5 hrs joint meeting), Diagnosis of death *frame* (1.5 hrs)  
Saturday: Congress – **Beat Walpoth** will report on results of hypothermia (30 min); Splintage (**Ellerton**) 20 minutes; Rucksacks (**Elsensohn**) 20 minutes; Review of ICAR MEDCOM (**Brugger**) 20 min. **Lecturers must send an abstract by 14<sup>th</sup> Aug 2009.**
- 2009 September 25 **International Hypothermia Conference (Zermatt, Switzerland)**  
Possibly 1.5 hrs for ICAR Medcom presentations - 20 minutes each. Avalanche trauma mortality in Canada (**Boyd**); CPB v ECMO (**Mair**); Hypothermia relevance in avalanche (**Brugger**); Case reports (**Ellerton, Milani?, Paal-Sumann?**) to be confirmed (**Brugger**)
- 2010 May 2-9 **ICAR MEDCOM spring meeting (Spitzbergen, Norway)**  
Proposed dates discussed - return 9<sup>th</sup> leaving 14.00; accepted that this is a once in a lifetime trip particularly as Tore will be our host. Costs: Oslo to Longyearbyen (perhaps via Tromsø) – cheapest 253 euros return from Oslo. Own insurance for cancellation, illness and accident required. Hotel costs (eg Polarriggen) – 60-75 euro/night for B&B; optional snow mobile rip 290 euro/day/person, dog sled trip; Red Cross meeting room with internet connection; sites

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in Longyearbyen include art gallery, museum, governor and hospital. Individual cost will be around 1000-1500 euros minus any contribution from MR organization, perhaps reducing to 500 euros if Tore can arrange sponsorship. **Pre payments will be required and hotel has to be booked by May 2009.** Definitive reply by May. Herbert, Günther, Steve, Gege, Peter, Iztok, Mario, John, Hermann, Fidel and Tore expressed interest. **Tore and Hermann** will send out a proposal to members in the next few weeks.

- 2010 August **ICAR MEDCOM specialty course (Arequipa, Peru) – no further information**
- 2010 October **ICAR MEDCOM fall meeting & general assembly (Slovakia)**
- 2011 **ICAR MEDCOM spring meeting (Germany)**
- 2011 **ICAR Fall meeting (? Greece)**

## OTHER

- 2009 November 7 **International Congress Mountain Rescue Medicine (Innsbruck, Austria)** (German) Topics: Crisis intervention & psychological support, extreme sports and adventure events in the mountains – safety measures and personal opinion - difficult resuscitation outside resuscitation guidelines
- 2009 May 15-16 **20 yr Anniversary of Austrian Society (Igls, Austria)** (German)
- 2010 Feb 25 **Italian Society of Mountain Medicine** (Italian)

### 13. *NEPAL SPECIALTY COURSE May 24 – 29, 2009*

Faculty: Hermann Brugger (generalist, cold injuries), Tore Dahlberg (traumatologist), Fidel Elsensohn (generalist), John Ellerton (generalist), Herbert Forster (orthopedist, Padam Ghale (rescue specialist), Tim Kovacs (paramedic), José Ramón Morandeira (surgeon), Maria-Antonia Nerin (mountain emergency medicine specialist), Günther Sumann (anaesthetist), Iztok Tomazin (generalist, mountain guide), Additional Nepali rescue faculty

Minutes taken by John Ellerton. Thank you very much!  
Bansko, Bulgaria, March 29<sup>th</sup> 2009