STATISTICS REPORT 2025

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April 2026

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Volunteering to save lives

PREFACE

This Annual Statistical Report is a supplement to the Scottish Mountain Rescue Review 2025.

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

For 2025, this report includes data gathered from 26 civilian member teams as well as four Police Scotland teams.

Scottish Mountain Rescue are proud to represent our member teams.

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

Image © Aberdeen MRT

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, of which **26** are members of Scottish Mountain Rescue. This report for 2025 is compiled from information received from the 26 civilian and 4 Police Scotland teams that were members of Scottish Mountain Rescue for the year of 2025. The teams whose data are included in this report are listed on the right.

This annual report covers the calendar year from January 1st to December 31st 2025.

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 changed in 2021 and in 2024 with teams joining SMR)

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

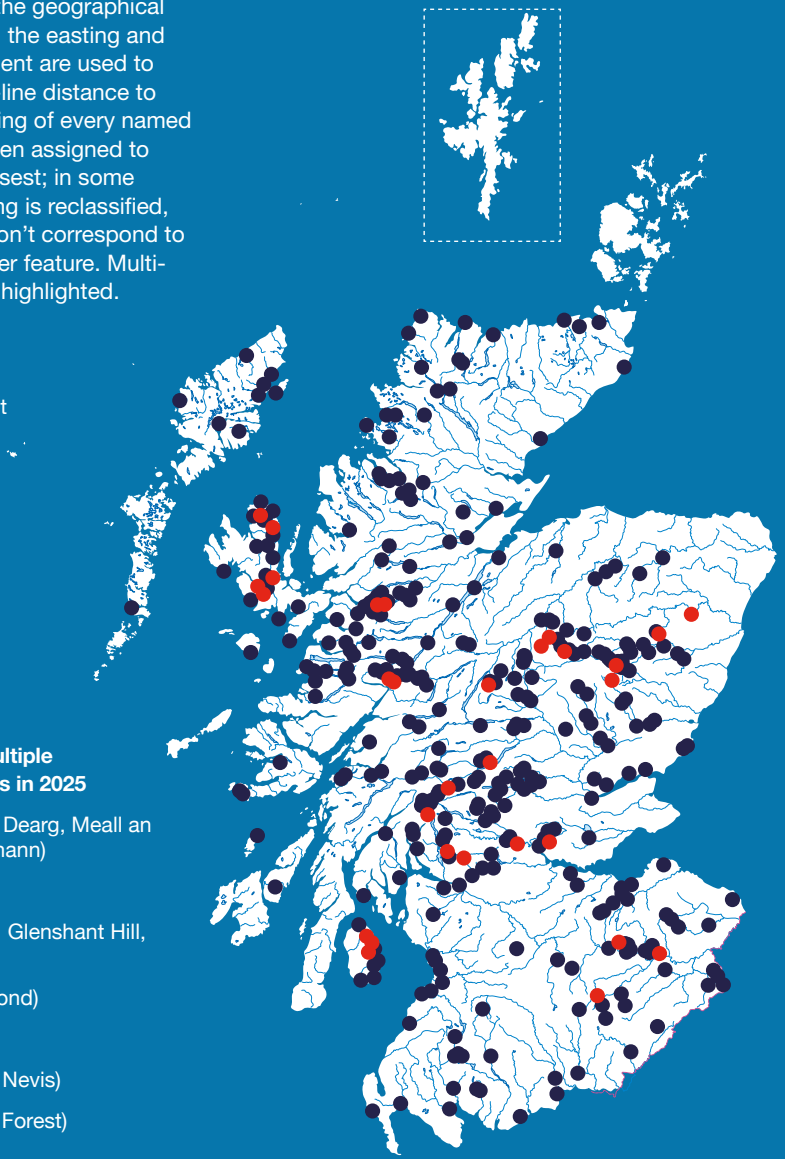
- Aberdeen MRT
- Arran MRT
- Arrochar MRT
- Assynt MRT
- Borders SAR Unit
- Braemar MRT
- Dundonell MRT
- Galloway MRT
- Glenelg MRT
- Glenmore Lodge MRT
- Hebrides MRT
- Killin MRT
- Kintail MRT
- Lochaber MRT
- Lomond MRT
- Moffat MRT
- Oban MRT
- Ochils MRT
- Skye MRT
- Tayside MRT
- Torridon MRT
- Tweed Valley MRT
- Scottish Cave Rescue Organisation (SCRO)
- 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 (Highland) MRT
- Police Scotland (Strathclyde) MRT
- Police Scotland (Tayside) MRT

MAP OF 2025 INCIDENTS

This map displays the locations of incidents recorded by the 26 civilian and 4 Police Scotland SMR member teams. To determine the geographical grouping of incidents, the easting and northing of each incident are used to calculate the straight-line distance to the easting and northing of every named peak. Incidents are then assigned to whichever peak is closest; in some instanced this grouping is reclassified, i.e. where incidents don't correspond to a mountain but another feature. Multi-incident hotspots are highlighted.

Count

- Incident location
- Multi incident hotspot



The following were multiple multi-incident hotspots in 2025

- Ben Nevis (incl. Càrn Dearg, Meall an t-Suidhe, Meall Cumhann)
- The Cuillin
- Goatfell (Meall Breac, Glenshant Hill, Goat Fell
- Conic Hill (Loch Lomond)
- Devil's Pulpit
- Cnoc Reamhar (Glen Nevis)
- Castle Hill (Glentress Forest)
- The Old Man of Storr
- Dumyat (Ochils)
- Falls of Bruar Gorge

OVERVIEW:

INCIDENTS, CALLOUTS AND HOURS

Number of incidents

The total number of independent incidents in 2025 was **798.**

Of these, **491 (62%)** were related to mountaineering (this includes hillwalking, scrambling, rock climbing and winter climbing, and MRT activity).

