



MOUNTAIN RESCUE ENGLAND AND WALES

PATRON - HRH THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE

Mountain Rescue (England and Wales)

Incident Report 2011

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Copies of this report can be obtained from the Mountain Rescue (England and Wales) website –
<http://www.mountain.rescue.org.uk/media-centre/statistics>

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Mountain Rescue (England and Wales)

Incident Report 2011

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

<i>Table 1</i>				
Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
2011	1086	33	675	1326
2010	1126	53	658	1394
2009	1059	37	667	1471
2008	886	48	557	1202
2007	796	33	501	1141

The decrease in mountain incident deployments is best described as a return to normal levels following a previous anomaly. Concerns were raised last year that the rate of increase recorded then might continue. This has not materialised. It appears that 'normality' has resumed. This is examined in more details, for both mountain and non-mountain deployments later (see Appendix 1).

Comment must be made about the reduction in the fatality rate; the majority of which were medical rather than traumatic. Mountain biking accidents have doubled in both relative and absolute terms. Opportunities for following prepared trails have increased but inherently dangerous consequences of an accident have again been highlighted with a fatality to one rider. Most of the previous recorded fatalities while mountain biking resulted from medical collapses but this should bring home the need for care and experience gained under controlled conditions.

There appears to be considerable frustration among teams about the continuing number of persons reported lost or overdue. If there are types of incidents that are avoidable, then instances where persons are lost or reported overdue can so be described. In these cases, the persons involved generally show a lack of preparation; before venturing out, they failed to plan their route with sufficient care, they failed to gain sufficient experience at navigation or they failed to take the appropriate equipment to navigate with. The underlying reasons for this are an ignorance of the fundamental importance of navigation and to take steps to master the basics of good navigation and route planning.

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

<i>Table 2</i>				
Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
2011	484	53	109	332
2010	725	44	118	336
2009	597	59	126	401
2008	457	67	99	346
2007	462	38	89	325

The drop in non-mountain incident numbers is much more dramatic than is the case with mountain incidents. The significance of this drop is discussed in detail later (see Appendix 1). It is interesting to note that the overall level of non-mountain activity has levelled out, matching the figures of 3 and 4 years earlier.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the team members and regional officers who devote so much time to ensuring that the work of mountain rescue teams is reported accurately. This aspect of our work has never been acknowledged publicly; it is very much a 'back office' activity but it is vital if mountain rescue is to get its message across to the correct people, both the people we assist and the people who make the big decisions. Again, accept my sincere thanks to you all.

Ged Feeney
 Statistics Officer MR(E&W)

Summary Report | Mountain Incidents (pg2)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011.

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

Hillwalking is a general category covering all instances of recreational walking, away from easy road or track access. The categories referring to

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	Peninsula	S.W. England	South Wales	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Abseiling	Incidents	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0.3
	Subjects	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0.2
Mountain Biking	Incidents	26	16	14	4	20	1	0	9	5	95	8.7
	Subjects	24	9	14	5	20	1	0	5	4	82	6.2
Cave/Mine Exploration	Incidents	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4	0.4
	Subjects	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Hang-gliding	Incidents	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
	Subjects	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Hill Walking (D of E)	Incidents	10	0	0	8	7	0	0	3	3	31	2.9
	Subjects	34	0	0	20	11	0	0	3	3	71	5.4
Hill Walking	Incidents	278	42	29	155	94	20	0	42	68	728	67.0
	Subjects	360	36	31	208	96	21	0	53	86	891	67.2
Hill Walking (Winter)	Incidents	12	0	0	5	2	0	0	2	1	22	2.0
	Subjects	19	0	0	5	2	0	0	2	1	29	2.2
Fell Running	Incidents	6	4	2	3	2	1	0	0	1	19	1.7
	Subjects	7	4	1	4	2	1	0	0	1	20	1.5
Parapenting	Incidents	3	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	10	0.9
	Subjects	3	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	10	0.8
Rock Climbing - roped	Incidents	10	2	0	23	26	1	0	1	2	65	6.0
	Subjects	13	2	0	36	26	0	0	1	2	80	6.0
Rock Climbing - unroped	Incidents	0	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	6	0.6
	Subjects	0	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	6	0.5
Rock Scrambling	Incidents	7	0	0	42	3	1	0	0	2	55	5.1
	Subjects	10	0	0	76	3	2	0	0	2	93	7.0
Rescue Team Activity	Incidents	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	0.4
	Subjects	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	0.3
Search - Mountain	Incidents	8	1	2	10	6	2	2	3	3	37	3.4
	Subjects	1	0	1	10	3	1	2	3	3	24	1.8
Snow/Ice Climbing - roped	Incidents	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.4
	Subjects	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	9	0.7
Snow/Ice Climbing -	Incidents	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Subjects	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Totals	Incidents	366	70	47	256	172	27	2	61	85	1086	100.0
	Subjects	478	55	47	373	175	26	2	68	102	1326	100.0

