

# Mountain MAGAZINE Rescue



ISSUE 11

INCORPORATING MRC NEWS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN ENGLAND, WALES & IRELAND

JANUARY 2005

## HANGING OFF THE BEN

With Mick Tighe

## NEW CAS CARD

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and keep!

## KEEPING THE PEACE AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN BOSNIA

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INCORPORATING MRC NEWS

## EDITORIAL

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## NEXT ISSUE

### Issue 12 - April 2005

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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

Photograph: Ashley Cooper Photography  
Ashley explains, 'This was a joint job between Wasdale, LAMRT and Kendal teams. The casualty had fallen 20 feet into a gully on the side of Crinkle crags and sustained head injuries. His friend went for help walking out to Brotherilkeld and alerted services three hours after the accident. We found him about two hours later, returning him back to the roadside about 8 hours after his fall.'

**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.**

## ...A WORD FROM THE TOP TABLE...

In the run up to the Christmas celebrations how many of us dread the seasonal ritual of Trivial Pursuit? One question goes something like 'Where in the UK is it legal to drive on the right hand side of a two-way road?' If, in that infernal game, is also asked, 'Which UK national service has as its tagline *Funded entirely by voluntary contributions?*' it might prompt that other seasonal activity – the family argument – because the service in question, the RNLI, now receives government funding. So which is the 'correct' answer – the one on the card or the accurate fact? Time for another drink!

This funding change came to light when Andy Simpson and I attended the 'Lifesavers Awards'. A

chance, I hear you say, to hob-nob with a guest list which read like a 'Who's who' of the entertainment and business worlds. I know many feel awards are over-hyped and vacuous – what about those who serve but are never recognised? How best, I thought, do I apply the insight of the UK

managing executive of Singapore Airlines who told me, 'We have to recognise that we now live in a celebrity culture?' Where there's celebs there's attention and where there's attention there's cash!

We see the celebrity culture on a daily basis through reality TV, the publication of autobiographies by people whose careers seem only just to be starting or through the pages of OK magazine. It's sad that few stop to think what would have a greater impact – that there was nobody prepared to take personal risk to save others?

But there's no escaping the impact of celebrity. Public perception of the work of the rescue services is inevitably shaped and moulded by their work in, for example, television drama. How many members of the public question the reality of *Casualty*, *Baywatch* or *Rockface*? Do they pause to think what life is really like for us? The pictures these programmes portray create a challenge for us. We have to consider how public expectations are shaped and how we can best respond in order to move forward.

So why have the RNLI abandoned what many thought was a proud tradition of surviving solely on voluntary contributions? We discussed this on the table Andy and I shared with, not only the RNLI but also representatives from Singapore Airlines, St John Ambulance and Zoll Medical. What was key was that the RNLI recognised that with the new workload, where beaches must be manned by lifeguards during the week, that they could no longer rely solely on volunteers. Was this a case of public expectations being raised by the portrayal of beach rescue in *Baywatch*? It may seem a remote possibility, or even appear trivial but we underestimate the impact of what remains the greatest medium of our time at our peril.

So, the RNLI have responded to celebrity culture. They have seen the importance of events such as the Lifesavers Awards in raising their profile and recognised that they can maintain their volunteer ethic yet still provide an opportunity to develop financially. The real stars of that evening

were the representatives from nearly every emergency service – professional and volunteer.

Leaving aside the funding changes, many external and internal observers continue to draw parallels between our two organisations. Apart from the obvious land versus sea issue there are very strong similarities. How many of us are familiar with the concept of the 'ground troops' being embarrassed to have the label of 'hero' attached to them? It seems to be a common thread that those who wish to serve others shy away from public recognition. I was reading an article recently on the National Teaching Awards ceremony. One paragraph in this article described the calibre of the people chosen in each of the categories and their achievements. Their dedication was amazing, the devotion to both the children they reach out to, and to their profession, was an inspiration. Yet these awards only started in 1999.

It's very easy to become cocooned from the

**So, the RNLI have responded to celebrity culture. They have seen the importance of events such as the Lifesavers Awards in raising their profile and recognised that they can maintain their volunteer ethic yet still provide an opportunity to develop financially.**

world but we have to become a player in the modern world. The stability of any organisation is based on a number of factors and one of these is, of necessity, financial. In a society where the value of celebrity has overtaken community or volunteering, there seems to be an anomaly. There seem to be more and more charities, a perception of increasing dependence on them and increasing competition for funds. To avoid losing or missing out, we need to maximise the value of events such as the Lifesavers Awards to raise the profile of our work, develop fundraising potential and awareness of our 'brand'.

My employers ran an interview with me in our in-house magazine. The interviewer thoroughly appreciated what we were doing, saying it was 'great copy – a great feel-good story'. Businesses love to be associated with what their employees do outside of work. We must not underestimate the impact this can have. For all of us, mountain rescue is such an integral part of our lives we easily forget we do something special. When we save someone, that person and their family will never forget it. How many have the opportunity to make such an impact on someone else's life?

The public want us to be heroes. There's a real danger, if we shun this role, they'll turn away from us. So we've explored the need for change and how we can achieve it, and identified the role model which demonstrates how it can work. But what does this have to do with the question of what side of the road we drive on? You drive on the right hand side of the road that leads up to the Savoy Hotel, venue for the Lifesaver Awards. It's a relic of the days when the drivers of horse-drawn carriages would alight to open the door for his passengers, without having to walk round the horses and risk a kick, a bite, or something harder to wash out!

I started with a question and I leave you with one. Do we wish to adapt and move on to remain relevant as a volunteer community with support and recognition – or risk becoming an historical curiosity?

**Penny Brockman** MRC Treasurer

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## TEAM LEADERS DAY

Thirty one came to Rishworth in December for the annual Team Leaders' meeting – including team leaders, deputies, assistant leaders and incident controllers – representing eighteen teams. Four teams were unable to attend due to responding to incidents. Dave Allan reports elsewhere on an excellent programme. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 3 December 2005

## INSURANCE UPDATE

Penny Brockman reports:– 'What a busy time, within a month of taking over as Treasurer I became aware that one frequently used personal accident insurance company, used by the police, had written a clause in their policy stipulating that we were not covered for flying in non-licenced passenger aircrafts ie. MOD, Police and Air Ambulance helicopters. I decided to take immediate action, and phoned every region to advise them to contact the police forces they deal with, to find out if members were covered. To date a number of policies have been identified where members are not covered to travel in non-licence passenger

aircrafts, and remedial action is under way. Whilst this was going on, the insurance group was reformed with Tony Rich as chairman. We've also enlisted Stuart Byatt, an insurance specialist, from within the rescue community. Stuart has over 30 years' experience in the insurance industry. The members area of our website will be used to publish frequently asked questions and view copies of the policies. This will be managed by another member of the group, Peter Allwright. Stewart Hulse will continue the work he started by reviewing the personal accident policies and updating us on any variations. This will help us achieve consistency among the police forces. This insurance group will not only represent Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) but also British Cave Rescue Council and the Mountaineering Committee of Scotland.

'Paul Forrester (ACPO Rep) has also been working on personal accident insurance. He sent every police force a questionnaire to obtain further information on the cover each force provides. From this, we can make a business case to improve our current situation and

we are working closely with Paul to investigate the cost of a centrally held policy.

'To raise the profile of the insurance issues facing mountain and cave rescue, Tony Rich and I wrote an article for Emergency Services Times highlighting the level of insurance we have as volunteers working at the request of, or by arrangement with, the police. The question we raised was – would the level of insurance hinder search and rescue operations.'

There is now an insurance group email address to ensure your questions are directed to the right people – insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk

## POLICY DOCUMENTS

Penny explains the policy documents adopted at the November meeting.

- a) Fundraising Policy
- b) Equal Opportunities Policy
- c) Purchasing Policy
- d) Environmental, Access & Conservation Guidance

'Although we don't want to be driven by administrative procedure, it has become apparent that the policies were necessary as funding bodies often ask whether there is an Equal

## NEW CAS CARD

The Cas Care card has been redesigned to bring it into line with current MRC casualty care teaching and reflect the Basic Trauma Life Support guidelines used in other pre-hospital settings. It is now arranged into individual sections which keep the casualty carer focused and systematic in their assessment. There are separate areas for History, Initial Assessment, Rapid Primary Survey, Secondary Survey, Treatment and Ongoing Assessment, and blank areas for free text to increase the accuracy and detail of the record – all of which has necessitated a change to an A4 format. To overcome the increase in size, the card is designed to fold into thirds, if desired. It was decided to distribute the card electronically, as a PDF, via the Medical Section of the MRC website – for several reasons. Firstly, there is no generally accepted consensus regarding the best choice of material for the cards. The PDF file format can be read using freely available software (Adobe Acrobat Reader) – most teams will have access to the necessary computing and printing facilities and be able to reproduce the card in sufficient quantities for themselves. Finally, it's anticipated that the card will evolve with time, and this will be easier and cheaper to do by electronic distribution. PDF files do not readily lend themselves to 'personalisation', so it is hoped that individuals and teams will provide feedback on how well the card performs in practice and how it can be further improved. Without this feedback, it will not evolve. We are already indebted to many rescuers for their comments and suggestions – thank you for helping us.

**Henry Lazarowicz, John Saxton and John Ellerton** Medical Sub Committee

**Feedback concerning the card should be sent to: h.p.lazarowicz@ncl.ac.uk or john.saxton@onxnet.co.uk**  
**If necessary, printed copies of the card should be requested from your regional MRC Medical Subcommittee member.**

**See back of magazine for your copy of the new Cas Card.....**

Opportunities Policy. National fundraising has also highlighted the need for, not only a fundraising policy, but also visibility on the decision making process for purchasing. Due to the nature of our work it was felt that guidance for teams should also be provided on Environmental, Access and Conservation.'

The policies can be found on the members' area of the website. Although these are MRC policies, teams can adopt or amend for their own use.

Penny has also produced a draft policy for the reimbursement of expenses for Mountain Rescue (England & Wales). This will be circulated prior to the next meeting for adoption.

## TRAIL MAGAZINE

Since July, *Trail* has run a monthly auction on e-bay on our behalf, averaging a much appreciated £600-£800 a month. A big thank

you to Judy Whiteside for developing the relationship with *Trail*.

## FUNDS FOR RESCUE

An increasing number of people are now running events on behalf of mountain rescue. Eve Burton has agreed to take on the administration for these events.

## GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The government funding initiative has moved forward with presentation CDs sent out to all MPs and Members of the House of Lords. Discs have also gone out to teams with the request they lobby local MPs to join the All Party Committee.

## LOST IN THE POST

It appears that there have been problems with statistics getting through to Ged Feeney, MRC Statistics Officer. The problem had severely affected the South Wales

## FIXED DATES IN THE CALENDER...

**MRC MEETING Saturday 21 May & 19 November**  
**TEAM LEADERS MEETING Saturday 3 December**  
**TEAM DOCTORS MEETING Friday 14 October**

figures. The culprits, it transpires, were one or two postal workers who were hoarding mail! What this has flagged up is the need for regions to check on a regular basis that their reports are actually getting through. And on that note, it was proposed at the November meeting that, as from January 2006, all reports should be submitted electronically, subject to any glitches thrown up by Scotland, who adopted electronics-only submission of statistics on 1 January this year. Finally, a plea from Ged – please can teams submit their information in a regular flow rather than saving everything up into one lump.

## WAKE UP CALL

Mike Margeson reports, 'Two instances of equipment failure/misuse have recently been reported to the equipment sub committee. It would appear both of these could and should have been avoided, and could very easily have led to a much more serious outcome. 'What lessons learned? In the first incident, a

stretcher failed catastrophically on a horizontal lowering training exercise. It actually broke at the join point. This was a basket stretcher, the main issue being it was not one of the three stretchers recommended and approved by the MRC equipment sub committee for use in vertical crag work. **I would remind teams that only the Bell, MacInnes and Troll Alphin are approved for vertical crag work by the MRC.**

'The second incident happened during a practice single man pick off using a Troll Pro Alp tech. The rescuer descended to the casualty and started his descent, which continued rather too quickly, resulting in a broken leg for the rescuer. A safety rope was not being used. Investigation is ongoing into exactly what happened.

**'However, I would draw your attention to best practice advice from both the equipment and training sub committees that a safety rope back up should be used in all**

**stretcher and single man rescues whether training or the real event as a matter of standard protocol and best practice. This incident would not have occurred if a safety rope had been used.'**

## FPE/PPE CHECKING TRAINING DAYS

Following the success of this one day course, the equipment sub committee will host two further days – one in south Wales (contact Richard Terrell) and one at Oldham (contact John Edwards). Dates and further info to be advised. These are not just aimed at equipment officers but are of value to all team members. They are 50/50 funded by the MRC and are approved national courses.

## WHEEL FOR BELL STRETCHER

Peter Bell (ever the creative!) has been working on the development of a new wheel system for some time. Prototypes are now being tested. Anybody interested should contact Peter direct or visit the website.

## LITTLE DRAGON

Early in the new year we will be placing the biennial order for Little Dragon warm air units. These also now have the facility to supply warmed oxygen. If your team requires a replacement or update of an old model, contact your regional equipment sub representative ASAP.

## CASBAG LEEDS UNIVERSITY REPORT

The full report, including test results and methods used, is now available on the equipment section of the MRC web site.

## MACINNES MK7 STRETCHER

The origin of this design goes back to the 1970s when MacInnes attempted to make a capsule in which a patient could be enclosed and evacuated. A GRP working four piece model was made up by Mo Anthoine at Snowdon Mouldings, but this was too heavy and not wind friendly! The materials for the design had still to be developed. The MK7 was started about five years ago using sheet aluminium alloy – still too heavy, but it

enabled the formulation of a working design for a lightweight, composite three piece shell with titanium for other parts. After experimenting with various materials for the shell, and five prototypes later, a new composite was found, which has all the correct characteristics, but which is very expensive. The inner skin of the shell is of a reinforced carbon fibre. U-shaped shafts fold out for patient carrying and for winching/horizontal lowers. The three part stretcher can be unfolded in a few minutes and a lightweight wheel can be fitted in seconds. It is carried on a pack frame, which doubles as carrying harness on the rear shafts. The Mk7 comes with a six point lifting harness and cover. Final models are now going out to selected teams. Cost is in the region of £1500. Weight approx 11kg. 2.13m long x 486mm wide. Folded 500mm x 1m x 200mm. Many thanks to Hamish MacInnes for this background and info.

## ...AND FROM THE PRESS OFFICER...

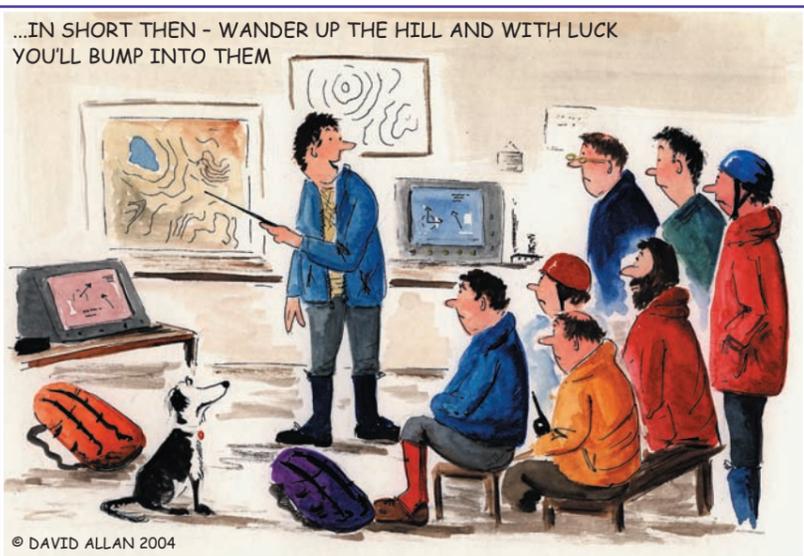
...and the Press Officer, yet again, demonstrates his misunderstanding of the word 'volunteer'!

I could be making a rod for my own back here but, in the absence of a PR Aide Memoire (and, don't worry, it is in the pipeline), I'd like to offer my services, and those of the PISC, to teams should they need any help with PR.

I have to say that many teams make a very good job of it without any interference but I know that one or two struggle a bit. If nothing else, we can provide contact details for all regional and local press and if you need help writing press releases, we're perfectly willing to do that too.

