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27 February 2025

Dear Ori,

**"UK and Irish Mountain Rescue Conference 2012: 7-9 September, Leeds  
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and  
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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amy Miller".

**Amy Miller**

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# mountain rescue

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**WELCOME TO  
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Every care will be taken of materials sent for publication however these are submitted at the sender's risk.

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Editorial copy must be supplied as Word document. Images must be supplied as high resolution (300 dpi) JPG/EPS/TIFF/PDF.

Advertising artwork must be supplied, ready prepared on CD or via email as font embedded PDF/EPS/TIFF (300 dpi) or Quark document with all relevant fonts and images.

**FRONT PAGE**

Aberglaslyn MRT member Will Hordley fires a smoke flare for the helicopter to locate the casualty and assess the windy conditions, high on the Miners Track, Snowdon, 15 May 2012.

Photo © Mike Gibson  
www.vital-images.co.uk

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Articles carried in Mountain Rescue do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Mountain Rescue England and Wales. We do not accept responsibility for information supplied in adverts/advertorial.

**mountain  
rescue**



JULY 2012

*first*  
**Word** MIKE MARGESON

*Our chairman's first instructions to me, with a wry smile were, 'Well I guess you'd better write a piece for the magazine!'*

Sat at home, watching the Jubilee beacons — on Black Combe, Scafell Pike and a really fantastic beacon on the Old Man of Conistown which I know Conistown MRT members helped make such a success — had me thinking what to say in this piece.

At my interview I was, of course, asked about the future and my vision of priorities. You should also know what I see as important as your new vice chairman. My skills and experience come very much from an operational perspective as an active team leader and full time Mountaineering Instructor in my day job. In over twenty years serving as an MREW officer, I have had no time for regional or national politics. I am always inclined to say what I believe, even knowing that this has often got me into trouble. My focus will therefore be very directed at team and operational grass roots level.

I believe we have made considerable progress in recent years. Having said this, time and time again poor communication has let us all down, leading to suspicion and lack of trust. We need to work hard at all levels to continue to improve our communication.

My view is that we need to continue to develop good

governance and we still have a good deal to do in this area. Of particular concern is that we currently have no in-house system of operational external audit or peer review. Anybody looking in from the outside would be astounded that, in this day and age, we did not have this in place. We have made progress with reviewing, updating and creating new national guidelines, alongside a mountain rescue team capabilities document. I believe we need to develop a process to enable peer audit of each MREW team. Alongside this, we need to grasp the nettle and conduct a review of team membership of MREW. This is long overdue and if this means that some teams do not meet the capabilities, requirements or demonstrable need for a 'mountain rescue team', then so be it. Maybe some teams would be better served by membership of ALSAR or some other organisation.

It is quite clearly a time of significant change for mountain rescue in England and Wales. As your new vice chairman I see my role and responsibility as ensuring continued change and development with a direct link to team and operational needs as an active team leader. ■

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MOUNTAIN RESCUE MAGAZINE



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# UK AND IRISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE CONFERENCE 2012: 7-9 SEPTEMBER

## LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

This year's conference is fast approaching and, if you intend to come along, you need to book now! Peter Howells, conference organiser, asks that you get your forms in by 1 August so we can confirm numbers with the venue.

**Application forms are available on request from Alwyn Hayes via [bookings@mrconference.rescue.org.uk](mailto:bookings@mrconference.rescue.org.uk) or [alwyn124@hotmail.com](mailto:alwyn124@hotmail.com).**

**Cost is a discounted £95 for members of the UK voluntary rescue teams in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Please note: For members of IMRA and ALSAR the cost is £180 for a full weekend delegate and £75 for a day delegate.**

The event takes place at the Headingley site of Leeds Metropolitan University with Keela signed up as a sponsor. They will be providing a free t-shirt to each attendee. And the bar, where we are reliably informed, has been advised to stock up on beer!

With the theme of the conference billed as 'Technology in Mountain Rescue' the programme includes a wide range of techie topics, such as 'Personal location beacons' (Tom Taylor), 'SARLOC' (Russ Hore), 'SARCALL — delivering a seamless operation platform' (John Hulse) and 'Fundraising and social media' (Neil Hayter). Help on the hill comes with 'Map craft' and 'Information technology in mountain rescue' (Lyle Brotherton), 'Mountain weather forecasting' (Geoff Monk of MWIS) and 'Technical mountain rescue — a Scottish perspective' (Jonathan Hart). There's the usual medical thread, of course, comprising lectures such as the intriguingly titled 'Blood is not just thick or thin' (Andy Ashton), 'Pre-hospital care' (John Ambrose) and 'Spinal injuries in mountain casualties' (Ben Hall).



