

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Annual Statistical Report
2018



Volunteering to Save Lives

Image: Ochil's MRT

This Annual Statistical Report is a supplement to the Scottish Mountain Rescue Review 2018.

For more information on Scottish Mountain Rescue and our member teams visit our site:

scottishmountainrescue.org



Mountain Rescue Teams together provide Scotland with a community of over 800 highly skilled and trained volunteers spread across the country. This statistical report shows the contribution these volunteers make to the safety of all who live in or visit Scotland.



—Damon Powell, Chairman SMR



Image: Ian Dawson

Scottish Mountain Rescue 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...

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

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

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



Image: Kintail MRT



Mountain Rescue Teams throughout the country are on standby 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They respond to a wide variety of call outs from minor incidents to life-threatening emergencies.



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.

To give a flavour of some incidents, a selection of comments from the Team incident reports are below:



Continuation of call out regarding overdue walkers, plus their dog. No firm idea of where they might be... team members deployed to search hills. RAF team assisting with four Search and Rescue Dogs Association (SARDA) members and their dogs plus helicopter providing transport and searching.



Group of 28 persons from outdoor centre instructors and children cut off by flash flood whilst canyoning. Police SAR advisor contacted who requested attendance of team. Coastguard also attended and fire service. Group managed to find a suitable path to walk along to safely exit the gorge.



Severe weather incident... The team managed 48 different tasks over the five days. Tasks included medical support; moving key staff; working with district nurses; working with care workers; delivering key prescriptions; delivering key medical supplies and other provisions; assisting with stranded motorists... Over the five days the team accumulated 616 person hours and 1496 miles of travel.



Two persons lost in poor visibility ... One was cold and wet and becoming unable to walk. SARLOC gave grid and Casualties were given a bearing to walk but were making very slow progress. Team deployed and they were located and assisted off hill.



SARLOC is a system that assists locate people using their smart phones.





Mountain Rescue in Scotland is coordinated by Police Scotland. Police Scotland receive the initial call-out through the 999 system and who if appropriate, contact the local Mountain Rescue Team (MRT).

Each MRT is an autonomous 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, of which 24 are member of Scottish Mountain Rescue. This report for 2018 is compiled from information received from the 24 civilian and 3 Police Scotland teams that are members of Scottish Mountain Rescue.

This annual report covers the calendar year from January 1st to December 31st 2018.

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



Note:

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

Due to this, direct comparisons can only be drawn against values produced since the 2016 SMR report (since previous reports included teams which are now not members of SMR). Where available, figures from previous years follow the 2018 numbers for comparison.



OVERVIEW: INCIDENTS, CALL-OUTS AND HOURS:



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

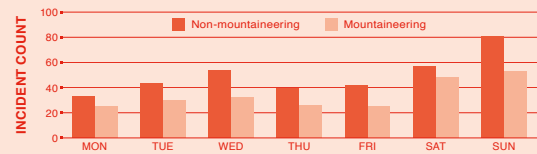
The total number of separate team call-outs was

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.



TYPE OF INCIDENT:

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

TYPE AND DESCRIPTION	NO. INCIDENTS		
	2018	2017	2016
Rescue	217	153	158
Search	116	78	104
Search and Rescue	114	106	108
Medical Emergency	46	17	<i>Not Known</i>
False alarm	21	14	10
Civil resilience	16	2	4
Police investigation	16	10	14
Body recovery	13	13	9
Animal Rescue	12	8	6
Other	9	4	7
Technical Rescue	5	6	7
Search (water)	2	6	6
Water Rescue	1	3	3
Advice	0	1	0
Not recorded	0	2	0
TOTAL	588	423	436



Special note: “The Beast from the East”

Early 2018 saw the occurrence of an unusual meteorological event, which at the time was referred to as “The Beast from the East”. A period of cold temperatures and high snowfall arrived from the east, leading to a range of requests for assistance from local authorities. Several teams were involved in these efforts over the period from 28th February to 4th March.

Over this period, teams logged 34 call-outs associated directly with the weather conditions (though some activations of the teams involved many separate taskings). In these call-outs, 264 people are recorded as being assisted (likely to be an underestimate). Teams performed a wide range of tasks to help local people and authorities, including medical support, transporting key staff, ambulance duties, rescuing stranded motorists and homeowners.

