



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR ALPINE RESCUE

Davos, 3 October 1999

*Minutes of the 51st ICAR Representatives' Meeting
25 September 1999
in Sonthofen, Oberallgäu (Germany)*

1. Address of welcome of the President

Martin Schori, the President, welcomed all those present, the representatives, the Board and the guests. He expressed his thanks to the Committee of the mountain rescue section of the Bavarian Red Cross and the German Alpine Association for their good organizational skills usefully employed and the considerable financial support. Special thanks were also expressed to the co-ordinators for the Nebelhorn demonstrations and the beautiful get-together evening.

Hendrik van den Driesch died on 9 July 1999. He was a loyal supporter of the South Tirol alpine rescue teams. He worked as a translator for the ICAR for many years and he offered his useful multi-lingual services particularly during meetings as well as for producing various reports and other written work. The ICAR shall remember him and other alpine rescuers who passed away over the last twelve months.

2. Roll-call, appointment of officers

Twenty representatives from the total of 29 ICAR member associations were present. They represented a total of 23 votes. This gives an absolute majority of 12. Apologies were received particularly from the Italian (CAI) and the Spanish (FEDME) Associations.

Pierre Blanc was given the task of counting the votes.

The meeting was held in German. Urs Wiget interpreted the proceedings into French and Felix Meier into English.

The agenda and the various documents were provided to the member associations in good time. The President's annual reports were also available here in Sonthofen. These will also be sent out together with these Minutes.

Nothing was submitted in response to the President's call for any additional requests or amendments to the agenda.

3. Minutes of the 1998 Representatives' Meeting in Obergurgl (A)

The Minutes of the 1998 Representatives' Meeting were sent out to the Associations in November 1998. They were passed and accepted with thanks from the Secretary.

4. President's Annual Report

Looking back at the past year, Martin Schori, the President, referred once again briefly to the impressive Jubilee event in Obergurgl.

He mentioned the extraordinary avalanche situation which occurred in February 1999, particularly affecting France, Switzerland and Austria and put the mountain rescuers to the test. The results of the Canyoning accident in Switzerland in July 1999 were tragic.

After the unhappy feedback from the manufacturers about the avalanche beacon technical comparison tests, at least the ICAR agreed on its results. It is important for the whole Commission to back these tests.

The introduction of an ICAR homepage represents an important advancement. The President expressed thanks to Gebhard Barbisch for his efforts in connection with this matter.

In talking of the prospects, the President mentioned in particular the need for a permanent secretary, a more professional approach to the administrative work, an information center and the settling of the matter of ruling on duties of the board assessors.

The ICAR must come out into the open more frequently and market its services in a better way. Today's electronic means give us an excellent opportunity to publicize the work of mountain rescue organizations. Of course, we must not work only at the expense of our members but try and sell our services in a more effective way. Manufacturers of alpine sports articles must be incorporated and tourist and Alpine sport resorts in particular boasting of well functioning alpine rescue teams should contribute more financial resources. Finally, the possibility of financial support from the EU should be investigated.

The Delegates' Meeting approved the Annual Report, unopposed.

5. Finances

5.1 1998 Annual Accounts and Balance Sheet

The 1998 Annual Accounts close with a loss of CHF 12,780.70. The expenses for the anniversary festivities totaled CHF 27,825.-. Sponsors' contributions totaled CHF 8,860.-. Savings achieved on current accounts were counterbalanced by the extra cost of Internet of CHF 6,527.-. ICAR's assets as at 31st December 1998 were CHF 57,635.50. Since no questions concerning the annual accounts were asked, Felix Meier, acting temporarily as the treasurer, put them to vote. The Annual Accounts were accepted by the Meeting, unopposed.

5.2. Auditors' Report

The auditors' report was read out by Peter Reinberger. Treuhand AG, the auditors, stated that the balance sheet and the profit and loss account were correct, that the accounts were kept in an orderly manner and that the generally approved valuation principles had been observed. The Meeting discharged the Board from their responsibilities.

5.3 Proposals for 2000

As regards the 2000 budgets, there is a small adjustment whereby the CHF 3000.- for the Bulletin are removed. The President proposes that this amount be transferred to the cost of the Homepage.

This was approved by the Meeting and the 2000 budgets envisaging receipts of CHF 26,000.- and expenditure of CHF 21,100.- was approved, unopposed.

5.4 Membership Payments

According to the details provided by Felix Meier who took over ICAR's treasurer's office temporarily as from 1 July 1999, membership fees totaling CHF 1500.- are still outstanding for 1999. Those associations which are in arrears have been approached here in Sonthofen or will receive a letter asking them to send their subscriptions.

