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## **Glenn McIlroy - International Liaison Report 2009**

### **FIPS 2009 Are, Sweden**

Thanks to a very supportive budget ASPA was able to provide 8 delegates with travel assistance and congress fees to participate in the 17th Federation Internationale Patrouilles de Ski congress in Are, Sweden earlier this year. It was a tremendous effort from SLAO (Swedish Lift Area's Organization) and particularly Marie Nordgren and her hard working team of helpers who worked tirelessly on the preparations and the delivery of the congress. With 15 countries to entice to the congress the end result was a very informative week of indoor presentations and outdoor interactive activities all with a serving of unique Scandinavian hospitality and entertainment.

From the welcoming evening presentation on the history of Are and its fascinating weather phenomena lectures and activities throughout the week included:

- Pediatric Skiing Injuries in Sweden
- Managing Disabled Skier Accidents
- Hypothermia
- Reducing Back Injuries and Lifting Systems
- The Swedish Weather Centre
- Avalanche Rescue
- Ski Patrolling in Switzerland
- Legal Aspects USA
- Immobilization Techniques
- Overview of Australian Ski Patrol
- ASPA Extended Care Module
- Hydration of Ski patrollers
- An assessment of Wrist Guards
- Patroller Injury Survey
- Scenario Based Training Exercise
- Overview of Japan Ski Patrol
- Overview of Ski Patrolling in France
- Overview of Ski Patrolling in Italy
- Overview of Ski Patrolling in Chile
- BASP British Ski Patrol Training

All of the attending delegates helped to give an interesting insight into ski patrolling in their home countries by giving a brief overview of their domestic associations and the conditions of the ski areas they patrol in. Once again the Australian presentations were well received and a popular inclusion to the program.

## The ASPA Team

ASPA was well represented by:

**Rowan Peck** who together with Michelle Ware set up an engaging scenario that involved a number of groups from mixed countries responding to an on snow incident involving several injured and distressed skiers. The purpose of the exercise was to highlight the importance of scenario based training. It certainly created a lot of hand signals in my group as none of the participants could speak the same language. After the debrief it was hailed as a success with many participating countries very supportive of the various techniques used and the opportunity to participate in some hands on practical skills training.

**Margot Hurrell** delivered an informative presentation on her study into the adequate hydration of ski patrollers as well as the results of a survey into the pros and cons of a variety of wrist guards. The wrist guard lecture was well received by the congress as very few studies have been done in this area. Many felt this information would assist greatly in recommendations regarding the use of the various types of wrist guards on the market.

**AJ Simon** and **Peter Findlater** gave a presentation on the development and composition of the ASPA Extended care Module. AJ in particular spoke of the content and intentions behind the development of the module whilst Peter gave an insight into the real benefits of these advanced skills to a remote area ski patrol such as his home resort of Ben Lomond in Tasmania. This presentation produced much discussion as ski patrollers from many countries are not authorized to administer any medications what so ever.

**Mark Spilsbury** had the duty of delivering an overview to the congress of the state of affairs with regard to ASPA. Marks address detailed the national approach to training both first aid and on snow, sponsorship and funding issues, the structure of ASPA and the challenges facing the organization. Many delegates looked at the Australian model as very progressive and could only wish they had such cohesion, particularly the Americans.

**Rik Head** as a FIPS VP Special Projects Rik was heavily involved with assisting with various FIPS managerial tasks throughout the week. Rik also delivered the results from a Ski Patroller Injury Survey he had produced for the congress.

**Dr Mark Zagorski** and **Glenn McIlroy** , Mark and I delivered a follow up presentation on back injuries and efforts being made at Falls Creek to eliminate them. Mark looked specifically at the types of back injuries, who they where happening to and the true costs of repairs to these injuries. I focused on the efforts we had made at the resort to provide lifting aids to eliminate some of the manual handling situations.

All of the Australian and most of the presentation from the other delegates are available to view or download from [www.fips-skipatrol.org](http://www.fips-skipatrol.org) look in the media gallery.

## Planning for the 18<sup>th</sup> FIPS Congress Rusutsu, Japan

The dates for the next world congress have been set, the congress will run between Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April to Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup> 2011 at the Rusutsu ski area on the island of Hokkaido in Japan. ASPA has budgeted \$10,000 in the 2009-10 budget with a further \$19,000 planned for 2010-11. All going well ASPA should be in a position to once again assist several delegates to attend the congress. The selection process will commence early in 2010.

## Wrapping Up

Many thanks to Mark Spilsbury who has kept FIPS high on the agenda and as a result of his efforts as president of ASPA adequately funded this portfolio. Mark has helped keep ASPA at the ready and a major contributor to the international ski patrol community.

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Below is an image of the Patient Lifting System at Falls Creek. The concept to develop a patient lifting system was presented by Dr Mark Zagorski and myself at a FIPS congress back in 2005, now a reality in 2009 and a great success after in excess of 350 movements in its first winter of use at the Falls Creek medical centre.



A patient is lifted from a rescue trailer and conveyed into the emergency entrance at the rear of the Falls Creek medical centre.

Glenn McIlroy

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