



Mountain Rescue Council

Charity No. 222596

Mountain Rescue Council
England & Wales

Incident Report 1998

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Mountain Rescue Council – England and Wales

Incident Report 1998

This year's report is overshadowed by the tragic death of an MR team member whilst involved in an incident during the summer. The news came as a great shock especially to his team members and to everyone in mountain rescue circles. To his wife and family, we extend our sincere sympathy and support in this difficult time.

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

Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured	Persons assisted
1998	628	26	444	810
1997	695	19	512	925
1996	697	27	538	1059
1995	656	52	474	900
1994	634	39	486	929
1993	610	53	323	902

It is pleasing to report a 10% decrease in the number of mountain incidents over the previous year following years of steady growth. This could be a result of the depressing weather experienced during the summer months. However, the trend for fatalities has been reversed following the decline of earlier years. Whilst fatal heart attack have reduced, death resulting from trauma has increased markedly. Compared to last year, the number of head injuries has remained constant; this is without doubt, the most preventable of injury likely to afflict the hill-goer. There are still too many instances (scrambling for example) where people have ventured onto steep and broken terrain who could have avoided serious head trauma if they had been wearing some protective helmet.

This year's non-mountain incidents are summarised as follows:

Year	Incidents	Fatalities	Injured ¹	Persons assisted
1998	250	44	71	240
1997	185	26	49	163
1996	213	21		411
1995	144	18		147
1994	106	23		116

1. comparable figures before 1997 are not available

With the exception of 1996 where the dramatic increase was due to severe winter weather, there has continued over the past five years a steady increase in the deployment of MR resources for non-mountain incidents. This year however has seen an unprecedented increase in the fatalities encountered. Some of these incidents have received national media coverage because of their tragic nature; but even if the incident did not warrant media coverage, MR members are still to be seen undertaking what is often very unglamorous work for someone in distress.

The figures contained in this report hide a significant voluntary contribution to society. The incidents in this report, 941 in total, involved just short of 53,000 man hours; much of which was during night-time or poor weather. This commitment is reinforced with regular training in mountain and search skills, casualty care training and fund-raising. Lastly, many farmers and pet owners can be thankful for the work of teams prepared to go to the aid of sheep, dogs and cattle who have strayed into difficulty.

Ged Feeney.

Ged Feeney
MRC Statistics Collator

Mountain Incident Report

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to 31/12/1998.

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

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

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	%
Abseiling	Incidents	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0.5
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0.4
Fellrunning	Incidents	5	2	3	0	2	0	0	1	13	2.1
	Subjects	5	4	3	0	2	0	0	1	15	1.9
Fellwalking - Summer	Incidents	225	8	25	60	44	11	13	32	418	66.6
	Subjects	293	12	28	84	45	14	25	45	546	67.4
Fellwalking - Summer (DoE)	Incidents	8	1	2	3	2	4	0	2	22	3.5
	Subjects	13	8	7	7	2	18	0	5	60	7.4
Fellwalking - Winter	Incidents	7	0	0	6	3	2	1	1	20	3.2
	Subjects	10	0	0	10	3	2	1	1	27	3.3
Hang Gliding	Incidents	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	5	0.8
	Subjects	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3	0.4
Mountain Biking	Incidents	8	4	6	0	5	0	2	2	27	4.3
	Subjects	22	10	6	0	6	0	2	2	48	5.9
Orienteering	Incidents	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
	Subjects	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Parapenting	Incidents	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	5	0.8
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	4	0.5
Rescue Team Exercise	Incidents	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0.3
	Subjects	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0.2
Rock Climbing	Incidents	12	0	1	7	23	0	1	4	48	7.6
	Subjects	16	0	1	8	24	0	1	4	54	6.7
Rock Scrambling	Incidents	8	1	0	7	0	0	0	0	16	2.5
	Subjects	10	1	0	8	0	0	0	0	19	2.3
Searches *	Incidents	17	4	8	8	2	2	3	1	45	7.2
	Subjects	6	3	5	3	1	2	2	1	23	2.8
Snow/Ice Climbing	Incidents	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.5
	Subjects	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.5
Totals	Incidents	297	22	47	91	87	20	20	44	628	100.1
	Subjects	382	40	51	120	89	37	31	60	810	99.9

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

Mountain Casualty Report

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to: 31/12/1998.