These call-outs and people assisted are included in the summary numbers for the year elsewhere in the report.



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.

MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS



239 "mountaineering" incidents, in which **289** people were assisted

Mountaineering incidents by activity:

ACTIVITY	HILLWALKING (SUMMER)	HILLWALKING (WINTER)	ROCK CLIMBING	SCRAMBLING	SNOW/ICE CLIMBING	MRT ACTIVITY
2018 NO.	151	75	6	2	5	0
2018 %	63%	31%	3%	1%	2%	0%
2017 NO.	158	47	5	4	1	1
2017 %	73%	21%	2%	2%	0.5%	0.5%



Hillwalking Summer 63% Hillwalking Winter 31% Rock Climbing 3% Snow/Ice Climbing 2% Scrambling 1%



289 mountaineers were assisted

PERIOD	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	UNSPECIFIED
2018	289	164	98	27
2017	342	159	138	45
2016	395	205	124	66



MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS CONTINUED

Primary Cause of mountaineering incidents:

CAUSE	NO.	CAUSE	NO.
Slip/Trip	106	Technology reliance	6
Nav Error	43	Exhaustion	6
Lost	38	Separated	5
Fall	27	Blown over	1
Missing equipment	22	Lightning	1
Overdue	21	Rockfall	1
Medical	18	Walk over cornice	1
Cragfast*	15	Food	1
Reported missing	12		
Weatherbound**	10		
Benighted	8		

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

As in previous years, the simple slip or trip is the most common cause of requiring assistance.

The combination of navigational error or being lost are also a very common cause of requiring assistance.

Injury Types In 2018, 139 (48%) of the casualties rescued had an injury

INJURY TYPE	2018 %	2017 %
Fracture	45%	50%
Sprains	17%	13%
Fatal	9%	3%
Laceration	9%	6%
Other	8%	0%
Bruising	4%	1%
Heart	4%	2%
Internal	1%	1%
Asthma	1%	0%
Hyperthermia	1%	0%
Hypothermia	1%	3%
Illness	1%	6%
Multiple	1%	2%
Seizure	1%	2%

