STATISTICS REPORT
2022

Tom Adams & Andy Morgan
April 2023

Image © Ed Smith Photography (Photo of Assynt MRT)

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN
RESCUE

**Volunteering
to save lives**

PREFACE

This Annual Statistical Report is a supplement to the Scottish Mountain Rescue Review 2022.

For more information on Scottish Mountain Rescue and our member teams visit: **www.scottishmountainrescue.org**

This report includes data gathered from the 25 civilian member teams as well as three Police Scotland MRT's.

Scottish Mountain Rescue are proud to represent our member teams.

Compiled by Tom Adams (Oban MRT; **statistician@scottishmountainrescue. org**) and Andy Morgan (Scottish Cave Rescue Organisation; **statssupport@ scottishmountainrescue.org**).

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INTRODUCTION

Mountain Rescue in Scotland is coordinated by Police Scotland. Police Scotland receive the initial callout through the 999 system and, if appropriate, contact the local Mountain Rescue Team (MRT). Each MRT is an independent organisation who submit their reports to the Statistician of Scottish Mountain Rescue (SMR), the representative body for the majority of MRTs in Scotland.

There are **28** voluntary civilian Mountain Rescue Teams in Scotland and **3** Police Teams, of which **25** civilian teams and the three Police Teams are members of Scottish Mountain Rescue. This report is compiled from information received from the **25** civilian and **3** Police Scotland teams that are members of Scottish Mountain Rescue in 2022.These teams are listed to the right.

This annual report covers the calendar year from January 1st to December 31st 2022.

Important Note: This report does not include incidents from non-member teams, except where SMR teams have assisted these teams.

This complicates direct comparison of numbers with those from previous years. (Membership has been consistent since 2016 with one team rejoining in 2021)

Comparison of key figures with those from previous years are provided where this is considered helpful.

- Aberdeen MRT
- Arran MRT
- Arrochar MRT
- Assynt MRT
- Borders SAR 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
- Skye MRT
- Tayside MRT
- Torridon MRT
- Tweed Valley MRT
- Scottish Cave Rescue Organisation
- Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA) (Scotland)
- Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA) (Southern Scotland)
- Search and Rescue Aerial Association (SARAA-Scotland)
- Police Scotland (Grampian) MRT
- Police Scotland (Strathclyde) MRT
- Police Scotland (Tayside) MRT

MAP OF 2022 INCIDENTS

Overview map of incidents.
All incidents undertaken
by SMR teams.

Count

● Incident location

● Multi incident hotspot
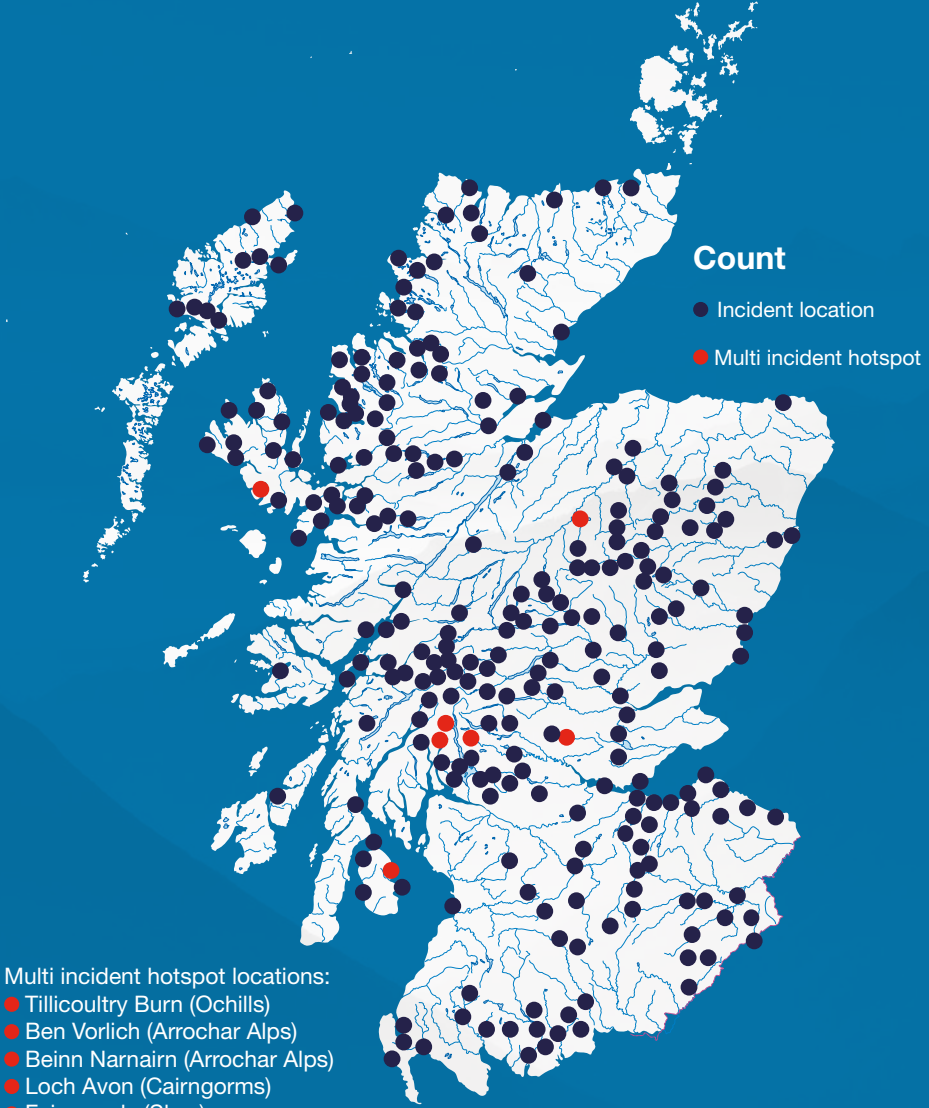
Multi incident hotspot locations:
● Tillicoultry Burn (Ochills)
● Ben Vorlich (Arrochar Alps)
● Beinn Narnairn (Arrochar Alps)
● Loch Avon (Cairngorms)
● Fairy pools (Skye)
● Ben Lomond (Loch Lomond)
● Goat Fell (Arran)

