

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
SEARCH AND RESCUE 1ST RESPONDER
LESSON PLANS AND SCOPES AND PURPOSE**

PURPOSE

This course is designed to give local emergency services providers and managers sufficient information to make appropriate initial organizational and tactical decisions for a missing person incident.

1. COURSE INTRODUCTION, ADMINISTRATION AND OBJECTIVES (30 minutes)

Scope: Student sign-in of students, welcome, familiarization with facilities, administrative information, course purpose, agenda and instructional staff introduction.

2. LEGAL ASPECTS OF SEARCH AND RESCUE (1 hour)

Scope: A presentation of the legal issues of SAR and the protection afforded the rescuer and victim of the SAR operation. Topics presented include a **review** of the national and state SAR systems and authorities, the Good Samaritan Law, rendering emergency care, negligence, liability issues, and entry upon private property. (Not intended to be an interpretation of the law only an overview of what is out there.)

3. SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS (1 hour)

Scope: An overview of SAR operations with the emphasis on ground search and rescue. Terms are defined and current technology is described. Types of incidents are described. An overview is given on how missing person searches are initiated. The Incident Command System (ICS) is introduced.

4. SEARCH AND RESCUE RESOURCES (1 hour)

Scope: Organizations providing various types of SAR resources are described. Services are defined. Law enforcement, military, and civilian support organizations and their respective roles are presented.

** Time allocations is for presenting the lecture along with supporting slides.*

5. FILM: SURVIVAL (Madison Films, Inc.) (30 minutes)

Scope: A film depicting several incidents of subjects who for one reason or another found themselves in a hostile outdoor environment with out the knowledge or skills to help them survive and what became of each subject.

6. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT (1 hour)

Scope: The needs of the body including protection from the elements and proper nourishment are presented. The principles of gear selection are discussed. Specific gear for wilderness operations is shown and discussed including outer garments, footwear, food, items of comfort, personal safety items, items for signaling, and a suitable backpack.

7. FIRST NOTICE(including Determining Urgency and Planning and Searching Data) (30 minutes)

Scope: Initial contact with the reporting party, gather initial information and evaluating the problem are discussed. Use of the Lost Person Report is presented. Definitions and differences between planning and searching data are discussed. Identifies the factors involved in determining the urgency of the situation and describes how these help determine the relative priority and degree of response.

8. SEARCH STRATEGY AND TACTICS (class) (2 hours)

Scope: The basic tenets of SAR are presented to include victim orientation, search as an emergency, search as a classic mystery, searching for clues, and aspects that are important to search success. The phases of SAR operations are presented. Basic techniques employed in lost person searching are defined and discussed.

9. SEARCH STRATEGY AND TACTICS (practical exercise) (3 hours)

Scope: Practical exercises designed to highlight clue awareness and search techniques.

10. FIELD TEAM ORGANIZATION (30 minutes)

Scope: The various positions on a typical field team are discussed with emphasis on the function and responsibility of each position. The Task Assignment Form (TAF) is demonstrated and discussed.

11. LOST PERSON BEHAVIOR (1 hour)

Scope: Discusses how probable search areas may be defined by using historical data of lost persons in the particular geographic region within which the search is being conducted. Identifies the lost person behavior factors that must be used in the overall search strategy. Describes the need for data collection and the use of date in determining the probability of the search area. General aspects of lost person behavior are also covered along with mental influences likely to cause certain behavior, general categories of lost persons, probability zones, national statistics and example problems.

12. INVESTIGATION AND INTERVIEWING (1 hour)

Scope: Identifies the general principles of investigation to include: Assembling a complete profile; clue seeking in a continuous on-going process; gathering a set minimum of planning/searching data; never minimizing the value of a clue and using everyone to gather facts. Discusses the fundamental elements of interviewing witnesses and persons who may have intimate knowledge of the missing person or circumstances surrounding how the missing subject may have become lost. Specific emphasis includes generalized principles and pitfalls of interviewing, the physical setting for the interview, four types of interviews; who must be interviewed and what information is necessary.

13. **LAND NAVIGATION (class) (2.5 hours)**
Scope: Student is introduced to the basic concepts of navigation by map and compass; including reading and interpreting map information, terms and concepts, declination, true and magnetic north, factors of importance, types of compasses, bearings, navigating and grid systems used in search work. Major concepts of orienteering are presented including attack points, catching features, collection features and aiming off.
14. **LAND NAVIGATION (practical exercise) (3 hours)**
Scope: Students will demonstrate and practice concepts presented to them in the classroom by completing outdoor orienteering courses and other navigation exercises.
15. **MISSION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (30 minutes)**
Scope: A summary of the various forms used in SAR for mission reporting with special emphasis on the Mission After Action Report and information it should contain.
16. **ESTABLISHING THE SEARCH AREA (1 hour)**
Scope: Discusses the need to establish a search area and the four methods used to reduce the area to a manageable size. Potential search area is described as a function of distance traveled by a lost person and identified in specific zones of probability.
17. **SEARCH AREA SEGMENTATION, ASSIGNING THE PROBABILITY OF AREA (30 minutes)**
Scope: The rationale of search area segmentation is discussed. Construction and use of segments, identification of boundaries, optimum size for field personnel and management plus base camp tracking of search area progress introduced. Discusses the concept of assigning probabilities to search segments by consensus so as to eliminate the effect of dominate personalities of other biased influences.
18. **THE PROBABILITY OF DETECTION (1 hour)**
Scope: Discusses the research on probability of detection and the various tactics that can be used to search for lost persons. Thoroughness and efficiency are discussed in relation to multiple coverage and the implications of search management. Sample problems with representative calculations are provided along with practical use of nomograms and charts to determine specific resource detection probabilities.
19. **BRIEFING/DEBRIEFING (30 minutes)**
Scope: Discusses the important elements of briefing and debriefing to include the function and responsibility, who should give them, where and when they should occur, the information that they should contain and some guidelines as how they should be conducted.

20. **MAP PROBLEM (2 hours)**

Scope: A tabletop exercise based on an actual case study incident which emphasis pitfalls, deficiencies and or omissions that typically occur on search missions. Emphasizing practical applications of all concepts and principles presented throughout the course.