



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR ALPINE RESCUE

Davos, 8 October 2003

***Minutes of the 55th Meeting of IKAR Delegates
In Coylumbridge (Scotland)
On 4 October 2003***

1. Welcome by the President

Toni Grab, the President, welcomed those present at the 55th Meeting of IKAR Delegates. The documents had been sent to the organisations (regular IKAR member associations) together with the invitation in goof time. An apology was received from the Bulgarian mountain rescue association (Bulgarian Red Cross), which was unable to attend for financial reasons. Written apologies were received from Board member Bruno Fleury, honorary members Gerhard Flora, Karl Peter Götzfried and Marian Bielecki, as well as from Honorary President Martin Schori.

2. Roll call, appointment of officers

Organisations present	26 (of 33)
Countries represented	17 (of 22)
Absent organisations	Fed. Andorrana (Andorra), Mountaineering Union (Bosnia/Herzegovina), FEDME (Spain), Bulgarian Red Cross (Bulgaria), IMRA (Ireland) and DAV (Germany).
Total number of votes	26 (absolute majority: 14)

Reinhard Gruber and Christoph Frommelt were appointed as vote counters.

3. Replacement of "Tatra's Mountain Rescue Service" by "Mountain Rescue Service Slovakia"

A new, national organisation for mountain rescue has existed in Slovakia since the beginning of 2003. The enlarged association was accepted into IKAR without objection.

4. Minutes of the 54th Meeting of the Delegates in 2002 in Malbun

No questions were asked or amendments were made to the minutes of the Meeting of the Delegates in 2001, which were unanimously adopted.

5. President's annual report

5.1 First Part: The President's brief report

Toni Grab gave an overview of IKAR's activities of the past year based on the association's business records.

Following last year's Conference in Malbun, the Liechtenstein Mountain Rescue Association was able to refund CHF 6,000 to IKAR. This pleasing fact speaks well of the organisers, headed by Christoph Frommelt, and was gratefully acknowledged.

The conference here in Scotland was discussed at the Board's spring meeting in Zurich. The relatively high costs were cause for particular reflection. Some of the efforts made to lower prices actually bore fruit later on. The commission conferences scheduled right before the annual conference were cancelled, except for the Commission for Air Rescue. In future, clear rules must be laid down regarding the standard under which IKAR Conferences are to be held. The main emphasis is on the exchange of technical information between mountain rescuers. Theory and practice should be taken into account in equal measure.

Italy's CNSAS (*Corpo Nazionale Soccorso Alpino e Speleologico*) has adopted a new set of statutes effective as from the beginning of 2003. As a result, administratively it is less tied to the CAI (Club Alpina Italia) and can, in particular, more independently handle the training and organisation of mountain rescuers. IKAR issued a message of greetings on the anniversary of the CNSAS, which is being celebrated in 2004. Since the preparatory work for the IKAR Conference in Poland was already well under way October 2002, it was no longer possible to consider Italy as the organiser of the 2004 IKAR Conference.

There was little to report regarding new IKAR members. Nothing further had been heard from the Slovenian cave rescue association. Contrary to expectations, no membership application had yet been submitted by the Turkish mountain rescue organisation. Local talks were underway, conducted by Danilo Skerbinek and Rick Lorenz. IKAR had to try and secure the Turks' membership. The Iranian mountain climbers' association had taken a first step by establishing written contact, and had requested support in its reorganisation. The IKAR had to take an overall view of its affairs within the limitations imposed on it.

The SAC offered to hold a Winter Rescue Conference in January 2004.

5.2 Second Part: Brief reports by the Commission Chairmen

5.2.1 Commission for Mountain Emergency Medicine (Hermann Brugger)

Hermann Brugger sincerely thanked the organisers Nick Forwood and Dave Syme and described the conditions for working and maintaining friendships here in Scotland as excellent. Iztak Tomazin was also thanked for organising an outstanding 'spring meeting' in Slovenia at the Erzavceva lodge in the Triglav Mountains.

Rick de Decker of South Africa's 'Wilderness Search and Rescue Organisation' was accepted as a corresponding member. Written contact was assured, and his know-how could now be fully incorporated into the commission's work. It was not necessary that he attend meetings.

Technical cooperation with the medical commission of the UIAA, the 'Wilderness Medicine Society' and the 'International Society of Mountain Medicine' was deepened and improved.

