



2016 ASRC Retreat Bears Den Lodge

If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.

RETREAT NOTES

Friday, January 15, 2016

Informal discussion, dinner

Saturday, January 16, 2016

Participants

Brian Maier (SAR-OH)	Keith Conover (AMRG)	Jocelyn King (MSAR)	Michael Hansen (DMVSAR)
Scott Merritt (SAR-OH)	Ben McCandless (AMRG)	Michael Damkot (SMRG)	Robert Peterson (DMVSAR)
Monte Wall (SAR-OH)	Don Ferguson (MARG)	Andrew Hower (SMRG)	Gregg Wavle (MSAR)
Don Scelza (AMRG)	Rebecca Hostetter (MARG)	LuAnn Gatti (NWPAK9SAR)	Beth Huhn (SAR-OH)
Victoria Airey (MSAR)	John Rogowski (AMRG)	Michelle Eaton (NWPAK9SAR)	Jesse Guttman (MSAR)
Steve Weiss (SMRG)	Carl Wertz (MARG)	Kathy Lamb (NWPAK9SAR)	
Katy Hart (Head Chef)	Patty Lindsay (MARG)	Dan Brizuela (MSAR)	
Padraic Hughes (SMRG)	Paula Repka (MARG)	Jim Jackson (DMVSAR)	

Welcome/Kick-off – Don Scelza, ASRC Chairman

- Chair kicked off meeting at 0930.
- Chair noted that 10 of 29 Retreat participants are female. Impressive representation - long standing tradition within ASRC.
- ASRC - 41 years in existence. While Chair personally visiting all Groups, has reviewed ASRC history; set new direction. Codified direction in 2012. Published Strategic Plan in 2013 to document direction. Has been working since that time to make the changes. Not an easy task.
- February 2014 – presented new direction (from membership-based to Group-based), FAQ document published. 2014 formal conference for 40th anniversary of the conference. 2015 started further documenting new direction. Set of documents that describe ASRC (Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Administrative Manual, Operational Guidance Manual, etc.) 8 – 10 people in the conference meet every 2 weeks to discuss progress on documentation modification.
- 2016 will be year of implementation. Will discuss details during this Retreat. Change from a response organization to an organization of support to member Groups, so they can better support operations within their own response areas.
- Many accomplishments over course of last 4 years. The Groups of the ASRC will continue to provide services locally. The value of the ASRC is the level of support it can provide to its member Groups and continued efforts in pushing the state of the art in SAR (discussed examples: Use of GIS and modeling, remote support, UAV use in SAR, Effective Sweep Width, etc.). ASRC is working on methods to bring “state of the art” to each of its member Groups.

- States have gotten interested in SAR and want to ensure teams are not self-certifying. ASRC's response – modify the method of certification within ASRC through a new credentialing system process.
- Much work still needed – test and fix. Need to: complete a document refresh and catch up on state requirements for organizations. View, plan and execute – positive exchange with Groups/Officers is what is pushing this process forward.
- Discussion:
 - Concern about change in leadership in the middle of this change. A: New leadership is important; need to find people that will take on new leadership roles; previous leadership will remain available to support change.
 - Recommendation: Past Chair remain a non-voting member of the ASRC Board of Directors
 - Q: When will we stop using the word change in reference to how the ASRC used to be versus the new direction? A: Once the change is accepted by all Groups/states. Organizations inherently have a long memory – which is sometimes flawed by nature; expect 10 – 15 years. Always members/entities that remember old and have difficulty grasping new.
 - External changes continually require changes internally to meet the needs of the client base. On-going – Groups will need to change to meet the needs of clients; ASRC will need to change to meet the needs of the Groups.
 - The “new” ASRC is all about supporting the Groups.

