

Translation (Draft)

Original: [令和3年夏期における山岳遭難の概況](#)

September 9, 2021

## Overview of Mountain Disasters in the Summer of 2021

National Police Agency

### 1 Outline

#### (1) National outbreaks

Outbreaks nationwide in the summer of 2021 (the two-month period from July to August; hereinafter the same) the number of mountain accidents are

- Number of incidents: 533 (up 63 cases from the previous year)
- 597 persons in distress (+56 persons compared to the previous year)
  - of which: dead or missing

46 people (down 1 from the previous year)

(Figures are preliminary)

In the past five years, both the number of incidents and the number of people in distress have been on a downward trend, but this year they have turned upward.

#### (2) Incidents by prefecture

In terms of the number of mountain disasters by prefecture, Nagano Prefecture had 88 cases, followed by Hokkaido with 40 cases and Toyama Prefecture with 39 cases.

### 2 Characteristics

#### (1) By purpose and type of accident

Looking at the 597 victims by purpose, the largest number, 454 (76.0%), were mountaineering, followed by hiking, 46 (7.7%).

By type, the most common reason was getting lost (179 persons, 30.0%), followed by falling (121 persons, 20.3%) and slipping (99 persons, 16.7%).

#### (2) By age group

Of the 597 victims, 123 (20.6%) were in their 50s and 60s, followed by 109 (18.3%) in their 70s and 81 (13.6%) in their 40s.

Note: Percentages are rounded off to two decimal places (the same applies to Tables 1 to 5). The total number may not match the detailed number.

### 3 Measures to Prevent Mountain Accidents

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Many mountain accidents are caused by inadequate preparation in terms of knowledge, experience, and physical strength, such as making inappropriate judgments about the weather, insufficient equipment, or making plans that are physically impossible.

Therefore, the following points should be taken into consideration in order to prevent accidents.

- Accurate hiking plans and preparation of full equipment

Select a mountain that is suitable for your weather conditions, physical strength, skills, experience, and physical condition and make a safe plan paying attention to the schedule, equipment to be carried, food, etc.

When making a mountain hiking plan, be aware of dangerous areas such as slips and falls, as well as escape routes that can be taken down the mountain in case of trouble.

In addition, be sure to pack the necessary equipment for climbing, such as clothing appropriate for the climate of the mountain you plan to climb, climbing shoes, rain gear (rainwear), a helmet to protect your head in case of falling rocks or slipping and falling, a map, a compass, and food/snacks. As well as communication equipment to call for help in case you get lost. In the event of a mishap, be prepared with communication equipment (cell phones, radios, extra batteries, etc.), zelt (simple tent), and emergency food.

When climbing alone, it is often more difficult to cope with problems than when climbing in a group, so try to climb with several people, led by a reliable leader.

- Submission of climbing plan

Share the climbing plan with your family, workplace, etc. so that it can be used as a resource for quick search and rescue in case of emergency.

The written climbing plan should be checked in advance to ensure that there are no deficiencies in the plan.

In addition to sharing the written climbing plan with your climbing companions, you should also submit it to your family, workplace, or the climbing report post at the trailhead.

- Prevention of getting lost

Learn how to read a map and use a compass and carry them with you when climbing a mountain so that you can always check and understand your position.

By using GPS devices and other devices that can acquire location information, it is possible to obtain a more accurate location, which will help prevent getting lost and quickly identify the location in case of distress.

- Prevention of slips and falls

In addition to using well-groomed climbing shoes, ice axes, crampons, stocks, and other equipment appropriately according to climbing conditions, always act with caution and do not let your guard down.

When passing areas where there is a risk of slipping or falling, be sure to wear a helmet in case of slipping, falling, or falling rocks from above.

- Accurate judgment of the situation

In case of poor visibility due to fog (gas) or bad weather, or when you are in poor physical condition, the risk of getting lost or slipping and falling increases.

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If you feel that you may have lost your way, do not proceed blindly, but follow the trail you have just taken (trace) and turn back to the regular trail.

- Prevention of new coronavirus infection

Check information from the local government that has jurisdiction over the mountain area, as well as the operation status of public transportation and mountain lodges.

Take care of your health on a daily basis, and refrain from entering the mountain if you feel unwell at all.

Also, keep as much distance as possible from people around you during your activities. When the temperature is high, the risk of heat stroke increases. If you feel breathless or hot, remove your mask.

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Refer to the original for the Appendices

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