Now you may think that my motives are purely altruistic but, as we all know, there's no such thing as a free lunch. At a time when we've agreed to pursue national funding, it's more important than ever to raise our profile, both amongst the general public and the decision makers who might be able to influence our success or otherwise (ie. your local MPs) – and it won't do any harm to your local fundraising efforts either. If anyone wants any help, please contact me at **andy@andrewsimpsonadvertising.co.uk**

**Andy Simpson** MRC Press Officer



## PARTY LEADER COURSE 2-4 JULY 2004

The quality of the weekend was summed up by Scott Amos of Tweed Valley MRT, 'The course was professionally run and extremely pertinent. The instructors and mentors were second to none (as was the food!).'

He was one of thirteen members from seven teams who travelled to Rishworth from the four corners of Great Britain. This relatively low turn out resulted in course members having the luxury of double the usual time for hands on experience to consolidate the content of the lectures and the workshops. The course addresses the requirements of the Training Guidelines for Party Leaders. This includes effective briefing; dedicated deployment of a small party; party management; casualty site management; commonest injuries; triage; resources available to parties. The component parts are brought together in a Round Robin of practical scenarios.

The course has a high staffing ratio involving twelve experienced members drawn from a variety of teams throughout England and Wales along with seven members from local teams who volunteered to act as exercise casualties.

At the course debrief some members admitted that they were exhausted after shoehorning a three day schedule into a weekend. No one admitted to being weak willed and dallying too long in the pub at night.

It is always a delicate balance when allocating time at weekends. You are pulled between family loyalties, jobs around the house, hill days, fundraising for the team, and so on. To



shelve all that in favour of going on a course further distorts the balance. Additional aggravation is caused by the course fee. I know that some places were not filled because members were deterred when faced with paying personally instead of being sponsored by the team. Who will the training benefit? Surely it is for the greater good of the team rather than improving the potential of the individual. Teams will have to address this issue.

The course has been well supported over the years by numerous teams. However the records show that many teams have never applied for places. I find this intriguing. One wonders about the calibre and performance of search and rescue parties during incidents and how well they are led.

Most of you will know that I have taken on the position of MR Secretary. Tony Jones thinks that I should retire from work and take on even more jobs in MR. The bank manager thinks otherwise. So, two decades after conceiving the course, running it at national level since 2000, and being associated with it (on and off) at regional level for most of the time before that, I am passing

on the baton. My successor will be Mike Marsh. He is Deputy Leader of Bolton MRT. Mike has been a leading figure on the courses over many years and he is a natural choice. He is fortunate indeed in retaining the support of all the staff who have been instrumental in maintaining the extremely high calibre of the course. (See opening quotation.) It really is wonderful to know that you can rely completely and absolutely on a group of experienced and dedicated staff members who support each other so harmoniously. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be in the same company as these colleagues whom I regard as friends - Iain Ashcroft, Pete Barnes, Huw Birrell, Al Day, Ed Fagan, Ged Feeney, John Gladston, Peter Howells, John Hulse, Tony Jones, Roland Layland, Mike Marsh, Andy Milner, Chris Moody, Garry Rhodes, Ann Shaw, Howard Swift, Simon Thresher, Jonathan Whiting.

**Peter Smith** MRC Secretary

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Eve Burton has been awarded the Distinguished Service Award for her work with mountain rescue. Proposed by Mike France PDMRO Chairman and seconded by Neil Roden, the citation was read at the November meeting and accepted.

Eve joined the Buxton team in 1971 and is still an active member of the team, attending most call outs. Her links through the Buxton team into St John Ambulance have already earned her a long service medal with two bars. In 1992, she became Insurance Officer for PDMRO, moving to Treasurer, and incorporating the insurance work, four years later.

She has served many years on the Conference Committee, helping put together conferences at Dublin, Derby, Lancaster, Durham, Edinburgh and Bangor. She has also organised the MRC Handbook since 2000.

As PDMRO Treasurer, she chairs their financial group and, since 2000, has been Secretary to the PDMRO training group. In her spare time (!) she has bodied for SARDA Peaks.



### ANNUAL TEAM LEADERS MEETING

A new venue played host to an excellent meeting with a very high standard of presentations leading to good informed discussion.

Listening to Paul Baxendale describing the wealth of information available on the websites and email groups etc, it is difficult to believe that we continue to be assailed by complaints that people do not know what is going on! Paul has put an incredible amount of effort into producing and presenting these facilities and continues to be available to help teams or individuals to make best use of them. He finished with his imaginative choice of the new 2005 password to the members site.

Sq. Ldr Brian Mennie gave a very informative account of the changes to the RAF Mountain Rescue Service and developments at Valley. We look forward to having the same excellent relations with his newly formed team.

Geoff Crowther produced a lucid account of the changes to call out systems used within his team. This opened up useful discussion on the future developments anticipated in the links between pagers and mobile phones. A good exchange of thoughts and ideas on the problems faced by different teams took us up to lunch.

John Hulse and Alistair Read describing the adoption of rigging for rescue techniques into their team dispelled any prospect of a post-lunch doze. They proffered interesting thoughts on the wider issue of bringing about changes of practice within a team. The importance of Rigging for Rescue in leading to a proper evaluation of rescue technique was discussed and clearly has had a major impact across the country in this respect. Listening to this presentation and the ensuing comments it is hard to understand why we had such difficulties in introducing RfR to the training programme.

Neil Carruthers described the development of his team over the past few years, particularly in respect of vehicles and buildings, and useful lessons were passed on. Again, an informed discussion with everyone able to take away new nuggets of information.

Finally, Dave Freeborn led a discussion on the need for a nationally agreed document of understanding between Mountain Rescue and Air Ambulance services.

I am indebted to Peter Smith for his efforts in arranging the venue and detail of the meeting. I believe that, once again, the value of bringing together those who deliver the service was demonstrated.

**David Allan** MRC Chairman

## ...AND ANOTHER WORD FROM THE EDITOR...

Where was I? Oh yes... the computer. So off I went to purchase a new toy. A shiny white i-book laptop. Handy for backing up all that important mountain rescue information. Portable. Ideal for taking minutes at PISC (and other meetings) should that be required. Great for the garden - late summer sunshine dappling the lawn, glass of something chilled at hand. Perfect. Or so I thought. Until that moment arrived. The one where I was busy assembling all the stuff for this, the next issue of Mountain Rescue Mag.

Lesson well and truly learned after the last episode, which still leaves me twitching (and you think I'm joking), I now back up like a frenzy with the help of an admittedly ageing (in computer technology terms) zip drive. Files buzz like demented bees from the 'big' machine to the laptop, and from the laptop back again, a teetering stack of unruly zip discs constantly retidied on my desk top. That's the wooden one on which my computer stands, not the virtual one which, of course, arranges itself into tidy columns at the click of a mouse.

The thing about zips is you can continually update them. CDs, once burned, well that's it. And call me an old skinfliint but I do resent throwing my hard earned cash in the waste bin every time I amend a document. Anyway, the other thing about zips is... they become corrupted. You reach a stage when they won't read and then you can't remember what was on them anyway, and then they manage to corrupt the rest of your system. You're ahead of me, aren't you? So the 'big' computer starts playing up again. The very strategy I am employing to

avoid a problem is actually now exacerbating it. Another computer engineer ploughing a furrow to my door. My God, I've had my moneysworth out of that service contract.

In the meantime, not to worry, I thought, I'll nip to the Apple Centre, pop some extra memory on the laptop. Then I have two systems. While I was in there, they very kindly offered to update my operating system for free. And we all know what happens when a computer engineer gets his mitts on your keyboard.

It was two days later before I actually turned the machine on again and saw... nothing. Just black. So my lovely new toy was whipped straight back to the Apple Centre for diagnostic tests (shades of leaving favourite dolly at the Dolls Hospital, the heavy duty elastic band which somehow held her arms and legs together inside her hollow torso perished beyond repair, her piteous cries of 'Mama' echoing in my dreams - oh for the days when life was quite so simple).

Fortunately, the 'big' machine has also had a visit from the Apple doctor and, fingers crossed, is now behaving. Which is probably just about the best thing I could have said. Tempting fate and all that. And the zip drive is consigned to a burgeoning shelf labelled 'Previous expensive items of must-have computing hardware which are, prematurely in my opinion, no longer of any use', to be replaced by an even cuter new toy - 256 megabytes of memory on a stick. As Mr Wogan might say - is it me?

**Judy Whiteside** Editor

### Kit crit Edeldid Shield helmet

So you have the colour GPS linked into your blue tooth camera phone cross-linked to your new PDA, which is linked, live into TETRA for downloading the latest Memory map and Tom Tom updates, this then links through the new high band to TETRA radio gateway so that control know your every move on the fell, all this technology fitting in a pocket sized 80 litre Pelli case, weighing about 40kg, when suddenly the casualty knocks a pebble off the crag and smashes your head to bits!

Why did you leave your helmet behind? It's too heavy on top of all the other supertechno stuff that we all seem to be carrying (me included). Well perhaps this is where Edeldid's new lightweight helmet 'the shield' could be of use.

With the introduction of the Shield, Edeldid has done away with any excuse not to wear a helmet whilst climbing or doing rope work. Weighing 320g, the Shield really

earns the name lightweight. Constructed to the usual Edeldid helmet standards, the Shield offers top security and unparalleled comfort at an affordable price. There are plans in the New Year to have this helmet certified to the cycle helmet standard, as well as the existing climbing helmet standard, making it a truly versatile helmet. Having been initially sceptical about lightweight helmets in the past, this one certainly has all the high quality hallmarks associated with Edeldid products, the fit and styling make it an easy to wear helmet, especially if it's going to spend most of its life in your fell bag. Then the lightweight aspect is invaluable.

**Technical spec**  
**CE EN 12492**  
**Weights 320g**  
**Fits sizes 54 to 62cm**  
A personal view by  
**Alan Woodhead**  
Bowland Pennine MRT

## ADVERTORIAL The new Matrix headlamp from Nightsearcher



A headlamp is an incredible partner when doing different kinds of work in the dark. No matter where you are looking, you instantly have the light in the right direction. The new Matrix compact headlamp combines a powerful light and a very long discharge time, using LED technology. The M is a combination of Super-Power LUXEON 1 Watt LED and 3 Super-Bright Nichia LED's, making this a very powerful and versatile headlight. It is very efficient - LEDs, unlike conventional bulbs, never need replacing, last a lifetime (100,000 hour) and only consume a fraction of the power. Select to use either 1/2/3 of the Super-Bright Nichia LEDs or switch to the Super-Power Luxeon 1 Watt LED. Providing a powerful bright beam, this can also be set to a 'flashing' mode for emergencies. The M is specially suited for advanced outdoor users, search and rescue teams and all other professional users where there is a need for a very long discharge time, for short and long range use.

Nightsearcher was established in 1989 by Colin Howard, Managing Director, to produce high quality professional rechargeable lighting products - torches, headlamps, searchlights and rechargeable floodlights. Through a reputation for innovation, quality and reliability the product range has grown to meet the changing needs of our customers. Our Research and Design department develops lighting products for many applications. We are quality registered to ISO 9000:2000 and are proud of the products and service we provide. We export to many countries throughout the world, to the police, fire and rescue, military, railways, farmers, engineers - people who require high quality professional products, designed to give many years service.

For more information visit our website [www.nightsearcher.co.uk](http://www.nightsearcher.co.uk)

### Páramo Directional Clothing

The difference between Páramo Directional Clothing System and conventional approaches lies in the word 'Directional'. The fabrics we use do not merely hold water back (waterproof) or passively pass moisture vapour (breathe), but actively 'direct' liquid water into the right spot. Conventional waterproof breathable fabrics can only cope with 20% of the sweat you produce when working hard. For real comfort you need Páramo's Directional fabrics to pump away the other 80%. Outdoor Instructors and rescue team members were the first to fully appreciate Páramo and they remain the focus of

our development. By satisfying their requirements, we can be sure that all outdoor enthusiasts gain maximum benefits from our garment design. Páramo Directional Clothing System is used by many organisations - specialist teams within the rescue services, outdoor centre staff, UK armed forces adventure training instructors and SARDA as well as English Nature and the National Trust for Scotland. One of the biggest compliments we receive is when search and rescue personnel are so impressed by their team kit that they buy more Páramo for their own personal use!

# FIRST RESPONSE...



## THANKS FROM KEELA

First of all, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to publish a letter in your distinguished magazine... don't worry we will be taking advertising space in the new year! Joking aside, we at Keela would like to thank all the members who visited us at the stand at the recent UK Mountain Rescue Conference in Bangor. This was the first one I have attended and I'll be making sure I get to the next one too. Angela and I (I was the bald one!) had a great time meeting new contacts and putting faces to old ones, in what can only be described as 'a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere'. As well as being a good PR exercise for Keela, it was great to talk to people who are

wearing and using our kit in extreme conditions, and get some good feedback. We are making more of an effort to kit teams out at a reasonable price, hence the regular flyers that are being sent out. Keela can't ask for a better endorsement of their clothing than having rescue teams use it throughout the year, in all manner of conditions. So we would like to offer our profuse thanks to the various teams and members who use it and would hope that, with their continued backing and support, we would be able to persuade more people to come onboard in the future. Thanks again. **Tony Taylor**  
Field Sales Manager. Keela

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Buffalo have been making the Special 6 Shirt for outdoor professionals for well over 20 years and in that time they have kitted out many of the UK's mountain rescue teams. Buffalo clothing is made to tried and tested designs, using only the best material. Buffalo don't put any fancy gadgets on them, making them heavier, cost more or look fashionable - they are simply made to keep you warm and comfortable in the very worst conditions the UK can throw at you. The inner pile keeps you warm (wet or dry) and the Pertex® outer keeps out most of the wind and rain and helps any internal moisture evaporate. Simple and very effective! Buffalo also make jackets, trousers, salopettes and sleeping bags - all with the same design philosophy - function not fashion.

For more information on how Buffalo can make your team more comfortable, please contact Adam Thomas at Buffalo Systems on 0114 258 0611 or via email [mountainrescue@buffalosystems.co.uk](mailto:mountainrescue@buffalosystems.co.uk)



## Do they mean us?

Anne Leuchars tells it like it is...

The conference organisers had asked me to speak on 'How mountain rescue is viewed by the general public'. So I thought I'd ask Mr and Mrs General Public. I took my video camera to Keswick and stopped people who looked like they were just returning from a walk. I simply said I was making a training video, with no hint as to its subject matter. I asked how they would get help if one of their party was injured on the fells and, if they mentioned mountain rescue, how much they knew about the teams. I conducted eleven interviews and the replies were encouraging in some ways, but disappointing and downright worrying in others.

### Encouraging:

- \* 10 mentioned mountain rescue without prompting.
- \* 9 knew they had to dial 999.
- \* 7 used the word 'volunteers'.
- \* All had absolute faith in the skills of the teams.

### Disappointing:

- \* When asked about funding of MR teams, not one used the word charity
- \* 5 said funding was 'voluntary donations' or 'collecting boxes' or 'legacies'; 4 thought it was a mixture of donations and money from the government/local authorities/the National Park; 2 didn't know.
- \* Despite having faith in the teams' skills, they were only described as 'basic first aid', 'they know the terrain', 'orienteeing', 'they train regularly in rock climbing'.

### Worrying:

- \* All 11 said they would use mobile phones to get help, without querying whether they would work on the hills.
- \* They all took it absolutely for granted that you'd be there, with no idea that you only exist through sheer bloody hard work.

Obviously this was not a statistically valid survey, but the responses were interesting. Most organisations would envy your Approval Rating - even the people who knew absolutely nothing about you thought you were great. But you should be concerned about the level of ignorance about your funding, and of the time/effort/cost involved in reaching and maintaining high levels of search and rescue techniques. It all points to (a) more work to raise the public profile of MR and (b) a focus on a few key messages in all the work you do with the media and the public.

Your situation is comparable to that of lifeboat crews. The RNLI's Chief Press Officer Roselynn Crowther says the mis-perceptions they face are that people think lifeboats come under the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and are government funded. Also, in a major rescue with different agencies involved, the media tend to lump them all together as 'the coastguards'. She says ALL members are briefed to name the RNLI as often as possible in all interviews and at funding events, and to concentrate on two key points: (1) the RNLI is a charity and (2) it is staffed by volunteers. She also puts pressure on partner agencies to put across the two messages as well.

