



## **The revision of the International Classification of Seasonal Snow on the Ground: progress report**

**C. Fierz** (1), R. Armstrong (2), Y. Durand (3), P. Etchevers (3), E. Greene (4), D.M. McClung (5), K. Nishimura (6) and P.K. Satyawali (7)

(1) WSL Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF, Davos Dorf, Switzerland (fierz@slf.ch / Fax: +41 81-4170110 / Phone: +41 81-4170165),

(2) National Snow and Ice Data Center, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, U.S.A.,

(3) Météo-France/Centre d'Etudes de la Neige, St Martin d'Hères, France,

(4) American Avalanche Association, FtCollins, CO, U.S.A.,

(5) Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada,

(6) Nagaoka Institute of Snow and Ice Studies, National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention, Nagaoka, Japan,

(7) Snow and Avalanche Studies Establishment, Manali HP, India

There is a broad consensus that the “International Classification for Seasonal Snow on the Ground” is now well accepted by most snow scientists and practitioners around the world. Besides the English version, some translations are available too. However, some scientific communities (modellers, ecologists, biologists) hardly know the 1990 classification and it is barely used in important countries like India or Russia. Furthermore, snow scientists feel some points need to be revised. Most problems are spotted within the classification of wet snow and crusts, but also in conjunction with polar snow, blowing snow, snow in forests or on how well a non-specialist end-user may be able to use the classification. In November 2003, the International Commission on Snow and Ice (ICSI) approved the constitution of a working group on Snow Classification. A eight member technical committee formed by motivated and experienced snow researchers guarantees for a balance between practitioners’ and scientists’ needs. The goal of the technical committee is to produce a first draft of a revised classification which will be evaluated by a representative political committee of worldwide snow research agencies.

Here we present a synthesis of the material already gathered, a task which received

support from snow scientists and practitioners around the world. This material is now under consideration for inclusion in the revised classification.