



APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

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Dear Board of Directors,

Enclosed are my unsolicited comments on proposed changes to ASRC operational SOPs. As you may be aware, a committee was formed at the last BOD meeting to review some suggested changes presented at the meeting. The major impact of the proposed changes is to increase the role and power of the Conference Operations Officer, create a single entity with overall operational responsibility, and increase centralization within the conference. On the surface these seem to be essential goals of the organization. Indeed, it closely follows the command structure of the Civil Air Patrol. I found it interesting that at the last Virginia Sar Conference the CAP sent an official representative who stated "the CAP is a large bureaucracy and responds slowly". It is my personal feeling that when one looks at the reality of search, and the administrative capability of the conference the proposed changes would only increase bureaucracy, increase personality conflicts, decrease flexibility, and not improve the Conference's ability to locate lost subjects. On the other hand, the proposal contains some very worthwhile points and some changes need to be made to the SOPs.

A logical approach would be to address the problems that brought about these proposals and determine what is the best way to solve them. Ideally, the solution should be simple, easy to follow and implement, flexible, and avoid more rules and regulations. Gary's original letter states the following problems he felt the Conference had no structure to address.

- Disaster response
- Multiple missions with disagreements over resources
- Resource allocation and dispatching
- Conflicts with pre-scheduled group events
- Conference approval of group responses and fundraising

John Punches raised one additional concern of

- Removal of ASRC resources from a search in the event of misconduct.

Any proposal that increases bureaucracy within the conference should be examined critically. Most proposals on the surface are good ideas, and yet at the same time fail to be followed (not a single group files a proper roster as defined by ASRC rules, only one group strictly follows ASRC requirements for active membership, not a single group follows the physical requirements, most groups do not follow or even maintain the records needed to prove FTM and FTL recertification requirements, I bet we will waive or delay the recertification requirements for ICs and ISs, remember the B.R.O. requirements during searches, several policies listed in the ops manual are outdated, the ops manual itself has not been updated in over four years, and the list goes on). These rules and others are not followed because of the hassle factor and lack of time, not because the policy is a bad policy. Excessive policy often decreases flexibility. Some members of the Conference would love to establish a standing policy forbidding field promotions. While field promotions are not to be encouraged and no IC likes them, if your priority on a straight forward daylight task is on finding the subject, keeping local volunteers involved in the search instead of searching on their own (statistically speaking this is one of the tasks most likely to locate the subject), and keeping RAs happy, then field promotions must be continued.

What the conference does really well is respond to incidents with highly trained and experienced managers who are quite capable of making good decisions. It is difficult to become an IC, the process is long and requires the applicant to have demonstrated experience, good judgement, and good politics. Reviewing the history of ICs on searches the Conference can be proud. The two major complaints I have heard concerned an IC who would have failed today's recertification standards and another illegally elected. DES seems to have no problem trusting the judgement of our ICs. Keeping the field commander in charge of all operational aspects of the conference has a lot of recent management support. In the Vietnam war operational decisions were made in Washington. The operational decisions that caused the war's failure were resource allocations and rules of engagement made in Washington. It is ironic that it is this level of decision the current proposal wishes to shift from the field IC to an offsite location. During DesertStorm, all operational and resource decisions were made in the field. Even corporate America is streamlining and tossing away the layers of administration. In the past, the ASRC has strongly believed that those in the field should be the leaders. I hope the conference can continue to place the emphasis on finding the subject in a safe manner and not on rules and clean looking administrative flow charts. However, the flow chart I propose is extremely straight forward.