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



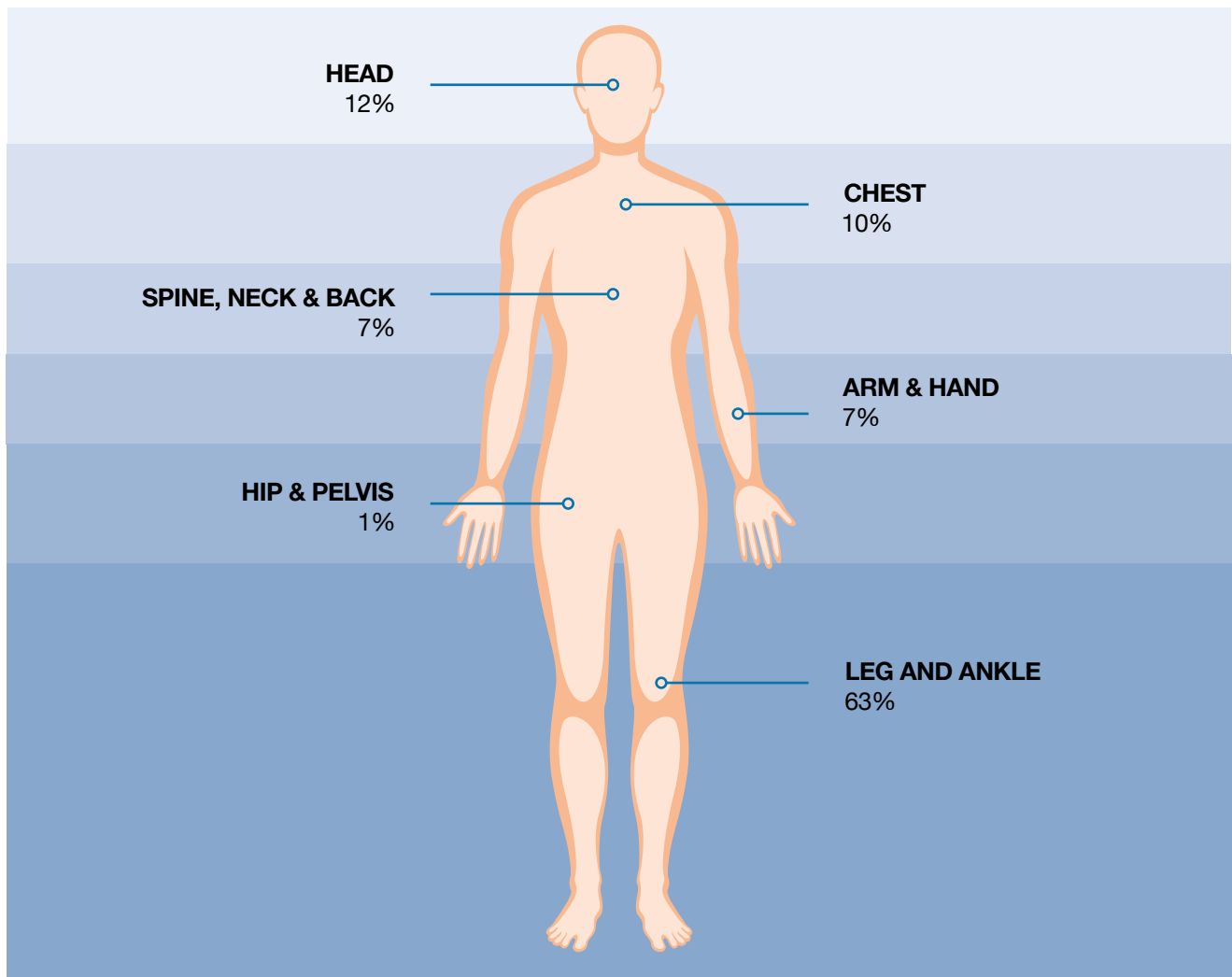
TERMINOLOGY

***Cragfast**: when someone is stuck on a crag or other steep ground and unable to go up or down themselves.

****Weatherbound**: when weather conditions are bad enough that a person is unable to move.

INCIDENTS CONTINUED

INJURY SITE:



LOCATION	NO.	LOCATION	NO.
Ankle	46	Wrist	3
Lower leg	17	Neck	2
Head	16	Elbow	2
Chest	13	Abdomen	1
Knee	9	Upper arm	1
Thigh	6	Lower arm	1
Shoulder	4	Hand	1
Other leg	4	Other arm	1
Spinal	3		

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

People may have more than one injury. Trauma to the lower leg continues to be the most common site of injury.



DEMOGRAPHICS OF MOUNTAINEERS

Nationality was recorded for **170** mountaineers

NATIONALITY	NO.	NATIONALITY	NO.
Great Britain	137	Poland	2
France	9	Austria	1
Germany	8	Netherlands	1
USA	8	Switzerland	1
Australia	3		