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

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

Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	Perce
Abseiling	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0.4
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Fellrunning	Uninjured	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	4	0.5
	Injured	4	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	10	1.2
	Fatal	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Fellwalking - Summer	Uninjured	126	1	8	41	4	10	17	19	226	27.9
	Injured	153	11	19	41	40	2	8	24	298	36.8
	Fatal	14	0	1	2	1	2	0	2	22	2.7
Fellwalking - Summer (DoE)	Uninjured	7	5	6	5	0	16	0	4	43	5.3
	Injured	6	3	1	2	2	2	0	1	17	2.1
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Fellwalking - Winter	Uninjured	5	0	0	7	1	2	0	0	15	1.9
	Injured	5	0	0	3	2	0	1	1	12	1.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Hang Gliding	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0.2
	Fatal	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Mountain Biking	Uninjured	17	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	20	2.5
	Injured	5	10	5	0	6	0	1	1	28	3.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Orienteering	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Parapenting	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	4	0.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Rescue Team Exercise	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1
Rock Climbing	Uninjured	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8	1.0
	Injured	10	0	1	6	24	0	1	4	46	5.7
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Rock Scrambling	Uninjured	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0.6
	Injured	7	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	13	1.6
	Fatal	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Searches *	Uninjured	5	3	3	2	1	0	2	1	17	2.1
	Injured	1	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	6	0.7
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Snow/Ice Climbing	Uninjured	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
	Injured	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Totals	Uninjured	172	9	20	59	6	28	20	26	340	42.0
	Injured	196	31	28	58	81	7	11	32	444	54.7
	Fatal	14	0	3	3	2	2	0	2	26	3.1

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

Non-Mountain Incident Report

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to: 31/12/1998.

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

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

Action/Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	Perce
Aircrash - Civil	Incidents	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0.8
	Subjects	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	1.7
Cave/Mine Exploration	Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.4
	Subjects	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	2.1
Horse / Pony Trekking	Incidents	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1.2
	Subjects	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1.2
Local Incident	Incidents	10	22	4	4	2	1	3	1	47	18.8
	Subjects	8	12	2	6	2	0	2	1	33	13.8
Non-Mountain Search	Incidents	6	46	27	21	35	23	16	5	179	71.6
	Subjects	5	43	27	23	33	24	13	5	173	72.1
Road Traffic Accident	Incidents	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	7	2.8
	Subjects	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	2.5
Sledging	Incidents	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.8
	Subjects	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.8
Water Sport	Incidents	7	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	9	3.6
	Subjects	9	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	14	5.8
Totals	Incidents	26	74	33	26	38	26	20	7	250	100.0
	Subjects	24	62	31	31	37	25	19	11	240	100.0

Non-Mountain Casualty Report

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to: 31/12/1998.

This report restricts itself to those incidents not directly related to mountain or wilderness related activities. It lists the number of persons assisted by Condition of subjects. The percentages are rounded to 1 dec. place. Please note that the totals do not sum to 100% because of round up error in the rows.

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

Action / Activity		Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	Perce
Aircrash - Civil	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Fatal	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	1.7
Cave/Mine Exploration	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	2.1
	Injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Horse / Pony Trekking	Uninjured	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.4
	Injured	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.8
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Local Incident	Uninjured	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	1.2
	Injured	7	11	1	3	2	0	0	1	25	10.4
	Fatal	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	5	2.1
Non-Mountain Search	Uninjured	4	33	15	11	19	15	10	1	108	45.0
	Injured	0	5	5	5	10	3	2	2	32	13.3
	Fatal	1	5	7	7	4	6	1	2	33	13.8
Road Traffic Accident	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	2.5
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Sledging	Uninjured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	Injured	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.8
	Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Water Sport	Uninjured	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	8	3.3
	Injured	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	1.7
	Fatal	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.8
Totals	Uninjured	8	33	17	12	19	15	15	6	125	52.0
	Injured	12	23	7	8	12	4	2	3	71	29.5
	Fatal	4	6	7	11	6	6	2	2	44	18.4

Main Causes of Mountain Incidents

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to 31/12/1998, during which 626 incidents were reported.