My proposed operational structure is based upon simplicity, and placing nearly all operational responsibility into the hands of the IC. When an incident occurs the IC becomes the equivalent of a fire Chief or captain of a rescue squad. This model is simple, operational, flexible, and works. The IC is responsible for all on-scene decisions, operational aspects of dispatch and alerting, and Conference resource requests. An IC is the most logical person to place at the top of our Incident Command Chart for several reasons. These reasons include but are not limited to 1) they are already in charge of the operational incident, 2) ICS makes them responsible for ordering all resource requests (in NIIMS ICS the IC gets exactly what they order) 3) dispatches sole function is to support the incident and thus the IC and 4) IC selection comes from the Board of Directors and is on an equivalent basis as the power of the Chairman. Our ICs already have several layers of checks and balances on them. First, the staff can initiate having the IC removed. Second, if the search is in Virginia, our MOU allows the state to remove the IC. Third, in real politics the RA could effectively remove an IC. Finally, and most important, this has never been a major problem. Only in some special circumstances will a level of command be initiated over the IC. This level or Area Command Authority (ACA) will be described later.

Since I agree that some changes need to be made I will outline how I think the structure should be made. I will write my proposed motion in normal type and occasionally place comments and clarification in italics.

I move the following be adapted as Appendix B of the ASRC Operations Manual. *For those familiar with the Ops manual you will already find an Appendix B called Alert & Dispatch procedures nearly identical (I added some of Gary's ideas) to the following. However, the BOD has never voted on adapting this to the ops manual.*

## **Appendix B. Alert and Dispatch Procedures**

- 1.0 The ASRC Alert Officer (AO) will fulfill the alert function. The AO is intended to act as the interface (with decision making capabilities) between the ASRC and an outside agency requesting ASRC operational support. The AO must also handle getting the ASRC "started".
  - 1.1 Respond to an initial request for ASRC participation
  - 1.2 When the ASRC is requested by a state other than Virginia, the Alert Officer (AO) arranges deployment of ASRC resources with the RA or the RA's designee. DES will then be notified by the AO and given details of the ASRC response. Response need not be coordinated through DES.
  - 1.3 When an ASRC group learns of a search where the ASRC has not been requested and has an interest in approaching the RA, any contact will be made through an ASRC Incident Commander (IC) or the Conference Chairman. This may require notifying an IC from another Conference group.
  - 1.4 All calls to the VA DES concerning searches where the ASRC has not been requested will be routed through the Conference Chairman, the Conference Operations Officer, or the BRMRG Alert/Dispatch Coordinator. (Note: This is an operational office held by one person and differs in definition from an AO.)
  - 1.5 ALERT OFFICER DECISIONS
    - 1.5.1. It will be determined by the AO, after talking to DES or to the RA, what level of callout the search requires.
      - 1.5.1.1. Notification - The ASRC is on notice that a search is occurring. Resources have not been requested and a callout does not seem imminent.
      - 1.5.1.2. Alert - The ASRC has a high probability of responding to a search within the next 24 hours. Members should be contacted, availabilities should be determined and a response team organized.
      - 1.5.1.3. Overhead Team - Only ASRC Incident Staff and Incident Commanders are being asked to respond at this time.
      - 1.5.1.4. Quick Response Team - An ASRC OHT has been requested, and a limited number of FTL members as well. No FTM or COQ members are being asked to respond.
      - 1.5.1.5. Full Callout - All available ASRC members are asked to respond to the search. If a full callout is requested for a later time, (i.e. we are asked to respond at 0600), the level of callout is Full, not Alert. Full callout is also used for specific numbers of resources or groups if FTMs and COQ are being requested.