Obviously the PR resources of the RNLI are more lavish than yours, but you DO have a national Press and PR Officer (Andy Simpson) and most teams now have a member responsible for media and publicity work.

They are only as good as you make them - please give them lots of ideas for publicity and respond to requests for help from them. In all the work I've done with MR teams, going back eleven or twelve years, a great many of you have agreed you would benefit from some awareness raising. You'd be barmy not to do it - it's the only way to reach the general public, potential sponsors, politicians and the media. It's hard work, but you are definitely making progress.

## JDS BOTHY SHELTERS

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Or order online at [www.outdoorstore.co.uk](http://www.outdoorstore.co.uk).



## First Aid can be fun

First aid is just common sense really. It needn't entail tedious hours spent getting to grips with your Latin roots, or even some worthy brick of a text book, although a working knowledge of basic anatomy and physiology is obviously useful. It needn't be boring or confusing, and certainly doesn't require a great deal of specialist equipment. In fact, it's amazing what you can do with a plentiful supply of triangular bandages, a few wet wipes and a pink plastic torso. But, perhaps that's another story. The point is - first aid can be fun.

No really. That was the message course tutor and fellow team member Gary Dickson put across loud and clear one sunny weekend in late August. And, it has to be said, there was a fair amount of laughter woven into the theory, practical demonstrations and hands-on opportunities. The group was small - only eight - as four had dropped out at the very last minute. Their loss. Instant bonding over tea and innuendo and we were off.

The course is designed to develop a relevant understanding of first aid and promote confidence in using it within the outdoor environment - ideal for mountain rescuers. As a non-operational team member there is no requirement for me to have any sort of cas care certification, as I'm unlikely to be delivering first aid on the hill, but - apart from an interest in all things medical - I also think it's important, as team secretary (and editor of this illustrious tome) to understand what goes on at the sharp end, as it were. And you never know when there might be a requirement for it outside of mountain rescue. Better to be prepared.

Over the two days, a structured timetable led us eagerly through the programme, short periods of simply explained theory linked to the chance to practice each new procedure - with continuous feedback and support from Gary (and my fellow students). And no getting away with anything either. My apparent inability to resuscitate young Annie did not go unnoticed. Indeed, it took several 'goes' before Gary was completely satisfied I might be safe to let loose on the real thing. Well they say practice makes perfect.

By Sunday, we were ready to take our new skills outside. More short bursts of theory, followed by increasingly complex scenarios on the very muddy, steep grass verge across the road - aided, abetted and somewhat stressed by constant noisy heckling from Herr Gruppenfuhrer and the inclination of the other people in one's group to question and argue with any decision hesitantly made. All valuable stuff.

By Sunday evening I was the exhausted but proud recipient of a basic qualification in first aid. Gary's easy manner made the whole weekend - he is a natural teacher, clear and well prepared in his presentation, logical in his demonstration and honest and forthright in his feedback. And, without a doubt, first aid can be fun.

Besides basic first aid, he can provide training in emergency care, first aid at work, advanced first aid, paediatric and defib use, and will even tailor bespoke courses to your specific needs. All his courses are accredited and registered with the Learning Skills Council. They are suitable for, and recognised by, most governing bodies including MTLB, RYA, BCU, Pre-School Alliance, National Child Minding Association, and are also suitable as evidence towards NVQ units. And, of course, are a useful addition to team cas care training. You can contact Gary on 01254 394459 or 07903 583989 or visit [www.capsariustraining.co.uk](http://www.capsariustraining.co.uk)

Judy Whiteside Rossendale & Pendle MRT

## You know you're in a rescue team when...

- ...you believe that unspeakable evils will befall you if the phrase 'It's been quiet lately' is heard...
- ...you extol the virtues of the new casbag over dinner...
- ...the postman delivers to you, at home, a letter addressed 'To the MRT'...
- ...you hear yourself for the umpteenth time explaining what mountain rescue teams actually do and why they need money to do it...
- ...you turn up to the team dinner in a fleece...
- ...the pager goes off during your wedding anniversary meal and your wife doesn't get upset when you leave her to pay the bill!...
- ...you own five waterproof jackets and three fleece but only one suit...
- ...or (not to leave us girls out of this distinctly male-oriented newsgroup thread) when your male team mates look at you as though you've just dropped off another planet when they see you 'scrubbed up', clad in anything more feminine than boots and leggings and wearing lippie...
- ...come to that, when your non-MR friends see you out of your normal clothes (those with shape and without mud) and assume you've fallen on hard times...
- ...when your ex-husband asks, with a smirk, 'But what do you know about mountain rescue?' and you realise how much life has moved on...
- ...you find an unconscious misper is actually laid in a tent with a dozen knives of various degrees of sharpness, and Control are telling you, 'The police say to watch him when he comes round because he can be dangerous after his fits'...
- ...you decide to clean out your car and, just as your entire fell kit is all laid out on the lawn, the pager goes off...

From the MRC Newsgroup... and some

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## LAKE DISTRICT

**Richard Warren (Secretary, LDSAMRA)** writes... 'The Lakes teams were relatively quiet throughout the first half of 2004 with incident numbers generally down on previous years. However, there was a significant increase in the remainder of the year, particularly the period September to November 2004. SARDA Lakes has already had over 60 callouts up to the beginning of December. The increases will be fully analysed at the close of the year when all the reports have been submitted, but some views would suggest that the numbers of walkers and climbers has been steadily increasing since the foot and mouth epidemic of 2001 with the return of tourism to the Lakes. The walking season seems to be lengthening as the winters recede. Also there is the increase in 999 calls via mobile/phones, a blessing for the trauma and medical cases but sometimes too easy an option for the stranded walker. It will be interesting to see if this pattern is repeated elsewhere in the UK.

'The transition from low to high band radios has gone very well with a relatively small amount of teething problems. Recognition has to go to the radio sub-committee and radio officers within the Lakes' teams for their determined effort over the past few years. Some limited low band capability has been retained for those teams covering the outer areas of the Lakes and interface with other low band users on the county boundary. Environmentally safe disposal of the redundant low band radios was going to be a significant problem for both the police and those teams with additional low band sets. However, this has been resolved by the donation of the sets for continued use by the military cadet forces in Cumbria. The idea was initiated by Kendal MRT and is being co-ordinated by Rob Brookes, LDSAMRA Project Radio Officer on behalf of the Lakes teams. The low band radio set donations are being made with the full agreement of the Cumbria police force and licensing of the two UK general channels (channels 2 and 3) will be the responsibility of the receiving groups. The channel 1 crystals will be removed from the sets.

'A recent survey of bridges in the Lake District has

highlighted a particular problem in the Wasdale valley. The narrow concrete road bridge that leads to the Brackenclose National Trust car park and camp site, the Brackenclose Fell and Rock Hut and Wasdale Head Farm has been closed until further notice due to structural weakness. At the time of writing, indications from the National Trust, Western Valleys, were that work would start on a temporary Bailey bridge, week commencing 10 January and take about two weeks to complete. In the meantime, it is only open to foot traffic and even the farmer must park vehicles at both sides of the river. The implications on parking and the campsite are significant. There are no dispensations for rescue vehicles. Enquiries should be made to the National Trust. 'If you have any questions on this or any other Lake District statements, then please contact me and I will ensure that you receive a response.'

## MID PENNINE

### AN OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF

'I was passing by and just wondered what a mountain rescue team was doing here', was how Patsy Calton, Liberal Democrat MP for Cheadle, greeted members of **Bolton MRT**, taking a lunch break during a search for a missing woman in Heald Green. In the light of current efforts to win the support of MPs in general for mountain rescue, it provided team leader Garry Rhodes with an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the role we play in lowland search operations. The MP was already aware of the Early Day Motion so the message must slowly be getting through.



### NEW POST FOR MIKE

Congratulations to Bolton team member Mike Marsh who, after many years of instructing on the national Party Leader course, has recently been invited to take over its running and organisation. Besides his work on the national course, Mike has also instructed on the MPSRO regional Party Leader course over a great many years, and assisted on the IMRA Party Leader courses.

### NEV RETIRES

Nev Sharp, team leader of **Calder Valley SRT** is retiring after over 30 years mountain rescue service – an involvement which began in 1966 when, as a police officer, he



attended the incident that would lead to the formation of the Calder team. He recalls, as a young police dog handler, searching for a missing Water Board keeper at Widdop, near Hebden Bridge. 'Extreme winter condition resulted in the death of the man and subsequently the team was formed'.

For several years he had close contact with the team in his police capacity, calling upon their services from time to time. He eventually joined as a full time member and, over a period of years, fulfilled various positions – as he says, 'With no aspiration to be leader'. He eventually became chairman for three years and then deputy leader, taking on the leadership role in 1997. He recalls introducing vodapagers back in 1994, to improve response times – something which today he is very proud of. Calder manages to scramble a Land Rover crew at any time, day or night, within 15 minutes.

In 1994/5 he spearheaded a tremendous fundraising campaign to establish a new team HQ at Mytholmroyd. A very well appointed, purpose built base is now home to CVSRT. With an element of some (considerable) determination, he gave the team a corporate image by the way of team uniform, even managing to convince them it would be necessary for them to fund their own gear. How times have changed, new members get issued with everything, and no longer have to pay for the privilege! After a lengthy process, one of the first lottery grants awarded to an MR team was achieved and a brand new, fully converted Land Rover appeared. The team was on a real high, fundraising became easier due to image and a more professional approach.

Sadly, Nev was also involved in sorting out the aftermath of a serious Road Traffic Accident on the M62 in 2002 when team members were the innocent victims of a devastating accident resulting in injury to several members. The long term outcome, after a lengthy legal process, was another new Land Rover followed by a new forward Command and Control Vehicle.

When asked the question many of us are asked – 'Why?' – he says, 'My drive and commitment have been motivated by the team membership whom I have always put first. People are your greatest asset and it's very special with MR work. They are volunteers whom you ask to give their best when the odds are against them. Usually the time's wrong, the weather's bad, it's often very dark and the situation can be very desperate for someone'. So, Calder will be involved in a new search over the next few weeks – for a new team leader. This could well be one of the hardest searches they have ever undertaken as he will certainly be a hard act to follow.

## NORTH EAST

### NEW CONTROL VEHICLE (MARK ONE)

**Scarborough & District SRT** has just taken delivery of a new Control unit. Based on a Mercedes Sprinter, the vehicle was supplied by Mike Kent Cars in Scarborough and converted by Macclesfield Motor Bodies. The main part of the unit has desk space, map boards, computer, printer and copier, with seating in the rear. A bulkhead separates a storage and mess area containing generator, water boiler and other equipment. A Bell stretcher can be secured in the unit to carry a patient and carer if required. The vehicle is also equipped with an electronically controlled pump-up mast, area floodlighting, a PA system and an enclosed awning to provide shelter for team members. Total cost of the vehicle plus conversion was around £37,000.



## PEAK DISTRICT

### OLDHAM MBE

Tony Gillon, secretary of **Oldham MRT**, has become the second team member to receive the MBE – for his work with Oldham County Court. Tony has been involved in co-ordinating rescues on and around the Saddleworth moors and further afield since 1989 – one of his first missions helping recover personal effects from the stricken jet in the Lockerbie air disaster. Years later he helped ferry casualties home from hospital in the aftermath of the Manchester bombing. By day, he is an administrative officer for Oldham County Court, a post he has held for 25 years. He has also been a member of the St John Ambulance and acted as a volunteer for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002.

Tony said, 'It was quite a surprise to receive the official letter but I am very pleased.' Congratulations Tony!

### IT'S THAT TUNNEL AGAIN

It is Thursday 23 December at 6.23 am. It's bitterly cold and snow is falling. A Trans Pennine express passenger train travelling from York to Manchester Airport has derailed in the Standedge tunnel, one mile from the Diggle end. The train is a triple multiple unit carrying approximately 350 passengers, mostly holidaymakers and a number of commuters. The first carriage is on its side blocking the eastbound line and the second

## NORTH WALES



Gaynor & Pero on the left, Gwen and Rolf on the right

### TRAILING DOG FOR WALES

There's a new addition to the SARDA Wales kennel. Gwen Patmore of **Aberglaslyn MRT**, and her chocolate labrador Rolf, qualified in December as a novice trailing dog team, the first voluntary trailing team in Britain. Hertfordshire police has two bloodhounds who currently trail. Trailing involves the dog wearing a harness while the handler follows behind holding a long line. The dog follows the trail of the missing person using a combination of ground scent and the air scents either side. A scent article, such as a hat or glove, is needed so that the dog can discriminate the lost person scent from the scent of everyone else in the area. Whilst this method might not be practical on a mountain search, it may show up a direction of travel from a car, for example, so effectively halving the search area.

Trailing is not very practical for mountain searches, unless the point last seen is the top of say Snowdon, where the dog may be able to provide a direction of travel for the ground troops. The air scenting dogs will cover an area much quicker as they pick up on a concentration of any human scent, rather than a trail. Urban searches, especially for Alzheimer's sufferers and children would be ideal as they don't tend to wander far from the PLS, but are difficult to find. Suicides who leave their vehicles somewhere could also be trailed to their chosen hiding place. It's very probable many searches could have been brought to a quicker end had a trailing dog been available at the time.

Gwen adds, 'SARDA Wales has been experimenting with trailing dogs over the past few years, believing that the asset of a trailing dog would assist in finding the lost person sooner. Having a trailing dog ready to respond with a handler who is a member of a mountain rescue team will only enhance our ability.'

'Andy Dunn's dog Buster had been ready to take his novice grade mountain search dog assessment when it was discovered Buster had scoliosis of the spine. Buster had a great nose and to waste all that time and effort would have been a great pity, so SARDA Wales suggested Andy change to trailing work. Sadly, it proved too physically demanding for Buster and he had to retire, but not before valuable knowledge had been gleaned. Andy got another black lab Jack, and carried on the trailing, progressing much faster as this was the only way Jack had been trained, unlike Buster, who had been trained to air scent first.

'Last June, I started to train my six month old chocolate labrador to trail. Whilst in Scotland for the SARDA Wales annual training week, Andy and I put together the first training stages and requirements for assessments but, soon after that, Andy had to retire Jack with a rare windpipe problem which starves him of oxygen. This left Rolf and me carrying the trailing flag. 'By May 2004, we had been graded at Stage Five, examined by Tom Middlemas, who himself trails with bloodhounds. Tom was very surprised and pleased to see what we were doing. He helped us finalise the training stages and assessments and also pointed me in the right direction for my novice assessment with a few short training sessions.

'On 4 December, SARDA Wales held their first Novice Assessment for a trail dog and I'm very proud to say that we passed. Rolf and I will be available for call outs and, depending on the job, will be deployed at the discretion of the call out co-ordinator. Watch this space!

'Gaynor Lewis and Pero also passed their novice search dog assessment. Those of you who know them will know it's been a long hard road, but I'm pleased they've come through and wish them many years of service for SARDA. Steve Howe and Tilly have also passed their mountain search dog regrade so will be with us for another three years.'

### A few points to consider before calling out the Trail Team:-

1. **Scent article** – should be something that has been worn by the missing person recently – NOT washed! Article should not be handled by anyone else and kept in a plastic bag eg. evidence bag.
2. **Time** – Rolf is currently working on 3 hour trails. Call the SARDA call out co-ordinator for advice on time scales – the sooner he's out, the fresher the trail.
3. **Navigator** – as for an air scenting dog, to work radio and keep a record of where they have and haven't been.

As trailing is new it will take a while to suss out the pros and cons. The more call outs the Team attend the sooner we will know. Hopefully they'll be a useful tool in the Mountain Rescue Box of Search Management!

For further information contact Gwen via email [gwenrichard@cymru1.net](mailto:gwenrichard@cymru1.net) or contact Roland Layland on 07734 204 749.

## ● HANDLE WITH CARE ●

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To find out more about us or to become a member contact:  
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Kendal, Cumbria LA9 8BR  
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carriage is upright but has mounted the first carriage and is wedged into the roof of the tunnel. The third carriage is upright but has left the track. The initial report confirms there is no fire or hazardous substances. There are six known fatalities, 170 injured, some seriously and 60 persons are trapped. The majority of uninjured passengers are located in the third carriage. Some passengers have emerged from the Diggle end of the tunnel cold and in a state of shock. The snow is still falling and is now four inches deep and the tunnel approach is hazardous on foot. 'Having to cope with all this', says Peter Hyde of Oldham MRT, 'would be a bad start to your day but, in this case it is only Oldham MBC's 2004 Exercise Pandora – a tabletop exercise designed to test the response and emergency plans of all the organisations that could be involved in an incident like this. 'Representatives from all the emergency services – and us of course – with hospitals, the press, various local authority departments and voluntary agencies are all given the chance to test and improve plans by being given a wide range of hypothetical problems to resolve as the incident develops. 'Happening four days after the Berkshire level crossing provided a poignant reminder that things like this do happen and being well prepared to face it is as important for the casualties as it is for those who have to respond to the need.'

