

mountain rescue

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ISSUE 46

MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE IN ENGLAND AND WALES OCTOBER 2013





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**WELCOME TO
ISSUE 46**

Mountain Rescue is the membership magazine for mountain and cave rescue in England and Wales.

Contributions should be sent to the editor at the address below. Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

EDITORIAL

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**NEXT ISSUE
ISSUE 47**

Copy Deadline:
5 December 2013

Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document. Images must be supplied as high resolution (300 dpi) JPG/EPS/TIFF/PDF.

Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded high resolution PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi).

FRONT PAGE

RAF Sea King working with Keswick team.
Photo © Keswick MRT

EDITOR'S NOTE: Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.



I imagine most people will have seen the picture of three helicopters and a mountain rescue team attending an incident on a Lake District fell involving one injured walker. The image raises a number of issues that might usefully be discussed, such as best use of resources and effectiveness of communication. However, as I looked at this image, I was taken back to an article by Pete Livesey, many years previously. Titled The Ethics of Rescue, it raised questions concerning the environment and the unwritten codes of mountaineering when accidents occur. The article was intended to evoke some useful debate but that did not actually occur in any meaningful way.

As time has progressed the codes and ethics of mountaineering have perhaps become somewhat blurred, partly as a result of more and more people going into the hills on a casual basis. On the other hand, there is an increased concern for the fragility of the environment although this does not often translate into actual changes of practice.

In 1848, John Stuart Mill wrote, 'it is not good for man to be kept perforce at all times in the presence of his species' but, given the long trails of bodies on some paths this may no longer be a major motivating force taking people into the hills. Allied to this there is undoubtedly less self-sufficiency, recognition of risk and acceptance of its consequences. It is unlikely we will encounter many situations comparable with that when Wilf Noyce opted to lie in the snow overnight waiting for morning before disturbing a rescue team to evacuate him and his broken leg.

Nevertheless it must be quite obvious that rescues

involving aircraft, especially when in multiples, do have a significant impact on the environment.

Some will argue that in the event of an accident 'anything goes'. This does not in itself preclude full recognition and objective discussion of the issues.

Most members of mountain rescue teams have come from a life of hill going and will at the very least understand and empathise with the problems that arise. Whether the same is true of the statutory SAR services that are increasingly involved in rescues on the hills is much less certain. It is difficult to imagine that the arrival of a number of helicopters enhances a day out in the mountains, although it has actually been suggested that some walkers find the presence of helicopters in the hills reassuring!

Pete Livesey's article also touched on the topic of pre-emptive strikes in respect of rescues and some aspects of this were raised at the last team leaders' meeting without reaching any form of consensus.

I believe it is important that these issues are kept alive and freely discussed, and that mountain rescue remains cognisant of the wider aspects of mountaineering and the environment.

On a more prosaic note the news that 2012/13 saw a 20% fall in charity donations is a concern. Taken with the fact that there are currently 820,000 registered UK charities and that 80% of donations go to the top fifteen, clearly fundraising will continue to be a challenge. At all levels we are indebted to those who work hard to keep us solvent and hope they will remain inspired to continue.

That we are entirely voluntary at all levels remains a powerful message and it behoves us all to reinforce this fact whenever the occasion arises. ■

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PARTY LEADER COURSE

WATHGILL CAMP, DOWNHOLME
RICHMOND, NORTH YORKS DL11 6AH
7.00PM, FRIDAY-SUNDAY, 15-17 NOVEMBER

This well established course promotes good practice, reflecting National Training Guidelines, and is applicable to party leadership for all search and rescue teams throughout the British Isles.

Aimed primarily at team members with a minimum three years experience. Thirty places available for members of search and rescue teams on a 'first come - first served' basis.



COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- * To encourage the highest standards and best attitudes for search and rescue.
- * To ensure members are conversant with party leadership skills and knowledge, applicable to a common and consistent approach towards search and rescue.
- * To consolidate training undertaken within each members own team.
- * To enable members to improve their experience, confidence and performance in the skills and qualities of party leadership.

* To assist with planning, please return all forms BEFORE 25 October.

Cost: £120

Please make cheques payable to 'MREW Courses'. NB: There is a 50% refund to members of Mountain Rescue England and Wales rescue teams.



To book and for further information contact Davie Thomson swale72@gmail.com or 07710 462713



INSURANCE MATTERS

NEIL 'WOODIE' WOODHEAD
insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk

When people ask 'Are we insured?', my first response is frequently, 'Insured for what?'

Turn the tables now, ignore mountain rescue and I'll ask you, 'What are you insured for in your everyday life?' The answer could be a whole myriad of possibilities — policies covering your house, its contents, your travel abroad, your vehicle, your life, the possibility of your boiler breaking down or you suffering a critical illness etc. So, when you ask the question, first think what it is you're actually asking. Do you mean does the team have liability insurance to cover a fundraising event or do you mean does the personal accident policy cover you as a team member if you're injured on that fundraising event? There may be a crucial difference.

Your team should have received a couple of short forms for my quick insurance survey, as mentioned in previous issues. There are two main aspects to this. The first is to gather information on your team's insurance needs to cover your base and equipment. If we can centralise this process, we may be able to secure more competitive premiums and your team will then save on its premium.

The second aspect is to seek your views on whether you have legal expenses insurance in place and whether you

think this is something we should fund centrally if funds allow, alongside the liability insurance. So please do make sure your team responds, so we can focus on what matters most to you and how we can help to contain your insurance costs.

We are now well into our second year with centralised vehicle insurance and the mass renewal in July seems to have gone very smoothly. Teams do still have questions and I'm always available to answer these. If your query relates to your specific vehicles, please contact our insurance brokers, Perkins Slade, direct as they are managing the scheme on our behalf. The contact is Rob Hampton — email r.hampton@perkins-slade.com or call 0121 698 8156. But if your query is more generic and has wider implications for mountain rescue, please come to me directly and we can ensure the scheme continues to provide the cover we all need.

A few recent queries are worthwhile repeating here. The first concerns what cover is in force for a team that needs to move a casualty's vehicle as part of the rescue? The good news is that teams are covered to move them under the contingency cover.

Another relates to what cover we have if a road is closed due to bad

weather. Of course, with winter approaching, this is very possible with a heavy snowfall and that's when we may be out heading to the hills or supporting the ambulance service who are unable to get an ambulance to their patient. Our insurers are fully aware that we operate emergency vehicles and have cover to operate off road, so we can operate past that road closed sign. However, the position with a team member's own vehicle is likely to be very different and you must check your own insurance policy to see what cover you have in place.

The final point concerns team members' own vehicles and what cover you have as a charity volunteer. The UK has thousands of charities and volunteers using their own vehicles for this grey area between business use and social, domestic and pleasure. Each insurer has its own criteria for what they need to be notified of and a quick way to check your own insurer's position is to view the Association of British Insurers webpage <http://tinyurl.com/orvdyae> — also available in Members Resources under 'Insurance'.

Turning to the national personal accident policy, other police forces are now showing interest in moving to this policy. This is positive news and

we are closer to having every team covered under the one policy.

There is ongoing confusion about the difference between the civil liability policy and the personal accident policy. In general terms, the former covers the team if they are sued by someone who is injured and the latter pays a set benefit to an injured team member irrespective of whether the team was legally at fault.

The civil liability policy primarily covers teams and team members who may be legally liable for causing damage to property and/or injuring a team member or member of the public whilst involved in training and fundraising. The cover whilst on a call-out, and thus the cover for administering casualty care, is only on a contingent basis. The casualty care aspect generates many queries, understandably — if you administer drugs, you want to know you are covered should something go wrong! The simple answer is that firstly, the cover is contingent only and, secondly, that the insurers cover us for this first aid treatment on the basis of the casualty care syllabus and the First Aid Practice v6 document from the MREW Medical Officer.

Medical practitioners take note though,

medical malpractice is excluded and your own medical defence policy would need to respond.

Two recent questions may be of interest. Are you insured if you go out as team members and clean up a local climbing crag? The short answer is a definitive no. It isn't a mountain rescue activity and you can't pretend it falls under team training. If team members are doing anything outside of the team, you are on your own — no insurance. You are just a group of individuals that happen to know one another through the team.

The second question relates to allowing an outside organisation use of your base for another activity. If you want to let out your facilities to a local dance troupe, fat club, exercise class, alcoholics anonymous or any other external organisation, you are at risk of being sued if you haven't taken care to ensure they have public liability insurance. Ask them to let you have a copy of their insurance certificate and their risk assessments. If they haven't got them, you'd be well advised to tell them to go elsewhere.

I will be at the November meeting but remember you can always email me with any queries. ■

TRAIN THE TRAINERS Places: 30 Date: 17 November 2013 Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton Contact: Al Read	NATIONAL TRAINING DAY Places: 100 Date: 28 June 2014 Location: Plas y Brenin Contact: Al Read
NATIONAL PARTY LEADER Places: 30 Date: 15-17 November 2013 Location: Wathgill Camp, Richmond Contact: Davie Thomson 07710 462713 swale72@gmail.com	MREW SEARCH FIELD SKILLS Date: 1-3 August 2014 Location: TBC Contact: Al Read
NATIONAL MEDIA SKILLS Places: 30 Date: 17 November 2013 Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton Contact: Al Read	MREW SEARCH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT Date: 4-9 August 2014 Location: TBC Contact: Al Read
MANAGING THE INITIAL RESPONSE TO A SAR INCIDENT Date: 21-22 November 2013 Location: Longhirst Conference Centre, Morpeth Contact: Pete Roberts conference@searchresearch.org.uk	MREW SEARCH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT REFRESHER Date: 10-11 August 2014 Location: TBC Contact: Al Read



RUNNING FOR RESCUE
THE VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON
SUNDAY 13 APRIL 2014

RUNNERS WANTED!
APPLY WITHIN

TRAINING UPDATE
Al Read writes: Summer is over but training continues at all levels, with regional and national training supporting the wider development of team members. In August, the MREW Search Field Skills and Search Planning and Management courses

The Virgin London Marathon is the world's most iconic marathon. Every year, runners raise over £50 million for charity and it's an experience never to be forgotten. The famous 26.2 mile route takes runners on an amazing journey through central London from Blackheath to The Mall. Do you want to be one of 35,000 people taking part in 2014? Run the London Marathon for MREW and help raise vital funds. We have guaranteed places available through our involvement with the Princes' Charities Forum. Team members and supporters welcome. Interested? Contact Woodie via insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk to register your interest or request further information.

were well attended with added representation from police, fire and rescue and ALSAR. These courses continue to develop with a number of improvements. In field skills, the importance of evidence handling has been highlighted as a key skill for searchers, and the police input really brings home the importance of the clue and evidence-aware searcher. This course also introduced tracking as a skill — often one of the most enjoyed parts of the course. For the search planning and management courses, techniques to handle

national News

larger numbers of responders have been introduced, along with highlighting the importance of documentation to support the search incident —especially when it transitions into a longer event. The search courses have always aimed to keep students up to date with recent search related research and this year saw the introduction of Range of Detection (RoD) to help with calculation of Probability of Detection (POD). Greater use was also made of an online learning platform to support attendees and recent attendees with additional course material.



A number of events at regional level have highlighted the importance of being able to work with other organisations. Also in August, a multi-agency exercise in the Swaledale area brought together a range of responders to deal with a complex incident. And in North Wales, C Flight from RAF Valley hosted a multi-agency event for those who use SAR aircraft. Mountain rescue and ALSAR teams, RNLI crews, MCA volunteers were represented. The networking value was as high as the input from the different speakers. A session of note was the Mountain Medicine project presented by Dr Linda Dykes from Ysbyt Gwynedd that has highlighted the value of collecting clinical data about the casualties that come into contact with an MR team or SAR flight. The data collected by the Mountain Medicine team helps inform team members when they have difficult casualty care decisions to make, such as the risk of a significant spinal injury being present in a mountain casualty. MREW has also been involved with representation and contribution to a number of national projects. The UK Fire and Rescue Services

are currently updating their National Occupational guidance with contributions from mountain rescue. Relationships with the College of Policing, Police National Search Centre have also been rekindled and MREW is a stakeholder with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) that is running until 2014. Participation at these meetings and workshops helps ensure we are represented at different levels (local to national) and have some knowledge and skills that are potentially very useful for other agencies to be aware of. Also important from a national perspective is the SAR-H transition from the current arrangements to contractor based solution. There has been some movement in terms of engagement but the impact to training for MR team members who are required to operate with SAR aircraft is still to be picked up. However, two members of the training committee have completed a capture of the wider helicopter training requirements, so we are in a good place to start training discussions.

Note: A summary of the new aircraft, their capabilities and

network of like-minded team members. Training is key to us all being able to perform our different roles within a team. Without the different contributions made by people at all levels we'd be far less capable.

EQUIPMENT UPDATE

Richard Terrell writes: The development of the casbag is now complete, with final modifications made. The bag is now wider and longer, and U-shaped with the zips in the top of the 'U', allowing the bag to hug the casualty. The hood draw has been modified for better closure and the carry rucksack is bigger to allow better stowing on the hill and room for items such as waterproofs and helmet.

FAULTY FLARE REPORT

A Signal Distress Day and Night No1 Mk4 flare was held at an angle in the team member's left hand and the ring pulled with his right. The initial jet pushed the flare down and left, so the ignited end was on his palm between thumb and forefinger. The flare was dropped immediately but the burn to the left-hand palm, though cooled immediately in a nearby stream, resulted in significant blistering and temporary loss of use. The investigation has identified a couple of possibilities — either inadequate grip on flare, or more thrust from this flare than is usually expected.

NHS GRANT CLAIMS

Can I remind teams of the guidelines to follow when requesting items to be purchased under the NHS grant. I've had three requests this year for non-qualifying items and one that didn't include a delivery address. A full guide can be found in the Members Resources under 'Equipment'.

proposed base locations has been produced by John Hulse (see page 12). The document is also available for download from Members Resources under 'SAR Helicopters' and from the Facebook closed group. Any queries about SAR-H provision should be addressed to sar-h@mountain.rescue.org.uk

TRAINING MEET UP AT JMSTC INDEFATIGABLE

This one-day event for MREW members with an interest in training took place in early October, attracting interest from all regions plus a small number from Mountain Rescue Ireland.

MREW PARTY LEADER COURSE, RICHMOND 15-17 NOVEMBER

Run by Davie Thompson, the course will use the revised Party Leader guidelines and capture the key points of team members acting as a party leader.

MEDIA SKILLS AND TRAIN THE TRAINERS 17 NOVEMBER

Set to take place on the Sunday after the national meeting, at Lancashire Police HQ, both courses are ideal opportunities to build new skills and develop a wider

1. Items must be capital items and not consumables. ie. Vac splints are acceptable but bandages are not.
2. Items must be connected to the treatment of the casualty. However, rope to rescue the casualties is acceptable.
3. Kit cannot be issued to team members but must be part of the main first aid response kit.
4. No training items or kit. Allowable items include vacmats, casbags, vac splints, specialist first aid or oxygen bags, rolls of full rope (no cordage), and any capital medical kit that is reusable and can have no personal use. Not allowable include drugs, bandages, training stethoscopes and airways.

VEHICLES UPDATE

Daryl Garfield writes: As many of you will already be aware (but it's worth repeating here), I've now had an update from the DfT regarding Section 19 (Speed Exemption).

Many thanks to all teams for their assistance with the application. Unfortunately one team felt the need to put in a separate response and application in addition to the MREW and BCRC ones, despite my appeal to teams not to do this as it could have an adverse effect on mountain rescue as a whole. Hopefully this won't be seen as a disjointed application. This has been an on-going issue since 2006 so, hopefully, the light at the end of the tunnel is getting much nearer.

The response was as follows:—

I am writing to provide you with an update about our plans for publishing the Department's response to the speed limit exemptions

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Jon Doran, outdoorsmagic.com

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Tom Richardson, Climb, August 2013

"...GORE-TEX® Pro fabric and the Lhotse jacket have both received superb upgrades" Test Rating: 5/5

Graham Thompson, Trail, August 2013

Mountain Equipment Pro-Partner Nick Bullock puts the Lhotse through it's paces on an alpine gear test. Rive Gauche, Chamonix.

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WHAT DID THEY EVER DO FOR YOU? the exec:

If you've ever wondered who those invisible people are, beavering away on your behalf at national level (or even, dare we say it, doubted their very existence), here's your chance to find out. This is by no means a definitive list but it's a page-worth of key people – and it certainly doesn't mean the ones not detailed further aren't also beavering away on your behalf. The plan is to update this on a regular basis as projects develop so watch this space....

executive



CHAIRMAN: DAVID ALLAN

chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Represents mountain rescue with Government, the emergency services and other SAR organisations and The Princes' Charities Forum.



VICE CHAIRMAN: MIKE MARGESON

vice-chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Works on operations and governance, to support officers in their roles and represent MREW. Currently developing a peer team review process.



SECRETARY: PETER SMITH

secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk
An interface between teams, regions and the national body, records and produces minutes at MREW meetings and generally deals with reams of admin.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY: KEITH GILLIES

assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Works with the MREW executive to develop a full range of duties including representing MREW on the organising committee for the 2014 UK MR conference and supporting the Trustees.



PRESIDENT: PETER BELL

president@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Acts as an ambassador for mountain rescue to the outside world and thoroughly enjoys engaging in technical discussions.



TREASURER: PENNY BROCKMAN

treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Ensures the smooth running of MREW finances and works with Neil Roden on the management of the Government grant monies. Currently working with experts advisers to review and ultimately streamline the financial systems used across MREW.



CENTRAL PURCHASE: NEIL RODEN

purchasing@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Works with Penny Brockman on the management of the Government grant and continues to develop central purchasing to benefit all teams.



COMMS: MARK LEWIS

communications@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Seeking to better comms technology for mountain rescue. Sits on UKSAR Comms working group.
Vice chair: Iain Nicholson: iain@sardogs.org.uk



EQUIPMENT: RICHARD TERRELL

equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk
All things equipment: review, research and liaison with suppliers and manufacturers. Currently involved with the new stretcher project.
Vice chair: Ray Griffiths: raygriff@btinternet.com

specialist officers



FUNDRAISING: MIKE FRANCE

nationalfundraising@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Develops revenue opportunities and sponsorship deals to benefit all mountain and cave teams.
Vice chair: Bill Whitehouse: billrh@aol.com



INSURANCE: NEIL WOODHEAD

insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Continues to work with teams on the national vehicle insurance scheme and also currently looking at legal expenses insurance and cover for team bases.



MEDICAL: JOHN ELLERTON

medical@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Represents mountain rescue in medical matters to the Government, the emergency services and IKAR, and maintains the 'morphine' licence.



PRESS OFFICER: ANDY SIMPSON

press@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Represents MREW to the press, TV and radio, liaises with Clarence House and supports teams in their own publicity and corporate identity.
Vice chair: Judy Whiteside: editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk



TRAINING OFFICER: AL READ

training@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Develops training and guidelines for team members at all levels across a range of disciplines, including a national search management foundation course.
Vice chair: Tim Cain: tim@timcainleadership.co.uk



VEHICLES: DARYL GARFIELD

vehicles@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Liaises with the police, Department of Transport and other bodies. Recently dealt with mountain and cave rescue applications for exemptions under Section 19.
Vice chair: Paul Smethurst: smethyp@gmail.com



WATER: ANDY LEE

water@mountain.rescue.org.uk
Andy is acting as Interim Water Officer, pending a new appointment to the post in November and he is currently getting himself up to speed with the role.

Plus... VICE PRESIDENTS: TONY JONES & PETER HOWELLS

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specialist officers

national News

Business

MREW BUSINESS MEETING AND SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Places: 100
Date: 16 November 2013
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
01706 852335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY DAY

Place: 100
Date: 17 November 2013
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton
Contact: Iain Nicholson
iain@sardogs.org.uk

TEAM LEADERS' DAY

Date: January 2014
Location: Bowland Pennine MRT HQ

MREW BUSINESS MEETING AND SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Places: 100
Date: 17 May 2014
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton
Contact: Peter Smith
01706 852335
secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk

consultation. I hope you will accept my sincere apologies for any difficulties this uncertainty may have caused.

I would also like to assure you that the Department recognises the importance of the work undertaken by organisations such as yours. We carefully considered the timescale for the work we're doing, the potential impact of delaying publication of our next steps and the effect this might have on those who perform a vital role in conjunction with the emergency services. However, on balance we decided it was important to allow ourselves more time to properly investigate some of the policy issues that came to light during the consultation process and ensure our decisions on next steps were legally sound. These matters have been considered in depth and we have had fruitful and productive discussions with the emergency services and

the driving standards agency. I am now in a position to provide you with further information about our plans for taking the work on this forward.

As stated in our consultation document, the Department has set up an advisory expert panel consisting of members from the police, fire and rescue services authority, the ambulance service, the Institute of Advanced Motorists and Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. The panel's role will be to assess all of the business cases received by the Department from organisations in support of their request for speed limit exemption. The decision about which organisations receive exemption is entirely one for the Minister of State but we wish him to do so on a well informed basis and by considering all possible issues. We hope to take forward the necessary legislative changes in 2014. We are taking forward

separately work on some of the other policy issues including work relating to the training and accreditation issues mentioned in the consultation document. We hope to publish a summary of the consultation responses and announce these next steps publicly in the autumn.

LAND ROVER UPDATE

News from Land Rover is that production of the current Defender will cease in late-2015 with a new version due on line twelve to eighteen months later. The new spec vehicle won't offer quite as many options (eg. wheelbase variations). Vehicles already in production will still be eligible for registration up to summer 2016 but the least popular variants will gradually be phased out. The reason for the change is that the existing Defender will no longer meet legislative standards.