Session 1: ASRC Training Standards – Don Scelza, Chair

- Handout:
 - [ASRC Training Standards v7.2](#) (draft)
- Proposing v7.2:
 - Known facts: not specific enough to provide formalized testing across all Groups; needs rewritten. For a year, will hold major changes needed and barrel through with proposed version. PTB's will support the current, proposed version.
 - Would like to put together a committee to work on a major rewrite, while the Credentialing System is being implemented and tested.
 - Q: Will training standard incorporate testing, or will testing be separate? A: Will leave to committee to decide.
 - Discussion:
 - Recommend breakdown in topical areas/modules to address major areas of the standards – may create friction under the new Credentialing System if not all consistent (since new credentialing requiring 50% check-off from outside source).
 - The 50% is to ensure mitigation of image of self-certification. Scenarios and testing will be standardized, which will help mitigate Group to Group disparities.
 - Fair and judicious process will matter more to ensure process is successful.
 - Why wouldn't ASRC quickly breakup the Training Standards and modify to implement new before move to new Credentialing System?
 - Requesting agencies have made it clear they do not wish self-certification.
 - Longer-term: ASRC should have enough data to develop Ops-driven standards – what does the mission actually require. Analyze and build new standards based upon current/logical need (data science driven). Need to look at data for ASRC and other similar organizations.

- Michael Damkot (SMRG) offered to assist ASRC to develop methods to capture/analyze data.
- Understand there are Training Standards problems. There is a plan to fix.
- New Training Standards to be voted on at the Board Meeting at the AGM. Updated version based upon discussion today will be issued for review prior to AGM.
 - Discussion:
 - Recommend preamble inserted in the Training Standards to indicate that it is a working document.
 - May be better served to incorporate this insert into the updated Strategic Plan.
 - Overview: Job description, develop bullet points, develop testable standards, consider risk mitigation
- **Action Item:** Michael Hansen to more formally incorporate the “living documents” concept into the next update to the Strategic Plan.

Session 2: ASRC Credentialing Policy - Ben McCandless, AMRG

- Handouts:
 - [ASRC Credentialing Policy Manual](#) (draft)
 - [Credentialing process flowchart](#)
 - [Draft FTM Position Task Book](#)
 - [Draft FTL Position Task Book](#)
- Completed a sample run through of credentialing process via role play – theme Monte Python, Squire Credential. Roles: Applicant, GTO, Qualified Evaluator, ASRC Examiner, ASRC Credentialing Board.
- Discussion:
 - Personal opinion (one individual – i.e. GTO) should not be included in the process. To move forward in the current proposal, one individual may prohibit (unjustly) movement forward to the next step of the credentialing process.
 - Need to incorporate recourse procedures into the Policy Manual.
 - Consider taking timelines out of the process and shift to the ASRC Credentialing Board to make formal decision for inclusion into the formal process/documentation.
 - SOP of the ASRC Credentialing Board should address fail state and methods to address unresponsiveness; reason credential not approved, etc.
 - Why test on backside, if test and prove skills (earlier on or) throughout process with the Qualified Evaluators? A: Ensure quality of applications and the certification itself. Preparation and basic demonstration at Group level – exhibit mastery of skills at final exam stage with ASRC Examiners.
 - Recommend removal of temporary issuance of credential or push proctor of certification testing down to the Group level.
 - Instead of provisional credential, possibly call something different (“candidate”).

Session 3: ASRC Bylaws – Don Scelza, Chair

- Handout:
 - [Proposed ASRC Bylaws](#)
- Bylaws provide overarching structure to identify how the organization operates.
- Proposed changes overview discussed:
 - Transition from member centric to Group centric throughout
 - Incorporate details to document and support the new system of credentialing
 - Add preamble that more clearly documents conference governance

