Present

Keith Conover, AMRG delegate
John Kiel, AMRG delegate
Chris Ingle, BRMRG delegate
Bob Koester, BRMRG delegate
Pam Platt, Chris Metzler, William Dixon, Kristen Caviness
Peter McCabe, ESAR delegate
Mike Dix
Lorick Fox, RSAR delegate
Todd L'Herrou, RSAR delegate
Patsy Humphris
Cady Soukup, SMRG delegate
Gary Mechtel, SMRG delegate
Greg Shea, Gene Harrison
Kent Carlson, SWVMRG delegate
Marcia LeGrand, SWVMRG delegate
Dorothy Antis

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am, with the first order of business, Special Business. Gary Mechtel discussed the problem of a lack of interested people on the ASRC board, specifically those serving as officers. Greg Shea proposed an amendment to the ASRC bylaws. After some discussion, the Board of Directors unanimously agreed to recommend the following change to the ASRC bylaws.

(2.8c) At the first meeting of the Board after 1 April, the voting delegates shall elect from among all the delegates the officers of the Board of Directors. The following conditions shall apply:
1) Officers will be elected from Certified or Probationary Certified Groups.
2) Officers shall have votes in accordance with constituent group voting status.
3) The Chair and/or Vice-Chair If from a group not holding voting status, Shall be accorded a vote only at such times as may be needed to break a tied vote.

This proposed bylaw amendment shall be sent to the general membership, at which time each member has 30 days in which to reply. In the event that no reply is received, that member's vote shall be counted as a "Aye" vote.

Further special business was the nomination and election of officers. Nominated were: Cady Soukup and Bob Koester for Chairman. Cady Soukup was elected. Bob Koester was then elected Vice-Chair; Gary Mechtel, Treaserer; and Todd L'Herrou was elected Secretary pending acceptance of the precee and Todd L'Herrou was elected Secretary pending acceptance of the preceeding Bylaw amendment.

Following elections, Training Officers of the groups were accepted for continuing terms by the Board of Directors. The current training officers are:
AMRG: Mike Kuga
BRMRG: Chris Ingle
SMRG: Greg Shea
SWVMRG: Marcia LeGrand

Training Coordinators are:
ESAR 616: Carl Solomon
RSAR: Todd L'Herrou

The Committee chairs were reviewed, but not approved. They include:
Communications: Gene Harrison
Medical: Bob Koester
MIS(ad-hoc): Jim Rooney
Operations: Chris Metzler
Training: Chris Ingle

GROUP REPORTS:

AMRG: Current Chairman is John Greenaway, Vice-Chair: Dave Lindell, Sect'y: Joe Crist, Treas: 'ARF' Fogle, ASRC delegates Keith Conover and Mike Kuga AMRG now has a UHF paging system with 8 Pagers, and will be storing John Kihl's personal radios in the locker for team use. The Allegany group is now Tax-exempt

BRMRG: $9,000 was requested from UVa student activities funds. Only $6,000 was granted, but BRMRG is appealing the remaining $3,000. Blue Ridge has also requested funds from the Va Rescue Squad Assistance Fund, to procure equipment for a 'vehicle-less ambulance'.
Current chair is William Dixon, BOD includes Kristen Caviness and Deming Herbert. BRMRG will be hosting the Wilderness EMT course. They also are re-ordering pagers. The Repeater is now on-line, but needs further modification. They are teaching Hug-A-Tree in all Albemarle County elementary schools, and will be printing the wilderness first-aid procedure guide using University funding.

ESAR 616: No written report. ASRC reps are Neil Conner(advisor) and Mike Dix(ESAR).

RSAR: Current Chairman is Lorick Fox, Vice-Chair: Ernest Moore, Sec/Treas: Patsy Humphris, Training: Todd L'Herrou, Operations: Ralph Wilfong, ASRC Reps: Lorick Fox and Todd L'Herrou. RSAR has applied for membership in Old Dominion EMS alliance, which will allow application for RSAF funds. Some discussion was made concerning RSAR's full membership status. It was decided that rather than call a full membership meeting, the vote would be made via the mailing used for the Bylaws amendment. This is contingent on acceptance from the BRMRG training officer. It was also decided that the Groups would be responsible for meeting the minimum equipment standard 18 months after approval. This would be Feb, 1989.

SMRG: no written report. Current Chairman is Kevin Parkes, ASRC delegates: Cady Soukup and Gary Mechtel.

SWVMRG: Current Chairman is Dorothy Antis, Sect'y(co): Maryanne Drumright+Chuck Laikin, Treas: Kristi Fitzwater, Training: Marcia LeGrand, ASRC delegates: Ricardo Bennett and Sarah Owen. Other news includes three new EMT's, funded $1,500 from Va Tech Student Activities fees, and instructing Hug-A-Tree to local elementary

schools starting in April.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMUNICATIONS: Also see attached reports. Have suggested an outline for chapter in Ops Manual. Commo has developed a Inventory Registry sheet for Group equipment, which will be used for further coordinating communication equipment (attached). Also, remember to use ASRC 'Jones plug' standard (attached).

MEDICAL: Currently need an inventory of the different Group's medical equipment for the Gov's Disaster Task Force. Also working on a commo guide for medical communications. Committee would like for all groups to list members EMT status and Exp. date on rosters.

MIS(ad-hoc): No report.

OPERATIONS: Ops will be checking with VaSARCo about placing 'ASRC' at the head of the VaSARCo Crash Scene Obs. form. This will allow use out of state. Ops will be recommending the adoption of Sign-In sheet at the next meeting. Some documentation was lost on the current version of the Ops Manual. How much may be recovered is unknown. The Ops Committee is working to outline some of the management procedures currently in use, but not formally recorded. This information will also be distributed in several ways: 1) ASRC newsletter article. 2) add-on to ASRC MSF classes. 3) Training textbook. Discussion took place on the '18 or older' vertical team member policy. It was resolved that the ASRC policy will read: "Litter Attendants on a Vertical Rescue Shall be over the age of 18."

TRAINING: Still working on revision of the Training Standards. This document will require Bylaw revisions to encompass the scope of the standards, and the current plan is to separate levels of membership from levels of training. After discussion, it was decided that the training guide/manual will be titled "The Appalachian Search and Rescue Textbook." At Keith Conover's request, an editorial board was chosen to review the document. This board includes: Duff Brown, Dave Carter, Lorick Fox, Chris Ingle, Bob Koester, Dave Dave Lindon, and Chris Metzler.

Treasurer's Report: Checking account $468.95 Currently the ASRC owes $70.00. The ASRC is owed 1987 dues from ESAR 616($70.00) and AMRG($115.00) All groups owe 1988 dues, at $45.00 per group.

NEW BUSINESS:

A group in Washington Co. MD has expressed an interest in SAR/ASRC. They would like to be able to use our 'roving' license. After discussion, it was decided that Gary Mechtel would help them to develop a pre-plan, but the license was not available to them at this time. Gene Harrison is also able to help them if they choose to persue

their own license.

A motion was made to discontinue the ad-hoc MIS committee. This passed unanimously. A closed session of the board recommended "Conditional Resignation" as an alternative for Jim Rooney.

Keith Conover discussed the March ASTM meeting. No specific concerns or actions were considered.

Wilderness EMT/First Aid in Va, Pa, and MD is continuing to be an unknown as far as standards and certification are concerned. A motion was made that a 'working group' be formed to make recommendations at the next BOD meeting. The group will consider the development of ASRC W-EMT and WFA training/certification, including legal liabilities and alternatives. The motion passed 6-1-0

A review of the communications committee was presented by Greg Shea. The report was written by Shea and Brian Wheeler, and was based on past evaluations and actions of the Comm. committee. Part of the problem lies in the fact that the ASRC holds an Itinerant(mobile-only) license. Because these are difficult to control, the FCC requires individuals to be legally responsible for the license. Currently John Keil is the Signatory, and Gene Harrison the Control Point. A motion was made to retain Gene Harrison as the Communications Committee chair, pending a 6-month review by the Board. The committee shall have both written and verbal materials prepared for each Board meeting, and continue to adhere to the goals as stated in previous reports. The motion passed 6-1-0

After discussion of who ratifies Group-level Communication officers, a motion was made to use the following process:
1) Group recommends Commo Officer to Comm Committee
2) Committee reviews candidates, makes recommendation to BOD
3) BOD makes final decision on confirming Officers.
The motion passed 5-1-1 as a current ASRC policy.

Bob Elron presented two items, which were entered into the minutes as items A(Honorary titles) and B(ASRC record-keeping). These will be discussed at a later meeting.

With no further new business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPALACHIAN SEARCH AND RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

Communications Officer

Box 1584, Leesburg, VA 22075   (703) 777-6111

25 March 1988

TO: ASRC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS, including
            ASRC COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS and ASSISTANTS,
            SPECIAL ADVISORS and LIAISONS, and
            Other Specially Interested Parties

FROM: Gene Harrison
            ASRC Communications Officer

SUBJECT: ASRC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE SPRING MEETING
            2 April 1988 at Shenandoah National Park