The commission statutes were amended, enabling in particular the acceptance of 'corresponding members'. It was stipulated that publications were published mainly in indexed journals.

A repository for all home pages would be set up on the Internet. An 800-page avalanche emergency version (http://users.south-tyrolean.net/avalanche/d/index_d.html) had been produced with the help of Ken Zafren, Bruno Durer, Xavier Ledoux, Markus Falk, Lisl Kastner and Hermann Brugger. Sparkasse Südtirol had offered to provide sponsorship. Links to IKAR's home page had been provided for and were deemed to make sense.

Three recommendations and reports were being produced and were to be published shortly: a paper on helicopter technology, AED (automatic defibrillation), and precautions in the event of accidents involving lightning.

The book on 'Consensus Guidelines on Mountain Emergency Medicine and Risk Reduction' was a best-seller and copies were available at three different places, as well as from ÖGAM, since just recently.

The goal for the future was to work hard whilst also building friendships. The spring meeting would take place in March 2004 in Liechtenstein. The technical issues to be covered would primarily be research on snakebites, eye injuries, medical protective precautions in air rescue missions and work on the statistical assessment of rescue resources. Clinical studies of avalanche burials would also be conducted.

5.2.2 Commission for Air Rescue (Gilbert Habringer)

It had proven worthwhile for the air rescuers to add an extra day to the official IKAR Conference in Scotland. The time had been needed and used to the full. The Royal Air Force also provided an insight into the organisation and operation of its Rescue Coordination Centre at Cinglod Lodge, Lossiemouth.

The input of the local organisers was put to optimal use, and special thanks were expressed for them.

The examples of accidents and the specific papers provided mutual learning opportunities. Mr Pouradier presented the flight safety system and planning for the Eurocopter. The REGA explained its Flight Safety Program (FSP). Canada, too, spoke about emergency procedures. There was a decent basis for innovating and thereby also implementing these systems in other countries.

Gilbert Habringen gave special thanks to Gerold Biner and Bruno Jelk for their superb research on emergency situations involving the transportation of people using ropes. Nothing of comparable value was available in the international literature. The Rescue Commission was breaking new

ground in this area, where no rules were already in place. This was a pioneering effort. The effort made and clarifications given on accident prevention during rescue missions was moving in a decisive direction.

There was a report from France on the influence exerted on air rescue by environmental and geophysical changes in the mountains. In addition, the new Eurocopter 145 was presented.

The meeting on rope and winch rescue conducted jointly with the Commission for Terrestrial Rescue was also very fruitful.

A recommendation developed and adopted as a result of these presentations would shortly be published on the Internet.

5.2.3 Commission for Terrestrial Rescue (Bruno Jelk)

The commission chairman also started off by thanking the organisers, highlighting the excellent work done by the translation team and the local technician.

Paper after paper focussed on the issue of rescuers' safety, which had to be the top priority both before and during rescue actions.

Bruno Jelk thanked all the speakers who had the courage to present such examples with critical factors. According to him, the primary aim was to learn from one another, not indulge in mutual criticism. Many people knew they were at the limit, and frequently the success of a rescue action was also decided by luck. The basic prerequisites were technical knowledge, and - in time - also the ability to take correct decisions in the given situation.

Old recommendations had either been revised (canyoning) or deleted altogether (hiking shoes, Akja sleds).

The plan was to conduct alternate practical technical conferences on avalanche rescue (in winter) and terrestrial rescue (in summer). One exception here would involve rescues in ice climbing accidents, which by their nature invariably had to be conducted in the winter.

For the next such *winter technical conference, to be held from 16 to 18 January 2004 at Diavolezza, Switzerland* and organised by the SAC, the chairman requested presentations and demonstrations of the methods used in the various member countries.

Bruno Jelk concluded by thanking the other commissions for cooperating so smoothly and also Gebhard Barbisch for the assistance he had provided as deputy.

5.2.4 Commission for Avalanche Rescue (Toni Grab)

In spring 2003 a conference entitled "Should Free Riding be Regulated?" had been held in Martigny, Switzerland. The event was organised by Meteorisk (Robert Bolognesi). The conclusion reached there was that regulation was not possible, nor would it make much sense. Prevention was the key where free riders were concerned.

Toni Grab expressed thanks for all the plenary session reports submitted by the avalanche experts here in Scotland, which focussed on the safety of rescuers and the management of large and medium-sized missions. The general theme for 2004 would be the safety of rescuers. Mr Grab asked the participants to start thinking about this subject and writing papers already.