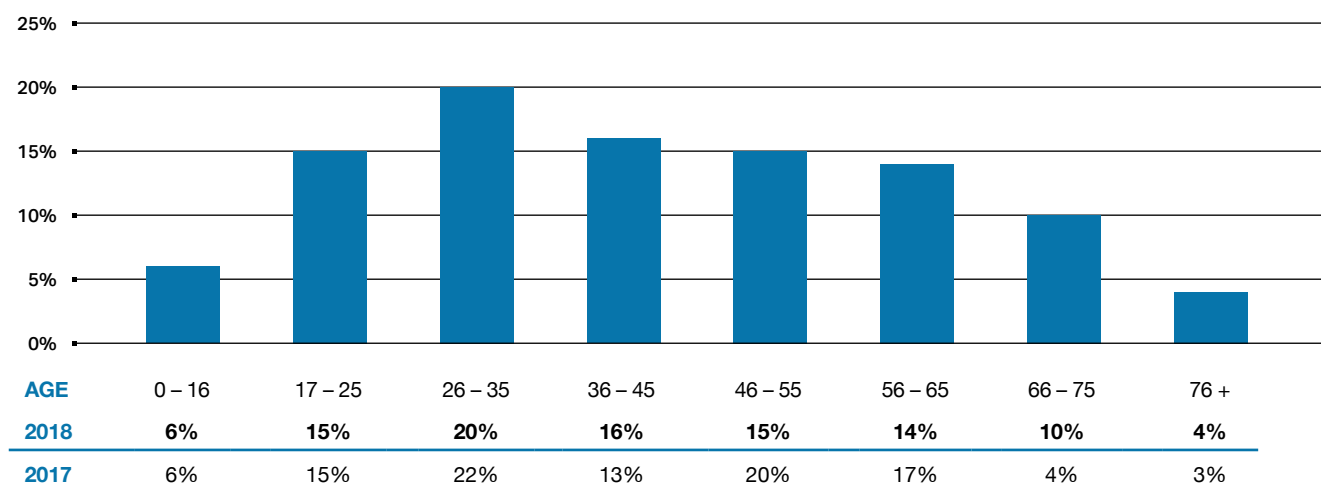
The breakdown for British mountaineers (where the specific country they were from was recorded) is shown below.

COUNTRY	FREQ
Scotland	100
England	26

In 2017, 12 nations were represented compared to 9 in 2018.

AGE RANGE

Ages were recorded for **218** mountaineers involved in incidents





NON-MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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.

349 incidents supporting the community

Incidents by activity :

The activity leading to these incidents was recorded in 178 cases.

The most common activity leading to a callout in 2018 was Rural walking.

ACTIVITY	2018 NO.	2017 NO.	ACTIVITY	2018 NO.	2017 NO.
Rural walking	49	53	4x4/ATV	3	0
Missing Person	41	32	Civil resilience	3	1
Cycling	25	24	Fishing	3	3
Self harm	9	10	Equestrian	2	3
Police investigation	8	0	Skiing	2	0
Motor vehicle	6	0	Air sport	1	1
Canyoning	5	4	Canoe/Kayak/Raft	1	0
Medevac	4	0			
Running	4	9			
Swimming	4	2			
Working	4	9			
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	4	3			

Causes :

Factors leading to incidents are recorded by teams. Each incident may have several contributing factors. As in previous years, the most frequent specific cause of a non-mountaineering call-out was slip/trip.

CAUSES	NO.	CAUSES	NO.
Slip/trip	108	Exhaustion	8
Reported missing	78	Benighted	6
Navigation error	44	Self-harm	4
Lost	39	Separated	4
Fall	30	River crossing	3
Missing kit	23	Technology reliance	2
Medical	18	Kit failure	1
Weatherbound	17	Food	1
Overdue	13		
Cragfast	12		

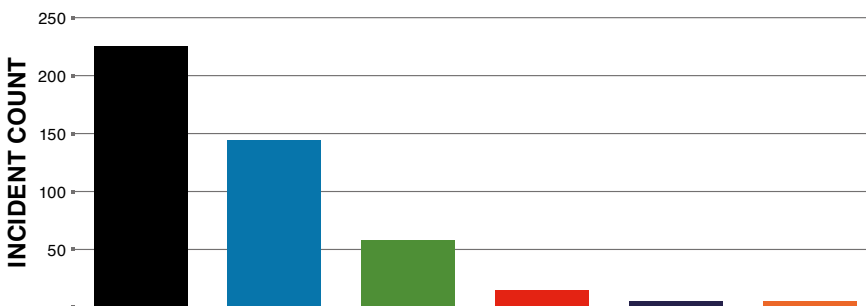


JOINT WORKING – ALL INCIDENT TYPES

Mountain Rescue Teams are called out by and work closely with Police Scotland to resolve every incident. In 38% of incidents, teams worked closely with a number of other partner agencies.

