

Emergency Procedures for Leaders in the event of an incident - June 2024

If the incident involves a fall or other injury make sure that the casualty is not pulled or moved and that they decide when and how to move. Offer help, but do not act precipitously or independently.

If they are in imminent danger from rock fall or the possibility of falling then you may move them to safety, with help and with great care to avoid further injury, particularly if they are unconscious.

Stay calm. Take time to assess the situation and decide what to do. Take charge or appoint somebody else to be in charge. Get organised. Decide who and how many people need to stay with the casualty. Assign specific responsibilities to individuals if appropriate. Make sure that all of those likely to be involved have made a note of all other relevant mobile phone numbers for communication during the incident. If anyone is injured, remember ABC – airway, breathing and circulation (signs of life/blood loss) Treat any injuries (remember the first principle 'do no harm')

Insulate the casualty from the ground, add extra clothing as soon as possible. Place any unconscious casualties in the 'recovery position'. Make sure that all of those staying with the casualty have sufficient clothing. If necessary "rob" extra clothing from those who are continuing with the walk. Do not wait until it is cold to add extra clothing for all in the group.

Determine your exact position on the map and consider the options.

Determine what to do about the casualty. Can they recommence the walk safely? What help will they need? Organise the group to enable safe removal of the casualty if appropriate. Should the emergency services be called?

To summon help from those nearby the emergency signal is 6 blasts on a whistle within a minute or 6 flashes of a torch, followed by a minutes break . Then repeat.

If you get connected to 1-1-2, you can get medical advice and guidance from the professional health-worker at the call-centre, so stay connected!

Try to conserve battery life by having all the details to hand before phoning. A list of the details needed is shown below.

If there is no mobile coverage at your location, consider whether it might be worth moving to another location to make the phone call.

If mobile reception is poor and you are unsuccessful dialling 112 try sending a text to a friend.

Treat any injuries (remember the first principle 'do no harm') with : Even small wounds need a hygienic approach, meaning: clean it with water or swab, and protect the wound from dust and dirt to avoid later severe infections. In case a fall involves a head injury, be aware that all medical conditions might be dynamic, meaning risk of deterioration over the next minutes/hour, so continued observation of victims mental status is needed (make time-recording of obs on paper, to hand over to rescue-team).

When connected provide:

(a) The name, age and condition of the casualty. Details of known injuries. Are they conscious? Are they breathing?

(b) Location of the incident (use all available known references:- Town or village, identifiable features (castle/mountain name/beach/road numbers and km markers). Latitude and longitude.

(c) The size of the group

Be ready to provide the following additional information:

Telephone number of the phone you are using and any other phones in the group.

The nature and time of the incident – what happened?

Weather conditions including wind speed and visibility at the accident site.

Equipment which is at the accident site (warm clothing, group shelter etc)

Any distinguishing feature/marker/colour at the accident site.

Location of where you are phoning from – if different from accident site.

If you are unable to summon help from the site or nearby appoint somebody to go for help on foot:

Remember to take all the details shown above. Write them down if possible.

It may be possible to find nearby help. Within the CB it is possible that you may encounter other rural workers or vehicles that can offer assistance. There may be other walkers who can offer assistance. Blowing a whistle may bring others to your aid. (See above for international emergency signal)

Awaiting help:- remember that even when a rescue team has been alerted, help might not arrive for several hours. You will need to keep the casualty AND the rest of the waiting group warm and dry. If necessary huddle together to keep warm.

It is likely that either the police or the bomberos (fire brigade) will be sent on foot to determine the nature of the rescue and to determine extra resources required to effect the rescue. Normally they will be very experienced with this type of incident and know exactly what to do. In some circumstances any casualty will be carried by stretcher and you may need to help with this.

If a helicopter is involved there will be medical support provided on board and if the casualty is airlifted away then there will be no further space on board for relatives or other members of the party who will have to make their own way to safety.

Take the contact details of the injured party. If the injured party is walking without family or friends ensure you have the details of someone to contact on their behalf. Make sure you know what hospital the injured party is being taken to.

Write up an incident report at the earliest opportunity to make sure that you have an accurate record of the events of the day. These can quickly become forgotten or muddled.

What should be done to safeguard the rest of the group?

Descend to safety. Assuming that the rest of the group are NOT involved in carrying or supporting the casualty and it is not likely they will be needed for further support during the day, then they should make their way safely onwards.

EMERGENCY SIGNAL: SIX BLASTS ON THE WHISTLE or SIX TORCH FLASHES repeated every minute.

RESPONDING TO THE ARRIVAL OF A HELICOPTER



FINDING YOUR LOCATION

GPS unit. Most gps units will contain a setting allowing you to determine your latitude and longitude. Remember to distinguish between E and W as + or -.

Mobile phones. Both iphone and Android phones allow you to download apps that can easily tell you your Latitude and longitude by polling satellites. To do this it is easiest to download Outdoor Activer which can give you a map which will show you how near or far you are from roads.

You can also use an app specifically for Lat and Long downloadable from the App store or Play store.