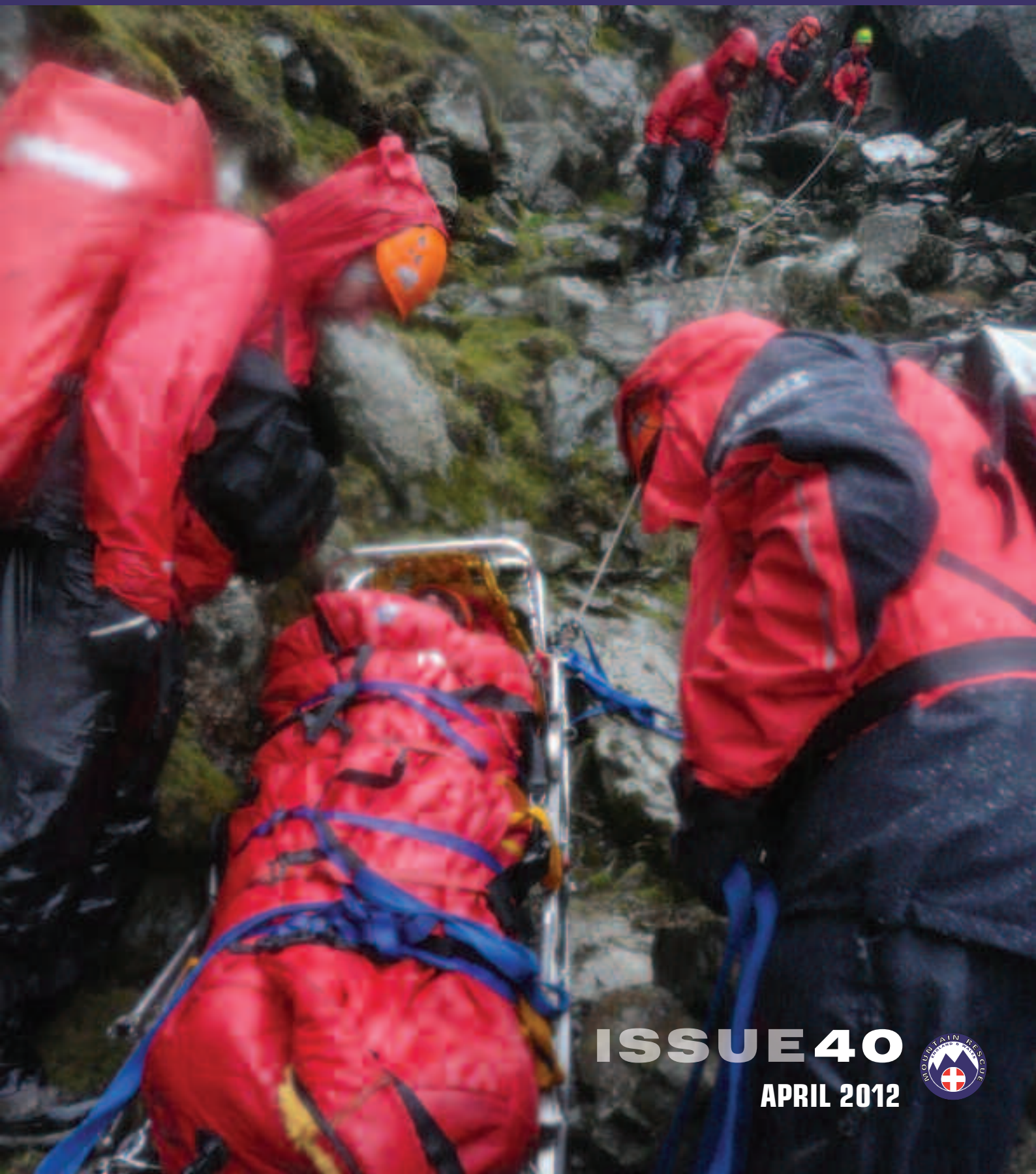


# mountain rescue

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**ISSUE 40**

**APRIL 2012**



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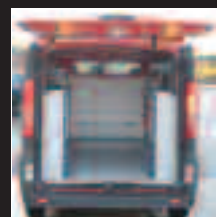
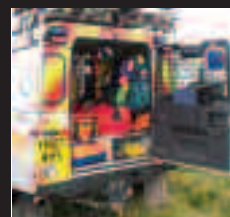
» Member of FIRESA and federation of communications services.

» APB specialises in the installation of blue lights equipment into everything from cars to fire engines and other specialist vehicles such as HPs, mountain rescue vehicles and control units. We offer an on-site service to limit down time of the vehicle, or we can offer our equipped workshops near Peterborough.

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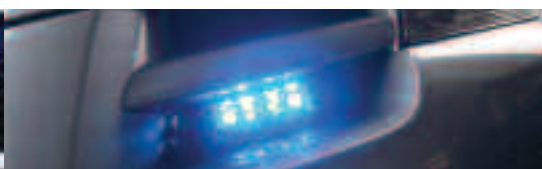
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Unit 4, Pinnacle Close, Crowland, Peterborough PE6 0GB



## WELCOME TO ISSUE 40

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

Editor: Judy Whiteside  
8 Bridgefoot Close, Boothstoun  
Manchester M28 1UG  
0161 702 6080  
editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Publicity Officer: Andy Simpson  
0161 764 0999  
press@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Web: mountain.rescue.org.uk

Advertising Sales: Pat Starkie  
01204 888 151  
pat@vintagechikz.co.uk

### NEXT ISSUE ISSUE 41

Copy Deadline:  
5 JUNE 2012

Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document.

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

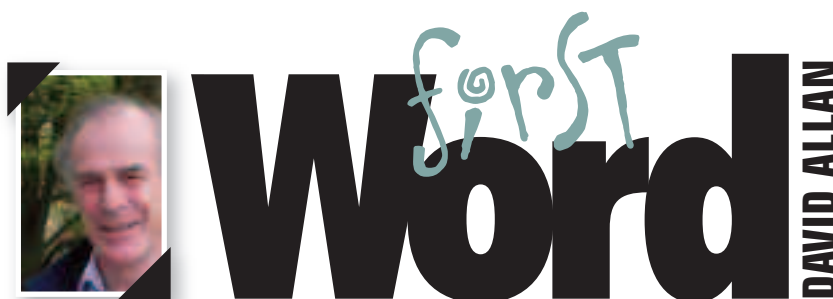
Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi) or Quark document with all relevant fonts and images.

### FRONT PAGE

Very difficult rescue on Easy Gully, Pavey Ark, Great Langdale with Langdale Ambleside MRT  
Photo: Paul Burke

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.

**mountain  
rescue**



## 'Man is great in that he is a bridge and not a goal.' Nietzsche

As we begin to implement the limited terms of office for MREW officers and appoint new people, this quotation has particular relevance. It has, in fact, got much wider resonance in mountain rescue beyond the national officers. There is a need to recognise that part of the importance of looking to the future is the identification of people who will continue to take things forward. Each individual holding a post in mountain rescue will acquire, one hopes, an intimate knowledge of the challenges that post presents and will therefore be in a unique position to contribute to the finding of successors. Indeed this might reasonably be considered to be an inherent element of a post. When we reflect on the achievements of people who have taken on leadership at team, regional and national levels over the years it is apparent how important robust mechanisms of succession must be. Ralph Nader understood this well.

*'I will start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders not more followers.'*

The planned replacement of officers provides an opportunity to review the content and responsibilities of the posts as their date for change approaches. Suggestions for modification of areas of responsibility will be welcomed as we try to keep the organisation relevant to a changing world.

The number of events with which we are involved, both within mountain rescue itself and in links with other bodies, has expanded enormously in the past few years. The list includes the recent growth of training days, UKSAR and other SAR body meetings etc etc. This prompts me to raise again the failure to make use of the calendar on the MREW website. We need a mechanism that will avoid events clashing and use of the website would be a relatively simple way of achieving this. Publication of a calendar in the magazine may be worth trying but this will never be as up to date as the website could be. The success of recent events such as the team leaders' day and the water conference in providing a forum for exchange of ideas and lessons learned across the country has been so good, we do not want to compromise future occasions by poor communication and planning of dates. Is there a reason why the website calendar is so unpopulated? An answer, or answers, to the question would be most welcome.

Finally we perhaps can look forward to a less challenging time for mountain rescue if a recent survey in the United States is an accurate forecast.

*'80% of North Americans believe that a risk-free world is a definite possibility!'* Daniel Kewski survey. ■

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## SPRING AT DMM

Spring has arrived and, like many others, we're looking forward to getting out and about and using our very comprehensive range of Rock Climbing gear. However, the dust has only just settled on the winter shows where we were delighted to unveil our new range of five axes which will be available in just six months time!

We've made use of our hot forging capabilities and used a hot forged handle for all models. This enables us to then over mould the grippy material to provide a tactile but tough solution. The construction of the axes uses all our experience and expertise from previous models and takes it a little further.

The range goes from the trusty Cirque which now features a hammer version in the shorter lengths too. The Raptor makes a come back as a strong reliable all round mountain tool ideal for working and instructing. The Fly now has a supportive, detachable hand rest, and then the Apex and the Switch provide two top alternatives for technical ice and mixed climbing. The ergonomics of both these tools has been painstakingly researched and calculated to give beautifully balanced tools which will compete with the very best.



**DMM**  
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## INSURANCE MATTERS

NEIL 'WOODIE' WOODHEAD

[insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

I've just returned from an excellent weekend in the Lake District, where I've been a dogsbody in glorious sunshine – quite a change for mid March! As an associate member of Lake District Mountain Rescue Search Dogs, I'm a big supporter of search dogs and the role they play in mountain rescue.

I've had quite a few interesting enquiries from different SARDA groups over the last year. There is some confusion as to what insurances we have in place to cover search dog and handler pairings. A fundamental point to remember is that the insurances only cover mountain rescue hill team members who are training through a SARDA or graded by a SARDA. If any SARDA decides to help train a dog belonging to a non-mountain rescue hill team member, then our insurances do not protect them. They must have their own insurance in place.

Furthermore it isn't possible for a team to give a non-mountain rescue hill team member some form of honorary status to get them insured for training a dog or being used on a call out. A SARDA takes full hill team members who are therefore deemed hill competent by their team, together with their dog, and trains them to be a search dog pairing. Our insurance policies are in place and paid for, to protect mountain and cave rescue teams and their members.

The main item being looked into is vehicle insurance and you will be aware from previous magazines that it is hoped some central funding will be available this year. Initially, it is likely to be a subsidised scheme but I hope central fundraising will enable us to fund the scheme fully in future years.

Thanks to all those teams that returned the vehicle survey. The deadline was extended until the end of February and it took some chasing at the end – only three teams didn't do so and are therefore not eligible to join the scheme. Communication seems to be a problem!

The information you all provided has enabled us to approach a number of insurers and, by the time you read this, we should have their proposals back for consideration. More at the May meeting, when we hope to have a firm

proposal on the table for you all – only three teams didn't do so and are therefore not eligible to join the scheme. My plan is still to have the scheme live for you in the summer.

The national personal accident (PA) policy, funded by various police forces, has been renewed with great assistance from our friends at North Wales Police. The insurers have agreed to two improvements to the cover. First the seven-day excess that has applied to the policy with effect from inception has been reduced to a nil excess and this cover backdated to 1 March 2011. Secondly, the maximum accumulation limit any one event has been increased from £2m to £5m.

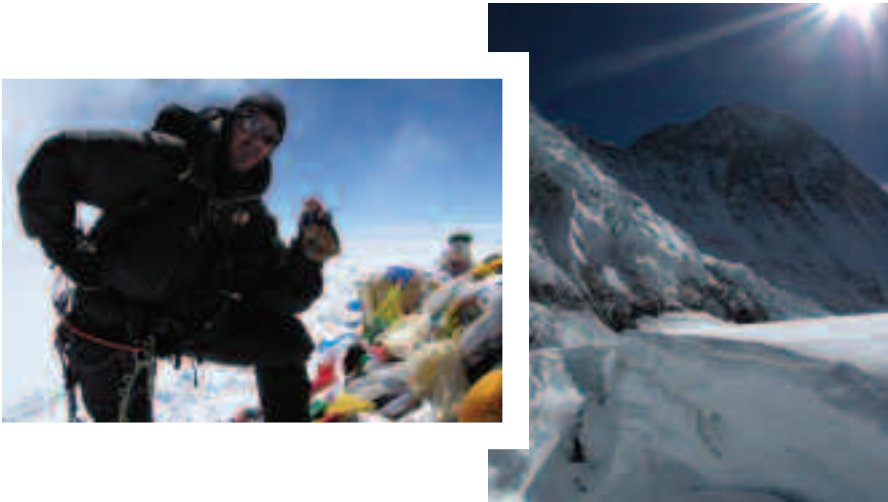
Once again I remind you that if your force hasn't signed up to the policy you should continue to question them about the cover you have and whether it compares. If you need help in speaking to them to explain the cover under the national policy, let me know.

The civil liability policy has also been renewed. It is important the annual declaration is completed by all teams, as I need to sign one declaration stating that no team is aware of an incident that may give rise to a claim. Please remember that the liability cover is provided by MREW to cover all our mountain and cave rescue teams, and search dog associations. It is funded centrally and you have nothing to pay from your team.

There were a couple of incidents reported to me with the declarations that haven't previously been declared. It is very important for the protection of your team and your trustees, that any reportable incident is notified to me – see the guidelines with the policy. If you fail to report an incident and a claim is subsequently made against your team, you run the risk of the insurers refusing to indemnify you – which would leave your team and your trustees to pay the claim. Personal injury claims can be very expensive – don't leave yourself open to the possibility of the insurance not covering you. It could be a very costly mistake.

I will be at the May meeting if any of you have any questions. As always any queries please email and I'll give what help I can: [insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk). ■

## DOUBLE EVEREST SUMMITEER **TIM MOSEDALE** AT THIS YEAR'S UK MOUNTAIN RESCUE CONFERENCE



Plans are well underway for this year's UK Mountain Rescue Conference, with confirmed speakers on a variety of subjects under the heading 'Technology in Mountain Rescue. The Saturday evening speaker this year will be Tim Mosedale. Based in Keswick, Tim is a climber, instructor and local guide, but more importantly, only the tenth Brit to summit Everest from both sides. He's also a regular visitor to Ama Dablam, having run successful expeditions there for the past nine years. In fact, he's off there again in October. We're lucky to pin him down between his many expedition and climbing commitments so come along and enjoy the evening!

This year's conference will be held at the Headingley site of Leeds Metropolitan University over the weekend of Friday 7 to Sunday 9 September. Keela have signed up to be a sponsor and will be providing a free shirt to each attendee.

Places for the conference itself are limited to 300 places this year – a booking form will be coming out to teams just after Easter.

At the time of going to press we did not have a full speaker list, but you can rest assured it'll be packed with interesting topics! Check out the conference webpage for updates on speakers and prices (to be confirmed).

In the meantime, if you have any enquiries regarding conference booking, potential topics or speakers, please contact Peter Howells on 01633 254244 or 07836 382029 or email [plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk).

### NATIONAL MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE AWARENESS WEEKEND

Date: Bank Holiday Weekend, 5-7 May  
Location: Locally to all teams

### NATIONAL TRAINING DAY

Places: 60  
Date: Saturday 5 May (One day)  
Location: Plas y Brenin  
Contact: Mike Margeson  
01229 889721  
[mmargeson@hotmail.com](mailto:mmargeson@hotmail.com)

### MREW BUSINESS MEETING AND SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Places: 100  
Date: Saturday 19 May (One day)  
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton

### QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE BEACONS

Date: Monday 4 June  
Contact: Peter Smith  
[secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
Location: All MR and CR teams on local high point

### SEARCH FIELD SKILLS

Places: 30  
Date: 24-26 August (3 days)  
Location: Bangor University  
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE  
01248 716971 or 07811 041227  
[asgjones@cix.co.uk](mailto:asgjones@cix.co.uk)

### SEARCH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Places: 30  
Date: 27-31 August (5 days)  
Location: Bangor University  
Contact: Dr ASG Jones MBE  
As above

### UK MR CONFERENCE

Date: 7-9 September (2 days)  
Location: Leeds University  
Contact: Peter Howells OBE MStJ  
01633 254244 or 07836 382029  
[plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:plhowells@plhowells.fsnet.co.uk)

### MREW BUSINESS MEETING AND SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Places: 100  
Date: Saturday 17 November (One day)  
Location: Lancs Police HQ, Hutton  
Contact: Peter Smith  
[secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

## MARCO TRAILERS AND THE MCA

Continuing a relationship which dates back to 1998, Marco Trailers are designers and manufacturers of specialist information trailers to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Due to its size, ease of handling and ability to be trailed by the MCA's fleet of Ford Focus-sized vehicles, a total of nine Marco X25 2.5 metre exhibition trailers are operated by the MCA.

The brief was to supply exhibition units capable of being trailed by a small family saloon car and, when uncoupled from the towing

vehicle, be easily manoeuvred on varying terrain by not more than one or two MCA volunteers. The trailer had to be quick and easy to set up, carry enough promotional material to display the role of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and also promote safe maritime practice. The final specification included full wrap body graphics, digitally printed graphics panels, flags, headboard, full length brochure display with integral storage and leaflet dispensers.

Together with the latest flat screen technology, sound

system and DVD player the MCA X25's attract attention by all means possible. The trailers are used at events throughout the country and are taken to some of the most remote parts of the UK proving that, wherever they go the MCA, via the Marco X25, are sure to be noticed. To find out more, go to [marcotrailers.co.uk](http://marcotrailers.co.uk) or email [rob@marcotrailers.co.uk](mailto:rob@marcotrailers.co.uk).



# NATIONAL TRAINING DAY

**PLAS Y BRENIN: SATURDAY, 5 MAY 2012**

After the success of the 2011 Training Day Mountain Rescue England and Wales will host the 2012 event at the National Mountaineering Centre Capel Curig.

## TIMETABLE & SESSIONS



10.00-10.30: Coffee  
10.30 Introduction  
welcome and admin  
10.45-12.45:  
Morning sessions  
12.45-1.45:  
Lunch - bring own  
or buy at the bar

1.45-3.45:  
Afternoon sessions  
4.00 Departure  
at the latest

### Equipment

**Richard Terrell**  
Including Mechanical  
advantage and pulley  
session

### Water Rescue

**Ewan Thomas**

### Technical Rope Rescue

**Ogwen Valley MRO**

### Medical Workshop

**John Ellerton**  
Update of findings of the  
Analgesic Survey  
Managing lower leg  
injuries

### Vehicles and Driving

**Daryl Garfield**

### IT and Technology

**Mark Lewis**



We have 150 places - 25 per session - all of which will be repeated in the afternoon. To help planning and session allocation, Richard asks could you please book places as a team if possible as this will help logistics. To book, email Richard with team member names and the sessions you would like to attend. First come first served so early booking advised to avoid disappointment.

**Please email Richard Prideaux on  
richprideaux@gmail.com**

**or call him on**

**07799 031128 or 01824 703 121**



## VACANCIES FOR OFFICER POSTS PETER SMITH

Three officers will stand down during 2012. Vacancies will occur for vice chairman, assistant secretary and medical officer. Regions and teams are requested to nominate successors. Those nominated will be invited to submit a CV for mountain rescue and a letter detailing relevant experience and showing how that will be used in fulfilling the role.

All applicants will be invited to attend an interview which has three purposes – to agree the role requirements; discuss its potential development and identify the preferred applicant.

Typically, the interview panel will comprise three persons: one MREW officer, one regional chairman and one regional rep. Interviews will take place in Lymm, on a mutually acceptable date. Submit nominations to me via email at [secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

## TRAINING NEWS MIKE MARGESON

### PARTY LEADER AND TEAM MEMBER GUIDELINES

Selwyn Keenan is now well underway updating and reviewing the MREW Party Leader and Team Member guidelines. Many thanks to him for coordinating this project and also thanks to all those teams and regions who

have responded. Although a timetable has been laid out, it's still not too late to send in your team's thoughts and ideas on updating these important documents: email [selwyn.keenan3@virgin.net](mailto:selwyn.keenan3@virgin.net).

## NATIONAL TRAINING DAY 5 MAY PYB

Outside our national conferences, this is probably our most important training event of the year with six workshops, running morning and afternoon. A big thank you to Richard Prideaux who is handling all the bookings to get folk on the requested workshops. There are already 100+ team members booked in but we still have some places left – max is 150 so book soon via [richprideaux@gmail.com](mailto:richprideaux@gmail.com).

## LATER IN THE YEAR...

Later in the summer we have the Party Leader course, the annual round of search management courses and, of course, our biennial UK conference at Leeds University the weekend 7-9 September. We're still working on the programme so if you have any training-related topics or speakers you'd like to have included please email [trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

## THE LONDON MARATHON DAVID ALLAN

In December, each of the charities that compose the

Princes' Charity Forum were offered five places to run in the London Marathon in 2012.

The timescale to find runners to represent MREW was very short and we therefore relied on known marathon addicts to put the list together. In addition to the five who will run, it was necessary to find three reserves.

The five for this year are Karen Sturgess (Keswick), Adi Taylor (Buxton), Matt Dooley (Glossop) and Dave Howarth (Kendal). The reserves are David Coxon (Coniston), Jon Jones (Derby) and Neil Roden (Edale).

We have agreed that this year's reserves will be offered first choice to run in 2013. All the participants will raise money to support MREW. It is expected that the offer of five places will continue for at least five years and there is therefore an opportunity for more people across all of mountain rescue to participate. As already mentioned, the timescale was very short on this occasion and it was not possible to seek people from every corner. I hope we will be able to correct this in coming years. Anyone interested in running the London Marathon in any of the next four years, please contact me.

Until this opportunity arrived I had only a vague awareness of how sought after London Marathon places actually are and therefore what a bonus it is to have access to these places.



## THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE BEACONS

### PETER SMITH

On Monday 4 June, the aim is to light 2012 (or more) beacons throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom and other countries around the world to mark this important and historic moment in the Queen's reign. Her Majesty has graciously agreed to light the National Beacon on Monday 4 June, following the concert at Buckingham Palace.

Bruno Peek OBE MVO OPR is the Pageantmaster for the event. He has issued an invitation for every mountain and cave rescue team throughout England and Wales to take part in this nationwide celebration by lighting a beacon on a high point in their home patch.

Teams taking part should complete the Beacon Registration Form online by going to [www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk](http://www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk) as soon as possible. And be prepared to resort to Plan B if your preferred location has been booked by others!

I am compiling a log of participating teams. Please keep me informed of progress: [secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

Britain has a long history of beacon lighting spanning many hundreds of years. Previous beacon events include:

- 1897 – Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee
- 1977 – The Queen's Silver Jubilee
- 1981 – Operation Seafire to launch Maritime England
- 1988 – Fire Over England to mark the 400th anniversary of the sighting of the Spanish Armada
- 1992 – Beacon Europe
- 1995 – 50th Anniversary of VE Day
- 1999 – Beacon Millennium on 31 December
- 2002 – The Queen's Golden Jubilee
- 2002 – Golden Jubilee Summer Party
- 2005 – Trafalgar Weekend to mark the 200th anniversary of Nelson's victory.



## SO MUCH MORE THAN THE LONDON MARATHON...

Dave Howarth is one of those running the marathon for mountain rescue. A deputy team leader of Kendal MRT, he's been in the team about eight years and has just started training a search dog with LDMRSD. Fern is an English Shepherd – one of only 44 of her breed in the country and the first to

be trained as a mountain rescue search dog. This will be Dave's first marathon and he hasn't yet set himself a time or an amount he wants to raise. And the marathon isn't the only thing he'll be doing to raise funds. Following the marathon, he's planning the Keswick to Barrow (40 miles) and then, probably at the

end of May, the Bob Graham Round – 42 of the highest peaks in the lakes, 72 miles 27,000ft of ascent, hopefully in under 24 hours! Sounds as though he's in for an exhausting few months! His justgiving page, if you'd like to support him, is [justgiving.com/Dave-Howarth-KendalMRT](http://justgiving.com/Dave-Howarth-KendalMRT).

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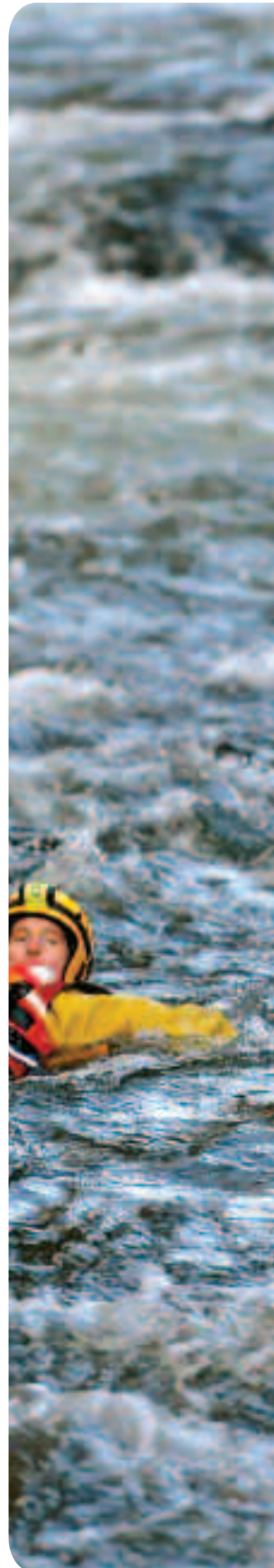
Rescue 3(UK)  
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Frongoch, Bala, Gwynedd  
LL23 7NU

Tel: 01678 522035

E-mail: [info@rescue3.co.uk](mailto:info@rescue3.co.uk)

Website: [www.rescue3.co.uk](http://www.rescue3.co.uk)

uclan



**T**he second National Water Conference was held in January, hosted by Edale MRT. The aim was to provide continuing education for all mountain rescue members involved in water rescue and water incident management. Over 100 people attended, representing 28 teams across England and Wales plus a few from supporting organisations from the past two years.

Planning began following the success of the inaugural event in 2011, with the decision to host again in the Peak District. The National Water Conference (NWC) Committee was rejuvenated with the addition of members from other teams across MREW, to maximise appeal. With the support of Peter Smith, invitations were extended to teams across the UK and there was a good demand for available places. A massive amount of work and effort went into organising what proved to be a successful and educationally valuable conference.

Following the original request in 2010 from the National Water Committee for the development of a National Water Conference, a strategy was developed during that year by Martin Bills, Neil Hayter, Laura Cooper and myself. This identified a number of concepts, aims and objectives. It is from this that the conference is planned. Examples of these include:

- Improve safety and competence for all members and those affected by mountain rescue activities in and around water.
- Continual development for water incident managers.
- A forum to develop networking and the sharing of experiences.

IMAGE © CHERYL KING  
[WWW.CKINGIMAGES.CO.UK](http://WWW.CKINGIMAGES.CO.UK)



## MREW NATIONAL WATER CONFERENCE EDALE BASE. 21 JANUARY

ANDY LEE

- Maximise opportunities to support or lead research topics.
- Develop new practitioner skills through workshops.
- Raise awareness of national and organisational guidance relating to water management and activities.
- Improve understanding and relationships of key stakeholders.
- Platform to deliver salient updates.

We also recognised the target audience, without doubt, as teams within Mountain Rescue England and Wales. Every effort is made to achieve the highest standard, optimising value for money opportunities and a full review process through feedback forms and a post-conference report.

It is always a pleasure to be supported by volunteers who take pleasure from seeing a job well done. The organising committee of Neil Hayter (vice chairman), Martin Bills and Laura Cooper (Edale MRT), as well as two additional members who joined this year – Chris Onions from Ogwen Valley and Dave Morgan from Glossop. Delegates were provided with conference packs including information on the speakers, conference committee, sponsors and next year's event, to be hosted on 19 January in the Peak District.

In a change to last year, we had a morning of lectures, followed by an afternoon of various break-out sessions on relevant and thought-provoking topics.

After formally welcoming one-and-all to the exciting event I was able to introduce Ewan Thomas who provided an update as National Water Officer on what is new on the national front.

