

Appalachian Search And Rescue Conference
Board of Directors Meeting
2 February 2003
University of Virginia

Present: Kevin Brewer, Billy Morgan (TSAR); Pepper Broad, Dan Patterson (MARG); April Cropper, Peter McCabe (MSAR); Mike Kennedy, Dawn Smith (SMRG); Chris Ruch, Keith Conover (AMRG); Bob Allam, Stef Dorrow (PSAR); Bob Koester, Lauren Fernandez (BRMRG); Tom Lovejoy, (also proxy for Kinsey Row) (SVMRG), Randy Frank (PVRG)

Officers present. Lauren Fernandez – Chair
Randy Frank – Vice Chair
Amanda Harrison – Treasurer
Peter Pennington – Secretary

1) Previous Minutes: The minutes of July 2002 were accepted without amendment.

2) Insurance Report: The Secretary reported on ongoing negotiations with VFIS to obtain liability cover for the BOD. It was stated that it seemed unlikely that simple liability could be separated from liability as an ALS organisation. Should this be so, it might be prudent for ASRC to review the whole of its command and control structure in order to ensure the BOD is fulfilling its legal duties. Furthermore, it may mean that groups such as TSAR who might be attending a search under their direct MOU with Va might legally be attending as ASRC no matter the method of call out. It was resolved that a lawyer would be briefed to ascertain the BOD liability status on a pro bono basis.

Action Sec.

BOD to vote by email on arrangements and to approve any necessary funding for a lawyer's review. **Action Sec**

3) Workers Compensation: The Secretary reported that the way to raise the level of WC available in Virginia would be to lobby for a change in the current law that limits it to \$300 per month. It was reported that such a move is underway through VASARCO with suitable wording to be submitted later this year. It would include a right for the unemployed to receive the statutory minimum rate. **Action Koester**

Representatives from PA, MD and WV would research their respective State's position and forward details to the Secretary. **Action: Broad/ Frank/Conover**

4) Position of Group Chairs: The issue of making Group Chairs members of the BOD by right of their role, ex officio or full voting, was discussed. A motion to move the idea forward was not supported.

5) Web Page: It was reported that an offer had been received from two members of SMRG to develop a web page on lines similar to the web page used by SMRG. A motion was passed to authorize the Chair to proceed on a basis that the rental of server space would not exceed \$400 in the first year. **Action Chair**

6) Revised Due Process: A draft report on the revision of the Due Process rules was submitted. It was felt that an anonymous system, similar to that used in both civil and military air forces might be useful for improving operational efficiency. It was noted that the new web page might lend itself to all manner of forms of communication.

Action Ruch

It was agreed that the Secretary would organize early in March a meeting of the editors of the various documents under revision with a view to producing a cohesive whole for the membership to approve. **Action Sec**

The documents include: Bylaws, Administration Manual (with Due Process included), Code of Practice, Training Manual. They would be converted to pdf format for placement on the web page.

Keith Conover proposed creating a process for which operational practices and policies can be reviewed on a regular basis. A group of people (perhaps a preexisting committee) would examine 'errors' in order to determine if the procedures themselves should be revised or if it simply calls for additional training and emphasis. Optimally, the process would incorporate anonymous(e) and 'near-miss' reporting. **Action Conover**

7) List-Serve: It was confirmed that all BOD members are on the list-serve.

8) ASRC Inventory: A question was asked about the size of the assets owned by the ASRC. It was reported that over the years a few items had been bought and in time written off and that the current asset list consisted of the medical inventory as submitted by the Treasurer at each BOD meeting. Items were bought or replaced as necessary. Most items, being of a medical nature have a short life.

The Ops Officer would check on the inventory and determine that no items were omitted through ignorance of their existence. The Ops Committee was also charged to recommend the process and frequency for future inventory checks to the BOD. **Action Ops**

9) Treasurer's Report: It was reported that the ASRC currently had a balance of \$8468-43. Donations of \$600 had been received and dues for 2003 were now awaited that would add \$2410 to the balance. The financial report was accepted.

The Vice Chair offered to write to the Ortiz family thanking them for their kind donation **Action V Chair**

ASRC would shortly be in receipt of a Virginia Licence to Solicit Funds. There had been a year's delay as the Commonwealth revised the legislation. The Secretary would investigate the needs of the neighbouring states. **Action Sec**

10) Medical Report: It was confirmed that recent purchases had been made to satisfy the bi-annual licensing exercise. VAEMS would require, from March 2003, background criminal checks on all new members of ASRC. Existing members would be covered by grandfathering arrangements. Further research is required to determine which agency is to bear the costs of this exercise. It is also not clear how ASRC members who live outside Virginia, or members of groups not based in Virginia would be covered. Nor was it clear whether groups could seek these checks or whether the ASRC should have a central 'clearing house'. **Action Dorrow**

It was felt that these requirements should be added to the new web page and made clear to all prospective new members. A revised new member form would be devised with a tear off slip which would be used for the background check but subsequently not remain on file thereby guarding confidentiality. It should also be made clear to members as to what will happen to the data once it has been used for a background check.

