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**Policy Amended: 2019-08-22**

For information regarding this policy, contact [Operational Policy and Compliance](#), National Criminal Operations, Contract and Indigenous Policing.

1. [General](#)
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### 1. General

1. 1. A lost/overdue person is someone who:
  1. 1. 1. has become disoriented and is wanting to be found, or
  1. 1. 2. is overdue from a sporting or recreational activity, e.g. fishing, hunting, and hiking.
1. 2. For missing persons, refer to [OM ch. 37.3., Missing Persons](#).
1. 3. For search and rescue (SAR), refer to [OM ch. 37.1., Search and Rescue](#).
1. 4. The police force of jurisdiction of the last known or seen location is responsible for lost/overdue person investigations.

### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 2. 1. Member

2. 1. 1. Determine whether the complaint is a missing person or a lost/overdue person.
  2. 1. 1. 1. If the complaint is a missing person, refer to [OM ch. 37.3.](#) and [Form 6473, Missing Persons Intake and Risk Assessment](#).
  2. 1. 1. 2. If the scene is accessible and safe:
    2. 1. 1. 2. 1. immediately attend the scene,
    2. 1. 1. 2. 2. complete a risk assessment,
    2. 1. 1. 2. 3. investigate in accordance with divisional policies, and
    2. 1. 1. 2. 4. identify the Point Last Seen (PLS) or the Last Known Point (LKP) of the lost/overdue person, and protect that area from contamination, which could destroy foot tracks and scent.

NOTE: If practicable, consult with the Police Dog Service (PDS) at the onset of the investigation.

2. 1. 3. For all lost/overdue persons, notify the detachment commander or supervisor.
2. 1. 4. If practicable, immediately request the assistance of a search/incident commander.
2. 1. 5. Implement divisional or detachment protocols for Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR).

NOTE: If practicable, the RCMP and local GSAR Search Manager should jointly interview the family and witnesses.

2. 1. 5. 1. If the search is a Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) or Parks Canada responsibility, refer to [OM ch. 37.1](#).

NOTES:

1. Canadian Coast Guard is tasked with marine search and rescue, communication, navigation, and transportation issues in Canadian waters.
  2. Parks Canada employs park wardens to protect natural and cultural resources, conduct campground patrols and other targeted enforcement activities, and to ensure the safety of visitors in national parks and marine conservation areas.
2. 1. 6. For reports of lost/overdue persons, ensure that all pertinent information is added to CPIC. (e.g. the last known location, individual description, and vehicle description (if a vehicle was used)).
    2. 1. 6. 1. Include clothing and shoe description and size and other items (e.g. camping gear, back pack).
    2. 1. 6. 2. When relevant, obtain the GPS coordinates of where the vehicle was found, the general area where the person was last known to be, and the person's destination.
    2. 1. 6. 3. When it is determined the subject owns, or is in possession of, a mobile device, seek authorization to ping the device, in accordance with divisional policies.
  2. 1. 7. As soon as practicable:
    2. 1. 7. 1. complete [Form 3450, Lost/Overdue Person Report and Search Results](#), and
    2. 1. 7. 2. provide [Form 3450](#) to the incident commander and the GSAR manager.
  2. 1. 8. Consider issuing a Be On the Lookout (BOLO).
  2. 1. 9. When the person is located, ensure the information has been removed from CPIC.
- 2. 2. Supervisor/Delegate**
2. 2. 1. Confirm that the appropriate investigative response is underway, and that all investigative actions have been, and continue to be, documented on the file.
  2. 2. 2. Confirm that the required information has been added to CPIC (e.g. persons, vehicles).
  2. 2. 3. When advised there is a complaint of a lost/overdue person, consider requesting a search/incident commander and trained volunteer GSAR team to stand by.
  2. 2. 4. Establish communication with the media and the family.

## 2. 3. Search/Incident Commander

2. 3. 1. Establish an incident command post close to the search area.
  2. 3. 1. 1. Ensure the incident command post has the necessary communications, maps, food, and supplies.
  2. 3. 2. When interviewing family and witnesses, ensure [Form 3450](#) has been completed by the RCMP and GSAR.
  2. 3. 3. Use the GSAR Knowledge Management System (SARKMS) in locations where it is available and/or implemented.
    2. 3. 3. 1. Determine software use and compatibility amongst the various GSAR teams involved in the search.
    2. 3. 3. 2. Ensure all RCMP PDS and approved civilian GSAR K9 are using GPS.
      2. 3. 3. 2. 1. Ensure the GPS is downloaded onto GSAR systems and grid maps in a timely fashion.
  2. 3. 4. As soon as practicable, consult with the GSAR search manager to:
    2. 3. 4. 1. gather all pertinent information essential to the management of the incident;
    2. 3. 4. 2. determine and contain the search area;
    2. 3. 4. 3. determine the number and type of resources on scene and actions to be taken;
    2. 3. 4. 4. determine what search strategies tactics to employ;
    2. 3. 4. 5. activate GSAR resources;
    2. 3. 4. 6. ensure a check-in procedure is established;
    2. 3. 4. 7. identify possible hazards;
    2. 3. 4. 8. ensure health and safety of responders and the public;
    2. 3. 4. 9. determine the extent of the search and evaluate the need for additional resources;
    2. 3. 4. 10. brief and debrief key GSAR team members as required;
    2. 3. 4. 11. develop and maintain operation progress report;
    2. 3. 6. 12. brief the detachment commander; and
    2. 3. 4. 13. recommend suspension or termination of the search.
  2. 3. 5. As required, request, coordinate, and direct police and other resources.
  2. 3. 6. When necessary during a search, remain at the incident command post.
  2. 3. 7. If there are no volunteer GSAR teams, consider deploying the tactical troop or special tactical operations team.

2. 3. 8. Register volunteers, as well as their ground search certification level, map and compass knowledge, woods experience, or any other information requested by the province or territory.

NOTE: Each volunteer must give written consent to an agreement such as the following:

**I am prepared to follow the directions of the search/incident commander through their organization as prescribed. I understand that I am a volunteer and must adhere to the directions of search management in order to do my part.**

2. 3. 8. 1. Countersign the registration and agreement document.

2. 3. 9. A volunteer may be rejected with cause.

2. 3. 10. Upon the demobilization of a search, account for all human and physical resources.

2. 3. 11. Ensure the health and safety of responders and the public.

2. 3. 12. Ensure all GSAR actions and injuries are documented.

2. 3. 13. Hold a debriefing with the search manager and selected volunteers to record positive and negative aspects of the search.

2. 3. 14. Organize an After Action Review and forward to the detachment commander.

2. 3. 15. Ensure a proper command transfer.

#### 2. 4. Detachment Commander/Delegate

2. 4. 1. Maintain an updated GSAR emergency contingency plan.

2. 4. 2. When advised there is a lost/overdue person, consider requesting a search/incident commander and trained volunteer GSAR team to:

2. 4. 2. 1. attend the scene initially, or

2. 4. 2. 2. stand by.

2. 4. 3. If a search is warranted and a trained search/incident commander is unavailable, request one from the district commander.

2. 4. 4. Prepare a briefing note to inform the district commander/delegate of any on-going GSAR events.

2. 4. 5. When it has been determined that a search should be suspended or terminated, advise the district commander/delegate.

2. 4. 6. Forward a copy of the GSAR and debriefing reports with your comments and recommendations to the divisional GSAR coordinator.

2. 4. 7. Where applicable, ensure the detachment or divisional Media Relations Officer (MRO) are engaged in the investigation.

2. 4. 8. Encourage members with GSAR training to keep their training current.

2. 4. 9. Promote GSAR by giving presentations to school children and special-interest groups.

2. 4. 10. When possible, conduct security clearances on volunteers.

## 2. 5. Divisional GSAR Coordinator

2. 5. 1 Maintain up-to-date GSAR resource lists.

2. 5. 2. Provide an annual report (i.e. every calendar year) with recommendations for the divisional GSAR Program to the Cr. Ops. Officer/delegate.

2. 5. 3. When necessary, coordinate air support and other provincial or territorial resources.

2. 5. 4. In accordance with divisional policies, provide a copy of the GSAR and debriefing reports to the provincial or territorial GSAR authority.

2. 5. 5. Complete review of each GSAR incident and all expenditures.

## 2. 6. Cr. Ops. Officer/Delegate

2. 6. 1. If you are in a contract division, appoint a divisional GSAR coordinator and an alternate.

2. 6. 2. Ensure divisional policies reflect provincial or territorial legislation, MOUs, and policies relative to GSAR.

2. 6. 2. 1. Consult with GSAR to ensure that workers' compensation and civil liability coverage for GSAR volunteers is in place in your jurisdiction.

2. 6. 2. 2. Identify the agency responsible for volunteer expenses.

2. 6. 3. Ensure sufficient members are trained as search/incident commanders to meet any possible GSAR requirements.

2. 6. 4. Before recommending to the CO/delegate that a GSAR operation be officially ended, consult with the district commander/delegate.

2. 6. 5. Meet annually with the provincial or territorial ministry or agency responsible for GSAR, and promote the:

2. 6. 5. 1. use of provincially or territorially controlled equipment and resources;

2. 6. 5. 2. province or territory to support and maintain volunteer GSAR organizations;

2. 6. 5. 3. exchange of information and cooperation between government and civilian GSAR organizations; and

2. 6. 5. 4. formation of agreements between federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal agencies and civilian SAR organizations, e.g. Parks Canada, Natural Resources, provincial parks, Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA), Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA), to provide equipment and trained personnel to ensure a coordinated response.

2. 6. 6. Report any GSAR-related trends, problems, or deficiencies which may have national significance, to National Headquarters, ATTN: Director General, NCROPS.

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## References

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