

5 November 2015

CCT RESCUE TEAM NEWS LETTER NOVEMBER 2015

HI All

NEWS

Now winter is over it is necessarily time for various forms of update before the summer.

Of importance is that the submission to the Community Fund made by Emlyn and supported by others was totally successful. As a consequence, the CCT Team now has ropes, karabiners, Petzl ID's and small pulleys. The Team now has most of the gear needed to be self sufficient in training or on a simple rescue. **Well-done and thanks Emlyn!**

Chris has volunteered to store the gear at his place in South Hobart so that it is available for a rescue.

We now need to source packs, larger pulleys (pro traction) for counter balance rescues and a lockable storage system. The SAR coordinators are working on this but if you have ideas or sources for lockable boxes let us know.

WHAT NEXT?

The SAR coordinators feel that the team has evolved significantly from the disparate group of climbers that was its genesis. In the beginning it would have been hard to establish hard rules or define techniques and firm protocols. Now these things are not only possible they are necessary. For our skills to be integrated into the broader response during a critical incident, the lead authority (Tasmania Police) need to know that we are able to operate within defined guidelines (see below), nominally that we are adhering to the legislated workplace health and safety guidelines.

In this way it is now an appropriate time to set down some clear objectives, minimum skill sets and call out protocols so that we are prepared for summer. These will also inform the exercise at Coles Bay later this month.

CALLOUT

What happens when a callout occurs?

Tasmania Police are the lead agency for coordinating vertical rescue (VR) within the state. The SES and CCT may be requested to assist Police with a critical incident if deemed appropriate. There is an understanding between Tasmania Police and the Tasmania Fire Service that urban and confined space VR will be undertaken by the TFS. VR jobs that occur on cliffs and in caves are typically handled by Tasmania Police.

In the event of a VR job where the CCT can be of assistance, the Police will contact the CCT SAR coordinator (first name of the callout list). If they cannot reach the first person on the callout list, they will then progressively work down the list until contact is made. The CCT SAR coordinators are responsible for coordinating the callout of the CCT SAR team. They will be contacted by police directly, other climbers or the SES. If we are contacted by other climbers requiring assistance, a decision will be made about whether the incident requires Police assistance. In the event of a life threatening situation and/or time critical situation, where external assistance is required, the CCT will contact Police.

To maximise time frames for survival, the team may be requested to assist at very short notice. Previous experience with VR jobs is that you may be asked to get to either the airport (Rotorlift Aviation) or a Forward Command Post within an hour (or shorter) of notification. The Police and SES have some spare personal VR kits if this occurs, but appropriate clothing/footwear is your own responsibility.

For obvious safety and professional reasons CCT SAR coordinator must be satisfied that those called have the required skills to perform the rescue subject to callout. It is important to note that (particularly since the Pedra Branca accident) volunteers are subject to workplace safety legislation. Emergency Services such as Police and SES must be satisfied their volunteers are compliant. Hence their insistence that we use rescue rated techniques and equipment.

An essential element of workplace safety is that the practitioner/volunteer has the required level of knowledge, training, currency and skills for the task. In this way it is important that CCT rescue team members have competency and knowledge of the relevant essential skills and safety protocols. This is validated by attendance at practices and training whenever possible.

Simply put, the CCT team coordinators responsible for callouts are unable to utilise persons who do not have the required level of skills, training or currency.

To date the ethos of the CCT SAR team has been strongly inclusive, informal and committed to helping fellow climbers. This ethos remains. In this way there will be no examinations, tests, grades or validation dates. However, for safety reasons callout must be confined to those with known skills and currency. Whilst this can be achieved a number of ways the easiest and safest method for the coordinators is to call those who regularly attend training, exercises or currently work in that space.

The CCT team will remain highly inclusive however the callout list must necessarily reflect the above. It will have two parts; firstly there will be the members who have recently demonstrated the required skills and currency. The second part will include those in training or who have shown those skills in the past - but have been unable to maintain recent currency.

So.....

OBJECTIVES

It should be noted that VR jobs are rare (we may only get 1 job every 2-3 years) but deemed high risk. The following are a set of objectives that should inform preparations for the summer period.

1. That by December the members of the team subject to callout will be proficient at the skill sets essential to work with Police and SES teams on safe and effective rescue responses.
2. That the equipment owned by the group is prepared and stored in a manner that facilitates rapid response to Mt Wellington.
3. All team members are conversant with the safety rules for rescue responses (attached).
4. On call team members are aware of, and practiced at, the basic core skills that are required to be safe and effective as a team member.
5. The CCT Callout list is up to date, and circulated to the appropriate Tasmania Police and SES contacts.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Team members MUST be familiar and proficient with the following essential skills:

- Our lightweight rescue rated belay system that utilises twin 7mm prussiks, a pulley and a pre loaded ATC.
- Pick offs
- Ascending and descending.
- Rigging rescue rated equalised anchors systems.
- The operation of the Petzl ID In the various contexts of:
 - Releasable mainline,
 - Ascending and descending,
 - Pickoffs
 - Belaying.

The recent practice at Fruhauf involved pickoffs and whilst several methods were tried the system as described by Chris (attached) was the most efficient and simple. This is our standard.

If anyone has been unable to attend training and is not familiar with any of these techniques please contact Stu and we will arrange an update.

Additionally, we may be asked to assist in poor weather when a helicopter cannot access a cliff. Therefore individuals need to be prepared to walk some distance and be self sufficient in alpine environments (possibly overnight). It would be useful to have 6 or 7 of the team who are prepared to have a full bush walking/climbing kit fully prepared ready for a one hour departure from Rotorlift. If you are prepared to do this, and stay highly current please let Stu or Emlyn know.

It will be obvious that these developments have been Southern based. VR response is slightly different in the other Districts and we look forward to having conversations with our Northern counterparts in the future.

Basic Equipment

The following is a list of the sort of gear you will need to bring to a callout, it is in development so feedback would be appreciated):

Some of this we will try to supply in the near future but most of you will have it in the shed.

2 x 7mm Prussiks cut to a length that will make exactly 43cm and 33cm loops.

1 x 6mm safety prussic at 33cm loop

1 Petzl oscillante pulley or equivalent (we have now got some of these in the kit)

2 x 120cm 20mm nylon sewn slings BD are cheap and excellent

2 cordalettes of 7mm nylon 2.5m loop

At least 6 lockers. (Preferably pear biners. Petzl William Trilocks are best but very expensive. BD Pear biners are much cheaper and work well. In the end any lockers will do.)

Ascenders

Belay device

Helmet

Gloves

Head Torch

Personal Clothing (e.g. Beanie, Waterproof Shell, insulation layers etc.)

Decent Sized Pack (you may be carrying your own personal kit and also a heap of rope/equipment)

Snacks (these jobs can drag out)

Water

Any way please do some practice before the exercise at Coles Bay. It would also assist the planning if you let on of the Coordinators know you are going.

Kind regards Stu, Emlyn and Chris.