It was stated that a greater emphasis is to be placed on the completion of patient care reports with visits to be arranged to groups to teach the protocols. **Action Dorrow**
BOD was asked to consider whether medical qualifications should be listed on sign in sheets at searches so that medical resources can be spread more evenly around teams.

Action Ops

10) ADC: ASRC's new postal address should be noted. The BOD approved expenditure not to exceed \$50 for a pager for the OMD. It may be possible to recode one of his existing pagers. **Action ADC/Med**

An investigation was called for to examine other systems to be used for ASRC dispatch communications. The existing arrangement with Metrocall may cease at any time due to the providers bankruptcy. **Action ADC/Comms**

It was noted that an AO's course had been held before the meeting. It was resolved that the Training Manual be revised such that the requirements for AO no longer include IS as a requirement but still maintain the requirement for MSO or equivalent. It was noted that there is a minimum need for six AOs and often the ASRC operates at below 3 qualified people. **Action Training**

11) Operations Report: ACA Guidelines. Following a discussion on the procedures that should be followed when the ASRC is called in to a search already initiated with an ASRC member group taking part, it was agreed to take the proposals back for further modification.

12) Communications Report: It was reported that the radios recommended for use by the Comms. committee are FCC approved and do meet all necessary requirements. Channel frequency guidance would be posted on the web page. **Action Comms**

13) Records: It was reported that 19 mission records for 2002 have yet to be sent to the Locker for archiving. It was noted that the BOD should review the length of time for archiving, the type of record to be archived and the method of storage. It was recommended that box type storage would make storage easier. **Action Records**
It was suggested that a past ASRC member, Cady Soukup was linked to a company that undertakes digitising past records. **Keith Conover** would investigate.

14) Training Officers Report: The following members were confirmed as Group Training Officers.

Mark Creighton SMRG

Mike Sims PSAR

John O'Shea SWVMRG

Chris Ruch AMRG

Billy Morgan (TSAR) was confirmed as IS

The following were confirmed by block vote as IC3:

Bob Allam

Bobby Jones

Billy Morgan

Brendan Schubert

Amanda Harrison

Jim Poole

A separate vote confirmed Suzen Collins, a member currently subject to a letter of censure, as IC3.

The BOD asked that those reviewing disciplinary procedures examine voting arrangements and follow up activity after any disciplinary action.

The following were confirmed as IC2.

Justin Green

Randy Frank

The Conference Training Officer indicated he would be prepared to pass the role on to a new person

15) Due Process:

a) Suzen Collins. A letter of censure was placed into the record

b) Fernandez, Frank, McCabe, Pennington, Harrison, Broad, Koester. Allegations of misconduct and fiduciary failure.

The Investigating Officer reported that no further action was to be taken within the ASRC on these charges.

In general, reasons given were:

a) Procedures do not allow for proceedings to be taken against the board as an entity.

b) Some charges were unreasonable in the light of the board being composed of volunteers rather than paid professionals.

c) Some of the charges arose from a misunderstanding of events.

d) Some charges arose from a misunderstanding of existing written policies and rules.

It was resolved that certain specific items would be addressed or clarified at the earliest opportunity:

a) That the BOD did nothing about member medical certifications, especially for IS/IC.

b) That the BOD did nothing about Groups not filling out medical forms. c) That the BOD did nothing about the ASRC not registering with the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs. d) That the BOD is not taking action about misfeasance by the ASRC Treasurer. e) That the ASRC Treasurer has not been filing reports, and has failed to obtain an external audit.

It was noted medical forms had been completed, that once informed about the need for a State Licence to solicit money, the delay had been within the State, that the misfeasance of a previous Treasurer had been discussed at every board meeting for nearly three years and was being handled in closed session and that the Treasurer did file reports and had had an external oversight of the records undertaken

16) AOB Congratulations were offered to Dawn and Chris Smith (SMRG) on their recent marriage.

Approval was given for a presentation of the ASRC's role to a potential group of donors in Maryland.

It was agreed that there be an investigation into cost and procedural issues that may arise from the presentation of long service and outstanding service awards. It was agreed that this matter would be resolved by email.

The forthcoming general meeting was discussed. It was agreed that on Saturday April 12 there would be first a BOD meeting at 1000 and then a General Meeting at 1400. There would then be various talks and presentations and a competition on the Sunday.

It was agreed that the various types of membership should be reviewed and simplified.

The relationship between ASRC and Wilderness EMS Management was explained.

It was agreed that Ops Kits generally should include a list of non ASRC resources available.

It was reported that Maryland is seeking a complete list of ASRC medical resources for their records.

A question was posed whether the ASRC should have an MRA team either as a distinct body or as a cadre drawn from other groups.

Date of next Meeting

12 April at 1000 at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg.