



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION  
FOR ALPINE RESCUE

Davos, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2002

*Minutes of the 54<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ICAR Delegates  
in Malbun (Liechtenstein)  
on 19 October 2002*

**1. Welcome by the President**

Toni Grab, the President, welcomes those present at the 54th Meeting of ICAR Delegates. He extends special greetings to the honorary member Karl Peter Götzfried. The honorary members Gerhard Flora and Ruth Eigenmann were also present during part of the proceedings. Apologies were received from the Bosnian Mountaineering Union which was unable to attend for financial reasons, FFME from France, the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations and Melchior Schild, honorary member.

The Meeting of ICAR Delegates (DV) observed one minute's silence in memory of all mountain rescuers who lost their lives during the past year.

**2. Roll call, amendments to the agenda**

Organizations present	28 (of 33)
Countries represented	19 (of 22)
Absent organizations	Fed. Andorrana (Andorra), Mountaineering Union (Bosnia/Herzegovina), FEDME (Spain), FFME (France)
Total number of votes	31 (absolute majority: 16)
Scrutineer	Gebhard Barbisch

Amendments to the agenda. Two proposed amendments concerning delegates of state organizations are agreed. One honorary member is to be nominated.

**3. Minutes of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Delegates in 2001 in Makarska**

No questions or amendments are raised to the minutes of Meeting of the Delegates in 2001. They were accepted without objection and the secretary was thanked for his services.

## **4. President's annual report**

### **4.1 First Part: The President's brief report**

Toni Grab, ICAR's President, gave an overview of ICAR's activities based on the associations business records.

Shortly after the delegates' meeting in Makarska on 23 October 2001, a delegation visited the European Parliament in Strasbourg. A brief report on this visit is attached to the Minutes of the last delegates' meeting. The President is confident that the contacts made on that occasion will help towards the understanding of ICAR's aims and concerns. He thanks all participants of the delegations for their efforts.

ICAR's delegations also made other visits and attended various discussions. On 20 October, the SAC in Interlaken celebrated 100 years of the mountain rescue organization. In January 2002, the Commission for Avalanche Rescue met in Gossensass, South Tyrol. In March 2002, the Board Meeting offered the possibility to harmonize the action within the commission bodies. In May, Toni Grab again met the European parliamentarian Luciano Caveri during a UIAA conference in Trento. Armando Poli, the President of the Italian Rescue Service, was also present and gave due support. The Slovenian Mountain Rescue Service invited ICAR's top personalities to their 90<sup>th</sup> Jubilee. Foreign visitors were lavishly entertained. In June, almost the whole ICAR Board visited the Terrestrial Rescue Conference in Brasov, Rumania. At the beginning of October 2002, ICAR's three-man delegation attended the splendid celebrations on the occasion of 50 years of the GOPR in Poland.

The President was able to see for himself what purposeful work is done in the various sectors of mountain rescue. He is very pleased to see the high level of expertise displayed. He thanks all organizations for the kind reception he enjoyed and once again extends his congratulations, particularly to those associations celebrating their anniversaries.

### **4.2 Second Part: Brief reports from the Commission Chairman**

#### **4.2.1 Commission for Terrestrial Rescue (Bruno Jelk)**

Bruno Jelk highlights the commission conference which took place from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2002 in Brasov, Rumania, as the focal part of the activities. The main subjects were centered around canyon accident rescues and evacuation in cable car accidents. The demonstrations arranged by the organizer and the attending associations were impressive. The theory lectures and discussions based on the demonstrations dealt with the subject in depth, to everybody's benefit. Bruno Jelk extends his thanks to the organizers and the speakers from Brasov.

A total of 25 papers were read here in Malbun. Some of them were read to avalanche rescuers and air rescuers establishing an interdisciplinary approach. The papers were centered on technical, psychological, organizational and preventive aspects and measures applied in mountain rescue, focusing on some accidents and near-accidents as examples.

The commission travelled from Malbun for half a day to EMPA (Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research) in St. Gallen where impressive material tests were demonstrated to them, showing the vulnerability of ropes and equipment, particularly in rock-fall accidents, and justifying care in handling. Bruno Jelk extends his thanks to the speakers and particularly to the lady interpreters who created the right atmosphere for the conference to proceed smoothly.