This note is to invite you (and remind you if you hopefully got my other
messages) to come to the Spring meeting of the ASRC Communications
Committee, which will be held on Saturday, 2 April 1988, 1000 hours, at
the Luray headquarters of the Shenandoah National Park. The purpose of
the meeting is to reaccquaint each other with each other and the new
people who are now participating in the ASRC communications environment.
It is also to assist all of us in sharing our ideas and knowledge in the
understanding and solution of our Conference, Group, and general SAR
challenges. It is on the same day and at the same place as the ASRC
Board meeting in order to assist all attendees in the sharing of rides.
It also allows people to attend portions of both meetings. The Board
will be down in the dungeon, but we will have the nice room behind the
dispatch office. Please come prepared to share your knowledge and
experiences with others and to learn from them, too. The following list
contains some of the subjects which will probably be discussed, so
please think ahead about how these areas affect you, your Group, the
ASRC, and SAR. As you can see, these items include administrative,
technical, operational, tutorial, training, and other areas. If you have
any other good ideas to add, or know of anybody else who could benefit
from this meeting, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your
efforts, and I look forwards to seeing all of you again!

                                        Gene

    Welcome to Group Communications Officers and Committee members
    Functions and structure of ASRC Communications Committee
    Needs and goals of ASRC, the Groups, and SAR
    Constraints and environments for SAR communications
    Functions and objectives of Communications Officers
    Review of primary SAR communications types and characteristics
    Special aspects of radio systems and technology
    Inventory of communications equipments
    Training manual and qualification system
    Mutual aid and interoperability
    Spectrum management and frequency usage
    Equipment requirements and employment guidelines
    Computers and automation

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TO: ASRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND KEY PERSONNEL

FROM: GENE HARRISON, ASRC COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

DATE: 29 JULY 1987

SUBJECT: ASRC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND SUPPORT

ACTIONS

The ASRC Communications Committee is very active, although at times discretely behind the scenes, in several critical areas. For the benefit of the Board, let us review them.

RADIO LICENSES   First, the notorious ASRC radio license has been finally granted after being re-re-resubmitted to the FCC (Frustating Confusion Commission), which for one thing means we can still continue to operate our system. However, in case you didn't hear, the FCC has recently changed the rules on Special Emergency Radio Service applications.   They are now much harder to obtain due to the requirement for approval by a separate coordinating organization. Not to mention the seventy-five dollars (that's right, $75) per frequency per area. Anybody want to guess how much we get to pay to have a critical handful of channels which are good across the US for use in emergency airlift operations?? Volunteer organizations cannot afford this burden, and we're not alone. As usual, the Committee has continued to assist many other SAR organizations in obtaining radio licenses, such as several units in the East Coast Dog Conference. Almost all have been rejected by the FCC. The choice may become one of operating illegally (not recommended) in order to save lives, or go broke (also not recommended)! The Committee is pursuing the FCC and the (confusing) collection of coordinating organizations in an effort to correct this situation. Stay tuned!

NATIONWIDE SAR FREQUENCY As some of you remember, it has long been a dream (and desparate need) of SAR people to have a primary operational channel which is clear across this nation and usable by all SAR resources for combined emergency operations. This interoperable channel was once supposed to be "wun-six", but the glut of school buses, vets, pagers and other incompatible and inconsiderate users has shown this to unrealistic. Several members of the Committee, in close coordination with members of other SAR groups and generally under the national banner of NASAR, have been pursuing this goal for almost ten (that's right, 10) years. Recently, we have taken a different approach (not actually guerilla warfare, believe it or not) which seems to be making significant progress. Haunting the halls of Washington is not anything I'd wish on anybody, but that's what we've been doing. Not to mention some very large phone bills making and developing contacts. If this finally works, it will be a tremendous benefit to all US SAR teams. Stay tuned, too!

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE Third, the NPSPAC is a new and special official Federal committee, convened by the FCC at the mandate of Congress, to do several things of great significance to SAR.

The first is to develop a national band plan to use the new 6MHz slice of the 800 MHz radio band which has recently been allocated to Public Safety uses. Another part of their mandate, however, is to examine all of public safety usages in an effort to identify problems and make recommendations for necessary changes. This does not apply only to Police and Fire, but also to EMS, SAR and Disaster. This is an unprecedented opportunity for SAR and Disaster groups such as ours to make our voices heard and work for improved interoperability and access to more channels. The impact of this will be felt for the next decade! When we discovered this (thanks to John Kihl's detective work), we joined forces with others to get in on the action. The Committee has developed a coalition of ASRC, National Cave Rescue Commission, Commonwealth of Virginia (DES and EMS), Civil Air Patrol, NASAR, and several other groups. We are also enlisting the aid of several Government Agencies with SAR and Disaster concerns. This is going to be a tough fight because there are a lot of powerful and established special interests which love the status quo and are only interested in slicing up the spectrum pie and closing the operation. This won't help the traditional orphans such as EMS. Disaster and especially SAR. Some of these groups have been know to laugh (that's right, "HA, HA") when SAR is mentioned as needing a tiny bit of spectrum in which to operate and save lives. And forget trying to explain to them that when the flood or quake hits, and it's their families bleeding and buried in the rubble, that it's not their maucho SWAT team, shiny ladder truck, or fancy MEDIC ambulance that's going to find them and save their lives. It's going to be a scruffy dog and a tired girl in a dirty parka (one of those "HA,HA" SAR teams) that's going to make the vital difference, IF they've got just a little bit of help in communications to enable the critical resource to be deployed to the critical incident effectively! Like Lois said, we'll probably have the world's finest quake response system about 18 months AFTER the big one. The latest event is the publication of an FCC NPRM (notice of proposed rule making) which slices up the 800 MHz stuff and also grants APCO (Association of Public Safety Communications Officers) virtual dictatorship of this spectrum, much to the screams of all the other coordinating bodies and other users! Stay tuned, also.