CHARITY SALARIES UNDER SCRUTINY SALLY SEED

There was a great deal of press interest in charity executives' salaries over the summer after the Daily Telegraph revealed that the number of senior staff being paid six-figure salaries had jumped by 72 per cent since 2010.

Sixty-six per cent of respondents to a subsequent survey then showed that the public would be less likely to donate to charities that paid staff more than £100,000 per year.

With a chairman and all other officers working on a voluntary basis, MREW has a good story to tell on this but, at the same time, jumping in to make big claims in the media could bring an unnecessary weight of scrutiny on to those same people. It was judged best to have a clear stand-by statement ready in case of questions when this was in the news but not to go out with a proactive announcement.

However, that Daily Telegraph survey, conducted by OnePoll with 2000 members of the public, revealed other opinions and attitudes that may have relevance to MREW, its activities and its communications in future.

53% said charities should receive public funding alongside donations.

It is complicated to communicate this accurately but there seems to be public sympathy for the fact that government support doesn't mean that charities don't still need donations.

24% of respondents weren't sure that charities were spending as much as

they should on frontline services.

Within MREW, we might take it for granted that a lot of our funds go into equipment and training, but it is probably still worth saying on a regular basis and having some stats to back it up if we can too. At a team level, this tends to be an easier connection to make.

65% said they would be more likely to pay attention to a charity if it engaged with them through social media.

Many teams and MREW itself use social media but are we engaging as much as we could, involving Followers and Friends online?

37% preferred to find out about a charity and its activities through TV, with 19% preferring magazines and newspapers and 10% social media.

Getting involved in a local TV news report or a rescue documentary can be time consuming and disruptive but, from these results, it is still probably the best way of reaching potential supporters through the media.

A sample of 2000 people is only that, but there is food for thought here that's worth checking with your team's supporters too – and maybe adapting to suit.



FUNDAMENTAL TO THE SHAPING OF THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

ANDY LEE MREW INTERIM WATER OFFICER



Men wanted for hazardous journey. Low wages, bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness. Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in event of success. Yours faithfully, Ernest H. Shackleton.

Whilst I am hoping this venture will have a successful future with a team of men and women, I am hopeful for a warmer and brighter journey, but it will be wet and wages are lower than Ernest himself advertised.

Upon the request I received in May 2013 to act as Interim National Water Officer I have been attending national executive meetings and representing MREW at national groups such as CFOA. One of the first tasks I felt much needed was to establish a subcommittee to move 'water' forward within MREW. So...

CALLING ALL MEMBERS INTERESTED IN WATER RESCUE AND WATER SAFETY

The regional officer represents the voice of the regions at a level I feel is fundamental to the shaping and the future of the organisation. The function of the regional rep to the national subcommittee is to share:—

- Regional experiences
- Questions
- Ideas
- Strive for excellence

- Develop standards and safety systems
- Share best practice.

One of the key responsibilities is to feedback to regions, signposting relevant information, updates and resources, disseminating decision and strategies from within the meeting.

I aspire for a group consisting of internal and external advisers and representatives ensuring the best way forward to meet the needs of MREW at local and national level, to ensure intra-operability and a status respected by all with safety at the heart of operations.

From within the subcommittee, a vacant position exists for the vice chair and this will be appointed from interested parties who will be required to represent the group when the chair is unavailable, ensuring the

organisation moves forward at every opportunity.

The re-energised subcommittee will confirm the desired direction of travel for the future of water and associated operational incidents within MREW. So don't sit back — get involved!

SO, WHAT NOW?

- Each region should confirm their regional representative.
- Confirmed members should attend the subcommittee meetings in November and May.

Finally, if you're not the regional rep or nominated person but feel you have specialist skills in water and are prepared to support national work please get in touch via waterofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk.

BRUSH UP YOUR AFTERCARE



Going into autumn and winter, training will be high on the agenda for many of you. The importance of looking after your clothing, footwear and kit with high performance aftercare such as Nikwax may be something you already understand, but it certainly doesn't hurt to brush up on what you know. Nikwax has put together a set of videos explaining the basics of kit care and the process of cleaning and waterproofing your gear. So, if you need to refresh your knowledge, or start from scratch, take a look at www.nikwax.co.uk. We've got videos that cover TX.Direct, Waterproofing Wax for Leather,



Polar Proof, Cotton Proof, Tent & Gear Solarproof and BaseFresh. The website also has in-depth info on our entire PFC free, non flammable product range, so feel free to have a good look around! Get a FREE Nikwax sample by playing our fun online Quiz. Look for the yellow WebQuiz button on our homepage.

SHOW US YOU KNOW YOUR STUFF BY ANSWERING TEN SIMPLE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY AND WE'LL SEND YOU A FREE SAMPLE.

DATE PROTECTION UPDATE

Requests for support and guidance regarding Data Protection and record keeping have now been addressed and a small working group tasked. They will review the situation and produce guidance for teams with regards to protection and best management of all information.

One thing that has become evident is that there are different requirements for the safekeeping of different types of information held by organisations ie. medical, fundraising, personal data, etc. Whilst this review takes place we would suggest that teams continue to store data in a secure manner. If you require any further details, please contact David Allan via allan986@btinternet.com.

WATCH OUT FOR NEWS OF NEXT YEAR'S NATIONAL WATER & INCIDENT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE – DATE TO BE CONFIRMED BUT THIS IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE IN MARCH/APRIL.

IN THE NEWS

Image © Spaceheater. Dreamstime.com

MREW PR consultant and media trainer **Sally Seed** looks at a couple of pieces of media coverage from the past few months and suggests things to be learnt for future MREW PR and media relations.

Personalities and individuals.

Newspapers and magazines love stories about people — but mountain rescuers are often very wary of being seen as an individual rather than part of the team. It's not exactly a recipe for disaster but it can create tensions and complications, often in a situation where a journalist contact can only see the opportunity and can't understand the sensitivity or concern.

For example, Arthur Littlefair of Kirkby Stephen MRT was invited to the Queen's Coronation celebration service in London in June, at the suggestion of the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria. Arthur was very modest about this and certainly didn't want to create publicity for himself. But

he had to be the focus of any press release as the story was undeniably about him.

To reduce the focus on Arthur and to emphasise the broader MRT element and the fact that other volunteers had been invited, we did a couple of things.

One of Arthur's colleagues got images of him and his wife, partly in London finery and partly dressed for MR, at the Kirkby Stephen base and in front of a team vehicle before the big event. I also found out from the Lord Lieutenant's office about the other voluntary bodies that were being represented from Cumbria and made sure that we mentioned them in the story too.

As a result, only one publication insisted on a photograph from London and all the others used the obviously 'mountain rescue' image and mentioned the range of organisations, at the same time reinforcing the voluntary nature of mountain rescue by association. Another example of this focus on individuals came up for Caroline Langdon of Coniston MRT, quite recently. MREW had been approached to submit a favourite Lakeland walk for use in a feature in Country Walking. Caroline was happy to help with ideas for a route — a family walk in Copper Mines Valley, to be precise — but not keen to see her name and picture on it.

We asked if it could, instead, mention the team and feature the website address.

The answer came back — no problem on the website address but the journalist needed a profile picture of Caroline to match the format for all the other walks in the article.

Caroline wasn't keen and isn't someone who has her picture taken too often anyway. She offered a photograph of herself (almost unrecognisable) wearing sunglasses but Country Walking were having none of it. Thankfully, Coniston team members took fresh pictures of Caroline, complete with a rescue red jacket but then, to Caroline's relief, Country

The moral of the story? Most people reading the article pick up on the mountain rescue element and they're not really worried about the individual.

Walking published it so small that a postage stamp would cover it anyway!

The moral of the story? Most people reading the article pick up on the mountain rescue element and they're not really worried about the individual. But to have let the picture and person aspect be a barrier to MRT involvement might have meant we weren't featured at all.

So, three lessons overall:

- If you're asked to contribute to an article, focus on making sure that the right person on your team takes part, bearing in mind from the start that the journalist is likely to need a name and a picture.
- If a team member has been

involved in something particularly newsworthy, use it and build on it to get messages across — don't be so shy of the individual publicity that the team loses out.

- And, finally, if a member of your team is collared to do something like this for MREW, please don't tease them TOO much!

We're hoping to make In the News a regular column with hints, learning points and ideas for media coverage. If you have a problem you'd like to see discussed or a piece of coverage you think others could learn from, please don't hesitate to get in touch via sally@stoneleighcomms.co.uk. Thanks. ■

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NEW SAR-H HELICOPTER PROVISION BRIEFING SUMMARY: SAR VOLUNTEER FOCUS

JOHN HULSE

During the UKSAR Operators meetings on 1/7/13 and 2/7/13, Damien Oliver (SAR-H MCA Project Lead) presented an overview of the state of the SAR-H project.

AVAILABILITY AND COMMAND & CONTROL

- The new helicopters will all be operated by Bristow but in HM Coastguard livery.

- No decision has been taken on the future location of the ARCC. The ARCC will remain at Kinloss Barracks for the time being. Its future location is a matter for government ministers. Regardless of location, all tasking will remain the responsibility of the ARCC.

- The new base locations and new aircraft are intended to reduce the average flight time from 23 minutes to 19 minutes for SAR responses.

NEW BASE LOCATIONS

- Inverness
- Humberside
- Caernarfon
- Manston
- Cardiff St Athan
- Prestwick
- Newquay
- Sumburgh
- Lee-on-Solent
- Stornoway



Figure 1: View of The Existing S92 Aircraft

S92 HELICOPTER CAPABILITY SUMMARY

- The aircraft will carry eleven passengers plus two stretchers.

- The aircraft has an extended range of 250nm with 30mins on scene at that range and then return.

- Cruising speed is 145 knots and maximum speed 165 knots.

tank in addition to the standard external fuel tanks.

- Cruising speed is 145 knots and maximum speed 165 knots.

AW189 HELICOPTER CAPABILITY

- The aircraft will carry six passengers plus two stretchers.

- The aircraft has a range of 190nm with 30mins on scene at that range and then return.

- Cruising speed is 145 knots and maximum speed 169 knots.

WINCH CAPABILITY

- There is dual winch capability in both new S92 and AW189 helicopter types using the same fit as the current S92 aircraft. The winch characteristics are:—

- Aircraft hoists have cable lengths of 290 feet with no restrictions on minimum length.

- The hoists can run continuously at a cycle of 300lbs out and 600lbs in until the cabin capacity is reached.

- The dual hoists can operate up to at least 325 feet per minute.

WEIGHT LIMITS

The contract included assumptions made for a typical MRT group to be flown based on a team of 6 people each weighing at 80kg, plus 25kg for hill bags. Hill bag dimensions being 0.6m x 0.35m x 0.3m. Additional rescue kit characteristics which may or may not be in the same lift:—

- One stretcher at 25kg with dimensions of 1.2m x 0.6m x 0.4m.

- Four rope bags at 10kg per bag, dimensions 0.6m x 0.3m.

- One crag bag at 15kg, dimensions 0.6m x 0.3m.

AIRCRAFT FIT

The new aircraft are fully NVG-capable. The new radios will have a better set of scan controls than the Sea Kings and also have Airwave access.

SAR-H CREWS

Approx two-thirds of the new SAR-H aircraft crews will be ex-military personnel.

TRAINING PROVISION

- The CAA will regulate SAR training according to its own published guidance contained within CAP999. It is not anticipated that there will be any sort of capability gap for SAR training under SAR H. See document CAP999 in reference 4 below.

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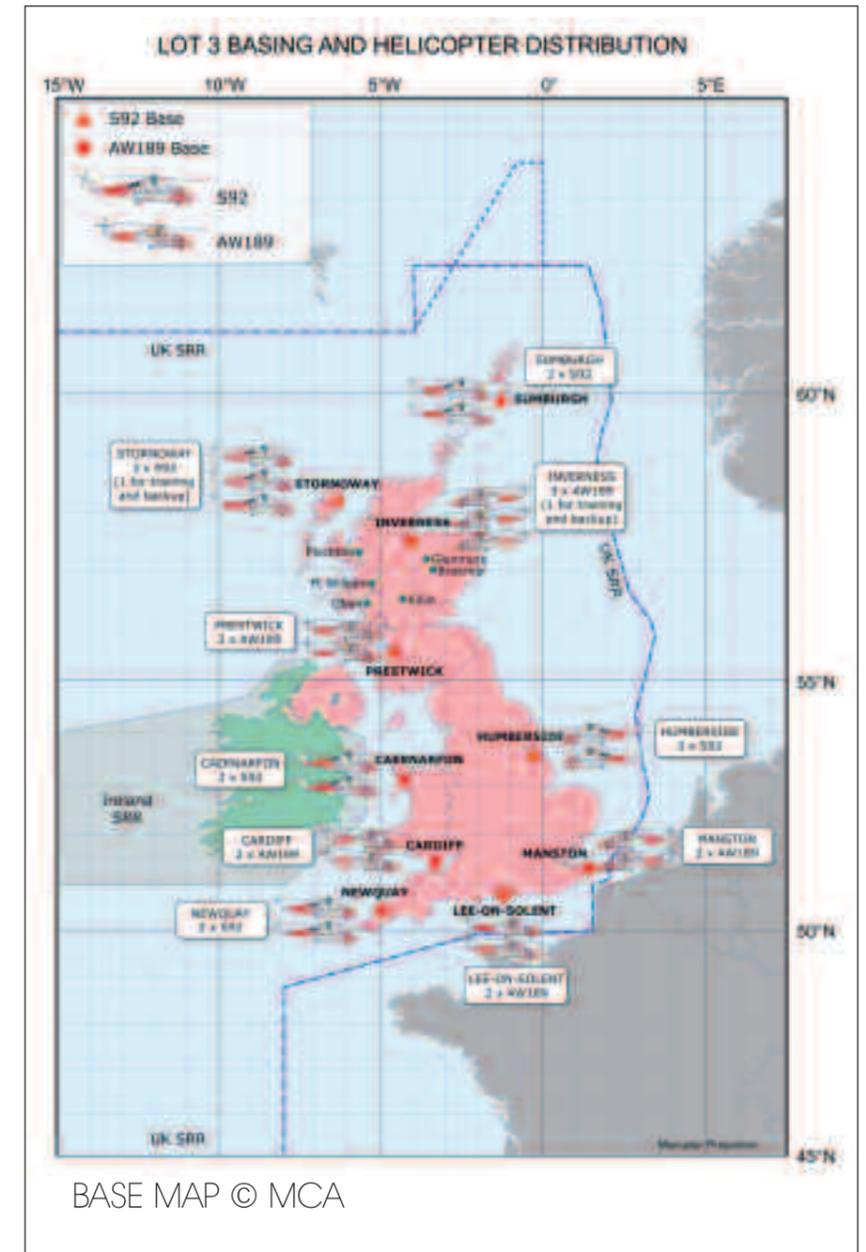
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- Existing Coastguard SAR helicopters currently operate with less training

BASE TRANSITIONING AND AIRCRAFT TYPES

Current Base	Future Base	Aircraft Type	Transition Date
Lossiemouth	Inverness	AW189 x 3	April 2015
Leconfield	Humberside	S92 x 2	April 2015
Valley	Caernarfon	S92 x 2	July 2015
Wattisham	Manston	AW189 x 2	July 2015
Chivenor	Cardiff St Athan	AW189 x 2	October 2015
Prestwick (Gannet)	Prestwick	AW189 x 2	January 2016
Culdrose	Newquay	S92 x 2	January 2016
Sumburgh	Sumburgh	S92 x 2	April 2017
Lee-on-Solent	Lee-on-Solent	AW189 x 2	April 2017
Stornoway	Stornoway	S92 x 3	July 2017

The AW189 not yet been built. SAR certification is expected in Spring 2014. The clear aspiration is to 'socialise' the AW189 helicopter ahead of the transition.

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- Lengths available in 500, 1000, 1500, 2000

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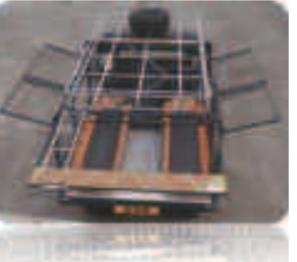
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A Y Morton & Co have now developed a purpose built twin stretcher rescue vehicle. The rear unit is manufactured as an independent bolt-on pod, incorporating a full roll over protection system and fitted to a Polaris Ranger 6x6 chassis cab. With stretchers removed, the vehicle can be utilised for a multitude of purposes including fire fighting equipment and personnel transportation.

The morton EUV bolt-on pod comes complete with roof storage facility and rear access ladder. The roof can be floored to provide weather protection. The pod has four upper and lower side access panels as well as full opening back door making the EUV pod very accessible from all angles. The EUV pod can be tailor-made to suit individual requirements.

For further information and prices please contact:
**A Y Morton & Co Ltd, Station Road
Strathaven ML10 6BE**
Tel: 01357 522311
Email: alastair@aymorton.co.uk
Website: www.mortoneuv.co.uk

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- Technical Rope Rescue Instructor

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page 13

hours than their military counterparts. This model is said to have been successful and has formed the basis for the contract.

- Each flight/base will operate with 50 hours per month which is less than that in a military environment. The 50 hours is inclusive of transit times. No real metrics are currently available for volunteer access to RAF helicopters; this will be a point for discussion.

- The provision of training for SAR teams will be assessed and subject to review.

- It is recognised that there will be an assimilation period during the introduction of the new aircraft where more training time is required, but planning is still underway.

- It is thought that Bristows will be more deterministic in availability of training for SAR teams, in other words, their aircraft are assumed to be more reliable than the RAF so we are more likely to have training commitments honoured.

GENERAL POINTS

Damien Oliver (MCA SAR-H Contract Lead) has kindly agreed to come back to subsequent UKSAR meetings to continue the discussions or assist with specific enquiries associated with the volunteer context of the SAR-H contract.

RAF MRS Teams report that the down-draught from the S92 is significantly worse than that of the Sea King. As a consequence, all MRS team members carry

protective glasses for use when working with the S92.

SUMMARY

The reports from some of the Scottish teams about the current Bristow helicopter service levels were generally favourable. It is clear that the Bristows delivery will be in a different framework and style than the RAF helicopters, however, the overall response will be closely monitored and that should work to our advantage providing we can clearly evidence any assertions and/or requests.

My view is that there is more work required on the volunteer context for SAR-H; indeed, work is still in progress on core aspects of the contract at the MoD and MCA. The UKSAR Operators meeting was assured that performance aspects of the SAR-H contract will be under close review, however it is absolutely clear that we will need to work cohesively at national rather than team or regional level to make progress. ■



Figure 2: Rendered view of new AW189 SAR Aircraft



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If you have any queries about this report, please email sar-h@mountain.rescue.org.uk

LAKE DISTRICT

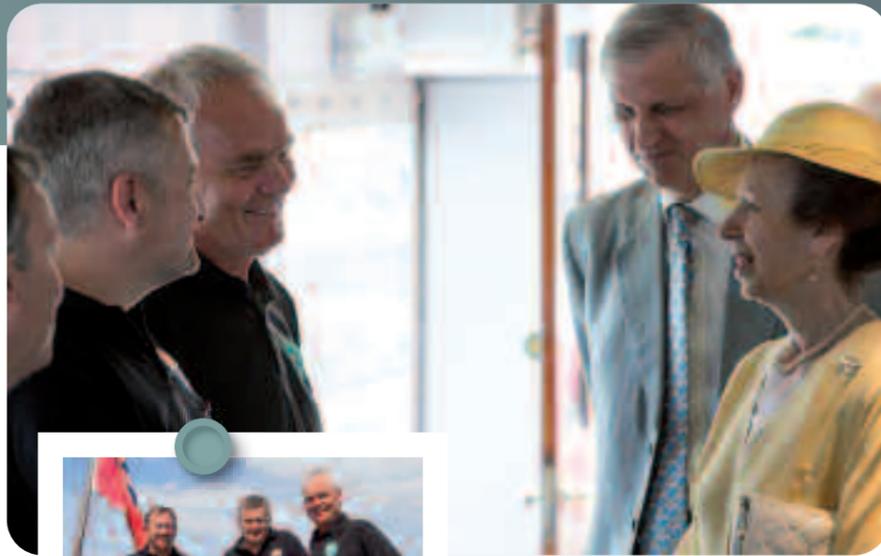
RIB CROSSES ULLSWATER FOR £1000

Patterdale team members crossed Ullswater in their RIB to collect a cheque for £1000 in August, thanks to the fundraising efforts of staff and visitors to Park Foot Caravan and Camping Park.

'We really appreciate the generosity of everyone on the site,' said John Williams, 'and we thought it would be nice to attend the presentation using our rescue boat as a change from a team Land Rover.

'Not everyone realises the team has a RIB — named Scottie after John Scott, a previous chairman — but we use it regularly, not only in support of lake searches but also as a quick means of transport between the western and eastern shores of the lake for rescues. We met up with site manager, Mark Foudy, his daughter Lauren, and two members of the staff who organised the event, Carrie McWilliams and Jess Breeden. They thought they were just handing over a cheque but it was nice to give them a quick tour of the Pooley Bridge lake shore in the RIB as well!

A Fun Day, with prizes donated by Barbara Allen and Fiona Bell who own Park Foot (and who also rounded up the proceeds to £1000), included a



Left: Dog Ted steals the show, pictured, left to right, with Roger Pickup, Nick Owen (LAMRT) and Richard Warren (Chairman LDSAMRA). Above: HRH Princess Anne chats with the three Lake representatives. Images © Tony West.

