



Saving Lives  
in the  
Mountains

24 / 7 / 365

# Mountain Rescue Ireland

Annual Report  
2023

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# Any individual or group requiring assistance in the upland and mountainous environs on the island of Ireland will be responded to by volunteers embedded in the local community.

These volunteers are organised into mountain rescue teams and tasked by the police force, A.G.S. within Ireland and the P.S.N.I. in Northern Ireland.

This tasking leads to an emergency response which will search, locate and rescue those seeking assistance and escort them to safety or deliver them to more definitive medical care.

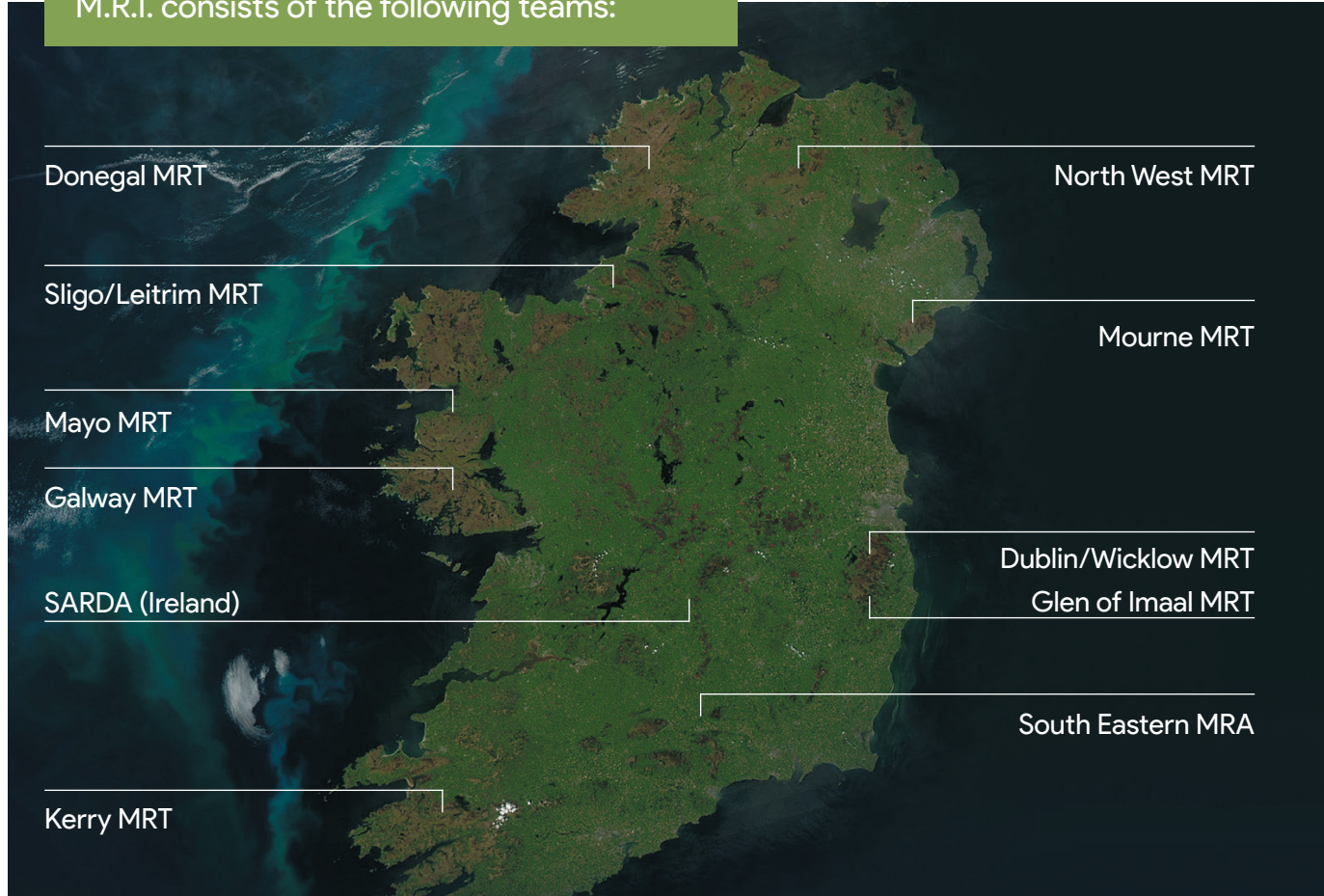
Collectively these teams come together as Mountain Rescue Ireland (M.R.I.) to represent the views of its members on mountain rescue and safety, to represent and liaise on general matters with government, to

propagate information on mountain rescue and safety and take such action as may be necessary to promote a wider appreciation of the need for mountain safety.