STAFF

I would like to introduce you to some of the people that are bearing the burden of these fights for ASRC, NASAR, and SAR: John Kihl, AMRG; Bruce Barton, North East SAR; Pete Wharton, RSAR. And substantial help from Art Dodds, SMRG; Irv Lichtenstein, Greater Philladelphia SAR; Brian Wheeler, BRMRG; and John Birch, SMRG. And new team members Rusty Miller BRMRG; and Eric Mathews, SWVAMRG. And special thanks to Al Baker, past President of the ASRC, who had the interest and foresight to listen to what was really going on. These people are really pouring a lot of their heart and guts into this struggle to help us all, and they deserve everybody's support, and at least their respect. It isn't required to agree with them, but at least give them a chance to orient and explain — these challenges are not only tough, but they also mandate an expertise, depth, and tenacity which is all too rare in any organization. I am personally very proud to be working with such an outstanding team. And that brings us to the next item.

ASRC SUPPORT

This outstanding ASRC Communications team, and the truly critical work that they are doing for both ASRC and all of the SAR community, could easily be wiped out in an instant! How can this be? A surprise attack by those special interests? A politically motivated slamming of the doors at the FCC? Perhaps a renagade school bus crashing through their front doors? No! All it takes is the whim of a capricious ASRC board! It seems that the ASRC Communication Committee has no permanet status and can be wiped out at any meeting of the Board, despite all the good work and great strides for SAR. Many members do not remember it's history. According to the first President of the ASRC, the Communications Committee was originally intended to be a permanent organization, and it has in fact been the only ASRC internal organization which has been in continuous operation since the very beginning. Longer than Operations, Training, Medical, or any other. And longer than SMRG or BRMRG, too. Yet it never got written into the Bylaws as a formal body. Perhaps it's time to correct this error. As a formalized body, as defined in the bylaws, it's responsibilities and authorities would be clearly defined and no longer subject to misunderstanding. Even more importantly, an essential continuity of operation could be assured, from year to year, without significantly being affected by the periodic turnover of the elected positions in the ASRC. Many other organizations, including local, state and Federal, expect to see consistent and coherent organizational structure and operation in a professional SAR resource such as ASRC. This has not always been the case, unfortunately. Therefore, the Communications Committee strongly and unanimously supports the establishment of a new ASRC Communication Division, as described in the attached summary. This was to have been a key action item at the recent ASRC Board meeting in Pittsburgh, but it was tabled with no action. Unfortunately, I could not attend due to unforseen work commitments, and John Kihl was involved in an accident when his ambulance was rammed while on an ALS call. I hereby officially request that the Board act rapidly, by mail or telephone vote, to positively support this Bylaws change and the ASRC Communications Division, and therefore expedite action for adoption. If you have any questions, both I and the Communications staff will be happy to help. But please realize that our time is precious and must be devoted to the critical operations which have been described above. Thank You!

ASRC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

3 OCTOBER 1987

1.   GENERAL PURPOSE

The   purpose of the ASRC Communications Committee is to   expedite
the   effective and proper use of all forms of   electronic
communications within the ASRC, and within the SAR community.

2.   SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The ASRC Communications Committee is responsible for, and has the
authority for, the following areas within or interfacing to the
ASRC and/or elements thereof:

A.   All   radio,   tactical   (field),   and   special   purpose
     communications.
B.   Development, interpretation and enforcement of applicable
     rules, regulations, and policies.
C.   Licensing and compliance of communications equipment and
     installations.
D.   Training and approval of communications personnel.
E.   Coordination   of   communications   related   information,
     activities, and initiatives.
F.   Other communications activities as necessary.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO BOD AND GROUPS

The   Communications Committee serves the ASRC membership and the
SAR community directly and through the BOD and special liaisons
as shown in the Communications Committee Organizational Chart.