## SOUTH WALES

### NEW CONTROL VEHICLE (MARK TWO)

**Longtown MRT** recently took delivery of a new Control vehicle to replace a 15 year old Ford Transit that was rapidly nearing the end of its serviceable life. After lengthy reviews of vehicle types available, the team settled on a new Vauxhall Movano 2.5 Tdi, long wheelbase, high



top, panel van, chosen against the criteria of initial cost, running cost, size, weight, power and payload. The vehicle was purchased from Baylis Haines & Strange, Vauxhall dealership in Gloucester at a very generous discount. The team spent a considerable amount of time researching and designing the interior layout and produced scale drawings to assist the fit out. The main central area acts as the control and communications area, accessed by the sliding

side door and the rear area is partitioned off and contains medical, technical and rescue equipment, accessed via the rear door. A Clark 12m mast has been permanently fitted internally, to the rear compartment and numerous power and radio cable outlets have been incorporated into the body of the vehicle. The few 'luxuries' fitted include an internal heater to keep their 'sensitive search managers warm in the winter and an external sun awning to keep them from sunburn in the summer months!' The acquisition of the vehicle was made possible by a very generous donation of £10,000 made by Monmouthshire County Council and money was also raised from the team's annual Black Mountains Challenge. Longtown would also like to thank the numerous companies who assisted with the fit out – Mobile Body Services (Worcester) for the main internal fit out, Arrow Ford (Blackwood) who installed the markings and Just Auto Electrics (Pontypool) who installed the lights and sirens. The total cost was approximately £28,000 and the careful planning has paid off, as the vehicle is already proving to be a fantastic addition to our search and rescue work.

For further information please contact Mark Nicholls, Team Leader on [mn@rpsl.com](mailto:mn@rpsl.com)

## SOUTH WEST

### NAME CHANGE FOR DARTMOOR

29 September 2004 saw a major change in **Dartmoor Rescue Group**. At the behest of the Charity Commissioners, the group devolved from one charity into five. Dartmoor Rescue Group remains a charity in its own right but the four sections of Ashburton, Okehampton, Plymouth and Tavistock now also have charitable status. After a great deal of hard work by constitutional sub committees, their overworked

### COMPACT DISCS, BLACKBERRIES AND BLUE LIGHTS

Though the last days of autumn, and with the New Year and winter looming fast, the West Country has not succumbed to the total concept of hibernation through these coming dark, damp, winter months. Quite the reverse. Cas care courses and all manner of training, fundraising, winter maintenance and exercises are planned for the new and more established members. Strangely though, events do seem to have a habit of surprise about them, rain in the summertime, for one. No one expects it, yet I am sure it's happened somewhere in the South West in living memory.

That was of course before the heavens opened over Boscastle this summer, haplessly tossing Cornwall Rescue Group firmly into their first large multiagency incident. Of course, the astute among you will be thinking, 'Ah but things like that are all planned for, and all manner of things are in place for such disasters. We have the Civil

group secretary Mike Pesterfield, and James Grant, the Tavistock team chairman (to name but two), the separate teams are each entitled 'Dartmoor Search & Rescue Team' suffixed with the town name. This will doubtless cause the press a deal of confusion – after 36 years they still have trouble distinguishing between the sections/teams.

### POLICE COMMENDATION

30 June saw two **SARDA** handlers with their navigators, called to assist **Exmoor SRT** with a search for a 73 year old female in Holsworthy, North Devon. She was found by search dog Amber with her handler Matt Robertson and navigator Dominick Guly. A life was definitely saved that evening. As a result, Exmoor team members and the SARDA members involved were awarded a Devon & Cornwall Police Commendation. Matt and Dominick, along with Alex and Nicki Lyons – the other SARDA handlers involved, with their dog Aiken – were invited to attend the presentation at Powderham Castle in October to receive the Commendation.

Nicki Lyons has also been nominated for a Premier South West award in the Compassion category by a former colleague, Judith Hewlett, from Torquay. These awards are a WMN-backed campaign to recognise local heroes. Supported by BBC South West and Noel Edmonds' Unique Communications Group, it is sponsored by airline Flybe. People living and working in the region were invited to nominate people in eleven categories.

Mrs Hewlett said, 'At least thirteen people owe their lives to Nicki. The work is voluntary, and she gives up her time for free, 24 hours a day. She and many like her are frequently overlooked but they are life savers and an irreplaceable part of the emergency services.'

Contingencies Bill now rolling out to ensure that aid and resources are ready and available when the fan is truly and positively struck.' SWERA will, indeed, be lobbying that mountain rescue is represented on the regional emergency services forum and that the regional volunteer SAR teams will also be represented on the volunteer forum, both to put the message across and to ensure that a fair slice of any available funding for resilience works doesn't just disappear into the mist.

Going back to Boscastle, now that the smoke has settled, invitations were recently sent out, and accepted, to pop into 10 Downing Street for the evening. One such invite found its way into the hand of Sgt Mike Rose of Devon & Cornwall Police (SWERA Chairman). Armed with this hallowed invite and a copy of the Mountain Rescue CD, Mike ventured off to the bright lights and gold lined streets of London, evading blaggards, cut throats and the occasional highwayman, tasked with delivery of the CD –

# Suspension trauma for non-medical people!

## Nick Mattock (non-medical person from Bowland Pennine MRT) explains

There seems to be the idea in our team that if there's something new to be learned then the best person to teach it is the most unlikely to understand it. That way we know everyone else will get it explained to them in an easy-to-understand way! And so it was that when the team was kindly invited to send someone over to Holme Valley for a lecture, my name was put forward...

The speaker was Paul Seddon, who has recently completed a review and evaluation for the Health and Safety Executive of existing knowledge about harness suspension. Although the report is primarily concerned with the use of harnesses in industry, Paul is a mountaineer and has worked in the outdoor equipment field for many years, meaning that his presentation to the assembled MR members was relevant, informative and worthwhile.

### What is suspension trauma?

Suspension trauma is the common name given to orthostatic shock resulting from being suspended motionless in a harness. Orthostatic syndrome is well understood within the medical community but, strangely, the idea that it can arise from being suspended in a harness is not.

The most common example of an orthostatic syncope is that of a soldier who, having been upright for a long period of time feints into a horizontal position, which is the body's way of enabling them to regain consciousness. A full body harness wearer who remains upright and motionless for a length of time is unable to employ this natural defence and so the situation becomes a dangerous one.

### What causes suspension trauma?

The major factor in orthostatic syncope is that of venous pooling, where the blood accumulates in the lower parts of the body due to natural gravity. Usually motion encourages the body to continually pump blood around its system but when motionless the body fails to do

this as effectively and the blood pools, bringing about hypovolaemia which results in a fall in cardiac output and arterial pressure. The body compensates for this state of affairs by going into orthostatic syndrome, which first sees tachycardia and an increased blood pressure, followed soon by a drop in pulse rate and blood pressure. These symptoms can lead to unconsciousness and death. German research in the 1970s saw the effects of orthostatic shock become evident within five minutes of being immobile in a harness.

Factors that may increase the risk of orthostatic shock in a suspended casualty include unconsciousness, entrapment, fatigue, dehydration, hypothermia, low glucose etc. Anxiety can also contribute to making the casualty's condition worse as this stimulates chemicals in the body leading to an imbalance that can promote hypovolaemia.

### The symptoms (in no particular order)

- Pallor
- Cold sweats
- Nausea
- Ringing in the ears
- Blurred vision
- Loss of consciousness

### The implication for mountain rescuers

Possibly the most important thing to stress with regards to orthostatic shock and mountain rescuers is the risk at which we are. Think how often you or one of your team members has simulated an unconscious casualty for a training exercise, or how often you've been suspended in an awkward position whilst treating a casualty. Mountain rescuers not only need to be aware of the possibility of suspension trauma in others, but also in themselves. Prevention is better than cure and common sense plays a big role in this with the rescuers only 'working' when fit to do

so, making sure they take on plenty of fluids, keeping warm and, most importantly, by keeping moving.

A uniform treatment for suspension trauma has not yet been developed and this is a very real challenge for those in the wider medical community as well as those engaged specifically in rescue medicine. Quickly returning a casualty to the horizontal position will cause deoxygenated blood and toxins to flood from the area in which they have pooled into the heart and bring about cardiac arrest, and this should be borne in mind when dealing with any casualty who you suspect may have been susceptible to suspension trauma. The only suggested treatment at present would seem to be a slow returning of a casualty to the horizontal, which obviously proves problematic for a normal stretcher evacuation and must be balanced against whatever other medical conditions are present. Bear in mind that the ambulance crews that you hand the casualty over to may not be familiar with the term 'suspension trauma' but will be well aware of orthostatic shock.

### The report

A copy of Paul Seddon's report for the HSE *Harness suspension: review and evaluation of existing information* can be downloaded for free from the HSE website

[http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/crr\\_pdf/2002/crr02451.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/crr_pdf/2002/crr02451.pdf) or purchased from HMSO for about £20.

### Key words explained

*Orthostatic*: relating to, or caused by an upright posture.

*Syncope*: temporary loss of consciousness caused by low blood pressure.

*Hypovolaemia*: a decreased volume of circulating blood in the body.

*Tachycardia*: an abnormally rapid heart rate.

hopefully into the hands of Mr Blair himself. Now then one thing our grandmothers always taught us down here – along with always making sure you were wearing clean underpants (in case you were knocked down by a bus) and always to have a neatly pressed and folded handkerchief tucked in the pocket – was the concept of contingency planning. With this in mind, a second CD, together with a letter asking the PM to put his personal backing behind the campaign, was despatched in the care of the RAF. Just in case. But, needless to say, both CDs were duly delivered. Regarding the ongoing saga of Blues & Twos, recognition was positively dispensed by a West Country Court against a SWERA rescue team member charged with exceeding the speed limit whilst attending a callout – despite the use of a blue light to warn other road users of the urgency of his task. The case was dismissed as mountain rescue is an emergency service and, as such, the current exemptions apply.

Good news but, that said, we all must ensure the standard of driver training and safe driving technique given to team members falls in line with this ever evolving legislation. On an entirely different tack, it's amazing what you find written on the paper which, prior to consumption, was the last resting place of your fish and chip supper. 'Blackberry Rage' apparently was rife on the footpaths of the parish late last summer. An incident was reported during which an elderly woman was observed scolding three small boys for picking blackberries close to where she had already 'trawled her haul'. These innocent children and their puppy, armed only with an empty ice cream container, had been tasked to fill it – for the purpose of making a single blackberry and apple crumble for dessert for that evening's supper, from the plentiful hedgerow. Not plentiful enough for all to share, it would seem, in the view of the elderly woman who by this time had already harvested two extremely large buckets full.

I find this selfish attitude towards a harmless and therapeutic early Autumn tradition, quite incredible. After all, aren't we supposed to be encouraging our children to take exercise and benefit from the goodness of freshly picked fare! Surely enjoyment of the countryside is for all, not just those who get there first with the biggest bucket and the loudest mouth? It may be somewhat lateral, but is there a connection here with government funding? Or, to be precise, the disparity between the (bucket) size of funding available to mountain rescue teams compared with other voluntary aid organisations. Should there be a more forceful tack taken to highlight the efforts of the rescue teams? Maybe it's just as important for us all to talk with and inform the public, MPs and local councillors as it is for us to make sure the rucksack is packed and batteries charged ready for when the pager next goes off.

**Alan George** Chief Rescue Officer  
Avon & Somerset CRT & SWERA

## SCOTLAND UNIFIES SEARCH & RESCUE COMMUNICATIONS

The MRC of Scotland is replacing several different analogue networks and single channel operations with a new radio system from ntl. The base for this new system is the SAR Bandplan, a UK-wide initiative driven by the UK SAR Operators communications working group. This provides a frequency spectrum specifically to enable the many different agencies to inter-communicate and combine efforts in the most effective way.

### Fit for a harsh environment

Nick Forwood chairman of the MRC of S outlines the objectives, 'We have been working with legacy systems that were reasonably efficient in some areas, but ageing and obsolete in others. It has been clear for some time that we needed a more unified network to allow for reliable communication between a variety of teams and individuals.

'We needed a system that would be fit for purpose in our harsh environment – waterproof, high power, and capable of operating in cold weather – but also relatively simple to use by everyone.

'The unified radio system project is two-

thirds funded by a generous grant from the Scottish Executive, with the rest coming from a substantial charitable bequest, for which we are very grateful.'

### Seeking best value

The MRC of S worked closely with potential suppliers during a consultative period to ensure that their exacting requirements were understood, and suitable products and technologies identified and assessed. Following exhaustive tests and trials, the £500,000-plus contract to design and build the new system was awarded to ntl. The company has now supplied and commissioned 800 hand-portable radios and accessories, some 50 mobile radio sets for rescue vehicles, plus base stations (some fixed, some temporary) and repeaters for up to 23 teams.

Using the UK Bandplan's more efficient frequency spectrum, the new radios operate on a multi-channel communications system that reduces local interference and channel congestion. ntl has also programmed in extra Bandplan frequencies that will enable communications with other public safety organisations. In addition, since there are more rescue teams than frequencies, ntl has carried out the mapping to establish where frequencies can be re-used without risk of interference. In the coming months, mobile data communications will be added to the voice facilities, giving teams the ability to send and receive GPS location information.

Ian Rideout, radio communications officer for MRC of S and full-time operations director for the British Red Cross, endorses the decision to work with ntl.

'The ntl team carried out a thorough evaluation to come up with the right equipment for our criteria, and impressed us with the depth of preparatory and advisory work,' he says. 'But equally importantly, they offered best value overall – in terms of expertise, supply, and commitment to our cause. They went beyond our expectations, with members of the ntl team in Scotland even going out with our volunteers to experience mountain rescue communications issues at first hand.

'From the start, they have taken a great interest in understanding the conditions in which we work, and have been very flexible. For example, when a major incident occurred in the North of Scotland before the new system was fully operational, ntl responded with tremendous goodwill to our request to help set up some of the new communications equipment.

### Drawing on experience

ntl's Public Safety group already provides communications services to more than three-quarters of the UK's police, fire and ambulance services as well as other national public safety organisations such as the coastguard and RNLI. With a history in transmission stretching back 48 years, the company has built up a thorough understanding of both the technical and operational aspects of public safety communications, and the issues involved in enabling organisations with large numbers of radio users to migrate from analogue to digital systems. Digital technology offers great potential for adding capabilities and improving information, but its complexity can raise operational and organisational issues, and ntl engineers are skilled in ensuring that these do not affect service levels during the transition.

This level of experience is important in emergency services organisations choosing to work with ntl. Each group is different, but all depend on individuals being able to communicate when and where required, and all need an uninterrupted service. There are especially strong parallels between RNLI and MRC of S requirements since both need rugged and reliable voice and data services for all-volunteer crews operating in potentially dangerous situations. ntl designed and built the RNLI's well-proven radio communications system, and now manages and maintains the network and equipment. Their national engineering force is based locally around the UK, so customers benefit from dealing with familiar faces with local knowledge.

Independence from technology manufacturers is another advantage because it means its specialists can operate as true systems integrators – assessing a wide range of products and technologies on their merits and fitness for purpose

### Already proven

'Our old and piecemeal systems have been transformed into a system that's fit for purpose,' says Ian Rideout. 'It will make a huge difference to rescue communications, and proved itself in first use when an aircraft crashed in mountainous terrain in late October 2004. In view of where the aircraft came to rest, we would have had a major communications problem without the new system. The teams with the new equipment were very complimentary about it.'

'We're also very proud of the fact that our new radio system is the UK's first national implementation of a system based on the UK Bandplan,' adds Nick Forwood. 'In Scotland we are working in a predominantly mountainous terrain with a great need for co-ordinated SAR services. As a result there has been a tremendous concentration of will from government, police, the MRC of S and ntl, so we have been able to move very quickly, and take a lead.'