Note:

The category Search includes those activities not covered by the rest, where the subject(s) either strayed, became lost or whose whereabouts were otherwise unknown. It also covers those incident where no subjects were associated.

The category Cave/Mine Exploration shows incidents that are also reported by BCRC, but are included here because support was provided by surface MR team(s).

Summary Report | Mountain Incident Subjects (pg3)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011.

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

Hillwalking is a general category covering all instances of recreational walking, away from easy road or track access. The categories referring to winter reflect the prevailing weather conditions reported at the time of the incident rather than any calendar period.

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	Peninsula	S.W. England	South Wales	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Abseiling	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0.4
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Mountain Biking	Uninjured	3	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	10	1.6
	Injured	20	9	12	2	18	1	0	5	4	71	10.5
	Fatal	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.0
Cave/Mine Exploration	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.3
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Hang-gliding	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3.0
Hill Walking (D of E)	Uninjured	30	0	0	13	5	0	0	0	0	48	7.8
	Injured	4	0	0	7	6	0	0	3	3	23	3.4
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Hill Walking	Uninjured	183	4	16	98	25	18	0	26	42	412	66.9
	Injured	166	29	14	106	69	3	0	26	41	454	67.3
	Fatal	10	3	0	4	2	0	0	1	3	23	69.7
Hill Walking (Winter)	Uninjured	14	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	15	2.4
	Injured	5	0	0	3	2	0	0	2	1	13	1.9
	Fatal	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.0
Fell Running	Uninjured	3	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	7	1.1
	Injured	4	3	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	12	1.8
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3.0
Parapenting	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	3	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	10	1.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Rock Climbing - roped	Uninjured	4	0	0	22	1	0	0	0	0	27	4.4
	Injured	9	2	0	13	25	0	0	1	2	52	7.7
	Fatal	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.0
Rock Climbing - unroped	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	6	0.9
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Rock Scrambling	Uninjured	6	0	0	62	0	2	0	0	0	70	11.4
	Injured	4	0	0	13	3	0	0	0	2	22	3.3
	Fatal	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.0
Rescue Team Activity	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	0.6
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Search - Mountain	Uninjured	1	0	1	10	0	1	2	3	1	19	3.1
	Injured	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.3
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	9.1
Snow/Ice Climbing - roped	Uninjured	5	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	8	1.3
	Injured	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Snow/Ice Climbing -	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Fatal	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.0
Totals	Uninjured	249	5	20	212	34	22	2	29	43	616	100.0
	Injured	217	47	26	153	136	4	0	38	54	675	100.0
	Fatal	11	3	0	8	5	0	0	1	5	33	100.0

Note:

The category Search includes those activities not covered by the rest, where the subject(s) either strayed, became lost or whose whereabouts were otherwise unknown. It also covers those incident where no subjects were associated.

Summary Report | Non-Mountain Incidents (pg4)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011.

The report confines itself to those incidents not directly related to mountain or wilderness-related 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 the totals may not sum to 100% because of the effect of this rounding in the rows.