The total number of separate team callouts resulting from all incidents was **1,169**, or **1,270** including "continuations" (linked callouts on different days).

This is an average of **3.5 per day**, (including continuations). At least one team was called out on **312** different days this year, and the busiest three days of the year were Saturdays 5th April, 10th May and 12th July with **17** callouts of teams each.

Hours

Mountain rescue team members gave up **39,229** hours of their time during callouts. In addition to this, each of the more than **850** individual team members will spend dozens of hours each year on training activities, and most are also regularly involved in the day-to-day running of their teams, each of which is a charity in its own right.

People helped

During 2025, **901** people were assisted.

Seven incidents involved the rescue of dogs, and **four** incidents the rescue of livestock.

There were **38** incidents involving fatalities, nine of which were related to mountaineering activities. Of those nine, four were due to medical events that occurred in the mountains.

798
Total number of independent incidents.

491 (62%)
Incidents related to mountaineering.

1,169
Total number of team callouts.

312
Days where at least one team was called out.

39,229
Hours of time given by mountain rescue team members.

901
People were assisted.

Image © Killin MRT

UNDERSTANDING PATTERNS IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE DATA

Over the course of 2025, SMR collaborated with two researchers from the Management Science Department at the University of Strathclyde. This team analysed the entire dataset held by SMR over the period from 2015 to 2024, with the aim to identify broader trends which may support the charity in strategic and long-term planning.

The first analysis the research team completed was a seasonal decomposition of the monthly incident numbers. This analysis separates the time series of incident numbers into a long-term mean trend, a seasonal trend which repeats on an annual basis, and residuals which represent the irregular and unexpected fluctuations in incidents.

