OPS V-2
[illegible]

38

ASRC OPERATIONS MANUAL
SECTION V

OPS V-1
SEPT 76

DRAFT

TASK ASSIGNMENT

A. Introduction

A major problem facing the coordinator of any search operation is the organization of a large mass of people into teams and the assignment of the teams to appropriate tasks. Although this is simple in concept, the actual logistics can become quite complex, confusing and time consuming, especially in a large search. Disorganized task assignment procedures can result in teams ill-equipped, both in personnel and equipment, for their tasks. In order to reduce the confusion associated with task assignment, the ASRC has developed a standard operating procedure (SOP) for task assignment, which is described below.

The ASRC task assignment procedure, along with other SOPs, is designed to aid search and rescue efforts, not hinder them. Where an SOP is useful, it should be fully exploited; where a less elaborate procedure is sufficient, the SOP should be adapted and abbreviated. The procedure described below is designed for use in a large scale search, and should work if followed exactly. It is expected that the sequence will be suitably abbreviated in small scale searches. However, each departure from the SOP should be carefully evaluated as a source of error. By itself, the task assignment SOP is merely a clerical procedure; it is useless unless intelligently applied.

B. Task Identification

With the help of the Operations Officer (OO) and the Responsible Agent, the Mission Coordinator (MC) plans his search strategy and displays it on the Strategy Map. The MC's notations on the Strategy Map should show well defined search areas, priorities, and search modes compatible with the operation's manpower and material resources so that the OO can identify individual, specific tasks.

For each task, the OO initiates a Task Assignment Form (TAF) by numbering the task and entering the task number and description in the appropriate spaces. The task description includes

1) Geographical Feature: Ridge, stream, valley, fire tower, road, etc.
2) Map Name: Include type of map.
3) Type: See SAROP, page 20.
4) Difficulty: Sierra Club Scale:
   1. Level, easy walking
   2. Steep trail, boots required
   3. Use of hands required
   4. Use of rope required
   5. Continuous belay required
   6. Direct aid required.
5) Assignment: A clear, concise, complete description of what is expected of the team assigned to the task.
6) Time: This is the time the task was initiated. It serves as a check on the efficiency of the task assignment process and as an Operations Log reference.

Finally, the OO assigns the task to a field team. This is done by entering the team's letter designator in the "Team" space. If the team is already in the field, the TAF goes to the Communications Officer (CO) for dispatching. If the OO wishes to personally brief the FTL, he need only consult with the CO regarding dispatch. If a new field team is called for, the OO passes the TAF along to the Personnel Officer (PO) who then executes the "Personnel" section. If a field team is needed,

C.   Personnel Assignment

The Personnel Officer (PO) uses the card-file Personnel Roster to assign appropriate searchers with appropriate personal equipment to the new field team. (Close coordination with the Equipment Officer (EO) and Communications Officer (CO) is essential to the assembly of an effective team; this is the reason that the PO and EO positions should often be handled by one person). Use of the Personnel Roster is described below.

1)   The Roster contains one card for each person on the operation. Each searcher's card is filled out (and cut) to indicate his skills and personal equipment. (See SRF in Section X.)

2)   To assemble a team, the PO selects appropriately skilled and equipped people from the "Base Camp" section of the roster and pulls their cards.

3)   These cards are clipped together along with a piece of paper labeled with the team letter.

4)   The names of the searchers selected are entered on the TAF along with the total number of people on the team. The card stack is kept out of the file.

5)   The TAF is then passed along to the EO along with the card stack (indicating personal equipment).

6)   When the TAF is completed and returned to the PO, he summons the FTL and gives him the original of the TAF. The carbon copy goes to the OO. The FTL assembles his team and its equipment and reports to the OO for briefing.

7)   After the team is dispatched, the OO returns the TAF carbon to the TAF File. The card stack is filed under its team letter in the field section of the Personnel Roster.

8)   When the team returns to base camp and is debriefed by the OO, its card stack is removed from the "Field" section and the cards refiled in the "Base Camp" section.

