

Open Letter from CE instructors IANTD to IANTD HQ regarding the accident which took place on January 5, 2017 in the Italian cave Fontanazzi.

This letter expresses the concern of IANTD instructors trainers associated in IANTD CE to report published few days ago by IANTD HQ. The mentioned report contains an assessment of the fatal accident which occurred in an Italian cave Fontanazzi on January 05th, 2017 during the course conducted by Andrzej Kruczkowski. We encourage all those who support our position to submit their signatures under the letter which we will send in a few days to IANTD HQ. This request applies only to instructors and divers certified in IANTD. Please add your name, degree and certificate number IANTD in the comments and it will appear under this appeal next to our signatures.

To Tom Mount, IANTD HQ, QA Board

On 13 March the letter was sent to all IANTD CE instructors containing new recommendations on IANTD Instructors' ethical behaviors and the commission's decision on accident in the cave Fontanazzi. This letter concerned us and therefore we ask You directly for clarification of Your decision.

IANTD CE has informed us that the QA Board did not find any evidence to doubt that Andrzej Kruczkowski violated any standards during the ill-fated diving course culminating in the death of one of the students. Per the decision of the QA Board and all IANTD CE all instructor and instructor trainers to permissions of Andrzej Kruczkowski should be restored and the status changed to active. This decision is incomprehensible for us and we are asking for the explanation. Most of us have trained tens of divers on different levels, both the cave and the technical and none of us can imagine conducting training in this way. None of us can imagine planning a dive course in which students are diving at intervals of minutes what causes that the students are left without any supervision by the instructor. Especially during cave course. None of us can imagine conducting Intro to Cave training in the Fontanazzi cave due to its difficulty (20 m corridors with the clip at the entrance). The description given by one of the participants of that dive (candidate for a cave trainer) confirms that this dive was planned just this way and then executed.

In our opinion it is, and nothing else, the cause of death of Krzysztof Betiuk during the course led by Andrzej Kruczkowski. Once again we would like to emphasize that our knowledge regarding this diving and diving plan comes from the public and official description of one of the participants who participated in the ill-fated course (Wojciech Nowak - candidate for cave instructor). We have no reason to believe that this description is false as in our opinion it is also charged to Wojciech Nowak. In addition, it has been made public immediately after the accident. Description of this diving is accurate and detailed which further substantiates to us. Plan and behaviors described are so customized that we do not believe that they are only a figment of Wojciech Nowak (never met in our diving career with similar behaviors). Therefore, we turn to you with the question whether the diving good practice and standards of IANTD instructor allow leaving the student during the course without supervision? Is planning the course assuming no possibility to control students consistent with the standards? Let us also add that the instructor even after finding the student was not able to help him and bring him to the surface. The whole diving community in Poland knows the description of the accident because one of the participants posted the description on the internet where it can still be read. Confronting this description with Your decision creates the impression that such behavior is in accordance with the standards of good practice and IANTD diving promoted by IANTD. Us instructors' trainers and IANTD instructors must face the situation caused by an explicit violation of the standards during the course conducted by Andrzej Kruczkowski and sanction its actions through IANTD CE and QA Board.

Therefore, we would like to request explanations on what basis QA Board's issued this questionable decision on Andrzej Kruczkowski.

Diving community in Poland, and not only in the IANTD is amazed with the decisions taken and expects clarification on this matter. We assume that the lack of response from the IANTD CE, IANTD HQ and QA Board will result in not only a huge loss of IANTD image in our region but mainly outflow instructors and students to other organizations. Moreover, it affects the perception of IANTD as an organization with high standards of moral and ethical organization where the welfare and safety of the student is paramount.

Another issue which we would like to raise is a letter to sent recently to all our instructors regarding our moral attitude. You write that negatively appreciate our attitude we had following the recent issued report. Our statements were due to concern about what happened in Italy, both during the course and immediately after the accident. We conclude that your assessment was based on the Instructors' public entries on social networks. You write that because of this You are tightening of criteria for ethical behaviors and people who you recognized as too publicly discuss this and other events might be removed from the IANTD organization if you would feel that these behaviors might negatively impact IANTD. We want to clearly explain that our public statements were a reaction to the lack of information from Andrzej Kruczkowski and IANTD CE and public reaction to the descriptions of the event posted by one of the participants.

In our opinion, none of us crossed the line of good taste and none of us have and had no intention to harm IANTD. We wish only that the matter was properly resolved because it will affect our future operations and activities and perceptions of IANTD in the region and the world. The decision to intensify the moral standards for public comments was received by the community as an attempt closing to close us the mouth to people who wants a full explanation of the events and those who with their experience and knowledge of the specifics of the cave can shed light on the whole situation. At the same time, we are glad that You are following our activities on social networks because it means that You also have access to the description of the case presented by the participants of the ill-fated course, that contain blatant violations of standards and good diving practice. You can also verify the information provided to IANTD that are distributed by the participants to the public.

We are also declaring that in our understanding of safety, high standards of moral and ethical as well as understanding the nature of conducted trainings are the highest priority.

Sincerely:

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