APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

SEARCH AND RESCUE
OPERATIONS PLAN

Third Edition
December 1985

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24-hour emergency phone: (804)-323-2300 (Virginia Dept. of Emergency Services, Emergency Operations Center)
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PRINTING HISTORY

First Edition, 1975; Yorke Brown, editor
Second Edition, October 1983; Keith Conover, Editor
1.0 PURPOSE
This document provides a general outline of the procedures followed by the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference (ASRC) during search or rescue operations. This information will orient ASRC members and others to ASRC operational procedures.

2.0 SCOPE
This edition of the SAROP outlines the principles which govern how and when the ASRC responds to an incident. Detailed discussions of search and rescue strategy and tactics are not included. It is assumed that the reader is familiar with these principles as outlined in search and rescue (SAR) texts.

3.0 APPLICABILITY
This document, together with Incident Command System (ICS) literature, ASRC training materials, and consideration of preplans in effect for some areas in which incidents might occur, provides for the management of any degree of ASRC involvement in a variety of types of incidents. Authority for the modification of this plan for any particular incident rests with the incident commander or command staff liaison.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY
The ASRC is an all volunteer organization dedicated to search and rescue throughout the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. This requires that the ASRC conduct operations under a wide variety of circumstances. Given these constraints, a quick and efficient SAR operation requires a simple versatile preplan.

5.0 ALERT PROCEDURES
Responsible agents may alert the ASRC by contacting the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Emergency Services Emergency Operations Center (DES) at telephone number (804)-323-2300. A DES watch officer will contact a Conference Alert Officer who will follow established procedures to dispatch an appropriate response and place on the appropriate level of alert groups that are not immediately needed to respond. Each group of the Conference must work out the details of its alert procedure and inform the Conference of its current procedure.

5.1 The urgency of any SAR problem is evaluated by the AO and the Incident Commander (IC) during the first notice phase of the response. This determination is based on the subject's age,
medical condition, equipment, experience, the weather, the length of time the subject has been missing, preplanned or other actions that have been taken by others involved in the search effort, and the political climate. The relative urgency will influence the type, size, and urgency of the response.

5.2 Three alert postures are recognized by Virginia's SAR groups for the purpose of common terminology:
1. -NOTIFICATION- A SAR incident is in progress in which a SAR Council agency is involved, but ASRC resources are not yet requested.
2. -ALERT- A SAR incident is in progress and ASRC involvement is probable.
3. -CALLOUT- The ASRC has been requested or is actively involved in an incident.

5.3 An appropriate response will be dispatched first from the group that can get a qualified team on the scene first. This may or may not be the group which is closest to the incident site.

5.4 Upon notification, alert, or callout, the ASRC alert or dispatch officer must inform DES of the nature of the incident, and ask that other SAR Council member organizations be placed on the appropriate level of alert.

6.0 TYPES OF RESPONSE
Specific types of response depend on the situation and may include:

6.1 Overhead Team response. Typically, three people make up this team. This response is the initial rapid response made to most requests for ASRC involvement. The team members act as a management/advice team, for either the local personnel or other SAR teams, or they may act as an advance team. As an advance team, they will make all the necessary arrangements so that further SAR respondents can be rapidly and efficiently deployed.

6.2 Full response. A full response consists of ASRC field team leaders and other personnel to act under the direction of the incident command staff. This response should provide for as much communications and logistics support as the circumstances require.

6.3 Quick response team (QRT, may be considered an ICS task force). This is a rapid response of a small team of ASRC members with a minimum number of management personnel (usually just a QRT leader). A QRT is the usual ASRC response to a simple manpower request. QRT's will often consist of members from the same group. This will be the group that can get a QRT in the field first. A QRT may be specialized (e.g. a technical rescue team, or a semi-technical evacuation team with medical capability). A QRT is similar in function to an ICS strike team, but the size is not fixed.

6.4 Other responses may be tailored to special circumstances.
7.0 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

7.1 If possible, the ASRC will use the Incident Command System and its documentation and terminology when it manages any SAR incidents. The Conference will also be capable of functioning under other management systems.

7.2 The SAROP does not provide information on the ICS command structure. Details of the system including management structure and position descriptions may be found in ICS manuals and documents. [See the appendices to this SAROP].

7.3 When necessary, the incident commander may modify provisions of the ICS to suit the needs of any SAR incident.

8.0 OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Only personnel that have had adequate training, skills, and background (as judged by the ASRC Board of Directors) may serve as incident commanders for the ASRC. Once appointed, the IC will help co-ordinate the following:

1. A thorough investigation that should begin promptly and continue throughout the mission. Often the largest portion of the investigation is done by the responsible agent. He and the IC should closely co-ordinate their work.

