

Avalanche education as public service

Klaus Kranebitter
Mountain Guide, Verein zur Information über alpine Gefahren
Pradlerstrasse 21, 6020 – Innsbruck, Austria

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1 THE START OF A PROJECT

In fall **1998** I had the idea of organizing a **public avalanche class** for friends at the local ski hill Seegrube/Nordpark in Innsbruck/Austria. Professionell snowboarder Flow Daniaux, was running the snowboard park on the hill and was looking for somebody to team for the same purpose. Given his contacts to sponsors and my contacts and knowledge of the guiding side of things, **we organized the first SAAC** (snowboarder avalanche awareness camp).

2 ACCEPTANCE AND STRUCTURE

The idea was to give **avalanche education without costs as a customer service** from ski hills and the industry to freeriders. This structure attracted more people than expected. SAAC became an institution with **about 40 events and average 1600 participants a season**.

Being available for skiers and snowboarders alike, we changed the name to "Snow and avalanche awareness camps" (SAAC).



3 DEVELOPING NEW PRODUCTS

Seeing the educational craving of freeriders, we decided to branch out. **2003/04 multiple day camps** started with a more detailed introduction in avalanche awareness. Called **SAACndSTEP**, they last 3 and 5 days. Participants pay for these camps.

2005 we started avalanche awareness in **schools in Innsbruck/Austria**. Called **SNOWHOW** these camps reach pupils from 16 to 18 years of age. We educate about 800 pupils every year.



4 SCIENTIFIC BENEFIT

Reliable observation of understanding and misunderstanding different strategies of avalanche awareness and avalanche gear.

Corresponding author address:

Klaus Kranebitter, SAAC/SNOWHOW
Verein zur Information über alpine Gefahren
Pradlerstraße 21,6020 – Innsbruck, Austria

Email: klaus@saac.at
Phone: 0043 – (0)512 – 34384848
Mobil: 0043 – (0)650 – 2248432