- 1.5.2. Once an IC is on scene and has assessed the situation, he or she will determine any change in callout status. This individual is responsible for all operational decisions on scene and for all requests of conference resources. All groups must call in when the pagers are activated to determine the status and details of the callout. All groups must contact their members if instructed by an AO.
- 1.5.3. If a limited number of resources are requested (a QRT callout for example), the AO may decide to place nearby groups on full callout while the rest of the Conference is on Alert.
- 1.5.4. It is the responsibility of the AO to determine the initial IC based on who can be on scene in the least amount of time. This may entail changing ICs while one or more ICs are en route to the incident. **THE FIRST IC TO ARRIVE AT A SEARCH INCIDENT ASSUMES COMMAND OF THE INCIDENT.** This command may be passed to another incoming IC at the discretion of the initial IC. If more than one IC from the same group travel together, it should be determined before arrival who will be in charge. *(I have heard many different proposals over the years. This is the only one that makes sense. The purpose of the conference is to find lost people in a safe fashion. The purpose of the ASRC is not to provide training opportunities to every IC. The idea of the first IC arriving on scene, but not functioning or making decisions as the IC because some rule does not help the ASRC. I have heard proposals for quotas on the number of searches one IC can function, revolving ICs based upon groups, and excluding ICs if they cannot be present for a full 12 hours. Just think of ASRC searchers standing around waiting for somebody else an hour down the road who needs their quota of searches. Think of the IC who can be on scene in 35 minutes (it happened twice to me just this year) but can only stay for the first eight hours (next IC four hours away plus prep time). Any other policy does not help the Responsible agent, DES, the local community, the ASRC, or the subject. Imagine an IC not functioning as IC because a conference rule, waiting on Bob Koester somewhere on the road (and I would never leave late or have car trouble!). Once upon a time I thought I would never have to make these arguments.)*
- 1.5.5. In the event an IC cannot be located the AO will attempt to contact every IC in a timely fashion to obtain an IC. If this attempt fails, the AO will activate Area Command Authority (ACA). ACA will determine if it is appropriate to send an IS member as conference Agency Representative (AR). *(IS members should not be automatically assumed to be qualified to serve as AR. It depends upon a whole host of factors (type of mission, size of response, nature of response, personality of the RA, personality of the IS member, experience of IS member, urgency, politics, etc. An ACA must evaluate the situation and decide if it is appropriate to send an IS as AR. The selection of the AR may also be based upon the individual IS and not solely upon which one can get on scene the fastest. These decisions should reside with ACA.*
- 1.5.6. For information pertaining to decisions regarding the use of the UVA medical helicopter, Pegasus, see the supplemental appendix titled "Pegasus Response Guidelines". For decisions regarding the use of the Park Police's Helicopter, see the supplemental appendix titled ""
- 1.5.7. The AO must determine or designate a Dispatch Officer for every group in the Conference. The AO will become his or her group's Dispatch Officer (DO) if another is not determined.
- 1.5.8. An AO will report directly to the IC for all operational decisions during an incident. The AO will report directly to ACA if the AR is of IS rank. The AO will report directly to the ASRC Conference Chairman for changes in policy decisions. The AO on-call is responsible for ASRC dispatch oversight.

I move that the following section be added to 4.8 in the ops manual

## **II. The ASRC Agency Representative Function**

**4.8.0** The ASRC Agency Representative (AR) provides the on-scene ASRC oversight function. The AR acts as the on-scene commander in charge of all ASRC resources. The AR may also be in charge of all the SAR resources, in which case the AR is called the IC. However, the AR may not be running the operation, in which case the AR is simply the ASRC Liaison to the incident commander. The functions for the AR are described elsewhere in the operation manual, ASRC SAROP, ASRC OR, VaSAR CO SOP, ICS documentation, etc.)

**4.8.1.** For all incidents that the ASRC responds to, or that the ASRC is on alert for, the AR is responsible for reviewing and if necessary, amending the initial AO decisions. If the AR is an IS then this responsibility falls to the ACA.

