

THE KARABINER

CONNECTING THE TECHNICAL RESCUE INDUSTRY

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Officers & Directors

Tom Hales, Chair, UK.
Beth Henry, Executive Director, US.
Tom Gwilliam, Director, UK.
Jim Coffey, Director, CA.
James Falchetto, Director, UAE.
Michel Goulet, Director, US.
Wayne Chapman, Director, US.
Randy MacLean, Director, CAN.



ITRA Assessor Course in Chang Mai, Thailand

Message from the Board

It feels like yesterday, however, in just 30 months ITRA is growing in leaps and bounds. We are now comprised of over 1,200 members (including students) across 40 countries, with over 190 events delivered around the world, over 1,100 instructor and 1,400 practitioner certifications issued, a global pool of 29 ITRA Assessors, and a Facebook following of over 8,000 people.

Our growth is reflective of the huge amount of support we have received from the technical rescue industry, with iconic brands such as CMC, Petzl and Roco Rescue as premium annual sponsors. Not just iconic brands, but iconic people with some of the world's leading technical

rescue experts behind our vision. We thank everyone who has provided their support to get us where we are today.

We became a tax exempt not for profit (501(c)(6)) entity last year that cements our status truly as the world's only non-profit trade association for technical rescue. And as a member serving organisation we have developed and enhanced a wide range of services and products for our members and their clients. Since our last edition, we have approved new qualifications in emergency response driving, introduced assessment practice notices and restricted practitioner notices, provided complimentary QR code access to all students, run assessor courses in

Message from the Board Continued

the Middle east and Asia, and made enhancements to our database including the availability of customised event (course) training skill sheets.

We listened when members raised concerns over the proposed Preferred Training Provider scheme and take on board that independent assessment needs to be fiercely protected. As a result the PTP scheme was shelved and we have been reviewing feedback on an alternative model as put forward by members during consultation.

In the past few months, the world has changed. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our members and us as an association too. The Board of Directors, has used this time to focus on making sure our core products such as assessments are fully developed and ready for our members to use, giving them a competitive edge in what will be a challenging time for all. We have recently issued a position statement on COVID-19 to support our members.

Working Groups for each subject have put in a huge effort in helping get our assessment tools, discrepancies lists and sub-charters fit for purpose, and we thank all those involved who have given up their time as volunteers to these projects.

With so much going on, communications and engagement is key. We continue to ensure critical documents such as the Assessment Charter and qualification changes go out to all voting members for consultation and we are proud that the vast majority of feedback is able to be accommodated. We also understand that now we have past the start-up phase, our members want to see a clear strategy for the association, so we have developed our first strategic plan which was given overwhelming support through membership consultation recently (100% of submissions were in support of it). With minor changes to accommodate member feedback now

completed, our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is now available from ITM (our cloud database) under "Documents".

Armed with a new strategic plan, the association can move forward with a clear direction with members knowing what the priorities are, and what to expect in the years to come as part of accountable governance which is further reflected in Board of Director meeting minutes and our Annual Financial statements being available for current members on ITM.

There have been some changes at the top. Steve Glassy has stepped down from his position as Chair and from the board. He will still be contributing to the organisation, as both an active member, and as a contractor supporting our work. The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank Steve for his significant contribution as the founding Chair to the organisation and his ongoing support. In addition to this, the Board would also like to thank Bill Procter for his service and contribution and who oversaw the transition of the Chair to Tom Hales (UK) Bill will continue in his role in the working groups. Tom is also joined by another new member to the Board, Randy Maclean (CAN) who many of you will recognise from his work on this newsletter. The board looks forward to building on the sound foundations, to continue to develop and grow the organisation to best serve our members.

Finally, we will be holding our first annual meeting on Saturday, September 12th at 12:30pm PDT. This is exclusively an online meeting hosted on GotoMeeting. We welcome you all to join us for this historic occasion by checking the meeting URL and other details available on the ITM Event Calendar.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for being part of ITRA and championing our shared vision.

Assessor News

Future Assessor Courses

After successful completion of the inaugural assessor course in Albuquerque, New Mexico back in November of 2019 there has been lots of discussion and enquiries with future dates moving forward.

Unfortunately, with the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic that has put a stop on all future assessor training for the immediate future. However, there was a program facilitated in January in the UAE and Thailand that certified another 20 assessors for those regions bringing a total of 29 ITRA Assessors around the globe. ITRA had another 4 courses scheduled that needed to be postponed until the fall which included the US, Europe, Canada, New Zealand and Singapore.

Stay tuned for updates as we re-schedule for safer times later this year!

Practice Note

Practice Note 2020-001 was issued on the 8th April and clarifies assessment processes. Some of these requirements will be revised as part of the new version of the Assessment Charter.

Assessment Charter

The revised assessment charter is under finalization as a result of member consultation.

Result Processing changes

As we move toward online examination (assessment) of the theoretical elements of our qualifications, the Board has supported changes that such examination fees will be collected at time of the online assessment, leaving no need for assessors to manage ITRA assessment fees. This

will only be available for subjects and levels where such online examinations are available.

Where Skill Assessment Forms are submitted to ITRA using the Wufoo online assessment result form, MMCo will process the results to the students ITM record. As part of this process, they will email the student to advise their qualification has been awarded. With the new qualification e-certificate, this will then mean the student can login to access and print their own copy of the e-certificate. As part of the assessment fee, this will include student membership for 12 months including an ITM login so they can access their training record.

We have had a number of complaints from students who have been assessed but not received any formal notice of their successful completion. A reminder that as part of the assessment process, assessors must provide students a copy of the Skill Assessment Form that includes the outcome (or have the student take a photograph of the completed form). Students should also be advised to contact their assessor in the first instance with any assessment reporting issues, before contacting the association.

Additionally, the assessment result form on Wufoo now has the option for the assessor to be invoiced for the assessment fees rather than pay via PayPal. Results however may not be processed until payment is received.

Micro-Assessments

As indicated in our strategic plan, ITRA is exploring the option for ITRA Assessors to carry out "Micro Assessments." This

allows assessors to independently assess students for a sub-set of ITRA qualification learning objectives. Similar to the ITRA Training Skill Sheet, the Assessor can create an event, select the desired learning objectives, print out the micro-assessment form for each candidate, carry out an evaluation of the student and grade their performance on the form. The form can be saved by the assessor or student on their ITM profile. Micro Assessments are not ITRA qualifications and cannot be used toward or in substitute ITRA qualification or cross credit toward an ITRA qualification assessment and are not subject to post-assessment quality assurance like formal ITRA qualifications are. Micro Assessments would typically used to meet local competency requirements where attendance-based certification is not suitable, and the micro-assessment event would show on their ITM record as an attended event. An update later this year as the process is further refined.

Working Groups

The various working groups have been busy over the past few months. They have significantly contributed to the revision of the ITRA Assessment Charter and development of the assessment discrepancies lists. They are currently working on assessment tools for the existing version of our qualifications (version 4) and once they have completed further training, they will be looking at revising version 4 and following membership consultation start to refine the detailed requirements for over some 400 learning objectives in use.

Assessor News Continued

This will then mean that when our revised version of our qualification suite (version 5) goes live early 2021 our assessment requirements will be even more clearly defined.

Assessor Update

As a new organization, we are constantly finding ways to improve. We have made many changes to improve efficiency and quality to our assessment process and as a result we will be ensuring all our

Assessors are updated on these changes through a number of short e-learning courses which will be rolled out in the coming months. Some of these courses will also be made available to instructors and other members for their professional development.

We are conscious that many assessors have not conducted assessments since their training due to COVID or other reasons. If you are unsure on how to set

up, conduct or administer an assessment, please contact info@itra.international for assistance.

Assessor Folder

Assessor's should all be able to access the Assessors folder on ITM. It contains the online assessment result form (wufoo), as well as the current Skill Assessment Forms including a new second page (declaration and checklists) which is now mandatory.

Instructor News

Additional Designations

Instructors who wish to teach additional learning objectives that are offered outside of ITRA qualifications can now apply to have these added to their instructor designations. This allows instructors who have suitable experience in these additional learning objectives to better customize their courses such as for rafting based rescue, kayak based rescue, rope access, radio use, advanced driving, ladder use, helicopter safety, large animal rescue, stress injuries and more.

The Board has approved a sale on additional designation applications until the end of July 2020, with a base fee reduction from USD\$25 to \$10.

itraforms.wufoo.com/forms/additional-designations/

Attendance certificates

Attendance Certificates from 1 September will be charged at USD\$10 per certificate generated. Instructor hand signed and un-signed options are now available to print. The fee increase was made following the Boards decision to provide students free QR code access (and in due course free student membership) for 12 months. This means that when students are added into ITM, their QR code is immediately activated. At any time, students can pay to become paid student members and in doing so, they also will be provided a login to ITM so they can access their

Record of Learning and other resources.

