

mountain rescue

JANUARY 2008

ISSUE 23

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mountain rescue



EDITORIAL

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NEXT ISSUE

Issue 24 - April 2008
Copy deadline - 7 March

Editorial copy must be supplied as Word/Quark document.
Images must be supplied as separate JPEGs/Photoshop EPS/TIFF (300 dpi)
Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi) or Quark document with all relevant fonts and images.

Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

Front page pic

Rossendale and Pendle vehicles disappear in the Helimed downdraught.
Photo: Tim Richardson

Thank You

to everyone who has submitted news, articles and photographs for inclusion in the Mountain Rescue Magazine. If your contribution isn't here, don't worry. Everything is kept on file for future consideration, so please keep up the good work.

Editor's Note
Articles carried in Mountain Rescue Magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the MRC. Further, we do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

'We never achieve mastery of the mountains; the mountains are never conquered; they will always remain and sometimes they will take away our friends if not ourselves.' Borrowed from Joe Tasker. Why? Because it is so far removed from the experiences described elsewhere by Richard Warren. The philosophy that recognises an element of risk in going to the hills is healthy and desirable because it inevitably implies a preparedness to deal with difficulties and unforeseen events. How far from this have things moved when rescues are initiated 'because the bracken is a threat' or 'we don't like the look of the next bit of path' and the onset of darkness is met with surprise and bewilderment?

It is difficult to know why the self sufficiency of hill going has taken such a back seat for so many. Perhaps it's a reflection of society as a whole, where loss of mains electricity for a couple of hours assumes life threatening proportions. It will very clearly be a serious problem for mountain rescue if the trend continues. We have a tradition of withholding criticism of those who are rescued and have had only limited excursions into the areas of preventative action and education. Perhaps this will change.

A fundraising opportunity may exist. If

people want a hill experience without planning, discomfort and a measure of adrenaline on occasion, a DVD of their intended visit might be a better option.

And so to something blue. Despite the matter having been debated at conferences, MR meetings and many other venues, there is still a minority demand to change the face of Mountain Rescue to a more generic rescue organisation. Mountain rescue has achieved a respected position in its own right. The level of skill, training and commitment is widely recognised. It's true a very significant amount of work carried out by teams across the country is not within the traditional concept of mountain rescue. It has been recognised by the world at large that teams will turn their hand to many things and their abilities can be utilised in non-mountain incidents. But this position has been achieved on the reputation of mountain rescue and to discard this cannot be advantageous.

There are many things within MR which need to be improved or resolved, insurance being a glaring example. As we go into our 75th year let us focus on these issues and leave the identity debate behind. 'Leave it alone. You'll never improve on it.' These were the words of Roosevelt on the Grand Canyon. The same might be said for the image of MR.

David Allan Chairman

The October magazine raised some interesting points, many of which I believe are linked. Gareth Harvey's article raised the question of the need to become a single body like the RNLI. This is clearly very successful but, as with every large body, there are drawbacks.

MR does suffer an identity crisis. Teams in the Lake District do mostly mountain rescue. There's the odd urban bit, the odd bad weather, community bit. Many performed a vital role at Grayrigg, but we were bit-part players. The statutory authorities did the press. We paddled through the mud. We got local press coverage, so our neighbours knew what was happening, but it wasn't our business to shout about that one. As an MRT these are peripheral and a diversion. Help is given willingly, but it's not our raison d'etre.

A huge percentage of the population has no idea we exist, or what we do. A significant number of people will see mountain rescue in non-mountain areas and wonder what it's all about (and probably have a quiet chuckle). Then there are MRTs in mountains! Not much of an identity crisis there? Previously we had fell rescue teams, search and rescue teams etc... names that reflected the work done. Now we have teams filling in gaps for a seemingly under-resourced statutory ambulance service and we also have lowland SAR. If there were to be a single national body, then logically they should be included.

I'm not questioning the existence of any of these organisations. I'm sure police inspectors across the country are delighted to have access to a body of organised, equipped, trained people with a command structure that can be called upon in an emergency. The nightmare scenario this avoids is well-meaning but uncontrollable members of the public trampling all over a potential crime scene or

drowning themselves trying to help.

Australia has the State Emergency Service, providing everything from mountain and cliff rescue (not necessarily the same thing), bush fire fighting to urban SAR. If we roll up all MR, why stop there? Why not include lowland SAR, overseas rescue organisations and disaster dogs and save some duplication of admin.

There comes a point where all this gets too big for a volunteer unit. Employing a press officer, fundraiser or admin staff brings us under Health & Safety law. Then Jonathan Hart, or those like him, lose their ability to make a dynamic risk assessment and, although the system they set up is legal, it could kill someone.

Why stop there? Bring in the RNLI. They already have a system in place and, it would seem, peacefully absorbed the beach lifeguards a year or so ago. And there's the coastguard, now with responsibility for safety on four lakes in the Lake District. Although they do seem short of a boat!

Now we're getting into Nobel Prize territory. Medals all round. Somewhere along the way it gets a bit like work. Those long treks across Crinkle Crag in horizontal rain looking for the torchless and brainless won't be fun anymore and I don't want to volunteer for that. I've actually come to terms with the heartburn, cold dinners and threats of violence if I wake family members up while trying to sneak cold and wet into bed.

You know what... I like it the way it is, with a cuddly, kindly uncle looking down on us, not really sure what's going on, but wanting to help, and wondering if you're courting yet, and us just getting on with the job. I'm sure we'll get away with it for a few years yet.

Nick Owen
Langdale Ambleside MRT

EQUIPMENT NEWS

Mike Margeson reports... After the request by David Allan that all MRC subcommittees appoint a vice chairman, we are delighted to announce that Richard Terrell was unanimously appointed to the role. Richard has been a very positive contributor for many years, assisting with National Training day inputs and at conference, and co-ordinating the South Wales PPE/FPE Equipment Inspection courses. He has also represented MRC interests at the BMC Technical Committee for a good number of years and is without doubt an excellent appointment.

STRETCHER AND LOAD TESTING

I am absolutely delighted to announce that Peter Bell and myself have recently completed final arrangements for Lyon Rescue and Training department to take over our national stretcher service and load test certification process. This will be undertaken at the Tebay Rescue Training Centre just off the M6. The process will be unchanged. Write a letter on headed paper with two team officials' signatures and I will then arrange details with the team. I would remind you that service and load test is paid for centrally by the MR(E&W) as it is seen as very critical and important issue. Peter and I have had extremely

constructive support from Lyon in setting up this service. Peter will be helping and working alongside the Lyon engineers during the first few services to help transfer knowledge and expertise.

EQUIPMENT STILL IN STOCK

We still have a number of vacmats in stock. I'd like to clear these from storage to active use. We have only two brand new Tangent Bell Stretchers left, going for £1000. The last Bell stretchers ever to be made, they are historic items!

NEW CASBAG

This production run is behind schedule at Aiguille Alpine Equipment. However, in due course every team will receive a new casbag for the national trial programme.

STRETCHER DEVELOPMENT

There are a number of further points since our last update. At its most recent meeting, the equipment subcommittee decided it was far to long to leave to the conference to start collecting and researching ideas on stretcher design and development. So, on Sunday 18 May, at the MRC meetings at PYB, the equipment sub will have a stretcher development meeting rather than hold a training session on the Sunday. We plan to produce a questionnaire on stretchers – their design, usage and development –

which will be circulated to all teams for their contributions. There will also be a session on stretcher development at the conference.

LAND ROVER... A DIPLOMATIC REMINDER!

Teams ordering Land Rovers direct from the factory benefit from a substantial discount negotiated by the MRC fundraising committee. To maintain the excellent relationship of this partnership it is essential to observe the payment terms which require teams to 'Please settle their account with Land Rover within thirty days after the delivery of the vehicle.'

UK MR CONFERENCE 2008 STIRLING

The programme is taking shape with the format of the tracks changed from the traditional 'un-discipline' of previous years. Session titles include 'Fatalities', 'Water, Water Everywhere', 'The Fallen Climber', 'Lost and Overdue', 'Stretchers', 'Changing Circumstances', 'Making Ends Meet' and 'Extended Rescues'. There will be input from cave rescue into several of the sessions. Speakers of proven ability from within and without mountain rescue have been recruited and there will be plenty of opportunity to discuss many of the issues. The lecture room sessions will occupy the Saturday. On the Sunday morning,

SORTING OUT THE VAT

For many years the issue of what we should and shouldn't pay VAT on has been a minefield for teams across the country. There are guidance books out there but they're confusing and difficult to work through. HM Revenue and Customs have a dedicated team of people who deal with charities and have an understanding of how charities work. They can be contacted by email. The route is:-

- > Go to HM Revenue and Customs Homepage
- > At the top of the page is a 'Contact' button. Click on that.
- > A page will appear. Down the right hand column click on 'Send an email.'
- > Half way down next page is 'Charities Page.' Click on that and then click on 'General Enquiry.'
- > If your email is deemed 'Not general' it will be passed on to a specialist.

It's possible that, within the MRC, someone could take on the role of co-ordinating enquiries but for the time being this should provide quick and accurate guidance. Please let me know how well this works or of any problems you encounter.

Neil Roden

we shall take advantage of the grounds of Stirling University, including the lake, with practical water-based exercises including helicopter involvement and demonstrations of GPS mapping. A full programme will be complete early in 2008. For further details contact Alfie Ingram or Peter Howells.

EQUIPMENT EXHIBITING AND ADVERTISING AT THE CONFERENCE

Preparation is now well underway. If any team members have trade contacts or particular relationships with manufacturers that might like to advertise in the conference programme or exhibit and sell at the conference, please contact Mike Margeson on mmargeson@hotmail.com.

NATIONAL TRAINING OFFICER

MR(E&W) are seeking nominations for the new post of training officer. Core elements of the job description include:-

- ▶ Conducting a survey of teams to assess good practice.
- ▶ Communicate with teams regarding requirements for training at national and regional level.
- ▶ Assist and advise teams on training issues.
- ▶ Liaise with regions concerning support for regional training.
- ▶ Advise on the effective provision of national training events. Liaise with other organisations (HMCG, BMC) over training matters and inform MR(E&W) of relevant developments within other bodies.
- ▶ Liaise with other officers on training matters.
- ▶ Liaise with the training officers of MRC(S), BCRC, IMRA, NIMCRCC.
- ▶ Develop a 5 year plan for the best use of MR(E&W) resources for training.
- ▶ Attend meetings of MR(E&W) and its officers.
- ▶ Make a regular contribution to the MR mag and the website, and make available a calendar of training events.
- ▶ Maintain currency of national training guidelines. If interested in the post, write to Peter Smith with your mountain rescue CV and a letter to illustrate your relevant experience and how you would use that experience in the post. Applicants will be invited to attend an interview. Typically the interview panel will comprise of a regional chairman, a regional representative and an officer of MR(E&W). The preferred candidate will be recommended for ratification at our AGM in May 2008.

Bell stretcher servicing

Lyon Equipment are pleased to announce that from 1 December 2007 they have taken over the service and load testing of the Bell range of mountain stretchers. As the mountain range is no longer being manufactured, it is essential that teams gain the maximum service life from the ones they have. Although incredibly strong, regular use for training and call outs will cause wear. Some of the textile and mesh parts will ultimately become damaged and need replacement. As with any other piece of hardware, regular inspections and repairs will help ensure everything works smoothly when needed.

The transfer to Lyon will ensure that the high quality of service will be seamlessly maintained. As before, two options are available. General servicing, which includes basic repairs and parts replacement, and load testing where a thorough examination is carried out followed by application of a proof load.

Records of all service work and test certificates will be supplied to customers with copies held by Lyon who also aim to offer a reminder service to teams to assist in managing future maintenance. Mountain rescue teams in England and Wales wishing to have work done should speak to Mike Margeson, MRC Equipment Officer, for approval before contacting Lyon to arrange delivery of their stretchers. Other organisations should contact Lyon directly on 01539 626251 to discuss their needs.

It's not just PPE that needs care and attention!

75 years ago, gear was either home made from old Whitworth nuts and stout hemp or cost a month's wages and made in some alpine barn. Testing was done when you fell and inspections were carried out at the end of the day to see if someone had 'borrowed' something from you.

Times have changed and today's teams have become much more aware that hardware, like anything else, does not last forever. Everyone knows that harnesses, helmets and ropes need looking after. Doing pre-use checks and keeping logs of condition is now second nature for gear like this, but what about other items that are just as critical and take just as much (ab)use?

Ground anchors, deadmen and stretchers can be essential kit on a technical rescue but are often overlooked when it comes to maintenance. Because of their specialised uses, not all these items may be CE marked or have EN performance standards (how do you test a ground anchor when its strength depends on what you hammer it into?). However, manufacturers will have ensured they have the quality and robustness that ensures satisfactory performance. They will also have provided advice about inspection and maintenance. For straightforward items this may be nothing more than six month visual checks for cracks, deformity and corrosion carried out by the user but for complex items like stretchers it can involve much more.

The Bell Mk 3 Stretcher for example has a detailed user inspection checklist complete with lubrication advice and recommendations about servicing and load testing but how many owners reading this know where to oil it, what oil to use and when to load test? Maybe it's time you asked yourself if you are looking at enough stuff – in the right depth.

Paul Witheridge Lyon Equipment Limited



NO IT'S NOT GPS MAPPING - IT'S THE TEAM'S INVESTMENTS.

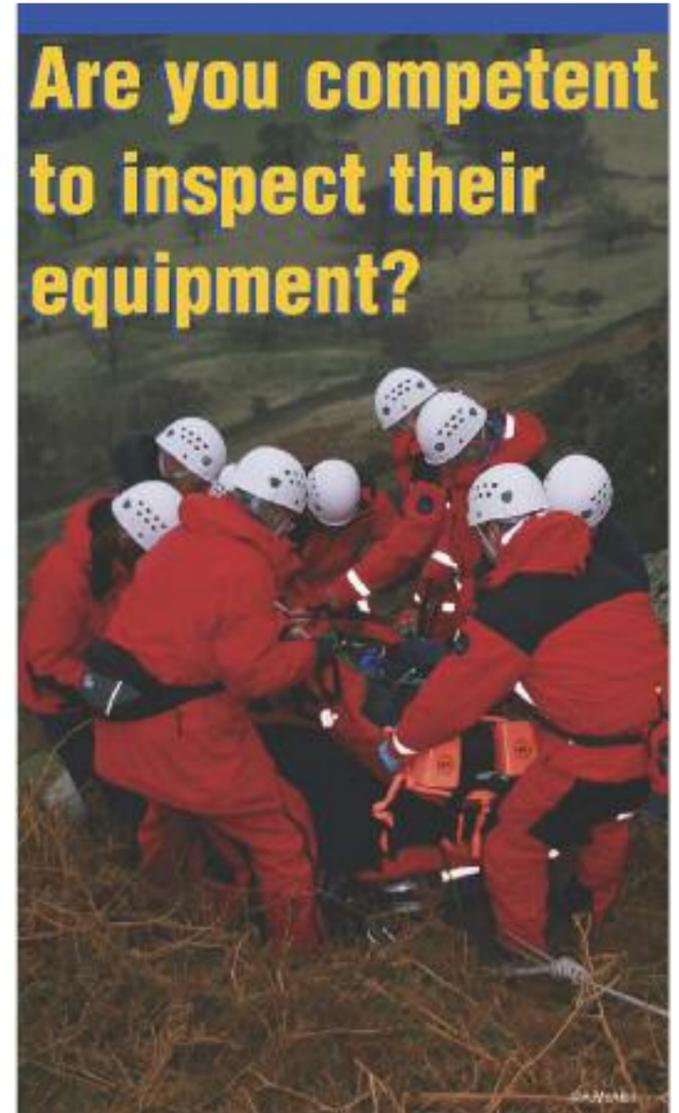


DAVID ALLAN FRCS: 25 YEAR LONG SERVICE AWARD

David Allan is a modest man who is content to hide his lights under a bushel. He is multi-talented and has a wicked sense of humour as the publication of his MR cartoons has demonstrated. The son of a Morecambe trawler skipper, he worked his way through medical school in Manchester still crewing on trawlers as far afield as Iceland. His contribution as team doctor to the then Furness MRT and at regional level within LDSAMRA soon saw him appointed MRC medical officer under the MRC's new Chairman Peter Andrew. Characteristically, as an active climber and mountaineer, he never ducked a challenge and helped to steer the medical sub committee forward, laying the paving stones for cascade training and the national standard we see today. The next chapter in David's remarkable contribution to Mountain Rescue – whilst directing a busy surgical

department at Furness General Hospital as his day (and night) job – was to take on the chairmanship of the MRC. In this role, we have all come to know and respect his leadership and wisdom. As the MRC enters its 75th anniversary year, I feel it is in very safe hands with David at the helm.

Mike Margeson



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75 YEARS

Mountain Rescue celebrates it's 75th anniversary in 2008 and where better to mark the occasion than in Manchester, where it all started in 1933.



On the 19th April 2008, why not join up to 500 of your colleagues from around the UK to mark this unique occasion. Enjoy a magnificent dinner followed by guest speakers and entertainment at the International Suite of the 5 star Jarvis Piccadilly Hotel in Manchester.



Tickets are available now on a first come, first served basis. Dress code is black tie.

Tickets £50 each from Eve Burton on

01663 750371

or e-mail her at:

75thdinner@mountain.rescue.org.uk

IKAR Pontresina 17-21 October 2007

Mike Margeson reports

The following report is in note form to give an overview and general picture rather than a set of minutes. For those unfamiliar with the workings of IKAR (International Commission for Alpine Rescue) it has the following working commissions – Commission for Terrestrial Rescue, Commission for Avalanche Rescue Commission for Air Rescue and Commission for Mountain Emergency Medicine – each consisting of specialist rescue personnel delegates from the IKAR members rescue services, organisations or countries.

We've not been represented at all commissions for a good few years and this has been pointed out to me on a number of occasions by IKAR officials. So I was delighted to meet the two new delegates from the MRC of Scotland – Steve Tenler (team doctor of Braemar MRT and MRC of S Medical Officer) and Blyth Wright (an avalanche expert who would attend Avalanche Commission). Paul Horder and myself have taken part in some joint meetings with the Avalanche Commission most years have tried our hardest to glean the important information and keep people up to date, but it's not the same as having a specialist delegate on the commission.

On the subject of avalanches, don't forget the excellent avalanche and medical DVD 'Time is Life', made by the Medical and Avalanche Commissions last year, available from the website (ikar-cisa.org) or through our Medical Officer, John Ellerton.

After three days of death by Powerpoint, I have chosen a couple of topics I thought of particular interest.

The first was a series of night-time demonstrations at 3000m exploring a range of issues to do with visibility. The first demo saw 100m marked out on the glacier with posts at 25m

intervals. Four rescuers were lined up, the first in black, the second in blue, the third in red with a few strips of silver high vis and the fourth a Swedish Police mountain rescue team member in his bright orange and red uniform with lots of high vis in silver all over it.

We stood with ordinary headtorches at the start line. By the second marker post at 50m, the first in black and second in blue could hardly be seen. When the four got to the third marker at 75m you could not see the first or second at all and the third in red with the small high vis strips was just discernible. At 100m, you could just see the third but the fourth, our Swedish Police MRT member stood out like a motorway service station. When you used a hand-held bigger beam torch the high vis was even more striking.

There was discussion about those being able to see and identify rescuers. There was also discussion around safety of rescuers and the benefits of high visibility rescue team clothing.

We moved on to a demonstration of some of the latest night vision binoculars and monoculars. A dozen different head torches had been placed around the corrie, anything up to nearly half a kilometre away and the challenge was to see how many you could find. During this exercise, I was talking with a helicopter pilot who flies a lot of night rescue hours with night vision goggles and he was commenting how much improved the latest versions are and how much the price had come down in the civilian market.

The next demonstration was the latest in searchlights, particularly strong and powered by small generator. The local team were talking about how useful they were on clear nights especially when searching large areas for missing skiers for

instance. The local team had put a casualty in a high vis jacket on a large crag on the other side of the glacier to make the point. The search beam covered a large area of mountainside very quickly. It was like lighting up and searching Pavey Ark in about five minutes. The Ogwen team members thought we could search Tryfan without even leaving base!!!! Seriously, the candlepower and beam now available is very impressive but these types of search beams with very high tech reflectors are rather expensive!

The other presentation was on long rope rescue. Many of these long rescues have traditionally been executed with the use of cable. This being replaced by low stretch rope by most teams but not exclusively. So the use of double 7mm or 8mm Dyneema is quite a radical move from low stretch semi static rope or cable.

Dyneema has the advantages of being incredibly strong and abrasion resistant. It also has weight and bulk benefit for very long cliff rescues 200m+. However, those in the know will recognise that the down side is that, unlike the traditional nylon low stretch rope we are used to, Dyneema has a very low melt point, about half that of traditional low stretch ropes. An even bigger problem to me, is the fact you cannot tie a knot in Dyneema, you have to splice it to connect it to another length. This I perceive as a big issue in operational terms. I will look forward to finding out how some of the other rescue services (who intend to carry out further trails this year) get on with using Dyneema.

IKAR 2008 will be held at the PGHM, Police National Mountain Rescue Training School in Chamonix, France.

New clothing for women from Páramo

Páramo reached new heights last Autumn with the launch of a new high mountain clothing system designed for women by women.

The new products were inspired by a heartfelt request from outdoor instructor Rocio Siemens, amongst others. 'There are women out there who are doing the hard mountaineering and who need real mountaineering clothing, and we desperately need a range of Paramo clothes that will fit us'.

