



**Press Release**

**10 December 2019**

**For immediate release**

## **ThinkWINTER**

### **Organisations unite to promote safety in the mountains this winter**

A safety campaign to promote mountain safety awareness for those heading out to enjoy Scotland's mountains this winter is running all this week.

'ThinkWINTER' is a joint effort by organisations involved in mountain safety including Scottish Mountain Rescue, Mountaineering Scotland, Glenmore Lodge, the Association of Mountaineering Instructors, SAIS, the Mountain Weather Information Service, and Police Scotland.

The campaign is using traditional and social media to reach both experienced winter hill-goers and those who may be less experienced or venturing out in winter for the first time. It started with the Scottish Mountain Rescue annual conference at Glenmore Lodge at the weekend and culminates in the launch of the sports scotland Scottish Avalanche Information Service forecast on Friday 14 December.

Winter has well and truly arrived in Scotland's mountains and thousands of enthusiasts will be taking to the hills for mountaineering, ice climbing and snowsports touring, making the most of a season that for many offers the best mountain experiences of the year.

But the rollcall of accidents over the years underlines the extra hazards faced during the winter season and the need for those going into the hills to ensure they have the necessary experience and equipment and have made proper preparations.

Topics covered will include raising awareness of the challenges involved, planning, navigation, being prepared for weather and avalanche hazards, and what to do in an emergency.

Heather Morning, Mountain Safety Adviser with Mountaineering Scotland, said: "Scotland's winter mountains offer some truly magical experiences, but they be gnarly and challenging! If you want to get the best out of your mountain adventures then you have to be sure you are properly prepared and have all the skills required."

Mark Diggins, Coordinator of the sports scotland Avalanche Information Service, said: "As the winter season begins we should start to prepare for the normal challenges that we will be faced with in Scotland's mountains.

"Getting good information helps any mountain enthusiast decide where to go and what to do. Avalanche reports and other useful information can be obtained from the Scottish Avalanche Information Service at [www.sais.gov.uk](http://www.sais.gov.uk), and the Met Office, and MWIS websites."

Shaun Roberts, Principal at Glenmore Lodge, the national outdoor training centre, said: "Successful adventures this winter will require well informed decision making. Front load your activities with

some quality time spent assessing the critical information – mountain weather, avalanche forecasts, underfoot conditions, the nature of the terrain. Understand your own motivations for your trip to the mountains and find likeminded people to experience them with, ensuring an open dialogue about your plans, you capabilities and equipment.”

Kev Mitchell, vice chairman of Scottish Mountain Rescue, added: “We would always encourage people to enjoy the hills in winter, however it’s absolutely vital that you are prepared. Leave earlier to get back earlier because of the lack of light, and adapt your day to the conditions. Make sure your mobile phone is fully charged and kept in a warm place, and not used for navigation. Mapping software for phones is great but it eats up batteries, especially in winter conditions.”

## Ends

### Notes for editors:

*Image:* [http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/ThinkWINTER\\_photo\\_by\\_Duncan\\_Gray.jpg](http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/ThinkWINTER_photo_by_Duncan_Gray.jpg)

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Mountaineering Scotland: <https://www.mountaineering.scot/>

Glenmore Lodge: <https://www.glenmorelodge.org.uk/>

Sportscotland Avalanche Information Service: <https://www.sais.gov.uk/>

Scottish Mountain Rescue: <http://www.scottishmountainrescue.org/>