Attendance Certificates are not compulsory to be issued to students. If they are generated using ITM, then the \$10 fee will be invoiced on a quarterly basis. Watch this space as we also add an QR code based e-ticket that will accompany the Attendance Certificate which allows students to cut out and laminate a pocket card from their training (included in the \$10 fee).

ITM Tutorials

A new series of video tutorials are now available to instructors on ITM under documents. These videos refresh how to add students, create courses, generate attendance certificates, print student Records of Learning (ROL), and carry out other pre- and post-course administration.

Work URL on Directory

You may have noticed that on your ITM profile, under the work tab there is now a field for your work website address. If you add a URL and you have also opted into the public directory, then on the website directory your listing will also show that URL. This will make it easier for prospective clients to learn more about your organisation before contacting you.

Qualification Certificates

In the coming weeks new qualification e-certificates will be

Instructor News Continued

available and issued to all those issued an ITRA qualification automatically at no cost. Future successful assessments will also include the free qualification e-certificate. The traditional ITRA qualification certificate with the seal and hologram will still be available to purchase, and an optional ITRA wall plaque will be made available soon for purchase also.

Recording Training in ITM

To clarify recent queries from instructors, ITRA does not require its instructors to enter all their training into ITM and candidates for assessment do not need to have been trained by ITRA prior. We encourage instructors to add their training to ITM as this is an add value to the student given there is no cost to add a student, and they get a complimentary QR code activation for 12 months. Instructors due for recertification do have to provide evidence of their training activity, so ITM can easily track this to save time. ITRA's founding philosophy was that for an annual membership fee, instructors could train as many people as they wanted including providing a record of learning (transcript) at

no cost – this has not changed.

ITM Organisational Zones

To allow for client companies and training providers to compartmentalise their student information, organisations can now pay for their own organisational zone to be set up on ITM. This once off fee is USD\$100. Contact info@itra.international for further information.

ITM Course Templates

Instructors and training providers wanting to have their own ITM course template containing specific learning objectives can now pay for such templates to be created. The fee for this to be set up in ITM is USD\$50 for initial set up or subsequent revisions.

How do I become an ITRA instructor?

The International Technical Rescue Association is a non- profit association that exists to provide global recognitions of technical rescue practitioners and instructors. As an independent instructor you will contribute to teaching a global syllabus that compliment your national standards.

To become an ITRA Instructor you'll need to hold an ITRA qualification above the level you seek appointment. This means that to become a Level 1 Instructor you will need to hold an ITRA Level 2 qualification in the subject area that you wish to become an instructor in.

The process for becoming a recognised ITRA Instructor is very straightforward:

- You must hold a current ITRA Regular Membership
- Be signed off by two ITRA instructors using the Instructor Candidate Skill Sheet
- Provide a logbook showing your instructor experience
- It's recommended that you have undertaken an instructor mentoring programme and hold an adult education/learning qualification
- Provided a rescue focused resume
- Are familiar with the ITRA Instructor Manual
- Be able to participate on an online video interview by an application review panel

- Complete ITRA learning objectives that can be completed online

A question that is sometimes asked is whether there are any cross-credit schemes for instructors who have been externally certified. Currently there is not, except for emergency driving itra.international/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ITRA-emergency-driving-v4-final.pdf. However, when new rescue disciplines are added, there is normally a transitional period of six months to allow those with significant instructing experience and non-ITRA certifications and credentials to be cross-credit.

ITRA Events

Upcoming ITRA Events

July 10-12, 2020 – ITRA Rope L1 Blue Mountains, West Sydney, Australia

Hosted and facilitated by William Proctor of Safety Access Rescue

July 14- 17, 2020 – ITRA Rope L2 Blue Mountains, West Sydney, Australia

Hosted and facilitated by William Proctor of Safety Access Rescue

July 17-19, 2020 – ITRA Rope Assessor Workshop, Redmond, OR

Hosted by Vertically Speaking

August 17-21, 2020 – ITRA Rope L1/L2 Prague, CZ

Hosted by Singing Rock

Facilitated by Randy MacLean of Total Rescue and Craig McClure of The Crackerjack Group