2. Strategy should be overseen by the IC and may follow several distinct phases:

   a) Phase 0: Alert, callout, and mobilization as outlined above.

   b) Phase 1: The defining criterion is speed. Highly mobile and readily available ("type I") resources are deployed, including, but not limited to, sign cutters, search dogs, containment patrols, aircraft, and hasty teams. The resources will often include personnel not trained in SAR, such as local volunteers. Containment and attraction techniques are first used in this phase. These techniques include patrols, camp-ins, natural barrier containment, and other methods to enclose the search area as completely as possible.

   c) Phase 2: The defining criterion is efficiency. Highly efficient, trained ("type II") resources should be used. These include hasty, dog, and airborne teams and other clue conscious teams. The latter might include teams performing wide interval grid searches. This phase will make up the bulk of the search.

   d) Phase 3: The defining criterion is thoroughness. This will include "type III" resources and techniques, and mainly consists of grid searches using all
available resources. This is done as a last resort.

e) Phase 4: The safe withdrawal and demobilization of search personnel. The incident command staff should not withdraw until all other personnel are safely accounted for. An orderly demobilization plan should be prepared early in a large operation. At the conclusion of this phase, DES should be notified that all ASRC units have returned to their home stations.

3. The IC's first concern is the safety of all SAR personnel. His second priority is the well being of the subject. He should not attempt to deal with any item that is not under his control, or is irrelevant to the operation.

4. Team leaders should be debriefed by designated personnel immediately upon completing their tasks. Information on the searched area and its terrain, the probability of detection, significant clues found, pertinent negatives, and any other useful information should be collected at the debriefing.

5. Thorough and accurate documentation of a SAR incident is vital. ICS management forms are the preferred way to document management, supplemented by task assignment forms to document each task. The IC should oversee the use and collection of these forms. At the conclusion of the mission, the IC should submit a NASAR data collection report, a narrative summary, and all pertinent logs and forms to the Conference. The Conference will forward the appropriate copies of this information to NASAR and to Virginia DES as requested by NASAR and the Virginia SAR Council.

6. ASRC involvement in SAR incidents should not be suspended without the agreement of the responsible agent and the ASRC IC or team leader (or AO, early in an incident). When planning the suspension of a search, the IC and responsible agent should solicit the input of other leaders involved in the operation. Safety should be a prime consideration in determining whether to continue a search. When an unsuccessful mission is suspended, the IC should advise the responsible agent on passive search techniques that may be continued indefinitely.

7. Other incident command responsibilities are outlined in ICS training and field operations documents.

8.2 The basic unit of search is the field team. The success or failure of the mission hinges on the intelligence with which teams are deployed and their effectiveness in the field.

1. Field teams may be hasty, tracking, sign cutting, electronic direction finding, grid, rescue/evacuation, or other teams. ASRC members may also be asked to accompany and support dog teams or teams specialized for some other function.
2. A field team leader (FTL) is designated by the operations section when the task is assigned. It is the FTL's responsibility to oversee the completion of the assigned task as safely as possible.

3. The FTL (often in conjunction with the operations section) may appoint members of the field team to fill certain roles, such as radio operator, rescue specialist, or medic, or specialists necessary for the completion of the task.

4. If the team is a large one, such as a grid search team or an evacuation team, assistant field team leaders (ATL) may be appointed. One ATL per five other team members is in keeping with ICS principles of span of control.

5. A task assignment form (TAF) should be completed, listing the details of the assigned task, the persons assigned to the team, communications instructions, and other relevant operational and logistical information. One copy of the form is given to the FTL and one is retained by the operations section.

6. When the task is completed, the FTL should debrief with the operations section or with whomever is identified as the debriefer. The FTL should report when his team will be ready for reassignment. The debriefing and reassignment may be handled through communications channels, without the team actually returning to the incident base.

8.3 Medical and evacuation contingencies should be planned early in an operation.

1. Any persons requiring medical care (subjects or searchers) should be triaged and evacuated in the order of the severity of survivable injuries.

2. Contact with locally responsible medical command and with emergency medical services providers should be established to expedite the provision of medical care.

3. If a subject is found deceased, the area around the body shall not be disturbed, nor shall the body be moved without the permission of local authorities. Only one or two people should disturb the scene to confirm that the subject is dead.

8.4 When performing a rescue or recovery, several items need to be considered.

1. All evacuation teams must have adequate medical and rescue personnel and gear. A qualified medic must be assigned to every patient requiring care. Proper emergency medical care will precede any evacuation.
2. A rescue specialist will be in charge of each evacuation team. He is responsible for finding the best route to the nearest roadhead, landing zone, or other point from which the patient can be safely transported. Furthermore, he is responsible for enforcing safety standards outlined in the ASRC training literature, and will oversee the technical or semi-technical operations. Only persons trained and experienced in technical or semi-technical evacuations will serve as rescue specialists when these skills are required.

3. Unless otherwise requested, the medic should surrender patient responsibility to the appropriately trained emergency medical personnel once the roadhead or landing zone is reached. The medic should offer to accompany the responsible medical personnel, and should always obey laws and statutes concerning the treatment and handling of medical patients.

8.5 Soon after any major operation, a critique should be held to review good and bad aspects of the operation.

8.6 All communications on all ASRC co-ordinated operations shall be in plain English using clear text and no codes with due consideration for communications security. An exception is the status codes used to report a find. Once radio contact is established, operational and medical information shall be transmitted as clearly and as explicitly as possible. Patient information should be transmitted by more private means, such as telephone, if possible. In no circumstances, however, should team safety or patient care be compromised in an attempt to obtain a secure communications channel.

