



Swaledale Mountain Rescue Team

Mountain and Cave Rescue in Swaledale and Wensleydale

LATEST NEWS – JULY 2008

Here we are now with our forth edition!

Fire, Fire!

SMRT in joint exercise with North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

Over the last few years we have been spending more time working with the NYFRS, be it drills, equipment familiarisation, meetings and discussions such as around swift water rescue capabilities. It seemed high time that we started building on these foundations by having a real time exercise to further build rapport and knowledge between the teams. From a personal point of view being in both organisations I thought an exercise where we could work together bringing in different skills would be good, as many scenarios would involve one team primarily 'watching' the other perform a specific task. Therefore the plan in this exercise was for Reeth & Leyburn fire crews to provide initial access, casualty care and casualty extraction from a road traffic collision (RTC), and for SMRT to take over the casualty care, packaging & handling after extraction, facilitate hauling systems and other rope work as necessary and provide search teams including SARDA if necessary.

The scenario was a two car RTC, car one was on its roof on easily accessed ground, car two was on its wheels at the bottom of a steep slope requiring roped access (due to car extraction the following day, the steep ground was not as steep as we would have wished, never the less it was adequate for the exercise!).

On Thursday the evening of 19th of June Reeth and Leyburn's tenders were mobilised to the scene on the moor near Grinton lodge. On arrival they found our own Dr Mike on scene role playing as a paramedic for added realism.



The fire crews established an incident commander who was supported by a Command support officer. The scene was "Sectorised", Reeth took sector one (car two), Leyburn took sector two (car one).

The Reeth crew realised they needed technical rope work support SMRT were mobilised from our imaginary exercise

in the vicinity, which allowed us to be on scene within five minutes! We set up our control in the same location as NYFRS control (the vehicle that leaves the flashing lights on).

Sector One (The car on its roof – there were two casualties): In the driver's seat was a female with a tension pneumothorax and in the back was a male with a fractured pelvis. The car was first stabilised whilst casualty care was commenced. Glass was managed and access to casualties progressed without any difficulty. On arrival SMRT took over the casualty care and packaging. The male, with the Fractured Pelvis, took his acting to heart when reading his crib card and even tried to mimic priapism! (google that one) He was packaged with the use of an inverted KED. The female with the tension pneumothorax must not have laboured her signs & symptoms enough as she did not warrant getting the air released from her chest with a needle (Thoracostomy).

Sector Two (The car on its wheels at the bottom of the steep ground, only accessible from the slope): There were three casualties. In the drivers seat was a male who was unconscious with a suspected spinal injury and a head injury. In the front passenger seat was a male with a mid shaft of femur fracture. In the back was a male with a dislocated shoulder.



A belay was set up and a trauma respondent was lowered down, a second belay was set up to aid the lowering of equipment including the cutting gear, no mean task....!..... The car was stabilised, glass was managed, and the roof was cut off. SMRT's first job was to put in access ropes then a hauling system, this took over from the NYFRS rigging as they are only allowed to use their hawsalaid rope for lowering people if absolutely necessary. SMRT medical & packaging equipment then started to arrive. The unconscious casualty was made a priority & extracted on a KED before packaging & hauling up the slope, in reality the ambulance service would have provided full length spinal boards to use. The casualty with the dislocated shoulder was aided out of the vehicle with support, his shoulder was immobilised and analgesia given. Meanwhile the male with the mid shaft of femur fracture had to wait for a ked to be free from sector two. This was due to the worry of spinal injury because of the



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mechanism of injury. This was unfortunate as it delayed his extrication & the application of a Segra traction splint to arrest possible blood loss.

Search teams were not needed in the end, there was enough going on in the time scale we had, Sorry Grant I know you & Penny wanted to have a play. Our learning objectives were well met: Communication between the teams ran smoothly. Recognition of each others control and setting them both up in the same location worked. I also feel confident that report and knowledge of abilities and equipment between the teams has increased.

In the real world the ground would need to be steeper to warrant SMRT involvement in this scenario from the fire services point of view, but it served its purpose.

After a debrief the team retired to a public House for tea and medals.

The NYFRS Officer appointed for liaison with outside agencies like ourselves, Andy Young, was present which made sure all involved kept on their toes. But we all did ourselves proud I didn't hear one negative comment from either organisation.

Finally a big thank you to our colleagues from Cleveland MRT and our very own Dave S for being live casualties while we cut them out... they provided the realism to make what I believe was a very worthwhile exercise come together.