Bearing in mind that not everyone could meet the January deadline, IKAR took up the SAC's offer. The conference at Diavolezza was primarily intended for rescue specialists (actors). Toni Grab thanked the SAC representatives and said he expected the content of the conference to be of a high quality.

5.2.5 Brief report of the webmaster (Gebhard Barbisch)

Gebhard Barbisch had been assigned to redesign the home page. The current version had gone on the Internet in 1998 and not substantially changed since then. In future, the IKAR website would also appear in three languages. The home page was being produced in English. The site included both a freely accessible and a restricted area and chat room.

The deadline for the unveiling of the new website was set at the end of 2003. There would be a one-month postponement if necessary.

6. Finances

6.1 2002 Annual Accounts and Balance Sheet

Treasurer Felix Meier reported on the profit and loss account and the balance sheet as at the end of 2002. The assets figure had risen once again. The securities had earned a low rate of interest. In the autumn of 2001, CHF 5,600 from a collection was sent from England, and another CHF 2,600 was sent in 2002, IKAR having been recognised as a "charity organisation". In future, the interpretation costs for Delegates' Meeting would be substantial. All contributions for 2002 had been paid up. The 2002 accounts showed a surplus of CHF 7,681.15. IKAR's assets as at 1 January 2003 were thus CHF 114,059.99.

6.2 Auditors' report

The audit of IKAR's financial transactions was performed on 28 February 2003 by Peter Rheinberger and Christian Gritsch, acting in their capacity as auditors. In their opinion, the accounts had been properly drawn up and they proposed that the 2002 accounts be approved by the meeting and that Treasurer Felix Meier be discharged with grateful thanks.

6.3 Approval of the 2002 Annual Accounts and granting discharge to the treasurer

The 2002 Annual Accounts were approved. These were unanimously and unreservedly accepted and discharge was thus granted to the treasurer.

6.4 2004 Estimates

Budget proposals dated 1 October 2003 for 2004 showed total expenditure of CHF 36,800 against an income of CHF 30,600, resulting in a slight loss. A proactive effort would be made next

spring to find sponsors. In particular, efforts were being made to find a satisfactory solution to the costs associated with simultaneous interpretation.

6.5 2003 Membership payments

Three contributions for 2003 still remained unpaid: OeBRD, Bosnia/Herzegovina and FFMA (France). Talks to clarify the situation had taken place here in Coylumbridge. The outstanding payments were expected to arrive shortly.

7. Status of IKAR's dealings with the EU

Past experience suggested that politicians intervened when it was to their benefit. In principle, at present IKAR had not made much progress over the past year. Sepp Hölzl was working through an existing contact in Italy to clarify the best route to take. A task force comprising Sepp Hölzl, Hermann Brugger, Reinhold Dörflinger and Toni Grab was determined to move forward on this issue.

Toni Grab pointed out to the representatives of the attending EU countries that a short-term need might arise to obtain signatures from MEPs for a motion. Toni Grab felt it would make sense to produce an overview of whose support could be lined up in each respective country, and hoped he would have better news to report in a year's time. The objective, he said, was for the EU to **recognise IKAR as THE authoritative mountain rescue organisation**. Money (the EU does support IKAR) should not be the main issue, but the topic should be raised as and when appropriate.

8. Electing a new Chairman of the Commission for Avalanche Rescue

A potentially satisfactory solution for filling the chair of the Commission for Avalanche Rescue had emerged during the year. Toni Grab had made inquiries by to the SLF and ascertained that the institute's management was prepared to release Hans-Jürg Etter to serve in that capacity. Hans-Jürg Etter (54) worked at the SLF until 1995, where he acquired a thorough knowledge of avalanche warning, course design, expert reporting and experience in writing numerous technical articles, namely with respect to accidents. It was noted that detailed assessments covering many years and including the full corpus of data for the Swiss Alps had only become possible as a result of his efforts. From 1995 to 2000, as head of the Parsenndienst rescue service he switched jobs, but not his field of activity. During this period, he gained deep insight into practical measures. He also became the training director in the cable car association for patrollers. In 2001 he returned to the SLF to work again in the avalanche warning service. A designated expert, well-versed in every aspect of his trade, he is also multilingual, a good speaker and well-respected in the profession. The Board proposed that the Delegates' Meeting elect Hans-Jürg Etter as chairman of the Commission for Avalanche Rescue.

