

Submitted Abstract

ID IMC22-FSAbstr- 755

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Country	Austria
Region	Western Europe
Title	Fieldwork Safety In Alpine Environments - The Ri.S.S.K. Approach In Practice.
Keywords	Field Work, Risk Management, Hazards
Type	List Of Focus Session
Focus Session ID	19

Abstract

Public entities, providing operational warning services and research facilities in the environment of natural hazards have been working in high alpine, exposed areas for decades and have subsequently developed a high level of informal risk management competence due to their technical expertise and experience. Compared to their level of exposure, they have experienced only very few severe or fatal accidents during field work. Nevertheless, various natural hazards as well as hazards resulting from exposure to extreme weather conditions and complex terrain are inevitable and therefore almost always present during fieldwork in alpine terrain, with varying conditions throughout the seasons. Risk management is therefore required to enable the necessary activities on the one hand and on the other hand to protect the personnel involved from significant immediate hazards. Due to increasing safety demands and awareness and to provide an optimal working environment for the vastly varying personnel, ranging from technical employees to researchers, students or other attendants, a formalized, custom-tailored safety concept is of great importance. The framework we present here, has the goal to develop a risk management strategy that is accepted by all stakeholders and that effectively identifies and mitigates risks, such that operational objectives can be achieved, and possible damage will be minimized. The presented safety concept is based on ISO 31000:2018 - a standard that deals with risk management, establishing guidelines that describe in a general setting how to deal with risks in an organization. The presented safety concept is divided into comprehensive fundamentals, an adapted framework and a universally applicable process. While the fundamentals and framework serve to establish a risk culture, the process defines the actual procedures for practice, for which the so-called RI.S.S.K. approach was developed. The process refers to: Risk Identification [RI], Safety [S] assessment, Safety [S] measures, check [K] including monitoring and reviewing process. In this way, RI.S.S.K. represents a classical risk management process, which is optimally suited for field work due to its simple structure and universal applicability. RI.S.S.K. can be applied in both: the planning process and in the field to quickly arrive at viable assessments and reasonable measures. By means of RI.S.S.K. all occurring risks are systematically recorded in the planning process and during the field work and controlled in the sense of coherent risk management. In this way, the fundamentals combined with the framework pave the way for a risk culture which decreases risk and improves workers safety.