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Blue Cross Organisation as the subject of safety management in mountain tourism

Key words: safety management in tourism, mountain rescue

Summary: The article discusses the issue of effectiveness of safety management in mountain tourism. The analysis was done by the Mountain Rescue organisation which through formalisation and behavioural dimensions of rescue activities manages the state and the level of safety in mountains, and more specifically in the field of mountain tourism.

1. Introduction

Every organisation operates in a specific environment for itself and is a system made up of several components, which are dependent on each other, uses the resources of the external environment, transforms it and returns to the environment in the processed form (Donnelley, Gibson, Ivancevich, 1990, p. 27). In other words, it is teleological and reasonably structured socio-technical system (Kast, Rosenzweig, 1970, pp. 120–121) which is composed of subsystems: goals and values, psychosocial, structural, technical, and management (Leavitt, 1965, p. 86). The level of organisation and coordination of the organisation and its environment depends on the law and is codified in the company's formal documents of values and organisational goals folder, expressed in terms of both creating market value added efficiency, strategic competitive advantage, and flexible organisational culture. Based on the theses formulated above, we will make a preliminary analysis of the organisation, in its two

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dimensions: formalisation and behavioural. The study was done by Mountain Volunteer Ambulance Service.¹

2. MVAS—organisation of safety management

Mountain Rescue Service in sociological sense can be understood as a collective society, which is characterised by specific purpose and mission, relative isolation from the environment, predominance of formally structured internal relations, realisation of goals of internal balance and stability through the use of means of social control behaviour of its participants (Stalewski, Łucewicz, 1994; Łucewicz, 1999). It is the same system in which systems (subsystems) coexist and interact and they consist of human resources, technical equipment, standards and rules of conduct and defining of technology and methodology to guide the implementation of organisational goals (Leplat, 1982; Pidgeon, Turner, 1986).

Psychosocial subsystem organisation includes participants in the organisation, their motivations, attitudes, values, culture and relationships occurring among them (Kozmiński, Piotrowski, 2007, p. 30), it is a part of whole organisation. Andrzej K. Kozmiński and Włodzimierz Piotrowski say that being in the formalisation of such systems is to reduce "... arbitrary action by imposing the organisation of written standards, about what and how to be (in the organisation) carried out" (2007, p. 273). Not without reason it can be argued that, among organisational subsystems, a subsystem of human-culture plays a role here. If organisational culture is shaped by values, norms, and organisational artifacts, and they are included in the work of teams and attitudes of people, organisational culture is conditioned by subjectivity—that is, by people. In the literal sense, organisational culture limits and standardises freedom of actions, giving them a coherent set of certain values and norms in social roles. In case of rescue organisations we should even talk about safety culture, wishing to emphasise the fact that it provides "the pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and assumptions, which need not be formalised, but that shape human behaviour and ways of implementation of tasks" (Armstrong, 2005, p. 248), we should even emphasise the essence of this type of organisation, strictly speaking—security.

Security Management is an activity that builds upon the experience and knowledge of a wide range of fields (Studenski, 1996), and a general sense to include assessing the condition and safety levels, formulate programmes to reduce accidents and morbidity, stimulating, tracking, and correcting the formulated goals—programmes. One of the fundamental properties of safety management is that it recognises the organisation as a so-called social and technical system in which a person

¹ The usual names of MVAS are: Mountain Service, Mountain Rescue and the Blue Cross, as used in the title.

plays the dominant role as a creator of this Agreement, the Contributors apart from him are objectives, tasks, work environment, technical equipment and technology used (Studenski, 1986; 1994; 1996). It should be emphasised that an important role in safety management has a value to be attributed to social and technical system to the significance of risk reduction of accidents and occupational morbidity. It is formed by: the level of knowledge of participants about the risks to the organisation and the capacity to counteract the effects of their presence as well as by the level of value attributable to life and health in the organisation. This depends upon the level of effort and enterprise policy, aimed at becoming: design and implementation of security systems, technologies and control and measuring procedures (see Studenski, 1996; Mrozowicz, 2006a; Mrozowicz, 2007).

