

# Mountain MAGAZINE Rescue



ISSUE 18

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

OCTOBER 2006

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## NEXT ISSUE

Issue 19 - January 2006

Deadline for copy 8 December

Editorial copy must be supplied as

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Advertising artwork must be supplied, **ready**

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### Front page pic

Edale MRT on training exercise.

Tim Webber

## Thank You

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

### Editor's Note

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

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

Mountaineering is an individualistic and at times anarchistic pursuit and it comes as no surprise that mountain rescue, spawned of mountaineering, is formed of highly motivated people with their own ideas and views.

I have found that the only way to give some semblance of 'leading' the organisation is to guess which way it is headed and then try and walk at the front. MRC officers work hard to listen to as many thoughts and ideas from the body of the organisation as possible. It is clearly not feasible to institute all of them and it is also true to say that every man has an idea that will not work. Nevertheless the direction of travel will always be driven by the collation of opinions from the teams and their members.

It is unlikely that we will reach a state wherein there is a single unified path of travel on all matters. Bill Murray, possibly the greatest writer on

mountains and mountaineering observed, 'Unity is misconceived as an ideal if it achieves a dull uniformity. Diversity is enlivening when held within reasonable bounds'.

We should therefore take satisfaction from the catholic nature of our organisation and try to embrace as many of the varied thoughts as possible. This also means that the larger elements of mountain rescue do not have a monopoly on good ideas and best practices and we all need to make better use of the means to listen be it websites, team leaders meetings etc.

During the past twelve months I have been able to travel around the country quite widely and I am able to say without reservation that mountain rescue is in a very healthy state. It is carrying out rescues that no one else is able to undertake, doing so with great skill and commitment and is universally held in high regard. Sometimes there seems to be tunnel vision focusing only on numbers of rescues. It is, however, the quality of the service that is the greater strength. As Einstein stated 'Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts'.

David Allan Chairman

## ...AND FROM THE EDITOR...

There's one question destined to raise every team member's eyes from that familiar spot on the carpet during cas care lectures. No, not the one we ask any male casualty over 40 (heck, any male casualty, full stop) presenting with symptoms of angina, concerning whether he has partaken of a certain purple pill during the last few hours (cue sniggers all round). But the one about which drug in the mountain rescue pharmacopoeia you might use to treat a casualty in the throes of an asthma attack. The reason being, you see, that about 70% of team members apparently suffer with asthma to some degree or another. Must be something in the Rossendale water. Maybe it's all those hours spent navigating through the Pendle clag.

Having said that, the obligatory puffers have not been much in evidence in the last several weeks in which I have been joining the team on outdoor exercises and, recently, the new trainees on trainee training. Maybe the asthma thing is just an amusing myth perpetuated to ease the torpor of staring at the carpet for an entire meeting? Whateva.

So... team training. And after a lifetime of practical creativity (well, have you ever met any other single soul who has crocheted a carpet or knitted a filofax cover? No? Then I rest my case) I am suddenly all fingers and thumbs. Completely unable, with a vehicle full of silently groaning testosterone, to close the passenger door on Mobile 1. 'Just lift the handle and pull it shut.' Nope, won't go. Repeat last two sentences five times until someone else slams it shut with enormous ease. Completely unable, on another occasion, to follow my team leader's 'simpler method' than my own perfectly successful method of tying a figure of eight knot. Ho hum.

But there have been moments of sheer squealing delight. Like the off road driving day, spent getting to know our new vehicles and following tricky little courses, team members in

Meanwhile, a Tyrolean traverse had been set up across the dip. 'You going Jude?' Try holding me back!! And off I went... squealing, as I mentioned earlier, with sheer delight all the way. And back for a second go! Wow! I mean, wow! Later that day I was the 'casualty' strapped into the Bell for a journey up and down the crag. And finally, rope attached, I climbed (okay, got hauled up out of my terrified limpet stance more than once, if truth be told) up the same '80 foot' which had earlier held so much fear for me. Even bigger smile day.

But back to the point... and there was actually a point, believe it or not. While all this action girl stuff has been going on, I've also been giving my kitchen a much needed coat of paint. The day the paint can came out, so too did the most awful barking cough, wheezing, shortness of breath and consequent aching ribs. Two weeks in and no sleep, I gave in - crawling to the doctor's surgery begging for mercy. Result? I now have a (temporary) puffer. My very own Salbutamol. As team membership goes, I guess I've arrived!

Judy Whiteside Editor

## EQUIPMENT NEWS

Mike Margeson writes, 'The UK conference was not only well supported by 20 trade exhibitors but also had a number of new equipment contributors and speakers.

Jamie Kean and Paul Rosher presented the continued development of the Scottish stretcher and cas bag project which is receiving good reports in tests.

'Dave Binks and Paul Horder presented a software programme developed to work with GPS mics on a Simoco radio. A trace and record of each party and its location can be displayed on an OS tile on screen at base. This cutting edge technology has a number of applications, not least the safety of knowing where each party is.

'Also of interest is the heated Entonox, project which Tracey Binks has been developing. She reports that progress is being made on a solution for storing Entonox within an unheated vehicle. Tests on a heating system designed by Inditherm plc have been successful and Aiguille Alpine Equipment has now manufactured a prototype bag. Following the conference, this will be further demonstrated at the next MRC Equipment subcommittee meeting at Preston in November. Full

testing will then be complete. Details will be reported in this magazine and teams will be welcome to trial the system. Further information can be obtained from [tracey.binks@dfmrt](mailto:tracey.binks@dfmrt)

'Other news – the vacuum mattress production run which has been slightly delayed is almost complete as the magazine goes to print and distribution is imminent. 'We have four new Bell Tangent stretchers available to teams at half cost (£1000). Also available is a small number of cas bags. 'The next PPE/FPE Equipment Checking course will take place at Oldham MRT base on Sunday 15 October. This partially MRC subsidised course costs £12 per head. Booking is through Peter Smith on 01706-852335 or [secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk) This is a highly practical and hands on course relevant to any team member and well received by those who have previously attended.'

## TWO NEW POSTS

The MRC is currently seeking nominations for two new posts. The **Vehicle Officer** will be expected to deal with the many queries about vehicles and their use within mountain rescue



## CHRISTMAS CARDS

The MRC is publishing Christmas cards this year. Supplied in sets of 8 x A6 cards, the packs contain two each of four designs – courtesy of David Allan – together with 8 envelopes. Packs are available to teams priced £2.50 + 75p p&p per set (with a view to teams selling on at a minimum of £4 per pack) from Eve Burton, 9 Princes Road, Chinley, High Peak S23 6AB. Large orders please call Eve on 01663 750371 for appropriate p&p charge.

including purchasing, VAT, vehicle customisation, maintenance, insurance, road tax, operations, markings, blue lights, driver training and ambulance regulations. The post holder will be someone who is prepared to amass the necessary information relating to all these issues, maintain its currency and disseminate as appropriate. This includes awareness of training opportunities. The second post of **Water Officer** will be

concerned with the safety and well being of mountain rescue personnel when operating along river banks (often in flood condition) and coastal fringes (with tidal fluctuations), crossing streams (with or without a casualty), boating across open water to access a casualty on the far bank, and assisting those who are trapped or endangered by flood waters or by a raging torrent. The post holder will be someone who is prepared to amass the necessary information, maintain its currency and disseminate as fit including appropriate equipment and the awareness of training opportunities. The officer will be required to advise teams on all matters of water safety and rescue relating to MR involvement with still, moving and rapid water situations. Internally, both posts will require attendance at the MRC meetings in May and November along with occasional meetings, by invitation, with the

Executive and the training subcommittee. Externally they may involve representing MR with other agencies and involvement with the working arrangements between mountain rescue and other agencies. Anyone interested in these posts should contact Peter Smith. Applications will be circulated to MR members with voting rights with a view to making a decision at the November meeting.

## TRAINING MANUAL

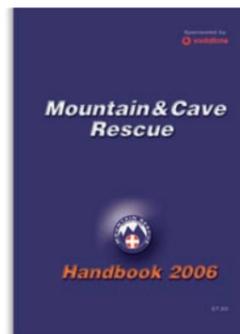
Work is underway to produce a UK Mountain Rescue training manual/handbook, supported and endorsed by both executive committees. It will be a comprehensive document providing information about the context, administration and operation of mountain rescue in the UK. The intention is NOT to prescribe what teams should or should not do but to provide a comprehensive 'toolbox' of

topics. There will be up to date information on policies and procedures and examples of tried and tested operational practices. Experts from across the UK will contribute. The manual will be a practical, credible and current resource of value to all members of UK mountain rescue, its aims to share good practice amongst teams, help teams develop their own practices and procedures, to assist training and guide new members, and to document key procedures as part of risk assessment and professionalism practice.

It is hoped to secure additional funding from outside the organisation and it is intended to distribute at minimal cost to teams. The project is planned to complete by summer 2007 although this target may be somewhat ambitious!

## NEW HANDBOOK

The new Mountain & Cave Rescue Handbook is now available from Eve Burton priced £5 + £1.50 p&p each to teams and members (cover price £7.50). Eve will quote p&p for larger orders.



## MRC DIRECTORY

The Directory is also currently being updated and will be available from November as a pdf.

# FIRST RESPONSE



## TEAM VEHICLE SECURITY

With my work hat on as a crime researcher for West Yorkshire police the other week, I was on an intelligence development course with speakers from a wide range of specialist teams in West Yorkshire police. This was in the week of the terrorist problems at the airports. Crime Division was talking about some of the local intelligence of incidents that

fed into the detective work following the London (July 2005) attack. One thing that came out was the credible intelligence that groups are looking for access to 'official vehicle' to assist in future attacks. This can either be stolen (remember the cave rescue team vehicle reported in the latest MR Mag?) or bought second hand. I guess I'm suggesting team vehicle

security be brought to the fore. This is supported by an article from August 2006 Emergency Services Times (below) – well worth a read. Not to be alarmist, but this appears to be a growing trend.

**Stuart Milner**  
Holme Valley MRT  
& Secretary MPSRO

## Can you account for ALL of your fleet?

The threat of terrorism has made institutions, companies and governments strengthen the physical perimeters of their sites, buildings and premises and conversely the terrorist has had to adapt their methods of delivering a deadly cargo of explosives, writes **Barry Scott** Detective Sergeant, NaCTSO (National Counter Terrorist Security Office).

There have been attacks in Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other parts of the Middle East where stolen, adapted or cloned ambulances, police and utility company vehicles have been used in suicide attacks.

In November 2003 a residential compound used by western oil workers was attacked by multiple suicide bombers posing as police. In January 2004 terrorists using a vehicle carrying red crescent ambulance markings carried out a suicide attack on a western hotel in Baghdad. In February this year suicide bombers using three vehicles carrying the markings and logos of the Saudi national oil facility were thwarted from entering the gates of the country's largest oil field.

A 'Trojan' vehicle, and by that I mean 'any vehicle which appears harmless or friendly, but is designed to destroy or attack from within', has become a method of attack for the suicide bomber to secure access to the heart of any target premises or site prior to carrying out the detonation. There has been no vehicle borne suicide attack in the UK to date.

## Emergency vehicles are commonplace

Emergency vehicles are a common site in city centres, at sporting events and where people congregate. Crowded places have been a target for the terrorist abroad, especially in Iraq, and have included local markets, job centres and social gatherings.

Building a vehicle bomb requires a significant investment of time, resources and expertise. Because of this terrorists will seek to obtain the maximum impact for their investment. The vehicle they use to carry a device to the target will be vital to operational success and an emergency vehicle would be ideal for this purpose.

The nightmare scenario attack would be a stolen or 'cloned' emergency vehicle approaching the outer cordon of any sensitive site or ceremonial event with its blue lights and sirens running. It would take a very brave young officer to stop that vehicle before allowing admittance to the site or event. The usual response by most officers would be to open the barrier and allow access to that vehicle as it approached. If that vehicle was driven by a suicide bomber, the result of that action could be catastrophic. Thankfully this scenario is being addressed at the planning stage of state occasions, political party conferences and major events.

## Obtaining a target vehicle

First the terrorist needs to obtain their target vehicle and accessories. The aim of every fleet manager should be to ensure that any of the vehicles in their fleet could not be used in any future attack. The security of your vehicles or the vehicles accessories, ie light bars, sirens, force crests, reflective markings and logos is paramount, these basic precautions are essential in the fight against terrorism.

Of course, this problem is not only for emergency service

fleet managers. All fleet managers need to heed the same message as refuse vehicles, post vehicles and company utility vehicles all gain access to secure premises every day. These issues are being addressed in different transport forums throughout the country. However, you should also address these issues when you have vehicles visiting your workshops, compounds or garages. Are they authorised to enter? Supervised while on premises? Or removing any items they shouldn't?

However, to reduce the opportunity of the terrorist obtaining a suitable vehicle to carry out this scenario we must look at the safety and security of all emergency vehicle fleets. In 2004, advisory guidelines were issued to police, fire and rescue and ambulance services regarding the security of their fleets whilst under repair. These guidelines are available from your local police CTSA (Counter Terrorist Security Advisor).

## Disposal care

At the end of a vehicle's emergency service life care should be taken regarding disposal. Ambulances and fire and rescue vehicles have traditionally been passed to voluntary services, or abroad to aid countries in the developing world. This occurs in order to gain the maximum amount of resale value and utilise the money to buy new vehicles.

Fully equipped ambulances and fire and rescue vehicles regularly appear for sale on ebay. Fire appliances are being used as 'party' vehicles for hen and stag nights. The 'exclusiveness' of these vehicles is disappearing and if taken as the norm peoples' awareness of them is reduced.

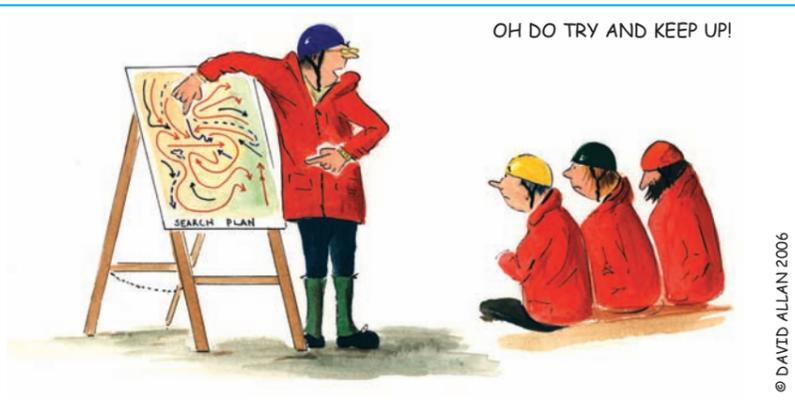
When a vehicle comes to the end of its emergency career, prior to disposal, the emergency service fleet manager should ensure the removal of all livery and equipment. An information sheet should be provided to the auctioneers/new owners regarding the penalties of using a vehicle with emergency/police markings and equipment. An early notification to the DVLA and the Police National Computer (PNC) should be made to ensure the vehicle is shown as being no longer owned by a police, fire and rescue service or, in the case of ambulances, a National Health Trust.

## Liveries, legislation and licensing

There is much work still to be done, covering issues such as national emergency service liveries, legislation and licensing. In the interim, ensuring fleets are secure and revisiting guidelines and procedures. This will go a long way to preventing a terrorist using one of your vehicles in the first vehicle suicide attack in the UK.