October 5-7, 2020 ITRA Rope Assessor Workshop Rotterdam, NL

Hosted by ResQ

Facilitated by Randy MacLean of Total Rescue

October 26 – 30, 2020 – ITRA Rope L1 Newhaven, UK

Facilitated by Tom Gwilliam of Specialist Training

Additional Upcoming Programs

September 14-18, 2020 – Tactical Rope Operations, Redmond, OR

Hosted by Eddy Cartaya

Facilitated by Eddy Cartaya and Rick Speaect

Overview: This is an advanced and intensive course on integrating light and fast SRT techniques with tactical rope operations in a variety of environments, day and night, on manmade and natural vertical mediums. This is NOT just one-way travel SWAT rappelling. This program teaches operations primarily based on Single Rope Technique (SRT), with an emphasis on the operator being able to move fluently in all directions and through any obstacle on rope or encountered structure or entry point. It incorporates many advanced SRT concepts and systems adapted for tactical operations that will enable operators to dramatically improve their vertical mobility and vertical access skills, even to places that might have previously been considered inaccessible. Descents, ascents, structure climbing, remote rigging, and some intervention and officer rescue techniques are covered. Course includes orientation to techniques for tree operations and using mask PPE (tactical SCBA). Elements of TCCC (Tactical Combat Casualty Care) will be integrated into live fire exercises and final mission scenarios. This course takes learning objectives from all three of Vertically Speaking Tactical's 3 level curriculum and select learning objectives from ITRA's Rope 1, 2, 3 and Tactical endorsement.

If any member would like to list special training events in our upcoming newsletters, please contact Randy MacLean at Karabiner@itra.international for further info.

Event Spotlight: Bangladesh USAR First Responder



Event Spotlight: Bangladesh USAR First Responder

First ITRA USAR Course delivered in Bangladesh

Technical Rescue International's (TRI) Tom, Mark, Paul and Darryl have just delivered the first ITRA INSARAG First Responder Course (with approval from the INSARAG Secretariat and Regional Lead) to members of the Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD). The training course is part of a wider project known as the Bangladesh Urban Resilience Project. The TRI USAR Instructor Team have been in country for a couple of months' now gathering information, making preparations and enhancing the current training rig in order to provide an effective delivery, initially for four courses.

Not only will the training allow the



FSCD First Responders to work in a standardised, structured and coordinated approach in country, it will also inform them of the processes that may take place should Bangladesh be subject to an event such as a large scale earthquake requiring an international response and to provide information for the response in a recognised format.

As well as enhancing the training site, preparation work has included the creation of guidance notes, Field

Operations Guides, ordering of personal protective equipment and clothing and the acquisition of tools and equipment.

The current FSCD training site was enhanced as part of the project to ensure that the course outcomes were fully met, and the students could operate in an environment to get the most out of the training. As part of the site enhancement, materials such as concrete tunnels and large slabs were acquired and craned into place. Fortunately, the FSCD had a mobile crane on hand so quick work was made of the build.

Working in such a country and environment provided some considerable challenges which in turn required careful forward planning. Acquiring concrete slabs was difficult due to the way many buildings are constructed in Bangladesh (in situ and manually) and the fact that every last bit of concrete and masonry from any demolished buildings is used and put back into construction. Props such as scrap motor vehicles were also hard to come by and expensive, as every part of them will be stripped and sold or re used for something.

Past experience has shown that when constructing a simulated building collapse training rig in such a country and environment, local wildlife such as snakes and scorpions are a real consideration. Fortunately, a number of Mongoose have been introduced to the site to solve that problem for us and provide some lunchtime wildlife watching!

A large-scale city map was created and printed locally on vinyl as a training aid to discuss local incident command and response, scene management, initials

Event Spotlight: Bangladesh USAR First Responder Continued



actions, Assessment, Search and Rescue Levels and Sectorisation. An advantage of working in such a country is that items like these can be produced quickly and at low cost.

While in country, the TRI Instructor Team took the opportunity to discuss and advise the FSCD drone team on how they could use their drones to great effect to carry out wide area and sector assessment. In a major earthquake in a city so built up as Dhaka, wide area assessment would be extremely difficult without an aerial capability as many streets would be blocked restricting access. Use of the drone for

assessment would allow access to areas difficult to reach, reduce the time taken for an assessment, significantly increase situational awareness and allow information to be gathered on areas that may have significant risks present.

On such a project, the delivery is the easy bit! It takes some considerable time to negotiate through the things that are different than organising, preparing and delivering in a more developed country.

It takes a team which has to include nationals as they know best the culture, the best way to wade through the bureaucracy and how to get the information across in the best way. It also allows the

opportunity to help develop the nationals so they can manage future projects with the experience they have gained. If you want to know about this, or any other projects delivered by Technical Rescue International please feel free to get in touch info@technicalrescueinternational.co.uk

Members in Action: Constable Rochelle Andrews



Constable Rochelle Andrews while attending an ITRA Introduction to Swiftwater Vehicle Rescue (ISV) course in 2019 (Photo Credit: Blair Hillyard)

We are starting a new feature in THE KARABINER to showcase the heroic efforts of our people.

- **Member:** Constable Rochelle Andrews, New Zealand
- **Courses:** ITRA Introduction to Swiftwater Technician (IST) and Vehicle Rescue (ISV)
- **Qualification:** ITRA Level 1 Swiftwater
- **Photo:** Constable Rochelle Andrews while attending an ITRA Introduction to Swiftwater Vehicle Rescue (ISV) course in 2019 (Photo Credit: Blair Hillyard)

At around 3pm on 29th December 2019 a group consisting of five children, ranging in age from 11 years to 17 years, and one adult arranged to meet family members at a swimming hole within Kaitoke Regional Park, Hutt Valley. The group were camping in Department of

Conservation (DOC) campgrounds so were dressed only for swimming with no additional clothing or supplies to stay out for an extended time.

The swimming hole was only a short walk away from their campsite so when they did not meet family by 4pm concern was raised. The local DOC Ranger, who was on site, was made aware of the missing group and coordinated an initial search of the campgrounds and raised general awareness. At 6.30pm Police were called in regard to the missing group as they still had not been seen or made it to the swimming hole.

Constable Rochelle Andrews of the Wellington Police SAR Squad was contacted and asked to go to the campgrounds to ensure that the group had not made alternate arrangements and had simply failed to tell anyone. It became apparent that the group were not

within the campgrounds and they had not made alternate arrangements as all of their clothes, shoes, and other items such as cell phones were still in their tents with other family members.

Rochelle and a Police Dog Handler were then tasked to start clearing a likely walking track leading south towards Te Marua, Upper Hutt. Also within the search area is the Hutt Gorge, an area known to have previously been the site of multiple searches when people have become stuck by water levels, bluffs, hypothermia, or lack of an appreciation for the risks involved in the gorge. Due to the greatest risk to life within the search area being the Hutt Gorge, LifeFlight Westpac Trust Helicopter was tasked from Wellington to clear the Hutt Gorge.

A relatively short time later but with rapidly dimming light levels the LifeFlight helicopter located the group in an area that they were trapped. The group were not able to safely progress down the river and were not able to make their way back. They were on the true right of the Hutt River in an area of bluffs that prevented them being winched out without them getting into the water and putting themselves at further risk. Those risks were compounded by the fact that they had no form of communication with rescuers.

Due to the geography of the Hutt Gorge and the wind that was rolling down off the surrounding hills the helicopter was not able to enter the gorge safely and have an acceptable exit strategy. As it stood at the time the winch on the helicopter was too short at 150ft (45m) and the helicopter pilot had already pushed the machine to

Members in Action: Constable Rochelle Andrews Continued

its safe operating limits in an attempt to gain access. As a result of an initial attempt by the helicopter pilot and his crew to access the group the helicopter needed to return to base and be assessed by an engineer before further flying.

With the group now located the job had turned to a rescue operation. Rochelle and the dog handler were tasked to continue on the track they were on and make their way down to the Hutt Gorge to assess the situation from the ground and to try and establish communications with the group. From local knowledge and consultation with the DOC Ranger the location that the group were in could only be accessed from either in the water or by crossing the river from the True left. The track that Rochelle and the dog handler were on came down to the True left of the Hutt River.

While Rochelle and the dog handler were making their way to the Hutt Gorge more Police SAR staff were tasked to the area to assist. Detective McGhie and Constable Nicholson gathered

warm clothing from family members still at the campgrounds for the missing party and made their way to the rescue site by foot.

On reaching the rescue site it was clear to Rochelle and the Dog Handler that the group were trapped by the river which was approximately 12m across and too deep and swift for them to

walk through. The group were showing signs of early hypothermia, still dressed in only their togs with the ambient air temperature dropping and being cooled by both the river and the wind that is channeled by the gorge.