4. GOALS FOR 1987

A.   Develop communications training materials. IN PROCESS
B.   Renew radio license for 155 MHz channels. ACCOMPLISHED
C.   Participate in FCC National Public Safety Planning Advisory
     Committee (NPSPAC) and fight for SAR needs and resources.
     ACCOMPLISHED
D.   Develop coalition of SAR emergency communications leaders for
     regional and national activities. ACCOMPLISHED
E.   Obtain new license for UHF Emergency Medical   Services
     frequencies. ACCOMPLISHED
F.   Exploit new technology agile radios within ASRC. ACCOMPLISHED
G.   Assist ASRC Groups and other SAR teams in obtaining equipment
     and supplies at minimum (usually dealer or factory) cost.
     ACCOMPLISHED
H.   Develop Committee member job descriptions. IN DRAFT
I.   Improve intracommittee communications to support dramatically
     increased ASRC size, regional expanse, and communications
     activities. IN PROCESS
J.   Obtain bylaws change to stabilize and formalize the
     Committee. IN PROCESS

5. GOALS FOR 1988

A. Continue 1987 goals A, H, and I; maintain gains and thrusts
    of the others.
B. Expand 155 MHz license for more capabilities.
C. With SAR emergency communications coalition, continue battle
    for special nationwide SAR channels.
D. Develop regional SAR data communications systems to support
    all phases of SAR activities, including wireless and wired.
E. Assist each ASRC Group to become self-sufficient in initial
    response and small tactical operations communications
    equipment and capabilities.

A.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 1987 the SAR communications community was faced with an unusual
number of significant challenges. These included the actions of the
National Public Safety Planning Advisory Committee, the attempt to
obtain nationwide dedicated SAR frequencies, and the controversy over
restricting new and vital technology. Several of these challenges are
continuing into 1988, and new issues include the ASTM standards
activity. Overall, 1987 showed progress for SAR communications, and the
NPSPAC was a temporary setback with the potential for long range gains.

B.   NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The National Public Safety Planning Advisory Committee (NPSPAC) was
created by the Federal Communications Committee (FCC) at the mandate of
the US Congress. Its major purpose was to create a national band plan
for the new 6 MHz portion of the 800 MHz radio band which was recently
allocated to Public Safety users. This was the spectrum which was also
sought by the mobile satellite service community for the provision of
nationwide and rural "cellular telephone" type services which would have
been of great benefit to the SAR community, especially in remote areas.
However, in the political fight for this spectrum, the public safety
organizations won, despite the observation that they already have more
spectrum than they can utilize effectively.

Although the 800 MHz frequencies were possibly not of critical utility
to rural SAR and disaster operations, they were of significance for
emergency interoperability with other agencies who were using them,
especially during urban disasters and other mutual aid activities. It
should be remembered that the NPSPAC had another mandate which was of
even more significance, and that was to examine the other radio
frequency bands and to propose approaches to improve interoperability
and effective usage. It is in these other bands, especially the very
high frequency, high portion (VHF-HI), band near 155 MHz that most SAR
and disaster teams are presently operating. Unfortunately, these teams
are often crowded out of the limited frequencies in their areas, and
their low-power tactical operations are overwhelmed by high-power users
"sharing" the channels that they can get. Since these teams are also
highly mobile and are often rapidly deployed to emergencies all over the
US (and internationally, too), they must have a means of
interoperability with the units in the emergency operational area,
regardless of where it is. Unfortunately, a nationwide SAR and disaster
channel has never been approved by the FCC, despite many previous
attempts. Therefore it was of critical importance that ASRC and all
other SAR and disaster organizations participate in the NPSPAC
activities and raise their voices together in an effort to influence the
beneficial results of the process.

When the FCC convened the NPSPAC, it made some critical errors, the most significant of which was the entrusting of the control and operation of the committee to personnel from an organization which had a great vested interest in the outcome of the results. Never send mice to guard cheese! This organization was the Associated Public Safety Communications Officers (APCO), who promptly placed their own members in every key position, volunteered to write (their version of) the minutes, and evidently were able to pursue their own agenda with impunity. As an example, at least half of the members wanted to discuss the definition of "public safety" organizations, which would have opened the door to presently excluded emergency providers such as SAR, disaster, Red Cross, emergency medical services, and others. According to the FCC, public safety includes only police, fire, local government, forestry, and highway, and these users have jealously guarded their "spectral turf". It's comforting to know that the FCC holds garbage trucks and road scrapers in higher esteem than front-line life savers such as paramedics and SAR teams! Despite this, the Chair refused to allow discussion. Likewise, several proposals were submitted to discuss emergency interoperability and nationwide compatible radio channels, but these papers "disappeared" from the minutes even though they were presented in full view of the whole committee. Finally, certain members resorted to obtaining written receipts from the Chair for paper proposals which they submitted, some of which apparently also "disappeared".

