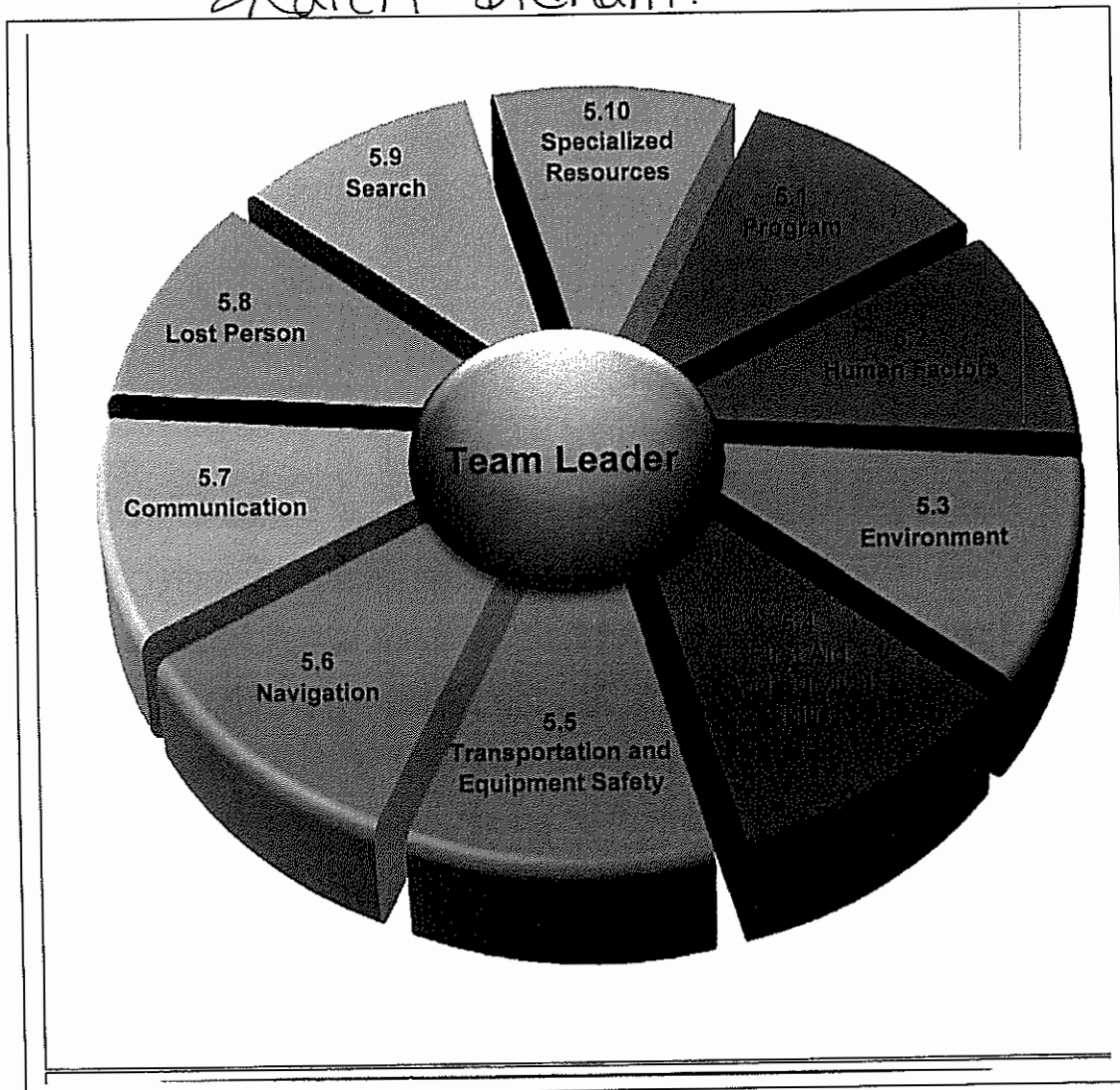




# Newfoundland and Labrador Search & Rescue Association

## Team Leader Manual

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## Contents

Introduction.....	6
5.1 Program.....	7
5.1.1 SAR Structure in Canada.....	8
A Shared Responsibility .....	8
The National Search and Rescue Program (NSP) .....	8
CAF Organization for Aeronautical and Maritime SAR.....	9
Area of Responsibility (AOR) .....	10
Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) .....	11
5.1.2 Incident Command System (ICS).....	12
5.1.3 Roles and Responsibilities.....	13
5.1.4 Legal Requirements.....	14
Health and Safety.....	15
Legal and Civil Rights.....	16
Involvement with Investigations.....	16
Protection of Privacy .....	17
Identification .....	18
Criminal Record Check (CRC) .....	18
5.1.5 Liability Protections and Worker’s Compensation .....	18
Applicable Legislative Protections and/or Legislation.....	19
Legal Liability and NL Good Samaritan Act (Emergency Medical Aid Act).....	20
Applicable Worker’s Compensation Coverage (Injuries) .....	21
Insurance .....	22
5.1.6 Finance and Administration .....	24
5.1.7 Documentation.....	24
Health and Safety.....	25
Searches.....	25
Signing In and Out.....	26
Briefing and Debriefing.....	27
On-scene Searches.....	28
Note Taking.....	29
Requirements for Notebooks.....	30
Legal Requirements.....	31

5.1.8 Media Policy .....	33
The Role of the Team Leader Regarding Media Policy.....	34
Process for Referring Media Enquires.....	35
Spokesperson to Address the Media .....	36
Spokesperson to Address the Public .....	36
Restrictions on Collecting/Creating/Reporting/Passing on Information .....	37
Repercussions of Breaching Media Policy/Confidentiality.....	38
5.2 Human Factors .....	40
5.2.1 Leadership and Supervision .....	40
Leadership and Supervisory Skills required for a Team Leader.....	41
Characteristics of an Effective Team.....	44
Situational Leadership.....	45
Conflict Management .....	46
Counseling (Feedback).....	49
How to coach and address inappropriate actions by a team member.....	50
5.2.2 Risk Management.....	53
5.2.3 Team Safety .....	54
5.2.4 Psychological Health and Safety.....	55
5.2.5 Transport .....	56
5.3 Environment .....	57
5.3.1 Weather .....	57
5.3.2 Natural Hazards .....	58
5.3.3 Animals .....	58
5.3.4 Insects and Arachnids.....	60
5.3.5 Plants.....	61
5.3.6 Terrain .....	62
5.4 First Aid and Survival Skills .....	64
5.4.1 First Aid.....	64
5.4.2 Survival Skills.....	66
5.5 Transportation and Equipment Safety .....	69
5.5.1 Personal Vehicles .....	69

5.5.2 SAR Response Vehicles.....	70
5.5.3 Vehicle and Trailer Combinations .....	71
5.5.4 Marine Emergency Vessels .....	72
5.5.5 Snowmobiles .....	73
5.5.6 All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) .....	74
5.5.7 Aircraft – Rotary Wing.....	75
5.6 Navigation .....	76
5.6.1 Maps.....	76
5.6.2 Compass.....	78
5.6.3 Global Positioning System (GPS).....	79
5.6.4 Map and Compass.....	80
5.6.5 GPS and Map .....	81
5.7 Communication .....	82
5.7.1 Awareness of Role of Communication during an Incident.....	82
5.7.2 Radio Operations .....	82
5.7.3 Satellite and Cell Phones.....	83
5.7.4 Alerting Technologies .....	83
5.7.5 Emerging Communication Technologies .....	84
5.8 Lost Person Behaviour .....	85
5.8.1 Lost Person Behaviour.....	85
5.9 Search Competencies .....	87
5.9.1 Search Theory .....	87
5.9.2 Notification .....	89
5.9.3 Activation (Call-out), Checking In, Initial Briefing .....	90
5.9.4 Assignments .....	90
5.9.5 Search Techniques.....	92
5.9.6 Confinement/Containment .....	93
5.9.7 Attraction Methods.....	94
5.9.8 Clue Awareness.....	97
5.9.9 Demobilization Process .....	98
5.9.10 Night Searches .....	99
5.9.11 Land-Water Interface Searches .....	100
5.9.12 Evidence Handling .....	101
5.9.13 Dealing with Deceased Persons .....	101

9.14 Urban Searches .....	102
5.10 Specialized Resources .....	104
Reference .....	105
Glossary .....	106
Annex A Check List – Briefing .....	118
Annex B Check List – SMEAC .....	120
Annex C Check List – Mission Planning .....	123
Annex D Media Contact Report .....	125
Annex E ICS 201 Incident Briefing .....	126
Annex F ICS 202 Incident Objectives .....	130
Annex G ICS 204 Assignment List .....	131
Annex H ICS 309 Communication Log .....	132

## Introduction

### Overview:

This manual focuses on the attributes and competencies of ground search and rescue team leaders to identify expectations and support capacity building related to this key role. The team leader is the vital link between the SAR Manager and the search team. The team leader must be well trained and motivated with the experience and background knowledge necessary to successfully lead the team in the field.

This manual complies with the CSA Training Standards for Ground Search and Rescue (Z1625-16, Z1620-15).

