



# Irish Mountain Rescue Association 2007 Annual Report

Registered Charity: CHY 10412



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## Introduction to the Irish Mountain Rescue Association

The Irish Mountain Rescue Association (IMRA) is the representative body of the twelve Irish mountain rescue teams that operate throughout the island:

1. Donegal Mountain Rescue Team
2. Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team
3. Galway Mountain Rescue Team
4. Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue Team
5. Kerry Mountain Rescue Team
6. Mayo Mountain Rescue Team
7. Mourne Mountain Rescue Team
8. North West Mountain Rescue Team
9. Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA)
10. Sligo Leitrim Mountain Rescue Team
11. South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association (SEMRA)
12. Tramore Cliff & MRT

The twelve teams consist of over 350 men and women who provide a voluntary emergency service to people lost or injured while walking or climbing in the mountain ranges of Ireland. This 24-hour 999/112 emergency service is funded by state funds and public donations.

The Irish Mountain Rescue Association (IMRA) has the following objectives:-

1. To assess and keep under review the requirements of mountain rescue services.
2. To establish mountain rescue services as required to benefit the public.
3. To act as a central organisation in liaison with civil and service authorities.

IMRA operates as a co-operative association of the teams that works on consensus, using a development plan, for the best interest of the teams and the casualty. Each team has developed administrative and operational practices based on their experience of working in their local communities and terrain. IMRA respects the tradition of each team and at the same time looks to identify opportunities to benefit all teams and to promote practices developed by one team which will benefit all teams. It works with the teams to offer national events to aid and assist in the development of the teams. These events include:

- National Conference and AGM (hosted by and rotated amongst the teams)

- Induction Course (for new trainees)
- Equipment Course (for Team Equipment Officers)
- Party Leader Course
- National Training Exercise (hosted by and rotated amongst the teams)
- National Operation ("Reek Sunday", Croagh Patrick, Co. Mayo, the last Sunday in July)

At the local level, each team also develops its own schedule of management meetings, training, and fundraising to make sure that its members are appropriately skilled and equipped when needed.

IMRA was founded in 1965 and over the years has established links with other agencies to ensure that it has the most up-to-date information and the necessary resources to respond to incidents. These links (in no particular order) include:

- Order of Malta
- Irish Red Cross
- Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI)
- Irish Coast Guard (IRCG)
- HM Coastguard (NI)
- An Garda Síochána (AGS)
- Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)
- Coillté
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
- Department of Justice
- Department of Defence
- Irish Air Corps
- Civil Defence
- Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC)
- Bord Oiliúnt Sléibhe (BOS - the Irish Mountain Training Board)
- Mountaineering Council of Ireland (MCI)
- Irish Cave Rescue Organisation (ICRO)
- Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MR-EW)
- Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRC-S)
- Mountain Rescue Association (MRA, covering the USA)
- International Commission of Alpine Rescue (ICAR)

## » 2007 Chair's Report: Look what we achieve when we work together

Outlined below are a list of the activities and achievements of the Association throughout 2007. In most cases I have avoided putting names to the items, however the extent of the achievements would not have been possible without the commitment of the member Teams, the support of the Team Committees and the enormous commitment of individual IMRA members which in many cases will never be fully known or appreciated.



Liam McCabe (Chair, SEMRA)

### Training:

- Funded by the IRCG Development Grant and hosted by the DWMRT (with the support of many other Irish and UK team members), IMRA ran a very successful Party Leader course and a Tracking course during the year.
- An IMRA "Train the Trainer" course, hosted by the Donegal MRT was held in April. This was a very successful event with many Teams represented among the instructors and the students.
- An IMRA Equipment Maintenance Course was hosted by the Donegal MRT and the IMRA Equipment Officer at the Bluestacks Centre and attended by the Northern and Western Based Teams.
- A busy weekend for the Mayo and supporting Teams (including ICRO and MRC Teams) to the Reek event on Croagh Patrick in July. As always the event is an excellent opportunity for Teams to practice inter-agency operations in a live operational environment.
- The Galway Team hosted a very challenging and enjoyable National Exercise and introduced many to the vast and isolated terrain in which they work.