M.R.I. is a member of the International Commission of Alpine Rescue (I.C.A.R.) the international body for mountain rescue organisations dedicated to the advancement of best practice in mountain rescue worldwide.

This report reflects back on 2023 and presents the commitment and work of the teams dedicated to responding to those in need.

## M.R.I. consists of the following teams:



Donegal MRT

Sligo/Leitrim MRT

Mayo MRT

Galway MRT

SARDA (Ireland)

Kerry MRT

North West MRT

Mourne MRT

Dublin/Wicklow MRT

Glen of Imaal MRT

South Eastern MRA



Facing into 2025, recognition is needed that saving a life in an upland or mountainous environment requires commitment to the mission at many levels.

For the mountain rescue volunteer to assist the casualty they must be supported by the mountain rescue team in the provision of the following:



The casualty requiring assistance is dependant on all these levels for support, regardless of the casualty being a visitor to or a resident of the island. It is vital that all stakeholders: local councils, government departments and agencies, and other interested parties recognise their place in the mountain rescue mission.

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244  
DAY TIME

372

128  
NIGHT TIME

TOTAL  
INCIDENTS

66  
HELICOPTER  
TASKINGS

7,443  
PERSON  
HOURS

HELP!

999

GARDA  
/ PSNI

Callout Officer

Callout SMS

MOBILE BASE

MOUNTAIN  
RESCUE BASE

Mountain rescue teams are only possible due to the commitment of the volunteers who dedicate to being on call 24/7/365 to assist those in need

28  
LOST

28  
MISSING

121  
MINOR  
INJURIES

47  
SERIOUS  
INJURIES

7  
TOTAL NO.  
FATALITIES

5  
CRAGFAST

9  
FOREIGN  
TOURISTS

255 of the 372 callouts (69%) were for hikers/climbers  
288 of the callouts (77%) were located in the mountains

\*Mountain rescue teams are tasked to a variety of incidents arising from their wilderness & mountainous capabilities.



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Registered Charity Number: 20026370. CHY (Revenue) Number: 10412

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# Donegal Mountain Rescue Team (DMRT)



Donegal Mountain Rescue Team covers the County of Donegal, an area of 4,861km<sup>2</sup>. This is made up of the iconic mountains of Errigal, Muckish, Slieve League, The Bluestack Mountain Range, the Derryveagh Mountains and the Urris Hills. This year we were tasked to 26 incidents, a significant increase on last year. We have noticed that this year, there is a growing number of callouts taking place later in the day which can often involve more resources and person hours. We have also unfortunately had more fatality call outs this year than other years - a worrying trend. As the team evolves to take in to account these challenging callouts, so does our training. This includes training in certain "hotspots" which are popular call-out areas. These areas are being mapped, escape routes planned and work is being done to determine the best practice on what is needed in each area.

This year, we have also been tasked by the An Garda Síochána for several missing persons. This has involved our call out co-ordinators organising search plans and being heavily involved in the areas being searched.

The team has sent members to attend skills days and weekends arranged by MRI. These events have been very beneficial and have developed and expanded each members skill level and experience. These MRI-funded events help members of the team evolve and bring new ideas to the team, as well as creating bonding experiences.

We were invited to the Marine Rescue Coordination Centre in Malin Head Inishowen, where we were able to see first-hand what happens when we put a request in for Rescue 118. The staff work around the clock monitoring Channel 16 VHF. Again, putting a face to the name has proved invaluable to the joint relationship of these two organizations, especially in recent call outs.

The team vehicles required a lot of maintenance this year, which has affected our budgets particularly as costs in general continue to rise. We were, however, able to upgrade one of our vehicles to accommodate a casualty transported in a stretcher, making casualty extraction much easier for the team. Our PRO this year has promoted our Facebook and Instagram

pages with great success. We have certainly started seeing more focus on the team from the local papers, which has resulted in several radio and paper interviews. This all helps in building the teams local profile and hopefully, going forward, we will see more donations as a result.