#### **4.2.2 Commission for Air Rescue (Gilbert Habringer)**

At the start of the meeting, Malbun was filled with wind and noise from the brand-new EC 145 helicopter. All pilots present had an opportunity to fly the helicopter and see its marvellous rescue features for themselves.

The commission then concentrated on theoretical work. Country representatives had the opportunity to report on their work. There was much discussion on the subject of near-accidents connected with helicopter services in particular.

Gilbert Habringer referred to interesting results of investigations. It has been possible to reduce the incidence of air accidents caused by technical faults and to improve safety standards. On the other hand, the number of air accidents caused by human error was on the increase. 12 percent of all air accidents were due to technical faults but as many as 80 percent to human error. The commission decided to study this “human factor” in greater depth and endeavor to reduce its incidence.

#### **4.2.3 Commission for Mountain Emergency Medicine (Hermann Brugger)**

Hermann Brugger started by thanking the Liechtenstein colleagues for organizing the event and creating the excellent conditions for the conference in Malbun which streamlined the proceedings. The change in the chairmanship of the commission went smoothly. With Urs Wiget’s assistance, it was easy for Hermann Brugger to take over the commission.

The number of members has been increased with three qualified mountain doctors, that is Dr. Buddha Basnyat (Nepal), Dr. Ramon Gria (Argentina) and Dr. Arthur Morgan (South Africa) having been included as “corresponding members”. This represents considerable enrichment to IKAR and opens up the possibilities of spreading the knowledge of mountain medicine worldwide.

The World Congress of Mountain Doctors took place in Barcelona in the Spring of 2002. Intensive discussions on the subject of coordination took place on that occasion with the ISSM (the parent organization of mountain doctors), the medical commission of the UIAA and the Wilderness Medical Society. The activity of these organisations will be synchronized in future. Supply, measures and training are to be related to a common denominator.

In 2002, the commission published a book containing all 17 medical recommendations listed by IKAR over the last 12 years. Its publication was given generous financial support by CNSAS, the Italian mountain rescue service. Dr. Fidel Elsenon, the editor, briefly presented this book and highlighted the main subjects on which it is focused. It is written in English and costs EUR 20. It is sold with a CD with a complete translation of all texts into 10 languages; it is available from Stefanoni, the Italian publishers, under <http://www.stefanoni.it>. Hermann Brugger asks those present to advertise this book. The proceeds from the sale of this book will benefit the commission directly and will be devoted to the promotion of training in the countries of the “corresponding members”.

Future recommendations and commission papers will be freely accessible through the Internet. The commission is currently working on three further recommendations: Transfusions for victims of mountain accidents, medical equipment in mountain rescue helicopters and defibrillators

#### **4.2.4 Commission for Avalanche Rescue (Toni Grab)**

An avalanche rescuers conference took place in Gossensass, South Tyrol, from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2002. It was organized by the mountain rescue section of the South Tyrol Alpine Association in conjunction with CNSAS. Theoretical and practical training was closely interactive in this event as well. The participants presented their associations’ avalanche training

strategies, the operation plans and the alert organization. The rules of behavior on avalanches were discussed and, finally, the use of avalanche beacons with the new aerial on the helicopter demonstrated. Toni Grab expressed his thanks again to Othmar Prinoth and Siegfried Salzburger, the organizers.

The avalanche commission closely cooperated with the Commission for Terrestrial Rescue in Malbun. Four experienced avalanche specialists (Robert Bolognesi, Marin Engler, Michael Larcher and Werner Munter) talked on the subject of risk assessment. They explained their decision-making aids and briefly referred to their uses in rescue operations. It became apparent that one must assume the existence of a variable risk standard depending on the situation, the number of those buried and the time which has elapsed from the moment the avalanche came down.

The purpose of the subsequent discussions within groups was to produce a recommendation on the conditions under which a search action should be started and when it should be stopped in the case of any excessive danger of further avalanches. It turned out that such recommendations couldn't be compiled in the available time. It was agreed to compile a set of questions (<http://www.ikar-cisa.org> => Commission for Avalanche Rescue). It should assist in decision-making. Rescue managers/accident site officers are asked to test this list of questions in practice and to supplement it as thought necessary.

Practical avalanche action was also discussed in Malbun. Toni Grab encouraged those present to start collecting accident material. Information on real cases will form an important basis for ICAR's work. Analysis of it and explanations of any errors that may have been made will form a basis for efficient avalanche service and for reducing accident damage.

