MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE OF SCOTLAND

The Magazine of SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

August 2011

I have hugely enjoyed and feel privileged to have been the MRCofS Strategic Project Manager for the last eighteen months, and will be sad to go back to wearing a suit on a train into Edinburgh rather than huffing and puffing my way up the hill behind a MRCofS course on Carn Asadal or up Corrie Na Cliste.

I have been particularly impressed with the dedication and professionalism of all MRT volunteers. You represent the best traditions of community service and continue to deliver a world class, front line, voluntary search and rescue service, free at the point of delivery, in the face of increasing demand. Please continue to tell, as I will, those who do not know of the thousands of volunteer hours you give to rescue hundreds of people, indirectly supporting the economically vital outdoor recreation and tourism sectors that are of such great benefit to Scotland.

The Scottish Government, Order of St John and all government all recognise what you do and have increased their grants to Scottish Mountain Rescue for land-based search and rescue. While this additional funding is usually very welcome it comes with responsibilities and there will be an increased financial management workload for the MRCofS Executive and MRTs. You will have to manage carefully this necessary workload so that you stay focused on your core purpose of providing a voluntary mountain rescue service.

The new Core Capabilities for Scottish Mountain Rescue covered elsewhere in this issue and are a vital tool to let other emergency responders know, or to remind them, of what you do as a voluntary organisation, and the high level at which you operate in providing a unique voluntary public service to assist the Police. You should not take for granted that others know what you do and should take every opportunity to remind them of your core capabilities, in particular when your MRT provides an additional service.

May I thank all the MRTs and members who have taken the time over the last year to let me know what you think and what amendments should be made to the work I have undertaken on your behalf. Without this valuable feedback Scottish Mountain Rescue would not be in the high profile position it is now in with government, charities and other responders. Lastly may I thank your Executive and in particular Jonathan Hart, Graham McDonald and Alfie Ingram who do a huge amount of largely unseen work to advance the cause of Scottish Mountain Rescue. Please do support and speak to your Executive whenever you can so that you can progress together confidently.

I hope we meet again soon up a hill in social rather than professional mountain rescue circumstances.

John Craig Strategic Project Manager

My first duty as the new Chair of the MRCofS is to formally thank Alfie Ingram on behalf of the members of the public we serve and the teams affiliated to the MRCofS, for all the hard work and dedication he (and joy) have put into the role for the last seven years. I am taking stewardship of an organisation that has been both well managed and progressed over this difficult and challenging period.

My second duty is to thank you, all the front line individual team members across our civilian voluntary, Police, RAF, SARDA and Cave rescue teams in continuing to go out in all weather and conditions at any time of night or day and provide an amazing voluntary world class service, free at the point of delivery. The statistics for 2010 clearly demonstrate what a truly fantastic and inspirational organisation we all belong to in Scottish Mountain Rescue.

Looking forward, I suspect that for the duration of my role as Chair of the MRCofS we will see unprecedented change in Scotland, both within our political establishments, and across the public and private sectors at large. This period of change will have a profound impact on Scottish Mountain Rescue. During this significant and fast moving period of change Scottish Mountain Rescue will need to consider issues such as modernisation, the potential of increasing costs and administration, and of course issues with regard to the choice of services our teams supply their local communities, be it in the Highlands and the North of Scotland, across the islands and down in the central belt and the borders.

My last duty as Chair is to welcome the new Chair – Jonathan Hart. I hope Jonathan will lead the MRCofS in the same way I did and that you can progress together confidently.

I look forward to working with you to meet this challenge.

Jonathan Hart, Chair MRCofS

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Design Editor
Any queries regarding artwork, design and layout etc should be forwarded to the Design Editor.
Dave Cawthorn, Tel: 01750 33242
Mobile: 07702 169213
e-mail: d.cawthorn@btinternet.com

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New PETZL VIZIR eye shield accessory - cannot be dropped or left behind. meets EN166.

Compatible with the New PETZL PIXI industrial lighting range
New Core Capabilities for Scottish Mountain Rescue were approved by the MRCofS General Committee in November 2010. They have been recognised by the Scottish Government and Police as the niche mountain rescue service in Scotland.

The new Core Capabilities are a vital tool to let other emergency responders know what Mountain Rescue Teams do. They are something you should all be proud of as they detail both how you offer a unique voluntary public service and also how MRs assist the Police in meeting their responsibility for land-based search and rescue. They provide a note of operational capabilities that many MRs excel at and often exceed; and provide good practice for new or aspiring members.

Scottish Mountain Rescue is leading the way for the voluntary sector in Scotland at a time of major change for the Scottish Police and Fire and Rescue Services. These Core Capabilities should further the wider understanding of Scottish Mountain Rescue as the niche mountain rescue service in Scotland.

The Core Capabilities should be kept under dynamic review by the MRCofS Executive with any proposed amendments subject to approval by the MRCofS General Committee. It is important that this work does not remain static, but rather that it evolves and responds to new opportunities. Please do speak to your Executive members regularly and let them know what you think so that Scottish Mountain Rescue can consider it’s response to a changing operational environment.

John Craig
MRCofS Project Manager

Scottish Mountain Rescue - Core Capabilities

1. Deploy under the authority of the Police Force in whose area they are located.
2. Maintain the ability to deploy personnel and operate effectively and safely 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, in all weather conditions.
3. Work in a challenging and at times hostile environment in all mountainous terrain throughout Scotland.
4. Assist the Police in multi-agency search and rescue (SAR) operations.
5. Deliver best practice casualty care and evacuate casualties as appropriate.
6. Operate safely along water margins. Those teams that operate a flood or swift water rescue capability should have in place an appropriate agreement with their local Police and Fire and Rescue Service.
7. Maintain radio communications compatible with the UK SAR band plan.
8. Operate safely and communicate with the UK SAR helicopter fleet.
9. Maintain appropriate partnerships with other local SAR stakeholders and community resilience providers.
10. Safeguard, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of our personnel while undertaking Mountain Rescue activities.
11. All teams are to be capable of effecting technical rescues on ground above the high water mark.
12. Teams that wish to provide additional and/or enhanced SAR capabilities should have in place an appropriate agreement with their local Police Force.

These Core Capabilities will be kept under dynamic review by the MRCofS Executive with any proposed amendments subject to approval by the MRCofS General Committee.