With regards to fundraising this year, we have discovered that street collections are very difficult. We were lucky to have access to one of the local shopping centres before Christmas and this certainly helped the bank balance, however fundraising is getting harder for all the teams. If it wasn't for the kind and extremely generous donations from the public, we certainly would struggle as I'm sure other teams would agree. The donations this year we received were extremely generous, whether big or small, it shows the appreciation the public have for our team.

Going forward this year, the focus of the team's training will be based on past call outs, where members will work together to see where things can be improved. Training will take place in the previously mentioned "hotspot" areas and will focus on worst case scenarios, problem solving and putting this into practice.



# Sligo Leitrim Mountain Rescue Team (SLMRT)



## Incidents

During 2023 SLMRT conducted 16 callouts, including 14 rescues and 2 searches, one of which lasted 4 days and logged over 900hrs person hours. These callouts typically saw our team operating with other agencies including other MRI Teams, Gardaí, Irish Coast Guard, RNLI, and the Fire service.

## Training

Training this year comprised of over 30 sessions covering aspects such as night navigation, medical, PPE inspection, rigging course in Doolin, REC 3 first aid, party leader course, and some joint exercises with other agencies.

## Events

The Team also committed to 8 different events as part of our fundraising strategy and public relations. Our assistance was giving to local mountain events as well as the national exercise held on Croagh Patrick.

## Fundraising

The Team had 2 main fundraising events this year, our annual street bucket collection which takes place on the Halloween

bank holiday, and a raffle held at a local country music festival. We would sincerely like to thank everyone who has donated to the team.

## Vehicles

SLMRT has 2 vehicles in use a 2015 VW Rocton 4X4 and a 2020 Ford Transit which is our Incident command unit.

## Members

Currently we have 25 active members. Over the course of 2023, team members gave up over 2,800 hours of their time to commit to callouts, training and fundraising.

## Team Base

The Team is currently housed within an area vacated by Sligo County Council. This has provided us with a secure facility to keep all the vehicles and equipment, and also space to conduct training. We are very grateful for the assistance provided by Sligo County Council.



# Mayo Mountain Rescue Team (MMRT)



2023 was another successful and busy year for the Mayo team. We continued to upskill members in various aspects of mountain craft, remote first aid, and technical rescue.

We responded to 34 callouts in 2023, which is a decrease from that recorded in 2022. As in previous years, over 70% of our callouts were on Croagh Patrick. Numbers climbing the mountain in 2023 showed a decline on those who climbed in 2022. This was noticeable especially on Reek Sunday, the last Sunday in July which is a traditional climbing day. In 2023, we estimate that c.5,000 climbed on Reek Sunday, which is a significant decrease on the pre-covid numbers of 10,000-15,000.

Reek Sunday is an important national annual event in the life of Mountain Rescue in Ireland, and we are grateful for the ongoing support that mountain rescue teams from Ireland (and beyond) provide to ensure adequate rescue resources are onsite to meet demand on the day.

Moreover, substantial remedial works on the mountain (including a path on the steepest part of it) has contributed to a reduction in the number and nature of casualties we treat. Many accidents now take place lower down on the mountain and typically consist of lower leg injuries. The Irish Coast Guard

(ICG) heli-evacuated serious injuries. We continue to train with the ICG on a regular basis to ensure interactions between MMRT and the ICG are conducted to best-practice protocols.

Furthermore, members have successfully completed winter training courses in Scotland, thereby enhancing the team's considerable skills set.

Our team has a regular compliment of 25 members. During the year, we said goodbye and thanks to 4 members and welcome several new members onto the team.

We continue to fundraise locally and are well supported in all our fundraising activities. As a team we are seen as an essential part of the local infrastructure and we regularly take part in the local St. Patrick's Day parade. This helps maintain a high profile, which in turn, aids our fundraising work.





# Galway Mountain Rescue Team (GMRT)



## Training

Galway Mountain Rescue's training was in full swing during this period with members re-certifying their medical skills at REC / CFR-A level, rigging courses, VHF courses, drone training, and 3 new party leaders. Additionally, team members attended rigging, joint training and governance sessions.

