



Mountain Rescue Council England & Wales

Incident Report 1989

(Revised 28/11/2007)

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INCIDENT REPORT 1989

1989 again resulted in an increase in the number of incidents involving rescue teams on our Welsh and English mountain and upland areas.

At 607 incidents were up by 12% over '88 and a 60% increase in 4 years.

Fatalities thankfully were slightly down by 3 on 1988. Injuries slightly increased by 28 to 428 cases.

An increasing number of call outs have again been of a strictly non-mountaineering category such as hang-gliding, para-scending, mountain biking, horse riding, and animal rescue (mainly crag-fast sheep). In 1989 there were over 35 such incidents, all fortunately non fatal. A disturbing feature in 1989 has been the increase in rock climbing fatalities to 7 compared with 3 for previous years and the doubling of accidents from 33 in 1986 to 66 in 1989. Many of the accidents occurred on the new scrambling routes and in many cases un-roped and un-helmeted.

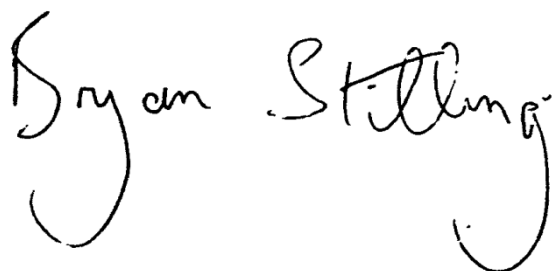
Fatalities from collapses on our hills and upland areas at 20 and from "non-mountaineering" causes at 12 are still the major cause of death - they do however again stress the vital, essential and unique role that our teams provide for all who are in distress on our hills and upland areas. In 1989 team reports indicate

31,300 man hours of duty on incidents by our Welsh and English teams and this figure does not cover all incidents or time and involvement of practices, team organisations, fund raising etc. At 607 call outs this averages 10 of our teams in action giving aid to those in distress each week.

Figures from M.R.C. Scotland for 1989 report 154 incidents with 24 fatalities; this gives a UK total of 761 incidents and 79 fatalities.

The reduction of these figures, especially fatalities must continue to be a main concern of all who are linked in all ways to outdoor pursuits in the UK.

A reminder, however, again that the attached incidents must also be kept in context with the millions who do respect and enjoy our hills and upland areas in safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Stilling". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'B' and a long, sweeping underline.

BRYAN STILLING

April 1990

ENGLAND AND WALES

MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE

Mountain Incident Report 1989

	Lake Dist	NE Eng	Yorks Dales	Mid Penn	Peak Dist	North Wales	South Wales	SW Eng	Total 1986	Total 1987	Total 1988	Total 1989
Rock Climbing	22 23 (4)	2 2	2 2	- -	17 18	15 15 (3)	- -	3 3	33 34 (2)	55 59 (3)	58 64 (3)	61 63 (7)
Snow/Ice Climbing	2 3	- -	- -	- -	- -	3 4	- -	- -	4 7 (2)	10 17 (1)	15 20 (3)	5 7
Fell- Walking Apr-Oct	138 144 (12)	5 7	11 11 (1)	2 2	22 25 (3)	45 47 (5)	3 3	3 3	153 208 (17)	197 223 (23)	185 208 (20)	229 242 (21)
Fell- Walking Nov-Mar	55 58 (3)	1 1	6 6	2 2 (1)	10 12	19 22 (3)	2 2	1 1	73 84 (18)	84 109 (10)	93 107 (12)	96 104 (7)
Searches Injured	15 15 (3)	2 2 (1)	- -	2 2 (1)	3 7 (1)	7 9 (1)	3 4 (1)	4 5	7 9 (1)	11 14 (1)	21 31 (8)	36 44 (8)
Searches Non- injured	32 80	10 19	8 16	4 7	11 25	18 55	7 30	14 31	60 139	87 183	91 204	104 263
Crag-fast Non- injured	11 17	- -	- -	1 1	2 3	13 22	- -	- -	19 49	28 48	36 70	27 43
Non- mountain	15 15 (3)	8 9	4 5 (3)	1 1 (1)	8 8 (2)	6 6 (2)	6 6	1 1 (1)	27 30 (11)	32 51 (12)	36 45 (12)	49 51 (12)
TOTALS												
Incidents	290	28	31	12	73	126	21	26	376	504	540	607
Involved People	355 (25)	40 (1)	40 (4)	15 (3)	98 (6)	180 (14)	45 (1)	44 (1)	538 (41)	700 (50)	754 (58)	817 (55)
RAF H'cop Rescue Search	30 5	- 2	2 2	- 1	3 2	52 13	1 4	2 3	74 23	86 22	80 26	90 32
S.A.R.D.A	22	3	4	6	8	16	8	11	63	65	74	78