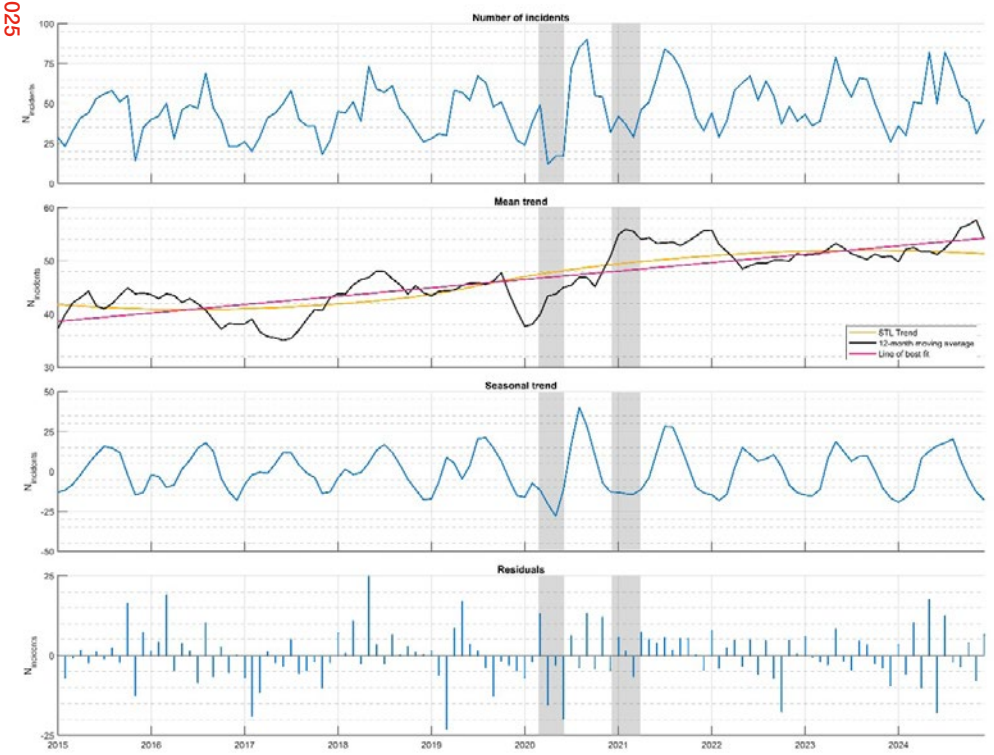


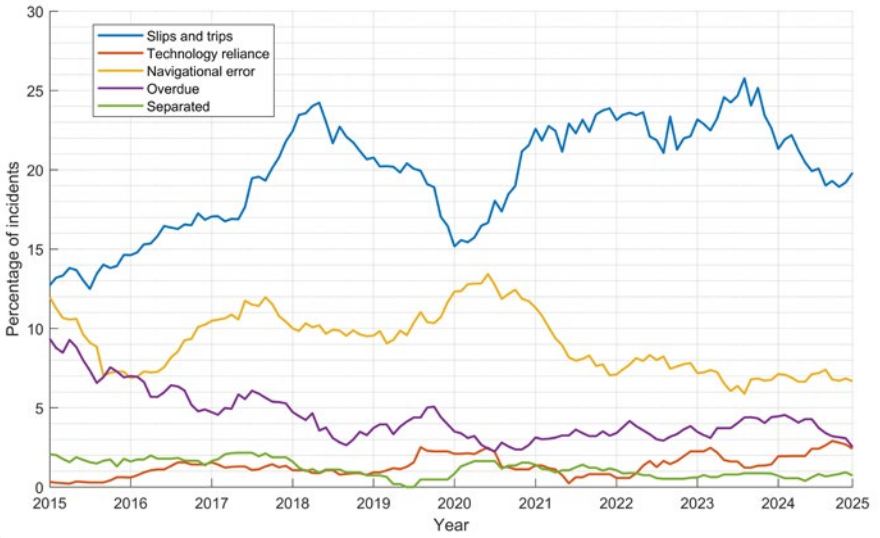
Image © Dundonnell MRT

Image © Oban MRT

The mean and seasonal trend analysis highlights that there was a stepped increase in incidents around the Covid-19 pandemic years (2020/2021 – with lockdowns highlighted in grey). This resulted in ca. **10-15** additional incidents per month since then, with the trend flattening in more recent years. The increasing residuals since 2020 (incidents in each month which are not explained either by the long-term or seasonal trend) also indicate that the occurrence of incidents is becoming more erratic.[1]

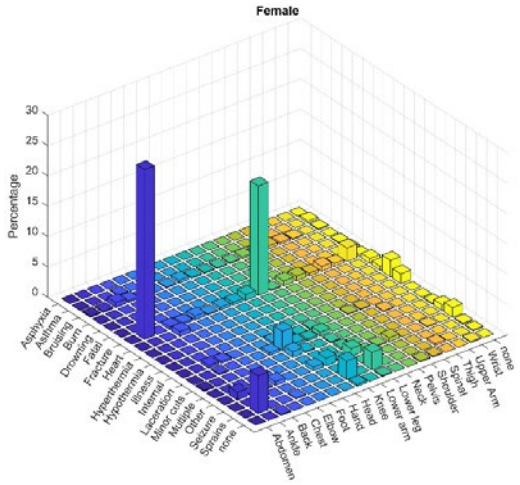
1 One team re-joined SMR in 2021; their data was removed from this specific analysis to facilitate a more accurate long-term trend-analysis.

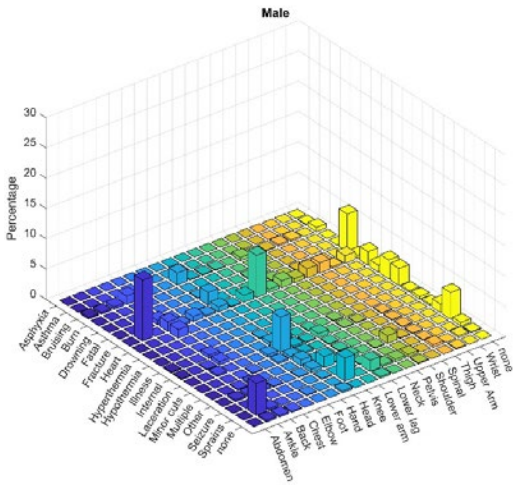
The researchers also analysed the relative importance of a range of factors contributing to incidents occurring. This longitudinal analysis of incident factors showed that the long-term trend for slips and trips, as well as technology reliance are on the rise. On the other hand, casualties being overdue, navigational errors and parties becoming separated have been trending downwards slightly as incident factors – this could be the case due to increased connectivity and technology use in the outdoors; however, SMR does not collect data to prove this. The chart below shows the 12-month moving average of the percentage of incidents which had one of those factors reported.



UNDERSTANDING PATTERNS IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE DATA

Lastly, the analysis of injury types and location by gender provided interesting insight: it shows that female mountaineers, regardless of age group, are much more likely to suffer from a suspected ankle fracture (**28%** of injuries) compared to males (**10%**). A similar trend is visible for suspected lower leg fractures (**18%** of injuries for females, **7%** for men). The data also shows clearly that men are much more likely to die in mountaineering incidents (**6.2%** of injury types) than women are (**0.3%**). These percentages have to be considered against the backdrop of an overall higher percentage of male casualties compared to female. Additional data about general participation in mountaineering activities amongst male and female populations would help us better understand these trends; unfortunately, no such data is captured by SMR or other agencies.





28%
Of injuries are to ankles for female mountaineers.

10%
Of injuries are to ankles for male mountaineers.

18%
Of injuries are lower leg for female mountaineers.

7%
Of injuries are lower leg for male mountaineers.

0.3%
Of injuries to female mountaineers are fatal.

6.2%
Of injuries to male mountaineers are fatal.

Image © Tayside MRT

TRENDS OVER TIME

When comparing the statistic for the teams who were already members of SMR in 2024, 2025 had a similar level of mountain rescue activity, compared to 2024. The statistics in this publication include data from the Lochaber and Police (Highland) teams who were not included in the 2024 publication.

For a direct comparison with 2024, if the Lochaber and Police (Highland) data are excluded from the 2025 figures, the number of independent incidents decreased by **3%** (or **17** incidents) between 2024 and 2025. However, the number of callouts across both Police Scotland and civilian teams, including continuations increased by **2%** (**16** callouts).

The stable trend between 2024 and 2025, breaks the trend in recent years, of increasing callout numbers and total number of hours spent. However, numbers remain at a consistently higher level since 2020, when compared to the previous decade.