The Páramo team worked with female outdoor professionals to refine the ultimate garment system for the growing number of women whose leisure or work takes them into high mountain and polar environments.

The Ladies' Aspira Smock and Trousers both use the revolutionary Nikwax Analogy® fabric, which has set Páramo waterproofs apart from conventional waterproof garments. Its significant advantages are crucial in extreme environments, offering more effective removal of water from the clothing system, so minimising post-exercise chill and its severe negative effects during prolonged exposure to cold and wet conditions. Additional benefits are the fabric's toughness and durability, its renewability using Nikwax® Aftercare products and the fact that it is soft and comfortable enough even to sleep in. The robust fabric and components have been extensively field tested to ensure they will withstand the extreme conditions and activities they are likely to be subjected to.

The smock shape was preferred for the uncluttered front panel (ideal for harness use), the ease of ventilation and access to inner garments via the long reversed front zip which opens to waist level, and the ease

of fastening the garment without having to struggle to engage a zip. The fixed hood fits comfortably over all climbing helmets and allows minute adjustment. All the essential controls on the hood and elsewhere are designed to be easily operable with a single gloved hand. Articulated arms and shoulders allow excellent freedom of movement, and the pocketing configuration combines fast access storage with handwarming.

The new trousers are designed for every high mountain adventure likely to be encountered, offering durability and comfort with extra reinforcement on key abrasion areas – backside, knees and ankles. The ingenious 'access all areas seat' allows the waistband to be retained in place (even during harness use) for comfort stops on the hill. The trousers can be worn next to skin or with Páramo Stretch Pants in extreme cold. The two-way reversed side zips provide extra ventilation when required. Suitable for snow sports, winter climbing, mountaineering and expedition use or search and rescue, the Aspira trousers can be worn (and forgotten about) from dawn to nightfall, and even bivvied in.

In addition to the Ladies' Aspira range, the new Ladies' Velez Adventure was conceived for high energy activities such as mountain biking, rambling, adventure racing and running, and offers tried and tested design features such as a roll-away integral hood, unique twin zips at the front (for rapid cooling when required), fully articulated shoulders and elbows for freedom of movement and a drop tail for lower back protection. Maps, tools or snacks can be stored in the generous chest pocket. For further information about the new range of garments, go to www.paramo.co.uk

Late news... mountain rescue met Corrie in January when viewers saw Weatherfield's Liam Connor fall from a mountain ridge. Keswick MRT was consulted during filming and team members were filmed racing to Liam's aid. Full story next issue...

LAKE DISTRICT

ARE WE VICTIMS OF OUR OWN SUCCESS? WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT IT?

Richard Warren writes... The public awareness campaign, launched in the spring of 2006, has been a great success. Many thousands of posters have appeared all over the county, and tens of thousands of little cards were handed out to anyone and everyone in the hope the message might eventually get across that teams are purely voluntary, on call 24 hours a day and that the twelve Lake District teams are funded entirely by voluntary contributions. Also that if you are in real trouble,



make sure you make the '999' call and ask for the right service. Did the campaign work? Did the calls get through to the right agency? Did we see an improvement in public awareness of the service? Make up your own mind...

Since the beginning of 2007 the region has seen a steady increase in the number of callouts. It started to be noticeable in the spring, three rescues in one day on one patch and by the end of April the same team, **Wasdale MRT** had attended 24 incidents, 50% up on the previous year. The trend continued with a Wasdale press release on Wednesday 19 September titled '31 callouts in 42 days – a busy time for our team'. Many of these rescues were down to the Three Peaks Challenge which by then had brought the total number of 999 calls to 85. By mid November, the Wasdale team had taken 103 calls from the police and, of these, 73 had required significant team effort on the mountains. Thirty were down to walkers who were requesting a 'free guiding

service' and of these, only five groups were prepared to follow the instructions given over the mobile phone, the remainder had to be located and walked off the mountain.

But is this a local blip? A few telephone calls later it became obvious there was a trend emerging.

Cockermouth MRT had also experienced an increase in numbers of incident and type. Over a twelve week period between July and October, nine of the 18 incidents fell very firmly into the category of 'wandering aimlessly' or 'requested guiding service' for ill equipped or ill prepared groups.

Incident 29: Two women, aged 24 and 25, from Maidenhead and the Isle of Wight became lost in the Scale Force area near Crummock Water. They were located by team members and escorted down to the main path back to Buttermere. (Bright sunny day – eventually located in head high heather 50m from the path!)

Incident 42: Two walkers from Liverpool became stuck in darkness with no torch in the High Crag/High Stile area. They had set off from Buttermere at 2.30pm, for a lengthy route along the Red Pike, High Stile ridge. After a search of the area by seven search parties, the couple were located and escorted safely down to Gatesgarth. (This was a case of setting off far too late in the day with no torch and no hope of completing their aspirations.) So, two teams out of the twelve Lake District teams... is it still a problem you might ask? Take a visit to the **Langdale Ambleside MRT** website, currently running at 10% up on 2006.

Incident 81: A woman phoned to say she had become stuck in mist and was unable to find her way off Crinkle Crag. She had located the electric fence and we found her near Red Tarn. She was also on the hill without a torch. She was escorted off the fell and returned to safety.

(Comment on their website following this incident – This is the third incident recently and the 'nth' of many where the victims went up a mountain

without any realistic possibility of getting back down without assistance. This is entirely preventable with sensible and simple preparation. Don't be too ambitious, set off early enough to complete the route before dark, take a torch, learn to navigate, and to quote Gordon Ramsey...)

Incident 83: Then it happened again! A couple phoned to say they were lost and it was becoming dark. They were near the fence again, so we were able to send them in the right direction. We were driving up to meet them and make sure they were off the hill, when we were contacted to say they had made it to the valley bottom. Their problem was compounded by their lack of torches.

Incident 84: And then again (3 hours later). It's not funny! This time four people, but essentially exactly the same problem. This time we had to go and get them, because it had already gone dark, and they were going nowhere without help.

Incident 84a: A couple phoned for help whilst fellwalking on Blea Rigg. They had become lost and were unable to find their own way down. We were just trying to work out where they were when they were found by passing walkers who were able to show them the way down. Nothing more to add that hasn't been said before.

Incident 87: A woman phoned, unable to locate a way off what she thought was Tarn Crag. She had become disorientated and was eventually located by team members near Deep Slack and escorted back to the valley.

Incident 91: A couple phoned for help because they were struggling getting down from Helm Crag without a torch...

Incident 93: A couple became lost and benighted when they went for a walk without a torch, whistle, compass or adequate clothing...

Incident 99: A man and his partner phoned for help when they were unable to locate a path down from Harrison Stickle. This was despite being able to see clearly down to Stickle Tarn. We managed, after some considerable time, to talk them down to a point where they intersected a path, and were confident they could manage the remainder of the way unassisted.

The theme of these rescues is pretty clear – ill equipped/ill prepared/inexperienced and over ambitious. I think we do have a problem and it will get worse before it gets better unless some national action is taken. Somehow we need to get the message across.

Is there a solution? I offer three possible alternative approaches. First, a public awareness campaign at national level aimed at those people who really would benefit from understanding a little more about the outdoors, the risks and what mountain rescue is and is not. Specifically:-

- * Teams are professionally run but charities with volunteer members.
- * Teams respond to emergencies where life is either at risk or would be at risk if teams were not available.
- * On call 24/365 but we do have day jobs.
- * Limited funding from external bodies and only able to operate through voluntary donations and fundraising activities.

Peter Jackson MBE. Duddon & Furness MRT. Forty years in mountain rescue.



▲ STONESTAR 1968/69
PETER FAR RIGHT

As a young man of 21, Peter became the first leader of a newly formed mountain rescue team in the Lake District in 1967 – one of the youngest leaders any team had appointed. Forty years on, he is still a team leader with unbroken service through the intervening period. On 6 November, he received a Long Service Award from Peter Bell, President of Mountain Rescue (England & Wales), at a presentation near the team's base in Broughton in Furness. Accepting his certificate, Peter remarked on the significant changes in equipment over his forty years but, that, throughout the period, the one thing that hadn't changed was the commitment and enthusiasm shown by team members.



▲ WALLOWBARROW GORGE 1994/5
PETER AT FRONT

Millom FRT was formed after a plane had crashed on Black Combe, the nearest summit to the town, on a trip from Blackpool to Newcastle. The wreckage was not found until long after the crash and it was clear one of the two people on board had been alive for some time in the wreckage. A local landowner thought a mountain rescue team was needed to provide the equipment and expertise to deal with any future incidents in the area. He approached the town's mountaineering club with the idea and a team was formed. Peter, as the most competent climber in the club, was duly elected as leader. The team had minimal equipment, no base or vehicle and

little specialist knowledge. Peter took charge of training and organising others to scrounge helmets and a stretcher from the local iron works, first aid training from the local GPs and temporary storage facilities in a loft.

Over the years, fundraising with Peter in charge, bought the team a series of vehicles, garage/storage facilities, and all the equipment required to locate and evacuate casualties from the fells. Since the team's electronic records began in 1995, Peter has consistently attended more callouts, practices and meetings than any other member. A sample of the paper records show his attendance standing at over 75% for all the years checked since the early 1970s. In the late 1990s, the Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association commissioned a report – 'Rescue 2000' – to look at the provision of rescue services in the area. One of its recommendations was that the two teams covering the south west of the area, Millom FRT and Furness MRT, should merge. As independently financed charities, both with a full commitment of members, joining the two teams together was not a simple task. Peter oversaw the process and, after two years of hard work, Duddon and Furness MRT was formally launched in 2003.

It would be easy for someone in Peter's position to sit back on his experience and act against change but this has never been an option. His fundamental commitment is still to provide the very best service to anyone lost or injured on the hills, a commitment recognised by an MBE last year.

Peter will stand down as team leader at the next AGM but intends to stay on as an active team member leaving others to take over the responsibilities he has carried for so long. Without doubt, his long term contribution has been an inspiration to his team members and others within MR, and we congratulate him on this outstanding achievement.



▲ PETER BELL PRESENTS PETER WITH HIS LONG SERVICE CERTIFICATE

DATES 2008

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY
Places: 24
Date: Spring
Location: South Wales
Contact: Richard Terrell 07971 191942 richardterrell@aol.com
UK MR 75TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER
Places: 500
Date: Saturday 19 April
Location: Jarvis Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester
Contact: Eve Burton 01663 750371 75thdinner@mountain.rescue.org.uk
PARTY LEADER COURSE
Places: 30
Date: Weekend July
Location: Rishworth
Contact: Mike Marsh 01204 696383 mjim@boltonmrt.org.uk
SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT REFRESHER
Places: 30
Date: Tuesday/Wednesday 26/27 August
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE 3 Maes Tyddyn To, Menai Bridge LL59 5BG 01248 716971
SEARCH FIELD COURSE
Places: 30
Date: Thursday to Saturday 28-30 August
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE. As above.
SEARCH PLANNING & MANAGEMENT
Places: 40
Date: Sunday to Thursday 31 August to 4 September
Location: University of Wales, Bangor
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE. As above.
UK MR CONFERENCE
Places: 250+50 for speakers
Date: Weekend 5-7 September
Location: Stirling University
Contact: Peter Howells OBE 01633 254244 plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk
EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY
Places: 24
Date: Sunday, Autumn
Location: Oldham MRT HQ
Contact: John Edwards 01457 870734 jmemr@fsmail.net
MRC MEETING
Places: 50
Date: Saturday 15 November
Location: Lancs Police HQ
Contact: Peter Smith. As above.
TEAM LEADERS MEETING
Places: 50
Date: Saturday 6 December
Location: Rishworth
Contact: Peter Smith. As above.



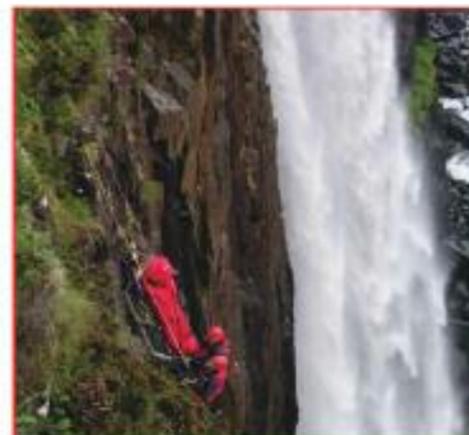
Hit the Trail for the perfect pint!

Visitors to the Lake District can taste the perfect pint at the end of a hard day on the hill, and help support mountain rescue, thanks to Trail magazine and their very own 'Trail Ale', launched at the Wasdale Head Inn, with a bit of help from one or two local team members.

The first taste and launch celebrations kicked off at 7.00pm on Saturday, 3 November. Trail favourite Alan Hinkes,

the first Brit to climb all fourteen summits over 8000m including Everest, hosted a quiz to a pub packed full of walkers, and the winning team won free pints of Trail Ale. 50p from each pint of the ale sold will be donated to Mountain Rescue (England & Wales). The launch night alone raised over £200, which means 400 pints were collectively guzzled by more than one hundred thirsty walkers.

Great Gable Brewing Company at the Wasdale Head Inn developed Trail Ale as a 'light, bright, quaffable beer, designed to refresh and rehydrate after a testing adventure' based on feedback from Trail's reader forum. Matt Swaine, editor of Trail said, 'It's great for walkers to be able to support mountain rescue while they celebrate their latest hillwalk with a pint of Trail Ale at the Wasdale Head Inn.'



Snowsled Rescue

- standard MRC pattern vacuum mattress.
- Secure Casualty System (SCS) cas bag (photo opposite).
- MRC of S Katie rescue stretcher (due February 2008).
- animal rescue sac.

Snowsled Rescue Ltd, Market Place Mews, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8DN
Tel/fax: +44 (0) 1444 502731 E: rescue@snowsled.com www.snowsled.com

Second, if a group requires a mountain guide to get them off the mountain then give them a local mountain guide's telephone number in the first instance.

Third, send an invoice! Perhaps one similar to the example shown from the Langdale Ambleside team, created as a one off, purely to reinforce the messages contained within this article.

A light hearted approach here, but is it a glimpse of the future? A significant increase in non-life threatening rescues will compromise a mountain rescue team's ability to respond to the more serious incidents. A day spent learning how to navigate with a map and compass will go a long way to prevent the avoidable rescues described in



this article. Navigation and map reading skill along with proper clothing and equipment will definitely reduce the numbers of callouts and help mountain rescue teams to concentrate on those areas where their skills are needed most. A GPS and a mobile phone can and

will let you down, a map and compass won't. In the Lake District we will wait to see if 2007 has been an isolated year or whether it is the thin end of the wedge. If it is a growing trend, then the face of mountain rescue as we know it might change... and not necessarily for the best!

If you have any questions or comments on this article or indeed any of the Lake District articles or statements made then please contact me and I will ensure you receive a response.

MID PENNINE

ALPHORNS MAKE NOVEL FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY

Summer visitors to Jumbles Country Park in Bolton could have been forgiven for thinking they had been transported somewhat further south to the rolling meadows of Switzerland, thanks to the haunting, mellow call of the Alhorn. Helen and Neil Grindy, both professional French horn players, fell in love with the instrument when they visited Switzerland in 1987. Last year, they decided to buy their own 14 foot Alphorns and set about entertaining the crowds at Jumbles on fine days. Any money made from their performances was donated to **Bolton MRT**. 'We love walking and the instrument is traditionally played on the mountains so it's very appropriate,' said Helen. The wooden instruments are carved from solid softwood, generally spruce but sometimes pine.

JOINT FOUNDATION COURSE

For the third year running, the Bolton team organised a Joint Foundation Course in Mountain Rescue in October. Trainees from NEWSAR and Bolton joined members of lowland teams Staffordshire SAR and Cheshire LSRT as Friday evening kicked off with the usual night search

exercise for beer and toffees. Surprisingly searchers missed two cans – unsurprisingly picked up later by the instructors sweep team. Thanks to a dull, drizzly Saturday morning, neither the RAF Sea King nor the Lancs ASU helicopter made an appearance but the Greater Manchester Police ASU redeemed the situation, allowing all present to have a look round the aircraft. Lectures and mini practical exercises paved the way in late afternoon for a physically demanding introduction to steep ground stretcher handling in the confines of Noon Hill Gully on the edge of Rivington Moor.

The evening introduced guest lecturers from Greater Manchester Police and a Home Office Forensic Officer, rounded off by Andy Simpson on 'What the MRC does for you.' The very last lecture, a practical table top search management exercise finished at a very late 11pm, before descending rapidly into beer and Sunday's hangover.

Sunday's practical exercises came to a close just after midday with real life call outs for both Bolton and NEWSAR. The next course will take place the weekend of 17 to 19 October, 2008.

NORTH WALES

AIR CRASH IN NORTH WALES

North East Wales SAR set up a major search exercise last June, involving search and rescue teams, North Wales police, Dyfed-Powys police, RAF Valley 22 Sqn and the ARCC at RAF Kinloss. Centred on the village of Llanfychangel y Mochain, the exercise was 'to search for a missing light aircraft that had disappeared off the radar at 5pm on the Friday', the aim to give search managers good practice at developing their search strategy for the deployment of troops the following day. The main ground troops were supplied by NEWSAR but they were very ably supported by a contingent of searchers from Cheshire ALSAR. This was the first time the two organisations had worked together and the co-operation and interaction worked really well.

Saturday saw the deployment of the ground troops in really hot weather. The areas given to search were open moorland with very thick and deep heather concealing holes deep enough for some of the smaller troops to disappear into completely. At base there was strong involvement from Dyfed-Powys police, with two visiting and observing POLSARs from Cheshire police. The search management work was carried out by members of NEWSAR, aided by a member of ALSAR. The ARCC and RAF Valley were using the exercise as a training exercise for themselves and there was regular comms between the incident base and the RAF. The work carried out in search control was under the scrutiny of a surprise visitor – Mountain Rescue vice chairman Tony Jones.

The heat and terrain caused a couple of minor injuries that further enhanced the authenticity of the exercise. Search teams were out for up to seven hours and there was a feeling of trepidation amongst the search managers about the likely reactions of the members on their return. This fear



was totally unfounded as the overwhelming consensus was that everyone had enjoyed the day. Sunday saw the teams going out into revised areas based on work carried out by the search managers late into the night. This led to an early find of the crash site and, believe it or not, a real crashed aircraft with two live bodies in it. It also transpired there were still two missing casualties. Around this time the helicopter arrived and was dispatched to find the missing youths which he very quickly did. The nature of the positioning within the fuselage of the two casualties, and the nature of their injuries, gave an opportunity for some very skilful and resourceful casualty handling.

The exercise finished at about 3pm on the Sunday and everyone seemed to go home extremely happy. The troops and the base were located in the village hall and all the members were made to feel extremely welcome in the village and surrounding areas. NEWSAR would like to extend their thanks to the local population and the local pub that fed everyone for such a pleasant weekend. It was a huge success thanks to several months of planning by several members of NEWSAR.

PEAK DISTRICT

SLIDETITE SECURES KIT

Anne and Peter Nolan hijacked the MR stand at the Emergency Services Show to donate ten of their mini flood kits to **Glossop MRT**. They have been sending the kits – a simple sprung cord and



two of their adjustable hooks – to volunteer groups as a means of showcasing their products. All you need to do is add a bag, sack or bin liner and you

Shepherds' Cairn Memorial Service

On Saturday 24 November 2007, members of Northumberland National Park MRT attended an outdoor service, led by the Rev. Judy Glover, to mark the tragic event that led to the team's formation 45 years ago. The event was planned by Northumberland National Park Authority.

The winter of 1962/63 is still remembered as one of the coldest since records began. Jock Scott and Willie Middlemas were making their way home from Rothbury Mart. A blizzard was in force as they dropped off their colleague, Willie Bulloch, at Castle Hill Farm and, against better judgement, tried to reach home across the moors by tractor towards the remote farmstead of Ewarty Shank. At that time, the road from Alnham was just a track and there was no telephone line at the farm.

Two days later, Willie Bulloch was out tending his flock and Mrs Scott asked him when she should be expecting Jock. Knowing they'd set out on Saturday, he raised the alarm.

Rescue parties, including the police, RAF, shepherds and farm workers, began the search. The tractor was found abandoned and Jock's body was discovered buried under drifting snow near High Knowes late on the Tuesday. He was only half a mile from home. It was not until the following day that Willie's body was found only 100 yards away from where Jock had perished.

Newspapers of the day reported on the Alnham storm search and the tremendous rallying of the 'big-hearted Cheviots' community to raise funds for the bereaved families. This area of country can be wild and very exposed in the winter. A hundred years earlier, a plucky Eleanor Herron set off from her workplace at Alnham over the moors to her home at Hartside



THE REV J GLOVER, CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT KEVIN LAMBERT AND TEAM MEMBERS AT THE CAIRN PHOTO: RICHARD HOLMES

in the Ingram Valley. She was later found frozen, seated on the stone where she'd stopped to rest.

It was the fate of these two experienced hill men that prompted the creation of the NNP team, with John Weatherall as leader.

Over the years, different people have brought new skills to the team. Search management now plays a vital role

and former team leaders Pete Roberts and Dave Perkins have formulated systems of searching which are now used by rescue teams in many countries around the world.

Former police Inspector Jim Thompson learnt first hand about the horrendous conditions facing the rescue teams, with one of his first assignments as a newly qualified police constable.