8.7 Operational radio communications should employ tactical callsigns or identifiers (e.g. "communications","ops","LZ control","SMRG response", etc.) or operators’ names. Tactical callsigns for teams and divisions should use the ITU/ICAO phonetic alphabet while branches and tasks should be referred to by numbers. The incident command/radio base station shall control communications and provide for Federal Communications Commission license identification. No unit numbers should be used during an operation but may be used for non-operational purposes.

8.8 Locations and positions should be reported using ASRC grid system co-ordinates, UTM/MGRS co-ordinates, or latitude and longitude (listed in order of preference).

8.9 The communications unit leader is responsible for enforcing, and users for following, ASRC and federal operational and emergency communications procedures.

9.0 PREPAREDNESS
In order to safely and effectively execute the SAROP, there is a need for a certain amount of preparedness.
9.1 All ASRC members should carry sufficient survival and safety gear with them at all times during an operation as circumstances and training standards dictate. Each member is responsible for a rapid and safe response to an incident. The ASRC member should be appropriately equipped and prepared to spend forty-eight hours in the field without resupply.

9.2 When transported to an incident scene by air, ASRC members must use appropriate safety gear and procedures, and should be prepared to remain at the scene for at least forty-eight hours. Return transportation may not have been arranged at the time of departure, and weather conditions can change rapidly, altering flight plans. Only the incident commander and the responsible agent (or their designees) should make arrangements for air transportation of searchers.

9.3 The integrity of the alert process must be maintained. Each group must inform the Conference of its alerting procedures, and should promptly advise the Conference of any changes in its procedures.

9.4 The SAROP should be periodically re-evaluated and revised to ensure a rapid, efficient, safe, and effective response to all SAR incidents.
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GLOSSARY

References are to sections of the SAROP.
Terms with commonly used acronyms are listed under that acronym.

Advance Team: One of the functions of an overhead team may be to arrive ahead of a full response to prepare for it.........................6.1

Alert: A recognized state of readiness. Indicates that involvement in an incident is probable...5.2

Alert postures: Recognized states of readiness in anticipation of mission involvement......5.2

AO: Alert Officer: Person who takes the responsibility of alerting the Conference or a group....5.0

ASRC: Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference, Inc. An organization comprised of four (as of this edition) mountain rescue groups.

ATL: Assistant field team leader: Person appointed to help manage large field teams..................8.2.4

Briefing: A passing of information, usually to a team about to perform a task or to one's relief.

Callout: A recognized state of readiness that indicates that an ASRC response has been officially requested or is taking place.......................5.2.3

Callsigns: Communications identifiers........8.7

COMCTR: Communications center: the center through which all incident communications are passed. Its callsign is usually "<incident name> communications"..8.7

Communications: Information relevant to the operation passed through any medium.............8.6

COMSEC: Communications security: A set of practices the goal of which is to preserve privacy........8.6

Containment: A strategy of limiting the size of a search area..................................................8.1.2b

Critique: Review of an operation.................8.5

Debriefing: A report of information relevant to an operation, usually refers to a FTL's report to the operations section after the completion of a task. ..................................................8.1.4

Demobilization: The removal of resources.....8.1.2e
DES: Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Emergency Services

DO: Dispatch officer: Person who handles the dispatching of a response (Conference or group).

EOC: Emergency operations center, headquarters of DES.

Field team: Basic tactical unit

First notice: Initial phase of alerting


FTL: Field Team Leader

Finance section: A section of the incident command system responsible for keeping time and personnel records.

First notice: The phase of an operation that initiates with the receipt of a request for assistance or with notification that an incident is in progress.

Grid system: A system of geographic co-ordinates used to report locations. Also known as the ASRC Co-ordinate system.

Hasty search: Search by a small team, usually along some readily identifiable geographic feature. Its small size makes the team quick and easy to deploy.

IC: Incident Commander

ICS: Incident Command System of the National Interagency Incident Management System

Initial Response: The first resources dispatched to meet a request.

ITU/ICAO alphabet: A standard system of easily pronounced and easily distinguished words for the letters of the alphabet which has been adopted by the International Telecommunications Union and the International Civil Aeronautical Organization, and by treaty is the only phonetic system to be used in radio communications.

LKP: Last known position of a search subject. Not necessarily the PLS.

Logistics section: Section of the ICS responsible for providing for the logistic support of an incident, including communications.

LZ: Landing zone. The part of a helispot or helibase where helicopters actually land.
Medic: Person responsible for patient care. Ideally, there should be one medic for each patient... 8.4.1

Medical Command: The physician or facility responsible for overseeing emergency medical care in an area... 8.3.2

MGRS: The Military Grid Reference System, also known as the Universal Transverse Mercator System (UTM). A system of co-ordinates that sets up one square kilometer grids. Co-ordinates refer to the distance in meters from the equator and from defined longitudinal borders of zones... 8.8

NSF: Managing the Search Function, a course in the management of lost person searches developed by the National Association for Search and Rescue.

