

## ASRC BOD 25 August 2001

Hosted by MSAR at Howard County Wellness Center.

Meeting started at 10:10am with committee meetings dictated by interest.

### Attendance:

MSAR – Kevin Cropper, Peter McCabe, Pamela Paulding, Pieter Lucas, Chris Stanton, Donna Tosh

SMRG – Christopher Smith, Frank Bennett, Dawn Knapp, Peter Pennington, Dean Mires, Mike Kennedy

PVRG – Laura Cathcart

TSAR – Kevin Brewer, Billy Morgan

BRMRG – Camille Birmingham, Jared Ulmer, Dan Christy, Emily Minor

PSAR - Suzen Collins

General meeting called to order at 11:42am, followed by quick introductions.

### *Officer's reports*

#### **Treasurer**

Everything is stable. Everyone paid last year's dues by a couple months ago. Metrocall bills are going out. No more donations from Keswick search of a year ago. Balance is up to \$6K+. Mark Eggeman is no longer able to make the weekly paycheck deductions that he had been making, but he is planning to complete the repayments by January. There was some minor confusion about the designation "Reimbursements", versus the payments from Mark. (It is an outflow, not an intake.) Itemization of reimbursements has been requested. Question about how much the monthly repayment from Mark should be. Note that there is a deficit in how much of the payments should have been made. Pennington suggested, and it was moved, that the budget be accepted so we are all responsible, not just the Treasurer.

Passed 3-0-0.

#### **Vice Chair**

Delaware Valley SAR Group, applicant at some status level, has dissolved their program and is no longer effective. Their leader has left the area and their dog handlers moved to dog groups. Pennsylvania SAR Council board has approved four top levels for their teams. There is a fairly active dialog regarding what components of each team would go into which level. They have approved "Search" teams – could do search but not "Rescue" – also fully qualified GSAR teams and individual memberships in the SAR council. They have dog team standards in one of the four levels and will probably have dog teams. McCabe is the Ops officer there. They have their own programs and equipment and want to be defined as operational, based on what they have, not what they should have. This may hurt them later, but will most likely affect us in any dealings we

have with them and the Commonwealth of PA. They figure a local FD or county agency will always be the IC, so liability is local, not theirs.

Q: Has the MD SAR Forum met?

A: Not for some time, but a search activity the first weekend of November may be planned. But there have been no meetings since late spring.

The MD St. Police decided not to revise the existing MOU. We have never been called on the basis of that MOU, so we would like some revisions. Perhaps we could place an announcement in the Ops Binder of each Barracks. (The Barracks usually call dog folks, and we could get them aware of us (ASRC).) Randy Frank has not made it happen already.

It was reported that there were deficiencies and some confusion in the Emergency System in WV. The fear there is that they'd have to ring VA for out of state help and then get billed for it. (They don't want to do that.) State resources are generally not up to the need in WV. Next plan is to go directly to Charleston (capital) and make some noise there. Also, Pepper Broad is involved/in charge of a network there. It will be involved with the MARG mock search (see below). Pennington will contact Pepper. (As a side note, Bob Kester is in WV w/ FEMA for the floods and you might see him.)

### **Chair**

The Chair expresses apologies for not being able to attend the last meeting on such short notice; there was an injured officer and the Chair was stuck at work. Since then, some conversations with folks, but not much due to the charges that are pending and propriety. Pepper and Chair have played phone tag. In a non-formal setting, continued working w/ Virginia SAR Council and more under announcements, below.

### ***Committees***

#### *Medical*

(Donna Tosh reporting, in absence of chair.) Reviewed suggested changes and will email them to Stefanie and they'll review some more.

#### *Training*

Jared, acting chair, Standards have finally been updated and will be posted next week (PDF format) w/ new IC standards and IS re-certification qualifications and things that needed to be added to them. And the committee is still looking for a chair. (hint, hint) (The Chair states that it has not twisted arms for chairs, but is looking for interested parties.) (Parties need to be FTL for Training Chair.)

#### *Ops*

Webbing v/s rope in regards to five 20ft pieces. There was a debate, but no recommendations or votes. Also, our pagers are no longer being made, so we need to consider alternatives. Is Metrocall bankrupt/going out of business? In Richmond area, several agencies have gone away from them. Camille suggested checking other services;

nothing is tying us to Metrocall. We've got a year (maybe more?), but we need to start looking. There is no date for when this service will stop, but groups should start thinking/looking.

Is there is a Safety committee? No, and w/o people on a committee, there can't be an elected chair.