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

Year	Callouts of civilian teams (incl. continuations)	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
2023	716	25,453
2024	761	24,202
2025*	904 (744)	32,832 (26,671)

**Figures in brackets exclude Lochaber MRT)*

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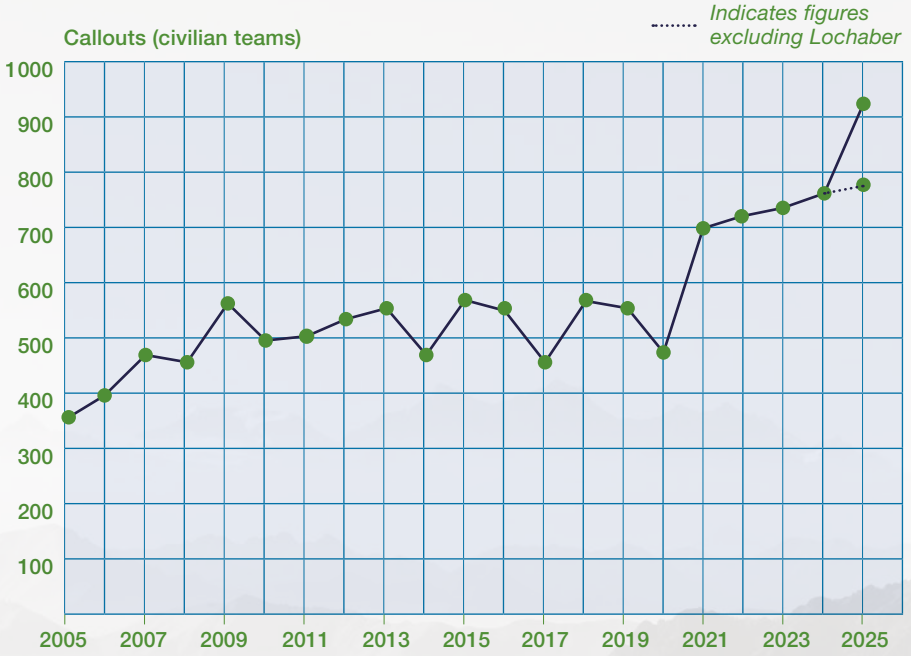
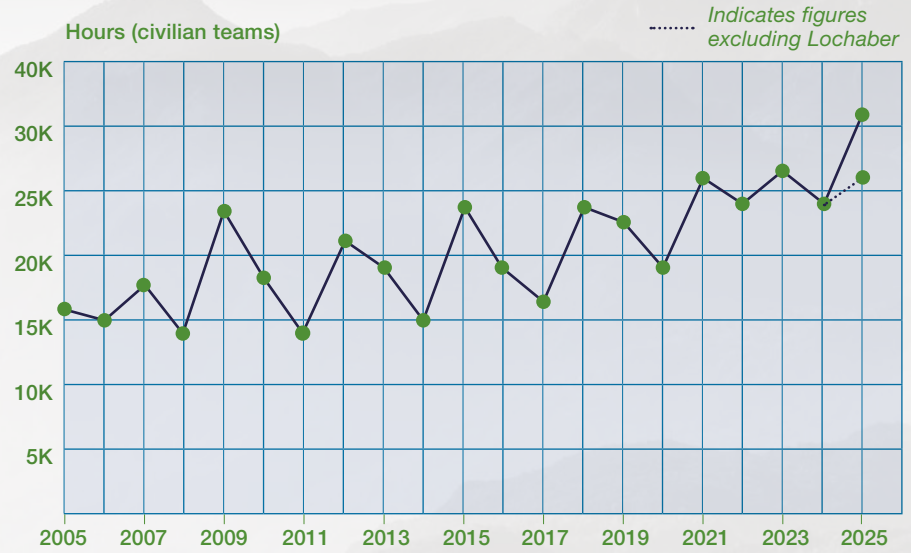
Image © Oban MRT





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	Percentage
Rescue	351	44%
Search and Rescue	152	19%
Search	101	13%
Medical Emergency	68	9%
Body Recovery	22	3%
Technical Rescue	21	3%
Police Investigation	19	2%
False Alarm	16	2%
Other	16	2%
Not Recorded	13	2%
Animal Rescue	9	1%
Search (water)	4	1%
Water Rescue	4	1%
Civil resilience	2	0%
	Total 798	

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

Image © SARAA

Image © Hebrides MRT

798

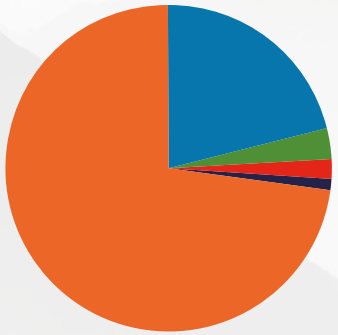
Total number of independent incidents

MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS

All incidents involving Scottish Mountain Rescue Teams are reported in two broad categories, Mountaineering and Non-Mountaineering. This classification is based on the activity being undertaken. “Mountaineering” includes climbing or hillwalking in both Summer and Winter, as well as scrambling.

In 2025 there were **491** “mountaineering” incidents, in which **624** people were assisted.