Voice contact was not able to be made effectively due to the noise of the river and Distance across it. After a risk assessment between Rochelle and the Dog Handler and Police

coordinating the rescue Rochelle made the decision to swim across to the group with a dry-bag and provide a limited number of survival blankets and additional clothing that she and the

Dog Handler had in their bags. Rochelle made this swim effort twice to ferry all of the required clothing to the group. She was also able to advise the group of what was happening and the

effort that was being organized to get them out. She was able to provide a panicked group with reassurance and confidence that help was 'here' and more on the way. Rochelle provided

calm and empathetic reassurance that lifted the group's moral.

Unknown to the group was that no other local helicopter provider had the ability to fly at night with a more powerful machine or longer winch cable. Without additional support they were

likely to have to remain where they were until the morning when the Westpac Helicopter could return and reassess the scene. Younger members of the group were not retaining sufficient heat and their situation were declining.

A request through Defence Joint Forces was made for a helicopter with night flying ability, a long winch capacity, and greater lift than the LifeFlight Westpac Helicopter. At that time there

was only one operating NH90 helicopter crew in the country which was already tasked by RCCNZ to a search off the

coast of Mahia. The request was granted by Joint Forces and NH90 diverted to Kaitoke, refueling enroute.

At the rescue site it was clear that the group's location meant that a winch evacuation could not be made from where group were huddled on a ledge just above the river and blocked by surrounding bluffs.

It was decided, after evaluating the risks, that the best approach was to swim the missing parties across the river one at a time, assisted by a rescuer who would be attached to a safety line. Rochelle volunteered for this task despite having already been across the river twice and having had to rewarm herself each time.

The contingency for Rochelle was that another SAR member would take over from her should she become too cold and unable to complete the task. It was also apparent that some SAR

staff would need to remain warm and dry in order to assist the group to dry off, get into warm clothing and treat any injuries or hypothermia along with taking control of the safety line.

Rochelle swam across the river six times and retuned with each of the missing party one at a time. The swimmers were dried off, put into warm clothing and covered with thermal blankets.

Rochelle then returned back across the river to recover the warm clothing and thermal blankets that she had originally taken over for the group.

Rochelle was extremely cold after completing that task, to the point that she required assistance to exit the river. At that time Rochelle changed into dry clothing and was warmed by the other

Members in Action: Constable Rochelle Andrews Continued

SAR members onsite. Shortly after 3am the NH90 arrived on scene. All six of the rescued party were winched into the helicopter one at a time and taken to the Kaitoke Regional Park Campground where they

were met by Ambulance, Police, and elated family members.

Rochelle's actions stood out as exceptional, putting the rescued party's welfare far above her own. She was able to remain composed and reassuring to each

person rescued as she explained what needed to happen, what was happening, and what was likely to happen. All of this effort was achieved during hours of darkness and in a river gorge that provided an

inhospitable rescue site. Rochelle, supported by the team, saved six lives that night.

www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/wellington-cop-hailed-swimming-dark-river-18-times-in-life-saving-rescue

[saving-rescue](#)

If you know of an ITRA practitioner who has literally saved the day, please send us their story at karabiner@itra.international



Student membership changes

New student members will be pleased to hear that the ITRA Board of Directors has just approved a twelve month complimentary student membership. This means your ITRA Record of Learning or Attendance Certificate is activated for that term and will include your unique QR code to allow real-time checking of your credentials.

This move is part of the Association's mission to provide more benefits to end users. It will allow over 7000 students to get their QR code activated. Complimentary student members can upgrade to a paid student membership. Student members are not eligible to vote, be consulted or stand for office. Once your

complimentary membership has expired you will be required to take out an annual paid student membership.

A paid student membership will allow members the additional benefit of having their own login to the ITRA database to update their details, review their learning history, print off their own ITRA Record of Learning and upload external qualifications.

To offset some of the income loss in implementing this change, the cost of attendance certificates will increase from USD\$5 to USD\$10 from 1 September 2020.

Instructor Insurance

Great news if you are an ITRA instructor operating in North America. As an instructor it can often be difficult to obtain the appropriate insurance that protects you from liability associated with your activities as an instructor.

ITRA, as part of its commitment to develop creative solutions to meet the needs of our membership, has developed a General and Professional Liability Insurance Program. This new program is administered by Buddy Insurance (www.iambuddy.com).

You can get an idea of premiums by completing the application

form that can be downloaded (itra.international/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ITRA-Instructors-PL_GL-Applications.pdf) Is there another way we can reference this application form? Yes, you can by adding the QR code below. If you have any questions, contact Buddy Insurance by email jpaul@iambuddy.com.