Next was Lyle Brotherton. It was at this point everyone in the room sat upright with ears firmly pinned

back. There was no room to hide from a truly energetic presentation. Lyle is an active member of Scottish MR who both lectures and instructs Advanced SAR Navigation to MR, SAR teams, and the Special Forces, and is author of 'The Ultimate Navigation Manual'. He talked about Navigation for Water Incidents. This world-renowned expert in navigation was both enthusiastic and inspiring – reflected by the extremely positive feedback. The information on the applications of GPS within MR was especially interesting.

Professor Mike Tipton provided an excellent talk on Medical Considerations in Water Rescue. He has spent over 25 years researching and advising in the areas of thermoregulation, environmental and occupational physiology and survival in the sea and published over 350 scientific papers, reports, chapters and books in these areas. In 2002, he published 'Essentials of Sea Survival' co-written with Dr Frank Golden, who we are pleased to say also attended the conference. Their expert information on the reality of rescue from water and, in particular, the impact on decision-making was cited as a highlight by many delegates.

DCI Gerwyn Lloyd provided an educational and somewhat controversial session on Fatal Incident Protocols. A full time officer for North Wales Police, he is an active mountaineer and has been involved in the investigation of numerous fatalities in the mountains over many years. His combined investigative and mountaineering skills have enabled him to develop and deliver the Fatal Incidents Protocol training ongoing in North Wales since 2003, recognised nationally as best practice. In respect to

gathering evidence and photography, the importance of working alongside your local police service was reinforced, and a colourful and intense set of questions was halted by remembering to always have charged camera batteries!

Chris Onions gave a valuable session on weir risk assessments, being driven forward nationally by Rescue3. Whilst a technique many have seen before, the session was delivered with such passion I'd be surprised if anyone left without learning taking place. I'm confident understanding of application, limitations and improved ability to utilise the skill within a management role, were achieved.

During lunch, delegates were able to browse the trade stands. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors, including Boundtree Medical, Futuresafe, MFC Survival, SP Services, Speedings and Safequip. Coopers Café in Edale provided a wonderful lunch, with more cake than even mountain rescue delegates could manage!

After lunch, delegates attended the various break-out sessions. Martin Bills gave an insight into Vehicle Rescue in Water, providing valuable tips and practical demonstrations, battling against the elements to enlighten interested and enthusiastic delegates. Al Read talked about Water Search Skills, based on his expert knowledge and experience while Chris Onions held a further group session on Weir Risk Assessments and completion of the relevant paperwork.

I provided an insight into the Water Incident Management Course to be delivered this year. Ewan Thomas hosted a group discussion to plan the next five years in water rescue. The

afternoon closed with a Q&A session for the entire panel, which generated some interesting debate and thoughts, and closing remarks from me at the end of an extremely successful and enjoyable day.

Feedback was extremely positive. Lectures and speakers were well received and a number of suggestions made for more water kit displays and future lecture topics – of which most are already in the pipeline!

A special thanks to Edale MRT for their hospitality and support of the event. Edale's support group, Friends In High Places, provided a second year of support in various roles. But what do Edale get out of this? A clean base, with many members taking time to clean in the weeks running up to the event – after all Edale base is sited on a cement works!

The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the planning and organisation (not forgetting family and friends who help make these events possible).

Next year's event will be in the Peak District, the location dependent on interest received. The current venue has a maximum capacity of 130. A decision will be made on bookings, so book now to avoid disappointment – bookings can be made via the website.

We are keen to use the day to share experiences and lessons learned. If you have an interesting water-related case/incident during 2012, please get in touch and we will aim to include them. We value your thoughts – any suggestion to support the planning of the day or topics to consider, please contact us via the NWC email address.

Finally, I would like to thank Neil Hayter for his huge efforts and continued support. ■

# WHAT DID THEY EVER DO FOR YOU? the execs

If you've ever wondered who those invisible people were, 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....



## **CHAIRMAN: DAVID ALLAN**

**EMAIL:** [allan986@btinternet.com](mailto:allan986@btinternet.com)

Represents the interests of mountain rescue to the Government, the emergency services and other SAR organisations and The Princes' Charities Forum. Currently involved with the BMC and MLTE in the development of a national Safety Forum and, with Daryl Garfield, is seeking to establish national guidelines for team vehicle livery.



## **PRESS OFFICER: ANDY SIMPSON**

**EMAIL:** [press@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:press@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Represents MREW to the national press, TV and radio, liaises with Clarence House regarding any Royal involvement in MR, supports teams in their own publicity, advises on corporate identity, and works with the fundraising group to further sponsorship deals with companies such as Goodyear – currently helping develop the relationship with Go Outdoors.



## **SECRETARY: PETER SMITH**

**EMAIL:** [secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Acts as an interface between teams, regions and the national body, records and produces minutes at MREW meetings and generally deals with reams of admin.



## **MEDICAL: JOHN ELLERTON**

**EMAIL:** [medical@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:medical@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Represents the interests of mountain rescue in medical matters to government, the emergency services and ICAR, and maintains the 'morphine' licence. Currently looking at possibilities for updating the Casualty Care handbook and conducts mountain medicine research.



## **TREASURER: PENNY BROCKMAN**

**EMAIL:** [treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Besides ensuring the smooth running of MREW finances, is currently working with Insurance Officer Neil Woodhead, the insurers and police authorities to thrash out better deals for us in insurance, and with the fundraising group and Tony Rich to secure sponsorship deals to benefit team members.



## **VEHICLES: DARYL GARFIELD**

**EMAIL:** [vehicles@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:vehicles@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

All things vehicle oriented including liaising with the police, Department of Transport and other relevant bodies. So... driver competency guidelines, fleet insurance, blues and twos, vehicle livery...



## **PRESIDENT: PETER BELL**

**EMAIL:** [president@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:president@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Demonstrates wholehearted support for mountain rescue, attending national meetings and acting as an ambassador outside the organisation. Whilst there is a requirement for him to remain apart from day-to-day business, he thoroughly enjoys engaging in the technical discussions.



## **TRAINING: MIKE MARGESON**

**EMAIL:** [trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:trainingofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Instrumental in creating the MREW Rope Rescue Guidelines and successfully re-establishing a national training day at Plas y Brenin. Currently initiating and developing new courses, such as media skills and 'train the trainers' and updating party leader and team member guidelines.



## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY: PETER HOWELLS**

**EMAIL:** [assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:assistant-secretary@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Organises MREW search/management courses, represents us on the Youth United National Committee and co-ordinates our role in the UK MR conferences – currently working with Leeds Metropolitan University for 2012, and also working with Peter Smith on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee initiatives.



## **CENTRAL PURCHASING: NEIL RODEN**

**EMAIL:** [purchasing@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:purchasing@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Chairs the Forward Planning Group part of which involves developing a central purchasing policy. Currently part of the team working with Go Outdoors developing ideas for fundraising and gear testing.



## **FUNDRAISING: MIKE FRANCE**

**EMAIL:** [nationalfundraising@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:nationalfundraising@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Chairs the fundraising group to develop revenue and PR opportunities and further sponsorship deals with a variety of companies including developing the relationship with Go Outdoors. Also acts as the link with the Princes' charities.



## **INSURANCE: NEIL 'WOODIE' WOODHEAD**

**EMAIL:** [insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:insurance@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Currently reviewing all mountain rescue-relevant insurances, including developing guidance notes and presentations for teams, looking at a scheme for vehicle insurance and possible enhancements to personal accident cover.



## **WATER: EWAN THOMAS**

**EMAIL:** [water@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:water@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Liaises with DEFRA and the fire service in the development of guidelines for water rescue, training and best practice. Currently creating a central register of water resources.



## **EQUIPMENT: RICHARD TERRELL**

**EMAIL:** [equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:equipmentofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Looks at all things equipment, reviewing, researching and liaising with suppliers and manufacturers and is currently involved in development of the new stretcher project.



## **COMMS: MARK LEWIS**

**EMAIL:** [communications@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:communications@mountain.rescue.org.uk)

Aims to develop better comms technology for MR, most notably working with Mpyx to provide mapping systems. Also sits on the UKSAR Comms working group.

**PLUS...**  
**VICE CHAIRMAN: TONY JONES**  
**EMAIL:** [vice-chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:vice-chairman@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
**STATISTICS: GED FEENEY**  
**EMAIL:** [statistics@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:statistics@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
**MAGAZINE: JUDY WHITESIDE**  
**EMAIL:** [editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:editor@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
**LEGAL: TONY RICH**  
**EMAIL:** [legal@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:legal@mountain.rescue.org.uk)  
**CAVE RESCUE: BILL WHITEHOUSE**  
**EMAIL:** [billrhw@aol.com](mailto:billrhw@aol.com)



PHOTO: GERALD DAVISON, NEWSAR

## **MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE TEAM LEADERS' DAY 4 FEBRUARY: RUTHIN SCHOOL**

### **RICHARD PRIDEAUX DEPUTY TEAM LEADER NEWSAR**

A mildly damp Saturday in February saw team leaders and other team representatives visiting the small North Wales market town of Ruthin for the national Team Leaders' Day. This time around the event was being hosted by North East Wales SAR (NEWSAR) on behalf of the North Wales Mountain Rescue Association (NWMRA), at the historic Ruthin private school.

Delegates from all over England and Wales came and watched the phone signal disappear as they crossed over the Clwydian Range into the Vale of Clwyd. The agenda ranged from reports on trailing dogs and updates on national projects to a gripping account of a prolonged technical rescue by the Ogwen Valley MRO.

After an opening (in Cymraeg and English, of course!) by NEWSAR deputy team leader Huw Birrell and North Wales Police Deputy Chief Constable Ian Shannon, Iain Ashcroft took to the stage with a presentation on the history and operations of NWMRA and the host team, North East Wales SAR.

Next up was OVMRO team leader John Hulse with an update on the SARCALL system and particularly the

'Incident Log' feature. This allows for teams to keep a live log as a job unfolds on the SARCALL site, and has been used successfully by numerous teams. Our team has found it to be very useful on longer missing person searches, where lots of decisions and actions are being taken by various people at different stages and it's handy to be able to review all of these on one screen. It's also useful when calling for assistance from neighbouring teams, as their team leaders can read the log and arrive on scene with a good working knowledge of the situation so far.

Iain Nicholson followed with a look at trailing dogs within SARDA, how they work and some of the operational concerns that need to be taken into account when deploying them onto a search. Before lunch, Russ Hore gave a live demonstration of the innovative SARLOC system. He sent the initial text message with the embedded link out to the 'misper' (NEWSAR team member Mike Jones), who was sat in his nearby garden waiting to spring into calamity. The missing person was soon located on the mapping screen, and an emergency cup of tea was dispatched out to him!

After lunch there were updates on the new National Police Air Service from Paul Davies, of North Wales Police ASU, and the progress of the vehicles, driving standards and the ongoing driving survey by Darryl Garfield. The importance of returning this survey as soon as possible was stressed to all teams present, as it is difficult to move forward as an organisation unless you are aware of what each part of that organisation is doing.

Dave Simcock Roberts and John Hulse then presented a piece on the role of mountain rescue within the Silver Control Cell at North Wales Police control room, with a case study on the severe snow event that the north and west of the area experienced in 2011 and the MR coordination of resources. During heavy snowfall, MR vehicles were some of the few emergency service units left capable of operating on the roads in the region, and team leaders from teams across the area took shifts in Silver Control to help coordinate the numerous roles MR performed during that period.

Finally OVMRO Team Leader Al Read presented an account of a

gripping rescue on the infamous Craig yr Ysfa performed by OVMRO last summer. What began as an easy multipitch V.Diff outing by a local mountaineering club ended in over 25 team members and over a kilometre of rope being committed to the job. The rescue lasted over fifteen hours and showed once again the huge dedication of the MR volunteer. The job will certainly go down in NWMRA history as one of the toughest rescues in the region.

Finally, there was the necessary step of herding everybody out onto the front lawn of the school for the 'group photo'... why is it MR folk can perform complex tasks in poor weather at 3.00am on top of a mountain, but can never organise themselves into a neat line? The poor photographer was nearly in the next county before he got everybody into the shot...

It was great to see some old friends, make some new ones and remind ourselves of why cooperation between teams and regions is the future of mountain rescue. See you next year! ■

## LAKE DISTRICT

### INCIDENT NUMBERS FALLING?

Richard Warren writes... Incident statistics are now in for 2011 and, after a manic five-year period in the Lakes with record numbers of incidents, last year brought some respite with numbers significantly down. Lake District teams dealt with 424 individual incidents last year. This represents a remarkable 29% decrease that can only be partially explained by the previous years' very high figures (600 incidents plus the additional high numbers of alerts). A fall in visitor numbers and a different type of person coming to the area appears the likeliest explanation. Perhaps more of the people venturing onto the fells have improved their experience or knowledge. Better weather may also have contributed to the improvement. There appears to be a raft of possible causes. We might hope that one possible reason is down to the numerous public awareness initiatives that have been rolled out over the past four years throughout the country. LDSAMRA, in conjunction with Cicerone, promoted the 'How to Stay Safe and Enjoy the Fells' leaflet. This can be found and printed from the LDSAMRA website ([ldsamra.org.uk](http://ldsamra.org.uk)). The aim is to help people make the right choices before going into the hills and provide information for what to do in the event of an accident and how to avoid getting lost or benighted – a very helpful addition to anyone's rucksack when heading into the mountains. There has also been a reduction in the number of fatalities (43%), which is very welcome news, but it only takes a small number to change this percentage. It is clearly linked to the overall drop in incidents which, in turn, is linked to visitor numbers

### LAKE DISTRICT TEAMS WELCOME THE NEW CHIEF CONSTABLE

In February this year Stuart Hyde took over the reins from Craig Mackey to become Cumbria's new Chief Constable. Mr Hyde has always been a strong supporter of mountain rescue in his previous position as Cumbria's Deputy Chief Constable and we look forward to his continued support for the future. Craig Mackey has taken on the job of Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan police. Mr Mackey joined Cumbria Police in 2007 as Chief Constable and worked closely with the region and the teams throughout his term of office. We wish them both well in their new and challenging roles and welcome Mr Hyde as our new Chief Constable.



MR STUART HYDE, THE NEW CHIEF CONSTABLE OF CUMBRIA CONSTABULARY

and weather. The level of danger also plays a part in determining fatality rates. We have real concerns about the deaths occurring in water-related activities. 50% of the people requiring assistance were fatalities. This is a very sobering statistics and should alert participants to the need for proper training and supervision; equally, local knowledge should temper any ambitious plans in view of the behaviour of local winds and lake temperatures.

### 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LDSAMRA

The 60th anniversary of LDSAMRA (founded as LDMAA in 1952), reported in the last issue of Mountain Rescue magazine, was to be marked by a major celebration event on Saturday 5 May 2012. The event included the re-enactment of an early rescue on Great Gable which was the catalyst for the formation of the twelve Lake District teams. Although planning for the event was well advanced, the decision to cancel had to be made. There were a number of circumstances leading up to this, including a major outdoor event planned on the same day. This being Bank Holiday weekend – potentially very busy for the teams anyway – meant

the event would have been at great risk. It was not an easy decision to make and we apologise to anyone who may have been planning to attend.

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR STEPHE

The LDSAMRA AGM in March honoured Stephe Cove of **Duddon & Furness MRT** with a regional distinguished service award. Stephe recently stood down as chairman of the team but remains a fully active team member. He joined Millom FRT 39 years ago, in 1973, and has served continuously since then. For 27 years, he held the post of chairman, including ten years with the new team formed after the merger of the Furness and Millom teams.

During the early years of Millom FRT he played a critical role in sustaining the team's activities. In particular he represented the team at regional meetings, at the then Lake District Mountain Accident Association (LDMAA). Through his teaching background he helped spearhead the involvement of local Scout groups and Army Cadets with their training, mentoring them to

## WOMEN NAVIGATORS DONATE TO LOCAL RESCUE TEAM



SAL CAWLEY HANDS OVER A CHEQUE FOR £275 TO DARYL GARFIELD (LEFT), KAZ FRITH AND GLENN MITCHELL (RIGHT) – WITH DRAM AND DOTTIE

Walks for Women, a local Penrith business, has been raising money for **Penrith MRT** since April 2010 when the company ran its first navigation, map and compass reading course.

Sal Cawley of Walks for Women wanted to make the connection between learning navigation skills. 'Women who attend our courses are asked if they would like to make a voluntary donation to Penrith team in recognition of the excellent work they do. To date this has raised

£275 and the response has been 100% positive from our clients.'

Sal handed over the cheque for £275 to Penrith team members, Glenn Mitchell, Daryl Garfield and Kaz Frith – accompanied by Dottie and Dram – at the team's base, in early March.

'It's really good to know someone like Sal is offering navigation courses locally,' says Glenn, 'as poor navigation is at the root of many of our call-outs.' Sal and Jackie Jackson of Walks for Women say their intention is to

continue to run low cost training courses to help women develop their confidence and build new skills to keep themselves safe on the fells.

'The feedback we get is very much about confidence and having the knowledge to use a map and compass in all sorts of walking situations,' says Sal. 'Many of our participants are local Cumbrian women who want to be more confident when out walking on their own or when taking children and friends on a walk and they've certainly

been keen to support MRT too. We encourage women to look at the Penrith team website ([penrithmrt.org.uk](http://penrithmrt.org.uk)) for additional safety tips and weather information.'

'If we can offer the training women want and also raise more money for our local mountain rescue team, that's a brilliant combination,' agrees Jackie. Further details of dates and programmes are online at: **walksforwomen** **lakedistrict.co.uk**.



STEPHE COVE (LEFT) RECEIVES HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FROM RICHARD WARREN

become team members on their eighteenth birthday. He also regularly undertook safety awareness talks at schools and local groups. Most significantly Stephe played a huge role in the small group managing the very difficult three-year process in the merger of the Millom and Furness teams to form Duddon & Furness MRT. His energy, wisdom and experience were significant in this merger along with his positive drive. All of these factors, and his organisational skills, played an important role in the success of the merger. Not satisfied just with seeing the new team formed, Stephe spent the last ten years working hard to make sure it was a success. Many team members are long standing friends and were extremely sad to see him stand down from his chairman's role in early February this year. Having already made an outstanding contribution to mountain rescue he will continue as a team member where his experience will be invaluable for the future.

### NEW MOUNTAIN RESCUE LEADER FOR PENRITH TEAM

Ian Clemmett is retiring from **Penrith MRT** and standing down as team leader after sixteen years of service (three as team leader) as he is leaving the area following a change of employment. Ian has been involved in a huge variety of incidents, including rescues on High Street, night time searches on Cross Fell and the floods of 2005. 'Some of my fondest memories are to do with those occasions when the team has pulled



IAN CLEMMETT (RIGHT) HANDS OVER TO MIKE HILL AS PENRITH TEAM LEADER

together at times of particular duress and sometimes in quite harrowing and difficult circumstances,' says Ian. 'One particular incident involved a multi-team search for a missing person in the Haweswater area. We found the walker's body at the summit trig point of High Street and had to wait while a stretcher was brought up so we could carry him down. It may have been summer but it was cold, wet and very windy. A tragic outcome, but there was a tremendous sense of camaraderie as members from the different teams all mucked in together. The teamwork at times like that is priceless.'

Mike Hill, who has been a member of the team for eight years, takes on the responsibility of team leader. He is looking forward to maintaining the team's already high standards in areas such as casualty care, search management and water rescue.

Mike Graham, who has been a team member for 29 years, is also retiring, and the team would like to thank both Ian and Mike for their service and wish them all the best for the future.

## MID PENNINE

### A DAY TO REMEMBER

Paul Durham, of **Bowland Pennine MRT** writes... It's not very often team members enthusiastically take time off work – except for call-outs naturally – but such a rarity occurred on Tuesday 7 February.

Work on this rare event started almost a year earlier. Chairman Cox became aware Her Majesty The Queen had made it known that as part of her Jubilee Year she would like to meet mountain rescue teams from across the country and, geographically speaking, we are ideally placed to welcome her being, as the tag line states – 'central to the UK'. Let me explain.

If a box is drawn around the UK and the diagonals crossed they intersect above a small village called Dunsop Bridge in the centre of The Trough of Bowland in Lancashire. Don't take my word for it, visit the hamlet on your way up the M6 on your way to the Lake District. Turn right as you reach Lancaster and head east for approximately half an hour and you'll be in the middle of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The plaque by the phone box in the village says 'Centre of the UK'. But please don't tell anyone else, you'll spoil the place!

Anyway, I digress. Take a back bearing for about a mile from the centre of the village and on the left hand side of the road, just by the cattle grid, you'll see our headquarters Smelt Mill. Now, whilst looking at the plaque on the wall that says 'Smelt Mill' cast your gaze up the fellside, on the opposite side of which is The Whitewell Estate, headquarters of The Duchy of Lancaster, the head of which is none other than Her Majesty The Queen. So it was quite natural for our chairman to put quill



## LAND ROVER DONATION CHAIN CONTINUES

When the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge donated a Land Rover wedding gift to mountain rescue last summer, they probably never guessed it would be the start of a chain of donations that has gone from Patterdale in the Lake District to Glossop in the Peak District and will soon stretch a link further to Snowdonia in North Wales!

When the Patterdale team's name was drawn from the hat to receive the 'Royal' Land Rover, there was an immediate opportunity to pass on an existing vehicle to another team elsewhere in the country and a second draw selected Glossop MRT. The resulting handover was at Patterdale's base on Sunday 29 January where Patterdale chairman, John Williams, handed over the keys and the vehicle to members of the Glossop team.

'We were extremely fortunate ourselves to win the Land Rover donated to Mountain Rescue England and Wales by the Royal couple and in turn we are delighted to pass on our older vehicle to the Glossop team. Although it is ten years old, I am confident it will give the team sterling service.'

But that is not the end of things as Pete Stewart, chairman of Glossop MRT takes up the story. 'It seemed only fair to pass on the good fortune to another team so we contacted all teams in MREW and were approached by three that were in need of a second-hand Land Rover. We had a draw and South Snowdonia MRT won our old vehicle. They're due to pick it up as soon as Patterdale's has been resigned in Glossop's name.'



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**John Graham**

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# regional News

to parchment and, in his best Shakespearean script, invite Her Majesty round for a cup of tea the next time she was passing. We thought the letter – complete with Penny Black – lost in the post, for a year went by before a note, wrapped around the shaft of an arrow, slammed into the tree trunk. The invitation had been accepted by The Earl of Wessex Prince Edward. After a melee of security meetings, numerous hushed conversations and references to ‘The VIP’, and the beavering of membership in frantic cleaning up mode, the base started to look something like.

It’s been said that The Royal Family believes the world smells of gloss paint. Not ours. Pledge, Jeyes Fluid and the unmistakable odour of a bulging, dust-filled cyclone vacuum cleaner container (can’t call it a bag as it doesn’t have one).

The day dawned beautifully with a frosty cloudless sky and, for an hour, the Earl saw displays of the Little Dragon and vacmat, stretcher handling and swiftwater rescue equipment, followed by a horizontal stretcher lower off our indoor training tower and a pick-off of a cragfast climber from our 7-metre high indoor climbing wall (available for joint fundraising ‘Challenge Everest’ sponsored events!) The Earl then chatted with our two SARDA handlers and our mountain bike unit lads, followed by a conversation with our controller about the merits of our mobile office aka the control vehicle and its state-of-the-art technology. Finally, the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the visit and a shaking of hands with seven members who have just received their forty year service certificates.

A good day was had by all before the Earl was whisked off to Blackpool Pleasure Beach to have his picture taken with Sponge Bob!



ABERGLASLYN TEAM MEMBERS PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE GIBSON (WWW.VITAL-IMAGES.CO.UK)

## NORTH WALES

### ABERGLASLYN TEAM A STEP NEARER TO THEIR NEW HOME

Helen Vaughan-Jones writes... **Aberglaslyn MRT** came a step closer to realising its dream of a permanent home when work commenced on its new base in March. The team has led a nomadic existence, relying on the goodwill of local farmers and landowners for the safekeeping of both Land Rovers and equipment.

Call-outs have increased dramatically over the last few years, with 2010 the busiest year to date with 64 events. The increase in workload, and the offer of land to build on, prompted serious efforts to fundraise for a permanent base. Plans were drawn up and planning consent obtained.

Over the past two years, the team has been fortunate to obtain the assistance of two contractors whilst they were working on the new Porthmadog bypass. Jones Bros and Balfour Beatty not only offered the use of a cabin and conference centre on their site at Porthmadog, they also started the ball rolling with work on the access road and parking area, demolition of the old building and most of the groundwork.

Members have been fundraising tirelessly for a good few years to enable the building of the base. Grants were also applied for, with some of the money coming from companies such as NatWest Community Force, First Hydro and the Cooperative Community Fund.

To keep costs to a minimum it was decided the building would be an insulated industrial building which would house both Land Rovers plus all the team’s equipment, and also have a drying room, office, bathroom facilities and a small kitchen. The steel frame should be erected quickly and the shell completed within about four weeks.

The team would like to thank everyone who has supported them so far, especially NWMRA, and would be very grateful for any assistance in



PHOTO: DION VAUGHAN-JONES

completing the project. Another £10,000 is needed in order to fit the building out.

The ‘youngest’ team in North Wales, Aberglaslyn was formed in 1996. Prior to this, an ad hoc Rescue Post was in place at Aberglaslyn Hall Outdoor Education Centre. The team operates across approximately 750 square kilometres of north west Wales, in an area incorporating popular walking, scrambling and climbing locations such as the Nantlle Ridge, Moel Hebog and its satellite peaks, Tremadog cliffs, Cnicht and the Moelwyn. They also cover the whole of the Lleylen Peninsula. There are currently 32 members in the team.

## SOUTH WALES

### JOINT TEAM EXERCISE

On a glorious sunny day in late February, the four mountain rescue teams based in South Wales came together for joint training on Saturday, to work jointly on two scenarios. The four teams involved – Western Beacons, Brecon, Central Beacons and Longtown – frequently use an area call system to ensure sufficient coverage of their wide operational area which means this annual event is a great opportunity to meet up, share expertise and get to know each other better. This ensures that when ad hoc groups of teams are formed for area searches, for example, the team members already know each other well which improves operational effectiveness.

Scenarios on the day included a swiftwater exercise, an area which mountain rescue teams are becoming increasingly involved in, and a simulated

mountain evacuation of an injured walker. The importance of inter-team working was also brought vividly to life during the day as a call-out to a fallen climber in the Wye Valley triggered the rapid departure of members of Central and Western Beacons who coordinated a successful evacuation by helicopter.

Longtown team leader, Mark Nicholls said, 'We've had a great day and really learnt a lot from each other. The four teams, Western Beacons, Brecon, Central Beacons and Longtown often find themselves in a situation where we need to work collectively, so to have the time to ensure our procedures are effective for a day such as this is invaluable.' ■



SOUTH WALES JOINT TEAM EXERCISE

More regional news on  
page 18



IMAGES SUPPLIED BY RAF MRS



## TOM HANSFORD THE RAF MOUNTAIN RESCUE SERVICE

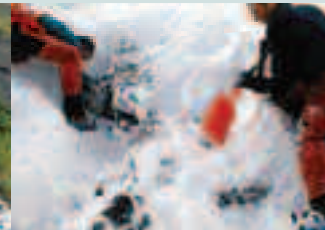
**T**he RAF Mountain Rescue Service is an organisation little understood outside of the military, and only just understood inside the military, largely because we take little time to explain ourselves... The most important point to express is that, while we are keen to assist the police and civilian MRTs when requested, our first priority and the sole reason for our existence is to react to a military aircraft crash.

The origins of the RAF MRS go back to the Second World War. An RAF medical officer, Flight Lieutenant George Graham, is credited with creating the first organised team at RAF Llandwrog in North Wales in 1943. For this, and the numerous lives saved subsequently, he was awarded the MBE. During the war and the following years, the RAF lost many aircrew in the mountainous areas of the UK. Some survived the initial crash but then died of exposure before help could arrive. In particular, in 1951, a Lancaster crashed into Beinn Eighe, in the Torridon area of Western Scotland. The wreckage was in a very inaccessible position and much still remains in 'Fuselage Gully', a Grade II winter climb. At the time it took rescue parties several days to reach the site and months to recover the bodies; the need for a rescue service with a greater capability was evident. Therefore this tragedy catalysed the development of the RAF MRS and is a key factor behind our well trained and equipped RAF teams of today.