## Grants

Galway Mountain Rescue grant spending in 2023 was focused primarily on equipment purchases and medical training. This has allowed each member to be kitted out with essential equipment and has included the purchase of rigging equipment to aid in technical rescues, cold weather equipment and training aids to help develop our skills. We were also fortunate to avail of the CLAR grant to aid in the purchase and fitting out of our new Base Command Vehicle.

## Equipment

In 2023 Galway Mountain Rescue continued with the replacement and improvement of the rigging equipment with the purchase of specialised kit, this process is now complete. The upgrade of personal team issued equipment included the purchase of cold weather clothing, VHF radio ancillaries and

backpacks. The aim is to make sure all operational members of GMRT are as well-equipped as possible when on a call out. We have also purchased a new shield for our FERNO stretcher to protect the casualty from the elements to aid in their comfort and care.

## Capability Development

Galway Mountain Rescue has concentrated on building inter-agency operability in 2023. A concerted effort was made to meet and work with other emergency agencies, including An Garda Síochána, Civil Defence, ICRO and IRCG. The learning was significant, and we look forward to working with all agencies in the future. We have also been improving our medical training with members all improving their knowledge and qualifications.

## Fundraising

Our Flag Day collection on the streets of Galway City on the October Bank Holiday weekend was a great success in terms of fundraising and public engagement including former team members popping over to say hello. The team's annual "Howl at the Moon" night walk was a success with over 500 persons taking part.



# Search & Rescue Dog Association (Ireland)



## Team Details

Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA) Ireland is a national voluntary SAR organization specialised in the training and deployment of search and rescue dogs. Our dog teams, which consist of the handler and their dog, can be tasked to search for injured or missing persons anywhere in Ireland and are effective in mountains, woodlands, rural and urban areas, waterways and shorelines.

## Team Members

We currently have 12 fully qualified mountain rescue search dog teams, and hope to have up to 3 additional dog teams on our callout list in the coming months. We have multiple prospective and trainee dog teams and several dedicated dogs body members who assist with training. We had one dog retire this year, Syd, who was a valuable air scenting dog in the West of Ireland. Sadly, Finn, one of our green tag dogs passed away this year also after a short illness.

## Callouts

Our 12 qualified dog teams responded to 33 callouts in 2023 in counties such as Cork, Dublin, Tipperary, Galway, Leitrim, Meath, Kerry, Mayo and Waterford. We have searched in the Galtees, the Macgillycuddy Reeks, the Blackstairs Mountains, Cliffs of Moher and the Dublin Mountains. SARDA Ireland search dog teams have aided in the recovery of several missing persons in 2023, some thankfully alive, whilst some were sadly deceased. Many of these searches were conducted alongside other agencies such as An Garda Síochána, Irish Coast Guard, Civil Defence, National Ambulance Service and Mountain Rescue. Similar to 2022, our main tasking agency in 2023 was An Garda Síochána. SARDA Ireland are being called to increasing numbers of lowland and semi-urban searches and we are glad to be able to provide support throughout the Irish community, regardless of the area or terrain. SARDA dog teams are available to assist all mountain rescue teams throughout the country as required, via SARCALL or by contacting the SARDA Ireland Call Out Coordinator on 087 1798460.

## Training

Traditionally, our dogs are graded to the 'mountain rescue search dog' standard. These air-scenting dogs can be used

to search through large areas very quickly and effectively for human scent.

SARDA Ireland are now also training trailing search dogs. Trailing dogs are 'scent-specific' and use a scent article belonging to the missing person to follow the missing persons route (the scent left behind) from their last known point. These dogs will follow the specific scent of the missing person and will eliminate competing scents, human and otherwise, that do not match the scent profile. The trailing programme is run with the support of NSARDA, the umbrella group which connects SARDA Ireland to sister teams in the UK. We have 2 trailing dog teams going forward for assessment in 2024. We wish them luck.

