

avalanche prevention



Snow stopper

T.A.S. has been putting its latest
avalanche prevention technology
to good use on the slopes



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Gazex explodes an oxygen/propane gas mixture in specially designed exploder tubes

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DaisyBell is a helicopter-borne gas device, while O'Bellx (below) is a fixed standing version

This spring, at the exhibition of Mountain Sustainable Development in Grenoble, France, T.A.S., a specialist in remote avalanche prevention systems, presented some major new developments in the field of avalanche prevention. Having successfully used DaisyBell, its helicopter-borne gas device, for the past three winters in countries including France, Italy, Russia, Canada and Switzerland, France-based T.A.S. presented the fixed-standing version of this, which is called O'Bellx.

O'Bellx is a new concept, based on the explosion of a gas mixture dropped from a fixed mast in the avalanche area. O'Bellx can operate 50 shots without any reloading and can be brought down from the mountain for loading and storage during summer. It uses the same control system as T.A.S.'s flagship product Gazex: radio or GSM modems that can operate night or day, in any weather conditions in total safety for the crew, who operate the machinery from an office.

Used for the first time this winter in France, Gaflex is an evolution of the historical Gazex without any downhill feet and consequently lower installation costs. As for Gazex, it explodes an oxygen/propane gas mixture in specially designed exploder tubes located at the top end of risk zones. The exploders are connected to gas storage tanks with enough capacity to operate for the whole season without needing re-filling. When the gas mixture explodes, the force of the explosion is directed towards the snow, producing different effects: a shock wave that produces a typical N-shape pressure; a direct push into the snow under the open end of the exploder; and an indirect effect on the adjacent snow mantle.

There have been a number of installations of the Gazex system already. In Italy, nine exploders have been positioned to protect the Passo Fedaiia Road, which runs between Trento and Veneto in the Dolomites. And in Russia, at Sochi, home to the 2014 Winter Olympics, T.A.S. has installed about 20 exploders to protect the Rosa Kuthor and Gornaya Karusel sites. Gazex was also chosen to protect the competition ski slopes for the next 2011 University Games at Erzurum in Turkey. <<