Whether an aircraft crash happens in the most inaccessible area of the country, or an urban environment, RAF Mountain Rescue will react. Our teams are on a one-hour notice-to-move, 24/7.



# regional News



intricacies. In every vehicle we have specialised crash kit designed to allow life saving operations to be attempted in these hostile environments. We are well trained in the use of parachute drift tables to establish suitable search areas; and we receive aircraft specific training to safely recover injured aircrew. Searches for aircraft crash sites also have different complexities to missing person searches. Information from radar traces, seismic readings, eye witnesses, radio transmissions, flight plans and weather reports are all fed to a team leader to assist him in his search planning.

We can also respond within 24 hours to a crash overseas – for example a British military transport aircraft in transit to the Middle East. Just such a scenario happened for real in 1999, when a Hercules crashed and caught fire on take off in Albania. RAF MRS troops deployed for two weeks, combining mountain rescue and military skills to provide an armed aircraft crash guard. RAF MRS was essential again when an RAF Jaguar crashed in Alaska in mountainous terrain, providing mountain safety on the scene, enabling the crash investigators to carry out their duties in safety. This ability to react immediately and deploy overseas is essential and is another bespoke facet of RAF Mountain Rescue. A few years, it was the RAF MRS that deployed to Borneo in 1994 to search for a British Army expedition missing on Mt Kinabalu, an example of our wide range of responsibility.

RAF MRTs can assist civilian MRTs or the police with search and rescue if requested. The ARCC (presently based at RAF Kinloss) will first confirm that we are available and not required at that time in our primary role. Each of our teams will provide a

minimum of ten people when called upon (but usually more), plus vehicles and equipment and, if the situation is life threatening or urgent, our assistance is provided at no cost. We won't try to take over in any way but will stay subordinate to the police and work alongside the lead MRT.

We are always eager to help. As a civilian team leader, please don't hesitate to involve us. In 2011 we responded to only ten military call-outs and 51 civilian call-outs, with the capacity to respond to many more if required. We're also happy to turn back en route if the situation is resolved before we arrive – we would rather be called out and stood down shortly afterwards than overlooked completely. This still allows us valuable practice of our call-out procedure and helps us to maintain our focus. At present our assistance seems to be asked for in some areas more than others, but once an established relationship has been made with local teams it usually leads to valuable cooperation and combined training. We are in the fortunate position of having high quality resources (both manpower and equipment), and keen to put them to good use!

There are four teams in the UK: Leuchars, Kinloss, Leeming and Valley, all supported by a headquarters colocated with the RAF Valley team in North Wales. Fortunately, call-outs for actual aircraft crashes are now rare with the reliability of modern aircraft, high standards of aircrew training and the simple fact that there is less military flying being conducted in the UK than there used to be. The specific skills of an RAF MRT need be maintained, however, and we spend considerable time training.

All teams train for three out of four weekends, plus a weekly briefing on a variety of training

topics. This significant commitment to work the majority of weekends is simply because less military flying occurs then; the chances of a call-out are reduced and the teams can afford to drop to a lower readiness state whilst out on the hill. Furthermore, team members who have another 'day job' in the RAF may participate. We deploy to a different location each week with all the required equipment to operate anywhere in the UK, including cooking equipment, drying facilities, extensive comms equipment, camp beds and tents. This means we're accustomed to the deployed operations we would experience during a prolonged operation away from our home base. We tend to set up a basecamp in village halls and bunkhouses, thus allowing excellent access to the different mountain areas. With only four teams covering the entire UK, it's an ongoing battle to retain some local area knowledge of any potential crash site. Team members are accepted with zero mountaineering experience and all training is completed in-house. Training includes hill walking, rock climbing, technical and improvised rescue techniques, helicopter operations, aircraft crash exercises, winter climbing and navigation. We are also required to train on any public holidays such as Christmas, New Year and Easter allowing longer training periods to be utilised. Whilst these weekends are necessary to maintain our operational effectiveness, they are definitely enjoyable and the main motivation to join our ranks.

Overall this regular training produces a highly trained service, which is rarely utilised (thankfully!) in its primary role, but is generally available, and keen, to assist with civilian call-outs if requested. ■

# OBITUARIES

## JOHN POULTER – SO MUCH MORE THAN MOUNTAIN RESCUE

BY NEIL RODEN **EDALE MRT**

With more than forty years in mountain rescue, John Poulter will be a familiar name and face to many. Sadly John passed away on 14 January this year but he leaves behind Joyce, his wife of more than fifty years, two sons and countless friends from mountain rescue and many other interests and hobbies.

John's love of the mountains goes back to the time he served in the Forces in Aden. During that time he climbed the volcanoes in the area and this formed part of his application to join York Mountaineering Club in 1955. It was there he met Joyce and, in October that year, both John and Joyce were part of the inaugural crossing of the Lyke Wake Walk – a 40-mile hike from Osmotherley to Ravenscarr which should be done in less than 24 hours. John went on to complete that more than 20 times; Joyce was one of the

first women to walk it both ways.

In 1972, John and his family moved from the North East to the Peak District, settling into the village of Great Longstone. A year later, he became a Peak Park Ranger and, at the same time, joined Buxton MRT. For those with long memories John was with Buxton when they were filmed for a Coronation Street storyline.

In the late 1970s John transferred to Edale MRT where he was an active member for many years taking on the role of team, and ultimately regional, training officer.

All John's life he had a passion for dogs but even he was surprised when he was asked to be the president of SARDA Wales. After some thought and consultation he accepted the job and

made a huge contribution, helping train dogs, supporting fundraising and taking huge pleasure in the weeks training in the Cairngorms.

Away from mountain rescue, John travelled extensively through Europe's mountainous regions. In recent years he and Joyce became particularly fond of the Cevennes region of France, especially the route told in Robert Louis Stevenson's travelogue, 'Travels with a Donkey in Cevennes.'

His other interests included being a Justice of the Peace (he was North Riding's youngest JP for many years), the history of mines, railways, stamp collecting and politics (an avid reader of the Guardian from the age of 13).

John had many skills but one of his greatest was that of communicator. Many years ago a lady went into a library in Dorset and borrowed the book 'Sam the Search Dog.' She was so taken by the book she went back to the library to find out more. For a reason we will never know the library put the lady in touch with John. They corresponded by letter for several years and then visited one another. John was a renowned letter writer and their friendship grew on that basis. Not so long ago the lady from Dorset passed away and, because of her friendship with John left a very substantial legacy to mountain rescue.

John's funeral was on Friday, 27 January at Hope cemetery in the Hope Valley. There was representation from all seven teams from PDMRO and fifteen people travelled over from Wales. As the crowds gathered so did the black clouds. For fifteen minutes or so, the rain lashed down and somehow it seemed quite ironic. Adverse weather never troubled John, in fact very little did. John enjoyed life, and he lived it to the full. He had great integrity and diplomacy and I know will be missed by many.



**JOHN IN TYPICAL PLAYFUL MOOD AND CHILLING OUT WITH SARDA WALES COLLEAGUES**  
PHOTOS: THANKS TO IAIN NICHOLSON



## MICHAEL MACHELL

BY NICK OWEN

**LANGDALE AMBLESIDE MRT**

The team was deeply saddened at the news of the death of Michael Machell, one of its former members, in a climbing accident in California on 14 January. He had travelled to America to study for a year at Berkeley University.

Michael, a former student at the Ambleside campus of the University of Cumbria, was involved with the team, as a trainee and full member, for three years from 2008 to 2011. He attended approximately 170 rescues in that time. He graduated from the University of Cumbria with a first class Honours Degree. His interest in mountain rescue was just one manifestation of his deep love for climbing and the outdoors.

On a personal note, Michael was a great friend, a regular climbing partner and a committed team member. His youthful energy and boundless enthusiasm was infectious. He will be sadly missed by all current and former team members. He was 23 years old.

As a result of significant donations following Michael's funeral, a fund is being established to assist young mountaineers in pursuing their interests safely. Although in the early stages at the moment, details will be available via [www.lamrt.org.uk](http://www.lamrt.org.uk), once it is up and running.



**UPPER WHARFEDALE GROUP SHOT WITH MRS ALEXANDRA HOLFORD**

## WEARING THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE BADGE WITH PRIDE

Following on from the Llanberis MRT profile I wrote for the October issue, it seems I have upset Dave Marsh (and possibly others) with my comments about badges. It was not my intention to upset anyone so my apologies to Dave and anyone else who may have taken offence.

I share the same sense of pride as Dave at being involved in mountain rescue and in being a search dog handler.

Llanberis MRT have the view that badges are not necessary. We have a relatively compact patch and, for the reasons I mentioned in the article, we don't want or need them. As a dog handler I do wear a badge (SARDA Wales) when on a call-out – it's useful when I arrive at a police station, nursing home or MRT base to identify who I am and what I am doing there and I can see that, for some teams, a badge is useful.

I share Dave's sense of pride in being a member of our community, and in the work that we do. My article briefly touched on the issue of people wearing badges when not on a rescue and, in my view, this warrants debate. There are three main issues that I can see.

One: There is a percentage of the outdoor community that feels that anyone involved in MR is only involved for the 'pose' factor. By wearing badges and MRT jackets on anything other than a call-out we add weight to their preconceptions and this does none of us any favours. (We regularly see MRT badges and jackets on Snowdon and they are not from the Llanberis team).

Two. In the UK we are very fortunate

to have free access to our mountains, a last frontier where people can leave the big society behind, enjoy the wilderness environment, challenge themselves without rules and regulations and learn from the mistakes they will inevitably make. We all enjoy that freedom and hence our involvement in wanting to help people that make mistakes, once they ask for it. A real concern with badges is that we start to be viewed as the Mountain Police on patrol on the mountains of the UK. This breeds resentment from those on the receiving end of unasked for advice (I know because clients have told me of their experiences) and goes against the whole ethos of mountaineering in the UK.

Three: If people are wearing badges on anything other than call-outs there is no control over what they are being used for. I have seen someone doing a dangerous job of guiding six people on the Cullin Ridge with an MREW badge pinned to their lapel as some form of qualification. Again this does the rest of us a disservice and reduces the integrity of our badge/brand and it also reduces the effectiveness of them when we do rely on them on a call-out.

I believe the MRT badge has value and symbolises the hard work that generations have done before us and will continue to do after us. Let's make sure it retains that value by debating how and when we use it.

**Rob Johnson**  
AMI, Llanberis MRT and SARDA  
Wales member



## VIEWRANGER'S FREE APP AIDS TEAM COORDINATION

ViewRanger Search & Rescue (VSAR) programme continues to grow amongst SAR teams, now reaching the milestone of over sixty. Based on feedback received, the app has proved invaluable in supporting team coordination, navigation and data capture for shouts, as well as in training. Recently added MREW teams include Cockermouth, Cornwall, additional SARA teams and CRO teams. Internationally, teams in Ireland and the USA are also adopting ViewRanger.

As ViewRanger runs on most smartphones (ie. Apple, Android and Symbian OS devices) the service is simple and, in most cases, free to deploy. Participation in the programme provides access to free and discounted mapping from Ordnance Survey and other map agencies.

In addition to GPS location and mapping on-screen, with or without cell signal, the app provides the ability to record search patterns and use the exportable, time stamped data for evidential purposes. A key feature, delivering significant benefit, is ViewRanger's BuddyBeacon, a location sharing capability that allows team members and search coordinators to view the real time location\* of others using mobile phone, tablet (ie. iPads) or the web (\*requires mobile signal). ViewRanger also includes PC screen route-planning and sharing via a web portal at [My.ViewRanger.com](http://My.ViewRanger.com).

**The VSAR programme is the company's initiative to support accredited rescue organisations in England, Wales and beyond. If your team is interested to find out more about ViewRanger, or to join the VSAR programme, see [viewranger.co.uk/SAR](http://viewranger.co.uk/SAR) or contact [craig@viewranger.com](mailto:craig@viewranger.com).**



## HIGH SHERIFF DROPS IN

The High Sheriff of North Yorkshire, Mrs Alexandra Holford, visited **Upper Wharfedale FRT** at their headquarters in Grassington in Yorkshire. The holder of this ancient title toured the building, meeting team members and being shown the latest hi tech rescue equipment, in particular the team's new incident control vehicle which took over four years to raise the necessary funds for. Chairman Ian Hook, said 'The High Sheriff had sent a request to be taken abseiling but with the

wintery conditions we decided against this. We'd also hoped to have an actual call-out during her visit and the adverse weather conditions made this very likely but it just didn't happen. We put on a good show for her and she said how fascinated it had been to meet the team and hear about some of our rescues.'

After a full day with the team which included a trip out to some of the rescue locations around the area, the High Sheriff commented, 'I've had a fabulous day with the Upper Wharfedale team. They are

a terrific team, providing a service to a wide range of individuals. Their work can be a relatively simple task of helping someone who has sprained an ankle walking in the Dales, or a major long-duration operation involving perhaps 70 members to extract a seriously injured potholer with life threatening injuries who has to be extricated from a dangerous and water logged caving system. They are completely dedicated to helping anyone in difficulties – a great public service that deserves all our support.'

The Office of High Sheriff is an independent non-political Royal appointment for a single year. Its origins date back some 1,000 years to Saxon times, when the 'Shire Reeve' was responsible to the King for the maintenance of law and order within the shire or county and for the collection and return of taxes due the Crown. In modern times, the High Sheriff gives an active and supportive role to the emergency services, the prison and probation service and to voluntary organisations involved in crime reduction.

# REVIEWING THE DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAMME: LESSONS LEARNED AND DECISIONS MADE

BY CENTRAL BEACONS MRT DRIVER STEERING GROUP (PUN PARTLY INTENDED!)

**N**ews of teams being involved in road traffic collisions, subsequent investigations and the recent article by Daryl Garfield (MREW Vehicles Officer) prompted the Central Beacons MRT to take a good look at itself regarding the driving procedures and policies we have in place. A cursory glance brought a jolting realisation that our processes were wholly inadequate.

With a lot of work to do, we set up a working party to identify best practice. This article shares our journey with you – although what we offer is by no means the best way to tackle these issues, nor do we believe the end products are infallible!

## CURRENT PRACTICE

Our existing driving policy could be described as 'broad'. We recognised early on that there were areas that had either changed beyond recognition or just simply were not included.

It is also worth noting we were all aware of the discussions at national level regarding the right of mountain rescue response drivers to claim exemptions: speed exemptions, proceeding through red traffic lights and driving either side of bollards. This was something we could not ignore. We decided to gather as much information as possible and, whilst recognising that this is an emotive issue for many teams (needless to say, our own), we believed we had to consider their use within our team.

## OBJECTIVES

Our first step was to identify the areas to review and assign our working party 'volunteers' to various sub-groups. As you can imagine, some members were more easily cajoled to volunteer than others! We

identified a Maintenance subgroup, Driver Training subgroup and Driving Policy subgroup, all organised by an all-seeing coordinator.

Our ultimate aim was to research and develop packages of maintenance, training and policy.

## LESSON 1: RECORD, RECORD, RECORD

The Maintenance group's aim was to research what was expected in terms of record-keeping, how we could implement this without compromising operational procedures and who would be responsible for the upkeep of records.

An audit of current practices found that we do a routine weekly check and maintenance of our vehicles. If there were faults, our current practice was to notify our vehicle guys by writing them on our garage whiteboard, which would be promptly wiped off when resolved. We felt that there could be some improvements to support the vehicle guys as it was going to be a challenge to produce an auditable trail of the recording and rectifying repairs to the vehicles.

The group did an amazing job of developing various procedures for, not just response drivers, but all team members. First, they recognised that we needed a clear system to record our vehicle checks. They made a distinction between daily checks, completed each time the vehicle left the vehicle bay, and weekly checks, completed each week regardless of the number of journeys completed. Each completed check had a unique reference number that could then be cross-referenced to the maintenance

logs when faults were reported and repaired. All team members could complete a weekly check following a familiarisation session (for example, to point out the difference between the oil and water reserves!). Any team member who drives a vehicle would be expected to complete a daily vehicle check each time a vehicle driven.

## LESSON 2: CREATIVITY HELPS

Prior to this task, the team received blue light training from the local police. Whilst this was invaluable, the training was infrequent and no formal programme was available to ensure skills were kept up-to-date. Furthermore, our non-response and off-road drivers received limited training. The Driver Training group's aim was to identify the best practice guidance in relation to training for team drivers and, inclusive in this, ascertain what our legal requirements were. Using this information, the group was asked to develop a suitable driver training programme.

Within this task was the review of current legislation including consultation with various agencies including the Department of Transport (DfT) and Driving Standards Agency (DSA), relating to the training standards required for response drivers. We were aware that this is likely to change in 2012, although it still seemed important to establish some formal training process.

The Training group consulted numerous forums when ascertaining the appropriate training for our response drivers. By default, this included consideration of the use of exemptions, as it impacted upon the need for training in these areas. We used the emergency services (Police, Fire and Ambulance) as a reference and (likely unattainable) benchmark. As the DfT is looking to standardise training, we thought we would be best placed to follow their lead.



DRIVING

We happened upon many variations of 'driver training', various levels and numerous means of gaining (expensive) qualifications. Fortunately, one of our members had recently become involved with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). We discovered that the RoSPA scheme offered grounding in non-high speed driver training (ie. advanced level driving). This could potentially offer accredited prior learning towards (in ambulance service parlance, Institute of Health Care Development, Driver 1. IHCD D1) driver training. It also provided reassessment with a maximum frequency of three years, whilst following the police-adopted 'road craft' approach. We also learned we could train in-house tutors to train up-and-coming drivers for their assessment by independent RoSPA examiners.

Thus, we had the beginnings of our driver training programme. We agreed all our drivers would go through the RoSPA scheme. Those who attained a bronze, silver or gold award would be considered competent to drive our vehicles on a non-emergency basis. Those who attained a silver or gold award would be considered eligible to train as blue light responders. Our colleagues in RoSPA have been exceptionally helpful and even acquired sponsorship that would usefully contribute towards the modest costs of training our drivers. Special thanks to Steve Baker (Cardiff RoSPA) who has also offered his time to train our tutors-to-be as promptly as possible.

Gwent 4x4 Responders also offered to assist us with our off-road driver training. Members of this group provided an enlightening and engaging foundation presentation to all team members. They agreed to provide training sessions to our team drivers and this is now incorporated into the training programme.

To evidence-base our driver training programme and encompass all of the above, each driver would keep a Driver Training Portfolio, to include all relevant documentation and evidence of training at each level. It is hoped that, should it be necessary to produce in a Court of Law, this would provide assurances that steps have been taken to train our drivers to a standard necessary to be competent in their role.

### LESSON 3: OBJECTIVITY TRUMPS SUBJECTIVITY

The aim of the Driving Policy group was to develop a comprehensive policy that would incorporate all of

the above and be explicit in what was required of our drivers. This group also had the unenviable task of researching the exemption issue in relation to what our response drivers could expect to claim, whilst driving within the capacity of a CBMRT response driver.

We appreciated that this policy had very much borrowed content from our neighbouring teams. From our review we identified any gaps and sought to explain our position to a degree that team members had sufficient clarity in what was expected. We covered topics on assessed risks, minimum requirements for driving, driving classifications, pre-driving checks, emergency service personnel, and complaints.

Finally, we broached the topic of exemptions. We researched and consulted with various agencies and individuals and engaged in many heated debates, but all realised the advantages the exemptions offered us. We were also reminded we were not in position to make the decision whether it was appropriate to claim exemptions – our trustees would have to investigate the process of how those exemptions could be claimed if this was the direction the team was going to take. We drafted two policies, one with the exemptions and one without.

After three months, a representative group met with our trustees and then the team to present the maintenance logs, proposed training programme and both policies. We also offered all the correspondence, documents and notes – a rather impressive lever-arch file of bumph! A summary of the facts included clear questions for our trustees, such as: Do the trustees, within their capacity as governors, authorise CBMRT response drivers the entitlement to claim exemptions whilst acting within the capacity as a CBMRT response driver? The answer was 'no'.

Our maintenance logs, training programme and the relevant policy were gratefully sanctioned and adopted. We will endeavour to review, evaluate and revise as necessary.

### FINAL REFLECTIONS

This process required focused attention, motivation and impartiality. The group demonstrated commitment over and above what is typical of your average MR volunteer. Difficult discussions took place and it's a credit to everyone involved that no blood was spilt and we're all on speaking terms! Many thanks to all those involved and consulted with. ■

## PRIORITISING PROTECTION WITH PRIORITY START

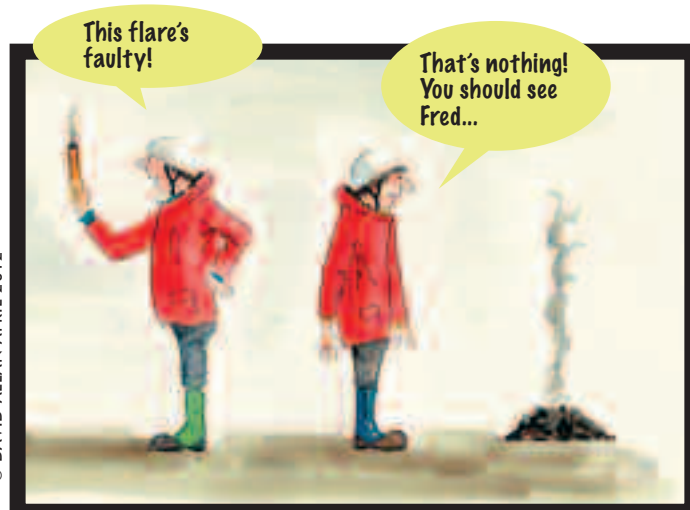
Deep discharging always damages a battery, which will lose between 30 and 40 per cent of its service life the first time it occurs. Priority Start is an automatic battery protection system, designed to prevent a battery from draining to a level which prevents the vehicle from being started.

The computer-controlled, heavy-duty electromechanical system constantly monitors a vehicle's electrical systems and the voltage levels of the battery. If a drop in battery voltage to a factory set level is detected when the ignition is turned off, the battery is automatically disconnected. To achieve this, the device deploys a bi-directional motor for its internal contacts, resulting in very low resistance to current and high reliability. The contact resistance is less than two milliohm, and in the closed position a clamping force in excess of 60 linear pounds is exerted.

When the ignition key is off, the device automatically disconnects any undesired drain on the battery caused by lights, radio or other electrical devices. When the voltage drops to 23.5 volts on 24v batteries (or 11.9v on 12v batteries), the device disconnects, as voltages below these levels would result in insufficient power to start the vehicle. The device reconnects when the driver turns the ignition key 'on', and operates the light switch or foot brake.

The device incorporates patented 'engine run' circuitry, which prevents the device from disconnecting while the engine is running even if voltage drops below the factory-set safe threshold. This is achieved through the ability to sense electrical noise (30 millivolts) created by fuel pumps, fuel injectors and the alternator. If an alternator or alternator belt fails, the circuitry will recognise the condition and prevent disconnection of the battery at the 11.9v threshold, allowing the vehicle to continue on the battery capacity.

Priority Start is an electromechanical device, and when it operates it is possible to hear the gears engage. The quiescent draw is 4 milliampere in the connect mode and 16 milliampere in the disconnect, similar to a small LED. It is suitable for vehicles up to 1,000 cranking amps. Quick and easy to fit, it does not require hard wiring, making it readily transferable between vehicles.



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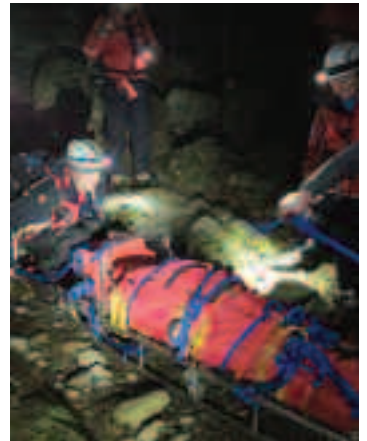
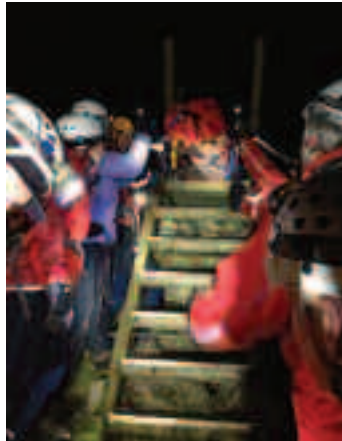
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## TEAM EFFORT IN THE DARK FOR WOMAN WITH BROKEN ANKLE: 22 JANUARY

In January, Wasdale team members were assisted by twelve members of Duddon & Furness and a Coniston team member, in the treatment and recovery of a 51-year-old female walker with a suspected broken ankle. The pagers went off at around 3.15pm, shortly before darkness, in windy conditions with occasional rain/sleet showers at the higher level. Visibility was low cloud initially which cleared later in the afternoon. The woman had been descending from the summit of Scafell Pike in a group of four when she suffered a stumble fall just above Lingmell Col. One of the Wasdale team leaders, who was already on the fell, gave casualty care before the arrival of the rest of the team. A member from Coniston mountain rescue team was also on scene. The casualty was given analgesia and her leg was splinted before the stretcher carry and sledge down to Backenclose via Lingmell Nose. The incident closed at 8.30pm.

real  
rescues

# incidents

figures

## Oct • Nov • Dec • 2011

### Lake District

Cockermouth	04/10, 16/10, 24/10, 28/10, 05/11, 20/11, 07/11, 15/11
Coniston	03/10, 27/10, 01/11, 14/12
Duddon & Furness	06/10, 08/10, 08/10, 25/10, 27/12, 26/11, 30/12
Kendal	03/10, 11/10, 12/10, 23/10, 25/10, 04/11, 11/11, 11/11 05/11, 25/12, 27/12, 31/12, 31/12, 31/12
Keswick	01/10, 01/10, 06/10, 15/10, 17/10, 19/10, 25/10, 26/10 26/10, 30/10, 25/10, 03/11, 05/11, 20/11, 24/11, 20/11 02/12, 03/12, 23/11, 17/12, 18/12, 25/12, 26/12
Kirkby Stephen	08/11, 16/11, 13/11, 21/12, 27/12
Lake District MR Sea	10/10, 12/10, 17/10, 25/10, 26/10, 25/10, 11/11, 24/10 08/11, 08/11, 20/11, 02/12, 27/12, 17/12, 30/12
Langdale Ambleside	02/10, 07/10, 08/10, 10/10, 14/10, 18/10, 23/10, 24/10 25/10, 27/10, 04/11, 05/11, 11/11, 11/11, 11/11, 14/11 31/12, 31/12, 31/12, 29/12, 14/12, 09/12
Patterdale	26/10, 16/10, 21/10, 28/10, 05/11, 10/11, 12/11
Penrith	12/10, 24/10, 12/11, 08/11, 08/11, 13/11
Wasdale	06/10, 08/10, 08/10, 15/10, 16/10, 23/10, 24/10, 25/10 06/11, 13/11, 26/11, 30/12, 30/12

### Mid-Pennine

Bolton	01/10, 03/10, 06/11, 26/10, 03/10, 19/11, 27/11, 27/11 10/12, 19/12, 18/12
Bowland Pennine	09/10, 27/12, 02/10, 04/10, 15/10, 16/11, 26/11, 26/11 05/12, 05/12, 18/12, 22/12
Calder Valley	02/10, 18/10, 08/10, 04/12, 04/12, 13/11, 16/11, 06/11 06/11, 02/11, 27/12
Rossendale & Pendle	20/10, 22/10, 05/11, 03/11, 04/11, 13/11, 13/11, 26/11 30/11, 13/11, 06/12, 10/12, 18/12, 19/12, 21/12, 22/12 27/12, 30/12