'I was based at Morpeth police station and vividly remember when we got the call. I went up on the Tuesday just after Jock's body was found and the conditions were arctic. The ground was frozen solid, strong blustery winds had blown the drifts level and the snow was very tightly packed. It took us a good hour to get up to the spot and when we did the conditions were extremely difficult to work in as it was so exposed.

'We had nine dogs up there helping with the search as well as RAF Mountain Rescue. The RAF team were using long measuring poles to determine the depths of the drifts as it was almost impossible to tell how far down the actual ground was. It wasn't until the sun broke through on the Wednesday morning that the snow started to soften and the dogs picked up the scent. It was a young dog called Rex who found Willie buried under 6 foot of snow.

'The whole time we were there, the community were extremely helpful and rescuers were given a hot meal by the Sordy family every night, something which everyone really appreciated.'

The anniversary tribute included a memorial cairn at High Knowes erected by the current generation of rangers and MR team members at the spot where the two shepherds lost their lives. Shepherds' Cairn is situated on Alnham Farm owned by John Sordy, whose father farmed the land at the time of the accident, and who has been closely involved in the erection of the cairn. An information panel with the full story and a walking route to the cairn will be erected near Alnham churchyard to help future visitors understand the significance of the events.

Bill Ellis, team leader of the mountain rescue team said, 'Members assisted in the construction of the memorial cairn and we feel it a fitting tribute to the memories of the two shepherds lost in this tragic event.'



Leaders in comfort and performance



Warm as toast!



Base layer, mid layer, shell has been the conventional layering mantra for years. Consequently, most walkers and climbers carry a mid layer for extra insulation - more often than not a fleece jacket. However, this iconic piece of kit, carried for extra comfort and security is, in practice, often a serious weakness in the clothing system.

The wetter the fleece gets, the less it insulates and getting it on and off is a complicated and uncomfortable manoeuvre, especially in high winds and heavy rain or snow. Even if you can find a sheltered spot to remove your shell, you still lose most of the heat stored in your base layer - just the opposite of what's needed.

So what's the alternative?

Base layer, shell, Paramo overlayer - the Paramo Torres Smock and Gilet can be easily and quickly put on over a shell and will immediately halt heat loss even if the shell is wet. Our synthetic overlayers insulate well even when saturated and allow the garments beneath them to stay dry. It means a much better survival potential should misadventure occur.

Visit www.paramo.co.uk/torres and prepare to stay toasty this winter!



“I found the Torres Smock an excellent piece of kit for the extremes of temperature on the glacier in general above 6000m. It could be pretty warm when the sun was out. But a cold breeze would have us slipping hurriedly into rucksacks for extra insulation, and particularly when we stopped for a break or were sitting around the tents. The Torres Smock gave us a quick source of insulation - without having to take off our Alpha-Jackets and lose heat in the process.”

Mike Dawber, Tibet Expedition 2007

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REGIONAL NEWS

can waterproof your Land Rover grill for deeper wading. Team leader Chris Gregory said, 'Their kit is great for anyone who needs an adjustable, sprung tie down.' Find out more about the product at slidetite.com.

COUNTY'S FINEST HONOURED

A prestigious ceremony at the Devonshire Dome, Buxton in November honoured individuals, groups, businesses, voluntary groups and charities who are making a difference to the lives of others, including **Buxton MRT** and **Kinder MRT**.

Councillor Joyce Sanders, chair of Derbyshire County Council and politician and writer Roy Hattersley made the presentations. Councillor John Williams, leader of Derbyshire County Council, said, 'We are very lucky to have a whole army of volunteers, fundraisers and committed groups and individuals working hard in our communities. Every day, they go the extra mile to make life better for us all by raising money, looking after our environment and helping others to stay safe.'



▲ MEMBERS OF KINDER MRT (TOP) AND BUXTON MRT (BOTTOM) RECEIVE THEIR AWARDS

THREE CELEBRATIONS FOR EDALE

On Saturday 6 October 2007, **Edale MRT** celebrated three significant events – the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, new headquarters and a new control vehicle. John Bather, Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire, presented the team with a commemorative piece of crystal and a certificate signed by the Queen. The award is a national honour, equivalent to an MBE, in recognition of outstanding achievement by voluntary groups across the UK. An added bonus was the opportunity for three team members – chairman, secretary and treasurer – to attend a Buckingham Palace garden party on a lovely sunny day in July. The new, purpose built HQ was opened by John Bather, who unveiled a plaque to commemorate the occasion. Over 150 people enjoyed a convivial evening buffet to thank all who have worked so hard to make the base a reality.

Chairman Rob Small said, 'Moving in was a great boost to the team, fulfilling a long cherished ambition to have improved facilities at the heart of our operational area.'



'The benefits have already been realised. Days after we got the keys, the team was called from a routine equipment maintenance session to an incident on Kinder Scout. We were able to deploy three vehicles rapidly from our new base without worrying about security, as equipment maintenance was, for the first time in the team's history, being carried out entirely indoors. With the roller shutter doors lowered, all the unfinished work was left secure until team members could return to finish the job. The incident involved a badly injured walker being treated on scene and then packaged in one of our stretchers before being loaded into an RAF Sea King for airlift to hospital.'

'More recently, we controlled a search on Kinder Scout from the new base. And word is obviously spreading as, recently, an off road trail biker roared into our base to request assistance as one of his party had been injured riding in nearby Pin Dale, less than a kilometre from the base.'

'We are immensely grateful to Lafarge for their continuing support. We've been based at the Lafarge site in the Hope Valley for over 25 years and have a very good relationship with all at Lafarge but this move does help cement that relationship!'

The new facilities are a vast improvement on the old, which were housed in the same building on the Lafarge site. The team now has about six times the floor area with undercover parking for all four of the vehicles and warm, dry facilities for equipment maintenance, along with secure stores for medical supplies, replacement equipment and fundraising material. An indoor training and meeting room is large enough for the complete team, a smaller meeting room and separate office and a dedicated control room to allow searches and protracted operations within the area to be controlled from headquarters. This room is equipped with computers, telephones and radio equipment allowing search managers to operate efficiently in a warm and dry environment. There are dedicated kitchen and welfare facilities for both male and female team members and an indoor training wall enabling team members to develop and practise techniques for rescuing those stuck or injured on the nearby climbing edges or on steep ground. Eventually we intend to fit out the remaining three walls in this facility to make it much more effective for indoor crag rescue training. In fact, the base is already benefiting all the teams in the region as a facility for PDMRO meetings.

The team also unveiled DM4, their new control vehicle. The Mercedes Sprinter van was donated by South Yorkshire police and has been fitted out for use on searches which cannot be controlled from the comfort of the new HQ. The team is very grateful to South Yorkshire police for their generous support. The vehicle is fitted with a control desk, radios, pump up aerals, 240v electricity supply for laptops and printers via an inverter and a bank of batteries, plus an equipment storage area accessible from the rear doors and armour for riot protection – something they hope they'll never use! Rob concludes, 'All in all 2007 has been a very successful year for the team. Team members have even found time to attend 79 incidents so far.'

SOUTH WALES

LONGTOWN TEAM MEET SIMON YATES

On the evening of 29 October, Simon Yates visited the Courtyard Theatre in Hereford as part of a lecture tour describing his exploits both before and after the events in Peru that became the 'Touching the Void' story. While this incident undoubtedly raised his public profile, it is only a small part of



▲ RICH STEVENS OF LONGTOWN MRT WITH SIMON YATES

career as a mountaineer that has taken him around the world. Never wanting to miss an opportunity to raise some money, members of **Longtown MRT** arranged to hold a collection at the theatre, there being a number of team members living in Hereford. The plan was to park the team's Land Rover outside the venue, and for team members to help the audience dispose of any spare change. Promoter Mark Dann introduced the team to Simon, who came up with a suggestion to assist

OLDHAM WEEKEND

This annual event, run by **Oldham MRT** on the first weekend in May, was introduced to stimulate an exchange of ideas throughout mountain rescue and other emergency services. The team started the event in 1981, when they recognised their uniquely privileged position of being able to develop their ideas on rescue techniques and equipment through their close links with Troll Safety Equipment Limited.

The weekend seminar now provides an ideal platform from which to demonstrate some of the systems and techniques used by the Oldham team, to stimulate new ideas and encourage continuous improvement. Originally only open to members of civilian and



military mountain rescue teams in England and Wales, as well as HM Coastguard cliff rescue companies, for the last five years teams, from Scotland and both Northern and Southern Ireland have attended. For the past two years, the course has also been made available to members of all of the UK statutory emergency services, with places being taken by several police and ambulance services.

When? Annually over the May Day bank holiday weekend.

Who? Experienced mountain rescue personnel, with reasonable rock climbing ability, because the seminar concentrates on a variety of cliff rescue techniques, including hillside exercises.

The next one? Friday to Sunday 2-4 May 2008.

Booking Invitations will be sent out during January 2008. A booking form will be available on the OMRT website (www.omrt.org) from January. Places are limited and you are advised to book early to secure your spot!

Venta's new generation lightbar incorporates the latest LED technology

Providing improved efficiency and functionality, Venta UK's new generation Panther LED Lightbar incorporates the latest LED technology with a tough design for the most demanding environments. With high intensity ultra bright LEDs as standard and a low profile design of just 70mm to reduce wind drag, the Panther is incredibly energy efficient draw – on average just 0.5A per module, yet still emits an extremely high-power warning signal. The inclusion of a night dimming function reduces power usage even further.

All components are built up off the strong aluminium base and are plug and play for virtually zero maintenance. Combined with the wrap-over lens

design, this allows for speedy replacement in the event of damage without affecting the lighting modules. Available with selectable flash patterns and with 12 or 24 volt options, the Panther is offered in modular widths ranging from the 570mm Minibar to the 1953mm six module bar with bespoke wider widths

also available. LED module options include 3 or 6 in-line or 3-on-3 double stack versions with a choice of directional or wide-angled optics and colours that includes amber, blue green, red or white.

Venta can provide the Panther LED Lightbar with a wide range of fixing options including strapkit, and with an accessory bracket to accommodate aerial, GPS, etc so there is no need to drill through the roof of the vehicle. Other options include 35watt or 50watt halogen take down alley lights, stop/turn/tail lights and illuminated centre. Highly versatile, the Panther can be configured in innumerable ways and bespoke components can be manufactured to address specific requirements. With EMC approval ratings of ECE R10, 72/245EEC and PITO spec 5 issue 10 approval, the Panther LED light bar will provide emergency vehicles with higher visibility and a lower physical profile resulting in improved fuel efficiency and decreasing energy consumption.



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with the fundraising efforts. As part of his sponsorship with outdoor manufacturer Mountain Hardwear, Simon had a number of baseball caps and a fleece, to do with as he saw fit. He suggested the team sell these items at the end of his presentation and the proceeds go to the team. Following the lecture, which included some outstanding photographs and many entertaining stories, Simon invited Rich Strevens from Longtown to give a brief outline of the team's work before the autographed caps were sold off and the fleece auctioned. Meanwhile, team members were waiting outside the theatre with collecting buckets to ambush the audience! Thanks to Simon's generosity, the team raised over £300.

SOUTH WEST

NOT A BAD DAY OUT REALLY!

8 October saw the Avon and Somerset Chief Constable signing a Memorandum of Understanding with **Avon and Somerset SAR**, presenting three new vehicles, clearing the way for their inclusion in the Tetra network and presenting Alan George with a lifetime's achievement award – all for thirty years outstanding service to search and rescue in the area. Since its inception in 1977, the team has attended more than 600 incidents, including the Gloucestershire floods, where it assisted with the rescue of more than 1200 people and attended to 32 medical emergencies, in conjunction with **Severn Area Rescue Association**. Chief Constable Colin Port said, 'I am pleased to recognise the team in this way. When I saw the work they were undertaking at the recent floods, I was struck by their levels of expertise and dedication.'

DRG TRAINING WEEKEND

Tim Heming reports... 'Casualties screamed, helicopters clattered, radios crackled, stretcher bearers grunted, the usually empty moor resounded to the sounds of rescue activity as close on 100 search and rescue team members from across England and Wales took part in an exercise designed to foster team relations and inter-agency working practice.

'In mid November 2007, the **Dartmoor Rescue Group** training weekend was run from Okehampton Army Training Camp, on the north edge of Dartmoor. This annual event sees an invitation to play sent out to all England and Wales teams, SWERA organisations, the RAF and others. This year saw the four DRG teams (Okehampton, Ashburton, Tavistock and Plymouth) join Exmoor and Bolton MRTs, and Hampshire and Wiltshire search teams. Also present were Kimmeridge Coastguard, Severn Auxiliary Rescue Association, a helicopter from RAF Chivenor and search dogs and handlers from SARDA.

'On Saturday, a large search and rescue exercise was conducted on northern Dartmoor, with several scenarios designed to involve the controllers and the nine search teams sweeping the moor. Each team comprised members from all the rescue

teams, so people could get used to working with members they didn't know. Ten casualties were deployed during the day, simulating everything from the usual sort of hillwalking injury through to an ejected pilot and even an RTA. Some casualties were airlifted off by helicopter, with one experiencing a 40 metre winch from Tavy Cleave, while others were stretchered off by rescue team members. The helicopter also assisted with transporting personnel and equipment, and searching from the air.

'I was in an eight strong team tasked to search an area to the west of Great Links Tor for a missing walker. We swept a track for about two miles and returned down one side of a stream. I noticed, and it was remarked upon at the debriefing afterwards, how seamlessly the personnel from different teams worked together. Nobody watching us would have thought we'd only met that morning!

'On Saturday night, people assembled in the NAAFI for the traditional skittles competition. This has its origins in the mists of time, and all are encouraged to field a team. After a tense battle, it went to a tie-break between Bolton and WILSAR, won by Bolton. We also raised £237.47 for Children In Need – a combination of the skittles entry fee and a raffle organised by Gavin Grimsey, which included some truly desirable pieces of outdoor kit as prizes.

Come Sunday morning, for those stalwart souls who just wanted more, there were two orienteering courses laid out, of 9.8km and 12.8km distance. I did the 9.8km route with others from Ashburton team and, despite the brief that it was 'non-competitive', we found ourselves pressing on in an uncharacteristic display of 'let's overtake this lot and lose them in the fog' mentality.

'The training weekend was organised by a training committee, headed by Dartmoor Rescue Group chairman Henry Guly, general secretary Phil Hayter, and the four Dartmoor team training officers, Neil Handley, Gavin Grimsey (acting), Jamie Reading, and Brian Cole. Craig Scollick, trainee with Ashburton team said, 'The fine weather on Saturday meant navigation wasn't too much of a challenge but this changed on Sunday for the

orienteering courses. It was an excellent training weekend for all attendees where many new friendships were built and old ones were fostered, all excellent news for cross-team cooperation.'

'All rescue teams in England and Wales are invited to the training weekend, which next year will be particularly special, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Dartmoor Rescue Group.'

YORKSHIRE DALES

52 LONG SERVICE CERTIFICATES PLEASE

Some request but that was the figure **Upper Wharfedale FRA** came up with when they decided it was time to seek individual recognition for many of the team's members – this remarkable statement of long service and dedication also came as a surprise to the team when they started combing through the records as Chairman Howard Driver discovered.

'Such is the camaraderie amongst members we had just not thought about how long we'd been together and, after much searching, we were amazed to find that half of the team qualified for the certificate and that their combined service was a staggering 2000 years – a good number having served 40 years and several even over 50. Adding to these figures it also dawned on us just how much of a family we were with sons and daughters, husbands and wives and brothers and, in recent times, a granddaughter of one of the very early members – very proudly representing three generations of the same family.'

The occasion was marked with a formal presentation evening with Lord Crathorne, HM Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire making the awards on behalf of Mountain Rescue (England & Wales). Invited guests included representatives from the police, fire and ambulance services in the Dales, as well as local dignitaries. It was also a great opportunity for the gathering of old friends, which included one founder member from back in 1948 and another who joined just a month later. A great occasion and yet another major milestone in the team's long history.



▲ RECIPIENTS OF THE LONG SERVICE AWARD TOGETHER WITH HM LORD LIEUTENANT LORD CRATHORNE

Team leaders' meeting 2007

David Allan reports

A grey wet Saturday in the Lake District was the background to the meeting on 1 December. We were, however, comfortably housed in Keswick team base for what was one of the best meetings to date. It was certainly well attended with teams represented from almost every region. We were particularly pleased to welcome the Scottish Border teams of Galloway, Tweed Valley, Moffat and Borders for the first time.

The meeting was ably chaired by Mark Hodgson, Keswick team leader, and we are grateful to his team for their hospitality.

The first presentation from Ewan Thomas, the recently appointed MRC water officer, gave a succinct account of the water safety and rescue capabilities and experience of the teams he had contacted so far. (Approximately two thirds of the teams in England and Wales.) There are quite widely varying levels of involvement from nothing at all to a significant number of swift water rescue trained team members. The problem with relation to involvement with floods was outlined and it is clear there are no well established training facilities available for this at present.

In the discussion, it appeared that water training is an area where many teams will benefit from the provision regional and national training courses. Ewan indicated that, once his survey is complete, he will make suggestions as to how these might be best provided.

Alan Prescott, Keswick MRT radio officer, gave a demonstration of the use of GPS mapping by his own team. He outlined some of the problems which had been overcome and very clearly showed the ease with which the system could be used when working with an adjacent team. Interesting benefits have arisen. There is much less use of voice communication and the system is increasingly being used to give guidance to people on the fells. The ease with which the signal is lost when the mike is, (intentionally or unintentionally) hidden in a pocket or under a hood was noted. Keswick now have 46 individually identified working sets, plus units in the vehicles.

In the discussion the question of security was raised. To date this has not been seen to be a problem but Dave Binks said this could be built in without too much difficulty should the need arise.

An open discussion on the desirability, or otherwise, of having fixed term appointments of team leaders and other MR officers took place. A review of the practices of the teams present revealed most had an open ended appointment subject to annual re-election. A significant number made three year appointments, some renewable for further three year periods. Llanberis resolved the issue by running without a team leader at all and Ogwen Valley have five TLs, one of whom stands down each year in rotation. Deputy team leaders in general are rotated more frequently. In Derby, the team leader picks his deputy leaders before appointment and presents this as part of his application.

Concern was expressed that the relations between a team and outside agencies needed a team leader in place for several years but others felt that the outside agencies changed their staff so frequently that this is not an issue. NEWSAR observed that a fixed term removed the 'politics' of appointments and allowed all the focus to be on operational matters.

Clearly teams have introduced systems that suit their purpose well but it was interesting to see the range of options in place. A final point was raised that there is currently no training for established or neophyte team leaders in leadership and this is something we may well return to in the near future.

Richard Warren presented the problems which have arisen in recent months with a very significant rise in the number of incidents in the Lakes. Almost this entire rapid rise is due to parties being unable to find their way off the fells when darkness arrives. Many of them have set out on ventures that could not possibly be accomplished in daylight hours. The absence of torches, and basic navigation and hill sense, is a common occurrence. Indeed the mobile phone seems to have replaced these completely. It has proved impossible to talk some parties off the hill even when their location was known. Some parties just don't like the look of the path and find head high bracken an insuperable challenge. The feasibility of leaving parties on the hill to await daylight was discussed. Llanberis team have advised well equipped uninjured parties that the paths will re-appear in the daylight with success.

It is hoped that the figures of recent months are an anomaly. If this is not the case, action will be needed to get information out to the public about this problem. Although the BMC and other bodies are willing to engage with this, it seems unlikely the people responsible for these incidents are avid readers of climbing or walking magazines and the national press and television would be the medium to use.

Paul Horder described the evolution of Keswick team's approach to driver training. When the team first looked at this, they realised it was in fact the highest risk activity they were involved in. In addition to this, the new legislation required action to be taken.

The first step was to submit all team members to MAC Driver Awareness training for one day. This produced a preferred driver list of 36 team members from a total of 46. Two were excluded on medical grounds. This was followed up with a one hour re-assessment every three years.

In 2007, a change was made to use the Cumbria Police Emergency Response Driver training. Two team members at a time attend for half a day. This has resulted in 25 team members of 46 being recognised drivers. Initial concerns regarding availability of recognised drivers have not proved to be a problem.

In the ensuing discussion it was apparent there were enormous variations across the country in

both the approach of police forces and their willingness to offer training. Calder Valley has been turned down by the police and are currently talking to the ambulance service.

Another open discussion followed this one on the need and desirability for regional and national training events. An interesting observation was to the effect that regional training might be better focused on 'operational' regions rather than traditional regional boundaries. This has already occurred in one or two limited areas.

There was general agreement that topics where national and/or regional training would be advantageous. As would be helicopter training, swift water rescue (and possibly other aspects of water safety), rigging for rescue and major incident involvement.

Andy Crossley gave an excellent profile of Scarborough and Ryedale team. He described their operational area from the high North York Moors to the coast. Mountain biking on the forestry tracks presents a significant amount of work. The make up of the team, the training and equipment they have tested were shown.

The team profiles have been an important aspect of TL meetings enabling other teams to take away ideas and examples of good practice and this presentation lived up to that need.

The final presentation of the day was a description of mountain rescue involvement in the Grayrigg train accident by Andy Dell, leader of Kendal MRT. 'When I received the call I knew this was not going to be an ordinary incident' were his opening words and how true this was.

He portrayed well the confusion and communication difficulties that dog most if not all major incidents. He then went on to describe the massive contribution that his team, and five other MR teams and SARDA, made to the rescue work. This involvement was at all levels from casualty care to running the initial control centre.

Because of legal constraints there does not yet appear to have been a multi-agency review of the incident. When such occurs it is to be hoped MR is invited to sit at the table, as Andy's experience is both salutary and valuable.