## **5. Finances**

### **5.1 2001 Annual Accounts and Balance Sheet**

The treasurer Felix Meier reported on the Profit and Loss Account and the Balance Sheet as at the end of 2001. The assets figure was higher. Since it is higher than short-terms requirements, part of the capital was put into fixed-interest securities. All contributions for 2001 were paid up. In the Autumn of 2001, the amount of CHF 5,600.-- was sent from England, from a collection, the ICAR having been approved as a "charity organization". The 2001 accounts show a surplus of CHF 25,800.--. ICAR's assets as at 1 January 2001 were CHF 107,378.94.

### **5.2 Auditors' report**

The audit of ICAR's financial transactions was performed by Peter Rheinberger and Christian Gritsch acting in their capacity as auditors. In their opinion, the accounts have been properly prepared and they proposed that the 2001 accounts be approved by the meeting and the treasurer Felix Meier be discharged with grateful thanks.

### **5.3 Approval of the 2001 Annual Accounts and granting discharge to the treasurer**

The 2001 Annual Accounts were approved. These were unanimously and unreservedly accepted and discharge was granted to the treasurer.

#### **5.4 2003 Estimates**

Budget proposals dated 12 October 2002 for 2003 show a total expenditure of approx. CHF 25,000.-- against an income of approx. CHF 30,000.--. These estimates were agreed and unanimously approved.

Also Felix Meier appreciated the simultaneous interpreting in Malbun and he stated that the budget would suffer heavily if simultaneous interpreting were required again.

Considering the successful experience with simultaneous interpreting, Toni Grab would not be without such services in the future. He put this forward matter for discussion and approval. The meeting passed his proposal and unanimously accepted any possible budgetary excess expenditure for this purpose. Of course endeavors must be made to have the cost of simultaneous interpreting covered by one or several sponsors.

#### **5.5 2002 Membership payments**

Three contributions for 2002 still remain unpaid. Reminders were sent to the associations in question. Clarifying discussions took place here in Malbun. It is to be expected that the outstanding payments will be received shortly.

### **7. IKAR's further action towards the EU**

The Italian EU deputies under the leadership of Luciano Caveri in particular are prepared to receive the ICAR and to support its representations to the EU Parliament. Discussions on this subject, which Sepp Hölzl and Armando Poli shall also attend, will take place on 23 October 2002 in Italy.

ICAR will prepare a paper which will make it clear that it continues to work in the direction of co-operating with the EU. In the first instance it is a matter of ICAR being recognized by the EU as a special organization concerned with alpine rescue. ICAR also expects support for the training of new members and generally for countries where mountain rescue services must be improved.

A brief discussion proved that support for translation services and publications for the ICAR would be very helpful, considering the situation portrayed above.

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

Toni Grab, who is also chairing the Commission for Avalanche Rescue in the interim, pointed out that no suitable candidate for the chair has been found so far. Othmar Prinoth was approached but had to decline because as President of the Italian mountain guides he has since taken on other duties and could not cope with extra work.

The Board decided to approach the Associations with a view to having suitable candidates named. The best person should be found before the next conference and a suitable candidate proposed to the Delegates' Meeting.

## **8. 2003 Scottish conference venue presented**

A year ago, the Scotland declared that it would be prepared to take over the organization of the 2003 ICAR Conference. Dave Syme, member of the Commission for Mountain Emergency Medicine, gave the following basic data:

*The next ICAR Conference will take place in Coylumbridge, Scotland, from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> October 2003.*

The Scottish mountain rescue service organization comprises 25 rescue teams. Two of them are subordinate to the Royal Air Force. They are called out approximately 300 times each year. A conference of the Medical Commission has already taken place in Scotland in 2000.

Our Scottish colleagues will be supported in their preparations by a delegation from the Board. The homepage of the Scottish Mountain Rescue Commission is as follows:  
<http://www.bluedome.co.uk/assoc/mrcscot/mrscot.htm>.

Dave Syme presented the conference venue and the surrounding area with the Cairngorm Mountains by showing impressive photographs and a short video. He extends his sincere invitation to all mountain rescuers and looks forward to meeting as many mountain rescuers as possible next year in Coylumbridge.

## **9. Finding a conference venue for 2005**

No venue for 2005 has been proposed so far. No association has so far offered to organize that conference.