### Leadership:

The team leader plays a critical role in a GSAR response as they have responsibility to direct, coordinate, and supervise the search team and has accountability for the actions and conduct of the team. An effective team leader possesses strong leadership skills and generates a safe, co-operative, and cohesive team environment to maximize the effectiveness of the response. A key responsibility of the team leader is to ensure that all policies, procedures, and protocols are followed during the mission. The team leader brings the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the searcher to this role. This is achieved through successful completion of searcher training and evaluation and sufficient experience through operations and exercises. The ten team leader curriculum categories are:

- a) Clause 5.1, Program
- b) Clause 5.2, Human factors
- c) Clause 5.3, Environment
- d) Clause 5.4, First aid and survival skills
- e) Clause 5.5, Transportation and equipment safety
- f) Clause 5.6, Navigation
- g) Clause 5.7, Communication
- h) Clause 5.8, Lost-person behaviour
- i) Clause 5.9, Search competencies
- j) Clause 5.10, Specialized resources

# 5.1 Program

## Overview:

A team leader needs to understand how SAR is organized and implemented at the local, provincial, territorial, and national levels. The team leader will be able to communicate information to the team members on adherence to applicable legal requirements and on GSAR policies and procedures, and ensure that the searchers are aware of eligible and ineligible GSAR activities. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- a) Clause 5.1.1, SAR structure in Canada
- b) Clause 5.1.2, Incident command system (ICS)
- c) Clause 5.1.3, Roles and responsibilities
- d) Clause 5.1.4, Legal requirements
- e) Clause 5.1.5, Liability protections and workers compensation
- f) Clause 5.1.6, Finance and administration
- g) Clause 5.1.7, Documentation
- h) Clause 5.1.8, Media policy

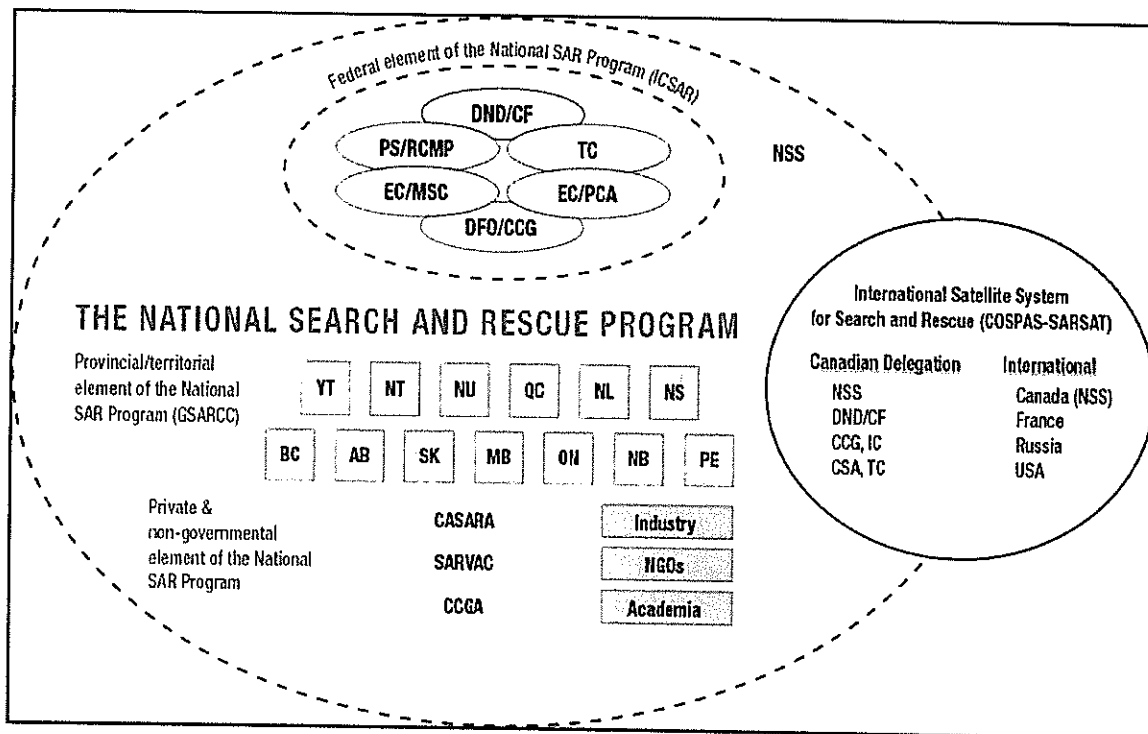


Figure 1: SAR Structure in Canada



### **5.1.1 SAR Structure in Canada**

#### Role of the team leader:

As a leader and a supervisor within a complex operating environment, the team leader must understand where the team fits within the larger picture and be able to explain this to the members of his team.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

How SAR is structured within the catchment area in your jurisdiction.

### **A Shared Responsibility**

Search and Rescue (SAR) is defined as the combined activities and tasks involved in both searching for and rescuing persons who are feared to be in distress. Many searches do not involve rescue and many rescues do not require searches (see the glossary at the end of this manual for definitions of further terms).

In Canada, search and rescue (SAR) is a shared responsibility among federal, provincial/territorial, Parks Canada, municipal organizations, as well as air, ground and maritime volunteer SAR organizations. There is a distinct organizational difference between the responsibility for GSAR and that of aeronautical and maritime SAR.

Due to its vast size and range of environments, Canada relies on a diverse group of government, military, volunteer, academic and industry partners to provide overall SAR services to the Canadian public.

In addition to responding to SAR emergencies, the organizations also invest time and resources in preventative SAR measures (e.g. AdventureSmart program). United by the common theme of "working together to save lives," the collective work of these partners forms the backbone of Canada's National SAR Program (NSP).

### **The National Search and Rescue Program (NSP)**

The NSP is a horizontal program that integrates organizations and resources that are involved in the provision of SAR services to Canadians, and includes SAR response and prevention.

The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness is the Lead Minister for Search and Rescue (LMSAR). The Department of National Defence will keep its lead role for the delivery of airborne SAR operations, just as the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) will remain responsible for maritime SAR, and lead responsibility for GSAR will rest with the provinces and territories. The NSP is led by Public Safety Canada and supported by the National SAR Secretariat (NSS).

The NSS is responsible for the management and coordination of the NSP, ensuring best use is made of SAR partner's diverse resources and capabilities. It is responsible for:

- The development and coordination of overall SAR policy in consultation with SAR partners.
- Supporting and promoting the activities of the NSP as a means to achieve highly effective and economically responsible SAR programs throughout Canada.
- Working directly with federal, provincial/territorial as well as air, ground and marine volunteer SAR organizations to develop and standardize the quantity and quality of SAR services available to Canadians.

The executive director of the NSS chairs the federal Interdepartmental Committee on Search and Rescue (ICSAR). This committee is responsible for advising the LMSAR and the Government of Canada on issues related to SAR in Canada. Members of the ICSAR include:

- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) (Department of National Defence)
- Canadian Coast Guard (Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada)
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) (Public Safety Canada)
- Parks Canada Agency (Environment Canada)
- Transport Canada
- Meteorological Service of Canada (Environment Canada)

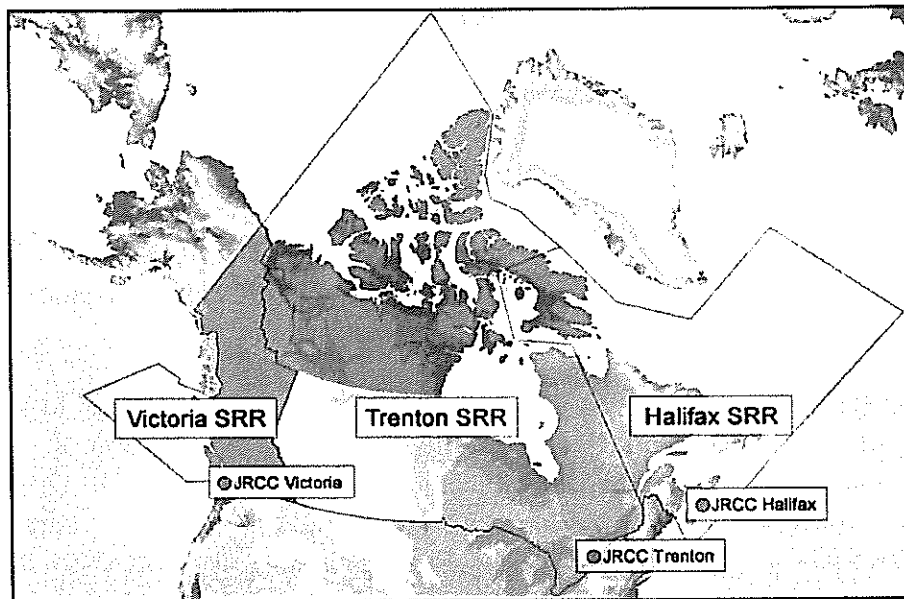
### **CAF Organization for Aeronautical and Maritime SAR**

The CAF have the primary responsibility for the provision of aeronautical SAR services (search for downed aircraft) whereas the CCG is responsible for maritime SAR services. The CAF are responsible for the effective operation of this coordinated aeronautical and maritime SAR system. Commander Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC), who is accountable for all CAF operations around the world, is responsible for:

- The control and conduct of aeronautical SAR and coordination of maritime SAR operations in the Canadian area of responsibility (AOR).
- Liaison with other SAR operating departments and agencies, nationally and internationally.
- The oversight of annual coordinating activities between the CAF and CCG, and regional SAR staffs.

SAR operations are divided into three Search and Rescue Regions (SRR). These regions are named after their respective Joint Rescue Coordination Centres (JRCC):

- **JRCC Victoria**, in British Columbia
- **JRCC Trenton**, in Ontario
- **JRCC Halifax**, in Nova Scotia



**Figure 2: SAR Regions**

The JRCC's are operated by a team of professional SAR experts from both the CAF and the CCG. They have access to and can task dedicated military SAR aircraft, CCG vessels and crews to respond to an emergency in their region.

Furthermore, SRR commanders can task additional CAF naval or air resources and CCG resources to respond to SAR missions within their regions. SAR coordinators may call upon any asset having a capacity to assist in any given situation and will use any resource at their disposal to render assistance to those in need as quickly as possible. If more SAR assets are required to support a particular mission, Commander CJOC can task all available CAF resources from anywhere in Canada.

