

Siberian Search & Rescue



Aleksandr Kresan is team leader of the Siberian Regional Search and Rescue Team

This issue, **Emily Hough** talks to Aleksandr Kresan, leader of the Siberian Regional Search and Rescue Team in Russia, about preparations for the team's Insarag External Classification later this year

Aleksandr Kresan leads the Siberian Regional Search and Rescue Team, based in the Siberian Federal District of Krasnoyarsk. The team is part of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (Emercom). His job, therefore, involves round-the-clock control and management of the team's forces and facilities for response, ensuring readiness for all types of natural and man-made disasters, at regional, federal and international levels. As well as a base HQ, the SAR team has branches across regions in Siberia. This year, the team will carry out its Insarag External Classification (IEC).

Kresan describes a typical day: "As a team leader, I don't have a fixed timetable," he says, explaining that he has to be "on" 24 hours of the day. "I start my mornings with situation updates on the area that I'm responsible for, as well as on the team, before I even have my first cup of coffee."

When he gets to the team's HQ base, his first task is to check and control team logistics, the number of personnel available and readiness levels.

"Daily meetings with team units and departmental heads allow me to be involved in the essential details of team personnel functioning," he explains.

"Of course, we are permanently working on developing and improving our logistics base and the professional skills of our personnel," Kresan says, adding that: "My team is a group of companions and co-operative thinkers. We all have one aim – to develop our team and help people."

"As a team leader I am very careful not to be uncaring. It is really important to think about even small details in our day-to-day work, as well as during rescue operations to ensure we are performing to the maximum capability. Of course, sometimes, you have to take unpopular or even risky decisions. Such decisions are my responsibility and I take ownership of them, as well as responsibility for my team's safety and effectiveness in every minute of their work."

Motivation

He does admit to one frustration, however: "The lack of time. Sometimes I think that 24 hours a day are not enough to implement all the ideas that we have."

Kresan is clear what motivates him in his role. "For me, it is very important to believe and understand that our teams and personnel are ready to help and respond to different kinds of disaster as well as to routine everyday emergencies.

"It is important for us to respond to all types of incident – sometimes events, which some may consider as unimportant and not for the rescue service, are very significant for the person who has asked for help. We are ready to do our job."

He wants to continue to develop the training facilities for the team in the future.

"I believe rescuers should permanently maintain and continually improve their professional skills. The world changes and develops constantly; every day we meet new challenges and must be ready to face them.

"This year the Siberian Regional SAR Team has its IEC classification and we believe that it will allow us to work in close collaboration with SAR teams abroad to exchange experience and get new skills.

"We must learn every day and use all the opportunities we have to be a team of professionals in this sphere," Kresan concludes. 