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APPALACHIAN SEARCH!

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Newletter of

APPALACHIAN SEARCH AND RESCUE
RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

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MEETINGS : Most SMRG activities are held at Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Headquarters (PATC HQ), 1718 N Street NW, Washington, DC (near the Dupont Circle Metro Station). Business meetings are the first Tuesday of the month, and training meetings, the third Tuesday.
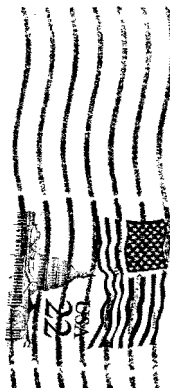
ASRC NEWSLETTER : Published on a bimonthly basis. Yearly subscriptions are $5, payable by check made out to The Treasurer, SMRG, c/o the above PATC address. Articles or schedule items should be turned into the Editor, Paul Torrence (301)977-2102 (h).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION : in general about SMRG, or for information about membership, write to SMRG, c/o the above address, come to one of the business meetings or contact the Group Training Officer, Paul Torrence, at (301)977-2102 (h).

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24-hr emergency number: (804)323-2300 (VA Dept. of Emergency services)
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1) Base resource planning should include calling all the involved agencies and identifying the number of people needed and the required time of arrival.
2) The Operations branch must continously stay abreast of all the clues, changing the shift plan as necessary (in response to clues).
3) Incident staff personnel need to improve their understanding of the ICS and the various functions identified in the ICS.
4) Inter-team table-top training will help resolve the previous problem.
5) Remember, ICS is very flexible, the IC may modify it as he sees fit.
6) Appoint liason officers: Incident to dog teams, Incident to rescue squad(s), Incident to forest personnel, Incident to family, etc..
7) Develop and train in procedures for shifting a search incident to a rescue incident.
8) A list identifying resources involved in the incident, noting both organizations and the number of individuals per organization, should be posted.
9) Include Dog liason(s) in the overhead briefing and in the Planing Section.
10) When in doubt, (ie, ops vs plans) the operations chief is in charge.
(c) In conclusion, the ICS system will continue to be used. Careful use of ICS will prevent many of our recent problems.

Finally, other issues discussed included:
1) Communications problems should be identified over the radio net. For example, if the base is having difficulty receiving messages due to outside interference, the teams in the field should be notified.
2) Base should try to improve sleeping accommodations for the SAR personnel. That is, base should make these arrangements, and not leave it up to the individuals returning from the field. Remember, the dogs perform better when they are allowed to rest with their handlers.
3) In turn, all SAR personnel should inform base where they are sleeping. This covers two problems: wake up calls for the next shift and resources for emergent problems (eg, a find).
4) Try to maintain the same team identifiers throughout the mission. Frequent changes in a field team's Id leads to confusion.
5) Share your own SAR team's training standards with all the other teams.
6) Trust the operational qualifications of any DOGS EAST dog team that is brought to the scene.

submitted by

GARY MECHTEL

FALL 1986 CRITIQUE OF RECENT SAR MISSIONS.

A critique session took place at the Warrenton Rescue Squad on October 1986 to review many of the incidents that took place this past summer. Participants included members of the Dogs East, Shenandoah National Park, Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group, and Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group. Bill Peirce of the Shenandoah National Park was the moderator.

The primary items discussed were: (a) the resentment that the local resources feel when the "SAR Armada" takes over, (b) the lack of local resource participation in SAR efforts (especially when the ASRC is involved), (c) the ASRC's use of the Incident Command System (ICS) without consideration of its usefulness, (d) the operation branch's rigid compliance with plans, and (e) a lack of follow-up on clues. Other secondary comments were made during the critique and will be listed at the end of this report.

The following suggestings concerning the Use and Misuse of local resources, were proposed during the discussion of items (a) and (b).

1)   Do not let the mission staff be "cubby-holed"; the staff needs to keep the searchers happy. Remember, the search is only as good as the searchers it employs. By alienating the searchers, the staff reduces searcher morale, hence compromising the probability of success.

2)   Remember our purpose: we are there to help the victim. Therefore, remember that by upsetting the local resources we compromise both the present and future incidents.

3)   The planning section's Medical Plan should predict and account for any problems that might occur with the various Medical Authorities.

4)   All SAR units should maintain a low medical profile without compromising patient care. An effort should be made to contact the local medical control and work within the system.

5)   Keep the local resources very involved in the incident.

6)   Base resource planning should include calling the local agencies and identifying the number of people needed and the required time of arrival.