### **Area of Responsibility (AOR)**

The Canadian federal area of responsibility is defined both under International Civil Aviation Organization agreements for aeronautical SAR and International Maritime Organization agreements for maritime SAR. This AOR extends over 18 million square kilometers of land and sea – an area one-and-a-half times that of Canada's landmass.

The aeronautical SAR area extends from the U.S. border to the North Pole, and from approximately 600 nautical miles (1,111 km) west of Vancouver Island in the Pacific Ocean to 900 nautical miles (1,667 km) east of Newfoundland in the Atlantic.

The maritime SAR mandate includes the oceanic waters, in addition to the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes.

The CAF have the capability to provide aeronautical and maritime SAR services into the farthest and most remote locations in our Arctic region. The CCG is capable of providing SAR services to the Arctic on a seasonal basis through the deployment of icebreakers and science vessels.

### **Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR)**

GSAR in Canada is conducted under the legal authority of the individual provinces and territories. This authority is delegated for operational response to the jurisdictional police services.

At the provincial level, the RCMP is the operational authority for GSAR in all Canadian provinces and territories except Ontario, Quebec, and parts of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Ontario Provincial Police, Sûreté du Québec and Royal Newfoundland Constabulary have the authority in these jurisdictions. Parks Canada leads GSAR in federal parks and reserves. The provinces and territories have appointed representatives to the National GSAR Council of Canada to establish provincial and territorial GSAR standards of training and competency.

At the National level, Search and Rescue Volunteer Association of Canada (SARVAC) represent volunteer ground search and rescue and also sit on the GSAR Council of Canada. Each of the provinces and territories also have an umbrella organization in which volunteer search and rescue groups operate.

A team leader must ensure that team members are aware of the functional chain of command within which the team operates.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.1.1, Bibliography
- DND - National Defense and the Canadian Armed Forces – SAR
- Wikipedia – National Search and Rescue Program

## 5.1.2 Incident Command System (ICS)

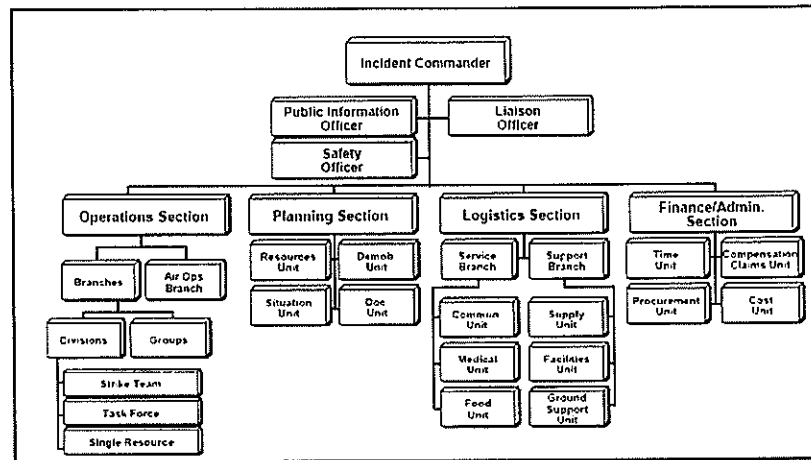


Figure 3: ICS Structure

### Role of the team leader:

The team leader must be familiar with the Incident Command System, the position and function of the GSAR team within the ICS structure, and the roles and responsibilities of the team leader and team members. A search team operating within the ICS structure would fall under the Operations Section and could be part of a Division or Group and be described as a Task Force or Strike Team depending on the incident's requirements and complexity.

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- The position and role of the GSAR team in the ICS structure and org chart.
- The role of the team leader within the ICS structure

### Observable performance (Do):

- Successful completion of the ICS-100 or IMS-100 or equivalent as determined by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).  
*Note: Successful completion of the Level 200 is recommended.*
- Ensure that team members understand their individual roles within the ICS structure.
- Ensure that team members respect the chain of command and adhere to ICS principles

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.1.2
- ICS Canada
- ICS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System
- ICS-200 Basic Incident Command System

### 5.1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

#### Role of the team leader:

Team leaders must have a clear understanding of their key roles and responsibilities so that they can operate effectively when assigned as team leaders during an incident.

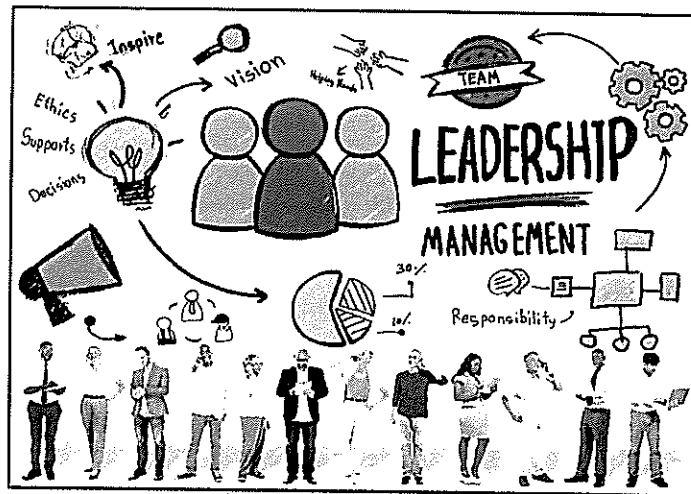


Figure 4: Roles and Responsibilities

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- The mental and physical requirements for the specific search to be carried out.
- The skills and knowledge required to complete required tasks.
- The equipment required to perform possible task assignments.
- Reporting relationships between GSAR organization and relevant jurisdictional issues.

Have a thorough working knowledge of the following team leader's roles and responsibilities which are broken down in three categories:

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Have a thorough working knowledge of the team leader's roles and responsibilities.

#### Leadership

- Ensure each member is capable, both mentally and physically, to perform assigned tasks.
- Ensure each member possesses required skills and knowledge to perform assigned tasks.
- Ensure each member is equipped with the required gear to perform assigned task.
- Assign roles to team members.
- Be able to direct and redirect searchers.
- Monitor searchers (fatigue, hydration and condition).

- Oversee the safety of team members.

#### Technical Competence

- Conduct team briefing.
- Determine critical distance and establish critical separation.
- Control the search line or search pattern utilized and make changes as required.
- Report and investigate any clues found.
- Scribe/record as required.
- Establish the probability of detection (POD) of the area in collaboration with team members.
- Conduct team debriefing.

#### Administration and Logistics

- Ensure team members sign in.
- Sign out equipment as required.
- Confirm that team members are in possession of all personal equipment (24 hour packs).
- Arrange for extra water, if required.
- Ensure team members receive meals, if provided.
- Sign in equipment as required.
- Ensure team members sign out.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations, Section 5.1.3

### **5.1.4 Legal Requirements**

#### Role of the team leader:

As various actions of a team leader/member may be subject to a variety of federal or provincial legislation and/or the policies of a lead jurisdictional agency, or of the volunteer GSAR organization, the team leader must have an understanding of the applicable legal requirements regarding GSAR operations.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be aware of legal requirements applicable to GSAR operations including:
- Occupational health and safety.
- Labour standards.
- Legal and civil rights.
- Policy regarding a respectful workplace.
- Involvement with investigations.
- Protection of privacy.
- Identification.

- Criminal record check.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Supervise team members to ensure compliance with legal requirements.
- Supervise team members to ensure compliance with the GSAR organization's safe working policies and procedures including:
- Report unsafe conditions, hazards and accidents.
- Implementing emergency response.
- Ensure compliance with respectful workplace policy.
- Respect safety priorities (themselves, the team, the public and the subject).
- Use safety equipment, devices, and clothing.
- Address activity or behavior that can create a hazard to them or to any other person.
- Ensure ability to work is not impaired by fatigue, alcohol, drugs, stress or other causes.
- Provide adequate and timely information to team members of the personal risks and how to mitigate those risks.

### **Health and Safety**

Team leader must be aware of the importance of protecting the health and safety of team members. Most workers in Newfoundland and Labrador are required to receive health and safety training through their work and are therefore familiar with the concepts and requirements of Newfoundland and Labrador's Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Actions of SAR team leaders fall under and may be subject to other legislation, such as the Criminal Code of Canada Section 217.1 regarding the "*Duty of Persons Directing Work*", which states:

*"Everyone who undertakes, or has the authority to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task."*

One way to comply or mitigate this obligation of team leaders is to ensure that their actions are taken in accordance with known and accepted standards of care. Therefore the basic principles of the Occupational Health and Safety Act should be followed. These include:

- The right to participate - All team members should be encouraged to be part of the process of identifying and resolving health and safety concerns.
- The right to know - Team members have the right to know about any potential hazards to which they may be exposed. This means they must receive training and information on the equipment, conditions, and activities in which they will be participating or may be asked to participate in.



- The right to refuse work - All team leaders/members have the right to refuse work they believe is dangerous to either their own health and safety or that of another person. These concerns must be brought to the attention of the IC or command.
- The right to stop work - During SAR activities, the following individuals may stop or order an activity be modified:
  - The team leader or an executive member of the SAR organization.
  - A designated safety officer under the ICS structure.
- Certain types of specialty teams may also have their own designated safety officer (e.g. high angle or swift water rescue).
- Directions from the lead jurisdictional agency.

Team leaders and members must follow these directions and should always ensure their actions are in accordance with the principals stated above.

### **Legal and Civil Rights**

Team leaders must be aware that they may be held responsible for breaches of legal and civil rights, which can involve their team members. This includes policies for human rights and respectful workplaces (which does include volunteer SAR organizations). The Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Code states:

- Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.
- Every person has a right to freedom from harassment (Harassment means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome.) Team leaders must ensure that all members understand that harassment or other violations of the Human Rights Code will not be tolerated.
- No person shall infringe or do, directly or indirectly, anything that infringes on these rights.