OVERVIEW:
INCIDENTS, CALL-OUTS AND HOURS

Number of incidents

The total number of independent incidents in 2022 was **636.**

Of these, **330 (52%)** were related to mountaineering (this includes hillwalking, scrambling, rock climbing, winter climbing, and MRT activity).

The total number of separate team activations or "call-outs" was **843**, or **906** including "continuations" (linked call-outs on different days).

This is an average of **2.5 per day**, including continuations. At least one team was called out on **281** days this year, and on the busiest day of Sunday 26TH June 2022 there were **15** activations of teams.

Hours

Mountain Rescue team members gave up **29,804** hours of their time during call-outs.

That's the equivalent of one person working 40 hour weeks every year for seven years and four months… Voluntarily!

People helped

During 2022, **740** people were assisted.

3 incidents involved the rescue of dogs, and **2** incidents the rescue of sheep.

There were **21** fatalities, **11** of which occurred in mountaineering incidents.

636
Total number of independent incidents.

330 $^{(52\%)}$
Incidents related to mountaineering.

843
Total number of team call-outs.

281
Days where at least one team was called out.

29,804
Hours of time given by volunteers.

740
People were assisted.

TRENDS OVER TIME

Trends over time

As noted in last year's statistics report, 2021 was the busiest year on record in terms of both callout count and hours spent by teams. While the headline figures for 2022 are slightly lower overall, 2022 saw the highest number of callouts of civilian teams on record, and the number of hours spent by civilian teams was only slightly lower than 2021.

These figures sit within an overall trend of increasing callout numbers and total number of hours spent over recent years.

Total number of hours spent by SMR **civilian** rescue teams.

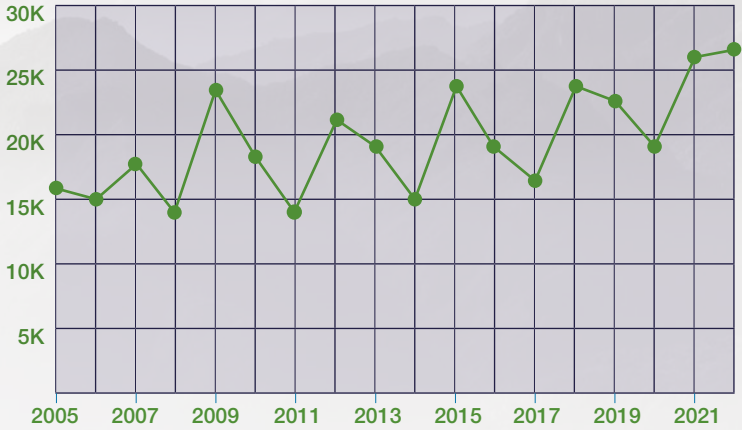| Year	Callouts	Hours
2005	372	15,399
2006	396	15,263
2007	463	17,487
2008	455	14,150
2009	548	22,483
2010	501	17,663
2011	504	14,272
2012	532	21,242
2013	540	19,361
2014	472	15,141
2015	575	23,396
2016	562	19,115
2017	466	16,439
2018	563	23,209
2019	534	22,191
2020	480	19,457
2021	698	25,653
2022	709	24,545

Call-outs (civilian teams)
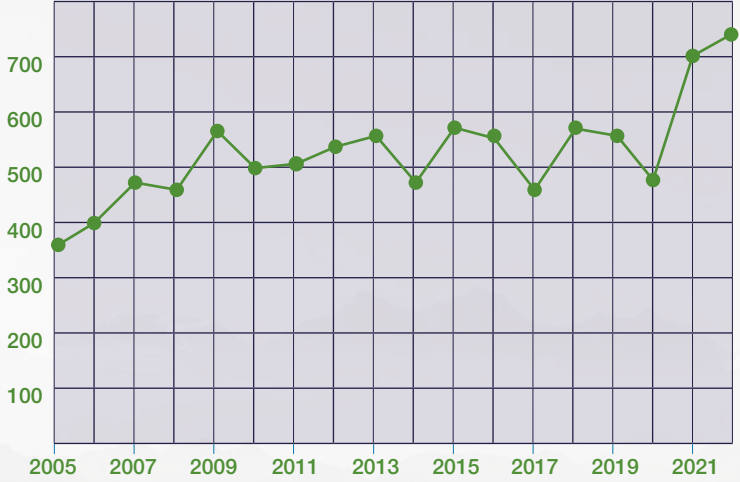
Hours (civilian teams)

DATA
TYPES OF INCIDENT

Mountain Rescue Teams are asked to respond to a variety of incident types. The breakdown by primary type is shown below.

	Count
Rescue	189
Search and Rescue	168
Search	113
Medical Emergency	54
Police Investigation	29
Body Recovery	15
False Alarm	13
Technical Rescue	9
Other	9
Animal Rescue	8
Civil resilience	6
Search (water)	5
Water Rescue	2
Not Recorded	16
	Total 636

636

Total number of independent incidents


Image © SCRO MRT
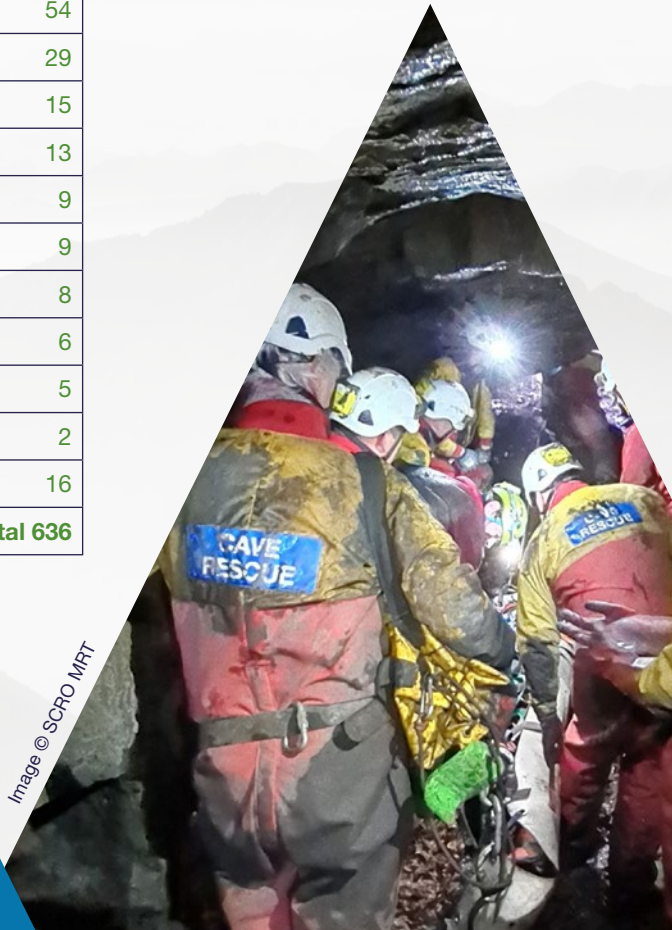
MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS

All incidents involving Scottish Mountain Rescue Teams are reported in two broad categories, Mountaineering and Non-Mountaineering.

Since 2010, this classification is based on the activity being undertaken. "Mountaineering" includes Climbing or Hillwalking in both Summer and Winter. It also includes personnel on Mountain Rescue missions.

In 2022 there were **330** "mountaineering" incidents, in which **429** people were assisted.

