

International Emergency Telephone Codes & Mountain Rescue Services

Country	Phone number	Channel and frequencies	Helicopter	Costs / insurance	Mountain Rescue System	Presence of Physicians
Argentina	Aconcagua: no phone number North Patagonia (Bariloche): 105 South Patagonia (El Chalten): no phone number	Radio VHF Aconcagua: 142:800 North Patagonia (Bariloche): 155:675 and 148:450 South Patagonia (El Chalten): 155:835 and Rx 154:335 - Tx 149:335	Aconcagua: helicopter for evacuation from base camps Plaza de Mulas and Plaza Argentina North Patagonia (Bariloche): just sometimes -few South Patagonia (El Chalten): sometimes -exceptionally	Aconcagua: included in the permit North Patagonia (Bariloche): no cost South Patagonia (El Chalten): no cost	Aconcagua: public system (police rescue team and rangers) North Patagonia (Bariloche): public system (volunteer rescue team and park rangers) South Patagonia (El Chalten): public system (volunteer rescue team and park rangers)	Aconcagua: medical service in the base camps. North Patagonia (Bariloche): not always South Patagonia (El Chalten): sometimes -exceptionally
Austria	140 / 144 / 112	No Radio Call available	Most of the time	Patient has to cover the costs; if not possible: public coverage	Public but volunteer, helicopter systems are private (except Vorarlberg)	Most of the time a physician is part of the rescue team; in helicopter - always
Bulgaria	(088) 1470 / (02) 963 2000	55.475 Mhz or 147.850 Mhz	Sometimes (not during the night)	Patients insurance; if none, government	Public and volunteer groups	In Helicopter - yes, rescue squad sometimes
Canada	911*	There is not a uniform frequency	Always available though may be a long distance away. In some cases a fixed wing aircraft must ferry fuel alongside the helicopter when the rescue team and helicopter must fly distances over 200km to a remote mountain range	Always a government agency	Always public	Not usually but more often paramedics trained in ALS and in some programs advanced procedures
England, Wales, Scotland	999 / 112	Radio call frequency restricted to the emergency services	Most of the time	No cost	Voluntary - largely non-governmental	About 25% of rescues
France	15 or 112 transfer the calls to the mountain rescue unit in some areas (Chamonix, Ecrins) there is a direct phone # to reach the mountain rescue unit	150 MHz range	Helicopters available (state operated, plus private helicopters in skiing areas during the winter). 95% rescue operations are done with helicopters	No cost for mountain rescue (including hiking, free flight...) patients are charged in skiing accidents (any cross-country skiing and skiing in ski resorts when using the ski-lifts)		Typically rescue helicopters are staffed by professional rescuers; police or gendarmerie mountain guides, and one mountain emergency doctor

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Germany Bavarian Alps, low mountain range	112	Radio call frequencies restricted to the emergency services	Regularly from sunrise to sunset, exceptionally during the night	Patient's insurance (injured only, defined rates). If not injured patient has to cover the costs	Public, but volunteer service (one organisation) supported by government	Physician usually in helicopters, paramedics ((different levels) in the rescue teams
Italy	118, activation of HEMS or mountain rescue teams	For mountain rescue only 71.500 / 71.550 MHz, not available for the public South Tyrol: not available	Every day from sunrise to sunset	No costs for Italians and foreigners. National Health Service covers the costs; some regional health authorities require payment if no medical emergency. South Tyrol: patient's insurance, if none, government	Public, by national law CNSAS (voluntarily – med, nurses & tech – , as public service) provides for rescues, generally dispatched by 118 call centre; police, fire brigades and military corps can co-operate South Tyrol: public	If rescue helicopter - yes; sometimes (if required) in the rescue squad
Norway	112 (police) / 113 (health service)	Channel 5. The radio rescue channel in the mountains is restricted to professionals	Most of the time. Expect 1-4 hours delay from call to arrival (because of long distances)	The government covers all rescue expenses. The insurance company might pay, depending on the agreements between Norway and the different countries	Public and volunteer groups	Seldom in the rescue party; always in helicopter
Poland	112 / 601100300	Radio frequency 153.625 MHz	Helicopter available most of the time in Tatra mountains. In other regions HEMS helicopters available sometimes	No costs (costs of rescue are covered by the government)	In public hands	Physician usually present in rescue squad and always in helicopter
Slovenia	112	Usually 157.725 MHz (mountain rescue service working channel, not for public use)	Yes, most of the time, usually from 7.00-19.00, during summer until 20.00	Rescue missions including helicopter flights for Slovenians are covered by the National health insurance. Foreigners are expected to have their own insurance	Public	During helicopter missions doctor always present; during ground rescue missions at about 50%
South Africa	From cell phone 112 / from land phone 10177 / for Cape Town and Western Cape (021) 948 9900	122.4 (air band), various other UHF frequencies depending on region	Almost immediate Red Cross B3 HEMS helicopter in Cape Town (daytime only). Very variable, depending on province. Ranges from good service near urban areas to nothing in the remote areas. Many different governmental authorities and volunteer organisations involved with little national coordination or cooperation. The	No cost to patient; paid from provincial emergency medical services funds. Sometimes helicopters have to be privately paid	Volunteers (medical and technical) in clubs e.g. MCSA, with back up from provincial medical authorities. No private rescue teams	Usually "paramedics" (all levels from BLS to ALS), few doctors (all volunteers)

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			exception is the SAR component of the Mountain Club of South Africa, who have a national committee, but complete regional autonomy in operations			
Spain	112 / 062	Radio call frequency, if there is one available: 146.175 MHz. In most regions, radio contact with the huts (every area has its own frequency) is possible	Most of the time from sunrise to sunset	No cost	System public Mountain rescue teams of Guardia Civil are available in all regions. In addition, there are some other rescue groups in Cataluña, País Vasco, Asturias and Madrid	Most of the time; in helicopter - always. Rescue squad -sometimes
Switzerland	144 / 1414	161.300 MHz	Most of the time	Patient's insurance; if none, government	Private (foundation)	In Helicopter - yes; rescue squad -sometimes
USA	911*	123.100 for Ground to Air and Air to Ground. 155.160 "de facto" Search and Rescue for multi-agency terrestrial operations, US-wide	Sometimes. Very few SAR units in the US have a helicopter	99.9% of SAR in the US are done by volunteers (unpaid professionals), who raise their own funds and are not subsidized by taxes or the government. There is no standard or compulsory search or rescue insurance	In fact there are private SAR groups that have no authority, training or proper credentials that still show up at a mission to "help"	EMT-Basics and EMT-Paramedics normally staff the rescue squads; in helicopters - physicians as volunteers

*911 is the emergency number throughout North America and if specifically requested they will dispatch whichever mountain rescue service is nearest. However, cellphone coverage is problematic in remote mountain ranges. However, 911 does not work with an Iridium satellite phone and the Globalstar system defaults to their operator in Ontario. In the case of satellite phones and whenever prepared otherwise it is better to telephone the nearest rescue service at whatever number they have. All mountain guides carry a radio in mountains where there are repeater networks and will call direct to the rescue service by radio.

Disclaimer: these data are based on personal communications from IKAR members. No responsibility is taken by the International Commission for Mountain Rescue IKAR for the correctness of this information.

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