New credential verification cards available

New credential verification cards available

Credential verification cards are now available for our members. You might like to think of these as a typical ID card, but they are not. These QR Cards are more says Steve Glassey, chair of the ITRA Board of Directors. "This card enables its holder to validate her or his credentials in real-time, whether it be on a work site, a response or a job interview," he said.

Now you don't have to worry about

having to carry around with you screeds of paper and certificates that list your qualifications. The unique QR code, when scanned on a smart phone will immediately open up to a webpage that lists your technical rescue credentials – all easily accessed by one QR code on this one card!

There is no global non-profit QR system like it in place, offering verification in training and assessment across such a diverse range of subjects from rope,

swiftwater, animal, confined space USAR and emergency driving. "Even if you have opted out of the public directory search, the QR code still provides validation to those you share the card with," says Steve.

You can get your ID card right now by scanning this QR code. Once your order has been received it will be immediately posted out to you. The ID card is available to USD19.95, including postage.

News in Brief

- Assessment fees changed to \$100 per assessment/candidate/subject plus \$25 surcharge for additional levels from direct entry etc. These fees are non-refundable.
- New Facebook frames available, with restricted versions i.e. qualified, instructor etc. all now on ITM Documents under marketing > Facebook frames.
- New YouTube channel set up and available. And twitter – follow us [@ITRARescue](#) or click our social media channel icons at the bottom of our website.
- Future assessor courses – assessor application fee will be waived, and just the annual \$150 registration will apply upon appointment.
- Reminder that all Board of Director meeting minutes are available for members under ITM documents.
- E-Learning Logins: ITRA is currently developing an online learning management system on its website using LearnPress. Members should receive a login to this new platform once it is operational in the coming months. The LearnPress LMS is not integrated with the ITM database, so user logins for each may be different.

Questions From the Floor

The benefit of having face to face workshops such as our recent Assessor Courses, is that we have been able to have instructors ask us lots of questions about ITRA in terms of processes, policies and direction. From the courses across New Mexico, Dubai and Thailand we have compiled a list of common questions and

provide a reply to help clarify a range of points.

1. Should we have an ITRA Instructors Course?

With the Assessor Course being the first face to face meeting with "ITRA", it certainly proved very useful to further explain the function and processes of

the Association. We acknowledge the limitations of a short webinar to induct new instructors but given instructor cross credit is no longer available for rope and swiftwater, future instructors would be coming to ITRA assessments as part of their pathway and hopefully become more familiar with these concepts. New instructors also need letters of support

Questions From the Floor Continued

from existing ITRA instructors which will also better prepare them in the future. Though we do not have a position yet on a future instructor course, we will be looking at the professional development of our instructors in the future.

2. Can we have an online area to share documents as Assessors?

Yes. We already have a Facebook group for ITRA Assessors for informal sharing, and we have a folder on ITM where we can store documents as well, such as forms etc. We have started to load documents and resources to this folder such as the skill assessment sheets for most subjects.

3. What about a command level qualification for each subject?

In our new strategic plan, we are planning to develop a Level 4 suite of qualifications for team leaders/commanders of technical rescue for each subject (rope, swiftwater, etc). We are focusing this year on getting our existing range of qualifications in place properly with the right resources to support their assessment to a high standard. This is something that is in the pipeline. Our current level 3 qualifications do not focus on command or leadership in technical rescue.

We also will be looking at Awareness (Level 0) qualifications, which will be a sub-set of the existing Level 1 qualifications across our subjects in the future too.

4. What about other new subjects?

We have put a hold on a few new subjects/qualifications to focus on our existing suite of qualifications. Once we have

ensured the basics are in place for these existing qualifications, we can then look at other subjects such as ice rescue, air rescue, trench, cave, extrication and more. Before we do that, we would need to have sufficient members interested in forming a working group, with subject matter expertise and global representation as well as consult with the membership to determine the priority for these new subjects.

5. Is there a way a training centre can be accredited?

Currently our focus is on individual members including instructor and assessors. However, we understand the needs of our members who are wanting their training centre to be accredited. We are working on a concept paper for ITRA "Recognized Training Provider" which is currently under review.

6. What about online theory testing?

In response to member feedback, we are expediting the transition to online examination for the theory (knowledge) elements of our qualification assessment. We hope that most subjects will have this as an option in the coming months, as well as transferring the assessment fee collection from the assessment (summative) day to when the student completes the theory (online) exam beforehand.