	Count	%
Hillwalking (Summer)	227	69
Hillwalking (Winter)	92	28
Rock Climbing	6	2
Scrambling	2	<1
Snow/Ice Climbing	3	<1
Total	**330**	**100**
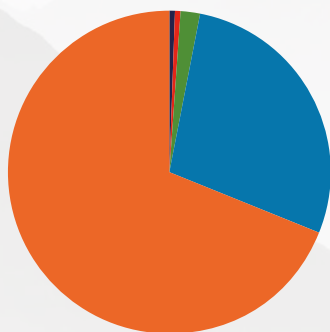
- Hillwalking (Summer) 69%
- Hillwalking (Winter) 28%
- Rock Climbing 2%
- Scrambling <1%
- Snow/Ice Climbing <1%

Cause and conditions

The factors leading to mountaineering incidents (as described by the casualty or witnesses, or determined by the rescue team) are listed in the table below. Incidents may have more than one contributing factor.

	Count
Slip/Trip	122
Lost	56
Navigation Error	43
Fall	38
Medical	31
Reported Missing	22
Overdue	21
Missing Kit	18
Other	14
Crag-fast	13
Benighted	10
Weather-bound	9
Tiredness	8
Technology Reliance	7
Separated	5
Experience	5
Blown Over	4
Fitness	3
Food	3
Avalanche (human triggered)	2
River Crossing	2
Kit Failure	1
Mental Health	1

Where available, the weather conditions recorded at the time of the incident are detailed below. Most incidents occurred during fine weather (note that each incident may have more than one type of weather recorded).

330

Total number of mountaineering incidents

	Count
Fine	140
Cloudy	59
Dark	56
Windy	56
Rain	46
Freezing	33
Snowing	14
Blizzard	6
Hot	6
Storm	5
Lightning	1
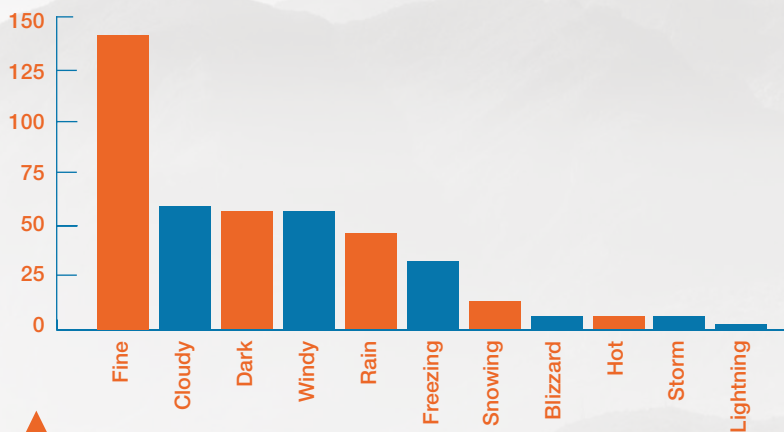
MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS

Where available, the terrain in the locality of the incident is detailed below. It can be seen that most incidents occurred near a path of some sort, often involving steep ground (note that each incident may have more than one terrain classification).

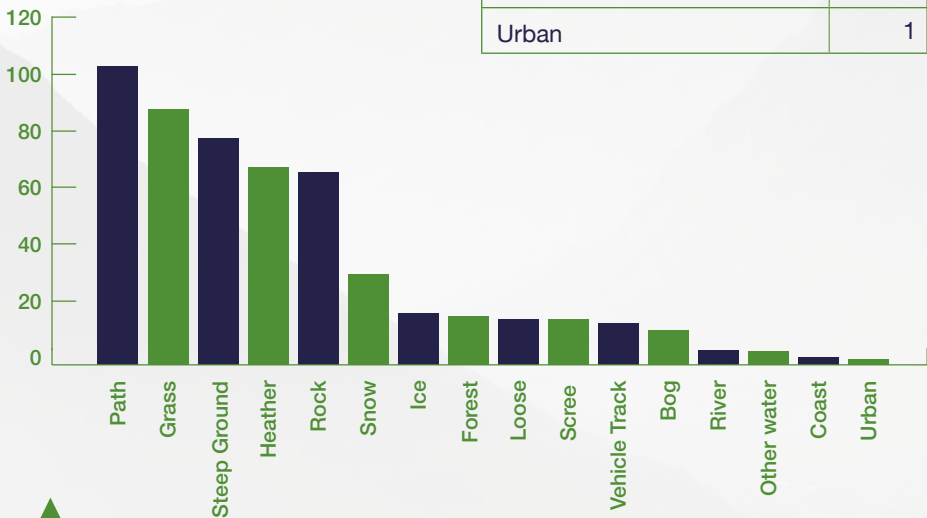|	Count
Path	111
Grass	95
Steep Ground	83
Heather	73
Rock	72
Snow	33
Ice	19
Forest	18
Loose	16
Scree	16
Vehicle Track	15
Bog	13
River	5
Other Water	4
Coast	3
Urban	1

Image © Arran MRT

Image © Tweed Valley MRT

INJURY TYPES

INJURY SITE

In 2022, **90 (21%)** of the people assisted had an injury recorded.