For further information on the subject of terrorism and for the best and most up to date advice from experts in government and the police service log on to [mi5.gov.uk](http://mi5.gov.uk) or [homeoffice.gov.uk](http://homeoffice.gov.uk)

*This article first appeared in the Emergency Service Times*



**PS.** You've seen the cartoons, ordered the Christmas cards... now buy the book! **'So You Want To Join Mountain Rescue?'** by David Allan & Judy Whiteside is published by Hayloft – a snip at £14.95! [www.hayloft.org.uk](http://www.hayloft.org.uk)



PAUL CHESHIRE, SECRETARY KESWICK MRT AND RICHARD WARREN SECRETARY LDSAMRA BEING INTERVIEWED LIVE ON ONE O' CLOCK BORDER TV NEWS OUTSIDE KESWICK BASE

## LAKE DISTRICT

**Richard Warren (Secretary, LDSAMRA)** writes... In the last issue of the magazine, we reported that the accident statistics for 2005 in the Lake District were showing some worrying trends. The total number of incidents were 395 with 19 fatalities reported in mountain related activities, the highest figure on record. Ten were reported as 'collapsed' with medical problem, mainly heart related. It is interesting to note that in only two cases did companions attempt CPR. It was partly due to this worrying trend, and partly due to a need to increase public awareness of the mountain rescue service, that the region decided to embark on a publicity campaign. The campaign was launched on 31 August with the press release and distribution of 50,000 posters

### Cameron McNeish takes stage at Kirby Lecture 2006

Speaker at the Friends of the Lake District's annual Kirby Lecture is the writer, broadcaster and mountaineer Cameron McNeish. He will give an illustrated lecture, entitled 'Wild Landscapes - A Spirit of Place?' exploring our relationship with wild places on Friday 20 October at 7.30pm at Keswick School, Vicarage Hill, Keswick. Entry is free and open to everyone so please do come along and join us for the evening. For more information about Friends of the Lake District phone (01539) 720788 or visit our [www.fld.org.uk](http://www.fld.org.uk)



## HANDLE WITH CARE

Each year millions of people visit the Lake District National Park. It's a special place, away from many of the pressures of everyday life. Friends of the Lake District work to keep it, and the rest of Cumbria, special for the benefit of everyone. When we were formed, more than 70 years ago, we were at the forefront of the movement for the Lake District to be designated a National Park and our work continues today. Whether you come from near or far, we want you to enjoy the Lake District, but why not join us and help keep it special, too?

To find out more about us or to become a member contact:  
Friends of the Lake District (MR)  
Freepost LA1186  
Kendal, Cumbria LA9 8BR  
Tel: 01539 720788

'Caring for the countryside in the Lake District and throughout Cumbria for the benefit of everyone'



and 100,000 information cards around the region. Lakes' teams visited as many outdoor shops, pubs, hotels, B&Bs, outdoor centres and other outlets as possible. Media coverage was very successful with live and recorded interviews on Radio Cumbria and Bay Radio, live interviews on Border TV, BBC Look North and BBC Manchester. Under the headline 'Highest number of mountain rescue fatalities on record in the Lakes - how can we halt this trend?' we aimed to raise awareness of what mountain rescue is and what it isn't, through a series of questions.

'Do you know how many teams there are within Cumbria serving their communities?'  
'Did you know that the 450 team members within those twelve teams covering the Lake District are all fully trained but unpaid volunteers?'  
'Did you know it costs between £30,000 and £50,000 each year to cover the cost of running a single team? Collecting boxes are your way of keeping the service going and improving it.'  
'Did you know team members are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and most have full time jobs?'  
'Did you know that we are all quite happy to be purely volunteers and on call?'  
'Did you know that this year 57% of all calls were made via mobile phones? In many cases we struggle to get back to the informant as they move from their location or switch it off?'  
'Even today, many people who walk the fells on a regular basis still believe mountain rescue to be a fully paid, full-time professional service funded by taxpayers.'

'In addition to the public's limited understanding about what mountain rescue is and isn't, or how they should call out a mountain rescue team, we are also concerned over the growing number of incidents, particularly fatalities. The poster campaign is a response to this and to concerns within the mountain rescue community over the number of agencies becoming more and more involved in mountain rescue - either in a support role (Air Ambulance) in preference to road ambulances; or the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) taking over co-ordination of rescues on the four public access lakes; the fire and rescue service with swift water rescue and cliff rescue on the horizon.'

'With so many different organisations in the frame, the public can be forgiven for being confused as to who to call in the event of an off-road incident. In addition to all this confusion there are the extra demands being made on funding with different groups trying to meet their own particular funding needs.'

'How do we plan to increase public awareness and what will you see that is different? There will be posters located in every single outdoor shop, outdoor centre, hotel and community centre throughout the region. When you buy an item in a shop, there could be a business card sized card placed in the bag along with your purchase, advising you exactly what to do in the event of needing the mountain rescue service. This will hopefully lead to fewer delays in getting the correct emergency resource and equipment to you - especially important in life threatening circumstances where the team needs to get to you within that golden hour. If the team needs a helicopter then they will ensure you get the correct type of helicopter for the job.'

'The following accident statistics for 2005 in the Lake District have shown some worrying trends and LDSAMRA would like to reverse this trend. Of the 395 incidents attended, 19 fatalities were reported in mountain related activities, the highest figure on record. Ten were reported as 'collapsed' with medical problem, mainly heart related. It is interesting to note that in only two cases did companions attempt CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). This must surely act as a wake-up call to hill users to learn basic life support. It is no use saying 'it will never happen to me'. Major trauma claimed six victims. Two rock-climbing deaths resulted from leader falls, one caused by a large rockfall on a popular crag. Both of these incidents occurred within eight days! The other four deaths resulted from falls on steep, rocky ground while hill walking. These occurred toward the end of the day, consistent with other accidents reported when people are becoming tired. This must be taken as a sign to improve people's awareness that fitness levels are important in safe movement on difficult ground. If you would like to know more about this

**MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN THE LAKE DISTRICT**  
Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association (LDSAMRA)

12 teams  
450 trained, unpaid volunteers  
24 hours a day, 365 days a year service  
Funded entirely by voluntary contributions

If you need the services of a Lake District Mountain Rescue Team: **DIAL 999**

ASK FOR CUMBRIA POLICE WHO WILL NOTIFY MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
STAY BY THE PHONE OR WHERE THERE IS A MOBILE SIGNAL

[www.lidsamra.org.uk](http://www.lidsamra.org.uk)

voluntary service provided to your community, then it is worth paying a visit to the regional website which has links to all your local teams [www.lidsamra.org.uk](http://www.lidsamra.org.uk). There you find virtually anything you need to know about mountain rescue. Thank you for your support in the past and hopefully, your continuing support for the future. This publicity campaign is being supported by the Cumbria Tourist Board and HSBC in the Community. We are extremely grateful to HSBC who have fully supported the project as part of their commitment to supporting the community.'

## MID PENNINE

### CALDER CELEBRATE QUEEN'S AWARD

Calder Valley SRT celebrated their 40th anniversary on 17 June with an official open day attended by civic dignitaries from the parishes and town councils of the area. Guest were joined by past team members and representatives of local community organisations and the emergency services. The open day was blessed with glorious sunshine as over 250 guests and members of the public mingled around the team headquarters viewing team equipment, archive displays and the team vehicles. The event was opened by Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police, Colin Cramphorn QPM DL, who praised the team for their commitment over the years and reflected on the strong bond between the paid emergency services and mountain rescue volunteers. Mr Cramphorn also attended the event in his role as the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire and presented team president Bob Uttley with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The award had been



COLIN CRAMPHORN PRESENTS CHAIRMAN BOB UTTLEY WITH THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

announced the week previously and came as a great surprise to team members. President Bob Uttley said it was a great honour for the team to receive the award and recognised the work of team members past and present. The award not only recognised the provision of a rescue service but also its work with the local



PHOTOS: BOLTON EVENING NEWS

### IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

Search rescue dog Chi is recovering from his own misadventure when his leg was accidentally caught in a strimming machine. Owner Dave Marsh, of Bolton MRT, had been cutting three foot high grass in his garden but didn't spot nine year old Chi who had dashed up to him after being startled by the noise of a bird scarer. The strimmer caught the animal's leg leaving it almost severed above the ankle. Chi was rushed to the vet where a specialist operation saved his leg from amputation. Dave said, 'I was in bits for two weeks after the accident because I love my dog and couldn't believe this happened. I didn't see him because the of the grass until it was too late. One of his legs was badly broken - it was hanging off. I took him to my vet and because of the complexity he thought it might have to be amputated. But he referred Chi to a specialist vet hospital called Rutland House, in St Helens, and they were able to sort out the wound before he had a major operation to pin his leg back together.'

Dave and Chi have been together since Chi was a seven week old pup. Ian Barclay, the veterinary surgeon who performed the operation has been in the profession for 25 years. He said, 'Chi had a big chunk of bone missing from his leg which made it difficult to treat. We had to put plates and screws in the leg, which is hard when there is a large area of bone missing. He was put under anaesthetic and the operation took about two hours. It seems to be healing well now so I am optimistic that the leg will recover.' Asked for an update on Chi's progress, before going to press, fellow team member Dave Healey said, 'Last time I saw Chi, he was the fastest thing on three legs. He would raise his leg in the frame and rush around something chronic. He was still the very playful Chi as seen on call outs and training - full of energy and willing to play despite his injury. He appears to be doing really well. There was a lot of concern when we heard about this accident. It was as if one of our own family had been injured... well he really was part of the MR family.' Best wishes to Chi - let's hope he continues to thrive.



communities, supporting other activities including charity events, community clean up events and support to organisations such as scouting. He went on to praise and thank the many supporters of the team including landowners and local businesses. The team received an engraved glass tablet and parchment signed by the Queen. Following the formalities of the open day members of all decades enjoyed beers, food and good old 'crack' in between dancing to a ceilidh and disco. A proud day for the team and all members past and present.

## NORTH EAST

### THE WHAT GOES ROUND COMES ROUND CALL OUT

Gari Finch, call out officer for Cleveland SRT writes, 'Wednesday nights are practice nights for us. One Wednesday in July, as we were about to start our practice at one end of our patch, the mobile rang. It was North Yorks police informing us that a walker had fallen and in need of assistance. (At the opposite end of our patch, of course). The walker reported that her injuries were not serious but that she was near Round Hill, could see the B1257 (Bilsdale Valley road) and

the Bilsdale TV mast from where she was. Round Hill is well known to us, as it's the highest point on the North York moors. So a cunning plan was developed to send two Land Rovers up to the Round Hill area and the rest of the team and our other vehicle to meet with the police at a car park on the other side of Round Hill from where we could send in a walking party.

'We met the police who confirmed the details we had been given initially but as, by now the searching Land Rovers had made no contact with the injured lady, we asked them to triangulate her mobile signal and get some additional details from her. It was at this point that one of our eagle eyed team members spotted another Round Hill named on the map. This one was on the other side of the valley from our location, but from it you could see the TV mast and the B1257. Round Hill 2 was within walking distance for the lady, so when we failed to get a grid reference from her and no indication as to whether she had crossed the B1257, another party was sent out to cover Round Hill 2.

'What we could not understand was, if the lady knew about Round Hill and could identify a road by its proper designation, why could she not generate a grid reference? After another conversation with her, we discovered that she had started her walk in the morning from a village called Glaisdale about 15 miles from the Round Hills we were searching. At this point yet another eagle eyed team member found another Round Hill in the Glaisdale area! Mobile phone coverage was not very good and to make matters worse the lady reported that her mobile batteries were just about flat. We didn't want her phone to lose its signal as the police were still trying to triangulate. The one good thing about Round Hill 3 was, unless the lady had incredible vision, there was no way she could see either the TV mast or the B1257 from it. We put Scarborough team on standby for Round Hill 3 and continued with our vehicle/foot search of Round Hill 1 and 2.



## PEAK DISTRICT

THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF DERBYSHIRE, DAVID COLEMAN, PRESENTS A CHEQUE FOR £5,500 TO PDMRO. THE MONEY WAS RAISED AT A DINNER DANCE HELD IN APRIL, BY THE POLICE FEDERATION.  
FROM LEFT: EVE BURTON, PDMRO TREASURER, DAVID COLEMAN, ROBIN KNOTT PDMRO SECRETARY DUNCAN DAVIES AND CHAIRMAN OF THE POLICE FEDERATION.

'Eventually one of our vehicles made the find about two miles south of Round Hill 1, and we evacuated the lady off the hill. When we asked why she could not generate a grid reference the lady indicated that she was using a guidebook map for navigation, which accounted for why she could identify the B1257 and the TV mast. She had navigated her way very well with it, for she was not local to the area. We had a swift debrief as time was approaching 2300hrs and retired to the next round of the day in a place of refreshment. Yes, we did remember to stand Scarborough team down – they were somewhat disappointed, as they had to continue with their committee meeting! If only all rescues were as straightforward!

## ICELAND YOUTH TEAM VISIT TEESDALE

Eight youth team members accompanied by two leaders from Isafjordur SRT in Iceland travelled to the UK for a ten day exchange visit with **Teesdale & Weardale SRT** in July. The Teesdale team is unique in the UK in having a youth section, whereas 50% of Icelandic teams have youth sections. The project, funded by North Pennines LEADER+ is aimed at learning and sharing ideas and techniques between teams, and giving young people a cultural exchange experience between groups with similar aims.

The programme of events during the visit was quite intensive and allowed the 12 youth team members to work closely with their Icelandic partners. There was a presentation at the team base in Barnard Castle and visits to Patterdale and Keswick MRTs (thanks must go to both those teams). Many Icelandic SAR teams include sea rescue as part of their remit and the visiting team were very interested in visiting the RNLI – Hartlepool and Sunderland stations very kindly hosted the group for a day – the high point being a trip out in the Hartlepool boat. Four days were spent in the Lake District and the group went on several long mountain walks including Scafell Pike and the Helvellyn horseshoe – the heat was quite intense and was a real shock for the Icelanders who had been experiencing a period of three months of rain with a top temperature of 16°! Other activities included rock climbing and abseiling, and swimming in the lakes and rivers. The programme ended with a BBQ and the exchange of team badges and pictures.

A return trip is planned for July 2007 – to include an expedition onto a glacier, whale watching and, of course, bathing in hot springs!!

## NORTH WALES

### TWENTY FIVE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST CALL OUT

The 1 November 2006 sees the **North East Wales SRT** (NEWSAR) celebrating the 25th



NORTH EAST WALES TEAM MEMBERS RESPLENDENT IN NEW KEELA KIT

anniversary of its first callout – to assist two fallen climbers at Pistyll Rhaeadr. As became the norm, the team (then the Clwyd Rescue Team) was stood down on arrival, as the casualties had been rescued by local climbers. 25 years on and 262 callouts later, NEWSAR has grown from six to forty members and continues to thrive. In July, team members past and present celebrated the event with an anniversary dinner, together with family and friends. One of the team's founders and the first team leader Noel Hulmston, was also present. Mountain Rescue president, Peter Bell and the Chief Constable of North Wales Police, Richard Brunstrom, both gave inspiring speeches. At the conclusion of the after-dinner speeches, long service awards celebrating ten and fifteen years service were presented to eight team members. In addition to celebrating its anniversary, 2006 has been a busy year for NEWSAR. The team has purchased an additional Land Rover, relocated its base due to the closure of RAF Sealand and purchased new Keela kit for all members with the assistance of local and national sponsors.