AGENCY	NO.
Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS)	143
HM Coastguard	57
Northumberland MR service	5
Royal National Lifeboat Institution	5
Scottish Charity Air Ambulance	3
Loch Lomond Rescue Boat	2
Police Search Teams (NOT Police MR)	2
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	1
SAS Special Operations Response Team	1
Border Search And Rescue Unit	1
Penrith MRT	1
Police Dive / Marine Unit	1
Recovery garage	1
Medic One	1

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



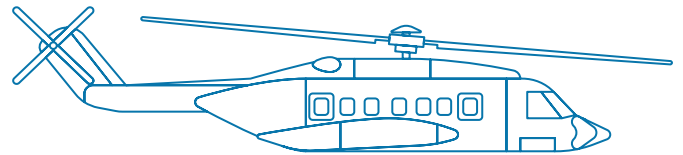
WORKING WITH HELICOPTERS

MRTs work closely with helicopter services across the country.

FLIGHT	NO.
Rescue 199	119
Rescue 951	97
Rescue 948	37
Helimed	15
Police	13
Other	9
Rescue 999	7
Rescue 177	2
Rescue 190	2

Flights 999, 951 and 948 use a Sikorsky S92 Aircraft.

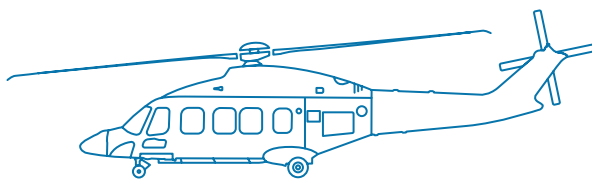
Flight 199 replaced Fit 999 in June 2017 and use Augusta Westland AW189 aircraft.



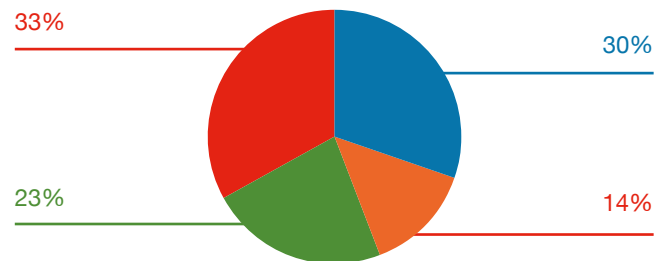
Helicopters were used in

301

incidents.



How helicopters were used:



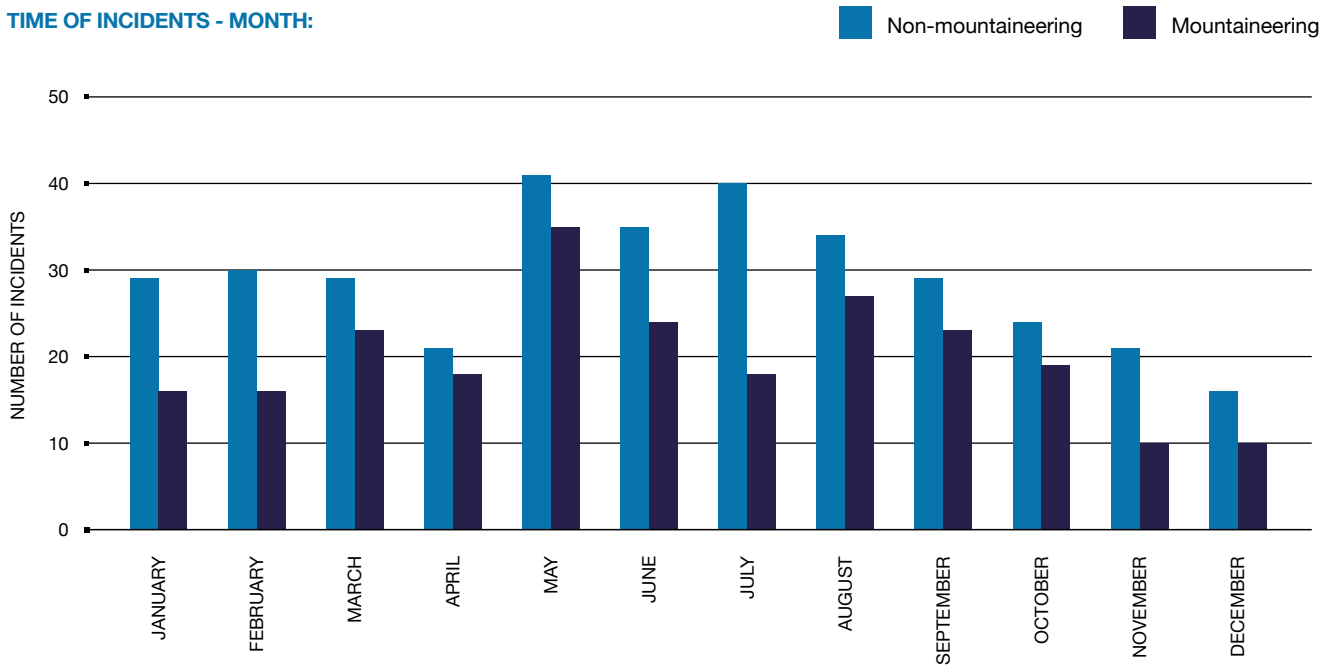
USE	NO.
Search	93
Transport	42
Rescue	70
Evacuation	100