(Editor's note:

top number - number of incidents, second number - number of persons involved and third number (in brackets) - number of fatalities)

MAIN CAUSES OF INCIDENTS - England and Wales 1989

		Lake Dist	NE Eng	Yorks Dales	Mid Penn	Peak Dist	North Wales	South Wales	SW Eng	Total 1986	Total 1987	Total 1988	Total 1989
Slips Fell Walking	Footwear Satisfactory	44	9	4	6	15	19	6	5	61	75	93	108
	Smooth Soles or Poor Footwear	43	5	6	5	12	17	1	5	56	64	62	94
Slips Fell Walking Snow/Ice	No Axe +/- Crampons	4	-	1	-	-	3	-	-	24	8	19	8
	Well Equipped	7	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	17	9	20	11
Falls Rock Climbing / Abseiling	Roped	4	1	-	-	5	5	-	2	13	20	18	17
	Solo	11	1	2	-	6	3	-	-	11	13	23	23
Falls Snow/Ice Climbing / Abseiling	Roped	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	2	4	4
	Solo	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	3	6	1
Belay or Runner Failure	Climbing	4	-	-	-	8	1	-	1	8	10	10	14
	Abseiling	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	7	1
Rockfall		4	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	7	9	13	7
Avalanche		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5	-
'Medical' Causes	Fatal	14	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	20
	Non-Fatal	8	6	3	4	4	7	2	2	-	-	-	36
Inexperience Incompetence Ignorance Incident Causes	April to October	41	13	10	4	12	24	6	8	139	168	142	118
	November to March	26	4	5	2	10	12	4	10	57	70	84	73
Suicide		1	1	3	1	-	2	1	1	3	3	5	10
Attempted Suicide		4	4	-	-	-	1	-	2	4	7	4	11
Lightning Strike		-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	2

FREQUENCY OF INJURIES - England and Wales 1989

		Walking		Climbing		Non-Mountain	Total 1986	Total 1987	Total 1988	Total 1989
			Snow Ice	Rock	Snow ice					
Lower Leg		101	12	11	2	2	94	97	110	128
Upper Leg		18	3	4	-	4	13	28	32	29
Pelvis / Spine		9	2	6	1	5	13	12	18	23
Chest		2	-	1	-	2	5	9	11	5
Back	Bruising	3	2	1	-	2	9	13	17	8
	Fracture	2	-	1	-	3	5	7	5	6
Internal		4	-	4	-	1	5	6	10	9
Arm / Shoulder		13	2	4	-	3	12	16	26	22
Head fatal		6	2	3 ¹	-	3	15	10	8	14
	climbing no helmet	-	-	1 ²	-	-	3	3	4	1
Head non-fatal	Walking / Climbing	18	2	4 ¹	-	5	28	29	31	29
Head non-fatal	Climbing No Helmet	-	-	14 ²	-	-	16	15	9	14
Multiple Abrasions		6	2	2	-	1	7	8	9	11
Exhaustion	Summer	29	-	-	-	4	24	21	27	33
	Winter	3	6	-	-	-	5	19	10	9
Hypothermia - fatal	Summer	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	1
	Winter	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	2	-
Hypothermia -non-fatal	Summer	16	-	-	-	4	12	26	11	20
	Winter	9	3	-	-	2	24	20	11	14
Heart Attack	Fatal	16	2	-	-	2	20	18	17	20
	Non-fatal	6	1	-	-	-	24	20	10	7
Illness		26	3	-	-	-	21	30	27	29
Drowning		-	-	-	-	1	4	4	6	1
Total		287	42	5	3	44	350	414	417	433

Footnotes: 1 - with helmet
2 - no helmet