

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

2018 Review



TORRIDON



SMR MEMBER TEAM



Scottish Government and St John Scotland are committed supporters of Scottish Mountain Rescue and we thank them for their financial assistance.



**Safer
Scotland**
Scottish
Government



St John
Scotland



Scottish Mountain Rescue (SMR) is a community of 24 voluntary civilian Mountain Rescue Teams spread across Scotland.

Responding to requests from Police Scotland the teams provide a world class Search And Rescue (SAR) service that is free at the point of need and available whenever needed.

Any Hour, Any Day, Any Weather...

2018 IN BRIEF:

588 INCIDENTS

683 CALL-OUTS

29,091 HOURS ON CALL-OUTS

851 PEOPLE RESCUED



Image: Belinda DiQuinzio



Compiled by Andy Rockall and Yasmin Harrower
info@scottishmountainrescue.org

Scottish Mountain Rescue is a registered Scottish Charity
- No. SC045003

You can support Scottish Mountain Rescue at:
www.scottishmountainrescue.org/donate



FOREWORD

Richard Parkes

Director of Maritime Operations and HM Coastguard



HM Coastguard



I am honoured to be invited to contribute to Scottish Mountain Rescue's Annual Report and am truly grateful for the close working relationship HM Coastguard has developed with Scottish Mountain Rescue over the years.

Since the transition of search and rescue helicopters to a unified fleet of aircraft under the sole responsibility of HM Coastguard, we have seen nearly 4000 search and rescue taskings across Scotland alone. Many of these will have been undertaken alongside Scottish Mountain Rescue volunteers, and I know that it is the close working relationship and professionalism of all that has been pivotal to successful outcomes.

The increased capability of our new fleet has enabled us to respond to incidents more effectively. I know many Mountain Rescue volunteers have worked with our helicopters and our dedicated crews, and will continue to work and train together, to ensure we collectively provide a first-class service for Scotland, and across the UK.

On a daily basis I see the dedication to help and provide assistance to any person who needs it. I know that this dedication is reflected across all Scottish Mountain Rescue teams, where we see volunteers responding in the most difficult and challenging situations.

The term "unsung hero" can be over-used, but for search and rescue, the term is most certainly apt. It sums up the incredible passion, dedication and drive of all teams, volunteers and supporters. I am familiar with the sacrifices that all volunteers

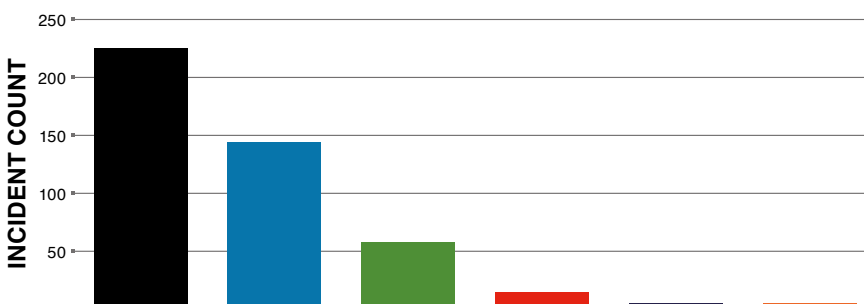
make, particularly in relation to the time they do not get to spend with their loved ones. Across UK search and rescue we are seeing more reliance on our capabilities and this growing demand has been met magnificently by Scottish Mountain Rescue.

I am immensely proud of the work undertaken across UK search and rescue and consider myself fortunate to be part of a network of dedicated and inspirational individuals, that, together have saved countless lives. Thank you to all in Scottish Mountain Rescue for the fantastic work you do. Long may our partnership continue.

Richard Parkes



STATS: JOINT WORKING (ALL INCIDENT TYPES)



Mountain Rescue Teams are called out by and work closely with Police Scotland to resolve every incident.

In 2018 teams worked closely with a number of other partner agencies to resolve 224 incidents.

Police Scotland - 224 incidents

Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) - 143 incidents

HM Coastguard - 57 incidents

Other organisations - 14 incidents

Northumberland MR service - 5 incidents

Royal National Lifeboat Institution - 5 incidents



Damon Powell

Chairman, Scottish Mountain Rescue



I'd like to thank Richard Parkes for his kind words about the partnership between Mountain Rescue (MR) volunteers and the Search And Rescue (SAR) helicopters. Working with helicopters is just one of a wide range of skills and training needs all MR volunteers in Scotland have.

These skills allow teams to respond to a huge range of requests, beyond the traditional rescue of an injured person in the mountains.

In 2018 Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs) carried out a wide range of tasks—

- coordinated searches for vulnerable missing people
- rescued people from fast flowing rivers
- brought to safety people caught in flooding
- managed communications between emergency services in rural areas during power cuts
- deployed drones to make detailed searches of difficult-to-reach areas
- assisted ambulances to reach ill people in deep snow
- skied fuel and food supplies to elderly people cut off for several days by snow

The obvious skills of mountaineering competency, navigation, water, rope and medical that are required to respond to such a wide range of requests are very much the tip of an iceberg of skills that all MR team members bring with them and develop whilst part of an MR team. Soft skills are at least as important as the more obvious technical skills.

Any single rescue may take many hours, and there are several points where soft skills are crucial. Here are snapshots of two points in the rescue: first, the call-out; and second, arrival at a casualty. These may provide an idea of what is involved and the soft skills MRT members employ.

First; the initial call-out.

All team members are volunteers and will be going about everyday life just as anyone else is, working or at home or out enjoying themselves (and yes, parties do empty when everyone's phone buzzes for a rescue). When a call-out comes in, they have to work out if they can be available for that rescue. Arranging for other family members/ friends/ work colleagues to take over commitments. There are always the same questions: are there work commitments? Can work

be caught up on later? Is there a risk that it might be a long rescue, that it will affect their responsibilities in the next few days? There may also be guilt for leaving friends and family once more.

If they are available, rescuers move on to logistics: do they have the necessary equipment and clothing with them, or can somebody else fetch them? How quickly can they get to the rescue post or meeting point?