The election of Hans-Jürg Etter as chairman of the Commission for Avalanche Rescue was confirmed by acclamation in the plenary session.

9. 2004 Polish conference venue presented

Leslaw Riemen of TOPR (*Tatrzańskie ochotnicze popotowie ratunkowe*), the mountain rescue service in the High Tatra Mountains, extended an invitation to come to Poland in 2004. The offer to hold the IKAR Conference there had been considered more than a year ago already, confirmed in Malbun, and meanwhile specifically set out.

It was confirmed that the next IKAR Conference would take place in Zakopane, Poland, from 13 to 17 October 2004.

Until then, it would be worthwhile occasionally consulting the TOPR home page (<http://www.topr.pl>).

The initial planning stage was over. It was planned to liven up the Conference proceedings on Friday afternoon with practical work (rock). An appropriate exercise site was only a short distance away. Leslaw Riemen would send out sketches of the site and encouraged all the attending organisations to make some kind of presentation.

A short film was shown, presenting the impressive mountain landscape of the High Tatra Mountains and the rescue work done by the TOPR.

10. Offers for organising conferences as from 2005

There was no official candidacy yet for 2005, but one offer had been made.

For 2006, the SAC together with the REGA, said they were prepared to organise the IKAR Conference in Switzerland.

The ENSA (*Ecole Nationale des Sports d'Alpinisme*) of France, which is basically the training school for mountain rescuers in Chamonix, would also be interested in organising the Conference, preferably in 2008, especially since that was the school's 50th anniversary year. A representative from the MRA (USA) also said that their association was a potential conference organiser in 2008.

No decision could be made at this time, but Toni Grab once again pointed out that the aim should not be to select conference venues that were as comfortable as possible. He said he could also envisage a much simpler, more modest conference that everyone can afford. All organisations offering to host the Conference were asked bear this in mind.

11. Miscellaneous / Prospects for the future

11.1 IKAR logo

In the past it had not been officially permissible to demonstrate one's membership of IKAR on paper (e.g. on letters). The standpoint today was that the prospect of highlighting IKAR membership for advertising purposes was highly desirable. IKAR's member organisations were

called on to use the phrase '**member of IKAR**' wherever this made sense or served IKAR's cause. Use of the existing logo should be limited as it was being redeveloped.

11.2 Elections to replace the entire Board

Elections to replace the entire IKAR Board would be held in 2004.

11.3 Anniversary in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian mountain rescue association had extended an invitation to celebrate its 70th anniversary. Toni Grab and Reinhold Dörflinger would be representing IKAR there.

11.4 General theme

Next year's main topic would be the *safety of mountain rescuers in action*.

11.5 Avalanche beacon recommendation

It emerged from lengthy discussions at the Conference that *for the time being it would be inappropriate to issue a recommendation in the area of avalanche beacons*. It had been suggested that beacons be equipped with secondary functions like an altimeter, clinometer, radio and so forth. Contrary to one initial position, IKAR saw the answer in working with manufacturers to find even better solutions, rather than stating a clear no. Progress should not be blocked.

11.6 Statistics

A working group was formed to take on the task of updating IKAR's statistics. The group's members would be Reinhold Dörflinger, Gebhard Barbisch, Heini Malue and Danilo Skerbinek.

11.7 Working documents

The papers presented here in Scotland would not be compiled on a CD. All presentations would be posted on the website as PDF files.

12. Final word from the President

In conclusion, Toni Grab remarked that the quality of the papers presented had been satisfactory. He was pleased to see a growing number of participants changing from consumers of expertise into providers of such specialist knowledge. He suggested that everyone should play as active a part as possible.

He particularly thanked the commission chairmen for their work in preparing the proceedings and at the Conference itself. He also extended thanks to Gebhard Barbisch, the translation team, and Olivia Nohl, who had provided him with crucial support.

He saved his warmest thanks for the conclusion of the Conference and organisers Nick Forwood, Dave Syme and their many helpers.

Nick Forwood received IKAR's gold badge on their behalf.

The meeting was concluded after exactly two hours to a generous round of applause.

Seen by:
Toni Grab
President

For the minutes:
Roland Meister
Secretary

Enclosures: - organisation chart of IKAR
- list with IKAR member organisations

Copies to: - IKAR member organisations
- honorary members and members of the Board