- Update references to governance documents throughout
- Add additional clarification for Certified Group requirements and membership types
- Clarify that method communication between Conference and Groups will be directly through each Group Chair and Group Board Representatives to further disseminate to members.
- Will incorporate changes legally required by the states regarding operation of non-profit Boards (proxies)
- Will clarify the definition of “meetings” to include physical and some means of electronic interface.
- Final changes will be presented for vote during the AGM weekend.
- Discussion:
 - Is the one/two BOD representatives addressed in the new version? A: Not currently addressed, but if a change is needed – will address.
 - Why are 16 members required? A: No known basis under current operational environment.
 - Operational considerations are still important and the ability for Groups to sustain themselves.
 - Certain business components for each Group are important.
 - ASRC Groups must always be ground capable.
 - If number of required FTM’s is a challenge – should fix the root cause of problem instead of adjusting the number of FTM’s in the governance documentation.
 - Possible alternative is a percentage of the number of team members or a certain fraction of the team to make up required FTM/FTL numbers.
- **Action Item:** Secretary to incorporate additional updates based upon Retreat discussions. 3.2.2 Have at least 10 Qualified Members; all Certified Groups will have two voting members on the Board of Directors (remove reference to Certified A/Certified B).

Session 4: ASRC Tracking Standards – Padraic Hughes, SMRG

- Handouts:
 - [NATSLLC 7100 F.A.S.T.](#)
 - [NATSLLC 7200 Criteria for Field Evals](#)
 - [NATSLLC 7400 Type 3-Operational Tracker](#)
 - [NATSLLC 7500 Type 2-Tracking Technician](#)
 - [NATSLLC 7600 Type 1-Tracking Specialist](#)
- Why?
 - Escalated need for specialized teams by client organizations.
 - Expand the knowledge base and skills the ASRC/Groups can offer.
- Why adopt existing standards?
 - Continuity across jurisdictions
 - Easily implemented
 - Third party certification
 - National standard
- Options
 - Rebrand everything ASRC
 - Build a coalition – rebrand the credentialing component (preamble that identifies those that adopt and coalition would initiate changes)
- Criteria
 - Awareness level – F.A.S.T.
 - Tracker types – Operational, Technician, Specialist

- Package proposal
 - Standards } NATS/ASRC/Others
 - Evaluations }
 - After Action Report – ASRC
 - Training Log – ASRC
 - PTB – ASRC
- Proposed timeline
 - Standard vote – at AGM
 - Evaluation and certification documentation – July 2016
 - Training Plan – July 2016
 - Training roll-out – September 2016
- Questions for Conference
 - Is the ASRC interested in adopting pre-existing standards? NATS is available without copyright and is rich in content
 - Rebrand or build coalition?
 - ASRC pre-requisites?
- Discussion:
 - This is the first time ASRC has strongly considered specialty standards.
 - This would be a new partnering relationship and may require specific business relationships to foster credentialing/testing mechanisms.
 - Recommend list of pros/cons
 - May serve as a less volatile mechanism to explore developing business relationships than internalizing standards/credentialing
 - If internalize, will run into issue of self-cert or not widely recognized/accepted
 - Testing standard versus training standard
 - VA, SARTI, group in GA and group in Canada have already adopted existing
 - Not enough ASRC resources available to manage and maintain many sets of standards
- **Action Items** (next steps): Padraic Hughes
 - ASRC governance of an outside standard
 - ASRC certification of specialties
 - Craft one or more models that address two bullets above (models that could apply broadly to a variety of specialties)
 - Focus on what clients desire

Session 5: Medical (and First Aid) – Keith Conover, AMRG

- Handouts:
 - [Retreat Medical Section](#)
 - [MAC Stress Management](#)
 - [First Aid & BLS Protocols](#)
 - [Patient Record Proposal](#)
 - [WFA Integration Proposal](#)
- Pre-Retreat discussions:
 - Different visions across Medical/Medical Advisory Committees
 - Focus on guidelines/policies that allow Groups to operate within specific guidelines to a specific level while retaining the ability to manage/monitor/regulate.
- Medical Advisory Committee
 - Tasks include development of white papers on controversial or complex issues

- Set of protocols (BLS and First Aid level) – recommend changing nomenclature to guidelines. May be taken as physician’s orders from the Medical Advisory Committee.
 - All currently in draft form.
 - Request Groups to review and comment.
 - Not copy righted
 - Will be signed by all physicians on the Medical Advisory Committee
- Patient Record Form proposal
 - Will propose adoption at next Board Meeting
 - Will publish guidelines on protocol to encrypt and relay information
- Medical Committee proposal
 - Would like to develop career path for medical, specific for SAR (Wilderness EMR, Wilderness EMT)
 - Work up own standards/credentialing process (curriculum and testable standards)
 - No national Wilderness EMT standard
 - Way to show national leadership in this area
- First Aid Standard
 - Never decided what American Red Cross First Aid “equivalent” is
 - Proposal – eliminate external Red Cross/Heart Association; adopt Wilderness Medical Society first aid components and integrate into FTM standards. Does not require duplicative external certification. Incorporated only components relevant to area.
 - Reviewed hypothermia handout (manual handout during conference)
 - Ultimately will take less time to cover materials and meet requirements
 - Internal certifications will be of benefit to the Groups, without going external

Sessions 6 and 7: Operations, GIS and Remote Support and UAV – Hansen, McCandless

- Handout and PowerPoint presentation:
 - [ASRC Operational Guidance Manual](#) (draft)
 - [Winter Retreat PowerPoint – Ops, Remote Support, UAV](#)
- Operational Guidance Manual
 - Group accreditation removed, no other changes made since last release
- Services we provide
 - What types of incidents?
 - Cold cases (some high/some low)
 - Responsive/non-responsive (varied responses)
 - Get better at providing services needed; how to support members to improve skills in areas needed
 - Where on continuum of services – what services are requested?
 - Full services
 - Base support
 - Field resources
 - K9
 - Remote support
 - Skillset management
 - Technology
 - Electronic mission management (need to enhance some items to reinforce as core skills in the ASRC standards)
 - Are there service gaps?
 - None noted
 - Are there services/skills training for that are no longer relevant?
 - Yes – just because they are denoted in the existing ASRC standards

- How is Group working to stay relevant?
 - Balance between RA need and what entices members to stay active with the team (search management is a challenge, as many members primarily wish to work in field)
 - Outreach at local level – state connections and county connections
 - Leverage organizational disconnect (external) to best meet the needs of the client
- How improve quality of service?
 - Offer specialties (tracking, etc.)
 - Off-load some work burden from GTO's – ability to further engage tenured members to push Groups forward; individualized attention is still important.
 - Make products available electronically to all members, conference-wide.
- Improve marketing?
 - Continually do good work
 - Outreach to local fire/police; mock searches with other entities
 - More marketing (Fire Expo, Hug-a-Tree program, etc.) – results in more call-outs, but is labor intensive
 - Partner with other non-profits to share resources
 - Customized Christmas cards – sent to all local agencies/first responders
- How do we work better with RA's to deliver the best service we can?
 - Understand their needs
 - If do good work, will call back – word of mouth goes a long way
 - Leveraging technology
- Remote Support
 - How does one get involved and not cannibalize resources on scene?
 - What is Remote Support?
 - Not just calling for an answer
 - Not just Planning
 - Not just GIS
 - Why use Remote Support?
 - ASRC mission
 - What fraction of searches has one had all resources needed (only one answered in the affirmative – one search in 41 year history)
 - Effective force multiplier
 - Off-scene use of resources
 - Jump-start search
 - Current state of Remote Support
 - Small group of competent personnel
 - Dependent on personnel availability
 - A clear way to standup capability and learn skills is absent
 - GIS dominates public perception
 - Process of becoming involved can be intimidating
 - Workflows are not clear or ubiquitous
 - Desired state of Remote Support
 - Well-defined path for training new personnel
 - Large corps of trained personnel (call schedule to activate); index of people familiar with different areas/skill sets (can integrate as data set into database)
 - Clearly defined services and expectations
 - Expanded support functions (outside planning – assess UAV footage, etc.)
 - Low hurdle for becoming involved
 - Well-defined workflows and infrastructure