TIM PICTURED ON THE SUMMIT OF EVEREST, MAY 2011  
© TIM MOSEDALE

Plus there's all sorts of other stuff to entertain, educate and inform — leadership training, dogs, vehicles, legal issues, public relations, water rescue, avalanches and case studies from our international colleagues. In a nutshell, something for everyone!

Keynote speaker for Saturday morning will be Rory Stewart MP and Saturday night's entertainment will be provided by Tim Mosedale, double Everest summiteer. Based in Keswick, Tim is a climber, instructor and local guide, but more importantly, only the tenth Brit to summit Everest from both sides. He's also a regular visitor to Ama Dablam, having run successful expeditions there for the past nine years. In fact, he's off there again in October so we're lucky to pin him down!

If you have any enquiries regarding conference booking, potential topics or speakers, please contact Peter Howells on 01633 254244 or 07836 382029 or email [phowells@phowells.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:phowells@phowells.fsnet.co.uk). All that now remains is to get your place booked!

## MARCO TRAILERS AND THE MCA

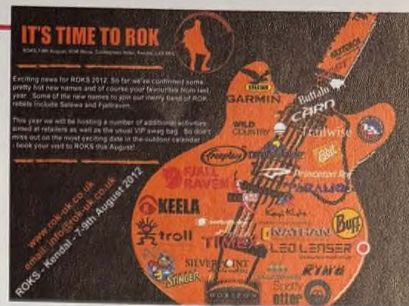
Continuing a relationship which dates back to 1998, Marco Trailers are designers and manufacturers of specialist information trailers to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Due to its size, ease of handling and ability to be trailed by the MCA's fleet of Ford Focus-sized vehicles, a total of nine Marco X25 2.5 metre exhibition trailers are operated by the MCA.

The brief was to supply exhibition units capable of being trailed by a small family saloon car and, when uncoupled from the towing

vehicle, be easily manoeuvred on varying terrain by not more than one or two MCA volunteers. The trailer had to be quick and easy to set up, carry enough promotional material to display the role of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and also promote safe maritime practice. The final specification included full wrap body graphics, digitally printed graphics panels, flags, headboard, full length brochure display with integral storage and leaflet dispensers.

Together with the latest flat screen technology, sound

system and DVD player the MCA X25's attract attention by all means possible. The trailers are used at events throughout the country and are taken to some of the most remote parts of the UK proving that, wherever they go the MCA, via the Marco X25, are sure to be noticed. To find out more, go to [marcotrailers.co.uk](http://marcotrailers.co.uk) or email [rob@marcotrailers.co.uk](mailto:rob@marcotrailers.co.uk).



## THE CUMULUS PRO ROCKS ROKS

Calling all mountain and cave rescue, ALSAR and SARDA team members — KEELA would like to invite you to an exclusive, invitation-only event in Kendal this August. It's a unique opportunity to view some of the best outdoor brands around and see first-hand the latest kit, test out the latest toys and maybe splash out with 'VIP mates rates'.

The evening features a talk by Lyle Brotherton entitled 'The use of handheld satnavs (GPS) in mountain rescue emergency management planning.' Lyle (who instructs advanced SAR navigation — and features here on page 38) is author of 'The Ultimate Navigation Manual', researched while working with over 132 teams, in 22 countries. He also advises the UK and US governments on navigational strategy in emergency management planning, and works with international governments post-major disasters, such as the 2010 Pakistan floods. Spaces are limited for this part of the evening — book now so you don't miss out!

ROKS 2012 will also showcase KEELA's new Cumulus Pro Mountain Jacket, the lightest System Dual Protection jacket — a huge addition to the KEELA range. It's been in the pipeline for two years, during which time we sought advice from both mountain rescue teams throughout the UK and Europe. We even ran a competition to discover which features should be incorporated. The end result proves that the wait has been worthwhile — we've produced what we believe is one of the best mountain jackets on the market, well received by team members who have previewed it recently. We're confident it will be a mainstay in our range.



## THE POSSIBLE FUTURE OF SARLOC... AND OTHER THINGS

### RUSS HORE

#### SARLOC

More and more teams are using SARLOC in the UK and it seems like every week I get a request from outside the UK for more information. My aim is to keep it as simple to use as I can, but there are some changes I would like to make.

At the moment, teams append an identifier to the end of the SARLOC URL, which currently needs to be a valid MRMap radio ID for the missing person's location to appear in MRMap. The problem with this is the radio IDs are fixed and, once a misper has the URL, they could abuse it by 'showing their mates down the pub' how it works. As it stands at the moment, each time SARLOC gets a fix it adds a record to the MRMap database.

To prevent this I have developed a system whereby users (MR teams) can request a 'token' from SARLOC. The token takes the form of a random string of characters (eg. 'HGbt6H') which is sent to the misper instead of an MRMap radio ID. When the team requests the token, it also tell SARLOC which team they are and what radio ID to associate with the token. Thus, when SARLOC gets the misper's location it 'knows' what radio ID to put in the MRMap database but teams do not need to disclose a radio ID to the misper. The HUGE benefit of this is that the token will be valid for a certain amount of time — by default four hours, but this can be changed when the token is requested.

When the token is requested, the team can also optionally supply a mobile phone number, or numbers, to which SARLOC will send the misper's location information. The benefit here is that if a team has no internet access, they can still receive the misper's location.

Along with mobile phone number(s), teams can also optionally supply an email address to which to send the details.

Now if all this sounds like too much work for teams to do, it can all be automated.

#### SARCALL integration with SARLOC

One possible solution would be for the team to send a text message to SARCALL passing the misper's mobile phone number, a mobile to send the location to, and an email if required. SARCALL would pass this information to SARLOC and it would use SARCALL as a software 'mobile phone' to send the SARLOC link with a token to the misper and send the resulting location to the team's mobile phone.

So, in practice, all the teams would need to do is have a template SMS message stored on their phone, add the misper's mobile number and send the text to SARCALL. SARLOC would do the rest.

#### Team's website integration with SARLOC

If you have access to an email to SMS gateway you could automate the whole process from your own web site. Ask Russ for details.

#### MRMAP WEB BASED CONFIGURATION FILE EDITOR

Currently each MRMap user has a local configuration file (mrmmap.ini) that contains all the configuration details for MRMap. The problem is keeping all team's 'mrmmap.ini' files in sync so, when a team changes who has one of its radios, all other teams get the change. Dave Binks and I have a plan, which we are still developing but the rough idea is as follows:

The team's local copy of the 'mrmmap.ini' file will no longer be edited by the team but will be downloaded from the MRMap web site. Any changes to the file will be carried out using a password protected web page.

Teams will only see their own 'private' radios but will be able to specify 'public' details. The purpose for this is many teams assign a real person's name to a radio in the 'mrmmap.ini' file for their own use, but publish a copy with the names

removed and just numbers. So the base op may see 'OGGI Russ Hore' but all other teams would see 'OGGI 6.'

To make things easier, the web page would allow 'groups' of radios to be defined. A radio would only be a member of one 'group' (a group being 'First aiders' for example) and editing of a group will be possible. So all 'First aiders' could be changed from 'Red trails' to 'Green trails' without having to change each first aider's entry.

When a team starts MRMap it would check if it has internet connectivity and download a fresh copy of 'mrmmap.ini' to the local machine. MRMap will now use that local copy. If internet connectivity is not available, MRMap will use the existing local copy of 'mrmmap.ini'.

The web-based editor is available for test and comments. Contact Russ or Dave for more details. As this project is still in the development phase we welcome ideas to make things easier for teams.

#### MREW MAP SERVER

I hope we're all aware of the availability of online mapping such as Google Earth/Maps, Bing Maps, OpenSpace, and the free map data available from the OS (OpenData).

These facilities are extremely powerful tools but there is a catch. If you want to use them to display 'sensitive' data, such as SARLOC hits, the terms of use for the free systems generally do not allow the use of the system behind a password protected web page.

The cost of a license to allow you to password protect the map data is considerable (£5k-£10k per year) and only allows you access to the map data the provider has access to.

When you use a system like Google Maps you are only really talking to a bit of software that 'knows' how to retrieve pictures (map tiles) from a map server, amongst other things. Work is well underway to deploy a map server for MREW use only.

There are huge amounts of free data available to the public that could be served up with a map server. The Environment Agency publishes flood-warning data; Ordnance Survey has their OpenData program, location of mine shafts, caves, etc. Operational data such as keyholders for gates could be served up — click on the gate on the map and the phone number of the key holder pops up.

These can all be served up from a map server in a standard format. In fact, any data that can have a location attached to it can be delivered in a standard format as a layer.

In simple terms, a user can ask a map server: 'Give me a map centred on this lat/long containing the following layers: StreetView, contours, flood plane data' and the map server works out which tiles to return.

When this is up and running, systems such as SARLOC will make use of it, allowing SARLOC hits to be displayed on a variety of maps: 1:25k, StreetView, etc.

If you have any questions about SARLOC, or any of the above developments, please get in touch with Russ (sarloc@russ-hore.co.uk).

Well, Who knew?!

The word 'Bluetooth' was first coined in the 1990s but its origins go back way further. Several centuries further, in fact. It is said to be named after King Harald Bluetooth (910-985), who was credited with uniting Denmark and Norway, and was coined because Bluetooth technology unifies the telecommunications and computing industries.