

Case Study



Mock rescue training exercise in the North of Scotland

The Area

Scotland has some stunning scenery and none more so than an old mine in the north of Scotland our teams visited recently.

Needing a second means of egress / separate escape route, the mine manager contacted us for advice and assistance to adapt an existing development in the mine for this purpose, and we made an initial site visit.

This development was an old raise that started off one of the old roadways and exited halfway up the mountain, and we were asked to determine its suitability as an escape route.



Tension line on mountain

Initial Observations

The raise – or rise as it is known – had many twists and turns and was also very steep and about 70m high. Our experienced rope access teams entered the mine and inspected the shaft via ropes. It was clear that although the rock was stable, it was too steep for someone to use as an escape route and climb up, and that additional equipment such as stairs, ladders and rails would be needed before it could be used.

The Work

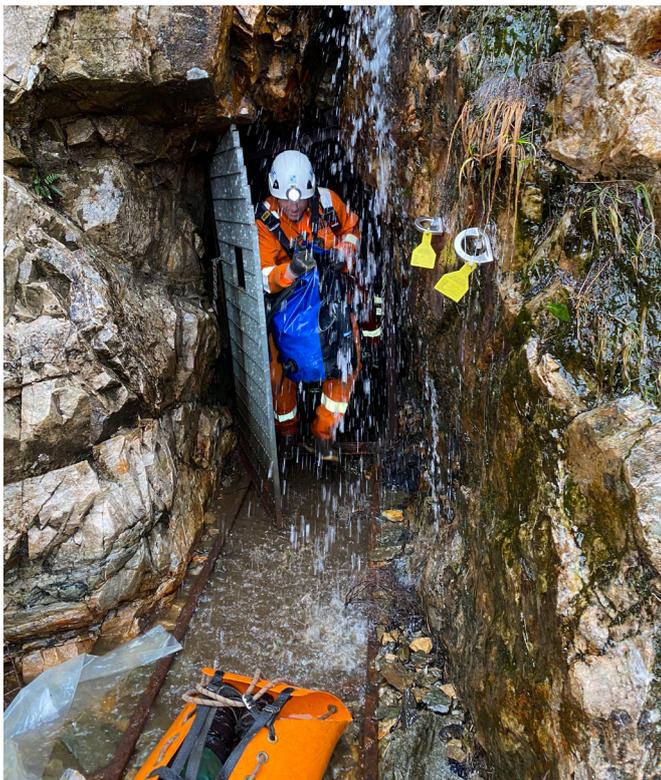
Following the initial site visit and recommendations from our team, the mining company made several significant improvements to the safety of the escape route. These included installing ladders, handrails, and anchor points on the mountain itself, to enable a tension line to be fixed if required to get a stretcher down the mountain.



Using rope access skills



Performing a mock rescue inside the mountain



Ensuring a safe escape route



We then made a second inspection, taking a team of our rescue experts and all equipment necessary. After the inspection we performed a mock rescue exercise where we rescued a mannequin which was at the bottom of the rise, and brought to safety down the mountain to ground level. We timed the incident and exercise too and provided a report to the customer to say we felt the escape route was now safe and could be used in case of emergency.

Going forwards

Sliding a rope down a hole in the side of a mountain with a waterfall behind you, isn't the usual day job of our rescue teams, but one well within our capabilities. Now that the escape route is safe, we will be providing high risk confined space rescue training for the mining teams to enable them to perform a rescue should the need arise.