The search category covers mainly urban, coastline and lowland areas with good road access. Local incidents reflect assistance given to local

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	Peninsula	S.W. England	South Wales	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Aircrash - civil	Incidents	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0.6
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0.9
Animal Rescue	Incidents	15	0	2	1	3	0	0	2	0	23	4.8
	Subjects	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Fishing	Incidents	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
	Subjects	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
Local Incident	Incidents	23	77	20	11	31	1	0	13	6	182	37.6
	Subjects	11	47	11	4	22	1	0	11	4	111	33.4
Motor Sport	Incidents	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	6	1.2
	Subjects	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	6	1.8
Occupational	Incidents	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	0.6
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	0.9
Pony Trekking	Incidents	0	6	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	11	2.3
	Subjects	0	7	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	9	2.7
Road Traffic Collision	Incidents	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	8	1.7
	Subjects	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	1.2
Search - Non-mountain	Incidents	9	36	28	28	21	64	13	24	3	226	46.7
	Subjects	6	22	24	28	17	45	10	22	3	177	53.3
Sledging	Incidents	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.4
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.6
Water Sport (all types)	Incidents	7	0	0	6	1	0	0	4	1	19	3.9
	Subjects	6	0	0	5	1	0	0	3	1	16	4.8
Totals	Incidents	59	121	53	47	68	66	13	45	12	484	100.0
	Subjects	27	77	37	38	50	46	10	37	10	332	100.0

Summary Report | Non-Mountain Incident Subjects (pg5)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011.

This 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 the totals may not sum to 100% because of the effect of this rounding 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 the statutory emergency services during severe weather, problems with access or major incidents.

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	Peninsula	S.W. England	South Wales	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Aircrash - civil	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1.8
	Fatal	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.9
Fishing	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.9
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Local Incident	Uninjured	6	13	6	2	5	0	0	2	0	34	23.0
	Injured	4	30	5	2	16	0	0	5	2	64	58.7
	Fatal	1	3	0	0	1	1	0	3	1	10	18.9
Motor Sport	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	6	5.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Occupational	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
	Injured	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.9
	Fatal	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.9
Pony Trekking	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
	Injured	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	6.4
	Fatal	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.9
Road Traffic Collision	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	2.8
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Search - Non-mountain	Uninjured	4	12	13	17	9	32	9	11	2	109	73.6
	Injured	1	2	2	6	0	2	1	1	0	15	13.8
	Fatal	0	5	7	4	6	7	0	5	1	35	66.0
Sledging	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1.8
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Water Sport (all types)	Uninjured	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2.0
	Injured	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	3	1	8	7.3
	Fatal	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	9.4
Totals	Uninjured	13	25	19	19	16	32	9	13	2	148	100.0
	Injured	7	39	9	12	25	2	1	9	5	109	100.0
	Fatal	6	9	7	6	7	8	0	8	2	53	100.0

Summary Reports | Main Causes of Mountain Incidents (pg6)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011, during which time 1086 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 Cause Total	Col. 7 Percent of all Incidents
1. Avalanche	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1
2. Belay / Runner Failure	2	0	5	0	0	7	0.6
3. Benighted	25	3	4	0	4	36	3.3
4. Cragfast	21	2	30	1	0	54	5.0
5. Fall or Tumble	143	2	70	2	48	265	24.4
6. Lightning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
7. Lost or Overdue	134	3	6	0	13	156	14.4
8. Medical Collapse or Illness	62	1	2	0	8	73	6.7
9. Overdue or Missing	60	1	3	0	19	83	7.6
10. Rockfall	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.1
11. Shouts, Lights or Flares Reported	6	0	1	0	11	18	1.7
12. Slip. Trip or Stumble	238	10	12	2	9	271	25.0
13. Unable to Continue	25	2	0	0	1	28	2.6
14. Totals Incidents	778	22	129	5	152	1086	100.0

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 category includes 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 the percentage of all Mountain Incidents reported.

Summary Report | Main Sites and Types of Injury (pg7)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011, during which time 877 persons (injured or ill) had a defined condition reported. This report summarises the main sites and types of injuries dealt with by MR Teams. It is based on a search of keywords used in incident reports.

Site / Condition	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
1. Lower Leg & Foot	214	6	28	0	16	23	287
2. Upper Leg & Knee	35	0	5	0	6	3	49
3. Pelvis	13	1	10	0	5	4	33
4. Abdomen	3	0	0	0	0	1	4
5. Chest & Shoulder	24	0	5	0	17	8	54
6. Back & Neck	36	0	19	0	12	21	88
7. Arm & Hand	31	2	16	0	17	6	72
8. Head	66	0	20	0	15	11	112
9. Fractures	161	6	33	0	26	26	252
10. Lacerations etc.	43	0	9	0	6	6	64
11. Exhaustion	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
12. Hypothermia	15	0	1	0	1	10	27
13. Heart Attack (non-fatal)	15	0	0	0	0	3	18
14. Heart Attack (fatal)	11	0	0	0	0	2	13
15. Illness	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
16. Total	516	15	84	1	93	168	877

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 category includes 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.