Vessel Teal, Windermere Steamers. Three members of mountain rescue were invited to attend the sailing, one representing the region and two from Langdale Ambleside MRT, as the team local to Bowness. We were fortunate also to gain permission to bring along an additional team member in the shape of search dog Ted who has only recently been certified for operational work with his handler Roger Pickup.

The visit was the second to Windermere by the Queen in nearly 60 years, the first being in 1956 with the Duke of Edinburgh when she travelled from Ambleside to Bowness, also on the MV Teal. The event included the unveiling of a second plaque on the vessel. In all, around forty people were invited to accompany the Royal party on board. Most were representatives of local charities and some, like mountain rescue, had strong links with the Royal Family through patronage.

The weather could not have been kinder for a trip on Windermere with wall-to-wall sunshine and temperatures in the high 80s. LAMRT team leader Nick Owen, deputy Roger Pickup and I managed colour coordination for the day and Ted was suitable spruced up and jacketed. The day before

duck race, a fun dog show, archery, bouncy castles, face painting, lots of stalls and a birds of prey display by Silverband Falconry.

'We have thousands of visitors each year,' said Mark Foudy, 'and many of them go out walking, canoeing or cycling in the area so we are very aware of the demands put on our local rescue team. If we can support the work of these committed volunteers with a bit of fun for our visitors, that's great.'

A BOAT TRIP WITH THE QUEEN AND THE PRINCESS ROYAL

Richard Warren writes: In July, Cumbria hosted a visit by the Queen and the Princess Royal, a continuation of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations that included a visit to Kendal, followed by a short sailing from Bowness to Brockhole on the Motor



Left to right: Simon Woodrow (Patterdale MRT), Carrie McWilliams, Jess Breeden, Lauren (seated with bear), Mark Foudy and John Williams.

SEVEN LAKES TEAMS WORK TOGETHER IN JOINT EXERCISE IN THE MALLERSTANG VALLEY

September's large scale exercise — organised by Kirkby Stephen MRT — saw over 70 team members, including five search dogs, searching for ten 'casualties' over a large area of the Mallerstang valley. Casualties were placed in a number

of challenging locations, calling for expert medical attention and careful recovery. All were located, treated and evacuated within just a few hours — a pleasing outcome given the difficulty of the terrain. The exercise allowed the teams to hone their

working practices when deployed together on large scale incidents and the Kirkby Stephen team was also able to test out a mobile satellite broadband internet service, supplied for the day by specialist provider Anyplace Internet. The seven teams

taking part were Kirkby Stephen, Penrith, Teesdale, Kendal, Swaledale and CRO, alongside Lake District Mountain Rescue Search Dogs. On behalf of the team, thanks go to the local farmers and landowners, who were very helpful in welcoming

the exercise onto their land, and to the owners of the Moorcock Inn who allowed the main search control units to be set up in their car park.

Photo: Kirkby Stephen team leader Arthur Littlefair 'in control' alongside satellite dish.

there had been a full briefing of the ship's crew and, as the guest list only listed our fourth member as 'MRT Ted', there had been much bemusement over one of the key tasks for the day 'to source a bowl of water for Ted'!

Of course, having a search dog on board was a major attraction and he certainly stole the show, being photographed nearly as much as the Royal party. The Queen and the Princess Royal shared the informal meeting and greetings of those present and we were lucky to be first in line to greet Princess Anne. She was very complimentary of the mountain rescue service and fascinated by the work of the search dogs, certainly making us all feel very much at ease for the short sailing up the mere to Brockhole. It was a great day out and a real privilege to represent mountain rescue.

NEW TECHNOLOGY GIVES 'CROWD' INSIGHT INTO SEARCH AND RESCUE

The AeroSee UAV technology platform was tested by Patterdale MRT in July, with remote users able to assist in a trial search by interacting with live video streamed to their laptops or mobile phones. The pioneering project is the work of staff at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) Aerospace Centre and Media Innovation Studios who believe the technology could help save lives in the mountains.

The AeroSee drone was launched from the sports field in Glenridding (opposite the Patterdale base) to embark on a 20-minute flight over ten square kilometres, in search of a 'missing walker'. Images from the craft were relayed to volunteers logged onto the AeroSee website, who were then able to tag the images wherever they thought they'd spotted an injured person. The crowd sourced intelligence — which includes visual references and GPS location data — was then relayed to team members back at base who are able to assess the image, and send the AeroSee back to take a closer look if they believe crowd participants have identified a person in trouble on the hills. The idea

TEAM BENCH TAKES PRIDE OF PLACE, IN MEMORY OF A FRIEND AND MOUNTAIN LOVER

Patterdale base has a new bench, in memory of Alan Burns, a keen walker and climber who sadly died in December 2010 after a fall into Brown Cove. The team has stayed in touch with Alan's family and friends since the accident so this was a fitting tribute. Alan's parents, Bob and Anne Burns, visited Patterdale in August to meet team members for tea and a tour, and a chance to sit on the bench in their son's memory.

Any fatality hits a team hard but this was a particularly tough one for the current team leader, Mike Blakey, who knew Alan well. 'We met whilst living and working together in the mountains of France, back in 1993, teaching climbing, windsurfing and other outdoor pursuits,' explains Mike. 'A couple of years later, we learned to paraglide together and Alan managed to land badly and break his ankle — much to our amusement at the time! Of all the things I've done as a team member, this will remain with me for ever. None of us ever imagine having to use every skill we have to save a friend. It was a tragedy that somebody who loved the mountains so much, and who had been a member of a mountain rescue team, died in such circumstances. I shall be sitting and sipping coffee on this bench for many years to come and remembering the good times.'

Bob and Anne Burns (centre), with (left to right) Simon Woodrow, Glenn Bridge, Mike Blakey, Jacquie Freeborn and John Williams of Patterdale MRT.



is that data provided by members of the public participating in the rescue operation can help the rescue team target their resources more effectively, saving time and enabling them to head straight to the casualty.

Darren Ansell, Space and Aerospace Engineering Lead at UCLan said, 'AeroSee can rapidly cover a geographic area that might take a number of hours to search on foot — particularly critical if a casualty's injuries are severe or weather conditions are poor. If it can improve the focus on key areas, AeroSee also has the potential to reduce the risks for volunteer rescuers in dangerous conditions.'

Patterdale team members were intrigued to see how it worked and whether the team really could build a community of virtual search agents prepared to assist them at a moment's notice.

Leader Mike Blakey said, 'Technology in mountain rescue is changing fast. Drones may be really useful in some scenarios and the idea of getting people to help with the rescue operation wherever they are in the world taps into the way people use digital technology.'

Prior to the event, members of the public were invited to join the live trial and could tag images whenever they saw anything that looked like a person in distress. The 'injured walker' was first tagged within 69 seconds of the image being uploaded to the website — in fact, the virtual search agents were able to home in on the location of the missing person before the drones had even landed! Check out aerosee.org for more details.

NORTH EAST

SCARBOROUGH AND RYEDALE TEAM RECEIVES ROYAL THANK YOU

The Scarborough and Ryedale team has been named as one of just forty recipients of a prestigious community initiative award. The Duke of York's Community Initiative is presented annually to a small number of Yorkshire-based organisations that, having been subjected to rigorous and robust scrutiny, are deemed 'of real value to the community, well run and an inspiration to others.'

The initiative, founded by HRH The Duke of York in 1998, exists to both encourage and reward innovative and inspirational community projects in Yorkshire and the Humber. Representatives of the team will travel to Bridlington Spa's Royal Hall in October, to attend a luncheon at which the Duke will personally present recipients of the 2013 awards with their citations.

Ian Hugill, the team's PR officer said, 'We are delighted to be recognised in this way. As a charity established to serve our local community and one which only continues through the support of our local community, we find immense satisfaction and motivation from this Royal award.'



Trainee NEWSAR team member Dr Tom Beach, ready for action.

RAF CALL ON NEWSAR TRAINEE FOR HELP IN SEA RESCUE

North East Wales SAR trainee Tom Beach got rather more helicopter training than he'd bargained for earlier this year, when he found himself roped into a rather unusual rescue. Trainee team members were attending RAF Valley to receive winch training when 22 Squadron got a call-out for a 'wet job'. Expecting the worst, the team began to pack up, fearing that any chance of being winched that day had just evaporated. Not so for Tom!

As details of the job came in, crew members asked if anyone in NEWSAR's number was a doctor. Without hesitation, and the words barely out of their mouths, Dr Beach was helping himself into a flight suit and being handed a helmet. Then it was into the Sea King and off to a cargo ship somewhere in the Irish Sea to respond to the call for help.

More information was gathered in-flight and it became clear the call-out was to a gentleman in his 50s who'd experienced a seizure earlier that morning. He had no history of epilepsy and, worryingly, there was the possibility he had suffered a head injury the day before.

Landing on the ship's helipad Tom and an RAF paramedic winchman were escorted below decks to the medical bay. After initial assessment, it was found that the patient was fortunately relatively stable and he was removed to the Sea King for a rapid evacuation to hospital. A 30-minute flight later, the patient was delivered safely to Aintree University Hospital — although not the nearest facility, this was felt to be the most appropriate because of both its status as a regional trauma centre and also the ready access to tertiary neurological care on site.

Move over RNLI, mountain rescue is branching out!

real rescues

SUPERMARKET SEARCH FOR MISSING ROTHERHAM MAN

Shoppers at the Morrison's in Catcliffe, Rotherham, were surprised to see several mountain rescue vehicles parked in the car park of the store in August, as team members used the area as a base to search for a missing 85-year-old.

Woodhead MRT, who usually operate in the wilderness of the Peak District, received the call from South Yorkshire Police after extensive local enquiries, including the use of the police helicopter, were unsuccessful. The gentleman, from the local area, had been reported missing earlier in the day.

Around 30 team members, including specialist swiftwater rescue teams and six search and rescue dogs from Woodhead, Edale and Oldham teams searched the large semi rural area surrounding Catcliffe, including unused railway lines and river banks and the gentleman was found safe and well five hours later.

Incident Controller, John Howe, said, 'It was a particularly difficult search to manage given the size of area we had to cover and the specific terrain within it. It was important we used the correct search strategy to hit the probable areas within the search area.'

'When we got the call to say the man had been found safe and well it was a real sense of relief and a great feeling. I'd also like to say a massive thanks to the manager and staff at the Morrison's store who fed and watered the teams during the search.'

A BUSY, AND FREQUENTLY FRUSTRATING, SUMMER FOR WASDALE TEAM

At around 3.15 pm, one afternoon in August, NWAS reported a pair of walkers stuck and injured in a gully on the Wasdale Screes overlooking Wastwater. The two males in their thirties had mistaken a gully for a descent route to the valley bottom and, when they were around 100m down, one of them fell around eight metres sustaining injuries to his hand and arm.

With assistance from the North West Air Ambulance, thirteen members of the Wasdale team, plus a search dog and handler, located the casualty in a very exposed, inaccessible and dangerous location, around 400m above the valley bottom. The air ambulance lifted a number of team members in pairs with over 600m of rope and crag gear and, due to the location of the cragfast walker and his injured companion (50m below him on a ledge) the team leader called in support from the Duddon and Furness team. A further six team members attended, bringing up more ropes to provide fixed lines down the gully. The two walkers were evacuated back up the screes using haul lines, as lowering down would have been too dangerous. Once at the top, on Whin Rigg Summit, they were walked off the mountain and the incident was closed at 11.00 pm.

Wasdale team would like to send grateful thanks to the North West Air Ambulance and Duddon and Furness MRT for their assistance with this technically very difficult and physically demanding rescue. Some Duddon and Furness team members, incidentally, had to be diverted to another serious incident on Hard Knott whilst on their way to this call-out, hence having to split their team numbers.

incidents figures

Apr • May • Jun • 2013

Region and Teams	Incidents	Region and Teams	Incidents	Region and Teams	Incidents	Region and Teams	Incidents
Lake District		North East		Glossop	7	Yorkshire Dales	
Cockermouth	16	Cleveland	13	Kinder	3	CRO	16
Coniston	12	Scarborough & Ryedale	12	Oldham	7	Upper Wharfedale	15
Duddon and Furness	10	Swaledale	1	Woodhead	5	(Previous quarter: 19)	31
Kendal	11	Teesdale and Weardale	1	(Previous quarter: 79)	85	Search Dogs	
Keswick	21	(Previous quarter: 39)	27	Peninsula		Lakes	3
Kirkby Stephen	9	North Wales		Cornwall	9	England	6
Langdale Ambleside	27	Aberglaslyn	3	Dartmoor (Ashburton)	2	Wales	6
Patterdale	17	Aberdyfi	6	Dartmoor (Okehampton)	5	South Wales	4
Penrith	5	Llanberis	34	Dartmoor (Plymouth)	5	(Previous quarter: 19)	19
Wasdale	18	North East Wales	5	Dartmoor (Tavistock)	6	RAF	
(Previous quarter: 112)	146	Ogwen Valley	14	Exmoor	1	Valley	1
Mid-Pennine		South Snowdonia	5	(Previous quarter: 8)	28	(Previous quarter: 8)	1
Bolton	22	(Previous quarter: 45)	67	South Wales		Total	508
Bowland Pennine	18	Peak District		Brecon	25	(Previous quarter: 408)	
Calder Valley	5	Buxton	20	Central Beacons	16		
Holme Valley	1	Derby	9	Longtown	8		
Rossendale & Pendle	2	Edale	34	Western Beacons	7		
(Previous quarter: 46)	48			(Previous quarter: 33)	56		

In September, Wasdale team members dealt with a 'less than helpful group' one late Saturday evening when a pair of walkers in their twenties reported themselves as lost and stuck on large rocks somewhere on the summit of Scafell Pike.

Their location was digitally established, using the SARLOC system, as being on a rocky path within 100m of the summit. They were very lightly equipped, no spare clothing, no map or compass but did have torches. They had gone on ahead of the father and friend on the way to the top and become lost and the father had the only map and compass in the group. As they were so close to a busy summit, the team leader worked hard to encourage them to make their way to the top and find some helpful walkers but they were unwilling to move as 'their legs were seized up' even though they knew the team would take a further two hours to get to them.

A limited call-out followed, with four team members setting off plus one team member already on the mountain working with a group, and a further team member from Penrith MRT already on the mountain. The father and friend, who had presumably given up, were descending via Lingmel Col. They were quickly located by the team member on the fell but the father was not willing to reascend to assist in locating his daughter and friend even though their location was now accurately known by the team leader and they were safe on a path although cold and wet.

The team eventually brought the pair back to the valley bottom, after a very frustrating night for the team leader, and reunited the pair with the father who was asleep in his car at the bottom. The incident was closed at 2.30 am.

Inexperience, lack of equipment, insufficient preparation, inability to get themselves out of trouble, not staying together as a group and a less than helpful group leader (the father) — all in all another avoidable rescue to add to the many mountain rescue volunteers are having to deal with.



In July, a party of five split up with two becoming lost above Eskdale and spending the night out on the fell.

A group of five had set off to climb Scafell Pike late in the afternoon. At the path junction in Hollowstones, just after 5.00 pm, the father and two sons headed for the summit via Mickledore whilst the wife and sister decided to take the easier route via Lingmel Col. The plan was to meet on the summit but the two ladies were not seen again. It transpired that the pair, who were fit and well, had been to the summit then made a navigational error and headed down into Eskdale before coming to a halt on steep ground. They had mobile contact with the team leader but were unable to give sufficient information to locate their position for a night search or to be safely talked off the mountain. They were eventually found at 8.45 am. Tired, cold and hungry, they'd managed to keep their spirits up until they were located on the southern slopes of Slight Side, below Scafell. In addition to the thirteen team members, a Lakes search dog and a Sea King from RN Gannett has assisted in the operation.



Multi-award winning GPS for Mountain Rescue

The **Public Sector Mapping Agreement (PSMA)** grants registered public sector organisations such as Mountain Rescue teams access to Ordnance Survey data on a royalty free basis. A Mountain Rescue team can therefore own Great Britain 1:10k, 1:25k and 1:50k mapping for **FREE**. The whole of Great Britain 1:25k mapping would normally retail for over £2300!

The majority of Mountain Rescue teams are already registered with the PSMA allowing Satmap to supply mapping directly to a team. All of Great Britain Ordnance Survey 1:10k, 1:25k and 1:50k is available on three map cards for use with the Active 10 GPS. The only financial outlay is the Active 10 device itself and Satmap have an **exclusive promotion** below to meet team search area requirements:

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PENMACRA

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September saw a number of Dartmoor SRT (Ashburton) members taking part in a Vertical Ten Tors Challenge, climbing the combined height of ten Dartmoor Tors on a 9m indoor climbing wall at the Dart Rock Climbing Centre at Buckfastleigh. And with it absolutely throwing it down with rain outside it was the perfect opportunity to play inside. The day kicked off at 10.00am with Nik, the brains behind the idea, starting everybody off with the first five climbs. Around sixteen volunteers took part in the challenge, with Nik bringing in the final 520th climb around 3.00pm. The challenge was devised to raise much needed funds for the team and the £2,000+ raised was more than double what they'd hoped for.

'I would like to thank all the family and friends for sponsoring my colleagues and me in this undertaking,' said Nik, 'and, of course, a big thank you goes to Dart Rock Climbing Centre for their support for the event.'



Photos: Al Pewsey



PEAK DISTRICT

MATLOCK MAYOR REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

Mayor of Matlock, Councillor David Jones, swapped his chain of office for climbing ropes in September, when he scaled the heights of Matlock's High Tor to raise awareness and funds for Derby MRT. High Tor, a sheer vertical face overlooking Matlock Bath, is considered by most climbers as a serious challenge and David, supported by team member Chris Bagworth, took one of the hardest courses up the rock, a route known as Debauchery. A keen climber, who last scaled the route 20 years ago, he quickly realised this was not going to be an easy undertaking!

'This is at the top end of what I can do these days, but it's a brilliant route, one of the best in the country and I'm delighted to have done it,' he said. 'Derby team gave me a lot of support and luckily I didn't test Chris's patience too much by floundering about. I wanted to raise awareness of the work the team does and help raise some money for them.'

With the unexpected warm weather, many climbers had headed to the area and were surprised to see a local dignitary, resplendent in suit and tie, posing for the camera at the foot of such a difficult climb. The suit was soon swapped for t-shirt and climbing harness and the challenge was on. Less than two hours later, David emerged triumphant onto the top of the cliff.

The team is regularly called to incidents on the rock faces in the surrounding area but, luckily on this day, their specialist skills were not required. A team spokesman said, 'We're really grateful to David for his fantastic support. You don't get many mayors willing and able to do something so extreme!'



JOINT EX IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

In June, Gloucestershire CRG organised a multi-team event on with Midlands CRO, SARA Tewkesbury and Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue. Whilst some were involved in an underground search, others were unexpectedly practising winching when a Land Rover became stuck in mud, en route to see the Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue technical department demonstrate their use of quadpod and Alphin stretcher. Total Access (UK) Limited kindly loaned Midlands CRO an Actsafe rigging frame – similar to the Larkin frame – which deviates

a rope over an edge to assist in bringing a casualty up steep/vertical ground and showed its worth for potential crag or shaft rescues. The afternoon saw a joint search exercise organised by SARA Tewkesbury for the two cave rescue teams.

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regional News



THINGS PICK UP IN EXMOOR

When a team vehicle needs replacing, doubtless the majority of teams approach the moment with a combination of fear, excitement and a fair dose of number-crunching. When that moment came for Exmoor, writes Lionel Murphy, 'we considered all suggestions as to what sort of vehicle we should have and a helicopter was ruled out straight away — nice, but nowhere to park it!' Committee member Dan was 'volunteered' to lead the project, duly co-opting Graham (Equipment Officer) and Lionel (PR Officer) to assist. First came a visit to all the local Land Rover, Toyota, Nissan and Mitsubishi dealerships, who were all very helpful and willing to assist but, the difficulty was how to turn a pick-up truck into a suitable vehicle for carrying the team kit.

'We contacted Daryl Garfield, MREW Vehicles Officer, who was extremely helpful, especially in analysing the main usage of our vehicles. The fate took a hand with a leaflet from Pickup Systems in Bacup, who purchase Toyota Hi-Lux chassis, then build a bespoke pod to fit in the format required and a visit to their workshops was organised. 'It transpired that the Rossendale and Pendle team had also purchased one of these vehicles and Ivy from the team brought their vehicle down for us to see. This was extremely helpful as she was able to explain how they found working with it. We are very grateful to Ivy and the Rossendale team for taking the time to do this — it demonstrates the support there is between teams across the country. 'Armed with all of this information, we reported back to the committee and a decision was reached to purchase one of these vehicles. Between planning and final collection, Dan was in regular contact with Pickup Systems, always receiving a friendly and helpful response to ensure the vehicle was fitted to our requirements. There are always things you remember you wanted but forgot to ask for! We picked our vehicle up on Thursday 4 July, all gleaming, clean and ready for the road. A few little adjustments and we were ready to go. All in all this was a painless exercise — except for parting with the money! And considerably enhanced by the help and friendliness we encountered from the company. 'We made it back to our search centre in South Molton before the start of the indoor meeting so the team was able to inspect it before a call-out came. I'm sure we'll find things we would like to change as we use the vehicle, but we are certainly pleased with initial impressions. To date the Hi-Lux has performed well both on and off road and is very comfortable to drive and travel in.'

BCRC FALL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT INSPECTOR COURSE

In June 2013, BCRC ran its first Fall Protection Equipment Inspector course kindly hosted at Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group's HQ and run by BCRC Equipment Officer, Mike Clayton. The course was aimed at Cave Rescue equipment officers and team members who are responsible for the formal inspection of team rescue equipment. The course was attended by members of Derbyshire CRO, Devon CRO, Gloucestershire CRG, Mendip CR and Midlands CRO with all participants successfully passing the course.