Casualties only have a single injury type recorded (though this may be "multiple"). The breakdown of injury types is given below.

	Count	%
Fracture	41	45
Sprains	15	17
Other	8	9
Laceration	7	8
Hypothermia	3	3
Illness	3	3
Heart	2	2
Multiple	2	2
Hypothermia	1	1
Internal	1	1
Total	**83**	**100%**

Casualties generally have a single (or no) injury site recorded.

	Count	%
Ankle	26	33
Lower Leg	19	24
Head	10	13
Knee	6	8
Wrist	4	5
Shoulder	3	4
Thigh	3	4
Chest	2	3
Abdomen	2	3
Back	2	3
Upper Arm	2	3
Pelvis	1	1
Total	**80**	**100%**

Due to rounding, percentage values in the table may not add up to 100%.

Image © SCRO
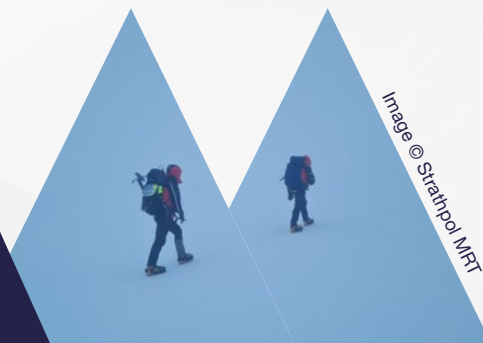
Image © Strathpol MRT

80 (89%)

Of people assisted had an injury recorded.

Head 13%

Shoulder 4%

Chest 3%

Upper Arm 3%

Back 3%

Abdomen 3%

Wrist 5%

Pelvis 1%

Thigh 4%

Knee 8%

Lower Leg 24%

Ankle 33%
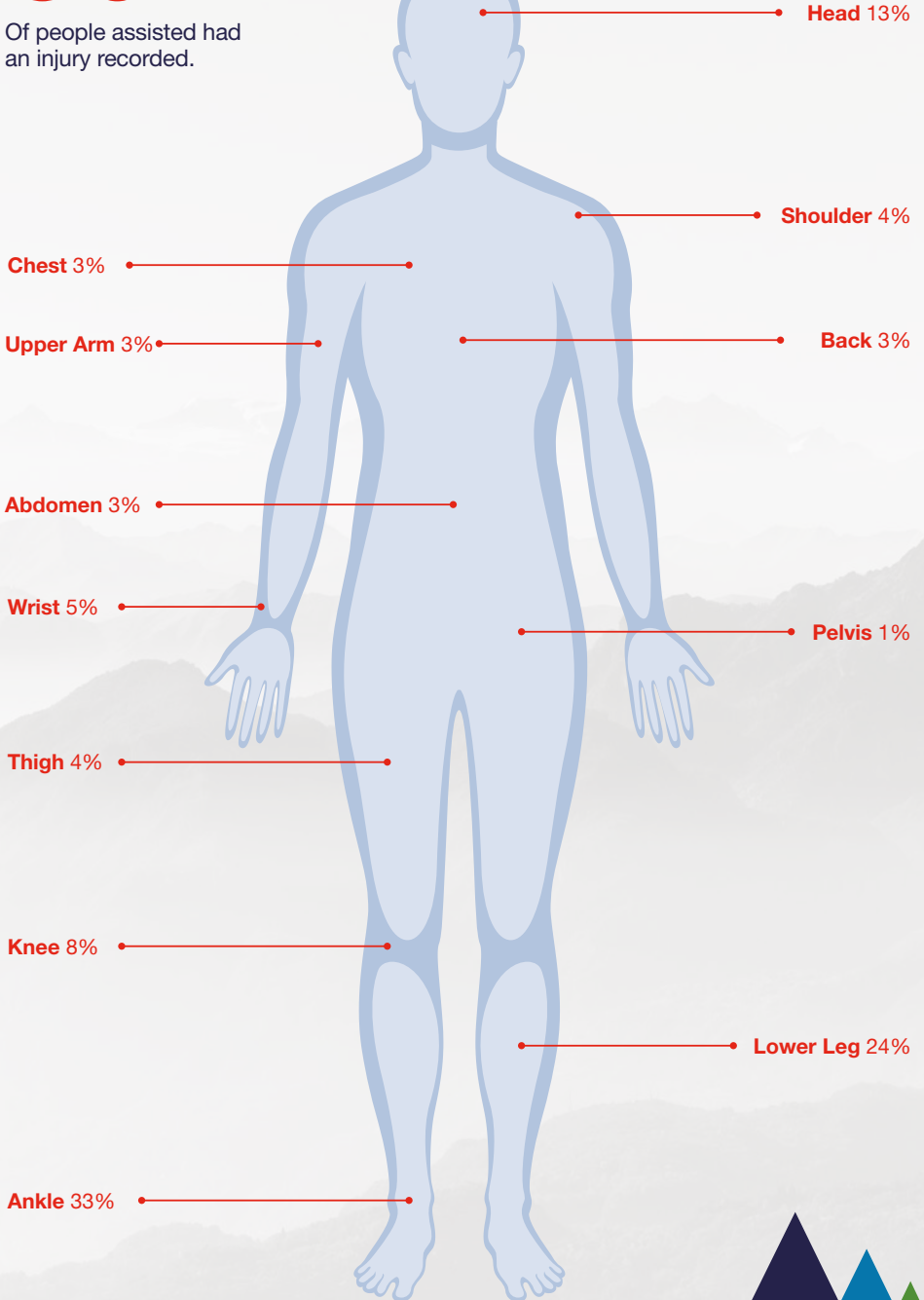
DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

