



British Cave Rescue Council

The representative body for voluntary underground rescue in the British Isles

Incident Report for Period 1st January 2025 - 31st December 2025

	Cave Rescue Organisation ⁽⁴⁾	Cumbria Ore Mines RU	Derbyshire CRO	Devon CRO	East Cornwall SRT	Gloucestershire CRG	Irish CRO	Mendip Cave Rescue	Midlands CRO	North Wales CRO	Scottish CRO	South East CRO	South & Mid Wales CRT	Swaledale Mountain Rescue	Upper Wharfedale FRA	West Cornwall SRT	TOTALS
Caving Incidents	8	-	6	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	5	1	1	-	25
Assisting Authorities ⁽¹⁾	-	1	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	8
Persons Assisted	19	-	11	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	1	40
Fatalities	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Persons Injured ⁽²⁾	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	6
Helicopter assistance ⁽³⁾	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Animal Incidents	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Reported Standbys	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	5
Assistance to other teams	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Totals Underground Incidents	13	1	7	0	0	2	1	4	0	1	0	1	5	1	1	1	38
<p>'Surface Incidents' include fell/moorland rescues and searches. Teams, chiefly although not exclusively in the north, carry out these duties as part of their normal workload.</p> <p>These incidents are usually recorded in the Mountain Rescue (England & Wales) Incident Report for 2025.</p>																	
Surface Incidents	73	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	35	15	180
Persons Assisted	66	-	-	-	14	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	32	7	154
Fatalities	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	1	10
Persons Injured	44	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	27	5	108
Surface Animal Incidents	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	5
Reported Standbys	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
Assistance to other teams	7	1	-	-	-	8	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	26
Totals Surface Incidents	75	1	0	0	21	8	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	38	36	15	185

Notes:

1. This row records incidents where assistance is requested by the authorities for non-caver incidents. These are identified on page 2 of the report.
2. Injuries include those assisted for a medical condition, but exclude cavers assisted through exhaustion.
3. This row records use of helicopter to evacuate a caving casualty.
4. The Cave Rescue Organisation is based in Clapham, North Yorkshire.

Further details relating to this incident report or about the BCRC and its membership can be obtained from the BCRC Secretary, Emma Porter via secretary@caverescue.org.uk



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Summary of Incident Report, 2025

1. There was one underground fatality in 2025; incident 1. In addition, there was one fatality in a missing person search where a team were asked to investigate underground areas; incident 10.
2. There were 8 incidents where teams assisted the authorities in the execution of their duties – incidents 4, 10, 11, 13, 16, 24, 28 and 29
3. The main causes and injuries sustained over recent years are recorded here. The *Injuries Incurred* table includes fatalities and exhaustion/hypothermia incidents.

Table 1: Incident causes

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Assist authorities	8	3	7	4	8	30
Cave diving	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exposure/exhausted	1	1	-	-	-	2
Fall	2	2	1	4	3	12
Flooding	1	-	1	2	1	5
Hung up	1	-	-	1	-	2
Lost/overdue	4	13	10	5	11	43
Marooned	-	1	1	-	-	2
Medical emergency	-	1	2	2	-	5
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Physically stuck	-	1	2	1	5	9
Rock fall	3	1	-	-	-	4
Self marooning	-	-	-	3	1	4
Slip/trip	2	1	1	1	1	6
Unable to climb	1	1	-	4	3	9
Total	23	25	25	27	33	133

Table 2: Injuries incurred

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Arm/shoulder	1	1	-	-	-	2
Drowning	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exhaustion/hypothermia	3	1	2	5	8	19
Femur/pelvis	-	1	1	2	1	5
Head injuries	-	-	-	-	1	1
Knee injuries	-	-	1	-	1	2
Lower leg/ankle	3	-	-	3	1	7
Medical condition	-	1	2	3	1	7
Multiple	2	1	1	-	-	4
Other	3	-	1	-	-	4
Spine/back	-	-	-	2	-	2
Total	12	5	8	15	13	53

4. The underground animal incidents included 3 sheep and 3 lambs.
5. In 2025, there was a total of 5570 hours spent on callouts by teams (over half of which was from the multi-team incident at Dowbergill), with an average of 13 team members and 135 person-hours per incident (12 team members and 52 person-hours if Dowbergill is exclude). These figures do not include resulting equipment maintenance and re-equipping of rescue vehicles. In this report, incidents are recorded where personnel have been deployed to the site; other problems or alerts are not included.



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Summary of Incidents for 2025

- 1. Sunday 19th January at 12:27 by CRO: 33t, 5h 11m**
Diccan Pot (Selside), fall
A party of cavers were undertaking an Alum/Diccan exchange, when the cavers at the top of the first pitch in Diccan heard a 'bang' and the rope became taut. When the team descended they found the caver still attached to the rope, but deceased. The cause of the incident was not clear (although potentially a medical event), and the coroners report is still awaited. FATAL
- 2. Sunday 19th January at 16:40 by SMWCRT: 20t, 4h**
Daren Cilau (Llangattock), physically stuck
A caver (m49) became trapped by his left leg in the Vice in the entrance series of Daren Cilau while exiting. Rescuers were unable to free him initially as he was blocking the passage to those entering from the Daren Entrance. One of the team doctors, being the smallest person present, was able to squeeze through a very small opening above the trapped caver and release his leg from the cave side of the passage. Other than being very cold, they were uninjured.
Additionally, their caving partner (m65) fell outside entrance to the cave and badly cut their face. He returned to Whitewalls where he was attended to by the team first aiders and team doctor.
- 3. Saturday 15th February at 21:00 by ICRO: 20t, 7h**
Polthanarees Cave (Cuilcagh Mountain), unable to climb
A caver (m20) was unable to exit the entrance climb while on the return part of a trip. A "hot point" was established underground where he was warmed and fed. Meanwhile, rock breaking and rescue rigging teams engineered a bypass to a constricted section of passage near the entrance. This allowed the caver, who was uninjured, to be hauled up via the new route to the surface..
- 4. Wednesday 19th February at 09:43 by SECRO: 2t, 20h**
Unnamed stone mine (Godstone), assist authorities
SECRO were asked to assist local authorities with information on possible mines in sandstone after a major road collapse due to burst water main. Some local mines were checked, but nothing of concern was found.
- 5. Saturday 1st March at 21:12 by SMWCRT: 2t, 38m**
Agen Allwedd (Llangattock), lost/overdue
Three cavers (m42, 60, 63) attempting Grand Circle round trip were reported overdue. While preliminary investigations were taking place, it was established that the cavers had now safely exited the cave. They had been unable to find their way through Biza Passage as it was sumped, and forced to return via Southern Stream Passage, hence becoming overdue.
- 6. Sunday 2nd March at 18:25 by CRO: 21t, 1h 30m**
Big Meanie (Leck Fell), physically stuck
A university group were undertaking an exchange from Death's Head to Big Meanie, when a caver (f20) was unable to get through the tight section of the Big Meanie pitch. CRO mobilised but on arrival at the cave the rest of her group had managed to free her.
- 7. Saturday 15th March at 15:00 by DCRO: 10t, 37m**
Giant's Hole (Castleton), lost/overdue
A party of cavers were reported overdue from a trip into Giants. A quick search to Garlands showed that the party had already exited, and they were located on the surface at Carlswark, having changed location and forgotten to update their callout
- 8. Sunday 16th March at 20:50 by CRO: 21t, 4h 20m**
Gaping Gill Jib Tunnel (The Allotment), unable to climb
A caver (f20) was reported to be stranded on a ledge 40-60m from the top of Jib Tunnel, and unable to climb out. On CRO's arrival, two of the surface group were very cold so they were driven down to the CRO depot at Clapham. A haul line was rigged to assist the stranded caver, and she was brought to the surface unharmed.
- 9. Sunday 23rd March at 18:04 by CRO: 17 t, 5h 30m**
Wretched Rabbit/Lancaster Hole (Easegill), lost/overdue
A party of 8 cavers attempting the Lancaster Hole to Wretched Rabbit traverse got lost and were reported overdue. CRO sent a party into Lancaster Hole to follow the route, and the cavers were located uninjured but cold and tired at Fourways Junction. Four of the cavers were able to exit with a guide, but the remaining 4 required assistance to exit via Wretched Rabbit.
- 10. Sunday 13th April at 09:30 by COMRU: 15t, 2h**
Various mines (Patterdale), assist authorities
A missing person was reported in the Patterdale area, and COMRU were requested to assist in searching mines close to where the person's vehicle was located. The person was located (deceased) by a member of the public approximately 10 miles from the vehicle. FATAL
- 11. Wednesday 16th April 2025 at 10:00 by GCRG: 5t, 2h**
Bream (Forest of Dean), assist authorities
A local informed the police he had found bones in a cave and had videoed them. The video was not good enough quality for the police to ascertain if the bones were animal or human, and so the police asked GCRG for assistance in recovering the bones from the cave for analysis.
- 12. Friday 18th April at 21:05 by SMWCRT: 25t, 2h 50m**
Daren Cilau (Llangattock), lost/overdue
A party of cavers (f23, 44,49) were reported overdue. As the team was arriving at Whitewalls, the missing cavers exited the cave. They were unhurt, but cold and tired, having had issues with route finding.
- 13. Tuesday 29th April at 19:43 by NWCRO: 10t, 1h 14m**
Dinas Mot (Llanberis Pass), assist authorities



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A climber got their leg jammed behind a flake on a climb in Llanberis Pass. NWCRO involvement was requested by LLMRT for possible use of rock breaking equipment, but on arrival at the LLMRT base the casualty had already been freed.

14. Saturday 3rd May at 19:52 by MCR: 6t, 2h

Stoke Lane Slocker (Stoke St Michael), lost/overdue

MCR were called out after a solo cave diver was reported overdue from a trip into Stoke Lane Slocker. A rapid search party were sent to the cave, while a team of cave divers were assembled in case there was a requirement to search beyond the sump. Fortunately, the search party located the diver between the free-divable sump and the entrance, cold and tired but unhurt, and escorted him back to the surface.

15. Saturday 17th May at 15:30 by DCRO: 34t, 8h

Nettle Pot (Castleton), fall

A party of 4 cavers undertook a trip to Derbyshire Hall in the Far Flats area of Nettle Pot. On their return, one cave (f24) had an out of control abseil on the very muddy fixed ropes, and hit a boulder, injuring her hip and pelvis. Her colleagues surfaced and raised the alarm. She was assessed by a team doctor and RRMTs, and found to have a very painful hip and thigh, but was otherwise stable. She had already been self-mobilising, but was limited by pain. She was given pain relief, including Pentrox, before being hauled up the next short pitch. She then crawled to the base of the entrance shaft, before being hauled to the surface in a nappy harness where she was transferred to a waiting ambulance. Imaging in hospital showed no fractures, but significant soft tissue injury.

16. Thursday 19th June at 23:58 by WCSRT:6t, 1h 15m

Poldice Mine (Todpool), assist authorities

The team were called out by the police after they received a report of a lost person in the vicinity of disused mineshafts. They were successfully located on the surface, unhurt, shortly after the team members arrived on scene.

17. Saturday 28th June at 21:02 by CRO: 6t, 1h 41m

Top Sink (Easegill), lost/overdue

A party of 4 cavers were reported overdue on a through trip from Cow Pot to Pool Sink. They had last been seen at Stop Pot at approximately 16:00. Teams were sent to Top Sink, County Pot, Cow Pot, and Wretched Rabbit entrances to see if they had exited. The party were found at Top Sink, and escorted back to Bull Pot Farm.

18. Saturday 28th June at 22:50 by CRO: 8t, 5h 48m

Long Churn Cave (Selside), flooding

Three cavers were reported overdue on a trip into Long Churns with water levels rising. Team members drove up to Long Churns to check water levels and found Lower Long Churns impassable. Alum North-West route was rigged to try and contact missing cavers but without success, along with Dr Bannisters. Once the water levels

became passable, a team entered the middle entrance and found the missing cavers. One was quite cold, but all were able to exit with assistance

19. Sunday 6th July at 19:13 by SMWCRT: 1t, 30m

Cwmystwyth Mine, lost/overdue

Dyfed Powys Police contacted the team after a caver's family received an SOS message. As the team were making initial enquiries, the missing cavers (f30, m37) made contact, having been underground longer than planned, and the team was stood down.

20. Thursday 10th July at 14:30 by SMWCRT: 5t, 1h

Porth yr Ogof (Ystradfellte), slip/trip

A novice caver (f13) dislocated her kneecap in Porth yr Ogof. On the arrival of SMWCRT, she had already managed to exit the cave.

21. Sunday 27th July at 15:30 by DCRO: 21t, 7h 30m

Streaks Pot (Stoney Middleton), physically stuck

A party of four cavers were undertaking the through trip starting at the Top Entrance. One member passed the tight vertical squeeze at the base of the top entrance rift, but was then unable to pass the 90 degree bend squeeze in Nervous Breakdown. He was also unable to repeat the vertical squeeze, so 2 other members of the party exited to get assistance. The team attended, and after an unsuccessful attempt to haul back up the vertical squeeze to the top entrance, the casualty was assisted to exit via the lower entrance, with a small amount of passage modification to ease his passage.

22. Saturday 16th August at 21:36 by DCRO: 20t, 5h

Eldon Hole (Castleton), self marooning

Two cavers (m42, 50) were reported to be unable to exit from a trip down Eldon Hole. They had been part of a party of 5. DCRO attended and found them well, but with rather sparse equipment, minimal SRT kit and no helmets. After being checked over, they were uneventfully hauled to the surface.

23. Tuesday 26th August at 17:00 by SMRT: 3t, 1h

Gunnarside, lost/overdue

The team were alerted to an overdue party of cavers in the Gunnarside area, but as the team were making initial enquiries, the cavers existed safely and the team were stood down

24. Wednesday 24th September at 20:28 by MCR: 2t, 3h 30m

Bethel Quarry (Bradford on Avon), assist authorities

Wiltshire Police requested assistance from MCR after a large fire was reported at Bethel Quarry, with people reported to have entered shortly beforehand. A small team attended and briefed the local fire service, but initial efforts to enter the quarry were hampered by thick smoke. Once a search was possible nobody was found.



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25. **Saturday 27th September at 23:39 by MCR: 3t, 2h**
Eastwater Cavern (Priddy), lost/overdue
A solo caver was reported overdue from a trip in Eastwater. A small team undertook a search and found the caver at the Crossroads, lost and with a failing light. They were escorted back to the surface.
26. **Thursday 2nd October at 21:19 by UWFRA: 119t, 36h**
Providence Pot (Kettlewell), lost/overdue
The team were alerted after a party of three cavers (m40, 72,72) were reported overdue from a trip to complete the traverse of Dowbergill Passage. An overnight search located the party towards the Dow Cave end of the system, having had difficulty with route-finding. Unfortunately, by the time the party was found the good weather that had been forecast during their trip had passed and Storm Amy had brought torrential rain. This caused water levels to rise, blocking the exit via Dow, requiring the party to retrace their steps and exit via Providence Pot. In atrocious weather, extensive damming and water diversions were put in place on the surface to avoid the Providence Pot entrance sumping. The protracted exit via Providence Pot proved to be a challenge for the casualty party who had already spent 24 hours underground. Progress was slow, and additional team members entered the cave carrying hot food and drinks to revive the cavers, as well as warming kit and heated jackets. The first casualty was able to exit on Friday at 3.30pm, but the other two cavers found the trip much harder and it was the early hours of Saturday morning before the second caver was able to exit (at 2.30am) followed 2 hours later by the final member of the party. Assisted by CRO, DCRO, SMRT, Calder Valley MRT and RAF Leeming MRT.
27. **Saturday 4th October at 14:36 by MCR: 6t, 2h**
Eastwater Cavern (Priddy), physically stuck
The team were alerted after a Scout caver was reported to be stuck in a passage in Eastwater Cavern. A team undertook an initial search and found that they had been successfully freed by their companions, and were slowly making their way to the surface.
28. **Sunday 5th October at 14:36 by DCRO: 28t, 4h 10m**
Coombs Dale (Stoney Middleton), assist authorities
DCRO were called to assist in a search for a high-risk missing person. They had mentioned caves in recent discussions, and their car had been found in a carpark at the bottom of Combs Dale. A phone ping had tracked the casualty to near Sallet Hole so a small DCRO team were sent to scout the entrance, but found no sign of entry. A team were then deployed when some clothing was found near some small cave entrances, but by their arrival the casualty had been located on the surface. After providing medical assistance, DCRO members helped Edale MRT to transfer the casualty to an ambulance for ongoing care
29. **Monday 27th October at 09:00 by GCRG: 1t, 2h**
Wigpool Iron Mine (Forest of Dean), assist authorities
Police requested GCRG's assistance to recover some bones from Wigpool Iron Mine for analysis. The bones were found not to be human.
30. **Saturday 8th November at 14:12 by CRO: 5t, 2h**
Alum Pot (Selside), unable to climb
The team were called by North Yorkshire Police for a party of cavers stranded at the bottom of the 90m shaft of Alum Pot due to concerns over a damaged rope. As the team were assembling at the RV point, they received a further call confirming that the party were safe having resolved the issue with the rope.
31. **Saturday 13th December at 22:25 by CRO: 7t, 2h 58m**
Bar Pot (The Allotment), physically stuck
A caver (m43) caving with his sons (m8, 15) got stuck at the top of Bar Pot entrance pitch. A small team helped the caver to get back down the pitch while others rigged Small Mammal Pot. He was uninjured, and able to exit before being driven down to the CRO depot.
32. **Saturday 20th December at 14:15 by DCRO: 14t, 2h 35m**
Carlswark Cavern (Stoney Middleton), fall
A novice caver (f18) slipped while climbing down the barrels lining the Flower Pot entrance to Carlswark, falling around 3m and hurting her ankle. Due to the constricted nature of the entrance, a small team went underground while the entrance was rigged. A team RRMT and doctor assessed the casualty as having a likely broken ankle, and used Pentrox to assist in splinting, before moving her to the base of the shaft. She was hauled to the surface, and handed over to an ambulance crew, before 3 other members of the party were also hauled out. A fractured ankle was later confirmed at hospital.
33. **Tuesday 30th December at 20:40 by DCRO: 24t, 8h 20m**
Gentlewoman's Shaft to Ringing Rake Sough (Matlock), lost/overdue
A party of five cavers were reported overdue from a planned Gentlewoman's Shaft to Ringing Rake Sough through trip. Teams were sent in from both the sough and the shaft entrances, and the party was located downstream of the ducks but upstream of a silted-up squeeze. After some rewarming and digging the silt, the party was able to exit under their own steam from the lower entrance