**4.8.2.** The AR is responsible for controlling and directing all on-scene ASRC resources.

**4.8.3** The AR is responsible for requesting all off-scene ASRC resources.

**4.8.4.** The AR is responsible for reporting to the DO at least once per shift.

**4.8.5.** If multiple missions occur, each AR will coordinate resource needs with each other and dispatch.

*In the event either AR is not satisfied then ASRC dispatch will activate ACA. (In the original proposal multiple missions automatically triggered ACA. However, it has been my experience on several searches that had multiple searches the ICs simply got on the phone and quickly worked out resource allocations. On many cases the second response left directly from the primary search and the coordination occurred on site. By the time dispatch would have been contacted, found the OC, the OC received a briefing on all the resources and their availabilities, and talked to both ICs, the secondary IC could have been on the road for at least 45 minutes. Lets continue to trust the people in the field. Let the ICs make the field decisions which include allocation of off-scene ASRC resources (this is nothing more than true ICS). Lets also remember that if one of the searches is in Virginia then according to our signed MOU with DES the DES SAR duty officer has the right to reallocate resources. DES has never had to use this power simply because the ICs always came to a good decision. ICs are truly reasonable people who have a good grasp of the global perspective. However, since not all searches are in Virginia and the potential for disagreement exists, a mechanism is required. I believe that activation of ACA when it is required (keeping with how ICS is suppose to function) will solve this problem. Another point to keep in our heads is the simple fact we cannot order our members to leave one search in order to drive half way across the state or even out of state to another search (Section 3.3 of the OPS Manual).*

*The original proposal also required that before an IC can suspend the mission they must receive the approval of ACA (or OC in the original wording.) The decision to suspend is simply the most difficult one an IC makes. It often haunts an IC years after everyone else has forgotten. The process involves intense analysis of the task completed map, review of all clues, intense review of investigative information, and a review of several other factors. The gut feeling of the need to suspend often comes an entire shift ahead of time. At some point a meeting is called that usually involves the Operations chief, the planning chief, the investigator, the responsible agent, often representatives of dog groups or other experienced SAR groups, and sometimes the SCO. Finally, the DES SAR duty officer is consulted. Only then is the decision to suspend made. If the staff has a major point of disagreement they can start the procedure to remove the IC. It has been my observation that a new (new to the search that is) IC can always find one*

more thing, task, or question to try. The new IC is quite willing to try something for the fourth time because it is the first time they tried it. In fact one can always try one more thing, this is part of the reason that suspending a search is so difficult. If I was the off-scene ACA or OC in order to make an informed decision I would need to receive a FAX of every summary map, a copy of selected task debriefings, a complete copy of all the investigative information, a copy of the clue log, a copy of every task that was sent as a follow-up to a clue, and certain other pieces of documentation. I would also have to talk to the SCO, SAR duty officer, IC, OPS, PLANS, clue unit leader, deputy ops, any branch or division leaders, responsible agent, and representatives of SAR groups. This would require at least 2-4 hours. However, I feel this is the only way I could make an informed decision whether or not I should overrule an IC. I would also feel rather sorry for the IC who most likely already convinced (in reality ICs usually have to fight to keep the RA from suspending even sooner) the RA to suspend. Having ACA approve suspensions does not increase our liability protection. Currently, in Virginia we place the final burden on the DES SAR Duty officer. A sharp lawyer would jump on the opportunity if the OC overruled the IC and the IC could not sustain the search to the level the OC requested. I recommend we find a similar process to shift the burden to DES type SAR officer in the other states the ASRC serves. Shifting the final burden back to the ASRC is a clear statement saying we take full responsibility for the decision to suspend.

I move the following section be added to section 4.6 of the ASRC Operations manual. The Current 4.6 (Incident Commander Policies) would become 4.7

*Original title*

### **III. THE ASRC Operations Coordination Function**

*I think we could learn a lot from the experts at ICS. Only activate an element of ICS when it is needed! The OC as described in the document essentially oversees dispatch, alerting, and ICs on a continual realtime basis on every incident. This function closely follows the role of ACA (Area Command Authority) which can be a single person or a staff. In ICS it only becomes activated when there are multiple incidents in a close proximity (Yosemite fires). In addition it is usually located at one of the searches or in close proximity. We must have a mechanism to activate ACA within the ASRC. However, it can be accomplished rather easily and involves very little bureaucracy in my proposal. My first descriptive change would be that ACA is only activated by IS when they feel an IC must be removed, or by an IC (AR) when multiple missions occur and resources cannot be divided without an outside arbitrator. The role of the OC to ensure that the ASRC "is working within proper ASRC and outside agency agreements, and liability concerns" already belongs to the IC in the operations manual. More importantly, it also belongs to an IC who is on-scene. It has been my experience to adequately brief a new IC can take at least an hour and sometimes longer. Even now, I do not feel comfortable as the new IC for at least 4 hours. Meaningful briefings take time, especially over the phone. Truly meaningful briefing cannot be done over the phone. DES has long taken the stand of trusting the Field IC, why can't the ASRC. If you think about it, what guarantee do you really have that the ACA is more reasonable than the IC. A good IC "lives and dies" by their ability to read the fine nuances of the Responsible agent, and other key players (often without rank or position). The ACA will not have this opportunity. My suggestions for starting an ACA follows.*