Gender of people assisted.

Gender	Count
Male	202
Female	134
Unspecified	93

Nationality

Nationality was recorded for **178** of the assisted mountaineers. Mountaineers rescued had **8** different nationalities.

Country	Count
Great Britain	156
Denmark	7
France	7
Spain	3
United States	2
Belarus	1
Canada	1
Netherlands	1

British Nationality

The breakdown for British mountaineers (where the specific country they were from was recorded) is shown below.

Nation	Count
England	21
Scotland	112
Not specified	23

Age

Age was recorded for **207** mountaineers. The most frequently rescued age category was **26-35** years, although this may simply reflect that certain age groups go out into the hill more frequently than others.

| Age Range	Count	%
0-16	10	50
17-25	28	14
26-35	47	23
36-45	28	14
46-55	40	19
56-65	32	15
66-75	15	7
76+	7	3

Due to rounding, percentage values in the table may not add up to 100%.
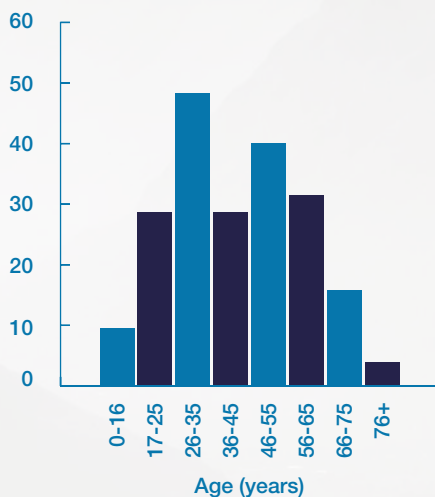
TIMING OF INCIDENTS

The busiest period for teams is generally during the summer months. Both mountaineering and non-mountaineering incidents (see later section) increase during the summer. The busiest day of the week for teams from mountaineering incidents tends to be a Saturday or Sunday.
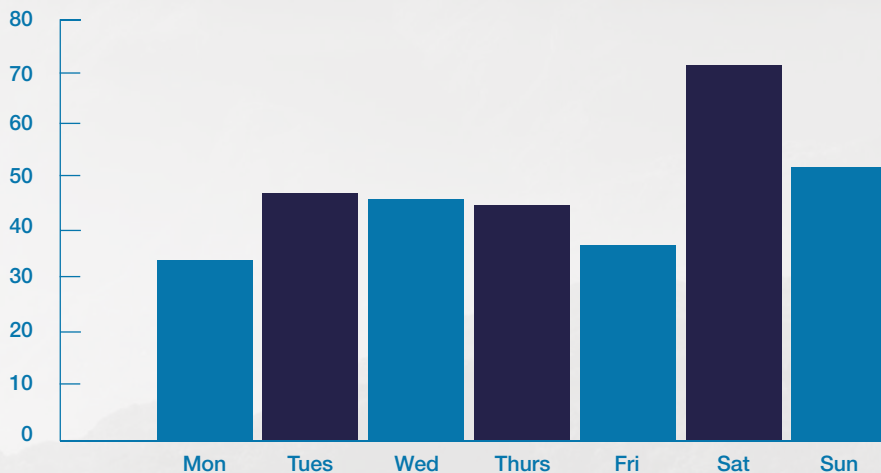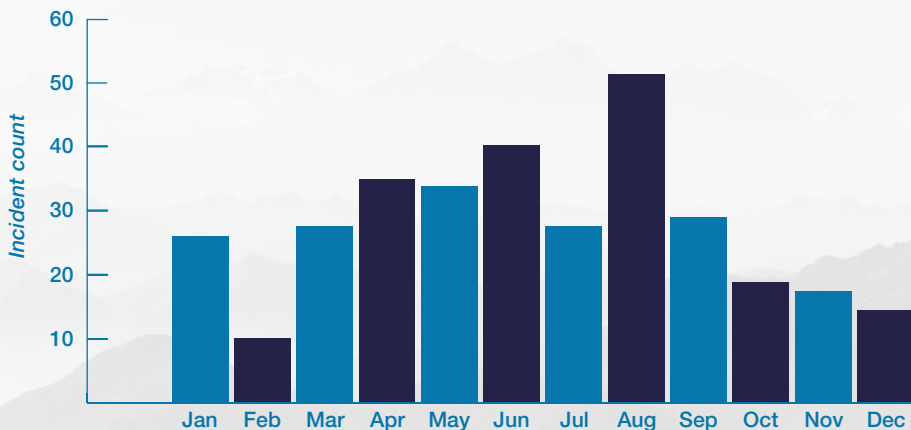
NON-MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS

Mountain Rescue Teams grew locally as a result of a need in their community. Over time, the needs of the community change, and with it the capabilities of the MRTs to respond to these needs. Throughout the period, teams continued to respond to a wide variety of calls for help and their activity is recorded in this section.

Teams were engaged in **306** incidents supporting the community. More than one activity can be recorded against an incident.

Activity

The activity or activities leading to these incidents was recorded in **242** cases.

	Count
Missing Person	81
Rural Walking	45
Mountain Biking	41
Mental Health Related	20
Running	12
Police Investigation	9
Civil Resilience	5
Motor Vehicle	5
Working	5
Cycling	4
Equestrian	4
Air Sport	3
Fishing	2
Swimming	2
Canyoning	1
Medevac	1
Snow Boarding	1
Duke or Edinburgh's Award Expedition	1

Causes

Factors leading to incidents are recorded by teams. Each incident may have several contributing factors. The most frequent specific cause of a non-mountaineering call-out was reported missing.

	Count
Reported Missing	72
Fall	55
Slip/Trip	38
Mental Health	35
Medical	18
Lost	15
Navigation Error	12
Weather-Bound	11
Overdue	7
False Alarm	6
Separated	6
Benighted	5
Crag-fast	4
Missing Kit	3
Kit Failure	1
Experience	1
Tiredness	1

Image © Hebrides MRT

TIMING

May was the busiest month for non-mountaineering incidents with **32** incidents.
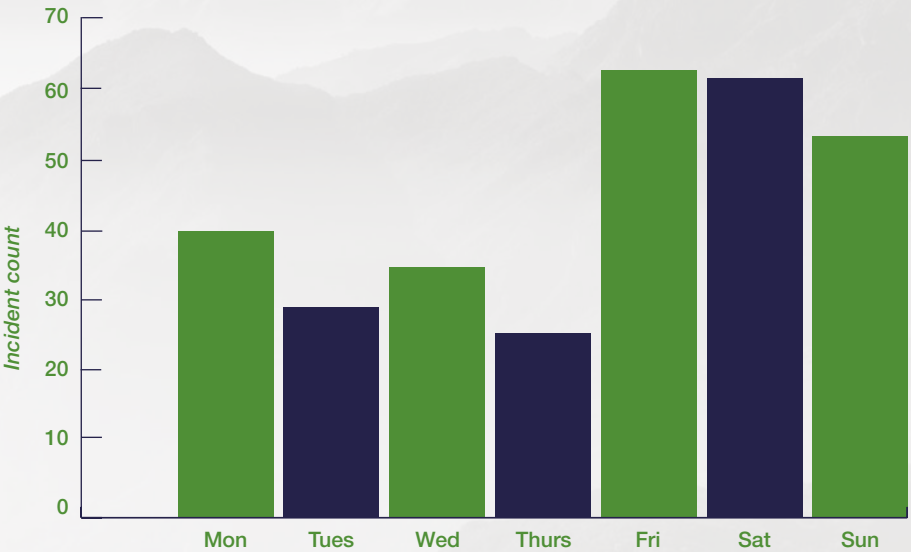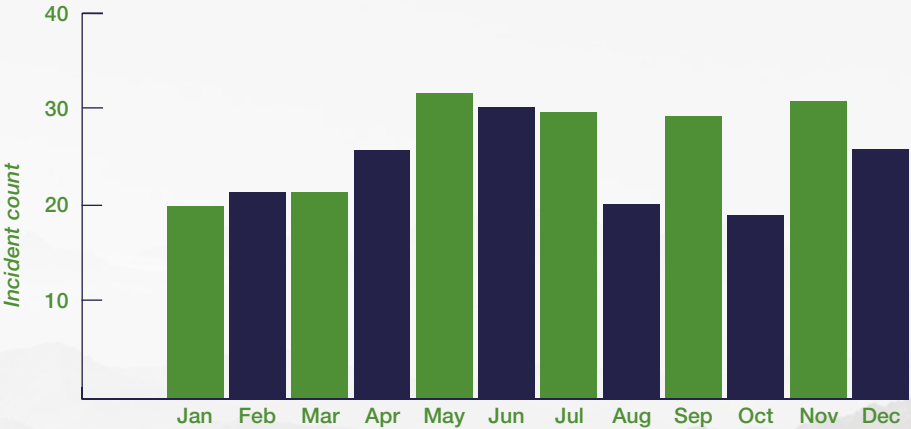
The busiest day of the week for teams for non-mountaineering incidents was **Friday** in 2022.