7. Can we have ITM to work on iPhone and iPad?

The preferred browser is Chrome. Safari on iOS has security restrictions that means uploading is difficult and it also fails to adopt many features from the

HTML standards that are common in other browsers. We suggest that you look at using a Windows OS device running Chrome when using ITM.

8. During assessment who is responsible for safety?

The assessor is responsible for the safety of the candidate being assessed. This is because the candidate's instructor may not be present and ultimately the assessor is asking the candidate to carry out tasks. As liability and insurance laws vary from country to country, it is important the assessor, client and candidate are all clear on local requirements, liabilities, responsibilities, etc.

9. How can we reduce the paperwork required during assessments?

Workbooks are being revised this year, and already we have committed to reducing the number of multiple areas to sign and reduce the paperwork associated with the assessment process. We are exploring ways for ITM to pre-populate forms such as the Skill Assessment Form, and even store this information (against a person's ITM record) to enhance our compliance with the EU data protection laws.

10. Is ITRA encompassing too many rope disciplines such as mountain, industrial, urban etc?

It is important to clarify that ITRA is not a rope access organisation. This sector already has a range of existing and fit for purpose qualifications that include peer rescue. ITRA does not prescribe techniques, and we are outcome focused so providing the candidate performs the task in accordance with our charter and

Questions From the Floor Continued

PSC (performance, standard, condition) based objectives, the assessment can be in a range of environments applicable to the candidate. The benefit of ITRA is that we are providing recognition across sub-disciplines such as mountain vs. urban and encouraging sharing of ideas and techniques.

11. Can we have key documents and assessment resources translated into other languages?

It is very encouraging to see the demand for our programmes in non-English

speaking countries. We are likely to form a Translation Working Group next year, once all the key documents (revised qualifications, charter, discrepancy lists, assessment workbooks, etc. have been finalized). Again, our focus for this year is existing qualifications and systems to ensure our foundation is solid before expanding into other subjects and languages. In the meantime, assessors can undertake assessment in other languages providing they seek advice from the Association prior to ensure consistency and integrity of alternative

assessments. We have already done this for example in Thailand, where rope rescue candidates were given a power point (visual) based exam under specific test conditions. We also encourage our members to share news on their social media in local languages and self-organize meetings and workshops to encourage networking with other ITRA members in their region.

COVID 19

The Association has issued a position statement to provide advice to our members, in particular the delivery of training and assessment activities. You can find this position statement on

our website at itra.international/Itranews/covid-19-position-statement/

About the International Technical Rescue Association

Purpose: Why ITRA

- To promote international best practices and standards for technical rescue.
- To improve the global portability and recognition of professional rescue qualifications.
- To provide local flexibility in delivering technical rescue training curriculum.

Vision: Our Hope

- A collaborative and professional global technical rescue industry.

Mission: What we do

- Recognise and document locally delivered training according to global best practice.
- Provide Independent competency-based assessment for instructor and technical rescuers.
- Maintain a global central database of training records for members.
- Share safety related lessons learned from technical rescue activities to prevent harm.

Values: How we do it

Accountability:

- Training and assessment systems developed by industry for industry.
- A non-profit entity that is driven by and accountable to its membership.
- Instructors and Practitioners maintain their currency through robust re-certification process.
- Members acting professional and accountable under a Code of Conduct.

Transparency:

- Meaningful and genuine consultation with members on our work.
- Active use of social media to engage and keep members informed.
- Annual disclosure of our activities and finances to our members.
- Public register of qualified practitioners, instructors and assessors.

Working together:

- To share knowledge, skills, and experiences across all disciplines of technical rescue.
- Establish an international reporting system to highlight safety concerns within the industry.
- To review and enhance rescue and rescue related training and assessment standards.
- To foster collaborative interaction and professional development within the industry.



Comments, concerns and Compliments?

We have established a new email to connect members with the board to share their comments, concerns and compliments. This email goes to Beth Henry, Deputy Chair of the ITRA Board who can raise your thoughts or feedback to the Board directly. Simply email:

comments@itra.international

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Subscription

THE KARABINER is sent to all current associate, regular and fellow members of ITRA. Membership options are available from the website. All issues of THE KARABINER are also catalogued on the ITRA database (ITM) for members to access current and previous issues.

Peer review

This newsletter may decline, defer, review and/or edit submissions at its discretion; however THE KARABINER is not an academic journal that uses a blind peer review process.

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