## SARDA WALES TRAINING WEEK 27 FEBRUARY – 5 MARCH 2005



This year's SARDA Wales Training Week takes place at Insh Hall, Kinraig, near Aviemore. The number of places is limited so please book early. The week will follow the normal pattern of training for both trainee and graded dogs and handlers, with some winter mountaineering training also provided. Non dog handlers are expected to give a minimum of two days commitment to the dog training programme.

Cost is £120, inclusive of all meals and accommodation. Applications with a deposit of £80 per person were due by 20 December – all places are allocated on a first come first served basis but there may be a few spaces still available. The balance will be due on 31 January. Applications will only be accepted with the full deposit and for the full week. Only SARDA registered dogs may take part in the training programme and no other dogs will be allowed on training exercises. Any other non-registered dog brought to Insh Hall will require proof of worming and vaccination to be supplied at the time of full payment, in the form of a photocopy of the inoculation certificate and receipt of worming. For the safety of all dogs this must be complied with.

### Do you want my body?

Do you like dogs? Mind rolling around in the wet, snow and sheep sh\*\*, making silly noises? Are you a little bit mad? If so, you'd enjoy being a dogsbody. You'll need, depending on the season, full winter gear for training with the pups as you'll be running around most of the day and need to keep warm and dry. With older pups, novice dogs and graded dogs you'll need extra equipment – sleeping bag, bivvi bag, sleeping roll mat, crampons and ice axe if you're going high.

With the young pups, everything's a game. You must be prepared to run around squealing and making silly noises playing tug. They only have a small attention span so the games are fast and furious and then they need a rest. With older pups, you may have to hide in one place for up to half an hour. For novice dogs that increases to 2-3 hours and, for graded dogs, up to 4-5 hours – depending on the area being worked. Sleeping bags and bivvi bags are a must to keep you warm and dry, and camouflage you so the handler doesn't see you.

For the Scottish week, volunteers are asked to body for at least two days. You're only asked to do what you are happy and confident with. The rest of the time they can either body or go off walking or sightseeing.

The first time I bodied, a colleague said, 'Let me get this right – you are paying to go and lie on a wet hillside waiting for a dog to find you. You are sad.' But I'm not sad at all – I thoroughly enjoy the week, the handlers are a fantastic group of people, work hard, play hard and most of them drink hard! They are always really appreciative – without us they wouldn't be able to train their dogs. I am often asked, 'What do you get out of it?' I get frozen, often wet, baked in the summer, a wonderful tan on the bits which have not been bitten by mozzies or midges – and a feeling of great pride in the dogs. To watch them progress through novice to fully graded dogs, makes me feel so proud, because in a way they are my dogs too, I have helped them on their way.

**Di Reynolds**  
Dogsbody SARDA England



The report of last year's training week missed the copy deadline. But, just to demonstrate that nothing ever gets chucked in the editor's office – just hides in the files for future use – here it is now, to whet your appetite for 2005. Harold Burrows reported. 'SARDA Wales runs a training week every year so both dogs and handlers can gain experience in the high mountains and severe weather conditions on the Cairngorm plateau. In 2004, we moved the week forward to the beginning of February, in an attempt to find good snow, wind, hail and tempest. As the advance party

arrived on Saturday we had snow and ice. 'At last, we have it right!' came the call. Sunday morning dawned cold, with ice on the loch. There was even ice in the branches and trees. I took my dog Sam for an early walk around the lake with just the moonlight on the loch, then it was down to the kitchen to help Simon (our cook) prepare the evening meal and unload the fresh fruit and veg from the delivery van. Tons of stuff came out of that little 5 cwt van! Monday morning, our spirits rose along with the temperature as we watched the snow disappear. So off to the high hills we went, getting our boots wet for the first time. Just to be in the hills is magic, but to stand in the mountains watching the handlers with their dogs working big areas, the red deer running over the hills the odd golden eagle high in the sky is fantastic.

The training week is open to all. People from all over the UK come and join us. There are the dogs bodies – without whom we could not train the dogs – plus dogs and handlers from other SARDA associations. We work hard, going out whatever the weather to train and improve the service we provide to mountain rescue teams and, of course, we play hard too – the nightly talking over a pint or two putting the training into context and, while we're there, sorting out the troubles of the world.

The day begins with breakfast at 7.00 am, so we can be on the hill by 9.00. Lunch is taken on the hoof – frozen ham sandwiches last longer and the hot coffee burns your mouth (they say it's good for testing if your fillings are okay and we do have a dentist with us on the training week!) The evening meal is at 6.00 pm, with our Simon turning out a high standard of meals you would not believe – followed by an evening lecture on topics as diverse as yoga, first aid, checking snow for avalanche, dog first aid, how to bury people in the snow, tracking with Tonto Jones, how dogs smell... to name but a few. Then it's off down to the pub and, on our last night, a sing song to empty any bar, tell a funny story or even dedicate a song to a loved one. It's a great week whether you're an experienced mountaineer or just want to help train dogs and enjoy the company of like minded people.



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## Feedback UK Mountain Rescue Conference 2004...

Following the Conference in September, Chairman Peter Howells invited feedback from delegates. Richard Warren's balanced observation (below) was representative of many comments. Responses from Peter (and Judy).

Dear Peter, Thanks to you and all your team for laying on the 2004 Conference. Tremendous hard work by all and we in the Lakes wish to convey our appreciation. As requested, here is some feedback for the preparation for Lancaster.

### What went well...

Good use of multimedia and very good screen in main hall. I liked the concept of the opening presentation to music but the choice of images and 'hero' music switched off a lot of the audience. I did like the *Rescue Me* soundtrack – it was appropriate for the closing of the conference and great to have photos of participants. Well done to whoever was responsible for that.

Good representation from all the regions – an ideal opportunity for networking. Excellent sessions on Air Ambulance. Are you fit enough? Public view of MR (first class), Fundraising, UK Land SAR, and Sleep deprivation (first class). Good summary from Bob Sharp on MR development since Edinburgh. Accommodation very good and secure. Excellent dinner restaurant and quality of food. Good bar but shortage of bar staff. Conference brochure OK but needed more maps to the various tracks.

• *The 2002 Edinburgh brochure had carried a specially drawn map of the campus and accommodation. In an effort to reduce costs (extra pages of print and computer generated imagery tot up) and, given that the University were supplying maps, it was decided not to do that this year. Lesson learned I think. Judy*

Lecture rooms not overcrowded. A good natural split of personnel. Start time OK and finish time allowed people to travel home. The audience did dwindle by 50% after the morning coffee break. Good motivational lecture by Don Cooper brought the whole thing nicely to an end.

### What could be improved...

Location poor. A good 3/4 mile from accommodation to lectures. Parking instructions for registration would have helped as there was plenty but difficult to find in the dark. Lunch venue too far, especially in the rain.

Sound quality in the hall was very poor. It improved as the conference progressed and more people complained. Roving mikes would have helped and you do need more floor staff.

• *Having paid a University technician to set up I was also upset at the exceptionally poor sound quality. This had been checked on Friday evening and worked well. We called the tech back but, because there were two other conferences taking place, he took two hours to arrive. Peter*

For many, this third UK Conference, was successful with plenty of good feedback but we recognise that, for others, expectations were not totally met. We have now been able to review the feedback, and what did and didn't work. The main points of concern seemed to be the venue, the proximity (or otherwise) of the accommodation, lectures and catering facilities, the quality of the speaker programme and (once again!) the bar.

In what started out as a most difficult financial situation, we evaluated a number of venues in Wales – whose 'turn' it was to host the conference. Bangor was chosen because it was reasonably central. It's true – especially in view of the weather – that the distance from the accommodation and restaurant to the site of the lectures and exhibition was too far and a map of the parking facilities at the lecture site would have been useful.

I agree the arrangements were not ideal, but this venue was the only one in North Wales. For 2006, it has now been agreed we return to Lancaster University. This venue meets our requirements, all areas are on one site and it is central to most UK teams.

So, what of the conference content? Over 30% of the sessions had never been presented to a mountain rescue conference in any part of the UK. No mean feat, especially when we had very little funding for speakers' expenses until July. My thanks must go to the overseas speakers who agreed to come at such short notice. I believe the speaker programme catered for team members new and old.

As for the bar... you may recall a previous conference report in which I said, 'I warned them once, I warned them twice, I even warned them thrice, and still they ran out of beer'. I asked Bangor to prepare for over 300 attendees arriving at the bar. I was assured, on more than one occasion, that sufficient staff would be on duty and plenty of beer stock at hand. I even confirmed this with both the bars manager and conference officer earlier in the week. But, when registration closed and the conference team arrived at the bar, the queue was four deep with only three staff serving. I can only hope Lancaster will take my advice and staff up – and stock up – for 2006.

Saturday for the conference team was mainly a blur. Even in the bar, they were still working with the raffle. Thanks to all the companies who donated prizes. We arranged a late night meeting room after the bar closed, for a 'bring your own' party and this was a great success with 100+ networking into the wee small hours.

In late November, the committee met to review the conference and begin planning the next. **Lancaster University is booked for 22-24 September 2006** – a little later than usual but the only weekend they have available. So put it in your diaries now and start saving!

A number of action points came from the meeting but much will depend on the income available. Please let me know what you think is a reasonable charge – £50, £60, £70, £80, £90? This year, we were able to reduce the price and refund monies to early bookers (although many commented they would have been happy to leave the money in the pot) but in future we may have to charge a higher price.

Do you have a topic you would like to present in 2006? Or one you might like to see at the conference? We are always looking for good ideas and potential speakers and would like to include more workshops and debates to encourage more interaction with attendees.

Finally, of course, there are two words of thanks. The first to those of you who attended the conference. Without you there would be no conference. It's your weekend, so we look forward to any suggestions and ideas. Secondly, I'd like to give a personal thanks to the continued dedication of the UK conference team. They take time out and travel to up to eight meetings per year and then take away a list of actions for completion before the next meeting.

**Peter Howells** Conference Chairman  
plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk

## SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY

# LOOKING BACKWARDS... AND FORWARDS

## David Allan on history

**A** childhood immersion in strict chapel life means I am only too well aware of the dire warning of St Luke Ch.9.V.62. In later years I also, for some time, subscribed to the expressed view of Henry Ford that 'History is more or less bunk'. Now, however, I'm not so sure.

Reflecting on what has gone before certainly affords a sight of how far we have travelled. But does it help to decide where we should be travelling? There is no doubt that a regular backward glance from the helm of a boat gives a good indication of how far we have strayed from the intended course and how much leeway to apply to correct things.

One of the immediate benefits of my retirement from the NHS (well almost) is the time to read at leisure matters that are not of urgent and pressing importance. This has allowed me to peruse some of the early MRC papers. There is a great deal to work through, but almost the first striking item of note is the membership of the early MRC committee. The list of names is instantly recognisable for mountaineering achievement at home and abroad with an impressive catalogue of new routes and summits, from Derbyshire outcrops to the Himalaya.

A detailed account would occupy more than one article and perhaps can be expanded in the future, but a brief dip into this world produces Joe Walmsley leading an expedition to Masherbrum; Jack Longland with numerous new routes in addition to his famed line on Clowgn d'ur Arduu; Sid Cross producing enough new routes to almost fill his own guide book with the Eliminate routes on Dow Crag, Dier Bield Crack and Sinister Slabs amongst the best known and Graham MacPhee Glover's Chimney on the Ben and the E. Face of Mont Maudit. Also there is John Gosling who, after establishing many new lines in the Peak District, gave up the prospect of being Professor of Anatomy in Manchester in order to work in California and climb in Yosemite. (I remember John with some affection as holding his rope for his ascent of Anaconda on Hen Cloud is the only time I have been accredited with a new route.)

There are many other names but these alone indicate the intensity of mountaineering experience and involvement with the formative years of mountain rescue.

The present situation is clearly very different. That is not to say there is no mountaineering experience within the MRC. Far from it – the climbing CVs of the current equipment officer and medical officer alone would make impressive reading. There is not, however, the universality of front line mountaineering of previous years.

It is without my present remit to consider why this change has occurred but rather I would ask the questions 'Does it make a difference now?' and 'Will it change the way we move in the future?' Operationally mountain rescue is an effective service rarely failing to deliver anything less than totally committed and highly trained teams onto the hillside. Perhaps the time and effort required to reach this level of proficiency leaves little time for individual climbing exploits and epics.

Mountaineering is inherently wedded to risk taking and danger and most participants are well attuned to this.

*That Alpine witchery still onward lures, Upwards, still upwards, till the fatal list Grows longer of the early mourned and missed.*

### Frances Ridley Havergal, 1884

The Hunt Report on Mountain Training in 1975 fully recognised this essential element of the sport. *'Those who go to the mountains of their own free will must be free to court these risks.'*

All of this does not deny that there is immense pleasure and satisfaction to be gained by many thousands of people who simply visit mountains without ever courting any significant risk. There is also the need for some special circumstance to be described for those, especially youngsters who are 'taken' into the mountains. This has been well discussed by Harold Drasdo and Colin Mortlock and what was written some twenty years ago is just as relevant today.

In recent years there has developed, I believe, a tendency for the strictures correctly applied to 'educational climbing' to be cast more widely. One should not, I suppose, in a society which frowns upon conkers, window boxes and contact sports, be too surprised to find that there are those who cannot appreciate the idea of risk taking without material gain. Again it is not surprising to find politicians amongst the ranks of those of such a mind. Certainly not surprising to Robert Louis Stevenson when in 1882 he wrote, *'Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary.'*

Herein lies a danger for mountain rescue in coming years. It would be very easy to be drawn into criticism and condemnation of the risk taking nature of mountaineering when from time to time accidents and tragedies unfold. This is particularly so when society is also increasingly overtaken by a culture of blame and shame.

Is it possible that those who are involved in mountain rescue but not in 'sharp end of the rope mountaineering' are more likely to be drawn into this arena? If so then the change in emphasis of membership of the MRC over the past decades is of consequence and concern. Even for those who are immersed in the climbing world as well as mountain rescue pitfalls lie ahead. I believe it will be necessary for us to give positive and public support to the freedoms inherent in climbing on many occasions in the future. It will be equally important to avoid being drawn into the realms of passing censure on these freedoms and unwittingly perhaps give credence to the views of those who cannot understand the climbing world.

*'And I have an enemy,' I cried  
'And he is terrible and strong  
Stronger than mountain, wilder far,  
His name is Fear, I know him well.  
How should I lock him in a shell?'*

**Rosemary Dobson**

# SCENE AWARENESS

As the profile of mountain rescue increases and our partner agencies learn more about the services that we deliver, the professional expectation placed upon teams also grows. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the use of rescue teams in major incidents. As a member of a team it is now more likely than ever that you will be involved in what the police call 'scene'. 'Scene' is the generic term used to describe any place, vehicle or even a person connected to a police investigation into a suspicious matter that may yield some kind of evidence. It doesn't necessarily mean that a crime has occurred but the police apply rigorous standards of investigation to any death in the outdoors, as well as at serious accidents and the like.

In the wake of events such as the Morecambe Bay tragedy and a murder in the north of our area, Bowland Pennine MRT have been working closely with Lancashire Constabulary's Crime Scene Investigators to develop scene awareness amongst team members.

Minute amounts of material, which could connect an individual to a scene will be present and your initial actions can be vital if such evidence is not to be destroyed or devalued. There will be no second chance. So the golden rule is if you are the first person present, your responsibility is to preserve and not to change the value of any evidence at a scene.

### Suggested initial actions at a scene

- The scene should be preserved calmly and carefully. Always expect the worse and be cautious. Take great care.

- Inform control immediately so that extra resources can be sent to your location and the appropriate authorities can be informed.

The preservation of the scene, particularly of a serious crime, will continue long after the MRT hand over to the police or other authorities. No-one should be allowed to enter the scene without a reason that you'd be happy to justify in court, and this includes other team members! As barrier tape is not always readily available in a fell environment, improvised access control can be employed eg. rucksacks, physical presence and rope.

For medical reasons you may have to enter the scene. If you do, take great care as there may be a wealth of potential evidence on entry points eg. fences, footpaths etc. Try and avoid the obvious routes that other persons at the scene may have taken and use the same route back from the victim (a Common Entry Path).

Having said all this, your duty to protect life takes precedence over everything else.