	Count	%
Hillwalking (Summer)	358	73
Hillwalking (Winter)	101	21
Rock Climbing	14	3
Scrambling	11	2
Snow/Ice Climbing	6	1
MRT Activity	1	0
Total	**491**	**100**



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	152
Medical	63
Lost	60
Navigation Error	47
Overdue	38
Fall	34
Crag-fast	31
Reported Missing	22
Missing Kit	21
Weather-Bound	18
Tiredness	18
Technology Reliance	16
Benighted	13
Assisting Other Emergency Services	12
False Alarm	10
Experience	10
Separated	8
River Crossing	6
Kit Failure	6
Mental Health	6
Food	4
Lightning	2
Other	6

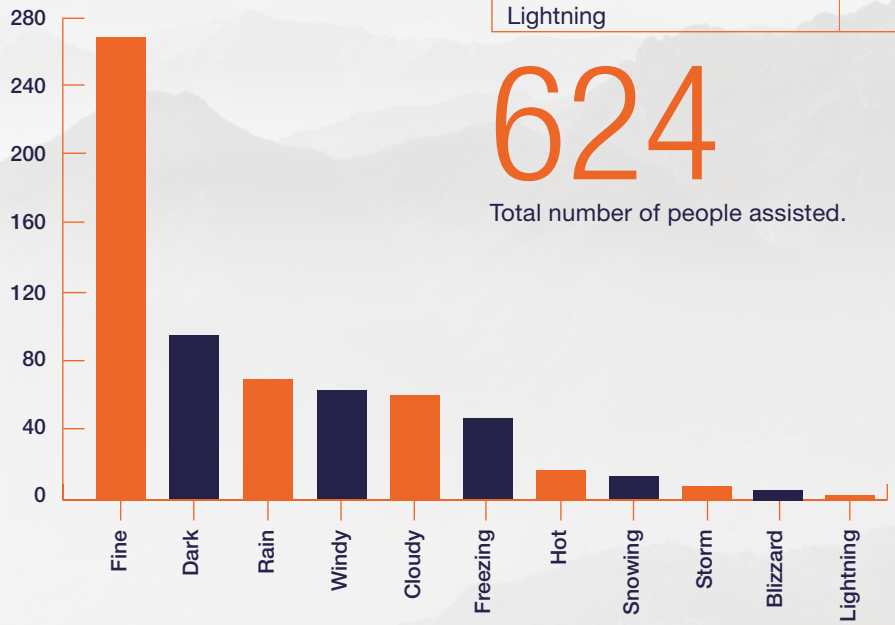
Image © Tayside MRT

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

491

Total number of mountaineering incidents.

	Count
Fine	268
Dark	101
Rain	73
Windy	65
Cloudy	56
Freezing	47
Hot	17
Snowing	11
Storm	8
Blizzard	5
Lightning	1



624

Total number of people assisted.

TERRAIN

Where available, the terrain in the locality of the incident is detailed below. Most mountaineering 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	205
Grass	99
Rock	98
Steep Ground	98
Heather	93
Loose Ground	53
Bog	40
Scree	38
Snow	33
Forest	31
Ice	27
Vehicle Track	25
River	13
Coast	7
Other Body of Water	6

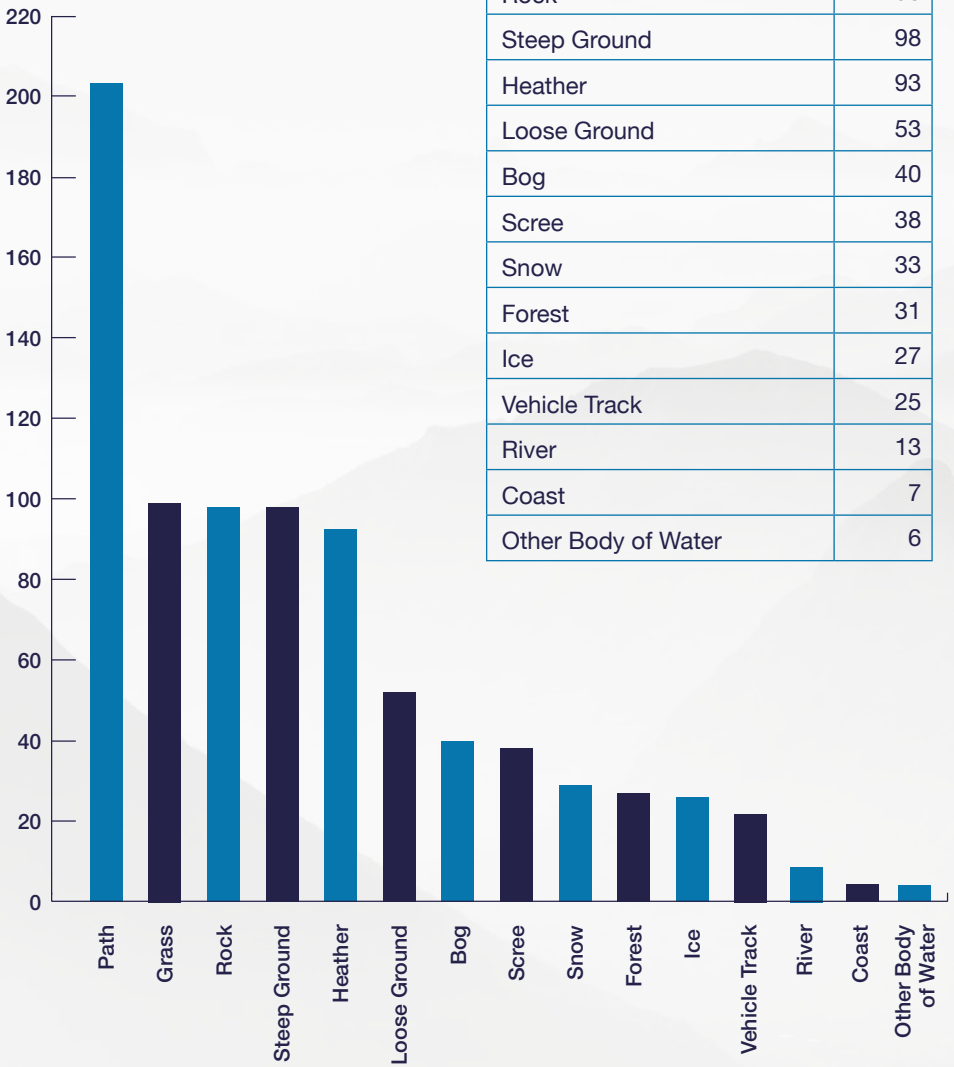


Image © SARAA

INJURY TYPES

In 2025, **178 (29%)** of the people assisted in mountaineering incidents had at least one injury recorded.