For the avoidance of doubt, the term “Mountain Rescue” includes all terrain search and rescue. The final decision regarding the appropriate operational deployment of a team and the safe use of a team in any situation will always rest with the Team Leader.

Dyneema Rope - the answer to our prayers or a potential death trap!

Andy Simpson reports from the 2010 IKAR Conference

Very early on in the Terrestrial Commission of the 2011 IKAR Conference the perennial subject of Dyneema rope was aired.

When it first appeared Dyneema was hailed as incredibly strong, very lightweight (100 metres of 8mm rope weighs only 4kg), it floats, has only 1% stretch and is resistant to acid/alkali/UV/ petroleum. The rope itself is high module polyethylene (HMPE), not to be confused with Kevlar (high module polyamide (HMPP)). Much has been written on the subject and while there is ongoing but, at the moment, it would appear that the only safe, and certified, application for Dyneema rope is a static line providing a very lightweight alternative to steel cable slang under a helicopter. As part of a MERS2 (multiple evacuation rescue system) system it can take a load of up to 800kg, allowing several people to be rescued at once.

As soon as you introduce a high speed winch into the system you are also introducing the potential for heat build up. Dyneema rope is only to be used in temperatures below 50˚C before it starts to deteriorate very rapidly. Above 75˚C the rope becomes unusable but the worrying thing is that it will look fine. Any visual check will pass without comment but not only will the rope have deteriorated, it will have become positively dangerous to use. Similarly, the rope is easily contaminated by fine particles of grit, not always apparent to the naked eye.

In addition, whilst the rope floats and will not soak up water, water does become trapped between the fibres and takes a long time to dry out. I don’t know what the technical difference is but, one way or the other, the rope holds water after immersion or exposure to wet conditions, increasing the weight of it as you’d expect.

Dyneema rope is very difficult to knot and doesn’t retain its strength unless it’s done in a particular way. If it isn’t done correctly in that way the loss of strength is massive compared to other ropes, thereby introducing a potentially catastrophic element into simple human error.

Finally, for those who might be tempted to splice a Dyneema rope - don’t unless you know exactly what you’re doing (and you have the correct tools) or, better still, send it back to the manufacturer, it’s that tricky. Up to 30% of the breaking load is lost when the rope is spliced incorrectly.

As someone who doesn’t know the technical ins and outs of rope but who uses them reasonably regularly I would be scared stiff of touching Dyneema. It appears to have the same failing as ordinary rope but is somewhere near as forgiving if it’s even slightly abused.

Add to that the fact that it keeps its failings well hidden and you have a recipe for disaster for most ordinary team members.

By the manufacturer’s own admission, Dyneema rope is not certifiable as a rope generally for use in climbing or rescue. No doubt the next IKAR meeting will be treated to a lecture on how things have developed in the last 12 months and there will be some improvements. In the meantime you’d be better off taking burners string on the hill, at least you’d know that was going to snap!

www.air-work.com

Andy Simpson is Team Leader of the Rosssendal & Pendle MRT, and was an MR (S&R) rep at the Oct 2010 IKAR Conf.

Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland

Insurance

Personal Accident

Personal Accident insurance on operations (Call Outs) is provided by a Teams home police force. Teams should confirm with their home police force as to whether cover is also provided when undertaking training.

Civil Liability

The MRCofS holds a Civil Liability Policy which covers the MRCofS Executive, and all affiliated voluntary organisations. The limit of indemnity is £10,000,000.

The policy provides cover on the basis of any authorised activity of the MRCofS which includes social, and fundraising activities. Fund raising activities should generally be carried out in a “mountain” environment i.e. providing first aid cover at a fell race for which a donation may be received. Whilst providing safety cover at a Common Riding is acceptable, organised events which involve horses (i.e. equestrian shows), or engines (i.e. motor cycle scrambles car rallies, and similar) are not covered. Low risk activities such as Flag Days, and other general fund raising outs with the mountain environment are also covered.

The policy covers all emergency medical treatment (first aid) - the parameter being that the provider is trained in the medical treatment being administered.

Trustee Liability

The MRCofS holds a Trustee Liability Policy which covers the MRCofS Executive, and the Trustees of all voluntary affiliated organisations.

The policy covers the legal liability of officers or trustees of the MRCofS Executive, whilst acting as governors etc of the Charity. Limit of Indemnity is £1,000,000.

The policy is with Markel (UK) Ltd, and has been arranged through Henderson Insurance Brokers.

MOD Helicopters

The MRCofS holds an MOD SAR Helicopter Liability Policy which will pay claims made by a third party, either the MOD or the civilian organisation, in the event that they are legally liable for an accident happening during a SAR training flight involving the subject aircraft.

Not more than £50,000,000 will be paid for claims arising out of one occurrence

Note this policy is for training flights only, operational flights are automatically covered by an MOD policy.

This article first appeared in the MRCofS magazine “Mountain Rescue”
The workhorse of Scottish rescue. Consider the contribution that the MacInnes Mk6 stretcher has made to rescue incidents; consider the asks of anyone who knows that this proven design has been involved in - high time then that a little TLC was bestowed upon this iconic stretcher.

Although the Mk6 is a mature design there is still work being carried out by the manufacturer to improve the overall production process, tweak accessories such as head guard, wheel and back frame, and finalising the detail of the comprehensive service. This article looks at what you can do to keep your stretcher in the best condition between services and explores how you might make a few mini-modifications.

Maintenance Who and When?
Well the question of who should do the maintenance would typically be answered ‘a competent person!’ But who is a competent person? Basically this is somebody that the team can prove has the experience to carry out the task. Ideally it would be somebody who deals with the maintenance of PPE equipment within their working life and there are many within MR – engineers, riggers, bike mechanics, etc. If this is not possible then we have to give the members that carry out maintenance of stretchers need some form of training. Party to inform them what to do but also to let them know the importance of what often feels a mundane task. I have no doubt that all teams could identify a competent person and this individual could either do the maintenance or deliver the in house training for others to do the job.

Every time the stretcher is used, incident briefing, training, maintenance and inspection should be done and subsequently recorded. You should be able to get it down to a slick process that takes no longer than 10 minutes. If your stretcher is stored a long time between incidents then it depends on the nature of storage to how often you maintain it. Those that are stored in a cosy base or a weather tight remote rescue box, then an annual care plan would be fine. If your stretcher lives on the top of the vehicle then you would need to check it far more regularly. If you chat to Stuart at the Mk6 service centre in Glencoe, he will tell you that the stretchers that show up in the worst condition are those that are strapped to the top of a landy. Many teams that prefer to store the stretcher on the landy roof have gone for a stretcher bag to keep the worst of the conditions out.

