

The Cairngorm Club

INCIDENT PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

If an accident (human or vehicle) or other incident (e.g. missing persons, altercations) likely to involve the emergency services, the public media, or the mountaineering community (inside or outside the Club) generally, occurs during a Club meet of any sort (formal or informal), the following procedures should be followed as far as practical. Normally, the "Meet Organiser" will be the person appointed as such by the relevant Meets Secretary and/or the Committee; in other cases (e.g. an informal meet), the most appropriate person is assumed.

1. If the emergency services are required, the person calling them out should inform them as fully as possible as to the nature and location of the incident, including any injuries. An "Emergency Procedure" sheet is attached below. If necessary, the formal Meet Organiser should be informed as soon as possible of the incident.
2. The Meet Organiser should constitute a small 2- or 3-person team to determine and organise other action as necessary, such as search parties and MR liaison.
3. Where it has been necessary to call out the emergency services, or an injury likely to be of a significant nature has been sustained, the Meet Organiser should advise the Club President and/or Secretary of the position as soon as practicable. Other incidents should be notified in due course to the Secretary for reporting at the next Committee meeting.
4. The President and/or Secretary should determine whether liaison should be established between a Club representative and any injured party or their family, and if so should nominate someone (possibly one of themselves) to conduct such liaison and report back.
5. The President and/or Secretary may request one or more written reports from those involved, and shall provide to Committee members such information about the incident as is appropriate in their judgement. Where the Club's Civil Liability Insurance (CLI) policy may be affected, the appropriate information should be provided to the Club Membership Secretary: see www.mountaineering.scot/clubs/advice-and-resources/club-insurance, where there is a link to a Howden report form (which should normally be submitted only by the Club Membership Secretary as the relevant liaison officer).
6. The President and/or Secretary may disseminate such information as they consider appropriate concerning the incident to other Club members or to the media (commercial or social), subject to the following provisos:
 - (a) no information regarding the identity or medical condition of those involved should be disclosed, except with their agreement or that of their family as the case may be;
 - (b) no statement should be made attributing liability in respect of the incident to any individual or to the Club;
 - (c) the privacy of all those involved in the incident should be respected and preserved as far as reasonable and possible.
7. Where practical, only the President or Secretary or a person nominated by them should provide to the media any information regarding an incident or its possible consequences. When the President and Secretary are unavailable, a statement providing limited information may be made by a committee member (e.g. the relevant Meet Secretary) if necessary.

8. Any public statement made to the media on behalf of the Club should contain the following:
 - (a) acknowledgement of the incident and its general nature;
 - (b) the type of meet during which the incident happened;
 - (c) expression of regret in respect of death or personal injuries;
 - (d) a statement to the effect that members participate in Club activities on their own account and at their own risk;
 - (e) a statement that the Club will be conducting its own enquiry into the matter to see what lessons if any can be learned.

9. No information regarding the incident should be made available on the Club website or social media without the prior approval of the President or Secretary. For serious incidents, posts from any Club member should not be made before friends and family of those affected have been informed through official channels.

Ken Thomson and Garry Wardrope, 24 May 2023

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

CAIRNGORM CLUB

1. Protect all from further hazard; care for injured; consider rest of party.
2. First, gather information below, then call the Police (who will coordinate Mountain Rescue if needed) on 999 or 112, stating:
 - i) The incident location, e.g. a 6-figure grid ref., and named feature
 - ii) The number of casualties or lost personnel
 - iii) What is wrong with casualties, and whether they are deteriorating
 - iv) Details of the equipment in the group, e.g. group shelter
 - v) Your contact number and any other mobile numbers in the group
3. If sending for help or police/MR liaison, ensure that at least one competent person stays with the casualty; if possible, send two people with written message.
4. Make no statements except to the Police and Meets Organiser/Club Official; do not place any blame, or accept any liability.

NB: The International Mountain Distress Signal is 6 whistle blasts or torch flashes, followed by a minute's gap, then repeated. Do not stop when you hear/see a reply; carry on signalling until help arrives. Do not shine torch at arriving helicopter.

Further information is available at <https://www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/essential-skills/mountain-rescue/calling-for-help>.