The basic result of the NPSPAC process is a notice of proposed rule making (NPRM) of the FCC which gives use of the 800 MHz channels to only those organizations which are approved by regional public safety committees, with the blessing of APCO. These public safety committees do not have to consider non-public safety entities (such as SAR, disaster, Red Cross, EMS, or any others) unless they choose to do so. The NPRM also totally ignores any nationwide user requirements (such as highly mobile SAR and disaster teams) and disregards all the other frequency bands, despite their mandate to consider them. Therefore, if a SAR, disaster, or other team cannot cajole their local police, fire, etc. and APCO regional committee into allowing them a tiny piece of the "turf" to operate on 800 MHz, they can't do it anywhere in the US, period.

Now for the good news! The attitude and performance of the APCO and the NPSPAC have been a good lesson for all concerned. In the SAR and disaster community, as well as the other "non-public safety" emergency services, it is clear what type of operations and tactics will be used to protect the "turf". Therefore, we should choose the next move and pick the next battleground. One potential opportunity is to try to join the APCO and establish a SAR and disaster committee. Another is to use the ASTM process. In 1988, the ASRC Communications Committee Team will be exploring both options.

C.   NATIONAL SAR FREQUENCY

At the present time, there is no nationwide clear radio frequency which can be used by SAR and disaster units for emergency interoperability and mutual aid communications. As mentioned above, the National SAR frequency of 155.160 MHz has never been acknowledged by the FCC in Part 90 or its predecessors. Most of the SAR and disaster teams in the US operate in the VHF-HI band, which is very crowded. However, the characteristics of these frequencies and the equipment which uses them are an excellent combination for SAR and disaster team usage from rural to urban environments. Yet, a clear channel is still desperately needed. At the start of 1987, the ASRC Communications Committee Team had

identified a potential set of frequencies of which one or several might be obtained for these uses, if the appropriate procedures and contacts could be identified and pursued. The Team has been assembling the information and applications necessary to request authorization from the FCC, but unfortunately the process has not been able to move as rapidly as hoped due to significant activities such as NPSPAC and other time consuming events. It is planned to resolve the application process and submit the necessary documents by summer 1989.

D.   TECHNOLOGY

Recently there have been several reports that the FCC has attempted to ban the use of synthesized radios by SAR and disaster units. This is not exactly the case (yet), as understood by the examination of one of the FCC's recent notices obtained through Hunter Holloway (thanks!). The notice affects those organizations which have been using radios, designed and marketed for the amateur radio service, on non-amateur frequencies such as special emergency channels. They have done so primarily because of the low cost of the "ham" equipment and the wide frequency range which some of the new technology equipment will span, often all of VHF-HI band (140 to 175 MHz). Therefore, in a single economical package, they can interoperate with users in SAR, ham, CAP, MARS, police, fire, rescue, parks, forestry, and other services. This is certainly a persuasive argument! However, there exist certain administrative and technical controls on such operations.

The technical requirement is that all radios used in most of the services other than ham, CAP, and MARS must be type accepted. That is, they must be technically qualified to perform in an electronically acceptable manner, and they must be appropriately examined and approved by the FCC. The ham radios in question do not have to meet the same technical tests, even though they may actually be capable of passing them. The FCC concern evidently involves the unknown potential for improper functioning, rather than the fact. Fortunately, there are now available several radios which offer virtually the same performance (and are almost as inexpensive) and are type-accepted. They are usually commercial version "cousins" of almost identical ham radios, but have improved designs and have met the testing criteria. Excellent examples are the King LPH series and the ICOM H-16. They span almost any desired part of the VHF-HI band, including ham. It is suggested that SAR units no longer purchase ham radios for non-ham uses, and that any existing ones be quietly sold or retired.

Administratively, the FCC requires that the user of any transmitter on any frequency must have the proper authorization. This is usually satisfied by the possession of an FCC license, an agreement with such a licenseholder, or satisfaction of other appropriate requirements (if any). One exception (not to be abused or used routinely) is the emergency provision. In the event of a clear and present danger or threat to life or property, and radio communications are the only feasible means of summoning assistance, radio users may disregard the administrative (and some of the technical) restrictions and attempt to pass the critical messages. Such a use of the emergency provision must be done with due regard and minimum practical interference to the other authorized users, and it is limited to the minimum time necessary to accomplish the communications. SAR units should not rely on the use of this emergency provision on a routine basis. If they need to frequently interoperate with other users, they should obtain a license or agreement.

E.   ASTM STANDARDS

There has been a significant amount of interest in SAR standards, and one area which has not been considered by the ASTM SAR standards effort is SAR communications. The members of the ASRC Communications Committee Team plan to attend the ASTM meeting and organize a SAR Communications activity. This may be of great value in bringing together all SAR and disaster organizations in an effort to develop standardized communications procedures, frequencies, equipment, and mutual strength. This is an opportunity which should be actively pursued.