### North East

Cleveland	08/10, 25/10, 27/10, 30/10, 02/11, 03/11, 06/11, 09/11 13/11, 25/11, 15/12, 31/12
Northumberland Nat Park	28/10, 13/11
Scarborough & Ryedale	25/11
Swaledale	11/10, 22/10, 20/11

### North Wales

Aberglaslyn	09/10, 15/10, 23/10, 30/10, 01/11, 01/11, 06/11, 19/11 12/11
Llanberis	02/10, 01/10, 02/10, 02/10, 15/10, 20/10, 05/11, 17/11 25/11, 15/10, 26/10, 28/10, 29/11, 09/12, 22/10, 28/10 29/10, 03/11, 03/11, 12/11, 12/11, 19/11, 20/11, 23/12 31/12
North East Wales	23/10, 26/11, 12/11, 06/12, 12/12, 28/12, 20/10
OB Wales	27/10, 12/11, 12/11
Ogwen Valley	02/10, 02/10, 05/10, 08/10, 12/10, 15/10, 16/10, 22/10 23/10, 05/11, 07/11, 01/11, 09/11, 12/11, 15/11, 17/11 20/11, 26/11, 26/11, 29/11, 03/12, 09/12, 11/12, 17/12 17/12, 26/12, 27/12
Snowdonia National Park	15/10, 12/11, 17/11
South Snowdonia	30/10, 12/11

### Peak District

Buxton	21/11, 01/10, 02/10, 02/10, 03/10, 15/10, 16/10, 22/10 23/10, 31/10, 10/11, 11/11, 23/11, 04/12, 29/12, 23/12 10/12, 27/11
Derby	13/10, 16/10, 28/10, 27/11
Edale	12/10, 15/10, 16/10, 23/10, 06/11, 06/11, 12/11, 01/10 15/10, 16/10, 31/10, 30/12, 29/12, 29/12, 28/12, 26/12 24/12, 23/12, 10/12, 04/12, 20/11, 28/11, 27/11
Glossop	12/10, 21/11, 16/12, 11/11, 30/12, 29/12
Kinder	27/10, 09/11, 21/11, 20/11, 16/12, 22/10, 11/11, 16/12
Oldham	01/10, 01/10, 10/10, 05/11, 20/11, 17/11, 18/12, 18/12 16/12, 10/12, 09/12
Woodhead	30/12

### Peninsula

Cornwall	09/10, 24/10, 24/10, 02/11, 21/11
Dartmoor (Ashburton)	05/11, 26/12
Dartmoor (Okehampton)	05/11, 26/12, 08/10, 26/12
Dartmoor (Tavistock)	02/10, 05/11, 06/11, 15/12, 26/12, 25/12

### South Wales

Brecon	02/10, 02/10, 02/10, 21/10, 23/10, 25/10, 30/10, 06/10 26/10, 29/10, 02/11, 04/11, 20/11, 27/11, 28/11, 27/11 08/12, 11/12, 21/12, 24/12, 26/12, 30/12, 03/12, 29/10
Central Beacons	01/10, 02/10, 02/10, 02/10, 06/10, 08/10, 17/10, 18/10 21/10, 23/10, 25/10, 30/10, 06/10, 20/11, 27/11, 08/12 11/12, 21/12, 26/12, 03/12, 05/12, 29/10
Longtown	02/10, 30/10, 06/10, 02/11, 27/11
Western Beacons	01/10, 02/10, 02/10, 08/10, 21/10, 23/10, 25/10, 30/10 08/12, 11/12, 26/12, 30/12, 03/12

### Yorkshire Dales

CRO	01/10, 02/10, 02/10, 08/10, 09/10, 09/10, 16/10, 23/10 28/10, 01/11, 13/11, 27/11, 25/12
Upper Wharfedale	08/10, 11/10, 28/10, 02/11, 07/11, 13/11, 14/11, 20/11 04/12, 31/12

### Search Dogs

England	28/10, 27/10, 10/10, 21/11, 11/10, 06/11, 30/12
Wales	06/12, 12/11, 29/11, 23/12, 28/12, 05/12, 05/12
South Wales	01/10, 08/10, 17/10, 08/12, 11/12, 29/10

### Non-specialists

	02/10, 02/10, 11/12
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### Coastguard

	26/11
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### RAF

Leeming	17/12, 17/12, 31/12, 26/12, 30/12
Valley	12/10, 15/10, 29/11, 26/12

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*ISS would like to thank the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service for their kind permission to use this photograph.*



# BUSY TWO DAYS IN A SNOWY PEAK DISTRICT: 4/5 FEBRUARY

The snow that swept the country over the first weekend in February gave rise to a hectic weekend for teams across England and Wales, and in no small measure in the Peak District.

Derby team members were on a 3-day training weekend at Crowden, near Glossop, when the snowfall started. After a late night training exercise on Friday night, training on



'I SEE NO SHEEP!' DERBY TEAM MEMBERS PLAY HIDE AND SEEK WITH A LEDGE-FAST SHEEP

the Saturday morning was interrupted with a call to join other Peak District teams in the search for a missing father and his two children, believed to be lost somewhere on Bleaklow – the second highest area of the Peak and a difficult region to navigate, especially in snow. This incident was stood down as the missing party was located.

Team members returned to their training until shortly after lunchtime with a call to aid a driver involved in a road accident. The man was suffering from breathing difficulties but could not be reached by regular ambulance. A party from Glossop team had also been tasked but, as they were already involved in other incidents, a Derby vehicle was sent as well. Derby were stood down when a Glossop 4x4 vehicle managed to reach the scene first.

The major incident of the weekend came with an emergency call on Saturday evening. A 74-year-old man, out walking for the day, had become lost and benighted near to the centre of Bleaklow. He had been found by two fell runners out on the hill practising their night navigation. They alerted the emergency services and stayed with the man until rescuers could reach them. Derby, Glossop, Woodhead and Edale team members, supported by search dogs from various teams, launched a major operation to rescue the party, who it was believed could all be in a poor condition due to the weather conditions and the amount of time they had been on the hill. The party were located close to midnight. The gentleman was suffering from hypothermia and required a stretcher evacuation but the two fell runners were able to walk off the hill.

As no helicopters could fly in the conditions, the casualty had to be sledged and carried off in a three-hour evacuation, crossing waist high snow drifts. The situation was complicated further when a Woodhead team member slipped and injured his knee, and also had to be stretchered off the hill. Luckily, there were more than 60 rescuers on the hill at times and able to manage two extended stretcher evacuations simultaneously, despite the extreme conditions.

By 4:30am, exhausted rescuers were back at their accommodation after a long and difficult day. Training the following day was cancelled but, shortly after team members returned home, in came another call – this time to rescue a sheep stuck on a ledge at Stanton Moor, near Bakewell, where it had been for some time, unable to make its own way off the ledge. A crag rescue rope system was set up and the animal was recovered uninjured.

Meanwhile, Glossop team members' hopes for a quiet time after three call-outs the previous weekend were firmly dashed by the weather.

The pagers sounded at 2:00pm for the father and his two young sons missing on Bleaklow. The three walkers had parked at Snake Summit and walked out to the aircraft wreck at Higher Shelf stones but wind, snow and spindrift made the location unrecognisable, despite the father having been there before. The snow had changed the features and he was lost.

A member of Glossop team from Shirebrook was first up to the summit as snow fell heavily and cars blocked the road, stuck in the snow. With two young children out in freezing conditions, the priority was to get out to them quickly, so using a 4-wheel drive the rescuer was quickly at the summit and on the hill. Walking the Pennine Way towards the path across to Higher Shelf, the rescuer came across numerous parties out walking – it was going to be a busy day. As the rest of the team were leaving the HQ at Glossop Police Station, another call came to help the Ambulance Service, unable to reach a Glossop woman having an epileptic fit.

The team split into two to manage both incidents and called support from Derby team who were on an exercise staying over at Crowden for the weekend.

Luckily, for the father and his two sons, a group of walkers came across them by chance and led them to the Pennine Way. The rescuer from Glossop walked out to them, returning them to his vehicle on Snake Summit to warm. Meanwhile, other team members were busy pulling the BMW of a passing motorist out of a ditch. This was the first day in operation for the team's 'new' Land Rover, passed down from Patterdale team

following their receipt of 'the Royal Wedding present vehicle' (*update on this story on page 13*). It may have been strange seeing a 'Patterdale Mountain Rescue' liveried team vehicle in Glossop, but the team hadn't yet had the chance to repaint it!

Another call from the Ambulance Service came in for a road traffic incident in Hadfield and team members deployed to that, leaving the father and two lads plus the Glossop rescuer to return to Glossop Police Station.

The snow was now falling thick and fast and cars were piling up, blocking the Snake road. A group of scouts appeared from the blizzard at Snake summit and knocked on the GMRT rescuers' window. On an adventure weekend, they'd found their way off the hill in the worsening weather but their vehicle was down at Blackden layby, too far for the exhausted scouts to walk.

With further assistance requested, Glossop team members turned around again, heading back to the summit. While keeping the scouts warm in a casualty tent, the large group were ferried to their minibus in a GMRT snow shuttle service, then the full minibus towed off the Snake Pass to safety.

At 6:30pm, just as team members thought the day was over, off went the pagers again with a call to the 74-year-old man lost and disoriented then exhausted in deep snow, about as far as you can get from any road in the middle of Bleaklow. With no way of calling for help, even if his family had missed him and raised the alarm, team members would have had hundreds of square miles of hills and moors to search, with no indicator of where he may be. But by a massive turn of luck, two fit fell runners from Bristol were training for the High Peak Marathon and out running during the night from the cut gate track across Bleaklow to Snake summit. They literally fell over the man in the middle of the moors. A few metres either side and they'd have run straight past him!

The two runners were well equipped with a small tent and sleeping bag. They were able to provide a GPS grid reference of where they were so rescuers could head straight for the spot, a Glossop team member and his search dog being first on scene.

Glossop team members arrived back at Glossop Police Station at 6:00am on the Sunday morning only to be called back out at 7:45am to assist the Ambulance Service with an elderly lady suffering from pneumonia.

Glossop team secretary, Keith Montgomery said, 'The team would like to thank the people of Glossop for their kind, continued support in funding the rescue service. And also thanks to our sister teams, Reliance motors for keeping our vehicles on the road and for Ray engineering and Aalco metals for the new sledge base for our stretchers.'

## REACH AND RESCUE POLE FOR OPERATOR SAFETY

Designed with operator safety in mind, with a 3-metre hazard zone, the Reach and Rescue Pole accurately deploys a flotation or rescue device to a casualty as quickly as possible, on water, ice, mud and flood. The largest pole folds to 2.6 metres for easy storage in a quick release bag. The flotation buoy can be attached to the top section – you decide which accessory suits the incident and attach it to the pole using the snap-on, easy release head section. The operator points the pole toward the victim, releases the first clamp on the first section, extends the section and closes the clamps, repeating until desired distance is achieved. The pole retracts in reverse order.

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rescue, less if the victim is closer than 17m. The high visibility end section can be seen by the victim, even in lower visibility. Go to [www.reachandrescue.com](http://www.reachandrescue.com) for our demonstration video.

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## RESCUES HIGHLIGHT THE NEED TO CARRY MAP COMPASS AND A TORCH IN THE MOUNTAINS

### ROPE JAM AND FAILING LIGHT: 25 FEBRUARY

Three climbers had to be rescued after getting into difficulties in failing light in Snowdonia. The two women and a man, all in their twenties and from Nottingham, called for help after completing a climb on the Idwal Slabs. Ogwen Valley MRO team members were alerted around 7:00pm. The climbers had set off at midday to tackle the Charity route on the crag north of Glyder Fawr, a 145m (470ft) climb rated 'Very Difficult'. Chris Lloyd of the Ogwen team said, 'They left their rucksacks at the base of the crag and climbed this V Diff in rock climbing shoes. The three took a bit longer than planned on this multi-pitch route. They successfully found the difficult walk 'up and off' from the top of the crag and set up an abseil for the final escape down to the gully. 'Unfortunately, the abseil rope became jammed. In failing light and with only one torch, they decided to abandon the rope and make their way down to the foot of the Idwal Slabs passing under Suicide Wall. The path is not very distinct, especially at night, and rock climbing shoes are not the best footwear here. The ground is steep, loose and vegetated and has a number of rock steps. They became concerned about the wisdom of progressing, so rightly telephoned for assistance.' Two parties from the OVMRO went to the scene, one making its way to the climbers and the other to retrieve their rucksacks, then team members lit the way down and guided them to safety. They were taken, uninjured, to the rescue team's base for hot drinks at about 9:00pm. Mr Lloyd added, 'Climbing a multi-pitch route as a rope of three does take longer than two on a rope on a one- or two-pitch route. It was fortunate one of the group had had the foresight to take a torch.'

### FARMER HELPS TEAM FIND WALKERS IN THE BRECON BEACONS: 2 MARCH

The four women, from Oxford, had a guidebook but no map or compass for their walk at the Usk Reservoir in the North of the Brecon Beacons National Park in March. As it started to get dark, the four walkers, who were staying at a cottage near Carmarthen, rang 999 and nine members of the Brecon MRT went to the area. Mark Jones, deputy team leader, said, 'The women had got lost earlier and asked at a local farm for directions before carrying on their walk. However the farmer became concerned and went out to look for them on his quad bike. He reached them after spotting a light from their mobile phone and was able to give us their exact location.' Team members used two 4x4s to reach the party and the women were brought to safety using the vehicles and the farmer's quad bike. They were cold and exhausted, but otherwise unharmed. Yet another example of the importance of carrying a map, compass and torch for a walk on the mountain, no matter how short the walk.

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# Diary of a N Editor

**Luddite at Large** *Loosely translated as:*  
*The Things I Do For Mountain Rescue*

## Woof! Woof!...

It appears there's a new wheeze out there in Mountain Rescue Land. Editor asks team member/dog handler/officer/geek to write something for the mag. Lines of communication fall eerily silent for a while. Then Bringg!!! Phone rings. Inspiration! (I can almost see the light bulb glowing at the other end.) 'Why don't YOU interview ME?!' Great, I say, falling neatly and naively in with their cunning trap. Let's set it up. And we do. And I do... except, er... hang on a minute... doesn't that now mean that it's ME writing the article not you.... ha, ha! Gotcha!! But it's too late. They've gone...

And so it came to pass...

I'm sat in a room with a dog, asking the questions. Not just any dog, of course. This is Mij. A Border Collie from Leyland (originally Anglesey) who's about to retire from full time trailing work whilst still in her prime. But why so soon? 'I wanted to go while I'm still in working order,' says Mij. 'Too many hang on to the bitter end. I made it clear to Iain - that bloke on the other end of the string - from the start. I'll go at ten. No later.'

Hmm, this is clearly a dog not to be messed with. Better watch my Ps and Qs So that'll be it then? 'Oh no. That's just the beginning. I won't be on the call-out list but I'll still be putting in the hours. We need more trailing dogs out there, those air scenting bods have had it their own way for toooo long! For the next couple of years, I'll be working with NSARDA, getting trailing going throughout the UK, running seminars, doing demos, making guest appearances... you know the score.'

How does Iain feel about all this then? You sure he isn't looking forward to a soft spot on the sofa, log fire burning, extra treats for tea...? 'Oh, don't you worry about him... he does as he's told. He knows who does the work around here. AND who calls the shots!'

'D'you know,' she leans in conspiratorially, 'sometimes he thinks he's being clever -

usually when here's lots of other dogs around with their humans. Showing off, like they do. Hands the bit of string to someone else while I'm not looking - something to do with demonstrating how it all works. Thinks I won't notice. Ha!

'I stop dead in my tracks, then e-v-e-r so slowly turn my head and shoot him 'The Death Stare'. He knows straight away he's done wrong! But I'm not one to hold a grudge, you know... soon as that string's back in his hands, I'm off! It's forgotten!'

Mij Nicholson started out in life at Border Collie Rescue on Anglesey, one of a litter of eight pups. It was June 2002 when she first saw Iain and Alison walk through the door. 'Knew from the moment I clapped eyes on them they were the ones! Took a couple of visits before they agreed to take me on, and I DID have to turn on every ounce of collie charm, but they were nice people. They seemed to enjoy playing with me.'

Did you always know you'd be a search dog? 'Well I AM from sheep dog stock you know, so maybe it WAS my destiny. Although I had him worried on the stock test.' Chuckles. 'Apparently my interest in them wasn't exactly the behaviour he was looking for... we exchanged a few strong words on that one but it's fine now.'

So, you went home with Iain and Ali, then what? 'Twelve months of obedience training for Iain under Jacquie Hall's supervision - have to get these young pup handlers in line early on - and lots of games. Then two years of hard slog before we could grade - and even then, by the way, we have to regrade every three years. You have to keep on the ball with humans, otherwise they forget stuff.'

One thing DOES intrigue me: you're a member of SARDA Wales. That's quite a way from your home in Lancashire! 'We just love Snowdonia! The training's always on a Saturday and Sunday so it fits in with Iain's working week - I need him and his wheels to get there, of course. And I was returning home really. Land of my Fathers

and all that. We met lots of new people, made lots of new friends.' So, d'you have a Best Friend for Life? 'Oh, definitely! Rolf the Labrador! And his human, Gwen, is okay too. Rolf and Gwen were the first trailing team in Wales (WE were first in England!). Rolf and I spend a lot of time, you know, hanging out, shooting the breeze, winding up the humans...'

But you DO have a 'sister', don't you? Plenty of playtime there too I suspect? 'Oh yes. Floss came along in 2005. She's my partner in crime! Although I did hide upstairs for a while when she first came along - boisterous? What?! I keep her under control now - it IS my job, after all! She's busy working with Ali as an open area dog with SARDA England but we sometimes get to work together, sometimes on the same shout.

How many rescues you done then? 'Just over 200 deployed - from Cornwall to Cumbria. Fourteen finds - eight alive, six dead. There's been some good 'uns too. One woman - 79 she was, with dementia, Alzheimers', leukaemia. Very frail lady. Missing for 24 hours. By the time we were called, the police had been out all day and Bolton team had been called too. I got a scent from her house, across the road, into some scrubland and on to this mass of brambles with a 'rabbit hole' in the middle. There was no mistaking the scent but where was she? Then Iain shone his torch down this hole and there was her little face at the other end. Seems she'd burrowed her way in. Wouldn't have survived the night if I hadn't picked up that scent and persisted with it.

'See, that's how we work. Give us a scent from something the human's touched or worn and we can follow it till the trail runs out. So, if someone goes missing, we can give a sense of direction. Classic case in the Lakes last year, when a chap went missing up on the Kirkstone Pass. His car was there but no sign of him and not a clue which path he might have taken. And there ARE a few up there. It was flippin' cold that



*That's me and my fave human being, Iain. His missus Alison is okay too!*



*Me and Floss - that's her giving me a hard time!*



*Mud, mud, glorious mud...*



# Trailing dogs

# dogs

night and Mr Owen really didn't want to have to turn out lots of team members searching lots of areas without some more clues, so off we went. Well, I soon picked up the scent from the chap's car to this one particular path leading up Red Screens – which meant the air scenting dogs, and the rescue team members, knew exactly where to start looking. We'd helped eliminate the possible areas. In fact, it was one of my air scenting chums who found the man.'

I have a sense Mij could talk all night about her exploits, and deservedly so, but I'm running out of space... so I press on... your name: Mij. Unusual? 'You can thank a chap called Gavin Maxwell and his otter for that one! They made a film out of their story back in 1969, wa-a-y before I was born – 'Ring of Bright Water' – and the otter's name was Mijbil, shortened to Mij. Means 'Princess' in Arabic, apparently. Which I think is apt, don't you?'

No plans for a Facebook page? A lot of your air scenting colleagues seem to be going online with their stories and handler pictures. 'I WAS on Dogbook but no, not for now. And don't get me started on Twitter!'

Memoirs then? 'I'll need to speak with my agent about that...'

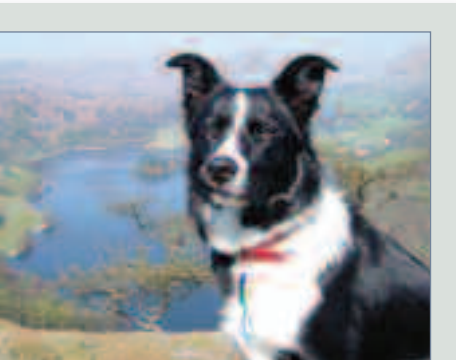
Party? 'Oh I'm sure there'll be something somewhere involving treats and beer and mud! Which reminds me – my 'find' routine! Find body – get cooked beef treat from body – run off and roll in mud, the smellier and muckier the better – back to body for play with tug toy. They love it!' Mmmm... Somehow, I'm not convinced...

Fave place? 'Loughrigg!!'

Fave food? 'Beef, of course! Silly!!'

And so we reach the end of the interview. Time for Iain's lie down so they'd better get back up the M61 to Leyland. Truly a remarkable dog. And a first for me, I have to say. Till next time then... Woof!

Judy W xx



*This is me. And see that... THAT'S my playground...*



## SNIFF SNIFF... EARLY TRAINING! IAIN NICHOLSON

**Q** uite a few people wonder at how we get the dogs to discriminate scent. With a scent specific, or trailing dog, this is the key attribute we must ensure that every dog has, as it's the keystone to what we intend to train the dog to do. With the work Tom Middlemas has done in the UK and Europe, changes were made to the foundation work undertaken with the dog in an aim to develop discrimination skills and ability at an early stage.

The early stages of a trailing dogs training are now centred on being able to discriminate different scents from each other. What may surprise people is that these scents are not human from day one, but the likes of olive oil, cardamon pods and various herbs, to name a few. What we're aiming to do is to get the dog to locate the scent it is given, and indicate.

To facilitate this, there are a number of 'stages' or exercises, the dog undertakes, all with a link to a behaviour or skill we want in trailing humans later in the dog's training. These early stages are done in a controlled environment provided by the boxes and gauzes, where errorless learning can take place so as not to introduce any bad habits at an early stage in the dog's (or handler's!) training.

So, what do we do? At the very start, we use a combination of scent discrimination and reward via 'boxes' over a number of training stages. Three Tupperware-style boxes are used, each containing the same reward but one box with a scent on the top. The boxes are placed in a line five metres apart. The dog is given the same scent from a gauze (toothpaste would be an example) by the handler, and the dog – on a long lead at this stage of training – is walked up to each box in turn until it locates the scent on the top of the scented box and is rewarded.

WHO YOU LEADIN' ON? HANDLER TRAINING WITH THE 'BIT OF STRING'  
PHOTOS: IAIN NICHOLSON AND DARYL GARFIELD



Continued on next page

The idea is that, to get the reward, the box with the correct scent must be located, despite all boxes containing a reward. It should be remembered that when discriminating, dogs must be given time to build the mental picture of the scent in their mind, so it's important to let the dog have three to five seconds at each box. At the start, the fact the dog shows interest in the box is rewarded and, as the exercises develop, an indication from the dog can be insisted upon as the game is learned and confidence is gained.

As the dog team progresses through these early stages, the exercise develops, and a decoy scent is placed on the two boxes that do not have the scent the dog is being asked to locate. Further progression



TRAINEE TRAILING DOG DRAM GETS HIS REWARD FROM HANDLER DARYL FOR FINDING THE BOXES

leads to the removal the boxes, and just having scent on small gauzes on the ground for the dog to find. As skills are gained, the training moves to human scent, and people are used in place of the boxes, with the dog discriminating and indicating the correct person in the group from a scent article it has been given.

Throughout these stages of the dog's training, the exercises reinforce and develop the dog's indication. This is extremely important as it is this indication the dog will use to indicate the location of the scent trail to the handler later in its training and operational working.

Certainly the result of a dog undertaking this training is that they are much more confident in discrimination, and prove much better in later training when trailing and following human scent.

It must be said that this article just touches on the training exercises at a high level. There are many pitfalls that can be easily introduced in these exercises, and they are always taught by an experienced trailing dog handler to ensure the desired training objective is achieved, and that both dog and handler are competent at each stage before progressing to the next. ■



IAIN NICHOLSON

## NSARDA SEMINAR

Interest in trailing dogs has grown hugely over the past twelve months – from SAR organisations throughout the UK. Tom Middlemas and I were keen to get some form of initial training organised to ensure handlers had the information and basic training which would help them on the road to training a scent discrimination dog.



## SUCCESS IN THE LAKES FOR SARDA ENGLAND

WAYNE THACKRAY

**T**he SARDA England assessment course has been held in the Lake District for as long as any of the current handlers and bodies can remember. With steep rocky fellsides and harsh winter conditions, it's an ideal environment for testing the abilities of aspirant and experienced dog teams...

...so imagine our surprise this year – nothing but blue skies and bright sunshine! Although, the temperature was low enough to remind us it was still winter. Our irrepressible and ever upbeat dogsbodies were glad of the kind conditions.

Derwentwater Hostel was our base as usual over the weekend of 13-15 January and what a success it was! Three more dog teams successfully passed their Initial Grade Assessment tests and made it on to the call-out list. Peter Thompson of North of Tyne MRT graded his second dog Bess; James Taylor-Short, a member of the Bideford Sector Coastguard, graded his dog Poppy; and Tony High of Teesdale & Weardale MRT graded his first dog, Isla.

Tony and Isla were also awarded the Novice Shield for showing outstanding performance during their assessment – no mean feat, and only

the third time in ten years the shield has been awarded. When asked to comment, Tony was unusually stuck for words, only managing a beaming smile and the words, 'Happy days'!!

Also this weekend, Karen Fisher and Sam (also Teesdale), and Paul Taylor and Toby (Glossop), passed their Upgrade Assessment to become Full Grade search and rescue dog teams.

As is traditional, Vicky Blood of West Mount Vets kindly helped with free vaccinations, wormers and tick treatments for those dogs requiring them. Oscars Pet Foods behaviourist and nutritionist Shelly Aspden was amazed at the dedication of handlers and bodies alike and was pleased to see the Oscars sponsorship being put to good use to save lives. Oscar Pet Foods kindly sponsor all graded dogs with premium foods to keep them fit and at the top of their game.

SARDA England would like to thank

# dogs



Fortunately, Harold Burrows, chairman of NSARDA had a similar view. Our first 'trailing weekend', in September brought such positive feedback, we set about organising a trailing seminar. Our aim was to provide an intensive week of theory and practical skills for those interested in actually training a scent-specific trailing dog.

The response was phenomenal, with every available place being filled and most SAR dog organisations in the UK being represented. This was certainly a boost for us, as it confirmed the interest was out there for this type of SAR dog. With the course organised, and guest speakers for the evening arranged, 12 February saw people travel from all over the UK to the first NSARDA Trailing Dog Seminar at Bowland Pennine's Smelt Mill base.

Monday was day one, and a theory day! Tom covered the essential topics when looking at training a trailing dog, including early schooling, dangers in conventional obedience, 'odours', bacterial activity and properties and the effects of time, wind, and temperature on the trail. All were very interactive sessions, and it opened a new approach to dog training to many who'd had a search dog before. The evening presentation was by Oscar Pet Foods, and the dog nutrition talk generated a great deal of discussion – especially when people found out what may, and may not, be in their current dog food!

Tuesday brought a rest for people's

brains after the day of theory! Practical sessions on how we teach dogs to discriminate and build the indication in the trailing dog in the early stages of training allowed people to do some basics with their dogs. An evening talk by Phil O'Brien, team leader of Bowland Pennine MRT, on the use of trailing dogs and their many capabilities for a search manager brought a 55-minute discussion, and Simon Harris gave an excellent insight into missing person behaviour.

Wednesday was based around acquiring scent and working your dog on a trailing line. There's a lot of 'connection' between the dog and handler on the line, and it's important to get the handlers to experience the feedback that occurs. Cue a practical session, of handlers role-playing trailing dogs and being worked on the line! A great exercise to experience line work – and get tied in knots! Good debates on people's experiences followed this and much was learned. An entertaining evening lecture on dog first aid and bandaging your dog by Clair Williams followed, with all getting involved with dog bandaging into the evening.