7)   Appoint liason officers: Staff to dog teams, Staff to rescue squad(s), Staff to forest personnel, Staff to family, etc.. Incorporate members of the other groups into the command staff.

8)   Develop a "how can I help attitude" among all the resources!!!!!!!!

9)   Involve the local agencies in the overhead briefings, and if they want, the day to day operations.

10)   Spend time explaining what is happening. By demonstrating the data gathering, analysis, management, and leadership techniques we employ, the outside resources will begin to appreciate our usefulness.

(c)   In conclusion, we must change our attitude about the local resources. They can provide many invaluable resources and a proper use of the ICS system will account for a good working relationship.

The following suggestions concerning the ASRC's attempt to force the ICS system to work, Operation's rigid compliance with plans, and the lack of clue consciousness at base, were brought forth while resolving issues (c), (d) and (e).

3. Maintain a professional appearance and attitude.
   a. Wear your uniform or plain clothes, not party shirts.
   b. Control your conversations - you could be talking to a family member.
   c. Use any free time to ready yourself, your equipment and rest.
   d. Intoxicants of any type are an after mission activity.
   e. Be open and friendly with the other rescue workers and local authorities.
   f. Act professional in all regards, even when not on a mission staff or
      a field team. Walking about barefoot, or receiving a back massage
      from a member of the opposite sex does not constitute professionalism.

After all this, what should happen is that the Responsible Agent, the local authorities
should, but not necessarily say:
"When we called DES for help, they told us that you would be coming. They said that you
had had extensive experience in this type of rescue and that you could help us manage as
well as provide technical assistance to this rescue. Will you do the operational control
for us?"

Submitted by Art Dodds, Jr.

ATTITUDES OR WHO'S IN CHARGE

Some of us may be too new to volunteer rescue to remember the good old days when the local authorities had no idea what to make of us or what do with us on a rescue. How could you as an alpine 5.11 climber, Manage the Search Function trained, medically qualified to perform brain surgery, expedition caver, and trained in all aspects of high angle evacuation be refused control of a rescue effort, by local authorities. Here are some reasons:

1. The local authorities are charged with the responsibilities to safely conduct rescues in their jurisdiction, THEIR JURISDICTION.
2. The media coverage and outcome of a rescue could be a deciding factor in their re-election, THEIR RE-ELECTION.
3. Who in the HELL are you? I have a rescue to run here! Get the #%$&*@ out of here.

Through the years, item 3 has been worked on by the combined efforts of volunteer rescue groups; Search and Rescue Councils have been formed at state levels, mutual aid training between local squads and volunteer groups is now common, qualification standards for membership in volunteer groups are maintained at or above paid professional, and alerting through the Sate and Federal Emergency Operation Centers has served to let the local authorities know who we are and what to expect from us.

The National Association for Search and Rescue provide national level training for both paid and non-paid rescue professionals. Never forget your local authorities may be better trained than you. Our role is support not to fight over control.

Items 1 and 2 are still the most critical and the first few minutes after you arrive will determine if you are asked to get out or your group is used to its full potential. It is sad to say that even today, well trained, well intended, volunteer rescue personnel have destroyed the viability of their group response by not dealing with the very simple concepts of:

1. We are here to support your efforts.
2. Here are our capabilities.
3. How can we help you?
4. The goal of all persons at the rescue is the health and well being of the subject (victim).

The simple need to interface on a human level, to take a few minutes, to reassure the authorities that they are in charge and your group can help them provide the highest level of search methods, patient care and management can make all the difference. Remember that the Incident Command System will only work once the Responsible Agent has delegated the authority to act.

Here are a few simple steps to improve your image as a professional rescue worker and get your group into action quickly:

1. Be organized when you arrive.
   a. Have a list of personnel, their qualifications and equipment ready.
   b. The group leader should report arrival of the group.
   c. The others should wait quietly for additional instructions. The local Responsible Agent does not want a mob of 8 or 10 people questioning him.

2. The group leader should be positive about the capabilities of the group but avoid any exaggeration.

ASRC Group Meeting/Activities Schedules

Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (info: P. Torrence: 301-977-2102)

When		Where	What
20 Jan	1930	PATC HDQTRS	Land navigation
TBA	TBA	TBA	Winter weekend
3 Feb	1930	PATC HDQTRS	SMRG business
14,15,21,22 Beb	0830-1800	Immaculata High School	Managing the Search Function
17 Feb	1930	PATC HDQTRS	Mt. Hood Accident analysis, Knots
3 Mar	1930	PATC HDQTRS	SMRG business

Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group (info: Ted Dettmar: 804-977-0445)

