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Belluno, March 4th 2003

Dear Mac,

Thank you for your answer of January 8th to my letter which unfortunately reached you after Flagstaff ISMC plenary assembly and the UIAA General Assembly.

As you suggested it in your conclusion, CAA members, at our meeting on Febr. 15, stated their willingness to give their contribution to work for the best conditions of promotion and development of ski mountaineering competition. Exactly for this purpose, CAA wants to secure the acceptance of this discipline, and considers therefore that the respect and application of the existing guidelines and rules are required for its promotion and development.

With regard to your letter, let me please stress three points as general remarks concerning the application of the existing guidelines, that should be recalled to all competition organisers and UIAA member association:

- Concerning the use of motorised engines on site (helicopter, snowmobiles), the existing UIAA rules must be promoted, and implemented and controlled by the organisers. As a matter of fact, according to the ISMC Statutes (Art. 1 and Art. 4b) the ISMC rules have to comply with the UIAA Regulations for ski mountaineering competitions (e.g. 1994 UIAA recommendations). The precise wording of it, limits the use of helicopters .."to medical and emergency support only". The present - but false - wording does not correspond to the original text mentioned earlier. It says that the use must be limited to "medical, emergency and safety support only". This can be largely interpreted, since many things can be defined as "for safety reason". This should be corrected.
- One should be sure that for this discipline, the wording used on all official documents is, "ski mountaineering competition" and not "ski alpinism", as it sometimes still is the case.
- It is stated in the UIAA Regulations, that all UIAA member associations and all their individual members can participate to competition of the official calendar, therefore it is not "legal" that only members of one federation per country can get a valid license for ski mountaineering competition.

These are three examples of UIAA rules mentioned at the CAA meeting, which are not respected by the ISMC.

Regarding the Bormio race shown on television, it seems that it was not on the UIAA-ISMC official calendar. A few remarks about that:

- since the pictures on TV showed the UIAA logo, we were not sure if an inquiry had been made to clarify whether it happened to be a misuse of UIAA's logo or if the pictures were some old ones used for the occasion.
- And consequently, what has been done to check this question and to make sure the UIAA logo wont be associated any more to such events, which aren't in accordance with UIAA guidelines for ski mountaineering competition?

Concerning the ISMC Plenary Assembly, as being the best place to resolve misunderstandings and work to improve ski mountaineering competition, we fully agreed with you. Unfortunately the CAA associations were not all present at that meeting in Flagstaff. However, it is very surprising that the ISMC board did not bring my letter of 14th of September 2002, into the discussions at that meeting, since the president had received a copy of it. The way the meeting was conducted made it difficult for delegates to raise the issue into the debates. I want to stress that point, and more specifically the general organisation and structuring of ISMC meetings, asking you to do your best to optimise this particular point.

You are asking me for more precision concerning the “long lasting impact on the area” of sky ski trophee organised in September 2002 in the Mont Blanc area. The whole area of the race had been invested and during 10 days preceding the event access to the area was questionable and sometimes forbidden. More then 3 days before the race, the tracks and marking of the itinerary were on place, “locking out” some mountaineers who complained about this, which hindered them for doing their tour. This kind of privatisation of an area for such a long period of time in high altitude, close to symbolic peaks as Mont Blanc is unacceptable.

We hope to have highlighted the points that remained unclear, and sincerely appeal for a strict application and respect of UIAA guidelines and rules, regarding the ski mountaineering competition, in order to sweep away the present worries regarding the evolution of this activity. Only then, many CAA expert volunteers will be able and motivated to fulfil the hard work you mentioned, with enthusiasm and the full support of their associations.

Yours sincerely

Roberto De Martin