Notification: A recognized state of alert that indicates that an incident is in progress but ASRC involvement has not been requested... 5.2.1

Operations Section: The section if the ICS responsible for the execution of the operational plan... 8.1; 8.2

OPCTR: Operations center of an incident.

OT: Overhead team: 1) The entire management team of a search. 2) A small management team sent out rapidly in response to a request for ASRC involvement to evaluate a SAR problem and begin planning its resolution... 6.1

Passive search: A strategy that centers on detecting the subject's presence rather than actively seeking him out... 8.1.6

Plans section: Section of the ICS responsible for formulating an operational plan. They usually work twelve hours ahead of the operation, that is, they are always putting together the next shift's plan.

PLS: Point last seen: The place where a search subject was most recently seen with absolute certainty.

GRT: Quick response team: A team sent out rapidly in response to a request. May be specialized for some function... 6.3

Radio log: A written record of communications. The communications are not necessarily by radio, but the record retains this name.

Responsible Agent: Person with legal authority for lost person searches in an area. Usually, but not always the county sheriff.

RESTAT: Resources unit of the ICS.
RO: Radio operator. Not to be confused with the communications unit leader. See ICS materials.

RS: Rescue Specialist: Member of the field team charged with oversight of the evacuation of a patient...8.2.3; 8.4.2

SAR: Search and Rescue

SAROP: Search and Rescue Operations Plan

Search dogs: Dogs trained to locate human scent and lead their handlers to its source..................8.1.2b-c; 8.2.1

Sign cutting: Searching along some feature for any sign that a search subject has crossed that feature. Also known as binary search..................8.2.1

SITSTAT: Situation unit of the incident command system.

SOP: Standard operating procedure.

Status codes: Codes used to report the medical condition of a patient. Standard among Virginia SAR Council members.

Status map: Map maintained by the operations section that shows all tasks currently in progress.

Strategy map: Map produced by the plans section to display plans for future tasks.

Summary map: Map(s) maintained by the documentation unit to display operations completed to date.

Suspension: The termination of SAR activities..8.1.6

TAF: Task Assignment Form: A form that describes the assignment of a team in detail..................8.1.5; 8.2.5

Task: Job(s) assigned to a team for completion.

Tracking: Following, step by step, a person's path by observing the disturbances resulting from his passage.

Traffic: Radio communications relevant to the incident.

UMS: Uniform map system: A location reporting system based on aeronautical charts. It is the standard system of the Civil Air Patrol and of the Mountain Rescue Association.

Urgency: A good feeling for how much danger a search subject is in is important in planning any response..5.1

UTM: Universal Transverse Mercator map system. See MGRS.

Withdrawal: Termination of ASRC involvement in an incident.
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LaValla, Rick; Stoffel, Skip; and Wade, Bill. SEARCH IS AN EMERGENCY, A FIELD GUIDE TO MANAGING THE SEARCH FUNCTION. Tacoma W.A.: Emergency Response Institute, 1982.
APPENDIX A

Alert Procedures of the ASRC
Current as of 1 January 1986

Responsible agents may request ASRC resources by contacting the Virginia Department of Emergency Services (DES) at 804-323-2300. A department watch officer will collect information about the incident.

The DES watch officer will alert the ASRC by calling the University of Virginia Medical Communications (MEDCOM) operator at 804-924-5805 or -9287 and asking that an ASRC Alert Officer (AO) call DES.

The MEDCOM operator will set off BRMRG pagers, and BRMRG members will call MEDCOM as instructed by the operator. The first person who calls in that can call DES as instructed does so and is given the number of the complainant. This ASRC member becomes the Conference AO.

The AO contacts the complainant to determine what resources are requested/needed, the urgency of the request, and to collect any other operational or logistical information necessary to make the response. At this time, the AO should make certain that the responsible agent has authorized the request.

The AO should quickly determine which of the four groups can get an overhead or other response team on the scene first (this determination is usually made in conjunction with AO's from each of the groups, reached through their groups' alert channels). The initial response and leadership should be dispatched from this team. Resources from other groups should be dispatched as needed to meet the request. It is strongly advisable to dispatch more resources than are requested.

Part of the AO's job is to designate a response leader. If this person will be functioning as an IC or other member of the command staff, he must be qualified as recognized by the ASRC Board of Directors.

If neither leadership nor manpower are available to meet the request, the AO must tell the responsible agent so and may advise him on other courses of action.

IDEALLY, the time from the first call to the time the initial response leaves should be forty-five minutes or less. (It is believed that the current record is about sixteen minutes. Anyone who beats this should report it to the records officer.--Ed.)

Once a response is made, the AO must keep in touch with the dispatch officers from each of the groups and with the IC or response leader throughout the mission. Groups should make every effort to set up one telephone number where their DO can be reached throughout the mission.