In the discussion that followed, the need for MR to be aware of and part of multi-agency planning was stressed.

We have now used four venues for the TL meetings. The proposal is that these should continue to be used in rotation but this is simply a proposal at this stage. The places visited are Swaledale team base, Ridley School (near Huddersfield), Rolls Royce Derby and Keswick base. If we continue the rotation the meeting in 2008 will be Ridley.

All the venues have come free, which is an important factor. If it were possible to accommodate the meetings in MR facilities that would be ideal. Reasonably good access is important. Are there other places we should consider? Do we continue with the current proposal? Your views please.

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Berghaus and Tiso raise almost £6000 for Scottish mountain rescue teams

Scotland's largest outdoor retailer Tiso, and outdoor clothing giant Berghaus, have come to the aid of mountain rescue teams across Scotland with a much needed donation of almost £6000. A highly successful, month long initiative saw 5% of sales revenue from selected Berghaus products sold in Tiso stores pledged to teams. The donation comes in the run up to the busiest period of the year, with unpredictable and often wild weather putting climbers in danger. Stuart Ruffell, team leader of Tweed MRT said, 'The money raised will be a great help to all the teams operating across Scotland. Initiatives like this one are great for raising the profile of the organisation and individual teams and, of course, raising the money needed to remain in operation.'

Tiso is Berghaus' biggest customer in Scotland and sells technical products from across the brand's extensive range. Between them they have almost 90 years experience of selling

high performance products and helping people to make the most of their time outdoors. The public clearly got behind the promotion – during the month, Tiso sales of the selected



LEFT TO RIGHT: JEN CHANGLING, CHRIS CHAPMAN (TWEED VALLEY MRT), ALICE CRAGG (TISO) AND STUART RUFFELL (TVMRT)

products rose by 22% compared to the same time last year. The £5752.65 will be shared across teams in Scotland to pay for new equipment and maintenance costs.



QUARTERLY INCIDENT REPORT FOR ENGLAND AND WALES JULY-SEPTEMBER 2007

The following is a listing of the number of incidents attended by MR teams in England and Wales during the period from 01/07/2007 to 30/09/2007. It is grouped by region and shows the date (day/month) the incident began. It is not comprehensive as many incidents have yet to be reported.

Lake District

Cockermouth	05/07, 14/07, 20/07, 22/07, 23/07, 23/07, 14/08, 22/08, 29/08, 05/09, 24/09
Coniston	08/07, 08/07, 11/07, 20/07, 05/08, 09/08, 11/08, 16/08, 16/08, 20/08, 22/08, 22/08, 25/08, 25/08, 30/08, 14/09, 25/09
Duddon & Furness	03/07, 18/07, 23/08, 09/09, 09/09
Kendal	14/07, 17/07, 17/07, 24/07, 03/08, 04/08, 06/08, 22/08, 30/08, 01/09, 09/09, 16/09, 16/09, 18/09, 22/09
Keswick	01/07, 11/07, 14/07, 20/07, 25/07, 02/08, 03/08, 07/08, 11/08, 11/08, 12/08, 14/08, 14/08, 15/08, 18/08, 25/08, 25/08, 29/08, 03/09, 09/09, 09/09, 09/09, 10/09, 11/09, 15/09, 17/09, 22/09, 24/09, 28/09
Kirkby Stephen	04/07, 19/07, 21/07, 25/08, 09/09
Langdale Ambleside	03/07, 05/07, 05/07, 07/07, 11/07, 14/07, 15/07, 17/07, 22/07, 31/07, 12/08, 12/08, 14/08, 16/08, 22/08, 22/08, 25/08, 25/08, 26/08, 26/08, 26/08, 29/08, 29/08, 01/09, 04/09, 08/09, 08/09, 15/09, 16/09, 16/09, 22/09, 22/09, 24/09, 25/09
Patterdale	10/07, 18/07, 26/07, 07/08, 15/08, 16/08, 16/08, 17/08, 19/08, 19/08, 23/08, 24/08, 25/08, 30/09
Penrith	18/07, 19/07, 26/07, 19/08, 25/08, 06/09, 08/09, 15/09, 24/09, 30/09
Wasdale	01/07, 03/07, 09/07, 12/08, 18/08

Mid-Pennine

Bolton	02/07, 02/07, 14/07, 15/07, 01/08, 06/08, 07/08, 12/08, 15/08, 15/08, 21/08, 08/09, 23/09, 30/09, 30/09, 30/09
Bowland Pennine	21/07, 22/07, 01/08, 03/08, 09/08, 01/09, 08/09
Calder Valley	05/07, 20/07, 28/07, 05/08, 05/08, 08/08, 22/08, 29/08, 06/09
Holme Valley	05/08, 09/09, 23/09
Rossendale & Pendle	05/07, 02/08, 02/08, 30/08, 09/09, 09/09, 12/09, 13/09, 17/09, 19/09, 30/09, 30/09

NE England

Cleveland	11/07, 12/07, 14/07, 12/09
Northumberland NP	06/07, 10/07, 17/07, 20/07, 05/08, 15/08, 24/08, 27/08, 27/08, 06/09, 08/09, 12/09, 23/09, 25/09, 28/09
North of Tyne	06/07, 10/07, 17/07, 20/07, 05/08, 15/08, 27/08, 27/08, 06/09, 08/09, 12/09, 23/09, 25/09, 28/09
Scarborough & Ryedale	18/07
Teesdale & Weardale	05/08

North Wales

Aberglaslyn	05/07, 09/07, 11/07, 25/08, 27/08, 28/08
Llanberis	01/07, 03/07, 09/07, 11/07, 14/07, 14/07, 15/07, 27/07, 28/07, 28/07, 29/07, 30/07, 03/08, 04/08, 06/08, 13/08, 22/08, 02/09, 13/09, 15/09, 15/09, 29/09
North East Wales	10/08, 11/08, 20/08, 25/08, 27/08, 28/08, 30/08, 08/09, 11/09, 24/09

OB Wales	01/07, 26/07, 19/08, 25/08, 04/09, 11/09, 29/09, 30/09
Ogwen Valley	07/07, 12/07, 15/07, 22/07, 24/07, 27/07, 27/07, 01/08, 19/08, 20/08, 20/08, 21/08, 21/08, 22/08, 22/08, 02/09, 03/09, 06/09, 22/09
South Snowdonia	01/07, 05/07, 28/08, 12/09, 15/09
Snowdonia Nat Park	01/07, 14/07, 14/07, 27/07, 10/08, 21/08

Peak District

Buxton	10/07, 31/07, 07/08, 11/08, 20/08, 21/08, 25/08, 29/08, 08/09, 22/09, 29/09
Derby	01/07, 04/07, 08/07, 03/08, 07/08, 26/08
Edale	13/07, 30/07, 31/07, 31/07, 01/08, 07/08, 20/08, 20/08, 26/08, 29/08, 01/09, 08/09, 08/09, 15/09, 15/09, 23/09, 23/09, 23/09
Glossop	27/05
Kinder	07/08
Oldham	02/07, 28/07, 06/08, 11/08, 28/08, 03/09, 08/09, 19/09, 23/09
Woodhead	05/08

South Wales

Brecon	04/07, 10/07, 15/07, 24/07, 01/08, 01/08, 22/08, 26/08, 26/08, 27/08, 10/09, 19/09, 23/09, 27/09, 28/09
Western Beacons	16/07, 01/08, 10/08, 26/08, 23/09, 27/09, 28/09
Central Beacons	04/07, 06/07, 10/07, 14/07, 16/07, 23/07, 01/08, 01/08, 19/08, 22/08, 26/08, 26/08, 23/09, 27/09, 28/09
Longtown	14/07, 16/07, 22/08, 23/09

South West England

Cornwall	15/07, 18/07, 06/08, 17/08, 22/08, 06/09
Dartmoor	03/07, 16/07, 05/08, 06/08, 11/09
Exmoor	02/07, 02/07, 05/07, 22/08, 04/09, 08/09

Yorkshire Dales

CRO	10/07, 01/08, 09/08, 11/08, 18/08, 31/08, 15/09, 15/09, 19/09, 21/09, 28/09
Upper Wharfedale	15/07, 25/08, 31/08, 03/09, 09/09, 18/09, 22/09

RAF

RAF Valley	20/08
RAF Leeming	04/08, 11/08

SARDA

SARDA (England)	01/07, 02/07, 04/07, 06/07, 17/07, 07/08, 08/09, 26/08, 29/08, 23/09
SARDA (Lakes)	05/07, 20/07, 12/08, 14/08, 08/09, 22/09
SARDA (Wales)	03/07, 10/07, 12/07, 05/08, 20/08, 27/08, 28/08, 11/09, 24/09, 29/09
SARDA (South Wales)	06/07, 08/07, 10/07, 14/07, 16/07, 23/07, 24/07, 01/08, 10/08, 19/08, 26/08, 23/09, 27/09, 28/09

Non specialists (Non MR)

	12/07, 16/07, 20/08, 21/08, 22/08
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Incident report... the tales behind the stats...

The call came from the police at 16:15 on 26/10/07. A broken mobile phone call had been received from a group of youths who had become lost descending from Scafell Pike and were now cragfast on a ledge with one of them fallen beneath. The sole clue to location was that below them there was a valley with a stream in it, and no further contact could be made. Where to start?

no use due to lowering cloud level and rain. Given the known urgency, we did not have a normal full team search briefing but had an immediate staged deployment of pair search parties more akin to a casualty pickup, but with additional problems of logistics on where to send critical equipment.

Soon we knew that, although triangulation of the phone location had been unsuccessful as expected, the signal had been received at Threlkeld so slopes with a north east aspect were most likely and, for a signal to get out at all, they were probably relatively high. Early on one of the search parties found a group about to phone 999 regarding a missing family, and by 17:40 another met a distraught youth who described an epic descent/fall/swim out of a gully. It was confirmed these were the same incident. The situation now became clearer – two separate parties of three had descended together, had got off route, and the single adult had fallen from the western wall of Piers Gill into the stream bed injuring his head at least. Four youths were left cragfast at the fall site, from where the informant had amazingly managed to climb down then drop the last big waterfall pitch to escape from the gully where, by rights, he should have become a second casualty.

Time to change gear, both equipment and speed, as the walls of Piers Gill are not small. Our tame fell runner, who had been near the Pike summit when the call came in, was diverted from his original target of Cam Spout/Esk Buttress and sent back up over Little Narrowcove. Before darkness fell he located the cragfast group at NY212083 from the opposite eastern bank, but not surprisingly was unable to access. Radio communications back to

19:00, just as it got fully dark and another call came in from the police about a missing group. It transpired this one was for a different incident and would have to be parked. The cragfast youths had no lights and this, together with the reflected noise of the waterfalls and clag bouncing back our lamps, didn't make homing in exactly on complex terrain easy. Two team members abseiled directly down Straight Gill and found the cragfast group in an exposed location, which could not be dignified by the term 'ledge', off to one side at 70m down. The youths were roped individually a few metres to a safer location and a bivi-tent pending evacuation. The second two team members abseiled in from higher up Piers Gill, and set up a tensioned rope traverse to start evacuation that way, aided soon after by further ropes brought by a mixed Cockermouth/Wasdale backup group.

Meanwhile, the first aider continued abseiling the remaining 50m down Straight Gill to the fallen casualty. Apart from being well rattled (both metaphorical and actual) he was essentially uninjured which was almost unbelievable. He described a sliding fall with short flights, but sufficient low energy hits on the way down to slow him, so that no one impact caused major damage. He'd eventually landed on his back but the rucksack had cushioned him, and crucially there was no significant head or neck injury. He was cold from immersion in the stream, and well bruised, but only 400mg of his personal Ibuprofen and munching his left over food was appropriate. Given the time it would have taken to execute a technical extrication and reach definitive care all were relieved.

The way out for the casualty was directly up, as re-ascent of Straight Gill wasn't straightforward and there is no easy route. The remainder of the combined backup group set up a haul rope and pulled the casualty 100m up the western side wall with the assistance of a lowered barrowboy, to a confirmatory check over by an A&E consultant at 21.20. The first aider followed later after having sheltered out of line of the consequent rockfalls which incidentally trashed his rope.

The location demanded widely different evacuation routes. The cragfast group were assisted back up the stream bed waterfalls then walked to Lingmell col and down to the valley past Hollowstones to Brackenclose, whereas the casualty was supported directly down to Lingmell Beck and thence to Burnthwaite.

All were reunited at the Wasdale Head Hotel nearing midnight where yet again we were provided with rehydration therapy and allowed to drip on the carpet in the residents bar.

Learning points? There were many, as always. But, as an example of combined team operations against a complex and rapidly developing situation it was remarkably successful. We believe the path of the Corridor Route will be improved soon where it crosses Piers Gill, so as to reduce navigational errors here.

David Willey Deputy Team Leader
Wasdale MRT

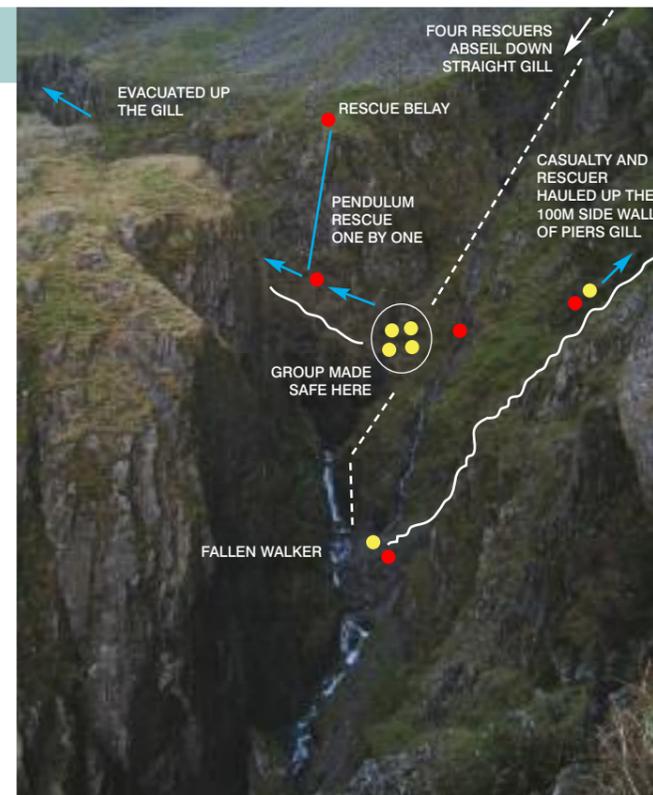


- The two separate groups of three try to climb down Piers Gill following the beck down. One group includes a father, teenage son and teenage nephew.
- The six become cragfast, the nephew manages to climb down.
- The uncle follows and falls 20m landing on his back but no major injuries.
- The nephew makes his way down the gill bottom, scrambling through the gill until he comes to a large waterfall.
- The nephew falls off the 15m waterfall pitch into a deep pool and swims out, then scrambles down the remainder of the gill to raise the alarm. Very courageous.

Given the paucity of information and the potential event other MRT and dogs were called in from the beginning, as they could be almost anywhere on the Scafell massif. Wasdale plus Cockermouth MRT would cover Wasdale, and then the tops overlooking Eskdale, up which Duddon & Furness would ascend. Keswick would come up onto Great End. A helicopter would be

base from this location were fraught but it was ascertained they were perched on the side of Straight Gill, which drops from the summit of Lingmell into Piers Gill at the dog leg. The fallen casualty was almost directly beneath and was standing plus responding to shouts.

The first four team members were on scene above with limited crag gear and full first aid by



- Two independent rescues – 15 involved in the four crag fast, 15 assisting the fallen walker – initially only four Wasdale MRT climbed down Straight Gill into Piers Gill from the Lingmell side. Cockermouth MRT members scrambled in from the head of Piers Gill.
- Four crag fast taken out horizontally one at a time, initially by pendulum until more ropes arrived with the Cockermouth team – then traversed and haul assisted up the waterfall pitches until eventually walked out of the top.
- Fallen walker hauled 100m up the side of the gill by two rescuers, one who was lowered in from the top.
- Fallen walker walked (assisted) back down to Burnthwaite.

Photos are posted on www.wasdale-mountainrescue.org.uk/rescue_photograph_index_page.htm



Langdale Ambleside MRT. Incident number 100. 9 December at 17.39hrs. Rockclimbing. Raven Crag, Great Langdale. Three climbers became cragfast when, surprise, surprise, it went dark! We eventually tracked them down, reunited them with their boots and escorted them to the bottom of the crag, via their bags.

The following is email correspondence from one of the climbers, reproduced with kind permission.

'...It was quite shocking to read about the increasing numbers of call outs in the past few years. I intend to post it on our club's Home page to let everyone (climbers and walkers) read it. Reading the examples of incidents, I was thinking, 'how could people be so flippant/careless/stupid?!' but now I know after my own experiences... Of course that is no excuse. If it's any help I can give you my interpretation as to why we ended up on the mountain stuck in the dark without any torches.

Thinking about your summary... 'ill equipped/ill prepared/inexperienced and over ambitious'... pretty much fits the bill.

'Over ambitious'. I remember walking up to the base of the route at around eleven that morning – blue skies, warm sunshine (even in December) – and eyeing up the route. I had led a 4 pitch VS in Wales a few weekends prior to this and felt no nerves about leading the severe we decided on. The over ambition probably came from this fact and the tropical conditions that morning, and maybe reading too many Mark Twight/Eric J Horst books!!!!

'Ill prepared'. As a result of my overambition I left the ground ill prepared. I had never climbed before with my companions for the day, but I know both had been climbing a lot longer than I had... their conversations of the trips to the Alps etc instilled a false sense of security... I thought I was climbing with more experienced, and hence safer, people. I have been climbing on and off for two years now, doing a lot more than normal in the last few months, since I [relocated] for a year's work placement. And had been smart enough to bring (and require) head torches/food/water/boots with me on several other mountain routes recently, but that morning I must have been over relaxed and too ambitious.

'Inexperienced'. Relative to most climbers I am probably still inexperienced. Although I've had epic days in the recent past, my experience therefore should have told me to bring the essentials up the route... but I didn't, and neither did either of my partners (one had been rescued before by mountain rescue in the Alps and the other sustained severe injuries from a trad lead fall in April 07), which was worrying, and I didn't learn that until we were perched on a ledge 200m higher shivering in the dark! We gauged the timing wrong – forgetting to compensate for the third person climbing with us and a drastic change in weather. The conditions put us at ease at the base of the climb. And the grade (for myself and another at least) was well within our capabilities.

'Ill equipped'. No head torch, food, water, walking boots to descend, map, compass. But luckily we did have mobile phones and cameras. I won't walk to the shops these days without a head torch!!!

It started to rain and get dark on the third pitch, we should have abseiled down at the second belay seeing the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

Fit for purpose?

David Bartles-Smith, Paul Renwick and Bill Batson on one team's experience of a technical rescue review

Over the past 3 years TWSMRT have been engaged in a process of review. Team leader David Bartles-Smith writes, 'This has been done to look at all aspects of our organisation and to ensure we are both effective and resilient. The demands upon the team have been increasing, not just in our core SAR work in support of the police, but in our emerging role and position within the civil contingencies framework. Long term we anticipate and are planning for the expectations upon us to increase. A robust organisation was essential and we now have in place five year planning, budgeting and an online management framework that supports us as volunteers in managing the organisation in a time efficient, transparent and effective way'.

The jigsaw that makes up the organisation has been dismantled, reviewed and changed, and re-assembled to provide the resilient and pro-active organisation we sought. This experience has put us in a position where 'change' is no longer a word conjuring fear and uncertainty but rather a concept that encourages interest and excitement. We are fully aware that in the coming years our delivery of search and rescue will come under greater spotlight, not only in terms of the litigation environment, but more significantly in our contact and relationship with the wider emergency services community. In a nutshell, we have to be 'fit for purpose', and must be able to evidence this not just in our ongoing training but in our commitment to best practice review. This process of change is linear, in that the organisational resilience needed to support it must come first. We have done this and now all areas of our operational work have been subjected to this process towards achieving an evidence based position of being 'fit for purpose'. One aspect of this was our review

of technical rescue, and Paul Renwick (Group leader, technical rescue) takes up the story...

The final piece of the jigsaw – and typical of any good jigsaw, the last piece was the hardest to find!

The world of technical rope rescue is one of those blurs many teams, including ours, tend to skirt round. Trying to discover what works best for your team, what kit you're going to need and how much you have to ask for from your committee!

Our team decided it was time to have a full system review. To do this meant us opening our doors to criticism. In May 2006 we invited Mike Margeson (MRC Equipment Officer) to one of our crag training sessions – a standard type of rescue 'casualty falling on to a ledge and the only way is up'. So we thought! Mike came with an open and honest view, sometimes too honest! He carried out an extensive technical review, identifying that our systems were inadequate and personal skills sub-standard.

After this review people sat up, asked questions and began the process of change.

As most teams know, change is often hard to accept and even harder to implement, but as a team we embraced this challenge with enthusiasm and excitement. The first crag session was a review meeting at the team's base where one of the team members held court throughout the process of establishing what exactly do we do/need as a team; where we were at technically and how we get to where we need to be as an operational technical rescue team. This process took over four hours yet, by the end of it, we had already begun to modify our technical work. We decided an extensive training programme was needed where we would train one Saturday a month, allowing us to address this change with more available training. At this point we discussed our policy of using team members as casualties in the stretcher and as a process of good practice we decided to purchase a 50kg Ruth Lee Rescue Dummy. The dummy proved valuable for everyone's learning as we could actively involve everyone in the training while also being able to 'press pause' at any time, and so allow us to leave the system set up to walk round and review.