## IT'S TRUE... (CONTRARY TO RECEIVED WISDOM) MEN ARE POOR NAVIGATORS... HONEST...

Or so our counterparts in Scotland would have us believe... In a previous issue of CASBAG it was reported that women are worse than men when it comes to navigation. Well, the tables now seem reversed! RAC Direct Insurance has carried out research showing that, in regard to navigation whilst driving, men resist asking for directions until the very last gasp. Apparently, male drivers waste six million hours a year by refusing to admit they are lost. Men wait an average of 20 minutes before giving up and asking for directions, whereas lost women drivers wait just ten minutes before seeking help. In fact, men are so reluctant to ask for help they're prepared to endure a 'nagging period' of around ten minutes before they crack and admit they have no idea where they are. Ten minutes on the mountain could mean the difference between life and death!

# FIRST RESPONSE

## IN AN IDEAL WORLD....

I'm sure it's a thought most of us have had at some point, either driving home from a national or regional MR meeting or perhaps after a few beers with fellow MR colleagues, but what is the 'ideal world' for mountain rescue in England and Wales?

It's a subject that often has extremes of opinion – passion or indifference. The passion could stem from tradition or, what some may feel, the blindingly obvious. The indifference can come from a feeling of contentment or satisfaction or, more worryingly, a 'What's the point?' There are many in-betweeners and other reasons. What's important to remember with our national body is that it's there for us – the teams and their members. It is vital that teams both feel they can contribute to MR and have the confidence to explain what they would like to see in their 'ideal world'. It's clear there will be many similarities and differences in view of this from team to team but, unless we express specifically and constructively what we would like to see, then a potential frustration and misunderstanding will ensue for everyone on all levels, from the MRC committee right the way through to individual team members.

Communication is often the key – teams need to have confidence in their regions to voice their opinions, but also the confidence to stand alone and voice their own ideas and suggestions. Success and survival will be determined by our strategy for the future – something that can be spread and reviewed over a period of six months, two years, five years – whatever – monitored and held by all involved as 'what MR will be'. So, not one to hide my opinions, I'll start... I'd like our national body to have strong leadership and offer greater guidance, vision and coordination. I think that MR and ALSAR should become one national body under the banner of 'Search

and Rescue'. Training needs will still be different between mountainous and lowland teams but search and rescue is a transferable skill. For example, rope skills on a mountain can be applied to situations on high angles, confined space and underground rescue. I'd like to see a national training syllabus with considerations for those local training requirements. Search and rescue should be a service for whoever needs us.

If, as we're regularly told, mountain rescue should appear in the front of the Yellow Pages, let's have our own 999 control room for 'Search and Rescue'. The full time staff here can be doing press releases or national fundraising during the quieter times! Let's start small with an aim to have a paid team of specialists at national level – supporting the functions at ground level either through equipment, funds or representation and liaison. Should SAR have a statutory function? Either way, lets have other emergency services approach us and ask to be involved instead of the other way around for a change – from air ambulances to fire brigades.

Let's have a national identity that extends further than a blue roundel. Corporate clothing, vehicles, equipment, branding and structure. Let's all be enthusiastic, forward looking, optimistic and transparent in all we do, and avoid negative conflict and politics. Let's learn and not be afraid of making a few mistakes or upsetting a few people along the way. Let's focus on the casualty. Obviously I have my reasons for my opinions, as you do yours. But I wonder how similar our feelings really are? Let's all be nice and open about our ideal world and maybe, one day, we'll know what each other's feelings are and, who knows, we might even say the same?

**Jim Gallienne** Cornwall SRT

## DIARY DATES FOR 2006

### EQUIPMENT INSPECTION DAY

Places: 24  
Date: Sunday 15 October  
Location: Oldham MRT HQ  
Contact: John Edwards 01457 870734 jmemr@fsmail.net

### MR (ENGLAND & WALES) MEETING

Date: 18 November  
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton  
Contact: Peter Smith 01706 852335 secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

### TEAM LEADER'S MEETING

Places: 50  
Date: Saturday 2 December  
Location: Derby area  
Contact: Peter Smith



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Team Leader – Kinder Mountain Rescue Team



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## NESRA CASUALTY CARE TRAINING PACKAGE LAUNCHED

The UK MR Conference in September saw the launch of the NESRA Casualty Care Training package – comprising interactive CD-ROM of 'on the hill' video demos, animated diagrams, 360° virtual skeletal models and instant access to anatomy and physiology animations, accompanied by teaching notes to support the CD – on sale for £65. A separate book of student notes – priced £10 each – mirrors the chapters in the CD enabling the student to understand the casualty care syllabus.

There was a great deal of interest at the conference, with many teams taking the opportunity to order teaching packages and student books. This excellent product is the result of two years' hard work and dedication for all those involved. In 2004, NESRA medical subcommittee began submitting applications to trusts with a view to producing a training aid to use for the casualty care syllabus and the successful application brought sufficient funding to develop the package. This is a non profit making venture with all the information written by volunteers. For more information, or to request a trial copy, please contact Paul Fell, Project Manager [paul@pfell5.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:paul@pfell5.fsnet.co.uk)



## SOUTH WEST

### CORNWALL UNDER CONTROL

**Cornwall SRT** has welcomed its newest member onto the team in the shape of a brand new control vehicle, representing the culmination of several months' hard work by the ops team. The vehicle cost around £30k all told and is based on a Peugeot Boxer hi-top 2.8 HCDi long wheel based van. It is standard amongst most MR control vehicles in that it has a control area and then a rear kit store. Much research was undertaken looking at different vehicles to establish exactly what we'd like in ours and what the best configuration would be. In the end, we also put in a torch charging system, tracking for stretchers and three additional removable passenger carrying seats. Diesel heaters, Simoco radios and an internally mounted Clark mast have also been fitted, as has a large awning for publicity events and briefings. No control vehicle would be complete without the generator for the kettle, laptop and other luxury controller 'essentials'. Team leader Jim Gallienne said, 'With absolutely no problems at all so far, the team is very pleased. Vehicle storage and a new team training venue now remain at the top of the priority list and plans are currently underway for an ambitious multi-agency development at a nearby National Nature Reserve with another government project. We are currently keeping everything crossed and have a few back up plans, but we look forward to hopefully telling you all about it in the next issue.'

### ROYAL GARDEN PARTY

Nikki and Alex Lyons attended a Royal Garden Party in July at the invitation of Her Majesty the Queen. Members of **Dartmoor Rescue Group** for 24 years, and SARDA members for 18 and 19 years respectively, the couple were presented to HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, who was very interested in the dogs and how they trained for mountain rescue. Alex said, 'We had a wonderful day, a great honour to know that our work is appreciated.' And yes, they did have cucumber sandwiches.

### WRESTLING WITH THE CIVIL CONTINGENCY ACT (AND OTHER GRUESOME LEGISLATION). OUR JOURNEY SO FAR...

When we first became aware of the Civil Contingency Act in 2004, we were stunned and horrified. Was this going to be a complete disaster and spell the end of our search and rescue efforts here in the West Country? Were we going to be legislated out of existence? Were we going to be buried in some volunteers' graveyard along with countless other well intentioned voluntary bodies? Fortunately for us we have two secret weapons at our disposal, one takes the form of a very demanding but equally supportive and innovative police force, and the other is called Alan George. The resulting mix is a heady brew guaranteed to throw up some surprises, so we knew we were

going to be in for a roller coaster of a ride. The Act is there to support full time emergency services and local authorities in their role as resilience planners in the event of emergencies. It calls on all full time emergency services to be 'Category 1' responders and to adopt certain statutory responsibilities. All other service providers, including voluntary agencies, are 'Category 2' responders and fall under the banner of the local authority emergency planning officer. Typical Cat 2 responders are the WRVS, RAYNET and local 4x4 groups. All these are useful agencies to support an on-going disaster, but are not able to mount a blue light real time response in an emergency.

So this was the dilemma. Do we just lie down and do what the Act proposed, or do we stand up and fight for a place as a Cat 1 responder? The Act does not allow for voluntary organisations to be regarded as Cat 1 responders but, fortunately for us, nobody bothered to tell Alan.

As a team we looked in detail at the service we provided, and asked the police to confirm their requirements from us. They reassured us that they still sought the same five deliverables from us, but informed us that our existing 'service level agreement' should now be a 'compact of understanding'. All this is beaurocratic nonsense, but apparently very important. From our perspective, as a Cat 2 provider we could easily provide land search and search management because this is not a true blue light activity and is not so time critical as most of our other technical rescue provision. Searching is delivered in support of other assets such as PULSA and police dogs and horses. We did not feel we had a unique contribution to make in this field, so could not argue a special case.

However, our technical rescue services from cliffs, buildings and bridges are unique and time critical. We armed Alan with this argument and off he went! Our basic argument went like this. If we cannot be a Cat 1 responder, then we must be a Cat 2. If we are a Cat 2 responder then we can expect a slower call out time from the local authorities, and therefore cannot enter into an agreement with the police to provide real time, life saving services. Therefore, we might just as well pack up, or become just a search team happy to work in slow time.

Alan took this situation to the police and the government office of the South West. Both organisations were shocked that they may lose such a valuable rescue asset that effectively costs them nothing, and he returned carrying an olive branch. The police would recognise us as a 'volunteer Cat 1 responder' and get us a seat at the local resilience forum. However, due to the sensitive nature of some discussions that take place at the forum, it was tactfully suggested that the police should represent our interests.

In the wake of this agreement, our position has been strengthened with both the police and other local Cat 1 providers. Local fire brigades and ambulance trusts are entering into 'compacts of understanding with us, and now regard us as co-responding partners, rather than just a bunch of

### OSAR LAUNCH NEW SAR ORGANISATION

Oxfordshire Search & Rescue (OSAR) has recently (and perhaps somewhat confusingly, given the various other agencies carrying this title) become known as UKSAR and begun a national SAR membership in the UK. Gary Foo of OSAR, whose group has provided aid to Pakistan asks, 'Is there a lot of difference between the mountains of Scotland and the mountains of Pakistan? Of course there is – but there is also a lot of commonality. 'Search and rescue has so many disciplines including air rescue, water rescue, mountain rescue, technical rescue, lowland rescue, urban rescue, medical rescue, cave rescue, cliff rescue, dive rescue and so forth but all with one focus and that is locating and saving people.' UKSAR invite search and rescue teams paid and unpaid to join together in sharing their information and resources. Membership to date includes members of all emergency services and the military. For further information visit [uksar.org.uk](http://uksar.org.uk) or contact them at [info@uksar.org.uk](mailto:info@uksar.org.uk) or call 0870 744 7379.

well meaning volunteers. In time, this will mean we will get more funding support from them, which will enable team members to spend more time training and less time fundraising. The service we offer will become even more professional and the casualty will be assured of the best possible treatment. This happy state of affairs lasted for a few weeks, and then the Fire Brigade Act came into play. This Act, of course, transfers a lot of responsibility for search and rescue from the police to the fire brigades. Again our voluntary Cat 1 role has offered us some protection from the worst effects of this Act, although only time will tell how fully the Act is implemented.

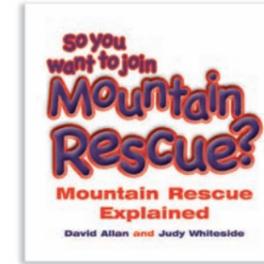
As a final (I hope) twist in this legislative saga, we again had to unleash Alan when we heard about the Road Safety Act 2006. This time we managed to get at the Bill even before the Act had its second reading in parliament. It seems that Alan has suggested a few alterations to the Bill to the transport minister, that will make it easier for teams to use blue lights under certain emergency circumstances. The outcome is still uncertain until the Bill completes its journey through parliament and receives Royal Assent later in the year. I assume that every team has had similar discussions with their local police and local authorities. I hope all the outcomes have been as positive as ours, but I would love to hear the stories. If you are having difficulty in coming to terms with the implementation of the Civil Contingency Act, I'm sure Alan will do you a good rate for consultancy!

**Duncan Massey** Avon & Somerset CRT

## READING MATTERS

### SO YOU WANT TO JOIN MOUNTAIN RESCUE?

BY DAVID ALLAN & JUDY WHITESIDE



Many of the perhaps more 'mature' readers of this will possibly recall those annual publications of the past which seemed to be an intrinsic part of the festive season. I refer to the cartoon books which appeared each year and featured some of our favourites – 'Andy Capp', 'Fred Bassett', 'The Perishers' et al. Well, here we are again, but this time with a cartoon book dedicated to our own particular interest.

Many readers will be familiar with last year's 'Mountain Rescue' by Judy (and Bob Sharp) with its mix of factual information, action stories and humour. Perhaps even more will have enjoyed David's wonderful cartoons which regularly feature in 'Mountain Rescue' magazine and elsewhere.

'So You Want To Join...' has taken a further step into MR literature with a delightful collaboration of David and Judy's work that weaves their combined artistic flair, presentation skills, knowledge of their subject (and subjects!) and humour into compendium of fun.

For me, the main successful ingredient is the way that David and Judy have taken their two successful products with which we are familiar and blended them – with a dash of 'Mountain Rescue', a sprinkle of complimentary cartoon text and a large helping of some extremely well drawn and incredibly funny cartoons. Not only that, they have also managed to emulate the cartoon books of yore and developed a story line running through what are actually 'stand alone' cartoon segments!

'So You Want To Join...' is not just for the MR fraternity. It is for anyone who may enjoy a different, and sometimes quirky, take on a fascinating subject. It will certainly appeal to partners, friends and associates of the MR 'clan' as it will do everything to reinforce what they already think they know about us!

Humour plays an important part in MR and this book brings that to the fore in a way that can be readily appreciated by anyone flicking through the pages, irrespective of whether they have any previous knowledge of the subject matter. Certainly, anyone connected with our organisation should give this book a go but, be warned! You may just recognise yourself, your colleagues and others within those pages!

**Barry Robinson** Rossendale & Pendle MRT.

So You Want To Join Mountain Rescue? Mountain Rescue Explained by David Allan & Judy Whiteside. ISBN 1 904524 478

Published 2006 by Hayloft. [www.hayloft.org.uk](http://www.hayloft.org.uk). Price £14.95.

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making the rope visible on approach from any direction. Genesis is gaining interest in the emergency services market, with evaluations currently taking place at Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Service.

**For further information contact Paul Hall or Helen Dixey at Church Mills, 77 Harborough Road, Kibworth LE8 0RB**  
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Helen: [helen.dixey@ntlworld.com](mailto:helen.dixey@ntlworld.com) Mobile: 07746 776816

# Blue light trainers - mind the gap!

It is well documented that human factors contribute 95% to road traffic collisions. The factors that are known to impact on risk include social, demographic and psychological aspects of a driver. In recognition of this, train the trainer courses for blue light driver trainers require study of chapter 1 of 'Roadcraft' and, specifically for police driving, Gordon Sharp's book provides some background on the human aspects of police driving. But these texts do not go far enough, writes **Lisa Dorn** Driving Research Group, Cranfield University.



DR LISA DORN.  
CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

Blue light driver trainers are key personnel in the communication and influence of appropriate attitudes and behaviour and need to be appropriately trained to deal with the human factors of driving under emergency conditions. Death and injury to innocent bystanders in the execution of these duties are unacceptable and the public expect that blue light drivers will demonstrate the highest standards when discharging their duty.

