



Mountain Rescue

(England and Wales)

Charity No. 222596

Mountain Rescue
(England and Wales)

Incident Report 2008

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All enquiries please direct to: -

Ged Feeney
MR-E&W Statistics Officer
57 Castlesteads Drive
CARLISLE
Cumbria
CA2 7XD
Tel: +44 (0)1228 525709
Email: ged@gfeeney.demon.co.uk

Copies of this report are available from the MR(E&W) website – www.mountain.rescue.org.uk

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Mountain Rescue (England and Wales)

Incident Report 2008

This year's mountain incident and accidents in England and Wales are summarised as follows: -

Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
2008	870	46	547	1179
2007	782	33	499	1121
2006	748	32	453	1013
2005	693	39	424	800
2004	609	25	376	804
2003	597	33	391	742

There seems to be no let up in mountain incident numbers increasing, year-on-year. Worryingly, the annual increase exceeds 10%. This trend is seen in all regions (except YDRP). Some of this increase can be attributed to wintry weather at the start of 2007, some to increased participation in mountain biking but are the public becoming less self-reliant? Anecdotal evidence suggests more people are requesting help without first attempting self-rescue. There is a growing feeling that the public are calling for assistance at the first signs of difficulty instead of using their experience to overcome the problems.

The number of mountain fatalities has again increased (40%); there are no activities other than mountain biking where this increase is significant. The frequency of fatal heart attacks have increased from 13 (2007) to 17 (2008) with a similar increase in non-fatal heart attacks. However, hypothermia cases have decreased; this is more likely accounted for by less poor weather rather than better protection and precautions. The incidence of poor navigation remains too high; given it can be reduced by training and practice; people are still making basic mistakes and/or paying no attention to this vital skill.

This year's non-mountain incidents in England and Wales are summarised as follows:

Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
2008	401	55	102	320
2007	396	37	100	303
2006	344	38	102	263
2005	264	34	90	211
2004	311	64	78	251
2003	334	28	97	260

Changes in non-mountain incidents are minor and vary between regions. Searching for missing persons accounts for 60% of this work and clearly police forces value highly the skills and resources that mountain rescue teams bring to these incidents. The provision of trained searchers, search dogs and management skills are a spin-off from teams' mountain training.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all teams for their reporting of incidents. For the last 18 months all reports have been submitted electronically. This has vastly reduced my workload but has provided an ideal chance to improve the quality of the information provided. Teams should expect further changes as we try to further enhance this side of our work.

Ged Feeney
MR(E&W) Statistics Officer

Mountain Incident Report

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008.

The report confines itself to those leisure activities that are mountain or wilderness-related to which Mountain Rescue Teams were summoned. It lists the number of incidents and persons assisted, regardless of degree of injury. The percentages are rounded to 1 dec. place. Please note that the percentage totals may not sum to 100% because of the round up error in the rows.

Hillwalking is a general category covering all instances of walking for pleasure, away from easy road or track access. The categories of summer and winter refer to the prevailing conditions reported at the time of the incident; it does not refer to any calendar period.

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Abseiling	Incidents	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Subjects	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Fell Running	Incidents	13	3	0	2	5	3	2	0	28	3.2
	Subjects	10	3	0	3	5	3	2	0	26	2.2
Hill Walking - summer	Incidents	291	26	32	88	53	32	12	32	566	65.1
	Subjects	408	29	47	125	79	49	14	43	794	67.3
Hill Walking - summer (DoE)	Incidents	4	1	0	4	3	3	4	1	20	2.3
	Subjects	14	0	0	8	7	2	7	5	43	3.6
Hill Walking - winter	Incidents	24	0	0	3	5	1	0	1	34	3.9
	Subjects	42	0	0	6	13	1	0	1	63	5.3
Hill Walking - winter (DoE)	Incidents	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Subjects	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	7	0.6
Hang Gliding	Incidents	1	2	2	0	0	2	0	1	8	0.9
	Subjects	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	0.4
Mountain Biking	Incidents	22	11	10	2	8	5	0	1	59	6.8
	Subjects	26	11	13	2	9	5	0	2	68	5.8
Orienteering	Incidents	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.2
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.2
Parapenting	Incidents	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	4	0.5
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	0.3
Rescue Team Exercise	Incidents	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.2
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.2
Rock Climbing	Incidents	11	2	2	11	26	3	0	2	57	6.6
	Subjects	12	2	1	14	24	3	0	2	58	4.9
Rock Scrambling	Incidents	10	0	0	35	1	2	0	0	48	5.5
	Subjects	11	0	0	66	1	3	0	0	81	6.9
Search*	Incidents	10	5	3	6	1	9	4	1	39	4.5
	Subjects	1	2	1	7	1	8	3	1	24	2.0
Snow / Ice Climbing	Incidents	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Subjects	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Totals	Incidents	390	51	50	151	104	63	22	39	870	100.0
	Subjects	530	50	70	231	140	77	26	55	1179	100.0