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## **4.6 Area Command Authority (ACA)**

### **4.6.1. Activation**

Activation of ACA will take place under the following conditions:

- 4.6.1.1** Whenever the Incident staff have serious disagreements over the decisions or actions of the AR and after talking with the AR.
- 4.6.1.2** Whenever multiple incidents take place and the AR cannot formulate a mutually satisfying allocation of resources.
- 4.6.1.3** Whenever an Incident commander wishes to activate ACA due to the complexity of a search or multiple searches. In this case exclusionary selection factors for the ACA do not apply.
- 4.6.1.4** During disaster incidents.
- 4.6.1.5** Whenever the decision to send IS member has AR must be made.
- 4.6.1.6.** Whenever, an AO needs an operational decision made and cannot contact the IC in a timely fashion.

### **4.6.2 ACA qualifications**

- 4.6.2.1.** ACA ICs must be a recognized current ASRC IC.
- 4.6.2.2** ACA ICs must have served at least 5 searches (simulations don't count here) as IC
- 4.6.2.3** ACA ICs must receive a favorable vote from at least 2/3 of the ASRC ICs present (in person, by proxy, or through a two-way telecommunication device) at an announced IC meeting.
- 4.6.2.4** ACA ICs must receive a simple majority vote of approval from the ASRC BOD.

### **4.6.3 Procedures**

- 4.6.3.1** Requests for activation of ACA will be sent to ASRC Dispatch
- 4.6.3.2** Dispatch will maintain a list of ACA qualified personal
- 4.6.3.3** *(I'm flexible on this one)* Dispatch will consult a monthly duty rotation schedule to determine who has primary ACA duty.
- 4.6.3.4.** That person will be excluded if they are currently serving as AR, on scene at any of the searches, or have a conflict of interest making a decision regarding a particular individual.
- 4.6.3.5** In the event the primary ACA is excluded or unreachable within 15 minutes the ASRC DO will rotate down the duty list until an ACA can be found.
- 4.6.3.6** In the event no ACA qualified IC can be found the ASRC Chairman will serve as ACA regardless of their training level or exclusion criteria. In the event the ASRC

Chairman cannot be contacted the ASRC Vice-Chairman will fulfill the function. (I can think of an even more elaborate chain if required)

#### 4.6.4 Functions

- 4.6.4.1. During disaster incidents, provide control over all the ASRC assets and approve all ASRC commitments.
- 4.6.4.2. Serve as the binding arbitrator if significant concerns arise over IC competence. ACA is required to discuss all charges against the IC with the IC in question. If ACA decides to remove the IC the decision of ACA shall be reviewed at the next ASRC Board of Directors meeting. The IC's certification to function at the IC level will be suspended until that meeting.
- 4.6.4.3. Serve as the binding arbitrator if significant concerns arise over allocation of resources during multiple missions.
- 4.6.4.4. Maintain pager or phone contact with the AR, DO, RA. when activated.
- 4.6.4.5. Keep the ASRC chairman informed of major decisions.
- 4.6.4.6. Provide oversight of an IS member if serving as AR.
- 4.6.4.7. Provide operational guidance if an AO officer cannot contact the IC.

The following section currently exists with appendix B. As stated before the only changes are inclusion of some of Gary's ideas.