### Policy/Development:

- Policy review meeting in Portlaoise in March. Allowed the Officers to prioritise the collective requirements of the membership. These priorities are now documented and regularly updated in our Development Plan 2007 – 2009.
- PHEC meeting in Wicklow in September. We had 29 members meet to discuss a path forward to engage in a proactive way in the area of PHEC Clinical Guidelines. The recommendation of this

meeting was the establishment of a Medical Sub-committee.

- Paul Whiting published the first draft of MR-BOK (Mountain Rescue Book of Knowledge) in September. This is aimed at facilitating the dissemination of information, experience and knowledge between member Teams.
- The November Executive committee agreed to the formation of two sub-committees to forward their relevant issues,
  - A Medical Sub-committee
  - A Training & Development Sub-committee
- IMRA's Search Development Officer launched the newly revised Search Planning documentation to the Teams (four forms instead of the original seven).
- The GPS technology funded by the 2006 IRCG Development Grant was further developed with additional equipment provided by IMRA to augment the original batch. The role out of the service has been fully supported by Kenny Roberts of the DWMRT and supported by the IMRA Equipment Officer Paul Moran and many others. A large scale test of the system was held during Reek Sunday.

### Administration/Financial:

- The 2007 IRCG €40,000 Development Grant was allocated by the Team Leaders as follows;
  - Accredited Technical Rescue Qualification - €10,000
  - Member Training - €15,000
  - Professional Publications €6,000
  - Virtual HQ (Website) - €7,000
  - ICAR representation - €2,000

- Note:** The ICAR representation funding was transferred to the purchase of a GPS compatible Repeater.
- The 2006 MR statistics were produced and published.
  - In association with the Teams, Joe Ganly, Network Insurance (and competing brokers) and the IRCG, IMRA secured a comprehensive Insurance Package to financially

protect its members from Liability and Accident/injury. We must also acknowledge the state support for this endeavour by supporting our grant application for €75,000 per annum for the next three years to cover this insurance cost. IMRA can now claim to have one of the best portfolios of insurance cover in place for its membership on the British Isles and the cost of this cover has been removed from its member Teams.

- 2007 saw the launch of a National IMRA Fundraising Campaign. This campaign will continue to be rolled out in the future with a clear objective of providing financial aid directly to the member Teams.
- IMRA purchased Conference Call equipment to allow representation to members at Executive Committee meetings who are not able to attend in person. This has been tried and tested and has proved very successful. We have also introduced the concept of conference phone call meetings. This is regularly used by the IMRA Officers and Teams to hold phone meetings.
- Four editions of "Call out" were produced during 2007. Two of these were professionally published publications (this project was funded by the IRCG Development Grant).
- An IMRA Head Office has been established at Sports HQ in the MCI office. This has allowed IMRA to acquire a postal address, office space, filing cabinet and meeting rooms at a permanent address. This has been achieved at no cost to IMRA thanks to the support of the MCI.
- IMRA provided lapel badges and windscreen stickers for its member teams.
- IMRA held four Executive committee meetings, three in Dublin and one in Enniskillen. The AGM in January was held in Tipperary and the PHEC meeting was held in Wicklow.
- The IMRA Secretary produced the 2008 IMRA Operational Contact list and distributed it to all IMRA Teams, ICRO, the PSNI, the Gardaí and the IRCG.
- IMRA Officers held four Steering committee meetings with the IMRA Development Officer during the year. This committee are responsible for the day to day "line management" of the position.

### Representation:

- IMRA were represented at the Mountain and Cave Rescue National Coordinating Committee and the Northern Ireland Mountain & Cave Rescue Coordinating Committee meetings in Dublin and Belfast during 2007.
- IMRA met with the Law Reform Commission twice during the year to assist in the development of a consultation paper on "The Civil Liability of Good Samaritans and Volunteers". This initial report acknowledges the role IMRA played in the formulation of this report.
- IMRA were represented at MRC and MRC of S meetings (2008 will see the re-engagement of IMRA with ICAR).

### And for the future:

- Continue the work of National and International Representation of our membership in a professional and positive manner.
- Act as a communication forum for member Teams (and associate organisations) to share ideas and experience and thereby improve the services we provide.
- Development/Training and Medical Sub-committees; we have now engaged our most qualified and experienced members to work in these key areas for the development and advancement of the services we provide.
- Attain an IMRA held Insurance policy that protects all IMRA members (12 Teams & IMRA Executive). We are 90% there, but we need to continue the push until we get to 100%.
- Secure an independent stream of funding that can be used to financially support the operational needs of our member teams. This will include the establishment of a National membership/supporters scheme in 2008.
- IMRA hope to re-establish our association with ICAR during 2008 (supported by the Development Grant from the IRCG).
- Review the way IMRA is funded by its member Teams with the aim of releasing unneeded funds back to the Teams.
- Positive and constructive participation by all Teams in determining the future of Mountain Rescue on the Island of Ireland.
- And finally some fun and friendship along the way.....



## Donegal Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1984)

[www.donegalmrt.ie](http://www.donegalmrt.ie)

2007 saw a very active role for DMRT in the area of up-skilling of its members and refreshing the minds of others. Team members attended courses ranging from Walking Group Leader and Mountain Leader awards to Rope Rescue and Training the Trainer courses. 2007 also saw DMRT being involved in a number of joint training exercises with other IMRA teams both near and far and we would like to kindly thank the Kerry team for their hospitality.

2008 will see a challenging year for DMRT as we try to renew and revive our fleet of vehicles as well as replace some much needed equipment. We aim to develop the team further by increasing the amount of members we have. We aim to maintain and enhance the skills we have learned in 2007 and carry on the trend for joint training with other IMRA teams, local organisations and services so that communication links can be created. 2008 will involve the introduction of a new training system that hopefully will allow members the flexibility, enthusiasm and training requirements needed to be a proficient mountain responder.

John McShane, Deputy Team Leader



## Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1984)

[www.dwmrt.ie](http://www.dwmrt.ie)

In 2007, the team had a number of major developments that included:

- The acquisition of a room in the Roundwood Garda Station (Co. Wicklow) that we will use as a base to store our equipment and as a possible operational base for future call outs,
- The upgrade of our mobile base unit *Wicklow MR1*, to a brand new Ford Transit mobile base. It includes a number of key advancements in technology including the new GPS radio technology and a Satellite telephone.
- The team also changed the colour of the team jacket from blue to the international colour for mountain rescue - red. With the help of our long standing corporate sponsors, The Great Outdoors, we've been kitted out with the Mountain Equipment 'Ogre' jacket.
- The team received the donation of a 4-wheel drive Opel Antara, *Wicklow MR3*, from Airside Opel. This is a valuable addition to the team's fleet of vehicles.

In 2008, the team is continuing to work on developing a number of key initiatives including further development of the GPS radio tracking technology, Harvey Maps in Scotland have recently donated the latest digital map data to the team. The key goal of the team is to fully develop the rescue post at Roundwood Garda Station. This is due to come online by July of this year.

David Williams, Secretary



## Galway Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1980)

The Galway Team hosted a successful IMRA National Exercise in September 2007. The Team had a number of significant training events including REC Level 4 first aid training, technical crag rescue, and a joint training exercise with the Red Cross Life-Boat on Lough Corrib to test GPS tracking capability. We continued our active participation in the Western Voluntary and Statuary Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Group. A number of aspirant members also joined the team.

We provided cover for for the Maamturks Walk in April, the Twelve Bens Walk in June, the Mam Éan Pilgrimage (Maamturks) in July, assisted Mayo MRT at the Focus Ireland Four Peaks Challenge on Mweelrea and of course participated in the annual Croagh Patrick pilgrimage.

During the year we hosted at our training sessions Rick Lorenz from Olympic Mountain Rescue Team, Washington, USA. Rick is also the US Mountain Rescue Association's delegate to ICAR.

In 2008, we plan to continue our participation in the Western Voluntary and Statuary Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Group; ensure the role of the First-Aider on live shouts is rotated amongst recently qualified REC4 and 5 team members; seek to maximise the goodwill shown to the Team by the public; launch the revamped website and team logo and make visits to local interested groups; review our vehicle needs and increase the levels of on-the-hill training.