With the information gained across

the first few days, Thursday was spent outdoors looking at how terrain affects scent on Beacon Fell. It's always interesting to see the preconception people have before, and after these sessions once it's seen in the outdoors and not from books. Those who brought their dogs had an opportunity to work them in the afternoon again. As it was the final evening, we had a more relaxed dinner and some closing words from those involved in the course.

Friday was trailing demo day, with Mij and Iain working a trail. The group followed on, with Tom talking them through all the behaviours and methods they'd learned during the week as Mij worked a trail through the Trough of Bowland. Lunchtime was the end of the course with people travelling home to near and far.

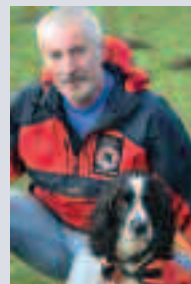
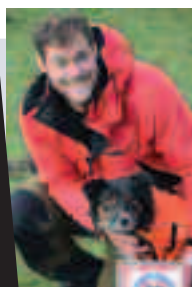
A big thanks must go to Oscar Pet Foods ([www.oscars.co.uk](http://www.oscars.co.uk)) who kindly sponsored the course, and to Pip and Alison for the catering and looking after everyone during the week. ■

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**TURN TO PAGE 34 FOR MORE ABOUT OSCAR PET FOODS...**

everyone involved in making the course such a success – the staff and new owners at Derwentwater Hostel, the visiting assessors from our sister associations for helping to assess, Lake District MRSD for arranging the availability of land and to the local landowners for allowing us the use of the land. And a huge thanks must, of course, go to our dogsbodies, a proud, dedicated, and usefully devious bunch of people without whom we couldn't train our marvellous animals in the first place.

To quote one of the handlers, 'It's understandable why we endure the trials and tribulations of search dog training, but why our bodies and other supporters go to such lengths to make it all possible is less clear, until you appreciate the collective ownership they have of these amazing dogs.' Well said, Pete. ■



CLOCKWISE: TONY HIGH AND ISLA WITH THE NOVICE SHIELD; JAMES TAYLOR-SHORT AND POPPY; KAREN FISHER WITH NEV SHARP; PAUL TAYLOR AND TOBY; PETE THOMPSON AND BESS PHOTOS: SARDA ENGLAND

*'It's understandable why we handlers endure the trials and tribulations of search dog training, but why our bodies and other supporters go to such lengths to make it all possible is less clear, until you appreciate the collective ownership.'*

*Pete Thompson, Handler*



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## THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 18:00hrs

Collected from home by the team support vehicle fully laden with baggage, team members and dogs. We are about to journey to Keswick in the Lake District to participate in the SARDA National Training and Assessment Weekend. Enticed by the promise of lavish catering, I have volunteered to be a dogsbody. Arrival at the Derwent YHA. The parking area resembles a supermarket car park on a Saturday afternoon. A plethora of dogs, mainly Border Collies. They range from young, hopeful, potential search dogs to the seasoned and experienced veterans (not to mention the handlers).

Found the kitchen, kettle and cake and settled in.

## FRIDAY 13 JANUARY 08:30hrs

An early breakfast followed by a briefing session and safety instructions for the 25 plus dogsbodies. Dogs and handlers are divided into various groups according to training needs. These range from the raw recruit puppy/obedience class through to



## DIARY OF A NOBODY

BY DAVID KNIGHT, AGED 56<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

fully graded search dogs. Stages 1 and 2 concentrate on body focus with an indication test to pass between the stages. Oldham handler Tony Tombs and dog, Jed, are in the puppy class. Handlers Mimi and Steve, with dogs, Blue and Tye, are in Stage 2 focusing upon small search areas. This is followed by stage 3 and an increase in area size and complexity. The next group is the Novice Assessment Group. Mick and dog, Bob, passed this last year (huge pressure!) to make Bob an active search dog. Novice dogs then have two years to retest to become a fully graded search dog. I am assigned to this group, which means that search dog Bob will have to come and find me yet again. We are transported to Langstrath, a valley near Rosthwaite in Borrowdale. I am instructed to go and hide high on the fellside. Here I spend a very pleasant and tranquil day cocooned in a sleeping bag on a comfy sleeping mat watching the world go by. I am occasionally disturbed by various search dogs, including Bob, followed by their heavy-breathing and sweating handlers who have just chased their dog up 600m of steep Lakeland fell, possibly for the third or fourth time in that search area alone. There

are usually two search areas to be completed with three to four bodies to be found in each. Each search must be completed within one hour.

The fun over, I go back to base. The evening meal meets all expectations. Thanks Mimi.

### SATURDAY 14 JANUARY 08:30hrs

Another day with the Novice group dogs and handlers. Search dog Bob must think I am very accident prone as he has to come and rescue me, yet again! A different venue this time with a location near to Castle Rock in Borrowdale. The scenario is the same with the trainers/assessors asking me to get lost high on the fellside. From my comfortable eyrie I am able to watch the dogs working. I hear the faint sound of the bells attached to their harnesses getting louder and anticipate the arrival of the search dog followed by a handler some distance behind. Another pleasant day draws to a close and all dogsbodies, search dogs and handlers return to the Youth Hostel for another evening meal that does not disappoint. Thanks this time to Katie.

### SUNDAY 15 JANUARY 08:30hrs

Still with the Novice group I am transported to Newlands Valley and again told to get lost. A shorter day today and a return to base before 13:30hrs for a presentation of certificates and awards to those handlers who have proved successful during a highly pressured three day assessment – the culmination of around four to five years of hard work for both dogs and handlers, although the dogs seem to handle the pressure of the assessment process far better than the handlers. I'm pleased to say that all the handlers achieve their goal. In particular, all of the OMRT handlers are pleased and satisfied with their progress and the results of the weekend. Next year will be very different for the Oldham team handlers with at least one, and most likely three, going through the mill of the formal and stringent assessment but, for now, all that remains is to load the van and make our way home.

If you enjoy playing hide and seek on a grand scale, are fond of dogs and have the occasional hour to spare, perhaps you would consider acting as a dogsbody now and again. The local search

and rescue dogs train in and around the Chew Valley and Dovestones area most Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. If you're interested give the team a call and one of the handlers will speak to you in more detail.\*

### INCIDENTS INVOLVING OLDHAM TEAM'S DOGS 2012

05 Jan: Patterdale: Missing walker. Nothing found.  
07 Jan: Bleaklow: Lost walker, found by Glossop's search dog.  
21 Jan: Oldham: Person missing from home. Nothing found.  
21 Jan: Bleaklow: Three lost walkers, one with lower leg injury. Found by police helicopter.  
22 Jan: Kinder: Four lost walkers, stood down while responding. Found by Edale MRT.

*\* Of course, dog handlers, wherever they are based, whatever team they belong to, are always in need of willing volunteers to act as dogsbodies. Check out your local team for contact details or visit the various SARDA websites – details of all can be found on [mountain.rescue.org.uk](http://mountain.rescue.org.uk). Happy hiding!!*

LEFT: BODY'S EYE VIEW FROM THE TOP  
RIGHT: COME ON DAD, I'VE BEEN  
HERE AGES!!

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## Cumulus Pro Mountain Jacket

At last, Keela are proud to unveil their new Cumulus Pro Mountain Jacket. This jacket has been in the pipeline for two years, during which time we sought advice from mountain and rescue teams throughout the UK and Europe, and even ran a competition to find out which features should be incorporated. The end result proves the wait has paid off, producing what we believe is the best mountain jacket on the market and the lightest System Dual Protection jacket in our extensive range!

The Cumulus Pro has all the features needed for extreme, prolonged use on any hill or mountain:



- Wire framed hood that's big enough to accommodate a helmet.
- Underarm venting for warmer days.
- Large map pocket.
- Mobile phone/GPS pocket.
- Double storm flaps on the main zip to keep the elements at bay.
- Reflective piping, for those that need to be seen, and the option to add our usual retro fit of 1" reflective tape on the cuffs and hem for those teams/members who would like a bit more!
- The Cumulus Pro has the added benefit of our new, innovative Pro-Lite fabric, making it light enough for year round use but also giving it the strength for typical outdoor abuse.

The Cumulus Pro is a huge addition to the KEELA range of clothing. It has been well received by MRT/SAR members when shown at recent conferences and exhibitions, so we are confident it will be a mainstay in our range for the foreseeable future. Competition winners will be informed shortly.

**For further information please contact: Angela Taylor on 01592 777000 or email [angela@keela.co.uk](mailto:angela@keela.co.uk)  
Visit us at [www.keela.co.uk](http://www.keela.co.uk)**

For a full range of suppliers and sponsors go to the members area [mountain.rescue.org.uk](http://mountain.rescue.org.uk).



TERRA



# FACEBOOK FAN COUNT:

Basecamp: 1838  
MREW: 420

Some of the stories that got you chatting last quarter...

...The new Mountain Rescue England and Wales page is beginning to gather fans – limited no doubt, by the fact I've set it up so certain countries can't see it. Call me old fashioned but I do get weary of deleting spam posted by 'fans' in, how shall I put this, distant lands, in their mother tongues, with absolutely no interest in mountain rescue other than bagging another page to 'like' (did I say that politically correctly enough? And, actually, am I bothered?). Anyway, in time I WILL be deactivating the Basecamp page, so if you haven't already done so, please transfer your affections to the new one. I'll see you there!

...early March saw Six Radio presenter, travel writer, all round witty raconteur and Coniston MRT patron, Stuart Maconie giving a talk at Coniston Institute in aid of the team. I did my best to plug it and there was certainly a roomful of willing ears, whether or not they saw it on Facebook! The evening was as entertaining as anticipated. Stuart was on form, there was even a glass of wine thrown in and the event raised £950 for the team. If you weren't there, you missed a treat...



...February added to the continuing debate about smartphone app usage and its potential for getting people lost. A couple in South Wales had an interesting lesson in the dangers of navigating using only their smartphone (at the expense of map and compass) when it placed them miles from where they actually were. Although Facebook comments suggested the couple had actually been fine, until the battery went flat. Central Beacons team members tracked them down, (by speaking to them on their other, bog standard, mobile phone) then took them to the team vehicle for tea and warming, before South Wales police took them home... you do get the feeling with all this though that it won't be the last time we hear similar tales! **JW**

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# Support News

## New faces at Adventure Eyes

It has been a crazy start to the year at Adventure Eyes. Whilst all may have appeared calm and relatively quiet to onlookers, behind the scenes has been a whirlwind of activity. Copious amounts of coffee and attempts at calming yoga have helped us get through the tougher weeks. That and just one or two bars of chocolate.

The reason for this flurry of self-imposed cyber craziness? The imminent launch of the new face of Adventure Eyes.

The newly designed site for Adventure Eyes.com has a few major feathers in its cap (as we remind ourselves daily that the effort is truly worthwhile!) For starters, it's a lot quicker to nip around and find your information – a definite plus point if you're as impatient as us when browsing the web! It's also accessible for all the 'flashless' gadgets out there. So the Adventure Guide can now be read on desktops, laptops, mobiles, pads, pods, and androids – handy for people on the move. And we've added a load more exciting features to make it even easier for people to find out where to go, and what to do in the UK and further afield.

So, by the time this magazine lands on your doormat, the new face of Adventure Eyes will have been unleashed on the world, and you can explore for yourself what has prompted so much energy and chocolate consumption

in the Adventure Eyes office.

The new site is not the only new face in town. During all this excitement and moments wondering quite how such a small team could possibly put a world's worth of ideas into action, an email popped into the inbox. It was one of those moments that you marvel at, when things just seem to bizarrely slot into place. A few emails and a few conversations later and we were delighted to welcome on board Matt Harden, an enthusiastic and multi-talented fella from Dartmoor SRT (Plymouth).

Matt's part-time role will involve a whole host of Adventure Eyes activities, from doing a spot of research through to putting together articles. However, a key focus over the coming months will be the promotions work we do for adventure-related charities. His background in mountain rescue will undoubtedly serve him well for this role, and we're looking forward to working with him.

If you have any adventure-focused fundraising activities or events you would like some additional publicity for, please do get in touch with us: [promotions@adventure-eyes.com](mailto:promotions@adventure-eyes.com).



## GIVE TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE BY TEXT MSGE

You can now donate to Mountain Rescue England and Wales via text message.

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## SUBSCRIBE TO MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAG: JOIN BASECAMP!

Single membership is £24 per year, joint membership £42. In return you will receive a lapel or cloth badge, a car sticker and a copy of the mag each quarter.

**GO TO MOUNTAIN.RESCUE.ORG.UK/BASECAMP**



## SUPPORT MOUNTAIN RESCUE - BUY A BEANIE TEDDY!!

We now have these in stock – yours for just £3.75 each. Contact Gail Todd on [gail.todd@sky.com](mailto:gail.todd@sky.com) for details.

Teams wishing to buy the teddies in quantity for team fundraising, please contact Gail for details of discounted rates and other merchandise available.

# STUFF Book

## WINTER CLIMBS IN THE CAIRNGORMS AND CREG MEAGAI DH

by Allen and Blair Fyffe

Review by Mike Margeson

Not surprisingly this sixth edition of the guide by Allen and Blair is superbly presented and put together. Over fifty very clear colour photo crag topographical images are used to help make this selected guide really easy to use, once in the corrie. Alongside these are action photos of various pitches to whet your appetite. Grading is clear and, as normal, includes the overall difficulty of the route and technical difficulty of climbing as well as a star system. There are routes of all grades and styles and plenty of choice to allow for conditions. There's also a wealth of good advice and information on a variety of topics such as conditions and route choice, avalanche safety and precautions, maps and equipment. The whole guide is still compact enough to carry and use sensibly. This is a welcome and very well produced new guide.

'Winter Climbs in the Cairngorms and Crag Meagaidh' by Allen and Blair Fyffe is published by Cicerone. [www.cicerone.co.uk](http://www.cicerone.co.uk). Pages 264. Price £16.95. ISBN: 978-1-85284-662-0.



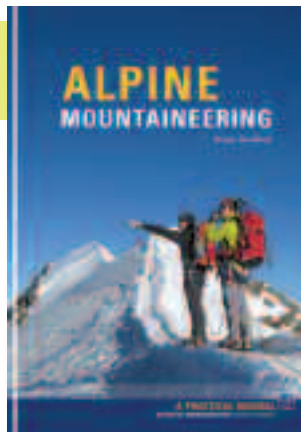
## ALPINE MOUNTAINEERING A PRACTICAL MANUAL

by Bruce Goodlad

Review by Mike Margeson

This new text, subtitled a practical manual of essential knowledge for the budding alpinist, is just that and does exactly what it says on the tin! The book is divided into two main sections. Bruce first goes through all the skill sets required and the acquisition of knowledge to operate effectively and safely in the European Alps. The choice of material and chapters reflects the experience and knowledge gained as an IFMGA Mountain Guide with lots of top tips about equipment, glacier travel, speed versus safety, weather and of course huts. Eric Pirie, an IFMGA Guide, EMT Ski Patrol and Cairngorm MRT member, covers the Alpine rescue chapter. There is a huge amount of knowledge for the beginner or improver or even, dare I suggest, the more seasoned. The text has very clear photographs to demonstrate and illustrate techniques which, for me, work really well. Part two is just fantastic for the Alpine novice: not just a guide book, more a progressive lesson plan. I would recommend this new manual to any novice or improving Alpinist.

'Alpine Mountaineering: a Practical Manual' by Bruce Goodland is published by Pesda Press 264 pages. Price £16.99. ISBN 978-1-906095-30-7.



**Coming soon!!**

## SEARCH AND RESCUE DOGS

by Bob Sharp  
& Bill Jennison

The unique contribution dog teams make to SAR in the UK has never been fully described. No publication has yet provided a complete account of search dogs from the early days to the present day and this book fills that gap! It has been several years in the making and many people both within and outside mountain rescue have made this possible. The reader is led through the history, current provision, training, assessment, operational work, health and welfare in a coherent and complete reference source for all those either currently working with dogs or planning to become involved. This book will appeal to everyone involved in mountain rescue as well as the wider mountaineering fraternity. There are personal accounts from handlers, casualties, 'dogsbodies', assessors and the dogs themselves, and many accounts of searches – both successful and tragic – carried out by dog teams. Printed in full colour throughout, the book is expected to hit the shops by the summer. Anyone who may be interested in a copy should contact Bob on [lomondbob@gmail.com](mailto:lomondbob@gmail.com) for advance notification.

*'Dogs play a vital role within mountain rescue in the UK. Laced with a myriad of fascinating photographs and 'doggie tales' both historical and contemporary; this book cannot fail to educate and inspire all those who enjoy the great outdoors.'*

**Heather Morning MA SARDA Scotland handler and Mountain Safety Adviser with The Mountaineering Council of Scotland.**

*'This book offers a unique insight into the work of search dogs. It provides a comprehensive and in-depth guide into the history and development of search and rescue dogs and the heroic work undertaken by the handlers within mountain and lowland rescue. If you want a complete source of information about working search dogs, combined with numerous stories of real incidents and a touch of humour, then this book is a must.'*

**Neville Sharp BEM MSc President. SARDA England.**



## ULTIMATE NAVIGATION MANUAL: ALL THE TECHNIQUES YOU NEED TO BECOME AN EXPERT NAVIGATOR

by Lyle Brotherton  
Published by Collins [www.harpercollins.co.uk](http://www.harpercollins.co.uk)  
ISBN: 978-0-00-742460-3. £14.99. 368 pages.

# SATNAV IN WATERSIDE SEARCH AND RESCUE



**LYLE BROTHERTON**

**O**perating beside any type of water presents major challenges to any team, not least to the primary remit of team safety. Rivers in spate, flood plains and breached flood defences all cause the same complication; the mapped water margin is changed and continues to change. These areas create a whole new landscape: in order to operate effectively and safely in this landscape, careful planning, training and preparation are of paramount importance. Accurately determining precise location can be extremely difficult especially in the absence of any distinct identifying feature; this can be further exacerbated by poor visibility, as caused by inclement weather and/or at night-time. Conventional map and compass technique is the mainstay of all good navigation, and employed by every mountain rescue team. In waterside search it should be augmented with satnav (GPS).

# navigation



## WHY SATNAV IS SO VALUABLE IN WATERSIDE SAR

The unique features of satnav come into their own at these incidents and can significantly improve the outcomes in terms of safety, evidence collection and collation plus operational planning. These key areas can be categorised as:

### Access

Correctly identifying current location and determining safe access as well as potential escape routes.

### Evidence

Accurately marking items and evidence found during the search.

### Search Areas

Determining exactly where has, and more importantly, where has not been searched and conveying this to the search managers.

### Search Management

Operationally creating a dynamic map of the areas affected by the flooding, and marking new riverside danger areas.

## SATNAV IN PRACTICE IN WATERSIDE SAR

The following is an overview of the capabilities and basic integration of satnav into practical waterside search and rescue.

The first principle of all navigation is that, before we can navigate anywhere, we must first determine exactly where we are.

Leaving a vehicle at a road, track or other prominent feature on the map is relatively straightforward and, generally, in MR we work to six figure grid references. However in working beside hazards such as water we need to be much more accurate; satnav very successfully meets this need.

### At the beginning of the incident

The first waypoint created is at the DOP (drop-off-point) when leaving the vehicle, for the reason that at anytime the responder can navigate, in a straight line, back to it from anywhere. If the satnav is a mapping unit then a safe route can be determined back to the waypoint using the built in mapping.

However, in flood conditions, and where rivers have risen significantly, what is shown on the map does not necessarily convey the actual terrain. For this reason the tracking feature on the satnav is activated immediately leaving the DOP.

All satnav have this feature, where the receiver creates nodes of your location, similar to waypoints, at given distances/intervals of time, thereby creating a track history of where you have travelled. At any point the responder can follow this track back and by this means walk along the same route that you used to navigate into the area. Furthermore, this safe route of access can be shared with other responders at the scene and when back at control with the search managers.

All tracks can be saved and named. With the situation being dynamic, it is important to include the time and date in this file name.

Usually a node is created every 10m, sometimes more, sometimes less, depending upon speed of travel and the manufacturer's default settings. In the more expensive, top-of-the range satnavs, these recording rates can be changed, so when working in areas where there is little margin for error set the recording to time, not distance, at two-second intervals.

*(Most receivers record a total 10,000 nodes, therefore at two-second intervals they will record a track for 5 hours 33 mins).*

### EXPERT TIP

Switch on your receiver and leave it somewhere with a clear all-round view of the sky, ideally for 15 mins, to get a good fix and collect current almanac data for the entire constellation – which will give you better accuracy for 4 to 6 hours. With predictive ephemeris (Hotfix) the information gathered can be useful for up to several days, which greatly reduces acquisition times.

This track will also form the record of the area searched by the individual responder.

Ideally, the whole party should be equipped with a satnav; however, at a minimum, the person actually tasked in searching the water edge should carry a receiver.

### Whilst searching

The single most important consideration in any individual search is self preservation and personal safety. Therefore, in dangerous environments the number of tasks the responder is required to perform should be kept to a minimum, allowing them to focus upon their safety and the job in hand. In automatically recording the track of the responder's actual path, he/she can concentrate on the task in hand.

Equally important, when an object or obstacle is found, the responder can very easily create an accurate waypoint of its exact location using the satnav by pressing one button only. Instead of having to study the map, determine the grid ref and then write it down.

Continued on next page

### EXPERT TIP

Designate different colours for each team member's track



### Search debrief

Immediately completing a search of the tasked area the track should be named and saved. In addition, if whilst at the water's edge the responder did not have time to name each waypoint and instead instantly saved them as a number, they should now be named whilst the information

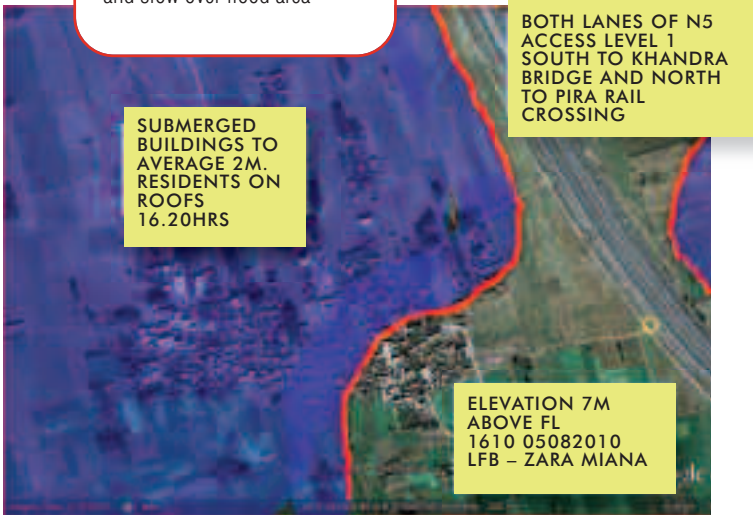
is still fresh in his/her mind.

This collected and stored information has immense value.

The water margin at that specific location, on that given date and time, can be accurately conveyed to the Search Manager and recorded on a map for everyone to see and use.

### EXPERT TIP

Satnav data recorded flow low and slow over flood area



The track is confirmation of the area searched. Subsequently sections that require further searching in the same area can be identified. Using satnav, other vital information can easily be marked on the control map: hazards on the water's edge, such as strainers, debris that has been created by the water, such as trees and vehicles, plus flash streams or drain covers that have

been blown and road surfaces that have collapsed.

Satnav has become the ubiquitous tool in mountain navigation. It does not replace the map and compass in rescue, but instead augments the work we do and, in waterside search and rescue, the benefits are enormous in terms of safety and efficiency. ■

Global Navigational Satellite Systems							
System	Number of Satellites	Frequency	Typical Accuracy	3rd Party Providers	3rd Party Providers (Commercial)	Service Coverage	Accuracy (Meters)
GPS	31	1575.42 MHz	±10m	Yes	Yes	Global	±10m
GLONASS	24	1602 MHz	±10m	Yes	Yes	Global	±10m
Galileo	30	1176.45 MHz	±1m	Yes	Yes	Global	±1m
BeiDou	35	1561.1 MHz	±10m	Yes	Yes	Global	±10m
Regional Navigational Satellite Systems							
QZSS	11	1196.45 MHz	±1m	Yes	Yes	Japan	±1m
IRNSS	7	1581.025 MHz	±10m	Yes	Yes	India	±10m
NavIC	7	1163.775 MHz	±10m	Yes	Yes	India	±10m

## WHY USE THE TERM 'SATNAV' NOT 'GPS'?

Hoover is the name of an American company and one of the first to manufacture a vacuum cleaner. Sometimes, vacuum cleaners are collectively called 'Hoovers', yet this is incorrect, as there are numerous providers, from Dyson to Electrolux, and the

correct term for all of these appliances is 'a vacuum cleaner'.

Similarly, GPS (Global Positioning System) is the name of the American navigational system controlled by the US Government and was the first of its type. Yet it

## WHY IS GRID REFERENCE SIZE IMPORTANT?

A six-figure grid references describes an area of 10000m<sup>2</sup> equivalent to 1.4 x Wembley football pitches and has no place in riverside search.

Using a grid reference tool or compass roamer very carefully, we can get near to an eight-figure grid ref (100m<sup>2</sup>), an area less than the centre circle on the pitch at Wembley.

Satnavs report a ten-figure grid ref (1m<sup>2</sup>), but you need to understand and take account of their reported accuracy:

- A satnav reporting an accuracy of 3 metres means you are somewhere inside a circle with a radius of 3m from your satnav (28m<sup>2</sup>).
- When satnav accuracy falls to 5.5m, your location is equivalent to an eight-figure grid ref.
- Therefore, all grid references taken from a satnav should be expressed as ten figures, yet only relied upon as an eight-figure grid ref. In other words, placing you in an area of 100m<sup>2</sup> at worst. Invariably, it will be better than this, we have just built in a large margin of safety.

## HOW DOES A SATNAV CALCULATE ITS LOCATION?

Simply, a satnav calculates its location on the earth's surface using the known positions of the satellites it is tracking – in effect measuring the distance to each satellite and then triangulating a position (it is actually called Trilateration because it is in 3D. If we triangulate using a map and compass we are really only working in 2D, as we do not take bearings to features significantly above or below us).

With as few as four satellites in view, the position of the receiver, in three dimensions, can be determined with an accuracy of around 20m. This positioning may be improved to within less than one metre, or even to within a few centimetres using more complex processes, which include augmentation by ground-based networks and retransmitted corrections by both radio and satellite. Generally, throughout the UK civilian handheld satnavs are accurate to between 2m and 6m.



# navigation

has incorrectly become synonymous with all similar navigational systems of which there are many new ones, each with a different name, and all controlled by different countries.

The term used to describe all of these navigational systems is GNSS (Global Navigational Satellite System). This term covers the satellites in orbit (The Space Segment), the ground stations that manage the system (The Control Segment) and lastly the receivers used to track and receive the satellite signals (The User Segment).

The collective name for these receivers is 'satnav'.

## WHAT DOES THE REPORTED ACCURACY MEAN?

Satnav accuracy varies depending on the quality of signals they receive and where the satellites are positioned in the sky. In ravines/canyons they will generally be less accurate than when you have a completely clear view of the sky to the horizon.

Satnavs do not position you with pinpoint accuracy – instead they place you somewhere inside a circle with varying degrees of probability.

Accuracy is usually displayed on your map page as a circle around the reported location – this circle represents an area where there is a 95% probability of you being, and is also shown as a number (usually on the satellite screen). This number is the length of the radius of the 95% probability circle.

What about the remaining 5% chance of you being somewhere else? For 1.5% of the time you will be somewhere within a circle 2.55 times this radius and there is a 0.1% chance of you being in a circle five times the stated radius.

However, in practice you are invariably within the stated accuracy of your exact location and, in many instances, almost upon the exact spot!



### EXPERT TIP

Receiver held horizontally and close to the body is a suboptimal antenna position. Receiver held vertically and away from body is the optimal antenna position. The accuracy is stated top right and the histogram (green bar chart) shows the relative strength of each satellite signal received, the higher the bar the better the signal. In the top right of the screen, the GNSS accuracy is displayed and this is directly related to signal strength, number of satellites and where they are in the sky.

