



Scottish Mountain Rescue

Glenmore, Aviemore, Inverness-shire PH22 1QU

'Volunteering to save lives'



Annual Statistics Report 2013



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Introduction

For the 2013 incident statistics, the Scottish Mountain Rescue statistician has tracked down, received and processed the data from the Scottish Mountain Rescue Teams, and produced this report. The annual report covers the calendar year from January 1st to December 31st.

The information within this report should be taken as a summary of the operational response activity throughout 2013 of the volunteer and professional teams throughout the country.



Summary

- 1) There were a total of 586 incidents in 2013 during which the volunteer Mountain Rescue Teams and SARDA were called out 744 times and contributed 28100 hours of their time.
- 2) A total of 721 people were assisted, of which 232 were injured or unwell.
- 3) Mountaineering incidents accounted for 59% of the total number of incidents. Mountaineering incidents are those involving hillwalkers, climbers and scramblers
- 4) The percentage of non-mountaineering incidents was 41%. These include snow and water sports, mountain biking and missing person searches.
- 5) The greatest number of call outs occurred within the Highlands and Islands division of Police Scotland.
- 6) Summer Hillwalking remains as the most frequent activity that casualties are engaged in.
- 7) A greater number of avalanche incidents occurred. This resulted in 8 fatalities, more than previous years.
- 8) The greatest number of injured casualties was caused by slips and trips .
- 9) The most common injury site was to the leg. This has been a consistent pattern over the years.

Overall Statistics for Scotland

The total number of incidents for 2013 was an increase on the published figures for 2012.

The longer term pattern seems to indicate a slowing down of the previous rise.

Table 1: Number of incidents

Year	Mountaineering	Non-Mountaineering	Total
2013	347	239	586
2012	381	162	543
2011	413	151	573
2010	340	194	534
2009	402	172	574
2008	387	188	575
2007	333	145	478
2006	315	119	434
2005	321	137	458
2004	308	90	398
2003	289	101	390
2002	258	81	339
2001	347	65	412

Persons assisted

“Volunteering to save lives”

During the year 2013, 721 people were assisted during an incident. This is almost identical to the numbers assisted in the previous 12 month period.

Table 2: Persons assisted

Year	Male	Female	Total
2013	548	173	721
2012			720
2011			684



Mountaineering and Non-Mountaineering Incidents

All incidents in which Scottish Mountain Rescue Teams are involved are reported into two broad categories; mountaineering and non-mountaineering.

Mountaineering incidents consist of those where the activity the person was involved in was hillwalking or climbing.

Table 3: Mountaineering incidents

Year	Hillwalking -Summer (%)	Hill walking Winter	Rock climbing	Snow/Ice climbing	Scrambling	Mtn Rescue	Totals
2013	212 (61%)	88	13	28	5	1	347
2012	246 (64%)	105	13	15	2	0	381
2011	242 (68%)	61	13	33	4	2	355

The table shows the number of incidents in each of the mountaineering categories. Summer Hillwalking incidents continue to be prevalent amongst the mountaineering activities, although the percentage has reduced over the last three years.

Winter incidents have reduced from a rise in 2012, although not to their 2011 levels.

Non-mountaineering incidents.

Incidents in this broad category relate to the activity undertaken and not the terrain, season or weather. These type of incidents may require the full resources of the volunteer and professional teams to resolve.

Table 4: Non- mountaineering incidents

	2013	2012
Airports	3	1
Animal rescue	4	-
Body recovery	6	10
Canoe/Kayak/Raft	1	8
Canyoning	3	-
Civil resilience	12	3
Cycling	15	16
Fishing	1	-
Medevac	1	-
Military exercise	2	-
Missing person	76	41
Motor vehicle	3	-
Police investigation	1	-
Running	8	9
Rural walking	37	6
Self harm	3	37
Skiing	6	3
Working	6	9
Other	6	39
Not recorded	45	
Total	239	

Missing persons continue to dominate within the non-mountaineering category. For 2013 there has been a large increase in the number of local and rural walking incidents.