John Bourke, Public Relations Officer



**Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue Team** (est. 1983)

[www.wicklowmountainrescue.ie](http://www.wicklowmountainrescue.ie)

The team had a busy 2007 - as well as responding to over thirty callouts, we continued our efforts to establish a permanent mountain rescue base, and to that end we acquired a site and began the planning process. Training continued throughout the year, and we initiated a trial of a new training-log system that we expect will help members monitor their competencies as they progress through the training programme. Seven team members also completed the EMFR programme, and they will be a very important resource for us during operations. Finishing off the year we ran a successful recruitment drive, and the new team members are aboard and already playing an important part in team operations.

As well as training and operations, 2008 sees some major undertakings for the team. The first of these is the intensification of our project to build a base. With the plans and designs well under-way we are launching a major fund-raising campaign, the largest in the team's history. Befitting such a large development in the team, we are also commemorating the 25th anniversary of the founding of the team this year, and we are planning events and celebrations later in the year to mark this important milestone.

Tommy Hayes, Public Relations Officer



**Kerry Mountain Rescue Team** (est. 1966)

[www.kerrymountainrescue.ie](http://www.kerrymountainrescue.ie)

2007 was quite a busy year for KMRT involving many happy and some not so happy callouts.

For many team members the highlight of the year must have been that moonlit night of 7th August when we successfully located an 82 year old lady and her 16 year old friend after they had been benighted while descending from the summit of Corrán Tuathail.

Who knows what 2008 will bring, hopefully no further fatalities.

Our training team are planning that all our members will be proficient in first aid to REC4 level and have organised courses accordingly. We are hoping to have our first active (sorry Pat Falvey) team member on the summit of Everest in 2008. All our best wishes go to John Dowd.

Brendan Coffey, Public Relations Officer



**Mayo Mountain Rescue Team** (est. late 1980's)

[www.mayomrt.com](http://www.mayomrt.com)

**MMRT Development Activities in 2007:**

- Commissioning of our new Mobile Communications Vehicle
- Coordinating two mountain events on Mweelrea and Croagh Patrick on the one day in June along with the Sligo/Leitrim and Galway Teams
- Coordinating the 2007 Reek Sunday Pilgrimage/National Exercise in July
- Installation of a Second Portocabin at our Croagh Patrick base at Taoibh na Croibhe.
- Initial Feasibility studies for a permanent base

**MMRT Development Activities in 2008:**

- Hosting IMRA AGM in Westport in January
- Completing Team External Assessment in April
- Coordinating the Reek Sunday Pilgrimage/National Exercise in July
- Initial Feasibility studies on Landrover Vehicle Replacement
- Advanced Feasibility studies for Permanent Base

Peter Jordan, Public Relations Officer





### Mourne Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1962)

[www.mmrt.org.uk](http://www.mmrt.org.uk)

**In 2007 we:**

- Hosted a Search Skills Course
- Held a technical rope rescue course with Derek Keegan
- Sent team members on an off road driver training course

Since the last edition of "Call Out" and throughout the 2nd quarter the Mourne MRT has taken receipt of our new Ford transit mobile communication base, which was funded by SportNI. There are several minor additions to be made to the vehicle along with the installation of radio systems, plasma tv and computer hardware/software to run the mapping and GPS facility currently being introduced to the team.

Since April the team have formed three groups to review SOP's and Policies. The areas covered are broken down into Technical, Search Management and First Aid. It is hoped that from these groups new and updated procedures will arise to assist with planning training provision and call out procedures.

The Mourne MRT were once again the proud recipients of yet another award from HRH Queen Elizabeth II. In early June we were awarded the 'Queen's Award for Voluntary Service'. It is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon groups of this kind and is equivalent in status to an MBE.

Looking forward to the rest of the year we have to finalise plans for the IMRA conference which is to be held in Newcastle in January 09. We are starting to take receipt of the development grant funding which we were successful in obtaining through SportNI and the NI government.

Ed Kilgore MBE, Chair



### North West Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1980)

[www.nwmrt.org](http://www.nwmrt.org)

In 2007 the NWMRT responded to 18 callouts/operations in 2007 and successfully undertook its 2 yearly assessment in November.