## CREATING WAYPOINTS BEST PRACTICE

Waypoints are at the very heart of satnav and are locations which you record and store on it. The way you hold your satnav is one of the biggest determinants of accuracy.

1. Select the satellite screen.
2. Wait for about 10 seconds for your unit to settle, especially if you have taken it out of your pocket or it was in sleep mode.
3. If you see the receiver's accuracy continuing to improve, either by looking at the stated GNSS accuracy or a bar chart of satellite strength, wait until you feel it has reached its optimum, usually around 30 seconds.
4. Check the satellites' geometry (the further spaced to the horizon the better your unit can calculate your position). If they are all grouped above you or to one side. Decide how important your waypoint accuracy is and if necessary wait for them to move.
5. Now create the waypoint.

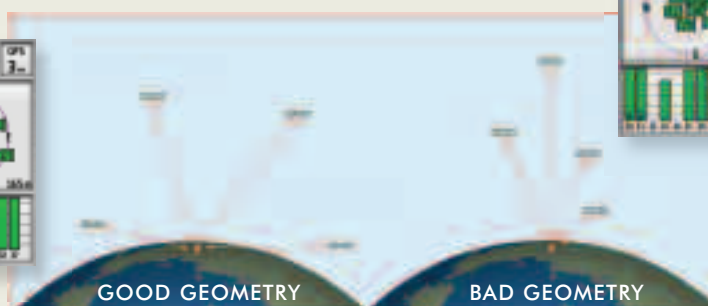
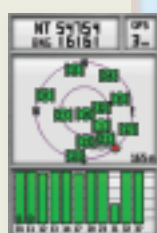


### EXPERT TIP

Hold the receiver at arm's length and head height and tilted to 45°.

### EXPERT TIP

The further spaced to the horizon the better your unit can calculate your position. If they are all grouped above you or to one side decide how important your waypoint accuracy is.





# THE ULTIMATE SPORTS GPS

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**NEW!**

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**Active 10 GPS with free mapping data** (map of 1/2 GB with OS 1:10k, 1:25k & 1:50k, representing over 200 OS Explorer maps worth £2300)



Used by:



# INFRA RED TECHNOLOGY WILL HELP SAVE LIVES ON THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINS

Infrared Security Solutions is proud to reproduce an extract of an article written by Bill Rose, team leader of the Killin Mountain Rescue Team.

*Killin Mountain Rescue Team has invested in handheld infrared cameras from Infrared Security Solutions Ltd in Nottingham following successful field trials earlier in 2011.*

*Infrared cameras detect body heat and can work in rain and misty conditions where conventional torches and night vision equipment is not effective. They have come on a long way in recent years, and are now relatively compact, no larger than a large pair of binoculars. They are now becoming affordable and available to civilian search and rescue organisations. Killin MRT is the first team in Scotland to invest in infrared cameras from Infrared Security Solutions.*

*With a range of over two kilometres, the handheld cameras allow large areas of hillside to be searched quickly and efficiently in a short space of time. They provide a facility to check steep dangerous rocky ground at night, or avalanche prone slopes without putting rescue team members at risk. The cameras can also detect a person hidden by trees and bushes.*

*Callander Community Council supported the team and provided match funding for the purchase of the cameras, realising the benefit they would provide in helping people who all too often find themselves in difficult and life threatening situations in the hills around this popular tourist destination.*

*It is important that rescue teams look at any development that can improve the speed at which we can bring about a successful result in a mountain rescue incident. Infra red cameras are another tool to add to the search box and Killin MRT is confident they will justify their purchase on many occasions.*

# Snippets

following on from the last issue...



**When you put a cut-out-and-keep model in the MR mag... this is what you get.. there'll be paper human figures to dress in red and black next ;-)**

Thus read the Facebook post from Nick Owen, with MREW Vehicles Officer Daryl Garfield and Robert Collyer at Langdale Ambleside MRT base. And I hear through the grapevine they weren't the only ones fiddling about with plastic scissors and Pritt sticks, as chopped up Mountain Rescue magazines littered control rooms across England and Wales. Hmmm... Blue Peter has a lot to answer for...

Duddon & Furness team member, Jacqui Young (last seen on January's front cover) is busy practising her swimming having just signed up to swim the English Channel with five other people for diabetes UK. The swim is scheduled for August. If you want to support Jacqui, check out her justgiving page: [www.justgiving.com/Jacqui-Young4](http://www.justgiving.com/Jacqui-Young4). Good luck Jacqui!



Following this, the result of the first field trials in our recently started campaign, we have carried out further trials with teams in Wales and the Lakes with further sales being confirmed at the time of writing.

ISS offers modern, innovative solutions to some of the difficulties faced by rescue teams and will continue to listen to your comments to determine how we might improve our offerings to support you.

If you would like to know more about our products or work with us on a field trial please contact us - Rob Reeve or Julie Haslam - on 0115 845 6573.

SEE OUR AD ON PAGE 24

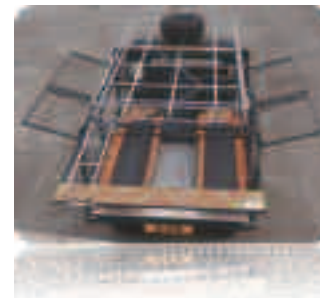


KILLIN MRT IN ACTION WITH A TIV AND DURING THE FIELD TRIALS

## morton EUV

POLARIS Emergency Utility Vehicle

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](mailto:alastair@aymorton.co.uk)**

**Website: [www.mortoneuv.co.uk](http://www.mortoneuv.co.uk)**

Infrared Security Solutions Ltd,  
Foxhall Lodge, Foxhall Road,  
Nottingham, NG2 6LH  
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 115 845 6573  
Fax: +44 (0) 115 845 6574  
email: [sales@iss-thermal.com](mailto:sales@iss-thermal.com)



PHOTO: BACK COUNTRY ACCESS

## REPORT BY ANDY SIMPSON

### SOME LESSONS TO LEARN FROM AVALANCHE RESCUE

Dale Atkins from the American MRA gave a talk entitled 'Butterflies and Avalanches: Common Errors in Avalanche Rescue'.

Clearly, the focus of his lecture was on avalanche rescues and how they can be improved but some of the lessons learned can easily transfer into mountain rescue. They are offered here merely as some areas to think about.

### STRATEGIC SHOVELLING OR THE V-SHAPED CONVEYOR METHOD

Bruce Edgerly from Backcountry Access outlined two pieces of research concerning the Strategic Shovelling and V-shaped Conveyor methods.

Did you even know there were different shovelling techniques for avalanche rescue? You may be surprised to learn (I was) that there is quite a bit of scientific research out there as to the best method of shovelling to reach an avalanche victim.

This probably won't affect most teams but given that many of us go off-piste skiing and winter mountaineering, there's a fair chance you may need avalanche rescue skills in your toolbox, albeit that you hope you won't ever need to use them. Working on the premise that an avalanche victim's best chance of survival will be through rescue by his/her companions in the first few minutes after an avalanche, the techniques used to locate and extricate the casualty, and the speed they are achieved, are fundamental to the outcome.

Digging is one of the main time consumers and, as such, needs to be as efficient as possible. The two methods mentioned have pros and cons as you might expect, one being better for small parties, the other better where manpower isn't a problem.

They both advocate digging from below the victim in order to avoid the digger collapsing the victim's air pocket on top of them, and they both address the problems of digger fatigue and the techniques available to maximise the effort being put in. Have a look at: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/BackcountryAccess/content/papers/ShovelCaseStudy08.pdf>. You never know, it might even improve your efforts on the allotment this summer!

[www.backcountryaccess.com](http://www.backcountryaccess.com)

#### Attitudes:

- Abilities are greater than capabilities.
- Hasty generalisations.
- Reluctance to adopt new technology.

#### Serious Errors:

- Often result from an accumulation of small errors.

#### Inattentional Blindness:

- We fail to notice large changes when absorbed in the inspection of something else.

#### Goal:

- To perform an efficient, fast and safe search and rescue in order to save a life.

#### Rescue Contradiction:

- More rescuers and/or newer equipment does not always mean better rescues.

#### Rescue Paradox:

- Sometimes 'text book' rescues are slow and sometimes 'sloppy' rescues are fast.

### MOBILE PHONE APPS: THE ANSWER TO OUR PRAYERS?

If you're skiing in the Austrian Tyrol or climbing in the Swiss Alps you can now take a mobile phone app with you to summon help if you need it. Austria's RESCALL and Switzerland's iREGA apps both boast the ability to contact the rescue services at the touch of a button and will give your rescuers information to help them come and assist you. The iREGA app is free to download from Apple's iStore (not sure about RESCALL). A great move forward (assuming you have a signal) but hopefully not something which will encourage people to go out unprepared.

### A WORRYING STATISTIC...

Les Agresti reported that since 1950 there have been 53 deaths amongst mountain rescuers in France - one third during rescue ops and presumably unavoidable.

The other two thirds were during training, about one every eighteen months. The last fatal accident during training was in September 2011 when a group were training using 50m and 60m ropes for abseiling. Unfortunately both lengths were the same colour and one trainee, thinking he was on a 60m rope, abseiled to his death straight off the end of what turned out to be a 50m rope. I really don't mean to sound flippant but don't people tie a knot in the end of an abseiling rope any more?

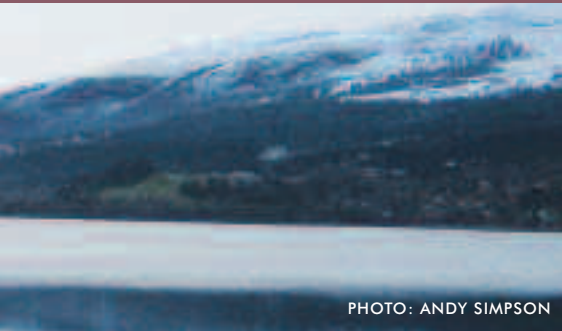


PHOTO: ANDY SIMPSON

# ÅRE SWEDEN

**FOR A VIDEO OF PROCEEDINGS  
AT IKAR 2011, PLEASE VISIT:  
[HTTP://VIMEO.COM/32415785](http://vimeo.com/32415785)**



## MIRRORED ROPE RESCUE SYSTEM

**An interesting presentation by Kirk Mauthner on twin rope systems (about 7 mins 30 secs into: <http://vimeo.com/32415785>).**

A conventional system has a live rope and a safety line but this leaves the safety rope open to a big impact if the live rope fails. Based on a drop test of 200kg onto three metres of rope, the back up rope must stop the load within one metre, including stretch and tightening, giving a peak force of 12kN or less. Post-drop the system needs to remain functional with the residual rope strength being at least 80%.

A way to avoid the drop is to tension both ropes once edge transition has taken place rather than having the back-up rope hand tight. This way there would be less likelihood of a rope failure as the load is split between the two systems. This also allows for both ropes to be rigged for a raise, reducing the load on a single line and reducing 'dig in' of the live rope.

A couple of basic principles need to be followed for this to work: both systems need to be fully competent and capable of acting as live and safety line at the same time; the back-up line should only be tensioned after edge transition has taken place in case there's any damage to the live line at this time; both lines need to be elevated if using a tripod (one under the other).

## UN HOSPITAL ENTRE EL CIELO Y LA TIERRA (A HOSPITAL BETWEEN SKY AND EARTH)

**Antonia Nerin announced a joint project between EUR.AC Research, IKAR, the Institute of Mountain Emergency Medicine and Nepalese Mountain Rescue to establish a core team of technically and medically trained mountain rescuers and physicians in Nepal between 2012 and 2017.**

The project will be coordinated with the current activities of UIAA Medcom and the International Society of Mountain Medicine.

The first step will be for ten mountain rescue team members and ten MR doctors from different areas of Nepal to attend a two-week course in technical and medical MR in the South Tyrol during 2012. This will be followed by a visit to Nepal in 2013 by five technical and five medical instructors to give a two-week course in a Nepalese mountain environment.

In 2014, the ten Nepalese doctors will be invited to the XIV World Congress in Mountain Medicine, in Bolzano, where they will have additional training and receive their certificates for the technical courses and the International Diploma in Mountain Emergency Medicine, issued by the congress organisers. The final stage will be to develop MR stations in the relevant areas of Nepal between 2015 and 2017.

## STANDARDS FOR UNRATED KIT



**Quite a lot of discussion took place regarding standards for all kit used within mountain rescue and whether or not it should be independently tested and certificated.**

Many countries felt all kit should be certificated for rescue but there were also a lot who said independent certification would cost too much and they would rather test the kit themselves. Clearly a lot of our kit comes with the normal industry ratings but there is quite a bit out there which doesn't. For example, many teams use the orange stretcher with a single rope at one end for vertical work and find it quite acceptable despite the stretcher not being rated for this. Dyneema rope isn't rated for mountain rescue work but many teams use it. Most teams in England and Wales use a Bell stretcher but this doesn't have an official industry rating and a lot of the gear we import from America isn't rated for sale in Europe.

Should there be a 'mountain rescue standard'? No doubt further discussion will take place but you might like to think about it yourself and maybe review the way your own kit is tested and approved for use by your team.

**In addition to last year's request that accidents (and what was learned from them) are reported to IKAR, the organisation has also asked that all 'near misses' be reported so that teams around the world can be notified of an accident waiting to happen. All reports should go to [Mike Margeson](#) who will then pass them on to the appropriate person at IKAR.**

# MEDICAL SEMINAR A SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

LES GORDON

There were three sections in the seminar:  
1. Hypothermia  
2. Physical fitness in rescuers  
3. Pain relief in mountain rescue

## SECTION 1: HYPOTHERMIA

### SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA

PETER PAAL MD  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ANESTHESIOLOGY  
AND CRITICAL CARE  
MEDICINE  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL  
INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA  
PETER.PAAL@UKI.AT



IMAGE COURTESY PETER PAAL

The lowest temperature from which an adult casualty has made a full recovery from severe accidental hypothermia and cardiac arrest is 13.7°C. Glucose is very important for thermoregulation. It is needed to enable the muscles to shiver. Most importantly, glucose depletion leads to faster cooling.

### Subtypes of hypothermia

The classification below is based on that proposed by Lloyd in 1996. In mountain and cave rescue, the most relevant types are the first three.

- Hyperacute – sudden immersion in cold water or snow causing hypothermia-induced cardiac arrest. Cold overwhelms heat production. Glucose levels are greater than normal due to elevated levels of catecholamines (adrenaline) and corticosteroids.

- Acute – eg. climber left on snow but limited shivering due to painful injuries; drunk intoxicated person. This is a slower process. Cold overwhelms heat production so glucose levels normal or sometimes greater than normal.

- Subacute – occurs over several hours following exposure to moderate cold or immersion in relatively warm water. The casualty is exhausted. Cooling occurs when glucose is depleted because shivering is not possible without adequate energy stores so spontaneous rewarming does not occur. Glucose levels are low.

- Subchronic – occurs in urban areas. Due to exposure to moderate cold for days/weeks.

Episodes of accidental hypothermia are not confined to the winter months. Dr Paal described the events that took place at the Zugspitze Mountain Endurance Race in Germany in 2008. This took place in July but there was freak weather leading to freezing temperatures, snow and wind. There were many hypothermic casualties. Some collapsed and were resuscitated but two runners in their forties died of hypothermia and exhaustion.

A practical way of on-site staging of hypothermia is the Swiss system that relates clinical signs to body temperature (Durrer, 2001):

I – Patient alert; shivering (35-32°C).

II – Patient drowsy, not shivering (32-28°C).

III – Patient unconscious (28-24°C).

IV – Patient not breathing (24-?13.7°C – no one knows the lowest survivable temperature).

### Hypothermia and trauma

There is a concept called the 'Deadly Triad in Trauma' (also called the 'Lethal Triad' or 'Trauma Triad of Death'). Hypothermia leads to deranged blood clotting and metabolic acidosis ie. accumulation of acids in the body due to poor tissue perfusion. The combination of the three adversely affects survival. Hypothermia commonly occurs in trauma (Hearns, 2003). Trauma severity correlates with hypothermia, and survival rate falls dramatically if the temperature is <32°C. There is a dramatic effect of hypothermia on bleeding in patients undergoing operation: for a 1°C fall in core temperature, bleeding increases by 10-15% and the need for blood transfusion increases by 22%. Accompanying head injury increases the degree of hypothermia by interfering with the brain regulation of body temperature. Multiple trauma can impair shivering because of pain.

### Protective effect of hypothermia

The body oxygen consumption falls by 7% for every 1°C fall in body temperature. It is this that enables severely hypothermic casualties to survive.

### The future

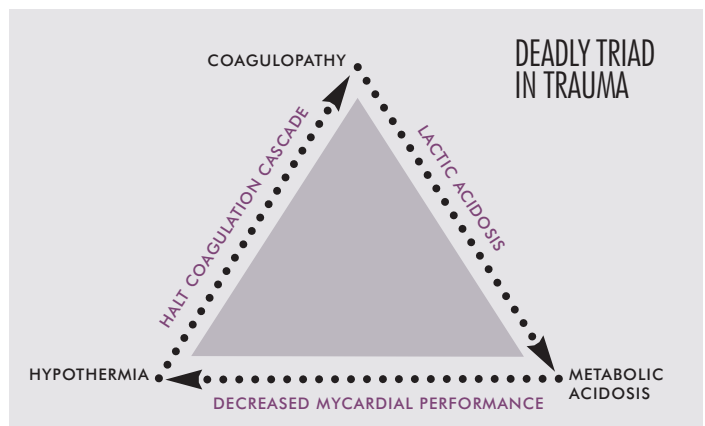
There are still a number of unknown issues eg. prognostic criteria that will help to identify which casualties will survive and those that won't. The International Hypothermia Registry ([www.hypothermia-registry.org](http://www.hypothermia-registry.org)) has been set up to collect data to help unravel some of the puzzles. Currently, it contains cases from many European countries and the USA. Send details of MR casualties.

### Conclusion

Outcome is excellent if no hypoxic event precedes hypothermia and there is no serious underlying disease.

### Useful references

- Lloyd E. *Accidental Hypothermia*. *Resuscitation* 1996; **32**: 111-24.
- Durrer B, Brugger H, Syme D. *Advanced challenges in resuscitation – Special challenges in ECC – Hypothermia*. *Resuscitation*. 2001; **50**: 243-6.
- Hearns S. *The Scottish Mountain Rescue casualty study*. *Emerg Med J* 2003; **20**: 281-4.



## AVALANCHE GUIDELINES

PETER PAAL MD  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ANESTHESIOLOGY  
AND CRITICAL CARE  
MEDICINE  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL  
INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA  
PETER.PAAL@UKI.AT

### Mortality rates and survival (Brugger H, 2001)

*Complete burial* is when the victim's head and chest are completely covered. *Partial burial* is when the victim's head and chest are free. 51% of 758 casualties who were completely buried were extricated dead, versus 4.4% of 1290 partially buried (data from a study reviewing incidents over a ten-year period in Switzerland).

*Survival phase* – of 638 casualties who were completely buried, the probability of survival is >90% until eighteen minutes after burial. After this time, the casualty enters the asphyxia phase (18-35 minutes after burial), when the survival rate drops from 91% to 34%. Finally, from 35-90 minutes after burial, is the latent phase, in which survival is only possible in the presence of a closed air pocket if the patient's airway is open. Casualties only survive for >90 minutes up to three hours if there is the air pocket is open to the outside air (7% of cases).

### Rescue

As a result of the findings described above, uninjured companions should aim to extricate the victim within 15 minutes, and organised rescue team within 90 minutes. On-site triage needs three pieces of information:

- 1: Identify whether there is an air pocket around the casualty, and whether the airway is clear.
- 2: Presence of an ECG tracing.
- 3: Burial duration and/or core temperature.

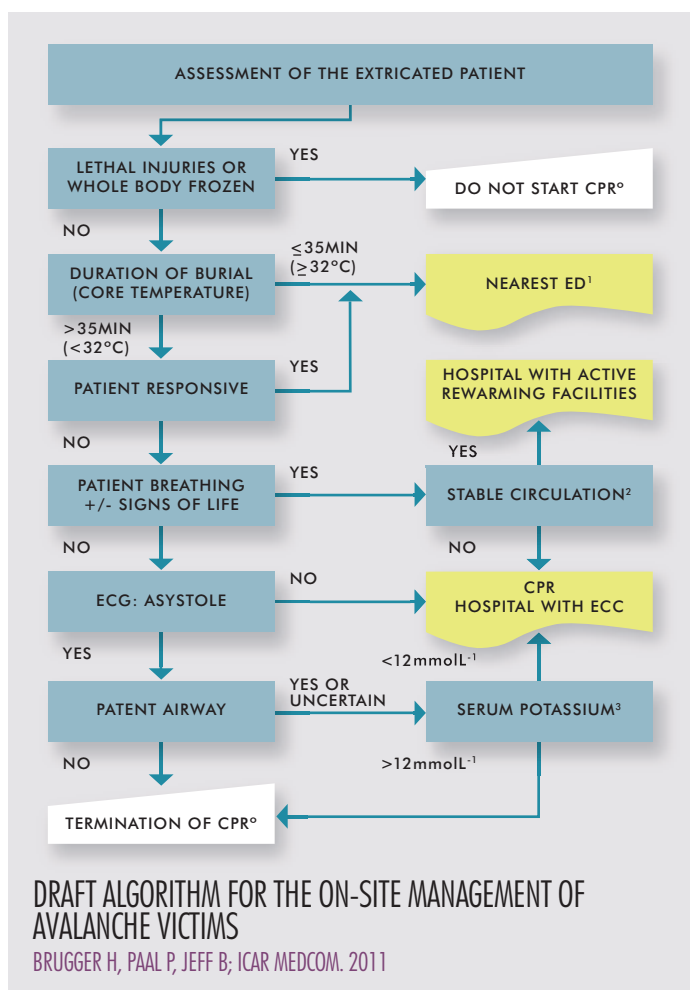
In severely hypothermic casualties who are thought to be salvageable,

there will then be the issue of how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation during transport.

Dr Paal then described the case of a 44-year-old male cross-country skier who was caught in an avalanche. He was buried for 255 minutes at a depth of 60cm. The casualty's airway was clear and there was an air pocket. By the time the casualty was released from the snow, he was not breathing and had no pulse. There were no visible injuries and no facility to measure body temperature or ECG. The casualty was declared dead at the site. He was wearing a multifunction sports watch with a wireless chest belt. This provided continuous monitoring of the altitude, temperature and heart rate. The data recorded by the device was analysed 24 hours later. It showed that, after burial, the heart rate gradually slowed over the next hour but did not reach zero until the moment of extrication. This suggests that the action of extrication may have triggered a cardiac arrest in a severely hypothermic person.

Dr Paal quoted a study that looked at the data for survivors and non-survivors of complete avalanche burial between 1980 and 2005 from the Canadian and Swiss databases. The proportion of survivors was the same in both countries (approximately 46%). However, the comparing survival curves, the Canadian curve showed a quicker drop at the early stages of burial and poorer survival associated with prolonged burial.

A total of 301 people in the Canadian database and 946 in the Swiss database were reviewed. The overall proportion of people who survived was the same in the two countries (about 46%). However, significant differences were observed between the survival curves for the two countries. Compared with the Swiss curve, the Canadian curve showed a quicker drop at the early stages of burial and poorer survival associated with prolonged burial. The probability of survival fell quicker with trauma-related deaths and in denser snow climates. Poorer survival probabilities in the Canadian sample were offset by significantly quicker extrication (median duration of burial 18 minutes vs 35 minutes in the Swiss sample). The observed differences in



avalanche survival curves between the two countries were associated with the prevalence of trauma and differences in the type of snow. Although avoidance of avalanches remains paramount for survival, the earlier onset of asphyxia, especially in maritime snow climates, emphasises the importance of prompt extrication, ideally within ten minutes. Protective devices against trauma and better clinical skills in organised rescue may further improve survival.

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## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE PREHOSPITAL CARE OF SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA?

JOHN ELLERTON  
MREW MEDICAL OFFICER  
ICAR MEDCOM  
ELLERTON@ENTERPRISE.NET

In mountain rescue, there is a steady trickle of cases of severe hypothermia that result in death. In the Lake District, the weather conditions can deteriorate suddenly catching people unawares.

Dr Ellerton described a case and showed the ECG of a 60-year-old

Continued on next page



PATTERDALE  
 AVALANCHE, FEBRUARY  
 2010 PHOTO: ANDY  
 MCALEA

RIGHT: FULL DEPTH  
 AVALANCHE. NORTH  
 WALES PHOTO: PETE  
 ROBERTSON

female. She had been exposed for hours to sub-zero temperatures and high wind. She had inadequate clothing. When she was found, she was 'P' on the AVPU scale, and was breathing about fourteen breaths per minute. Importantly, her ECG showed a rate of about 60/minute, but the rhythm had changed from normal to atrial fibrillation (not ventricular fibrillation: VF), and there were J-waves (an angulation on the downstroke of the QRS) – the tell-tale ECG sign indicating severe hypothermia.

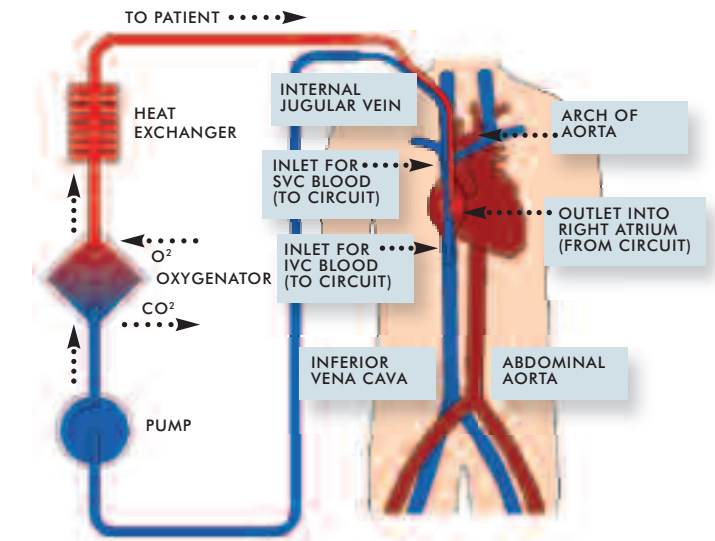
## How to prevent VF/asystole in severely hypothermic casualties

Casualties who are severely hypothermic (core temperature below 30°C) are on the brink of cardiac arrest. Inappropriate stimulation can easily push them into VF or asystole. There are a few important measures that have been shown to reduce the likelihood of doing this.

- Avoid postural changes. Where possible, keep the patient horizontal. Above all, do not suddenly change the patient's position. Raising the legs can also be dangerous as very cold blood from the legs can return to the core and push the cardiac temperature down to a level that will trigger cardiac arrest.



- Slow the cooling rate by insulation, removing wet clothes, etc. Warm packs can be used but should not be applied directly to the skin. In a very hypothermic person, the blood flow



through the skin is very sluggish. Any heat applied will not be conducted into the body very quickly so the temperature will rise in the area where the heat is and can cause a burn.

- Safety of procedures: published evidence suggests that careful intubation is probably safe. Therefore, careful insertion of eg. a laryngeal mask airway is also probably safe.
- There is weak evidence that providing extra oxygen might help prevent the slide into cardiac arrest in these patients.
- Drugs are often not effective in hypothermic patients as body enzyme systems do not function as well. If

transfer to a hospital that has the facility to rewarm such patients using equipment such as a heart-lung machine.

## When not to attempt resuscitation

- Lethal trauma or illness. Dr Ellerton showed a photo of a hypothermic casualty who had fallen. It was clear from his position he had not moved after the fall. This suggests the fall killed him and hypothermia occurred secondary to that.
- Prolonged asphyxia due to submersion or airway obstruction eg. in an avalanche.
- The whole body is frozen.
- The core temperature (if it can be measured) is <13.7°C. This is currently the lowest temperature recorded that someone has survived. It is believed this is near the biological limit for accidental hypothermia.
- The Alaskan Cold Injuries Guidelines also recommend that cardiopulmonary resuscitation should not be initiated if rescuers are exhausted or in danger. In addition, the time taken to transport the casualty to definitive care may also be important.