Currently, blue light trainers may be aware of WHAT human factors contribute to risk, but research at the Driving Research Group (DRG) at Cranfield University shows they need to know HOW to influence driver beliefs and behaviour to instil the right mindset during training and beyond.

### Essential skills

There are several essential skills that blue light trainers need to acquire to manage human factors in driving that are not part of the blue light driver training curriculum in the UK. The current situation represents a serious gap in blue light trainer knowledge and skills.

Specifically they need to be able to identify

and assess human factors in driving, raise the students' awareness of these factors and influence the way students think and behave. For this, trainers need good communication and motivational skills to develop rapport. Rapport develops best when the trainer understands a student's particular learning style and adapts their approach in accordance with this learning style to motivate learning.

A trainer also needs to assess a student's personal characteristics and how this might impact on their driving behaviour. For example, some students may be complacent about their risk or over confident in their perceived driving skills and ability. To tackle this, a trainer must have the knowledge and skills to encourage a student to self assess their motives and driving ability. Reflective thinking is an essential part of the development of an expert driver.

### Motivation

The DRG have also found that blue light trainers struggle to motivate some students to maintain the high standards of driving skills

achieved during training. They recognise that they are battling with the 'canteen culture' and operational and organisational pressures to respond to emergencies under strict response time policies. Often these pressures conflict with driving safely, undoing all the good work that blue light trainers do when training their students.

The work of the DRG is supported by a major European Union project called MERIT to investigate the minimum requirements for driving instructor training for novice drivers. Their recommendations are based on a survey of current standards, a literature review and case studies. The published report suggests that driving instructors should be trained according to the Goals for Driver Education (GDE) Matrix.

The matrix considers all the major research findings on driver behaviour and collision risk over the last two or three decades. It identifies four levels, with the first level being good vehicle

handling knowledge and skills which are clearly essential for safe driving and the cornerstone of all driver training and education. At the second level, good traffic management skills are critical for safely negotiating through traffic. This level includes hazard perception skills and is reasonably well covered on driver training courses. The third and fourth levels pertaining to the tactical and strategic factors related to specific journeys and the lifestyle/personality levels are not well covered in any curriculum either for students, driving instructors or blue light trainers.

### Train the trainers course

There are major challenges ahead then. Taking advantage of research on the factors known to impact on risk of collision and improving the curriculum for driver trainers is a priority. For this reason, Cranfield University has developed a three day CPD Train the Trainers course to address human factors in emergency service driving and how to influence these factors during training. The course has been designed in line with Centrex's Integrated Competency Framework and has been running successfully at Cranfield throughout the year. The course costs £600 per delegate.

For more information please log on to the website [drivermetrics.co.uk/cpd.htm](http://drivermetrics.co.uk/cpd.htm)

Article first appeared in *Emergency Service Times*



ON THE HILL

with Alan Woodhead Bowland Pennine MRT

Over the past few years it has been more difficult to train the team in winter skills, mainly due to the winter weather refusing to come at weekends! With this in mind members of Bowland Pennine MRT have moved the winter skills training from the Lakes in February to the French Alps in summer.



This June saw a record number of team members heading for the sun bathed Chamonix Valley for a touch of the white stuff. The group consisted of 19 team members including two from Holme Valley MRT. Experience ranged from seasoned alpinist through to Alpine virgins.

The five days included introductions to ice and snow techniques, crevasse rescue, rope work and alpine ascents. (Not to mention trying out local food and drink!), the plan was for a two day trip up the Grand Traverse to Mont Blanc (4810m) and back via the Bosons Glacier.

After a couple of days training on the Mer de Glâce, Petite Aiguille Vert, Cosmiques Arête, Valley Blanche etc, we geared up, and then we removed all the things that made the bags too heavy to lift! Changed technical climbing axes for light weight axes, sharpened crampons and we were ready for the push to the top.

We knew that the most difficult part of the route would be the night ascent of Mont Maudit. However, it was the weather that stopped us from reaching the summit - in fact, we only managed to buy one cable car ticket before the valley was engulfed in a massive hail and lightning storm with stones the size of marbles falling.

So, in the true spirit of mountaineering, we got our money back and spent it in the campsite bar, but next year we will be ready. We are taking umbrellas to fend off the hail, not sure how we'll cope with the lightning though!



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29 July, 2006. 17:25

**Duddon & Furness team was called by police following reports of a dog having fallen down a disused mine at Newton, near Barrow in Furness. On arrival, we were guided by Misty's owner up a track to find a clump of trees, bramble and a very nominal fence surrounding an old shaft. Three bars, actually lengths of old railway line, crossed a dark hole about three metres across. The first was solid, the second was decidedly wobbly and the third was out of reach.**



The owners had tied a weight to a length of rope to find the depth and had decided, fortunately, not to attempt to descend themselves. They could see the dog was still alive some sixty feet down.

We were able to tie the first rail to the tow bar of the Land Rover and secure the second one to the first to get a better look into the shaft. The stench was pretty bad from the dead sheep at the bottom that had made the same mistake as the dog but given her a soft landing.

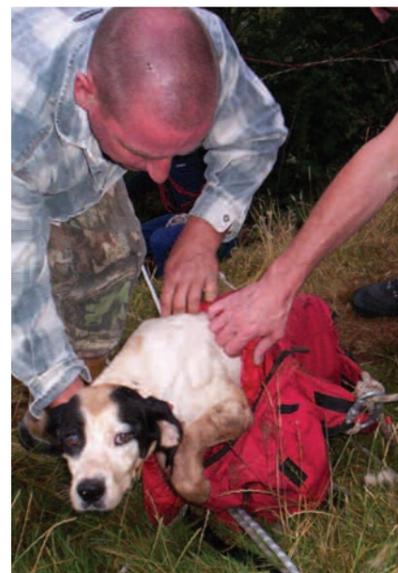
Deputy leader, Nigel Lister, 'volunteered' to abseil down and assess the situation and I elected to go down second to assist. Halfway down, he radioed that he wanted bringing back up because he couldn't breathe but after a couple of moments, while we were sorting out a hauling system, he decide to continue. At the bottom he found Misty in good spirits and decided he could cope on his own. Did I mind not going down? No – not one bit! Instead, a large rucksack was lowered down. Once secured, the dog was hauled carefully back up with just her head peering out. After several attempts, we managed to get dog and sack over the rail without causing further damage. Once released from the bag, and safely tied to a lead, she showed no signs of being the worse for wear from her fall.

Getting Nige out of the hole was a different matter. The pulley system set up to haul him out was unable to cope with the friction over the bar and down the top of the

shaft which was flared rather than vertical at the top. After lifting him ten feet, we gave up and lowered him to the bottom where he had to use prussic clamps to climb back up the rope. Although he was obviously quite tired at the top, the photo shows how much he appreciated the return to a full oxygen level.

Nige and the gear smelled atrocious. The rucksack was washed a couple of times, one of the ropes was sent into early retirement and there was a scramble to get into the vehicle that didn't have our hero in!

**Stephe Cove** Chairman  
Duddon & Furness MRT



# Lakes

# QUARTERLY INCIDENT REPORT FOR ENGLAND AND WALES APRIL-JUNE 2006

The following is a listing of the number of incidents attended by MR teams in England and Wales during the period from 01/04/2006 to 30/06/2006 It is grouped by region and shows the date (day/month) the incident began. It is not comprehensive as many incidents have yet to be reported.

## Lake District

Cockermouth	25/04
Coniston	08/04, 08/04, 19/04, 20/04, 20/04, 27/04, 08/05 14/05, 18/05, 21/05
Duddon & Furness	20/04, 30/04, 11/05, 17/05, 21/05
Kendal	01/04, 06/04, 26/04, 29/04, 13/05, 13/05, 21/05 21/05, 11/06
Keswick	01/04, 11/04, 12/04, 21/04, 30/04, 30/04, 30/04 30/04, 01/05, 08/05, 11/05, 13/05, 15/05, 18/05 27/05, 08/06, 17/06, 17/06, 21/06, 24/06, 25/06 27/06
Kirkby Stephen	15/05, 21/05, 04/06, 16/06
Langdale Ambleside	01/04, 01/04, 01/04, 04/04, 06/04, 13/04, 14/04 14/04, 16/04, 16/04, 21/04, 21/04, 29/04, 10/05 13/05, 13/05, 21/05, 21/05, 21/05, 22/05, 23/05 29/05, 02/06, 09/06, 10/06, 12/06
LDNP Vol Wardens	21/05
Patterdale	01/04, 06/04, 15/04, 15/04, 22/04, 22/04, 23/04 29/04, 29/04, 29/04, 21/05, 22/05, 25/05, 29/05 01/06, 05/06, 09/06, 11/06
Penrith	29/04, 07/05, 14/05, 15/05, 21/05, 22/05, 30/05 11/06, 18/06
Wasdale	01/04, 12/04, 15/04, 21/04, 25/04, 17/05, 25/05 17/06, 24/06

## Mid-Pennine

Bolton	01/04, 09/04, 10/04, 11/04, 16/04, 16/04, 17/04 01/05, 02/05, 04/05, 10/05, 23/05, 24/05, 09/06 11/06, 15/06, 15/06, 17/06, 18/06
Bowland Pennine	24/05
Calder Valley	24/06
Holme Valley	21/05, 06/06, 17/06, 24/06
Rossendale & Pendle	01/04

## NE England

Cleveland	06/05, 21/05, 21/05
Teesdale & Weardale	15/05

## North Wales

Aberglaslyn	22/04, 22/04
Llanberis	01/04, 02/04, 14/04, 15/04, 15/04, 15/04, 15/04 22/04, 22/04, 22/04, 29/04, 29/04, 09/05, 20/05 25/05, 28/05, 03/06, 08/06, 10/06, 10/06, 11/06 13/06, 21/06, 25/06

North East Wales	22/04, 22/04, 17/05
Ogwen Valley	08/04, 09/04, 13/04, 15/04, 21/04, 21/04, 21/04 22/04, 22/04, 06/05, 25/05, 26/05, 02/06, 10/06 10/06, 13/06, 20/06

## Peak District

Buxton	19/04, 05/05
Derby	05/04, 15/04, 29/04, 30/04, 16/05, 20/05, 13/06
Edale	17/06
Glossop	05/05
Kinder	29/04, 30/04, 05/05, 09/05, 27/05
Oldham	01/04, 16/04, 30/04, 05/05, 10/05, 04/06, 18/06 30/06
Woodhead	17/06

## South Wales

Brecon	15/04, 22/04, 13/05
Western Beacons	13/04, 15/04, 06/05, 13/05
Central Beacons	13/04, 22/04, 13/05
Longtown	04/01, 19/01, 22/01, 26/01, 21/02, 23/02
Severn Area RA	19/01, 26/01

## South West England

Exmoor	22/04, 11/05, 17/06
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## Yorkshire Dales

CRO	08/04, 22/04, 04/05, 08/05, 28/05, 29/05, 18/06 27/06
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## RAF

RAF Leeming	21/05
RAF Valley	22/04, 22/04, 06/05

## SARDA

SARDA (England)	01/04, 11/04, 05/05, 16/05, 21/05, 17/06, 17/06
SARDA (Lakes)	01/04, 04/06, 18/06
SARDA (Wales)	04/05, 17/05
SARDA (South Wales)	13/04, 21/04, 20/05
SARDA (Scotland)	21/05

## Non specialists (Non MR)

	09/04, 15/04, 21/04, 21/04, 10/06
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# North East

**The North Pennines are riddled with disused lead mine workings and open shafts are always ready to trap the unwary. Fortunately, incidents involving people are rare, but dogs frequently fall victim. On the eve of the August Bank Holiday weekend the Teesdale & Weardale team was asked to help after a black labrador fell down a mine shaft whilst on a grouse shoot.**

Upon arrival to conduct an initial risk assessment it looked bleak – this was a big shaft! However, once we entered the shaft mouth and could make a visual inspection downwards, it became apparent that this was one of those rare, good condition shafts and a rescue attempt would be made. The dog could be seen and although a some way down we could make out that it was alive.

Team member Paul Renwick descended the shaft and, after some persuasion, managed to 'bag' the dog and soon both were back on the surface. The dog was relatively unscathed and extremely lucky – a straight drop, no snagging and an angled landing slope!! Thanks and appreciations were made from the shooting party and the team quickly packed up and went home – we were out on a search the night before, so no hanging around.



PAUL RENWICK ABOUT TO DESCEND THE SHAFT

However, what would make this straightforward event memorable was about to happen. Team leader David Bartles-Smith received a phone call – a donation would be made to the team, and could he meet them the next day. He duly did and was completely floored when the shoot host, His Highness Mohammed Al Maktoum made a very large personal donation to the team. Thank you.

**Dave Bartles Smith**  
Teesdale & Weardale MRT

# Mid Pennine

**August saw Rossendale & Pendle team members called to a tragic accident at a quarry in Rochdale – a recognised site for scrambler bikes and 4x4s, and which has hosted trials bike championships for the last three years.**

The team was called when a 14 year old boy apparently lost control of his off road bike and plunged down an 80 foot cliff, suffering multiple injuries. He was pronounced dead at the scene by paramedics. A keen motorcyclist, the boy had been riding with friends and was wearing full protective gear. It is thought he had come off a well marked course around the quarry and ended up at the

top of a steep slope. The slope ran down for about 60 feet but then turned into a 20 foot vertical drop. Team leader Andy Simpson said, 'The boy ended up going down a very steep slope which became almost vertical at the bottom.' The incident is under investigation by police and health and safety officials.

Being rudely awoken in the small hours of the morning to be told 'We've got a callout, there's two women in the river, bring your wetsuit' is not the time to consider, 'What do you want me to do about it!' or 'If I get in the river, who's going to pull me out?' Fortunately, due to the speed of the events that followed and my total trust in the team sorting things out, these thoughts were brushed aside.



COCKERMOUTH TEAM IN ACTION ON A TRAINING EXERCISE

A woman had been washed down the Derwent and become stuck in the middle of the river below the footbridge in Cockermouth. So, fifteen minutes from being snugly tucked up in bed, I found myself in what I can only describe as walking onto a film set, searchlights, flashing lights, people rushing around purposefully. People carrying all manner of equipment, others in wetsuits, dry suits, yellow jackets, buoyancy aids, ropes, rafts and lots and lots of noise. And right in the middle of the river, awash with searchlight, a woman clinging to a tree!

Apparently she had been clinging to this tree for an hour and a half, whilst this menagerie of emergency services gathered on either bank of the river. How did we as a mountain rescue team, who regularly carry injured walkers off the fells or, more seriously injured climbers down cliffs, end up being key players in a full on river rescue? Well, that's a long story and some may say an inevitable progression from what we regularly do. But even now, months later, it still feels strange, a bit alien and a little 'outside the comfort zone'.

The team's and my involvement started many years earlier with regular descents of the river Cocker in canoes, kayaks, rubber dinghies and an assortment of air beds, in varying levels of water from full flood to 'I wonder if my socks will get wet'. This led on to Jim Coyle and I attending an excellent 'Swift Water Rescue Course' run by Keswick

MRT and a brilliant instructor – Franco Ferrero. So now its 2:55am on a bitter cold autumn morning and we are standing by the side of this brimful boiling soup of a river. My brain is struggling to make sense of the scene – there seem to be dozens of other emergency people everywhere – police, fire brigade, paramedics, coastguard and lifeboat... there's even mention of a helicopter turning up. One thing is for certain, now is not the time to start introducing yourself and finding out other people's capabilities! Work with the people you know, make a plan, and get on with it.