#### IV. ASRC DISPATCH FUNCTION

- 2.0 The ASRC Dispatch function is fulfilled via the Dispatch Officer (DO). The DO gathers and relays information between all ongoing incidents and the groups within the conference, and to support the incident ASRC information needs. This function therefore includes the following subfunctions:
  - 2.1. The initial DO is responsible for initiating the Dispatch function.
  - 2.2. The DO is responsible for recruiting additional help as needed to ensure timely dispatching.
  - 2.3. During any ASRC incident , the DO is responsible for maintaining a continual conference dispatch<sup>1</sup>, for finding a replacement DO, and for providing continuity between dispatch locations and shifts.
  - 2.4. It is the responsibility of the Conference DO to have an identified group DO for each group, including a pager or telephone number where that person can be reached.



- 2.5. The Conference DO will keep a log of every telephone conversation that occurs during a mission, including the time of the calls.
- 2.6. The Conference DO will keep an updated status board that monitors the availability of members of every group.
- 2.7. The Conference DO will maintain contact with Mission Base at least every six hours and will pass on updated information to every group dispatch and to DES.
- 2.8. If the Conference was alerted through UVA MEDCOM, then the Conference DO will keep MEDCOM apprised of the mission situation every 24 hours.
- 2.9. The Conference Dispatcher will serve as the group DO for his or her own group and contact every member.
- 2.10. ASRC Dispatch is responsible for all operational dispatch functions. If an ASRC group is not capable of performing its own dispatch function, the ASRC DO is responsible for maintaining that group's dispatch.
- 2.11. If the Conference DO is not an ASRC AO, then there will be an AO on call by telephone or pager to handle any questions, emergencies or additional searches.
- 2.12. The Conference DO is responsible for passing to the group DO at least once a day:
  - 2.12.1. Changes in weather, Base location or directions;
  - 2.12.2. Changes in alert status, and
  - 2.12.3. When group members reach or leave base.
- 2.13. If contacted by members of the press, the Conference DO has two options:
  - 2.13.1. The DO can refer the reporter to the IC.
  - 2.13.2. The IC may approve a press statement to be given out by the DO.
- 2.14. The Conference DO is responsible for filling equipment requests from base. This includes calling other groups to see what is available. This may include dispatching personnel to the search solely for the purpose of transporting equipment.
- 2.15. Once Dispatch has been notified by Base that there is a find, or that a decision has been made to suspend the mission, all groups must be contacted immediately. If there are teams en route, a turn-around page must be issued. If teams are en route without a pager and have not called in, Dispatch must notify Base that there are still incoming personnel.
- 2.16. Dispatch is responsible for talking to each of the group dispatchers to ascertain that they have received an end-of-search page. This may include calling the DO directly.
- 2.17. The Conference DO is responsible for contacting DES to notify them that the mission is closing, unless DES notified Dispatch first.
- 2.18. Since the Conference DO is also the dispatcher for his or her group, they must keep Dispatch open until all group members have returned. If Dispatch will then be closing, all groups must first be notified. If any group has members who are unaccounted for, or if any group cites a

reason why dispatch should not close, then Dispatch will remain open until all Conference members have returned.

2.19 The Conference DO will notify the DES Watch Officer when Dispatch closes. If the ASRC was alerted through UVA MEDCOM, then the Conference DO will notify the MEDCOM operator that Dispatch is closing.

2.20 The Conference DO at closing is responsible for filing the Dispatch Log with the mission files.

*The original proposal requires AR approval before ASRC dispatch closes. It has been my experience that nobody has ever needed dispatch open once base is closed and everyone is on the way home. Dispatch stays open until all BRMRG members have returned as a courtesy. If one really thinks about conference dispatch there is little to nothing dispatch can do for members on the road that group dispatches cannot perform. Nobody at conference dispatch minds keeping it open for a real reason. However, it is lonely, boring, and nearly pointless to keep it open once everyone is on the road back home. Of course group dispatches must stay open until all their members return home. By the same token I see no reason to deprive the dispatcher the opportunity to eat piazza with the returning searchers, in order to wait around for an extra 30 minutes. Honest, there is really nothing for the Dispatcher to do. If something really requires an AOs attention they don't mind being paged.*

This also already exists in Appendix B

#### V. ASRC Group Dispatch Function

3.0 The ASRC Group Dispatch Officer (GDO) is allocated to fulfill the local group dispatch function. The GDO gathers and relays information between the group and the ASRC DO. Given the nature of the ASRC response requirements, this may be a time critical function and may entail multiple types of data gathering (eg. find which IS's are available before doing a general call-out). The GDO is also responsible for coordinating the local group response and may also be called upon to support the ASRC GDO function on an as needed basis. This function therefore includes the following subfunctions.