### ***Old Business***

*Mission Debriefings (as per last meeting's vote, Mission Debriefings start the Old Business section)*

Henry County Search –

(A highlight on this search: the subject was a deaf/mute.) Emily, Jared, Dan, a few others, responded. Other groups: SeSar, Old Dominion SAR, Angel, Franklin Co. Base was very limited. Interesting subject. 12 to 14 hours. Found near the house. Status 2 – medication OD, thrown-up, dehydrated, wandered. Probably had left and come back into area, so area had been searched before. Emily was IC in middle of the night.

Responsible agent wanted very little to do, left us running things. Medical problems: mute, deaf, mid-50s, in and out of mental institutions, home for two week test period. Thirteen medications. Camille wound up being the EMT for the medical care up until the hospital. (Local ambulance did not have an EMT.) He was alert and oriented, could have used someone who could sign (language). Subject had some small abrasions, nothing big, but pupils were non-reactive. Got to use medical side of things. Proves the point to search Ground Zero.

Any concerns w/ integrating with other groups? Seemed to work pretty well. ASRC was playing well with others. Evacuation was the normal evac – number of people changing and such. Rescue Squad reacting, no longer a search task. Was EMS on site? Evac plan dictated from previous IC, which was to use local resources. Is it now practice that a non-ASRC IC be asked to come in, pending arrival of an IC? DEM has other IC's available. Especially when we join an ongoing search. It is a DEM call – if they are comfortable with whoever our agency rep is, then that is fine. DEM knows what resources we have. At the general level, where all can IC's come from? Can we get a DEM accredited commander? Shenandoah can't respond immediately with training levels. Are we getting into a liability issue since we are EMS non-transport? It was not our ambulance, but you (Camille) were the medical. Camille feels that we are non-transport b/c we do not have the ambulance, but we are Shock-Trauma level, so we can provide that medical service. We'll check w/ Stefanie on this issue.

Wintergreen Search –

Teams were en-route to Wintergreen when the subject was found by local resources before we arrived. Person was two miles down the trail, interesting considering they used walking aids and were only gone four or five hours. This was our first response to Wintergreen. IC had done some training w/ Wintergreen FD.

Shenandoah County Search –

Several folks were there. (4 August?) Suspended and never resumed. Elderly gentlemen, several mentally ill (one of the Cuban boat people). Got stuck in Virginia system. Voluntarily staying in facility. Some sightings, call went out evening before hand, sheriff agreed to allow search to end of day and realized he had been trying to hitchhike and sheriff decided it was not a viable search and he has not been located. No determination on time he left search area. Local support was really nice. Know FD, Emergency Management, etc.

#### Dinwiddie Co Search –

A young boy who wandered away from home (10 August). Teenager, went out in hot weather in heavy clothes, not allowed past a certain stump, learning disabilities, went further out. Arrived to dogs on scene. Bloodhound and air scent dogs hit same area. ASRC limited resources, but sign cutter (Debra Harris) made the find about a mile from the house. Close to the dog's indication. Status 1. Found via yelling (attraction). He had been drinking creek water.

#### Chesterfield Co Search –

77 year old male, found by a neighbor. Short. Chesterfield Co is well trained (six IC's). 14 July.

#### Other Searches –

PSAR had a member do a find of a fellow who fell in Colorado and rescued him. 1200ft fall.

#### *Mark's Repayment*

We have a signed commitment, from January. Seven months at about \$160, is about \$1120 owed through August. (The note is not currently available.) He has only paid \$377(?). That is rather in arrears. Is the commitment monthly or "by this date"? Peter McCabe : I believe it was monthly. \$158.33 a month (\$1899.96 divided by 12). Were any penalties stipulated? Was it voluntary? Mark is currently unemployed, has been for several months, and has no income. To Pennington, the problem is Eggeman's not communicating this difficulty. Did he communicate w/ Chair and/or Treasurer, an intent to 'give' his payment from teaching GSAR for VADEM? When was this? He was up-to-date up through the last meeting. (Where they incomplete in April and May? First payment was not until March anyway – two months after the initial discussion/agreement.) Camille: Sounds to me, this was discussed behind closed doors initially, so someone on the board needs to be following up on this. If he sent a letter, then the board should know. The board as a whole does not need to be discussing? Pennington volunteered to investigate.

**Motion:** Pennington resume contact and come up with recommendations as quickly as possible, and return information to the board.

**Friendly Amendment:** Contact the board, via email, before the next meeting.

**Discussion:** At this point, do we want to find out facts or deal with it? Can we act, as a board, via email? Camille: One person needs to be in charge of finding out and doing something, otherwise the delay is too great. Emily: what is the assumption base, what powers, are we granting here? This is a lot of legal power: signing documents, etc, we

are giving. Next full GSAR is not until Jan/Feb (partial one is Nov/Dec), so what income would we get from that and when? McCabe: Important that we enable someone to act now. We should have heard about this email from him about his job loss back in July – it should have been communicated to the board. Is there a precedent for voting via email?

