

AVA Commission Annual Report

20190905-AVA President Dominique Létang

“The avalanche does not know that you are an expert” (André Roch)

After our last congress in Chamonix, I was not able to attend the ICAR Executive Board meeting in January due to many solicitations after a dramatic accident, which occurred in France: Two ski patrollers died during an avalanche control operation as they were using a bombing system named “NONEL” (for “Non electric”). The use of this system is very simple and fast but we already had some near miss accidents due to misuse. Indeed, in each accident, not the device involved is problematic; instead we find the origin of the problem in human factors (by force of habit).

In August, the goal of the ICAR Executive Board meeting was to prepare the congress in Poland. All sounds good from TOPR which is in charge of the event.

I was in touch with Stephanie Thomas from TCSAR in Teton County these last months, who helped me to build the schedule of our avalanche commission meeting.

So, we will have presentations from different countries - as usual - on avalanche data, and some oral presentations. However, I regret we did not receive many presentations from our members.

So, we decided to implement four internal working groups during the congress. We found some volunteers to animate these groups:

The Work Group Leaders are:

- Oyvind Henningsen: Avalanche Commission Recommendations and Future goals for the Commission (Safety and Standard Recommendations)
- Mattias Tarestad and Per-Olov Wikberg: Prevention: Strategies, Statistics and Trends
- Kyle Hale: Industry and Partnerships Collaboration
- Stephanie Thomas: Research, Design and Science.

After these working groups, we will have summaries and conclusions. I would like to thank Stephanie and the people involved in the working groups very much, I truly appreciate your help!

Be assured of my full involvement in our commission.

Dominique Létang
President of the Avalanche Commission