The present model focuses on prevention not only in transforming the environment and technology, but focuses on motivation in employees' unsafe behaviour. Ryszard Studenski said that due to the fact that the company began working: "... accounted for as a whole forming a multi-element system, accidents and disasters [came] as a result of the inefficient functioning" (1996, p. 13). Under this assumption, accidents happen because the organisation itself becomes the initiator, or it is not able to prevent them from occurring (Leplat, 1982; Studenski, 1986). A systemic approach has contributed to accident causation adoption within the scope of prevention activities that promote the identification of hazards and reduce the risk of losing life or health (Studenski, 1986; Saari, 1987).

The subjective nature of social and technical systems created by human beings and designed to protect their life makes it through the achievements of science, greater social acceptance, and finally internalised by the unit safety falls within the scope of a safety culture. The process of raising social awareness of systemic need is perfectly illustrated by the statement of Studenski who says that: "... awareness about the human intermediary in the formation of accidents and disasters, and especially following the lookout for ways to reduce the participation of the human factor in causing accidents, the scope of knowledge used in the security organisation has expanded considerably. This knowledge is obtained out of the status of self-discipline in literature known as safety management" (1996, p. 129).

According to Tadeusz Rotter: "... the overall aim of the rescue service is to safeguard life and health of people who find themselves in dangerous situations, as well as tangible collateral, which in this case can also be found" (Rotter, 2001, p. 63). It also explains the role of man in this process: "why ... rescue service should have adequately trained staff and equipment" (Rotter, 2001, p. 64). This is how the employees' act depends on many factors. Studenski (1996, p. 15) quite rightly points out that, since it holds: "... subjective characteristics (psychophysical, personality), mainly on their qualifications, professional experience, socially conditioned and acceptable patterns of behaviour, especially in situations of risk, and above all from the importance attached to issues of security by the management of work" (Studenski, 1996, p. 15). For this reason, analysis of the safety management system was extended to the prism

of personality determinants which condition organisational behaviour of mountain rescuers (Mrozowicz, 2006a; 2006b).

Recapitulating, it can be concluded that management of safety in the mountains is an integrated management system and TOPR/GOPR organisations, as institutions forming and expressing specific organisational culture and its value, create safety culture, which is expressed through emanation of the existence of special functions, organisational and social impacts. In the context of such a system, integrated understanding of management and regulatory rescue organisation, safety management in the mountains should be understood as an exemplification of the two equivalent phenomena: safety management system as well as social and technical system of Mountain Rescue and Safety Management for mountaineering (Mrozowicz, 2006a).

3. Organisational and legal conditions of MVSA

The organisational system of preventive Blue Cross bases its structure on four subsystems: technology [rescue techniques, equipment and specialised equipment, instruction on-call Rescue Service Regulations, the Statute of the Mountain Rescue] society, which is composed of rescuers [presenting a kind of ability, behaviour, attitudes, interests, knowledge, motivation and personality traits], structural, involving the structure of power and its posting, the general positions, functions and social roles within which the organisational behaviour is revealed, and a system environment, which deals with internal and external environment of the Mountain Rescue organisation (Mrozowicz, 2007).

Mountain Rescue is a national public organisation, basing its activities on voluntary social work of its members, registered in the District Court in Cracow, XII Commercial Division of the National Court Register under number 0000156881.² Mountain Rescue can be a member of national and international organisations with similar activities and a representative of Polish mountain rescue organisations in Europe and worldwide. The area of Mountain Rescue is the territory of the Republic of Poland, with particular attention to mountain regions, a total area of 20,410 km², 7,200 km of hiking trails and 425 ski facilities. The seat of the primate is the town of Zakopane. Mountain Rescue can also act outside the Republic of Poland (Statute of the Mountain Rescue, 1990; Mrozowicz, 2006c; 2007a). MVSA is based on divisionalised organisational form, has autonomous branch offices, called the regional groups that have legal personality and conduct independent operations in isolated mountainous areas under the terms of the Statute of the Mountain Rescue. These in-

² Mountain Rescue is a registered association, and as such form of organisation with legal personality may assume local agencies to organise themselves into trade associations, affiliate its members to legal persons and benefit from the generosity of the public and accept donations from state authorities and other institutions.

clude: Beskidzka, Bieszczadzka, Jurajska, Karkonoska, Krynicka, Podhalańska and Wałbrzysko-Kłodzka Group. Mountain Rescue employs 74 full-time lifeguards, and supports the work of 1,126 volunteers, rescue workers and 248 candidates for the rescuers (Mrozowicz, 2007b).