Those who are able to attend the call-out communicate their availability to the rescue coordinator. This is done via a simple, quick code. They also need to communicate with family and work about any responsibilities that need to be covered. Of course, Mountain Rescue colleagues may share transport to the meeting point, and this is the time to organise that, too.



Soft skills are at least as important as the more obvious technical skills.



Second: arrival at a casualty in an exposed position.

The single biggest thing an MRT can do for a casualty is to arrive on the scene and confidently take charge. The message is simple: "We are here now, you are safe." The psychological benefit of this is unquantifiable. On arriving at a casualty every MR team member aims to transmit that confidence.

In reality, the priority for safety, as in all emergency services, is yourself, your team, and only then the casualty and their companions. So, on reaching the casualty other thoughts occur simultaneously: Am I safe on this terrain? Are my team mates safe? Are the casualty and their companions safe from falling further or being hit by rocks from above? If the answer to any of those is no, then they will need to use some of the technical skills they possess to make everyone safe.

If the answers are yes, then there are several things that need to happen: the location needs to be communicated to the rest of the team; an assessment of any injured person needs to

Continues overleaf »



FROM THE CHAIR CONTINUES...

happen; and an assessment of any others in the party who may also be injured. The party will almost always be cold, so warmth and shelter will be provided. All through this, team members use the full range of verbal, non-verbal and active listening skills alongside empathy to understand what the condition of the party is and reassure them.

Rescuers first on scene are also best placed to come up with an initial plan to look after and extract the group as safely and quickly as possible. As well as the need for medical, technical and carrying equipment they will consider the best way to approach the location and the easiest way to take the casualty and companions to safety. Rescuers communicate their needs concisely and discretely to the rest of the team so that appropriate plans are made and people and equipment arranged. Problem solving, initiative, decision making, evaluation of the evidence, communication again, trust in their companions and resourcefulness are all needed to successfully manage this stage of a rescue.



These skills allow teams to respond to the huge range of requests, beyond the traditional rescue of an injured person in the mountains.



Finally, at the end of any rescue — or indeed, training day — teams, as a matter of habit, conduct an open, no-blame, critical debrief of events to see what lessons can be learned and ensure any learning is shared across the team, including people that were unable to attend.

An often-overlooked benefit of having a national group of Mountain Rescue Teams working and training together is that we are collectively upskilling around 850 volunteers spread across Scotland. These volunteers take the skills developed and use them in other charities, within their communities and in the work place. The question for employers is not can you afford to allow MR volunteers time away from work to support the community, but can your organisation afford not to have employees with such a diverse range of skills.

Damon Powell,
Chairman



About SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Our community

Scottish Mountain Rescue represents 24 Mountain Rescue Teams made up of volunteers that provide a 24-hour rescue service in Scotland. In addition to representing these member MRTs, SMR also serves three Police Scotland MRTs and one RAF MRT. We are proud to have more than 850 dedicated volunteer team members who are always prepared and willing to drop everything they are doing to assist total strangers. These volunteers are the foundation of the Mountain Rescue community. Each MRT and team member saves lives in the Scottish outdoors.

Our charity

Scottish Mountain Rescue is a charity registered in Scotland. Founded in 1965 as Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRCofS). SMR is a representative and coordinating body for member Mountain Rescue Teams in Scotland.

SMR has an executive of nine volunteers who are appointed by Mountain Rescue Teams. Our executive bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to the organisation.

Our purpose

Mountain Rescue Teams' purpose is Volunteering to Save Lives, Any Hour, Any Day, Any Weather. SMR is here to help MRTs carry this out so they can focus on saving lives.

Our business

We are a central point of contact for teams and external stakeholders, which involves —

- Fundraising
- National training programme
- Volunteer wellbeing including provision of insurance
- Provision of essential equipment
- Organisation and facilitation of meetings of member teams
- Representation to government, public agencies and other stakeholders at Scottish and UK level

Our support

We are incredibly grateful to the growing numbers of people who joined our fantastic support team in 2018. In whatever way you choose to support us, you played an important part in saving lives and helping Mountain Rescue volunteers to be there for people when they need us.

As ever increasing numbers of people enjoy Scotland's mountains and wild places, we know that such popularity can lead to a greater number of incidents requiring the response of Scottish Mountain Rescue member teams. In order to be ready for these call-outs and to ensure that we can provide the best possible rescue service, we need our support to continue to grow.

The ability of Mountain Rescue Teams to reach and find people in difficulty as quickly and safely as possible can make a big difference to the outcome of an incident and save lives. We want to continue to help teams acquire the best training, ideas and equipment available to ensure that they can do this. We want to say a big thank you to our amazing existing supporters, and we hope that many more will join our support team in 2019!

Find out more about supporting SMR on page 18 »»»



OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY

Here is a sample of the operational activity of undertaken by SMR member teams in 2018. Not all teams are mentioned and neither are all incidents.

January

- Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs are called out on New Year's Day.
- Moffat and Galloway MRTs respond to a significant snowfall event including rescuing people stranded on the M74. [Image 1 - Galloway MRT]
- Whilst Arrochar MRT are out of their area for training Oban MRT carry out a rescue in the area Arrochar cover.
- Killin, Ochils and Lomond cooperate in a multi-day search for a downed microlight. Conclusion is that it is a well intentioned false alarm.

February

- Torridon MRT carry out a search over several days for a missing hillwalker.
- Torridon and Dundonnell MRTs with support from Kintail, Glenelg, RAF MRT and Search And Rescue Dog Association (SARDA) Scotland, search for two missing walkers and their dog in the Achnashellach area.
- Whilst on the train home, SMR delegates returning from the UK Search And Rescue (UKSAR) conference in Birmingham coordinate response to two separate incidents in different parts of Scotland. [Image 2]
- Ochils, Tweed and Moffat MRTs and Borders Search and Rescue Unit respond to a significantly serious bad weather event, 'The Beast from the East' including rescuing people stuck in vehicles and supporting people in isolated dwellings. During this period Ochils MRT also carry out a search for a missing hillwalker. [Image 3 - Borders Search and Rescue Unit]

March

- 'The Beast from the East' continues until stand-down on March 3rd.
- Arran MRT and Glenelg MRT carry out rescues in their respective areas.