Maintenance Equipment
If you want to get serious about it then get a few people together to help you do the job well. A basic kit would be:
- Brush
- Bottle of Muc-off
- GT85 Lubricant Spray
- Clean rag
- ONLY if
- Large screwdriver
- Adjustable spanner
- Rubber hammer
- Couple of saw horses

Mountain bikers will recognise a lot of this equipment as it is exactly the same as the stuff you maintain your bike with after a ride. The process is very much the same as well – wash it, dry it, protect it.

Cleaning and protecting
If stretcher assembly goes out to make sure you get it all parts and work on half the stretcher at a time again to ensure you get to all parts. Give a liberal spray of muc-off and grab a cup of tea (leave for 3-5mins) whilst the nano technology of this modern cleaning agent, what ever that is, gets to work to loosen the grime (techno phobes may use soapy water at this stage). After tea give the stretcher once over with the brush to help remove any stubborn grime then rinse with lots of water from bucket or hose. At this point you can grab another cup of tea and allow to drip dry or if you’re in a hurry wring out excess water with your clean rag. Now give a generous spray over and inside all frame parts with GT85. This does several things it will replace remaining water from the noks and crankies, penetrate deep into joints, protect and lubricate. Importantly it is safe on other stretcher components such as rubber and nylon straps; it also leaves behind a lubricating PTFE film which will make putting the stretcher together much easier particularly around the large nylon frame inserts. Now all you old timers that have done this cleaning. One clean stretcher and two cups of tea – what no biscuit??

Inspection
OK now the stretcher is clean get up close look for signs of significant damage and condition of screw heads, bolts and rivets. Look at how the stretcher is put together i.e. each half has a continuous bent tube frame that is suspended from two straight tubes which form the carrying tubes. Look closely at the corner plates which bring the tubing components together and also at the corner skis which form part of the joint; ensure all rivets are in place and not loose. Look inside the carrying tubes and ensure that the nylon tube inserts that link the two halves together are in good order, a few stretcher is normal.

• Frame tubing: Look over all the frame tube members for significant dents and condition of screw heads, bolts and rivets. Look at how the frame tubing is put together i.e. each half has a continuous bent tube frame that is suspended from two straight tubes which form the carrying tubes. Look closely at the corner plates which bring the tubing components together and also at the corner skis which form part of the joint; ensure all rivets are in place and not loose. Look inside the carrying tubes and ensure that the nylon tube inserts that link the two halves together are in good order, a few stretcher is normal.
• Skis: These often sustain damage and can often be straightened with a friendly rubber hammer if required. Check that the countersunk screws and V brackets are tight and give a good look at the stainless steel securing bolt and adjuster spanner. Pause your inspection at the centre ski joint where the ski is bent at right angle. Ensure the ski is in good order around this area and that no cracks are evident. Have a good look at the SS side of the casualty bed forming a snag hazard. At the other end of the stretcher we have another a similar thing to secure our rope bridle.

The Future
Two reasons to take care of your gear – governance and money. Governance is a clear trail of history which shows your gear, in this case a MacInnes Mk6 was fit for purpose. The future is the best to ensure it was well maintained and inspected regularly, hence the importance of this log.

What about money? Well I am not saying that every bit of your gear is worth keeping but if it is that right now, probably more than ever, strikes me as a good time to take much of the guesswork out of our work by giving it to give maximum front line time. What else does an icon like the Mk6 deserve?

Pimp My Ride
Finally then a look at how you can personally adapt your stretcher to suit the needs of your team. Key to this is knowing what is ‘out of bounds’ and what is allowed a little tweaking. Frame tubing, skis, casualty bed. A bit tricky to know what is not to miss anything. Most of the stretcher just needs a critical eye ran over it but there are times that you need to pause and inspect a little closer. Inspect the two parts of the stretcher individually and then put it together to check frame alignment.

The Mk6 is a mature design and there are many within MR – engineers, riggers, bike mechanics, etc. If this is not possible then we have to give the members that carry out maintenance of stretchers need some form of training. Party to inform them what to do but also to let them know the importance of what often feels a mundane task. I have no doubt that all teams could identify a competent person and this individual could either do the maintenance or deliver the in house training for others to do the job.

Wash it! Protect it Have a look inside!

Maintenance Gear
- Rubber hammer
- GT85 Lubricant Spray
- Bottle of ‘Muc-off’
- Brush
Hebrides Search And Rescue John Norfolk

Hebrides Search And Rescue were voted in as affiliated members of the MRC of S. This short sentence doesn’t really quantify or explain the 3 years of hard work leading up to that achievement.

Firstly I should introduce myself and the rest of the management team. I come from a military background, having spent 16 years in the Army, badged to the RA. I then went on to become a senior off road driving instructor with Land Rover working at Rockingham Castle. This then led me to become self employed, owning the company that ran the largest private off road site in the country. A few years, and a set of twins, later my wife and I decided that quality of life was more important and decided to move to the Isle of Lewis. I used to spend some amount of time each year firing off from the Missile Range in the Uists.

I was quite surprised to find that there was no MRT established here, despite being a sign for the “Mountain Rescue Post” in Tarbert. After being here a year I heard rumours of a team being formed so contacted the name I was given. It now transpires that there have been rumours and a desire to have a team here for well over twenty years.

These rumours were hard to pin down, but eventually I was given a name. Tom and Amanda Lavery, who have now become firm family friends, as well as Team Leader and Fund raising officer respectively. Tom works as the Emergency planning Officer for NHS Western Isles and was formerly a member of Lochaber MRT. Amanda is a care worker and has lots of experience of working in outdoor shops.

At this point it is worth mentioning that HebsAR has a slightly different structure, from most other SAR/MR Teams, in that we have a Team Manager and a Team Leader. When Tom and I googled “How to set up a Mountain Rescue Team from scratch” there were no results! There are text books out there on the technical aspects of our core business, but nobody really knew how to do it as a start up. All the existing teams are well established and formed dynamically over the decades. We knew we had a task in front of us as the decision was taken to share the work load as much as possible. We now operate on a basis that the Team Leader has operational command of the team and the manager overseas the management of the team.