F.   RADIO LICENSE UPGRADE

There has been an urgent request by AMRG for assistance in obtaining additional radio channels for use on ASRC operations. In the Pennsylvania area (and many others, too), the SAR frequencies we presently use are already crowded, and the competition with which we "share" the channels is using high power base stations which swamp our low-power tactical operations. The appropriate course is to apply for more frequencies on our license. Due to the advent of the expensive coordination process with its large fees, I and the other members of the Communications Committee are no longer able to finance the ASRC license costs out of our own personal pocket as we have done in the past. Therefore, we hereby request that the ASRC BOD budget a sum of $2000.00 to be used for the coordination fees. Although it probably will cost more, we will try to negotiate the lowest cost, and if any is left, we will return it to the BOD. As an alternative, if we can enter into a coalition with several other SAR community radio users who also have the same challenge, we may find a way to share some of the costs.

G.   REVIEW OF GOALS

A.   Develop communications training materials. IN PROCESS
B.   Renew radio license for 155 MHz channels. ACCOMPLISHED
C.   Participate in FCC National Public Safety Planning Advisory
      Committee (NPSPAC) and fight for SAR needs and resources.
      ACCOMPLISHED
D.   Develop coalition of SAR emergency communications leaders for
      regional and national activities. ACCOMPLISHED
E.   Obtain new license for UHF Emergency Medical Services
      frequencies. ACCOMPLISHED
F.   Exploit new technology agile radios within ASRC. ACCOMPLISHED
G.   Assist ASRC Groups and other SAR teams in obtaining equipment
      and supplies at minimum (usually dealer or factory) cost.
      ACCOMPLISHED
H.   Develop Committee member job descriptions. IN DRAFT
I.   Improve intracommittee communications to support dramatically
      increased ASRC size, regional expanse, and communications
      activities. IN PROCESS
J.   Obtain bylaws change to stabilize and formalize the
      Committee. IN PROCESS

H.   NEW GOALS FOR 1988

A.   Continue 1987 goals A, H, and I; maintain gains and thrusts
     of the others. IN PROCESS
B.   Expand 155 MHz license for more capabilities. IN PROCESS
C.   With SAR emergency communications coalition, continue battle
     for special nationwide SAR channels. IN PROCESS
D.   Develop regional SAR data communications systems to support
     all phases of SAR activities, including wireless and wired.
     PENDING
E.   Assist each ASRC Group to become self-sufficient in initial
     response and small tactical operations communications
     equipment and capabilities. IN PROCESS
F.   Update callsign and equipment inventory list. IN PROCESS
G.   Develop technical design guide for portable tactical repeaters.
     IN PROCESS

I.   ASRC SUPPORT

The ASRC Communications Committee Team, and the truly critical work that
they are doing for both ASRC and all of the SAR community, could easily
be wiped out in an instant! How can this be? A surprise attack by those
special interests? A politically motivated slamming of the doors at the
FCC? Perhaps a renagade school bus crashing through their front doors?
No! All it takes is the whim of a capricious ASRC board! It seems that
the ASRC Communication Committee has no permanet status and can be wiped
out at any meeting of the Board, despite all the good work and great
strides for SAR. Many members do not remember it's history. According to
the first President of the ASRC, the Communications Committee was
originally intended to be a permanent organization, and it has in fact
been the only ASRC internal organization which has been in continuous
operation since the very beginning. Longer than Operations, Training,
Medical, or any other. And longer than SMRG or BRMRG, too. Yet it never
got written into the Bylaws as a formal body. Perhaps it's time to
correct this error. As a formalized body, as defined in the bylaws, it's
responsibilities and authorities would be clearly defined and no longer
subject to misunderstanding. Even more importantly, an essential
continuity of operation could be assured, from year to year, without
significantly being affected by the periodic turnover of the elected
positions in the ASRC. Many other organizations, including local, state
and Federal, expect to see consistent and coherent organizational
structure and operation in a professional SAR resource such as ASRC.
This has not always been the case, unfortunately. Therefore, the
Communications Committee strongly supports the establishment of a new
ASRC Communication Division, as described in the attached summary. This
was to have been a key action item at the July 1987 ASRC Board meeting
in Pittsburgh, but it was tabled with no action. Unfortunately, I could
not attend due to unforseen work commitments, and John Kihl was involved
in an accident when his ambulance was rammed while on an ALS call.
Despite several requests since that time, nothing has been done. I
hereby officially request that the Board act rapidly to positively
support this Bylaws change and the ASRC Communications Division, and
therefore expedite action for adoption. If you have any questions, both
I and the Communications staff will be happy to help. But please realize
that our time is precious and must be devoted to the critical operations
which have been described above. Thank You!

J. SUMMARY

Although this short report cannot adequately reflect the very large amount of activity in SAR communications, the ASRC Communications Committee Team hopes to keep the ASRC Board of Directors informed of the fast-moving technical, operational, and political environments. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact us directly.