All actions by a SAR member or against a member, which violate the Human Rights Code, must be reported within the chain of command as soon as possible. Failure to ensure the protection offered by the Human Rights Code may result in an inquiry by the Human Rights Tribunal of Newfoundland and Labrador or civil action against the individuals and organization involved.

### **Involvement with Investigations**

Team leaders must be aware that SAR activities may be subject to civil action, criminal investigation, and other formal inquiries, or could involve the discovery of a crime scene. For these reasons the team leader must ensure:

- All activities are documented as per the SAR organization's requirements and that of the lead agency.

- Team leaders and members must be aware of the importance of evidence protection.
- Notes and documentation of actions must be carried out in a manner consistent with the expectation that a team leader and/or members may be required to testify as a witness or defend their actions in court or before an inquiry.

### **Protection of Privacy**

Team leaders must protect the privacy of personal information as per Newfoundland and Labrador's legislation; lead jurisdictional agencies and the SAR organizational policies on privacy of personal information. Team leaders must also be aware that information, which they have collected, may under some circumstances become subject to Newfoundland and Labrador's freedom of information requirements:

- Additionally, all information collected as part of a SAR activity under a lead jurisdictional agency may be considered subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act "*personal information*" means recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:
  - Information relating to the race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual.
  - Information relating to the education or the medical, psychiatric, psychological, criminal or employment history of the individual, or information relating to financial transactions in which the individual has been involved.
  - Any identifying number, symbol or other particulars assigned to the individual.
  - Address, telephone number, fingerprints or blood type of the individual.
  - Correspondence sent to an institution by the individual that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature, and replies to that correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence.
  - Individual's name where it appears with other personal information relating to the individual or where the disclosure of the name would reveal other personal information about the individual.

Prior to the release of any information permission and approval for release by the lead jurisdictional agency and/or family member (spouse/parent and/or legal guardian) should be received. When in doubt, the lead jurisdictional agency should be contacted to clarify the requirements regarding the release of any such information.

## Identification

Team leaders must ensure that members are aware of their organization's policies regarding identification and credentials requirements related to operating equipment or performing certain tasks, including:

- All SAR participants should be carrying at a minimum, identification such as driver license, health card and NLSARA ID Card, and wear the GSAR organization's uniform as required.
- Where vehicle, equipment or operation requires additional licenses, such as a boat operator's card, team leaders should ensure that members have the appropriate licenses with them.

## Criminal Record Check (CRC)

Team leaders must be aware of the requirement of their organizations for policies such as criminal record check and vulnerable person check:

- RNC/RCMP require annual CRC (and some organizations also require vulnerable person check) for volunteer SAR team members.
- Team leaders should ensure that all members are up to date with this requirement.

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations, Section 5.1.4
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual
- Section 7.6 Legal Issues in Search and Rescue
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Occupational Health and Safety Act website <http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/o03.htm>
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Personal Privacy Act website <http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/p22.htm>
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Human Rights Act website <http://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/h13-1.htm>
- Canada's Law website <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca>
- Legal Issues in Search and Rescue by John Chaffey (SARBC.org)

## 5.1.5 Liability Protections and Workers Compensation

### Role of the team leader:

SAR activities may place a team leader or member at risk for injury or legal action. There are a number of federal and provincial laws that offer liability protection and/or compensation for injuries. Team leaders should have an understanding of these issues in order to advise members, and to ensure that they recognize and provide notification within their chain of command of any issues that they or their teams may encounter.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be aware of the types of liability protections and workers compensation coverage within the jurisdiction, including:
  - Application legislative protection and/or legislation.
  - Legal liability and Newfoundland and Labrador's *Good Samaritan Act*.
  - Applicable workers compensation coverage.
  - Insurance.
- Be aware that no single piece of legislation, either federally or provincially (in Newfoundland and Labrador), specifically deals with the actions of GSAR members or their conduct during search and rescue activities. However, coverage from liability and compensation for injuries or damage is available to GSAR organizations.

Observable performance (Do):

- Provide guidance to team members on requirements for documenting and reporting of claims.
- Bring up any accidents or other events, issues or claims of which they become aware through the chain of command within their organization.

**Applicable Legislative Protections and/or Legislation**

Team leaders should be aware that no Newfoundland and Labrador legislation defines negligence or offers protection with regard to volunteers and their actions during SAR activities.

Claims of negligence and/or of liability due to injury or damage that may occur from actions taken (or not taken) are often a concern to team members involved in SAR activities. Therefore, a team leader should be aware of what constitutes legal negligence and liability in the context of SAR activities. Case law and the rational/statements of judges in making these past rulings provide some guidance as follows:

- To sue for negligence the following criteria must be met (Hanna 1994):
  - A duty to rescue exists.
  - One or more standards of care are breached.
  - Actual injuries are suffered.
  - Negligence is the proximate cause of the injuries.
  - Plaintiff's position is not prejudiced (e.g. assumption of risk, or contributory negligence).
- The following are possible circumstances that may constitute negligence in the context of SAR (Guzman 1991):
  - Delay in initiating a search.
  - Negligence in the conduct of the search (e.g. an inadequate search, defective equipment).
  - Ineffective use of resources to conduct search.
  - Negligent termination of the search.

As can be seen from above, training, knowledge and implementation of SAR techniques/ methodology and documentation of actions, conducted in good faith, will provide a due diligence defense to accusations or legal proceedings of negligence.

### **Legal Liability and Newfoundland and Labrador's Good Samaritan Act (Emergency Medical Aid Act)**

In most Canadian jurisdictions, there is no legal obligation for a member of the public to help someone in an emergency. However, most Canadian provincial and territorial legislatures (including Newfoundland and Labrador) do have statutes requiring drivers of motor vehicles who are involved in accidents to, among other things, "*give to a person injured in the accident reasonable assistance*" (Highway Traffic Act sec. 169).

Newfoundland and Labrador's Emergency Medical Aid Act applies to individuals who may find themselves in an emergency first aid situation, such as SAR personnel. The Act offers legal protection to those persons acting in good faith who render assistance.

*Note - if you are a health care professional (a member of a College of a health profession set out in the Regulated Health Professions Act) specific rules may apply.*

For specific legal details please refer to the actual legislation. In general: "the physician, registered nurse or other person is not liable for damages for injuries to or the death of that person alleged to have been caused by an act or omission on his or her part in rendering the medical services or first aid assistance, unless it is established that the injury or death was caused by gross negligence on his or her part."

Some of the commonly referenced Canadian judicial definitions of gross negligence include:

- Very great negligence.
- A marked departure from the applicable standard of care. Some older cases refer to a very marked departure from the applicable standard of care.
- Positive or affirmative negligence rather than passive negligence.
- Conduct so arbitrary it reflects complete disregard for the consequences.

A court case, Cleary v. Hansen (1981) also provides a clearer definition of standard of care. It reads, in part:

*"Even during an attempt to assist someone in an emergency, the law expects reasonable care to be exercised, even though the standard is relaxed to a certain extent. The court does not expect perfection, but rescuers must be sensible. They, like anyone else, must weigh the advantages and the risks of their conduct. Their conduct, too, however laudable, must measure up to the standard of the reasonable person in similar circumstances."*

SAR personnel, due to their training and experience, should therefore strive to ensure that they meet and exceed this basic standard of care. SAR responders

are also expected to act in accordance with their level of training, knowledge and skills. The basic principles of first aid should always be followed:

- Identify one's self as a first aider.
- Receive consent from casualty.
- If casualty is unresponsive, consent is implied.
- For children, get consent from parent or guardian, if they are not present consent can be assumed.
- Treat within current level of training and skill.
- Use common sense and ensure actions are in the best interest of the casualty.
- Do not abandon a casualty.
- Continue first aid until relieved by another aider, medical assistance (EMS) or the casualty withdraws consent.

Team leaders should be aware that organizations such as Red Cross and St. John Ambulance have general liability insurance coverage for persons who have one of their current first aid certificates. Coverage is typically limited where and when the actions and treatment given were in accordance with the level and aid methods of the training received. There have been no successful suits in Canada against anyone providing first aid that were trained by a recognized agent.

### **Applicable Worker's Compensation Coverage (Injuries)**

Team leader must be aware that members may qualify for assistance by the Workers Compensation Insurance Board (WSIB) if injured during a SAR mission where the team was called out by the RNC/RCMP. The Workplace Health Safety and Compensation Act section 40 item (h) states:

#### **"Coverage for particular workers**

volunteers engaged in search and rescue activities as tasked by the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police;"

There are other situations under section 40 of the Workplace, Health, Safety and Compensation act which team members could be eligible for coverage under and you should refer to the act for details.

Team leaders must be able to advise their members on the requirements for documenting and reporting of any potential claims. The Workplace NL website contains a link describing the process to be followed to complete a claim (<http://www.workplacenl.ca/WS Submitting a New Claim or Recurrence.WHSCC>)

Any injury should be reported to the Team Leader immediately and that information should then be reported through the chain of command. A description of what happened and the names of witnesses should be included in the report. A team leader should have knowledge and offer assistance to a team member in filing a claim if:

- They were injured in an accident.
- They developed medical problems that they believe were related to the work performed.
- They developed a disease or medical problems that they believe was due to exposure such as to noise, chemicals, or dust during covered activities.

Team Leaders must be aware that in order to receive benefits, a member must file a claim as soon as possible, and no later than six months from the date of the accident. If the issue is a disablement (a condition that emerges gradually over time), the six months runs from the date you report the disablement as work-related.

All injuries must be reported and documented, as soon as possible, within the chain of command during a SAR activity and in accordance with the team members SAR organization's policies.