Casualties may have more than a single injury type recorded (though this can also be recorded as “multiple”). The breakdown of injury types is given below.

	Count
Fracture	73
Sprains	41
Other	28
Heart	11
Hypothermia	11
Laceration	11
Illness	10
Multiple	8
Bruising	7
Minor Cuts	7
Internal	5
Seizure	2
Hypothermia	1
Total	**215**

INJURY SITE

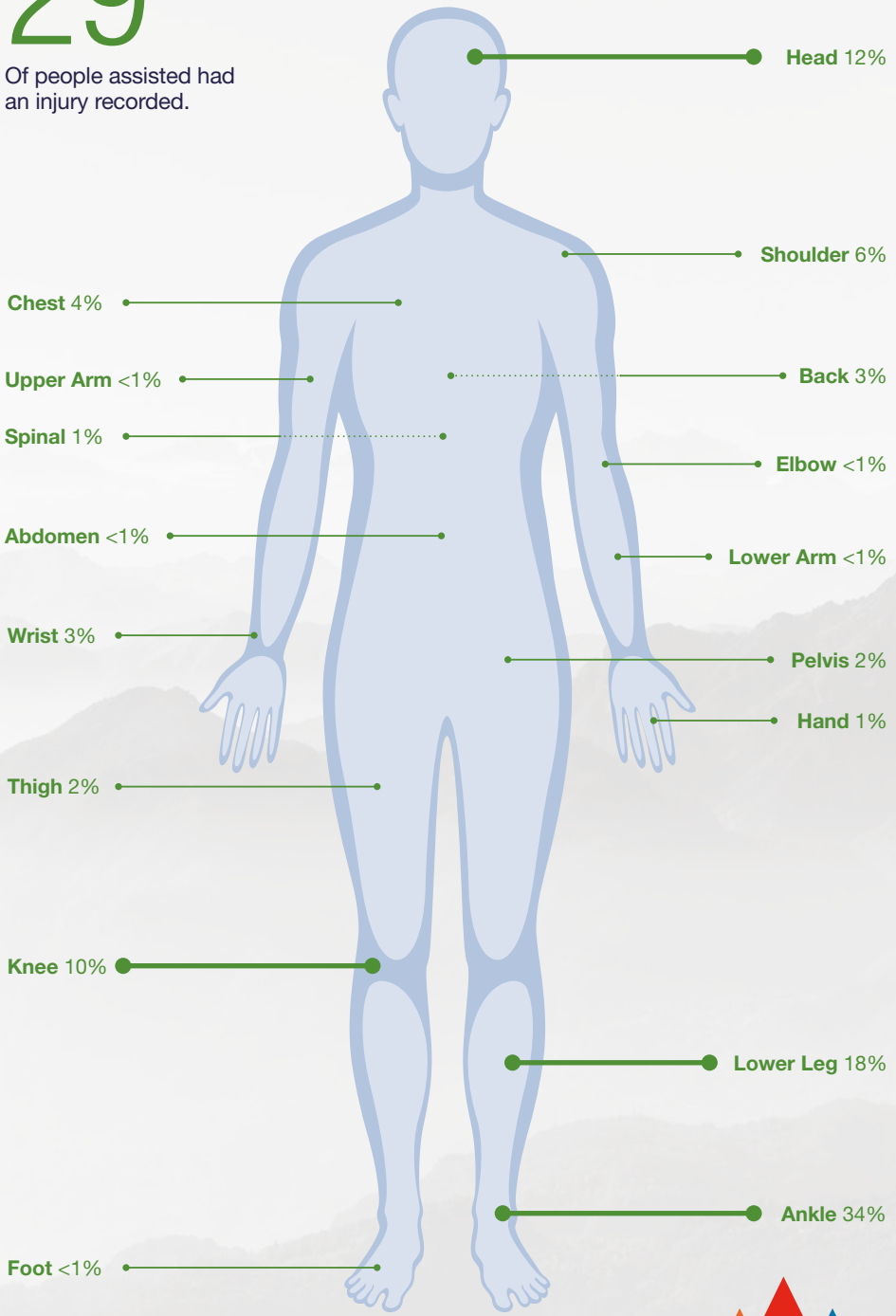
Casualties generally have a single (or no) injury site recorded.

	Count	%
Ankle	61	34
Lower Leg	32	18
Head	22	12
Knee	18	10
Shoulder	11	6
Chest	8	4
Wrist	6	3
Back	6	3
Thigh	4	2
Pelvis	3	2
Hand	2	1
Spinal	2	1
Abdomen	1	<1
Elbow	1	<1
Foot	1	<1
Lower Arm	1	<1
Upper Arm	1	<1
Total	**180**	**100%**

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

29%

Of people assisted had an injury recorded.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

Gender of people assisted.

Gender	Count
Male	317
Female	187
Unspecified	120

Nationality

Nationality was recorded for **370** of the assisted mountaineers. Mountaineers rescued had **17** different nationalities.

Country	Count
United Kingdom	316
United States of America	12
Germany	10
France	7
Netherlands	7
Poland	4
Czech Republic	3
China	2
Austria	1
Bulgaria	1
Canada	1
Finland	1
Guatemala	1
Ireland	1
Italy	1
South Korea	1
Switzerland	1

British Nationality

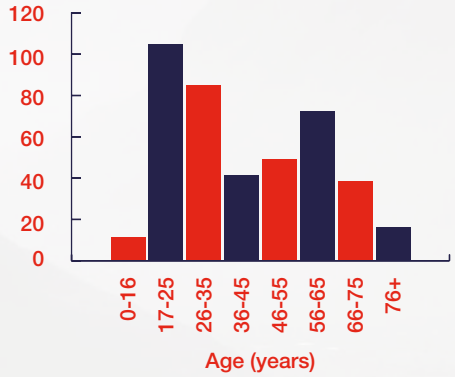
The breakdown for British mountaineers (where the specific country they were from was recorded) is shown below.

Nation	Count
Scotland	137
England	128
Wales	4

Age

Age was recorded for **425** mountaineers. The most frequently rescued age category was **17-25** years, which is more than double the number of casualties in the same age group when compared to 2024.

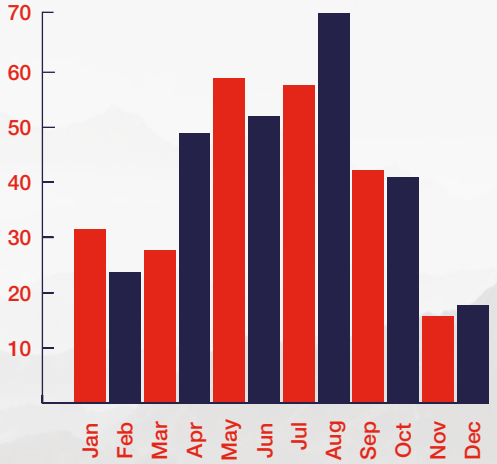
Age Range	Count	%
0-16	14	3
17-25	106	25
26-35	85	20
36-45	40	9
46-55	53	12
56-65	73	17
66-75	37	9
76+	17	4
Total	**425**	**100**



TIMING OF INCIDENTS

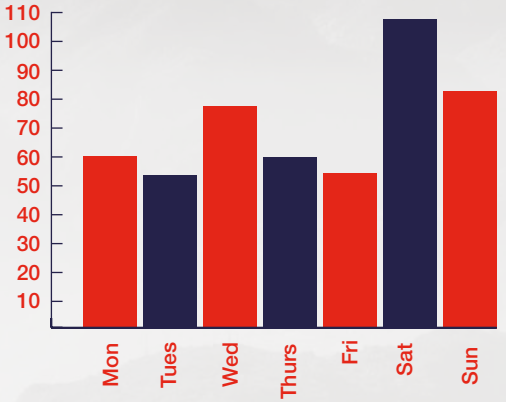
The busiest period for teams is generally during the summer months. Both mountaineering and non-mountaineering incidents (see later section) increase during the summer.

Month	Count	%
January	32	7
February	25	5
March	29	6
April	48	10
May	58	12
June	55	11
July	57	12
August	69	14
September	43	9
October	41	8
November	16	3
December	18	4
Total	**491**	**100%**



The busiest day of the week for teams from mountaineering incidents tends to be a Saturday or Sunday.

Weekday	Count	%
Monday	60	12
Tuesday	51	10
Wednesday	75	15
Thursday	58	12
Friday	52	11
Saturday	109	22
Sunday	86	18
Total	**491**	**100%**



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

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 **307** incidents supporting the community.

Activity

The activity leading to these incidents was recorded in **244** cases.

	Count
Missing Person	66
Rural Walking	55
Mountain Biking	46
Mental Health	27
Police Investigation	8
Working	7
Running	6
Motor Vehicle	6
Canyoning	6
Swimming	4
Air sport	3
Fishing	2
Cycling	2
Medevac	1
Equestrian	1
Civil Resilience	1
Skiing	1
Canoeing / Kayaking / Rafting	1
4x4 / ATV	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 callout was reported missing.

	Count
Reported Missing	64
Mental Health	55
Slip/Trip	43
Fall	31
Mountain Biking	24
Assisting Other Emergency Services	21
Other Sports	16
Medical	14
False Alarm	14
Lost	13
Navigational Error	9
Overdue	8
Body Recovery	7
Tiredness	4
Weather-bound	4
Technology Reliance	3
Separated	3
Crag-fast	2
Experience	2
River Crossing	2
Fitness	1
Missing Kit	1
Kit Failure	1
Benighted	1

TIMING

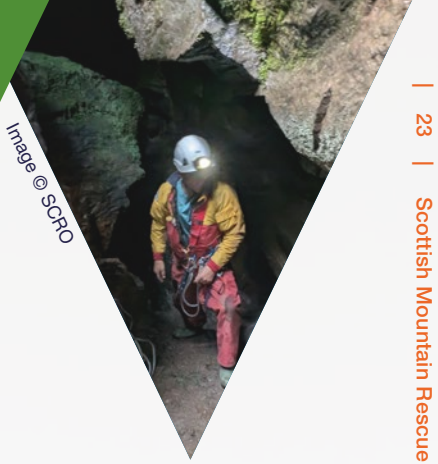
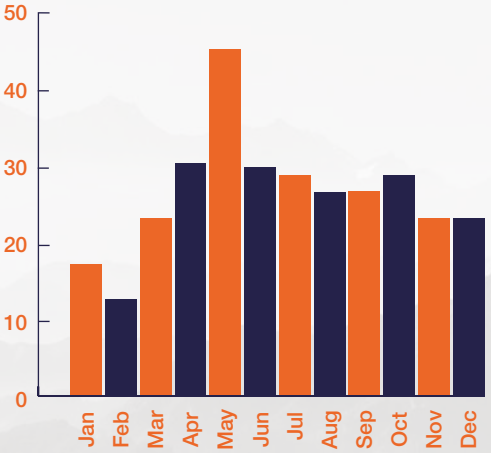