April

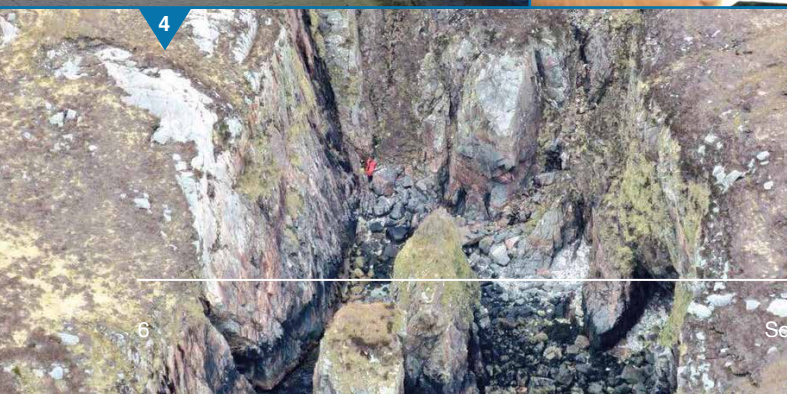
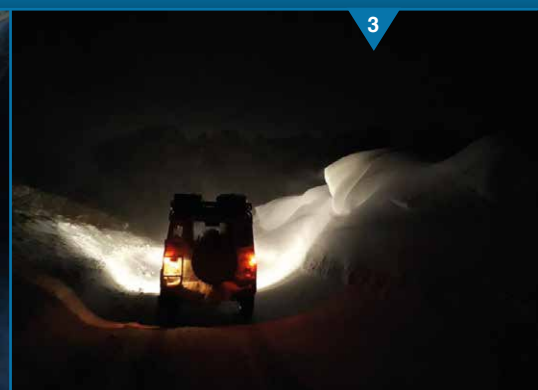
- Borders Search and Rescue Unit works with neighbouring teams, including teams from northern England in a cross-border search for overdue walkers.
- Hebrides MRT called out for someone who has fallen 80m down a cliff. [Image 4 - Hebrides MRT]
- Dundonnell MRT called out to a fisherman lost when returning from fishing on a hill loch.
- Tweed Valley MRT are called out twice in 30 minutes to different incidents.

May

- Ochils, Lomond and Killin MRTs cooperate in a search for a missing hillwalker. [Image 5 - Killin MRT]
- Oban MRT is flown to Mull to rescue an injured hillwalker, then return on the ferry.
- Skye MRT deals with simultaneous call-outs 50 miles apart.
- Borders Search and Rescue Unit cooperates with northern English teams to search for a missing family.



An incident is defined as a single event that requires the services of a Mountain Rescue Team. The resolution of this incident may need several call outs of a team (or teams) for example during a prolonged search.





OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY CONTINUES

June

- Skye MRT responds to four incidents in one day.
- Ochils MRT is called out three times during the month.
- Killin and Lomond MRTs cooperate on a search at Beinn A'Choin. [Image 6 - Lomond MRT]

July

- Kintail, Skye and Glenelg MRTs work together to assist a fallen walker on the South Shiel Ridge.
- Arran MRT collaborates with Arran Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) to assist an injured walker on Holy Isle. [Image 7 - Arran MRT]
- Moffat and Galloway MRTs cooperate on a multi-day search for a missing person.

August

- Dundonnell MRT carries out two separate rescues in gorges in their area during the month.
- Lomond MRT and SARDA Southern Scotland cooperate to assist a group in the Ben Venue area.
- Assynt MRT evacuates someone from the Bone Caves at Inchnadamph. [Image 8 - Assynt MRT]

September

- Skye MRT deals with two call-outs in two hours in different parts of the island.
- Lomond MRT responds to two call-outs during what was a day of training.
- Galloway MRT, Moffat MRT and SARDA Southern Scotland work with others on a search for a missing person.

October

- Braemar MRT searches for two people in the Eastern Cairngorms. [Image 9 - Braemar MRT]
- Moffat MRT rescues an injured mountain biker in the Forest of Ae.

November

- Tweed Valley and Moffat MRTs, and SARDA Southern Scotland, with support from three northern English MRTs search all night for a missing young person in Newcastleton Forest.
- Hebrides MRT carries out a search for a missing person around Stornoway. [Image 10 - Hebrides MRT]

December

- Ochils MRT and SARDA Southern Scotland are called out on Christmas Day to search for a disorientated hillwalker.
- Dundonnell, Skye and Killin MRTs carry out rescues in their respective areas.



STATS: RATIOS

1:1



**850 MRT volunteers rescued
851 people in 2018.**



**Search and rescue dogs attended
60 incidents.**



In the event of an outdoor emergency —
Call 999, ask for Police then Mountain Rescue

Find more SMR stats on page 17 >>>

6



7



8



9



10





OTHER ACTIVITY IN 2018

In addition to rescues, volunteers get involved in a wide range of activities. Here is a small sample of those which took place in 2018.

Day-to-day

- Braemar MRT visit and check the Mountain Rescue box in Lochnagar. [Image 1 - Braemar MRT]

Community

- Moffat MRT lends a hand to Santa Claus. [Image 2 - Moffat MRT]
- Torridon MRT supports the Celtman Extreme Triathlon.
- Kintail MRT supports The Highland Cross.
- Arrochar, Oban and Ochils MRTs provide support to the Jura Hill Race.
- Galloway MRT carry out an unusual stretcher carry: up to the summit of Screel, assisting a person with mobility issues to reach the top.
- Borders Search and Rescue Unit hold its annual Mountain Rescue Experience Day.
- Assynt MRT supports the Cape Wrath Marathon.

Representation

- Justice Secretary Michael Matheson MSP thanks MRTs for the hard work being carried out across the country.
- A Facebook Live Q&A session includes Damon Powell, Chair of Scottish Mountain Rescue.
- AGM of SMR admits Search And Aerial Rescue Association – Scotland to membership.
- Members of the SMR Executive attend the UKSAR conference at the NEC in Birmingham also attended by HRH The Duke of Cambridge. [Image 3 - Vivienne Bailey Photography]

Events

- Members of Assynt, Galloway and Skye MRTs, along with a representative of SMR Executive, attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace celebrating the 70th birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales. [Image 4]
- Aberdeen MRT host their sponsored walk.
- Aberdeen MRT members compete in the Dolomiti Rescue Race.