### **Insurance**

Private insurance coverage for equipment and personnel is available to SAR organizations. Since 1999, Algoma Insurance Brokers Limited has been providing a National Insurance Program to SARVAC and its membership. Team leaders must be aware if their organization has a policy. If so they should review that policy and be aware of the specific coverage offered. In general, coverage can include:

- Liability - \$5,000,000.
- Accidental death and dismemberment - \$100,000/volunteer.
- Owned/non-owned watercraft.
- Non-owned/unlicensed motorized vehicles (ATVs, Snowmobile, etc.)

Coverage of non-owned vehicles or watercraft requires a written agreement between the owner and the SAR organization. The vehicles or watercraft must be insured by the owner. Algoma Insurance must be notified as soon as possible of the agreement.

Team leaders should be aware that GSAR operations under or as part of the Canadian Coast Guard (or auxiliary) or with CASARA have separate insurance and liability coverage and requirements.

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations, Section 5.1.5
- Emergency Medical Aid Act Website  
<http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/e09.htm>
- Newfoundland and Labrador Highway Traffic act website  
<http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/h03.htm>
- Workplace, Health, Safety and Compensation Commission website WorkplaceNL  
<http://www.workplacelnl.ca/home.whscc>

- Workplace, Health, Safety and Compensation Act website <http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/w11.htm#79>
- Algoma Financial Group website <https://algomafinancialgroup.com/sarvac/>



## 5.1.6 Finance and Administration

### Role of the team leader:

An awareness of the administration and financial requirements related to maintaining a GSAR organization allows team leaders to explain to team members the rationale behind specific procedures that apply during an incident.

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be aware of their GSAR organization's financial and administrative requirements, including:
- Sign in/sign out procedures and how they support the tracking of volunteer hours for the SAR Volunteer Tax Credit.
- Reporting of lost or damaged equipment.
- Protocols for reimbursement of expenses.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Ensure team members sign in/sign out (See **Section 5.1.7 Sign In/Sign Out**) and follow other administrative and financial procedures while on search operation.

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations, Section 5.1.6

## 5.1.7 Documentation

### Role of the team leader:

Proper documentation is one of the cornerstones of GSAR activity. Failures to follow good practices will almost certainly adversely affect the outcome of a search and may damage the reputation of a GSAR organization or team leader. Team leaders are required to understand the importance and requirements for ensuring the proper collection and retention of documentation related to the team's assignments. Documentation may be of immediate and critical importance to the Incident Commander (IC) or others involved in managing the search, or may be filed away for years before being needed.

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Understand the importance and requirements for documentation, including:
- Health and safety.
- Signing in and out.
- Briefing and debriefing.
- On-scene searches.
- Note taking.
- Be familiar with forms to be used by the team for collecting information regarding various activities or specific equipment.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Ensure that team members follow documentation procedures and implement good practices for note taking.
- Ensure that all documents or other records are retained and properly distributed and/or filed, as required.
- Ensure that information, which may not be collected on forms but is important to the search or the organization, is properly collected and retained.
- Ensure all team members understand and follow the expectation that information gathered or learned during the SAR activity will not be shared or distributed.
- Ensure that team members understand that failure to follow the documentation and privacy policies of the SAR organization or those specified by the lead jurisdictional agency may result in legal proceedings or dismissal from a SAR organization.

### **Health and Safety**

This may include documenting activities such as performing and completing forms regarding vehicle usage and safety checks, or making personal notes that prior to getting on board a boat that a check was done to ensure that all SAR personnel PFD's were properly sized, being worn appropriately and were in good condition.

Documentation and records regarding such activities may become critical in explaining how or why an event, issue or accident took place and identifying those responsible. It also forms the basis of proving that actions taken were in accordance with accepted policies and practices and that the team leader or member(s) were acting in a prudent and diligent manner in the performance of their assigned duties.

For large events, a medical plan form may be required. This form will list and identify resources and location of medical aid or support (ambulances, extraction points, first aid teams), which may be of use by SAR personnel if they are injured. Team leaders should be aware where such aid is available or who to contact if aid becomes needed.

### **Searches**

There are a number of standard forms and methods used to track search activities which team leaders should be familiar with. This would include forms utilized by their specific SAR organization during SAR activities and those utilized by the lead agencies such as the RNC/RCMP.

Tracking of search activities is accomplished in a number of ways or mediums; which may include, but are not limited to:

- Radio logs (electronic and/or paper).
- Search team assignment forms.
- Handheld GPS data.
- Cameras (images).
- Maps or diagrams (electronic and/or paper).

- Use of mapping or search management software to identify and set boundaries for search areas, create assignments, record clues, record waypoints or points of interest, tracking of team locations and/or setting designated targets for searchers (computer software/databases and data input).
- Uploading of GPS data or photos to computer software (data collection and input).
- Personal notebooks (hand written).

SAR activities need to be documented in a careful and deliberate manner to ensure that all aspects and related information is collected and maintained. A review of such information may lead to the realization that an area of interest was not searched or may lead to additional efforts in other locations to improve the Probability of Detection (POD).

Track data, area of search, hours and the number of people and equipment used in a search may also help the family, friends and/or the public realize or better understand the level of effort and type of activities conducted during the operation by the various agencies involved. Information collected and stored may be valuable to other agencies or researchers interested in "*lost person behaviour*".

Failures to collect, and utilize this information may significantly reduce the likelihood of success in the current SAR activity. It may also lead to questions regarding the effectiveness of the agencies involved. A loss of data could have an impact on future activities/searches where it may have been helpful to have had the information.

### **Signing In and Out**

Volunteer SAR organization need to track time spent in all SAR activities for a number of reasons. The requirement and rational for tracking a person's involvement in SAR activities can change based on the type of activity. However, the need to keep such records is required. During actual SAR operations it may be necessary to be able to prove that the members on site have the required training (NLSARA/RNC/RCMP standards) and/or police safety checks to be involved. This process will be much easier to accomplish if there is a record of who is involved in the operation.

During some SAR operations members of the public may wish to offer aid. Tracking and recording information related to ad-hoc volunteers must be done as completely as possible.

All efforts must be made to ensure that these volunteers understand the need to sign in and out. The decision on what tasks these individuals will be assigned is the responsibility of the Incident Commander and/or lead jurisdictional agency. However, it is likely to fall on SAR personnel to keep track of these people who would likely have little experience in SAR activities. It becomes extremely important that the team leader and members assigned

to this task ensure that records and documentation of the actions of these volunteers are created and kept.

Having an up-to-date list of who is on site makes other command or logistical decisions easier. This may include basic support-related decisions such as determining the number of meals, beds or rides required. However, this information is most critical for the IC and/or search manager, as it could be a major factor in the ongoing SAR operational conditions.

Decisions regarding how SAR operations will be conducted are highly dependent on the personnel and resources available. This information will directly impact on the type of search techniques to be conducted and the number of individual teams and assignments.

Proper tracking of personnel is critical at the end of any SAR activity as a withdrawal from the area of operations begins. At the end of a search all members must be accounted for and this requires proper sign in/out recording.

Other reasons for tracking of SAR members activities include:

- Training.
- Participation in community and other goodwill activities.
- For use in providing information to support or receive awards or funding.
- Proof of hours required to receive SAR volunteer tax credit and/or to meet the requirements of the organization's by-laws.

### **Briefing and Debriefing**

Good briefings begin with good notes and a plan. By making notes and following an established form such as the ICS briefing form or an alternative forms (See Annex A Briefing Checklist or Annex B SMEAC which stands for "S" Situation, "M" Mission, "E" Execution, "A" Administration/Logistics, "C" Command/Signal); search managers will ensure that information critical to the search is collected in a consistent manner. This information can then be relayed to others in a complete and methodical manner.



Figure 5: Briefing and Debriefing

Team leaders should be prepared to take notes at any meeting, which they attend to ensure they have the information, necessary for their own team briefings. Where possible they may request or receive copies of the initial briefing form or fill one in themselves.

### On-scene Searches

Dr. Edmond Locard was an early pioneer of forensic science who set up one of the very first police criminal investigation laboratories. He is best known for what has become commonly known as "Locard's Principle":

*"Wherever he steps, whatever he touches, whatever he leaves, even unconsciously, will serve as a silent witness against him. Not only his fingerprints or his footprints, but his hair, the fibers from his clothes, the glass he breaks, the tool mark he leaves, the paint he scratches, the blood or semen he deposits or collects. All of these and more bear mute witness against him. This is evidence that does not forget. It is not confused by the excitement of the moment. It is not absent because human witnesses are. It is factual evidence. Physical evidence cannot be wrong, it cannot perjure itself, it cannot be wholly absent. Only human failure to find it, study and understand it can diminish its value."*

Those involved in SAR will clearly understand Dr. Locard's statements as it applies to the importance of clue detection. Although Locard's principle includes finding and studying of evidence it does miss one important step; that of ensuring that this evidence is properly collected, documented and retained.

Documentation of SAR activities can be conducted in a number of ways; this typically includes a mix of handwritten notes, forms, computer data, GPS, and/or photo's/videos.

Computers are being utilized to store copies of these images, notes, forms, mapping data and other information in one place. Digitized files are more accessible, take less space to store and are easier to distribute than paper files.

Electronic methods of gathering information can be extremely valuable to the documentation of a search, GPS can confirm the specific location and time a searcher was present, and the area searched. Photographs and video may be used to document footprints, articles of clothing, and other possible clues without damaging or moving these articles.

Electronic methods of communicating information may also allow the uploading of images to allow others who are not present at the site to view a found object (such as a shirt found along a trail), and to determine if it is a clue to the missing person or is not related to the ongoing SAR activity.

