

A MULTI-LINGUAL GLOSSARY FOR COMMON TERMS IN EUROPEAN AVALANCHE FORECASTING

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ABSTRACT: In 2001, a meeting of the European Avalanche Warning Services (Austria, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Scotland, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland) showed that the definition of commonly used terms in avalanche warning is required. Among other countries Switzerland was already in the process of preparing a glossary for the public. It was then decided to concert the efforts and issue a common glossary for the EAWS and for the public. In 2003, 10 years after the agreement on the five danger levels of the European avalanche danger scale, the glossary passed the EAWS committee and was published on the homepage of the EAWS in French, German and Italian language. In order to reach more users in the Alps and to bridge over to the anglophone avalanche forecasting services, the European glossary was also translated and published in English. The glossary defines the specific terms as they are used by European avalanche services. Beside the terms and their definitions, many illustrations and photos are readily available that enhance the understanding of the terms. Being an internet-product, many links to related terms are available which provides a deepened insight into the context and it is also possible to extend the glossary easily. However, it should not be understood as a comprehensive scientific glossary.

The new glossary is one important step to a better comprehension of the terms used in European avalanche forecasting products for international end-users. It is a contribution to increased safety in avalanche terrain for the public. Furthermore, it is an important tool for communication amongst the EAWS and with other international services.

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