

SCOTLAND'S CHARITY AIR AMBULANCE



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WELCOME

Welcome to the latest edition of your Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance newsletter.

It's been wonderful to see a gradual resumption of our community and events activities just as we approach the winter months. These events are so important to the charity as it enables the team to connect with their local communities and help raise awareness of our work. Hopefully we can re-introduce these more fully in 2022.



We have also held several face-to-face talks and presentations (and not just online!) from our wonderful army of volunteers. So, if you are a community group or know of one and would like to know more about the work of SCAA, please get in touch.

Operationally, the crews of Helimed 76 and 79 stand ready to be deployed to any incident throughout Scotland. This summer, the crews attended more call outs than ever before; an indication that people are exploring, enjoying their hobbies and interests and travelling across our beautiful country. Thanks to your continued support, our life-saving emergency service has remained fully operational during these difficult times.

With the festive season upon us, look out for our fantastic new Christmas cards and why not browse our online shop by clicking [here](#). Please also look out for our lottery canvassers in Aldi and other supermarkets while you are out shopping; a friendly hello would be appreciated!

I hope you enjoy reading this latest instalment and, if you are on social media, give us a Follow or Like to keep up-to-date with SCAA daily.

Have a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Thank you,
David Craig | CEO

MEETING NEW CHALLENGES

While never knowingly being tasked to airlift a Covid sufferer, SCAA's crews have had to follow ever-changing rules and regulations to ensure the safety of both themselves and their patients at scene and in flight.

Cumbersome PPE proved challenging in the confines of the aircraft and face masks stilted communication with our patients. The extra kit, heat of the PPE and additional precautions necessary for each mission challenged both our strength and our resilience.

We know, however, that our challenges were nothing compared to colleagues on road ambulances and in hospitals across Scotland as we worked together to help those suffering throughout what was an unprecedented emergency.

And yet the need for frontline, rapid response air ambulance support continued as the country locked down in the face of the viral onslaught.

Despite restrictions on public movement, accidents continued to happen, with trauma cases dominating our workload. Nearly half of all our call outs were to accidents such as

road traffic collisions, industrial accidents, falls, agricultural injuries, equestrian accidents and sporting and leisure mishaps.


Cardiac and other medical emergencies accounted for around a third of our workload with the focus on transferring patients to dedicated hospitals as quickly as possible.

The rapid transfer of patients is a proven lifesaver and SCAA is a regular sight touching down at Scotland's four main Trauma Centres at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee - as well as the country's many diverse specialist centres - ensuring patients get definitive care as quickly as possible.

An increasing aspect of our work centres on the vital lifeline we provide to our island communities where air ambulance support can often be their only recourse when illness or injury strike.



DONATE NOW



Our helicopters provide speedy and comfortable transport - accompanied by paramedic or consultant-led crews - from the islands and community based hospitals in remote areas to a higher level of care for treatment or stabilisation.

The speed afforded by SCAA's air ambulances is what makes the difference when every minute counts for a seriously ill or injured patient.

And the launch of Helimed 79 at Aberdeen sees us working jointly with our neighbours, ScotSTAR North's Emergency Medical Retrieval Service (EMRS), to deploy to critical emergencies with an enhanced clinical team on board.

Daily high level training with these consultant-led teams sees our paramedics exposed to enhanced skills which enable them to assist in extreme situations and environments.

The need to escape home confinement for exercise during the Covid lockdown saw many people take to our lower lying hills, riverbanks and bike trails.

As a result, the past year saw our tasking profile change slightly as serious trips, falls and tumbles in these difficult-to-access rural areas demanded air response to secure their safety and airlift them to hospital care for a variety of injuries.

We found ourselves working increasingly alongside colleagues from Mountain Rescue Teams and Search and Rescue crews as we worked together to support this frequent type of leisure-related accident.

While many of our missions involve SCAA in a solo operation to reach and retrieve a patient, most see us working alongside - and reliant upon - the kindness and services of others.

This can range from our colleagues from ambulance, police, fire, trauma teams and voluntary organisations at scene or the staff that make ready our landing sites at hospitals throughout Scotland - right through to the estate workers who let us jump on the back of their all-terrain vehicle to reach someone injured in an inaccessible spot or the golfers who help clear the fairway to let us land close to their collapsed club mate. We couldn't do our job without them all and we're hugely grateful.

SCAA's pilots also play a key role in our ability to reach those most in need - especially when faced with adverse weather or difficult terrain. Scotland is one of the most challenging flying environments and the paramedic crews' admiration for our highly experienced and stoical pilots is immeasurable. They're the ones that ensure we reach the patient and that the patient gets to hospital care.



The restrictions of the past year curtailed public visits to our bases and our usual welcoming policy was replaced with isolation measures. While we were unable to meet the public, however, they did not abandon us and their continued support and generosity helped fuel us through the worldwide crisis.

We can't wait to greet the public at Helimed 76 and 79 again. To meet those patients whose lives we saved and improved, to chat to the families our work impacts upon and to interact with the communities we serve.

Our role as paramedics is both challenging and rewarding and we thank all those we work alongside and those who continue to fund the vital role that SCAA now plays in our frontline emergency response network.

John Pritchard MBE and Ewan Littlejohn,
Paramedic Leads at Helimed 76 and 79.



DONATE NOW

AN ACT OF KINDNESS LEADS TO A FALL

Saving a bumble bee from the skylight in his workshop barn proved a costly act of kindness for Clive Warren from Banff.

For, as he climbed up to help the trapped insect and release it outdoors, the ladder slipped from beneath him and he crashed to the concrete floor below.

"I took one look at my leg and knew it was serious," he said. "I called my wife to ask her to phone 999, telling her not to come in until she'd done so. I didn't want her to panic until she'd made the call."

Clive's leg was a bloodied mess and after the first rush of adrenaline receded, the pain became excruciating.

"The emergency call handler was telling my wife what to do and kept reassuring her that help was on the way," recalled Clive. "We then heard this deafening roar outside and my wife said 'You'll never believe it, but a helicopter has just landed on our lawn'.

"I've never been so relieved to see anyone in my life," said Clive. "SCAA is one of the three charities we support and they more than lived up to all my expectations of a great service charity."

SCAA's Helimed 79 had airlifted a critical care team from Aberdeen to ensure Clive received vital attention in the fastest possible time, as there was no doubt from the 999 phone conversation with his wife that he had caused himself serious injury.

Working with a SCAA paramedic, the team quickly assessed and stabilised Clive, ensuring that his pain was treated immediately.

"I could tell it was bad," said Clive. "The bones were sticking through the skin in two places and my ankle was distorted and twisted. By the time the team got to work, however, I was comfortable, pain free and on my way to hospital.

"Every one of them was outstanding - so professional, so caring and so reassuring. I knew I was getting the best possible care."

Clive spent six days in hospital, undergoing several operations for a double open fracture and a dislocated ankle, mending breaks in the bone and skin with pins and fixings.

He faces a long road to recovery but he's in no doubt that SCAA played a huge part in reducing his suffering.

"I'll be forever grateful to SCAA," he said. "Their speedy arrival with critical care ensured my injuries were treated quickly and skilfully.

"SCAA is an outstanding charity - we've supported it for a while and now I can speak with confidence about how great it really is.



“The speed they got to me made a huge difference. I was in pain and my wife was in distress. SCAA helped ease both.

“

Everyone in Scotland should support this amazing charity - you just never know when it's your turn.

”

At 76, Clive has no intention of letting his injuries impede his enjoyment of life longer than they have to.

“I want to drive again,” he said. “Get back on my motorbike and also turn in a decent card at golf.

“I’ll still be rescuing bees from the skylight, but I’ve promised to get a fixed ladder put in place.”



DONATE NOW

THERE FOR YOU THIS CHRISTMAS

The lights may be twinkling on the tree, the festive cards displayed around the room and carols playing cheerily in the background - but it's just another day for SCAA's crews at Christmas.

"People might think things would be quieter for us on Christmas Day," said paramedic John, "but that's not always the case.

"Heart attacks and strokes are no respecters of the festivities and accidents still happen with people out on their Christmas Day walk, travelling to friends and family or trying out the new bike.

"Anyone with loved ones in the emergency services knows that their family Christmas might be a little different," said John, "but we always try to make it a bit special if we're on duty at SCAA."

As with families everywhere, the SCAA "family" Christmas revolves round the day's main meal. But things don't always go to plan.

"Once routine and essential duties are completed, we all muck in to produce a terrific meal - or sometimes a family member will come to the base and cook for us - but it all counts for nothing if a call comes in."

John recalls cold turkey one Christmas after a busy shift and giving up on the cooking altogether another year in favour of a meal from the local Chinese carryout after a heavy workload!



Pilot Gavin loves working Christmas Day and has notched up around seven December 25 shifts with air ambulances in Scotland.

"It was more tricky when the kids were small," he said, "but it's all part of the job and you take your turn.

"Although we're dealing with some pretty serious incidents, everyone still wishes you well - from dispatchers to refuellers and A&E staff at the hospital.

"It's always a privilege to be able to fly help to those most in need and it's particularly poignant on Christmas Day. I'm just glad to be able to play my part.

"It's also pretty special to see the world from the sky. It's absolutely beautiful flying back after dark and seeing all the Christmas lights from the air - it's a sight to enjoy."

While the crew remain poised to respond to emergencies at a moment's notice, Christmas at SCAA is not without its fun.

Spirits are raised reading festive wishes from patients and supporters, tummies are full from Christmas goodies handed in by well-wishers and a duo of “naughty elves” is always up to mischief somewhere on the base.

“Spirits are usually high,” said paramedic Julia. “It’s a bit like having a second family and you want to make the day special with them.

“You can make your special day at home suit your shift,” she added. “We once woke our little boy up at 5am to say ‘Santa’s been’ and helped him open his presents before putting him back to bed and heading for work. You don’t have to miss the magic of these special times.

“If we have to have our family Christmas a day early or a day late - that’s fine.

As soon as you know you’re working on Christmas Day you can start making plans.”

