

TEESDALE & WEARDALE SEARCH & MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

Search and rescue throughout County Durham

RULES & CONSTITUTION

TITLE:

The organisation shall be known as the Teesdale & Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue Team, hereinafter called "The Team".

1. AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

The primary focus of the Team is to locate and evacuate injured and/or lost persons in upland environments and to provide appropriate casualty care. In addition to this the Team may also provide:

- Missing Person Searches in urban, suburban and lowland areas;
- Support to NHS Ambulance Services for difficult casualty evacuations;
- Support to government agencies/emergency services in severe weather;
- Support to government agencies/emergency services where the Team's skills and equipment may be appropriate;
- Support to government agencies/emergency services at major incidents;
- Swift water rescue;
- Animal rescue.

The Team will predominantly operate within County Durham but can provide support in other areas when requested. It aims to provide its on call services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Team will also seek to educate potential users of the hills and countryside, advising of possible dangers in the area and aiming to reduce risk by giving talks and demonstrations to interested organisations.

2. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE POWERS:

In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise, the Management Committee may exercise the following powers:

- Power to make use of the Team's search, rescue and casualty care abilities, to relieve suffering and distress in any other ways that are considered by the Team to be practical and are within the Team's legal and insurance operating restrictions;
- Power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising funds the Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;

- Power to buy, take on lease or in exchange, any property necessary for the achievement of the objectives and to maintain and equip it for use;
- Power subject to any consents required by law to sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Charity;
- Power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and Statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objectives or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
- Power to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the objects
- Power to appoint and constitute such working groups as the Committee may think fit;
- Power to do all such other lawful things as is necessary for the achievement of the objectives.

3. MEMBERSHIP:

The Membership may consist of President, Vice-Presidents, Full Team Members (made up of the Hill Team, Canoe Team and Operational Support), Trainee Members and Associate Members.

- A. The President and Vice-Presidents shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and hold office for one year. They shall be eligible for re-election. These roles act as figureheads for the Team. The roles do not confer the ability to vote at General Meetings, but do not prevent the incumbents from performing another role within the Team that does allow a vote.
- B. Full Team Members shall be over the age of eighteen years and will be placed in at least one of the following groups:

HILL TEAM: This group consists of appropriately skilled Full Team Members, who are willing, at any time, to attend a Callout where the skills of the Hill Team are required and are expected to hold a First Aid qualification. Members of this group are expected to meet minimum annual training requirements as determined by the Committee. These requirements are set out in Standard Operating Procedures. In order for the Team to operate safely Hill Team Members who do not satisfy these minimum requirements will normally be removed from the Callout list. The requirements for their subsequent reinstatement will be a matter for the Committee with reference to the current Standard Operating Procedures.

CANOE TEAM: This group consists of appropriately skilled Full Team Members, who are willing, at any time, to attend a Callout where the skills of the Canoe Team are required. Members of this group are expected to meet minimum annual training requirements as determined by the Committee. These requirements are set out in Standard Operating Procedures. In order for the Team to operate safely Canoe Team Members who do not satisfy these minimum requirements will normally be removed from the Callout list. The requirements for their subsequent reinstatement will be a matter for the Committee with reference to the current Standard Operating Procedures.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM: This group is made up of Team Members who are not necessarily HILL TEAM / CANOE TEAM members but provide support to these operational teams. The following roles are not prescriptive but can range from:

- Providing administrative support;
- Helping maintain equipment;
- Helping maintain vehicles;
- Helping maintain the Bases;
- Driving;
- Search Management;
- And can include some of the Committee roles where membership of the HILL TEAM / CANOE TEAM is not a necessity.

The Committee may recruit and dispense with the services of Operational Support Team Members in order to address Team efficiency and effectiveness.

At least once a year the Committee will review the performance of all Full Team Members against training and attendance objectives that are set out in the Team's Standard Operating Procedures.

After 1 year's membership of the team, including time spent as a TRAINEE, Full Team Members (HILL TEAM / CANOE TEAM / SUPPORT TEAM) shall be eligible:

- To vote at General Meetings;
- To nominate candidates as Officers and Committee members;
- To stand as Officers and Committee members;

C. HILL TEAM TRAINEES / CANOE TEAM TRAINEES: This group is made up of Trainee Members who are undergoing a period of training and assessment before being considered for Full Team Membership and are expected to meet a minimum annual training requirement and an assessment for their respective roles as required by the Committee and set out in the Standard Operating Procedures. If these minimum requirements are not met the member will normally be removed from the relevant TRAINEE group.

Trainee Members (HILL TEAM / CANOE TEAM) shall be over eighteen years of age and shall not be eligible:

- To vote at General Meetings;
- To stand as Officers and Committee members.

But this does not prevent these members from performing another role within the Team that does allow both of the above.

D. Associate Membership is open to:

- Ex-Full Team Members
- Members of the public that the Committee nominate in recognition for their work
- Members of the public who provide financial support to the Team by annual subscription

Associate Members shall not be eligible:

- To vote at General Meetings;

- To stand as Officers and Committee Members.