Dr Ellerton's final comment was this: 'All casualties with a history suggestive of primary hypothermia, where no vital signs are detected, should be considered salvageable and transferred to an ECLS (Extracorporeal Life Support) centre if practical.'

drugs need to be employed, use a small dose and administer less often than normal.

- If there is a sudden loss of vital signs, start CPR and consider direct



## EXTRACORPOREAL REWARMING

GILES PEEK  
CONSULTANT IN  
CARDIOTHORACIC  
SURGERY AND ECMO  
GLENFIELD HOSPITAL  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF  
LEICESTER

ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation) is a special form of heart-lung machine. There is an international organisation called ELSO (Extracorporeal Life Support Organisation) that maintains a registry of active ECMO centres and produces guidelines for centres. Leicester is a member of this organisation.

Mr Peek gave an overview of ECMO using the diagram above to illustrate the system. The patient can be connected to the machine via cannulae that are inserted in the neck. The ECMO machine maintains an oxygenated circulation around the body and can also be used to rewarm the patient.

Although it uses similar techniques, ECMO is not the same as the classic heart-lung machine used for cardiac surgery (called cardiopulmonary bypass). In particular, ECMO can be used for weeks in cases where the lungs are damaged (eg. influenza pneumonia). The technique is very effective and doubles the chances of survival over non-ECMO patients. A modern ECMO machine is relatively compact in comparison with the original version, of which Mr Peek showed a slide.

Mr Peek reviewed the large number of complications of hypothermia. These include abnormal heart rhythms, poorer tissue oxygenation, reduced conscious level, increased excretion of water by the kidneys, reduced responsiveness to adrenaline (would be used during a cardiac arrest), and deranged blood clotting (particularly important if there has been trauma).

## SECTION 2: PHYSICAL FITNESS IN RESCUERS

### FITNESS REQUIREMENTS FOR RNLI AND HM COASTGUARD

GEMMA MILLIGAN  
PROFESSOR MIKE TIPTON  
UNIVERSITY OF  
PORTSMOUTH EXTREME  
ENVIRONMENTS LAB

Before starting the presentation, Miss Milligan drew attention to Professor Tipton's recent publication about the triage of victims of drowning as this is very relevant to mountain and cave rescue.

This presentation reviewed the design, implementation and reviewing of fitness standards for the RNLI and HM Coastguard. There is a need for a fitness standard based on the minimum acceptable performance of critical tasks. This forms an important part of the selection criteria for applicants wishing to work in these areas. The standards are not related to gender or age, and can also be used as a guide as to whether a worker is able to remain in the field. One particular use of the fitness standards has been to promote the development of more efficient equipment and techniques, when it has become apparent that current practices can only be performed by a small number of the fittest individuals.

The steps in designing a fitness standard in any situation are:

- Identify the critical tasks undertaken and establish how they are currently performed.
- Establish the physical and physiological demands of the tasks when performed at the minimum acceptable rate.
- If necessary for testing purposes, establish a valid task simulation or a simple way to administer a predictive test.
- Validate the proposed test routine.
- Arrive at a recommendation for a minimum fitness test.

The Portsmouth group have designed tests that assess strength, efficiency and aerobic capacity (eg. for stretcher carrying in a mud rescue). Miss Milligan then went on to identify some of the issues that must be considered when creating a valid test. For example in tests of strength, there are many difficulties in standardising conditions so that they accurately represent the real life situation. If the cut-off is too high, the test would be too stringent if individuals have to work at their maximum capacity to pass. Although a simulated task provides standardised conditions, it is not a direct measurement of the activity under question and cannot be assessed during normal working activity. Tests have been designed that will predict how well an individual will perform in real life. These have the advantages of being standardised and will reduce the risk of injury that might be possible when performing the actual task, but their value is limited if they do not accurately predict real life performance.

Finally, the following lists the essential tasks for the implementation of a fitness standard:

- Defining the physical demands of the activity.
- Types of tests (simulations vs predictions).
- Recommended training programmes for workers in the field.
- Alternative tests that assess fitness (eg. walk test).
- Training and kit for those conducting the test.
- Health and safety issues.
- Subjectivity vs objectivity.
- How often to review and revise the standards.
- Define the relationship between fitness tests and medical examination.
- Implementation of the test (eg. Integrated in the routine medical review; how often the tests should be performed).
- Who conducts the tests.
- What to do with those who are borderline – options are:
  - Period of remedial training
  - Remain on the job
  - Retesting, second failure
  - Direct assessment/simulation rather than using an alternative test
  - What to do with those who fail?

## Useful references

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## PHYSIOLOGICAL DEMANDS OF MOUNTAIN RESCUE

JOHN ELLERTON  
MREW MEDICAL OFFICER  
ICAR MEDCOM  
ELLERTON@  
ENTERPRISE.NET  
DR JAMIE MACDONALD  
LECTURER IN CLINICAL  
EXERCISE AND PHYSIOLOGY  
AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES  
BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Dr Macdonald began his presentation with a short overview about the Extremes Research Group at Bangor University which aims to advance knowledge and the understanding of human performance and health in 'extreme' natural and artificial environments and conditions (see <http://extremes.bangor.ac.uk>).

## Background

MR is fortunate in that there is a level of motorised support (road, air and water) available so equipment does not have to be carried all the way from the Base to the scene, and the casualty can be air-lifted out. However, many call-outs are unsupported and require a lot of physical activity.

The metabolic demands of hill walking have been investigated in 2002. Participants in a study reached 50% of VO<sub>2</sub>Peak during ascent and 30% during descent. There is an important difference between the 2002 study and MR in that the former looked at a recreational hill walk. Participants carried a lighter load, were able to pace themselves and had more rest stops.

A related study in 2009 looked at the metabolic demands of carrying a

Continued on next page



CARRYING, SLEDGING AND MANHANDLING THE STRETCHER  
PHOTOS: JOHN ELLERTON

stretcher. Members of two Lake District teams carried a variety of stretchers for 1km up (no load) and down (loaded) a gradient of about 22°. Assessment included a score of Rated Perceived Exertion (RPE) which averaged 12 out of a maximum of 20. This corresponds to a description of 'fairly light/somewhat hard' in an equivalent verbal rating scale.

## This study

This investigation into the physiological demands of MR arose from a desire to improve occupational health and safety following sudden deaths of two rescuers during call-outs, and to increase the understanding of the physiological requirements of MR.

Initially, the basic fitness levels of the MR personnel were quantified by measuring aerobic capacity (VO<sub>2</sub> max). The field test involved a simulated rescue of walking up to the casualty area (Red Tarn near Helvellyn in the Lake District), and carrying appropriate equipment (stretcher, vacuum mattress, casualty bag, and entonox). After a wait of 20 minutes (simulating casualty assessment and packaging), the stretcher was carried or sledged back to the road. During the simulated call-out, participants wore a portable metabolic analyser and heart rate monitor.

The results showed that all MR participants are aerobically fit (high VO<sub>2</sub>max). This fitness level is very similar to that reported in much younger naval fire-fighters. Importantly, there was a range in fitness of 20%

across the group, which may mean that team members should be selected for the most appropriate tasks. During the simulated call-out, participants obtained peak oxygen uptake, minute ventilation, breathing frequency and heart rate values of 97%, 83%, 93%, and 94%, respectively, of maximal laboratory values. When ascending, participants were working in the range of 'very hard intensity' for more than 80% of the time. This correlates with the RPE score (see above) of 15 (meaning 'heavy'). The exercise intensity during descent was less, despite carrying a loaded stretcher. The study also showed that heart rate correlates with oxygen uptake and so can be used as a reasonable indicator of exercise intensity.

In conclusion, MR work is one of the most demanding emergency services, requiring that tasks are completed at 97% of maximal capacity, compared to 60–80% in other emergency services. In addition, tasks last several hours, compared to <25 min in other services.

## Useful references

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- Hignett S, Willmott JW, Clemes S. Mountain rescue stretchers: Usability trial. *Work* 2009; **34**: 215-22.
- Callender N, Ellerton J, Macdonald JH. Physiological demands of mountain rescue work. *Emerg Med J* doi:10.1136/emered-2011-200485.

## SECTION 3: PAIN RELIEF IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE

### ANALGESIA: THE HILLSIDE OPTIONS

LINDA DYKES  
CONSULTANT, EMERGENCY MEDICINE, DIRECTOR OF THE MOUNTAIN MEDICINE PROJECT. YSBYTY GWYNEDD HOSPITAL  
MOUNTAINMEDICINE.CO.UK

Ms Dykes started with a short review of some of the studies undertaken by her group. For example, one study emphasised that the mountains are dangerous places. Quoting from the Mountain Medicine database, 10% of casualties over a ten-year period were fatalities. Of these, 57% were due to trauma. Hill walking was the most common activity at the time of death (58%) followed by rock climbing (17%).

### There are a number of options for analgesia in mountain rescue

*Entonox* is safe, effective and widely used in MR. The main contraindication is chest injuries. It should not be used in cold ambient temperatures due to separation of entonox into the constituents (oxygen and nitrous oxide). This would result in initially giving almost pure oxygen (which is not analgesic), and subsequently pure nitrous oxide (which would be dangerous). The other disadvantages of entonox are cost and weight.

*Oral drugs* available for MR are paracetamol, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID) such as diclofenac and ibuprofen, and codeine (either alone or premixed with paracetamol eg. co-dodamol).

A range of opioid drugs are available. Controlled-drug paperwork must be completed for all of these.

*Morphine* is widely used when a strong analgesic is required. If given intramuscularly (IM), it is quite effective but onset is slow, and there can be problems with cold and shocked casualties. The intravenous (IV) route is good but can only be used if a cannula is in place. It has to be given by a doctor or a paramedic.

*Intranasal diamorphine* is gaining in popularity in MR and a number of teams now use it. It was shown to be effective prior to evacuation in a series of 22 mountain casualties reviewed by Ms Dykes's team. Injuries included knee wounds, dislocated shoulder, spinal injuries and major leg and pelvic fractures. Diamorphine shows a rapid dose-dependent absorption with peak plasma concentrations occurring within five minutes. However, it is likely that drug absorption across the lining of the nose is slower in cold MR casualties. It is also fiddly to make up.

*Fentanyl lollipops* are now being used occasionally in MR. Fentanyl is a potent synthetic opioid that is effective either by absorption across the lining of the mouth or if swallowed. A 400 microgram lolly is equivalent to 4-8 mg of IV morphine and works within 16-20 minutes. Fentanyl can now also be given by the intranasal route, though this has not been used yet in MR. Onset is rapid (2-11 minutes) but it is short-lasting.

*Penthrox (methoxyflurane)* is an anaesthetic agent that is an effective analgesic if used in small concentrations. Currently, it does not have a UK product license but if it had one, it could be useful in MR. The equipment required for administration is much lighter than entonox, and it is as analgesic as entonox, but not as good an analgesic as diamorphine or fentanyl.

*Ketamine* is a controlled drug that can only be used by doctors in the UK. It can be given by IM or IV routes. It is very analgesic, and does not cause a fall in blood pressure or respiratory depression. However, patients commonly experience a period of confusion when waking up after receiving the drug.

## ANALGESIA – MREW AUDIT AND EVALUATION OF PAIN MANAGEMENT IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE

MIKE GREENE  
CONSULTANT, EMERGENCY  
MEDICINE  
JOHN ELLERTON  
MREW MEDICAL OFFICER  
ICAR MEDCOM

There is little published literature on prehospital analgesia in mountain rescue. A previous LDSAMRA audit in 1998 demonstrated variable practice, whilst another study showed that there are delays in administering analgesia, and that the quality of analgesia was poor for lower limb fractures. MR is different from other prehospital areas because of the environment in which we work, the wide range of skills amongst team members, and the fact that MR teams practice independently from each other. In addition, there is now quite a wide range of options for analgesia.

It was therefore decided to audit the current analgesic practice and address three particular areas:

1. Whether pain scores are practical in the MR environment.
2. To describe the analgesic strategies used by MR teams.
3. To determine the effectiveness of analgesia in MR.

### Method

The adequacy of pain management was assessed using a numerical pain score.

### Results

The study ran from 1 September, 2008 to 1 August, 2010. During this period, there were 1902 casualties in England and Wales whose condition was reported as minor or serious but non-fatal. Seventeen teams (33% of the total) submitted reports of administration of analgesia to 104 casualties. This represents 5% of the total number of casualties. The 17

teams treated 54% of all casualties in the study period.

### Do we relieve pain?

On initial assessment, the average pain score was eight, whereas at handover, it had dropped to three. In the first fifteen minutes after administration of analgesia, 66% of cases experienced a two point reduction in pain score, and 35% of cases experienced a 50% reduction. By handover, 85% of cases had a two point reduction in pain score, and 62% of cases had a 50% reduction. This strongly suggests that pain is well managed.

### How is analgesia delivered?

The following drugs were used: entonox; oral analgesics; IM and IV opioids; fentanyl lollipop; and intranasal diamorphine.

### Effects of the initial analgesia on pain score in the first 15 minutes in the order of effectiveness

- **IV opioids:** 94% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 69% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 3.5).
- **IM opioids:** 77% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 23% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 5).
- **IN diamorphine:** 67% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 33% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 6).
- **Combined analgesia\*:** 56% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 27% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 5).
- **Fentanyl lollipop:** 57% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 29% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 6).
- **Oral:** 43% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 14% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 5).



PHOTO: CHRIS BOYLES

- **Entonox:** 29% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 29% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at 15 minutes (median score 6.5).

### Effects of the analgesia on pain score at handover in the order of effectiveness

- **IV opioids:** 94% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 75% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 2).
- **Fentanyl lollipop:** 100% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 71% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 3).
- **Oral:** 43% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 71% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 3).
- **IM opioids:** 85% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 71% experienced a 62% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 4).
- **IN diamorphine:** 75% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 42% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 5).
- **Combined analgesia\*:** 58% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 63% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 5).
- **Entonox:** 29% of casualties experienced a two point or more reduction in pain score, and 29% experienced a 50% reduction in pain score at handover (median score 5).

\*The commonest combination strategy was entonox plus oral analgesics.

### Antiemetic use

Thirty-seven cases received an opioid with an antiemetic. Twenty-eight cases received an opioid without an antiemetic. There is no mention of how this is related to nausea and vomiting.

### Opioid dose

The commonest doses of IM morphine were 15 mg (10 cases) and 10 mg (6 cases). The commonest doses of IV morphine were 0-5 mg (15 cases) and 6-10 mg (9 cases). The commonest initial dose of IN diamorphine was 5 mg (13 cases) and the commonest repeated dose was 5 mg (13 cases).

### Main conclusions and recommendations

- Pain scores can be used to assess pain and make decisions in the mountain environment.
- MR does achieve pain relief in a significant number of patients with severe pain.
- The use of IV opioids achieves both early analgesia and if titrated, provides prolonged analgesia during transfer.
- Entonox performed poorly in the study.
- Fentanyl lollipops have a place in initial pain relief and remain effective through handover.
- IN diamorphine has a place in initial pain relief, but it would be better to use an initial dose of 10 mg.
- IM opioids retain a place in MR but the use of fentanyl lollipops and IN diamorphine should be considered.
- The use of oral analgesia to supplement opioid analgesics is underused.

### Useful references

- Jennings PA, Cameron P, Bernard S. Measuring acute pain in the prehospital setting. *Emerg Med J* 2009; **26**: 552-5.



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## A ROUGH BREAK – THE INSIDIOUS NATURE OF HYPOTHERMIA

TREVOR COTTON

**P**eter rang to ask if I was going to the November MBA area meeting. He had discovered an 'interesting new cycle route to Backhill of Bush,' he said. I should have smelled a rat! I'd done Peter's 'interesting' routes before. However, I agreed, and we decided to spend Friday night at Clennoch and strike out west from there.

Friday night came and John dropped us off on the old track from Craigengillan to Moorbrock. John and Dan were heading to White Laggan for the night and then some hill walking. We were to meet them the following evening at Backhill, as they had our tents in the car. It was a beautiful starlit night as we pushed our bikes over the Crumbly Bridge, up past Moorbrock house to the highpoint of the forest road. We mounted up and set off cautiously on the long, steep descent to Clennoch. The surface was very soft in places and about three-quarters of the way down I suddenly felt myself flying through the air. I landed on my back in a patch of sand. The bike bounced over me, one of the pedals biting me in the knee as it passed. I picked myself up and, apart from a stiff neck and a cracked helmet, I seemed to be fine. The bike checked over OK so we carried on to the bothy with no further mishaps.

It was 12.15am and we had a brew, followed by Christmas pudding and custard and another brew, before turning in about 2.00am.

Next morning the mist was right down as we took an early breakfast. After a steep push up the new forest road, we branched off left round the foot of Dugland heading for the quarry at Sware Brae. We knew there was a good firebreak through the forest there, but in the poor visibility we chose the wrong one. It was easy at first; but then we had to cross a boulder field, negotiate a nasty gully and finally brash our way through trees, before breaking out about 50 metres below the quarry. It had taken over two hours

to cover 2km. The slope was severe so we carried our panniers up separately.

The sun broke through as we checked our bikes over before setting off down the forest road. To my horror I discovered that one side of my pannier carrier had fractured where it bolted onto the frame. I effected a temporary repair with some cord, but it was not very successful and I had to keep stopping to tighten it.

We stopped for lunch where the road crosses the Bow Burn. After a reviving mug of tea, Peter and I put our heads together. We came up with a better idea using an aluminium tent peg as a splint and the cord as a brace. It was so good I didn't have to touch it again for the rest of the trip.

We hit the A713 and had an exhilarating downhill ride before turning onto the Loch Doon road outside Dalmellington. Despite the downhill section we were still a good two hours behind schedule. Strong headwinds made us work hard along the lochside and we were very relieved to find the café by Doon Castle was open. Fortified by excellent mugs of tea at an amazing price of 35p each, we embarked on the final leg.

From the head of the loch we turned to the south, down the forest road, leaving it where it took a sharp turn to the right. Peter said that a new forest road was supposed to have been driven through here to the Riders Rig, but all we saw was a quad track.

I'd thought the first part of the day bad, but this was much worse – 4km of hell, culminating in a steep ascent through rutted peat, the bicycles sinking up to the hubs in places. We staggered out onto the road, lathered in sweat, and just lay there for 10-15 minutes whilst we recovered.

The last 7-8kms were fairly easy, mostly downhill on good forest roads. We finally reached Galloway's answer to the Ballachulish Bridge, where the new road crossed Downie's Burn behind Backhill of Bush, and onto a wonderfully smooth section of road paved with crushed seashells. It felt so

good we cruised on past Backhill, down to the next fork, and round to the bothy from the other side. The bothy was now on a traffic island just like the famous farm on the M62.

We were very late and the meeting was about to start. I got my tent from John's car and quickly erected it. I had no time to put on dry kit, get a brew or grab something to eat before going into the meeting. As I was the last to arrive I had to sit in the doorway. The bothy door was missing and, as the meeting went on, I started to feel colder and colder. Then I started to feel light-headed and nauseous. By this time, I realised that 77km across Galloway on the bike had taken it out of me and my blood sugar must be really low. I decided to go into the other room in the bothy where there was a stove, and try to make something to eat and get warm. I'd started to shiver by now and, by the time I got into the other room, I was shaking so much I couldn't light my stove. A guy who was in there asked if I was on heroin as I looked so bad. I realised it was hypothermia and got the guy to do me a pan of hot soup whilst I got changed into my dry kit. He had a brew already on the wood stove, which I was grateful for. Although I have had years of training, the hypothermia crept up on me, and in different circumstances could have been much more serious.

After about an hour, I felt a lot better so went to my tent and, crawling into my sleeping bag fully dressed, slept for about ten hours. After a good breakfast the next morning, apart from a sore neck, I felt fine and went home in John's car.

As a postscript to this story, I woke up on Monday morning with severe pins and needles in my hands and feet, and spent most of the day in hospital having X-rays and being examined. Afterwards, when I examined my helmet carefully, I saw it was almost split in half and I had been very fortunate. As the old saying goes – it's a good job I landed on my head or I might have been hurt! ■

## DRUG RETURNS

JOHN ELLERTON

Thank you to all those teams that have sent their drug returns to me. The following teams have fully complied with the drug reporting requirements and are covered by the Mountain Rescue Licences.

Bolton  
Brecon  
Buxton  
Calder Valley  
Cave Rescue  
Organisation  
Central Beacons  
Cleveland  
Cockermouth  
Derby  
Duddon & Furness  
Edale  
Glossop  
Holme Valley  
Keswick  
Kinder  
Kirkby Stephen  
Langdale Ambleside  
Llanberis  
Mendip  
North East Wales  
Ogwen  
Patterdale  
Penrith  
Rossendale  
& Pendle  
Scarborough  
& Ryedale  
Swaledale  
Upper Wharfedale  
Wasdale  
Western Beacons  
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## SAM BRYANT-JONES & JIM WHATELY EXMOOR SRT

**T**he clues are there... Course Director Rod McIntosh's words seemed to echo those of David Allan in October's Issue 38 of Mountain Rescue magazine... the necessary and appropriate treatment can only be achieved through detailed diagnosis.

For non-medical professionals – periodic first aid training and refreshers are an essential, but sometimes daunting, part of our mountain rescue commitment. A desire to be adequately prepared for what we might be required to treat is probably the commonest reason for seeking additional training.

A strong personal motivation was indeed a prerequisite for this course, and what originally attracted the interest of Jim and me from the beginning. It was over a year ago that we'd read the article by Steve Johnson in issue 32 of Mountain Rescue.

A rescuer's approach to the steep learning curve faced us from the start. W B Saunders' *Emergency Care 2nd Edition, A textbook for Paramedics* was recommended as pre-course reading and BASP had emphasised that attendees would be required to arrive already capable of providing

Basic Life Support. A functional knowledge of EMT terminology was also to be presumed. Having failed to adequately process this information it was no small wonder several of us felt out of breath in the initial sprint to catch-up – we'd failed to spot the clues. Or if we had, we'd not given them sufficient attention!

The tutor/student ratio was excellent. For four and a half days, seventeen mountain rescuers, from Exmoor to Dundonell and one ski patroller/mountain rescue team member were lectured, guided, challenged and examined by three principal instructors from BASP. A heli-med paramedic, senior consultant anaesthetist and an educational technician (IV cannulas), added breadth of content and variety of style. While less intensive, though interesting, sessions were spent exploring suspension trauma, paediatrics, and pain, the core of the course was all about pumps, pipes and fluid. As simple as ABC it certainly was not!

The medical terminology and sometimes academic delivery were not for everyone, but all relished the challenge of striving for greater and more comprehensive understanding. BASP EMT courses are intended to be thorough – heart and lungs are given a thorough going over

## AND INDEED THEY ARE... BUT ONLY IF YOU KNOW HOW TO LOOK, LISTEN AND FEEL!

although on this course whilst the heads and limbs were mentioned less. Lectures were interspersed with practical sessions where we were pressurised to demonstrate not just knowledge but practical skill. The course primarily concentrates on developing competence in Advance Life Support, from I-gels to AEDs.

By the end of day three, no-one was in any doubt about the standards expected. Mnemonics littered note pads and tormented dreams disturbed sleep. Debates raged around the relevance of invasive treatments and comparisons made with other training courses.

We all practised IM injections on each other and putting lines in on dummy arms. One or two being brave enough to perform their first 'live' cannulations. This was done under close supervision. We were all encouraged to consider and discuss the appropriateness of developing the skills required to provide effective pre-hospital IV access.

We were given an hour and forty-five minutes to complete the written exam paper. Personally I almost ran out of time and could have written more. It was a race against time. The following morning we each undertook individual twenty minute scenarios. Ultimately, the pass rate was 83%, but we knew from last year's article this was not simply a 'turn up and pass' course.

Jim and I are both qualified carers and have been for several years and we attributed much of our prior learning to the MREW Casualty Care syllabus. We would certainly recommend that those considering attending this EMT course in future are self-confident, have prior experience of giving first aid within the



A NIGHT RESCUE SCENARIO AND A SPOT OF INDOOR CANNULATION PRACTICE

outdoor environment and can already comfortably (is there such a thing?!) pass the MREW Casualty Care course. With these provisos it really was an excellent experience.

Seasoned team members wishing to consolidate their knowledge or seeking to augment their practical training will enjoy the opportunities this interesting course presents. By the sight and sound of those chatting happily as we all dispersed it was obvious most felt they had!

Was it worth the 1120 mile round trip? Definitely! ■

from The  
**journals**  
DAVID ALLAN

## CASUALTY EVACUATION

The use of helicopters for evacuation and transport of casualties both on and off the fells has been the topic of two articles recently. In the first, John Ellerton makes a case for all helicopters involved in mountain rescue to be equipped with winching or long line capability in keeping with international recommendations.\*

**Emergency Medical Journal 2012;29;56-59**

\*John will be writing a résumé of this paper in a future edition of the MR magazine.

The second article looked at the evacuation of all casualties with major injuries from Shropshire to a major trauma centre and found that 30% of such casualties were not transferred expeditiously because they occurred after dark. In conclusion they say:- 'It is clear that the transportation of major trauma patients from remote and rural areas to major trauma centres remains problematical. Further work is required to develop more efficient systems of retrieval and transfer, and in particular to consider how emergency medical helicopters might operate at night.'

**Emergency Medical Journal 2012;29;182-183**

## CERVICAL COLLARS

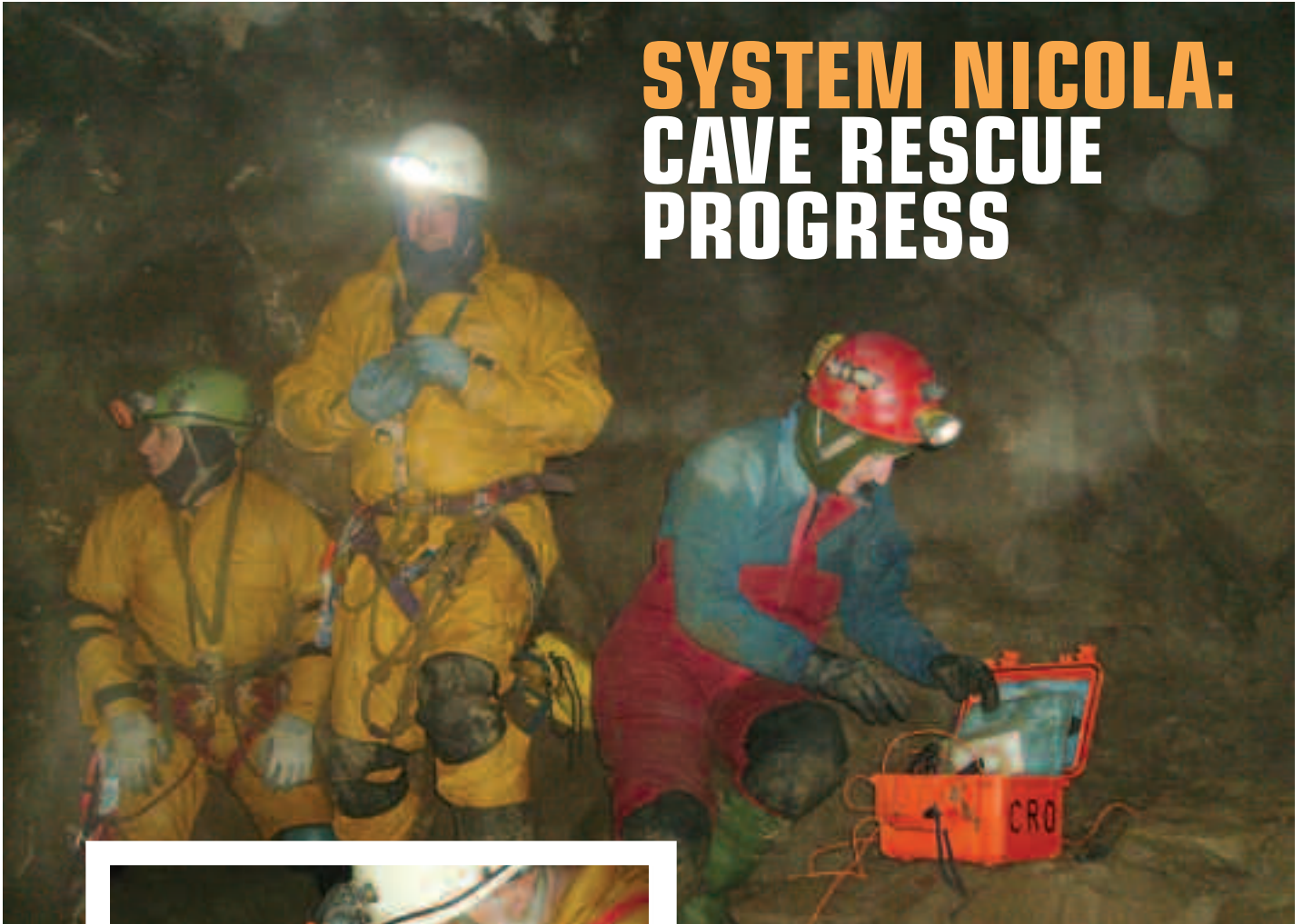
Articles pointing out the risks associated with cervical collars have been appearing for a few years. A recent paper picks up this theme and compares the use of a collar with side blocks and tape in casualties on a spinal board (or other rigid support such as a vacuum mattress).