The next several months were spent developing people's understanding and improving basic skills. During this period we also developed a basic skills manual encompassing what we were deciding our team would do ie. a knot list and list of equipment to be carried by team members.

During the same period we also began to look at which system would suit us best – Rigging for Rescue, IRATA, Rescue 3 or Outreach systems – or one of the other 10,000 courses and systems out there! We also spoke to many other teams and individuals – Alan Woodhead (Bowland Pennine MRT), Paul Witheridge (Lyon Equipment), Bill Batson (ex RAF MRS) – to find out which systems they use and why.

This was all before we began to work on our new systems. A small group of team

members attended the MR conference (no that was not me lying on the bar floor, honest!) and we found it to be one of the positive outcomes of this challenge – getting to speak and listen to others from the MR world and discovering we were not the only team in this situation. As a result of the conference, Paul Witheridge kindly invited a small group to Lyon Equipment Work and Rescue at Tebay for a day where we worked on basic rope rescue systems and equipment.

By this stage we had started to form a rough idea of what we wanted from our systems – something 'safe, simple and quick'.

Safe – we wanted a system that is strong enough to hold and even 'catch' a rescue load of 200kg or 2kn, while maintaining the ability to complete the operation following such a dynamic event. It must also fail to safe in the event of equipment or personnel failure.

Simple – well I have to use it! Setting up and operating our system must be straightforward, with the ability to change from lower to haul with minimum hassle and without compromising safety.

Quick – finally, we wanted a system that would allow rapid learning and rapid application, all of which should lead to a rapid extrication!

We were looking for systems that could be applied to almost any situation we might face in our team area. We'd begun to notice that most of the leading course providers were following principles similar to Rigging for Rescue (systems analysis, static system safety factors, critical point analysis) while using a variety of different belay devices, rope grabs etc.

We began to work on a simple two-line lowering and raising system using Petzl ID as it meets all of our safe, simple and quick requisites. We decided IDs would become our primary rope control device on both the main (working) and the safety (backup) lines.

The next year was spent developing training. We had decided the only systems we would need would be those that accommodate lowers, raises, guiding lines and high lines. Some areas of development needed a more experienced person to advise, and Bill Batson offered this help. We spent many hours talking systems in a pub in South Wales on a National SARDA course! During this period the crag development group had evolved into a team of 10-15 individuals who were committed to the project. Bill then kindly agreed to visit one of our crag sessions to review our techniques and systems. His feedback was the much needed encouragement our development group needed.

In October this year I attended a Swift Water Rescue Advanced course (predominately rope rescue!!). This further emphasised the fact we were on the right line. Time to invite Mike back! And this time Bill Batson came too. We carried out the same type of rescues as before but this time (if I say it myself!) showed huge progress (start to finish down from 2.5hrs to 30mins).

We demonstrated that we'd taken on board Mike's criticisms and developed further than he had expected! Mike and Bill's feedback on the day paid tribute to the hard word and dedication put in by the development group. As leader of the technical rescue group, I am proud of the

personal contributions and sacrifices team members have put into this project and believe we are now more than capable of dealing with the ever increasing demands on a modern rescue team.

Finally, I recommend that any team thinking about going through this process should:-

- ◆ Open your doors to constructive criticism by an expert.
- ◆ Create a small development team to head the feedback.
- ◆ Talk to other teams about what do they do and why
- ◆ Have fun developing.
- ◆ Be open to new ideas and new equipment since the last review.
- ◆ Ask yourself. Would your system survive a main line failure? What would happen if the person controlling the main line let go? Does every element of the system provide a 10:1 safety factor? Would the failure of any single point cause catastrophic failure? Is everything backed up?

I'd like to thank the whole team for the support and patience throughout. Without this support NO team will be able to move forward. I'd like to leave the last few words to Bill, who has been a huge support to me and the development group throughout this adventure!

Change is never easy as, by its very nature, it is necessary to step on the toes of those who



▲ SETTING UP A QUAD POD FOR VERTICAL EXTRACTION FROM A CAVE SYSTEM IN TEESDALE

have gone before and egos will be bruised along the way. Not everyone accepts change and, admittedly, due respect must be given to the 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' viewpoint. However, a team that refuses to at least consider alternative operating methods, techniques and protocols is, I believe, following a naive and potentially dangerous path – a path that could leave them, at best, behind the curve of accepted best practice and, at worst, might expose their team members and casualties to unnecessary risk.

Teesdale & Weardale SMRT is not one of those teams. With the full support of their team leader, Paul Renwick and his Crag Development Group have brought about a step-change improvement in the team's crag rescue capability, having first taken the courageous decision to invite outsiders into their inner circle to carry out an audit of their operating systems. I am delighted to have played a small part in the review process. What's more, I thoroughly recommend it. Even if you decide to change nothing after such a review, at least you will be making that decision from a position of knowledge rather than opinion. Go on – you know it makes sense...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

clouds come in. Another ill advised notion crossed my mind as we decided to press on in bad conditions to finish the route – we had driven for four hours to get here and made a big effort to leave early, so it would be a shame to only do half the climb and come back down without any sense of victory. I guess a lot of climbers/walkers who travel long distances to reach the mountains feel the same thing at some point on a day out – the balance between enjoying a full day in the mountains and coming back that night is a fine one (especially if you think you'll be down before dark and don't take the essential equipment.)

By the time we'd all finished the route we were wet, cold (I couldn't get any blood to my feet at all!) and the sun had set. It was dark. My partners made a snap decision to not try the 'tricky' descent (in the dark) that the guidebook explained and instead attempted to get to the top of the mountain (well above where the crags we were climbing finished) and walk down a gentler slope to the right.

Walking/scrambling uphill for 20mins approximately we were barricaded by a gully to our right and a dark abyss below. I suggested mountain rescue at this point, as we were frankly out of sane options with no light whatsoever, except a flash from a camera. It would never be enough to get us down (and at this point, we didn't really know how we would get down either). Unknowingly sitting about 20-30 metres from the summit in the pitch dark, huddling together for heat and praying to the mobile phone reception God, we waited for help as the phone rang every 10-20 minutes with updates of our rescue operation from below.

The rest is a blur of shivering and trying to keep warm, a search light pointing towards us from the valley below and eventually the voices of the mountain rescue team as they arrived above us on the summit.

Anyway... that was a little longer than expected but at least it helped me think exactly what we did wrong early on in the day and how to avoid a similar situation in future.

To all the mountain rescue team that helped three lost 'idjets' in the dark on Sunday 9 December 2007 in the southern Lake District... I would like to express my thanks and great appreciation to the team that rescued us that dark night. I couldn't believe it when we realised just how serious a situation we were in, but I was even more surprised at the speed and efficiency of your response team after our 999 call. Nice job!

Without mobile phones and your team's skills and efficiency, we would have been in for a very rough night on the side of the mountain above The Original Route. Your service was exceptional and I will never forget it! And as a member of your team mentioned that night... Santa has come early and delivered a spare head torch with a life time's supply of batteries! ;)



▲ HAULING UP THE SECOND WATERFALL AT HIGH FORCE USING DIVERSIONS TO PREVENT FRICTION

Fort William Mountain Festival
15-23 February 2008
 A Celebration of Mountain Culture

Back for its sixth year, this is the UK's leading festival celebrating mountain culture comprising nine days of films, lectures, workshops, art, writing, photography and music, bringing life to Fort William and Lochaber during the best winter walking and climbing conditions of the year.

Top climbers, paddlers, international films and public art cater for all ages and tastes, from mountain bikers to slackliners. Highlights include the UK's first ever Slacklining Championships, a mountain bike themed evening featuring the Scottish premier of legendary mountain bike film 'Klunkerz', the festival favourite Party up a Mountain plus plenty more.

There's daily workshops in mountain skills, avalanche awareness, winter walking, mountain biking, winter climbing and both indoor climbing and ice climbing at Kinlochleven's Ice Factor Indoor Climbing Centre. Bursting at the seams with extra events, the 2008 festival even has its own Fringe including music, writing, talks and book readings!

The film section of the programme will again include the Best of Banff [Mountain Film Festival] World Tour, and winners of Fort William's own film competition will receive their premieres at the Nevis Centre on Monday 18 February. Back for a second year is the John Muir Trust Open Writing Competition with regular prizes for the People's Choice Original Art Competition and the Photographic Competitions returning for another year.

The festival closes with an evening hosted by climber Dave MacLeod, beginning with the presentation of the inaugural Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture. Mountaineer Kenton Cool and climber/film maker Matt Dickinson will discuss the ethics of today's Everest, taking a close look at the issues surrounding the brutal fact that people have been left to die by expeditions high on Everest. There's also a rare screening of 'Everest the Hard Way' about Sir Chris Bonington's 1975 expedition on the SW face of Everest.

This event, along with many of the evening talks and films takes place at the Nevis Centre, the festival hub which also hosts the Festival Art and Photography exhibition on show throughout the festival. There really is something for everyone at the 2008 Fort William Mountain Festival. Pick up a programme or check out the mountainfestival.co.uk website and begin your celebration of the stunning Fort William mountain landscape.

Fort William Mountain Festival 2008
 Friday 25 to Saturday 23 February

Celebrate mountain life and culture - show your work, share your passion

Entries for the 2008 Mountain Festival's Film, Photography and Writing competitions are open..

- John Muir Trust Open Writing Competition
- Film Competition in association with OCUK
- Photographic Competition
- Original Art Competition

Further details and entry forms are available from www.mountainfestival.co.uk



BEN NEVIS CALL OUT CHRISTMAS 1956. LIFTING A STRETCHER FROM THE ALUMINIUM WORKS BOGIE. PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE 'HEAVY' WHALLEY

Forthcoming



15-23 February 2008
Fort William Film Festival
 On the night of Sunday 17 February, Lochaber MRT are hosting a celebration of Scottish mountain rescue history. See below for further details or go to mountainfilmfestival.co.uk

14-16 March 2008
The Ordnance Survey Outdoors Show
 At the NEC Birmingham, a regular venue for Mountain Rescue for the last few years this is a magnet for outdoor enthusiasts everywhere - walking, sailing, climbing, diving, you name it, it's there. Why not pop down and support the Mountain Rescue stand? For details of other exhibitors, go to theoutdoorsshow.co.uk

April 2008
Allendale Challenge
 One of the toughest challenge walks around - 25 miles covering some of the finest peat bogs in the North Pennines. For further details go to northoftynesearchandrescue.org.uk

Saturday July 5 2008
Rossendale Way in a Day
 A challenging 46 mile circular walk around the beautiful Rossendale valley. Also a Halfway linear walk of 22 miles. All proceeds to Rossendale & Pendle MRT. For further details contact Tim Richardson on tim.richardson@hotmail.co.uk

75 years of Mountain Rescue at Fort William Mountain Festival

Date: February 17 2008.
Location: Nevis Centre, Fort William
Time: 1900 hrs sharp!
Purpose: To celebrate the enormous contribution made by previous mountain rescue team members (civilian, police and military) throughout the last 75 years. Part of the national celebrations of the 75th anniversary of UK Mountain Rescue.
Tickets: Book online at mountainfilmfestival.co.uk

- Alex Gillespie will provide a talk on the history of Lochaber MRT. This illustrated talk will cover many aspects from the formation of the team to its current day activities, looking back at the amazing people involved and the types of rescues undertaken, from big wall lowers to huge searches in both winter and summer conditions. Alex is a well known photographer, director of the Nevis Partnership and was a key LMRT team member for many years. This will be a great insight into the long tradition of mountain rescue for many of the families within Lochaber and the extraordinary types of rescue that have occurred over the years.

- 'Duel with An Teallach' - a one hour film and reconstruction of a rescue undertaken in 1966, originally shown on TV in the 1980s. This will be its only public viewing. The executive producer was Hamish McInnes. The film follows the history of an epic winter incident on An Teallach in the Northern Highlands. The resultant technical rescue attempt was a huge undertaking and included the likes of Tom Patey, RAF Kinloss and the local team members at that time. This will be a great part of the evening and a one off event.

- Dave 'Heavy' Whalley will end the evening with an illustrated presentation looking back at mountain rescue over the last thirty to forty years. Heavy is hugely well known in MR circles, a bit of a legend really and a great raconteur and story teller, with a vast knowledge of MR both north and south of the border. Recently retired from working at the ARCC this will be a great opportunity to hear from one of the real characters of mountain rescue within the UK. Not to be missed!

Jonathan Hart

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For further information contact **SAFEQUIP** Safequip on **01786 478651** or email sales@safequip.co.uk

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Arctic explorer and dog musher Gary Rolfe is acutely aware of the need for concentrated nourishment on his expeditions. He often uses as much energy as running a marathon every day. He uses Excalibur dehydrators to prepare nutritious lightweight foods. The American-made Excalibur dries delicious energy rich lightweight trail snacks, cereal and fruit bars, fruit and vegetable crisps, meat jerkies, fruit leathers, stews, casseroles and more. It's available in five tray or large capacity nine tray models, with or without a timer.

Drying your own expedition food isn't a secret art but there's an excellent book on the subject called 'Backpack Gourmet' by Linda Frederick Yaffe. To get a free copy of this book with an Excalibur AND a 10% Mountain Rescue Reader discount, enter the promotional code MR01 at checkout when ordering online at www.ukjuicers.com. Or quote the code when you call 01904 757070.

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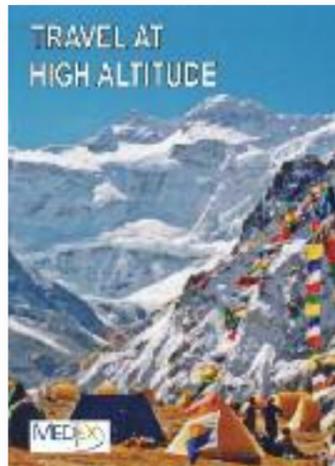


One thing leads to another...

Chris Smith on travelling at high altitude

PARCHARMO SUMMIT

In October 2007 I found myself trying to explain why I was in a room full of the world's top wilderness and high altitude medics. I was there to help launch a new booklet 'Travel at High Altitude', produced by Medex/Medical Expeditions, but edited by Denzil Broadhurst (Oldham MRT) and myself (previously Oldham MRT and currently Derby MRT). So, how did I get there?



Denzil and I joined Oldham MRT shortly after the Lockerbie disaster. After training one evening, Dr Andy Taylor talked about something he'd read in one of his doctors' magazines – a medical trip to Nepal looking for trekkers to take part in the research projects. Our ears pricked up, we asked a few

questions and soon found ourselves with a few other team members at a British Mount

Everest Medical Expedition 'planning' meeting. It was 1992. Our involvement has been a part of life ever since. We have supported planning and publicity for three Medex/Medical Expedition expeditions in 1994, 1998 and 2003, including translating the medical research consent forms from 'doctor speak' into something everyone could understand! The Oldham team has also provided workshop sessions on improvised rescue for the Altitude Medicine Diploma in Mountain Medicine courses held regularly by Medical Expeditions at Plas y Brenin.

Nearly everywhere we've been with Medical Expeditions, MR skills have been required at some point – a fallen climber on Aonach Mor, helicopter evacuation from Tryfan, stretcher carry and HACE evacuation from Everest and anaphylaxis near Kangchenjunga.

In 2006, at the annual Medex/Medical

Expeditions social, the idea of writing a book about high altitude illness for the layperson was discussed. After twelve months of cajoling more than twenty doctors to write pieces for the booklet and hours of 'translating' their work into layperson's language, 'Travel at High Altitude' was completed. The booklet is now available for free download from medex.org.uk

Printed copies were given to delegates at the World Congress on Wilderness and High Altitude Medicine held in Aviemore. And that's how I ended up putting books into delegate packs, promoting 'Travel at High Altitude' and explaining why as a non-medical I was there!

The next expedition is in the autumn of 2008 – anyone interested in joining us should look at the Medex website – you never know what opportunities it might lead to!

BaseCamp news.....

When BaseCamp was launched back in March this year there was absolutely no budget for marketing or publicity. All we had was a bit of space at the NEC Outdoors Show and access to car stickers, lapel badges and the quarterly magazines. Now, nine months on, we have what looks like being a very successful way of promoting Mountain Rescue and bringing in much needed financial support.

Blacks, the high street retailer have recently agreed to help promote BaseCamp and, early in 2008, will have leaflets by the tills in all their shops. Hopefully this will bring in a lot more members.

This year's Ordnance Survey Outdoors Show at the NEC runs from 14-16 March. Mountain Rescue will be well represented and it will be the first anniversary of BaseCamp. It's a good day out and a great opportunity to meet a few of the people involved.

The role of BaseCamp is to promote mountain rescue and the work it does but another important function is to bring money into the organisation. If you have any ideas for raising funds please contact me through the MRC website.

Neil Roden

NESRA updates Advanced Cascare course

The North East Search and Rescue Association have recently updated and revised their Advanced Casualty Care course and it is now open to applicants across the UK. NESRA have been running this course for over 25 years and it is one of the few courses available which deals with advanced techniques for mountain rescue medics. Course director, Dr Mike Brookes, emphasises that the main aim for advanced casualty care is 'to do the basics well, but bring advanced practice to the frontline to improve the quality of our patient care. Most of the time, casualties just need careful packaging and decent pain relief, but increasingly MR is being used as a trained body of volunteers to assist the emergency services.'

The residential course runs for a week and is geared purely toward medical care in mountain rescue scenarios. The four main themes are advanced procedures (such as IV cannulation and airway management), use of drugs, special scenarios (such as suspension induced shock syndrome and protracted rescue) and medical training (enabling Advanced Casualty Carers to lead medical training within their teams).

The course has been updated to include the new MRC drugs license as well as making the best use of current evidence, such as the British Army's recent review of pain

management in the field. The syllabus reflects the increasingly diverse nature of MR tasks, for example assisting in incidents such as the recent helicopter crash at Catterick Garrison. There is a module on major incident management which would allow MR medics to work alongside existing emergency service protocols. Dr Brookes, who served in the armed forces and now works as a rural general practitioner, said that the aim of the course was to be hands on, adding that most of the training will be in the field and as

realistic as possible, trying at all costs to avoid 'the typical Health and Safety carpet first aid course'.

The faculty is a diverse mix of professionals from the ambulance service, hospital consultants, general practitioners, military doctors and pre-hospital care specialists. The course is held in Cleveland and runs in March 2008. It is open to current holders of a casualty care certificate. For further details, please contact info@nesracascare.co.uk



Managing head injury: updated NICE guidelines published

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recently issued the newly updated guideline on the early care of adults and children with head injuries. Developed by the National Collaborating Centre for Acute Care, the guideline gives recommendations on the care and treatment options that should be available in the NHS for people with a head injury. It's a partial update of the original document issued in 2003, revising areas where new evidence has since been published, and also gives some new recommendations, including imaging of children and the need for collaboration between hospitals to achieve optimum care.

Hospital emergency departments see an estimated 750,000 people with head injuries each year. Most cases are mild and do not lead to hospital admission, but a small number of people have a moderate or severe injury and may die or go on to have prolonged disability. The guideline includes pre-hospital management, assessment in the emergency department, investigation for clinically important brain and cervical spine injury and indications for specialist referral. Recommendations include:-

- ◆ All patients presenting with a head injury should be assessed by a trained member of staff within 15 minutes of arrival at hospital.
- ◆ For patients with specified risk factors, computed tomography (CT) imaging of the head should be performed and results analysed within one hour of the request having been received by the radiology department.

- ◆ Children aged under 10 who are in a coma should have CT imaging of the cervical spine within one hour of presentation or as soon as they are sufficiently stable.
- ◆ Where a patient with a head injury requires hospital admission, it's recommended the patient only be admitted under the care of a team led by a consultant trained in the management of this condition during his/her higher specialist training.

Professor Peter Littlejohns, Clinical and Public Health Director at NICE and Executive Lead for the guideline, said, 'Fortunately, the vast majority of head injuries are mild, but for injuries that are moderate or severe, it's vital that health professionals can quickly and effectively diagnose and manage these cases. This guideline gives updated recommendations based on new evidence, which should ensure that health professionals can deliver the best possible care.'

The guideline draws upon the expertise of a range of health professionals and patient representatives who understand the complexities of diagnosing and managing head injury. It sets standards for all health professionals on the best ways to provide care.


National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

NICE is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.

medical staff

Don't hesitate, defibrillate!

Most MRTs debate long and hard whether or not to invest in a defibrillator. The usual arguments go something like this. Something else to carry... it'll never be used... money could be better spent on other gear... hill walkers are generally fit and don't die from heart attacks...

But then, on the other hand... more elderly and infirm are taking to the hills... long distance footpaths attract less fit people with greater risk of heart attacks... defibs are becoming cheaper and very easy to use...

In fact, the Fred Easyport is so small (133x126x50mm) and light (490gms) it fits into any response bag. The unit of choice for a number of mountain rescue teams and the size of a personal CD

player, its design enables people who may infrequently be faced with an emergency medical situation, to have the confidence to save life. It's efficient and effective, versatile and robust and its size makes it truly available to carry anywhere and into any situation. FRED® easyport® has the capacity for seventy life saving shocks before replacing the battery and is a quarter the size of existing units on the market. So... don't hesitate, defibrillate!