D.   Equipment Assignment

The Equipment Officer (EO) uses the card-file Equipment Inventory to assign appropriate equipment to the field team. He must coordinate with the PO and CO on personal and communications equipment. Use of the Equipment Inventory is described below.

1)   The Inventory contains a card for every piece of group equipment and every available vehicle on the operation. Each card should also be annotated to show damage done and repairs made during the operation.

2) When the EO recieves the TAF from the PO he selects
    the necessary equipment from the "Base Camp" section
    of the Inventory and pulls cards for it.
3) These are clipped together with the team letter and
    kept out of the file.
4) The group and individual equipment going out with
    the team is noted on the TAF.
5) Appropriate transportation is arranged for and noted
    on the TAF (the PO should have supplied a driver,
    if necessary).
6) The TAF is then passed on to the CO for communications
    arrangements and back to the PO for team assembly.
    Once the FTL has assembled his team he will assemble
    his equipment according to the EO's instructions.
7) After the team is dispatched, the EO files the card
    stack under the team's letter in the "Field" section
    of the Equipment Inventory.
8) When the team returns, the FTL must check in all his
    team's equipment with the EO. Cards for equipment
    returned in good condition are refiled in the "Base
    Camp" section of the inventory. Cards for damaged
    or lost gear are filed under "Out of Service."

E. Communications Instructions

The Communications Officer (CO) uses the Communications
Systems Chart to help him coordinate the communications network.
Each new task requires that a new link of the net be worked
in without upsetting any others. When the CO recieves the TAF
from the EO, he consults the Systems Chart to decide upon a
communications check-in schedule, callsign, frequency, and mode
assignment and appropriate traffic route, and enters these instruc-
tions on the TAF. Callsign, frequency, mode, and relay or repeater
are entered in the "COMO" block at the top of the form. Schedules
and other instructions are entered under "COMMUNICATIONS."

F. Snags

If, during the course of task assignment, one of the Mission
Staff determines that he cannot meet the requirements of the
task description, he returns the TAF, along with his suggestions,
to the OO for a solution to the problem, and the procedure begins
again. The exception to this procedure is the case of a communi-
cations insufficiency which can be remedied with a communications
task. In such a case, the CO holds the TAF until a suitable
communications task can be assigned. Once the difficulty is
overcome he reactivates the TAF, finishes his instructions and
passes it along to the PO as usual.

G. Briefing and Dispatching

Briefing procedures should be kept as simple as possible consistent with the requirement that they also be complete. The OO is responsible for all briefings, but he may find it convenient to delegate parts of the briefing to other Mission Staff officers. FTLs must insist upon adequate explanations of their tasks and communications instructions.

Briefings are carried out either face to face in Base Camp or through the communications network. The mode is specified be the OO on the TAF under "DISPATCH MODE" and the person actually doing the briefing marks the time and his initials below. The time serves as a check on assignment effeciency and as a reference for the OPSLOG.* The initials serve as a record of who did the briefing so that later clarifications may be made.

After the briefing, the TAF is returned to the PO for filing in the TAF file. TAFs for tasks assigned to pre-existing teams are attached to the team's first TAF.

*OPERATION LOGBOOK

H. Task Execution

The FTL is responsible for carrying out the assigned task completely and safely, and for keeping the communications schedule. If any difficulties arise or clues are found, a report is made as soon as possible. All team reports are entered in the OPSLOG and on the Status Map by the OO.

As each task is completed, the team may recieve a new assignment while still in the field, but eventually the team will return to Base Camp. The FTL must then see that all equipment is checked in with the EO, and that all his people are accounted for to the PO. He then reports to the OO for a final debriefing. The OO enters the time and his initials on both copies of the TAF (the FTL keeps his for a souvenir) to show that the team has been dissolved. If the OO wants to keep the team assembled without an assignment, he does not initial the "FINAL DEBRIEF" block, but simply instructs the FTL to keep his team together, and makes a note to this effect in the OPSLOG and in the TAF file.

