



## Maryland Natural Resources Police Maryland State Police Volunteer Search and Rescue Teams Standards



Volunteer search and rescue teams can be utilized to augment Maryland Natural Resources Police (MNRP) and/or Maryland State Police (MSP), (MNRP/MSP) personnel during search and rescue operations. Only qualified or provisionally qualified search and rescue (SAR) teams will be used. In order for a team to qualify it must meet and maintain the standards set forth below. In order to qualify a team must submit an application along with the documentation required to substantiate the team's qualification. If the application and documentation are in keeping with the established standards, representatives from MNRP/MSP will meet with representatives from the applicant team in order to review the documentation and standards. After the review, the MNRP/MSP will issue a letter indicating that the team is qualified, provisionally qualified, or unqualified. A team rated as qualified remains qualified until the rating is withdrawn. The MNRP/MSP may periodically review the status of the team to insure maintenance of established standards. A rating of provisionally qualified will be issued to a team that does not meet all the required standards but is deemed by the MNRP/MSP to be capable of meeting all of the standards within one year. After one year the MNRP/MSP will again review the team's documentation and issue a rating of qualified or unqualified. Any team that is rated as qualified may be a primary resource used by MNRP/MSP on SAR operations. A team, which receives a rating of unqualified, shall be informed in writing of the basis for the rating. A team, which has been rated unqualified, may resubmit its application for review at any time once appropriate corrections have been made.

### A. SAR Team Standards- A SAR team shall:

- 1) Possess and maintain a valid federal tax ID number and verification of the 501(c) 3 nonprofit designation of the organization, or parent organization, for deployable searchers;
- 2) Maintain insurance on the organization deploying searchers of at least one million dollars of general liability insurance, and a designation for operational liability coverage;
- 3) Maintain and adhere to the written policies of the organization governing search response, member conduct, record keeping, due process, and confidentiality;
- 4) Maintain written operational standards for field deployable searchers, canines, and/or equestrians;



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- 5) Maintain written training and evaluation records for each deployable searcher, canine, or equestrian;
- 6) Provide training for all deployable members, at minimum, in the following areas:
  - i) Day and night land navigation
  - ii) Wilderness survival
  - iii) Search tactics
  - iv) Introduction to ICS/Search Management System
  - v) Search resources
  - vi) Tracking awareness
  - vii) Search philosophy
  - viii) SAR legal issues
  - ix) Crime scene preservation
  - x) Personal safety
- 7) Maintain a list of unit equipment, logistics and capabilities:
- 8) Provide an internal process for initial testing, and retesting every three years or less, for each deployable team member in each individual's search discipline;
- 9) Maintain a valid FCC license for the frequency 155.160 Mhz, and all other licensed frequencies on which that unit may operate;
- 10) Be equipped with two-way radios capable of operating on 155.160 Mhz frequency for each deployable team;
- 11) Bring only the requested number and types of resources to the incident scene; and
- 12) Provide and maintain an active dispatch number, and must be able to respond to search requests in 10 minutes, regardless of the team's deployment status.

### B. Individual Member Standards

- 1) Each deployable member must wear adequate clothing and footwear for the climate and environment and be equipped with appropriate search pack and personal safety equipment for their search discipline. Pack must contain a minimum of the following:
  - i. Compass and grid reader
  - ii. One liter of water
  - iii. Improvised shelter material
  - iv. Space blanket



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- v. Basic First Aid Kit
  - vi. Whistle
  - vii. Matches or lighter
  - viii. Knife or multipurpose tool
  - ix. Food or Snacks
- 2) Each deployable member who responds to a MNRP or MSP request must have the appropriate credentials for the nature of the search discipline requested.
  - 3) Credentials are a combination of approved certifications that meet the minimum proficiency requirements in specific areas set forth below. A certification for a discipline must be issued by a state, regional or nationally recognized certifying organization within the stated discipline.
  - 4) Each deployable member must have certifications which meet the criteria for the following disciplines:
    - i. NIMS ICS 200
    - ii. CPR
    - iii. Search Strategy/Tactics
    - iv. Land Navigation
  - 5) Examples of such certifications may include NASAR SAR Tech II or Virginia FTM with a recognized CPR certification, and NIMS ICS 200.
  - 6) In addition to the above certifications, specialty units must have the additional certifications as appropriate:
    - Canine
      - i. Lost/Missing Person  
Air Scent Basic Level Proficiency Certification  
Trailing/Tracking Basic Level Proficiency Certification
      - ii. Missing Person Recovery (Cadaver)  
HRD Basic Level Proficiency Certification
      - iii. Water Recovery  
Water Search Basic Level Proficiency Certification
    - Mounted
      - iv. Mounted Search Basic Level Proficiency Certification
  - 7) The MNRP/MSP will determine whether a certification is acceptable on a case-by-case basis when the certification is presented, and provide examples of those currently accepted by request. The MNRP/MSP



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- reserves the right to substitute local or organizational qualifications where certification programs do not exist in a particular discipline.
- 8) A team member must possess a team picture ID card stating: operational status and deployment level.
  - 9) Unless directed by the agency in charge of the search and rescue effort, a team member may not contact the media or victim's family members when assisting the MNRP/MSP.
  - 10) A team member must comply with all reasonable direction and orders from the search management staff or MNRP/MSP representatives during a search and rescue effort.
  - 11) The MNRP/MSP may disqualify an individual member of a team from a search and rescue effort for due cause.