



From inter-agency coordination to incident response

Country
England and Wales

Number of locations
9 regions, 46 local teams

Number of employees
1,800

Services included
> Incident and emergency management.

Client

Mountain Rescue

Challenge

Mountain Rescue wanted to improve in two key areas: their ability to contribute in higher-level coordination forums with the police and local government; and their response to major incidents. Tackling both would enable them to form part of a truly joint response to public emergencies by working alongside other agencies and being ready to launch on large scale, complex rescue operations promptly and effectively.

Approach

In terms of joint emergency response, the team explored the protocols around contributing to local government/emergency service planning meetings, and looked at ways to improve access. Support was also given to key personnel to help develop their briefing skills and more clearly establish themselves as subject matter experts.

In relation to major incident response, Berwicks adopted a highly collaborative approach in order to identify and build on existing skills and capabilities. This involved drawing on the individuals' extensive experiences in their field – spanning rescue, geographical, topological and meteorological knowledge – and their broad network of contacts across many public agencies.

Finally, the team introduced modern concepts in training in line with JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles), focusing on improving shared situational awareness, joint decision-making and information management. The techniques and skills were embedded through a realistic multi-agency simulation exercise.

Results

Mountain Rescue reported a significant positive impact in both planning and response terms. Senior managers now feel more confident in their approach to local government planning meetings, with an improved ability to brief interagency teams, meaning they can now contribute effectively to cohesive and effective emergency response strategies.

Those attending the training and associated exercises also agreed that their new communication and decision-making skills would make a valuable difference to their ability to respond to disasters on the ground.

Mountain Rescue has requested that the training be rolled out nationally, while a separate organisation in a similar field has also appointed Berwicks to deliver training to their teams.

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