Anytime a response is dispatched from any groups of the ASRC, non-responding groups should be placed on "alert". Both DES and MEDCOM should be kept informed of the status of the incident and on the ASRC's ability to respond to further calls. The IC and AO (respectively) are usually responsible for
this. To ensure resource availability, perhaps for more urgent incidents, a commitment of all available resources should be made only for the most urgent SAR problems. A total commitment should almost never be made for out of region incidents.

DES will automatically notify other SAR groups whenever the ASRC is called out (SAR Council agreement). Actual involvement of these groups, however, can only be requested by the IC or the responsible agent, or their designee.

When an incident is resolved, or ASRC respondents are otherwise demobilized, groups should not stand down from their alert until all teams have returned to their home bases. DES should be notified when this happens.

EXCEPTIONS: 1) Because of working relationships with some responsible agents and other organizations (most notably SNP, the Albemarle County Police, SAR Council Teams, and Thomas Jefferson EMS Council members), the ASRC may be alerted by the complainant contacting MEDCOM directly, often by radio. If a response is made in such cases, the AO must remember to brief the DES watch officer and have SAR Council groups notified.

2) Because of fairly recent changes in the alert procedure, the ASRC may on occasion be alerted by a responsible agent who uses the old procedure and contacts the University of Virginia Police Department. In such cases, the AO must remember to brief the DES watch officer and the MEDCOM operator.

3) Conference members that become involved in missions by other than conventional means may alert other groups by calling MEDCOM directly.

ALERT PROCEDURES FOR THE GROUPS, as on record with the Conference 1 Jan. 1986:

Allegheny MRG: Call Allegheny General Hospital at 412-359-3131 and ask the hospital operator to page Keith Conover or Roy Alson.

Blue Ridge MRG: Call UVA MEDCOM at 804-924-5805 and ask the operator to page an Alert Officer.

Shenandoah MRG: Call Art Dodds, Sr. at 301-949-2497 and ask him to contact a SMRG AO for you.

Southwest Virginia MRG: Page a SWVMRG AO by calling 703-953-8442 and stating your message when you hear the tone.
Appendix B
Incident Command System
Position Descriptions and Map Symbols
ICS POSITION CHECKLISTS

The references following position titles in the checklists refer to the Incident Command System (ICS) position manuals which describe the full duties and responsibilities of that position. Position manuals may be obtained from:

Fire Protection Publications
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

COMMAND SECTION

INCIDENT COMMANDER

The incident commander is responsible for incident activities including the development and implementation of strategic decisions and for approving the ordering and releasing of resources.

- Obtain incident briefing and Incident Briefing Form (ICS Form 201) from prior incident commander.
- Assess incident situation.
- Conduct initial briefing.
- Activate elements of the incident command system.
- Brief command staff and section chiefs.
- Insure planning meetings are conducted.
- Approve and authorize implementation of incident action plan.
- Determine information needs and inform command personnel of needs.
- Coordinate staff activity.
- Manage incident operations.
- Approve requests for additional resources and requests for release of resources.
- Approve the use of trainees on the incident.
- Authorize release of information to news media.
- Insure Incident Status Summary (ICS Form 209) is completed and forwarded to Operations Coordination Center (OCC) and dispatch center(s).
- Approve plan for demobilization.

DIVISION/GROUP SUPERVISOR

The division and/or group supervisor reports to the operations section chief or branch director when activated. The supervisor is responsible for the implementation of the assigned portion of the Incident Action Plan, assignment of resources within the division and/or group, and reporting on progress of control operations and status of resources within the division and/or group.

- Obtain briefing from branch director or operations chief.
- Implement Incident Action Plan for division and or group.
- Provide available Incident Action Plan to strike team leaders.
- Identify increments assigned to the division and/or group.
- Review division and/or group assignments and incident activities with subordinates and assign tasks.
- Insure that incident communications and/or resources unit is advised of all changes in status of resources assigned to the division and/or group.

OPERATIONS SECTION

OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF

The operations section chief, a member of the general staff, is responsible for the management of all operations directly applicable to the primary mission. The operations chief activates and supervises organization elements in accordance with the Incident Action Plan and directs its execution. The operations chief also directs the preparation of unit operational plans, requests or releases resources, makes expedient changes to the Incident Action Plan as necessary and reports such to the incident commander.

- Obtain briefing from incident commander.
- Develop operations portion of Incident Action Plan.
- Brief and assign operations personnel in accordance with Incident Action Plan.
- Supervise operations.
- Determine need and request additional resources.
- Review suggested list of resources to be released and initiate recommendation for release of resources.
- Assemble and disassemble strike teams assigned to operations section.
- Request maintenance service for equipment at staging area as appropriate.
- Respond to request for resource assignments.
- Obtain and issue receipts for radio equipment and other supplies distributed and received at staging area.
- Report resource status changes as required.
- Maintain staging area in orderly condition.
- Demobilize staging area in accordance with incident demobilization plan.
- Maintain Unit Log (ICS Form 214).
- Coordinate activities with adjacent divisions.
- Determine need for assistance on assigned tasks.
- Submit situation and resources status information to branch director or operations chief.
- Report special occurrences or events such as accidents or sickness to the immediate supervisor.
- Resolve logistics problems within the division and/or group.
- Participate in the development of branch plans for the next operational period.
- Maintain Unit Log (ICS Form 214).
The checklist below provides basic steps appropriate for use in almost any incident situation. NOT ALL INCIDENTS REQUIRE WRITTEN PLANS. The need for written plans and attachments is based on incident requirements and the decision of the incident commander. The Planning Checklist is intended to be used with the ICS Planning Matrix board, and/or Form 215, Operational Planning Worksheet (Table 4.1). For more detailed instructions, see Chapter 3 of Planning Section Chief Position Manual (ICS 221-1).

**PLANNING SECTION CHIEF**

The planning section chief, a member of the incident commander's general staff, is responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination and use of information about the development of the incident and status of resources. Information is needed to: 1) understand the current situation; 2) predict probable course of incident events; and, 3) prepare alternative strategies and control operations for the incident.

- Obtain briefing from incident commander.
- Accomplish planning section units.
- Reassign initial attack personnel to incident positions as appropriate.
- Establish information requirements and reporting schedules for all ICS.
- Notify resources unit of planning section units activated, including names and locations of assigned personnel.
- Establish a weather data collection system when necessary.
- Supervise preparation of Incident Action Plan (See Planning Process Checklist).
- Assemble information on alternative strategies.
- Assemble and disassemble strike teams not assigned to operations.
- Identify need for use of specialized resource(s).
- Develop operational planning for planning section.
- Provide periodic predictions on incident potential.
- Compile and display incident status summary information.
- Advise general staff of any significant changes in incident status.
- Provide incident traffic plan.
- Supervise planning section units.
- Prepare and distribute incident commander's orders.
- Instruct planning section units in distribution of incident information.
- Insure that normal agency information collection and reporting requirements are being met.

**RESOURCES UNIT LEADER**

The resource unit leader (RESTAT), is responsible for: 1) establishing all incident check-in activities; 2) the preparation and processing of resource status change information; 3) the preparation and maintenance of displays, charts, and lists that reflect the current status and location of suppression resources, transportation, and support vehicles; and 4) to maintain a master check-in list of resources assigned to an incident.

- Report to and obtain briefing and special instructions from planning section chief.
- Establish check-in function at incident locations.
- Using the Incident Briefing (ICS Form 201) prepare and maintain the command post display including the organization chart, resource allocation, and deployment sections.
- Assign duties to resources unit personnel.
- Confirm dispatch and estimated time of arrival of ordered RESTAT Unit personnel. Request additional personnel, or release excess personnel.

**INTERVIEWER/INVESTIGATOR SPECIALIST**

The Interviewer/Investigator, a member of the planning section, is responsible for collecting information about the suspect from the reporting party and any other persons with knowledge as developed through the investigation. This development of Searching, Planning, and Investigating data and providing this data to the Situation Unit Leader is the prime responsibility.

- Obtain briefing from Situation Unit Leader (Planning Section Chief or Incident Commander).
- Determine:
  - Point last seen
  - Last known position
  - Time last seen
  - Search data
  - Planning data
  - Investigation data
- Provide photo and description for flyer.
- Complete detailed interview checklist.
- Followup on leads to confirm all information.
- Check out all clues reported in by field crews.
- Develop complete victim profile.
- Based on profile, assist overhead team in deductive reasoning of the suspect's behavior.

- Establish contacts with incident facilities by telephone or through communications center, and begin maintenance of resource status.
- Participate in planning section meetings as required by the planning section chief.
- Gather, post, and maintain incident resource status.
- Gather, post, and maintain resource status of transportation and support vehicles and personnel.
- Maintain master roster of all resources checked into the incident.
- Prepare Organization Assignment List (ICS Form 203) and Organization Chart (ICS Form 207).
  - Prepare appropriate parts of Division Assignment Lists (ICS Form 204).
- Provide resource summary information to situation unit as requested.
- Receive order to demobilize resources unit.
- Dismantle and store resources unit displays.
- List expendable supplies that need replenishing, and file with supply unit leader.
- Maintain Unit Log (ICS Form 214).
LOGISTICS SECTION

LOGISTICS SECTION CHIEF

The logistics section chief, a member of the general staff, is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials in support of the incident. The section chief participates in the development and implementation of the Incident Action Plan and activates and supervises the branches and units within the logistics section.

- Obtain briefing from incident commander.
- Plan organization of logistics section.
- Assign work locations and preliminary work tasks to section personnel.
- Notify resources unit of logistics section units activated including names and locations of assigned personnel.
- Assemble and brief branch directors and unit leaders.
- Participate in preparation of Incident Action Plan.
- Identify service and support requirements for planned and expected operations.
- Provide input to and review communications plan, medical plan, and traffic plan.
- Coordinate and process requests for additional resources.
- Review Incident Action Plan and estimate section needs for next operational period.
- Insure Incident Communications Plan is prepared.
- Advise on current service and support capabilities.
- Prepare service and support elements of the Incident Action Plan.
- Estimate future service and support requirements.
- Receive Demobilization Plan from planning section.
- Recommend release of unit resources in conformity with Demobilization Plan.
- Insure general welfare and safety of logistics section personnel.