The disadvantages of a collar are outlined. Raised, intra-cranial pressure due to venous constriction, limited access to the airway, pain and discomfort from the collar, the false sense of security that a collar may generate and difficulties X-raying the cervical spine with the collar in situ are the main problems described. In an elegant study, a comparison with side blocks was made. The blocks not only removed most of the above but also gave a greater degree of immobilisation of the neck. This of course only applies to casualties in a horizontal position on a board or equivalent.

**Emergency Medical Journal 2012;29;104-107**

Further to this article we have carried out a limited look at using blocks instead of a collar in people on a vacuum mattress and the findings do seem to be borne out. An additional factor was the relative ease with which the blocks could be deployed on the mattress compared with a collar.

# SYSTEM NICOLA: CAVE RESCUE PROGRESS



**F**ollowing the partially successful testing of the Nicola 3 cave radio system in September in Croatia and France, Graham Naylor has made steady progress with the problems encountered resulting in the next round of prototypes being produced in January 2012. These were expected early in the month but in practice were delivered with a few days to go before a scheduled test. These prototypes were bench tested – and one was found to be faulty and needed to be returned to the manufacturer to be corrected.

This round of prototypes includes the provision of a hand microphone, but, due to the short period since delivery, we were unable to reprogramme the units to support this operation.

Saturday 28 January, dawned bright and cold. Graham Naylor and Pete Allwright departed Dent early and arrived at the Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue (UWFRA) base in Grassington almost on time, bearing in mind the very icy road conditions. UWFRA are the team responsible for rescues in the Dow Cave/Dowbergill system. Refreshments and a briefing saw the team departing for the fell at 11:30-ish.

The plan was to put one group into Dow Cave to head to Gypsum Traverse, and a second group would go into Providence Pot and head to Bridge Cavern (see survey).

**REPORT COORDINATED BY:**  
**GRAHAM NAYLOR** SYSTEM NICOLA  
**ANDY JACKSON** UWFRA  
**PAUL NICOLLS AND FRED WEEKES** CRO  
**PETE ALLWRIGHT** BCRC/CRO  
PLUS CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THOSE  
PRESENT AT THE TESTS  
PHOTOS: ROY HOLMES  
& PETE ALLWRIGHT



# caves

Andy Jackson, from UWFRA, reports on the results:

At Bridge Cavern in Dowbergill passage, the location is approximately 110m deep from the surface. The surface team were positioned almost directly above this location. Conditions on the surface were cold in four inches of snow, but this was offset by the bright sunny day. Both a HEYPhone and prototypes of Nicola 3 were deployed.

Initial attempts to communicate with the HEYPhones were thwarted because there was a transmission problem with one of the sets.

Underground, all transmissions heard from the surface Nicola 3 unit located were described as very clear and very loud/ audible.

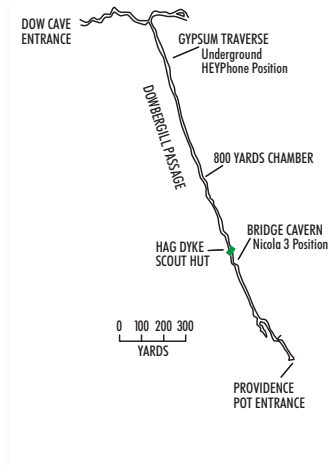
On the surface near the Hag Dyke Scout Hut, the HEYPhone received the underground Nicola 3 signal successfully. On the surface, changing to Nicola 3 resulted in the incoming signal being heard but it was difficult to understand. This was later attributed to the cross-talk problem detailed below.

The surface Nicola 3 was then moved and deployed at the Providence Pot entrance. From this point, transmissions made by the surface N3 were again very strong and clear when received underground, but still suffered the same problem of understanding the communications.

The transmissions from the underground Nicola 3 to a HEYPhone unit at underground Gypsum Traverse (approx 800m horizontal) were described as clear and audible. (It was planned to have a Nicola 3 at this location but the manufacturing failure prevented this.)

The Nicola 3 was fast to set up (no earth to mess about with) and was light and compact making carrying of the unit easier.

Sunday 29 January was again a bright and clear day and this time the party was due to meet in Bernie's in Ingleton at 10 o'clock, so less of a rush. Again a briefing allowed us to head to the Kingsdale Master Cave at about 11:30. This test was attended by a number of CRO members together with Bill Whitehouse (BCRC Chair and Derbyshire CRO), and representatives from Cumbria Ore Mines Rescue (COMRU) and



Swaledale Mountain Rescue (SMRT).

The test was made from the Swinsto Great Aven to a surface location immediately above.

In the cave, there was some difficulty in deploying the aerials – one leg required climbing up the aven and coiling the aerial. We also had problems turning on the Bluetooth headset as the ON button was very small and flush with the surface. A knife point was required!

Communications were established quickly using the HEYPhone and soon afterwards the surface Nicola 3 was received loud and clear underground.

On the surface, communications from the underground Nicola 3 were received clearly on both the HEYPhone and the Nicola 3, though at times the HEYPhone was a little disjointed. This was possibly due to the signal being too strong causing the front end to drop out. It should be noted here, the surface Nicola 3 used a more expensive Bluetooth headset with background noise cancellation. See notes below.

Underground on the Nicola 3, the signal could be heard but was incomprehensible. This is similar to the tests in Dowbergill.

The surface party then relocated into the dale near Valley Entrance itself. Here, strong communication to Swinsto Great Aven was established. The HEYPhone signal was similar to that for the location on the fell; the Nicola 3 signal was strong and clear bearing in mind the known problems. So in the future there will be less need for surface CRO personnel to freeze up on the fell during an incident!

## Points raised

Points were raised during and following the tests and I have attempted to summarise here. Some answers will be given later.

1. An external battery for long incidents or to back up a potential battery problem is required. This has been implemented on the latest prototypes but remains to be tested and proven.

2. A visible means of alerting users of the state of the radio, whether transmitting, receiving or listening. This could be a separate buzzer or flashing LEDs. Useful on a rescue when team members are otherwise busy.

3. Can the microphone be used to transmit/receive? (Yes, when the programming is completed.)

## Bluetooth

4. How long does battery last in the headset?

5. What happens if the user loses it down a drop or rift?

6. Will it be possible to select transmit mode from the Bluetooth headset? In these tests to transmit required operating the microphone transmit button.

## Aerials

7. Smaller reels for the antennae – there was concern over the length of the aerials. Comments were also made on the thin wire and the fear it may break easily in harsh underground conditions.

8. Use of the self-earthing aerials and practical use underground; the use of such long aerials will be impractical in some places.

## Summary

Nicola 3 is small, compact and robust. These tests have shown that

the signal strength is significantly stronger than the HEYPhone and Nicola 2, so will provide much better communications over a longer distance. The signal quality is also much better.

The testing was on the whole successful. The results show two problems. Graham has identified a problem with component cross-talk caused by a serious parasitic signal from a switching regulator in the receiver. It was thought that rerouting the component would mitigate the problem, but subsequent investigations have resulted in replacing the regulator with a LDO linear regulator. This will marginally increase the power consumption.

A problem with the quality of the transmitted signal resulting in the distortion needs a little more work so identify and fix.

To address some of the points above:

1. External batteries can be attached to backup the internal batteries. Depending on the talk-time, the internal batteries are expected to provide six to eight hours of service. A battery pack providing 9-volts may be provided by 'AA' through 'D' size cells. There is provision in the design for this but the mechanism of attaching external battery packs it to be designed.

2. Visible means of providing alerts is to be investigated.

3. The latest prototype provides for a handset – this will be working on the next test. (See note above regarding delivery of these prototypes.)

4. It will be possible to initiate transmission from the Bluetooth headset when the programming is progressed.

The Bluetooth headsets offer a

**Continued on next page**



number of issues. These depend on the type of headset used, but include:

1. Robustness – particularly the mobile phone headsets.

2. Headsets tested so far have tended to be compact and of variable quality, especially in the £15 to £25 range (the operation of the cheaper units is very difficult underground with small fiddly switches). Here the units fit behind the ear with a bud in the ear itself. Concerns have been expressed about this ear bud regarding cross-contamination, an issue that will need to be addressed by those adopting this option.

3. The compact nature also makes the headsets vulnerable to mishandling in difficult cave conditions and could easily be lost if dropped.

4. Battery lifetime varies between headsets, but often offer long standby times (several days) and five or six hours talk time. Most can be backed up with commercially available external battery packs – but beware that external power may cause the headset to switch off!

5. More up-market headsets offer improved performance, including 'noise cancellation', where the sound of background wind or waterfalls can be hidden. This, however, remains to be fully tested in our environment. These also suffer from the ear bud problem.

6. We are investigating industrial and military headsets which will overcome most of the these, with the downside being the cost.

On the subject of aerials, Nicola 3 is expected to support self-earthing, earthed and loop aerials. The self-earthing aerials are expected to be of particular benefit in difficult locations such as a boulder strewn area where previously finding a good earth has been difficult. The possibility of a modular self-earthing system is to be investigated – the length will be provided by plugging a number of shorter aerials together depending on the required communications distance.

### What comes next

The immediate problems with the parasitic components and with the encoding quality have been addressed. This will be followed by a further test somewhere 'down south'. Once the testing here has proved successful it seems likely another generation of prototypes will be made.

This will be followed by further testing in the UK and in France. Success will then see us going to the production stage. Initially, Nicola 3 will operate off the hand microphone. Further programming is required to make the Bluetooth support robust and flexible. ■

## YORKSHIRE DALES RESCUE PANEL & BRITISH CAVE RESCUE COUNCIL

### 25TH BCRC CAVE RESCUE CONFERENCE 12-14 OCTOBER 2012

On behalf of the British Cave Rescue Council, the Yorkshire Dales Rescue Panel (YDRP) will be hosting the 25th National Cave Rescue Conference on the weekend of 12-14 October 2012. The conference will be based in Clapham, North Yorkshire, the location of the Cave Rescue Organisation (CRO) headquarters.

A First Circular is planned for the New Year. At this stage, it is expected that Saturday will comprise a number of workshops, whilst Sunday will be more lecture based.

Any suggestions or proposals for workshops or lectures, please contact the organising secretary, Graham Hughes [hughesg01@hotmail.com](mailto:hughesg01@hotmail.com) in the first instance.

PLUS

THE EUROPEAN CAVE RESCUE CONFERENCE 2012 IS EXPECTED TO BE HELD 19-21 OCTOBER IN THE JURA, FRANCE.

...a busy period for some cavers!

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# SARCALL SMS RESPONSE FACILITY

JON WHITELEY DCRO RESCUE CONTROLLER/SARCALL SYSTEM ADMIN

**T**he SARCALL system is firmly established across the majority of the mountain and cave rescue teams in England and Wales and the SARCALL support team has a growing list of SAR teams who are considering using the system, including our friends north of the border. We have recently received numerous requests to further develop the system and build in an SMS Response capability into SARCALL... well, we are very pleased to say your wish has been granted!



Many teams currently ask their members at the time of the initial call-out to either text or call the team leader, or other nominated person, to declare their availability. The SARCALL SMS Response facility has taken this principle and we have built a tool to enable team members to simply notify their availability via the SARCALL system using an SMS message.

This is just one of the many tools of the SARCALL system and can be used independently of other aspects of this excellent FREE package. One of our medium-term plans is to link the information generated from the SMS Response tool and other areas of SARCALL system to the MREW Incident Reporting system managed by Ged Feeney.

## So, how does the Response system work?

Well, when a team member gets a 'call-out activation (by any means – landline, mobile, SMS or email) he or she sends an SMS from their mobile to a defined number 07937 985005.

Now, this is where the magic starts – when the team member's SMS is received by the SARCALL SMS Response number, the database looks up the sending number and knows exactly who sent it. Note that team members must advise team admins if they have changed their mobile numbers and team admins must maintain an up-to-date database of names and phone numbers.

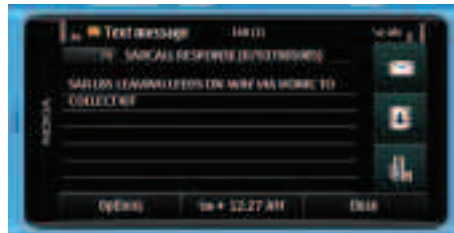
SARCALL then processes the information and

constructs a table of members attending. This is presented within the SARCALL web pages, as a simple R-A-G (RED/AMBER/GREEN) status for each member, together with a 'quick show' table. The SARCALL system can then be interrogated by a team leader to see how many team members are attending – either immediately, with limited availability, later or not at all.

The SMS from the team member must start with the activation keyword 'SAR'. The team member then uses one of three letters to define their status: 'A' = 'available', 'L' = 'limited availability/available later' and 'N' = 'not available'.

Once the member has entered one of these letters he/she adds the number of minutes until they will arrive at the nominated RV location; the number of minutes only applies to either the A or L states (maximum number of minutes is 99).

The team member can also choose to enter further information if they wish such as 'Stopping at base to collect equipment'. Also, if a team member is unexpectedly delayed whilst en route to a call-out, he/she can send another SMS and with an update message and SARCALL SMS Response, will automatically update the listing for that person. See below the three examples of a response message sent from a team member.



VICTORINOX KNIFE IMAGE COURTESY OF BURTON MCCALL

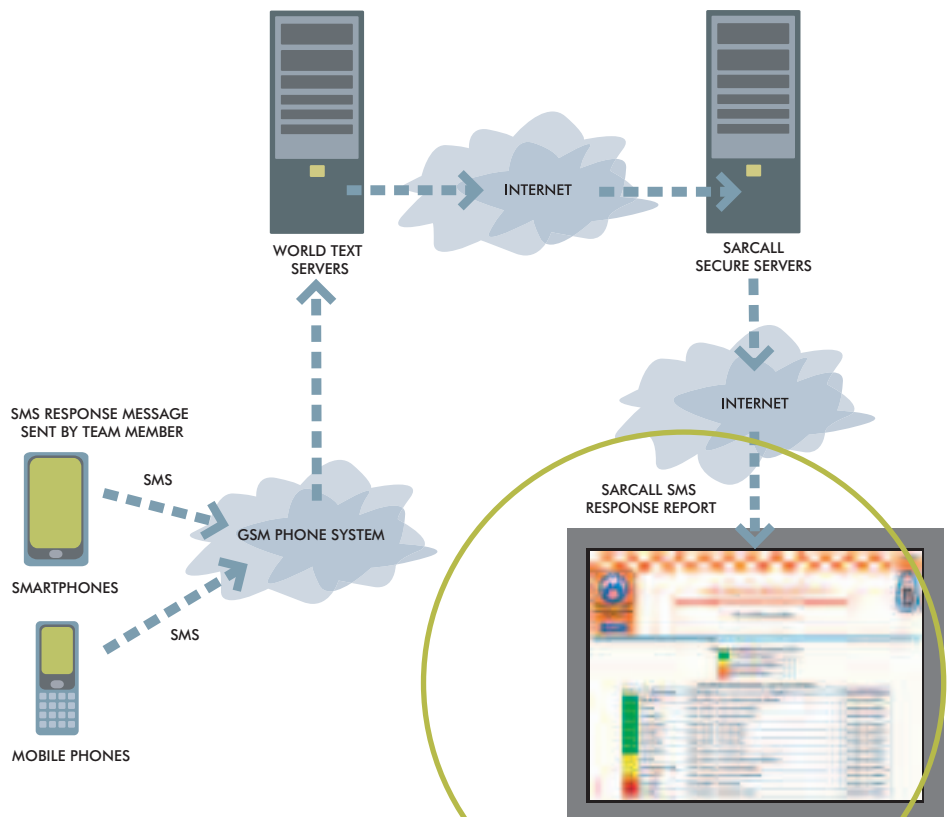
# comms

The big bonus here, compared to many current schemes, is that all the information is available and recorded centrally. Also, it does not tie the team leader up with lots of incoming calls or texts whilst en route to a call-out or during the early critical stages of an incident. The information can be emailed and then downloaded for recording purposes once the call-out is complete. The system can then be cleared of response data, ready for next call-out.

Team leaders/Base will be able to see who is able to respond and their individual response times either on the SMS Response page of their SARCALL web pages, or they can also interrogate the system from their own mobile phone. This facility works on any mobile phone, not only web-enabled smartphones.

This method works by the team leader sending an SMS to SARCALL with the message starting with the activation keyword (supplied on request by the team or regional admin). The system will return an SMS message with a summary of the total numbers attending, those with limited or late availability and those not able to attend. The response information, including a list of names and availability status, is also automatically emailed to the team leader. This enables a team leader who may not be near a good internet connection to get the same detailed information as provided in the SMS Response page within the team's SARCALL page.

This facility will clearly give the team leader a heads-up of the numbers of people available and allow early decision-making, if appropriate, of calling in additional resources from within their own team or neighbouring teams. In the example given below, a team leader of Ogwen MRT would be aware that at that point in time, twelve members had initially responded and that there are three members available and responding, a further three with limited availability or available later, and two not available.



LEFT: VIEW OF THE TEAM SMS RESPONSE PAGE ON SARCALL



The SARCALL project continues to develop and most of the wish list ideas are being generated from teams themselves. Any team which currently does not use SARCALL and would like to know more and



receive a demonstration is welcome to contact the SARCALL support team at [sarcall\\_admin@mountain.rescue.org.uk](mailto:sarcall_admin@mountain.rescue.org.uk).

The SARCALL side of the system is FREE of charge to all UK mountain, cave and lowland teams and the currently negotiated price is five pence per

SMS text sent from SARCALL with World-Text. This makes the overall system very affordable and realistic. Most of all, it is created and managed by a team of operational mountain and cave rescue people who understand and listen to the needs of our the rescue community. ■



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# CORROUR, COOKING AND CARN DEARG WITH OCHILS MRT

**ANDY CLOQUET**

**L**ast year, as you may have read in a previous edition of this journal, I pushed the window for our team's winter training a wee bit by including some serious mountaineering in The Mamores and on The Ben, where we took part in the search for a missing hillwalker whose hill bound location had eluded teams for over a week.

for this winter's adventure training a welcome idea by team members.

So, although the hugely variable early-year weather pushed Mick's first ideas into touch, his considerable personal experience and local contacts, and my sketchy training aims, brought us to Corrour station at 21:17pm with a scantily detailed call-out brief which had arrived on our phones a few hours earlier.

This was to take us onto Meall Garbh's Easterly cliffs with the aim

where Shank's Pony took over on the haul into the corrie.

Despite the steepness and full-on winter conditions, the night exercise was a certain and welcome alternative to the usual of being flushed through with Bellhaven's finest brew in Roy Bridge.

You'll be familiar with night searches and crag work, full-on snow and ice perhaps less so, but I won't dally over the details. Suffice to say, we worked satisfactorily even though we (I) missed the ropes used by Vernon to abseil from the climb and go to call for our help. Finding them would have aided our access of the climber from below but Simon's mini-team's efforts to access the casualty's stance from the side was commendably necky.

Somehow Vernon, (our trainer and Guide) had repositioned himself close to his 'casualty' and our night's efforts outstripped one of our former Tighe-blasted escapades in which we achieved the accolade, 'Never in the field of mountain rescue, have so many done so little, so slowly!'

Bed, at 04:00am, was in the estate's supremely comfortable The Chapel and Corrie Odhar accommodations and short-lived, with a return to training at a 10:00am debrief, using a model of the incident site constructed from food cartons and Jelly Babies, and a navigation exercise before lunch!

For 'afters', we were served a training feast of stretcher tie-ins, Tyrolean traverses, knot tying, tensioning, loading 'n' testing a semi-static rope to destruction using a Freelander and a prussik loop!

Evening merged with the



SMITHY AND BILLY DE-RIG THE STRETCHER LOWER

The team liked the end result and I reckoned my training skills and those of our Guide were more suitably put to use than perhaps on previous trips where we often went through set-pieces with more or less the same routine each year. Good training nevertheless, even with one year of collapsing snow holes, but perhaps due a wee shake-up.

This year, I found my initial plan of 'doing something out of the box'

of assisting 'a stranded and injured climber'. However, of Vernon, the person who had 'alerted' the police, there was no sign!

With our team leader having to recover his long-garaged VW and regrettably unavailable, Mario and Gary took duties at the footplate and we were met off the last train across the moor by Jon, who made a ferry-like job of shuttling bodies and kit around Loch Ossian and onto the track head from

# Scotland News



**ABOVE:** DEBRIEF MODEL FOR NIGHT EXERCISE. CUSTARD = CLIFFS. JELLY BABIES = TEAM MEMBERS **RIGHT:** 3D BRIEFING MAP OF CLIFFS ON MEAL GARBH, ACCESS TO THE CORRIE, BURN AND ROADHEAD AND THE SITUATION OF DIFFERENT SEARCH GROUPS

insidious cold of the late afternoon and soon our team caterers, Ben, Jon, Simon and Paul set about preparing a sumptuous 3-course meal which included venison from the estate – only interrupted by a mountaineering and MRT quiz and a 9 x malt whisky tasting. All in the name of team bonding... and onto Sunday which arrived all too quickly.

I worked with our experienced trainees returning to our cars at Rannoch some 16km away, via Carn Dearg in fairly limited vis of approx 2/3m.

The remaining team members formed small walking groups to follow our tracks; first traversing Sgor Gaibhre and our off-road driving team retraced their 11km route out to the main Laggan road.

A tremendous venue, a superb menu of training led by Mick Tighe of Nevis Guides, a brace of Munros and stacks of local history, all under the gaze of Lisbet Rausing's modernist take of a Scottish country estate house designed by Moshe Safdie.... all for £80 per person including an estimate of £10 each for travel. ■

#### Links:

<http://ochilsmrtraining.blogspot.com/2012/02/corrou-cooking-carn-dearg.html>

<http://www.bmg.org.uk/index.php/eng/Members/Guides-R-Z/Mick-Tighe>

<http://www.corrou.co.uk/accommodati on/overview>

**TOP AND BELOW:** CASUALTY ON STRETCHER ON A TYROLEAN CREATED FROM THREE ROPES AND NO CLANKY, GRIPPY GADGETS!



## MRC OF S APPOINTS NEW PROJECT MANAGER

February saw the creation of a new post in Scottish mountain rescue. Shaun Roberts will take on the role of Scottish Mountain Rescue Project Manager with the support of Glenmore Lodge, where the Scottish Mountain Rescue office will be located.

The new role will provide direct support to the 27 mountain and cave rescue teams across Scotland. It is part funded by the Scottish Government, the Order of St John and SportScotland/Glenmore Lodge.

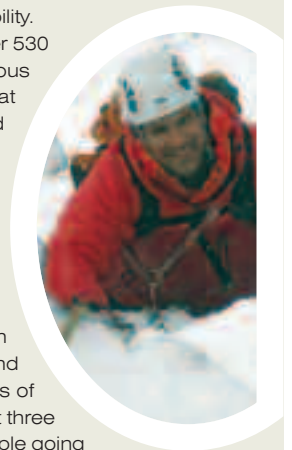
Kenny MacAskill MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice said, 'Scottish mountain and cave rescue teams represent the finest traditions of community service in Scotland. The Scottish Government funding grant will allow Scottish mountain rescue to continue to move forward on a range of key areas such as coordination, engagement with partners and stakeholders, and to improve the organisation's overall governance and long term strategic sustainability.'

'Last year, Scottish teams were deployed over 530 times – frequently in difficult winter mountainous terrain, poor weather conditions and often at night. We owe a huge debt to these dedicated and brave volunteers who save many lives every year.'

Jonathan Hart, chairman of the MRC of Scotland, added, 'It is vital, as we move into a period of change with regard police and fire reform in Scotland we create, with our key partners and stakeholders, a resilient and robust Scottish mountain rescue organisation that can progress change in a positive and constructive manner. With increasing numbers of visitors expected to visit Scotland over the next three to five years we can expect the number of people going into Scotland's' wild places to increase. We now have an opportunity to improve our communication with all our teams and our partner organisations and improve the service we provide to the Scottish public and all the visitors to the Scottish mountains and wild places.'

Shaun Roberts has instructed and guided in the Scottish mountains for twenty years and is Head of Rescue at Glenmore Lodge. His mountaineering experience extends to the Alps, Himalayas, Arctic and Alaska; his passion is the Scottish winter. 'My first experience of mountain rescue was being winched down to a casualty in the Cairngorms. Twenty years later, I am delighted to be deployed in the post of project manager.'

Glenmore Lodge is Scotland's national outdoor training centre for mountaineering, paddle and adventure sports. At the heart of the Cairngorms National Park and only three miles from the most popular point of access to the Cairngorm Ski area, it is owned by a charitable Trust that is part of the SportScotland family, the national agency for sport. The Lodge also has its own mountain rescue team. For more information go to [www.glenmorelodge.org.uk](http://www.glenmorelodge.org.uk) ■



The Scottish Government has increased its annual grant funding to the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, by £12,000, to £312,000, to be distributed between the 27 affiliated teams.

There will also be a one off grant of a further £12,000 towards communications equipment and the Government will continue to provide £15,000 partnership funding towards the Project Manager post. Overall funding from the Scottish Government to the MRCofS in 2011/12 will therefore total £339,000.

## Outstanding Performance, Outstandingly Delivered

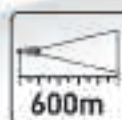
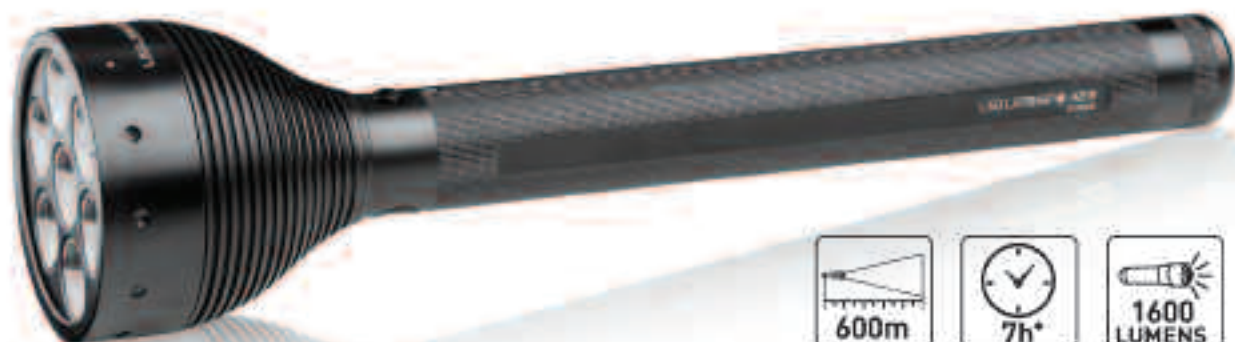
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\*Average hours of burn time as measured in the least energy consuming mode