The Team website ([www.nwmrt.org](http://www.nwmrt.org)) was revamped to include a members only section. This has improved our internal communications, sharing of information and enhanced our professional image.

A wide ranging review of MR was undertaken by the NI Mountain & Cave Rescue Coordinating Committee and the report has just been completed and is being presented to the various statutory bodies and stakeholders. The recommendations should lend weight for greater practical support for the NI MR Teams from Government and Statutory Bodies.

**In 2008 we will:**

- Take delivery of three new Land Rover 110 Defender station wagons. We will also replace some old equipment and purchase some new equipment to expand our capabilities.
- Refurbish the NWMRT Fermanagh Rescue Base in Florencecourt.
- Undertake Joint Training exercises with neighbouring teams and improve lines of communications with them.
- Set up a North West Mountain Rescue Association (NWMRA) to support the team and assist in fundraising.
- Take forward issues raised within the review of Mountain Rescue in NI.

Frank Rafferty, Deputy Team Leader



### Search and Rescue Dog Association [SARDA] (est. 1987)

[www.sardaireland.com](http://www.sardaireland.com)

SARDA has dog teams currently in training with 2 qualified dog teams and about 4 teams approaching assessment level. The teams were called out for searches on 11 occasions during 2007 with dogs usually used to search peripheral areas. However, a recent operation in the Comeraghs proved the value of deploying a dog swiftly to the most likely search area with the casualty being quickly located for the rescue team.

During 2008, SARDA will be focussing on increasing the number of dog teams available for searches in all areas of Ireland. Furthermore, SARDA will be endeavouring to raise the awareness of the value of search dogs in locating missing people quickly, especially when used in the most likely area of search. National training weekends will continue during 2008 and are proving beneficial to enthusiastic handlers at all levels, enabling them to build their expertise and gain from interaction with handlers around the country.

Liz Alderton, Public Relations Officer





### Sligo Leitrim Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1975)

The beginning of 2007 saw us lose a number of seasoned and experienced members for one reason or another. This left us under strength so in September we recruited six new probationary members to the team. Training has been ongoing for these people over the latter part of the year and into 2008.

We had an extremely busy start to the year, not only on training but call outs also. Between St. Patrick's Day and Easter we had three call outs in the space of six days. We are looking forward to taking delivery of our new Team Vehicle in the coming weeks for which we are busy drawing up plans for at present. This is a great boost to the team as our old vehicle is showing it's age. For the remainder of the year we intend to focus on fund raising and locating a permanent base. Operating out of the team vehicle and a succession of sheds is becoming increasingly unfeasible for us so hopefully 2008 will see us with a permanent home with storage, heating & drying facilities.

Trevor Lindsay, Team Leader



### South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association (est. 1977)

[www.semra.ie](http://www.semra.ie)

In 2007 the South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association (SEMRA) celebrated 30 years of voluntary unbroken service to the people of the South East of Ireland. It also turned out to be one of the busiest years with 22 incidents recorded. At the start of the year we organised the IMRA conference and AGM in Aherlow, and on Sunday when two team members were elected to the Chair and Secretary's positions it was indeed one of the team's proudest moments. Well done again to Liam and Mary. To all the members that turned out for call outs and training events organised during the year - WELL DONE and Thank you. Remember everyday we put on the SEMRA jacket is a highlight.

This year we are taking on new trainees so it's going to be an exciting year for them and us. For full team members our training officer has a full range of courses lined up at home and away. We are looking forward to long hot summer days on the mountains, and Tipperary winning the Hurling all Ireland Championship. (We can but dream), and going back to Croagh Patrick in July and meeting and working with friends from all the other IMRA teams. In this our 31st year, we all look forward to meeting the challenge of being a member of this team, and in doing so helping people that need it.

Jimmy Barry, Public Relations Officer



### Tramore Cliff & Mountain Rescue Team (est. 1978)

[www.cliffrescue.ie](http://www.cliffrescue.ie)

In 2007 the team focused on building team membership by increasing our profile in the local community. We were lucky to receive some sponsorship as a result. In addition we developed our mountain skills through additional training and courses. In the winter of 2007 we introduced night training exercises to orient team members to the "real-life" situation of rescue. These proved very successful.