As we started to plan the team word got out and we attracted a nucleus of members. With each additional member came more skills and enthusiasm to get the team up and running. Our really lucky break was attracting Dr Laura Marshall and her husband Justin Busbridge, a highly qualified Nurse Practitioner. We were also lucky enough to get Steve Oliver, ex Rossendale MRT, in to the fold. My drive and motivation was always boosted after a chat with Justin.

Once the decision was taken to form the team we approached the Police area commander, Chief Inspector Gordon MacLeod. He was pivotal, as without Northern Constabulary having a requirement for a team we would not be deployed. He has continued to support the team ever since, and we have established a good working relationship with him.

The Outer Hebrides, or Western Isles, is a long island chain running 130 miles from Barra in the South to the Butt of Lewis in the North. The population is over 26,000, spread across some of the most remote and rural parts of the British Isles. It goes without saying the weather presents its problems in this rugged environment. With the media attention that the islands have received with Monty Hall, Countryfile and Coast and the introduction of RET (Road equivalent Tariff) on the ferry we have seen a dramatic increase in the amount of visitors.

HebsAR’s role was always to enhance the resilience of the wider community by assisting our stakeholder partners. During the 2010/2011 severe weather the team deployed vehicles and personal to assist the council home care program and the local hospital.

Hebrides Search And Rescue currently has 24 operational team members, including 3 Doctors and Mike Walker from SARDA, and 3 support staff. We have a wide range of professions and experience across the team. The team is busy training and identifying skills and equipment gaps. The team still has a way to before we are fully operational and equipped, but lots of hard work is going on to resolve this. We are now a registered charity, which brings its own paperwork issues.

A quick mention must also go to Alfie Ingram, who as well as agreeing to mentor the team, has spent countless hours on the phone to Tom offering advice and support. For this Hebrides Search And Rescue is deeply indebted to Alfie.

Traditionally the land based SAR/MR roles have been undertaken by members of HM Coastguard. The islands are also lucky to be blessed with the S-92 helicopter operated by CHC. This accounts for a large proportion of the existing capability within the Outer Hebrides. As mentioned earlier the extreme weather here can also pose problems for the helicopter, at times.

Our website is: www.hsar.org.uk
Milly

In Trouble with Helicopters....

Thump...thump...thump...the noise grew louder and louder til’ I couldn’t bear it anymore...a pungent, acidic smell of aviation fuel filled my nostrils...a terrifying down draft of air was sucking the life out of me...just out of the corner of my eye a massive yellow object descended from the sky. I was petrified and didn’t know where to run.... I didn’t care where or for how long, I just had to get away.

Vaguely I could hear Special Human running behind me, her voice loud and desperate, lost in the noise, smell and maelstrom of air behind me, her voice loud and desperate, just had to get away.

Thump...thump...thump...the noise grew louder and louder til’ I couldn’t bear it anymore...a pungent, acidic smell of aviation fuel filled my nostrils...a terrifying down draft of air was sucking the life out of me...just out of the corner of my eye a massive yellow object descended from the sky.

I was petrified and didn’t know where to run.... I didn’t care where or for how long, I just had to get away.

Milly in Trouble with a Snowboard....

I’ve been around skiers and snowboarders all of my life. Special Human worked in the ski area so it seemed pretty normal for me to see Humans whizzing down the hill when the snow arrived. A close shave early on as a young pup, was pivotal in my education and self preservation around skis. Special Human’s instincts take over, any sort of doggie sense just goes out of the window.

I’m five years old now, you would have thought I would have got used to helicopters. I’ve even been taken to see a dog psychologist, (who incidentally even asked questions about my bowel movements!) in order to tie-sensitize myself to the horrendous yellow beast. But to no avail. A helicopter only has to appear on the horizon and I’m cowering in my paws. The ‘doggie psycho’ gave Special Human a CD of helicopter noises, the idea was to tie-sensitize me to the noise and make it seem normal. NORMAL!??!!! There’s nothing normal about a huge noisy, smelly, yellow beast descending from the sky. I ask myself... NORMAL! I’d rather run over a cornice, which incidentally I tried one day on Glás Maol. What a ride that was!!! Special Human was traumatised.

You would think that if I was so scared of something, Special Human would be good enough to keep me away from them. But oh no.

My reaction as often as not is I’m trussed up in my full body harness (I’ve included a picture for you here – how undignified is that???) held real tight and woman handled onto the helicopter. My latest helicopter epic was on Ben Nevis, just check out my look of disgust! Tell you what, I’d much rather jump than stay inside.......to illustrate why I was so scared of the helicopter.

The usual drive to work on stalks as we whizzed along, trees flashing past.

The usual drive to work at Glenmore was a little more ‘normal’ (doesn’t she know that’s a doggie job?!) Didn’t care tho’ cos I just loved pumping and catching shovel loads of snow in my mouth.

The day was forecast to be good, dry and sunny with a strengthening wind. There would be lots of people enjoying the hills today. We’d had a fantastic winter so far. Special Human times, are my favourite time of year; snow balls to run after, doggy ‘snow-angels’ to make and digging for things hidden in the snow by special human. Now that really was my favourite pastime. It was great fun practicing; sometimes I would find ‘articles’ buried. If I was really lucky one of those stupid humans would actually have been buried in the snow for me to find – weird ehh? It was way more fun than the boring summer stuff. Small air gaps in the snow would allow the human smell to percolate up to the surface of the snow pack. Wot a give away! I’d sniff ’em out, start digging and seconds later Special Human would be there with a shovel digging beside me...doesn’t she know that’s a doggie job? I’d be more than happy to help her out at work in seconds, shovel out she started digging too. Cautionary...far more cautiously than me. YES there it was half a meter down. It was a leg...an arm...a rucksack...difficult to tell at this stage...Special Human was shouting, other humans ran over...a head was carefully cleared, the casualty was breathing...still alive...moving...speaking...injured but alive.

I jerked awake as the familiar tones of the BBC Breakfast TV presenter filled the room.......Search & Rescue Dog hailed a hero as she digs victim out of Avalanche.'
The Sikorsky 92A SAR Helicopter at Stornoway

History

The Stornoway Coastguard Search & Rescue Flight commenced operations in May 1987. Prior to this, the Hebrides and the North West Coast of Scotland relied on search & rescue helicopters from either RNAS Prestwick or RAF Lossiemouth. Due to the distances involved and the isolated nature of some of the communities, the response time of these helicopters to the casualties was slow and was often increased by bad weather.