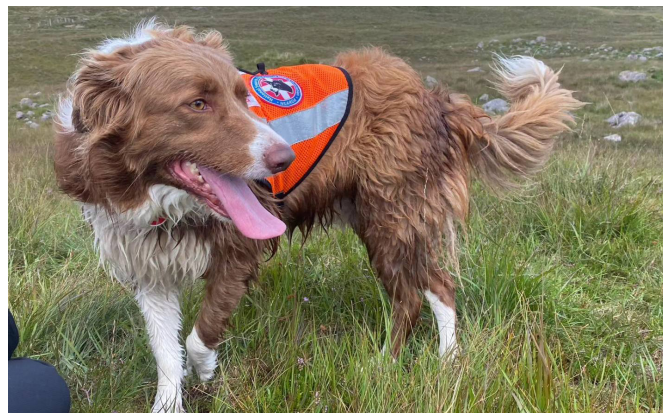
## Public Interest

We are happy to say that there has always been a large interest from the public to support or get involved with SARDA Ireland. Many have volunteered as 'dogsbodies' (those who hide on the hills for our dog teams) and to assist with fundraising.

## Fundraisers

SARDA Ireland carried out 2 fundraising Flag days, Cork in January (€7,746.52) and Limerick in November (€3,628.83). We had various people donate online over the various platforms, such as Facebook, iDonate, and PayPal.

We thank all those who assisted SARDA in 2023 and we look ahead to 2024 with a growing team of committed members.



# Kerry Mountain Rescue Team (KMRT)



Kerry Mountain Rescue Team dealt with 42 callouts in 2023, which was significantly down on callout numbers for the previous 2 years. The exceptionally poor weather experienced locally during the traditional peak holiday periods may have been a contributing factor as there was a noticeable decrease in numbers visiting the McGillicuddy's Reeks at these times. Other factors may have included reduced visitor numbers in general to upland areas throughout the year and (hopefully!) the effectiveness of targeted mountain safety awareness campaigns.

The majority of team callouts in 2023 were once again to the McGillicuddy's Reeks, with the highest concentration of incidents in and around Corrán Tuathail. There was also a notable increase in callouts to areas outside the Reeks such as the Paps, Old Kenmare Road, Clara, Brandon and Torc to name a few. Slips and falls accounted for a large proportion of the incidents with an unusually high number of callouts to lost parties also recorded.

A highlight of the year was the successful rescue of 6 persons who had become cragfast in winter conditions on precarious ground on the south side of the Bone on the 8th March. The operation lasted 10 hours and involved the technical extraction of the 6 casualties in challenging conditions.

The team continued to train regularly throughout the year, ensuring that essential core skills such as first aid, casualty care and evacuation, technical ropework, navigation, 4x4 and radio communications were refreshed and newer skills and techniques well-practiced in all conditions. Training highlights included a technical session near the rarely visited Mullaghanattin and EFR refresher training with Pat Reid in Beaufort.

Our technical and equipment committees continued reviews on our systems and processes with the aim of continuously improving the team's technical capabilities and ensuring that all equipment is fit for purpose and in good order. The team introduced the Petzl Maestro in 2023 to improve our lowering and hauling systems and this has proven to be very effective in a number of operations throughout the year.

2023 also saw the commencement and (almost!) completion of our new base extension. The new extension will provide us with additional space for team vehicles, badly needed equipment storage and drying facilities, as well as a meeting room and new toilet facilities. We look forward to completing the fit out in early 2024 and finally celebrating the official opening. We could not have completed this project without the generosity of the public and we would like to sincerely thank all who have donated to and fundraised for the team over the past year. From individuals to local businesses, schools, hillwalking/mountaineering clubs and scout groups, it has been a real community effort.

Special mention also to the Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle (ROKCC) and all who cycled, volunteered and raised funds on behalf of the team. Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir! The new extension will greatly improve our operations and ensure that we can continue to provide a top-class voluntary rescue service here in the South-West.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to wish our colleagues in MRI, SARDA, Coastguard, AGS and the Ambulance service a very happy, safe and prosperous 2024.



# North West Mountain Rescue Team (NWMRT)



The Team (as of the 1 January 2024), has 48 members (36 are full and 12 probationary members). In the East of the province, the callouts were primarily confined to the Slemish Mountain and the Cavehill Divis Mountain areas and in the West of the province, Cuilcagh Mountain, Lough Erne and the Gortin Glen areas.

One of the aims of the team is to attend public events as part of our charitable purpose “To educate the public on hazards in mountains and offer practical advice to reduce risks” The team encourages and has participated in events such as training events (Reek Sunday and FEARmanagh events) as well as local Scout group demonstrations.