### Written records

Since time immemorial, police officers have fastidiously kept notes of their actions and other information in their pocket notebooks. Other emergency services and agencies are now discovering the benefits of personal record keeping. It may be that you are called to a court to present any evidence you may be able to offer in relation to a death or other event. As such, it is well worth recording as much as possible about your involvement. Information you may want to consider including in a pocket notebook:-

- The time you arrived at the scene
- Actions that you have taken (including what time you took them)

- In respect of injured persons, note how the person was lying or sitting when you arrived. If the injured person is unconscious, note the position of the limbs and the condition of the clothing

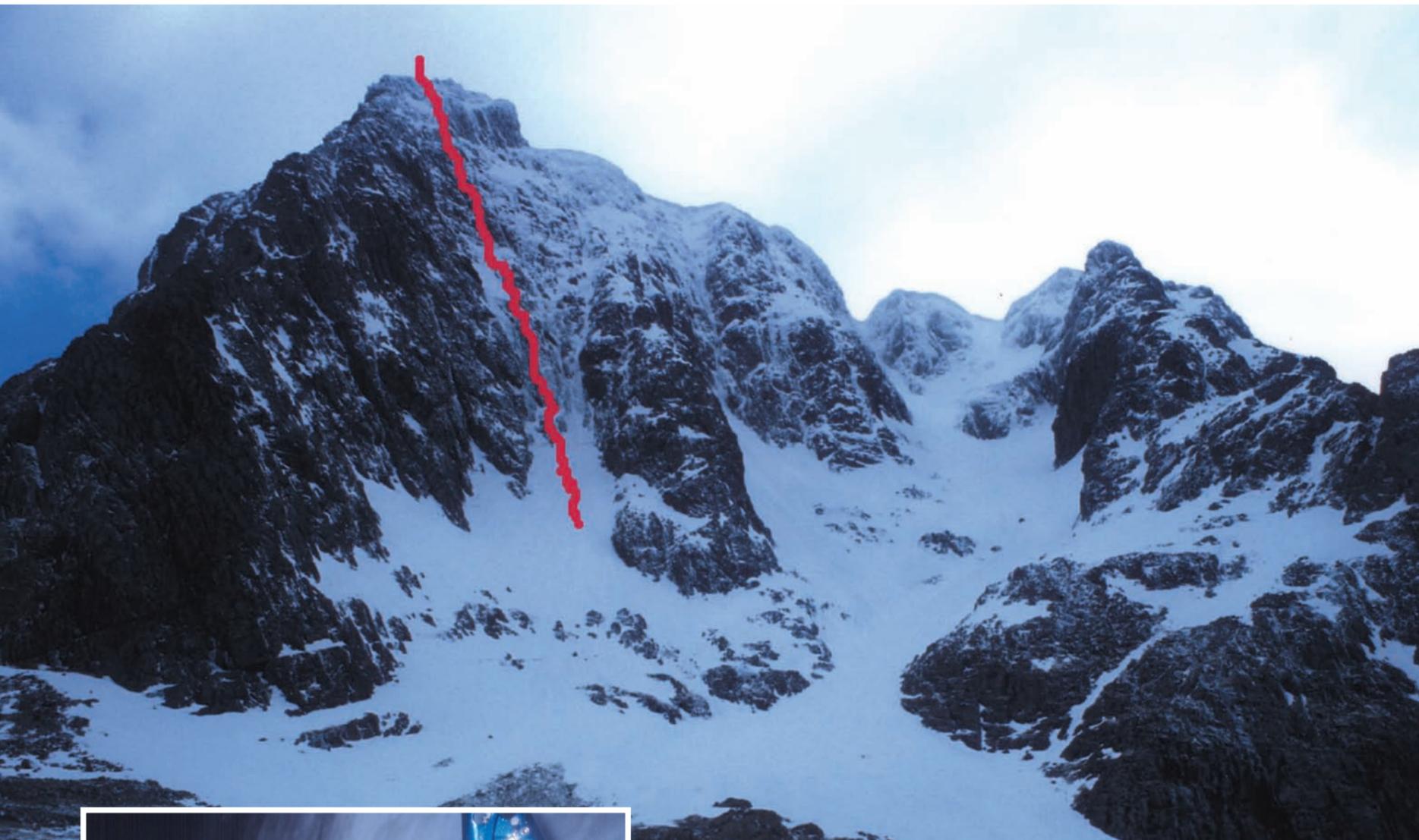
- A quick sketch of the scene and the original position of any items you have to move
- A photo of the scene may be of use

**Nick Mattock** (Bowland Pennine MRT)

# BIG LOWERS

Mick Tighe on belonephobia, big lowers and the Ben

CLIMBER ON MEGGY, EIGHT HOURS HANGIN' ON



CASUALTY HANGING ON ORION FACE

**Neil:** 'A loud crack, and a brief impression of a fracture line in the snow level with my axes and the whole slope was away, me with it. Instant desperate attempts at axe-braking failed, and I went over the upper buttress headfirst. A mess of images, rock and snow going past at speed and the inevitable failure of the belay loomed large. We weren't going to survive this one. 'But the belay held, and slowly, gently, I came to a halt and swung across the face into the chimney. Roger was obviously performing

belaying heroics above me, but I simply felt very happy. And very calm, although I knew I was very close to screaming panic. Even the brief inspection which revealed that my left leg seemed to be missing didn't bother me. I was grateful to be alive. A second look found the errant leg, but round the back of my right knee at a very bad angle.'

**Mick:** 'Belonephobia is the fear of sharp, pointed objects, or perhaps more specifically – needles, and I have to admit to a mild dose of it myself, having felt a certain whooziness recently whilst negotiating the surgery steps having had my regular tetanus booster. Neil fortunately had no such belonephobic hang-ups, and having

made a neat Swiss Army Knife incision in his salopettes I boldly stuck the needle into his thigh muscle, rather pleased he was getting injected and not me – I wonder if there's a phobia for people who have a fear of sticking needles into other people!

'In some ways though I suppose getting a needle stuck in his leg was the least of Neil's problems, after all he'd been perched on a tiny ice ledge 1,000ft up the Orion Face of Ben Nevis with a fractured femur for the past eight hours and was consequently a little chilly and in no small amount of pain, the numbing effect of the Cyclomorph injection was therefore some small relief; the problem now was how to splint the leg, as we were both suspended on

ropes 1,000ft up in the air and being bombarded with salvos of spindrift avalanches from the summit plateau for good measure. Improvisation usually comes to the rescue in such situations and after some time a raggle taggle of slings, krabs and half-inflated pneumatic splints was arranged to both our satisfactions, and all we needed to do now was get down!

**Neil:** 'Suffice it to say that Mick's splint job worked, the morphine didn't and the lower down Orion Direct was long and painful, even if the weather did clear up to give some good views.'

**Mick:** 'Inch by inch we crept down that face, Neil suspended from a knot above my head and swinging between my legs, where I could steer his leg away from the ice, thereby avoiding the searing pain any contact would bring – it was comfortable initially, but slowly the harness bit into waist and leg with a numbing pain. Bracing legs against the ice would leave me with an aching groin for days to come, and a John Wayne gait to go with it – small beer though compared to Neil's fractured femur. We rested for a while on the easier-angled snow – Neil on my knees, arms round my neck, cuddled in to try and relieve the pain in his leg – little did we care how it might look – no News of the World reporters here.'

We used condoms on the big lowers down the North Face of Ben Nevis in the good old days – they were difficult to get on with cold fingers, or with mittens on, but they stretched really well and once you had them fitted correctly with a bit of sticking plaster, they'd keep a radio dry all night.

Without good communications of course a lower couldn't even begin. They are often done in the dark and usually in bad weather – once the person being lowered goes over the edge they are out of sight and out of sound, and as it can be as much as 2,000ft down to safe ground a link or relay is often used to maintain good comms. We've tried throat (voice activated) microphones with little success, the problem being that everything said is sent over the airwaves and folk can't tell if you're speaking to the team leader, casualty, or just having a good curse

to yourself. We even had a little presser switch with a wire running down the arm into the palm of the hand, and activated by the thumb – it lasted about ten minutes, as did a boom microphone that got tangled in a sling. So with communications, simplicity has to be the theme, and it permeates through every aspect of the lower.

Simplicity, basics, call it what you will, but they have to be the golden rule when contemplating the rescue of injured, or stranded climbers from big cliff faces. The complicated, spider's web scenarios often practised on the training crags don't travel too well into the harsh environment of a winter's night on the summit of Ben Nevis; and whilst not every team has cliffs of these proportions on their patch, I would suggest that simplicity be the guideline for a lower on any crag, anywhere, at any time. Except maybe for the ropes, I can't think of any so-called technical lower that cannot be done with the gear the average climber carries on his or her climbing harness, and some person-power.

How many hours have we spent – one wonders – passing knots through various lowering devices with the inevitable debate: mariner knots, prussik, shunts and a lexicon of other such devices. The manufacturers came up with even more devices that would allow knots to pass round, through or over them. All this and all we really needed to do was get a longer rope to save having to join shorter ones together. In Lochaber, we have two 2,000ft ropes stashed on the summit of Ben Nevis, on drums to avoid kinks – there's also a sledge to put the drums on so they can be dragged to the lowering point, 2,000ft of rope is heavy. If we need to do a lower



where there isn't a 'stash' we just load some team members up with a few hundred feet of rope each – without cutting it – and they all walk to the lowering site in a line, with a few spare feet in between them. The job is of course simplified if – on a rare occasion – you can get a vehicle or helicopter to the lowering site.

If there are no knots to pass, then what device do we need to actually pass the rope through, one wonders. Once again the technophiles will have debated this at some length – there are a few in every team, they tend to have a metallic ring when moving around and you'll find a Technical Rescue magazine stuffed behind the toilet cistern if you're round at their house. The conversation will be pretty similar wherever you are and will revolve around various clumpy things, toothed cams, fall factors, shock loading and stress; which is what you normally get listening to these debates. With a bit of luck it ends up with a brawl – which is far more interesting than the subject that led up to it.



LOWER OFF NE BUTTRESS CASUALTY IN STRETCHER

600M ROPE DRUM  
NEVIS SUMMIT



I'm not the world's leading expert on big lowers (who is?) and you may have noticed a hint of the Devil's Advocate so far, but I have been involved in thirty or more big lowers in the past twenty years or so, more often than not as the one being

lowered, and on each and every occasion the lowering device has been a figure-of-eight, with maybe a prussik or a shunt for a back-up. The person feeding the rope always has a companion to help out and they swap over fairly regularly as a big lower, collecting casualties along the way, can take several hours.

Surprisingly perhaps, too much friction is often the problem with these lowers, not too little, and shock loading is almost nullified by length of rope, and friction over snow, rock, grass, heather or scree. The rope cutting into a cornice is a major problem in some cases, and a normal cliff-top roller disappears into the snow only slightly less quickly. The roller for pulling in the nets at the back of a trawler is the best cliff-top roller that we've found to date – unfortunately it weighs half a hundredweight. Various tests over the years have given us frightening fall factors when certain weights are dropped from certain heights in near laboratory conditions. Snow, grass, rock, heather and the like are not easy to replicate in controlled trials so we don't get the figures. Rest assured that you can bounce around as much as you like on a 1,000ft rope running over a cornice, and the belayer will be none the wiser – in fact most of the Lochaber boys will be on their second can of lager by this stage.

In theory, of course, all lowers should be done on double ropes, with separate belays, the added security of which is fairly apparent. In reality nearly every lower done in Lochaber over the past twenty years

has been done on a single rope – against all the rules maybe, but true. There are reasons: two ropes cause double the friction – often making the lower unworkable; it's almost impossible to pull 2,000ft of rope back up the face, so we can't commit both ropes to a lower in case there's a problem and someone else has to go down on the spare rope. There's also a rather more sinister reason here in Lochaber, as I'm the one who usually gets lowered, and I'm English – if there's a cock-up, it's no great loss!

No mention so far of perhaps the most important bit of all – the belays. I was amazed one time to attend a training exercise where stretcher lowers were being practised. It was the usual perfect right-angle cliff you could drive shit loads of gear to the bottom of, and take your granny up the side to enjoy the view. The amazing thing was the belay placements that were all marked with red paint – where's the 'training' in that I wondered. How about trying to find a belay on a 45 degree heather slope, or in six inches of snow that's rapidly turning to slush. For the 45 degree heather slope – try a joint exercise with the Coastguard and you'll soon learn how to deal with it, even if their gear is somewhat on the heavy side. For six inches of slushy snow start banging ice axes in with the biggest hammer you can find, and remember to take them back to the shop on Monday morning to get the rivets replaced. As far as belays in general, the message is simple – get some reality into your training

scenarios and don't be afraid to adapt or re-invent, and if you want an example or two have a look at military-type hold-fasts, which come in all shapes and sizes, can be adapted, modified or even remade in lighter-weight materials.

So, we've sorted out what happens at the top of the cliff, but what happens when the person being lowered gets to the casualty? First of all, avoid putting the casualty in a stretcher until you've got a good safe working area to do so, once again, in all the big lowers I've done the casualties – often badly injured – have gone to the bottom of the face before being placed in a stretcher. This obviously has to be a balance between medical requirement and practicality, but you can do a lot of damage trying to put a casualty in a stretcher whilst hanging in space. If there's a big ledge then go for it if you have the manpower, which is always there on the training crag, but not so often when the excreta hits the fan, otherwise head to the bottom where you should have a reception party.

If you can get them into a stretcher and off the face, then fine, otherwise it's back to basics again.

Adopt a good bedside manner, introduce yourself and get them clipped into you with a sling or two as it's bad form for casualties to arrive at the bottom of the crag before you do. Get the first aid sorted and take note from the opening narrative that the Cyclomorph didn't work – probably because Neil had hypothermia and poor circulation. Also, if your casualty is conscious you don't want to make them less so with drugs at this stage. As most British climbers don't wear a full body harness you'll need to put a chest boudrier (look that one up in the manual) on and clip it into the figure-eight-knot that you tied in the lowering rope – two feet above your head – before you left terra firma – do likewise with the legs if they're splinted, and get a solid anchor from the casualty's harness into the knot as well, they should now be swinging – almost – in front of you at around belly button height, with your legs braced against the rock or ice underneath them. Cut them free from rope or belay – making sure you cut the right rope! Head off down the face, making sure the casualty learns your name and address off by heart on the way down so they know where to send the bottle of malt. Try and get a lift down with the casualty in the helicopter if there is one, as if it's been a long lower you'll have difficulty walking.

If the non technical types find this all a little bit boring then here's a good exercise for map and compass or GPS. Every guidebook that's ever been written describes a climb from the bottom – never the top. We have

had great problems over the years finding the tops of climbs in the dark, bad weather, or both. So a member of the team voluntarily way-marked routes from the summit cairn on Ben Nevis to the tops of popular climbs – then transferred this information to the rest of the team's GPSs. This can of course be a useful exercise for any popular mountain area where you might have to find your way around in the dark or bad weather.

A wee war story to finish – this concerning Donald, who had been hanging in his ropes all night on a 1,500ft ice climb called Point Five Gully on Ben Nevis. To be honest we didn't think he'd survive, and it was with some trepidation that I was lowered about 1,000ft to where he was hanging. Initially, I did think he was dead as he was slumped over an ice-axe driven into the snow. A well-aimed snowball (not found in the first aid manual) made him look up.

'Christ! I'm pleased to see you!' I said.

'Not as bloody glad as I am to see you!' He replied.

My dear friends in the team added a final twist to this tale suggesting that Donald was the only bloke who was ever pleased to see Mick Tighe!

*Mick Tighe is a Mountain Guide, long-time member of Lochaber MRT, and is currently the National Training Officer to the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland.*

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**In the words of one local guide, 'Where else in Britain can you leave your car at 8am, get a ride up with your gear, finish your third route by 3pm and nip over the summit for a pint before leaving the hill?'**

The ski area has a reputation for good conditions late into the season which normally extends from mid December to mid April/May.

Fort William and Lochaber boast a vast number of Munros, whose snow covered peaks dominate the area, along with many renowned climbing areas including Creag Meagaidh – a perfect region to gain vital experience in winter conditions.

**As a mountain rescue team, if you contact us in advance, we can offer you a discounted rate on gondola or gondola and chair tickets.**

And if you fancy indulging in some other winter sports while you are here, Nevis Range has 35 pisted runs as well as the unrivalled off piste expanse of the Back Corries. With full facilities onsite including equipment hire, Snowsports School and extensive catering, we can provide the perfect winter sports venue.