**Amendment:** Collect receivables up to original agreement.

**Discussion:** What are we looking for? Do we want our money by the end of the year, or to organize a plan? Board needs to set a goal. “Re-establish communications w/ Mark Eggeman and confirm what has been stated here: Can’t meet current plan.” Pennington: My experience says that we press for something now, recovering full amount, but over a new schedule. Do we have a plan B in case of default? Are we willing to go to court based on a Promisory Note? Perhaps send a pro-forma letter from a lawyer saying, ‘court is the next step’. When would the board find out / act upon results? November? April: Can we give Pennington the ability to start repayments, with a new schedule to be approved at the November meeting? Start repayment, get a schedule, and gain good faith, then approve a new schedule, behind closed doors.

**Amendment:** Pennington negotiate a schedule for the next two months and then a new schedule be presented at the November meeting. The point of Contact will be Peter Pennington – from both ends.

**Discussion:** McCabe: Should we consider a collection agency? April: The board needs to establish a contact point and deal with information from him.

**Final Amendment:** Peter Pennington will resume contact with Mark Eggeman, negotiate a schedule for the next two months, and present a new schedule at the November meeting. Peter Pennington will be the Point of Contact from both ends.

**Voting:** Unanimous approval.

### *Membership Survey*

April compiled a list of questions to begin a discussion for establishing some goals yearly, so we can act on things. A couple of things: It was important to have this survey filled out before groups talk about it, due to different levels of training/length of time in service/etc. Recommended that we set a goal of having a quarter of the team membership fill out the survey. They should be an overall representation of the full program (across all training levels). Suggest that we set a due date, and possibly a prize for most / fastest / etc. responses. Tried to keep the questions balanced – not too negative or positive, without leading questions. The more responses, the better, but it should be at least a quarter of the team. It was suggested that some question were based on Years in Membership, for instance, “How many meetings attended” is dependant on length of time in group. Quantitative answers supporting Qualitative. Perhaps add a second page with “statistics” – age, training, etc. McCabe: Need to consider weighting of responses, by team (27 members v/s 103 members). Might help to know which group respondents are from. April: Sent to leader of team and have that person return them en masse to collector or board. Specifically: Affiliation, levels. There were some comments on the truthfulness of comments relative to anonymity. Grouping of years and levels. Suggested questions: Do you know your BOD rep? Have you thought about being a chair of a committee? Do you feel well informed about upcoming ASRC meetings? Peter Pennington volunteered to process all the information collected.

### *Investigation update*

Chair turns over to Secretary at 14:00, for an update. Last meeting had a closed session. This update probably does not need to be closed. Chris Ruch has provided the following message:

At the July Board of Directors meeting I was given the responsibility of conducting the pre-hearing phase of a due process procedure. At that time I was given the August 25th meeting as the target date for presenting the findings of my investigation. While the investigation has proceeded at a good pace and I feel that I am very close to being able to write my final report, there are still several issues that require further examination. This includes receiving documentation from individuals and agencies external to the ASRC. As a result, in the name of thoroughness, I will require additional time to conclude this investigation. Both the complainant and the accused have consented to an extension of the investigation, feeling that it is in the interest of all involved that the investigation be thorough and complete, even at the expense of quickness. The report should easily be completed by the end of September and I can present it to the Board at the next meeting, scheduled for November.

Thank you  
Chris Ruch

Control returned to the Chair at 14:06.

### **Back to Reports**

#### **Secretary**

There was a comment that the minutes were not available on the web this week. Needs to be investigated. Is this temporary?

It was moved that the minutes from the July BOD meeting be approved.

Unanimous.

### **Back to Old Business**

#### *ASRC outside of Virginia*

Peter McCabe working on Maryland. Pepper Board and Peter Pennington are working on West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Do we need to be concerned about regionalization?

What can we do to improve our services in these other states and our visibility there?

MCCabe: Remote dispatching services have been investigated by myself, Kevin Cropper, and Randy Frank. Technology could facilitate that. A web-based Bulletin board format, and being able to inform folks that updates are available. Minimum interaction with a fixed-place dispatch. This may cost as much as a \$1000, with additional security safeguards. It is a viable option and their time is due. This is probably the key issue to address to work regularly in WV/MD/PA.

Group dispatching seems to have troubles remaining permanently functional. This may help.

Q: Do you mean have a dispatch officer from one group pick up for another?

A: It could work, don't know how yet.

Pennington: I like the idea of different dispatch, since that gets over the problem of WV having to ring VA. On Chair's questions, we already have a problem with binding ASRC internally. Basic problem is no constant, up-to-date, contact list. Groups can not invite other groups easily. This is especially true for the officers. We need to make sure our organization is something people want to join.