Notable incidents that serve as examples of good inter-team and cross-border working between MRT teams include:

- Request to assist Sligo Leitrim MRT (Sat 21 January 2023) - 5 NWMRT Team members responded to a call for assistance from SLMRT in the extraction of 3 casualties from Dermott and Grainne’s Cave (Benwisikin), Co. Sligo.
- Request to assist Sligo Leitrim MRT (Sun 9 July and Tue 11 July 2023) - 17 (9 July) and 10 (11 July) NWMRT Team members responded to a call for assistance from SLMRT in the search for a missing person. This was a technical extraction on very steep ground in poor conditions.

## Team Leadership and Matters

2023 was a very challenging year for the team which resulted in a significant leadership change for the team following the Annual General meeting on 25 May. Whilst the leadership structure remained unchanged (Trustees and Team Officers) there were a lot of new members undertaking roles within the team. Of most significance was the appointment of 6 new Trustees, from 9, to oversee the governance and strategic direction of the Charity.

## Grants and Fundraising

In 2023 we received grants totalling £31,488.86.

Fundraising activities were pursued with the usual vigour with the team efforts realising a total amount of GBP £18,162.42.

The team recognises the importance of fundraising activities in striving to manage a sustainable MRT service to our community. The team takes this opportunity to thank all members and all generous contributions received in the past year that greatly contributes to our finance and the running of the team.

## Exercises and Events

### Inter Team Training ① – 22 January 2023

This was the most ambitious team training event organised by the team in recent years. The exercise on Cuilcagh Mountain, Co Fermanagh, was based on a multi agency effort in dealing with casualty care and extraction from the summit via the timber boardwalk. Over 40 team members were in attendance including representatives from Sligo Leitrim MRT, NI Ambulance Service (HART team), PSNI, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

The training exercise was undertaken in difficult conditions and was a significant success in establishing and confirming methods of working should a real life event occur. The exercise was also notable as it is apparently the first inter agency and cross border team working event in Northern Ireland. The event was attended by the press and media and subsequently reported on in the local papers and on national TV.

### Inter Team Training ② – 22/23 April 2023

The team organised a further inter agency training weekend in April, however this exercise was based in and around Lough Erne. This event involved 25 attendees over the 2 days and involved water and island search along with casualty recovery from water. This was an opportunity for the team’s recently trained and equipped Swift Water Rescue team to work alongside water-based SAR teams. This exercise demonstrated the team’s further development in the service provided and the ability to work alongside other teams in partnership. Teams and services that attended included: Sligo Leitrim MRT, Moffat MRT (England), PSNI (Boat Unit) NIAS, RNLI, NI Fire and Rescue Service.

# Mourne Mountain Rescue Team (MMRT)



## Introduction

The Mourne Mountain Rescue Team (MMRT) is a dedicated group of volunteers committed to providing search and rescue services in the Mourne Mountains and surrounding areas. Our team operates 24/7, 365 days a year, ensuring the safety of all who enjoy these beautiful landscapes.

## Operations and Incidents

In 2023, the Mourne MRT responded to a total of 85 incidents, a slight increase from the 78 incidents in 2022. These incidents ranged from minor injuries to complex rescues requiring multi-agency coordination. The most common incidents involved hikers who had lost their way or sustained injuries.

## Training and Development

Our team members underwent extensive training throughout the year, including: Mountain Navigation and Rescue Techniques: Regular training sessions to enhance skills in navigation, first aid, and technical rescue.

**Joint Exercises:** Collaborations with other emergency services, including the Coast Guard and Air Ambulance, to ensure seamless operations during multi-agency responses.

**Community Engagement:** Educational programs and workshops aimed at promoting safety and preparedness among outdoor enthusiasts.

## Equipment and Resources

Thanks to generous donations and grants, we were able to upgrade several pieces of essential equipment, including:

**New Rescue Stretchers:** Lightweight and durable stretchers for efficient patient transport.

**Communication Devices:** Enhanced radios and GPS units to improve coordination during rescues.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Updated gear to ensure the safety of our volunteers in various weather conditions.