There's a fundamental difference (or so it seems), carrying out a rescue in water as opposed to our usual medium (mountains and weather). The situation and circumstances change faster and more frequently. So our plan was going to be simple, fast and uncomplicated.

The woman was holding on to a tree on what, in the river's normal state, is an island. Tonight it was a branch sticking out of the water. Eighty metres upstream of her, is Millers footbridge spanning the river sitting atop of two supporting buttresses midstream. Prior to us turning up, a number of attempts had been made to throw a line to the woman. These had been unsuccessful in that she didn't want to leave her tree or the other emergency services felt that if she did it would exacerbate the situation.

Downriver of the footbridge, formed by one of the buttresses was a narrow strip of slower moving water... this was our pathway to the victim. We ran on to the bridge and, using a rope, I was swiftly lowered down the side of the buttress and into the water. My thoughts were, 'If I enter the water will I get back out?' I was fairly confident the team and I could look after me. If I came out with the woman then that would be a bonus. I would give it a go, to get her out of the water, but my prime concern would be me!

The killer in these situations is not swimming in water but being prevented from swimming by other things in the water – trees, branches, being caught on the river bed, the rope attaching me to the team on the riverbank drowning me and finally the woman panicking drowning us both.

The rope is attached to me via a quick release on my buoyancy aid so, if at any time the rope becomes stuck, I can release it immediately and take my chances with the river. This is definitely preferable to being drowned slowly on the end of a line.

I floated on my back down the narrow strip of slack water towards the woman, constantly reminding myself to keep my feet up as a trapped foot on the river bed now would be lethal. As I neared the victim I was talking to her, getting her to look me in the eye so that I could judge if she was going to panic

and drown us both. Thankfully she remained calm and was more concerned about her friend.

The victim and her friend had been drinking in the town and somehow been convinced that local police were after them. The friend had jumped into the river, getting into difficulties, the victim jumped in to help her and the pair had become separated, with the victim ending up in the situation that I found her. I assured the young lady her friend was safe and well, having managed to get back on to river bank further down stream, being found tucked up in bed later by the police!

So now there was two of us in the middle of the river, clinging to a branch. She was showing signs of hypothermia and her condition would deteriorate fast now that her body's natural reaction was to think it was almost over.

Because of all the overhanging trees on the nearest bank, I chose to release the rope from me upstream to the team, and throw a new, more direct, throw-line to the team, avoiding the trees. On to this new line was attached a buoyancy aid for the victim. This was swiftly carried by the river to me, and immediately put on the woman.

The plan was to let go of the tree and, with the team releasing the rope slowly, the river would carry us both downstream, 'a pendulum' into the riverbank. I put the rope on to my quick release, took a firm hold of the woman's buoyancy aid, telling her what we were going to do if things didn't go to plan, and let go of the tree. One minute later we were both being helped on to the river bank.

From entering to exiting the water... 15 minutes... simple, fast, uncomplicated and all credit must go entirely to the team who worked efficiently and effectively looking after me... the dope on a rope... having a midnight swim!

Michael Park Deputy Team Leader Cockermouth MRT

A number of Lake District teams have a specialist river rescue capability with experienced team members fully trained and certificated as swift water rescue technicians or higher. This increasing rescue capability is a reflection of the growing numbers of calls for assistance from other agencies in the region. It is interesting that this has also been recognised by the MRC in their request for nominations for the national post of Water Officer. Two of the region's team members have expressed an interest in this post.



Great How in the Coniston Fells can be a trap for unwary walkers. This long prow of rocky ground points eastwards from Swirl Band, part of the ridge that lies between Great Carrs and Brim Fell en route to Coniston Old Man. It is best seen from Levers Water where it appears as a steep impenetrable crag with easier ground above. In fact, a Grade 2 rock scramble leads intricately through the slabs and buttresses to the top. 'An interesting route on good rock and an excellent way to the top', according to the scrambling guide. Great How is also recommended for rock climbers with route grades varying between 'very difficult and extreme'.

Why then, you will be asking, is this of any interest to walkers? The reason is that walkers regularly stray onto Great How by mistake thinking that they are descending the path from Levers Hawse down to Levers Water. It's a simple mistake to make – a very tempting path seems to lead exactly where you want to go. The ground slowly becomes steeper and eventually you find yourself on near vertical rock, no doubt in a state of considerable apprehension. Walkers going south along Swirl Band towards Brim Fell make this mistake – it is a further 600 metres south along the ridge before you reach the



AN ENTICING PATH LEADING YOU INTO DANGER. PHOTO BOB HENSON

actual Levers Water path. Walkers going north heading for the path at Swirl How that goes down Prison Band towards Wetherlam also make the same mistake.

Over the past few months Coniston MRT have been called to help three parties in difficulties here, usually at the end of the day when darkness is falling. In December, a party of three followed the ridge down until they found themselves in a small gully. Realising they were not where they should be, they retreated back up the ridge. As they retreated, one member of the party dislodged a large rock which fell and trapped the legs of a female member of the party. Even with their



GOOD PATH DOWN WITH CAIRNS ALL THE WAY. PHOTO BOB HENSON

combined efforts the two men were unable to move it. They called for assistance and the rescue team went to their aid. Night had now fallen but there was a full moon making it possible to work without lights and one of those special experiences which all mountain people cherish. An RAF Sea King arrived from Kinloss and, with a beautiful display of night flying, the casualty was winched to safety.

In January, a pair of walkers got themselves into difficulty and the team was able to lead them back up the rocks to safety, fortunately there were no injuries. In April, a family of four got themselves into similar difficulties but had persevered with their descent and become cragfast on very steep rocks. The rescue involved setting up rope systems to lower them in several stages to easier ground. A 'mountain rescue' in the true sense of the words, something the team trains for but rarely has the chance to put into practice.

This is not a new problem for the team. Walkers have been getting themselves into difficulty here for years. Some time ago we decided to build a simple drystone wall across the path in the hopes that people might question whether or not they were on the right route. This was soon knocked down. We do not mind rescuing people – that is what we volunteer and train for – however, it is important to try and minimise unnecessary injuries to people and to avoid the possibility of the consequences being much more serious or even fatal. So walkers, if you are planning to descend to Levers Water from Swirl Band, especially in failing light or poor weather conditions, be warned and make sure that you are on the right path. The right path descends from Levers Hawse, the lowest part of the route between Great Carrs and Coniston Old Man. It is marked by a cairn on the main path and a line of cairns leads across grass to the edge some 50 metres from where a well trodden path takes you safely down to Levers Water. If you are travelling north intending to go down Prison Band from Swirl How then do not fall into the trap of going down Great How. The path you want is 1.2k beyond Levers Hawse and another 600 metres after the Great How path. It is a true T-junction with the ground dropping away rapidly in front of you. There is also a significant cairn. It's at least two metres high and you can't miss it.

Kit crit Eddy



Over the past few months, I have been playing with a new sport belay device called the Eddy, made in Germany by Edelrid. The device takes over where the Petzl Gri Gri stops. The Gri Gri auto locks in the event of a fall, but if the handle is pulled too far the cam opens fully and the floor reached much quicker than is healthy!

The Eddy has a double locking system – if the handle is pulled too far, the cam reverts to stop and locks. It's the perfect belaying device for sport climbing for either novice or the experienced climber. A revolutionary belaying device predominantly for sport and indoor climbing, the Eddy doesn't need much explanation and in simplicity is safety.

Easy to thread if the diagrams are followed, a bit more care needed if you are used to threading a Gri Gri. A controlled descent with an emergency break system eliminates the 'panic pull' syndrome that can lead to serious accidents.

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Alan Woodhead  
Bowland Pennine MRT  
MPSRO Equipment Officer

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## IN MY VIEW

# CASUALTIES WITH PSYCHIATRIC ILLNESS IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE

**Dr Henry Guly** Dartmoor SRT (Tavistock) and Emergency Physician, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth

**M**ountain rescue medicine has, in the past, concentrated on the management of injuries and hypothermia. More recently, emphasis has been placed on medical emergencies such as chest pain. However, MR teams are frequently asked to search for patients with psychiatric problems. These include depressed and suicidal patients, patients with thought disorders, such as schizophrenia and the elderly confused patient who has wandered. Patients with psychiatric problems may not wish to cooperate with rescuers and this article is intended to give some advice on the management of such patients.

An adult's body is their own (there are different rules for the under 16s and under 18s which I will not describe) and it is not a crime to commit or attempt suicide or to harm oneself in some other way. Most, but not all, patients who commit suicide are mentally ill. However, some people may wish to take their own life if they, for example, have a terminal illness or because it is their preferred way of dealing with what they see as a shameful situation such as bankruptcy or a criminal charge. If a person is in sound mind, they are entitled to harm themselves and if one tries, physically, to prevent them from doing this, it is, technically, an assault. Even touching somebody, against their will, is an assault. How does one cope with this situation in a MR setting?

### Mental illness

Firstly, let's consider the case of a patient with mental illness who is not currently in an immediately dangerous situation. Mountain rescuers are not psychiatrists (and nor are most MR doctors) and are not expected to make a diagnosis but there are some people who are obviously mentally ill, even to the lay person. Examples might be:-

- ◆ Delusions of grandeur – the person may think he is Jesus Christ or Napoleon and have plans to save the world.

- ◆ Paranoia – the person is convinced that 'they' are listening to and controlling his thoughts, have implanted electrodes in his brain and are out to get him.

- ◆ Hallucinations – the person is hearing voices that are not there. These voices may be telling him to harm himself or you. This may be associated with paranoia.

- ◆ Severe depression. Depression is not just a feeling of being 'a bit low'. Severely depressed people feel that everything is black and that they are worthless and deserve to die.

Alcohol intoxication is not considered a mental illness.

The Mental Health Act (MHA) allows mentally ill patients to be detained for psychiatric treatment against their will in three circumstances.

- ◆ By court order, if they have committed a crime.

- ◆ By 'sectioning' by one or more doctors. There are various different sections of the Act which proscribes the level of medical and psychiatric expertise required to assess a patient under each section. For example, in an emergency, any

registered medical practitioner can detain a patient for up to three days for assessment but a 30-day detention requires two doctors, one of whom should be an approved psychiatrist.

MR teams are unlikely ever to come in contact with patients who require detaining under the above mechanisms.

- ◆ The final method allows that if a police officer believes a person in a public place is mentally ill, they can be arrested under section 136 of the MHA and taken to a place of safety (usually a police station or hospital), where they must be examined by a psychiatrist who can either arrange for their admission to hospital under one of the other sections of the MHA or else discharge the Section 136, in which case the patient is free to go (or they could be admitted to hospital voluntarily).

If a MR team find a person that they consider is severely mentally ill but who is not causing a danger to themselves or others, the best thing is to try to persuade the casualty to come voluntarily. How one does this will vary from case to case but a few hints are given below.

- ◆ Avoid confrontational behaviour eg. speak nicely and gently, do not approach too close if that upsets the casualty. Relax and put yourself on the same level as the casualty. Do not stand up and tower over them. Most mentally ill patients are not violent but they may react irrationally to perceived threats.

- ◆ Don't be rushed – it needs time.

- ◆ Many casualties (male and female) will feel less threatened by a female. Do not forget that disturbed female casualties may be disturbed following a sexual assault, in which case a female team member is invaluable.

- ◆ Touch may soothe some disturbed casualties but may worsen things if the casualty is confrontational. Play it by ear.

- ◆ Sometimes casualties can be bribed to come with the promise of a cup of tea or a pint of beer.

- ◆ Do not make a promise that you know you will later break eg. Don't say, 'Its alright, I won't tell anyone else.'

If one's powers of persuasion are not good enough to persuade the casualty to come with you, you have no right to detain them and will need to call a police officer. Common sense would indicate that the casualty is prevented from disappearing,

particularly into moorland or mountainous areas where they may be at risk, before the police officer arrives. While technically this could be considered an assault, a charge of assault would require that a complaint is made against you, which is unlikely to happen and if the police officer subsequently arrests the casualty under a Section 136, Common Law (see below) is likely to indicate that you acted correctly.

### Casualty who has self harmed (eg. taken an overdose, cut their wrists) or is threatening to do so.

Not all patients who self-harm have a mental illness and not all want to die. Some reasons for suicide are given above but self-harm can also occur in people with a personality disorder (this is not classified as a mental illness) or as an impulsive reaction to some event (eg after a relationship breakdown). While the MHA allows compulsory detention for the treatment of mental illness, there is no statute that allows treatment of a person's physical problems against their will. As noted above, cutting my wrists, jumping off a cliff or taking an overdose with the intention of killing myself is not illegal but there are circumstances in which you can stop me from doing so. This is dependent, not on any statute, but on common law which is unwritten law dating back hundreds of years. If I want to kill myself, you cannot stop me unless you believe that I lack the capacity to make that decision. Legally, it is assumed that people have capacity unless it can be demonstrated that they do not. To have capacity I have got to be able to:-

- ◆ Understand what you tell me and retain the information. If you tell me that the overdose may kill me but I don't understand it or my memory is so short that I have forgotten it five minutes later, then I am incapable of making an informed judgment and lack capacity.

- ◆ Believe what you tell me. If I don't believe that the overdose will kill me and think that you are telling me that because you are in a conspiracy against me, then I lack capacity.

- ◆ Weigh up what you tell me. I need to understand not only that I will die but I also need to be able to argue the pros and cons of my decision eg. Understand that my wife will be upset, that my family will be financially disadvantaged etc.

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# Money Talks

## A fun and alternative way to raise funds

From **Andy Kirkpatrick**



PAUL RAMSDEN APPROACHING THE GRANDES JORASSES

In the past I've often given talks to support local teams, which have usually been small affairs. The outcome often felt unsatisfactory, mainly because I felt the potential audience – and the cash – wasn't achieved. Then two years ago I was asked to do a talk to raise funds for Buxton mountain rescue which I think could be used as a model for other teams in the UK.

I was giving a talk in Macclesfield and afterwards I got talking to Roger Bennett of Buxton MRT, and I suggested I did a gig to raise some funds for the team. By this time I'd decided that the amount of effort required meant it wasn't worth it on anyone's part unless it was to be done properly, and I knew we had to think big. I said I'd do a talk but on two conditions – firstly, we had to do it in the Buxton Opera house, a venue that held over 900 people, and secondly I said if it was to work then I had to be able to focus on it, and so I suggested we each have a share in the profits. We came to the conclusion that I would double bill Ian Parnell, with the team getting 50% and me and Ian getting 25% of the profits. I doubted Roger would agree to such a crazy idea – after all, aren't teams best at raising money by standing outside climbing shops shaking tins?

Well Roger must have had faith in me (more than I had in myself), as he rang a few weeks later to tell me the team had booked the Opera House. I assumed that the Opera House would give us a good deal seeing as the team supported the local community, but when Roger told me 'we'd better be able to fill it – it's costing £2000 to hire', suddenly I wasn't so sure I could pull this off, and envisaged bankrupting the people I wanted to help.

The rest of the summer was spent worrying about the lecture, sorting out posters and flyers, emailing magazines, and trying to make sure neither me nor Ian killed our selves and so scupper the night. The idea of making money from a 'charity' lecture may seem odd but, from experience, I knew that staging an event took a lot of work and, with a million other jobs to do, this would have to have some benefit. Plus I always knew that the more I did, the greater the reward for both me and the team.