SERVICE BRANCH DIRECTOR

The service branch director, when activated, is under the supervision of the logistics section chief, and is responsible for the management of all service activities at the incident. The branch director supervises the operations of the communications, medical, and food units.

- Obtain briefing from logistics section chief.
- Obtain working materials from logistics kit.
- Determine level of service required to support operations.
- Confirm dispatch of branch personnel.
- Participate in planning meetings of logistics section personnel.
- Review Incident Action Plan.
- Organize and prepare assignments for service branch personnel.
- Coordinate activities of branch units.
- Inform logistics chief of branch activities.
- Resolve service branch problems.
- Maintain Unit Log (ICS Form 214).

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT LEADER

The communications unit leader, under the direction of the service branch director or logistics section chief, is responsible for developing plans for the effective use of incident communications equipment and facilities; installing and testing of communications equipment; supervision of the Incident Communications Center; distribution of communications equipment to incident personnel; and the maintenance and repair of communications equipment.

- Obtain briefing from service branch director or logistics section chief.
- Determine unit personnel needs.
- Advise on communications capabilities and or limitations.
- Prepare and implement the Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205).
- Insure the Incident Communications Center and Message Center are established.
- Set up the telephone and public address systems.
- Establish appropriate communications distribution and or maintenance locations within the base and or camp(s).
- Insure communications systems are installed and tested.
- Insure an equipment accountability system is established.
- Insure personal portable radio equipment from cache is distributed per radio plan.
- Provide technical information as required on:
  - Adequacy of communications systems currently in operation
  - Geographic limitation on communications systems
  - Equipment capabilities
  - Amount and types of equipment available
  - Anticipated problems in the use of communications equipment
- Supervise communications unit activities.
- Maintain records on all communications equipment as appropriate.
- Insure equipment is tested and repaired.
- Recover equipment from relieved or released units.
- Maintain Unit Log (ICS Form 214).
ICS MAP SYMBOLS FOR SEARCH

Colors for Strategy Map

BLACK
3. SECTOR BOUNDARIES (Identify by Number) *

RED
10 AUG/14 JUL point last seen (PLS) *
11 AUG/08 JUL last known position (LKP) *

REDA
Repeater/Relay Incident Command Base Staging Area *

BLUE
Helipad Telephone First Aid Station *

BLACK
Travel Barriers
Wind speed/direction

THEORETICAL SEARCH AREA 70%

STATISTICAL SEARCH AREA

PROBABILITY OF AREA (POA)

PLANNED SEARCH AREA

* = Should include on briefing map mapping

ICS Land Search Map Symbols

1st COVERAGE

2nd COVERAGE

3rd COVERAGE

4th COVERAGE

SHOW ABOVE LINES IN:
GREEN SEARCH CREWS
BLUE HELICOPTER SEARCH
BROWN SEARCH DOGS

RED CONFINEMENT (Search Patrol) *

BLACK DOG #1 PATROL #3 CHEW OR STIRE MEANS ASSIGNED CREW #6 (A) (B) (C) Branches Divisions
Appendix C
Virginia Search and Rescue Council
Operational Preplan
1.0 GENERAL
The Virginia Search and Rescue Council is a confederation of representatives of agencies actively providing search and rescue services throughout the Commonwealth. The purposes of this document are to simplify the alerting procedures of the organizations and to provide for certain standards of incident management. This preplan is intended more as a reference than as a training guide. For further information on any topic addressed in this plan, the reader is referred to training materials available through each organization.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY
Most members of the council represent organizations that provide volunteer search and rescue services in Virginia and elsewhere. These groups typically will not become involved in an incident without the approval of the local responsible agent. To simplify the receipt of this approval, a Department of Emergency Services representative should attempt to get approval for any Council resources at the time of initial contact; this will make further authorizations unnecessary if other resources are needed.

An exception is Shenandoah National Park. As responsible agents of the park, rangers may request any resources they need for an incident under their management. Their requests for multiple resources can be simplified by routing them through the Department of Emergency Services.

3.0 NATURE OF RESPONSES
Search and Rescue Council agencies may be called upon to respond to any one of several types of incidents:
- Wilderness searches make up the bulk of the groups' operations, whatever the cause of the incident.
- Rescues/recoveries often are the end result of searches, or may be unrelated to a search problem.
- Aircraft crashes in wilderness areas are the objects of a search of a much larger area, and may also result in a rescue or recovery. Downed aircraft searches present many unusual problems and require additional specialized resources.
- Searches along and in rivers and other bodies of water are becoming increasingly common.
- Urban searches for lost persons.
Responses to natural disasters in or out of the Commonwealth or country.

The types of resources called on to respond to an incident will depend primarily on the type of incident, but also on its location, the season, and resource availability.

4.0 CALLOUT
The initial callout and alerting of Council agencies is primarily the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Emergency Services. The selection of which resources to call out, as noted above, depends on many variables and an explanation of this process is beyond the scope of this document. For this reason, a Department of Emergency Services representative familiar with search and rescue problems and their management should always be involved in this decision. Problems in making this decision should be minimized, however, by the mutual aid system outlined below.