## Community Support and Fundraising

The support from our community has been overwhelming. Key fundraising activities included:

**Local Business Partnerships:** Collaborations with local businesses provided additional funding and resources.

**Public Donations:** Continued generosity from the public, ensuring we can maintain and improve our services.

## Challenges and Future Goals

While 2023 was a successful year, we faced several challenges, including:

**Increasing Callouts:** The rising number of incidents highlights the need for ongoing recruitment and training of volunteers.

**Funding:** Ensuring sustainable funding remains a priority to maintain our high standards of service and to fund our new base project.

## Looking ahead, our goals for 2024 include:

**Expanding Our Team:** Recruiting and training new volunteers to meet the growing demand.

**Enhancing Training Programs:** Introducing advanced rescue techniques and mental health support for our team members.

**Strengthening Community Ties:** Increasing our outreach and educational efforts to promote safety in the mountains.

## Conclusion

The Mourne Mountain Rescue Team remains committed to providing exceptional search and rescue services. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our volunteers, supporters, and the community for their unwavering support. Together, we ensure that the Mourne Mountains remain a safe and enjoyable place for all.

# Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team (DWMRT)



2023 was another busy year for DWMRT with 97 callouts spread across our area of operations from Wicklow to Carlingford, Co. Louth. The number of callouts was slightly down on previous years but overall, the request for assistance remains very high with an average of almost two callouts per week.

The team conducted regular monthly training events throughout the year. In addition to internally run training events, team members attended external courses including Rope Rescue Operator and Winter Skills Basics. Team members also recertified where necessary as EFR/CFR-A. This is an ongoing annual requirement whereby all team members rotate through recertification unless they have a higher medical qualification.

The team invested heavily in the comprehensive refurbishment of two team Land rovers which should enable them to remain in service for the foreseeable future.

Our focus for 2024 is to obtain sufficient funds to start the construction of our team base. We are awaiting the outcome of grant submissions in this regard.

## Fundraising events

DWMRT carries out 3 major fundraising events each year. The Art O'Neill Challenge (AON) takes place in January and

commemorates the escape of Art O'Neill from Dublin Castle in 1592. Participants make their way from Dublin Castle to Glenmalur, Co. Wicklow.

We have Walk the Line in March which is a 22km night walk on sustainable tracks. Participants have the option of self-guided or walking as part of a guided group and it's an ideal introduction to those who have not walked at night in the hills. Our third fundraiser is Run the Line which takes place in November. This is a hill run over 22km on sustainable tracks.



# Glenn of Imaal Mountain Rescue Team (GOIMRT)



The Glen of Imaal Wicklow Mountain Rescue Irish Red Cross celebrated our 40th anniversary in 2023. It provided the team an opportunity to express gratitude to our partners and local community who have supported the Glen Team throughout the years. Their support, contributions and collaboration have been instrumental in the success of the team providing a 24/7 land search and rescue to the lost, missing and injured in the Wicklow Mountains.

Our 40th anniversary provided the team with a good opportunity to take stock of the many organisations that make our community service possible. Thanks again to An Garda Síochána, Irish Red Cross, Irish Coastguard, Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team, SARDA, Irish Air Corps, Civil Defence, The Wicklow Fire Brigade, the National Ambulance Service, PSNI, Community First Responders, National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Charlie Froud family and Foundation and Coillte

In addition to our 34 training sessions a year the team members were invited to join Swedish Mountain Rescue National Training Week in Bydalen, Sweden. We also had our yearly Winter Skills refresher training in Scotland. Search

management training was provided by The Centre of Search Management.

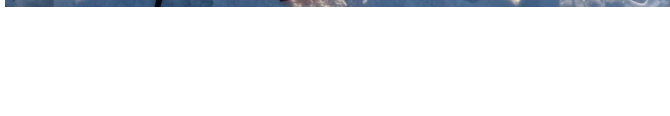
The team took part in the Party Leader Course run by Mountain Rescue Ireland, along with other teams from all around Ireland.

Two of our team members instructed the Mountain Rescue Ireland foundation rigging course in Clare, while four others took part.

We had a great turnout for our main fundraiser 'The Moonlight Challenge'. In addition we had a successful 'Craic of Dawn' fundraiser. The team planted 700 native trees for every participant of the 2022 moonlight challenge with the help of Rewild Wicklow, a project overseen by the NPWS.

In 2023 six of our new team members successfully completed their 13 month probationary period.