Many aircraft had more than one role.



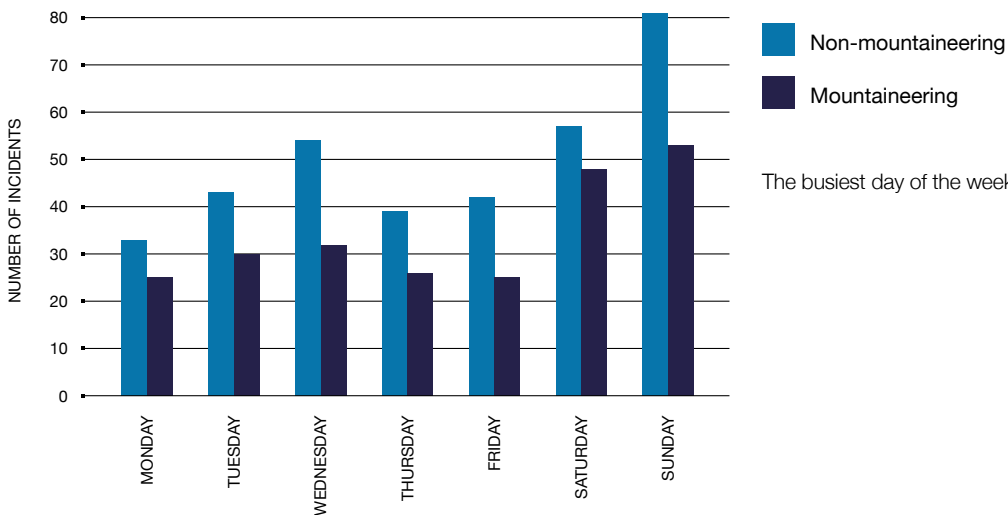
PATTERNS OF INCIDENTS

TIME OF INCIDENTS - 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.

TIME OF INCIDENTS - DAY OF WEEK



The busiest day of the week for teams tends to be a Saturday.

DAY

DAY	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
Non-mountaineering	33	43	54	39	42	57	81
Mountaineering	25	30	32	26	25	48	53



CALL-OUTS BY TEAM

Combined for all SMR Teams

Note: Team call-outs. In some areas, there is a joint response from two Teams to an incident or the incident may require the support of neighbouring teams. The number of call-outs is therefore greater than the incident figure.

AREA	2018		2017		2016	
	CALL-OUTS	HOURS	CALL-OUTS	HOURS	CALL-OUTS	HOURS
Aberdeen	16	990.5	8	531	20	828.5
Arran	24	849.4	32	2046.2	22	716.8
Arrochar	26	1137.1	16	429.6	24	991.3
Assynt	13	1095	11	132	9	198
Braemar	24	1159	25	645.5	51	1592
Borders	19	1019.4	20	677.9	24	1090.5
Dundonnell	33	1284.5	30	1138.5	30	1387.5
Galloway	22	773.6	14	722.4	14	433
Glenelg	3	107	1	26	4	80.5
Glenmore Lodge	3	47.5	7	70	7	74
Hebrides	17	2973	20	535.8	19	715
Killin	34	2452	42	2167.3	35	1505.5
Kintail	6	266.5	12	296	10	393.5
Lomond	38	1512.1	36	1350.8	24	1243.7
Moffat	35	2013	11	520	13	748
Oban	15	383.7	14	684.8	23	1225.7
Ochils	30	1331.7	18	701.2	19	557.5
Skye	49	1372.7	43	1425	49	1947.5
Torridon	27	1635	12	326.5	22	522
Tweed Valley	61	2151	32	1275.5	32	1519
SARDA (Scotland)	50	830.6	36	362.4	63	962.1
SARDA (Southern)	10	62.5	26	374.5	46	372.5
Scottish Cave Rescue	1	3	0	0	2	11
SARAA-Scotland	1	4	0	0	0	0
Total	557	25253.8	466	16438	562	19115