Note should also be made of the increase in civil resilience callouts for this year , mainly due to the extraordinary snow events which took place in the South west of the Country.



Information on Casualties

Table 2 above shows that there were 721 persons assisted during the year.

Of these, 232 were recorded as having being injured or becoming unwell. The remainder were uninjured people who were assisted in some way.

There were also 55 fatalities occurring during the year. Of these, 24 were mountaineering related, (25 in 2012) with 31 non-mountaineering (37).

There were 8 avalanche fatalities.

It should be noted that only the most severe injury is reported.

Table 5 :Injury and Illness-

Illness or Injury	Mountaineering	Non-Mountaineering	Totals
Drowning		2	2
Asphyxia	1		1
Fracture, sprain, dislocation	63	15	78
Heart	5	1	6
Heat illness	2	1	3
Hypothermia	11	6	17
Internal Injury	3		3
Cuts/Bruising	15		15
Multiple injuries	9	1	10
Illness ,CVA, seizure, Asthma	6	2	8
Other	30	4	34
Fatality	24	31	55

Table 6 :Location of injury

	Mountaineering	Non-Mountaineering	Totals
Head	17	4	21
Arm/shoulder	13	5	18
Back	3	1	4
Chest	5		5
Cardiac	3	2	5
Pelvis/Hip	4	1	5
Internal/Abdomen	2		2
Thigh	3	2	5
Knee	13		13
Lower leg/Ankle/Foot	59	17	76



As in previous years, the majority of injuries were fractures, sprains and dislocations to the lower leg, ankle and foot.

There appears to be a reduction in the number of multiply injured casualties from the previous year (21).

Hypothermia has increased slightly in frequency, up from 13 in Year 2012



Method of Evacuation

Once located and treated, the casualty will be assisted to a place of safety. The method of evacuation is dependant on the needs of the casualty at the time. Where recorded, the means of evacuation is shown below .

Table 7: Method of evacuation

Method	Number
Self rescue	23
Carry off by stretcher	61
Walked off by Team(s)	92
Helicopter	150
No evacuation	31
Talk off with advice from Team	9
Other	15
Boat	1
Hauled to top	1
Vehicle	8
Own transport	1
ATV	2
Not recorded	192

The majority of incidents involve one casualty. However, on occasion they may be a greater number requiring assistance.

Table 8: Multiple casualty incidents

No. Persons assisted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No of incidents	387	84	20	9	3	4	2	1	1

Age Profiles

Table 9 :Age of persons assisted

Age range	Number recorded	% of Total (2012 in brackets)
0-16	23	8 (10)
17-25	41	14 (15)
26-35	46	16 (16)
36-45	39	13 (14)
46-55	58	20 (20)
56-65	46	16 (13)
66-75	38	13 (9)
75 or over	9	3 (2)
Recorded	296	

Age was only recorded in 296 reports.

It is often assumed that it is the student age population that is most often rescued. This would be predominantly in the age range 17-25.

As can be seen, this does not appear to be the case from the figures.



Reasons for Mountain Rescue Incidents.

It is often difficult to assign a cause which leads to the calling out of a Mountain Rescue Team. If a walker slips on a mountain path, the simple cause is that they slipped. If however, a mountaineer falls a distance on broken terrain, the cause may be a slip, but may be contributed to by a navigation error, darkness or other factors.

In their reports, MRT's identify the main causes where it is known, however there are other factors that may not be identified or recorded.

Table 10: Factors contributing to Mountain Rescue callouts

Factor	No.	%	2012 %
Slip/ trip	99	23.4	16.8
Lost or Navigation error	81	19.1	20.6
Reported missing	54	12.8	18.1
Fall	50	11.8	10.5
Overdue	41	9.7	11
Cragfast (rock or snow)	25	5.9	2.7
Self harm	17	4.0	0
Medical emergency/illness	14	3.3	5.4
Benighted	8	1.9	3.5
Equipment failure or missing	8	1.9	0
Separated	7	1.7	2.6
Avalanche-triggered	5	1.2	0
River crossing	4	0.9	2.3
Rockfall	3	0.7	0.3
Weather-bound	3	0.7	0
snow event	3	0.7	0
Cornice collapse	1	0.2	0.1