Every few days I'd check with the Opera House about ticket sales, and as they rose, so did my confidence. One thing I'd underestimated was the amount of goodwill. Roger and I managed to raise the price of the venue with outdoor manufactures and local business quite easily, meaning all the profit would go to us. People want to support the team, and if they also get something good out of it, like a unique evening's entertainment, then they'll support it even more. A lecture is the ideal place to tell people what you do as a team, and perhaps thank them for their support and remind them you are there.

Eventually the big night came. The team Land Rover was parked outside, complete with tin shaking members. Ian and I were inside looking up at 900 empty seats, hoping people would turn up, and Roger was pacing up and down ringing his hands worrying if this was going to be a disaster.

It wasn't. The night was a sell out. 900 bums sat on £11 seats. What's more it was great fun, and perhaps the most enjoyable and satisfying talk I've ever done. The cash we made meant I could afford to ski across Greenland with a paraplegic friend, Ian could head off to the Himalaya and the team could put a big wad of cash towards a new base.

This event convinced me that lots of UK teams could do similar events, events that could easily be annual and highly profitable. There are dozens of great speakers who would be happy to do just what we did and, more importantly, a vast audience of both outdoor and armchair enthusiasts who are willing to pay to see them. All that's needed is the right venue, good marketing, and the right speaker. And as Roger found out, it's much better counting £20 notes in the bar with a pint of beer than standing in the rain with a tin in your hand.

If anyone would like advice on organising their own talk contact **andy at andy@psychovertical.com**



PORTRAIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

If a person is at immediate risk of significant harm and they lack capacity, you not only have a right to treat them against their will, if necessary, but you also have a duty to do so. This immediate risk of harm could apply not only to deliberate self harm but also to a person wandering, confused and ill-clad, on the hills in poor weather and at great risk of hypothermia.

However, if I do have capacity, you have no right to prevent me from harming myself and can only use your persuasive powers to try to get me to change my mind.

Clearly this is not a black and white situation – there is too much grey for comfort. What is significant harm? How do you know what the risk is from the overdose they have taken? How does a non-expert (or even an expert) judge capacity in somebody they have never met before on open moorland in a howling gale? You stand the risk of criticism whatever you do – if you leave someone to die, you will undoubtedly be criticised by the family and the press and probably by the coroner as well, but if you treat someone against their will, you could technically be sued for assault.

However, in practice, this is highly unlikely to happen. Not only is the casualty unlikely to complain (I have the experience – outside the MR situation – of people who have been rescued from a determined suicide attempt and while they say that they wished that they had not been rescued, they are usually grateful to the rescuers, paramedics, medical and nursing staff for the risks they took and effort they put into treating them), but a judge is unlikely to find against a person who acts in good faith.

The team leader must make the final decision but should consult with other experienced team members. Make use of professionals that you have available (emergency department doctors and paramedics will be used to the situation of overdose patients refusing treatment). However, if in doubt, act to save life – it is better to be criticised for breaching someone's human rights than for allowing them to die. The person who really wants to die, can try again but the person whose impulsive gesture proves fatal, gets no second chance. Unless there are very good reasons to the contrary, it is safer for a non-professional to assume that the wish to die is an indication of mental illness and an inability to weigh things up.

**Acknowledgment: I would like to thank Dr Anne Hicks for helpful comments.**

# FIRST RESPONSE



## TIME MAY NOT BE THE FRIEND OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE

If those who offered their services to mountain rescue in the early 1960s had contemplated, 46 years on, the time team members would have to dedicate to the modern rescue team, I am sure they would have serious reservations in joining the present day mountain rescue.

Us old 'uns love to compare the good old days with modern times but, in all honesty, this is rather farcical. First and foremost, there has been an enormous escalation in rescue incidents. Then there are the extra duties mountain rescue teams and their members have undertaken over the years. Today's teams perform to a high standard and the expertise team members must acquire is essential for the equipment they use and the excellent service they offer. Comparing the 1960s team member and the personal time he/she devoted to mountain rescue duties to what the present day team member has to come to terms with is totally inconceivable.

When I first joined, there was hardly any pressure or conflict between family and MR commitments. How times have changed. For some time now, I've heard 'whispers' from around the country that teams are very concerned about how mountain rescue might evolve and what the future might hold. My personal fear is, 'How much time can any team member give to MR?' If not addressed soon, this could become a serious problem.

We have to be realistic. Mountain rescue call outs have reached an all time high. Non mountain incidents are on the increase. Team training is essential but very time consuming. Fundraising is a constant demand on members' time. Team officials can spend many hours making sure all the equipment is in good order. Many team members attend national, regional and team meetings. As new legislation is placed upon us, so it demands more training, more time. Teams are obliged to attend outside events because it's a source of revenue to the team.

Can members, in the future, continue give their time to these ever increasing demands? The lifestyle and employment of some team members may allow them availability for most of the tasks above, but what about the man and woman who have

family, employment and social commitments? All team members have to assess where MR fits into their list of priorities. Believe me, I'm well aware what the word 'priority' means – I've spent over 40 years in mountain rescue, most as deputy/team leader of one of the busiest teams in the UK. On more than one occasion I was rudely reminded of my priorities!

I wonder were it will end – if rescue duties continue to increase, will teams have the members to cope, assuming they can spare the time? There could be a lack of people volunteering in the future because I suspect prospective new members will want to know how much personal time they will be asked to devote to MR – which, if too demanding, could be bad news for recruitment. If we think we might have a problem, now's the time to start doing something about it. The MRC contacted teams many years ago to assess what their capability and role was within MR. The Lake District elected to have an independent survey – 'Rescue 2000'. Could the time be ripe for another national assessment concentrating on the future availability of new members and the time they are expected to devote to MR?

It may be that the national fundraising committee could be spurred on to alleviate the many hours team members spend on team fundraising, by pursuing most vigorously that these hard-earned earnings should not subsequently be requisitioned by central government. I think we all agree that no team should pay VAT – exemption on ALL equipment purchased by rescue teams should be the norm, plus vehicle road tax and fuel duties. These taxes must be one of the biggest drain on funds that teams experience over a 12 month period. If the farming community can operate their tractors on red diesel (free of fuel tax) – for which, incidentally, they have storage facilities – then, with a little logistical planning, they could supply mountain rescue teams.

Most, if not all, these cash saving projects are already being pursued by the national fundraising committee. I am sure if we set our mind to it, there are ways to ease how team members commit their valuable time to rescuing people. Only time will tell.

**Stewart Hulse**

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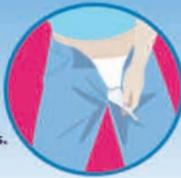
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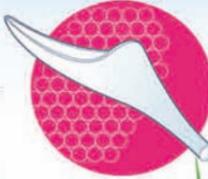


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Shewee, the ergonomically designed, moulded plastic device that allows women of all ages to urinate while standing or sitting and without removing clothes, should soon be available in a store near you! Women have previously only been able to buy Shewee online or in selected UK outlets, but its manufacturers have recently committed to an expansion drive to allow more women to benefit from the freedom Shewee brings.

Samantha Fountain, MD and inventor of Shewee says, 'We are really pleased that Shewee is soon to be sold in more and more outlets. As well as many UK retailers, we have distributors in America, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Israel and Malta, so soon, wherever they are, women on the go won't be too far from the comfort of a Shewee!'

The expansion coincides with new packaging and a website revamp. Shewee is now available individually in bright, cardboard containers, or in boxes of 12. Visit [shewee.com](http://shewee.com) and you could also buy a variety of Shewee branded products including T-shirts, 'Y-fronts', hand sanitisers, feminine wipes, and protective cases.

Shewee can be used in situations where squatting is impractical, difficult or potentially embarrassing, or anywhere toilets are unhygienic or not always readily available. It's lightweight enough to be carried in a woman's handbag, rucksack or pocket and can be easily washed or sterilised. The smooth liquid repellent coating ensures cleanliness and hygiene at all times and, whether used with or without a container, prevents drips, splashes and bare bottoms.

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Many women come along on their own. The walking group is small and friendly, with a trained guide to show you wonderful walks you might otherwise miss. The age range is wide and all women are welcome!

Visit [walkingwomen.com](http://walkingwomen.com) and you can view the whole year's calendar of holidays in one place to see which ones are currently available. Click on any title to link to the holiday details. The holidays are also displayed on separate seasonal pages which load quicker if you don't have broadband.

Many women return for more WalkingWomen holidays after their first experience, so the company has introduced 'Frequent Walker Miles'. Take three holidays or short breaks with them in a year, and they'll take £20 off the third one. Vouchers are also available for whatever amount you wish to give, either for specific holidays, or leaving the holiday choice open.

For further information, call 08456 445335 or 01926 31332 or email [queries@walkingwomen.com](mailto:queries@walkingwomen.com)

## GIRLGUIDING AT BLACKLANDS FARM

Blackland Farm is an outdoor activity centre in West Sussex owned by Girlguiding UK. Activities on offer include canoeing, kayaking, climbing, abseiling, archery, zip wire, crate challenge, low ropes course and team building. The centre is mainly camping based but also has four indoor accommodation buildings. Blackland Farm can accommodate up to 1,000 people at a time and is an ideal venue for large camps as well as small group camps. There are opportunities for suitably qualified staff to work on a seasonal or casual basis and accommodation can be provided.

## GIRLGUIDING UK

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[www.blacklandfarm.org.uk](http://www.blacklandfarm.org.uk)  
Activity Centre

TEL: 01342 810493 FAX: 01342 811206  
[blackland@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:blackland@girlguiding.org.uk)

## Glenmore Lodge couple first to make the longest climb on the planet

Pauline Sanderson, marketing manager at Glenmore Lodge, Scotland, and her husband Phil, a mountain and paddle sport instructor at the lodge, this summer became the first to complete the longest climb on earth, from the Dead Sea to the summit of Everest – and the first UK couple to reach the summit of the world's highest mountain together. The couple, from Grantown-on-Spey were part of a 14-strong expedition, Everestmax.

The team departed from a point at the Dead Sea, 1312ft below sea level, the lowest point on the Earth's surface, on 21 December 2005. The first phase of the overland journey saw Pauline cycling 5000 miles, at sixty to seventy miles a day, through seven countries – from Jordan through Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, Nepal, China and, finally, Tibet to Kathmandu where she was met by Phil and other members of the expedition. Base camp on the north side of Everest was reached in early April, and the climb to the summit of the 29,035ft mountain via the north-east ridge completed a total ascent of around 30,350ft.

The progress of the Everestmax expedition, which has explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes as patron and is fundraising for three charities, was being tracked by friends and colleagues on the shores of Loch Morlich, via updates on the everestmax.com website. They arrived at the summit in good conditions and were reported as heading comfortably down towards Camp III for a well-earned rest.

Tim Walker, Principal of Glenmore Lodge, said, 'Everybody at the lodge is absolutely delighted. It has been a huge commitment by them both. Pauline is not a professional mountaineer and so it has taken a huge effort on her part.' Tim added that they were a great inspiration to everybody to 'get out and live life to the full.' A party was planned for their return. Sir Ralph said it was an incredible overland journey which was an 'immense physical and logistical challenge'.

Now back at work, the Sandersons took unpaid leave to go on their charitable adventure, fundraising for three charities – SOS Children's Villages, Practical Action and Merlin. They were sponsored by Tiso and Marmot, who also sponsor Glenmore Lodge.

The first married couple to reach the summit of Everest were Andrej and Marija Stremfelj, from Slovenia.

What every woman should know...

Trawling the archives for interesting news and snippets related to mountain rescue brings other rewards. Take the 'tip top tips' featured in a 1951 copy of 'News Chronicle' – what every woman should know. Apparently, readers were invited to write in with their suggestions to 'make ends meet'. Oh how times have changed...

Living room need a bit of a spruce up? Why not revive cushion covers or curtains with the purchase of 'some clean sacks (not too heavy) from the grocer, or farmer if you live in the country. Cut them open, wash well in soda water to which is added a little disinfectant. Dye the pieces an attractive colour, when they can be made into good strong covers and curtains. Coloured cord or piping may be added for decoration.' Eat your heart out Linda Barker.

For smokers there is the excellent, if somewhat convoluted, advice to 'place 3d. (remember, we're talking pre-decimal here) in a box for the first cigarette you take, then 2d. for every other and 3d. for the last. Thus you will have enough money for the next packet and will be more careful about taking a cigarette!' Or, here's another thought, give 'em up. That way, you won't have to worry about having enough spare change in your pocket for the box. In fact, you won't have to carry the box. Or the fags.

And finally, if a favourite jumper or cardigan has become too tight under the arms, unpick the stitches 'for a few inches under the arm and side seam. Knit two squares in the same colour and sew in cornerways. Press well on the wrong side and the renovation will be unnoticeable.' Clearly an idea which caught on, as a couple of decades of schoolgirls, clickety clacking through their own personal square mountain every autumn term, will testify. There we were, thinking our woolly outpourings were on their way to Christmas blanket heaven and all the time they were plugging a hole in the underarm gusset market. **Judy Whiteside**

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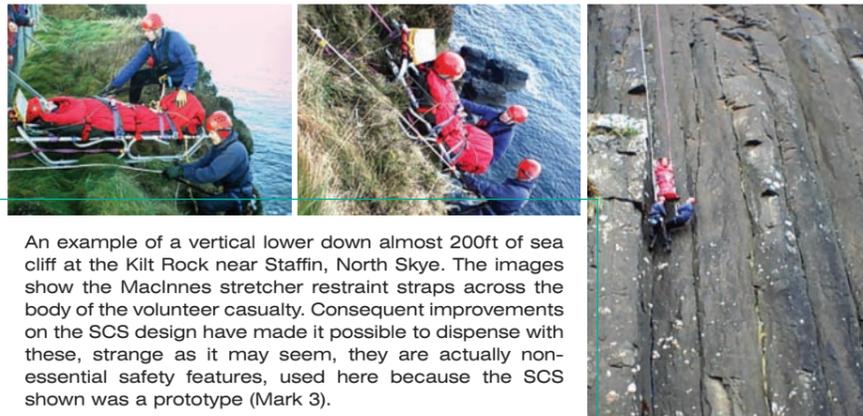
# THE SECURE CASUALTY SYSTEM

Paul Rosher Skye MRT

I began work on the early prototypes of the Secure Casualty System (SCS) five years ago in October. It all began with the then training officer for the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, Mick Tighe pointing out a number of problematic areas in MR kit. He then issued a general invitation for anyone with any notions that they wanted to develop to come forward and help form a group specifically with this remit. Principally the attention was on the MR stretcher, which James Kean of Kintail MRT has undertaken. With the casualty bag being an accompaniment to this, I took up the challenge of attempting to redefine the conventional casbag and create something new and, if possible, improve the design.

In the following four years my part-time work on the casbag made slow but definite progress in the right direction. Every design had to be fully field tested on rock faces, snow and ice. Each fundamental modification meant these tests would have to be repeated on the mountain in all weathers and given a full critical analysis concerning the validity and practicality of each design change. It was a long drawn out process! It had to be – mountain rescue equipment has distinct governing principles, prime amongst these the need for complete dependability and reliable security in repetitive applications, simplicity and ease of use, hard-wearing and preferably light in weight. A tall order by anyone's standards.

