



## **5. IRO Mission Readiness Test**

**08.11. – 11.11. 2007 in Ljubljana / Slovenia**

The 5<sup>th</sup> IRO Mission Readiness Test (MRT) took place from Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> November until Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2007 in Ljubljana. It was for the first time that the IRO MRT was carried out under my supervision and responsibility. But I have to mention that main planning steps had already been taken by my forerunner.

I would like to express my personal thanks to Ruedi Gantenbein and Wolfgang Hitsch who have been my permanent companions and consultants who have coordinated all things that were necessary in order to conduct the evaluation on the worksites. The NRO DVRPS from Slovenia under the direction of their president Dusan Weber, the director of the civil protection center in Ljubljana Robert Kus and the commander of the professional fire brigade of Ljubljana Tomaz Kucic have taken over the responsibility of arranging the worksites and organising logistics and have done so in a perfect manner.

A total number of 7 search sites was prepared so no worksite had to be search twice. All work- and searchsites have been prepared first-class and provided the demanded if not even higher level of difficulty. Transport of participants was arranged very well and always on time. My sincere thanks to all organisers.

It was for the first time that the IRO Mission Readiness Test was carried out in accordance with the suggested mission readiness criteria of the "INSARAG Search Dog Working Group". The team of evaluators was international and included evaluators from German, England, Korea, Norway, Austria, Slovenia and Switzerland. The foundation for the evaluation was a worldwide minimum criteria for rescue dog teams. Overall 7 worksites had to be searched within 36 hours and several additional tasks had to be completed. Those tasks were: complete procedures in the reception and departure center (RDC), setting up and maintaining a base of operation, roping exercise, first aid human, first aid dog and INSARAG marking, signalling and communication.

Of course the locating and finding of victims was the primary goal that had to be reached for mission readiness and this criterium will always have the most emphasis in the IRO MRT, also within the further development of the test.

First I would like to state that the work performance of the rescue dogs showed a clear increase in quality in comparison to the MRTs held before. This means that we were able to make another step forward in terms of quality at this MRT 2007.

Despite this positive development we still have not reached our goal yet. Predominantly we observed an adequate nosework but had to realize that the endurance and intensity of the search could be enhanced. The drive to search (willingness to find) has to be stabilised through training. Also the alert behaviour of the dog has to be improved. The clear and evident alert at an entombed victim is the primary goal and has to be consolidated before all other, though important, parameters. The systematic work of the dog handler has to be improved. Overall the tactic behaviour of the handler and the group leader has to be ameliorated because result-oriented mission tactic helps to save lives. Coordinated opera-

tive-tactic considerations and technical-tactical systematic work are a must for all dog handlers and group leaders.

It has further been noticed during the MRT 2007 that the so far used evaluation system of the IRO is too rough and incomplete when seen before the background of the INSARAG Search Dog Working Group suggestions and has therefore to be revised.

### Result

33 rescue dog teams and 11 group leaders took part in the test and 27 handlers and 8 group leaders passed. A list of all mission ready IRO dog handlers and group leaders is available as separate download at [www.iro-dogs.org](http://www.iro-dogs.org)

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