Mountain Rescue is an association of physical education.³ At this point we shall realise that the meaning of the law of the organisation domain is positioning it among the associations of physical education. “Physical education is part of a national culture that is protected by law” (Law on Physical Education, Chapter 1, Art. 1.1), it “is also ... the knowledge, values, habits, actions taken to ensure the psychological and physical development, education, improving the abilities of human and physical fitness, and also to preserve and restore their health” (The Law on Physical Education, Chapter 1, Art. 3.1). Mountain Rescue coordinates the activities of organisational level of implementation of the above-mentioned values; the epicenter of axiological determinants of its activity is concentrated around the value of humanities: social and spiritual development and protection of human health and life. “Ensuring the safety of people residing in the mountains is the duty of the government administration bodies and bodies of local government units, management of national parks, as well as legal and natural persons engaged in activities of physical education” (The Law on Physical Education, Chapter 10, Art. 54.1). Poland’s most important legislative act governing the existence of any associations, including, of course, Mountain Rescue, is the Constitution of 2 April 1997, which in the 12th article provides that “the Republic of Poland shall ensure freedom for the creation and functioning of trade unions, socio-professional organisations of farmers, societies, citizens; movements, other voluntary associations and foundations” (Constitution, 1997). The basic legal act regulating the operation of associations is the Act of 7 April 1989, the so-called Law on Associations (UPS Coll. Laws of 1989, no. 20, entry 104). It is a general regulation, referring directly to Article 12 and Article 58 of the Constitution, as confirmed by the provision of Article 7, Paragraph 2, according to which to certain organisations—in matters not dealt with separately—the provisions of the UPS are being applied. Therefore, the regulation has specific laws (governing the specific associations) which are specific exemptions and exceptions to the provisions of the UPS. Mountain Rescue works this way on the basis of three key pieces of legislation:

- a. Physical Education Act of 18 January 1996;
- b. the Council of Ministers of 6 May 1997 on determining the safety of persons residing in the mountains, flying, bathers and water sports;
- c. of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration of 12 November 2002 on the detailed scope of duties and powers of specialised rescue organisation, the conditions for their exercise of the other rescue organisations and the nature and

³ The Association is: voluntary, permanent and self-governing non-profit association, which alone determines its objectives, action programmes and organisational structures, and passes on its internal operations, basing it on the social work members.

amount of benefits available to mountain rescuers and water in connection with participation in the rescue operation. Organisation of aid and rescue for people who have been injured or are exposed to the danger of losing life or health in the mountains is, in particular, a duty of the Mountain Volunteer Rescue, "... a specialised physical education association with nationwide coverage, to the extent specified in the statute of that organisation" (Law on Physical Education, Chapter 10, Art. 55.1)—this phrase principles values, constituting the functioning of the Mountain Rescue organisation.

4. Organisation of the Mountain Rescue Service

Mountain Rescue is currently bringing together seven Regional Groups: Beskidzka based in Szczyrk, Bieszczadzka based in Sanok, Karkonoska based in Jelenia Góra, Krynicka based in Krynica, Podhalańska based in Rabka, Wałbrzysko-Kłodzka based in Wałbrzych and Jurajska based in Podlesice (Jonak, 2002). It has seven stations and eighteen central fields. It brings together about 1.100 rescuers, of which 60 employees work in order to maintain continuity of service and emergency preparedness understood against regulations, but the state remained bound up with the volunteer rescue service. To carry out tasks assigned by the State, in 1996 Mountain Rescue received the funds from the central budget through the Office of Physical Education and Tourism. The organisation is currently funding issues involved in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Fasiński, Jonak, Silberring, 1983; Jonak, 2002).

