

MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE

MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM INCIDENT REPORT 1980

INCIDENTS DEALT WITH BY MRTs IN ENGLAND AND WALES (Excl. Cave Rescue)

	S.W. England	North Wales	South Wales	Lake District	N.E. England	Yorkshire Dales	Mid Pennines	Peak District
Rock Climb	1	14 (3)	0	10 (2)	0	2	0	4 (1)
Snow/Ice Climb	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Fell Walk (Apr-Oct)	0	31 (5)	1	69 (8)	5 (1)	14 (4)	1	20 (2)
Fell Walk (Nov-Mar)	0	6	1 (1)	16 (3)	0	5	0	4
Searches Injured	0	2	0	4 (1)	3	0	0	1
Searches Non inj.	0	8	1	16	8	1	5	3
Cragfast Non inj.	0	12	0	3	0	0	0	3
Non Mountain	0	2 (2)	0	7 (3)	4	3 (1)	1 (1)	5 (1)
TOTAL	1	75	3	128	20	25	7	40

Figures in brackets indicate number of incidents that involved fatalities. Areas are those of the Regional M.R. Associations. Figures given above are related to incidents, and do not take into account the number of casualties dealt with.

During 1980 the Official Mountain rescue Teams dealt with 299 incidents, 39 of which involved fatalities, and a further 200 involved injury to climbers, walkers and others. 6 incidents were caused by hang gliding accidents, and another 6 were the result of suicide. 3 incidents were reported where climbers had been swept away by waves whilst traversing or climbing on sea cliffs. Early in the year 4 snow avalanches were reported; 2 in the Lakes, and 2 in the Yorkshire Dales, involving a total of 14 people. It is saddening to note that there were 20 fatalities due to heart attacks during the year, often occurring on the descent after a successful fell walk.

MAJOR CAUSES OF INCIDENTS

Slips fell walking	78	Of which only 3 involved smooth soles.
Slips fell walking on snow	14	Of which 12 involved no ice axe and/or crampons
Slips rock climbing - roped	17	Of which only 1 involved loose holds
- solo	9	
Slip snow/ice climbing	1	
Belay or runner failure - rock climbing	5	All of which involved pegs failing, nuts coming out, or slings cutting through.
- abseiling	1	Caused by a single nut coming out.
Snow Avalanche	3	
- walking	3	
- climbing	1	
Rock Fall	3	
- walking	3	
- climbing	1	
Lack of adequate personal or/and survival bivouac equipment	10	Of which 5 occurred in winter conditions
Journey too demanding/long, load too heavy, lack of food, lack of fitness, lack of preparation or training, lack of experience.	55	
Benightment - set off too late, no torch	22	Of which 12 occurred between Oct & March.

FREQUENCY OF INJURIES

		Walking	Walking on snow	Rock Climbing	Snow/ice Climb	Non Mountain	Total
Lower leg		60	8	10	2	3	83
Upper leg		5	2	0	0	0	7
Oelvis		2	1	1	0	1	5
Chest		3	2	0	1	0	6
Back - bruising		10	3	3	0	0	16
Spinal - fracture		1	0	1	0	0	2
Arm		14	0	5	0	4	23
Minor head - scalp wounds etc		14	2	4*	0	2	22
Major head - fractured skull, etc FATAL		1	0	6*	0	0	7
- fractured skull etc non fatal		5	2	8*	2	1	18
Multiple abrasions		8	2	2	0	0	12
Exhaustion and/or exposure (mild)	Summer	33	0	3	0	0	36
	Winter	4	0	0	0	0	4
Serious hypothermia	FATAL Summer	0	0	0	0	1	1
	FATAL Winter	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Non fatal Summer	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Non fatal Winter	2	0	0	0	0	2
Internal		2	1	2	0	0	5
Heart Attack	FATAL	20	0	0	0	0	20
	Non fatal	4	0	0	0	0	4

* HEAD INJURIES ROCK CLIMBING

3 of the minor injuries were to climbers NOT wearing helmets, 4 of the FATAL injuries were to climbers NOT wearing helmets, and 6 of those seriously injured were NOT wearing helmets.

Tom Redfern 14.5.81