Our plans for 2008 include completing the Team Assessment in the first half of the year. In addition, the team will apply for funding to move from Level 3 to Level 2 and allowing us to increase/upgrade our mountain rescue capabilities. We currently have an aggressive fund-raising campaign for a new rescue vehicle which is bringing us closer to our fund-raising goal and increasing our profile locally. We will continue to work with youth groups in the area. Towards the end of the year, we will implement plans to redesign our team base which will improve the safety and privacy of team equipment and paperwork.

Margaret Carroll, Public Relations Officer



## » 2007 Financial Report

### Receipts

	Euro	%
<b>OPENING BALANCES</b>		
Cash on hand	215	
Bank Current Account	8,273	
Outstanding Cheques	744	
Bank Deposit Account	5,007	
Bank Term Deposit Account	15,351	
<b>INCOME</b>		
5% Levy of NCC Grant '06	7,243	3%
IMRA Sub. (@ €250.00)	2,750	1%
Pub. Lia. Fund (2% of IMRA PLI)	5,399	2%
NI MRT's in RoI (2% of PA Ins)	-----	0%
Donations/Sundry Income	7,875	4%
Training Income	2,580	1%
Grant Income (2006)	122,836	56%
Account Transfer	-----	0%
Interest Accrued	456	0%
Team Insurance Scheme 07/08	68,313	

**TOTAL** €245,553

### Expenditure

	Euro	%
Subsistence	3989	2%
Travel & Motor Fuels	1893	1%
Telecoms & Postage	158	0%
Stationery & Printing	8148	4%
Training & Accreditation	6273	3%
Insurances (all types)	105,721	53%
Mountain Rescue Equipment	2502	1%
Communications Equipment	36,949	18%
First Aid/Med. Equipment & Supplies	-----	0%
Grant to Teams/Projects/Dep Account	10,475	5%
Development Grant	25,000	12%

### CLOSING BALANCES

Cash on Hand	2815
Bank Current Account	45,823
Unpresented Cheques	25,305
Bank Deposit Account	4306
Bank Term Deposit Account	16,807

**TOTAL** €245,553

## » 2007 Executive Committee

IMRA Elected Officers: Mary Mullins (National Secretary), Liam McCabe (National Chair) and Liam Ryan (National Treasurer)



The IMRA Executive Committee consists of the three elected officers of National Chair, National Secretary and National Treasurer plus the team leaders of each team (or their representative – normally a senior team member)

Officer	Position	Team
Liam McCabe	National Chair	SEMRA
Mary Mullins	National Secretary	SEMRA
Liam Ryan	National Treasurer	Kerry MRT
Seamus Bradley	Team Leader	Donegal MRT
Mark Flynn	Team Leader	Dublin/Wicklow MRT
Tony Daley	Team Leader	Galway MRT
Ann Fitzpatrick	Team Leader	Glen of Imaal MRT
Richard Stack	Team Leader	Kerry MRT
Michael O'Malley	Team Leader	Mayo MRT
Ed Kilgore	Chair	Mourne MRT
Joe Dowdall	Team Leader	North West MRT
Tim Clesham	Chair	SARDA
Ann Murphy	Team Leader	SEMRA
Trevor Lindsay	Team Leader	Sligo/Leitrim MRT
Robert Hennessey	Team Leader	Tramore Cliff & MRT

In addition to the Elected Officers, the Executive Committee also consists of a team of Appointed Officers in a particular area of interest working on behalf of all teams.

Officer	Position	Team
Paul Moran	National Equipment Officer	Dublin/Wicklow MRT
Gerry Butler	National Communications Officer	Dublin/Wicklow MRT
Ronal Lenihan	BOS Representative	Glen of Imaal MRT
Diarmaid Scully	Department of Defence Liaison Officer	Glen of Imaal MRT
Diarmaid Scully	Irish Aviation Forum Liaison Officer	Glen of Imaal MRT
Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan	MCI Representative	MCI
Gerry Butler	Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Representative	Dublin/Wicklow MRT
Raymond Cowman	Civil Defence Liaison Officer	Tramore & Cliff MRT
Donal McNamara	Development Officer (Search and Tracking)	SEMRA

## »» 2007 Incident Report

The 12 teams in the Irish Mountain Rescue Association reported involvement in 201 separate incidents in 2007. This compares with 229 in 2006, 179 in 2005 and 176 in 2004. The table below shows the number of incidents each team was involved in.