My first real breakthrough was winning the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Award. This granted me a fully financed travelling fellowship and opened the way for rapid advancement with the SCS design by enabling me to actually join Yosemite Search & Rescue as a full team member. During this placement, in winter 2002-2003, I attended training sessions and callouts, and was able to test the SCS Prototype 2 in ideal mountain terrain. My time with the YOSAR crew provided valuable insights into what eventually would become the restraint devices of the SCS, a substantial safety feature.



An example of a vertical lower down almost 200ft of sea cliff at the Kilt Rock near Staffin, North Skye. The images show the MacInnes stretcher restraint straps across the body of the volunteer casualty. Consequent improvements on the SCS design have made it possible to dispense with these, strange as it may seem, they are actually non-essential safety features, used here because the SCS shown was a prototype (Mark 3).

**I propose that the SCS is a genuine advancement in the field of casualty packaging.**

The findings from Yosemite proved invaluable for development of the following two prototypes, both of which were fully tested in Scotland by Mick's equipment group and Skye MRT. It was during this period, in which vertical lowering and hoisting seemed to dominate the tests, that I made an important discovery. Originally, my attentions had been focused on the demands of high angle rescue techniques and equipment, but my findings revealed a more general application – that it actually reduced the amount of casualty movement during transit. The effect was to broaden the application from a limited-use item of kit into one with wider scope.

Reducing casualty movement during transit. Five mere words which when translated into the reality of an injured casualty make all the difference in the world. Considering any form of movement at all is hazardous when internal injuries or spinal problems are diagnosed, I propose that the SCS is a genuine advancement in the field of casualty packaging.

Transverse strapping across the body can prove problematic. Often the

casualty will complain that they are too tight. Perhaps they are exerting pressure on an injured area? Concerns for the safe transit of the injured person dictate that this discomfort may have to be endured for the sake of security. Presently the current SCS, which has reached a pre-production stage, has a restraint system which evenly distributes the load, can be padded easily and quickly to protect the injured area and crucially is not dependent on extra stretcher strapping across the body of the casualty. This innovation is a unique feature of the SCS.

The gradual development of the SCS over the last five years has been directly related to the quality of the feedback from active mountain rescue team members who have seen the potential of the system and have contributed valuable observations and comment. My work has been cut out for me by considering the valid points and synthesising them into a design.

From Mr Tighe's equipment group, through all the Skye MRT tests, the YOSAR placement and training sessions with other Scottish MR teams (Oban, Ochills and Glenelg), the SCS has evolved into a prospective item of kit which meets the demands of severe terrain rescue. It is also necessary to mention the influence of Capita Health Solutions and their remote rigs and industrial platform medics training facility in



The four photographs above were taken on Ben Cruachan with Oban MRT on a training session. From left to right: the SCS in place on a MacInnes stretcher; the lot rigged and ready for lowering – note the absence of transverse strapping; volunteer casualty in a vacuum mattress with the Boot Bag and Torso Restraint in place; the Boot Bag located on one leg only, the other being heavily splinted and, in such a case, it is advisable not to have a load or stress on the injury.

Montrose. CHS promoted the idea of the SCS having an application out-with the arena of mountain rescue, recommending the restraint system as a feature, with a potential marine and industrial extrication relevance.

Currently a pre-production model of the SCS

is being evaluated by Ferno UK, a reputable manufacturer of emergency rescue equipment. They are assessing its market potential through

evaluation trials with MR teams, the MOD and the coastguard. The feedback will determine whether they will be producing the SCS and what future

refinements will be required. I am confident the responses will be mainly favourable.

Any inquiries or comment to – Paul Rosher, Rocais Dubh Design, Grianal, Dunvegan, Isle of Skye, Scotland IV55 8GU.

**The following images show the use and function of the Torso Restraint and the Boot Bag utilised on the Secure Casualty System, taken whilst demonstrating to various Scottish MRTs and also the Capita Health Solutions Offshore Medics course.**



Boot Bag used to secure a casualty. Utilising load-bearing webbing, climbing harness grade, adjustable buckles and load-bearing mesh, the feet are securely held in position and will not slip free. The nature of the mesh is such that if padding is used around the injury, the mesh will conform around it and retain its load-bearing qualities. It can also be used around a single leg if the other is injured to the point where no pressure at all can, or should, be placed on it.



Torso Restraint being locked into position around the casualty. Made to the same specification as the Boot Bag it can be used with the casualty's arms confined or not. Again, this can be padded without losing any casualty security. The load-bearing mesh is a comfortable material to have next to the body and conforms to the casualty once the adjustable buckles are engaged and tightened.



The casualty held upside down in the secure casualty system. The restraint method employed within the bag is holding the casualty in position comfortably, without tight straps locating upon the body. The two tapes which have fallen away are part of the rigid stretcher, not the SCS. The casualty's head is behind the wire headguard in the foreground. Note the minimal amount of forward sagging.



The SCS being checked in the upright position whilst being fixed into a rigid stretcher. The two black 1" straps at the base of the bag are non-structural. They hold the insulation in place when the casualty is of average build. The SCS anchors into the rigid stretcher by means of load-bearing strapping, two sets at the head, the base and two sets at each side. This fixes the SCS to the rigid stretcher and contributes to a reduction in casualty movement during transit.



Training session in which a mock casualty with hypothermia and an injured leg is being loaded into the SCS. The Torso Restraint can be seen in the open position ready for the casualty to be placed in the SCS. The visible zippers, a vertical pair and a long horizontal one, are the points of access for the placing of insulation, hot packs, heater pads etc.



The casualty being held vertically. Again the SCS is fixed into a rigid stretcher. Extra padding has been placed round the head to reduce movement. The twin zippered pouch positioned just below the red logo contains the pairs of adjustable straps for securing the casualty when the person is small to medium build. In this case they are not needed as the casualty here is six foot five. Note the visible anchor points on the stretcher top rail.



PHOTOS PAUL ROSHER

The SCS in a typical test and Prototype 2 with its integral harness, designed to restrain the casualty during lowering and lifting. The fundamental notions are all here – the waterproof and windproof shell, shown open, which could be insulated according to need, the load bearing casualty restraints linked to the Stokes Litter and extra insulation in the form of the green sleeping bag type insert. Although the sun is shining here, at nearly 6000ft the wind provided the realistic element of cold.

# NINE YEARS OF GPS TRACKING AND LOCATION – FROM VISION TO REALITY

Paul Horder Keswick MRT

In 1996, Keswick MRT moved into its new, purpose-built HQ. After the effort of two years' work, trying to find a suitable site (not easy in a National Park with its planning regulations), fundraising and building and equipping our HQ, we wanted a situation where we wouldn't have to do another thing for the next 10 years. In other words we wanted, as much as could, to future-proof our new HQ. We also wanted a 'state of the art' HQ that could be used as a model by other MRTs. This, I believe, we were and other MRTs visited us and have since followed our model.

What has all of this got to do with GPS location and tracking? As part of our effort, we built a computer network into the building. Using computers to record incident details was not new, but was usually done after the event – and often on a home computer. We wanted to do this 'on the fly' during incidents, to record our logs during the incidents.

## The Vision

The vision was to see and plot the positions and movements of our team members, in real time, using GIS maps (Geographical Information System) on a computer screen. If we could do this, it could enhance our organisation during (and after) searches, help us know the casualty location more quickly and show us where other assets were such as the doctor, the stretcher, the vehicles etc. Health and Safety requirements have added to the desirability of such a system – where, due to a team leader's duty of care, the last known locations of his team members can be seen.

We knew the technologies were available but, until then, they had not been developed as combined units – or they were the size of suitcases, to be fitted in delivery vehicles for location tracking.

Handheld GPS devices were already available but the information gathered was only stored on the device and generally not further used at that time. If a search controller asked team members where they had been on a search, the members would try to recall their routes and then they roughly draw them on paper maps for the controllers to scrutinise so they could then contemplate the next search actions. All rather hit and miss and dependent on the assumed routes taken being the actual routes taken. Hands up all those who can honestly say they have never got temporarily lost whilst searching in poor conditions?

## Initial Investigations

In 1997 we made some enquiries at the Home Office. The MRC, at that time, had a tame representative from the HO called Brian Hill. Brian was a walker and also a sailor. He recognised the value of location tracking and was keen to support our idea. He authorised the release of some radio channels and call signs so we could begin tests.

At the same time, I contacted one of the big names in GIS, ESRI. We were lucky, by probing deeply enough, to find someone pretty quickly. Scott Campbell – a climber involved in computer

programming with GIS systems – was willing to travel from Scotland to the Lakes to voluntarily assist us. Such was ESRI's interest in our innovative project that they provided some of their (expensive) mapping software to allow Scott to work towards a solution for us.

We now had a software programmer. What we also needed was a radio expert to help with the hardware side of things. Rob Brookes of Kendal MSRT was an enthusiastic radio amateur who had already shown signs of interest. He launched full tilt into the project and within a very short time had lashed some electronics together.

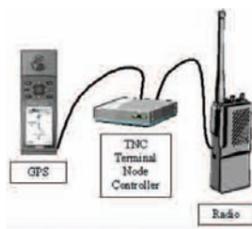
## Harnessing the Technology

So, one weekend in early 1997, Rob, Scott and I met at Keswick MRT's HQ to see what could be done. Both Rob and Scott lived up to expectations – and more! Rob, the typical radio enthusiast, had boxes of radios, wires, manuals, soldering irons, and Scott, the computer geek, sat at the computer screen and typed in computer programming language at the speed of light. The atmosphere, concentration and intensity of work was electric (excuse the pun). It was truly inspirational. What was happening? If you blinked, you missed it – such was the speed at which these two worked.

Rob was feeding the signal from a handheld GPS (Garmin 12XL) into a TNC (Terminal Node Controller) which acted as a kind of modem and which could be programmed to give the resultant signal an ID as well as determining the timing of the signal bursts (every 2 minutes or 15 minutes, etc). Next, the signal was fed into a team Simoco handheld radio through the facility plug on the side.

Scott was looking at the information being received at the HQ computer end from the GPS and slicing from it the relevant data strings which included the coordinates. This much was a skill in itself but the interesting bit was converting the latitude and longitude information into the British Ordnance Survey Grid System was even more challenging.

**First Trials**  
Before long, we were loading Rob's electronics into a bicycle saddlebag (too



PROTOTYPE 1998

big and unwieldy to put in a rucksack) and sending the volunteer down Borrowdale. The initial results were startling. Although SA (Selective Availability) was still active at the time, we could see, in real time, the cyclist travelling down the road into Borrowdale, leaving a snail trail on the map as she went. When we radioed and asked her to return to base, we could – to our surprise – see a separate trail coming back up the other side of the road!

Selective Availability (SA) is an intentional degradation of the signal once imposed by the US Department of Defence. SA was intended to prevent military adversaries from using the highly accurate GPS signals. With SA switched on, the accuracy of GPS 'fixes' was very spurious and couldn't be taken very seriously. Accuracy might have been down to 100 metres or more.

At the November MRC meeting in Preston, we gave a demonstration of the system working and those who were present at the meeting were impressed to see a volunteer walking around the streets on the big screen at the front of the conference hall.

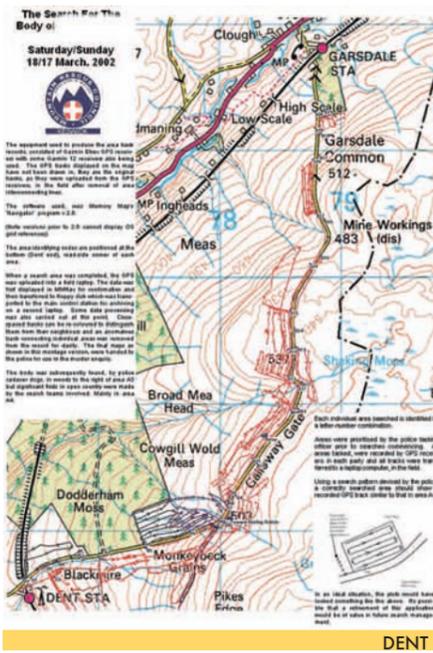
By this stage of the development, we had also enlisted the assistance of another expert in the field – Stefano Capaccio, a consultant in satellite navigation technology. What Stef had managed to do for the demonstration in Preston was to use another aspect of GPS technology to remove the SA from our incoming signals. DGPS (Differential GPS) uses incoming signals from 2 sources. One is from the handheld (from satellites) and the other is from a signal received from a transmitter with known coordinates. By comparing the data received from both signals, accuracy to within three metres could be achieved. As a result of this demonstration, the MRC pledged a grant of £500 towards further R&D for this project.

Happily, the American government turned off SA in May 2000, which significantly improved the accuracy of civilian GPS receivers. Without SA, accuracy is usually 15 metres or less.

In 1999 and in 2000, similar demonstrations were presented to the international mountain rescue community at the annual IKAR meetings, attended by Mike Margeson and myself. The reaction was one of amazement. Since then, parallel attempts have been made in various forms by other nations – with mixed success.

In 2002, we assisted in (or did we end up controlling) a search for a man who had been

missing in the Dent area of the Pennines. We had a laptop in a car running Memory Map Navigator v2.6. Each search group of about six persons had a GPS. The unit was to be carried by the end man of the line search. After completing each sector of the search, the GPS had to be taken to the car so that its track log could be download.



DENT

The resultant overlay of where searchers had been was most impressive. The police were not only surprised at the capability of the technology, they were also seriously lacking in radio comms. Definitely a good PR exercise for MR!

## Doubts

Having got through the euphoria, we began to take stock. The trials demonstrated that the hardware and software was more than able to produce the required results. However, the current arrangement of hardware was impractical – heavy, cumbersome, not robust or waterproof. There still wasn't anything out there that had been designed or built as a unified product. The consumer base was not large enough for any potential manufacturer to take up the idea.

The software also demonstrated that the concept worked, but the costs – at that time – were prohibitive for a mountain rescue team. To be able to use the Ordnance Survey mapping, map tiles of 20 sq km had to be purchased and licensing agreements entered into.

In a nutshell, the problems were – suitable hardware and availability of cheap or free OS maps at 1:25,000 or 1:50,000 scales.

## Suspended Animation

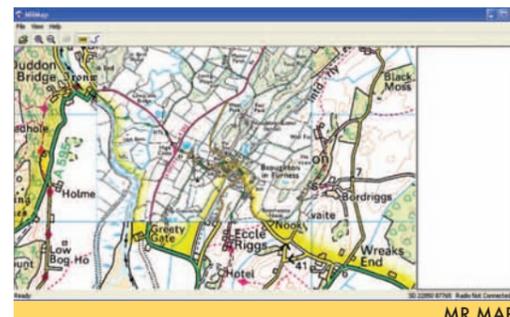
So, the project went into limbo for a few years. Behind the scenes, however, Rob, having been fired by the concept, continued to experiment and he found himself drawn into the world of programming. He has now developed a very capable system which would very ably satisfy most teams. More on this later.

Many readers will be familiar with Memory Map, a program which has served many purposes for many teams – and an excellent program it is. Track logs from several handheld GPSs can be downloaded into the software and the resultant overlay of routes can be used to identify holes in searched areas etc. But this facility is not live or in real time. True, Memory Map will track a single GPS but not more than one. A developer's kit is available for someone who can modify this restriction, but it is extremely costly. If the program had been able to receive several simultaneous GPS signals, most MRTs would have been happy to use it. Memory map is also programmed to expect GPS update at the normal Navstar rate of once a second. If it hasn't received an updated position report after a second or two, it assumes loss of satellite lock and stops. Updates via a radio link at this rate would not be popular.