When		Where	What
24 Jan	TBA	TBA	Search and evacuation
27 Jan	1900	TBA	Mini open house
31 Jan	TBA	TBA	Field team workshop
3 Feb	1900	TBA	Maps and grid systems
7 Feb	TBA	TBA	Search and evacuation. ASRC
10 Feb	1900	TBA	FTL skills
17 Feb	1900	TBA	Introduction to ELT
18 Feb	1900	TBA	BRMRG general membership meeting
21 Feb	1900	TBA	ELT practical

Richmond Search and Rescue (info: Todd L'Herrou 804-271-3083)

When		Where	What
2 Feb	1930	Richmond/TBA	Dogs
9 Feb	1830	"	Air OPS
16 Feb	1930	"	Winter OPS
2 Mar	1930	"	Night OPS

AMRG Schedule

When	Time	Where	What
Jan 6	19:30	St. Margarets	General Business Meeting
10 Jan	10:00	Altoona, PA	Kestone SAR
18 Jan	10:00	Bear Run	Land Navigation Contact: Michail Kuga 266-8343
20 Jan	19:30	St. Margarets	Basic & Internal Medicine Contact: Dr. Andrew Peat: 766-2417
25 Jan	9:00	Raccoon Park Entrance Rt. 30	Semi-Tech Evacuation Contact: Michael Kuga:266-8343
? Jan	?	?	Emergency Bivouac by callout
1 Feb	10:00	McConnolls Mills	Vertical Work Cont: John Zimecki 488-7554
7 Feb	9:00	Bear Cave, Blairsville PA	ASRC-NCRC cave rescue simulation Contact: Michael Kuga 266-8343
? Feb	?	?	Night-Semi Tech Evac. Contact: Michael Kuga 266-8343

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SAR QUIZ

incident command system

Matching

A.

1. ___ Incident Command
2. ___ Liaison Officer
3. ___ Team
4. ___ Incident Base
5. ___ Information Officer
6. ___ Incident Command System
7. ___ Span of Control
8. ___ Staging Area
9. ___ Action Plan
10. ___ Command Post
11. ___ Safety Officer
12. ___ Operations Chief
13. ___ Task force
14. ___ Plans Chief
15. ___ Documentation Unit
16. ___ Division
17. ___ Branch
18. ___ Logistics Chief
19. ___ Resources Unit
20. ___ Situation Unit

a. set of resources of same kind and type with common commo and a leader
b. combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and commo operating within a common organizational structure with responsibility for management of assigned resources
c. three to seven reporting elements
d. one who establishes objectives for the incident
e. covers and details all tactical and support activities required for a given operational period
f. assesses hazardous situations and develops measures for assuring personnel safety
g. location at which primary logistical support activities are performed
h. temporary location of available resources
i. implements the action plan, directs all incident tactical activities
j. location from which incident operations are managed
k. contact for reps from other agencies
l. develops info regarding incident cause, size, current situation, resources committed. Point of contact for media.
m. any combination of resources put together for a temporary assignment.
n. generally used to define a geographic area of responsibility
o. maintains master list of all incident assigned resources, maintains current status and location of all resources.
p. collects, analyzes, organizes situation info, prepares summaries, maps, intelligence, develops projections and forecasts
q. organizational methodology used when section chief's 5:1 span of control is exceeded.
r. responsible for gathering/analysis of all data re mission ops and assigned resources, developing alternative strategies, preparing an action plan for each operational period.
s. maintains accurate incident files, duplicating services, etc.
t. responsible for provision of all support needs to incident.

B.

Associate the items in column B with their correct organizational module in column A.

a. Command Staff
b. Planning Section
c. Operation Section
d. Logistics Section
e. Finance Section

1. ___ supply unit
2. ___ documentation unit
3. ___ information officer
4. ___ commo unit
5. ___ food unit
6. ___ liaison officer
7. ___ medical section/incident personnel
8. ___ task force
9. ___ resources unit
10. ___ safety officer
11. ___ situation unit
12. ___ facilities unit
13. ___ ground support unit
14. ___ medical section/victims
15. ___ procurrement unit
16. ___ compensation unit
17. ___ strike teams
18. ___ branch

SAR Quiz ICS Matching Part A: 1,D;2,K;3,A;4,G;5,L;6,B;7,C;8,H;9,E;10J;11,F;12,I;13,M;14,R;15,S;16,N;17,Q;18,T;19,O;20,P.
Part B: 1,D;2,B;3,A;4,D;5,D;6,A;7,D;8,C;9,B;10,A;11,B;12,D;13,D;14,C;15,E;16,E;17,C;18,C.