Following a series of tragic accidents in the 1980’s including the fishing vessel Bon-Ami in December 1985 – where 6 stranded fishermen were stranded after running aground on the approaches to Kinlochbervie while other fishing vessels and Coastguards looked on helplessly - a campaign for the provision of a dedicated search and rescue helicopter on the West Coast of Scotland was launched.

The campaign was led by local communities and supported by local politicians along with the fishing industry. The government eventually agreed for a Sikorsky S-61N helicopter to be introduced under contract to the HM Coastguard to provide cover for the North West coast of Scotland.

The flight is based at Stornoway Airport on the Isle of Lewis and operates 24 hours a day all year. Its area of operations is generally under contract to the HM Coastguard to provide cover for the North West coast of Scotland, the Ardmaircharan Peninsula on the West coast and inland to the Great Glen. However, the aircraft regularly operates outside this area and can fly casualties as far afield as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen.

The role of the flight is primarily maritime search & rescue, air ambulance support and of course mountain rescue. Stornoway’s first mountain rescue was flown by my father, Capt David Tink, 23 years ago in April 1998 where an S61, assisted by Torridon Mountain Rescue Team led by Charlie Rose, successfully recovered 2 climbers stuck overnight on a snow covered ledge on Liathach in Wester Ross.

Over the years the S61 helicopter continued to provide a dependable service to the Highlands and Islands but after 20 years it had become dated and required replacing. In 2007 a new Sikorsky S-92A helicopter replaced the ageing S-61N and introduced the latest aviation technology to SAR operations.

The S92A

The S92 entered into service in October 2007 and quickly established itself as a successful SAR platform which to date has completed over 650 call outs at Stornoway.

The aircraft is an AAWSR (All Weather Search & Rescue) helicopter with a dual hoist fit complete with new aviation and SAR technology which offers significant advantages over the old aircraft including full aircraft de-icing, improved performance and speed. It can fly in icing conditions down to minus 40 deg Celsius, it can maintain its speed at altitude and in the event of a single engine failure has a higher chance of maintaining its position during a critical phase of winching without the need to initiate an immediate fly away.

At just 68.5 feet long with a rotor diameter of 56.5 feet it has a smaller footprint than the S61, and its military variant the Sea King, but its design offers an increase in cabin size.

The aircraft is powered by two 2520shp General Electric CT7-9A engines which are controlled by FADEC computers. It also has an Auxiliary Power Unit to provide electrical and hydraulic power on the ground when the engines are shut down.

It is equipped with the latest aviation technology including a TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System) which will warn the crew of other conflicting transponder equipped aircraft; an EGSPS (Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System) which will alert the pilots to an impending collision; electronic flight instruments; a full suite of UK Ordnance Survey, aviation and marine charts with AIS (Automatic Information System) overlay for tracking of marine traffic and software including Digital Map and Chart Navigator Pro to assist the crew in their SAR taskings.

The electrically powered dual hoist system offers redundancy in the event of a single hoist failure and it comes with 290 feet of usable cable with a variable speed up to 3.25 feet per minute. The hoist can lift up to 600lbs.

A Spectrolab Nightstar 1600w Xenon search light is fitted on the port side of the aircraft offering 30 million candela illumination in both wide and narrow arcs.

Operation

There are two S92A helicopters at Stornoway, a duty aircraft and a standby aircraft. The duty aircraft's call sign for training is 'Coastguard' 100 (one-zero-zero) but this will change to ‘Rescue’ 100 if the aircraft is tasked to perform Search & Rescue operations.

The helicopter carries a crew of four: - two pilots, one winch operator and one winchman, who is a qualified paramedic. The winchman is linked to the aircraft by a wireless Presence Intercom system allowing him to communicate directly with the aircraft whilst working with casualties.

Operationally in the mountains, the aircraft has been very successful. Being more powerful than its predecessor it is faster, has better performance and has a larger fuel capacity which increases its operational time on scene. It also allows more MRT members to be positioned on or off the mountains in one go and offers a greater chance of the aircraft maintaining its position in the event of a single engine failure. This does have a downside in the fact that the aircraft’s rotor downside is increased although techniques have been both designed and validated to counter this issue on both the ground and in the air.

During the winter operations the aircraft’s anti-icing and de-icing system has proved invaluable with casualties able to be taken directly to hospital at altitude thus avoiding the long and time consuming low level routes around the coast.

The aircraft can carry up to 4 hours and 30 minutes of fuel giving it a maximum operational range in the region of 250 – 280 nm including 30 minutes on scene. It recently performed an 8 hour 30 minute 972nm round trip via Ireland to recover a seriously ill crew member from an oil tanker in the Atlantic 260 nm west of Sligo.

Operating with MRTs

Last year the Stornoway SAR flight began a MRT Flight Safety Initiative for all teams in our area. This involved revolaising the current aircraft safety briefing with the introduction of a dedicated and comprehensive annual aircraft safety and winching briefing along with the distribution of a specially written guide on the S92 for MRTs, aircraft safety cards and flight safety posters. This was complimented by an annual 1 day training course that we will be commencing the briefings again in August.

We always welcome any requests for training from MRTs. We aim to exercise at least twice a year with the teams but we will exercise more if asked. We actively encourage teams to contribute to the planning of our training day so we both get maximum benefit out of the exercise. Regrettably, we can only consider requests from MRTs in our area.

It is important to emphasise that we ‘train safe’. That is to say we will not expose our crew or MRT members to unnecessary risk, carrying out an on scene dynamic Risk Assessment on any MRT operations. During a SAR tasking we will endeavour to do all we can to minimise all exposure to risk although, as we all know, that is not always possible when attempting to save the life of a casualty and in some cases risks may be more difficult to mitigate. During training however we must make all attempts to minimise these risks and as such, for training, we will not winch a live body in a stretcher and we will not winch MRT members unless we have single engine performance.

A helicopter’s performance will vary depending on a number of factors: - the engine power, weather on the day, the weight of the helicopter and the altitude at which it is operating - to name a few. Basically, if the weather is hot and calm the performance will be less than if it is cold and windy. Additionally, performance is worse at high altitude than at it is at low altitude.

In the event of an engine failure when winching and the helicopter has single engine performance, then the helicopter is able to maintain its position and successfully complete the winching evolution by either safely returning the MRT member to the ground or safely recovering them to the aircraft.

If the helicopter does not have single engine performance then its rotor speed will decay and it will start to descend. To prevent this rotor decay to the point at which it is unrecoverable, the pilot will initiate a forward flying movement thus reducing the engine power required to maintain flight. If a MRT member is on the hook then the winch operator has two choices - to bring him with the aircraft or to cut the cable and leave him behind. The choice will vary depending on the circumstances but the potential risk is increased and sometimes with limited options available.

It’s important to us that the MRT’s have a good understanding of how we operate and vice versa. We hope to achieve this by a reciprocal information exchange through exercises and future attendance at MRT events.

The Stornoway crews have a tremendous respect for the work and professionalism of the MRTs and feel that over the years we have built up a good working relationship with them. As the Stornoway Coastguard flight approaches its 25th anniversary in 2012, our aim for the future is to build on this relationship and continue to work together effectively and successfully. Thank you for your support.

Capt Alun Tink
Deputy Chief Pilot
Coastguard Search & Rescue Flight
Stornoway

Capt Alun Tink first started flying helicopters in 1991. He has flown with Search & Rescue flights in Scotland, England, offshore in the North Sea, the Netherlands, Norway and the Faroe Islands. He has also flown in the Falkland Islands supporting the military, with the United Nations in Kosovo and on various oil & gas operations. For the past 6 years he has been based in Stornoway where he is the Deputy Chief Pilot and MRT liaison officer.

(All photographs - Steve Bransley.)
Tasmania is a 'new' country in many respects, only being created 12,000 or so years ago as a result of rising sea levels caused by the thawing of the last Ice Age. Indeed after the Europeans first landed, there was little to interest them except for the abundance of pelts, whether of the penguin or the platypus variety. With the island being off the beaten track, the English were happy to take their time on the long journey. If this type of hill going is not your particular "thing" and the clink of ironmongery is music to your ears, there are numerous venues where gravity can be challenged. One of the most accessible of these being the heavily bolted Kata-Tjuta located within the National Parks located at the base of Mount Olga. It is a very large area covered in sandstone formations, punctuated with the diverse flora. As it is without these constructions it would very difficult to access many locations without a machete, chest high waders or even both!

Thus this somewhat reduces the "stravaiging" attitude which can be indulged in Scotland, and does present a fairly regimented feel to excursions, even to the extent that there are sign out in registers at the start/ end or virtually every route, which by and large most people happily complete. The interesting thing is that the registers are not routinely checked to see if anyone hasn't returned, being only referred to if someone is reported overdue or missing, the details left in the register being used as guidance as to where the person planned to go, as well as time of return. Should things go wrong and assistance is required the Tasmanian Police have an SAR Squad. The volunteer SAR support for the statute services, however, is provided by the State Emergency Service (SES) which is an impressive large scale multi skilled and equipped organisation, full details of which can be found on the organisations web site - www.ses.tas.gov.au/what_is_ses/volunteers/sar_teams.htm - once nicknamed the Apple Isle due to its very successful export of the fruit to Britain, until EU rules put an end to the trade, Tasmania whilst not the cheapest option, nor exactly a short haul flight away, offers much to the outdoor enthusiast. Its great lifestyle, and wonderful attitude succinctly summed up in a roadside sign which subtly requested " Quiet Please - Tress Growing!".
The area around the Ardeche Gorge to the North West of Marseille is one of France’s many caving regions. In the gorge itself are many caves and one of these is the Dracogne de Gaud. This cave can be followed for only about one hundred metres before it is completely flooded. Cave divers have been gradually pushing the limit of exploration in this flooded passage or sump and, by the beginning of October this year, one of France’s leading cave divers, Eric Estable, had pushed on alone beyond the previous limit of 753 metres to reach 1000 metres from the start of the sump. At this point the passage was trending upwards quite steeply and, although 42 metres underwater, it was considered highly likely it would continue upwards until dry passage above water level was reached.

The sump is not only long but also very deep – minus 87 metres at its deepest point. When Eric first contacted the SSF about going beyond the previous limit of 775 metres, he had been given no encouragement but Eric was determined to push on and so, after a short break, he sent out to Plurdal for a few days to properly prepare for this new challenge. Dry passage beyond the previous limit was reached. Eric was well equipped and was ready to dive would be late on Wednesday – minus 87 metres before its deepest part of the sump (about 500 metres in) and, confirmed that SSF were talking to the authorities about making a formal request for help.

Now that it was confirmed the divers were definitely needed Bill went back to the ARCC and spoke to duty controller Robbie Roberts who, as luck has it, is not only a caver but also one with cave diving experience. Bill explained that a formal request for assistance was in the offing and there was a real urgency in getting the divers and their equipment over to France as soon as possible. He asked whether the team could be flown across the Channel for the French to then deal with their onward transport to the Ardeche. Following many more conversations and exchanges of information Robbie, the ARCC and the RAF came up trumps. A Sea King, from Chivenor in Devon, was put on standby to fly later in the day to Bristol airport and pick up the team and their kit. The RAF also agreed to fly their filled diving cylinders which would save valuable time in avoiding the need to mix gases and fill cylinders on site. The final detail was to ensure Cherbourg airport where the French would assume responsibility for them. But, for any of this to actually take place the NHCA, which is an inter-departmental body responsible for helping between governments was still required.

It wasn’t certain what route such a request should take. During the 2006 Norwegian incident, Bill had first tried the Foreign Office and Defence for a request to the French government as they were looking into the incident. At the time the Foreign Office had been reluctant to go to Interpol in London and then to the responsible ACPO officer. This had then worked so, assuming the situation would be the same now between the UK and France, Bill contacted Neil Thomas, DCC Ian Shannon’s ACPO staff officer in North Wales. As the day progressed Neil checked with the Foreign Office that their stance was the same and then confirmed with Interpol in London to ensure any request would be immediately passed on to him with the minimum of delay.

As the day progressed, other matters such as insurance cover were researched and resolved (the British Caving Association cavers’ holiday insurance will cover divers who are volunteering to travel to France via an RAF helicopter this evening in response to this request).

‘We understand that France will cover the cost of the divers’ travel and accommodation and any expensive equipment that will be flown to them from their landing point in France to Ardeche region.’

In response to the MIC message, help was also offered by other countries. The French government had already offered to send a helicopter via the French fire service. Italy, had offered to provide a range of technical skills necessary to operate far into the sump.