Team leaders should understand that it might be necessary to leave such clues undisturbed. If it is necessary to move a found object, photographs should be taken prior to moving it, and careful observations of the object and the surrounding area should be made. The need to leave evidence in place becomes a requirement if any part of the search indicates that a crime has been committed.

If a crime is discovered or suspected, command and/or a member of the lead Jurisdictional agency must be notified immediately. Teams in the vicinity of the Clue should immediately stop all search activities until directions are received from the IC or a member of the lead jurisdictional and/or police agency.

### **Note Taking**

The most common method of documentation used in the field is personal notebooks. Team leaders should be aware of good note taking practices and should instruct team members in these practices.

Field notes are not meant to record all actions and events but are only to ensure that enough information has been recorded to assist in the recall of events. Variations in the manner of keeping personal field notes are acceptable; as is the use of common or individual short forms or codes. However there are well established practices for taking good notes and ensuring that these notes will provide an accurate and useful aid in recalling facts and events long after they occurred.

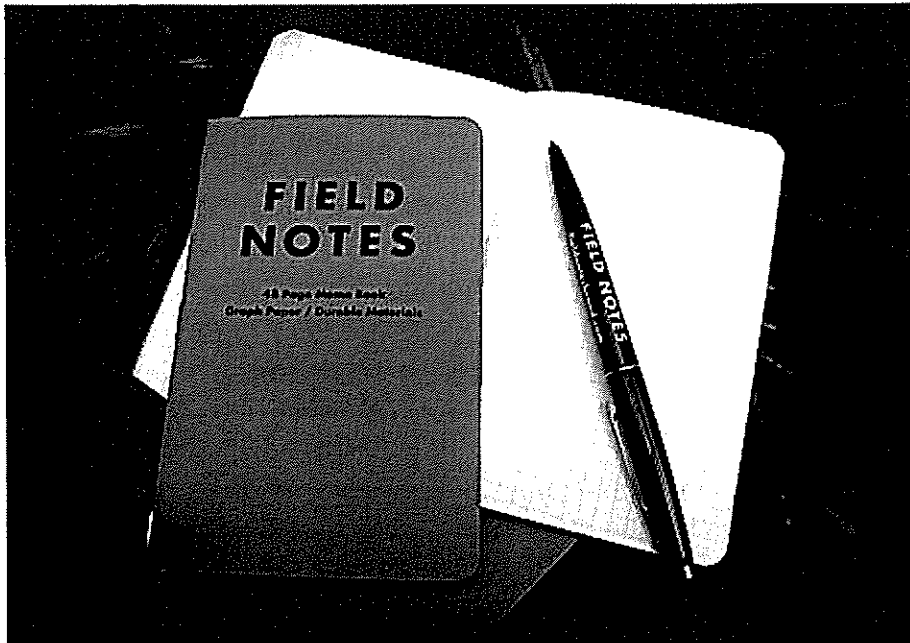


Figure 6: Field Note Book

### Requirements for Notebooks

Notebooks should be bound, lined and the pages numbered. Notebooks should be clearly identified as to their owner. Pages should never be removed. The use of waterproof notes books is encouraged for SAR activities. Every page should be used, do not skip pages. Notebooks should be kept safe and in a secure location when not being utilized.

Old notebooks should be kept for at least five years. Old notebooks must be disposed of in a manner, which shall ensure that any private information they may have contained is not unintentionally released. They should therefore be shredded or otherwise destroyed.

Hints on taking notes:

- Do record as much information as possible.
- Notes should be taken in a consistent manner and method.
- When possible, notes should be in smudge proof pen.
- Errors or mistakes must have a single line drawn through them; never scribble over or attempt to erase a mistake.
- Notes should be taken at the time events occur or as soon after as possible.
- Sketches and drawings can be helpful.
- Do not write or add material between the lines.
- If additional information is to be added, do so at the next available page, but make a note as to why/when this information was added.
- Initial all changes, corrections or additions.
- Do not record anything of a personal nature.

- Codes, acronyms and the use of short form are acceptable. It is not necessary to explain those in common usage such as GPS or Last Known Position (LKP).
- If personal shorthand is used, the notebook should contain a key or explanation. The first, last page or inside back cover of a notebook is a good place to collect and provide such a key/legend.
- Do not use vulgar language or make derogatory remarks in notes.
- During a discussion with a possible witness it is acceptable to record any pertinent outburst or statement as accurately as possible, including the use of profanity. Information regarding the attitude or appearance of such witnesses should be recorded especially if they seem unusually calm, nervous, pale, sweaty, distracted, upset or angry.

Notes will typically begin with known facts regarding any SAR events; such as the date, time of notification and the weather. Other information is added as it becomes available.

Ensure that as much detail and facts are recorded as possible of the lost person. These should include but not limited to:

- Name
- Description
- Last known location
- Suspected direction (direction of travel)
- Method of travel

Record GPS coordinates of command and other significant locations. When on an assignment, record who is with part of the team, assigned objective, radio calls, GPS coordinates, photos or videos taken, bearing and directions of travel and any clues or other significant events or observations made during the assignment. The final information recorded in the notes concerning an assignment or activity will be an overview of the debriefing given regarding findings/actions. The time of all activities or events should always be recorded.

### **Legal Requirements**

As part of a SAR activity team you may become aware of personal information or events and that may become evidence in a criminal or civilian case. Therefore extreme discretion, caution and good judgment should be utilized regarding the release of any information regarding SAR activities.

Special care should be taken to not release to the public any personal medical issues or concerns which could cause embarrassment; such as mental health issues. Medical issues such as dementia, autism, diabetes or epilepsy are also commonly part of information received during SAR activities; permission to release any such medical information must be obtained (typically from the immediate family).



Failure to act in a prudent and responsible manner regarding information, which is collected regarding a SAR activity, can result in legal action against a SAR organization or SAR member.

Control and safe-keeping of personal information includes ensuring that all information collected during SAR activities including paper and computer records are maintained in a secure manner. Team leaders should limit the release of any information, which they have collected, to their SAR organization executive, the SAR manager who was on-site, the lead jurisdictional agency or to the police. The team leader should document this release or sharing of information within their notebooks.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations, Section 5.1.7
- Managing The Lost Person Incident - NASAR (1997) website <http://www.nasar.org/>
- ICS 200 Incident Command System

### 5.1.8 Media Policy

#### Role of the team leader:

Media relations and managing the release of information have become a major concern and source of stress for command. Good media relationships and positive coverage are beneficial both in the immediate and long term. The unapproved release of information or the release of materials indicating inappropriate actions, images or comments can cause lingering damage to an organization's reputation and may cause distractions or difficulties in the management of ongoing SAR activity.

Team leaders during a SAR incident should neither attempt to attract nor hide from the media. They should continue with their assignments, and ensure that they and their team are acting in a manner, which represents their organizations professionalism. Team leaders are encouraged to become familiar with the media and related issues through training courses, books/manuals such as "Managing the Lost Person Incident - NASAR (1997)". Team leaders should gain experience whenever possible at news press release/events or other venues such as community events.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be familiar with applicable media policy within the jurisdiction, including:
  - Role of team leader regarding media policy.
  - Process for referring media inquiry.
  - Spokesperson to address the media.
  - Spokesperson to address the public.
  - Restrictions on collecting/creating/reporting/passing on information.
  - Repercussions of breaching media policy/confidentiality.

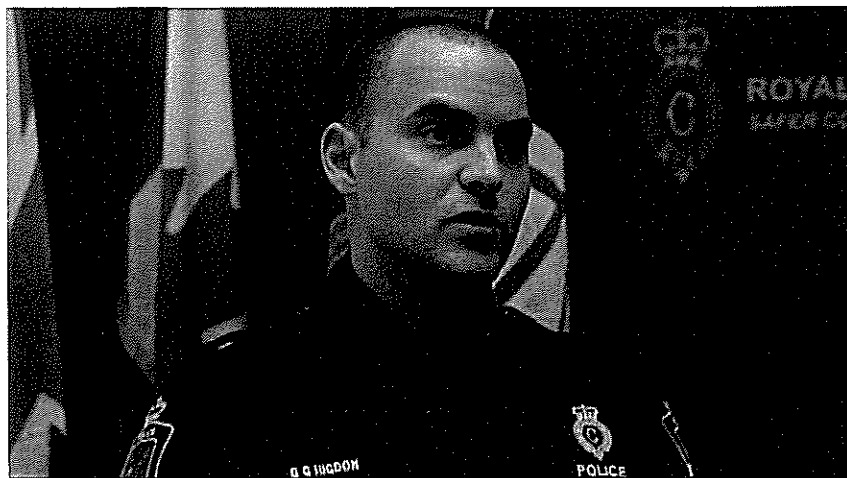
#### Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate media policy to team members and monitor compliance.
- Act in a professional manner when dealing with media.
- Discuss any breaches of the media policy and/or confidentiality with SAR organization directors as soon as possible.
- Be familiar with key aspects of dealing with the media, including:
  - The media is neither friend nor the enemy. They have a job to do and they believe it is very important.
  - Never use the phrase "*no comment*". Explain who can provide information and where they are located (e.g. command post).
  - Any camera or microphone can be on, at any time.
  - Assume everything said, posted or sent electronically (images, voice or text) will be passed on.
- The phrase "*off the record*" is not a guarantee.

### **The Role of the Team Leader Regarding Media Policy**

A team leader must be aware of the policies that their SAR organization has put in place regarding organized/professional media, social media and the release of information relating to SAR activities. These policies may restrict the use of personal devices such as phones, personal GPS tracking, cameras or the posting of information/photos regarding training or actual search activities.

A failure to act in accordance with good media and information-handling practices can damage an organization's credibility, reduce public support, result in legal actions or affect the outcome of a criminal investigation or inquiry.