Recognition

- Three members of different MRTs across Scotland are recognised in the New Years Honours lists.
- Torridon MRT member Jenny Graham becomes the fastest ever woman to cycle around the world.

Milestones

- Royal Air Force celebrates its 100th anniversary. RAF MRT has served for 75 of those years.
- Tweed Valley MRT celebrate its 50th anniversary with a ceilidh.

Bases

- St John Scotland gift ownership of bases to Dundonnell and Skye MRTs.
- Ochils MRT base is vandalised in the week between Christmas and New Year.

Training

- Braemar MRT host the SMR avalanche training weekend with members of Aberdeen, Dundonnell, Glenelg, Killin, Oban, Ochils MRTs, Police Scotland, RAF and Borders Search and Rescue Unit attending. [Image 5 - Braemar MRT]
- Oban MRT visit Skye and carry out joint training with Skye MRT.
- Ochils MRT test Voice Over Interperent Protocol technology for use with team radios.
- Several teams are represented at a Scottish Ambulance Service hypothermia conference in Dunkeld.
- Arrochar MRT undertake familiarisation training with Bristows Helicopters at its base.
- SMR holds an advanced rigging course attended by Galloway, Ochils, Lomond and Police Scotland MRTs.
- Assynt MRT and Scottish Cave Rescue hold a joint training exercise, evacuating two mock casualties from caves. [Image 6 - Assynt MRT]
- SMR holds its annual training conference at Glenmore Lodge with about 100 members of teams present. The weekend includes a talk on the rescue of a boys' football team from caves in Thailand and multiple workshops on MR related topics.





ACTIVITY OF NOTE

The Beast from the East

Mountain Rescue Team members are volunteers with an unparalleled and unique skillset. Consequently teams and their members are sometimes requested to respond to a wide range of incidents.

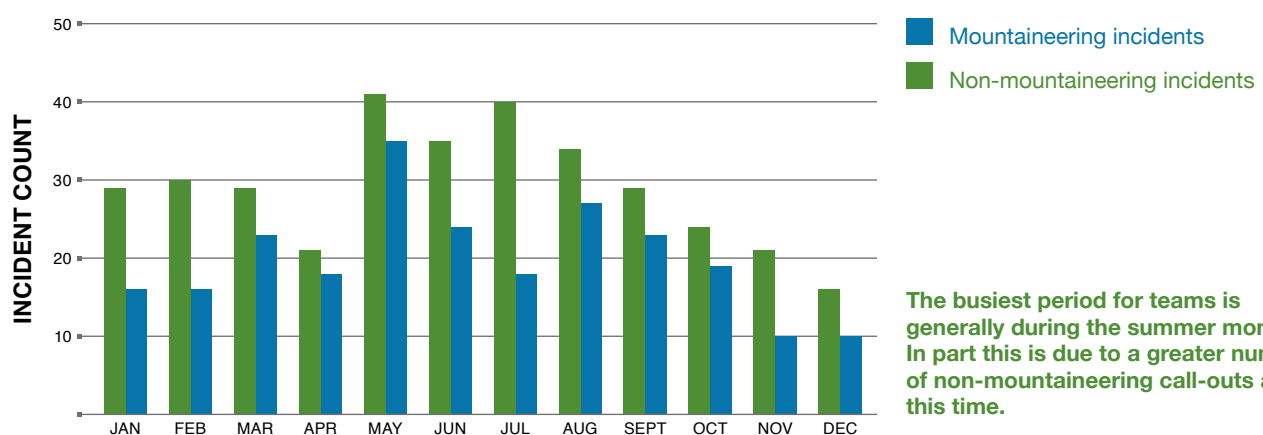
The severe weather incident known as the “Beast from the East” took place at the end of February and lasted for nearly a week, affecting many parts of the UK. In Scotland the extreme conditions resulted in deployment of four teams as part of a multi-agency response.

Between them, Borders Search And Rescue Unit, Moffat MRT, Ochils MRT and Tweed Valley MRT recorded 34 call-outs associated directly with the adverse weather conditions. Most of the recorded callouts involved many different tasks to complete.

During the worst four days of weather these teams assisted 264 people (likely an underestimate) and spent 2,000 hours supporting local communities, transporting medical staff, assisting stranded drivers, delivering essential medication to isolated houses and helping to make people safe in extreme weather conditions.



STATS: NUMBER OF INCIDENTS (BY MONTH)



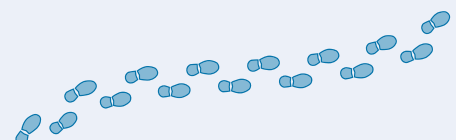
The busiest period for teams is generally during the summer months. In part this is due to a greater number of non-mountaineering call-outs at this time.

1 MRT Volunteers are —



FIT

Spending an average of 4 hours and 22 minutes on each callout.





Life of a MRT Probationer

Ross MacIntyre – Feb 2018

Mountain Rescue has been in my blood since birth; my father was on a rescue when I was born. The call-out had come earlier in the day: someone in trouble needing help—why wouldn't he go?

Many family photos of birthdays, weddings and parties are lacking one familiar figure. This was offset by the wonderful experiences, climbing, hillwalking and skiing when I could barely walk. I was brought up in the mountains; following in my father's footsteps was inevitable.

Education, work, and then a family pushed this ambition further from view. Still passionate about the mountains, with small children the time required for MR was beyond what I had to offer.

Fast-forward a decade or two and I'm in a car park about to go for a "walk" with the team to be assessed as a potential new trainee member. I'd say I am quite a level-headed person, I don't get stressed easily, but my palms are sweating, self-made pressure getting to me. Once on the hill I start to relax: this isn't about my skills as a mountaineer, this is an assessment of how I would fit into and work with the team.

