

Blatten landslide: drone documentation of 121 buildings

Canton of Valais, June to July 2025 · mandate of the Swiss Natural Disaster Pool



Drone image of June 2025: chalets standing in the lake dammed up by the debris.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the collapse of the Birch glacier on 28 May 2025 buried most of Blatten, the insurers needed reliable images of the buildings that were still standing but out of reach. The Swiss Natural Disaster Pool asked the EDO for help on a Friday. Three days later the mandate was signed, and 48 hours after that the first drones were in the air.

The EDO delivered 121 building dossiers with 30 to 50 images each, assigned to the building and available to the insurers on the TERMOT platform. For the EDO, Blatten was the first real deployment of its drone capability and of the multi-event function of TERMOT.

121

buildings documented

30–50

images per building

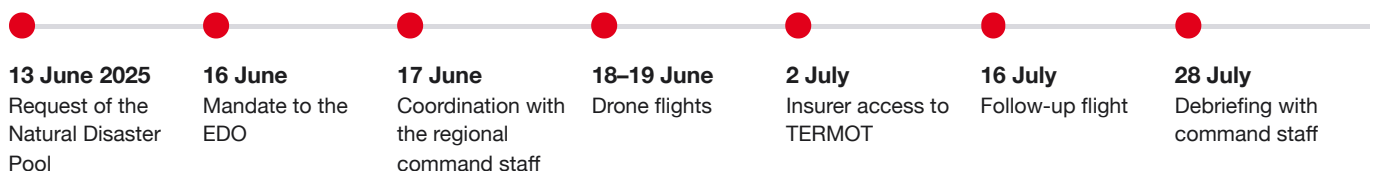
< 1 day

until the team was ready

2

TCS drone pilots on site

TIMELINE



WHAT THE EDO DELIVERED

- Clarification of feasibility over the weekend and a mission order within one day.
- Flight coordination with the regional command staff Lötschental and with the helicopter traffic of the army, Heliswiss and Air Zermatt.
- Two experienced drone pilots of the TCS, several drones, a Starlink terminal and an independent power supply.
- Dedicated sectors in TERMOT opened by risktec AG on the eve of the first flight.

LESSONS FOR THE EARTHQUAKE CASE

The EDO has established access to the command organisations of the Confederation and the cantons. In Blatten it acted as single point of contact between the insurance industry and the command staffs, a role it can also take on in future natural hazard events.

The imagery showed damage patterns of several perils at once: landslide, flooding by the dammed lake and impact damage. TERMOT handled this as a separate event alongside the earthquake set-up, which validated its multi-event function.

The pilot role of the drone teams has since been fixed in a supplement to the TCS standby contract: at least two pilots within 48 hours.