6. 1999 Revision of ICAR's Statutes

A revision of the statutes is urgent for the following two main reasons:

- to clarify ICAR's management staffing
- to settle the matter of ICAR's registered office in order to enhance its credibility and the possibility of appearing professional at international level

During the Spring meeting, the Board revised the substance of the Statutes in these matters which had been valid since 1994. Subsequently, the draft amendment was sent to the Associations for approval.

The written proposed amendments received from the Austrian Alpine Rescue Association (OeBRD) and the Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) were discussed between the representatives of these Associations and a Board Committee here in Sonthofen. Largely general consensus was reached, except in relation to a single Article.

The President pointed out that this business would have to be adjourned to the year 2000 if the discussions on this controversial point were to be too lengthy. He also mentioned that the technical rules and the rules of procedure were not under discussion at present and they would have to be adjusted in the coming year.

A total of 16 amendment proposals were discussed. The President set out on a projector the individual articles which were to be amended in three languages. German was the master language. Any translation errors were subsequently cleared up.

This Report now explains the major amendments only:

Re. Articles 1.2 ICAR's registered office

This is now at the permanent secretariat in Switzerland or, if no such secretariat exists, at the President's place of residence.

This amendment was unanimously approved (by 23 votes).

Re. Article 3.2.1 Membership, Members

"As a rule, ICAR's members are organizations performing their alpine rescue duties in their country officially and with approval, and alpine associations."

Incorporation of piste rescue services in this Article and thus the inclusion of the appropriate organizations was waived on the proposal of the SAC.

This amendment was unanimously approved (by 23 votes).

Re. Article 3.3.1 Membership, Special Members

"Organizations without their own rescue service whose membership of the ICAR is desirable and valuable are special members. Their acceptance to membership shall be decided by the Board."

This was the subject of a longer discussion.

- Adriano Censi as the member of the SAC drew attention to the fact that Articles 3.3.1 and 3.2.1 must be treated jointly and proposed that Article 3.3.1 be left in its old wording. He also pointed out that the voting problem must be examined.

- The President does not see any danger of the regional rescue services overwhelming the ICAR. The Delegates Meeting itself decides on acceptance. In the case of the newly formulated Article being adopted, TOPR (Poland), CIFRO (Sweden) and KWRO (Switzerland) would be regarded as ordinary members.

- Karl Peter Götzfried (BRK) pointed out that Switzerland's internal problems should not have to be solved here and pleaded for the new Article to be adopted.

- Ernst Kohler from REGA supported the SAC's proposal.

- Sepp Hölzl (Alpine Rescue Service AVS) wants to leave the old wording but to accept the three associations under discussion (TOPR, CIFRO, KWRO) as ordinary members.

His motion was rejected by 5 votes for and 12 against (with 6 abstentions).

Subsequently, the President put the new formulation of this Article to the vote: Article 3.3.1 was approved by 17 votes with 3 against (with 3 abstentions).

Re. Article 4.3.1 Board, time in office

"The members of the Board are elected by the Delegates' Meeting for a period of four years. The members of the Board can be reelected twice".

This Article was unanimously accepted.

Voting on the whole set of amendments to the Statutes went smoothly: 1999 Statute amendments were accepted unopposed.

7. Elections

7.1 Electing the treasurer

The Delegates' Meeting confirmed and applauded the election of Felix Meier as the new treasurer.

7.2 Auditors

Peter Reinberger (Liechtenstein Alpine Service, to date) and Christian Gritsch (Board of Mountain Watch, Bavarian Red Cross, new) offered their services.

8. The next Representatives' Meeting: 15th to 18th October 2000 in the USA

The next ICAR Representatives' Meeting will be held at the Grand Canyon, Arizona, USA. The venue for the meeting was described in detail by our American colleagues on the previous evening.

9. Results of the enquiry about venues for meetings in 2001 and 2002

Croatia with its mountain rescue company (Hrvatskog Planinarki Saveza) made itself available for co-ordinating the ICAR Conference in 2001. Borislav Alerej's brief and warm invitation was loudly applauded.

No offers are available for 2002 as yet.

10. Any other business

There were no further communications or verbal reports.

The President closed the 1999 Meeting after exactly two hours. He thanked all those present for their active co-operation and expressed his confidence that the decisions were well accepted. The frank expression of opinions bears witness to the strength and toughness of ICAR.

Passed by:
signed by M. Schori
President

For the Minutes:
signed: R. Meister
Secretary

Copies to: - ICAR member organizations
- Honorary and Board Members