* This category includes those activities not covered by the rest, where the subjects had either strayed, become lost, or whose whereabouts were otherwise unknown.

Mountain Casualty Report

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008.

The report confines itself to those leisure activities that are mountain or wilderness-related to which Mountain Rescue Teams were summoned. It lists the number of incidents and persons assisted, regardless of degree of injury. The percentages are rounded to 1 dec. place. Please note that the percentage totals may not sum to 100% because of the round up error in the rows.

Hillwalking is a general category covering all instances of walking for pleasure, away from easy road or track access. The categories of summer and winter refer to the prevailing conditions reported at the time of the incident; it does not refer to any calendar period.

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Abseiling	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Fell Running	Uninjured	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0.3
	Injured	8	3	0	3	4	3	1	0	22	1.9
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1
Hill Walking - summer	Uninjured	214	7	31	73	39	31	10	11	416	35.3
	Injured	180	18	14	49	39	17	4	29	350	29.7
	Fatal	14	4	2	3	1	1	0	3	28	2.4
Hill Walking - summer (DoE)	Uninjured	11	0	0	5	5	1	4	5	31	2.6
	Injured	3	0	0	3	2	1	3	0	12	1.0
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Hill Walking - winter	Uninjured	28	0	0	2	11	0	0	0	41	3.5
	Injured	11	0	0	4	2	1	0	1	19	1.6
	Fatal	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.3
Hill Walking - winter (DoE)	Uninjured	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	0.5
	Injured	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Hang Gliding	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	0.4
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Mountain Biking	Uninjured	8	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	13	1.1
	Injured	18	10	10	2	6	5	0	2	53	4.5
	Fatal	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0.2
Orienteering	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.2
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Parapenting	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	0.3
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Rescue Team Exercise	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.2
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Rock Climbing	Uninjured	2	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	8	0.7
	Injured	8	2	1	9	24	2	0	2	48	4.1
	Fatal	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Rock Scrambling	Uninjured	0	0	0	56	0	0	0	0	56	4.7
	Injured	8	0	0	9	1	3	0	0	21	1.8
	Fatal	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0.3
Search*	Uninjured	1	0	1	6	0	2	2	0	12	1.0
	Injured	0	2	0	0	1	2	1	0	6	0.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	1	6	0.5
Snow / Ice Climbing	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Totals	Uninjured	266	8	40	147	57	35	17	16	586	49.7
	Injured	242	38	27	79	80	37	9	35	547	46.4
	Fatal	22	4	3	5	3	5	0	4	46	3.9

* This category includes those activities not covered by the rest, where the subjects had either strayed, become lost, or whose whereabouts were otherwise unknown.

Non-Mountain Incident Report

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008.

The report restricts itself to those incidents not directly related to mountain or wilderness activities. It lists the number of incidents and persons assisted, regardless of degree of injury. The percentages are rounded to 1 dec. place. Please note that the totals may not sum to 100% because of the round up error in the rows.

The search category covers mainly urban, coastline or lowland areas with good road access. Local incidents reflect assistance given to local communities and emergency services during severe weather or in cases of access difficulties etc.