In the control room at Keswick MRT base there's a notice board and amidst all the paperwork posted there can be found a list of names. It's a roll call of all the men and women who've been active team members and reaches back through 67 years to the founding members of 1946. It's a sobering and humbling statement of enduring commitment. Every mountain rescue team has its history and that history is made by all the names of those who came before us. Those names can tell many a story. Their names that shall not be forgotten nor shall their endeavours fade. Without them there'd be no team.

COUNTING THE NAMES

STEVE ALLEN Keswick MRT

They are the names that were counted on
And we count them now.

They are the names that found the way
That made the tracks.
They are the names that are hard to follow,
As follow we must
And follow we will.

They are the names that answered the call
That dared and dared again.
Names that gave with nerve and sinew,
Lungs and brain,
Heart and hands.

They are the names whose lights danced on fells
That searched the unknown dark,
Names that found when all was lost
That carried and watched
That brought hope and life.

They are the names that shared the load
That tied the knots and held the rope.
They are the names that climbed and soared
That challenged the odds and overcame,
That laughed and joked to see them through.

They are the names that thought nothing of their doing
Names that would do it all again if time had not moved on.

They are the names that were there
The names that are still here,
The names that shall not be forgotten
Or their endeavours fade.

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MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE BENEVOLENT FUND: IT'S OFFICIAL!

The Mountain and Cave Rescue Benevolent Fund is a separate charity set up to help alleviate hardship suffered by individuals or their families which has arisen in connection with a mountain and/or cave rescue operation. The MREW executive was instrumental in setting up the Fund, provided the drive for its creation and remains supportive of its development and progress.

There are trustees for the Fund who are responsible for how it operates and the decision to make awards, but it is the Regional Representatives who play the key role in advising and guiding the Trustees when applications are made. We will be very much dependent on their combined impartiality and fairness in anonymously assessing each application.

SO THE FIRST BIG QUESTION IS, CAN YOU CLAIM AGAINST THE FUND?

The answer is a great big 'Yes', if you are a member of any England and Wales mountain or cave rescue team and you have been injured on a call-out, whilst training or any other official activity such as fundraising. A member of your family may also apply, if he or she has been directly affected by your, or their, involvement with a mountain or cave rescue operation which has resulted in their hardship or suffering. Individuals outside the immediate mountain and cave rescue 'family' may apply if they have been seconded into an operation led by an England and Wales mountain or cave rescue team and suffer hardship as result of a consequent incident or accident.

For full details on how to make an application please contact the Fund Secretary Judy Whiteside. Essentially, you complete an official benevolence application form, which must be supported by your team leader or other suitable team official. You can then submit your application through your Regional Rep or directly to the Fund Secretary. The application form asks for your personal information, details of the assistance you require and a medical consent form asking

for details of your injury/condition and details of your GP or treating consultant.

The time frame for processing your application will depend upon the complexity of your case and the level of documentation required. Once we have all the necessary documents and information in support of your application we will call a full meeting of the Trustees and Regional Reps. Confidentiality is a key issue so, in addition to the confidentiality agreements, crucially at this stage the information put before the Regional Reps will be redacted of any identifying detail and no documents relating to your

At long last the Benevolent Fund is a reality and we are officially open for business! As the mag went to print last time, we got the big green light from the Charity Commission with our registration number 1152798. **Neil Woodhead and Judy Whiteside** tell us more about the new charity.

application will be taken away from this meeting.

The Regional Reps will then assess your application and make their recommendation to the Trustees on whether to reject or accept your application, together with making a recommended level of award.

The Trustees will then consider this recommendation and make a final decision to either reject or accept your application, and determine the amount you will be awarded.

Of course, there are occasions when you may have an urgent need for short term financial assistance, so arrangements are in place where we can make an Immediate Support Grant of up to £500. Your application form must

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NEIL WOODHEAD (ACTING CHAIRMAN)
SHIRLEY PRIESTLEY (TREASURER)
JUDY WHITESIDE (SECRETARY)
BILL WHITEHOUSE (BCRC)

REGIONAL REPS:

LAURA CONNOLLY (LAKES)
KEITH GILLIES (MID PENNINE)
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still be completed, signed and supported by your team leader or other team official. This initial grant may be subject to subsequent adjustment or repayment if the Trustees consider any further, fuller application is not appropriate.

We hope this demonstrates that the Benevolent Fund has been set up and arranged to provide you, as a member of a mountain or cave rescue team, assistance when you really need it — when the rescuer needs rescuing.

AND THE SECOND BIG QUESTION IS, HOW IS ALL THIS FUNDED?

The Fund was initially set up with monies from a charity donation together with funds from Mountain Rescue England and Wales. But now we need your money to give us the funds to enable us to fulfil our wishes to help you in your time of need. Anyone can donate to the

Kendal Mountain Rescue Team Sixty years on...

Kendal team began life in 1953 following tragic events on the hills of Britain in the Easter of 1952, when fifteen people died and many more were injured. Prior to this, local police would call out known fell walkers from the Kendal area to assist with search incidents in the Kentmere and Longsleddale valleys. **Eddie Harrison** and the team take a look back over sixty years.



The organisation of the newly formed Kendal Mountain Search Team was quite loose, using experienced climbers and walkers, with sound local knowledge. In September 1953, there were only twelve members on the active list, two of whom were available on weekdays.

The team's area covered the fells of Longsleddale, Shap, Tebay and Sedbergh, sharing responsibility for Kentmere with a small team based there and the focus was on searching. Rescue kit was limited, comprising a Civil Defence stretcher, blankets loaned by the YHA and a first aid kit supplied by

to incidents being members' cars or motorbikes.

As incidents and membership increased it became clear the organisation needed updating. By December 1959, it was reported that the team had been called out three times in the past year and had held two exercises, on Potter Fell and in Longsleddale and, in recognition of the wider role of both searching and rescuing being undertaken, the title 'Kendal Mountain Search and Rescue Team' was adopted.

Throughout the 1960s, work continued to expand with call-outs across the Lake District and

demonstrations to local organisations.

Members of K Fellfarers, an outdoor group from the K Shoe factory, along with workers in Kendal, were key in the early years. In 1959, over a dozen team members were from K Fellfarers; in 1966 they represented over 30% of the team. Whilst their numbers have declined over the years (two in 1979 and only one in 2012) their importance in our early development cannot be understated. We can also boast Alfred Wainwright as the first honorary member. 'AW' kindly donated an original pen and ink drawing and 'The Head of Kentmere' (dated 1979) hangs proudly in our base.

Today, experience has shown that the optimum number of hill-going team members is between 35 and 40, and we've adopted 40 as our upper limit, regularly turning out 20 to 25 people on a call-out.

Our Operations Support Group comprises a small number of people who were previously full time and hill-going members. They have the necessary experience and skills to support the team by manning base, driving and handling communications during a call-out. Members of this group carry pagers and have the same training and general attendance requirements as the hill-going team.

New team members undertake a provisional year and we expect to see a very significant commitment

demonstrated during that time. An experienced team member takes on the role of mentor, acting as the first point of contact for questions or concerns. Provisional members generally start to be called out with the rest of the team during the second half of their probationary year.

Alongside this operational side, the team would struggle to function effectively without its support group whose contribution to base maintenance and fundraising is invaluable.

The team has been a registered charity since the early days, managed by a committee structured with oversight by trustees. However, concerns about an increasingly litigious society and the potentially serious personal financial implications for the trustees resulted in a significant change in 2008 when the team became a 'company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital'. We continued as Kendal Mountain Search and Rescue Team, and as a registered charity but, instead of trustees, we now have a board of three directors elected by team members. All team members are also members of the company, each with a personal financial liability of a maximum £10 which, hopefully, will never be called upon.

Back to the 1960s, and the team had no base from which to organise and run its activities. Prior to our move to Busher Walk, in the centre of Kendal, we had to make

do with borrowed or rented accommodation, at various locations around Kendal — rooms at the YMCA, above a betting shop, old police cells in Lowther Street, a police canteen, a room at the Conservative Club and, from 1973 to 1979, at the town's Brewery Arts Centre.

Plans to build team premises were being seriously discussed by late 1975 and, by early 1978, the team had been granted planning permission to build a base on its present site in Busher Walk, co-located with the other 999 services in Kendal. The estimated cost was £10,000, but it was hoped this figure might be reduced to £3,000 using Job Creation Scheme labour. Fundraising and building began in earnest although both suffered setbacks as delays occurred and costs increased. The site foundations were described as of 'variable character', ranging from solid rock to wet deep soil and wet weather compounded problems. Sponsored walks, raffles and a talk by Chris Bonington, together with generous donations from local firms and benefactors helped the team achieve its financial targets, although individual team members working in conjunction with local tradesmen completed much of the interior work.

It wasn't until July 1979 that the new building became operational as the team's base. The official opening, by the Mayor of Kendal, followed a year later, in November 1980.

In 1999, the base was extended upwards, to the side and to the front, to accommodate additional equipment and vehicles and allow a better flow through of people. The use of local architects with an understanding of how mountain rescue operates, visits to other team's bases and the temporary relocation to Cropper's of Burneside (a local paper mill) whilst a local building contractor carried out the building work, resulted in a base that continues to work very well to this day. The extended base was officially opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria.

Team gear has grown more sophisticated and often more complicated, especially in the fields of communications and medical equipment. In the early days, radio communications were limited and basic. Wireless telegraphy equipment was made available by the Civil Defence but this required members to actually

join the Civil Defence to undertake the necessary training. We now make use of the VHF radio system via an old Low Band radio link from a remote relay station which provides excellent radio coverage of the geographical area of operations. The Low Band link from our base in Kendal, which sits on the banks of the River Kent within a bowl of surrounding hills, has proved to be much more reliable than the previous telephone-dependent link to the remote relay sitting high on the ridge line about three kilometres to the south east of the base. Compared to problems faced by some Lakes teams, due to local topography, the system provides a simple solution to wide area coverage. Of course, we do suffer radio shadows but, when allied to the link provided by our forward control vehicle complete with pump up mast facility, we have the ability to overcome the majority of radio communication problems. The C&C vehicle can operate in the traditional role of such a vehicle, but the addition of a second radio relay set-up allows it to be locked up and left strategically parked to act as a second relay station covering the immediate area of radio shadow. Best of all, by achieving the necessary separation, the vehicle can cover both roles simultaneously.

It was 1969 before the team obtained its first vehicle: an ex-WD signals truck purchased at a cost of £400. Although it brought benefits, it soon became apparent it was not the ideal solution — not least because drivers had to hold an HGV licence. With the assistance of donations from the Scott Trust and the British Red Cross, a long wheel base Land Rover was purchased in 1973.

The team has operated with two vehicles since 1980, but operational demand and age were taking their toll. So, during 1988, a 'Wheels Appeal' set about raising funds to replace the two Land Rovers. Through the hard effort of members and the generosity of local firms and individuals, enough money was raised by 1990 to purchase three new vehicles.

In 1994 we added an All Terrain Vehicle, complete with trailer, thanks to money donated by friends, colleagues and the Shell Oil Company in memory of a Kendal resident killed at work in a helicopter accident. In some locations, it could substantially speed up the movement of

medical and rescue gear to a casualty but there were downsides so, after a few years, we passed the vehicle on to another team.

Our latest acquisition, replacing Land Rover Mobile 4, is a specially converted Toyota Hilux — a new direction in vehicle selection. The new vehicle's primary use is as swiftwater response but it will also be put through its paces as front line response if either of the Landies is off the road for a length of time. Wherever possible, we've handed our old vehicles to a less well-off team and Mobile 4 has now moved south to be with Devon Cave Rescue.

Call-outs for Kendal average 50 per year. We've attended a number of plane crashes, from Lockerbie in 1988 to a 2-seater aircraft on Ingleborough in March 2011, in which both people on board were rescued alive. The crash of a Royal Navy Sea King in Langdale in May 2004 whilst on a rescue is well remembered by three Kendal team members. One team member had just been winched out into a gully, one was on the winch line being lowered and one was in the helicopter awaiting their turn when the rotors hit the cliff face. Whilst there were no fatalities, one team member was seriously injured. In 2004, we helped search in Morecambe Bay for missing Chinese cockle-pickers caught by the incoming tide. Sadly, 24 of them died that night. The team has also attended a number of train crashes, most recently in February 2007 when an express train on the west coast main line crashed at Grayrigg.

The people we help give us their thanks verbally at the time, and often later in writing, but it's nice when others also recognise our work. In June 1962 and July 1967, we received certificates from the RSPCA for rescuing lambs from pot holes. In May 2009, we were presented with a Certificate of Gratitude for our 'invaluable assistance and support' from Cumbria's Chief Constable and there was more local recognition in 2011 with the Pride of Lakeland Community Award, run by Lakeland Radio.

I'm proud to say that Kendal operates as a team to the full. Besides the twice-monthly training and the usual run of meetings and many training courses, we've a good social side which will no doubt — in the tradition of mountain rescue — continue for the next sixty years. ■

fund — your region, your team, members of a team and members of the general public. There is no fixed donation or subscription and we welcome all regions, teams and individuals to support as by making one-off payments, regular standing orders, legacies or, indeed, multiple donations. One small notice of warning is needed for regions and teams — please check the wording of your constitutions if you wish to donate as it may need amending to allow you to do so. Support has already been received, with donations starting to be made by regions, teams and individuals — for which we thank you! It has been great to hear about the positive support and donations that are being made. We know some teams and regions have greater cash flow than others, so it is heartening to hear them supporting their fellow rescuers in other areas.

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Please support us with your donations and remember that if every team member donated just £1 per month, we'd have £30,000 every year to help the rescue families in need.

For further information and to request a copy of our Frequently Asked Questions, simply ask your Regional Rep or email judy.whiteside@zen.co.uk. Copies of relevant information and documentation will also be uploaded to the Members area, inside a new folder dedicated to the Fund. ■

PRE-HOSPITAL SPINAL IMMOBILISATION: AN INITIAL CONSENSUS STATEMENT

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the current evidence available on the practice of spinal immobilisation in the pre-hospital environment. Following this, initial conclusions from a consensus meeting held by the Faculty of Pre-hospital Care, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in March 2012 are presented.

INTRODUCTION

Spinal injuries are thankfully relatively uncommon but have the potential to cause very significant morbidity and mortality. It is reported that between 0.5 and 3% of patients presenting with blunt trauma suffer spinal cord injury (SCI).^{1,2} The incidence varies globally and time has yielded increased numbers of injuries annually. American figures estimate an incidence in the region of 40 cases per million per year.³ In the UK, the majority of traumatic SCI are attributable to land transport (50%), followed by falls (43%) then sport (7%).⁴ Of those fractures causing SCI, half involve fractures of the cervical spine, with 37% due to thoracic spine injury and 11% lumbar spine. Of the C-spine, 50% occur at the C6/7 junction and a third at C2.⁵ Data shows a crossover rate in the region of 10-15% of patients with a confirmed cervical fracture also having a thoracolumbar fracture.⁶ It is well recognised that immobilisation is not without harm but the 'number needed to treat' in order to include one actual injury is high.

SCI occurs when unstable spinal fractures (only diagnosed by imaging in hospital) cause direct mechanical

damage as a result of traction and compression, following which ischaemia and cord swelling ensues. Unstable fractures are those where there is disruption of two or three vertebral columns. The anterior column is formed by the anterior longitudinal ligament and the anterior half of the vertebral body, disc and annulus, the middle column by the posterior half of the vertebral body, disc and annulus and the posterior longitudinal ligament and the posterior column by the facet joints, ligamentum flavum, the posterior elements and the interconnecting ligaments. Immobilisation is based on the logical premise that preventing movement should decrease the incidence of SCI or further deterioration of existing damage. This is undertaken by, in effect, adding external supports to the body, preventing secondary injury during extrication, resuscitation, transport and evaluation.

Immobilisation is a routinely performed procedure in the pre-hospital environment. Its potentially serious adverse sequelae and the litigious nature of modern medicine have seen the development of an extraordinarily conservative approach

to immobilisation where it is applied in many cases in which neither the mechanism of injury nor the clinical findings would support its use.

Methods vary and research has drawn together consensus opinion on immobilisation techniques. Common practice involves the use of a rigid cervical collar, head blocks with straps or tapes and a long board with straps. A number of organisations use the orthopaedic scoop stretcher or Kendrick Extrication Device (KED). The scoop stretcher is of value in reducing the amount of handling to which victims of trauma are subjected and the Faculty of Pre-Hospital Care is shortly to issue consensus guidance regarding minimal handling protocols in trauma. The vacuum mattress is indicated in prolonged transportation to minimise the risks explained below. A pelvic sling should therefore be placed in the correct position in the vacuum mattress and the patient transferred in the scoop onto the mattress and the pelvic binder fastened appropriately. Once on a vacuum mattress, the scoop can be removed.

SEARCH STRATEGY

Prior to the Faculty meeting in March 2012, a review of the published literature was undertaken utilising PubMed to search the Medline database. Secondary searches were made using UK PubMed Central and Google Scholar. The search terms included pre-hospital, out-of-hospital, spinal immobilisation, cervical collar, C-spine clearance. A tertiary search analysed the references of retrieved articles to identify further sources.

THE DEBATE

Immobilisation is a key concept in most trauma guidelines. The ATLS course recommends that all trauma

patients considered to be at potential risk of spinal injury have immediate neck immobilisation.⁷ This guidance is founded upon expert opinion rather than definitive evidence and current protocols have a strong historical rather than scientific precedent. In the practice's favour, Reid in 1987 reported that secondary neurological injury occurred in 1.4% of patients with spinal injury diagnosed in the ED whereas the secondary neurological injury rate was 10.5% in those where a diagnosis of spinal injury was missed.⁸

However, a full review undertaken by Kwan and colleagues concluded that there is no high-level evidence quantifying the effect of immobilisation versus no immobilisation on adverse effects.⁹ They commented that the low prevalence of SCI would mean 50-100 patients would need to be immobilised for every patient at risk of SCI. Opinions are increasingly being expressed that the practice is overused and needs review since the procedure itself is not benign. Rather it is uncomfortable, takes time so delaying initiation of specialist treatment in time critical patients, raises intracranial pressure, increases aspiration risk and the risk of decubitus ulceration and also potentially reduces airway opening and respiratory efficacy.⁹ Indeed, the latter two risks refute an axiom of pre-hospital care where airway maintenance takes precedence over other considerations. Kwan concludes her review by stating that, '...the possibility that immobilisation may increase mortality and morbidity cannot be excluded.'

Hauswald's biomechanics have been published several times.^{10,11} His group surmises that injury is done at the time of impact by forces of greater magnitude than those encountered in subsequent movement which is generally not sufficient to cause

further damage. They comment that the alert patient will develop a position of comfort with muscle spasm protecting a damaged spine.

A 2009 review also concluded that the alert, cooperative patient does not require immobilisation even if a clinical decision rule is positive, unless their conscious level deteriorates.¹² They state that muscle spasm is a superior method to an artificial procedure. The College of Emergency Medicine guidance emphasises the need for large-scale studies¹³ whilst acknowledging the ethical conundrum that, 'the current practice... is so widely adopted and the consequences of causing or exacerbating a spinal injury so catastrophic that such trials may not be supported.'

SELECTIVE IMMOBILISATION

Practice is shifting from blanket immobilisation to a selective approach. The question posed is whether guidelines can safely identify those with a spinal fracture or SCI. Whether selective immobilisation differs from pre-hospital clearance is undecided. At times the terms appear synonymous. However, an algorithm-based decision rule must only have the sensitivity to identify all occult fractures. Clearance requires a high degree of specificity that is not required when ruling-in immobilisation.

Emergency Department management of spinal patients has changed over the past ten years with the incorporation of level one evidence into x-ray procedures. There are two validated decision rules with near 100% sensitivity for significant SCI. The NEXUS rules¹⁴ identified five low risk criteria which, if met, could exclude injury: —

- No midline tenderness
- No focal neurological deficit
- Normal alertness
- No intoxication
- No painful distracting injury.

The Canadian C-Spine Rule (CCSR) utilises low and high risk factors¹⁵:—

- Firstly, is any high risk factor present (age greater than 65, paraesthesia, significant mechanism?)
- Secondly, is there any low risk factor that allows safe assessment of range of motion? (Simple rear-end collision, sitting position in the ED, ambulatory at any time, delayed onset of pain, absence of spinal tenderness).
- Lastly, can the patient actively rotate their neck through 45 degrees?

NICE guidance favoured the CCSR but chose to combine the two rules adding midline tenderness to increase sensitivity.¹⁶ However, whilst this may appear logical it invalidates the evidence base developed for each system and a paper comparing the two came out firmly in favour of CCSR¹⁷.

Validation of the CCSR in the pre-hospital setting has been undertaken and its reliability proven. Qualitative studies have shown that paramedics are comfortable using it.¹⁸

Other rules exist. American EMS physicians algorithm indications include patients with a mechanism suggestive of clinical risk and at least one of: an altered mental status, evidence of intoxication, distracting painful injury, neurological deficit or spinal tenderness.¹⁹

Mechanism of injury is commonly used as being a predictor of injury and is component of the CCSR, despite being excluded from the NEXUS guidance. The American College of Neurological Surgeons emphasises it as the main factor mandating immobilisation over examination in the

pre-hospital setting.²⁰ Refuting this, other series show no link between mechanism and outcome.²¹

JRCALC guidance suggests that all patients should be initially immobilised if the mechanism of injury is suggestive of SCI.²² The guidance give a list of criteria which, if absent, allow removal of immobilisation. The recent 2011 update stresses that suspicion of thoracic and lumbar injury despite a 'cleared' C-spine warrants full immobilisation. The current lack of a clear consensus potentiates the risk of litigation, as no matter which guideline is used, expert witnesses will be found who will argue against it.