**Figure 7: Police Media Briefing**

Under standard ICS management, media requests will be directed to the Incident Commander (IC). If an incident is large or has drawn media and public attention the ICS structure can be grown to include incident command staff. A position such as an Information Officer (IO) may be created, as part of the incident command staff. This position is responsible for the development and release of emergency information to the media and the public regarding an incident. However, final approval for interviews and/or the release of information remains with the IC.

All lead SAR agencies such as police will have specific rules surrounding media contacts and the release of information regarding search and rescue activities occurring or which have occurred under their jurisdiction. Volunteer SAR organizations must in addition to their own internal policies/procedures, comply and follow the directions of the lead jurisdictional agency regarding media and other information releases.

It is therefore critical that team leaders ensure that those reporting to them understand the procedures and policies regarding media, the public and the release of information relating to SAR activities. It is also the responsibility of the

team leader to ensure that these policies are strictly observed by all members of their team during the SAR activity.

### **Process for Referring Media Enquires**

All media contacts and requests must be handled in a polite, professional and timely manner. SAR personnel should direct all media or information requests to the Information Officer (IO) or command. Media contact forms are a common and useful method of tracking the requests and ensuring that proper authorization has been received before a SAR member speaks to the media. Most SAR lead agencies will have their own forms. (See **Annex D – Media Contact Report** for example of a media contact form).

When contacted, a team leader should get a minimum of the name, organization, type of interview and contact information from the person requesting information. A list of questions or topics to be discussed should also be requested. This information should immediately be passed up the chain of command to the appropriate persons (Information Officer or Incident Commander) for a decision to be made regarding the request.

The person requesting information should be notified of this procedure and that no specific information can be provided at this time until proper authorization has been received. Professional reporters will be aware and familiar with such procedures, but will likely try and get some additional information from those onsite.

Confirmation or providing information that a search or rescue activity is on-going, and a general description such as, “we are searching for a male child who was reported missing this morning in the Lost Lake area” is usually acceptable. Be polite but firm; do not answer any further questions or confirm any statements/comments made by the media regarding the on-going SAR activity until permission has been received.

If media personnel have arrived on site they should be directed to command to make contact with the Information Officer. The Incident Commander or incident command staff must be notified immediately of the arrival of media. If possible keep someone with or near the media area to ensure that the location of the reporter(s) is known. All on-site SAR personnel should be advised of the presence of the media.

Reporters and/or members of the public may film SAR activities conducted out in the open legally. SAR members should do nothing to prevent such actions. SAR personnel are not to detain or otherwise hold a member of the public or media at any location. If the action of the media or a member of the public creates an unsafe situation or may interfere with ongoing search activities warn the persons involved and immediately request assistance of the lead jurisdictional agency. When/where possible ask that personnel from the lead agency with jurisdiction over the SAR activity (or police) take charge of the media.

### **Spokesperson to Address the Media**

Team leaders should be aware of, or request information regarding directing media contacts, as part of the activity briefing. This may be the Incident Commander, Planning Section Chief or other identified spokesperson or position (Information Officer). If no person or position is identified, all requests are to be directed to the Incident Commander. Team leaders should be prepared to immediately provide a contact name and/or position, contact information and/or the location of the media staging area to any media personnel encountered.

If no spokesperson or position has been identified it is the responsibility of the team leader to whom media contact has been made to immediately notify within the chain of command that a media request has been made or that media are present on-site. The team leader must wait for a decision or directions prior to providing any information related to the media's request. Team leaders however should not allow media requests or presence to interfere with their assignments.

If contact with the chain of command or personnel from the lead jurisdictional agency is not possible the media personnel should be provided with the location of the command post and/or other staging area. The team leader should then continue with their assigned duties. No further assistance or discussions with the media should take place, unless there is a clear danger to the media personnel or they are interfering with SAR activities.

If media personnel wish to physically follow a SAR team, no attempt should be made to prevent this from occurring. However, SAR personnel should notify the media personnel of any known or suspected issues or dangers which they may be exposed to or if their actions may interfere with the ongoing SAR activity. It should also be made clear that SAR personnel may not be able to provide any assistance to the media personnel such as transportation, guidance, food, or water.

### **Spokesperson to Address the Public**

It is imperative that team leaders understand that the lead jurisdictional agency is in charge of all SAR activity, what information may be provided or aid/assistance may be accepted. Team leaders should be aware of/or request information regarding directing members of the public, as part of the activity briefing. This may be the Incident Commander, Planning Section Chief or other identified spokesperson or position (Information Officer). If so all requests from the public for information or offers of help should be directed to this person/position.

Team leaders should be prepared to immediately provide the name and/or position, contact information and/or location of the appropriate staging area to any members of the public encountered.

If no spokesperson or position has been identified it is the responsibility of the team leader to whom contact has been made to immediately notify within the chain of command that a request for specific and or additional information or an offer of aid has been made. Notification is also required to advise the incident command staff that members of the public are present on-site or are expected to arrive shortly. The team leader must wait for a decision or directions prior to providing any additional information or accepting aid from the public.

Team leaders should not allow requests from the public or presence to unduly interfere with their assignments. If contact with the chain of command or personnel from the lead jurisdictional agency is not possible, the public should be provided with the location of the command post and/or other staging area. The team leader should then continue with their assigned duties. Under some circumstance limited public assistance can be directly accepted however, the team leader should record a rationale for the acceptance of this aid and from whom it was received.

The approved or unapproved acceptance of public aid may place the team leader, their SAR organization or the lead jurisdictional agency in a position of responsibility for injuries or damages which may occur as a result of the public's involvement.

### **Restrictions on Collecting/Creating/Reporting/Passing on Information**

The collection of information and providing that information to outside sources must only be done in accordance with the policies and procedures of the appropriate SAR organization(s) and of the jurisdictional lead agency in the SAR activity.

SAR activities and the information provided by the lead agency, police or family/friends may be confidential in nature as it may contain personal health, financial, legal information or other details regarding the person or persons involved. The release of such information may be subject to legal restrictions and prohibitions found in legislation or other agreements.

Additionally, although most SAR activities do not involve criminal investigations, it may occur. It is impossible to tell whether or not the activity the team leader is currently taking part or have taken part in, will become such an occurrence. It is therefore important that all information (notes, photos, video or personal recollections) be retained and handled responsibly, as they may potentially be considered as evidence. Unapproved release or failure to protect information

integrity, security, and confidentiality is not only unprofessional, it may constitute interference with an investigation

### **Repercussions of Breaching Media Policy/Confidentiality**

Volunteer SAR organizations and team members train and work hard to learn the skills to be considered valuable and even professional in their abilities relating to SAR activities. Over time this hard work can lead to strong relationships with other agencies and a high level of trust and support from the public. These can all be destroyed by the release of a photo, video or comments, which reflect negatively on a SAR activity or the agencies involved.

The release of any SAR activity information may be subject to legal restrictions and prohibitions. Therefore, an unapproved release of information may be an offense, subject to prosecution or civil suit against the person(s) and/or organization, which released or allowed the release of the information.

Some information gathered or collected during SAR activities may cause undue anguish or distress to relatives or friends if released. Consideration of this must be taken into account when press releases or interviews are granted. For example the release of information (through proper approved channels) that "*a drowned person was found to be not wearing an approved PFD*" may be regarded as appropriate. However, their friends and family of the deceased will certainly view the release of information or comments to the professional or through social media "*that the victim was negligent because they were not wearing a PFD*" negatively.

Other concerns may be the release of comments, images or information, which questions the effectiveness or management of the search or indicate horseplay or other unprofessional activities. Although the release of such information may have been intended for a small select private audience once evidence, opinions, video, or photos are expressed or posted on-line the information may spread widely and be used in a manner not expected or anticipated.

Such events can cause a loss of faith in a SAR organization by the public and/or the jurisdictional agencies, which were involved and/or have legal repercussions.

It is therefore critical that team leaders make it clear to all team members the requirements of the media policy and the need to protect the integrity, security and confidentiality of all personal information, which they may come into contact with.

Team leaders must discuss any breaches of the media policy and/or confidentiality with SAR organization directors as soon as possible. Team leaders and all team members also should be aware that breaches of confidentiality might result in dismissal from a SAR team or organization.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations  
Section 5.1.8
- Section 6.4 Media
- Section 6.3 Initial Basic In-field Interviewing Techniques
- Managing the Lost Person Incident - NASAR (1997)



## 5.2 Human Factors

### Overview:

A team leader is able to demonstrate leadership and supervisory skills necessary to direct the operations of a search team in a safe and efficient manner. A team leader is able to recognize potential hazards as well as the physical and psychological demands of a search mission and assign tasks accordingly to ensure the safety of the team and others. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- a) 5.2.1 Leadership and supervision;
- b) 5.2.2 Risk management;
- c) 5.2.3 Team safety;
- d) 5.2.4 Psychological health and safety; and
- e) 5.2.5 Transport.

### 5.2.1 Leadership and Supervision

#### Role of the Team Leader:

At the heart of GSAR, are small groups of people working together under difficult and stressful conditions to search an area to find a missing person. The team leader, in order to carry out his/her assignments must have the people skills to be both a leader and a supervisor. A team leader must know how to be a coach, manager and counselor to the members of his/her team. A team leader must also have an understanding of how to manage conflict so that the team can focus on the task at hand.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Leadership and supervisory skills required for a Team Leader.
- Key characteristics of an effective team.
- Concept of situational leadership.
- Key principles of conflict management.
- Be familiar with how to effectively communicate information, including:
  - Body language
  - Appropriate language (verbal or written)
  - Active listening
  - Giving and receiving feedback
- How to coach and address inappropriate actions by a team member.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Demonstrate and model leadership attributes, including:
  - Show compassion
  - Lead by example with regards to professionalism, confidentiality, and compliance with policies and procedures
  - Remain calm under pressure and handle stress effectively
  - Plan quickly and effectively
  - Analyze and prioritize tasks
  - Demonstrate good decision making and judgment, including taking control of a scene and directing others to accomplish tasks.
  - Delegate task assignments based on individual or team capabilities

- Effectively deliver briefings and debriefings
- Demonstrate concern for the safety of everyone
- Demonstrate good problem solving skills.
- Adapt to changing situations and conditions.
- Possess and utilize good interpersonal skills when dealing with people
- Be respectful when dealing with others
- Motivate team members to work together
- Communicate in an appropriate and effective manner.
- Allocate equipment within the team.
- Communicate the importance of professionalism and confidentiality in all aspects of a search.