The major factors involving being lost, navigation errors, and overdue make up 28.8% of the total. When added to the reported missing category, the total of misplaced persons is 41.6%, a significant majority of the total. This is down from the previous year of 49.7%

The next largest category is slips, trips and falls which add up to 35.2%. This category is the most significant contributor to traumatic injury and is increased by 8% from the previous year

There were 5 callouts to avalanches during the year, due to a long lasting instability in the snowpack. Unfortunately two of these incidents lead to multiple fatalities.

Helicopter Assistance

During a mountain rescue incident, time is often saved by the use of a helicopter. These are requested through the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC). Air assets can be requested from the military, coastguard, air ambulance or police as appropriate.

Helicopters were deployed to 241 incidents, 41% of the total.

Table 11: Helicopter attendance

Source of aircraft	Number of attendances
Coastguard (Rescue 100)	21
Royal Navy (Rescue 177)	52
Royal Air Force (Rescue 137 and Rescue 131)	56
Unspecified Rescue Aircraft	96
Helimed	8
Police	14

There were 6 incidents where 2 helicopters were on scene.

Helicopters can be used in a variety of ways to assist Teams during a rescue.

Table 12: Tasking of Helicopters

Tasking	Number
Search	71
Evacuation	128
Transport	15
Rescue	14
All	4
Not Used	2
Not recorded	13



Any Hour, Any Day, Any Weather

The Volunteer Teams are available to respond to callouts at any time throughout the year.

Table 13: Incidents by month

	2013 (%) Arrows indicate change from 2012	2012 (%)
January	7.2 (↑)	8.6
Feb	11.1 (↓)	7.0
March	11.3 (↓)	6.6
April	7.3 (↓)	7.6
May	10.1 (↓)	12.1
June	8.0 (↓)	10.5
July	7.2 (↓)	9.6
August	7.5 (↓)	8.6
September	13.0 (↑)	10.0
October	8.7 (↑)	7.8
November	4.1 (↓)	4.9
December	4.6 (↓)	6.8
Average	8.3	8.3

Previous years have had the busiest periods in May through to September. This year there was a busy winter period with a quieter summer.

September was the busiest month of the year overall.

Day of the week

Table 14: Incident by day of the week

Day	No of Incidents	%
Monday	69	12%
Tuesday	78	13%
Wednesday	60	10%
Thursday	69	12%
Friday	59	10%
Saturday	139	24%
Sunday	112	19%

Table 14 shows the frequency of callouts on a particular day of the week. As can be seen, incidents can occur on any day but are most common at a weekend, and nearly twice as likely to occur on a Saturday than any weekday.

Incidents by Geographical Region

Scottish Mountain Rescue Teams operate throughout the country in all geographical areas. The Table below documents the total number of times each team was called to assist in the incidents, together with the combined number of person hours (e.g. a call out in which 12 people were deployed for 5 hours yields 60 person hours. It should be noted that these figures in no way include the vast amount of additional time volunteer teams spend training, fundraising, administration and so on

Table 15: Breakdown of incidents by Team

Team	No. of Incidents (2012)	Hours deployed
Aberdeen MRT	8 (19)	671.5
Arran MRT	19 (16)	981.25
Arrochar MRT	19 (24)	679
Assynt MRT	10 (9)	404.5
Borders SAR Unit	13 (20)	900.5
Braemar MRT	27 (33)	874
Cairngorm MRT	41 (43)	2828
Dundonnell MRT	21 (28)	1120.5
Galloway MRT	14 (9)	636
Glencoe MRT	73 (58)	2833
Glenelg MRT	6 (4)	162
Glenmore Lodge MRT	13 (6)	111
Hebrides SAR	3 (9)	46.5
Killin MRT	34 (26)	2090
Kintail MRT	13 (16)	396
Lochaber MRT	90 (103)	3079
Lomond MRT	24 (20)	1045
Moffat MRT	9 (14)	350
Oban MRT	17 (24)	456
Ochils MRT	22 (27)	659.5
SARDA (Scotland)	72 (47)	1229
SARDA (Southern Scotland)	63 (53)	672.5
Scottish Cave Rescue	0 (0)	0
Skye MRT	53 (35)	3667
Tayside MRT	37 (50)	757
Torridon MRT	23 (13)	517
Tweed Valley MRT	20 (30)	935
Totals	744	28100.75