TASK ASSIGNMENT FORM

TASK NO.	TEAM	COMMO	DISPATCH MODE		FINAL DEBRIEF	
			TIME	INIT.	TIME	INITIAL

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURE	MAP NAME

ASSIGNMENT

TYPE   DIFCLTY: 1 2 3 4 5 6

TIME

PERSONNEL

FTL_____   SR_____

MEDIC_____   SR_____

RO_____   SR_____

RS_____   SR_____

DR_____   SR_____

SR_____   SR_____

EQUIPMENT

GROUP   INDIVIDUAL

TRANSP

COMMUNICATIONS

J.   Searcher Registration Form (SRF) * THIS FORMAT SRF IS NO LONGER IN USE

```
  (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)  (7)  (8)        SRF
```

NAME_____   APPALACHIAN SEARCH AND

PHONE NUMBER(   )   -   RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

EMERGENCY CONTACT_____

PHONE NUMBER(   )   -   SEARCHER
                                                  REGISTRATION
                                                     FORM
EQUIPMENT

1. PERSONAL? (SEE POSTED LIST)   Y   N

2. CB HAND-HELD 2 OR 5 WATT?   Y   N   CHANNELS:
   2-METER HAM PORTABLE?   Y   N   POWER:
                                           FREQS.:

3. VEHICLE AVAILABLE FOR SEARCH?   Y   N   4-W DRIVE?   Y   N
     LICENSE NO.:   MOBILE RADIO?   Y   N   TYPE:

   OTHER EQUIPMENT:

                         (OVER)
```
  (8)  (7)  (6)  (5)  (4)  (3)  (2)  (1)
```

SKILLS AND TRAINING

4. EMT?   Y   N   ADVANCED TRAINING:

5. HAM?   Y   N   CLASS: CALL:

   5th CLASS CLIMBER? Y   N   YEARS EXPERIENCE:
6. CAVER?   Y   N   YEARS EXPERIENCE:
   VERTICAL CAVER?   Y   N   YEARS EXPERIENCE:
     IF YES, DO YOU HAVE YOUR OWN COMPLETE VERTICAL RIG HERE? Y   N

(7)BACKPACKER?   Y   N   YEARS EXPERIENCE:

7. C.A.P. GRND. TEAM? Y   N   TYPE: CURRENT CAPF 101?   Y   N
   ASRC TRAINEE?   Y   N
                                OTHER:
   ASRC BASIC?   Y   N
8. ASRC RESCUE?   Y   N
   MTN. RESCUE ASSN.? Y   N

SRF Explanation * THIS FORMAT OF SRF IS NO LONGER IN USE.

The Personnel Officer (PO) sets out a plentiful supply of SRFs, pens (hopefully tied down) and puts up in prominent view two acetate covered boards. The first gives general instructions to incoming searchers, and the second details the minimum personal equipment as set by the EC or OO. As each searcher brings a completed SRF to the registration desk, the PO or an assistant checks it quickly. If the searcher appears to have some outstanding qualifications, the PO may wish to quickly interview him and send him to one of the Mission Staff. For example, the Communications Officer (CO) might appreciate any hams available (who are not field qualified) for use in the Communications Center. After his SRF is checked, the searcher is issued a Searcher Information Sheet (SIS), a Hypothermia folder if appropriate, and given a piece of paper or a sticker stamped with an ASRC rubber stamp as proof of having registered. The searcher is then allowed into Base Camp.

The PO or an assistant "codes" each SRF card by cutting out the holes (dashed lines on front view on previous page) according to the following code:

1. The searcher has the specified minimum personal equipment.
2. The searcher has a field-portable radio.
3. The searcher has a vehicle he is willing to use on the operation.
4. The searcher is an EMT.
5. The searcher is an amateur radio operator (ham).
6. The searcher is a caver or 5th class climber.
7. The searcher is an ASRC Trainee, CAP Ground Team member, or an experienced backpacker.
8. The searcher is an ASRC or Mountain Rescue Association Certified member.