Thank You!

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h (703) 777-6111
w (703) 883-6142

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26 Patricia Dr. Greensburg, PA 15601
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Bruce Barton
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hw (717) 424-1883

APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.
P.O. BOX 440
NEWCOMB STATION
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22904

November 19, 1987

Jamie Evans
Computer Science Department

Thank you for seeing me last Wednesday regarding the computer account for the Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group of the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference, Inc. As requested, this letter, in conjunction with the enclosed brochure (its two years old, and slightly out-of-date, however), will provide you with the information you requested on the organization itself, and the intended use of the computer account.

The Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference was established twelve years ago in Charlotteville, Va, in response to a perceived need for a highly trained and competent organization to perform wilderness search and rescue in Virginia. An all-volunteer agency, the ASRC has since expanded to five "Certified" Groups (in Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Richmond, Washington, DC, and Pittsburg, PA), and one "Affiliate" Group in Hyattsville, MD. The ASRC is now the principal response agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia (as well as the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania) for search and rescue. The ASRC now provides incident commanders and staff, field searchers, and technical rescue personnel. We were involved in over 50 incidents last year, travelling over 285,000 miles and committing over 12,000 manhours of volunteer service.

Because of our increasing responsibilities and size, the ASRC established a MIS Committee to plan for and guide the information processing needs of the organization as it developed. One of the keystones to this development was the establishment of an electronic mail network. This network is based on computer accounts at neighboring universities and research centers, and currently consists of donated accounts at the Univ. of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins University, and Carnegie-Mellon University.

The Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference would very much like to see its Blacksburg group (the Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group) established on the network. Its computer usage would be mostly electronic mail, with occasional uploading/downloading mail messages to a PC. Use of the account by group personnel would be strictly controlled, and the ASRC MIS Committee would provide 1st level user support to the account users.

If I can be any further help, or provide further information, please do not hesitate to call.

Regards,

Jim Rooney
MIS Committee Chairman

Request Form: Access to CS Facilities

Special Account

Type of request: (check only one per box)		
New ✓ Renewal _____	VTCS1 username _____ VTOPUS username _____ CSRN access _____	} PREFER USERNAME TO BE: SWVMRG

Applicant:

Name: _JAMES J. ROONEY_   Department: _VET MED_

Affiliation with CS department: _NONE - APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE_

Sponsoring Faculty Member: _Evans_

Node Name :: Username (if requesting CSRN only): _____

Campus Address: _PHASE II - VET MED_   Phone: _961-7666_

Select: Username _SWVMRG_ (12 char maximum)

Initial Password _ONBELAY_ (change on first login)

Signature: _[signature]_   Date: _11/19/87_

Sponsoring Faculty Member:

✓ Describe project on which applicant will work. Justify need for account or gateway over Computing Center facilities: _(SEE ATTACHED LETTER)_

Billing account/group: _ASR_

Make member of other groups: _____

Include on following mailing lists: _____

Special resources needed: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

~~Computer Resources Coordinator Only~~: _LAB DIRECTOR_

Approved Access: VTCS1 _____   VTOPUS _____   CSRN _____   Other _____

Rules Review: _____   Access Card: _____   Expires: _____

Access to Rooms: _no access_
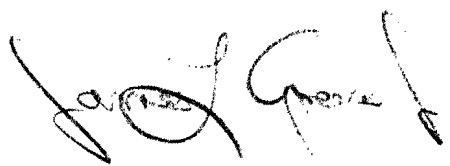
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Lab Staff Only:

Date Received: _____   Date Installed: _12/21_   By: _RAT_

User No.: _11000_   Account: _ASR_

Mailing Lists: _____

Homedir: _N_   Other:

Revised 10/87

(IN ORDER TO REMAIN CONSISTENT WITH OTHER GROUP USERNAMES - BAMRG, SMRG, AMRG, RSAR)

SUBJECT: The "SWVMRG@OPUS" account

The following questions were presented to Mr. James Evans of the VA Tech
Dept. of Computer Sciences on 3/25/88. His responses follow the questions.

1.   Mr. Evans, when was the "SWVMRG@OPUS" account set up? Dec 21, 1987

2.   Who asked for this account? MR Jim Rooney

3.   Did Mr. Jim Rooney represent himself as a member of SWVMRG who had
     the authority to set up said account? Yes

4.   Was the account set up as a personal account for Mr. Rooney? No.

5.   Was the account set for Mr. Rooney because he claimed to be a
     representative of SWVMRG? Yes

6.   Did Mr. Rooney give you the name of a second contact from SWVMRG,
     specifically Kristi Fitzwater? No, not that I can Remember.

[signature]

Lab Director
Computer Science dept