Team Involvement in Incidents

Teams	Incidents
Donegal	18
Dublin/Wicklow	35
Galway	9
Glen of Imaal	37
Kerry	26
Mayo	29
Mourne	13
North West	20
SARDA	11
Sligo/Leitrim	11
South East	23
Tramore	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>246</b>

A total of 246 returns were made which referred to 201 incidents, allowing for situations where more than one team was involved. Data regarding the number of IMRA hours on 193 incidents was available - a total of 10,674 person hours. The equivalent of almost 1,335 working days, were invested by teams to deal with these incidents in 2007.

Other organisations and services assisted in approximately 48% of incidents. IMRA teams responded in 2007 to search incidents (41%), rescues (44%), and provided requested standby/assistance for organized events (14%). Excluding standbys, which are previously arranged with the requesting group, 68% of callouts came through the 112/999 system via the Gardaí, the PSNI or the Irish or HM Coast Guards.

Source of Callouts

Source of Callouts	%
Gardai/PSNI/Coastguards	68
Other Team/Organisation	21
Family/Guardian	1
Friend/Member of the Group	3
Member of the Public	3
On Site/Came across incident/etc	4

Summer and Autumn were the busiest times - Autumn (46%) was busier than Summer (28%) in 2007. Over half of all incidents occurred at weekends with more incidents occurring on Saturdays compared to Sundays. 322 people were directly assisted by mountain rescue personnel in 2007 during 156 incidents where information was recorded: 136 of these were injured including 11 fatally. Where injuries were noted, lower limb injuries were most common (44%). However there were a number of more serious injuries, with 5 involving head/spinal, 7 serious multiple injuries, 4 heart attacks and 9 other medical instances. In addition, there were 23 cases of hypothermia, for searches, the mean distance between the point where an individual was located and the point they were last seen was 2.1 km (range 0 – 6 km; median 2 km). Teams conducted 81 stretcher evacuations, (33 of these during the Croagh Patrick Reek Sunday operation) ranging in distance from 0.5 to 1.5 km – the average being 0.5 km. Evacuation by helicopter took place in 66 cases indicating the increased level of collaboration between IMRA teams and helicopter services on the island.

## »» Difficulties to be addressed

- IMRA and its teams are made up of volunteers. After training and responding to call outs (i.e. incidents requiring the need of the specialist skills of Mountain Rescue), volunteers by their very nature, have little time left over for other necessary tasks involving Mountain Rescue. One of these tasks is fundraising. All teams are under financial pressures with the money generated each year (through grant and donations) being less than the running costs of the teams. Providing financial relief to the teams is of the utmost importance to IMRA.
- Teams have worked hard to raise the funds for the equipment and vehicles that they need. Teams need a secure location where these vehicles and equipment can be washed, dried (if necessary), maintained and stored. Most of our teams are now working towards securing a "rescue base or post" – a facility to store equipment; conduct training, conduct meetings and to manage call outs when they occur. Obviously large sums of money are required to purchase land or to fund building or renovation costs. These sums are beyond the reach of most teams and they must work hard and plan well in order to save the money to afford a base.

## »» How can you help?

- Take out a subscription to our national publication "Call Out"
- Join our supporters club
- Run the Dublin Marathon for us and get family, friends, neighbours and work colleagues to sponsor you.
- Organise a fundraising event for us.
- If or when the time is right for you to include a charity in your will - please remember ours.
- If you are a private individual, walking/mountaineering club or any other group which may potentially benefit from our specialist services, make a donation to support us in our life-saving work. Instructions on how you can make a donation can be found on the "Supporting M.R." page of our website – [www.mountainrescue.ie](http://www.mountainrescue.ie).
- If you a company or corporation, you may like to sponsor us through your Corporate Responsibility initiatives. Contact our Development Officer, Paul Whiting, on 023-59822 to discuss how sponsoring IMRA could be beneficial to your organisation, the Mountain Rescue volunteers and the wider community we serve.