

Avalanche Rescue Operation

Annaberg - 15.02.2023

incl. the use of Mountain Rescue Search Dogs



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15.02.2023 Avalanche - Annaberg, (Lower Austria)



AUSTRIA MAP



Accident Background



Weather: Sunshine,
Avalanche risk level in the
morning: 1
in the afternoon: 2



Conditions: Less snow in the
winter, heavy snowfall before
the accident, followed by
quick warming



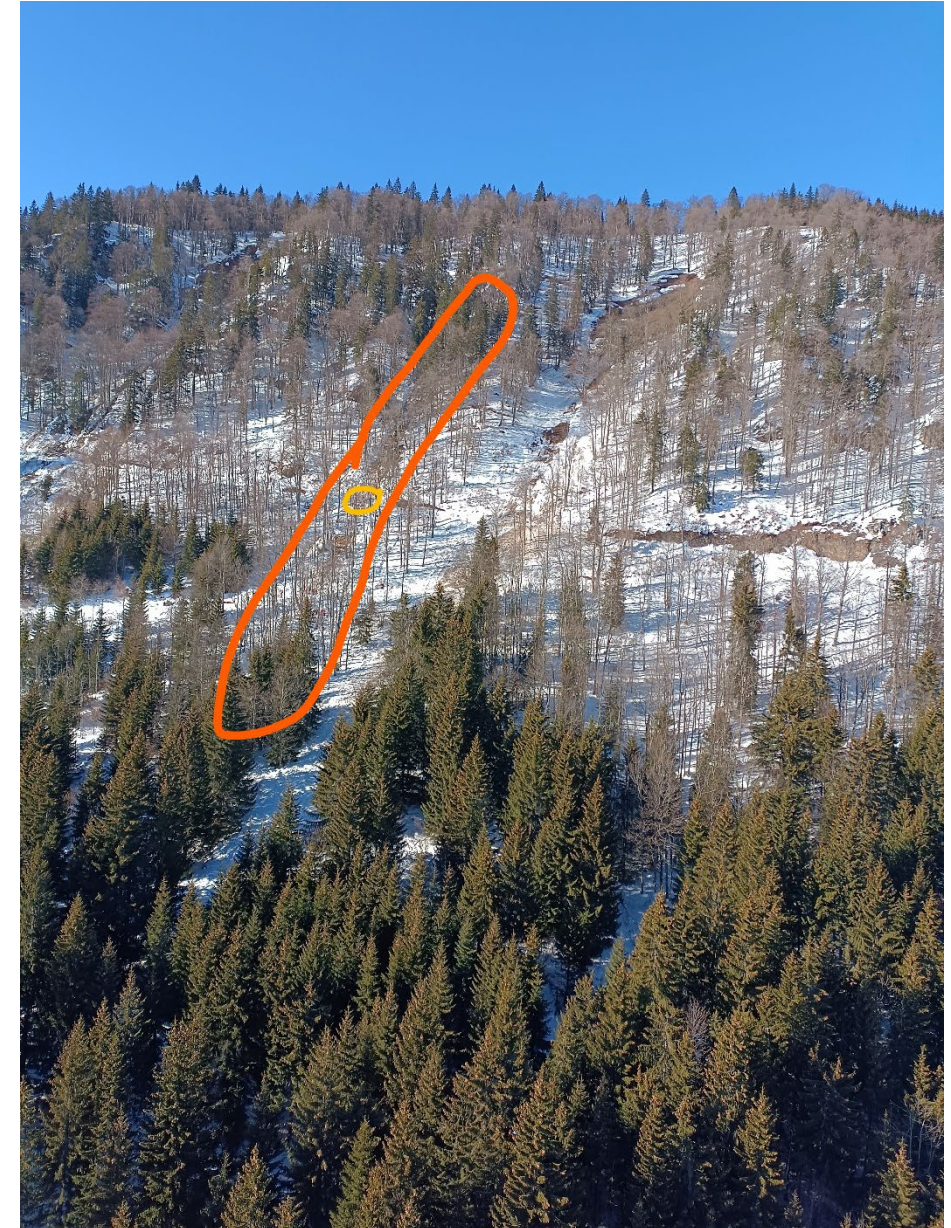
Location: Route: **Forestry
road** to Hennesteck,
Elevation: 1090m



Equipment: Touring skis, no
avalanche beacons, probes,
or shovels

Details of the Incident

- Three men aged 60 to 79 years were on a ski tour to Hennesteck
- At around 11:30 AM, at an elevation of 1090m, a warm glide avalanche was triggered from approx. 1260m, on a slope of about 40 degrees
- One person was fully buried about 2.8-3m deep. His two companions were not caught in the avalanche