The divers reckoned they’d be ready to travel from Bristol early on Monday evening and their initial plan was to drive down to the Ardeche – a distance of about 850 miles including the Channel Tunnel. Allowing for rest and preparation, the earliest they could be ready to dive would be late on Wednesday – three days after Eric became overdue.

This was really too long. Assuming Eric had been stuck inside the sump and asking for help if he and another experienced UK divers might be prepared to assist. At this stage the request was an unofficial diving-to-diver ‘pre-alert’. Any formal decision to request help from outside France would be unlikely until Monday morning.

A similar request had been acted on in 2006 when the Heyshephone underground to surface communications, had been sent out to Plundal in Norway to assist in the recovery of a Norwegian cave diver missing in another long and deep sump. That exercise had been quite a learning experience and was followed by some pre-planning: for a similar call should occur – and now it had.

Divers sitting in boat waiting to be ferried across the river to the cave, John and Rick on right.
They kicked up and entered the sump to find visibility of about one metre due to suspended sediment. More experienced divers who had been to the lowest point of the sump (17m) had reported that visibility seemed to improve as they descended. John and John passed that point, they found the reverse to be true. Visibility from thereon was, in fact, much poorer.

They pressed on. About 775 metres into the sump, they hit a constriction. There was a chance to find the diving line laid by Eric going through a very low arch. He made an unsuccessful attempt to squeeze through and, just as visibility reduced to zero, he caught sight of a diving scooter in the hole. Visibility was now so poor that when Rick encountered John, he thought at first that he had found the missing diver. Both made further unsuccessful attempts to squeeze through, after conferring by wet notes they concluded that it was impossible. John was able to pull the abandoned scooter out of the hole to take out for examination and then they made their way back through the sump in atrocious visibility as their activity had stirred up even more silt. They reported what they had found as their activity had stirred up even more silt.

At the time Rick and John found Eric’s body, divers had been to the lowest point of the sump and then removing the blocking silt and gravel by pumping. – clearly a long shot. There was still considerable optimism that a well-equipped cave diver of Eric’s experience would have been able to continue beyond his earlier limit of exploration and ascend to an air bell or dry passage.

Consequently, John and Rick were asked to dive again to the construction taking a radio location device with them to determine the exact location of the blockage relative to the surface. They were also asked to take a metal detector to determine whether any more of Eric’s diving gear was buried in the silt near the collapse. They dived on Saturday, and with some concerns over the effect the magnetic field generated by the location device might have on their dive computer, they operated the device successfully. Visibility was much better (relatively) and Rick was able to see further into the construction where he spotted a diving cylinder.

He was also able to find and inspect the entrance to a narrow passage above the collapse which might possibly bypass it. However, it was extremely challenging and Rick and John had to continue with their plans to attempt it with the back mounted diving gear they were using out of the question.

They returned to the surface and reported to the police. They withdrew, suggesting that an attempt on the passage above the collapse might be undertaken. An attempt was made using somerset rebreather tech. This was agreed and the following day (Sunday) the two Swiss and Italian divers ferried additional diving cylinders into the constriction ready for the attempt. They also pushed the dry tube containing supplies as far into the constriction as there was a view that Eric might be returning periodically to the far side and therefore able to retrieve it.

If Rick and John were able to bypass the construction, and if they did find Eric alive, they would need help and additional equipment to effect what would be a very difficult rescue. The only other available person with the experience and equipment to remove the blockage was another British diver, Jason Mallinson. Jason was already expecting to be called and was on his way to the site. On Saturday evening, as John was about to leave home to move further inland, he was able to be ready to leave in Hardwen. He would later be called.

Eric’s death was a tragic loss of one of the world’s leading cave divers. He will be greatly missed and the sympathy of cavers everywhere will be with his family, friends, and the French authorities.

Secours Francais and the French authorities mounted a huge and enormously efficient rescue operation and did everything possible in the hope that Eric did have survived his dive on 3 October and had found a safe place in the cave above water. The French authorities, in keeping with best efforts are sometimes unsuccessful. Sadly, this was one of those occasions.

This article was prepared for the EURL (2005) magazine

Comment from SCRO.

As Scottish cave exploration progresses, fresh technology and advances are increasing in importance. Such was the case for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus. It is to be hoped that such a rescue is never needed again. This is one of the two sections that flooded to the roof and where SCRO and BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border.

It is to be hoped that such a rescue is never needed again. This is one of the two sections that flooded to the roof and where SCRO and BCRC teams south of the border. All this for cave divers and sump rescue apparatus from BCRC teams south of the border.
An invitation to the Reception was extended to all MRCofS member organisations to send two representatives with partners to the function, in addition to which invitations were extended to members of the MRCofS Executive as well as representatives from each of the twelve Order of St John districts in Scotland. Also in recognition of his long and extensive involvement in Mountain Rescue, Mr MacDonald was hosted as a VIP guest.

Held in the Throne Room of the Palace Lord Wilson welcome everyone to the evening to which Jonathan Hart MRCofS Chair everyone to the evening to which invitations were extended to all MRCofS members and team management scenarios.

To book or for an informal chat through the course content, contact: Graham MacDonald egmc@btinternet.com

Level 2 Technical Rigging Course
Course date: Friday 16th, Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th September 2011 Location: Town Hall Aberfeldy, Perthshire Places available: 24 Course cost: £80.00 pp course cost only

Who can attend: Ideal for those who have attended the MRCofS level 1 course or equivalent. This course delivers best practice techniques for understanding;
- Advanced hauling techniques
  - Angle theory of tensioned lines
  - Suspended rope access systems

This course is mainly hands on and will assist those teams who have an operational capability for tensioned line work.
To book or for an informal chat through the course content, contact Stuart Johnston sj@climbmts.co.uk

Avalanche level 3
Course date: Friday evening 21st and Saturday 22nd January 2012.
Location: Lochaber MRT
Places available: 24
Course cost: £80.00 pp (does not include accommodation)
Who can attend: Experienced team members who wish to improve avalanche search skills and avalanche casualty care.
To book please contact Emma Pearce emma.pearce@outwardbound.org.uk

Avalanche Level 2
Course date: Friday evening 26th, Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th January 2012.
Location: Breamar MRT
Places available: 24
Course cost: £80.00 pp (does not include accommodation)
Who can attend: Experienced team members who wish to improve avalanche search skills and avalanche casualty care.
To book please contact Liz Belk liz.belk@glenmorelodge.org.uk