Police Scotland Mountain Rescue Teams

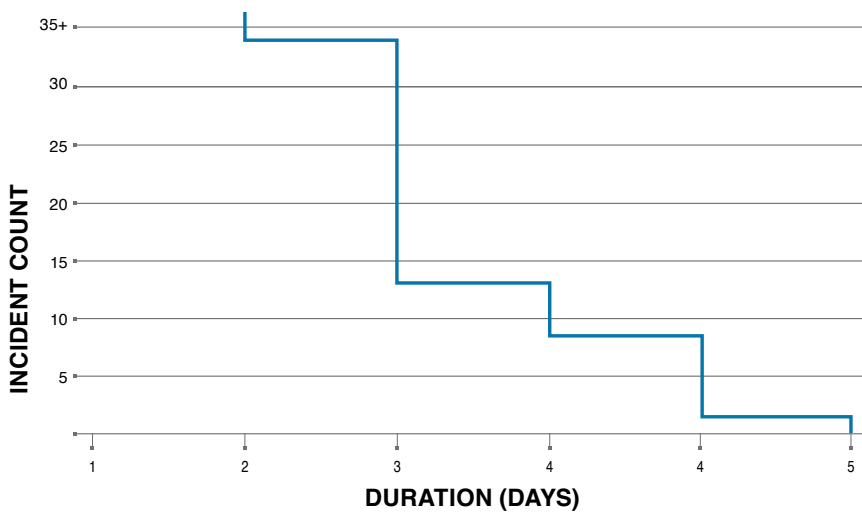
TEAM	2018		2017		2016	
	CALL-OUTS	HOURS	CALL-OUTS	HOURS	CALL-OUTS	HOURS
Police Scotland (Grampian)	26	525	27	381	51	1183.2
Police Scotland (Strathclyde)	123	2102.5	93	2369	75	1534
Police Scotland (Tayside)	54	1009.9	56	887.5	45	865.5
Total	203	3637.4	176	3638	171	3582



MULTI DAY AND MULTI TEAM INCIDENTS

57 incidents lasted more than one day.

Extended incidents:



	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	5 DAYS	5 DAYS
Incidents	531	34	13	8	2

Multiple Teams working together:

	1 TEAM	2 TEAMS	3 TEAMS	4 TEAMS	6 TEAMS	8 TEAMS
Incidents	370	172	39	4	2	1

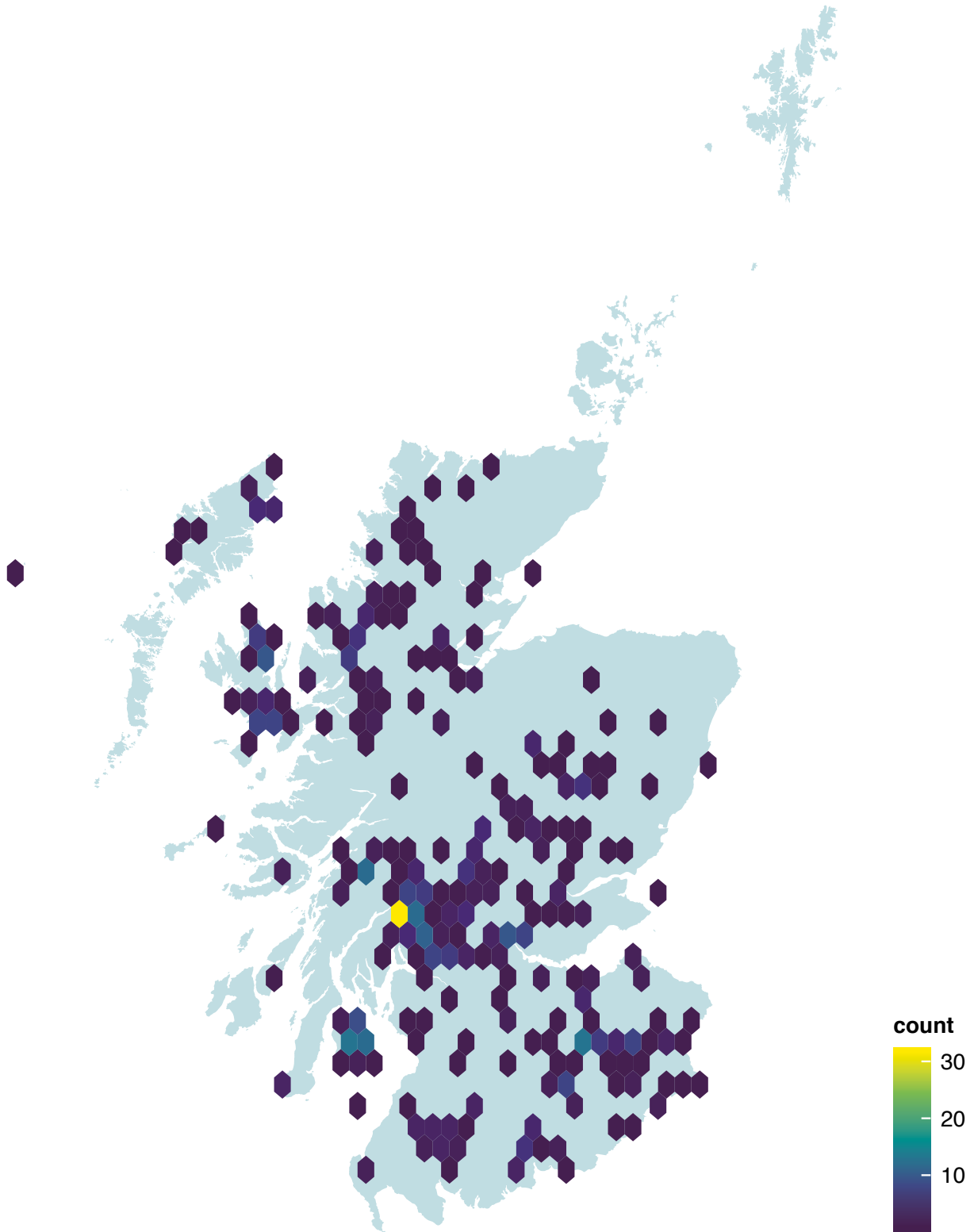


LOCATION OF INCIDENTS WITHIN POLICE SCOTLAND DIVISIONS

POLICE AREAS	YEAR 2018	YEAR 2017
A - Aberdeen	0	1
B - Aberdeenshire and Moray	34	28
C - Forth Valley	91	87
D - Tayside	51	45
E - Edinburgh	3	1
G - Glasgow	3	3
J - Lothians & Borders	70	46
K - Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	0	3
L - Argyll & West Dumbartonshire	88	34
N - Highlands & Islands**	131	128
P - Fife	1	2
Q - Lanarkshire	5	2
U - Ayrshire	58	19
V - Dumfries & Galloway	53	24



MAP OF INCIDENTS



Overview map of incidents. Incidents attended only by non-SMR teams (Cairngorm, Glencoe, Lochaber, Tayside) are not shown.



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All enquires about the content of this report or any other matter associated with Incident Reporting should be directed to Police Scotland on whose behalf the MR statistical data is held.

Any other enquiry relating to Scottish Mountain Rescue should be directed to the General Manager at info@scottishmountainrescue.org.



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

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.



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Scottish Mountain Rescue

Glenmore Lodge
Glenmore
Aviemore
Inverness-shire
PH22 1QZ

info@scottishmountainrescue.org

01479 861 370

scottishmountainrescue.org

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