Once the cards are cut and stacked, persons falling in any one of the above classifications (or any combination thereof) can be selected by pushing a pencil through the appropriate hole(s). Cards for ASRC members should be available in the file. As members check in, cards for them are pulled from the file, checked, and added to the stack.
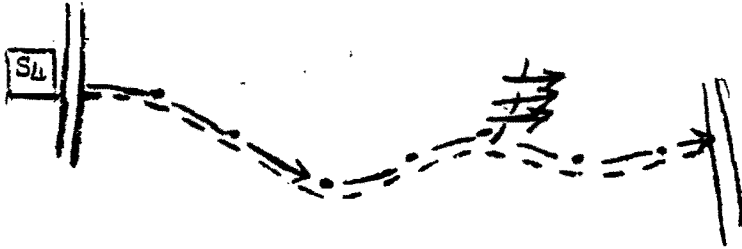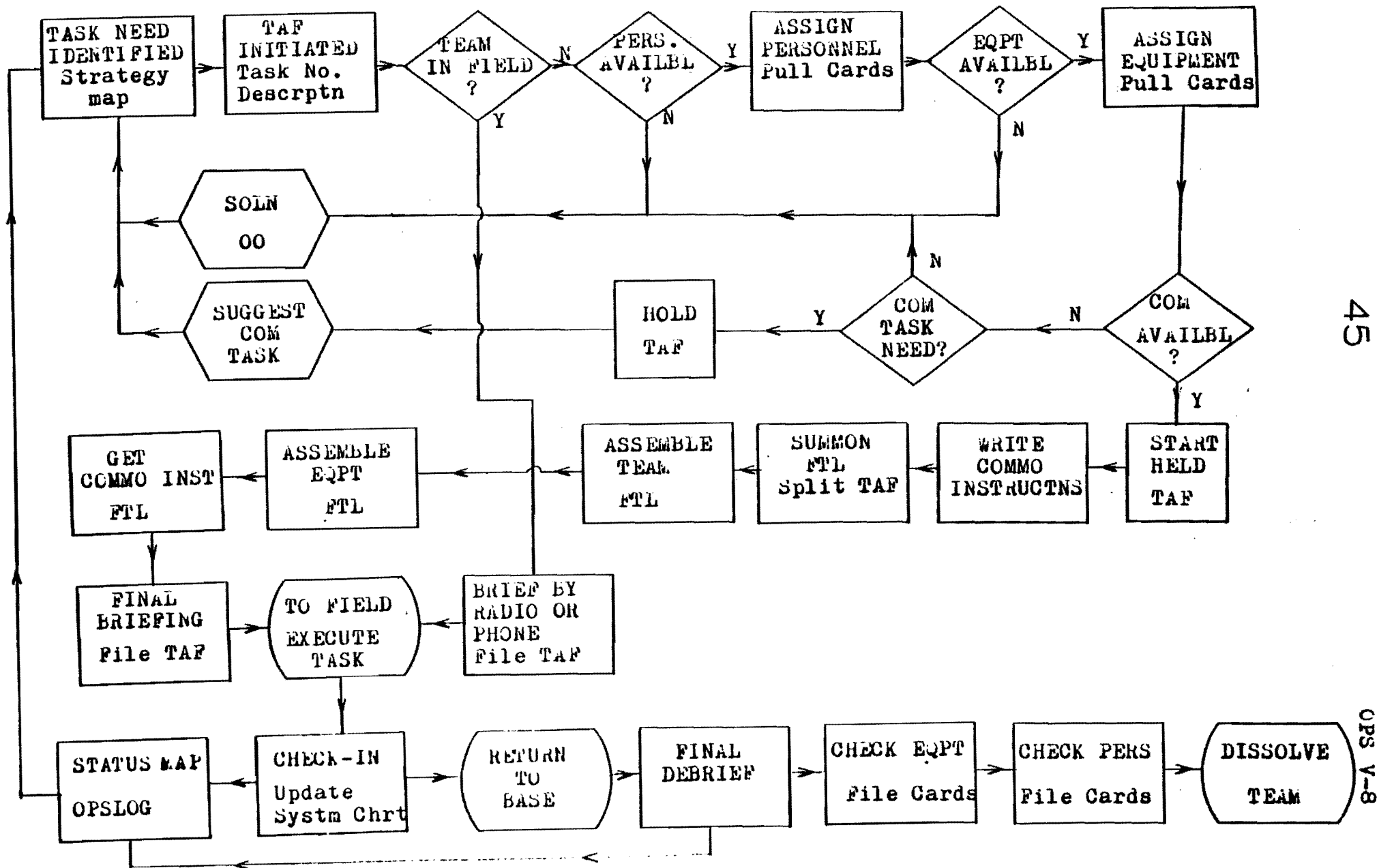
Tracking