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Training for Responding to an Emergency



The Health Protection Agency is an independent organisation, dedicated to protecting people's health in the United Kingdom. In order to do this the agency provides impartial advice and authoritative information on health protection issues to the public, to professionals and to government. It combines public health and scientific expertise, research, and emergency planning within one organisation.

The Agency's Emergency Response Training Team delivers a range of courses which seek to improve the emergency services' ability to respond to incidents and emergencies.

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- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for Emergency Response will introduce delegates to the concepts and applications of GIS in Emergency Response. It provides an introduction to the types of systems available, sources of data and the types of analysis that might typically be used.



For more information on these or any other training courses please contact the Training Team on **01980 619900**

or email emergencyresponse.training@hpa.org.uk or see the HPA website at www.hpa.org.uk

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Blacks and Mountain Rescue

Readers of January's Trail Magazine may have spotted an item in the Gear section relating to a 'sponsorship coup for Technicals'. It certainly didn't escape the notice of several of Blacks' fellow suppliers and manufacturers and, understandably, it caused a bit of stir.

Two short paragraphs claimed a 'major credibility coup' for the brand who had apparently become the 'official gear sponsor for Mountain Rescue in England and Wales'. Problem was, this was interpreted by all our other - in some cases, very long standing - suppliers (I won't risk listing them here and inadvertently offending one by accidental omission - they know who they are and so do you) as something of a redundancy notice.

So let's just put the record straight. First off, the matter was dealt with as soon as it came to our notice - thanks to a phone call from a regular team gear supplier via Pat, our advertising sales lady. So thanks to them. Twenty four hours of fact-finding and a flurry of phone calls later, we were able (I hope) to reassure all our suppliers that business very much continues as normal.

In Trail's defence, as anyone who has any dealings with the media will be acutely aware, however carefully worded a press release, there are no guarantees about what ultimately appears in print. Editors and journalists are perfectly free to interpret your carefully crafted words in their own style, put their own 'spin' on a story or edit the piece to fit the available space. Trust me, you wouldn't thank your favourite magazines for reproducing verbatim some of the lengthy submissions they receive, however informative.

But, back to the Blacks deal. The truth of the matter is that Blacks have agreed to sponsor Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) with, amongst other things, a lump sum payment of £20,000 per annum which goes into the national pot, along with other income generated by national fundraising, to benefit all teams. For that we thank them. In return, it has been agreed that members of mountain rescue teams will test the Technicals kit in the rescue environment and provide feedback to Blacks. Blacks are also able to claim in their promotional material that Technicals equipment has been 'tested and developed in conjunction with teams from Mountain Rescue (England & Wales)'. However, they are categorically not providing complete kit and equipment for every team member in England and Wales. (I can't begin to imagine what that little bill would amount to!)

The agreement is one of several national sponsorships, including Ordnance Survey for the digital map tiles, Memory Map for the mapping systems, Burton McCall for high quality accessories and Goodyear for team member safety - tangible demonstration of the value sponsors place on the 'Mountain Rescue' brand.

It's worth repeating here that each of the teams represented by Mountain Rescue is an independent, autonomous charity. Each with their own preference as to the kit they adopt as their uniform, their own budget to spend, their own ideas on how it should be spent and their own relationships with suppliers. Add to this the varied nature of the work the different teams do - dependent on local demand, weather conditions and terrain - it's highly unlikely the national body could prescribe one specific uniform to suit every team. (Witness the ever-circling discussion re a suitable 'uniform' colour for mountain rescue - red, black, blue, purple...)

Of course, beyond the operational requirement, individual team members have their own preferences for their personal kit - I'm sure my own team is not alone in setting up ordering systems with favourite suppliers and retailers to take advantage of group discounts.

And - just to swing it back to the advertising sales again - without the support of our growing catalogue of advertisers, you wouldn't be reading this magazine. Not in its current form, anyway. And that's a two way street. They enable us to produce a high quality product for our readers, which in turn attracts high quality advertisers... and so it goes on.

Across the board - be it kit, equipment or advertising sales - we enjoy mutually beneficial relationships which both sides have worked hard to create. Thank you to all those suppliers, manufacturers and retailers - existing and potential - who support us locally and nationally. Long may this continue.

Judy Whiteside Editor

Also on behalf of Penny Brockman Treasurer & Andy Simpson Press Officer

Mission Aborted

'Here's a message. It's urgent,' said Jones on the phone. 'There's a fool lost on Snowdon. He went off alone With the wind coming up and the glass going down, So he's missing this evening through acting the clown.' 'We need speed,' said the leader and started to shout. 'We are leaving. Get weaving, for all must turn out. Check your compasses, anoraks, Karrimor sacs And emergency packs on the Land Rover racks Get the stretchers collected. We must make a start If we want to be searching by first sparrow fart. See you butter some butties and brew up some chai With a wee drop of rum in the Thermos for Dai, For we'll get in a sweat, then be frozen and wet, And before you forget see you net in the Set.' Then the driver came running, adjusting his flies And the leader said, 'Sidney, a word to the wise. We are clear of the town so just keep your foot down If the crown of the road shows no white on the brown. But there's ice on the edges and frost on the grass And we'll run into snow when we get to the Pass.' They went slow on the snow, but it just put the lid On their chances when Sid hit the ditch in a skid. For a ditch is alright on a warm summer night

For a kiss with a miss who is blissfully tight. But a ditch is a bitch when you pitch off the track Into four feet of slush with the wheels sliding back. Then the driver was waving his arms in despair Like the prop of a 'copter that's chopping the air, While his mate lost his plate so could not clench his teeth As the icy cold water came up from beneath, And the leader emerged with a bump on his head. 'You've buckled the bumper, you bugger,' he said, And so man after man waded out of the mud And some spat out a curse but no worse and no blood. Then came Rhys the Police and Ianto the Slate Who said, 'Some silly sod must have smashed through my gate.' PC Hughes brought the news that ignited a fuse For explosions of swearing and filthy abuse, For no climber was missing. The tale was all wrong And the 'climber' found singing a scandalous song About Wales and its Ales and the Frails he'd enjoyed As he toyed with a barmaid in Betwys y Coed. **S Russell Jones**
From 'Climber and Rambler' some time in 1982.

Award Winner Goes on a Diet

Mountain Equipment's classic Kongur jacket has been updated for winter 2007 and is now lighter, more durable and more breathable than ever before.

This definitive, multi award winning mountaineering jacket has taken a step up in performance for this season by using the groundbreaking NEW 3-layer Goretex® Pro Shell fabric to great effect. Now weighing in at only 550g, the Kongur is a fully featured workhorse jacket that will not weigh you down. The improvements offered by this new fabric do not stop there though as it also provides significantly more durability and breathability.

The Kongur has been recognised as the ultimate mountaineering jacket by industry professionals for several years. This year is no exception, as for the third year in a row the Kongur was recently awarded 'Best in Test' for winter mountaineering jackets in Trail Magazine's Waterproof Guide. This independent review, published annually in the November issue is Britain's toughest test and regarded as the definitive buyer's bible. Against stiff competition for this highly sought after award, Mountain Equipment's Kongur jacket was judged yet again to be quite simply the best you can get in 2007.

Developed in association with professional mountaineering guides the Kongur jacket design includes many essential features for the serious user including an award winning helmet compatible hood, four large storm flap protected external pockets and underarm pit zips for exceptional ventilation. This is a jacket you can count on to perform in the worst conditions the mountains can throw at you. The Kongur is available in sizes S - XXL and in 3 colours - True Red (pictured) Ocean Blue and Burnt Orange.





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Commitment to safety on the roads and the hills

Patterdale MRT and Cumbria Constabulary's Driver Training team have been working together to ensure that every mountain rescue team member who drives a vehicle on the roads in an emergency has been trained to drive safely, whatever the urgency.

'The Road Safety Act 2006 came into force early in 2007 and puts new limits on emergency drivers,' explains Sgt Malcolm Hodgson who heads up the Driver Training school based at Carleton Hall near Penrith. 'If the mountain rescue team chooses to use a blue light on the roads to get to emergencies as fast as it can, then its drivers must have completed a theory course and a day of practical training and then have passed an assessment. Patterdale is one of several local teams who have worked their way through this training and we have also called on the services of my predecessor, Chris Hudson, who has been working with the team on the practical aspects.'

Nigel Harling is the training officer for Patterdale MRT. 'This emergency on-road driver training has been a big part of our programme for 2007 with about fourteen of our members completing both the theory course and the practical side. We are very grateful to Malcolm and his team and to Chris Hudson for their time and support - there are about 400 mountain rescue team members across Cumbria and we really appreciate the support from the police in enabling us to complete this essential training.'

Ray Griffiths is one of the Patterdale team who has completed the training. 'We had learnt in the theory sessions about emergency overtaking and cornering but it was something else to put it into practice under pressure. The balance of speed and safety is crucial and I feel much more confident now about getting that balance right in an emergency.'

Off-road driving is also an important skill for MRT drivers and staff at the Greystoke Castle estate have supported Patterdale MRT on this for about fifteen years. 'Everyone who intends to drive our Land Rover vehicles has completed the off-road course,' explains team leader, Dave Freeborn. 'It's one of the first things new members do once they have completed their initial hill training with the team. Neville Howard and the team at Greystoke Castle have offered us a tailored course that gives us exactly the skills we need in a nearby location and we have always been very grateful for this support.'

Neville continues, 'It always seems to me so typically British that one of the truly indispensable services in the Lake District is run on a volunteer basis. The work that the mountain rescue teams carry out is vital, ill-funded and probably under-appreciated. It really does take us all to support this cause as best we can, as often as we can.'

All Patterdale MRT members have now completed their on-road emergency driver training, equipping them to be safe on the roads as well as on the hills and thanks to tremendous support from both Cumbria Constabulary and Greystoke Castle.

Exclusive insurance policies for mountain rescue

James Trickett & Son (Insurances) Limited, are pleased to announce that we have arranged on a nationwide basis, the following three exclusive insurance policies designed specifically for mountain search and rescue, and associated, teams.

- ◆ Firstly, our Motor Policy, for individual vehicles and fleets, is now based on a nationwide flat premium, provides cover for blue light use, and for any licensed driver aged between 25 and 65 with twelve months full driving experience (exceptions can be accommodated).
- ◆ Secondly, our Trustee Indemnity Policy can provide cover at varying levels of indemnity and will automatically provide Legal Expenses and Loss of Reputation cover.
- ◆ Thirdly, our Charity Connect Policy will not only provide the standard cover for buildings and contents, but will automatically provide full accidental damage cover. Policies can be extended to give property owners liability, goods in transit, money and fidelity guarantee cover.
- ◆ All policies would attract a no claims discount after 12 months claim free.
- ◆ Policies can be extended to cover certain fundraising events.

All these special arrangements have been negotiated on a nationwide basis, with 'A' rated, UK Insurers, so every organisation receives the benefits of the success of the insurance scheme.

For further details contact Stephen Darwen at James Trickett & Son (Insurances) Ltd on **01706 212231** or email

stephen.darwen@trickettsinsurance.co.uk

Land Rover - The iconic brand

Copley Land Rover in Halifax was first opened in 1948, which makes it one of the oldest and most established dealerships in the country. Moving forward to 2007, Copley now has a broad range of vehicles on display at its dealership, and something to offer every driver - by combining a unique set of attributes from car-like handling to unrivalled luxury with peerless off-road performance.



The Land Rover Discovery 3 is a premium SUV offering a class leading breadth of capability, innovative user-friendly technology, distinctive design and a spacious interior that can comfortably accommodate up to seven adults. The Discovery 3 features sophisticated technologies including Land Rover's patented Terrain Response™ system, which optimises driveability and comfort whilst maximising traction. Terrain Response™ enables drivers to choose from one of five terrain settings via a rotary switch on the centre console.

The new 2007 Defender is an evolution of the iconic vehicle that first began life in 1948 and became favoured by farmers, aid-workers, NGOs and explorers from all corners of the globe.

Whilst the new model's instantly recognisable profile is largely unchanged - except for a prominent bonnet to accommodate its new 2.4-litre common rail diesel engine - many improvements have been made to deliver enhanced driveability and an even more rewarding ownership experience. The new 2007 Defender is equipped with a six-speed transmission, a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning system, upgraded audio system and an all-new fascia that adds a more contemporary feel to the cabin.

For further details on the Discovery 3 and the 2007 Defender, call **01422 363340** or visit Copley Land Rover's Wakefield Road showroom



National blue light users update with Bob Jackson

Well hello there again... if you read my last submission you may have thought... strange ending! But is that not what happens when we least expect it, something takes us away from our original process and we are directed by our responsibilities to go and do something else. This is somewhat normal for people who give up their time to help others in their time of need, and this is especially poignant when this time is given by people in the voluntary sector.

You may recall from my previous article, I have very strong feelings in relation to those who drive vehicles fitted with blue lights and/or sirens,



BOB JACKSON BLUE LIGHT USERS CONFERENCE CHAIR 1997-2007

either as part of their chosen profession or as part of a voluntary organisation. To set the scene I need to explain where I am coming from. As a result of the National Blue Light Users Conference, it became apparent that some major concerns were being felt by the delegates. One of the major concerns was that not all emergency services are treated the same.

An example of the existing lack of consistency is that, whilst police, fire and ambulance vehicles are exempt from adherence to the speed limits, the mines rescue service, the bomb disposal teams, the National Blood Service, Human Tissue for Transplant services, the RNLI

and the Marine Coastguard, whilst all providing life saving services are not permitted to exceed speed limits and are subject to all other road regulations. To add to the confusion, the National Blood Service are permitted to cross red traffic lights and pass the other side of 'pass this side' signs.

All of these services are permitted and allowed to display blue lights, but not take advantage of the exemptions afforded to the primary emergency services.

The mountain rescue services, very cleverly in my opinion, declare the majority of their vehicles as 'Ambulances' and as such could claim to be one of the primary emergency services. However this would need to be tested in a court of law. Of course, it also has to be borne in mind that such a claim brings with it responsibility, all NHS primary care ambulance drivers have to meet a set response driving criteria. Where would that leave a mountain rescue team in the event of a court case? Hopefully when the relevant Road Safety Act sections are enacted, mountain rescue will get the recognition it deserves and be able to have its own status.

Then of course there was the lack of advice to road users about what action they should take when encountering emergency vehicles using their audible and visual warnings, so a video was produced that went to all road safety officers, police casualty reduction officers and other interested parties.

My belief was that the UK emergency services (all of them) deserved a set of simpler regulations that determined exactly what is an emergency service, the exemptions all would be allowed to claim and a minimum national standard of response driving that was applicable to all.

So, to get up to date, the Road Safety Bill was given Royal assent and appears to address all if not most of these issues. Not quite what I imagined it would be, but this serves as a warning that you need to be careful what you wish for - you just might get it. The Act will, in my opinion, result in minimum standards for us all. There's an argument that having attained the licence acquisition requirements skills, it is specialised coaching, not instruction, that is needed to vary those skills and adapt their application into what are non-normal or exceptional circumstances.

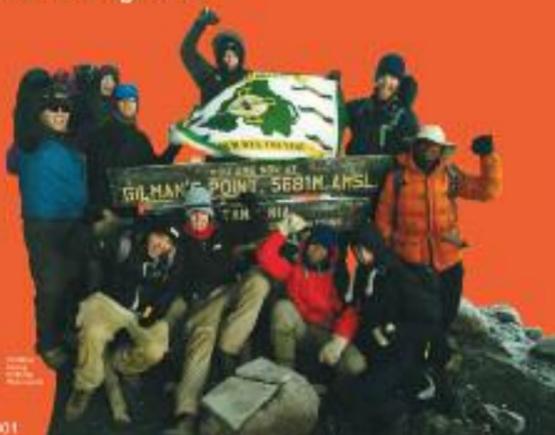
The people best suited to ensure 'emergency services driving standards' surely has to be the people who have done it for real, taught it for real, and have real experience in meeting both the physical and mental demands of this type of driving. It is because of this belief, that a select small group of specialists in emergency response level driving have got together to provide a one stop shop to cover all aspects of this complex issue, from driving psychology, alcohol drugs and fatigue policies, health and safety audits, policy and procedure audits through to response level driver training and testing, and independent collision investigation. For further information of how we may be able to help you, please contact the Driving Education Alliance on 07776 096345 and speak to Wendy.

In the mean time if you are at the pointed end and care about, are interested in or involved in emergency response driver training, why not visit www.airso.org.uk - click on National Blue Light Users Conference (where you can find presentations from previous conferences) and see what you've missed so far.

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ShelterBox is a charity based in Cornwall that delivers boxes of survival equipment to people displaced by natural and other disasters anywhere in the world. Each ShelterBox contains essential equipment that aids survival in the days and weeks that follow a disaster. The speed at which help reaches victims is crucial.

**Places are strictly limited.
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Call 01548 853524**



Kit crit Keela Scuffers

Remember the days in the 1980s when it was cool to wear Lycra tights on the hill in mad colours? Well fortunately those days seems to have passed, and there are now a multitude of high tech walking trousers out there on the market, ranging from £10 to £200.

Bowland Pennine MRT have recently been issued with the new Keela Scuffer trouser. This black, high tech pant in 4-way stretch fabric is furnished with three zip front pockets, one rear and one secret hidden pocket on the back of the belt (we have no idea what it's for though!). Double seat and reinforced rubberised knees and ankle points finish off the trousers along with two side vent zips for cooling.



I have been using these pants for over six months, on and off the hills, and they have proved to be hard wearing, fast drying, shower and wind proof. Last year, a team training trip to Chamonix in the French Alps, gave us another high altitude environment to test these pants in. At 4810m they were a pleasure to wear, very comfy, hardwearing even with crampons about and able to be worn between +28°C and -15°C on the summit.

All round these are a fantastic pant, ideal for all mountain activities from climbing through to rescue and hill walking. The one drawback we found is that the sizing is a little bit hit and miss. They are very long in the leg and most team members have dropped at least one if not two sizes! (So for most it's been the quickest way to drop a size ever!) Cost is around the £80 mark, however Keela

have a special price for MRTs. For further details contact them via www.keela.co.uk

A personal view from **Alan Woodhead** Bowland Pennine MRT MPSRO Equipment Officer

So... how much time do you spend on mountain rescue?

Mike France dares do the sums...

Over the years so many people have ask me that question. I have a fair idea how much time I spend on training and incidents but, as a team leader, Peak District chairman and, this last year, National Fundraising chairman, I have no idea just how much time is taken up with admin, meetings and team training.

So going back to last Christmas, when I was given a desk top diary, I decided to record all the time I spend going to meetings and doing admin for mountain rescue. I put the diary on my desk at work so, whilst waiting for the PC to load and emails to come in, I have been logging the hours spent and mileage done.

EMPLOYMENT WORKING HRS	MONTH	MR HOURS	TOTAL MR HOURS	MR MILES	TOTAL MR MILES
142	JAN	71.5	XX	704	XX
280	FEB	75	146.5	376	1080
420	MARCH	58.5	205	208	1288
560	APRIL	46	251	154	1442
700	MAY	77	32	690	2132
840	JUNE	44	372	164	296
980	JULY	72	444	473	2769
1120	AUG	50	494	292	3061
1260	SEPT	85	579	340	3401
1400	OCT	70	649	328	3729
1540	NOV	63.5	712.5	393	122
Total paid hrs 1680 PA	DEC	40.5 est	753 est	250 est	4372 est

I know many of you will be doing just the same and, in some cases, many more hours and miles but I am one of 3500 MR members in England and Wales. If you look at my MR admin, meeting and training hours and then start adding all our hours together plus the ones Ged produces for our incidents, the volunteering hours given by our service are astounding.

If you decide to do the same (it's a good little exercise), keep the dairy at work because if our partners ever find out just how much time we spend doing mountain rescue, two things might happen. We'd all be single or there would no longer be a mountain rescue service in England and Wales!

The Emergency Services Show 2007

The second Emergency Services Show took place at the end of November at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire. Twice the size of last year, this unique exhibition and conference took the industry by storm – attracting double the number of visitors – but exhibitors commented on the quality of the visitors as well as the quantity.



Bruce Mann, head of the Civil Contingencies Secretariat, was the keynote speaker at the Conference on 29 November, and discussed Preparedness and Response. Here he outlines the reasons he felt it important to be a part of event.

'The Show is an excellent opportunity to bring people

together from across the civil protection community. And that matters because effective multi-agency co-operation – people knowing and understanding what partners can contribute in preparedness planning and response – is essential in preparing for and managing complex emergencies. So the show provides an ideal forum where we can learn from each other, whether from the platform, over a cup of tea or in the bar.'

The aim of the show was to provide visitors, exhibitors and delegates alike with an exclusive chance to network, share information build relationships as well as sourcing the latest industry products and technology.

The conference – 'Improving Emergency Response' – was the culmination of an extraordinary year for the UK's emergency services, one in which the necessity for an effective multi-agency response was tested to the limit in very different situations.

It provided the opportunity to review some of the key aspects of the year, from the flooding to the Litvinenko poisoning. The programme also looked ahead, from meeting the challenges of the 2012 Olympics, to finding out about organisations such as the National Recovery Working Group and the Government Decontamination Services.

The exhibition was a complete cross section of new products, from the very latest IT for the industry to some fascinating new innovations, such as the 28 stone bariatric training dummy from Ruth Lee Ltd. 2,000 visitors were greeted by a wide range of emergency service vehicles parked outside the entrance. These ranged from the impressive 26 tonnes Major Foam Vehicle from the Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation to the new P3 Treatment and Transportation Vehicle from the British Red Cross. Tony Thompson, Head of UK Emergency Response & Resilience, British Red Cross commented, 'We made a lot of new contacts and renewed many old friendships... over 700 different people visited our display.'