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Aircrash - civil	Incidents	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
	Subjects	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.3
Fishing	Incidents	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0.7
	Subjects	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0.9
Local Incident	Incidents	21	53	16	8	19	5	0	1	123	30.7
	Subjects	14	30	13	7	11	3	0	1	79	24.7
Pony Trekking	Incidents	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1.5
	Subjects	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1.9
Road Traffic Accident	Incidents	0	2	1	1	6	1	1	1	13	3.2
	Subjects	0	5	1	1	1	0	1	0	9	2.8
Non-Mountain Search	Incidents	18	41	40	28	17	40	50	6	240	59.9
	Subjects	18	29	33	26	17	40	44	4	211	65.9
Sledging	Incidents	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
	Subjects	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
Water Sports (all types)	Incidents	8	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	14	3.5
	Subjects	6	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	10	3.1
Totals	Incidents	50	104	60	38	43	46	52	8	401	100.0
	Subjects	41	71	49	35	30	43	46	5	320	100.0

* These details are also reported by BCRC, but are included here because support was provided by surface MR team(s).

Non-Mountain Casualty Report

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008.

The report restricts itself to those incidents not directly related to mountain or wilderness activities. It lists the number of incidents and persons assisted, regardless of degree of injury. The percentages are rounded to 1 dec. place. Please note that the totals may not sum to 100% because of the round up error in the rows.

The search category covers mainly urban, coastline or lowland areas with good road access. Local incidents reflect assistance given to local communities and emergency services during severe weather or in cases of access difficulties etc.

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Aircrash - civil	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.3
Fishing	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.3
	Injured	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.6
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Local Incident	Uninjured	9	3	7	0	2	1	0	0	22	6.9
	Injured	5	26	5	3	8	2	0	0	49	15.3
	Fatal	0	1	1	4	1	0	0	1	8	2.5
Pony Trekking	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1.9
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Road Traffic Accident	Uninjured	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1.3
	Injured	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	4	1.3
	Fatal	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
Non-Mountain Search	Uninjured	9	16	25	12	8	23	36	2	131	40.9
	Injured	2	5	3	7	5	10	4	1	37	11.6
	Fatal	7	8	5	7	4	7	4	1	43	13.4
Sledging	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Water Sports (all types)	Uninjured	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	1.6
	Injured	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.9
	Fatal	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.6
Totals	Uninjured	22	23	32	13	10	24	37	2	163	50.9
	Injured	12	37	10	11	14	12	5	1	102	31.9
	Fatal	7	11	7	11	6	7	4	2	55	17.2

* These details are also reported by BCRC, but are included here because support was provided by surface MR team(s).

Main Causes of Mountain Incidents

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008, during which time 876 incidents were reported.

This report summarises the main causes of Mountain Accidents. It is based on a search of key words used in incident reports. All causes have not been listed, so the column totals may not agree with the total number of incidents. A typical report will illustrate another problem with totals:-

'...tripped on footpath whilst walking and fell 2 metres onto rocky ground.'

This will result in contributions to the 'Slip, Trip or Stumble' and the 'Fall or Tumble' categories.

Causes	Col. 1 Hillwalking (summer)	Col. 2 Hillwalking (winter)	Col. 3 Rock Climbing	Col. 4 Snow / Ice Climbing	Col. 5 Other Activities	Col. 6 Total	Col. 7 Percentage
Avalanche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Belay / Runner Failure	3	0	2	0	0	5	0.6
Benighted	24	1	4	0	0	29	3.3
Cragfast	16	2	16	0	0	34	3.9
Fall or Tumble	121	1	68	1	32	223	25.5
Lightening	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Lost	97	9	10	0	7	123	14.0
Medical Collapse or Illness	48	2	0	0	2	52	5.9
Overdue or Missing	49	2	1	0	16	68	7.8
Rockfall	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.1
Shouts, Lights or Flares Reported	16	0	0	0	14	30	3.4
Slip, Trip or Stumble	183	15	10	0	5	213	24.3
Unable to Continue	26	1	0	0	0	27	3.1

Notes:
 Col. 1 This category also includes Hill Running and Orienteering.
 Col. 2 This category is based on the prevailing weather and ground conditions at the time, not on a calendar period. It includes those incidents involving D of E expeditions conducted in wintry conditions.
 Col. 3 This includes incidents of Rock Scrambling and Abseiling.
 Col. 5 This groups all the remaining mountain activities e.g. Mountain Biking, Hang Gliding, Parapenting, Ski-ing, Mountain Searches, etc.
 Col. 7 This is a percentage of all Mountain Incidents reported.