Mountain Rescue is all about this team spirit: who do you want alongside you in a tough situation, when things are getting really serious? Your teammates can be the potential difference between life and death.

A week or so later I was invited to join as a trainee member. This means that while able to attend all training events, talks, and fundraising activities the trainee member is not on the call-out list. I was lucky, there were two of us from my village accepted that year. This would prove beneficial to both of us as each was slightly more experienced in certain areas and we could advise and coach the other.

The year as a trainee was eye opening, the skills and dedication from the whole team to help people in need was apparent from day one. MR training is not what people may expect, teams do not train people to be safe and competent



Training in a MR team is not what people may expect, teams do not train people how to be safe and competent mountaineers. This a pre-requisite.



mountaineers. This a pre-requisite. Team training is about the skills over and above the ones that we have when we join, including additional medical training, search techniques, off-road driving, rescue ropework and working with helicopters. Sometimes it is mentally draining — how am I going to remember all of this information! Everyone is happy to answer even the daftest questions, spending their time helping me improve my skills. This has stayed with me; I'm always available to help newer team members now.

The year flew past. Highlights included Summer and Winter training weekends. These also allowed me to experience how other teams operate as we had a day working with teams in each area we visited. I spent a very memorable day on the north face of Ben Nevis with the MR legend Mick Tighe, you can't buy that kind of experience.

The team training plan is worked up by the team training officer usually a year in advance, a significant commitment over and above the normal team duties. This yearly cycle means that during the first year, all skills required by the trainee team member are covered. At the end of the year there is an assessment day, showing how skills learnt are put into practice. The week leading up to my assessment day was spent honing skills. My buddy and I from the village spent a few nights helping each other with ropework on the local crag and revising the medical assessment procedures. We were as ready as we could be!



Typically an MRT will train one Sunday and one evening every month of the year.

MRTs spend more time training and developing skills than they expect to spend on a call-out. Figures suggest that for every hour on a call-out most teams invest three hours on training.

Continues overleaf »



STORIES

Life of a MRT Probationer continues...

My assessment was a very warm day in April. A couple of weeks before, I had been struck down with a really bad chest infection and cold and was still suffering, however I arrived at the base with nervous anticipation. My assessor was the team training officer, no pressure there! The rest of the team takes part in these assessment days, again giving up their own time to support the newer team members. Most were scattered across the hillside as mock casualties. The day was spent navigating from hill to hill, dealing with each “casualty”, with a bit of technical ropework thrown in for good measure. While I was slightly slower than normal due to the cold, I put my training into practice and completed each task. Assessment over it was back to the MR post.

The assessors had a quick meeting and confirmed that we had all passed and we were on the call-out list. What a wonderful feeling. My life had gone full circle and I was now the one that would be able to help people. Unfortunately, my father passed away in 2006 and couldn't share the news.

The next few weeks were strange, I was never able to fully relax. My phone could go at any minute. Would I hear it, would I be able to go? In the end I decided that I needed to do the normal things in life so went out for a meal with my wife. We had a great night and made plans for the next day as it was Easter Sunday. I went to bed feeling the most relaxed I had in a few weeks...

My call-out text alarm is abrupt, not the gentle tone that wakes me up for work in the morning. This is a brutal, loud and nasty alarm. As I woke up I remember thinking about what it sounded like then realising that in fact it was going off, the time, 3AM.

“FULL TEAM CALL-OUT MEET AT THE POST”

I fumbled with my phone, typing the response to let the team know I was coming. I had been so organised for a call-out while at work that my rescue clothes were in the car. Racing outside to get my gear I forgot that I wasn't wearing much more than my pyjamas (just as well the neighbours weren't

awake at 3AM!). Getting in the car with my buddy from the village we paused, just for a moment. The most dangerous part of any call-out can be driving to the meeting place. We spent a few seconds getting our heads together then set off to meet the team. The call-out was to search the hillside as a member of the public had seen lights on the hill. This turned out to be people wild camping and a false alarm with good intent.

We were safely home by 7AM but I couldn't sleep, full of adrenaline from these few hours. Getting that first call-out out of the way was important: I didn't sleep through the alarm, I knew what to do, the training took over.

That night at 3AM my wife got up with me to make me a sandwich in case I got hungry and waited up in bed until I was safely home. Now when a call-out comes in she shouts at me if I turn the light on! Mountain Rescue is a team effort, it's the wives, husbands, partners, children and colleagues that allow us to drop everything at the drop of a hat, and I am eternally grateful to them.



There are many ways in which you can help Mountain Rescue in Scotland. SMR and MRTs all rely on support from members of the public.

Your support can take many forms, fundraising, donations and corporate sponsorship are all vital to the future of SMR.

Your local team may also require assistance with the admin, management and upkeep of their base. So even if your best work takes place from behind a desk, get in touch today.

2 MRT Volunteers are —



PARTNERS

Working together and working with others; teams using skills to rescue people.





Training and Development in Scottish MR

In 2018 Scottish Mountain Rescue organised a programme of 20 training courses with a total of 340 places.

These courses designed and delivered by MRT members for MRT members build on the training programme that each team delivers locally. The national programme allows skills development and sharing amongst and between teams and team members. This is facilitated by experienced MRT members who are themselves introducing learning from a wide range of sources including the International Commission on Alpine Rescue (ICAR). This approach allows teams to benefit from the wider community both nationally and internationally. And means we can confidently state that teams provide a world class service.

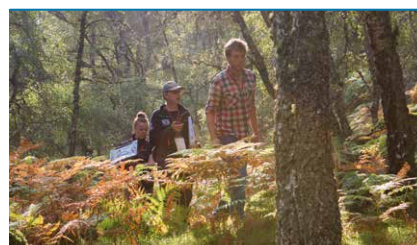
Here are some of the topics that are covered in training locally or nationally.



Ropework— As well as personal skills, MRT members train to raise and lower stretchers up and down cliffs, in and out of canyons and work with helicopters.



Avalanche rescue— Every winter teams train to find people buried in avalanches, digging people out and packaging avalanche victims on stretchers for speedy transport to emergency care.



Search skills— Teams train for line searches, water margin searches and the management of searches. Modern techniques involve digital maps and we offer a course in digital mapping.