Mountain Rescue supreme authorities are: the Congress of Delegates, General Council and the Audit Commission. The head of the association is Chief Mountain Rescue Council, which directs the activities of the organisation by an executive body appointed by the Board of Mountain Rescue. Responsibilities of the Board shall consist of: coordinating and controlling the activities of the Regional Mountain Rescue Group, programming and overseeing the work of Service Mountain, development plans and projects of the organisation and internal regulations. Its subsidiaries in the organisational structure is Chief Mountain Rescue Regional Group led by the Council of the Group together with the chiefs of the groups that make up the executive body, the head of the ongoing activities of the Regional Group (Statute of the Mountain Rescue, 1977; Fasiński, Jonak, Silberring, 1983; Jonak, 2002).

The Tatra Volunteer Ambulance Service [TVAS], the second rescue organisation in Polish mountains, is an association with legal personality, acting under a statute and registered in the Register of Associations Regional Court in Nowy Sącz on 13 July 1991. The supreme authority of the association is the General Assembly, which elects TOPR Board and Audit Commission every two years. Board appoints the Chief, their Deputy, the Chief of Training and Prevention, exercising managerial functions in the organisation. There are 25 professional lifeguards and over 100 volunteers in TOPR (Jonak, 2002).

5. Conclusion

Fast-equipped rescuers reach the scene of an accident and often decide about saving human life or reduce the suffering of victims of an accident. Rescue service is responsible for the organisation of such a mountain action throughout the activities of the Regional Group. The organisation of safety management in the mountains should be based on comprehensive analysis of tourism, climbing, holiday village, ski resort and tourist development of the area of the Regional Mountain Rescue Group. Understood as an expression of the organisation are the following correlates of management:

- a. an appropriate network of stations and points of Mountain Rescue, a combined network of short-wave communications, and mobile telephone (aspect of logistics—transportation);
- b. adequately trained rescue personnel in proper physical condition, operating under emergency plans (aspect of personality—competence);
- c. the relevant hardware base (aspects of technology);
- d. tested forms of cooperation in the field of safety management system in the mountains with: border guards, health care and aviation, police, etc. (aspect of synergistics). The issues presented research work focuses on the aspect of personality.

In the management of the safety in the mountains, depending on the nature, extent and nature of prevention of rescue activity, we can point out the following types of forms of organisational behaviour, whose purpose is so-called lock-out of threats (liquidation of accident). By their very nature, a rescue service group actions, hence the elements of lock-out threats are forms of interaction regardless of the individualisation degree of individual activities, actions or sequences of complex algorithms. In this sense, what is particularly important are social phenomena in the Mountain Rescue and personality factors that are accidental form of phenomena and processes with generalised expression in the scale of a whole group. Here they are together with their definitions:

- a. intervention—a short-term behaviour of one or two rescue workers to organise without having to transport the victim (performance of the dressing in a shelter or on a trail);
- b. (rescue) action—rescue efforts of the team (at least three) on the ground to transport the victim or seek for them (skiers transport with fractures or search for a missing tourist);
- c. emergency trip—acting within a group or several teams of rescuers (also with the participation of persons outside the Mountain Rescue) to a specific call to an accident or an application for them, together with transport equipment, victim or their explorations, requiring extensive use of emergency equipment, selecting a manager and responsibilities among the remaining members of the expedition.

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Organizacja Niebieskiego Krzyża jako podmiot zarządzania bezpieczeństwem w turystyce górskiej

Streszczenie: Artykuł porusza problematykę efektywności zarządzania bezpieczeństwem w turystyce górskiej. Przedmiotem analizy uczyniono organizację GOPR, która poprzez formalizacyjne i behawioralne wymiary działalności ratowniczej zarządza stanem i poziomem bezpieczeństwa w górach, a ściślej w zjawisku turystyki górskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem w turystyce, ratownictwo górskie
