

Annual report

ICAR Prevention Workgroup October 2014

Authors: Per-Olov Wikberg, Lukas Dürr, Manuel Genswein, Joe Obad

ICAR Prevention Workgroup was established at ICARS's Assembly of Delegates meeting in Åre/Sweden 2011, after a proposal from Kent Herrström, president for the Swedish Mountain Rescue Organization. ICARS's Assembly of Delegates meeting decided after voting to establish a working group to focus on preventive work in the mountains and mountainous areas. Sweden took the initiative to lead the working group during these two years, with Per-Olov Wikberg as the coordinator for the work.

The working group was going to be active for the next 2 years, debriefings were held on the 2012 ICAR Congress in Poland and an evaluation should be presented during the 2013 congress in Croatia. The working group is reporting its activities to the ICAR's Board of Directors and especially to President Gerold Biner.

According to discussions with the board at the 2013 congress in Croatia, the working group **received permission** to continue their work **for another 2 years**.

The history regarding accident prevention within ICAR

Accident prevention has been an important topic for ICAR in its early days, in particular during the active time of the Vanni Eigenmann Foundation. After many years of close to no activity outside of accident prevention concerning rescue operations, the ICAR meeting in Åre, Sweden in fall 2011 again established a formal workgroup based on a proposal from Kent Herrström, president of the Swedish mountain rescue organization (CIFRO).

About participating

Participating in the working group is voluntary and it is important to emphasize that this is a completely open group. In order to facilitate and initiate the work we have chosen to start with ICAR-delegates/members of the avalanche and terrestrial rescue commissions but that all the commissions is covered by the offer of collaboration.

Aims and purposes

The purpose and aim for the work is to provide an efficient exchange of ideas as well as launching common studies and projects related to preventive safety. It is also about sharing experiences and to jointly monitor and support research and development work on preventive safety in mountainous areas.

The decision on how, if and when integration of the discussed strategies on the national level should take place fully remains in the hand of the respective country.

All kind of issues that may be relevant to interact around could be discussed, but it is up to the working group to suggest and decide how to proceed.

History of meetings

Innsbruck may 2012

23 Participants representing 14 organizations took part. The meeting was for 2 days and a total of 19 presentations were given together with a workshop. The issue that was mainly presented and discussed was national statistics of the export/import balance regarding avalanche victims.

Web service

In the year of 2012, a web service was also introduced to support discussions and sharing information, <http://icarmountainsafety.ning.com>

Krynica, Poland October 2012

In Krýnica we arranged a short meeting mainly to inform other potential members about the work in progress and inviting them to join the workgroup.

Split, Croatia, October 2013

10 participants representing 9 organizations took part. The meeting was for 2 days and the issues that was mainly presented and discussed was as an example, a web service to present domestic based and useful mountain safety related information for travelers, update of the statistics of national import/export balance regarding avalanche victims, the possibilities to apply for funding trough EU / Interreg 2014-2017. On the second day we arranged a workshop with a special guest, Cam Cambell from Canada, who presented us the latest developments on ATES, Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale. At this workshop, some more participants joined us.

ICAR main meeting in Brac/Croatia 2014.

At the ICAR Main meetings at Brac/Croatia some of us in the group was asked to join the ICAR Board in order to discuss and suggest how this group could contribute to ICAR and if it would be possible to apply for external funding in the name of ICAR. The board agreed to this. The board also gave us 2 more years to work with this group before a decision will be taken regarding to establish a future permanent commission or similar. A brief description was made at the Assembly of delegates.

Preparations made in September 2014

A survey was sent to the group members in order to see what issues is most wanted to continue with. One question was also asked regarding if the members would like to continue in the existing form or in other ways. 90 % answered that we should continue to work and try to establish a future commission or working group within ICAR About the same part of answers, 80 %, said that the main issue for the group in the future should be to arrange annual meetings focusing on sharing experience and knowledge with each other regarding mountain safety related issues, sharing data and following relevant research projects.

ICAR Main meeting in Lake Tahoe 2014

9 participants representing 8 organizations in 6 countries participated. The main focus was to update the WG regarding how different projects is developing and to discuss the results from the future survey.

Examples of results the first years or work in progress

--> Creation of a web service 1: <http://icarmountainsafety.ning.com> where group members can set up discussion forums and share information. (Finished)

--> Creation of a web service 2: Preparations of creation of a web service with useful national mountain safety related information for international travelers (ongoing)

--> Arrange of a workshop on ATES ó which is now applied in several European countries such as Canada, USA, Norway, Sweden, Spain (Catalonia), Switzerland (Jura) (Finished)

--> Networking: use the experience of other ICAR members to bring things forward in the home country. One of the examples the past year is Swedens invitation of experts to a workshop regarding establishing a future avalanche warning service in Sweden. (Ongoing)

--> Discussions and proposals regarding collecting relevant data (which has mainly been held within the workgroup): the result will be proposals of a international standard in which we will be able to better standards, data structures. This will lead to better understanding of the main reasons regarding accidents where both international and national visitors are involved in. We strongly recommend that this is to be implemented within ICAR in close cooperation with EAWS and UIAA. (Ongoing)

--> Fundings: to be able to push development further it must be possible to use funding that could be used by the member organizations in order to develop both mountain safety and mountain rescue related issues that are aiming at prevent loss of lifes in the mountains. The proposal of the creation of a foundation and how to use the fundings within the ISMF- ICAR Mountain Safety Foundation is attached to this report. (Ongoing)