CONSENSUS OUTCOMES

The consensus meeting held by the Faculty of Pre-hospital Care aimed to clarify the practice of immobilisation. Preliminary discussions highlighted salient points that required discussion. The conclusions of the consensus group are given below.

1 The long spinal board is an extrication device solely. Manual-in-line stabilisation is a suitable alternative to a cervical collar.

With respect to methods of immobilisation, a firm distinction was made between extrication and transport/evacuation. The Faculty recommend the use of a long board solely as an extrication device and not for the transport of patients to hospital. For this purpose, a scoop stretch or vacuum mattress should be used. Not

only does this abate pressure effects but limits the exposure of patients to unnecessary and detrimental log rolling. It was also felt that manual-in-line stabilisation is an appropriate substitute for a cervical collar and may well be better in certain patients such as those with a compromised airway, possible raised intracranial pressure, combative patients and children. However, if a cervical collar is used this should be correctly sized and fitted. Incorrect use may give a false sense of security and the patient should still be fully immobilised. Once fully immobilised the collar may be loosened to reduce discomfort, reduce intra-cranial pressure and potentially facilitate airway management.

2 An immobilisation algorithm may be adopted although the content of this remains undefined.

Selective immobilisation algorithms are viable in the UK pre-hospital setting. Using algorithms such as these in the pre-hospital environment would allow clinicians to immobilise only those who meet pre-defined criteria. The precise details of these pre-hospital criteria are yet to be decided but may well resemble the NEXUS rules. With any algorithm, a sensitivity level must be accepted that strikes a balance between prevention of SCI and use of the finite resources

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PROGRAMME: MEDICAL SEMINAR

Saturday 9 November 2013
Charlotte Mason Library, Ambleside

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MR JOHN MURDOCK (ADMINISTERED BY LANGDALE
AMBLESIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM)

08:20–08:55 Registration, Coffee and Trade Exhibition

9.00 Introduction & Welcome: David Allan, MREW Chairman

Management of fractures and dislocations
Chair: John Ellerton

9.05 Management of pelvic fractures on the hills (20')
Mr Peter Worlock, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle

9.25 Femoral fractures and traction splinting (20')
Mr David Knowles, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Royal Lancaster Infirmary, Lancaster

9.45 Management of other fractures and dislocations (30')
Mr Matt Freudmann, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Furness General Hospital, Barrow-in-Furness

10.15 Q&A session with the speakers (15')

10.30–11.00 Coffee + Trade Exhibition

Management of neurological trauma on the mountains. Chair: Les Gordon

11.00 Head injury (25')
Mr Neil Kitchen, Consultant neurosurgeon, National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery, London

11.25 Spinal injury (25')
Mr Mark Wilson, Consultant neurosurgery & Prehospital Care, Imperial College, London

11.50 Q&A session with the speakers (15')

12.05–13.00 Lunch + Trade Exhibition

Chair – Les Gordon

13.00 Paediatric emergencies (25')
Dr Mary Ryan, Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool

13.25 Performing a good primary survey & managing cardiac arrest: lessons for Mountain Rescue (30')
Dr Anne Weaver, Consultant Emergency Medicine & Prehospital Care; Lead Clinician, London Air Ambulance

13.55 Q&A session with the speakers (15')

Chair – Tim Hooper

14.10 Risk factors for injury in the mountains – a review from the 2012 LDSAMRA Annual Report (15')
Mr Luke Farrow (Medical Student, Lancaster University)

14.25 Practical Mountain Rescue Medicine (30')
Dr Brian Tregaskis, Consultant Physician, Fort William & Team Doctor, Lochaber MRT

14.55 A rescue from the casualty's perspective (20')
Joe Beaumont (former casualty), Mike Gullen, Wasdale MRT

15.15 An interesting rescue (15')
John Ellerton, Team Doctor, Patterdale MRT

15.30 Q&A session with the speakers (15')

15:45 Closing summary: David Allan

Depart

16:00 to 17:30 Base Visit and Buffet at Langdale Ambleside HQ.

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available. Furthermore, the practice of 'clearing the C-spine' should be aimed at including all serious injuries and treating accordingly.

The suggestion that some of the criteria in the above mentioned guidelines might be 'weighted' was discussed although no firm conclusions were drawn, in particular, it was felt that the subjective elements (eg. mechanism of injury) could be viewed as a source of over-triage whereas objective elements such as age might be given more priority.

3 There may be potential to vary the immobilisation algorithm based on the conscious level of the patient.

It was felt that emphasis should remain on prioritising ABC in polytrauma patients. It was agreed that differentiation between the conscious and unconscious patient and the appropriate treatment for each should be considered in future guidelines. It may be that in the cooperative patient immobilisation can be deferred until after the primary survey by advising the casualty to refrain from movement. This is obviously not possible in the unconscious patient, but in their case, the need for a primary survey evaluation is paramount and independent movement is less likely. These suggestions are provisional.

4 Penetrating trauma with no neurological signs does not require immobilisation.

In line with other evidence, the meeting agreed that penetrating trauma to the spine does not require immobilisation in the absence of overt neurological signs.

5 'Standing take down' practice should be avoided.

It was also agreed that the practice of a 'standing take down' where a person who is wandering around with an element of neck ache gets placed against an upright spinal board and placed horizontal and then immobilised is seldom if ever warranted.

CONCLUSIONS

The consensus group was absolutely clear that a change is needed from a policy of immobilising necks as much for the protection of the clinician as for that of the patient, to a system of selective immobilisation designed to reduce the risks to the trauma victim.

It is important to remember, however, that voluntary aid organisations will be looking for guidance in this challenging area. For these practitioners, guidance for the 'non-professional' managing trauma should err towards the side of over triage. They could with benefit, however, be made aware that cervical collars are not the panacea that they are often made out to be and that manual inline stabilisation (MILS) is often a more beneficial and acceptable modality compared with triple immobilisation. They should also be encouraged to consider moving away from spinal boards towards non-metallic scoops and the concept of minimal handling.

6 Further research and into effective, practical and safe immobilisation practice, and dissemination of this, is required.

The consensus group emphasised the differences between the pre-hospital environment and secondary care and the unique challenges pre-hospital practice presents. As a result, in hospital guidelines can not be assumed to be directly transferable. Research in this area is needed and research supported practices will, the group believes, lead to advances in care which should be widely disseminated via reproducible education and training. Subsequent audit of the new practice will allow refinements and changes to be instigated.

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PELVIC FRACTURES: TO SPLINT OR NOT TO SPLINT?

The Bangor Mountain Medicine Project is a unique partnership between the Ysbyty Gwynedd (Bangor hospital) Emergency Department, local mountain rescue teams, North Wales Mountain Rescue Association and RAF Valley 'C' Flight, 22 Sqdn. Led by Dr Linda Dykes, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, the project focuses on mountain casualties in Snowdonia and is already proving to be a goldmine of information.



Since 2004, every patient admitted to the Ysbyty Gwynedd Emergency Department following contact with a mountain rescue team and/or RAF SAR has been entered onto the Mountain Medicine Database.

With over 1000 casualties entered, this is believed to be the largest database of mountain casualties in the world that includes hospital diagnoses (most stop at the field diagnosis made by rescuers).

Every mountain casualty generates a feedback form. This consultant-provided case-by-case feedback system is unique, however, Mountain Rescue England and Wales is currently considering whether it can be rolled out nationally.

Needless to say, the resulting database is a goldmine of information, enabling the Project to gradually develop the evidence-base concerning UK mountain medicine.

For example, using the Ysbyty Gwynedd Mountain Medicine database, we now know:—

- There is little or no scope to save any additional lives from trauma in the mountains of Snowdonia.
- Cervical spine injuries in casualties found alive are remarkably rare.
- Snowdonia is a 'suicide hotspot' according to the Welsh Assembly Government's definition.

The Mountain Medicine database is maintained by Dr Dykes with the

assistance of her Registrars and Clinical Fellows. Multiple analytical projects have been undertaken by final-year medical students from Cardiff University during their MM Senior Clinical Projects.

A comprehensive list of posters such as the one we detail below on Pelvic Fractures (and pictured top left) — demonstrating many aspects of the work undertaken by the Bangor ED — can be found on mountainmedicine.co.uk. The research is wide-ranging, for example, asking whether mountain users with conditions that might require urgent self-treatment carry rescue medication with them on the hills, and another looked at the incidence of spinal fractures in the mountains of North Wales (pictured below left).

PELVIC FRACTURES

Mountain rescue teams in Snowdonia endeavour to use pelvic splints as per JRCALC guidelines. However, mountain casualties with major mechanisms of injury are often found in precarious locations where the application of splints is challenging. The Project looked into whether pelvic fractures seen in mountain casualties are of the type likely to benefit from splintage.

The method was to interrogate all mountain

casualties with pelvic fractures brought to Ysbyty Gwynedd from January 2004 to October 2012. Fracture type was analysed using the Tile classification by a consultant musculoskeletal radiologist. For fatalities, post-mortem reports were examined.

- Of 913 casualties in the study period, 730 (80% were injured rather than ill.
- 18/730 (2.5%) of trauma casualties had a confirmed pelvic fracture.
- 14/18 (78%) had fallen from height; two were mountain biking; one had crashed his paraglider and one sustained an acetabular fracture with a simple fall.
- 4.3% of casualties who had fallen from a height greater than standing sustained a pelvic fracture.
- 2/18 died at scene. Post-mortem reports of these cases implied severe pelvic disruption but could not be classified further.
- 13/13 (100%) of fractures could be classified using the Tile system: 61% A1, 31% A2 and 8% C2.

The Bangor team concluded that pelvic fractures are uncommon in Snowdonia mountain casualties and, of those that do occur, the vast majority are stable (92%, cf. 55% in urban casualties¹). Severe pelvic disruption was seen only in casualties declared dead at scene. Only one casualty in a nine-year period had a pelvic fracture that might benefit from a pelvic splint.

The data suggests that application of pelvic splints need not be considered a high priority in mountain casualties, especially in precarious locations.

FINAL NOTE

Research and data-gathering continues and fresh evidence will lead to fresh conclusions. In the matter of spinal immobilisation in particular, there continues to be much discussion. Dr Dykes asked us to make clear that, although — like many emergency physicians — she is increasingly sceptical about the risk:benefit equation for spinal immobilisation, she is not advocating that mountain rescue teams 'just don't bother'.

'That stance,' she said, 'is not mainstream enough yet to condone, and I am frequently misquoted — no matter how clearly I spell it out.'

'Of casualties on our database with a significant mechanism of injury, one in nine have a spinal fracture of some kind — rising to one in three in those found dead at scene. But 98% of these fractures are stable, with no risk to the spinal cord. Rescuers don't need to beat themselves up if scene logistics or a time-critical patient preclude spinal packaging because, if that gamble is needed, there's a very good chance you will get away with it.'

¹Gansslen A, Pohlemann T et al. Epidemiology of pelvic ring injuries. Injury 1996;27(1):13-20

HYPOTHERMIA IN AUGUST

MISSING PERSON SEARCH, RIVELIN DAMS, SHEFFIELD



IAN BUNTING TEAM LEADER, EDALE MRT

Edale Team was contacted at 1850hrs on 1 August 2013, by South Yorkshire Police for assistance in the search for a lady missing from home in Sheffield, with concerns for her welfare. She was last seen the previous morning when she had been sent home from work.

Later that morning she was reported missing by her family when they came home to find her possessions at home with no sign of her. These included her purse, mobile phone and a number of other items.

It took the police until the morning of 1 August to locate the lady's car in the car park at Rivelin Dams. The area consists of two dams surrounded on three sides by dense woodland and the main A57 Sheffield/Manchester Road on the fourth. To the other side of the A57 is another area of woodland along with Rivelin Crags, home of some good climbing and a place we visit a number of times a year. The woodland itself is surrounded by open moorland. The area is popular with dog walkers, runners, mountain bikers and busy every day of the week.

The police conducted searches of the paths in the woods for most of the day and an underwater search team from a neighbouring force was drafted in to search the dams. All these searches proved negative and mountain rescue was called after a change of POLSA when the police changed shifts.

After the initial call, team members were put on standby whilst search managers went to meet the POLSA on scene and ascertain whether it was a job for us. We send standby messages to team members so they can start to make plans and butties and, at that time of the evening, not open a beer or bottle of wine.

SARDA was called straight away — due to the distance some of the handlers have to travel they like to be called early so they can get there at the start. The understanding is that they may end up turning around and going home if the job isn't a runner.

The full team was called at 1910hrs with search control being established at 1930hrs. After speaking with the POLSA, it was apparent this was a job for mountain rescue, albeit we'd probably been called a bit late. Given the size of the areas that required searching and the difficult ground conditions, combined with limited daylight, a decision was made to call Woodhead MRT to assist.

Although the paths had been searched by the police earlier and would have been busy with the public, a couple of team members were sent

out to conduct a hasty search of the paths and tracks. A small section was also sent across the A57 to search the crags. Whilst this wasn't a priority area we've had couple of searches in recent years where the misper has been located just out of the search area a number of days later. With Woodhead attending and five dogs en route it was felt we could spare some people for a bit of a 'punt'.

Following some success with finds in water, two dogs were tasked to search the edges of the dams. Again this was only tackled at this stage due to having a good number of dogs attending. The remaining woodland was split into areas and allocated to search teams and dog sections.

The woodland was dense and the search sections consisted of more people than we would normally send out. The idea being to clear areas quicker but limit the number of areas we were searching at any one time. All sections were deployed by 2100hrs but by this time the light was fading rapidly under the tree canopy. At around this time, the hasty section returned with some good information on ground conditions not shown on the map but nothing else.

It was obvious it was hard-going for search sections and the conversation in control was about how long we should search for. The thought — later confirmed by the sections — was that they were only going to find someone if they fell over them. This being the case, the areas would need re-searching in daylight, so we began to plan for resuming the search in the morning.

At 2205hrs, search dog handler John Coombs contacted control to

say he had located the misper and required assistance. The location was on track previously searched by the hasty section. All the search teams were recalled and our standard 'snatch' kit was deployed to the casualty site along with two team doctors and a couple of police officers. Due to the proximity to control of both the misper and the search sections, kit was on site for 2230. The misper was very combative, so much so she needed restraining (the police officers were very useful with this). She was also very cold and the doc's thermometer wouldn't register her temperature as it was so low.

After packaging her in a vac mat and onto a stretcher (which, combined, acted as an excellent restraint) she was evacuated down to control and dispatched to Sheffield's Northern General Hospital. On arrival, her rectal temperature was recorded at 30°C and this was after we had done some warming up on scene, during the carry and in the ambulance. There is no doubt that, had we suspended the search for the evening, she would not have survived the night.

Once the casualty was down at the RV, a dog and team members were sent back to the cas site to look for any tablet blister packs so we could give the hospital an indication of what she had taken, if anything. Approximately 30m up a steep bank from where she was found they located a 'den' with blankets, a bottle of drink and a knife.

SOME THOUGHTS...

- Calling two teams and two SARDA resources (Peak and Mid Pennine)



meant we had more options when planning the search— forty humans and five dogs.

- A hasty team should remember that they only search what's in front of them. Our hasty had a bit of a guilt trip when they heard where she was found. We think that either they or the dog team had disturbed her and she'd slipped down the bank trying to get to them. She was not on the track when the hasty passed through and they would not have been expected to have found her at the den.

- It was the hottest day of the year, yet she had severe hypothermia. We should consider hypothermia in all our casualties even in the heat of the summer.

- The casualty was very combative and didn't want our help — a big learning curve for those on site as it was something new. MRTs are used to being welcomed with open arms and thanks by our casualties. Having the police on scene was very useful as they are good at restraining people.

- The first thing anyone, including the police, knew about the knife was when it was found at the den. How would it have effected our response and actions if we had known about it at the start?

- We debriefed this job the following week with members of both teams and SARDA. It's something we don't do very often but was a useful exercise for all involved — especially for team members not involved in the search planning who were sent out with seemingly limited information and not privy at the time to the overall thought and planning process.



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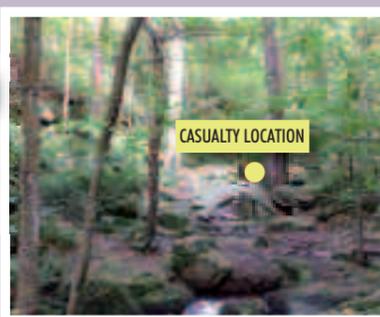
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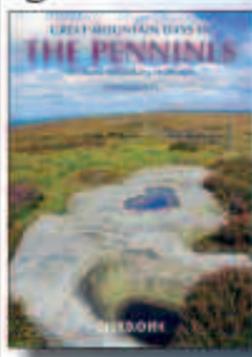
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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WAUK BOARD INCLUDING VIDEOS, USES, PRICING, AND PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS, VISIT WAUKBOARD.COM



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...it is a great book, especially for people who are not familiar with some of the less frequented areas of the Pennines.
...it is a great book, especially for people who are not familiar with some of the less frequented areas of the Pennines.
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...it is a great book, especially for people who are not familiar with some of the less frequented areas of the Pennines.

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Reviewed in this issue!
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STUFF Book

GREAT MOUNTAIN DAYS IN THE PENNINES
by Terry Marsh
Review by Mike Margeson



This guide follows a successful tried and tested format by Terry and Cicerone and the interesting choice of material and route information reflects both Terry's experience and his knowledge as mountain walker and writer. The text and layout are very clear with good OS maps and related route photographs. Contained here is all the information required to plan a day's journey, divided into five Pennine areas from north to south. The routes selected provide a wide variety of landscape, difficulty and terrain. Equally, there are no superhuman ridiculous routes in height gain and distance, rather a simple four grade system from Moderate to Strenuous, all achievable for the average walker.

Terry provides a thorough introduction with information on route choice, equipment, terrain weather and navigation. Each walk has paragraphs of text in green providing geographical, historical and archeological information on route. There is also a well thought-out piece on what to do in an emergency. I was particularly pleased that Terry, as a self-confessed GPS and mapping software enthusiast, emphasises the importance of map and compass skills, as in some of the remoter areas of his 50 walks you most certainly will need them. All in all, some great remote routes, particularly suitable if you like to get away from the crowds.

'Great Mountain Days in the Pennines' by Terry Marsh is published by Cicerone. Price: £17.95. ISBN: 978-1-85384-650-3.

TEACHING GRANNY TO SUCK EGGS?



GRANT WHITESIDE PARAMEDIC
BERGWACHT BLAUTAL & EDALÉ MRT

How do you teach doctors to treat patients without teaching Granny to suck eggs? That was the challenge facing Dr Johannes Dillmann of Bergwacht Blautal, a small MRT in southern Germany, when he took on the organisation of the first Bergwacht Blautal Notarzt Course to take place in July 2013.



environment will know, having so many people from so many different organisations in the same small area is not without its own challenges, before even considering the rescue of the patient!

The focus of the course was on fostering a good and safe working relationship between the mountain rescue teams and other pre-hospital emergency providers, many of whom are out of their normal comfort zones in the crag rescue environment, and to show how the volunteers can assist the professionals and the patient when the need arises.

Plans for the course evolved from the need to foster a better multi-agency approach to patient management in the mountain rescue setting within Blautal and surrounding areas. Blautal (lit. 'Blue Valley') forms part of the eastern fringe of the Swäbisch Alb, a beautiful area of rolling hills, farmland, wooded valleys and limestone outcrops, nestling between Stuttgart in the west, and the minster town of Ulm to the east.

Mountain rescues on the Alb are, due to a combination of the accessibility of the area and the German laws regarding invasive medicine and drug administration, usually multi-agency incidents involving not only MR and ambulance personnel, but also Notärzte (Germany's specialist pre-hospital doctors) and, often, local retained firefighters. As those of you who work in this kind of multi-agency

team members meant that when course day arrived, the Blaubeuren base was ready to welcome the guests. The day dawned clear and sunny, with a forecast of 37°C, as delegates gathered. Attendees comprised specialist pre-hospital doctors, air ambulance and ambulance crews and fire service personnel.

The programme consisted of morning theory sessions on: An overview of Bergwacht incidents and techniques (Dr Johannes Dillmann, BwBt/KKH Dillingen), Suspension trauma update (Dr Enrico Staps, BwBt/BKH Ulm), Height rescue (Johannes Hühn, Feuerwehr Ulm) and Personal safety and safe movement (Roland Hemminger, BwBt), a theory session followed a practical session on safe movement along fixed rope systems. Whilst these were taking place, other team members beavered away setting up the practical scenarios, and ensuring vital supplies of water were in place for the sweltering afternoon heat. Lunch was served from the base kitchen, with delegates eating in the relaxed atmosphere of the outdoor tables and a good deal of inter-agency networking to take place.

Thankfully a loan of radio equipment from the local branch of the DAV (German Alpine Club), allowed the planned simultaneous scenarios to take place, and many hours of hard work by

scenarios were designed specifically to allow course delegates to maximise hands-on experience of working alongside Bergwacht volunteers in realistic crag rescue situations. Having flown into the country the day before to assist, I found myself assigned to the rigging/operation crew on the Günzelburg site, working alongside Dr Dillmann and Wolfgang Pfetsch. We spent the next few hours juggling the requirements of getting

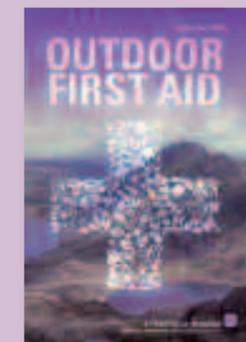
both groups safely and smoothly through the scenario and drinking enough to replace the water lost operating the stretcher hauling system. Afterwards, team members demonstrated the rescue of a 'cragfast' delegate.

Once the course closed, the training team gathered outside base for a 'hot debrief' and to reflect on the day's events. Feedback was very positive indeed and requests have already been



Wolfgang demonstrates his knitting prowess whilst operating an IDI © Grant Whiteside.

WINNER OF OUTDOOR FIRST AID BY KATHERINE WILLS



David Barton wins a signed copy of Katherine's book, which should soon be winging it's way to him. Thank you to all those who entered!

'Outdoor First Aid. A Practical Manual' by Katherine Wills is published by Pesda Press. Price: £15.99. ISBN: 978-1-906095-735-2.

RESCUED by Rachel Elliott
Review by Kate Gilliver (with tongue very much in cheek)



Rachel Elliott's Rescued will doubtless be scorching up the Amazon bestseller lists after creating a bit of excitement on the SARDA weekend. The plot is about as subtle as an over-excited full-grown collie landing on the stomach of a dozing dogsbody, but one's not really expecting sophisticated literature from Mills and Boon.

I read the book in one short evening despite being interrupted by chicken curry and having the book whipped from my hand several times by others desperate to read it for themselves. I couldn't go to bed not knowing how it ended, so read the final pages by the gentle light of the lantern in my trusty Force Ten tent, embraced by the downy softness of my sleeping bag. Clancy is making a TV documentary about a busy Lakes mountain rescue team, and Luke MacLennan, the team leader, wants to ensure she's fit enough for the job (in more ways than one). Characterisation is weak: Clancy is, to be honest, pretty pathetic and Luke, outdoor education instructor, MRT leader and SARDA handler, is Neanderthal in his attitude towards women. One wonders how he's considered the most eligible bachelor in the county – perhaps because he's so hot in bed, 'even as he slid deep inside her, the tiny part of her brain that was still capable of conscious thought knew she'd never get over this experience'. Other characters of interest are Dan, Clancy's business partner, and Charlie, the only other member of the mountain rescue team whom we meet. Luke mistakes Dan for Clancy's lover whilst Clancy believes Charlie is Luke's. The reader knows that Dan is actually Clancy's twin brother, and when Charlie's identity is revealed, I was supremely disappointed: I was totally expecting a Star Wars style 'Luke is my brother' revelation, but actually she's just his friend. Not sure why, given his attitude towards women, mind. The real hero of the novel, however, is without doubt the unnamed SARDA

dog who saves the day when Clancy is lost in the hills. For me, the dog's find is the most realistic section of the drama, and we empathise with Clancy's 'great shout of delight as a yellow Labrador, wearing the distinctive red coat of the Search and Rescue Dog Association, bounded up to her, his tail wagging in a frenzy of joy'. Of course, Luke – the epitome of unreconstructed masculinity – has a male dog.

This is my first Mills and Boon. It will be my last. It's only saving grace comes from the opportunity it provides for drawing on one's insider knowledge of MR to read imaginatively between the lines, but it will no doubt provide huge entertainment for those with that knowledge.

“
No mountain rescue base should be without a copy!

Editor's note: 'Rescued', by Rachel Elliott, was published by Mills & Boon in 1993. However, a quick search of their website (www.millsandboon.co.uk, if you insist) suggests this literary masterpiece is, sadly, now out of print. Readers might console themselves with the alternative 'Rescued by a Ranger', 'Rescued by the Dreamy Doc (and we have plenty of those in mountain rescue) or even 'Rescued by the Brooding Tycoon' (and goodness knows we could do with more of those).

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Bergwacht headquarters © Grant Whiteside.

received for another course next year.

Post-course feedback has also been positive and already improved relationships between the services. Indeed techniques learned on the course have already been employed by the crew of Christoph22 (the local air ambulance) on a rescue on the Alb, working with a neighbouring Bergwacht team, and contributing to a successful outcome for all.

Word of the course has already spread beyond those involved, as I discovered when, six days

afterwards, Tom Winkhart (one of the Bergwacht members involved) and I happened across a motorcycle accident on the Alb only to discover that the attending ambulance crew, whom we had never met, had already heard of us!

Well done to all those involved in the delivery of a successful course. Not just the 'training crew', but the 'behind the scenes' team who helped ensure everything went so smoothly. Keep up with the happenings in Blautal at www.bergwacht-blautal.de.



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lifeonline

Plenty more stories hitting the news feed this quarter.

Favourite has to be the Glossop team member who got creative



with his romantic gestures in September when he roped in a few pals to help pop the question to his partner (pictured above). Congratulations to Patch and Katie from all their colleagues in

mountain rescue — we look forward to similarly creative wedding pix!

Over in Wasdale, the creative efforts of another team member (Russ Hore, ex-Ogwen Valley

MRO) continued to reap benefits when a group of lost Three Peaks challengers was rescued by a team leader — from the comfort of his front room. The SARLOC system sends a hyperlink to the smartphone of the person needing help which, when followed, allows the rescuers to get a grid reference for their position. The

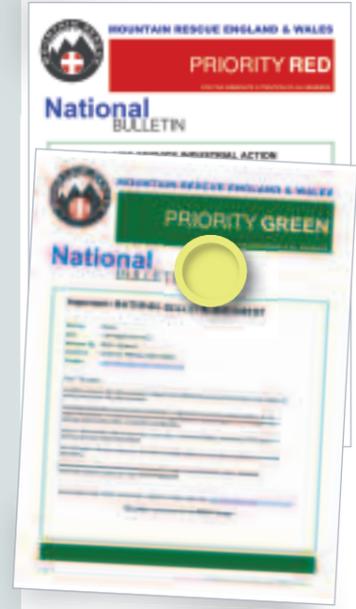
Wasdale team leader was able to direct them from their position on Broad Crag and give them bearings to enable them to walk themselves to safety off the mountain. **JW**

Facebook: facebook.com/MountainRescue.MREW
Twitter: @mountrescueuk

EMAIL LIST AND NATIONAL BULLETINS AIM TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS

Team leaders and the eagle-eyed of Facebook and the Members area will be aware that a new email list has been set up, comprising contact details for the team leader, secretary and chair for each team and this should better facilitate the new system of national bulletins.

The aim is to improve communication between the MREW Exec and the teams. The National Bulletin was introduced in



August to improve the dissemination of risk-critical information and forms part of the organisational methodology for risk management, ensuring salient information is shared with the membership. The bulletins are categorised as 'Green' or 'Red' dependent on the urgency of the message but they will not be used to advertise or promote training, fundraising or PR events or to pass non-critical information. Neither will they be issued on a routine or regular basis but on an ad hoc basis for risk critical information. Each bulletin will have contact person who will be able to provide further information about the topic in question.

NEW TO THE MEMBERS AREA:

NEW RESOURCES FOLDER FOR UPDATES ON SAR HELICOPTER DEVELOPMENTS

First document uploaded is 'SAR-H Helicopter Provision Briefing' with the focus on SAR volunteers, prepared by John Hulse and uploaded in September.

NEW RESOURCES FOLDER FOR THE MAJOR INCIDENT GROUP

Minutes of the July meeting uploaded in August.

MINUTES OF MAY 2013 TRUSTEE MEETING

Minutes of the May meeting of the Trustees, approved and uploaded in July.

PRINCE WILLIAM LEAVES OPERATIONAL SERVICE AT RAF VALLEY TO CONCENTRATE ON HIS ROYAL DUTIES



During his three years operational service on Anglesey, our Royal patron has taken part in 156 individual search and rescue operations with 149 people being rescued.

'I have flown with him and been very impressed with his flying ability and I'd be happy to fly with him again. We all wish him and his young family the very best for the future.'

Prince William received small gifts from his colleagues, and engineering staff provided him with a memento in the form of a plinth-mounted cyclic control stick top.

Squadron Leader Alex Brassington, who was the duke's flight commander at C Flight, said, 'Flight Lieutenant Wales has had a very successful tour on the SAR Force and has developed into a well respected captain and junior officer.'

'His skill as a pilot has directly resulted in lives being saved and he has ably led his crew in many SAR operations in the challenging North Wales environment, often operating his aircraft in poor weather and at night in Snowdonia.'

'Of note, he was the co-pilot of the crew that responded to the Marine Vessel Swanland sinking off the North Wales coast which resulted in two crew members being recovered from the sea and the winchman being awarded for bravery.'

'On the ground, he has been involved in all aspects of Flight life and has made a valuable contribution to the output of 22 Squadron. C Flight wishes him and his family all the best for the future.'

His last 24-hour shift in September was uneventful, with only a routine training flight and no incidents to respond to but his three years have frequently seen him supporting the mountain rescue teams of North Wales in evacuating casualties from the mountains of Snowdonia.

In total, the Prince flew 628 hours, flying Sea Kings as part of 22 Squadron, of which 231 hours were spent on rescue missions.

Wing Commander Sparky Dunlop, the squadron's commanding officer, said, 'Flight Lieutenant Wales has played an important role in the RAF Search and Rescue Force, as a pilot and aircraft captain.'

Missions were conducted across Wales, north-west England and the Irish Sea in a range of weather conditions which tested the crew's airmanship skills and determination.



ViewRanger V4 for iPhone and iPad is finally here, featuring an all-new user interface optimised to make it easier and more intuitive to plan, navigate, track and share your outdoor adventures – thanks to feedback from occasional walkers, long-distance hikers, bike enthusiasts, horse-riders, Antarctic explorers, mountain rescue teams and many more.

Although we originally designed ViewRanger to rival the best dedicated GPS devices, the added benefit of a phone is you also have access to a camera and an increasing variety of apps and social media. So we've further developed the app to exploit this social dimension.

For example you can 'favourite' other ViewRanger users and share information about good walks or find nearby accommodation, from within the app. ViewRanger also allows you to create a 'trip story', which displays your route with any geotagged photos and tweets. This can then be shared with friends or fellow enthusiasts who can comment and 'like' the trip on Facebook and Twitter or from myviewranger.com. Key features of the update:—

- New home menu, accessed by a finger swipe
- New design for map screen and menus
- New Action Bar enabling rapid interaction with POIs, routes and waypoints
- New Activity Feed for simple discovery of your friend's latest adventures
- Improved tools to find and download route guides
- Improved route and waypoint plotting tools
- All-new trip view for recording tracks with fully configurable trip statistics
- Speed and distance while viewing the map
- In-app sharing of recorded tracks on social media such as Facebook and Twitter.



Image © Daryl Garfield.

SEARCH MANAGEMENT AND INTERVIEWS



At last year's excellent UK MR Conference, in Leeds, I attended a compelling presentation, delivered by Dave (Heavy) Whalley: '40 years in RAF Mountain Rescue'. During his career, Heavy served as team leader at RAF Leuchars MRT, then Kinloss and later as a Controller at the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre, giving him a unique insight into SAR in the UK.

During his lecture he referred to the appearance of modern police officers – being somewhat intimidating, due to their PPE and other equipment, and that this can appear daunting to the relatives and friends of a missing person (MisPer) who are being interviewed.

I highlight as an example an incident in 1987, involving two climbers who had gone to climb a gully on Ben Nevis to celebrate Hogmanay. They reached the top and intended to follow the Tourist Track back down. However, realising that they had lost their map, they decided to descend the same gully, and in doing so were caught in a small slab avalanche. One of them was injured and unable to move, so the other went off to seek help.

He told the police that his friend was stuck in Five Finger Gully above the Waterfall. This information was given to Lochaber MRT, who deployed responders above Waterfall in horrendous winter conditions. RAF Leuchars and Kinloss were also called to assist.

Dr Tony Jones MBE, the then Team Leader of the Ogwen Valley MRO, was coincidentally visiting the RAF teams and joined Heavy at the Lochaber base. They asked to interview this climber (the first informant), with Heavy interviewing, whilst Tony took notes. They learned that on the way out the informant had marked the direction of the gully at the roadside with an ice-axe. This information had not been obtained by the police officer

who conducted the first interview, as they had concentrated on the MisPer's reported location. Heavy and Tony decided to immediately check this information by driving in Tony's Land Rover down Glen Nevis where they found the ice-axe by the road, pointing to Surgeon's Gully, a completely different gully to the one being searched. The responders were re-tasked and the casualty was soon located in this different gully.

In this case, one simple piece of information helped to solve the jigsaw more quickly, but was unfortunately missed at an early stage in the enquiry.

The incident confirmed the importance of mountain rescue Search Managers interviewing first responders/relatives/friends of the MisPer with police support. They have the unique search management knowledge and experience to pick up seemingly small points of detail that can become instrumental in developing the search plan.

And yet, in my experience, a quarter of a century later, the interviewing of these people by search managers, it is still not common practice in the UK, whereas with the MRTs I've worked with in the USA, it is a standard operating procedure.

In the USA, many mountain rescue, and search and rescue teams are headed up by police officers being part of either the local police or fire department. However, in Britain, many police officers are reluctant to allow Search Managers

to interview the first informant/relatives, or friends. Not only does the level of access for interviewing vary considerably, but can also be dependent on the particular senior investigating officer designated to oversee the search.

This may be for the reason that police officers are trained to conduct formal interviews. The evidence they obtain is usually part of a criminal investigation and therefore must remain confidential. Any evidence obtained will have been obtained through interrogation, whereas gaining information from first informants, relatives or friends of missing people is conducted through interviews. This is an important difference:—

● An **interview** is an informal conversation, albeit structured, between people whose common interest is to help locate the MisPer.

● An **interrogation** is accusatory and centred upon allegation, where the interviewee(s) may be uncooperative and deliberately misleading.

An MR Search Manager will generally interview a witness or relative with reference to civilian MisPer profiles, whereas a police officer also has to be mindful of potential criminal issues, which can alter their line of inquiry. If practical, it is very useful to use both interview styles, and to compare and amalgamate the results to enhance

the search background information and MisPer profile.

A Search Manager, wearing everyday clothes is much less formal and, therefore, more approachable than the appearance of a uniformed police officer and will employ a cooperative interview technique.

I believe that Search Managers should always interview the first informant, relatives or friends, unless there are exceptional circumstances where this is not possible.

To do this, a protocol needs to be agreed and approved by the Chief Constable or their designate, detailing how each request would be processed and authorised, the scope of the interview, the format of the interview and how it is conducted and recorded.

The following is a suggested format to form the basis for such an approach to the local police force in England and Wales, or in Scotland with Police Scotland, to agree a protocol.

INTERVIEW OBJECTIVES

Provide detailed information about the MisPer to the Search Managers to assist them in planning where and how to search for them. The five 'W's are Who? Where? Why? What? and When?

CONFIRMATION DATA

- Name and nickname(s).
- Sex.
- Race.
- Date of birth.
- Physical description.
- Detailed description of clothing, footwear and kit carried.
- Type of mobile phone, its number and email address.
- If they have a wallet and money.
- When first reported missing.
- Last Known Position including time.

PROFILE DATA

- A recent photograph of the MisPer.
- Physical condition.
- Emotional state (short term and longer term).
- Mental health.
- Known medical conditions.
- Medication carried or required by them.
- Has this type of event occurred before and how was it resolved?
- Any strange or unusual circumstances known about the event?
- Any suspicion of criminality detected at this stage may necessitate suspending the interview, and consulting immediately and privately with the police out with the interview locus?
- What was the purpose of their journey: walk, climbing, meeting other people or to find something?
- Potential for personal injury?
- How well do they know the area?
- Do they have a favourite location?
- Did they leave a note, and do they have a diary?
- Any other 'out of character' information?
- Any items missing from home, such as money, photographs etc?
- Any items left at home that they would normally take with them?

This data will permit the Search Manager to determine if the MisPer is indeed lost, or has deliberately gone missing, has suicidal ideations, or possibly other less common scenarios including misadventure, abduction and hoaxes.

It is important for the Search Manager never to discount the possibility that the MisPer has left the potential 'search area'. The Search Manager must maintain an

CHECK OUT PAGE 47 FOR THE WINNER OF THE MCMURDO FAST FIND RANGER GPS PLB!



objective view of all possible scenarios, until further intelligence can help to focus more positively on the 'real' scenario.

Periodic reviews of the status of the incident with police colleagues are invaluable in maintaining a clear perspective on the developing situation. Search Managers should make every effort to be included in any police reviews and update meetings. Any, and all intelligence, no matter how seemingly insignificant, should be considered and retained till resolution of the incident.

INTERVIEW FORMAT

Any interview should be conducted in a quiet room by an experienced Search Manager, ideally trained in interview techniques and accompanied by another team member, preferably of the opposite sex, who will take notes. Notes should be dated, location and attendees listed, and signed by the author. The interviews should also be tape recorded if possible, creating contemporaneous evidence should the incident ever become a criminal investigation. Should an incident become a criminal investigation during the whole process, all documentation and decisions made should be documented and will become 'admissible evidence for any future court proceedings, Coroner's Inquest or Fatal Accident Inquiry.

PRIORITISATION OF THE INTERVIEWEES FIRST INFORMANT

- Witnesses. The last person(s) to see the MisPer.
- Relatives living with the MisPer.
- Care workers, teachers or co-workers who've had interaction with and responsibility for the MisPer.
- Police officers, probation

officers or carers who are familiar with the MisPer.

SECONDARY

- Close friends
- Other relatives
- Classmates
- Work colleagues.

The above are my suggestions for the basis of such an approach and can be adapted to suit by individual teams to their particular circumstances.

The Police Search Adviser, within the police service, is seen as the expert for MisPer investigations and operations, however, when these MisPers are in mountainous areas then the unique knowledge, the capability and resources which the MR Search Manager has, and can draw upon, make them the expert in this circumstance.

Interestingly, in speaking to Tony Jones and drawing upon his vast experience of search management, he also has first-hand experience of joint interviews, where both a police officer and an MR Search Manager are present. As they each have a different mindset, they tend to ask different questions which complement each other.

Whichever interview format is chosen, the primary objective should be that MR Search Managers always interview first responders/relatives and or friends of the MisPer, to maximise intelligence gathering to achieve a quick resolution of the incident.

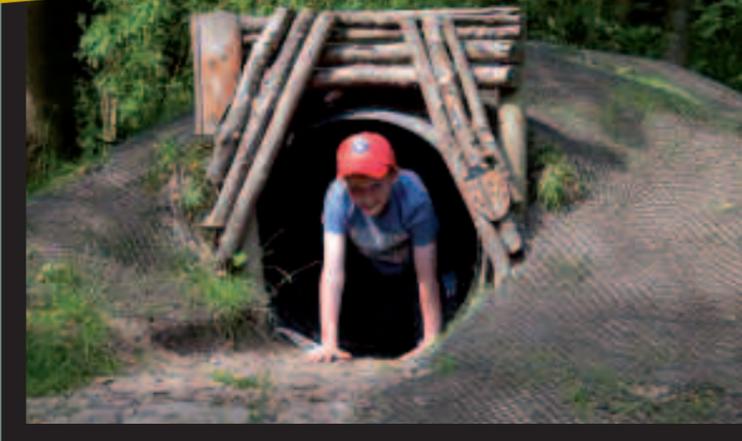
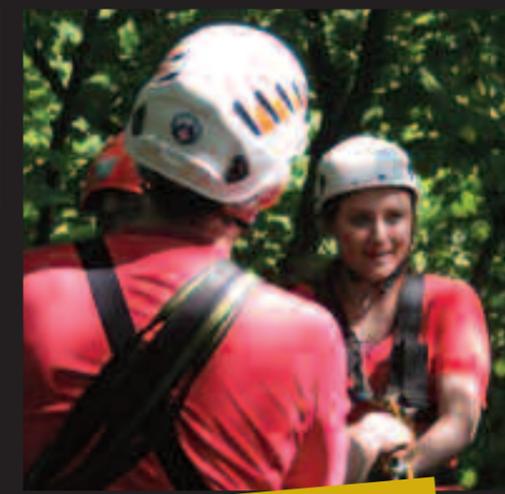
LYLE BROTHERTON

INSTRUCTS ADVANCED SEARCH AND RESCUE NAVIGATION TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS AND THE SPECIAL FORCES. HE IS AUTHOR OF THE ULTIMATE NAVIGATION MANUAL: ALL THE TECHNIQUES YOU NEED TO BECOME AN EXPERT NAVIGATOR.

YOUNG PEOPLE ENJOY A GREAT DAY OUT WITH MOUNTAIN RESCUE



Images © David Major



in and around the Cleveland MRT base at Great Ayton in North Yorkshire.

'Planning for the day was underway for over a year,' says Cleveland MRT Deputy Team Leader, Carl Faulkner. 'We managed to arrange accommodation and a wide selection of activities suitable for all the different age groups, abilities and agilities of the children, young people and families and everyone — more than 25 children and young people in all — seemed to have a great time.'

Cleveland members were supported on the day by members of the North of Tyne, Northumberland National Park, Scarborough and Ryedale, Swaledale, and Teesdale and Weardale teams as well as RAF Leeming MRT and SARDA. Activities included bushcraft, a visit to a mine at Kildale and demonstrations of search and rescue techniques, as well as orienteering and abseiling.