ALL INCIDENT TYPES

Joint working (all incident types)

Mountain Rescue Teams are called out by and work closely with Police Scotland to resolve every incident. In **7%** of incidents, teams worked closely with a number of other partner agencies (in addition to helicopters, which are covered in the next table).

	Count
Scottish Ambulance Service Special Operations Response Team	10
RAF MRT	7
Loch Lomond Rescue Boat	6
Royal National Lifeboat Association	5
Borders Water Rescue Team	3
Bomb Disposal	2
Nith Inshore Rescue	2
Park Ranger Service	2
Council	2
Police Search Teams (NOT Police MR)	1
Police Dive/Marine Unit	1
Army	1

Helicopter usage

MRTs work closely with helicopter services across the country.

Helicopters were recorded as attending **192** incidents. The number of activations of specific aircraft is detailed below (**202** in total; some incidents were attended by more than one aircraft).
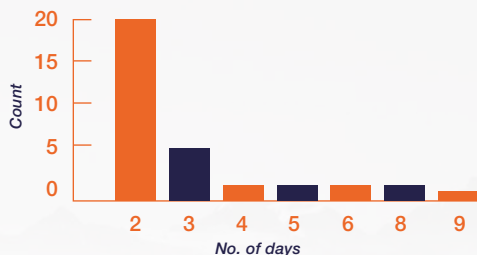
	Count
Rescue 151	63
Rescue 199	52
Helimed	30
Rescue 948	29
Police	24
Rescue 951	3
Rescue 952	1

Helicopters performed a number of roles in assisting teams. In many cases aircraft performed more than one role (while in some instances the helicopter was unable - or not required - to perform any of these roles).

	Count
Evacuation	108
Search	95
Rescue	67
Transport	56

Multi-day incidents

26 incidents lasted more than one day. These are summarised below.

Days	Count
2	18
3	4
4	1
5	1
8	1
9	1

Multiple teams working together

Number of Teams	Count
2	132
3	21
4	7
6	1

Police areas

Name	Count
Aberdeen	0
Aberdeenshire and Moray	61
Forth Valley	109
Tayside	71
Edinburgh	4
Glasgow	9
Lothians & Borders	70
Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	0
Argyll & West Dumbartonshire	58
Highlands & Islands	168
Fife	9
Lanarkshire	3
Ayrshire	23
Dumfries & Galloway	35

Image © Hebrides MRT

MULTI-DAY INCIDENTS

Call-outs by team

Multi day incidents

	Incidents	Hours
Aberdeen	15	1,264
Arran	16	581
Arrochar	22	629
Assynt	35	1,610
Braemar	34	855
Borders	25	1,485
Dundonnell	45	3,191
Galloway	18	701
Glenelg	2	120
HebSAR	16	531
Killin	44	1,786
Kintail	10	364
Lomond	47	1,594
Moffat	15	552
Oban	22	675
Ochils	40	1,377
Skye	59	2,233
Tayside	56	1,546
Torridon	17	318
Tweed Valley	55	1,815
Police Scotland (Grampian)	47	816
Police Scotland (Strathclyde)	68	2,938
Police Scotland (Tayside)	82	1,505
SARDA (Scotland)	51	877
SARDA (Southern)	48	358
Scottish Cave Rescue	2	7
SARAA-Scotland	15	79
Total	**906**	**29,804**

Total does not match values in table due to rounding.

Footnote

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Any other enquiry relating to Scottish Mountain Rescue should be directed to **info@scottishmountainrescue.org**

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN
RESCUE

**Volunteering
to save lives**