



Borders Search and Rescue Unit



Yankee, Xray, Zulu

“Yankee was in for its MOT today. Unfortunately, it needs a load of welding on the chassis before it will pass.”

This was the gist of an email that was sent on the 1st of June to all team members from our vehicle officer. Yankee, it should be explained, is the call sign for and hence name afforded to one of our 2 Landrovers, the other being designated Xray and the Mercedes Sprinter, Zulu. The welding has been duly done and Yankee back in service. We now await the bill.

Vehicle Safety

In a previous article I mentioned Keswick MRT's loss of a vehicle when it rolled during a call out. Following advice from Scottish Mountain Rescue the team funded the fitting of anti-roll bars to Xray. This work was done in December. The external fittings can be seen in the photo below taken just after the job was completed. Team members then had to refit the blue lights, spot lights, and radio aerials, all of which took some time, but was thankfully completed before lockdown.



Money In, Money Out

At present, like most charities and businesses, expenses continue while opportunities to raise money are minimal. Vehicles need maintained, insurance comes up, some equipment requires to be replaced, and certain items purchased to provide necessary protection in this coronavirus time. Reduced activity affords some saving of cash on fuel, and the fee for use of a room at Abbey Row for our monthly meeting, as Zoom has now become the venue.

Unusual Times, Unusual Training

A casualty with a lower leg injury requiring a stretcher evacuation of only one kilometre would usually involve 12 team members. Six carrying with frequent changes of position and personnel on the stretcher to avoid strain injury and exhaustion. Every person carrying the stretcher would be less than 1 metre from the casualty and other team members, all of whom must be considered a coronavirus risk. How do you protect the team members? The answer is **MEG**.

Mask, Eyes, Gloves. Team members will be expected to have on or put on Gortex waterproof jacket and trousers, then add mask, goggles, and medical gloves in that order before getting close to a casualty. Now that is the easy part. The carry out will be incredibly sweaty. Once the casualty is on the way to hospital, kit that can be disinfected and any other kit bagged. Now the fun begins, doffing the PPE.

GAEM Team member now gets a large bin bag, small waste disposal bag, and hand gel ready. Stand in bin bag, remove **G** - gloves, put in waste bag, use hand gel, remove **A** (apron), in this case waterproofs, and drop into bin bag you are standing in, use hand gel, **E** – eyes, remove goggles with care, use hand gel, **M** – remove mask and put in waste disposal, use hand gel, close both bags. Waste disposal bag into team collective bin bag and take bag with waterproofs to your car, use hand gel. Change your footwear, use hand gel. Go home.



Once home the protective gear, helmet, goggles, and boots can be cleaned using hot soapy water. The waterproofs can either be machine washed at 60 degrees and then reproofed, or left for 78 hours.

The 1, or maximum 2, team members who travelled in a team vehicle return it to the garage and begin the removal of the waste bin bag and kit that needs to stand untouched for 78 hours. They then do an internal clean of the vehicle or it is out of use for 78 hours. Throughout keep using gel, avoid touching face.

I should point out that during the training team members used buffs as face coverings in order to preserve our stock of masks.

<https://www.scottishmountainrescue.org> and <http://www.bordersar.org.uk>
BSARU is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO23213

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