By Dave H

Ground'dhog Day

Sunday 6th July was much looked forward to by Tim H and Dave R where we were to show RAF Search and Rescue Leconfield, just how its done.

An early start to get us to Normandy Barracks for the 9am crew briefing...

We arrived like all good aircrew 5 minutes before the briefing and were promptly taken off to be fitted out with designer underwear, flying suits, flying boots, helmet, North sea keep u dry immersion suits and cravat.

We discovered that this was a ploy, because on our return to the crew room 15 mins later, the briefing had been successfully been completed unhindered.

Dave turned to ask Tim if we should ask for a brief update and whether there was anything we should know about but thought better of it when he saw Tim checking a mirror to see whether his helmet was at a jaunty enough angle on his head.

We discovered that Leconfield had sent one Sea King to Boulmer, as both of theirs had gone U/S. This meant that Leconfield was now Ops only. (No trg flights)

There were no immediate 999 or Mayday calls for us to take care of so we followed Shawn into the hanger where we went through some familiarity with the Sea King.

We discussed the approach rules (Night and day), emergency exits, emergency action and position, radio procedure, seat belts, and the high line...all the usual stuff.



We talked about what they expect from MRT when they attend.

While Shawn went through the list I was mentally ticking them off as he went, things SMRT do take care of:
Speak to Police to request Hele, Give grid
Contact ARCC, confirm Grid
meet and greet on 62A
clear HLS, smoke

Yep, we do that.

Once fully conversant with all things Sea King, Tim and Dave returned to the crew room to take control of any waiting 999 / mayday calls.....still none.

While Tim checked out his headgear again, Dave made the brews for all. Tea/Nato/Qty 6.

A quick conversation with the Radio Op. confirmed that we had not in fact missed any calls since making the tea.

The Grande Prix duly started, where Tim and Dave were relegated to the second row of seats around the TV. It seems that the 3 second rule applies strongly in the RAF.

Once Hamilton cleared up, I checked whether the Sea King was still in the hanger, and enquired about any outstanding missions with the Radio Op...still nothing for Tim and I to take care of!.

As 5pm neared, we thought about saying our thanks and goodbyes. We went back to the changing areas to de kit, in veeery slow time just in case the Hele crew needed us.....They didn't.

At 5 ish Tim and Dave left the building, and a crew who were probably a little apprehensive should the red phone chirp once we had gone.

I guess they will manage.

By Dave R



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Incident Control Trailer

Brown & White Coach Builders were proud to hand over the revamped trailer earlier this year to the SMRT equipment officers, following completion of its sea trials with no apparent faults.

The original brief was to lighten the weight of the trailer making it easier to tow, provide control functions (including radios) and a small catering facility. All this for a budget of £1,000. Not the most exhaustive specification but it did give us some leeway on the design.

After consulting controllers, team leaders and equipment officers (and incorporating some of our own unique design features) we came up with the following specification:

- 240v AC, 110v AC and 12v DC electrical systems.
- The 12v system to have battery backup and automatic charging.
- The 240v system to be powered from its own generator (2KVA) or from a nearby source.
- Fluorescent lighting with external rear flood light.
- Propane gas system with space heating and a two ring burner.
- Stainless steel food preparation area.
- Windows fitted both sides
- Two high band radios and a tetra radio.
- 110v portable flood lighting which can be powered from the trailer or independently from the generator.
- Storage for food, drinks and rubbish.
- Two map boards and one white board planner.
- New sign writing.



It took approximately 4 months to carry out the work but when completed it was press ganged into use almost immediately. It has proved to be easy to use, taking less than 5 minutes to setup (once unhitched from Bravo). It frees up team vehicles giving the team more flexibility and gives controllers a comfortable working environment (hopefully encouraging them to make sensible decisions)

One problem which has been identified is the inability of some team members to follow the comprehensive instructions displayed on the right hand wall. Being a caring organisation we are considering two possible solutions: Get a Sun newspaper reporter to rewrite the instructions or issue equipment officers with cattle prods!

By Graham B

House Notices

Film extras required – Filming for the new revised casualty care CDrom is due to start soon. We require team members to act as extras, if you want to take part give your name to Graham.

Second hand Books required – A local business is selling second hand books and passing the proceeds on to the team. If anyone has any books they want to get rid of (preferably paperbacks) pass them onto Graham.

Recent Incidents

The busy start to 2008 for SMRT continues

27/07/08 (xvi D) 1740hrs: Team search dog and handler called by Cleveland SRT to assist with search for a missing 67 year old male from the Guisborough area. The man had set out on a 20 mile, solo sponsored walk the previous day but had not returned home. Extensive searches of the intended route and potential escape routes were searched in conjunction with search groups from both Cleveland SRT and Scarborough and Ryedale MRT eventually standing down at 0045hrs. Sadly a body was found by a local gamekeeper early the following day.

15/07/2008 (xv D) 2250hrs: Team search dog and handler called by Kendal MRT to assist with the search for a missing 87 year old female in the Kirkby Lonsdale area. Eight search dog teams from SARDA England and SARDA Lakes on scene. Stood-down at 0300 with nothing found. Unfortunately, the body of the missing woman was located the following day in Lake Windermere by members of the public.

13/07/2008 (17) 1500hrs 12/07/08: Team called along with Scarborough & Ryedale SMRT and two SARDA dog teams from SMRT and UWFRA to assist North Yorkshire Police in a planned search for vulnerable missing female in the York area. Extensive searches were conducted of open meadow, scrubland and dense woodland. Search was stood-down with objectives completed.

03/07/2008 (xiv D) 0402hrs: Team search dog and handler called by UWFRA to Fell Beck near Pately Bridge in connection with a search for missing female. Stood-down before deployment.

30/06/2008 (16) 1730hrs: Team called to assist ambulance service in the carry off of female with leg injury near Woodhall, Wensleydale. As the team was being mobilised help was provided by a farmer. The team were stood down.



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22/06/2008 (15) 2030hrs: Team called to assist in search for man reported missing from home in Leyburn. As team members prepared to commence the search with three SARDA dog teams on route the man was found by police about 1km from home.

14/06/2008 (14) Called to assist competitor in Swaledale Marathon suffering from chest pain. The team transported the walker to meet the ambulance service who continued treatment to hospital.

10/06/2008 (13) 2145hrs: Team called to assist in evacuation of female with fracture to arm resulting from a fall on rough ground near Slipton Crag, Colsterdale. YAS crew were first on scene and requested RAF Sea King due to the failing light and potential discomfort during a carry off. The team arrived on scene to marshal the inbound aircraft and escort the remainder of the party of the hill to their vehicles.

13/05/2008 (xiii D) 1850hrs: Team search dog and handler placed on standby by TWSMRT in connection with a search for a despondent male in the Chester-le-Street area of County Durham. Located by TWSMRT search dog around 2240hrs. Teams assistance not required.

08/05/2008 (12) 0515hrs: Team called along with its search dog and handler to assist Teesdale and Weardale SMRT in search for an elderly female near Newton Aycliffe. Incident stood-down following extensive searches of local woodland; enquiries continue.

07/05/2008 (x ii D) 2030hrs: Team search dog and handler placed on standby by TWSMRT for search in the Bowburn area of County Durham. Not required and stood-down at 2200hrs.

05/05/2008 (11) 1515hrs: Team called to a remote location in Swinner Gill, Swaledale to rescue a 50 year old male from Kent who had fallen approximately 30m over a crag and down to the base of the gorge. Team doctor treated the man at the scene for serious multiple injuries including an open and rotated lower leg fracture. The Team, using rope rescue equipment, then hauled the casualty approximately 400m up out of the gorge to the waiting Great North Air Ambulance for onward transport to James Cook Hospital.

01/05/2008 (xi D) 0815hrs: Team search dog and handler called by TWSMRT to assist with continuation of a search from the previous night for missing male in the Langley Park area of County Durham. Commenced search at 1300hrs; stood-down at 1600hrs with nothing found.

28/04/2008 (10) 0015hrs: Team called along with Teesdale & Weardale SMRT, Kirkby Stephen MRT and five SARDA dog teams to search for missing female near Tan Hill Inn. Shortly after team members arrived on scene the missing person was located by Cumbria Police.

26/04/2008 (x D) 1745hrs: Team search dog and handlers called to assist Kirby Stephen MRT in a search for a group of six young men after they had reported themselves lost and ill equipped near Shap. Stood-down enroute when group refound a path and safety.

Team Top Trumps

Cut out and play (or throw darts at them?)


Tim SMRT Top Trumps




Barry SMRT Top Trumps




Fletch SMRT Top Trumps




Pete SMRT Top Trumps