

Avalanche Commission Summary

ICAR 2017 Andorra

October 19-20, 2017

Thursday, October 19, 2017

8:15 am

- Welcome of the participants by the President of the Avalanche Commission, Dominique Létang.
- Annual activity report of the President.

“I would like to start by saying you that I am completely involved in my commission. Sometimes I heard, here or there, some criticism about my lack of involvement or my supposed lack of leadership. It’s not fair. Do not forget that I am also the chief of the French Avalanche Association. I am always very busy. However, do not forget that Manuel Genswein – you know this fact - is omnipresent, so which is difficult for me, is to brake him!

Since our last congress in Borovets, I participated on a meeting in Grenoble (UIAGM – ICAR) about MSKB and also in order to prepare our avalanche schedule for Andorra. Then in Chamonix last spring about the working group “best practice in avalanche recue”.

I participated on a meeting in Bern with IFMGA/SLF DAVOS/ENSA/UIAA/M.Genswein and ICAR (myself on behalf of our Icar president). This meeting was very important because we obtained a consensus about the mountain safety, based on the knowledge base, within the group.

Furthermore, on this meeting, we writed together the contents of the memorandum of understanding of the mountain safety.

I participated on our working group Tuesday of this week. We have right now nineteen translations of the knowledge base. We also have 160 illustrations about avalanche education, search and rescue. The working group continued on Wednesday. I fully would like to thank the working members group and Manuel Genswein in animating it.

I attended the workshop Wednesday. Despite the bad weather, it was very interesting and I would like to thank the president of the terrestrial commission but also the local organizers for the good job. In the evening, we have had a French group meeting in order to prepare the next congress in Chamonix.

At the beginning of our commission here in Soldeu, close to 80 attendees are presents in the avalanche commission.

Two information: be aware of that the ISSW will be held in Innsbruck from 7 to 12 of October 2018. Very close to our congress in Chamonix, important to know in case you would reach both congresses.

The second information is that Joe Obad, the chief of the Canadian avalanche association decided to stop as vice-president of the avalanche commission.

So, now, I will differently be organized in my commission, with the support of a short motivated team (4, 5 members) that will work on my side, based on a master plan, upon three years, dedicated to impulse a new wind in our commission.

I would like to congratulate the bombers and Joan Ricassen, for their efforts to make the congress a success and for Pancho, the chief of the civil protection of Andorra for participating in elaborating our accommodations for our working group at Naudi hotel”.

“Thank you very much”.

Start of our congress:

- Updating on the "Avalanche Best Practices" working group, by Manuel Genswein.

- Presentation of new members to the Avalanche Commission:

- Mountain Rescue Team Madrid

- US National Ski Patrol

- Mountain Rescue Bosnia Herzegovia

- Minute of silence in honor of the victims of the avalanche of Rigopiano (Italia)

8: 30-12: 00

- Presentation of the avalanche accidentology:datas of different nations:

- Italy

- Switzerland

- Poland

- France

- Catalonia

- Norway

- Slovakia

- Presentation: "Activities of the workgroup" Best Practice in Avalanche Rescue "Summary" (F. Jarry / France).

- Presentation: "Buried Subject outside of visual boundaries / call for discussion by Avalanche Best Practice Workgroup" (Poland).

- Presentation: "Mountain Guides' avalanche incidents in Slovakia" (Mr Biskupi / Slovakia).

14: 00-15: 00

- Presentation: "UIAA Safecom, Standard Probe and Shovel" (Genwein)

The UIAA Safety Commission standard for "Avalanche Rescue Shovels" has officially been released. Expect the first products to be presented at Outdoor Retailer and ISPO. Thank you very much to the ICAR members TOPR (Poland), CAI (Italy), GMSP (France) for their active participation in building up the field reference data base! Thanks to your active contribution and hard work in the field, we were able to identify the practically relevant threshold in the laboratory data. We advise all ICAR members to look for the UIAA Safety Label when purchasing avalanche shovels in the future!

- Presentation: board game "Avalanche" of Luis Cobo

- Presentation: «snowplak» (France)

15: 00-17: 30

- Joint session with the Terrestrial Commission

- Exchanges on the Mountain Safety Info project

- Presentation - G. Barbisch on the process to reach the Memorandum of Understanding.

- Discussion in both committees

- Presentation: Technical Rappelling on Big Walls / Rappelling in Cellars (Italy)

Friday, October 20, 2017

8h00-12h00: Presentations:

- "Pinpointing after search with electronic search means" (Austria).

- "Jochgrubenkopf accident" (Austria)

- "RADeMS: Response Assessment and Decision Making Support" (Canada)

14: 00 - 16: 00

- Presentations:

- "Survey on Mountain behavior and perception of avalanche risk" (Spain)
- "BC Zero's influence on avalanche education" (USA)
- Presentation of the prevention association "La Chamoniarde" (France)
- Presentation of the future Mountain Safety Info portal / modifications of the "best practice in avalanche rescue" illustration database (Genswein)

16:00 - 17:30

Joint session with ICAR Alpine Emergency Medicine Commission on "Triage Strategies" (exact timing to be agreed with MEDCOM)

I wish all of you a successful winter season. Please do not forget to register for this year's conference in France (Chamonix) and take the chance to make an active contribution to our commission program. **Registration could be open at the beginning on April 2018.**

Dominique LETANG

President of ICAR Avalanche Commission