The TOPR (Polish Mountain Rescue Association) was promised that it could make arrangements for the 2004 Conference in Zakopane. Italy, where the 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee of the mountain rescue organization will be celebrated, has since also offered to take on organizing that Conference. The TOPR has been asked to consider whether it would be prepared to cancel their Conference arrangements in favor of the CNSAS (TOPR advised us on 22.10.02 that the Prime Minister had already been involved and, therefore, for political reasons, it would not be possible to cancel the arrangements.)

## **10. Miscellaneous**

### **10.1 New Members**

It appears that the ICAR will continue to expand.

An application for admission to the ICAR was received from the Slovenian cave rescuers. Clarification of this application is still in progress. Decision on admission will be made as soon as all the necessary documents are submitted.

Contacts with the Turkish mountain rescue service organization have so far been extended by a delegation with Danilo Skerbinec accepting an invitation to Turkey in Autumn 2002.

Unfortunately, the Turks are not present in Malbun on this occasion and their acceptance has been put back.

## **10.2 Changes to the Canadian and the USA representations**

The Board has decided to make two changes to the country representations without much red tape and makes the following proposal to the Delegates Meeting:

### **Canada**

Marc Ledwidge declares (the relevant correspondence is to hand) that the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) would like to transfer the membership of the ICAR to the Parks Canada Agency (PCA). Parks Canada offers the best mountain rescue opportunities. It coordinates the Canadian representations and wholly supports IKAR's operations.

### **USA**

The situation is quite similar in the USA. Tim Kovacs drew attention to the fact that the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR) is no longer acting as a partner for the ICAR. The direct way is through the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA). The MRA would take on the financing and name the representatives for the ICAR commissions.

The Delegates Meeting unanimously agreed to approve these two changes to the country representations.

## **10.3 2003 events**

The following 2003 meetings and conferences have been arranged so far:

### **Commission for Terrestrial Rescue:**

Technical conference in Scotland, immediately before the ICAR Conference

### **Commission for Avalanche Rescue:**

Possibly a conference of specialists within the SAC conference in Switzerland  
 Technical conference in Scotland, immediately before the ICAR Conference

### **Commission for Mountain Emergency Medicine:**

Commission conference in March 2003, in Slovenia  
 Canadian Doctors' Conference in August 2003

### **Commission for Air Rescue:**

Technical conference in Scotland, immediately before the ICAR Conference  
 (invitation to see machines, team and demonstration on site available)

#### **10.4 Awarding honorary membership of the ICAR to Marian T. Bielecki**

Toni Grab pointed out that silent activists have been giving voluntary services in ICAR's mountain rescue section for decades, shaping the history of this Commission to a large extent. He gave the floor to Reinhold Dörflinger, the vice-president, who said it was a great honour in this connection and on the occasion of the International Year of the Mountains, to award honorary membership to Marian Bielecki from Poland. In 1952, Marian Bielecki was President and later chief representative of the Mountain Rescue Service Organization in the Beskidy Mountains. He has been a member of the central board of the GOPR all these years. In 1968, he introduced the Polish Mountain Rescue Association to the ICAR. The ICAR's gold badge was attached to his lapel to loud applause, and he received a small present. Visibly moved, Marian Bielecki expressed his thanks for the distinction. He said that it was only thanks to effective support from the alpine countries that it was at all possible to build up a mountain rescue organization in his country, and he expressed his grateful thanks for the distinction.

### **11. Final word from the President**

In his closing words, Toni Grab thanked the Liechtenstein Mountain Rescue Association for organizing the conference so efficiently. Christoph Frommelt, representing all who contributed to the success, received the ICAR's gold badge from the hands of the ICAR president. The good and invaluable services of the simultaneous interpreters were once again honored by a great round of applause.

Toni Grab thanked all speakers for their valuable contributions and the Board for its work, and said that he was quite convinced that mountain rescue has made great strides forward thanks to the in-depth discussions and the comradeship experienced here in Malbun. Even although everything was perfect, there is always the incentive to make it even better next year. He wished everyone a safe journey home and looked forward to the next meeting.

Seen by:  
Toni Grab  
President

For the minutes:  
Roland Meister  
Secretary

Enclosures: - corrected organization chart of ICAR  
- list of participants' addresses of Malbun 2002

Copies to: - ICAR member organizations  
- honorary members and members of the Board