3.1 It is the responsibility of every group DO to contact all of the members in the group to determine availability.

3.2 The GDO is responsible for finding a replacement, recruiting help as necessary to support timely dispatching, and maintaining group information continuity.

3.3 It is not the responsibility of the group DO to determine the level of callout for the group members. The Conference DO will pass on information already determined by the AO or IC. In the case of conflicts between ASRC DO and GDO, the ASRC DO's decision take precedence unless noted otherwise in ASRC documents.

3.4 The group DO is responsible for passing to the Conference DO:

3.4.1. Availability of members and those members' training levels;

3.4.2. Time when members leave to respond to a mission; and

3.4.3. Notification when all members have returned from the mission.

3.5. If a group DO is contacted by a member of the press, he or she must refer the reporter to

Conference Dispatch.

- 3.6. The group DO is responsible for answering every page from Conference Dispatch. There may be more information to pass along, or a change in the callout status.
- 3.7. The group DO is responsible for contacting members after being notified that a mission is closing. This is particularly important for members who are preparing to respond or who are en route. If members en route can not be reached, the Conference DO must be notified.
- 3.8. The group DO is responsible for knowing when all group members have returned from a mission and must remain open or available until receiving notification that all members have returned.

*The original proposal calls for the group dispatch calling ASRC dispatch for approval to close. Group dispatches must stay open until all their members have returned and are required to notify ASRC dispatch if it is still open. ASRC dispatch should not have to play big brother to approve a closing.*

#### **VI. ASRC Group Representation Function.**

**Adapt exactly as written in original proposal.**

#### **VII. ASRC Group Operations Coordination Function**

*The function of the GOO is to oversee each group's non-realtime operational needs and compliance to the ASRC operational requirements. On the surface it seems like an excellent idea. However, the ASRC operational manual already requires the group chairman to uphold all the requirements and policies of the ASRC. The group chair can then delegate specific functions based upon the needs of the particular group. If the group chair has no interest in following ASRC rules, a GOO appointed by the group chair or elected by the same body that elected the group chair will not be anymore successful. In real politics a vote of approval by the ASRC BOD will make very little real difference, other than taking up five minutes of our time. Just think about the tremendous impact voting the approval of the training officers has had on the real operations of the conference. Therefore, lets keep the current policy (how many of you even knew this was in the operations manual?) of holding the group chair responsible for all off search aspects. This section also contained a reporting clause requiring groups to report to the ASRC AO whenever a major change occurs to the groups operational status (group training, fundraising event, etc). First, there are several AO when a search is not occurring. Second, the AO cannot do anything with the information. Finally, this information will be collected anyway if a search actually occurs. Therefore, I recommend this entire section be deleted.*

In conclusion, disasters, disagreements between two IC over resources, and removal of an IC will trigger activation of ACA. A second level of bureaucracy does not need to exist under normal operating conditions. Removal of ASRC resources other than an IC is already allocated to the IC under ICS. If the ASRC is functioning with a non-IC AR then the decision would be made by ACA. An IC is the only one in the proper position to decide when a resource should be released. Since the sole purpose of alerting and dispatching is to serve the needs of the incident the IC is directly responsible for all resource allocation decisions. These decisions may be passed through the on call Alert Officer who has oversight responsibility over dispatch. My motions do not address the stated problems of ● Conflicts with pre-scheduled group events or ● Conference approval of group responses and fundraising. I will propose a very simple motion that requires no oversight to solve these problems. bk