



ASRC - Operations Officer

Report for 6/2/2012

I was nominated as the operations officer in April 2008 during the General Membership meeting at Chestnut Ridge Park outside of Morgantown, WV. I have now been the operations officer of the conference for more than four years and have seen many changes take place throughout the operational area of the conference.

In January 2010 we had Piedmont Search and Rescue as well as Tidewater Search and Rescue leave the conference. I personally took it very hard when these two teams left because many of their members were and still remain friends. At the same time both of these teams were mostly responding under their MOU's with VDEM so the relevancy of the conference was really not there.

In April 2011 we had Rapid Assistance to Community Emergencies join the conference which added the state of Ohio to our ranks. I see this as one of our major strengths in that teams in states without strong standards still see relevancy in joining the conference. We saw this when MARG joined the conference in 1997 and now RACE in 2011. Both teams were the first teams in their respective states to join the ASRC.

STATE REPORTS:

Virginia:

In the past few years Virginia has revamped their entire training program for Search and Rescue. Most of the changes have been with the classes as they have taken ownership of the training materials and actually released most of it into the public domain.

Over the past few years the three remaining ASRC teams in Virginia have all obtained individual MOU's with VDEM. The first thought would be the relevancy of the conference within the state has eroded however in conversations with VDEM we still remain an asset they are willing to call. It appears the conference is seen as a method to bring out of state resources into the state without having to go through any state/state EMAC requests. Of course this would only be utilized on large disasters or to bring in limited resources such as search management and base staff.

Virginia is rapidly moving toward a PTB (Position Task Book) model. Individuals would be issued a PTB that is managed by their individual teams. Within the book would be the specific requirements for the level as well as a training and mission log. Upon meeting the requirements for a given certificate the training officer for the team would review the documentation and then submit the PTB to the state for final approval. From what I understand the state will not review every book but only do spot checking.

For the ASRC to remain relevant in Virginia it is imperative that we have a representative of the conference at each of the VASARCO meetings and that we maintain an open line of communication with the State SAR coordinator. The individual attending the VASARCO meetings MUST exclusive represent the conference and not their individual team.

Pennsylvania:

Pennsylvania appears to still be a state where the big cities and state government care very little about wilderness search and rescue and/or teams. However with that said AMRG has made great progress in working throughout western Pennsylvania with all levels of government as well as other SAR teams. Due to this work AMRG is one of the most active teams for number of callouts in the entire conference.

Ohio:

RACE continues to be very active in the central part of the state. It is imperative for the conference to work directly with the team to develop upper level management personnel within the team.

Maryland:

Maryland continues to be another interesting state. There appear to be three individuals that act as the state SAR coordinators. Brent Troutman, Cole Brown, and Erica Carlson. Erica is the official state SAR coordinator through MEMA.

The conference needs to have a representative attend the quarterly Maryland Search Team meetings and to continue to establish relationships with the DNR, State Police, and MEMA.

West Virginia:

Since the Dolly Sods search in October 2007 great strides have been made within the state to establish a formal search and rescue program. The state has a very active SAR coordinator that continues to work with all teams in the state as well as neighboring state partners.

The conference should continue to support MARG and all efforts to lead the state forward in development of a formal certification process for all search and rescue team members. We should also continue to represent the conference during the annual state SAR exercise with a very large turnout as we have over the past few years.

Summary:

The conference is in need of new blood throughout the ranks to bring about the changes within search and rescue taking place throughout the mid-Atlantic.

I see a great future for the conference if we are able to monopolize on our capabilities. We have an excellent pool of membership that includes the leading experts in many aspects of wilderness SAR. With the new training standards there is an opportunity for the conference to release the standards out to the public almost as a challenge. If we are able to implement and follow the standards we will definitely have a major ebb and flow within our ranks but we will also have a much stronger base in the end. It is imperative for the conference to boldly go forward and through a peer reviewed process implement the standards so that the conference is again 2nd to none within the mid-Atlantic.

I encourage the operations officers of the various teams to have semi-annual meetings to discuss operational issues of not only the conference but the individual teams. These meetings are also a method for the OPS officers to elect a new conference operations officer from their ranks.

Future:

I will continue to serve as the operations officer of the conference at the will of the incoming chair as well as the conference Board of Directors. I believe the relations I have built with multiple states SAR coordinators as well as Agency's Having Jurisdiction will be fairly hard to replace. With a new operations officer I will work directly with them on these communications aspects to continue to foster relationships.

-Doug Moore

Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference – Operations Officer

Mountaineer Area Rescue Group – Operations Officer

Search Manager Type II

Cave Rescue Specialist