'Lunchtime back at Great Ayton was a bit special too,' explained Carl Faulkner, 'as many of the local emergency services that we work with on a regular basis also joined in. Assistant Chief Constable Sue Cross from North Yorkshire Police, who is also the president of the North East Search and Rescue Association, led the involvement of all the police and ambulance services from the region. We had a visit from an RAF Sea King helicopter from Leaconfield, police dog and scene of crime officer demonstrations, a visit from the local fire and rescue service (complete with sirens

and flashing lights) and five SARDA dogs — who, as we all know, always steal any limelight. The younger children, in particular, loved the search dogs.'

Feedback and comments following the event were

overwhelmingly positive. Hannah Bemand of WellChild, said, 'This is the second time I've been lucky

For the past five summers, mountain rescue has hosted a day that brings together children and families from several charities with a Royal connection. Mountain Rescue England and Wales patron Prince William, and Prince Harry, encourage their various charities to work together to promote their work and create opportunities for disadvantaged young people. **To date, the event has been held in the Peak District and North Wales and twice in the Lakes, and this year it was the turn of the North East.**

children. It's so different for these children and their families — an opportunity they will not get anywhere else and they have had a great day out.'

One of the support workers from Child Bereavement, who lost her parents when she was young, said, 'If there had been something like this at the time, it would have given me something else to think about. Thank you all of you — the children have loved it.'

As Carl concludes, 'We were all there to make this a great day for the children, young people and their carers and families. Their obvious

enjoyment and excitement was the best thanks possible and I'd like to thank all the local businesses who also contributed to making this such a fantastic occasion.'

The day ended with a hog roast at Cleveland base and the presentation of individual photograph souvenirs and goody-bags to all the children and families, by Carl and ACC Sue Cross.

And, whilst everyone was busy enjoying their fun day, it was still business as usual for the rescuers themselves when the call came to assist an injured fourteen-year-old BMX bike rider in a quarry near Great Ayton.

'We had plans in place to deal with such eventualities,' said Barry Warrington, the team's press officer, 'with a number of team members on stand-by to respond at a moment's notice.'

Next year's event is set to take place in South Wales.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE UK & IRELAND CONFERENCE

12-14 SEPTEMBER 2014 AVIEMORE, SCOTLAND

Find us and book online via facebook at:
MR GATHERING 2014

Mountain rescue teams from Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland will come together at Aviemore next September for their biennial conference: The Gathering. The venue will allow access to the high mountains and the huge resources of the Cairngorm National Park with delegates able to enjoy the world-class conference and leisure facilities of world renowned Macdonald Aviemore Resort, pictured above.

	09.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	16.00	17.00	18.00	19.00	20.00	21.00>
Friday							Arrival and registration			Whisky reception	Lecture		Social
Saturday	Conference welcome	Transport to off-site workshops	Off-site workshops				Transport from off-site workshops	FREE TIME		Dinner and Celidh			
		BREAK	Off-site workshops 1	LUNCH	Off-site workshops 2		FREE TIME						
Sunday	Transport to off-site workshops	Off-site workshops					Transport from off-site workshops						
		Off-site workshops 1	LUNCH	Off-site workshops 2	FREE TIME		Conference closes and raffle						

A rough outline of how the weekend might look

Photo © The Macdonald Aviemore Resort

The conference will be a mixture of outdoor workshop sessions and indoor lectures aiming to build on relationships within the UK and Irish mountain rescue communities and share best practice, particularly on effective leadership and management of volunteers. It further aims to share the results of research in search and rescue education since the previous UK and Ireland MR Conference of 2011.

Workshop bookings will be on a first come first served basis and we expect places to book up quickly. The training and workshop sessions will be based on small group sizes to ensure a high quality of delivery and a high level of learning is provided.

Up to 400 of the UK and Ireland's mountain rescue team members are expected to attend the conference including team leaders and representatives from the all the volunteer teams which make up mountain rescue in the UK and Ireland, a well as the Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA), retired team members and affiliated bodies such as the Military SAR teams, members of the police and coastguard and the Association of Lowland Search and Rescue teams.

Unlike some of the previous national events, we are aiming to spend as much time as possible out of doors (in the Cairngorm National Park) with most of the gatherings of the whole conference being in the social environment.

To reflect the diverse range of skills required in modern mountain rescue the workshops have been split into five themes:—

- Human Factors
- Search
- Medical
- Water Rescue
- Technical Land Rescue

There will be a range of workshops of either two hours (where two in a day were chosen) or five hour on the hill, chosen by the participants. This ability to mix-and-match means that those active team members attending the event can get up to the minute training and CPD opportunities of their choice, so the event can meet a large range of aspirations and expectations.

HOW DO I BOOK ON THE EVENT?

We plan to take bookings online and via the Scottish Mountain Rescue office based at Glenmore Lodge. Our Facebook booking system will be online soon. The process for booking will be:—

ARE YOU A FULL TEAM MEMBER OF A MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM? IF YES:

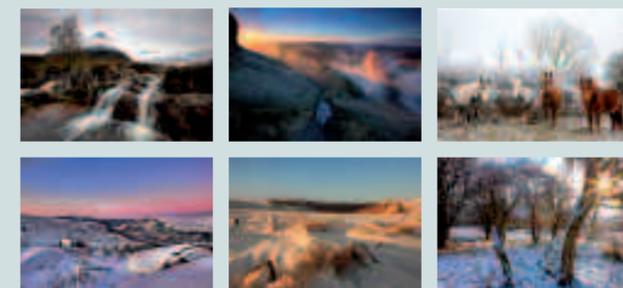
1. Go to our facebook page — 'MR Gathering 2014' — and apply online
2. Confirm your accommodation preference and workshop choices. Submit payment.
3. Once your payment has been received (and only then), Mountain Rescue Scotland will confirm your booking and your workshop allocation.

Early bookings and payment in advance are advised, given the workshop focus of this event, and the need to confirm numbers for each group well in advance of attendance. ■



**NOW
IN THE
SHOP**

NEW CHRISTMAS CARDS DESIGNS



Professional photographer and Woodhead team member Adrian Ashworth has kindly donated these six stunning images for our new Christmas card collection. The A6 cards are beautifully printed on 300 gsm silk art paper and come cello-packed in six of each design, with envelopes. Price £3.00 + P&P. Discount available to teams for bulk purchases*.



MODEL LAND ROVER

The latest MR vehicle 'on the road', this 1:76 scale Land Rover from Oxford Diecast comes on a 75mm x 45mm plinth (detachable) and is fully kitted out in Mountain Rescue livery. And, before you ask,

no, the doors don't open and it isn't accompanied by a little mountain rescue person. Or a miniature stretcher. Price £5 + P&P. Discounted rates available for teams for bulk orders*.

Of course, all the usual stuff is still available: pens, teddies, ceramic and thermal mugs, badges and stickers, books, annual reviews and t-shirts...

*Email Gail Todd via gail@lancashirelass.net for details of the Land Rover model and other merchandise, and details of team discounts.

WINNER OF THE MCMURDO FAST FIND RANGER GPS PLB!

Congratulations to Andy Sallabank, whose correct answer posed another question! 'Keep the antenna vertical once it has been unfurled. Interestingly Lyle's idea about facing the Equator is not mentioned in any PLB instructions I could find.'

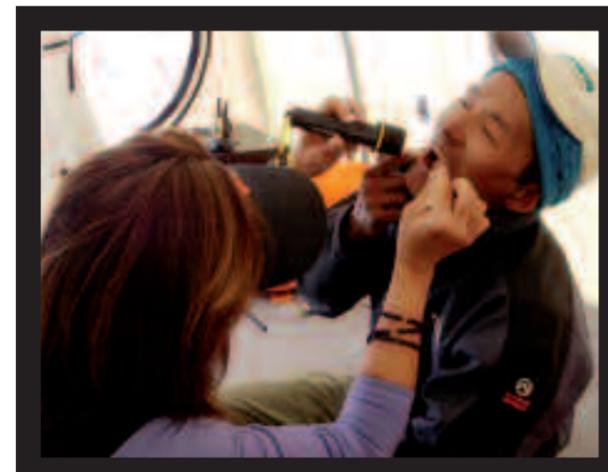
Lyle's answer: Yes, you are right on both counts Andy. Sadly the instructions that accompany these types of unit are rarely as good as the PLBs themselves. I first learned about facing the Equator from Tom Taylor MBE, former RAF MRT Team Leader and COSPAS-SARSAT satellite manager in the ARCC at RAF Kinloss. You face the Equator because the GEOSAR system consists of geostationary satellites orbiting the Earth at an altitude of 36,000 km, with an orbit period of 24 hours, thus appearing fixed relative to the Earth at approximately 0 degrees latitude (ie. over the Equator) and providing continuous coverage of all areas of the globe between 70 degrees North and 70 degrees South latitude.



For more about the Fast Find Ranger PLB, go to www.fastfindplb.com/en.

THE HIMALAYAN RESCUE ASSOCIATION 1973-2013

By the late 1960s, the flow of expeditions and trekkers into Nepal was increasing. Unlike the early years of Himalayan exploration, more was known about altitude-related illnesses. However, despite this, many people were still succumbing to the effects of cold and the fact that there was less oxygen in the atmosphere. It is a fallacy, as believed by many foreign mountaineers and trekkers at that time, that it was only foreigners who suffered from altitude-related illnesses. They believed that Nepali nationals, especially the hill people, were immune to such illnesses as mountain sickness and hypothermia.



operating in Pheriche at that time. Hackett continued to treat many patients and AMS suffers. In fact, he went out on several rescues maintaining the record of no one dying who had been attended to by an HRA medic. During the intervening years Hackett read everything he could find on AMS. Eventually Peter Hackett was appointed HRA Medical Director and in that position he began to recruit other doctors to volunteer in Pheriche. Dr Jim Duff (from

contribution from Ivan Goyzo Somlai.

By 1983, the HRA was in a position to provide two medical staff at both Pheriche and Manang for both seasons. This practice is still being delivered today with four staff being able to provide medical support for all those in need in the Khumbu and Manang areas.

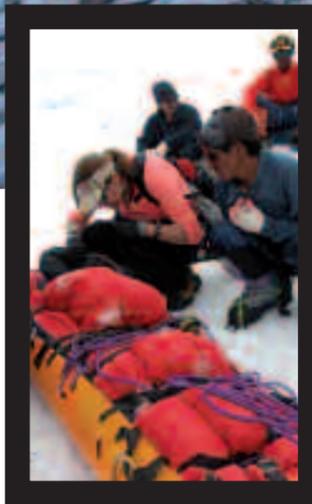
In 2002, Ang Kaji Sherpa became chairman of the HRA and he realised the necessity of establishing a Pheriche 'outreach post' at Everest Base Camp, this was duly set up in the spring of 2003 to mark the 50th Anniversary of the first ascent of Everest. Since the opening time Dr Luanne Freer has been instrumental in operating this facility every spring season. The facility has provided medical assistance for over 1800 patients and has organised over 150 helicopter evacuations.

HRA medical volunteers based at EBC will not climb above Base Camp, even in the event of emergency. Any medical emergencies occurring above EBC will be expected to be dealt with by the individual team in the usual manner. The HRA clinic will not supply teams with medications for their summit attempts. However, the HRA will provide radio or other non-climbing assistance where possible in the case of an emergency. In accordance to the HRA mission statement it does not restrict its services only to foreigners, it also supports Nepali citizens who are in need. In line with this spirit, the HRA has regularly — for the last fifteen years — provided medical



Kendal, UK) was the second volunteer doctor after Peter Hackett.

The Himalayan Rescue Association and the Nepal Mountaineering Association have always cooperated well together and, in 1981, the HRA shared a building with the NMA to establish their Manang Rescue Post in Ongre, Manang. In 1985 the HRA moved into bigger rented accommodation and, by 1991 — and with financial support from the UK — a new purpose-built Rescue Post was opened with a major



HRA's first mountain clinic was based in the 'Yak Herder's Hut', Pheriche, Khumbu and was opened in 1973. Pheriche had been chosen as the first operational location because it was here that in the majority of cases AMS began to seriously affect trekkers and mountaineers who had not acclimatised well.

Being based in Pheriche was a bleak existence during the winter, there was no suitable accommodation, but the early volunteer doctors remained until it became unbearably cold and they moved down to Thyangboche where there was a more abundant supply of wood for heating and cooking. Despite the number of

cases seen and dealt with, no one who had managed to reach the clinic that year died.

By 1974, Jimmy Roberts and Mountain Travel were running frequent treks to Nepal and the Everest region in particular, one of their clients was Dr Peter Hackett from the USA. Although Peter had no mountaineering experience at

the time, he became very interested in the problems of AMS and, on concluding his trek, he volunteered to work and stay in the yak herders' hut in Pheriche, which he then continued to do for the next three consecutive seasons. In preference to living in the hut, Hackett chose the more preferable surroundings of his tent pitched in

the hut's enclosure. However, the hut was not an appropriate 'clinic' in which to treat medical cases and many trekkers were very uncomfortable being examined in those surroundings. Rather than leave AMS sufferers to their own devices Hackett and Tashi Sherpa, the HRA's 'local man' would make frequent tours of the few lodges

support at Gosainkunda during the Janaipurnima festival for pilgrims. These medical facilities are operated by Nepali medical doctors and provides them with a real and meaningful

insight into mountain medicine. Over the last 40 years the HRA has contributed in a major way to creating a safer and more attentive and caring Nepal as a premier adventure and travel destination.

However, from a humble beginning not only has the world of trekking moved on but so has the development of commercialism and consumerism. There is a very different attitude being displayed in 2013 compared to that in 1973, not only by the demands of the trekkers and expeditions but also by the porters, trekking staff and trekking agents and also to a certain extent by the political situation in Nepal.

Since 2004, the HRA has been slowly gearing up to prepare itself for disaster management. As is evident from recent disasters, HRA has coordinated and handled major search and rescue work, primarily in a coordinating role. In

this work the HRA has to frequently liaise with foreign embassies, relatives of the victims, the press, government, helicopter companies rescue workers and insurance companies. HRA staff have to understand many different protocols, documentation, often conducted in different languages, and the electronic means of conducting their work has also become far more complex.

Today's running costs mean the HRA can no longer be sustainable from just the sales of t-shirts and badges. Even with the generosity of the major funders of the past, the future cannot be sustained to the extent of developing new systems to deal with what could be



thrown at Nepal in the future. The effects of climate change and global warming are just two more probabilities that add pressure on the future.

The HRA was established 40 years ago with a specific mission 'to prevent deaths [from AMS]' however, in today's world, with the increased pressure on the Himalaya for recreational purposes and a greater awareness of environmental and geographical issues, this remit should surely be widened, 'to prevent deaths from AMS, mountain and environmental disasters'.

There is not only evidence from recent tragedies and disasters, but, also now a readiness to accept that Nepal is in no position to meet a disaster head on. The Seti flood, the Manaslu avalanche, the fire in Thamel, not to mention frequent transport accidents, all raise the question, especially within the foreign media, 'how safe is Nepal as a tourist destination?'

It is not possible to establish a

strategic search and rescue operation as might be found in other more developed countries, but, the HRA is in a strong position, with additional government support to build up systems so as to demonstrate a professional coordinating and liaising role.

In simple terms, what this future role might require is an accepted system of communications with the means to carry out such a task. The manpower is already in position — the army, the Armed Police Force and the helicopter services — although, currently, the latter are far from adequate in terms of numbers and type, and of course all the mountain guides and adventure activity staff located throughout Nepal can add specialised skills.

The HRA should be in a position to create training programmes, to organise local coordination centres while the central HRA office in Kathmandu remains as the hub through which all

important information is fed and into which all enquires are passed and handled. Unfortunately the demands placed on the HRA are increasing, but, sadly, at the

present time, the infrastructure to keep pace with those requirements is not being developed at the same rate. ■



IAN WALL WAS TRAINING OFFICER FOR LANGDALE AMBLESIDE MRT DURING THE LATE 1970s AND EARLY 1980s. DURING THE LAST EIGHT YEARS, HE HAS MARRIED, BUILT A HOUSE AND LIVED IN NEPAL, WHERE HE RUNS HIS OWN TREKKING COMPANY. IAN ALSO

SPENDS A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME RUNNING MOUNTAIN LEADER TRAINING COURSES ALONGSIDE NEPALI MOUNTAIN GUIDES AND TRAINERS ON BEHALF OF THE NEPAL MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION AND THE EUROPEAN FUNDING BODY, SNV.





UPDATE ON NICOLA 3

EDITED BY PETER ALLWRIGHT



The last report – in Spring this year – carried out at OFD in South Wales, showed the Nicola 3 radios were offering the level of performance required for production. Further tests were planned, particularly in the Yorkshire Dales with CRO. These went ahead as planned and immediately showed a severe problem.

tries to highlight the issues. Detailed reports can be provided for some of the tests if required.

SUMMARY OF TESTING

Briefly, we had problems in Kingsdale Master Cave and in Dow Cave, in the Yorkshire Dales. These relate to the Loran navigation beacon, which appeared particularly strong during these tests. Several failed because the beacon swamped the audio making communications impractical.

It was further determined that on the Dow Cave test, the batteries in the underground radios were flat, thus the transmitted signal would be weak which may also have contributed to the failure in Kingsdale.

The radios worked successfully in OFD in South Wales, although the Loran still gave problems and made communications difficult at times.

The following weekend, the Loran appeared to subside and we carried out very good tests in Peak Cavern in

Derbyshire and in Wet Sink in the Forest of Dean.

The development work undertaken by Graham Naylor to cure the transmission over the shorter distances (100 metres and less) proved tricky, so the development took a little longer than hoped. The updated radios were made available in early August, but holidays intervened so testing was scheduled for September.

KINGSDALE MASTER CAVE, YORKSHIRE DALES: 31 AUGUST

Testing started at the Roof Tunnel pitch, a key location for the Cave Rescue Organisation. The test where the radio failed earlier this year was repeated and this time passed with a clear signal underground and a good signal on the surface. A Bluetooth 'showerproof' speaker was deployed and worked well.

The test party relocated to Swinsto Great Aven, again a key location on the through trips. The HEYPhone was

set up and communications with the surface quickly established. It was noted there was strong Loran interference at this location, a significant distance underground.

The Nicola also established communications; the surface to underground communications were good and clear, but the underground to surface was swamped by the Loran signal, making the communications at best one way and effectively impossible.

DOW CAVE, YORKSHIRE: DALES, 1 SEPTEMBER

The plan was to establish communications from Gypsum Traverse in Dowbergill Passage. This would be part of a planned communications exercise by Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Association (UWFRA). We would deploy the normal UWFRA communications then change to Nicola 3.

In this case, the 'normal' communications comprised a HEYPhone underground and a Molephone on the surface. Communication was established effectively, though the volume on the surface Molephone microphone was quiet. Underground, the fixed aeriels installed for communications purposes were used.

On switching to Nicola 3, the surface Nicola to underground HEYPhone

communications was established with a reported weaker signal, whilst underground Nicola to surface did not work at all.

On returning to the Wharfedale headquarters, the batteries in the Nicola were checked and those in the underground set were found to be below the acceptable threshold for successful operation – that is below the 3.6 volts per battery. This would go a considerable way to explaining the problems encountered.

OFD TESTS, SOUTH WALES: 8 SEPTEMBER

The weather conditions at Penwylt proved to be better than expected and we started with a short range test of about 100 metres. This worked well with a very strong signal, but it was noted the Loran signal was strong. When using the microphone in particular, there was distortion in the audio giving a 'dalek' tone to the voice received.

Moving on to the 450 metres test, the Loran proved a major problem with both the HEYPhone and with the Nicola 3 tests. The audio signal from the underground radios was being swamped by the interference and, whilst the audio could be picked out from the interference, it was hard work. The direction of the surface aeriels was moved through 90°, resulting in less interference but also less audio. However the signal was now usable.

At the 650 metres test, the HEYPhone opened communications with a good clear signal but Nicola 3 struggled with an apparently weaker signal that was very difficult to pick out from the background. At this point, the underground team was asked to deploy extra aeriels (25 metres in

each direction). Extra aeriels were also deployed on the surface (40 metres in each direction). This led to an immediate improvement in signal strength and quality.

The final test was at 800 metres in the cottage. This test failed; both HEYPhone and Nicola 3 failed to offer readable communications. This contrasts to the test earlier in the year when both achieved successful exchanges. When the underground party returned to the base, a debrief indicated the earth may not have been as good, which might explain this failure. On the surface Nicola 3, the indication LEDs showed we were getting a strong transmission signal at this location.

PEAK CAVERN, DERBYSHIRE: 14 SEPTEMBER

Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation had one of their regular training sessions organised for Peak Cavern and the opportunity to carry out further testing was used.

The first test was undertaken at the Treasury Junction, where HEYPhone communications was quickly established followed by the Nicola testing. It was noted the Loran interference was much reduced on these tests.

Moving onto Squaw's Junction, the procedure was repeated. The signal strength was stronger at this location, and the indication LEDs in the Nicola showed we were getting a strong transmission signal.

The indication showed an even stronger signal at Far Sump and again successful communication was achieved with both the HEYPhone and Nicola 3.

In all tests, the audio was again distorted by the 'dalek' effect.

WET SINK, FOREST OF DEAN: 15 SEPTEMBER

Planned at the last minute, the test party arrived at English Bicknor later than planned due to travel problems. The Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group had a plan ready to test in Wet Sink and this was followed.

The first test was at Cross Stream Junction underground. The surface party located on the surface at the rescue control location giving an approximated distance of 200 metres horizontally. The communications initially were weak but clear, but when the underground party extended the aeriels a stronger, clear signal was received. At this location, a quick test with the GCRG loop aerial allowed a very weak underground to surface signal that was readable but not usable in an operation. Surface to underground was readable.

The underground party moved to the second location towards Chunnel West. Good initial communications was made initially which was improved when the underground party altered the aeriels. The estimated distance was some 300 metres horizontally.