April: Cliques. Would we develop them if we did regionalization?

Bill: Continuity is lacking. From the board level and all the way down. Should we investigate an Executive Director who reports to the board? We have the financial stability to think about that.

April: That touches on something from last time. Most companies have boards that set goals and the director is tasked to achieve them.

McCabe: Reinvent the ASRC. We are fantastic and fragile. We could not stand-alone and do a search. We need others. We have unfairly foisted on BRMRG the responsibility of handling lots of day-to-day responsibility.

Chair: ASRC is quite dependent on personalities, and needs to realize we have hundreds of members who can help.

## **New Business**

Are there any motions for IC/IS or training officers?

Tom Lovejoy – we have two letters of recommendation, but not the documentation this time. But we don't have all the letters anyway. Responsibility is on the sponsor (Bob Kester) to get all the paperwork. Peter McCabe volunteered to ensure that all the paperwork gets to one place. Tom has said he'll come to the next meeting. Candidate and information pack together, all at once, with either sponsor or letter from sponsor.

### *Signing and Searches*

The Virginia School for the Deaf is very interested in helping/training groups. There is a web site: <http://vddhh.va.us/> - on that website, there is a list of all people in the state who are certified interpreters for the deaf and are available for emergencies on a volunteer basis. TSAR will be doing training with a deaf subject and deaf family in November. (<http://www.vsdhb.org/>)

## **Announcements**

### *Dog Team Training*

McCabe: Tomorrow, w/ approval of US Park Police, MSAR is doing training w/ MAD and six cadaver dogs. Also PVRG. May be broadened in the future. Activity is to "clear" some search sectors along the Baltimore/Washington Parkway. No uniforms, no logo'd packs. 7:30am to 12:30ish. Contact Peter McCabe if you are interested in attending.

MSAR would like to clarify that this is a voluntary thing, not really "MSAR".

### *MARG Mock Search*

No new information beyond the email. It is scheduled for 5/6 October.

*Lt. Limerick's claim w/ VDEM*

Value of a volunteer's time is \$300 per month on workman's comp. Unless you have another job, in which case it is some portion. The Virginia interpretation was that she (Lt. Limerick) would be paid 2/3rds of the \$300, instead of 2/3rds of her salary. Court case to determine if DEM is in loop or if city should handle the bills. What was her volunteer status? The end result is currently unknown. If it does not go well, one more appeal is possible. Need to consider what ASRC can/should do. Reminder: Do not rely on the state for workman's comp. Date of appeal (November?) will be sent out later for those interested. Question is "Is DEM the enemy in this case?" (Consensus: No.) Virginia SAR Council has asked for statements from Winny (nothing in writing yet) and insurance folks (nothing yet). They are trying to figure that one out.

*VASARCO Conference*

It is the last weekend in Oct (Friday, 26) at Camp Brady Saunders, near Dilwin. (?) There will be a field track and a management track, a two hour class on field promotion, clue awareness, forensic specialist (evidence searches, what to expect to see after so many months). There will be representatives from Game and Inland Fisheries, horses, resource management. Marcela Fierao will speak on what can and can't be determined from autopsies. More information is available on the VDEM website and VASARCO website. Triangle might be highlighted/showcased with their group. There will be horse and dog evaluation teams. Awards ceremony (Lisa Hannon memorial?) Free. Camping in tents.

*Montgomery Co, Maryland, Search*

They arrested a guy, who tried to do the same thing to another person. The shoe prints matched him. FTS from SMRG found some clues that helped, as did an FTS from PSAR. This was the Aspen Hill search.

*Hopewell*

This was an evidence search at the beginning of the year. Subject said she'd never be found. Her body was found in Maine.

*EMT*

EMT's through Virginia can do their reports on-line.

*VDEM Training*

There are lots of training classes offered, based on the FEMA curriculums. It is a chance to deal w/ lots of police chiefs and other emergency managers, and to make connections, so get the word out. Free training.

*State Fairs*

SMRG was doing a booth at the Virginia State Fair (which still has openings), but we've just missed the Maryland State Fair. VA State Fair – 27 September – 7 October. Held in Richmond.

*Next Meeting*

It will be the first weekend in November (3 November). That is also the Maryland SAR Weekend (?). Some search sim, both Saturday and Sunday. But nobody has a real conflict, so stay with the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Pennington offered Sheppard College. TSAR will do January's meeting.

**Motion:** Give permission to April and Dawn and Peter Pennington to complete and circulate the survey.

**Vote:** Passed Unanimously.

Chair: Is anyone interested in grant writing for equipment or training? Deadlines are September and March. Any interest?

Adjourned 15:19.