Summary Reports | Specialist Resources and Other Details (pg8)

This report covers the period from 01/01/2011 and 31/12/2011, during which time 1794 incidents (Deployments and Alert/Standbys) 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 for each row. The percentage calculations (rounded to 1 dec. place) are based on the total number incidents where MR teams were deployed.

Category	Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	Peninsula	S.W. England	South Wales	Yorks Dales	Total	%
1. Incidents Attended by Helicopter	130	41	18	131	53	20	1	32	25	451	28.7
2. Helicopter Used for Evacuation	94	27	11	90	37	5	0	20	17	301	19.2
3. Helicopter Used for Searching	18	13	7	36	10	17	1	10	2	114	7.3
4. Helicopter Used for Deployment	6	2	1	5	0	1	0	0	1	16	1.0
5. Incidents Attended by SARDA Dogs	61	8	4	30	15	14	0	31	10	173	11.0
6. Subject(s) Found by Search Dog	2	2	2	1	8	2	0	1	0	18	1.1
7. Incidents Attended by a Doctor	84	12	21	12	41	2	0	1	11	184	11.7
8. Incidents Initiated by Mobile Phone	201	31	10	233	153	10	0	49	61	748	47.6
9. Animal Rescues	15	0	2	1	3	0	0	2	0	23	1.5
10. Total Incidents - Deployments	425	191	100	303	240	93	15	106	97	1570	100.0
11. Total Incidents - Alerts/Standbys	46	16	4	123	7	21	2	3	2	224	14.3

Note:

Row 1 - the number of incidents where a SAR aircraft (military or civilian) was called to or attended the scene of an incident.

Row 2 - the number of times the aircraft was used to evacuate subject(s) from the scene of an incident.

Row 3 - the number of instances where the aircraft was used in a searching role.

Row 4 - the number of times the aircraft was used to deploy personnel and/or equipment in support of an incident.

Row 5 - the number of instances where Mountain Rescue Search Dogs were called to or attended an incident.

Row 6 - the number of instances where the subject(s) were located by the SARDA dog

Row 7 - the number of incidents where a doctor attended the scene of an accident, in most cases these doctors are members of MR teams.

Row 8 - the number of incidents initiated using a mobile phone by the subject requiring assistance.

Row 9 - the number of animal rescue by MR teams; typically, cragfast sheep.

Row 10 - the total number of incidents requiring deployment by MR teams in this region.

Row 11 - the total number of times MR teams were contacted but it did not lead to a deployment; requests for assistance that were not eventually needed.

Appendix 1

Were Mountain Rescue Deployments Exceptional in 2010?

This discussion is an attempt to explain differences between the annual numbers of mountain rescue deployments over the last three years. It will focus on the monthly distribution of deployments which have been separated into the broad categories of “mountain” and “non-mountain” activities to highlight the effects on resilience of the Mountain Rescue Service.

	2009	2010	2011
“Mountain”	1059	1120	1074
“Non-Mountain”	597	704	452
Total	1656	1824	1526

Table 3: Total Mountain Rescue Deployments 2009-2011

“Mountain” activities are confined to those leisure pursuits that are mountain or wilderness-related; principally hill walking (about 75%) and rock climbing (about 10%). They also include other adventure activities such as hang-gliding, parapenting, mountain biking and orienteering.

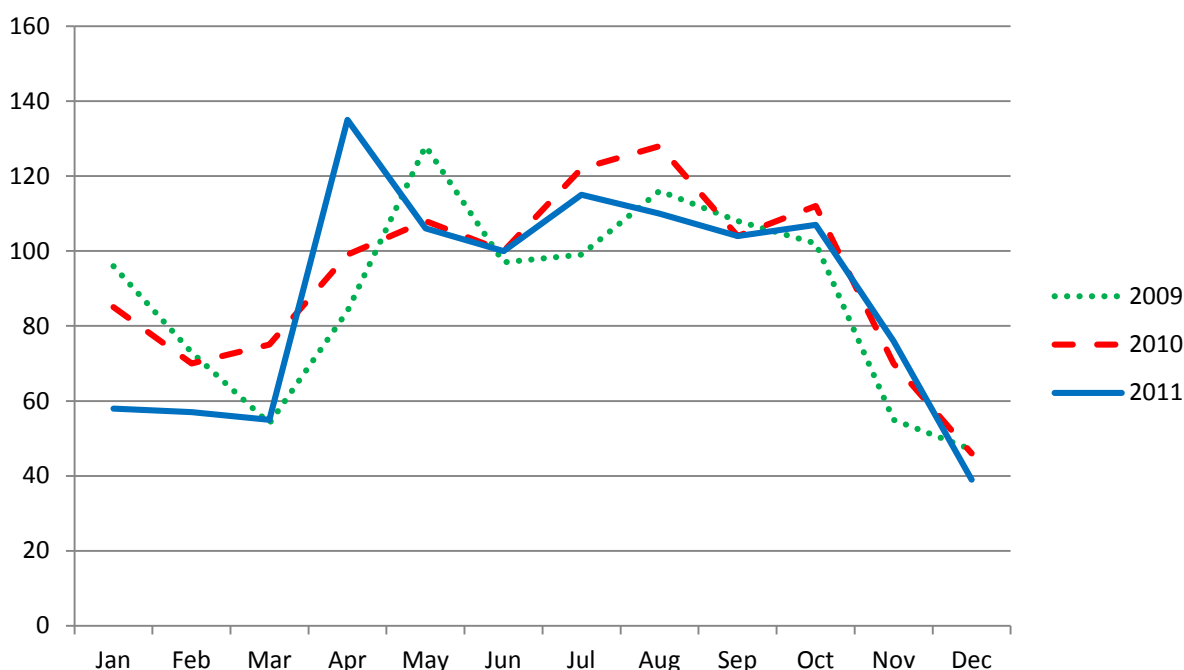


Fig 1: Mountain Deployments by Months

Broadly speaking, the distributions of deployments are similar; all have low points in Dec, Feb and Mar and sustained high points during the May to Oct. High points in Apr and May correspond to the Easter (12 Apr 2009, 4 Apr 2010, 24 Apr 2011) and May bank holidays. With very few exceptions, the monthly deployments in 2010 were higher than both 2009 and 2011, the exceptions being the spring holiday periods; the spring and summer weather in 2010 was particularly poor at encouraging visitors to mountain areas.

Looking at the months in detail, Jan and Feb reflect the effects of severe wintry weather in 2009 and 2010; large quantities of snow and freezing conditions in the mountains gave rise to excellent conditions for winter climbing and walking, this attracted many participants, hence the dramatic increase in deployments.

Deployments during the summer months of 2010 are markedly higher than either of the other years; this appears directly related to visitor numbers. Definitive visitor numbers were not available but anecdotal evidence from the tourism industry supports this.

Speculation that 2010 was an exceptional year appears justified. This judgement is based on visitor taking their holidays in this country, especially in the areas of national parks. Changes in holiday patterns appear to result from a reduction in foreign holidays by UK residents and not an increase in visitors from abroad.

“Mountain” deployment figures should not be interpreted as a likely indicator of future trends; early analysis tends to support the view that there were a number of exceptional factors at play in 2010 for the figures to be considered ‘normal’. The figures for 2011 would support this.

The “non-mountain” deployments consist principally of search and resilience activities, mainly in support of the statutory emergency services where access problems or unprecedented demand required the assistance of the voluntary sector. Thankfully, the number of major incidents remains very small but there are many instances where Police, Fire and Ambulance Services require the specialised expertise, equipment and experience of Mountain Rescue to fulfil their statutory duties.

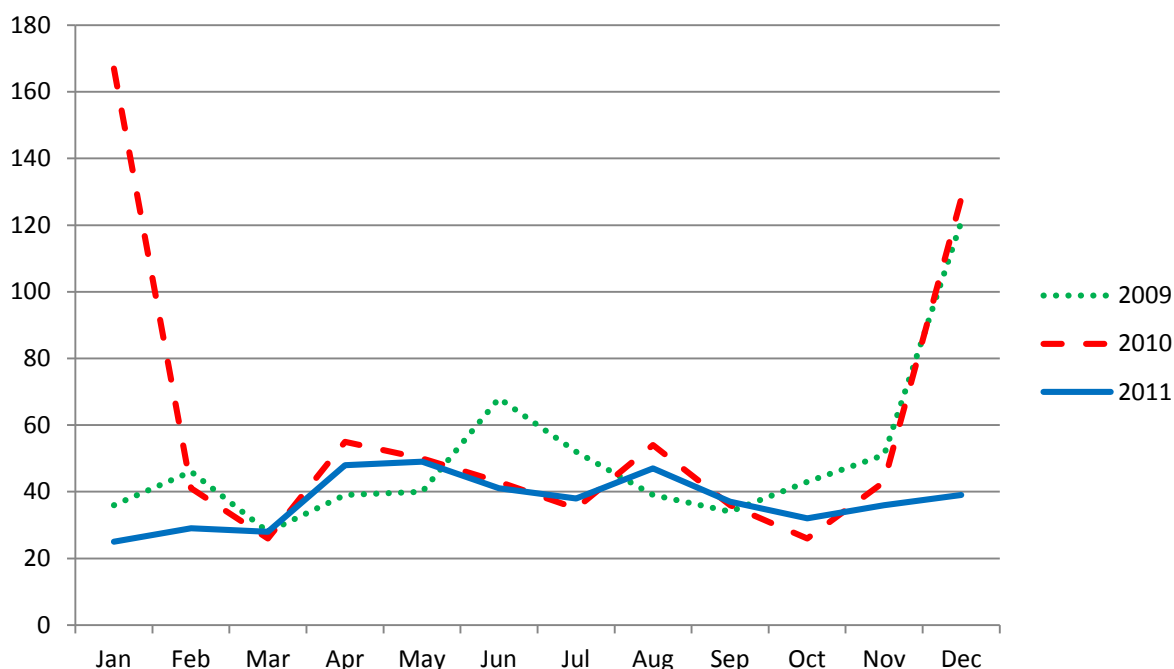


Fig 2: Non-Mountain Deployments by Months

Unlike the “mountain” figures, there does not appear to be a clear monthly pattern. Looking further back (2004-8), the levels of deployment fluctuated between 20 and 50 deployments per month; this trend appears to continue during 2009-12 with a number of minor exceptions. By comparison to “mountain” deployments, the number of “non-mountain” deployments involved is relatively small. However, for the teams involved they form a considerable proportion of their workload.

For the period 2004-8, the months of Feb and Nov are the quietest times, but in the years 2009-11 Mar and Oct were the quietest. However, the low numbers are easily affected by small increases so too much should not be read into these figures.

The fluctuations in Jan and Dec are a different story. This period matches exactly periods of severe wintry weather experienced throughout England and Wales. During this period, the Ambulance Services were severely stretched in trying to cope with demand.

Mountain Rescue teams’ ability to provide “resilient” crews in 4x4 transport coupled with a high level of medical care filled the gap; this was equally true in rural as well as urban areas. These expertises and

equipment, together with local knowledge were also employed in accessing remote roads where motorists, commercial and private, were stranded by snow drifts etc.

Using approximate figures, these increases in deployments account for an extra 80 deployments in 2009 and 240 in 2010 (both compared to 2011). These increases are clearly significant taken within the “non-mountain” deployments and remain significant when taken alongside the “mountain” deployment. This is especially true when the duration of deployments is taken into account.

The Mountain Rescue Service is influenced by the weather. It has been demonstrated that Mountain Rescue Services can cope with this level of demand. Changes in visitor patterns are influential for “mountain” deployments but for the overall figure, they appear quite minor and do not affect all sectors of the service. This cannot be said for those deployments that are directly attributable to weather conditions. All sectors of Mountain Rescue are affected during periods of severe wintry weather. 2010 was an exceptional year and it can be explained, in small part, by changes in visitor patterns but chiefly by exceptional weather conditions.

To summarise, increases in Mountain Rescue deployments have always been attributable to adverse weather conditions and the Service can manage this even when Teams are asked to assist in a prolonged period of severe winter conditions. The effect on Mountain Rescue of changes in visitor numbers is minor compared to the increase in resilience-related events.

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