Abstract: To introduce basic knowledge of avalanche danger for off piste areas, the Swiss accident insurance company SUVA produced in close collaboration with the Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research a video to appeal to young people. In “wrong-right”-scenes well known protagonists show how to behave at danger level 1 to 4 (“low”, “moderate”, “considerable”, “high”) and for a spring situation in out-of-bound terrain. The video also shows the several possibilities how to get the information about the actual avalanche danger degree in Switzerland. In addition instruction material supports teachers for example to educate avalanche prevention at school. Supplementing in some ski resorts the scene of the video for the corresponding danger degree of the daily avalanche bulletin is running.

Keywords: avalanche accident, avalanche incident, avalanche prevention, avalanche forecast, avalanche bulletin, avalanche danger degree, avalanche video, avalanche education.

1. Introduction

Avalanche accidents in off-piste terrain have increased in the last 5 years (Tschirky, 2000). 80% of the accidents occur at level “moderate” and “considerable” (Harvey, 2002). The mean age of people caught in avalanches lies between 17 and 30 years (Signorell, 2001 and Harvey et al., 2002). Often casualties had no avalanche knowledge at all. For better basic avalanche education the Swiss accident insurance company SUVA produced in close collaboration with the Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research (SFISAR) a video to appeal to young people. The video takes 15 minutes and educates how inexperienced people should behave if they want to ski off-pists. In “wrong-right”-scenes well known protagonists show how to behave at danger level 1 to 4 and for a spring situation in out-of-bound terrain. The video also informs what equipment is required for off-piste-skiing and where you can get Information about the actual avalanche danger degree (Ammann, 1998). Linked to the video supplemental facilities are presented (Link with avalanche bulletin, instruction documentation for teachers). The video is available on tape or DVD in German, French and Italian language.

2. Message of education video

This instructive video answers following questions:

- How can you inform your self about the actual avalanche situation?
- How do you behave at the different danger levels in off-piste terrain?

For danger level “low” (1), “moderate” (2), “considerable” (3), “high” (4) and for a spring situation (danger increase during the day) a small completed story is played. The stories always have the same pattern. In a first part a “wrong” -scene shows how not to behave, which ends in an accident. A “try again” -part after each accident with a “right” -scene shows the proper behaviour und gives a main message for each danger level. For each danger level the following advises are given:
### 3. Additional facilities

Supplemental to the video a instruction documentation supports teachers to educate avalanche prevention for at least two lessons. This brochure contains transparencies and worksheets to the video.

Furthermore in 10 ski resorts, which are famous for off-piste skiing, the according story of the present avalanche danger degree runs on big screens. To avoid the wrong film sequence these screens are automatically controlled by the Swiss avalanche warning service. Additional to the video the actual regional avalanche bulletin is also displayed on the screens.

### 4. References