Stoneleigh Park proved the ideal venue for such an event, enabling line rescue demonstrations to take place from Lifeskills Medical as well as a live car fire to demonstrate the performance of the new Firexpress Fire Bike from Emergency Technologies Ltd.

By the end of the two days, almost a half the exhibitors had booked for next year. For details of The Emergency Services Show 2008, please contact David Brown on **01273 453033** or email davidbrown@mmcpublishings.co.uk



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Peli Torches - 20 years of product development

Peli's range of professional torches has an unrivalled reputation for quality and durability and the number and variety of models offered has grown year on year over the last two decades. Peli have utilised new technology, particularly LEDs, and launched an innovation in LED torches. Recoil LED™ technology directs the light back into the reflector to focus it into an impressive white, collimated beam to rival conventional torches but with the durability and efficiency of LED. Using LEDs gives improved battery performance and there's no need to replace the lamp module.

Peli have recently launched a Glow in the Dark series of photoluminescent torches, which are ideal for emergency situations or finding a lost torch in the dark. The use of polymer resin for the torch body and the inventive construction of Peli torches has



made the models available lightweight and compact, designed specifically for emergency services and first responders.

For more details go to peliproducts.co.uk or call 01457 869999

ReflexRope from Venta helps increase safety for vehicles and people



Safety and visibility around cordoned-off areas is being drastically improved following the introduction of ReflexRope, a groundbreaking new reflective rope from leading vehicle warning equipment supplier, Venta UK. Incorporating a retro-reflective material, the innovative ReflexRope literally lights up when light from a vehicle's headlights or a torch shines on to it.

Clearly defining the scene of a breakdown or accident, the ReflexRope makes an ideal barrier to protect vehicles and people on the roadside and is perfect for corralling and managing people at the scene of an incident. The ReflexRope is also suitable for marine environments, at public events and in public areas, temporary car parks and camping sites where it can be provide people with a safe, visible walkway instead of a series of obstacles and hazards that could lead to a trip or fall.

Police, fire service, airports, rail and traffic management organisations have successfully trialled the rope, which is available in two sizes but can be manufactured to any dimension. The 6mm diameter 27 metre standard ReflexRope is fitted with cone loops, whilst the 15mm diameter 4.5 metre ReflexRope has magnets for attaching to metal surfaces and also comes with cone loops for using in conjunction with standard road cones.

Highly visible, due to the reflective tiny glass beads that bounce light directly back to the source, the 15mm ReflexRope can be seen in car headlights up to half a mile away. Easily stowed away until required, the ReflexRope is ideal for emergency services and vehicle recovery operators providing them with an additional safety device for warning other road users of a hazard.

ReflexRope is already proving to be a popular addition to Venta's expanding product range of safety equipment, which includes beacons, strobe light heads and stand alone messaging systems. The company is also a specialist in the latest LED lighting offering a range of grille and covert lights and fully flexible lightbars. For further information email sales@venta.co.uk

How to register as a user in the MR(E&W) Forum

Paul Horder takes you through the process step by step

In the October issue, David Allan referred in his leader to the 'deafening silence' that had overtaken the Forum pages of the website. More surprisingly, perhaps, there have subsequently been absolutely no comments at all on David's observations within the Forum pages!

As he said, is this just lethargy, or something else? It would be good to know. In an attempt to revive interest, I have put together what is (hopefully) an idiot's guide into getting started.

Once you've become registered, starting and joining in discussions should be easy. If this proves not to be the case, I will produce another idiot's guide - 'How to create and join in discussions' - in the next edition of this magazine.

News
Regions
Links
Members
Conferences
Forums
Search
Contact

Go to [Home Page](#)
www.mountain.rescue.org.uk
Select **Forums**

On that page, having read the descriptions, click on [click here to go to the forums](#)

This takes you to the Forums section of the website. At the top of the page you will see the summary of **Options** available to you. If you are not sure whether you are already subscribed as a member or not (230 MRT personnel are), click on **Member List** to check. You will need to check all five pages to see if you are there.

If you are already a member but have forgotten your username or password, contact the Webmaster or Paul Horder webmaster3@mountain.rescue.org.uk

If you are not yet a member, click on **Register**

Having read the **Registration Agreement Terms** select one of the three options at the foot of the page to continue.

In the **Registration Information** section, enter the required information...

Username:

E-mail address:

Password:

You can use anything you like for this, but make sure it is as 'strong' as your other passwords should be. Webmasters cannot see what you use, but they can reset forgotten passwords on request.

Type in the **Confirmation Code** exactly as you see it. Answer the **Textual Confirmation** question as requested.

In the **Profile Information** section, only minimal information is required, although you can add as much as you wish (if you understand it). The required fields are...

Location:

You will not be accepted as a Forum member unless you complete this section. Please insert your team name or other interest in Mountain Rescue to indicate you are a bona fide applicant. (eg. Keswick MRT).

The other boxes are optional but can provide interest to other Forum users.

In the **Preferences** section, you can change the default settings if you wish.

Finally, click on **Submit**. Your registration is then sent to a MR(E&W) webmaster who will check the authenticity of the application. You will be informed by email when your registration has become successful.

A manifesto for the missing

Pat Holland on carrying out the 'perfect search'

Every year a large number of people go missing. A search often results. The search may vary in its intensity, duration and participants. A search for a missing child, for example, is given a very high priority. But do all other searches get the same attention? Do we have a set pattern for searches? Are we agreed on a standard for searches? What do we mean by 'a search'?

The purpose of this article is to put out for discussion these thoughts on the 'perfect search'. The aim is to create a debate that will, I hope, inform the development of search planning and management. While this article was first written in an Irish context, I hope it will be of relevance to readers of the Mountain Rescue Magazine.

A 'perfect search' for a missing person should, I believe, have the following qualities:-

Initial Response

There should be a prompt, objective, template-based assessment of the urgency of the situation on the first report of a missing person by someone trained and experienced in missing person behaviour. If the assessment results in an 'urgent' need for a search then there should be a prompt and effective initial response consisting of the call out, response, rear base/control, travel, arrival, set up and deployment of sufficient search resources. The initial response should use proven basic tactics of containment, hasty teams, investigation and planning and there should be an early involvement of at least one trained, experienced and active search planner. There should be an initial concentration on tasks (hasty teams) and later on resources and process. The start of every incident can be chaotic but the crucial factor is how soon it comes under active skilled management so that all the energy available is focused and working together.

Leadership

There should be a clear and decisive assumption of the leadership role in the search and this role needs to be occupied at all times during the search. There should be no ambiguity of command – this is a fundamental weakness in poor searches. There should be a continuous police presence in base or at the very least a designated officer for the Search Commander to contact if necessary.

The Search Commander should be decisive but delegating, facilitative and consultative. They should not be afraid to admit vulnerability or lack of knowledge, should be responsive to genuine need and be benignly powerful, not dictatorial. Above all they must be able to make decisions when required.

If a search lasts into the following day and beyond, the search should aim for the following qualities:-

Management

There must be a management system of some sort to ensure the right areas are searched at the right time by the right resources who are then accounted for, collected, debriefed and fed. This is not simply a case of having good leadership; we need good management systems also.

Incident Command Roles

While a search does not need to have a huge management system (the 'three people in a van' model does work for most situations), there are certain tasks that must be considered. The American Incident Command System has the advantage of separating task from rank so that it can be applied to volunteer and/or multi-agency teams. It provides for the roles of Incident Command, Operations, Planning, Investigation, Logistics, Comms and some others. These headings can act as a prompt for an incident commander with no staff or can serve as the basis for a major incident management system. My team has successfully used this system in both small and large searches involving several hundred people and several agencies.

In my opinion, the early consideration of the Incident Control System and its roles is vital in a search which looks as if it is going to last beyond a single operational period of say, 4-6 hours. Even if no formal management system is adopted, the crucial functions of Incident Command, Operations (What is happening now?), Investigation (What happened?), Plans (What will we do in the next operational period?) and Logistics (What are we going to do it with?) must be carried out. They can be combined or delegated out but they must be done.

While an investigation of the circumstances of disappearance is a police matter in the case of any suspicious circumstances, the Investigation role needs to be carried out in all other searches. An in-depth and recorded investigation of the circumstances in which the casualty went missing to establish state of mind, last known position etc is vital to focus the search plans created by the Planning function. Again and again vital pieces of information found during

investigation have made a very significant difference to a search.

The Incident Commander and/or Logistics role holder need to have a good knowledge of all local statutory and volunteer resources and issues relating to their use. There is no better way to annoy a specialised unit than to deploy them incorrectly or ineffectively. In a perfect world, the local resources, both statutory and volunteer, would arrive on-scene knowing and trusting each other already.

Trained Staff

Staff for a search involves not only trained field searchers and party leaders, first aiders and comms. personnel: we also need trained search base personnel. The Incident Commander must have a trained and experienced staff working with them. A rough rule of thumb of one base person for each unit in the field is useful. These staff should be trained in the ICS roles and ideally should have participated in a major multi-agency search before. They should be open to multi-agency working.

The field searchers and their party leaders need to be 'clue conscious' so they are searching not only for the person but also for any trace of their passage. Important locations such as the 'Last Known Position' or 'Place Last Seen' must be protected for forensic and tracking examination. I have seen tracking used successfully in the Irish countryside to locate a lost person, but you cannot, for example, find out the footwear of the missing person if searchers have trampled all around the car.

Planning

After the apparent chaos of the initial search period, there needs to be an early creation of a first full operational period search plan, before any major response by trained and/or untrained searchers. There must be a constant review of it afterwards to always have a plan for the next search period. A search without a plan is like a play without a script, it may achieve its ends but the players will be all over the place, we will not learn from it nor can we ever replay it. We need to have a learning cycle of planning the search, carrying out the search, systematic debriefing and reviewing the results to form an objective scientific basis for our next response. It is especially vital that

a search plan be ready for groups as they arrive at first light, even if that means a planning group has to work through the night. Nothing annoys searchers so much as standing about in the morning waiting to be told what to do. It makes the search management look very bad. A search manager without a plan is hardly a manager. A search without a commander and a plan can turn into a tragic circus.

Process

A search is a task-orientated action – find the person! However without good process, other factors can get into the way. Those present may be under pressure, they may be afraid of a bad result to the search and so may get aggressive. There may be old wars between organisations (and their leaders) thrown together by necessity. The Incident Commander must tactfully and firmly gain a commitment from all agencies/groups of agreement on the need for effective sincere multi-agency operations. Such a contract may have to be worked out 'on the side of the road' in the absence of any pre-existing protocols. Respect and generosity must be the basis of the contract between the agencies and groups represented. There must be no space for 'throwing shapes' or 'put-downs' and if necessary the Incident Commander must remind us all why we are there and who we are working for – the casualty! All services must be welcome at the planning table and liaison officers from each service involved must be invited into the ICS system and invited to make a significant contribution. There must be an end-of-day ICS and senior service personnel review meeting to review strategy and results feeding into the planning for the following day.

Data

Data is fundamental to lost person behaviour and scientific search. Sometimes searches are directed on the basis of 'gut feeling' gained from years of experience. While abdominal intelligence may be useful, we can do better. Lost Person Behaviour is the data drawn from an intensive investigation of the casualty, their medical, social and psychological history and their behaviour once they went missing. When a large number of cases are analysed, common patterns of behaviour can be seen and used to inform the next search. If we collect and analyse data from many cases we may be able to offer search planners hard data, based on objective truth from the start of the search. If we do not collect, analyse and use lost person behaviour data, then we are fated to keep making the same mistakes, something Einstein, I believe, regarded as insane. I am happy to say that search planners in Ireland are very conscious of the huge steps forward taken in the study of Lost Person Behaviour in the UK and US over the last twenty years and only wish we were as advanced in data collection and analysis.

Resources

Many of the resources needed in a

search already exist but we are not aware of them. Both state and voluntary bodies have members, vehicles and bases but is there a list of them and their resources at each county level? Local organisations may be aware of several adequate base buildings in each county with welfare facilities, control rooms, sleeping areas and stores etc but when was the last time a major search was based there? All too often resources and relationships are only tried out when a major search occurs but could we not do some of the work in advance? Searches also need basic office requirements such as photocopying, scanning etc. My team carries a complete set of office equipment pre-packed in two wheeled crates in accordance with an EU emergency office model. If a voluntary team can do it, why cannot other bodies? Mind you, having a fantastic mobile office, as agencies may have, does not substitute for proper inter-agency relationship or an integrated command system or adequate inter-agency communications.

Standard Operating Procedures

We can assume, having seen it happen, that a major search, especially one dealing with a vulnerable elderly person or a child, can result in a major media presence. We can also assume that large numbers of unsolicited volunteers will converge on the search to help

Nothing annoys searchers so much as standing about in the morning waiting to be told what to do. It makes the search management look very bad.

bringing additional management challenges.

So we should have pre-set plans for:-
a) Media: to cater for and assist them with pre-set packs, website addresses, 'boiler plate data' etc. The media are now recognised as an essential part of a country's emergency services, especially where we do not have a state dedicated emergency broadcast system such as sirens or town Public Address systems. A press aide of President Nixon is reputed to have said 'The press are like alligators, you don't have to like them but...' The media must be taken care of and given information or else they will seek it out themselves from whatever source possible. We need to regard the media as active partners in major emergencies.

b) Convergent Volunteers (civilians) to form them into small groups with natural leaders, train them briefly in relevant skills, lead them, communicate with them, deliver and recover them. This is not impossible. My team has done this with several hundred people who turned up for a search but it is not easy and it requires both a pre-existing protocol and training of your own members.

Failure to deal with an uncontrolled volunteer response is one of the fundamental errors in a bad search. Leaving aside the need to record all those helping on the search for police investigation reasons, they need to be managed. They may not be fit, or have food or water and, as my team found out in a recent case, may be migrant worker friends of the missing person without much English. They are a resource we cannot ignore.

Having a SOP can move an entire group of people from a helpless and frightened level to that of a group sufficiently informed to do something useful and to feel useful. Thus, for example, the simple but effective 'Code Adam' protocol used in large commercial shops in the United States transforms shop assistants into trained and focused searchers who provide an immediate basic response to the report of a missing child. Do we have the same here for commercial and health care facilities?

We should also have, in the context of search, pre-set plans to deal with a 'find', the recovery, appropriate and tactful liaison with the family and friends, preservation of the scene including incident-specific codes as well as a planned search step-down policy. Step-down procedures should include the collection of 'lessons learnt' data, collected on a 'no-fault' basis and disseminated to senior

ICS staff and agency reps later as well as going to a national database. We should have the collection of all data, maps, papers and other records for a Search Record File and later analysis but is this happening? Where are the records from all the searches that happen every year in these islands? Are we learning from our experiences? Do we know what we are doing right? Again pardon me if this is all being done throughout the UK. I would much prefer to be told I was ignorant rather than right.

In Ireland we have a de-facto national standard in that a sizable number of people, from several agencies, have been trained in compatible search planning courses. A common set of documentation is available to all. Some Lost Person Behaviour data is being collected, especially from upland searches. However we have a long way to go.

We Need To

◆ Bring together active search planners to create a national consensus and a coherent strategy for data collection and analysis.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

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Many other recipes available

News from DMM

Perhaps the biggest news here at DMM has been the massive investment we have made in plant and machinery over the last few months. We've installed eight new clipping presses equipped with laser guards which make operation easier and also substantially faster. Then, if you've visited our website recently, you'll have seen the new forging press we have purchased and are installing as I write this article – the largest forging press we have bought to date. It will offer several advantages, not least making forging our Rebel and Anarchist Ice Tools a lot easier and quicker. At 26 tons it requires specialist installation and preparation, but this investment further demonstrates our commitment to maintaining our manufacturing base here in Llanberis, North Wales.

New products require considerable commitment in terms of time and money and we have always made this commitment since the company's birth in the early 80s. Nothing has changed from those early days and our desire to make the best climbing equipment possible, and make it here in Wales, remains as firm as ever. New products arriving very soon in the new year are the Offset nuts, locking version of the Revolver and new harnesses. For more information about our products please visit www.dmmwales.com



REVOLVER SCREWGATE

The Oxtail Bomb by John Blashford D Snell

Around 1991-93, I was writing an article on expedition rations and was sent some samples of a self-heating meal called Hotcan by Operational Support Ltd. These reminded me of some fun we had in the army in the 1950s with self heating soups. Whilst serving overseas, these were very popular on night patrols when we avoided lighting fires that would give away our position.

The tin had a chemical core that could be ignited by a fuse. They did not give out any smoke or flame. Before lighting the fuse, users were cautioned to puncture the lid of the soup in the outer part of the can. Failure to do this can cause an explosion!

On one patrol, we came across a meeting of rebellious villagers in a coffee shop. Being unarmed, they were not an immediate threat but, as they were making insulting remarks about HM The Queen and Britain in general, we decided to teach them a lesson. One of the soldiers crept round to the front of the shop clutching a Bren light machine gun filled with blank ammunition. Then, lighting the fuse on the self heating tin, but not puncturing the lid, I lopped it in through a window. Excited with political rhetoric, the villagers took a few moments to spot the spluttering can rolling across the floor. Suddenly, one screamed 'Bomba' and there was a mad rush for the door. Bursting out, the mob met a sapper firing short bursts of blank ammunition from his Bren gun. Those at the front pressed back into the coffee shop whilst those at the back pushed forward. Amidst the chaos, the tin exploded, showering all in oxtail soup. We retreated quickly into the darkness.

Perhaps it is fortunate that the Hotcan meals do not operate in this way and only use the mixture of two chemicals to heat the meal.

Recently, I was demonstrating expedition and emergency rations to some young people and showed them an old tin of Hotcan Irish Stew that had survived 15 years of heat, cold and rough handling in our store. 'Let's try it!' they cried. So we did. Although it took about 15 minutes to heat up, the contents were absolutely delicious. I wrote to the company congratulating them and am told that, although they had records of ten year old products proving very satisfactory, they had never heard of a 15 year old tin being tested with such good results.

I now discover that Hotcan comes in a variety of menus. Each meal produces over 400 grams of food which heats in 8-12 minutes. The price is very reasonable too. They are certainly ideal for emergency rations and use at sea when it is too rough to cook! (For contact details, see ad on facing page.)

Ensure your visibility in total darkness with the Light Harness



Used in conjunction with your own certified safety garments the Light Harness will ensure you are seen, no matter where in the world you are or how dark. Fully certified under EEC legislation, it is designed and patented by Scottish entrepreneur Jack McGenily, an aircraft engineer with many years experience and based on the same principle as the emergency floor lighting of passenger aircraft. When an emergency evacuation of the aircraft is required, the lighting system guides passengers to the emergency exits even in severely restricted visibility. Statistics clearly show that a very high percentage of people who perish on the mountains and hills do so because they cannot be found before the cold claims them. And the added irony is that the coloured clothing worn by many outdoor enthusiasts more often than not is of excellent quality but blends completely into the environment they are enjoying.

Technical data:-

Visible range: 1 mile. (1.6 KM) in total darkness. **Can it be seen from 360°:** Yes.

Battery life: 240 hours (on flashing mode). **Will it work submerged in water:** Yes.

Submerged life: 5 hours +. **Is it affected by altitude:** No. **Is it affected by temperature:** No.

If you need any further help, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

email jack@c-u-products.com or take a look at the website www.c-u-products.co.uk

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

◆ Systematically collect, in a no blame culture, the 'lessons learnt' from searches to inform future searches.

◆ Ensure that skilled, experienced and active search planners are easily available to any search.

These aims are, in my personal opinion, what we need to do in my country. Are any of them applicable to yours?

Self-Examination

Having written the above article in the comfort of my warm study, I had to face the reality of being initial incident commander some weeks after it was published. I realised I had the interesting opportunity of marking myself against my own standards.

Being as objective as I could, I give myself a high pass but some things were not done. The urgency analysis was done in my head, not on paper, a common fault of the first busy half hour. As always, the scene around the car had been well visited by the time the question of site preservation came up. Due to the simple issue of volunteer response, some of those who occupied ICS roles in base had not done so before and found it a steep learning curve.

It is a testimony to the quality of our team's members that not only did they do very well but they have since demanded more training because they want to do it again!

The volunteer response was partly controlled but it can be hard to do so fully in the initial phase and sometimes even beyond. To be positive, within a short time of team members arriving, we had people out searching the obvious points. We had very good searchers/police liaison, even with the distraction of a nearby RTA, and very good response from other volunteer organisations. Investigation and planning functions were set up within two hours and we had a full paper-based record of what had been searched, and by whom, to inform the following day's search. Finally, and most importantly, the casualty was found alive the next day.

Conclusion

No search is perfect. Some people are never found or are only found weeks, months or years after they disappear. But we can always do better. We can search and manage more efficiently and effectively. But what changes do we need to make to do so?

Pat Holland is a member of a mountain rescue team and a trained and active search planner. However, the views in this article are entirely his own and are not expressed on behalf of his team or any other organisation. He would like to thank all those who commented on drafts of this article. Any comments please, send to pat.holland@southtippoco.ie

Seven steps to raising more funds

Paul Durham, Bowland Pennine MRT on putting more pennies in the pot

All teams co-operate with their neighbours near and far on differing aspects of our service. Exchanging ideas on matters such as casualty care syllabus, rigging for rescue, training... the list goes on. The most fundamental element each and everyone of us offers in the name of the service is our selflessness, determination and social conscience to help others in need. The second most important element is the funds to deliver the service.