There was still one outstanding obstacle – the mapping (costs and licensing). We were brought to a standstill with Memory Map by MREW when reminded that MRTs were not licensed to use the personal software licenses for MR use.

## Solution?

After nine years of trials and tribulations, frustrations and hurdles, the end now seems to be in sight. Thanks to Dave Binks of Duddon & Furness MRT, and Rob Brookes of course, we now have a product which will do what we want. Dave has written a delightfully simple little program which will track the positions of multiple GPSs and overlay them on an OS map on a computer screen. This has already been demonstrated to the MRC Communications Working Group and, by



MR MAP

the time this article goes to press, will have been demonstrated at the UK MR Conference in Lancaster.

LDSAMRA and Cumbria police chose to use a Simoco radio system in the Lake District. In recent months, Simoco have produced a GPS microphone and it is with this technology that we have been able to produce a working system. The software polls the handheld radios at predetermined intervals (currently two minutes) for their GPS locations. The location data is also appended to any transmissions received by the handhelds. The overheads of air time and battery drain have proved to be negligible. Perhaps a more technical article can follow this one in a later issue of the MR Magazine.



SIMOCO GPS

see things unfolding. You can spot dead batteries, therefore ask other members to inform the affected member. When a casualty is found, time needn't be lost in sending a location – all that is required is for the casualty condition to be transmitted and for other members to be directed to the exact location.

What about other teams who use Icom radios or other makes, I hear you say? Obviously, our trials have been based on Simoco because that's what we have. However, we are all too aware that a product such as the one we have developed is too good to be fenced into the Lake District. It is a tool which should be of invaluable help to all teams. Therefore, trials have been conducted with the Icom handheld and GPS microphone and early indications are that it will work. We have been constrained by lack of available equipment, but – watch this spot.

In April of this year, an email was sent to all regions and teams by Penny Brockman, MRC Treasurer, outlining developments that were being made with the Ordnance Survey regarding 'access to 1:25,000 mapping data' for MRTs. At the time of writing, I understand that these developments are reaching a favourable conclusion. If this is the case, then the final hurdle will have been surmounted. (See STOP PRESS below.)

The software which we have developed will be available to teams at a very minimal cost and details of this will probably have been revealed at the conference – otherwise in future editions of the MR Magazine.

We will be pleased to try to answer any queries. If you send them to me, if I can't answer them, I will pass them on to the relevant person who, hopefully, can.

## STOP PRESS

It's official. OS Mapping Software is now available to all MR, BCRC and ALSAR teams in Scotland, England and Wales, following an agreement worth over £120K between Mountain Rescue and Ordnance Survey. An email explaining the agreement will be coming out to teams over the next few weeks. Teams will be required to sign individual contracts regarding the licence and its usage. All enquiries should be directed to Penny [penny@pennybrockman.co.uk](mailto:penny@pennybrockman.co.uk) Thanks go to Tony Rich and Mark Moran for their input.

Guy Wilson

# ICE COLD IN RJUKAN

I was nursing a splitting hangover, no other words for it. I was also nursing the delicately placed front point of a crampon, calf muscles screaming for release (or begging for mercy) and every fibre of my being searching the ice for a lifesaver axe hold. There was no other thought beyond that. Forget the panic of vomit rising, I wanted the flood of relief when it appears at last (the axe placement that is, not the vomit).

A flick of the wrist and the teeth of the pick bite the ice and you know its good. The relief is tangible. Your muscles relax, if only for a while. I took a deep breath and as I exhaled, I told my mind to send the fear with it, as if the fog of warm breath was my disquiet. It hung in the air against the blue sky and slowly dissipated. Calm was restored, regular breathing restored, a sense of well being reigned. I found myself thinking about Ceska Lipa where I had been in a motor accident, how strange the silence was as the car went end over end, silence as it landed on its roof and there too, a moment suspended in time had ended with relief only to be followed again by fear.

I was brought back to the present by a voice from below. 'Get moving, yer faggot, I'm bloody freezing!' Peter stood below impatient in the cold. I wondered what he was thinking of whilst stood in this freezer, then thought it perhaps best not to know.

That was almost three years ago in Norway. Now I was drinking coffee in the home of Ruud and Mirjam van Liene who moved from the Netherlands to this same little part of Norway to run the Rjukan Hytte og Caravanpark.



In the summer, the field is full of brightly coloured tents but in the winter it is difficult to see where the field is for the snow! Fortunately in the winter, as in summer, the park has a number of well heated log cabins that can be rented and it is these that have accommodated the recent wave of British ice climbers who have come

here to sample what is without doubt world class climbing.

It's not just the fact that there are over 160 ice falls in the area but the ease with which they can be accessed, a range of difficulty to suit everybody from beginner to expert and almost guaranteed conditions. It was while enjoying the company of my hosts that I was introduced to Terje Forsmo and Jan Andresen, two members of the Rjukan Fjellsportgruppe, which is the local climbing club.

Terje and Jan talked of some of the guided activities that they undertake. They of course take clients climbing but that wasn't all – survival training on the Hardangervidda plateau or fishing through the ice and creating a snowhole to see out the long cold night. They cover basic training in lifesaving in a winter mountain environment including ensuring your own safety – lifesaving, first aid

including CPR... all of these activities can be tailored to suit the requirements anyone may have.

We couldn't help but do a little climbing in what remained of the afternoon and quickly drove up to a roadside 'ice crag' on the ski road to



Gaustablikk. Terje set up a top rope on one of the numerous tree belays at the top of these single pitch ice falls while Jan took me through a few practical tips on technique, like keeping your heels down and flicking the axe into the ice while

timing the pull down on the axe. Now clipped in to the rope, I battered my way up the route aided by the helpful words of my mentors. I have to admit here I was not in the best of shape and was in fact suffering awfully from the long journey I had undertaken the day before and, of course, a few sherbets in the pub last night. I also have to say that however bad my climbing was that day, my friends had nothing but kind words of encouragement and showed the inimitable patience and generosity of attitude so necessary when successfully teaching people.

There isn't just ice climbing on offer, there is also some superb skiing at Gaustablikk which is only a few kilometres from town. There you can enjoy skiing both downhill and telemark. The ski centre can hire you all the equipment you require. Overlooking everything is the magnificent 2000m mountain Gaustatoppen, a great mountain within reach of the munro-bagger.

It cannot go without being mentioned that Rjukan has huge historical significance in the fight against Nazi Germany. It was at Vemork that the Nazis were making 'heavy water' that was vital in their attempts to produce an atomic bomb. Thirty-four British commandos were killed in a failed attempt to sabotage the plant, one of the planes crashed and those who survived were shot when captured on Hitler's orders. It was then decided that Norwegian resistance fighters would be trained in Scotland and parachuted onto the Hardangervidda plateau from where they would launch an attack. This heroic action was immortalised in the film 'Heroes of Telemark' which

starred Kirk Douglas. You can learn about the real heroes at the museum housed in the Vemork plant.

If you'd would like to know more about the exciting opportunities for adventure to be had in Rjukan, I hope the information found here will be of great help but please feel free to contact me if you want any help or advice about anything to do with visiting this fabulous part of Norway.

## INFORMATION

### Accommodation

Mirjam & Ruud van Liene  
Rjukan Hytte- og Caravanpark,  
Gaustaveien 78, N-3658 Miland,  
Norge

t 0047 35 09 63 53  
f 0047 35 09 62 30  
e post@rjukanhytte.com  
w rjukanhytte.com

### Survival/First Aid Ice Climbing

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### Skiing/Snowboarding

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Close up of the SCS being shaken into the Ferno Basket Stretcher. Note the seatbelt-type buckle in the foreground. It was not utilised in this test as the SCS has enough casualty restraint on its own. Comparisons were later made with conventional packaging options and, in each case and method, the SCS was superior. Note the insulation strap being utilised because the casualty is of small build.

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and information from their fields of expertise.

The breadth of speakers ensures that the conference is the event of the year for anyone involved in emergency services. Keynote speaker for both days is Bruce Mann, Head of the Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office, talking on the subject of Emergency Preparedness and Response. Further inspirational topics include:-

- **The Operational Aspects of the Fire and Resilience Programme** by Chris Arculeo, New Dimension Programme Deputy Director, Department for Communities and Local Government

- **Lessons Learnt - 7th July** by Richard Barnes from the London Assembly 7 July Review Committee

- **Flu Pandemic Preparedness** by Prof Lindsey Davies, Director of Flu Pandemic Preparedness, Department of Health

- **The Regional Response - Where are we now?** by Ted Vary, Head of Regional Resilience Unit, GOSE

- **The Restructuring of the Ambulance Service and Its Effect** by Jayne Barnes CBE, Yorkshire

Ambulance Service NHS Trust/Chair of Ambulance Service Association

- **The Role of the Government News Co-ordination Centre** by Carol McCall, Head of Security, Intelligence & Resilience Team, Cabinet Office Communications Group

Places are restricted for this one-off event. Whilst the Emergency Services Show is free to visit, there is a charge for the conference. Visitors to the Show and/or the conference can pre-register on the website. Prospective delegates can pre-register to guarantee a seat for either the first or second day, or for both conference days:-

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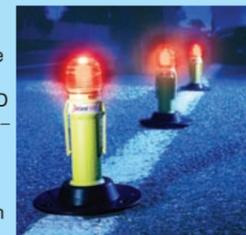
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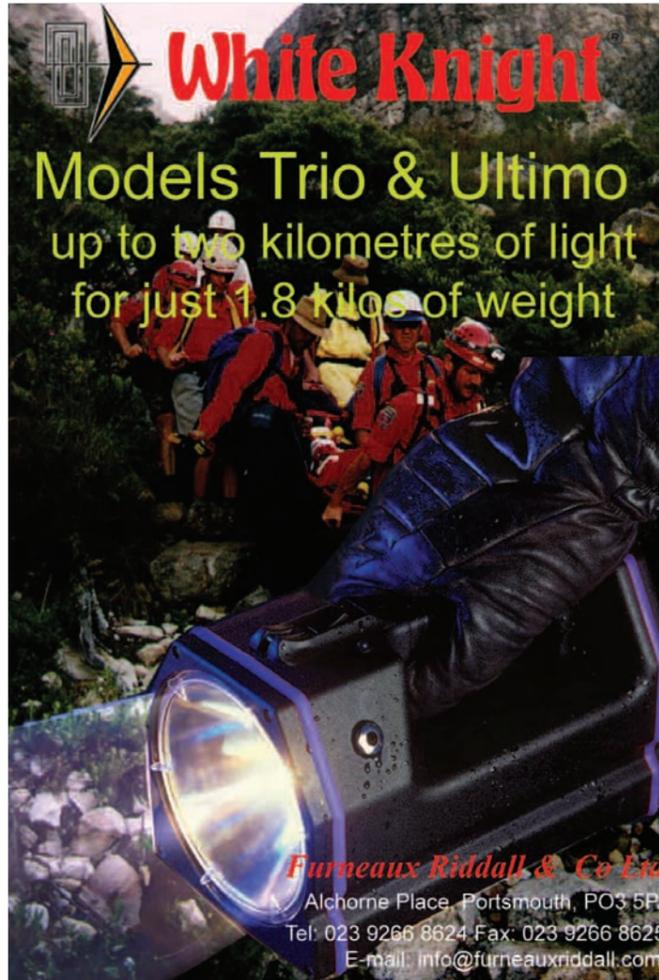
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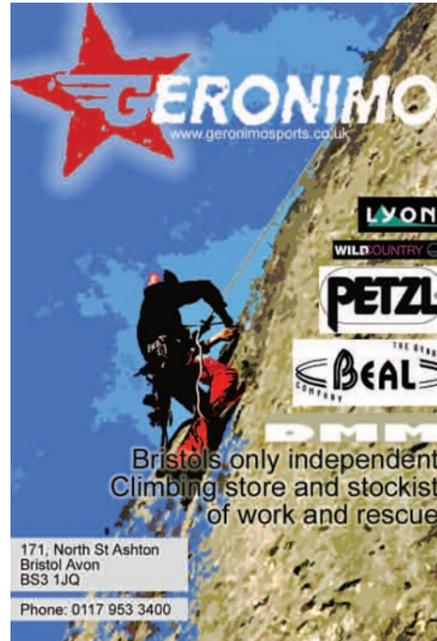
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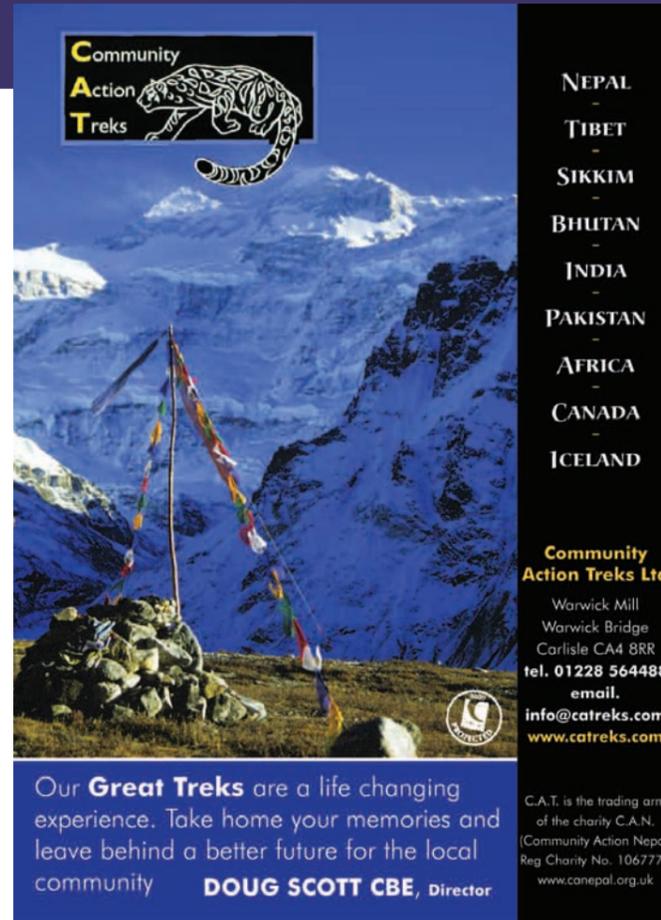


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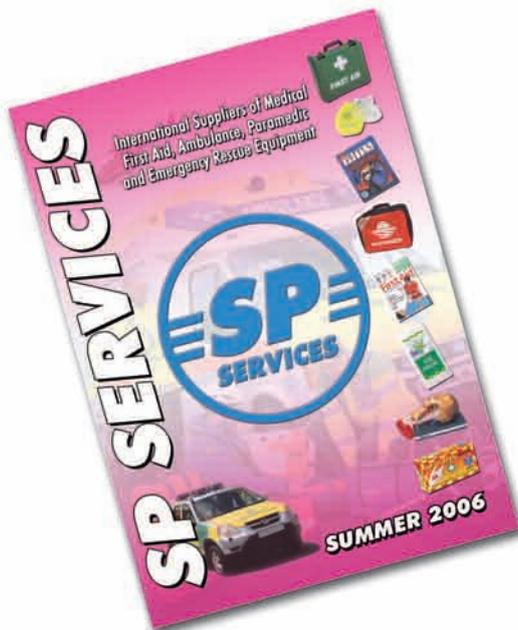
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