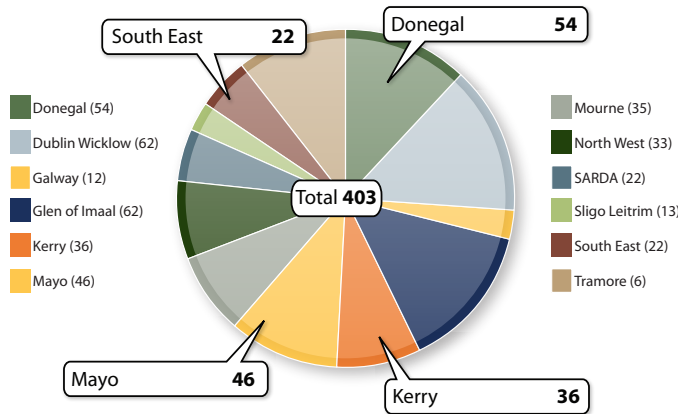


# Incident Statistics Report – 2009

The 12 Mountain Rescue Teams of the Irish Mountain Rescue Association (IMRA) reported involvement in 296 separate incidents in 2009. This compares with 214 in 2008, 201 in 2007, 229 in 2006, 279 in 2005 and 176 in 2004. A total of 403 returns were made referring to 296 separate incidents, allowing for incidents where more than one team was involved. The table below shows the number of incidents each team was involved in.

A total of 13,642.5 person-hours or almost 1,703 working days were provided by volunteers dealing with these 296 incidents. IMRA teams responded in 2009 to: 109 search incidents (37% of all operations) and 178 rescues (60%). Teams also provided pre-arranged standby/assistance for 9 organised events (3%).



Excluding standbys, which are previously arranged with the requesting group, 71% of callouts to Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs) came through the 112/999 system via An Garda Síochána, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the HSE Ambulance Service, or the Irish or UK Coast Guards. Sixty two (8%) of all calls to Mountain Rescue (MR) teams emanated from members of the public out on the hills either suffering a calamity or present at or coming across an incident, or from the organisers of mountain events; while 10% of calls were from other mountain rescue teams and occasionally wildlife rangers seeking support and assistance.

Irish mountain rescue teams mobilised during 2009 in response to 120 reports of persons reported injured; 169 incidents where persons were reported missing, lost or overdue; 12 sightings of flares, reported falls or shouts for help heard; 11 times to assist landowners recover lost and injured animals and 39 times to rescue crashed or stranded motorists and perform various humanitarian relief operations in snow, ice or flooding conditions. MR Teams deployed onto operation on 9 other occasions to provide an on-scene mountain emergency service presence in support of a range of community and tourist activities in mountain wildernesses, such as the annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick in Co. Mayo on the last Sunday of July each year.

Mountain search and rescue incidents were evenly distributed throughout all four seasons. Unusually severe winter conditions in early and late 2009 produced increases in operations for all IMRA teams when they responded by providing rescue and humanitarian relief services to local communities and persons stranded in vehicles during snow & ice conditions; though August 2009 also produced a comparable level of search and rescue operations.

Seventy-one percent of all mountain rescue incidents occurred at weekends (Fri, Sat, Sun or Mon) - with 8% more incidents occurring on Saturday compared to Sundays. Statistics indicates the likelihood of a mountain rescue callout occurring on Saturday & Sunday is almost twice that of a Friday or Monday and three times that of a Wednesday.

Analysis of the outcomes from mountain search operations indicate that: 16% of missing persons sought turned up or were located outside the search area, while another 6% of those sought were found by other

search & rescue agencies. The average distance between the point where an individual was located and the point they were last seen was 1.91 km while the range these distances was from 0.5 to 5.0km (the median distance was 1.7 km). Statistics also show that persons searched for were not found in 13% of incidents.

416 uninjured people were assisted directly by mountain rescue teams in 2009 during the 296 incidents where information was recorded. Another 154 people were injured, treated and evacuated to primary medical care and 10 fatalities were handed over to the statutory emergency services.

Incident outcomes record that rescue operations located, treated and evacuated 30.6% of subjects, while 26.1% were located and evacuated i.e. did not require treatment for injuries; Outcomes for 10% of incidents are either not recorded or were described as 'Other/Not Relevant'.

Where injuries were noted, lower limb injuries were most common at 33%. However over 55 cases of serious injuries, involving head/spinal, serious multiple injuries, heart attacks and other medical instances were treated and evacuated. In addition, 44 of the 154 of those injured were also suffering from hypothermia. Teams recorded 59 stretcher evacuations with an average carry distance of 1.91 km. Recorded distances that MRT's stretched casualties to waiting ambulances or helicopters ranged 0.1 km to 5.0 km with a median distance of 2.0 km.

Casualty evacuation by helicopter is recorded in 49 incidents. This figure and operational statistics reports for 2009 do not record the increasingly effective use that helicopters from various services provide as tactical airlift support to mountain search & rescue operations.

Injury Types reported:	No. of Incidents
Lower Limb Fractures/Dislocations	48
Minor cuts & bruises	8
Upper Limb fractures/dislocations	5
Other medical injuries/conditions	28
Head and/or Spinal injuries	8
Abdominal/Chest injuries	4
Serious Multiple Fractures	2
Heart Attacks	7
Serious Lacerations	3
Pelvic Fractures	3
Other / Unknown	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>
Hypothermic cases	44

Incidents reported with:	No. of Incidents
One person injured	106
No injuries	5
>2 people injured	11
Two people injured	99
Unknown /not recorded	83
Not relevant i.e. standbys, other	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>214</b>

ANALYSIS		
Mid-Week day	60	32%
Weekend day (Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon)	128	68%

IMRA would like to acknowledge the assistance and support of the following agencies in caring for the casualty on the mountain:-

An Garda Síochána, P.S.N.I., Irish Air Corps, R.A.F., Irish Coast Guard, HM Coast Guard, H.S.E., N.J.A.S., Fire Service, Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service, Irish Army, Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross, Order of Malta, Irish Cave Rescue Organisation and the National Park and Wildlife Service.

Monthly & Seasonal Analysis		
Month	Incidents	%
Jan	34	8%
Feb	44	11%
Mar	24	6%
Apr	22	5%
May	28	7%
Jun	32	8%
July	28	7%
Aug	47	12%
Sept	39	10%
Oct	26	6%
Nov	24	6%
Dec	55	14%
Spring	90	22.3%
Summer	88	21.8%
Autumn	110	27.3%
Winter	113	28.6%