The third location was near the junction of Coal Seam Passage and Dryslade Passage (450 metres). No communications were received in either direction. Note that this location is known to present difficulties as the geology stops the signal.

The underground party returned to the first location. Communication with the surface was re-established using the loop aerial. This time, experiments were made with the orientation of the loop and good, effective communication was made, albeit the strength did not match the linear aeriels.

The final test had the surface location move to over the underground location and a loop aerial to loop aerial test was carried out successfully.

ANALYSIS OF TESTS

- The Loran signal remains a problem and can overwhelm the audio at times.
- The battery life needs further study. We need to ensure the external batteries will work in situations where the internal batteries run down.
- The tendency of British teams to use as little aerial as possible at times contributes to communications difficulties. This particularly applies

to 300 metre plus tests.

● There was distortion of the audio when using the microphone. This was due to the Nicola 3 being configured for communications with Nicola 2 and is slightly off-frequency for the HEYPhone.

● The microphones implemented on Nicola 3 are smaller than those on the HEYPhone, giving an apparent weaker signal. Graham advises that fitting a larger microphone may not achieve the expected results due to the power than can be delivered in the design. The lower operating voltage also contributes to the apparent weaker signal.

● The tests at OFD were successful, despite the failure of the long test.

● The tests in Derbyshire were successful.

● The tests in the Forest of Dean were successful. These tests also showed the loop aeriels will work.

Graham Naylor has tested the battery life and determined this to be in the order of eleven hours. However, if the Bluetooth has a connected device (eg. the speaker used in these tests), then the battery life can drop to less than six hours.

The re-use of the HEYPhone batteries would require additional external circuits. The Nicola uses the internal batteries at 7.2 volts nominal; these will deliver 8.2 volts when fully charged. The HEYPhone batteries are 12 volts nominal and would destroy the Nicola circuits if used directly.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

● The radios have gone over to France for testing with Spéléo Secours Isère in the Vercors. This may add issues to the list.

● Graham Naylor, will look into ways of suppressing the Loran signal.

● The problems with the keypad to be identified and fixed.

● Tests will be carried out with the Nicola configured to a frequency where the Loran should not cause interference.

● The external battery support will be tested.

Once these have been addressed, re-testing at Kingsdale Master Cave and Dow Cave will be arranged. ■

SYSTEM NICOLA AND THE BCRC WISHED TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO ASSISTED AT THESE TESTS (TOO NUMEROUS TO LIST HERE). AT TIMES WEATHER CONDITIONS WERE MOST UNPLEASANT TO SAY THE LEAST.

CAVE NOW WORK LATER!



Main image: Roueiss Cave, Lebanon rescue practice © Johnny Tawk. Below left: Caving in Tunisia © Mike Clayton. Inset below: Mountain and cave rescue branding treks the Sahara © Amine Zorgati.

and scaled the mountains of Wadi Rum, we had previously donated equipment to some of the mountain guides who had been trying to set up a rescue team but this time, our attention was focused on a country we think of

GCRG, we delivered a couple of cave rescue presentations to Speleo Club du Liban, followed by a full blown cave rescue practice in the beautiful resurgence cave, Roueiss. We have commonly seen that fledging cave rescuers concentrate on the ropework side of rescue with management of a rescue and comms not given the consideration they deserve, so we deliberately chose to focus on this. The Roueiss rescue practice was a success with plenty of stretcher carrying and rigging, with use of the t-card system and focus on working as a team under a cave rescue controller. In reality, if there were to be a major cave rescue incident in Lebanon, the army would most likely be involved.



as our second home, Lebanon. In caving terms, Lebanon has it all: a significant depth potential with limestone mountains over 3000m and huge resurgence caves, where the water forcibly gushes out from deep within the depths of darkness. The biggest difference from British caving is the need to be aware of ordnance within the caves, a side effect of fifteen years of civil war. Whilst there are few cavers in Lebanon, there are two main caving clubs but there is no national body for caving and no national rescue organisation. Fortunately to date, cave rescues have been very low in number.

Whilst the Lebanese have reasonable caving equipment, on our epic journey it became apparent how lacking in equipment and knowledge, in the unfortunate event of a rescue, were many of the cavers we met.

One group of incredibly enthusiastic cavers was based in Tunisia, perhaps better known for its beaches and cheap package holidays. But if you can escape from the tourist zone and fight the excessive paperwork bureaucracy in order to go caving, the rolling limestone hills reveal a number of interesting caves and mines. With an increasing awareness and desire to explore their own country, Tunisian caver numbers are increasing but once again, there is no national caving body or cave rescue organisation. When we asked if there was a cave rescue organisation, we were told 'we don't need one, as we don't have accidents'.

Aside from exploration, one of the aims of this expedition was to deliver cave rescue equipment to Lebanon and, before leaving the UK, we had kindly received donations of caving and rescue equipment from GCRG, Total Access (UK) Limited and Brian Jopling, so we could build upon the cave rescue training we'd delivered in previous years. With an unexpected refusal of entry into Lebanon, as our Land Rover was diesel (unbeknown to us diesel vehicles were banned unless you were a truck or a bus!) — a major upset to our plans — the equipment eventually made its way to its intended destination by motorbike.

Two weeks later, whilst caving in deep shafts in the majestic limestone peaks near Zaghuan, one of the cavers was hit by a boulder and suffered a small epileptic fit. Fortunately, self-rescue instincts took over and all ended well but the seed was well and truly planted.

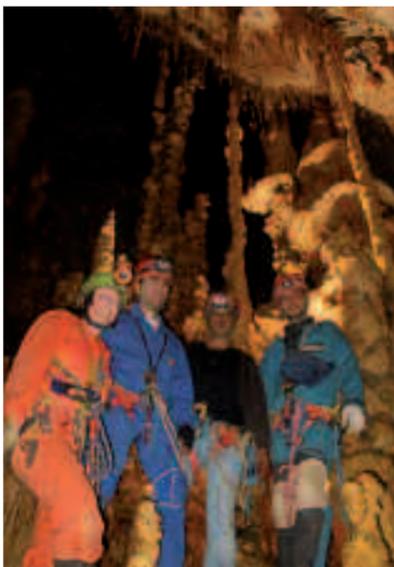
Joined by Dave Appleing, from

Our route was to take us down through the vastness of Spain to the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, where we spent days being guided to cave entrances by shopkeeper and man of the mountains, Aziz and bagging first descents of shafts. Not being able to drive into Algeria, we headed back to France and then Italy, before being met at the port by a group of exuberant Tunisian cavers with whom we were to share many underground adventures, then onto dry Libya where our every move was watched by our jovial tourist guide/minder. Blue lights

accompanied us across Egypt, where we enjoyed the heights of the Sinai and diving deep in the Red Sea, crossing over to our beloved Jordan and the rose-coloured sandstone of Wadi Rum. The kindness of strangers was overwhelming particularly in Syria, cups of tea with Bedouin, assistance from fellow Land Rover owners when we had a puncture, free bread from the bakers as we were guests in their country and the wonderful welcome from our caving friends in Lebanon and across Europe from Bulgaria and Serbia to Budapest and Stuttgart. Having travelled widely in Jordan

EMMA PORTER & MIKE CLAYTON MIDLANDS CRO

During 2009 and 2010, we were joined by fellow caver, John Christie on the Cave Now Work Later expedition: a journey of a lifetime. With one trusty, laden Land Rover Defender 110 and one BMW 650cc motorbike, we circumnavigated the Med, crossed North Africa, the Middle East and back through Europe in an adventure that simply would not be safe or possible today. Setting off before the Arab Spring changed the world we live in, our expedition encompassed not only an amazing road trip and the excitement of travelling in countries that are culturally enthralling, but we were driven by the shared hope of all cavers: to find caverns measureless to man.





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The wonderful hospitality of the country saw four MCRO members heading to Tunisia for Christmas 2011 for a week of caving with the parting words that it was their turn to visit the UK next time! During much of 2012, we exchanged emails and ideas, discussing cave rescue and the forming of an organisation and the Tunisian cavers received an introductory training week in cave rescue by Bulgarian cavers visiting Tunisia. Then it was our turn. With letters of invitation sent, interviews at embassies, the visas were granted and Hamda Ghaleb and Meher Melaouhia arrived in the Midlands after a couple of days of sightseeing in London.

Thanks to Derbyshire CRO, GCRG and MCRO, Hamda and Meher received an intensive few days of training covering subjects such as cave rescue equipment and bolting for rescue to rope care and the t-card system. Paul Taylor hosted a visit at the GCRG depot, taking them on a short trip into the entrance series of Wet Sink, discussing pre-rescue preparation and looking at the installation of a number of anchor points for rescue. After a very wet caving trip in the Peak District's P8, DCRO took them around their base and, on the Sunday, MCRO held a rescue practice at Clive Copper Mine, Shropshire. At the end of the practice, we presented Hamda and Meher with a large pile of equipment, with donations from Total Access, DCRO, MCRO and a stretcher from GCRG, along with other equipment. The less said

about the hours spent trying to pack it ready for the plane the better, although it did all get back safely.

In May this year, six members of MCRO (Bartek and Paulina Biela, Mike Clayton and Emma Porter) and GCRG (Dave Appleing and Paul Taylor) flew to Tunisia representing BCRC, to deliver a cave rescue training programme for the fledgling cave rescuers. The training programme was hosted with the support of the local government under the shadow of the Zaghouan mountains at the youth complex of Zaghouan with over 30 attendees. As with the Lebanese cavers, we wanted to focus on cave rescue management and communications, so a three-day intensive training programme was delivered. After the official opening was launched in the youth complex by the Regional Commissioner for Youth and Sports of Zaghouan and local government officials of Youth and Sports Administration, a day was spent in the classroom learning about the structure of British cave rescue, different types of accidents, self-rescue, comms and basics of casualty care. After a day of lectures and group discussions, a day was spent at a local sports centre with the morning being split into three practical workshops involving stretcher packaging, basic rigging and the use of the t-card system.

During the afternoon, we took a step back as observers having set up a scenario for the attendees to manage and execute. Chaos reigned, giving the controllers a baptism of fire! With some help, control was regained, and the casualty located, packaged and extracted from an awkward location and carefully manoeuvred along a convoluted route around the sports hall as a stretcher carry.

Lessons had been learned from the previous day, as at the start of the full scale rescue practice on day three, the team had evolved from a bunch of individuals into a team ready for the challenges of Mine Ain Haroun and its surrounding terrain.

The practice focused on locating and rescuing three missing people who were on a day out to explore the mine, with two walking wounded and one stretcher case. A control centre was installed and the rescue was controlled with the use of t-cards and comms systems to manage the flow of information in real time from the outside and into the mine. The operation began at 10.00am and under the responsibility of the surface controller and the underground controller, several

search teams were sent out, locating all of the casualties. The two doctors took control of the casualties, the pitches were rigged and the stretcher carrying team successfully reached their destination by 3.00pm, to be met by the 4x4 ambulance kindly provided for the training by the medical assistance and logistics company Calypso Services.

After what had been an intensive training course, with all participants having to communicate and listen in either their second or third language, we were really proud of what they had achieved. The cavers in Zaghouan have tremendous support from their local government, and with recent underground discoveries that have appeared in National Geographic, we hope we have created a legacy that will continue to grow in strength. Plans are afoot for a possible visit by some of the cavers to the UK in 2014 and we hope to return in 2015 to continue with further training.

Of course, there was time for some touristy days before we left, with camel riding in the Sahara, visiting Star Wars sets, having a close scrape near the Algerian border and, of course, venturing underground to some spectacular caves. ■



THANKS TO THE CAVERS WE MET ALONG OUR JOURNEY AND EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED THESE PROJECTS. ON BEHALF OF THE CAVE RESCUERS OF LEBANON, THANKS TO BRIAN JOPLING, GCRG, MCRO, TOTAL ACCESS (UK) LIMITED FOR ASSISTING WITH EQUIPMENT AND, ON BEHALF OF THE CAVE RESCUERS OF TUNISIA, THANKS TO THE CAVING ASSOCIATION OF ZAGHOUAN, THE YOUTH COMPLEX OF ZAGHOUAN, TUNISAIR FOR ADDITIONAL LUGGAGE ALLOWANCE AT NO COST, DCRO, GCRG, MCRO AND TOTAL ACCESS (UK) LIMITED.

Above: Jeita Grotto, Lebanon © Emma Porter. Below: Cave now, work later © Mike Clayton. Right: Stretcher carry © Tunisian caver.



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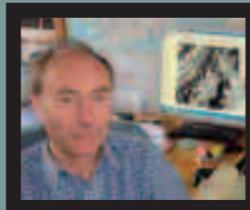
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WILL IT RAIN OR WILL IT SNOW?



Snow on the Valleys in Wales © Charlotte Leaper, Dreamstime.com



GEOFF MONK MOUNTAIN WEATHER INFORMATION SERVICE

Why forecasting whether it will rain, sleet or snow at any given point in the mountains is so fraught with difficulty.

Imagine winter's here. Britain is cold, there's widespread frost but milder precipitation-bearing air is coming in off the Atlantic. An easy forecast of rain on western mountains, turning progressively to snow eastwards. Or is it?

As the precipitation comes in, now imagine you are travelling up the A9 in Scotland, headed towards Aviemore. As you leave the Central Belt, it's raining, the temperature has risen to 3 or 4°C. North of Stirling, it's still raining but the temperature drops to freezing point, or even just below.

You continue north to Glen Garry (north of Pitlochry), and the temperature is back to around 3°C. As you ascend toward Drumochter Pass, the temperature slowly drops, rain turns to sleet and then snow, and becomes increasingly heavy.

Finally, north of Drumochter (still at an elevation of over 300m), the precipitation gradually becomes light, turning back to sleet or even rain, and eases markedly, and the temperature rises to 3°C.

What I hope to do here is attempt to address some of the reasons (although complicated) why the temperature and type of precipitation can vary so much within such a short distance.

There are two main factors. Firstly, the colder the air, the denser it becomes, and the more it drains down into the valleys creating pools of cold air that are difficult to dislodge. When warmer air comes in, it can simply flow over the top of the cold air, with the valley temperature not changing.

The second factor is wind speed. The stronger the wind, the more turbulence it generates, particularly when crossing major mountain summits, and the more likely the strong gusts created will run downslope and scour out the cold air from nearby valleys.

It is possible, according to wind direction, for one valley to remain cold — allowing snow to fall to valley level — whilst an adjacent valley warms, with snow turning to rain.

Returning to the A9,

Strathallen, north of Stirling, is well known for holding onto cold air. On occasion, temperatures have remained close to freezing point for 48 hours after they have risen across most of the country. Elsewhere, this effect even occurs close to the coast. As warmer air reaches south west Scotland from off the Irish Sea, the coastal temperature may well rise to around 8°C but, after passing over low rounded hills, some only 100 or 200m high, shallow valleys only ten miles inland remain at or below freezing point, for perhaps twelve hours. This can occur with coastal winds up to 20 or 25mph. Stronger winds scour out the cold air.

Another factor affecting the level to which snow falls is the humidity. The lower the humidity, the slower snow melts below the freezing level. This effect is amplified when the snow is heavy.

Thus, it is possible, particularly in spring, when the humidity is often low, that snow will penetrate several hundred metres below freezing level. This effect is best observed on a showery

day, when the temperature on the hills is a few degrees above freezing point and cloud base is well above the summits (indicating that the air is dry). On the other hand, where you are in cloud, fairly light snow will melt readily close to the freezing level.

Frozen precipitation can occur in various forms. Besides snow and hail, there are various types of snow and ice pellets, some formed in 'drizzly' conditions in cloud at low levels in the atmosphere.

More often, should the cold air in valleys be several hundred metres deep, previously melted snow will refreeze in the valley, not into snow, but into small pellets. When the cold air is only very shallow, the rain does not have time to refreeze in the air, but may freeze on impact with frozen ground, giving freezing rain.

Thus, the forecasting of the level to which snow will fall is fraught with difficulty, more so because of cold air pooling at valley level, rather than on the mountain summits. ■

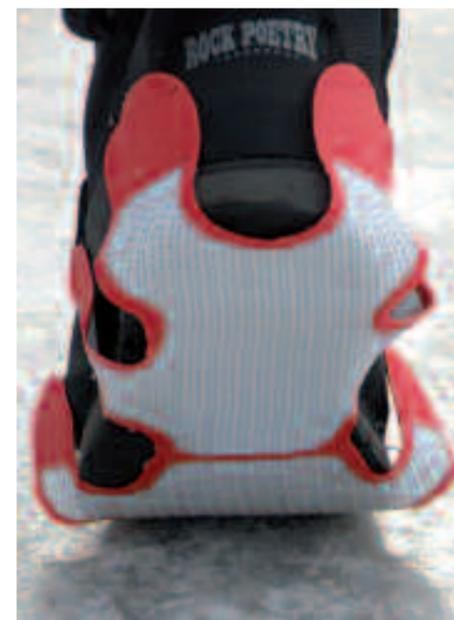
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The ACER Three Peaks Challenge team, primed and ready to go.

Acer also ran a dedicated social media campaign to ensure maximum exposure via Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr. Support also came from BT Business, which donated SIM cards for use with the smartphones. The team used BT's MyDonate free fundraising service for the Mountain Rescue donation, with every penny going direct to the charity.

'Acer and its products are all about performance and exploration

The team, comprising Acer employees and technical journalists were guided by four qualified mountain leaders, from The3PeaksChallenge.com and accompanied by a physiotherapist to ensure they all kept in tip top condition.

They set off to complete the Challenge over three days – walking and travelling between Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon in 72 hours; a total climb of 3,407 metres and a travel distance of over 470 miles.

Acer supported the fundraising attempt with the supply of training kit and the latest Acer smartphone, the Acer Liquid E1, complete with a training app to help build up stamina over the weeks leading up to the challenge. With the smartphone, team members were able to share their news and videos on their personal Three Peaks Challenge training and publicise their fundraising targets.

which is why we teamed up to conquer the highest mountains on mainland UK – and raise valuable funds for the mountain rescue teams,' says Linda Hassall, Marketing Director, Acer UK and Ireland.

Mike France, MREW National Fundraising Chairman adds: 'We are delighted that Acer and its journalist team have selected us as the charity they are fundraising for. On behalf of mountain rescue teams across England and Wales, thank you to them, and everyone in the group who took up the challenge, for the funds they've raised.' Read one woman's story of her personal experience on page 63. Sara Yirrell was one of the journalists who took up the challenge.

TOTAL RAISED FROM THE CHALLENGE, INCLUDING GIFT AID WAS £6,121.80.



THANKS ALSO TO KATHERINE WILLS

...for the signed copy of her book 'Outdoor First Aid' – won by lucky reader David Barton. Watch out for future magazine and Facebook draws for a chance to win more exciting goodies!

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ACER PUSHED ME TO MY LIMITS!



SARA YIRRELL

Up until now the only vendor events I've been on have been the kind where you fly to a nice location, stay in a plush hotel, eat posh food and cover press keynote after press keynote.

...And then party in the evening after frantically filing as much copy as possible to keep up the kudos with your

some rest in between. The first two — Scotland and England went well for me — strangely I found it ten times easier to come down a mountain than go up it. And, while lagging behind on the ascent, I found myself in the front pack on the way down.

In between mountains we were crammed into two minibuses and ferried from one end of the country to another for a welcome short rest in a hotel — as we tried to stretch aching joints and keep muscles from stiffening up.

On day two when we went for an evening meal, we were all walking like weebees and getting very strange looks from people in the pub we stopped in.

However, for me it was day three when it all went wrong. We arrived at Snowdon and my legs were absolutely killing me — but I was in a determined mood. I had done two, what was one more?

As we climbed higher it got hotter and hotter. There was no breeze

whatsoever and no shade. It was the hottest day of the year so far and I was trying to scale a huge mountain. What was I thinking?

Those who know me well will understand how much I detest being out in the sun. I can't bear to be in it when I'm just sitting around doing nothing, let alone trying to do five hours of intense physical exercise.

Time was against me because we had to be back down in a certain time to catch a train, and it was that, combined with utter heat exhaustion that caused me to admit defeat. Just 300 feet from the peak. I could see it, but I had nothing left to give, and I still had to get back down.

It may as well have been 3,000 more feet. If the sun had gone in for a bit and I'd had an extra hour, I know I could have done it, but these things happen. Knowing when to stop is often more difficult than bumbling blindly on.

So I apologise to all those of you who

sponsored me because I didn't quite complete it but I'm hoping you will let me off because I almost did, and because it was to raise money for a fantastic cause: mountain rescue.

There was even a rescue going on when we were two-thirds of the way down the mountain in Snowdon — absolutely vital work, done by volunteers.

So with that in mind, and with a teeny bit of disappointment in my heart, I bring you my Three Peaks roundup. I hope you still think I have earned my sponsorship money.

Despite not quite beating all three mountains — I beat two, and so very nearly beat the last one.

I also have a whole load of memories that I will never forget and met some fantastic people.

Thanks Acer and Honcho PR for a great weekend and for pushing me to limits I never even knew I had! I don't think many press trips will top that one, I have to say.



colleagues and remind the whippersnappers that you still have what it takes.

Until last weekend. Acer took a group of tech journalists (including me) and pushed them further than ever before by challenging them to complete the UK Three Peaks challenge in three days. All in the name of charity.

That involves climbing Ben Nevis in Scotland, Scafell Pike in England, and Snowdon in Wales.

Some crazy cats attempt it in 24 hours — but luckily for us we had

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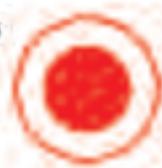
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