Police Teams

Team	No. of Incidents	Hours deployed
Grampian police MRT	34 (38)	600
Strathclyde police MRT	65 (44)	1632
Tayside police MRT	41 (54)	732
Totals	140	2964

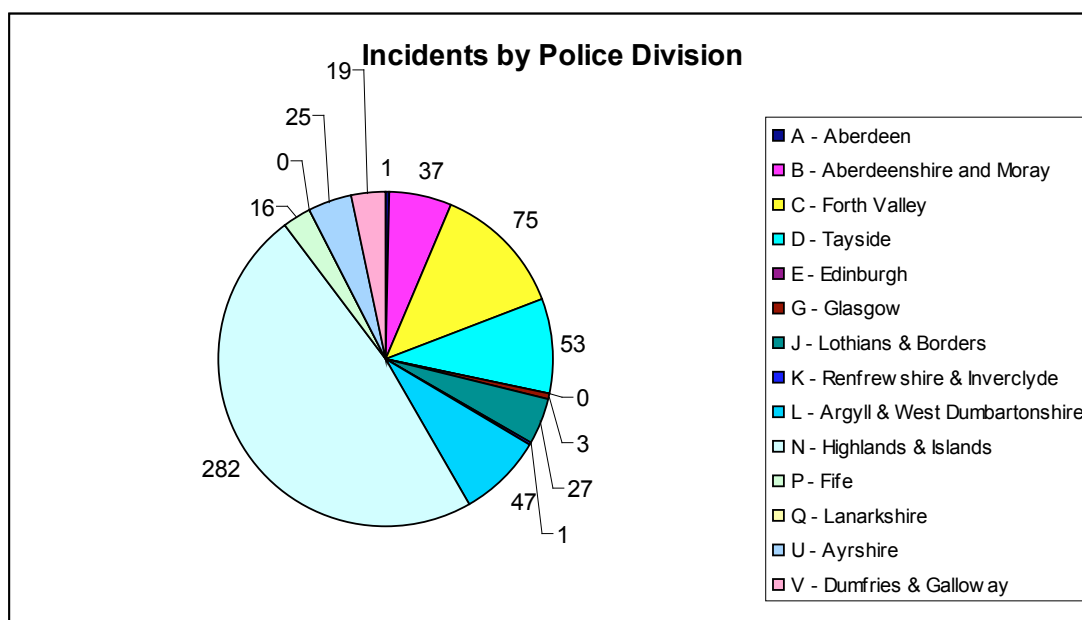
RAF Teams

Team	No. of Incidents
RAF Leuchars MRT	14
RAF Lossiemouth MRT	22

An alternative breakdown is to use Police area boundaries. From April 1st 2013, all forces amalgamated into Police Scotland. Police divisions are still in operation however.

Table 16 :Incidents by Police Divisions

Police Division	Previous authority	Number of incidents
A - Aberdeen	Grampian	1
B - Aberdeenshire and Moray	Grampian	37
C - Forth Valley	Central Scotland	75
D - Tayside	Tayside	53
E - Edinburgh	Lothians and Borders	0
G - Glasgow	Strathclyde	3
J - Lothians & Scottish Borders	Lothian and Borders	27
K - Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	Strathclyde	1
L - Argyll & West Dumbartonshire	Strathclyde	47
N - Highlands & Islands	Northern	282
P - Fife	Fife	16
Q - Lanarkshire	Strathclyde	0
U - Ayrshire	Strathclyde	25
V - Dumfries & Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway	19
Totals		586



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Scottish Mountain Rescue (formerly the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered charity number SC045003