Evacuation
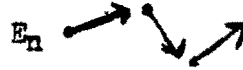
Relay or Repeater

Note: a task may combine two or more symbols. Example:

TASK ASSIGNMENT FLOWCHART

```
TASK NEED          TAF              TEAM          PERS.         ASSIGN           EQPT          ASSIGN
IDENTIFIED   →     INITIATED   →    IN FIELD  →N  AVAILBL  →Y   PERSONNEL   →    AVAILBL  →Y   EQUIPMENT
Strategy           Task No.         ?             ?             Pull Cards      ?             Pull Cards
map                Descrptn
                                    │Y            │N                            │N
                                    ▼                                          ▼

     SOLN ←──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────
     OO

                                                                    N
   SUGGEST ←              HOLD    ←Y   COM          ←N   COM
   COM                    TAF          TASK              AVAILBL
   TASK                                NEED?             ?
                                                                  │Y

   GET          ASSEMBLE         ASSEMBLE      SUMMON        WRITE          START
   COMMO INST ← EQPT        ←    TEAM     ←    FTL      ←    COMMO     ←    HELD
   FTL          FTL              FTL           Split TAF     INSTRUCTNS     TAF

   │
   ▼
   FINAL        TO FIELD         BRIEF BY
   BRIEFING  →  EXECUTE    ←     RADIO OR
   File TAF     TASK             PHONE
                                 File TAF
                │
                ▼
   STATUS MAP   CHECK-IN      RETURN        FINAL         CHECK EQPT     CHECK PERS     DISSOLVE
   OPSLOG    ←  Update     →  TO       →    DEBRIEF   →   File Cards  →  File Cards  →  TEAM
                Systm Chrt    BASE
```

L. The Status Map

The Status Map is a graphic summary of search operations. Physically, it consists of a topographic map of the search area mounted on a board with several acetate overlays. On the board beside the map is an acetate-covered table for notation of team letters and corresponding task numbers. The map proper is marked with the following information:

1) Victim's last known position and direction of travel.   LOST

2) Prominent points and attractive hazards.   (e.g. CLIFF, MINESHAFT)

3) Base Camp.   BC

4) All known road conditions.

5) All known helispots.

PASSABLE FOOT ONLY
BY CAR
4W dr. ONLY
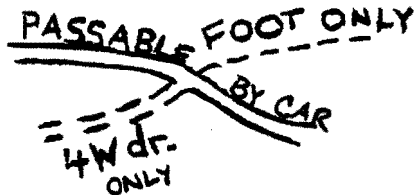
The Operations Officer (OO) uses the Strategy Map to begin assigning tasks. As each Task Assignment Form (TAF) is initiated, the OO notes each task on the map overlay by use of a capital letter indicating the general type of task, and a unique number designator as a subscript, which is the task number found on the TAF. Teams may be located by reference to the table of task numbers and corresponding team letters alongside the map.

As each team checks in with the Communications Center, the OO updates the Status Map by noting the team's progress using graphic symbols (see below). As much as possible, these should indicate the actual reported position and area searched for each team. As each task is terminated, the task designator on the map should be "boxed" to indicate completion. (e.g. S_4 ...)
At regular intervals, a fresh
overlay will be started; active tasks will be copied onto the new overlay. NOTE: The old overlays should always be saved, as they provide a succinct summary of search operations. *NOTE - XEROX COPIES ARE NOW USED IN PREFERENCE TO OVERLAYS.

TASK SYMBOLS

Containment

Road Patrol C_n

Foot Patrol C_n

Road or Trail Block C_n (circled)

Search

Scratch S_n

Survey S_n (circled)

Sweep S_n

Saturation S_n