Casualty care— MRTs might be dealing with a casualty in a remote area for several hours. SMR offer advanced casualty care training including casualty treatment, handling and packaging specific to MR needs.



Environment— Team members need to be comfortable in the environment they are working in, whenever called out. This means training in those environments as much as they can.



Dogs— SMR represent two Search And Rescue Dog Associations who are regularly called out alongside MRTs. On national training courses demonstrations are given showing how dogs can assist with avalanche rescue or searches.

Soft Skills, communication and management—

Soft skills are a vital part of any rescue, alongside technical skills the ability to communicate concisely and clearly, work with team mates and liaise with partners all contribute to the ability to respond to incidents. Training and experience cement these relationships.

All team members are equipped with a personal VHF radio handset and every vehicle and base also has radio communications. Training is provided in radio protocols.

All rescues have someone in control who organises the voluntary response. Sometimes control will be in a team base or perhaps a mobile unit which goes to the best place from which to coordinate the response. People in control have usually been in a team for several years and learnt over time how to organise and manage a rescue response.



Torridon Mountain Rescue Team

2018 Report



Our new rescue centre – a walk-through

2018 has been a landmark year for Torridon Mountain Rescue Team as we took occupation of our new rescue centre in the heart of Torridon. In last year's magazine, we told the story of this long-running project and of our fundraising campaign – Project Torridon Rescue – which raised successfully the money needed to build our new base. St John Scotland and Innogy were both particularly generous and deserve special mention again for their kind support.

Now that we are into the new rescue centre, a walk-through introduction seems to be in order for all our donors!

The base is situated behind the medical centre in Torridon village, next door to Loch Torridon Community Centre. The base consists of five main elements – mess room, operations, medical area, storage and assembly area.

The mess room [1] is the key focus of the building. It contains full kitchen facilities so that the team can get anything from a quick brew to a three course meal – useful for those days when the weather has closed in or we are working on an overnight or long-lasting shout.

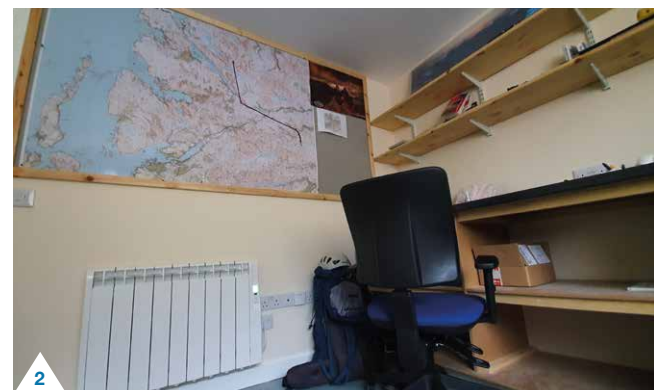


Round the edge of the mess room are placed benches so that team members can be assembled for briefings, debriefs, training and committee meetings. Simple, but effective, this multi-use space is where we spend most time in the base.

The operations room [2] is the nerve centre for call-outs. Equipped with maps, a whiteboard, communications and software, this is where call-outs are managed from, with the use of mobile command from one of the team vehicles if necessary.

The medical area is for the management of casualties whilst we await the arrival of professional medical care. This space is also where we can offer friends, families and companions of casualties a private environment whilst they await the outcome of a call-out or until handover is made to medical professionals. Separate from the mess and operations rooms, this is an important feature of our new rescue centre which we were unable to offer previously.

Storage is of course a vital component of any Mountain Rescue base. The base offers a large, racked storage room [3] in which we have ordered our rescue equipment, ready to 'grab and go' as needed. This space is much bigger than in our old rescue post at Torridon Youth Hostel, which lends





TEAM FOCUS

itself to easier organisation, administration, inspection and maintenance of kit.

We also can store equipment in the attic space [4] of the rescue centre and we tend to use that space for kit which we know will not be needed in an emergency. Bulkier kit is kept in the assembly area, for ease of access through the 'up and over' door at the front of the base. A dedicated drying room [5] allows us to dry out wet kit quickly and effectively.

The assembly area [6] is our 'kitting up' area - a large space where team members can get geared up in a hurry and gather the kit needed for a specific call-out. The 'up and over' door from this area leads out to the front of the building where our vehicles are parked and a short distance from the helicopter landing area. We can also use this area as an indoor training area during inclement weather.

So that's a quick canter through the key parts of our new rescue centre. Always keen to continue development of the team and its base though, we already have plans to extend the rescue centre to allow us to make more use of the first floor. Currently attic space, we envisage this being used for overnight team accommodation in the event that we have long-running and/or overnight call-outs so that team members can grab some sleep rather than driving home when exhausted. We would also be able to use the developed first floor as extra training and planning space, reducing further the need for us to spend money hiring external venues for larger team gatherings.

It may be that this extension of the base is far advanced (or even completed) by the time that this article is published, at which point we will take time to settle in before deciding what the next phase will be in enhancing further the service offered by Torridon Mountain Rescue Team.

Our generous donors have already been thanked earlier in this article and the team's warmest thanks go also to those current and former members of the team who have worked so very hard, over a number of years, to bring this construction project to fruition. All members of Torridon Mountain Rescue Team are unpaid volunteers and the extra commitment of those working on the new base project should never be under-estimated.

With special thanks to—



- 1 - Mess room
- 2 - Operations room
- 3 - Storage room
- 4 - The attic space

- 5 - Drying room
- 6 - Assembly area
- 7 - Base signs over the years.





SUPPORTERS



For many years, St John Scotland (SJS) has been the largest charitable donor to MRTs in Scotland. By 2020 this will amount to over £3.75million in funding, mainly through the provision of bases and vehicles.

The generous support of SJS continued through 2018 and included support to Tweed Valley and Torridon MRTs. Tweed Valley were enabled to acquire and renovate a disused fire station to use as a base and with SJS support Torridon completed a new build base. Both teams now operate from a base that fits their requirements, a fantastic step forward for them.

In addition, SJS supported MR across Scotland with a significant financial contribution toward the purchase of replacement radios. This is a vital development replacing aging and failing equipment with modern technology with improved capabilities that make team members safer and will enhance our ability to aid people in distress.

St John Scotland have made a massive contribution to Mountain Rescue in Scotland over many years. We are incredibly grateful for their continued support.



Left, Torridon MRT base | Right, Tweed Valley MRT base

nokian[®]
TYRES



Nokian Tyres have partnered with Scottish Mountain Rescue in a three year sponsorship deal. The agreement will see Scottish Mountain Rescue vehicles fitted with Nokian Tyres' most recent and innovative products.



THE JD FOUNDATION AND SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

The JD Foundation is a registered charity founded by JD Sports Fashion Plc in December 2015. The mission of the foundation is to support charities working with disadvantaged young people in the UK. There are currently thirteen charities supported by the JD Foundation, two of which are our environmental charities, Scottish Mountain Rescue and Mountain Rescue England and Wales.

As an international multichannel retailer of sports fashion and outdoors brands, The JD Group also includes leading outdoor retailers Blacks, Millets, Tiso and Ultimate Outdoors. Therefore the JD Foundation is delighted to support Scottish Mountain Rescue and Mountain Rescue England and Wales through monies raised on the sale of carrier bags across its stores in Scotland, England and Wales.

The JD Foundation receives 100% of the net proceeds from the sale of bags in Scotland; 50% of that money goes directly to Scottish Mountain Rescue with the remaining 50% distributed across youth charities.

Since its launch The JD Foundation has donated £1.84million to nominated charities, £160,876 going to Scottish Mountain Rescue to support the teams of volunteers and their invaluable work saving lives and promoting safe mountaineering.



UK SAR Volunteer Training Fund

The UKSAR Volunteer Training Fund administered by the Charities Aid Foundation generously supports the national training programme offered by SMR. In 2018 we offered 340 places on 20 courses which took place across Scotland.

We offer skills-based training to MRT members that is specific to Mountain Rescue. Topics include search management, technical ropework and avalanche rescue. We also offer casualty care assessments which, when passed, allow people to use advanced techniques including access to restricted drugs so that we can do our best for the casualty.

The fund also supports individual teams and supports the annual training conference that in 2018 took place at the National Outdoor Training Centre, Glenmore Lodge. Around 100 members of SMR come together for a weekend of workshops on Mountain Rescue related topics.

Training on courses and the conference are delivered by approximately 40 people. The vast majority of these are highly experienced MR practitioners who are expert in the topic in which they are delivering training. As well as the funders we thank them for making our training so highly relevant to our purpose.



STATS



INCIDENTS

588

Total number of independent incidents in 2018.

An **incident** is defined as a single event that requires the services of an MRT. The resolution of this incident may need several **call-outs** of a team (or teams) for example during a prolonged search.

(2017: 423; 2016: 436)

239 were mountaineering related

349 were non-mountaineering incidents



41%

59%



*mountaineering includes hillwalking, scrambling, rock climbing, winter climbing, and MRT activity.



CALL-OUTS

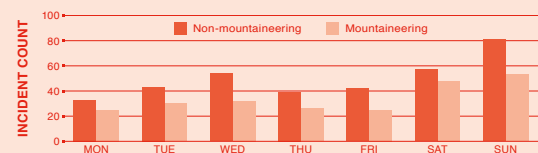
The total number of separate team call-outs was

683

or **760** including "continuations" (linked call-outs on different days)

(2017: 642; 2016: 733)

The busiest day of the week for teams in 2018 was a Sunday.



HOURS

In 2018 Mountain Rescue volunteers gave up

29,091

hours of their time during call-outs.

(2017: 22,076)

That's an average of 34 hours per volunteer per year on call-outs.

Team members volunteer far more time than this in training. It is not uncommon for a volunteer to give more than 100 hours to training per year.

Between 850 members that would be over 85,000 hours on training every year.



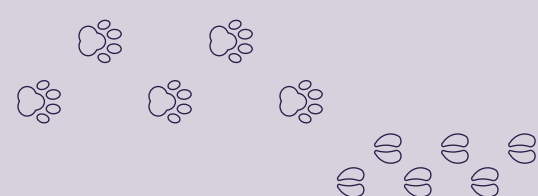
PEOPLE HELPED

During 2018

851

people were rescued.

(2017: 553)



5 incidents involved rescue of dogs, and 6 incidents the rescue of sheep.

3 MRT Volunteers are —



COMMITTED

The longest callout in 2018 lasted five days.





HONOURS

Special mentions

Three people in the Mountain Rescue community in Scotland were recognised in the Honours List at New Year 2018.

We are proud these people are members of the community and extremely pleased that their service has been recognised.

Ken McCubbin, BEM



Ken was a founder member of Galloway MRT in 1975, prior to that he was a member of Moffat MRT.

His continuous service in the two teams is more than 50 years. In early years of Galloway MRT personal vehicles were used for MR work and Ken bought an estate car to act as stretcher transport. As time went on he was involved in arranging the first storage of team equipment and fundraising for the first team vehicle. Ken's fundraising for the team continues through the Newton Stewart Walking Festival which he also helped establish, raising money for the team every year.

Ken has spent 43 years on the Committee of GMRT including time as Depute Leader, Team Leader, Communications Officer, Medical Officer and Community Liaison. He was Team Leader the time of the Lockerbie disaster after which he introduced support measures for team members who were dealing with the aftermath of the experience. He also started a buddy system to the team aimed at ensuring the wellbeing of team members.

Ken continues as a fully active member of the team.

Jon Hart, OBE



Jon has been a member of Lochaber MRT for many years during which he has taken part in many difficult rescues in extremely challenging conditions.

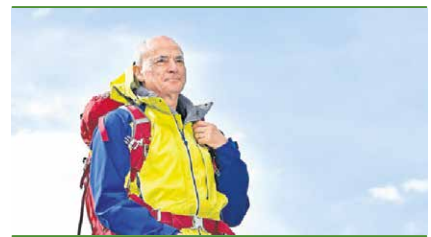
Jon served on the national Executive of Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland for six years, first as Secretary and then as Chairman. As Chairman he guided teams through a very challenging time during the creation of one Police Force in Scotland from 8 independent constabularies. This coincided with the transition of Search And Rescue helicopter services from military to civilian provision.

These changes brought strategic challenges and Jon dealt with these and many other issues including provision of insurances, ensuring supply of essential equipment and a new memorandum of understanding with Scottish Ambulance Service.

Amongst other things he achieved secondments of staff, and then creation of a new staff post. He was also heavily involved in the development of the national training programme, and ended his national involvement as Chair of the UK & Ireland Mountain Rescue conference in 2014.

Jon no longer works nationally, he continues as a fully active member of Lochaber MRT.

Mario Di Maio, MBE



Mario joined Aberdeen MRT in 1970 and has been a highly influential member ever since.

He shaped AMRT structure and protocols, has been a role model for physical fitness and technical expertise and was Team Leader for 9 years and before that Deputy Team Leader for 15 years. He has also been Treasurer and Training Officer. AMRT were the first team in Scotland to benefit from the support of St John Scotland to acquire a purpose built base, Mario was instrumental in forging the close relationship with SJS for AMRT that achieved this and eventually benefitted many other teams across Scotland.

Mario has been a driving force in AMRT over 48 years in which he has taken part in over 400 rescues, spent approximately 10,000 hours in training and spent countless hours in team management meetings, giving talks, organising training and logistics and all the back-office activities that it takes to run AMRT.

Mario continues as a fully active member of the team.

4 MRT Volunteers are —



NAVIGATORS

They know their areas like the back of their hand and can read a map wherever the callout takes them.





RECOGNITION

To our supporters —a word of thanks

On behalf of everyone at Scottish Mountain Rescue, our 24 member teams and their 850 volunteers, the 851 people assisted last year and their families, we would like to say thank you to everyone who supported Scottish Mountain Rescue in 2018.

Member teams of Scottish Mountain Rescue could not continue without the kindness and generosity of our supporters. In a real and practical way this support saves lives.

Fundraisers

In 2018 our incredible supporters set their sights high, doing some amazing things to help us save lives. From running all the munros in one continuous round to cycling the height of Everest, your running, walking, cycling and swimming kept us going.

This year even more supporters are planning to follow in their footsteps, like Al Barnard and Tom Feakins who are planning to visit all the mountains in the Cairngorms over 4000 foot and a bit more, running and cycling 111km in under 24 hours.



After thinking about the amount of time I spend in the hills and wild places of Scotland, the high regard I have for Scottish Mountain Rescue and the satisfaction I get from pushing myself to the physical limits... the decision to raise funds was fairly easy.

—Al Barnard



Individual supporters

Not everyone climbed mountains to support us, but just as important were the people who donated to Scottish Mountain Rescue. Over 100 people supported Scottish Mountain Rescue with a regular monthly donation and many more supported us with a single donation. Whether you have been supporting us for years or were one of the growing number of people who recently joined us. You were our support crew, the people we relied upon to make our rescues possible.

Groups and organisations

It wasn't just individuals who supported us, people involved their mountaineering clubs, their cycling clubs, their class at school and their networks on social media to form part of our wider team. In the same way that it takes a team of volunteers to carry out a rescue call-out, we rely on communities coming together and getting behind the teams to make our work possible and continue saving lives.

Corporate supporters

We are extremely grateful to our corporate partners and supporters whether they have supported us through donations, fundraising, or offering vital equipment. A huge thank you to our long-standing partners who have been there for us over many years, and a big welcome to our new partners and supporters. We look forward to working with you, having partnerships which last many years enables us to plan for the future.

Trusts and foundations

Our heartfelt thanks go also to the trusts and foundations who have supported us in 2018. Your support has helped us to be there for people when they get into difficulty in the mountains and remote places of Scotland.

Gifts in wills

We want to say a special thank you to the supporters who chose to remember Scottish Mountain Rescue with a gift in their wills. These gifts have a big impact and leaving as little as 1% (after providing for your family and friends) can make that impact!



How to support SMR

There are a number of ways to help SMR or your local MRT —

- Make a one off donation
- Set up a regular donation
- Volunteer your time
- Leave a gift in your will

Donate Now - click here

www.scottishmountainrescue.org/donate
info@scottishmountainrescue.org
01479 861 370



Volunteers are the heart of SMR.

They couldn't do what they do without support from people like you.

They give their all.
Please give all you can.



Any Hour, Any Day, Any Weather

SMR represents these teams and their contact information can be found on scottishmountainrescue.org.

- Aberdeen MRT
- Arran MRT
- Arrochar MRT
- Assynt MRT
- Borders Search and Rescue Unit
- Braemar MRT
- Dundonnell MRT
- Galloway MRT
- Glenelg MRT
- Glenmore Lodge MRT
- Hebrides MRT
- Killin MRT
- Kintail MRT
- Lomond MRT
- Moffat MRT
- Oban MRT
- Ochils MRT
- SARDA (Scotland)
- SARDA (Southern Scotland)
- Search & Rescue Aerial Association - Scotland
- Scottish Cave Rescue Organisation
- Skye MRT
- Torridon MRT
- Tweed Valley MRT
- Police Scotland (Grampian) MRT
- Police Scotland (Strathclyde) MRT
- Police Scotland (Tayside) MRT
- RAF Lossiemouth MRT

SMR works in partnerships with—

- The Scottish Government
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Bristow Helicopters Limited
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- HM Coastguard
- The Home Office



Scottish Mountain Rescue

Glenmore Lodge
Glenmore
Aviemore
Inverness-shire
PH22 1QZ

info@scottishmountainrescue.org
01479 861 370

scottishmountainrescue.org



@scottishmountainrescue



@ScottishMR



@scottishmountainrescue



Torridon Mountain Rescue Team

chair@torridonmrt.org.uk
teamleader@torridonmrt.org.uk

torridonmrt.org.uk



@TorridonMRT



@TorridonMRT



@torridonmrt

Torridon Mountain Rescue Team is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Scottish charity number SC015356

Scottish Mountain Rescue is a registered Scottish Charity – number SC045003

Volunteering to save lives