Initial Response

- The companions initiated the search, but without emergency equipment, it was unsuccessful
- Another touring skier arrived shortly after and called emergency services
- Emergency response started at 11:39 AM



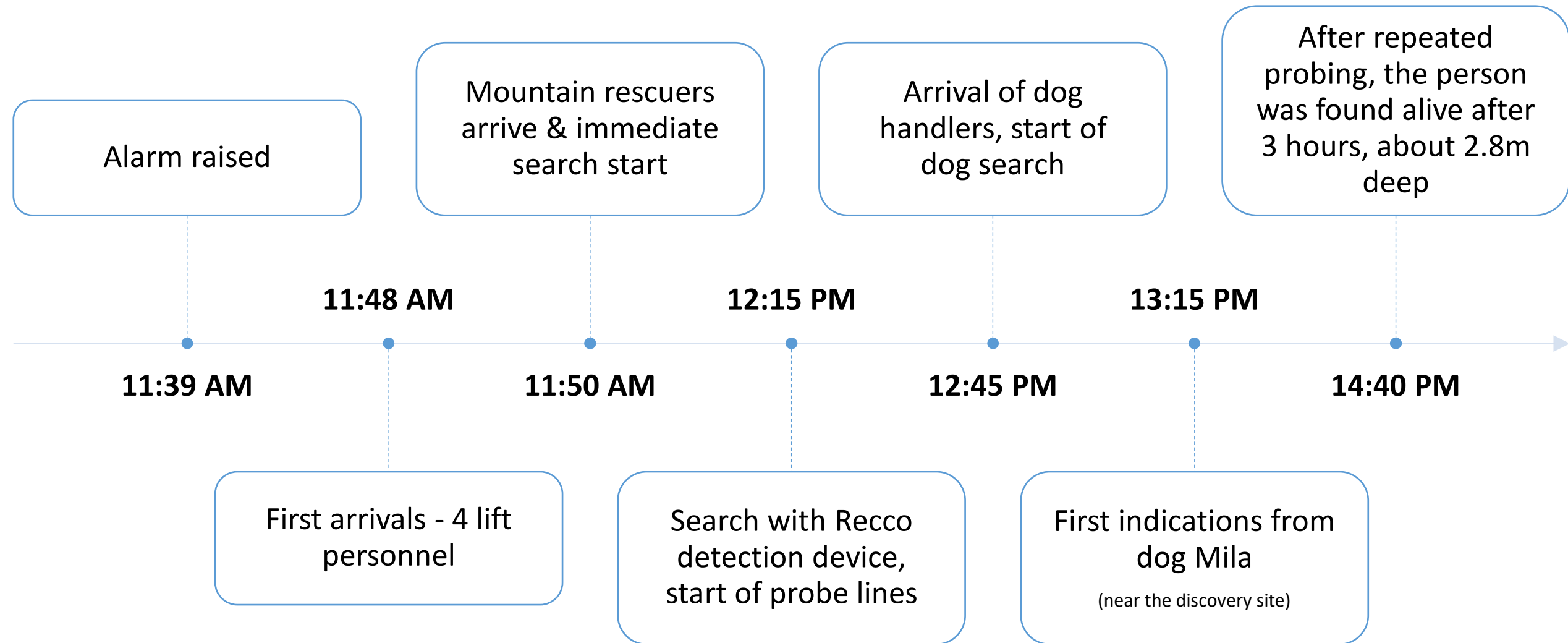


Rescue Operation Details

- Rescue Team Involving
 - 69 mountain rescuers,
 - 12 police staff (5 alpine police officers + 7 police officers),
 - 2 police helicopters with 4 crew members,
 - 1 drone from the police with 2 operators, and
 - 1 Rescue Helicopter (ÖAMTC) with 3 crew members
- **5 search dogs from the mountain rescue team**



Timeline of Rescue Operation



Pictures from the rescue operation



Pictures from the rescue operation



Pictures from the rescue operation





Pictures from the rescue operation





Conclusion and Lessons Learned

- The dog, due to the wet avalanche (scent gets lost downwards) and the depth of the buried person, cannot indicate the exact point
- This should be taken into account in future exercises: the person should be buried so that the dog cannot reach him
- Dog handlers need to practice diligently with the probe to find the person, same for the mountain rescuers, to develop a sense for when they have a hit
- 15.20 PM: Evacuation of the injured and severely hypothermic person with a body temperature of 26°C.



Debriefing





Thank you for your attention!