- Reviewed slide depicting technology adoption life-cycle (“The Chasm”)
- Proposal to cross “The Chasm”
 - Increase the size of the Remote Support corps (early adopters to help refine process, build and codify)
 - Why this first? Other goals are easier if have resources engaged
 - Need to define Remote Support, so adopters will understand
 - Minimal viable products – needs defined
- Proposal to increase corps size
 - Initial focus on basic skills (off-site)
 - Initial focus on basic skills (on-site)
 - Tiered training program (Remote Support Awareness/Remote Support Technician)
 - Start Training!
- Then What?
 - Once sizeable corps of personnel
 - Revise training base upon feedback
 - Build and refine infrastructure
 - Look to expand services offered
 - Develop formal curriculum for Type 1
 - Awareness level should have overall awareness capabilities and ability to effectively accept and use input – can serve as an outreach tool
- What functions cannot be performed off-site?
 - Can’t put boots on the ground
 - Can’t yell subject’s name
- Discussion:
 - Training – what would it look like?
 - Initial (classroom or video conference)
 - On-going (independent/remote)
 - Must understand dependencies and ensure outages can be overcome (no cell service, no internet, device outage, etc.)
- ASRC UAV/UAS Community of Practice
 - Concept of operations for ASRC; take white paper to next step
 - Experimentation
 - Field exercises
 - ASRC UAS Response Team
- CONOPS (in draft)
 - Search an area
 - Map an area
 - Packages for relay or assistance
 - Delivery of payload (subject or team)
 - Operate safely and legally
- Experiments
 - Sweep width experiment design
 - Consistency to derive data sets
 - Variety of ground cover and seasons
 - Optimize use of camera
- Field Exercises
 - Safe and legit
 - Participation from operators across the conference
 - Establish and refine mission processes

- ASRC UAS Response Team
 - Not operational group – but to model
 - Explore structure/processes
 - Long-term goal

Wrap-Up – Don Scelza, Chair

- 2016 AGM – where and what?
 - May need to provide time for group to hash out final details on documents
 - What is best to provide to general membership? Sweep Width Experiment, UAV integration, SAR Olympics (done in 2015)
 - Chestnut Ridge Park (by Coopers Rock) was a nice site utilized by ASRC before (WV)
 - MSAR and/or DMVSAR may have interest
- New Officers (will be elected at BOD Meeting after AGM)
 - Current Chair not continuing
 - If interested in one of the positions, please contact chair@asrc.net to relay details
- Next Steps Review
 - Minutes of weekend will go out to all
 - Leadership calls every two weeks; new documents will be disseminated timely
 - If team Board Rep, please review and comment on documents disseminated (share with Group and discuss/comment)
 - Discussion – **Action Items:**
 - Groups wish a list of documents that will be reviewed/voted upon at the AGM
 - Groups wish updated roster call in April 2016 in order to establish accurate Group membership levels in advance of the AGM
 - Disseminate details on how proxy process will work
- Chair extremely pleased with progress during the Retreat. Hashed out many details and have made proposals better.
- Chair looking forward to getting processes up and running.
- Board Meeting will begin at 0900 on Sunday, 1/17/16
- Departure expected by noon; all welcome to participate in Board Meeting; if not participating, please assist with the clean-up process.

Chair thanked all who participated.

Adjourn 1951

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Retreat discussions and content captured to the best of my ability.

Beth A. Huhn, ASRC Secretary

A special **Thank You** to the following for their extra efforts in ensuring the weekend was special:

- Katy Hart for weekend menu preparation, food purchase and serving as head chef for the entire weekend.
- Steve Weiss for coordinating facility logistics between ASRC and PATC.