Through prudent timely planning, a strong steady leadership, our nurtured family ethos and a pure love of the mountains the Glen Team will remain on 'standby' and ready to react!



# South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association (SEMRA)

South Eastern



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Mountain Rescue Ireland - Annual Report 2023



As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with pride and gratitude. 2023 has been another remarkable year for the South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association (SEMRA). Our team of 56 dedicated members has tirelessly served our community, demonstrating unwavering commitment and resilience.

Our success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our volunteer members. Behind every SEMRA member stands a supportive family. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to these unsung heroes who enable us to carry out our vital work. Their unwavering support allows us to be there when it matters most.

SEMRA actively participated in various events throughout the year, collaborating with other Emergency Services. Highlights include our presence at the St. Patrick's Day Parades in Cork and Tipperary, the National Services Day events in both Cork and Kilkenny, and the Winterval Blue Light Display in Waterford.

Operationally we continue to enjoy a close working relationships with An Garda Síochána, National Ambulance, Coast Guard, Rescue 117 Heli crew, Civil Defence, Search and Rescue Fire Service and our fellow Mountain Rescue Teams to highlight a few. Corporation from the public is always greatly appreciated.

In 2023, SEMRA bid farewell to our trusty 2008 Land Rover Defender. Thanks to the CLÁR 2022 Scheme grant, we welcomed a brand-new Defender to our fleet. This upgrade ensures our ability to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies.

SEMRA received significant press coverage in 2023. Local media highlighted our callouts, while national outlets featured several of our missions. Notably, we were featured in the documentary Tarrthálaithe na hÉireann, produced for TG4.

- 41 callouts were responded to in 2023, slightly fewer than the previous years (45 in 2022 and 43 in 2020).
- Our team is nearing a significant milestone: 700 callouts, expected to be reached early in 2024.
- These callouts included 19 search operations, 20 rescue

operations, one fatality, and two false alarms.

- Our coverage spanned diverse areas, including the Galtees, Comeragh, Knockmealdown, Slieve Blooms, Ballyhouras, Blackstairs Mountains, Slievenamon, Bree Hill, Brandon Hill, Dranagh, Mullinavat, and a coastline callout to Ballydwan Beach.

SEMRA continue to train locally and further afield. This involves ongoing local training events and joint events with Mountain Rescue and other services drawn from across the Island and internationally. The team have increased our inhouse capacity with the inclusion of team certified CFR trainers. This complements the EFR and FAR level first aid that is operated by the team. Ongoing external training included Heli Training sessions with the IRCG and MRI facilitated events such as the MRI hosted Annual Meet in Glendalough, Co Wicklow, Party Leader and Technical Rescue courses. Team members also attended winter training with TORP MR team in the TATRA mountains, Poland and the international conference, ICAR in Sudtiro, Italy.

A sign of the times is that some training is conducted online. This has allowed for increased connection with our colleagues internationally. In 2023 the team attended a number of events where we engaged with diverse topics "Celebrating Women in Mountain Rescue" (Mountain Rescue England and Wales), "To rescue against time: A snowmobile accident in Northern Sweden", presented by J Olofsson & M Nordgren (Swedish MR) and "SAR experiences in Turkey in the immediate aftermath of an earthquake" presented By Mark Scorer (SARAID, UK).

SEMRA hold an annual fundraiser each November, the Long Way Round (LWR). In 2023 the LWR sold out early which is a testament to the events continued popularity and the generosity of the public. As we look ahead, we remain committed to our mission. SEMRA stands strong, ready to serve our community, and we express our deepest gratitude to all who support us on this journey.



# SMALL CHANGE BIG DIFFERENCE

Mountain rescue teams are only possible due to the commitment of the volunteers who dedicate to being on call 24/7/365 to assist those in need.

These volunteers achieve this with minimal state support, and assume the costs of their own time and effort. We are required to reach out to the public to ask for support for the work that we do.

Please visit our website and give what you can.

[www.mountainrescue.ie/donate](http://www.mountainrescue.ie/donate)

donate  
today



# Saving Lives in the Mountains

24 / 7 / 365



[mountainrescue.ie](http://mountainrescue.ie)

Mountain Rescue Ireland (MRI), Head Office, c/o Irish Sport HQ  
National Sports Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland