Annex J. ASRC Alert Officer Functions, Duties and Responsibilities and Protocols

J.1 The Alerting Function - The ASRC Alert Officers (AOs) will shall fulfill the ASRC alerting function. The AO is intended to act as the initial interface (with decision-making capabilities) between the ASRC and any outside agency requesting ASRC operational support. The AO has the authority to change the operational state of the ASRC by activating and responding ASRC resources.

J.1.1 Initial Contact with a Responsible Authority - They AO is responsible for responding to an initial request for ASRC participation from a Responsible Agent (RA) or an authorized representative thereof. The AO will shall collect appropriate information as shown on the ASRC Incident Alert Form to start the alert process in a timely manner. In addition to collecting baseline information required to assess the urgency and appropriate response to an incident from the RA, the AO must be prepared to provide initial suggestions to the RA. Initial contact with a requesting agency is expected within 10 minutes of an alert.

J.1.1.1 Initial Contact with the Responsible Agent - The AO must determine if the validity of any request for ASRC resources is legitimate:

a) Is the request from a legally responsible agent or their duly authorized representative legitimate?

b) Is the request within our area of operations?

c) Is the request within our functional domain?

d) The AO should also gather:

  da) Responsible Agent’s name, title, and telephone number (and any other relevant contact data)
  eb) Road travel directions to the incident site
  fc) Initial data: weather, subject description(s), subject activities, resources on-scene, resources responding, and other urgency criteria as shown on the ASRC Incident Alert Form.
  gd) Virginia Department of Emergency Management Services (VA/DEMS) mission number or verbal approval that the mission has been approved.

h) If appropriate, suggest to the IC when air transportation is useful

i) If appropriate, contact VA/DEMS and inform them of the ASRC response to an incident.
J.1.1.2 Initial Interaction Between Alert Officer and Dispatch Supervisor (DS) - Once the AO sends a “106“ page (a request for a DS to call the AO), a Dispatch Supervisor should call back and respond within 5 minutes. Failing to get a DS does not respond within 5 minutes, a second “106“ page should immediately be issued. If a DS Failing to get a DS does not respond within 8 minutes of the AO’s first page request, the AO should attempt to contact at least four Dispatch Supervisors directly by telephone. In the event that there is still no response by Failing to get a DS either by paging or by direct telephone phone calls, the Alert Officer shall assume the duties of the DS’s responsibilities. However, every effort should be made to get a DS to assume the proper DS function duties, and to hand-off dispatch to the normal ASRC dispatching protocol. The AO will initiate conference dispatch by contacting a Dispatch Supervisor or by requesting a conference dispatcher directly using a 104 page. When the Alert Officer makes contact with the Dispatch Supervisor, the AO will advise the Dispatch Supervisor of the level of response, any collected information from the RA, and any contacts made to or contacts from an IC or ACA and other actions taken as recorded on the ASRC Incident Alert form.

J.1.2 Response Coordination - Response Coordination with Requesting Agencies

J.1.2.1 Coordination in Virginia - When the incident is in Virginia, ASRC responses will normally be coordinated through the Virginia Department of Emergency Services Management (VA/DEMS).

J.1.2.2 Coordination when Services are Outside Virginia - When the incident is outside Virginia, the AO arranges deployment of ASRC resources with the Responsible Agent (RA) or the RA’s authorized designee. VA-DEMS will then be notified by the AO and given details of the ASRC response. Any response involving Virginia resources must invoke notification of VDEM in accordance with the MOU between VDEM AND ASRC. Details of a non-Virginia response need not be coordinated through VA-DEMS.

J.1.3 Required Alert Officer Decisions

J.1.3.1 It will be determined by the AO, after talking to the RA, VA-DEMS (when the search is in Virginia), and others as appropriate, what level of response the incident requires. Levels of ASRC response include:

- **Notification** - The ASRC is on notice that a search or incident is occurring someplace in the normal ASRC response-area of operations. Resources have not been requested and a Callout does not seem imminent. If a notification is not upgraded within twelve (12) hours, it is automatically canceled. After 12 hours if the notification is not upgraded, Dispatch operations are not normally required for a notification, however groups should be preparing for an increase in the alert status of the ASRC. This is the ASRC 111 pager code is used to bring the ASRC to a notification status.

- **Alert** - The ASRC has a high probability of responding to a search or incident within the next twenty-four hours. Conference and group dispatch should commence operations. Groups Members should be contacted.
availability of responders and report to ASRC dispatch, within 4 hours should be determined and a response team organized. This is the ASRC 222 pager code is used to bring the ASRC to an Alert status.

**Overhead Team (OHT)** — An incident commander and a team of incident staff are requested to respond. Conference and group dispatch should commence operations. Groups should determine availability of responders and report to ASRC dispatch within 2 hours. Only a limited number of ASRC Incident Staff and an Incident Commander are being asked to respond at this time. This is the ASRC 331 pager code is used to request an OHT.

**Quick Response Team** - An ASRC OHT has been requested, and a limited specific number of FTL members as well are requested to respond. Conference and group dispatch should commence operations. Groups should determine availability of requested responders and report to ASRC dispatch within 30 minutes. No FTM or COQ members are being asked to respond, however groups should determine availability of additional resources and report to ASRC dispatch within 2 hours. This is the ASRC 332 pager code is used to request a quick response team.

**Limited Callout** - A limited or tailored specific resource response has been requested, or has been suggested as appropriate by the AO. This limited callout also includes specially trained and/or certified personnel from one or more teams. Groups should determine availability of requested responders and report to ASRC dispatch within 30 minutes. Groups should begin to determine availability of additional resources and report to ASRC dispatch within 2 hours. This is the ASRC 332 pager code is used to request a limited response. Limited responses may be used to restrict the age of searchers that may respond. A limited callout may also be used to direct a response from a specific team or teams.

**Full Callout** - All available ASRC resources are asked requested to respond to the search. If a full Callout is requested for a later specific time (i.e., we are asked to respond at 0600 hours), the level of Callout is a Full Callout and is still issued with a response time specified, not Alert. Full Callout is also used for specific numbers of resources or Groups should determine availability of responders and report to ASRC dispatch within 30 minutes.

**History of Searches** - Alert Officers shall have a list of jurisdictions, maintained by the ASRC Dispatch Coordinator, where the ASRC has never responded, and/or where previous responses have resulted in misunderstandings or management difficulties in that jurisdiction. This data must be easily accessible to Dispatch Supervisors. EPaper and electronic copies of such jurisdictions and a summary of problems previously encountered shall be provided to Alert Officers and Incident Commanders for their reference and use, no less than once each year.
J.1.4.1 Other ASRC contacts with Responsible Agents - In the event that a SAR incident is in progress in the response ASRC area of operations of the ASRC and the ASRC has not been requested to participate in the response effort, all calls by ASRC members to local, county or state emergency service operations or law enforcement agencies concerning the search will be routed through either a single IC or ACA. The ACA/IC will ensure that multiple, needless calls to contact with the responsible agents are not made and minimized, but sufficient to ensure that the RA is aware of ASRC resources available and how to engage those resources should it be deemed necessary.