Image © SCRO

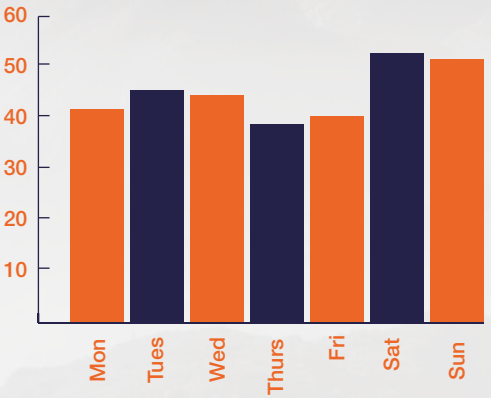
In 2025, the busiest days of the week for teams for non-mountaineering incidents were **Saturday** and **Sunday**, whereas the busiest month was **May**.

Month	Count	%
January	17	6
February	13	4
March	24	8
April	31	10
May	45	15
June	30	10
July	27	9
August	24	8
September	25	8
October	27	9
November	22	7
December	22	7
Total	**307**	**100%**



Weekday	Count	%
Monday	41	13
Tuesday	44	14
Wednesday	42	14
Thursday	38	12
Friday	39	13
Saturday	52	17
Sunday	51	17
Total	**307**	**100%**

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



ALL INCIDENT TYPES

Joint working

Mountain Rescue Teams are called out by, and work closely with, Police Scotland to resolve every incident. In **6%** of incidents, teams worked closely with at least one other partner agency (in addition to helicopters, which are covered in the next table). Please note that some incidents had more than one partner agency recorded.

	Count
Other Police Team	9
RAF MRT	7
Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS)	7
Scottish Ambulance Service Special Operations Response Team	5
Loch Lomond Rescue Boat	4
RNLI	3
Helimed	2
Nith Inshore Rescue	2
Trossachs Search and Rescue	2
Cairngorm Mountain Ski Patrol	1
Forestry Commission	1
Inshore Lifeboat	1
Local Estate	1
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	1
Military	1
National Park Ranger Service	1
Northumberland Mountain Rescue	1
Private Tour Operator	1

Helicopter usage

MRTs work closely with helicopter services across the country.

Helicopters were recorded as attending **228** incidents. The number of activations of specific aircraft is detailed below (**244** in total, as more than one helicopter can attend an incident).

	Count
Rescue 151/152 (Inverness)	97
Rescue 199 (Prestwick)	51
Rescue 948 (Stornoway)	48
Helimed	36
Police	10
Rescue 900 (Sumburgh)	2

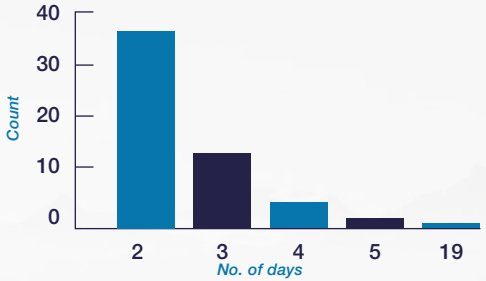
Helicopters performed a number of roles in assisting teams. In many cases aircraft performed more than one role (while in some instances the helicopter was unable - or not required - to perform any of these roles).

	Count
Evacuation	89
Search	72
Rescue	68
Transport	46
All	11

Image © Oban MRT

Multi-day incidents

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



Days	Count
2	37
3	12
4	4
5	2
19	1

Multiple teams working together

Number of Teams	Count
2	242
3	38
4	14
5	5
6	4

Police areas

Name	Count
Highlands & Islands	361
Tayside	89
Forth Valley	81
Argyll & West Dunbartonshire	63
Lothian & Borders	59
Aberdeenshire and Moray	53
Dumfries & Galloway	31
None	13
Lanarkshire	5
Edinburgh	3
Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	2
Glasgow	1
Aberdeen	1

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NO OF CALLOUTS AND HOURS BY TEAM

	Callouts	Hours
Aberdeen	14	581
Arran	29	1,041
Arrochar	33	980
Assynt	24	1,494
Borders	20	901
Braemar	42	811
Dundonnell	34	1,761
Galloway	18	1,871
Glenelg	11	420
HebSAR	12	307
Killin	28	1,150
Kintail	33	2,303
Lochaber	160	6,162
Lomond	38	1,205
Moffat	22	912
Oban	22	1,215
Ochils	21	769
Skye	102	3,123
Tayside	72	1,835
Torridon	19	598
Tweed Valley	54	1,739
Police Scotland (Grampian)	50	502
Police Scotland (Highland)	94	1,255
Police Scotland (Strathclyde)	120	2,845
Police Scotland (Tayside)	102	1,796
SARDA (Scotland)	41	868
SARDA (Southern)	19	112
SARAA-Scotland	36	678
SCRO	0	0
Total	**1,270**	**39,229**

Total does not match values in table due to rounding.

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Footnote

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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 **info@scottishmountainrescue.org**

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