Main Sites & Types of Injury

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008, during which time 758 incidents were reported.

This report summarises the main sites and types of injuries dealt with by MR Teams. It is based on a search of key words used in incident reports.

Injury Site / Type	Col. 1 Hillwalking (summer)	Col. 2 Hillwalking (winter)	Col. 3 Rock Climbing	Col. 4 Snow / Ice Climbing	Col. 5 Other Activities	Col. 6 Non - Mountain	Col. 7 Total
Lower Leg & Foot	153	13	15	0	4	17	202
Upper Leg & Knee	33	0	8	0	10	7	58
Pelvis	11	0	5	0	6	2	24
Abdomen	0	0	3	0	1	0	4
Chest & Shoulder	24	0	12	0	13	7	56
Back & Neck	16	1	18	0	15	10	60
Arm & Hand	21	0	14	0	11	5	51
Head	40	4	19	0	9	4	76
Fractures	144	12	35	0	22	30	243
Lacerations etc	22	1	4	1	10	3	41
Exhaustion	4	0	0	0	0	1	5
Hypothermia	19	2	3	0	3	10	37
Heart Attack (non-fatal)	10	0	0	0	0	2	12
Heart Attack (fatal)	16	0	0	0	1	0	17
Illness	2	0	0	0	0	2	4

Notes:
 Col. 1 This category also includes Hill Running and Orienteering.
 Col. 2 This category is based on the prevailing weather and ground conditions at the time, not on a calendar period. It includes those incidents involving D of E expeditions conducted in wintry conditions.
 Col. 3 This includes incidents of Rock Scrambling and Abseiling.
 Col. 5 This groups all the remaining mountain activities e.g. Mountain Biking, Hang Gliding, Parapenting, Ski-ing, Mountain Searches, etc.
 Col. 6 This groups all the non-mountain incidents as detailed on pages 4 & 5 of this report.

Specialist Resources & Other Details

This report covers the period from 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008, during which time 1326 incidents were reported.

This report summarises the specialist resources used during incidents dealt with by MR teams. It is detailed on a regional basis, with explanations given as footnotes to each row. The percentage calculations (rounded to 1 dec pl.) are based on the total number of incidents reported by MR teams.

Category	Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	%
1. Incidents Attended by Helicopter	118	26	31	53	49	43	15	13	348	26.2
2. Helicopters Used for Evacuation	93	13	18	38	23	19	1	8	213	16.1
3. Helicopters Used for Searching	10	8	13	13	16	24	12	2	98	7.4
4. Helicopters Used for Deployment	11	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	20	1.5
5. Incidents Attended by SARDA Dogs	62	24	11	33	12	48	0	0	190	14.3
6. Search Dog Finds	10	7	1	4	2	0	0	0	24	1.8
7. Incidents Attended by a Doctor	68	4	20	1	40	2	1	0	136	10.3
8. Incidents Initiated by Mobile Phone	276	19	17	139	74	43	13	0	581	43.8
9. Animal Rescues	18	0	3	2	1	2	2	0	28	2.1

Notes:

Row 1. The number of incidents where a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft (military, police or ambulance) was called to or attended the scene of an incident.

Row 2. The number of times the aircraft was used to evacuate the casualty(ies) from the scene of the incident.

Row 3. The number of instances when the aircraft was employed to search for the missing subject(s).

Row 4. The number of occasions when the aircraft was used to deploy personnel and/or equipment to remote locations, or their recovery.

Row 5. The number of incidents where Mountain Rescue Search Dogs were called to or attended an incident.

Row 6. The number of instances where the subject was located by an MR Search Dog and handler.

Row 7. The number of incidents where a doctor attended the scene of an incident - in most cases, these doctors were members of MR Teams.

Row 8. The number of incidents initiated by the person(s) requiring assistance using a mobile phone. In addition, the mobile phone may have been used by this person during the course of the incident, especially in a search.

Row 9. The number of animal rescues where a team has been requested by the police, local farmer or owner - these include cragfast sheep, dogs stuck on crags or down sink holes or larger animals unable to exit a deep gorge or stream bed.