

Fonnbu, a New (Old) Platform For Snow and Avalanche Research

Christian Jaedicke¹ Krister Kristensen² Karstein Lied¹ Steinar Bakkehøi¹

1 Norwegian Geotechnical Institute, Oslo, Norway; 2 Norwegian Geotechnical Institute, Stryn, Norway

One of the first tasks of the newly established avalanche group at the NGI in 1973 was the selection of a suitable location for an avalanche research station. The choice was on Grasdalen, north of the Jotunheimen mountains, 1000 m asl., in a valley well known for its avalanche activity and high amounts of snow. The station was ready for use in 1973 and intensive research has been made for more than 20 years before budget constraints decreased the activity in the late 80ies. Main research interest was on snow properties, weather and avalanche relations, avalanche dynamics and snow creep in steep slopes. In connection to the research station the Ryggfonn test site was established in 1979. Two years after the 30 years anniversary party, the station burned down completely in February 2005 due to an electrical failure. Scientific data and results were safe in the NGI archive, but lots of old memorials and instruments were lost. Already on the day after the fire, it was decided to build up a new modern station on the same location. Work started the same summer and in August 2006, the new station was officially opened. The new station features accommodation for up to 15 persons, a combined seminar and living room, offices, workshop and of course a sauna. The station is equipped with a modern weather station that also measures snow temperatures and radiation balance. It is now used for NGI research in connection with the Ryggfonn test site, for avalanche courses and courses arranged by the Norwegian School of Winter Warfare and Norwegian Universities. We would like by this presentation inform about the station and invite international researchers to use the station for their research in Norway.