4.1 Once the first notice of a SAR incident has been received by the Department of Emergency Services and an assessment made of the types of resources required, the urgency of the incident should be evaluated (see the NASAR field guide, Search is an Emergency) and should influence the number of responding resources, where they respond from, and perhaps their method of travel.

4.2 Several postures of readiness should be recognized by each organization for the purposes of uniform terminology:
1. Notification--An incident is in progress in which a SAR Council agency is involved.
2. Alert--An incident is in progress. Involvement of the alerted team is probable.
3. Callout--Agency resources are requested.

4.3 The final decision as to what resources are dispatched should involve input from the local responsible agent, a DES representative, and members of any council agency whose field of expertise is relevant to the problem (the DES representative should contact this person).

5.0 MUTUAL AID
The concept of mutual aid and alerting, along with the presence of a single dispatch number should assure that the best resources for any given problem are applied.

5.1 ANY TIME any SAR Council agency is alerted or called out by an agency other than the Department of Emergency Services, they should inform the Department's watch officer (even if they are responding out of the Commonwealth).
5.2 ANY TIME the watch officer receives this information, he should place ALL Search and Rescue Council agencies on "Notification" status (even if the incident is out of the Commonwealth).

5.3 If any dog teams are requested to respond to an incident, field personnel to work with the handlers as well as incident staff personnel should also be dispatched with the responsible agents approval.

5.4 If an Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference response to a lost person search is requested, all Council dog teams should be placed on "Alert" status. When the incident commander, the responsible agent, and others have assessed the incident, dog teams will almost certainly be requested.

5.5 If any SAR Council agency anticipates the need for Civil Air Patrol aircraft, manpower, or communications support, they should ask the Department of Emergency Services to notify the Civil Air Patrol of the anticipated need as soon as possible. If the Civil Air Patrol takes on a mission in which they anticipate the involvement of other SAR Council organizations, the organizations should be placed on notification status. The Civil Air Patrol should notify any local jurisdiction into which they dispatch ground teams.

5.6 It should be remembered that teamwork is the key to any response. It is best to dispatch at least a few resources from each organization to provide the best chance possible for the lost or injured person.

5.7 Shenannndoah national Park will request all resources through the Department of Emergency Services for any missions in the park, and will notify DES of any mission it responds to outside the park. Any organization anticipating the need for overhead team members may notify SNP directly or through DES and request specific functional positions or entire overhead teams. The Park's response may be limited by distance and available staff, but the Park does have about twenty MSF-trained IC's and Plans, Operations, Finance, and Logistics Chiefs.

6.0 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT
SAR Council agencies should use the Incident Command System to manage incidents in which they are involved. Representatives of all involved agencies should agree with overhead team assignments.

6.1 Each task assigned to the field should be documented using a SAR Council Task Assignment Form. One copy should go out with the team leader.
6.2 Further requests for resources on any incident should be initiated by the incident commander and should be routed through the Department of Emergency Services.

6.3 All communications should be co-ordinated by the incident communications unit. All radio communications should be in plain English, clear text. Only names of personnel and tactical callsigns (NOT unit numbers) should be used to identify radio communications.

6.4 The only codes used should be to report a subject find. After a reported find, radio operators should secure the network and all further communications should be explicitly clear.
   1. "Status 1"--Subject found alive and well. No evacuation assistance necessary.
   2. "Status 2"--Subject found injured. Rescue assistance needed.
   3. "Status 3"--Subject found deceased. Recovery assistance needed.

7.0 INCIDENT SUSPENSION

7.1 Suspension of a mission shall be defined, for the purposes of this preplan, as the withdrawal from active participation in the incident of all SAR Council resources.

7.2 Suspension and demobilization of a successful incident should be well planned and orderly. Every effort should be made to see that all searchers are safely out of the field.

7.3 An unsuccessful incident should not be suspended without the agreement of the responsible agent and the incident commander. They should solicit the input of other leaders involved in the operation when making this decision. When the incident is suspended, the incident commander should advise the responsible agent on passive lost person search techniques that may be indefinitely continued.

7.4 The incident commander should inform the Department of Emergency Services when all teams have left the incident site. The dispatch officers of each organization should inform the Department when all of their teams are safely home.

7.5 The incident commander should submit to the Department of Emergency Services a narrative incident report and a copy of the NASAR mission report.

8.0 PREPAREDNESS
8.1 To effectively and safely execute this preplan, a given amount of preparedness is necessary.

8.2 Any field personnel will be expected to carry with them safety and survival gear as their organization’s training and operational standards dictate.

8.3 The integrity of the alert process is VITAL. Organizations should ensure that the alert procedures they have filed with the Department of Emergency Services are current. DES should ensure that current rosters and a copy of this preplan are available to any Department personnel that might be responsible for taking reports of SAR incidents.

8.4 This document should periodically be re-evaluated and updated to ensure a rapid, safe, efficient, and effective response to all SAR incidents.