But this does not prevent these members from performing another role within the Team that does allow both of the above.

- E. The Committee shall confirm membership by the issue of a Membership / Base Access Card to all Full Team Members.
- F. The Committee reserves the right to terminate the membership of any individual (subject to Section 16 of this Constitution).

4. MANAGEMENT:

The management of the Team shall be in the hands of an elected Committee, which shall consist of elected Officers. The Committee shall meet immediately after the Annual General Meeting to consider co-options as necessary. Co-options shall be for a specific role only and are not eligible to vote. Elected Committee Members shall act as Trustees during their tenure.

5. OFFICERS:

A. The Officers shall consist of:

- Team Leader
- Three Deputy Team Leaders
- Hon. Secretary
- Hon. Treasurer
- Training Lead
- (Up to) Five Group Leaders
- Press & Public Relations Lead
- Equipment Lead
- Fundraising Lead
- Transport Lead
- Medical Lead
- Radio & Information Technology Systems Lead
- Operational Support Team Lead
- Search Management Lead
- Crag Lead
- Water Lead
- Canoe Group Lead
- SARDA Lead

The duties of the above Officers are defined in the Team's Standard Operating Procedures.

B. Except with the prior written approval of the Charity Commissioners no Trustee may:

- Receive any benefit in money or in kind from the charity; or
- Have a financial interest in the supply of goods or services to the charity other than those permitted by law; or
- Acquire or hold any interest in property of the charity (except in order

to hold it as trustee of the charity).

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Meetings of the Management Committee shall be called as and when required at the discretion of the Team Leader and Hon. Secretary. A quorum shall consist of 9 elected Committee members and must include the attendance of either the Team Leader or one of the Deputy Team Leaders.

Working parties shall be formed as and when the occasion demands and shall cease to exist when the particular purpose for which they were formed no longer exists - providing always, that the actions and proceedings of any such working party, (or persons referred to in that way), shall be fully and promptly reported back to the Committee.

Any Full Team Member may attend Committee meetings.

7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

The Annual General Meeting shall be held in November each year. Fourteen days notice of the Meeting shall be given. Any matters that an 'eligible to vote' Full Team Member wishes to have put before the AGM shall be sent to the Hon. Secretary, to arrive not less than seven days before the Meeting.

Any Full Team Member eligible to vote may stand for any Officer and Committee role. If there are more candidates than positions, voting shall be by secret ballot.

8. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING:

An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called within twenty-eight days of a written request to the Team Leader, signed personally by twenty five per cent or more 'eligible to vote' Full Team Members. Fourteen days written notice shall be given to all Members. The business of the Meeting shall solely consist of the item(s) for which the meeting is called. A quorum shall be fifty percent of the 'eligible to vote' Full Team Membership.

9. CHANGES IN RULES & CONSTITUTION:

Any changes in the Rules & Constitution of the Team shall be agreed at the Annual General Meeting or at such Extraordinary General Meetings especially convened for the purpose of amending the Rules & Constitution and providing that no alteration shall be made which would

cause the Charity to cease to be charitable at Law. The proposed changes must be approved by seventy five per cent of the votes cast at that meeting.

10. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE VOTING:

Voting rights shall consist of one vote per person, irrespective of the number of positions held. The Team Leader shall not vote on any issue, but in the event of a tie, shall have the deciding vote. Co-opted Committee members are not eligible to vote.

11. FINANCE:

The Team shall be financed by subscription, donation and fundraising activities. The assets of the Team shall, in the event of its dissolution, be vested in the Mountain Rescue England and Wales, as Trustees.

12. SUBSCRIPTIONS & BANKING:

Subscriptions are entirely voluntary. The Hon. Treasurer shall maintain a bank account. Withdrawals shall be on the signature of the Treasurer and one of the persons whom the Committee has appointed for this purpose. One of these appointees can also replace the Treasurer as a signatory in their absence.

13. ACCOUNTS:

The Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to:

- The keeping of accounting records for the Charity;
- The preparation of annual statements of account for the Charity;
- The auditing or independent examination of the statements of account of the Charity; and
- The transmission of the statements of account of the Charity to the Commission.

14. ANNUAL REPORT:

The Committee shall comply with their obligation under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual report and its transmission to the Commission.

15. ANNUAL RETURN:

The Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any other statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual return and its transmission to the Commission.

16. DISCIPLINE:

Any Member, who, by his or her action, brings the Team into disrepute, shall be asked to appear before a working party appointed by the Committee to look at disciplinary matters. Dependent on the findings of the appointed working party, the Committee may, for good and sufficient reason, terminate his/her membership. The working party may also recommend to the Committee that legal advice be sought, depending on the circumstances surrounding the particular event for which the working party was convened. A 'friend' may accompany the Team Member at such meetings of the working party. The Team Member will have the right of appeal. Any appeal must be made in writing to the Team Leader and will be considered by the Committee

17. DISSOLUTION:

If the charity trustees decide that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the charity, they shall call a meeting of all members of the charity of which not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, the charity trustees shall have power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the charity. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to Mountain Rescue England & Wales.