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

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

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

Cause	Col. 1 Fellwalking (summer)	Col. 2 Fellwalking (winter)	Col. 3 Rock Climbing	Col. 4 Snow / Ice Climbing	Col. 5 Other Activities	Col. 6 Total	Col. 7 Percentage
Avalanche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Belay / Runner Failure	0	0	16	0	0	16	2.6
Benighted	12	0	1	0	0	13	2.1
Cragfast	8	1	2	0	0	11	1.8
Fall or Tumble	74	3	48	2	8	135	21.6
Lightening	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
Lost	52	6	1	0	3	62	9.9
Medical Collapse or Illness	68	0	0	0	0	68	10.9
Overdue or Missing	65	2	1	1	18	87	13.9
Rockfall	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
Shouts/Lights/Flares Reported	5	0	0	0	18	23	3.7
Slip, Trip or Stumble	166	7	15	1	0	189	30.2
Unable to Continue	28	2	0	0	1	31	5.0

Notes:

Col. 1 This category also includes Fellrunning and Orienteering incidents

Col. 2 This category is based on the prevailing weather and ground conditions at the time, not on a calendar period. It includes those incidents involving D of E expeditions conducted in wintry conditions.

Col. 3 This includes incidents of Rock Scrambling and Abseiling.

Col. 5 This groups all the remaining mountain activities of Mountain Biking, Hanggliding, Parapenting, Ski-ing and Mountain searches.

Col. 7 This is a percentage of all Mountain Incidents reported.

Main Sites & Types of Injury

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to 31/12/1998, during which 626 casualties were reported.

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

Injury Type / Site	Col. 1 Fellwalking (summer)	Col. 2 Fellwalking (winter)	Col. 3 Rock Climbing	Col. 4 Snow / Ice Climbing	Col. 5 Other Activities	Col. 6 Non - Mountain	Col. 7 Total
Lower Leg & Foot	134	3	17	1	5	8	168
Upper Leg & Knee	39	3	6	1	11	11	71
Pelvis	4	0	7	0	1	3	15
Abdomen	4	0	3	0	0	0	7
Chest & Shoulder	14	1	13	0	6	4	38
Back & Neck	16	1	19	0	6	10	52
Arm & Hand	17	0	10	0	2	1	30
Head	36	3	27	1	5	13	85
Fractures	132	2	33	1	16	12	196
Lacerations Etc	27	0	12	1	9	8	57
Exhaustion	9	1	0	0	3	3	16
Hypothermia	22	2	0	0	1	9	34
Heart Attack (non-fatal)	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
Heart Attack (fatalities)	9	0	0	0	0	5	14
Illness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Notes:
 Col. 1 This category also includes Fellrunning and Orienteering incidents
 Col. 2 The category of Fellwalking (winter) is based on the prevailing weather and ground conditions at the time, not on a calendar period.
 Col. 3 This includes incidents of Rock Scrambling and Abseiling.
 Col. 5 This groups all the remaining mountain activities of Mountain Biking, Hanggliding, Parapenting, Ski-ing and Mountain searches.
 Col. 6 This groups all the non-mountain incidents as detailed on pages 4 & 5 of this report.

Specialist Resources & Other Details

This report covers the period from: 01/01/1998 to 31/12/1998, during which time 941 incidents were reported.

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

Category	Lake District	Mid Pennine	N.E. England	North Wales	Peak District	South Wales	S.W. England	Yorks Dales	Total	Perce
1 Incidents Attended by Helicopters	56	35	17	72	25	15	6	1	227	24.1
2 Helicopters Used for Evacuation	52	4	9	48	14	5	1	1	134	14.2
3 Helicopters Used for Searching	5	31	10	29	12	13	5	1	106	11.3
4 Helicopters Used for Deployment	6	0	2	6	1	1	0	0	16	1.7
5 Incidents Attended by SARDA Dogs	27	34	27	30	22	27	11	0	178	18.9
6 Search Dog Finds	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	0	11	1.2
7 Incidents Attended by a Doctor	107	8	17	5	49	4	4	0	194	20.6
8 Incidents Initiated by Mobile Phone	74	1	0	16	2	1	0	0	94	10.0
9 Animal Rescues	39	1	0	2	3	2	2	0	49	5.2

Notes:

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

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

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

Row 4. The number of times the helicopters were used to deploy personnel and/or equipment to remote locations.

Row 5. The number of incidents where MR Search Dogs was called to or attended an incident.

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

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

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

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