



International Commission for Alpine Rescue ICAR

Minutes ICAR Zermatt 2009 Combined Meeting of All Commissions September 26, 2009

Risk Assessment Go Decision – Pat Fauchère and Christophe Berclaz

Presentation of risk assessment before taking off for an operation. Throughout the operation we assess the expected risks and the results. Before the operation we should always be sure about the risks, time, and the situation of the victim. We create a table to guide the decisions as regards the possibilities of the helicopter and the pilot.

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Introduction of the Problem Regarding Harnesses / EU Petition for Normalization of Standards, Pat Fauchère

Again, as last year, we would like to discuss the planned European norm for harnesses.

We are currently faced with the problem that a helicopter manufacturer recommends and stipulates the material used for coupling people with winches or cables.

EASA says that the harnesses used essentially have to comply with the guidelines and that we would also have the possibility to evaluate the harnesses again. We have to make sure that EASA changes its philosophy. We note that what actually happens in the field is not always clear to EASA.

I suggest that ICAR drafts proposals which will then be presented to EASA so that this problem can be solved satisfactorily.

Severe Avalanche Accidents – Andres Bardill

Presentation about big and important avalanche events in which organizational structures and good regional organizations depending on the area are discussed. The operational resources, leadership, and communication have to be adapted to the size of the event on a local and regional level. The radio contact Polycom is necessary for this. Alerting has to be done through an emergency number, and the information can be sent on to the rescuers by pager.

In summer there is a similar structure available. At that time we can count on partners such as the military, civil defense, and others.

www.alpinerettung.ch

File: 23-Avalanche-Rescue-ARS.pdf

Topic: Presentation of Operational Structures for Avalanches in Catalonia - Francesc Carola Fire

Presentation of the operational structure in Catalonia. The mountain rescue furnishes 110 firefighters and executive officers. We work with 5 equipped helicopters. There are also many local partner organizations involved.

File: 24-Bombers-Catalunya.pdf

Integration of a Rescue Station during Catastrophes - Bruno Jelk and Felix Fux

Presentation of the integration of the rescue station Zermatt into the crisis committee during catastrophes.

We do not expect catastrophes but it is a service with other partners for all incidents. We are constantly on deployment. In winter our work begins with the first snowfall. At 20-30 cm of fresh snow we become active with evaluating risks. All decisions are made by a team and minutes are taken so as to be prepared for possible legal investigations in the future. For the road crews and the railway we have a consultatory function. The decisions are made by the road crew inspector or the railway inspector.

Fux Felix presents the county-intern organization. After the avalanche winter of 1999 with many avalanche deaths, all structures were revised by order of the Canton of Wallis. The risk assessment cards as well as

the leadership staff were revised and adapted to the current conditions. After the sentencing in Evolène, everything was reconsidered and updated.

Files:

25-Lawinendienst Mattertal.pdf

26-Lawinenevakuuation Zermatt SAC.pdf

Integration of the Austrian Mountain Rescue into the National and International Disaster Aid - Gebhard Barbisch

Gebhard Barbisch presents an integration plan in case of earthquakes. The collaboration of the players and partner organizations is of the utmost importance. Occurrence, means of aid, and time are of crucial importance. Structures and operation teams were built. There are teams that are capable of fulfilling all tasks. The structure and operation modules are constantly revised and developed further. Integrated operation teams are available and ready.

File: *27-ÖBRD-SARUV-SUA.pdf*

www.bergrettung-vorarlberg.at

Report Regarding the Results of Hypothermia Congress - Dr. Walpoth

Dr. Brugger thanks Dr. Walpoth for his work and the organization of the hypothermia congress. The objective is to exchange experiences in regards to hypothermia and to distribute these all over the world.

We celebrated the survival of Anna who, after 9 hours with a temperature of 13 degrees, was revived.

We also have patients with hypothermia of 17.5 degrees and with a 240-minute cardiac arrest.

Dr. Walpoth shows a table with data.

A thermometer was developed that enables us to measure very low temperatures very accurately.

Hypothermia patients usually have very good survival rates.

www.hypothermia2009.unige.ch

File: *28-Summary-Hypothermie-Congress.pdf*

Two New Recommendations – Immobilization and Splinting within the Organized Rescue Service / John Ellerton

Splinting is very important. It helps to reduce pain. The wounds heal better and the joints recuperate better. Of course, we acknowledge the situation the rescuer is in (terrain). We have also evaluated the vacuum mattress. It is absolutely necessary to immobilize the back and neck before laying the patient in the vacuum mattress. Severe bleeding with thigh fractures are reasons for an accident victim dying. Immobilization with splints is absolutely necessary in accidents like that.

Recommendation for the Treatment of Accident Victims in the Mountains - Dr. Elsensohn

Several trials to write documents regarding this subject have been undertaken. The material available for rescue operations is disturbing. The medications are also limited in quality. Rescuers who get to the injured victim first should as soon as possible contact a physician. The physician can then communicate the first treatment instructions. Certainly, the safety of the rescuers is the first priority.

Presentation of Examinations of Avalanches in Canada - Jeff Boyd

- www.cmaj.ca

Two hundred and four deaths were analyzed and autopsies done. We have more and more avalanche accidents with people riding snowmobiles. Most of these accident victims die of mechanical injuries and not from suffocating in the snow.

Statement by Dr. Brugger: Autopsies are absolutely necessary in order to obtain credible and objective results. All criteria and facts have to be taken into consideration.

End of Congress on Saturday, September 26, 2009 (12 noon)

For the Minutes: Anne-Christine Rey-Gillioz

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