I took over our team's fundraising in 2001, after realising my dog's legs and his epilepsy ruled him out of SARDA activities. With 34 years with the team, during which I held numerous committee posts, fundraising was the one I felt least equipped for in terms of background qualifications or experience. However, with a career in sales and marketing, at least I felt I might be able to 'talk the good talk'. As it has transpired with a combination of vision, luck and determination, we've been quite successful in generating significant amounts of money. Compared with our 2001 income, our 2005 and 2006 figures showed a 400% and 300% increase respectively.

So why not exchange ideas on fundraising with others in the hope of getting reciprocal suggestions which may bolster

spells out that without wider awareness of your charity's aims and objectives, additional fundraising is impossible. He illustrates a range of awareness approaches which are a precursor to all fundraising. I have to thank my team's committee, without whose vision I would have been hammering away in the wilderness blindly for years. I cannot recommend this guy enough.

Step 2 Register your team with your local CVS office (Council for Voluntary Services) who help charity/voluntary groups gain access to funding/management/governance knowledge.

In my case, they helped locate three sources of funding £700 which enabled me to produce 10,000 awareness brochures of what we do, how we do it and why. These are

source before moving on to looking to develop one of the other sectors. In our case the funds were, and still are, being generated predominantly from the Individuals sector. Building upon the awareness brochure, I felt a Safe Rambling brochure providing clear commonsense guidance on how to enjoy a day out on the fells and footpaths, which also included some simple guidance on what to do if you or someone in your party did become injured, would demonstrate proactive support for the ramblers, many of whom are in ignorance of these steps. This demonstration of support for the walking fraternity was accompanied by a donations/contribution slip, once again found to be reasonably profitable. A Ramblers' Association group have just paid £700 for a reprint of 10,000 leaflets with their logo on the reverse. Before that a Charitable Foundation paid £5,000 to have 34,000 leaflets printed and delivered through letterboxes by Royal Mail Door to Door service across the north of Lancashire. That's a lot of awareness and donations slips circulating across our area. This leaflet can also be seen on the website.

Most recently a third, fundraising leaflet has been printed asking people to join 'Bowline' our financial support group. £2 per month by direct debit for a certificate of membership, car sticker, MR supporter's metal lapel badge and a biannual newsletter. The cost has been covered by six local pubs and hostellers co-sponsoring it. All three leaflets have therefore been produced without financial burden by the team.

Step 4 Produce a priced team shopping list of day-to-day and project related items which you are in need of or wish for.

Step 5 Produce an annual appeal leaflet which is to be circulated to all addresses on your database. Ours has 600+ names on it, so 1000 leaflets are produced, and the balance distributed by team members when the opportunity presents. As the mailshot is being directed to Charitable Trusts and Foundations, experience has shown that such organisations will generally support projects more than meet your running costs, so choose carefully. They tend not to support

the purchase of a vehicle – every organisation wants a new vehicle – so be more subtle.

I asked them to support us by helping us complete the purchase of our new garage and training centre. The following year, once we'd bought it, I asked for help to fit it out. In both cases the appeals generated many thousands. The first appeal raised £15,000, against a cost of £900 to print, stamps and envelopes. Good return on investment.

With experience gained from that, later appeals have generated more than double this figure. Parish Council money will start to come in within weeks – small amounts but they add up. Next, the Rotary and Round Table donations start arriving. They may have a 'can you do a team talk to our group' string attached. Good. More awareness there then. The Charities and Foundations donations will finally follow. Be prepared for a flood of initial rejections but mixed in with them will be requests for more information. You'll be informed that 'your appeal does not meet our funding criteria'. That doesn't mean they shouldn't be on your list, it may mean their criteria has changed. Get on the internet and research their new criteria. I've a charity that will only provide medical equipment and has done so for us. Another has given money for climbing helmets and trousers for all team members. You'll fill in numerous dedicated application forms unique to each, to which you'll attach copies of your latest audited accounts and governing documents/constitutions. So find a good photocopier. The trustees of these organisations meet only 2, 3 or 4 times a year, so the gestation period of the mailshot may take six months. Patience is required.

Step 6 Statutory Bodies. If you're looking for cash from these sources to fund your daily running costs, forget it. From my experience it's all linked to BME activities (Black, Minority and Ethnic) issues, Disadvantaged, Disability, Increased Participation – I think you get the picture. Please do not take these comments as disparaging towards any of these groups in society. I just can't make a valid case on how MR operational activities can mitre with such requirements. If someone is out there who can, shout up and prove me wrong. My own team's HQ is equipped as an outdoor centre and has gained funding from these bodies to extend the range of educational courses it can now run but that does not provide direct financial support to our operational side of things. But it does give greater awareness and demonstrates to a wider audience what thoroughly good chaps we are. If you don't have a similar parallel activity, this source is a closed book.

Step 7 Businesses. This is the source I'm only just starting to look at. I registered the team with the local Chamber of Commerce two years ago hoping it would open some doors. I didn't renew our membership. I still can't form a coherent strategy which will allow me to get in front of local businessmen to investigate sponsorship/partnership links. That said, a local dairy will soon be selling cheese and butter with our name and logo on the packaging. The tag line suggesting... we're a local company supporting local heroes. Hopefully, this will generate more profit for them and we'll get a proportion of that. Either way our awareness rating will rise significantly. Also, the local Starbuck's is holding a week long fundraising effort for us. They approached us, so clearly our awareness is stretching further than we imagined. My only link at present with local businessmen is via their membership of the Rotary and Round Table type organisations which I'm courting and which is slowly bearing fruit. This is where the shopping list comes in handy once again. Is anyone out there who can give me focus or ideas?

As I said at the outset, Mark Butcher will explain how all these link together. And no, I'm not on a percentage!!!

Business decisions and thinking are driven by the head, driven by the need for profit so your dealings with them must reflect this focus. Individuals' decisions are driven by the heart. Trusts are philanthropic, driven by their funding criteria and founding principles. Statutory bodies are driven by I don't know what.

In conclusion, from the outset I was determined to increase our fundraising by not placing any additional workload on my fellow team members, they have enough on their plates with call outs/training etc. It must have a high return compared with the time and investment put in to set it into motion and not devalue the name, image and reputation of mountain rescue as a service. I feel I've achieved my goals.

So now it's over to you. I hope you've gained something from this and are willing to reciprocate. Some may say you've been given the green light to rob from Paul – I question that. The BITS have only an interest local to Lancashire. Lakes, Peaks, North East, Dartmoor, each will have only local BITS interest so no conflict as I can see. Only Rossendale and Pendle may crib from me but I hope to gain from Peter in return.



TO COIN A PHRASE... YOU WON'T GET A BETTER BIT O' BUTTER ON YOUR KNIFE...

NAVIGATION

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The first appeal raised £15,000 against a cost of £900 to print, stamps and envelopes. Good return on investment.

what we've already generated. Some may suggest that by offering up this template, I've bared our team's heirlooms but I don't fully agree. I don't have a monopoly on fundraising ideas, but I'm prepared to offer up my successes to help others, in the hope of tapping into other seams of gold and silver. This is by no means a template for guaranteed success but it's worked for Bowland Pennine. So here goes...

Step 1 Get your managing committee to speculate circa £250 on sending you on a two day fundraising awareness course run by Mark Butcher Associates. Call 0191 226 7304 or email markbutcher@blueyonder.co.uk (Best £250 you will ever invest!)

He spells out what 'BITS' means – Businesses, Individuals, Trusts and Statutory bodies, the categories from which funds can be generated. He describes how each works, their thought processes and decision/choice making procedures and how to individually target each group to maximise success. He

distributed through flag days, fetes, outdoor gear shops and other outlets sympathetic to our cause. It can be found on our website bowlandpenninemrt.org.uk. I'm sure many of you have similar pamphlets but may be ignorant of their role in the greater scheme of things. They also have a funding directory known as 'Funder Finder'. A directory or CD listing over 8000 charitable giving foundations and trusts. Put a considerable amount of time aside to trawl through it and read every single entry to determine which will support charities in your region or your aims. Commit all addresses to an Excel type spreadsheet. Add to this every Rotary, Round Table, Lions, WI, Soroptomist, Parish Council address in your area. My list has over 600 contact names and addresses. Then put it to one side until you have completed step 3.

Step 3 Determine where your current funds are generated from, set against the BITS protocol. Develop a strategy on how you can maximise the funds generation from this

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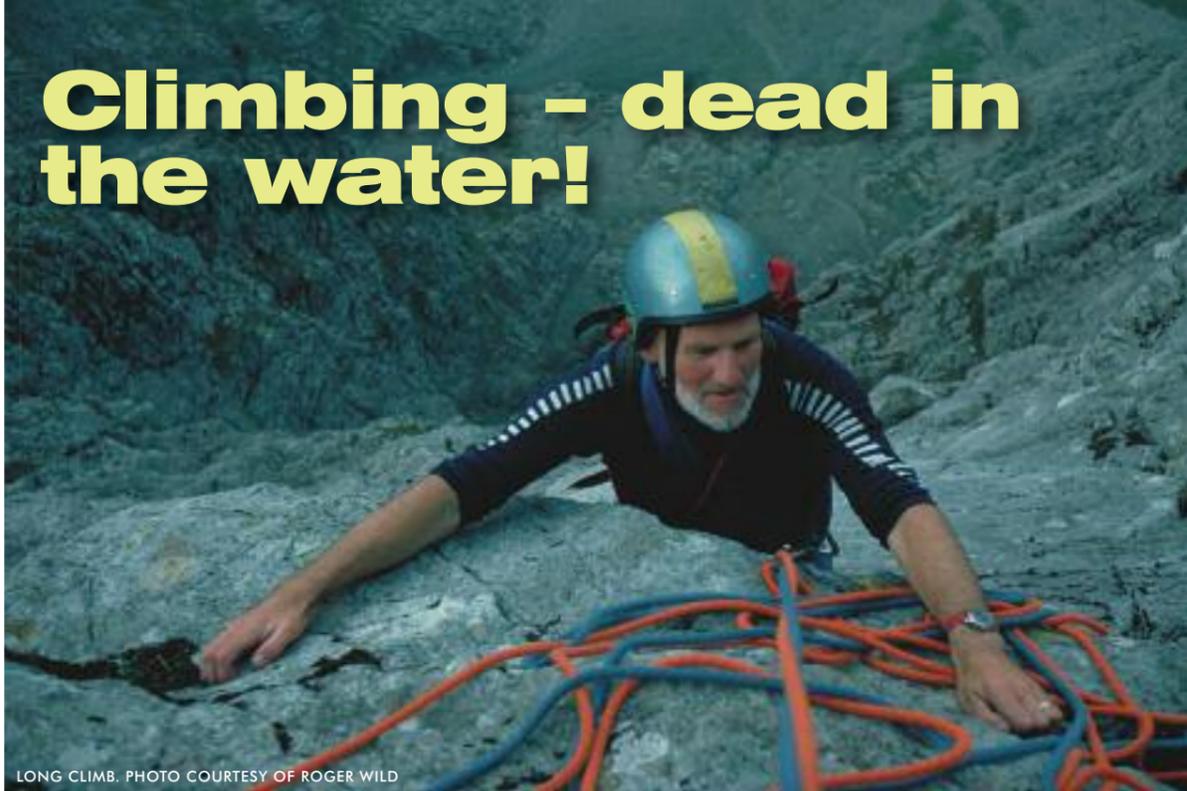
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Climbing - dead in the water!



LONG CLIMB. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROGER WILD

Bob Sharp on a sport fast losing its grip

Crikey. That's a bit strong isn't it? Well, yes it is and for someone who purports to be a climber, saying things like this is tantamount to heresy. But hear me out and you'll see where I'm coming from. And you might even agree with me.

I was introduced to climbing in my late 20s – rather late in life. In fact, unknown to me, I lived within a mile of one of Scotland's most famous roadside crags without even knowing it. When my mates took me there, I was hooked. I suddenly found a sport I was good at and enjoyed immensely. In those days the crags used to brim with people – solo climbers, seasoned tisos, families, youth groups and others. Craigmore crag was unusual in that its rock was basalt – a bit like gritstone. It offered a different kind of climbing to other local rocks – more strenuous and thrutchy in contrast to the balance required on mica schist. Some evenings, before the midges arrived in May, you could count well over a hundred climbers at any one time.

But time marched on and today very few people go there. The routes are covered in moss and grass and ferns grow on the ledges and cracks once used for handholds. The crag has been abandoned. All that remains as you make your way along the path at the bottom are memories from the past. This is not an isolated example. Many tell the same story of other once popular crags by the roadside and high in the mountains which are now rarely visited.

But I've digressed a little. Let me give you some facts. Have a look at the accompanying graph. It shows how the number of hillwalking and climbing (rock + snow/ice) incidents in Scotland have changed in recent years. I've also added a linear trend line to show more clearly the direction of change. I should add, to help clarify matters,

that the overall number of incidents in Scotland has stabilised since 1990. In fact, the trend is slightly downward. At the present time, there are just over 300 mountaineering incidents in Scotland each year.

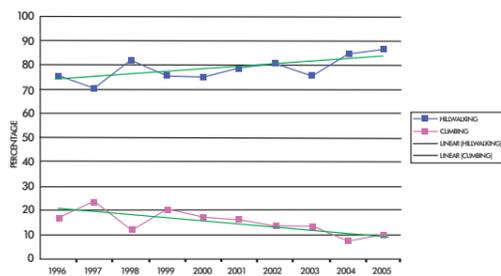
The graph shows a clear pattern. The number of hillwalking incidents has increased over the ten year period, whilst the number of rock climbing and snow/ice climbing incidents has decreased. There's an almost perfect mirror image between the two lines. I stumbled upon this finding as part of a research project into Scottish mountain incidents. The project gives a few clues to explain the increasing divergence of walking and climbing incidents. The project shows that over the ten year period there are increases in the number of inexperienced people who are rescued, increases in the number of equipment related incidents and increases in the number of people who are lost or cragfast.

In contrast, there are falls in the number of serious injuries (fatal and multiple) and a decline in the number of people who slip or fall. What does all this suggest? Well, the conclusion I come to is that it reflects a changing culture in mountaineering. It seems fewer people are climbing and more are walking. You might say that mountaineering is becoming a bit softer.

There is no reliable evidence on

participation apart from the annual household survey carried out for sportsScotland. This survey assesses how many people hillwalk or climb each month but it doesn't differentiate between the two. However, as reported earlier, there is anecdotal evidence which points to the decline in those who climb and a rise of the numbers hillwalking. Rescue work for several teams has swung towards the tourist/charity group/self-harm sectors and away from traditional rescues. This is reflected in the tally of non-mountaineering incidents which has risen sharply in recent years.

So, what's happened to climbing? Is climbing simply less popular than it once was? Are people finding adventure in other sports and activities? One explanation is that



climbing is still very popular but people are choosing to climb indoors. It's well known that indoor climbing has become very fashionable in recent years. A consequence of this is that the mountain leader training boards are presently working on proficiency and instructor qualifications for indoor climbing.

What about the winter climbers? It's a fair bet that many are now heading for the Ice Factor* near Fort William as the warmer winters in Scotland and the absence of snow and ice has limited winter climbing to a very brief time period. It's worth noting that the spate of fatal incidents in the Cairngorms last winter reflects attempts to climb when the snow and ice conditions were marginal.

But I feel there's a more disturbing factor at play here and it's all related to the nanny state in which we now live. It seems everyone and everything is pleasantly wrapped up in cotton wool. Life seems to be constructed around the desire to reduce risks, avoid accidents and sidestep any form of hardship or effort. The net result is we're all risk averse, afraid of blame, apprehensive of uncertainty and overly concerned about litigation. Children and young people especially are no longer allowed to take risks and whatever environment they enter is designed to be sterile and safe. Thus, playing outside with friends and walking to school alone are treated by many parents with some concern. It has recently been reported (by the Children's Society) that children's freedom to play unsupervised with friends is being curtailed by adult anxiety. Outdoor activities are deemed to be highly dangerous and many school based outdoor programmes have been abandoned or so heavily risk assessed their whole purpose has been lost. This problem was recognised by the outdoor education profession many years ago and, as a consequence, it established the 'Campaign for Adventure'. The campaign aims to convince people that life is best approached in a spirit of exploration and adventure and to show that 'chance, unforeseen circumstances and uncertainty are inescapable features of life and that absolute safety is unachievable.' I wonder how many parents of young children would buy into this philosophy?

So, how does this affect mountaineering? Well, mountaineering was bound to suffer because at its very core there is risk, hardship and inconvenience. To meet the challenges central to mountaineering, to become self-reliant, wise and skilful you have to work hard over a long period. I feel people no longer want to go down this route. They want a quick fix without the hardship or learning and are very happy to do all the expensive gear, head to the nearest icefall and chance their arm without any hint of apprenticeship. The proliferation of climbing guides, maps, instant weather forecasts, electronic gadgetry, TV programmes and 'what to wear' articles in the popular magazines has led to the emergence of the 'immediate mountaineer'. People want, what

one author has coined, an 'adventure in a bun'. When they get into trouble, good old self-reliance is abandoned at the expense of a mobile phone call. Basically, I think for many people climbing is a bit too risky and too much like hard work. You get wet, cold, eaten by the midges and you have to waste time driving to the mountains. Why bother with all this inconvenience when the same kind of thrills can be had in the warm, safe confines of a climbing wall centre? And for those who still enjoy the outdoors there is always walking. The rising number of hillwalking incidents matches the rise in numbers taking part and this is reflected in the increasing number of inexperienced people who are lost.

By my calculation, if the trends shown in the graph continue, there will be no climbing incidents in Scotland within ten years. In other words, climbing as we know it will have ceased. Rescue teams will have to be content searching for day tripping tourists and older folk missing from care homes. For my own team the shift began some years ago. The days when we searched for youth groups on expedition or rescued youths on a local outcrop are long gone.

OK, this is a bit tongue in cheek but you have to admit things are changing. If each team looked at the profile of its operation over the last two decades, I'm sure they'd see a dumping down. The increasing separation of walking/climbing incidents shown in the graph cannot be denied. I believe it has clear implications for the way mountain rescue teams respond and perhaps train. Does this apply to your team? Do you feel the days when people climb are numbered?



* The Ice Factor is the world's biggest indoor ice wall, situated in Kinlochleven just ten miles from Ben Nevis.

Cairngorm Poo Project

Spending the night in a snow hole in the Cairngorms is a popular activity and, if there are only a few folk doing it, then it's not a problem. But with increasing numbers of us enjoying the Scottish winter hills, snow hole sites are becoming an environmental disaster area. When the snow melts at the popular sites of Ciste Mheard and Coire Domhain our human impact is all too apparent. There are lots of good reasons to carry your waste off the hill.

- ◆ Visual degradation of our superb mountains.
- ◆ Water contamination in the River Nethy and Loch Avon Basin.
- ◆ Growing evidence that human waste is having a significant impact on the biodiversity of the late lie snow bed habitats.
- ◆ Increased risk of sickness from melting and drinking contaminated snow.
- ◆ The current trend of milder winters, resulting in the increased number of users to the very accessible but high, snow hole sites of Ciste Mheard and Coire Domhain.

Motivated by a Leave No Trace Course run by Cairngorm National Park, I felt the time was right to initiate a Pack It Out system here in the Northern Cairngorms. Those of you who've been to Glenmore Lodge in the last ten years will know they've been instrumental in just that. The project has been very successful in



NOT A PRETTY SIGHT!

educating mountain leaders in good practice. So an environmentally friendly system open to the general public and easily accessible from the main access to the Northern Cairngorms seemed to be the way ahead if our impact on the hill is to be minimised.

Easy job. Or so I thought! We have a sewage plant here at the mountain – what could be easier than handing out a few biodegradable bags and providing access to the plant to drop them in! How naïve can you get? I hadn't considered health and safety, SEPA regulations, sponsorship, funding, management of the project and, the biggest headache of all, finding a biodegradable bag strong enough to hold poo but which will then break down easily in our sewage plant.

After working for three seasons in Antarctica, pooing in a bag seems like normal practice to me – I'm not sure my partner and lodger felt the same when, throughout last summer, they were asked to provide samples for me to test various bags! I figured the longest a bag needed to stay together was three days and then a test suspending them in an old mink trap in the sewage plant would see if they broke down easily and allowed the contents to join the rest of Cairngorm Mountain sewage. Finally I found a suitable biodegradable starch bag made from maize. Bombproof for holding the poo and breaks down in our sewage plant.

I've had great support from my colleagues at Cairngorm Mountain and from Tiso, who sponsored the poo bottles. Cairngorm National Park have provided funding for publicity, and Cairngorm Signs are doing a deal on the signage in the car park.

So how does it work? Firstly the service is free of charge. If you're accessing a snow hole site from the Cairngorm ski area I'd encourage you to do your bit for the Cairngorms and call by the Ranger base for your bags, carrying pot (BHD – a light and rigid bottle with a screw top – no chance of any leakage or smell) and pouches (if you want to carry the pot externally it fits really easily to the compression straps on the side of your rucksack). Poo in the bag, tie the top of the bag and put in the BDH. Then follow the signs to below the bottom car park where you will find the Poo Chute.

Deposit your bag and throw the BDH in the sterilising barrel next to it. The BDH can then be cleaned and re-used.

Cairngorm Mountain is a social enterprise owned by a charitable trust. We strive to support our local community while offering an exceptional mountain experience in a sustainable way and everything you spend at Cairngorm Mountain goes towards achieving these aims.



Heather Morning POO CHUTE AND POTS



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