

# Mountain Rescue



## Penrith Mountain Rescue Your local search & rescue team

Penrith Mountain Rescue Team (PMRT) has been going for 52 years and is manned entirely by dedicated, trained volunteers who freely give their time and skills to provide a search and rescue resource to support Cumbria Constabulary. The team consists of approximately 40 members from all over North East Cumbria and from all walks of life. They all share one love and that is being in the mountains.

The extra space allows for sharing with the Cumbria Ore Mines Rescue Unit (COMRU), with whom we regularly train and are often co-deployed. The increased size will also ensure storage for the equipment required to undertake our enlarged remit of mountain, swift water rescue and police and ambulance assist in the 'off road environment'. A large training space is also a must.

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Each dog handler must already be an operational member of mountain rescue, safe on the hills, potentially alone with the dog, in the worst of conditions, to search for lost and despondent people.

### THE QUEST FOR A NEW OPERATIONAL BASE

We have been saving. However, a purpose built facility designed on best practice lines as per the bigger Lake District teams comes with a budget estimate of £400k-£600k

### A TYPICAL PENRITH MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM CALLOUT

There is no such thing, and 2012 proved that emphatically!

### WATER RELATED INCIDENTS

When Appleby, Carlisle, Cockermouth and Eamont Bridge flooded in the last decade the emergency services requested the help of Penrith MRT to cope with the risk to life and property.



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If you would like to get in touch go to our website contact page

### Our Search Dogs Dram, Dottie & Angus

Each dog handler must already be an operational member of mountain rescue, safe on the hills, potentially alone with the dog, in the worst of conditions, to search for lost and despondent people. The training time, frequency of deployment, and financial commitment of the handler and their family cannot be greater emphasized; there are only 15 operational pairs in the Lake District.

Within Penrith MRT Kaz Frith works with Dottie as an Air Scenting Search Dog, and is currently training Angus as the second Scent Discriminating Search Dog in the Lakes. Happily Daryl Garfield and Dram, of Penrith MRT, are a little further through their training to achieve this accolade. Scent discrimination training ensures a dog can ignore all other scents and focus on their subject, allowing the pair to be more effective in a populated area. However Dottie, in a non-discriminatory role, has so far found 8 people and definitely saved the lives of 2. Dottie and Kaz are additionally double trained and have attended 3 avalanches in the last 12 months.

### The Quest for a New Operational Base

Once upon a time our base on Tynefield drive was a state of the art, purpose built, and a well situated hub for our rescue activities. However, in 1990 the amount of equipment was less, the vehicles smaller and fewer and we are now short of space. The search has been on for a number of years. However the last 18 months of hard work, negotiating and financial legwork are showing promise of the team moving into a similarly state of the art building, 3-4 times larger in size, within the next 3-5 years.

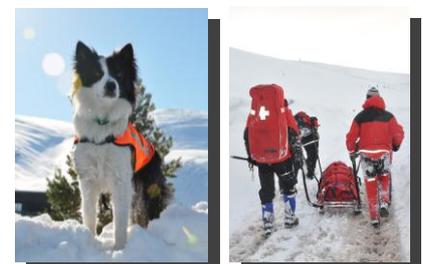
### A Typical Penrith Mountain Rescue Team Callout (There is no such thing!)

On average the team responds to 30-40 callouts per year - these can range from animal rescues (assisting farmers), to crag rescues involving technical rope access, to extended searches for missing persons. However, not all emergencies are in the mountains and don't all happen to tourists. The team has assisted at accidents and other emergencies such as military and civilian plane crashes, the 2005 Carlisle and 2009 Eamont Bridge floods and the 2007 Grayrigg train crash. We are also called upon by the Police to assist with searches for vulnerable or despondent people. There are never two call outs quite the same.

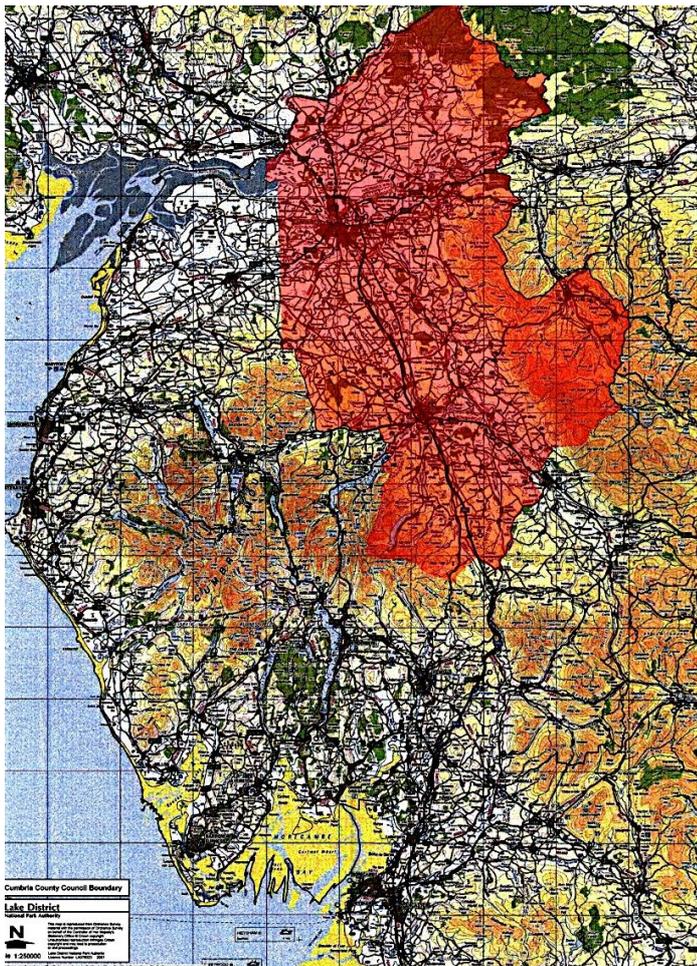
### Water Related Incidents

Since learning lessons as part of the responses to the Eamont Bridge and Cockermouth Floods, our remit has diversified to respond to search and rescue water related incidents safely, and in a complimentary manner to the police and fire services.

As such our regular training involves being in and around water as well as on the hills and crags locally. We now have 16 personnel who have undergone advance training to become Swift Water Rescue Technicians, those in dry suits in the water.



[www.penrithmrt.org.uk](http://www.penrithmrt.org.uk)



PMRT covers the largest geographic area of any of the Lakes District Mountain Rescue Teams, taking in 965 sq miles. The area stretches from the Scottish border to the depths of Haweswater and from the Northumberland border to the Solway Firth, thus including the towns of Carlisle, Penrith and Brampton.

Our population at risk is therefore varied – farmers, the tourist influx, the keen ramblers on the tricky Crossfell leg of the pennine way, and the unlucky locals caught in bad weather or ill health.

The team is also on call to assist other Lake District and National teams as required. Additionally the police can, and do, request our manpower and expertise in searches and emergency situations such as floods and major transport accidents. As such team members carry pagers 24/7 with the aim that response is immediate

PMRT is a registered charity and like all Mountain Rescue Teams in England and Wales relies entirely on donations, bequests and the generosity of the public to fund their running costs.