If time allows, SCAA’s Christmas Day crews might get the chance to catch a movie on TV, play a game or open their Secret Santa gifts.”

“You’re always ready to shift into action when the emergency comes in, however,” said Julia. “The need for SCAA never goes away - even on Christmas Day.”



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MISSION STATS

MISSION STATS SINCE LAUNCH (MAY 2013 TO OCTOBER 2021)

3,443
CALL OUTS



Helicopter

2,792 CALL OUTS



Rapid Response Vehicle

651 CALL OUTS



2,746

Flying hours



313,974

Nautical miles
flown



TRAUMA | **51%**



MEDICAL | **14%**



STROKE | **4%**



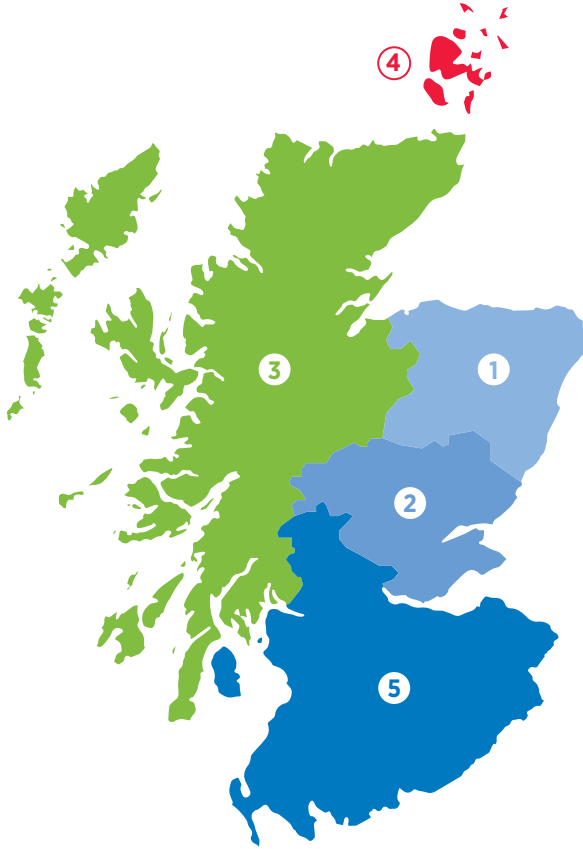
CARDIAC | **17%**



RETRIEVALS &
TRANSFERS | **14%**

TASKING MAP

SINCE LAUNCH (MAY 2013 TO OCTOBER 2021)



DONATE NOW



CHRISTMAS BAUBLE DONATION

On the next page, you'll find a link to download three Christmas Baubles you can print out at home. One bauble, marked "For your tree" is for you to use to decorate your own Christmas Tree at home.

The second bauble, marked "For SCAA's tree" is for you to send back to us with a special message for our life-saving crews. You can find our postal address on the back page of this newsletter.

The third bauble, marked "For you to share", is an extra Christmas Bauble that you can share with a friend or family member to hang on their tree this Christmas.

Your ongoing generosity will make a difference to those most in need. Each pound pledged fuels our helicopter air ambulances to deliver critical life-saving pre-hospital care and rapid onward transfer to hospital for those seriously injured or ill anywhere in Scotland. Your support allows us to continue playing a vital part in Scotland's 999 emergency response network. From the paramedics, pilots and charity team at SCAA, thank you and Merry Christmas.

[Click here to help support SCAA this Christmas](#)

Click the Christmas Bauble below to download your SCAA Christmas Baubles!



Our air ambulance crews are online 7 days a week, 365 days a year – including Christmas Day – to respond to time-critical emergencies wherever they occur in Scotland. If you value the work we do, we're asking for a one-time donation from you to support our life-saving work this Christmas. Thank you.

[DONATE NOW](#)

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING!

SCAA merchandise can be purchased via our website by clicking [here](#) or by calling 0300 123 1111.

Christmas Cards - £4.50



Christmas Cards - £4.50



Christmas Cards - £4.50



Hooded Sweatshirt - £26



T-Shirt - £14



Women's Bodywarmer - £32



Men's Bodywarmer - £32



Cycling Top - £35



Buff/Bandana - £6



Sew On Badge - £3



Baseball Cap - £14



Jute Bag - £6



Life-Saver Mug - £7



Tartan Scarf - £20



Sports Bottle - £7



SCAA Teddy - £15



Travel Cup - £10



Beanie Hat - £9



THANK YOU!

Thank you for continuing to support Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance. Whether you donate, volunteer or play our lottery – we couldn't keep flying and saving lives without you.

If you would like to help support SCAA, you could:

- Enter a fundraising event or organise your own
- Become a SCAA Volunteer
- Make a one-off or regular donation
- Leave a gift to SCAA in your will
- Play our weekly lottery - **you can sign up by clicking here**

If SCAA was there for you when you needed help, we'd love to hear your story. Email media@scaa.org.uk or call 07778-779-888 in confidence.

DONATE



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by Direct Debit and Credit or Debit Card



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Charity Number SC041845



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