For more information visit our website [www.nevisrange.co.uk](http://www.nevisrange.co.uk) or call us on **01397 705825**

Rescue. Point Five. 6/7 March 1997

An account of a rescue as logged by a team member acting as link between the helicopter, the police station and the various rescue teams on the hill. His position was on the Gairlochy Road looking up at the Alt na Mhuilinn to Nevis.

Thursday 6th

- 2000 hr** Team call out for lone climber injured and hanging in Point Five gully on Ben Nevis, weather atrocious with gale force winds and heavy rain at sea level.
- 2200 hr** Helicopter aborts attempt to put summit party high on the Ben. Team members glad to be on firm ground after a very bumpy ride!! Another six members of the team take four hours to reach the C.I.C. hut on foot.
- 2300 hr** Decision to delay rescue until first light after consultation with the chopper crew and the boys on their way to the C.I.C. hut.

Friday 7th

- 0600 hr** Team re-assemble at police station (some had spent the night there (voluntarily)). Weather improving with wind dropping and the rain ceasing.
- 0645 hr** Mobile 2 in position on the Gairlochy road to provide radio link.
- 0700 hr** Helicopter "Rescue 137" airborne with 4 team members.

- 0710 hr** Mobile 2 has comms with Nevis Willie from C.I.C. hut heading for bottom of Point Five.
- 0711 hr** Mobile 1 at dam with more team members.
- 0715 hr** Rescue 137 deploys 4 m.r.t. in Coire Leis to head for top.
- 0717 hr** Mobile 2 has comms with C.I.C. hut and with Nevis Harry at bottom of Observatory Gully to give link if needed.
- 0720 hr** Rescue 137 airborne with 5 m.r.t.
- 0725 hr** Rescue 137 deploys the 5 in Coire Leis to go to the top.
- 0730 hr** Rescue 137 uplifts 4 from the dam to C.I.C. hut.
- 0740 hr** Rescue 137 returns to Fort William to refuel.
- 0745 hr** Harry to C.I.C. hut, request stretcher and cas bag etc to Point 5.
- 0805 hr** Party on way up with equipment as requested.
- 0806 hr** Message to all parties from Rescue 137, 'crampon mat in place in chopper so no need to remove before entering.'
- 0806 hr** Nevis Noel and first party on summit.
- 0811 hr** Comms with RAF Kinloss m.r.t. on their way down the Great Glen to assist. Rescue 137 on way to pick up their advance party.
- 0825 hr** Party of 10 in position at bottom of the gully ready to receive the casualty.
- 0830 hr** All the summit party in place and preparing for lower.
- 0840 hr** 'Nevis Noel, avalanche report category 4, ready for lower in 20 minutes.'

- 0845 hr** Mick from summit comms strength 5.
- 0846 hr** Rescue 137 with 6 Kinloss to C.I.C. hut.
- 0904 hr** Starting the lower, request for radio silence except for the summit and Mick.
- 0910 hr** Drag on rope, Mick requests roller moved nearer to the edge.
- 0915 hr** Mick at steep section, can see rope below him.
- 0918 hr** Mick at top of climber's rope.
- 0923 hr** Mick has voice contact with climber, he is O.K. but does have some injuries.
- 0939 hr** Working on casualty. Hypothermic and leg and back injuries. Request vacuumat ready at bottom (already in place).
- 0955 hr** Mick requests down 6ft.
- 1004 hr** Continue lower
- 1009 hr** 'Wee bit faster.'
- 1013 hr** Casualty at bottom of Point Five.
- 1015 hr** Another 100ft.
- 1018 hr** Another 6ft.
- 1020 hr** Casualty ensconced in stretcher. Request for chopper assist.
- 1032 hr** Rescue 137 above casualty ready to winch.
- 1033 hr** Mobile 1 on way to west end car park to assist ambulance.
- 1037 hr** Casualty on board 137 on way to west end car park.

- 1040 hr** Summit party clearing ropes/belays etc.
- 1045 hr** Bottom party descending to C.I.C. hut e.t.a. 20 mins.
- 1050 hr** 6 Kinloss m.r.t. uplifted from C.I.C. hut.
- 1100 hr** 9 Lochaber m.r.t. uplifted from C.I.C. hut.
- 1110 hr** Summit party at abseil poles.
- 1115 hr** Rescue 137 to re-fuel at Fort William.
- 1125 hr** Summit party in Coire Leis for pick up, 137 on way.
- 1135 hr** Mobile 2 to Rescue 137 'thanks for your help.'

Manpower involved:-  
Lochaber MRT 19  
Kinloss MRT 6  
Rescue 137 6  
Police 3 shifts 6  
Ambulance 2  
**Alex Gillespie**

D BROOKS  
ON POINT FIVE



# KEEP OFF THE GRASS

**Barry Robinson** on mines and mountain rescue in Bosnia & Herzegovina

**D**uring the latter years of my service with Lancashire Police, I realised that perhaps I needed to think about going out with a bit of a bang! Perhaps an unfortunate choice of words, but so it was that I found myself volunteering to go out to Bosnia & Herzegovina as a 'blue beret' with the United Nations International Police Task Force.



HELICOPTER PATROL DOWN 'SNIPER ALLEY' SARAJEVO

Curious thing this volunteering. Here I am, a volunteer with mountain rescue, a volunteer with the Scout Association and then I volunteered to take a 12 month chunk out of my life and spend it in a recovering, war torn corner of Europe. And I had spent the better part of thirty years telling all around me that 'a volunteer was somebody who misunderstood the question!'

The International Police Task Force is a United Nations peace-keeping tool found from police officers from those countries who are members of the United Nations, the aim of the IPTF being to either police or monitor the policing of countries where the ideal of democratic policing has either broken down or not yet developed. At any one time there may be several IPTF 'missions' in existence - Georgia, Cyprus, Croatia, Kosovo and, up until recently Bosnia & Herzegovina, (BiH). (The BiH Mission started in 1996 and ran until 2002 when it was replaced by the smaller European Policing Mission).

After an induction course and medical at Warwickshire Constabulary, (the medical aspect of which I won't go into in deference to those readers who may be eating), I found myself, on a sunny Wednesday afternoon in April 2000, sitting in a Bosna-Air chartered Tupolev (Russian!) airliner, diving into Sarajevo airport. Many of you will not be familiar with Bosna-Air, the BiH state airline. You maybe more familiar with its alternative moniker,

'Maybe Airlines', (maybe it'll get there, maybe it won't!). It seems all their pilots are still reliving the war and take great delight in skimming the mountaintops before making a 45 degree dive into Sarajevo. Just because they can!

So there I was, sat clutching the back of the seat in front, (with both lips), zipping within two metres, (okay I exaggerate, it was probably five), of the mountaintops. Even through my fear I couldn't help admiring the wonderful vista of mountain, valley and forest, with clutches of hamlets dotted here and there in the most unlikely of places. It was then that I suddenly recalled a lecture from my induction course entitled 'Keep Off The Grass'.

'Keep Off The Grass' had nothing to do with any laws or regulations I was going to be enforcing. It referred to mines awareness. (Not the 'Mine's a pint' sort of awareness nor even the 'knowledge of where coal comes from'), but an understanding of the dangers posed by many thousands of indiscriminately sown exploding nasty things. I had been made very aware that 'Keep Off The Grass' was serious. I was starting to have selfish thoughts which ran along the lines of, 'If I have to go up to those villages, and if no-one knows where all the mines are, and if there are no proper roads leading there, and perhaps clipping my toe nails is something I might really miss and...'

Fast forward a month to Zavidovici, the station to which I've been posted, bang in the centre, (whoops, I've done it again) of BiH, surrounded by mountains and on the banks of the River Bosna.

Zavidovici and its surrounding villages had always been a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic region and, as such, suffered considerably during

the conflict of the first half of the last decade. Surrounding villages were 'cleansed' and razed, the 'Krivaja' timber factory, (once the largest in Europe), badly damaged and indiscriminate mine laying, shelling and sniping contaminating the land, infrastructure and community.

The role of the United Nations IPTF, as already mentioned, involves monitoring and advising the home police and security forces with regard to accepted, democratic policing principles. In effect this involves co-locating, or shadowing, the local police as well as investigating alleged breaches of these principles.

The work, in a country emerging from the type of conflict the former Yugoslavia had endured, is routine, boring, mundane and exciting, probably in equal measure.

Fairly early into my mission I found myself advising on an incident, sadly not an isolated type, where I could perhaps bring what MR skills I might have to bear.

By default, in other words, the local cops weren't particularly interested, I heard about a 'Missing From Home' incident in a village up in the mountains, about 20k outside the town. When I asked for a briefing I found that a 37 year old male farmer had left his home about 48 hours previously and had not returned. His wife had reported him missing after about 24 hours. When I pressed for more details I found that all that had been done was that his details had been recorded in the local police station daily log.

On speaking to the police supervisor I discovered this was normal practice, the attitude being, 'He's a grown man. He will turn up if he wants!'

(Having no other pressing engagements at the time!), I told the supervisor that IPTF were going to monitor the incident and that I would appreciate his co-operation. An immediate result was that I managed to talk to one of the local cops who had been involved in the initial report and, indeed, lived in the same

village. He told me there was no problem - the missing man, Ajdin, would turn up eventually.

When pressed for a bit more information it came to light that Ajdin was in fact an ex Bosnian army militia member who had seen action during the conflict. As a result he was physically disabled, due to a leg injury, had no speech and little hearing and was - in the words of the local cop - suffering from 'Bosnian Mind-F\*\*k'. An interesting colloquialism which seemed to me to be closely allied to Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. But there was no problem - he'd turn up eventually!!

The next step was interviewing a very distraught wife who told us that when she had last seen him, on the morning of two days ago, he was going to pick mushrooms to sell on the market and should have been back within a couple of hours for breakfast. There was no evidence of any circumstances that might indicate his intention to remain away. The only unusual aspect was that he had indicated that he was annoyed that the 'city people' kept getting the best mushrooms.

When I told the local police they were going to have to investigate further and probably consider a search they had one very simple question for me. 'How?'

The concept of investigation and search seemed to be completely alien to the police. They were aware, as was I, of the previous (pre-war) existence of a mountain rescue service, but that had collapsed during the war and, in any case, it was their job to rescue injured climbers, cavers and skiers. No one seemed to know whether anything of MR still existed or who could be consulted about this.

So it was that we enlisted the assistance of the military, (in fact, the Swedish army), and a number of local farmers and shepherds. Two strands of the incident were progressed - investigation and search. The investigation, using the local's knowledge of Ajdin and the local area, suggested that he wouldn't intentionally remain away from home and, if he had gone to collect mushrooms, then the locations would be limited. It appeared that all the locals were aware of where the mushrooms would be collected and that, due to the current heatwave, these



BiH MOUNTAIN RESCUE SERVICE KIT IN ITS ENTIRETY - EAT YOUR HEART OUT!

locations would be further limited to the wooded areas.

A search strategy was developed, taking into account the potential dangers of ordnance, as this was an area that had seen some serious fighting and defending during the war.

It wasn't long before, with the assistance of the police, local people, the military, (including air support) and a degree of search planning, that a section of woodland that had a very nasty smell emanating from it, was identified.

It was at this point that one of the locals was kind enough to tell us that this was a great area for mushrooms. Or would be if it wasn't for the fact that it had been heavily mined during the war due to its strategic position.

A de-mining unit was deployed and within a couple of hours the body of Ajdin was found.

It became apparent that in his search for mushrooms Ajdin had taken a risk, knowingly or otherwise, and gone into a wood he knew was mined. He had walked into what the locals termed a 'spiders-web'. An area where homemade mines were attached to posts and trees and connected with wire, the idea being that the aggressor - or in this case Ajdin - would stumble into the wire and pull it taut. This would activate a mine and that explosion would create a mini chain reaction, causing the activation of neighbour ordnance. In all, in his last action, Ajdin managed to activate three mines and would have been killed instantly.

A sad result but at least there was some closure for his wife and family. If we hadn't taken the action we did it could have been months or



EXCAVATING A MASS GRAVE

years before any outcome was known. On the plus side, if there can be one, we introduced the concept of

search strategy - investigation and search complementing each other. The strategy was the right one and led to an early find.

Problems did remain with the recovery of the body but all the agencies muddled through and achieved it.

Co-incidentally it was around this time I started to take an interest in the work of the local youth and community centre - an extension of the type of work I had been involved with in the UK. I soon learned that a key aspect to the recovery of the country was going to be reconciliation of the community and that this was going to be driven by the young people. An important element in this area are the volunteer youth leaders and so it was I met Admir Bajraktarevic (Ado), a youth leader, caver and mountain rescue instructor. Ado used his skills in outdoor experience and photography to enthuse the centre membership and break down barriers.

As my friendship with Ado grew I had the opportunity to spend some time visiting the safer part of the mountains (no mines!), a little caving, and involvement in an 'Outdoor Experience Weekend'. I also started to learn a little about the mountain rescue service in BiH.

MR in Bosnia is a voluntary organisation as is ours. Prior to the war there were nine fully equipped mountain rescue stations dotted around the country. (BiH is roughly twice the size of Wales with a similar population density, about 4.5 million). During the war, the stations were 'relieved' of most of their equipment and personnel. The human resources, (mainly 'fighting-age' men), to various aspects of the

military/militias, and the hardware put to military and humanitarian aid. (Imagine the military uses your team's equipment could be put to in time of conflict!)

There are currently five stations which are described as 'barely functioning'. The whole of the MR service totals about 60 trained personnel with another 20 'in training'. Training comprises of three separate 7 day courses, (usually undertaken at weekends), in the disciplines of summer MR, winter MR and first aid. Trainees must complete all three elements, take and pass an annual practical and theoretical exam and serve a two-year 'probationary' period. One element of training also visited, that we are fortunate enough not to concern ourselves with, is mine awareness and ordnance recognition.

There is virtually no 'official' financial support and tin shakes in a country where over 90% of the population live below the recognised western poverty line are unlikely to be unsuccessful.

All the stations are currently suffering from a lack of equipment, rope, ascenders and descenders, vehicles, harnesses, stretchers, splintage, general casualty care equipment and personal kit, particularly cold/wet weather gear. (BiH enjoys a continental summer climate and alpine type winters).

Indeed, the whole of the BiH mountain rescue service currently owns and operates a single 4-wheel drive vehicle, (a 10 year old Toyota donated by *Medicin Sans Frontiers*).

At the time of writing I am, together with other MR colleagues around the country, exploring the possibility of a project that may go some way to supporting the BiH MR service. Perhaps by the time you read this you may have heard of an appeal to teams up and down the country, to donate serviceable but redundant/obsolete kit, (including vehicles!), which we can take to Bosnia in the summer of 2005 to compliment the work our voluntary colleagues out there are doing. One or two equipment suppliers have already expressed an interest and offered their support, and I am convinced the response from UK teams will be positive.

BiH is no eastern European backwater nor is it a member of the Third World, although in recent years it has seen its share of atrocity - from crucifixion to concentration camps, mass rape and the razing of whole villages. And has stood nakedly whilst civilised governments wrung their hands and complained that there was nothing to be done.

The Bosnian people - Bosniak, Serb, Croat, Gypsy and Jew - are wonderful, warm, passionate people who even now welcome foreigners with a warmth of hospitality it would be difficult to beat.



SPOT THE LAND ROVER. IT'S INSIDE THE TANK - HONEST

Sarajevo, the capital, was the first European country to employ electric street lighting and the second to have a municipal tram system. Those of us old enough to remember will recall the magnificent setting of the 1984 Winter Olympics, (when Torvill & Dean achieved the perfect score).

The country is recovering. Part of that recovery involves the communities returning to their wilderness pursuits. Daily, more and more parts of the mountain regions are being opened up. Consequently, the frequency of the services provided by mountain rescue is ever increasing.

Our colleagues in this beautiful, wild country are doing a magnificent job. Perhaps we should give them a thought when we complain to our team committees and councils about lack of gear!!

For those of you wanting a change of scenery for your outdoor exploits I would commend BiH. Go and have a *burek* and *pivo*, (pie and a pint), with our Bosnian colleagues. I can guarantee you a warm welcome but, remember, if you decide to go off piste, please, 'Keep Off The Grass'.

# SLIPPERY GRASS?

**Tony Rich** on the mountain rescuer and expert evidence

**T**here has been much discussion in mountain rescue circles about the involvement of mountain rescuers in giving expert evidence, and the debate has at times generated more heat than light. This article aims to clarify what expert evidence is, the impact on rescuers and the policy on rescuers giving such evidence. It is inevitably a summary. Please check with me for detailed advice in any specific case.