Places available: 140
Course cost: £120 pp full board package
Who can attend: Any team member however, we strongly suggest team management and team members with specific team roles and responsibilities attend.
The conference will be packed with lectures and hands on workshops covering a wide variety of topics specific to Scottish MR.
To book please contact Stuart Johnston sj@climbmts.co.uk

Team members need to be competent on Scottish grade 1 terrain.
To book please contact Stuart Johnston sj@climbmts.co.uk

Climbtms Group Aberfeldy
Scotland
PH11 2DT
Office: 01887 822 699
Mobile: 07748 840 851
e-mail: sj@climbmts.co.uk
www.climbmts.co.uk

The Helimed turns it back in disgust as it cowers from the downdraft of 177 after having been displaced from the Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, Helipad to allow its bigger brother to land and hand over a female casualty to the hospitals A&E department. The Helimed completing a hospital casualty transfer was hastily moved off the helipad when 177 somewhat unexpectedly arrived overhead with its casualty which it had recovered from a fall from the sea cliffs at Arbroath, turning a quiet Sunday afternoon into a mini air show as the two aircraft carried out all their various manoeuvres landing, taking off and swapping places in order to off load their casualties.
on April 10th I was signed off by the doctor as being fully recovered from the accident and on April 13th Scott and I headed off. As with any event where the purpose is to raise rescue is very comforting so I decided to raise some cash for the Scottish rescue teams.

To raise the money, my friend Scott and I decided to do something a bit crazy and respectively challenging so it would attract as many donations as possible. We planned to cycle from Edinburgh to Castle to the Tower of London (450 miles) in 5 Days. As neither of us were regular cyclists we had to begin the intensive training and strict dieting. This involved cutting back on the pies and beer and the occasional cycle into the hills around Edinburgh. The saddle sores after these cycles were no good thing of signs to come.

After spending 6 days in hospital the long road to recovery started and so did the plans to give a little bit back in return for the effort made to sort me out. As I'm a keen mountainer the presence of mountain

What? MRCofS Avalanche Level 2 Rescue Course

When? January 2011

Where? Lochaber MRT

A really consistent and successful format for the MRCofS level 2 avalanche rescue programme has developed and been re-aligned over the last four years with Friday night introductions, practical team skills all day Saturday and a large mock avalanche rescue scenario delivered on Sunday, up on Aonach Mor in soft, crisp, powder snow with cobalt blue skies and lots and lots of sunshine!!! Expectations were high for this years programme.....

The MRCofS level 2 avalanche rescue course was held over the weekend of 15th and 16th January 2011 and the programme was once again hosted by Lochaber MRT, held at Nevis range and attended by 26 participants from teams across Scotland.

The course content for the level 2 programme in 2011 had been revised and improved taking into account a lot of new avalanche rescue experience and lessons learned from the big Scottish avalanche of the last few years, the latest IKAR evidence and the most up to date research coming out of the States. The programme for this years course was no exception and the programme had been updated to include improved information on multi person shovelling techniques, avalanche site management and a revision on the protocols for casualty care at these infrequent but un-planned events. As part of the programme this years participants were also fortunate to get a presentation and demonstration from members of the Austrian MRT who were over delivering the new RECCO avalanche responder to Lochaber MRT.

LMRT has become the first team in the UK to have access to this piece of kit that adds the speedy location of RECCO transponders that are now frequently sewn into skiers’, boarders and climbers clothing. The availabil-
ty of RECCO kit to avalanche rescue teams is standard practice in all the ski areas throughout the rest of Europe but up until this year has been absent from Scotland. LMRT have been pro active in this subject given the increase in off piste skiing, ski touring and boarding in the area and can now offer an improved response should an avalanche occur in any of the main ski areas. The potential of the RECCO kit for use in Scotland was highlighted (presentations from Davy Gunn in 2008 and 2009) on the MRCofS avalanche level 2 courses in previous years and it’s been great to see the MRCofS National courses provide the stimulus for local teams to consider how to improve their avalanche rescue capability.

The RECCO presentation was provided on the Saturday night of the course and folks were all revved up for the big avalanche scenario planned for the next day. However once again the Lochaber weather proved that regardless of modern mountain manoeuvring kit and advances in search and rescue technology the rigours of the West Coast weather can put the best laid plans to rest, and so it was... as the new rescue team building creaked and groaned during the Saturday night lectures, the winds picked up to a very respectable 100 mph at 500m and a huge thaw on the back of the south westerly winds forced the organisers to cancel the final mock avalanche scenario on Aonach Mor. A hastily arranged alternative programme was put into place and we all rocked up at Aonach Mor the following morning hoping that the winds would ease but unfortunately things just got worse and worse. The programme was shortened and delivered at the base station and thanks to Nevis range, coffee and bacon rolls saved the morning! Sadly it was not to be and the main part of the weekend is the big sunday exercise and this years participants missed out the chance to put all their new skills into practice in one large and realistic scenario and that was very disappointing.

However a lot of key skills were covered throughout the weekend and participants left the course fully updated on all current avalanche rescue techniques and had an opportunity to get to grips with the new recco kit.

Hopefully the MRCofS and Scottish teams can build upon this relationship with the Austrian Mountain Rescue service and look to gain form one another’s experiences.

Looking forward to seeing folks on the 2012 course.....look early!

Emergency 2011 Scotland

The Emergency Services Show

Following on the very successful establishment of the Emergency Services show in England, first held in London, but subsequently at Stoneleigh near Coventry, the organisers of the event, the widely read Emergency Services Times, decided to host a similar event in Scotland to cater for the more northerly based emergency services in the UK.

Held at the SECC in Glasgow on the 5th and 6th of July, the exhibitor and response to event was such that the show had to be moved to one of the larger exhibition halls. In addition The Emergency Planning Society Resilience Symposium was arranged to run in conjunction with the show resulting in a prestigious two days of exhibitions, workshops and presenters for the emergency services.

Particularly notable at the event was the extensive array of equipment and vehicles on display both inside and out – the outside section being neatly placed between the exhibition hall and the Glasgow Police / Scottish Ambulance Helpaid.

The MRCofS was invited to exhibit at the ‘Blue Light Zone’ of the exhibition, and during the two days welcomed a steady stream of interested visitors to the stand, the presence and ‘exposure’ most valuable in confirming MRs place in the emergency services world.

Emma Panza (MRT Training Officer) searching the run out apron immediately below number 5 gully after a cornice collapse event.
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