

Emergency Procedures

Mountain Rescue – Accident Procedures – Plan of Action







Mountain Rescue Ireland

Prior to 1965 organised mountain rescue was practically nonexistent in Ireland. If you required assistance, this was organised through local mountaineering clubs and local farmers.

The Kerry Mountain Rescue Team and the An Oige Mountain Rescue Team were formed in 1966. For almost twenty years the An Oige Team was the only organised mountain rescue service in the Dublin and Wicklow mountains.

Because of the need for a quick response local rescue team in the Wicklow Mountains, the Red Cross Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue Team was formed in 1983. Around this time the An Oige Rescue Team disbanded and reformed as the Dublin / Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team in 1984. Since then both teams work very closely together to provide a very efficient search and rescue service for the Dublin / Wicklow mountains.

The 12 Mountain Rescue Teams

- **Donegal MRT** Covering the mountains of County Donegal ie Slieve League, Bluestack Mountains, Errigal, Muckish, Derryveagh Mountains and the Inishowen Peninsula
- **North West MRT** Covering the mountains of the north-west of Northern Ireland
- **Mourne MRT** Covering the Mourne Mountains
- **Dublin & Wicklow MRT** Covering the mountains of Counties Dublin and Wicklow
- **Glen of Imaal MRT** Covering the mountains of south Co. Dublin, Co. Wicklow, east Co. Kildare and north Co. Wexford
- **South-Eastern MRA** Covering the mountains of the south-east (including the Galtee Mountains, the Blackstairs, the Comeraghs, the Knockmealdowns and the Slieve Blooms)
- **Tramore Cliff and MRT** Covering the cliffs along the southern coast
- **Kerry MRT** Covering the mountainous areas of Counties Cork and Kerry, primarily the peninsulas of Beara, Iveragh and Dingle
- **Galway MRT** Covering the mountainous areas of counties Galway and Clare
- **Mayo MRT** Covering the mountainous areas of County Mayo
- **Sligo/Leitrim MRT** Covering the mountainous areas of counties Sligo and Leitrim
- **Search and Rescue Dogs Association** (This association is organised on a national basis to provide the additional resource of trained search dog teams throughout the country)




Mountain Rescue Ireland

Each team has long-standing arrangements whereby it can be called out by a neighbouring team to assist them when required.

Some teams have more developed arrangements whereby call-outs in particular areas are dealt with by the teams on a joint or allocated basis. This has developed in areas of high call-out rates such as the Dublin/Wicklow mountains which are close to areas of high population density.

MRI is working to develop experience and knowledge of multi-team operations. Examples of this are our National Operation at Croagh Patrick pilgrimage in July when thousands of pilgrims climb the mountain on Reek Sunday and our Regional Exercises where all the teams come together to deal with an emergency scenario

To contact Mountain Rescue in an Emergency
 Dial 112 / 999 from any telephone and ask for Mountain Rescue.
 The Garda controller will ask your location and the nature of the incident.
 Provide your telephone number and if possible the grid reference for the location.
 Stay in a place where you can receive a signal on your phone.
 A Mountain Rescue Callout Officer will contact you directly for more information.
 The Callout Officer will then deploy the rescue team to the incident location.
 If an ambulance is needed, the Gardai or Callout Officer will request one directly.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an incident

- Stay calm. Take time to assess the situation and decide what to do.
- What should be done immediately to safeguard the group?
- If anyone is injured, remember ABC – airway, breathing and circulation
- Treat any injuries (remember the first principle 'do no harm')
- Insulate casualty from the ground, add extra clothing. Place any unconscious casualties in the 'recovery position'.
- Determine your exact position on the map and consider the options for:
 - (a) **Descent to safety.** What will the terrain be like? How far to reach safety? Are you sure you can carry the casualty? Will the casualty's injuries be made worse by travelling?
 - (b) **Finding shelter.** Don't use up valuable time and energy unless you are sure about finding shelter.
 - (c) **Staying put.** Will your situation be resolved if you stay where you are?
 - (d) **Seeking help** (remember that even when a rescue team has been alerted, help might not arrive for several hours).
- **If you decide you need help and you are calling from a mobile phone –**
- **Phone 999 and ask for POLICE and MOUNTAIN RESCUE**

When connected provide:

- (a) Location of the incident (grid reference, map sheet number, name of mountain area and description of the terrain).
- (b) Number and names of people in the party and their condition.
- (c) Any injuries and names of casualties.

Be ready to provide the following additional information:

Telephone number of the phone you are using and any other phones in the group.

The nature and time of the incident – what happened?

Weather conditions including wind speed and visibility at the accident site.

Equipment which is at the accident site (warm clothing, group shelter etc)

Any distinguishing feature/marker/colour at the accident site.

Location of where you are phoning from – if different from accident site.

If going for help on foot:

Remember to take all the details shown above. Write them down if possible.

If possible, leave at least one person with the casualty.

If possible, send two or more people for help.

Make the casualty's location easily seen by search parties.

**EMERGENCY SIGNAL: SIX BLASTS ON THE WHISTLE or
SIX TORCH FLASHES repeated every minute.**