## What is an Expert Witness?

Both civil and criminal courts rely on witness evidence to decide the facts of a disputed case. Ordinary 'lay' witnesses, who may be professionals or experts in their field, give an account of the facts that they themselves witnessed or of facts within their personal knowledge. Whilst of course they can use adjectives to try and describe what they saw, they are not, in principle, allowed to give evidence on matters of opinion.

Where the court needs help understanding a technical point of science, an expert witness is called to explain their 'science' to the court. Do not be misled by the word 'science'. It is not restricted to scientific or even technological matters. It covers any specialist field. For example an expert in banking may be called to explain the 'science' of banking, such as any term of art, or normal banking practice. Expert witnesses are allowed to give opinion evidence and owe an over-riding duty to the court to give the full range of professional opinion on a subject, not just their own. They can of course explain why they think their view is the best. In both civil and criminal law there are strict rules controlling who can give expert evidence, how they give it, and requiring an expert to 'qualify' by proving their expertise in the subject concerned. Their over-riding duty is to help the Court understand the technical aspects of the case and is far greater than any duty to the party that hired them. A further significant difference from ordinary witnesses, who are limited to repayment of their actual loss of earnings and incidental expenses in giving evidence, is that experts may be paid professional fees for their work.

So, for example, in a road accident case a bystander could say that he saw a car being driven fast – this is something he saw. He might be a doctor, but is still a 'lay' and not an expert witness. As a lay witness he could not go on to give an opinion, such as that the car was being driven too fast for the conditions. A police officer who attended the scene could give lay evidence of, say, the skid marks he found on the road, and produce any plan or photographs he made or took. What he can not do, as a lay witness, is interpret that data to give an opinion. An accident reconstruction expert, called as an expert witness, would be allowed to interpret the police measurements and arrive at an estimated speed for the vehicle, to comment on the stopping distances at this speed, and the effect on them if tyres are worn or the road surface wet. If qualified or experienced as a vehicle examiner he might

also give expert evidence about the state of the tyres and brakes as he found them post accident, and whether they were within normal limits. He could also set out a number of theories about how the accident took place, and explain why his expert knowledge leads him to prefer one to another although the final decision always rests with the court.

## So how does this affect mountain rescue?

Because it offers a source of revenue, some rescuers who would like to, use it to earn something as a by-product of their mountain rescue experience. However, the fact that you could give an expert opinion on mountain rescue techniques does not necessarily make you an appropriate mountaineering expert. For example, if a case arose out of an accident in a school party would you really be able to comment on normal educational practice in preparing an educational trip? There is nothing in MR that teaches you the answer to this. MR only teaches you how to prepare yourself for a search or rescue. It may be you know the answer because you are an MLTB qualified leader but, in that case, your relevant expertise is that of an MLTB leader, not that of an MR member and your mountain rescue expertise is irrelevant.

There is another danger. If individuals associated with MR become publicly identified with one or another camp in contested litigation we risk losing our reputation for neutrality, and with it either the confidence of the police, or the willingness of organisers of parties in possible distress to call us early, or indeed both. There is also a risk that a rescuer giving evidence will propound theories, apparently in the name of MR, with which many others in MR would profoundly disagree.

## A sad tale

A further aspect of the problem is that over-zealous policemen, fishing for evidence to make a manslaughter charge stick, have been known to lean on rescuers to go beyond giving statements about what they did during a rescue or body recovery, and to give unfavourable comments about the organisation, equipment, or techniques of the party in distress, the party organiser, or survivors.

In one recent case the police, having taken statements from the team, then refused to confirm that the rescuers would not be called as experts (despite the rescuers having indicated they just wished to give evidence of facts), refused to supply the rescuers with copies of their

statements, or allow the rescuers to moderate what they had said in the heat of the moment, or to limit the apparent scope of their expertise. Having given their time voluntarily for the operation, and to tell the police about it afterwards, they were told more of their time would be taken, compulsorily for the court hearing. The rescuers risked fines or imprisonment if they did not attend when ordered to do so.

Suggestions that if the police wanted expert evidence to support their case they might care to commission it (and fund it) from someone independent of the facts met with a vague response about resources! Letters to senior officers of the Force concerned expressing concerns were ignored, not even drawing a proper reply for months. As the accused expedition party leader was a commercial competitor of the rescue team leader, the potential for embarrassment to the rescuer, his team, and the wider rescue community, is obvious.

Given the standards displayed by the elements of the Criminal Justice Service involved it is perhaps of no surprise to learn that the rest of their case, as presented in court, was insufficient to secure a conviction.

## The new ACPO policy

However, this case has led to the new ACPO policy (which is of course a recommendation to police forces, and not a binding legal requirement). The policy is intended to protect volunteers' neutrality, and limit the administrative burdens placed on them. Under this policy any volunteer rescuer may still be asked for factual evidence – what did they see/do, what were conditions like, what equipment did the casualty and his party have and so on. However, rescuers will not be expected to give expert evidence. For example, they should not be expected to comment on the appropriateness or otherwise of the equipment, skills, and decisions of the victim or his party. If the police or prosecution need expert evidence they will commission it themselves on a proper paid basis from an appropriate expert unconnected with the rescue concerned.

The policy does not say that being a rescue team member disqualifies you as an expert, but at the same time mountain rescue expertise does not, of itself, qualify you as an expert on mountaineering issues generally. Furthermore, it is clearly undesirable for an individual to give apparently independent expert evidence to help the Court when his team, or worse still he himself, was or were involved in the actual facts of the incident. Where, then, is the independence the Court and parties have a right to expect?

## The Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) view

Whilst welcoming the ACPO approach, it deals only with the criminal law. Mountain Rescue

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(England & Wales) suggests a similar policy applies to civil law compensation claims. Only give evidence if you are commenting on matters within your expertise outside of MR. You should not use your involvement in MR to add authority to your evidence, although there is no harm in including your MR credentials in your general technical qualifications or experience. Normally you should decline instructions on matters where you or your team (or region, if a regional officer) had an involvement, even if the points on which your views are sought are within your expertise. If you do give evidence you should make clear that you are speaking for yourself only, and especially NOT your team, region or Mountain Rescue (England & Wales).

The only possible exception to this rule

might involve actual or potential civil cases against MR itself (or someone within it). Again if you or your team (or area if you hold area office) are involved in the facts you will probably lack the independence necessary to be a good expert, and may be very vulnerable to embarrassment on cross-examination. However, as what is in issue is how a rescue should be carried out your MR expertise may be relevant, but ask yourself to what extent there might be local factors on which you cannot comment before agreeing to act. Again make it clear you are speaking for yourself, and not any other body or group.

## Conclusion

The new ACPO policy, and those of Mountain Rescue (England & Wales), are there to protect you and your fellow volunteers. Respect

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The Pit Pony Sanctuary consists of a small group of enthusiasts in Pontypridd, Wales who help pit ponies and other needy horses and ponies. They work with meagre resources and are keen to add to the growing band of supporters of their registered charity.

Send a SAE for further information or see website [www.pitponies.co.uk](http://www.pitponies.co.uk) or [www.sponsorapony.co.uk](http://www.sponsorapony.co.uk)

The Centre is open to visitors. Please ring 0871 872 4106 for details of directions. Visitors have a guided walk with the ponies on the high pastures overlooking Pontypridd and enjoy spectacular views, friendly animals and people who are the Pit Pony Sanctuary

**PLEASE HELP US TO HELP THEM**

# THE ROLE OF TEAM ASSESSMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS

Roy Johnston and Pat Holland (South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association) Ireland

**The presentation had three aims:-**

- To share experience and promote discussion on the role of team assessment in the development of mountain rescue teams.
- To review the opportunities of external feedback on a team's organisation, administration, preparation and operational response to a simulated scenario.
- To help the audience consider if team assessment has a role in the development of their own team.

SEMRA's operational area is in the South East of Ireland and includes the Galtee, Comeragh, Knockmealdown and Blackstairs Mountains. The team has also responded to lowland incidents within this general area and acts as a back up to our neighbouring mountain rescue teams in Kerry and Wicklow. Within our primary area, we have a mixture of searches and rescues responded to by a team based on several centres.

Team assessments were introduced by the Irish Mountain Rescue Association, the federation of teams, in the early 1990s. Their purpose was to 'encourage high standards in mountain rescue by giving teams the benefit of outside opinion on the effectiveness of the team and to suggest areas for improvement'.

SEMRA has had two assessments to date (Dec 96 and May 02), in both cases with a mixed UK/Ireland assessment team and we are committed to a new assessment every three years.

**The format of the weekend is:-**

**Saturday am**  
Introductions, informal discussions on MR and team matters.

**Saturday pm**  
Review team admin, finances, training plans and records, equipment status, maintenance and inspection records, incident log, talk to other services etc.

Search Management tabletop exercise.

**Sunday am**  
Field exercise, search, casualty site management and rescue.

Exercise debrief.  
Feedback session.

**Within 4 weeks:-**  
Draft report submitted for comment.  
Final report.

At the time of our first assessment, a new generation had just taken over in the team, callout numbers were beginning to increase, but still much development work was needed. The recommendations of the 1996 assessment and the results were:-

- Increase training events to ten a year. (Done)
- Set a three or five year plan for team with specific goals. (Started but we got so involved in fulfilling the goals we never got to finish and formalise the

actual plan.)

- Increase the number of team members known to police. (Continually working on this though not on a planned basis, results beginning to show at local and national levels)
  - Provide pagers to all senior members. (Most of team now carry pager)
  - Consider a team vehicle. (We now have three!!)
  - Find someone to work on fundraising. (Fundraising committee set up, finance increased, greater commitment but no specific person)
  - Create a maintenance programme for stretchers. (Done)
  - Check working life for all equipment. (Ongoing)
  - Provide base/control team with high viz vests. (Team adopted the American ICS system and are now rolling this out to other teams)
  - Create a single incident radio/base log. (Done)
- This first assessment became a catalyst for subsequent team changes and development.

The second assessment was of a changed team. A strategic plan process had happened, trainees were now taught within a set programme, a strong group of new members had jointed in 2000 and there had been an increase in call outs. The type of incidents had also broadened, some being challenging, multi-agency low level searches.

The specific recommendations of the second assessment were:-

- Deploy first resources faster. (Noted)
- More members to be trained in the five day search and management course. (CSR, 2 levels)
- Hold regular update meetings on operations for all command staff. (Ongoing)
- Improve rope skills among members. (Ongoing)
- Have Actions column in committee minutes. (Done)
- Watch for changes in pager service (Ongoing)
- National Issues (Ongoing, referred to IMRA)
  - Review charitable status
  - Review legal status
  - Identify grant giving trusts for finance
  - Research possibility of tax incentive gifts

The team, in response to the 2002 assessment:-

1. Reworked our Strategic Plan and wrote an Action Plan.
2. Brought in a second batch of trainee members.
3. Reviewed our operational procedures, adding two vehicles and undertaking some lowland search in a strategic way.

The strengths of an assessment process is that it is a 'stretch goal' for a team, providing a new challenge with a boost of morale. It is always good to get external feedback on where you are good or where you need to improve. It can build confidence and is very good for strategic networking. Why reinvent the wheel when you can learn from those you respect?

However, there are weaknesses in the process. You need to watch the timing in your development

process, don't be a slave to the three year cycle. The assessment needs to be based on the team's actual history and area rather than a one-size imposed template. You must have a clear idea of what you need to get from the assessment and to follow that through in the selection of your assessment team. It is vital that the team is open to change and self-evaluation at all levels and is prepared to stretch itself to a higher standard. Finally you need to watch the post-assessment slump in energy.

There are many opportunities from the process. It can be a springboard for new activity and energy. It demonstrates a professional approach to other stakeholders such as the police. It provides a progress marker on where your team is and is a very powerful change mechanism if all involved buy in. After all, the assessors, if you pick them carefully, are recognised experts in their area. It is a constructive approach to development when it is voluntarily adopted by the team rather than being imposed as a threat from outside.

Any examination could be viewed as a threat. People can react with criticism, defensiveness and negativity. The assessment could focus on weak areas only if not properly based. If imposed upon a team, it might threaten the team power structure and could isolate those opposed to change. It is important to note that it is an assessment, not an audit, the latter implying a set standard to audit against. To be successful, MR assessments must not be a Pass/Fail system but rather a developmental process.

Where do we go from here? It may be that our next assessment might concentrate on micro issues such as to look at smaller more specific aspects of the team's work - casualty care, technical rescue and search management, for example. These could be used to consolidate different developmental stages. The time might also come where teams could come together for assessment in joint working.

**So why should your team have an assessment?**

- The subject/casualty, their family and friends, the media, other emergency services, your insurers, the courts and your own team members are the ultimate assessors.
- Use team assessment to get a 'preview in a safe learning environment' of what they might say.
- What have you got to lose other than the chance to improve?

If you want your team to change in some way, assessment is a useful tool but not an end in itself. It is only one weapon in the change management weaponry. The big issues are:-

- What is stopping you from having an assessment?
- What is blocking your team in making necessary change?

Date	Time	Site	Team
Name	Age / DOB		
Address	N.O.K.		
Tel.	Relationship		
HISTORY / Symptoms		Allergies Medications Past History Last Meal	
		Events	Date / Time of Incident

INITIAL ASSESSMENT		RAPID PRIMARY SURVEY	
Airway <input type="checkbox"/> C-Spine <input type="checkbox"/>	Obstructed <input type="checkbox"/> → Cleared <input type="checkbox"/> → Jaw Thrust <input type="checkbox"/> → Airway <input type="checkbox"/> Clear <input type="checkbox"/>	CHECK : OK? Yes No Head <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Neck <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Collar <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Chest <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Abdomen <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Pelvis <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Extremities <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Spine <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Abnormal Findings
Breathing <input type="checkbox"/> Oxygen <input type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/> → Assisted Ventilation <input type="checkbox"/> Present <input type="checkbox"/> → RR <10 or >30 <input type="checkbox"/> → RR 10 - 30 breaths / min <input type="checkbox"/>		
Circulation <input type="checkbox"/>	Pulse <input type="checkbox"/> → Absent <input type="checkbox"/> → CPR <input type="checkbox"/> Present <input type="checkbox"/> Major Bleeding <input type="checkbox"/> → Local Pressure <input type="checkbox"/>		
Disability <input type="checkbox"/>	Alert <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Pain <input type="checkbox"/> Unresponsive <input type="checkbox"/>		
		<b>'Load &amp; Go' Criteria</b> ABCD Any abnormal findings in Initial Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Chest Flail chest <input type="checkbox"/> Open wound <input type="checkbox"/> Tension pneumothorax <input type="checkbox"/> Abdomen Tender, Distended <input type="checkbox"/> Pelvis Pelvic instability <input type="checkbox"/> Extremities Bilateral femur fracture <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECONDARY SURVEY	
Initial Obs.	Focused / General Examination
Pulse	
BP	
Resp. Rate	
Temp.	
<b>A V P U</b>	

## TREATMENT

	Treatment	Dose	Route	Time	Effects
	Oxygen				
Fluids					
Meds. / Others					

## ONGOING EVALUATION

Time										
Pulse										
BP										
Resp. Rate										
O <sub>2</sub> Sats.										
Temp.										
Pupils L / R										
Blood Glucose										
GCS	Eyes									
	Verbal									
	Motor									
	Total									

<p><b>Glasgow Coma Scale</b></p> <p><b>Eyes Opening</b>            4 - Spontaneous            3 - To voice            2 - To pain            1 - None</p> <p><b>Verbal Response</b>            5 - Oriented            4 - Confused            3 - Inappropriate            2 - Incomprehensible            1 - None</p> <p><b>Motor Response</b>            6 - Obeys commands            5 - Localises pain            4 - Withdraws from pain            3 - Abnormal flexion            2 - Abnormal extension            1 - None</p>	<p><b>Equipment Used</b></p> <p>Cas. Bag <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Vac. Mattress <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Bell Stretcher <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other Stretcher <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Cervical Collar <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Spinal Splints <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Limb Splints <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Dressings <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Group Shelter <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Little Dragon <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>Pupil size (mm)</b></p> <p>+ Reacting - Not reacting C Closed</p> <p>10</p> <p>9</p> <p>8</p> <p>7</p> <p>6</p> <p>5</p> <p>4</p> <p>3</p> <p>2</p>
Casualty Carers		

Please document any pre-Mountain Rescue casualty care that has taken place

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