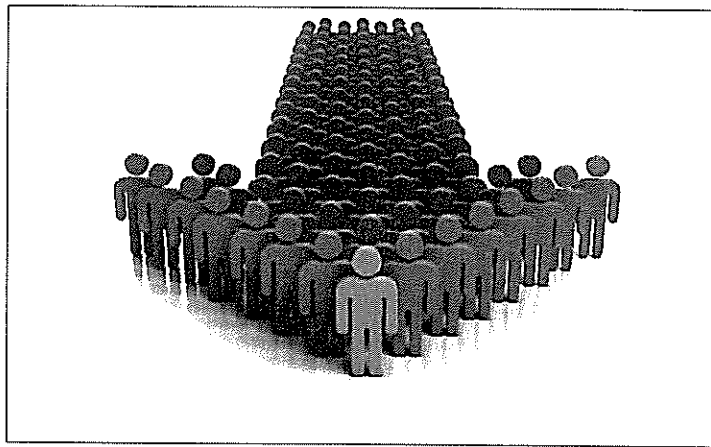


Figure 8: Leadership and Supervision

### **Leadership and Supervisory Skills required for a Team Leader**

Team Leaders supervise fellow team members and must possess the necessary supervisory skills to be effective in their role as a Team Lead. To be effective the Team Leader must have good interpersonal skills and training related to managing people. Effective leadership of a GSAR team requires that a team leader demonstrate the following:

- **Knowledgeable, Competent and Relevant Experience.** A team leader must be competent in his/her SAR and leadership skills. This comes from knowledge gained by years of experience as a SAR team member, furthering education as a leader and through continuous improvement. A thorough understanding and knowledge of all aspects within a SAR environment will enable the leader to make sound and timely decisions and provide the team what is necessary to accomplish the mission.
- **Concern for Safety.** A team leader ensures that safety is top priority in how he/she manages his/her team at all times while involved in a search or training event. As the key person on the ground managing a search team, the team leader must be alert to conditions which may affect the safety of team members, including team dynamics, external human factors, or environmental conditions. This level of alertness must be present at all times while they are responsible for the team to

assist in making the proper decisions regarding safety issues. While the team leader is expected to address the majority of safety issues in the field, clear communications with command will ensure that team leaders are aware of situations and can plan for contingencies as required.

- **Decisive.** Being decisive is the ability to make a decision after weighing the many situational factors, considering the input of others and examining the possible options. Decisiveness and the confidence it inspires are products of hard work, training, honesty, experience, positive attitude, and communication both verbal and non-verbal. Delays, confusion, or allowing discussions of issues already briefed could weaken a team leader's reputation for decisiveness, and also have an adverse impact on confidence in that leader.
- **Respect.** A team leader demonstrates respect to everyone involved and everyone that they may have an interaction with during a search or training event. The Team Lead must promote and ensure that respect is shown by all team members in their interactions with each other and others. The Team Lead should be a role model and lead by example which will demonstrate the standard expected of others.
- **Interpersonal Skills.** These skills define the way in which we interact with each other and are key to the role of a team leader as he/she is responsible for effectively communicating with and mobilizing team members in support of carrying out search assignments. They are skills that we are born with but also skills that can be developed and improved upon. Interpersonal skills can be broken down as following:
  - **Self-awareness:** This is a pre-requisite to empathy or "other-awareness" and underlies effective communication. This can be thought of as knowing one's strengths and weaknesses and seeking self-improvement, but can also be thought of maintaining self-control and composure while interacting with someone. Self-awareness for example, will lead to learning to recognize the signs of stress, understanding it and moving on.
  - **Listening Skills:** How a team leader interprets both the verbal and nonverbal messages sent by others. Effectively or actively listening is not easy but can be developed.
  - **Questioning:** Ask questions to clarify and better understand what is being said. Team leaders can learn to draw out information from others.
  - **Verbal or Oral communication:** What we say and how we say it. Speak effectively so it is clearly understood. Choose words carefully. Focus on statements so that the intent is precise and not open to interpretation. Understand the barriers to communication and how to communicate in difficult situations.
  - **Helping or Facilitation:** Work with others to find a mutually agreeable outcome. Identify, define and solve problems. Learn to negotiate and build a rapport with people. Learn to be empathetic. Get to know the team members and promote their welfare.
  - **Reflection:** Think about (team leader's) interactions with members and improve upon them. Explore and analyze options to make sound decisions.

- Assertiveness: Learn to be assertive when interacting with the team. Communicate clearly, build confidence, and learn methods for relaxing and coping with nerves.
- Non-Verbal Communication: Understand what is communicated without words, for example, body language. Understand that dress and deportment also affect the message being sent. Work on personal presentation and understand that it is tied to listening and verbal communication. Learn to control distracting behaviour.
- Facial Expression: Information about an individual's emotional state can be transmitted via facial expression. In addition, facial expressions can be used to regulate interactions.
- Gaze: Emotional information can also be communicated through gaze. For example, long stares are often seen as signals of hostility or aggression. Looking can also be used to initiate and regulate interpersonal interactions, and can be used to assess the reactions of others during oral presentations and conversations.
- Gestures: Gestures can be used to replace words. In addition they can also place emphasis on critical elements of a message deliver to the team/member. Gestures can also signal the beginning or end of an interaction.
- Posture: An individual's posture can reveal how they feel and their attitude towards others involved in the interaction. Posture also tends to vary as a function of how formal an interpersonal situation is with more relaxed postures indicating less formal situations
- Oratory cues: Non-verbal vocal cues such as the pitch, tone and speed of speech can also reveal information about emotional states, and can be used to regulate interactions. For example, people experiencing anxiety tend to speak very quickly and in a high pitch. Oratory cues can also regulate turn-taking in interactions and pitch changes also indicate when questions have been asked.
- **Problem Solving – Adaptability**. A team leader is able to address and adapt to unforeseen/changing circumstances in such a way as to maintain the integrity of the team and the assignment. Once in the field, a team is an autonomous unit trained to respond effectively to many situations, while adapting to environmental factors, group dynamic issues, equipment failures, human errors, etc. The team leader should be able to recognize when circumstances become beyond her/his scope of responsibility or ability, and seek support from the command.
- **The ability to instill a sense of ownership and purpose**. A team leader demonstrates a sense of ownership and having a purpose by having command of each component of the assignment and taking full responsibility for its outcome. A team leader should encourage members to have a personal investment on their team's assignment. Key to a sense of ownership is: willingness to actively listen to others, encourage diversity of thinking, empower team members to be fully engaged, have the humility to admit mistakes and eliminate blame, and share all successes/achievements.
- **Motivator**. A team leader encourages focused and ongoing participation in searches and assignments by being positive, encouraging, and leading by example. In order to motivate team members, the team leader should show confidence in them and

their ability to complete assigned tasks. Team leaders can hone their motivational skills by: listening to the subtle clues/inferences from the team members then clarifying the situation if needed, and keeping the team members informed to ensure the assignment is understood.

- **Ability to Delegate.** Giving others the authority to act and empowering them to complete the task is very effective and rewarding for the individual and the team. To delegate effectively the Team leader must know the capabilities of the team members. The team is more effective when team members have been delegated clear responsibility for a task. Some of the tasks that might be delegated are navigation, radio operation, GPS operation, flagging, and note taking.
- **Mentor/Coach.** A team leader takes an active interest in the professional development and progression of each member of his/her team. Leaders at all levels are responsible for eliciting the optimum level of performance from each of the team members. Team Leaders should encourage individuals, who demonstrate leadership ability. Encourage team members to take on a variety of progressively challenging roles within the team as professional development. Recognize team members who may be experiencing personal challenges, and provided them with the attention and instruction necessary to ensure they reach their full potential and meet the standard of performance of the team.

### **Characteristics of an Effective Team**

Teams that are able to effectively and consistently carry out their assignments, generally share similar characteristics. Because operational SAR teams are often fluid in their composition, it is important to promote and develop these characteristics on an ongoing basis within the SAR group, so they are well established prior to a SAR operation. The most common characteristics include:

- Clear roles/clear rules: team members understand and agree with the expectations of the organization and established standards of conduct, and perform their roles accordingly; tasks are distributed fairly.
- Climate of trust: facilitates relationships within the team, encourages respect, promotes camaraderie and an esprit de corps.
- Common purpose: team members share mutual goals.
- Competence: team members have access to the training and resources necessary to perform duties competently; demonstrate a high level of professionalism.
- Conflict resolution: processes are in place to work through disagreements; team members recognize healthy conflict as an opportunity for growth.
- Open communication: information is shared, communication is truthful and there are no hidden agendas.
- Participation: team members are encouraged to participate in team processes, decision-making and problem solving.

- Team integrity: team members encourage, support and listen to each other, and work to each other's strengths; individual and team efforts are recognized.

### Situational Leadership

Different leadership styles are more effective in different situations. For example, working with inexperienced convergent volunteers is very different from leading a team of seasoned, well-trained GSAR volunteers. A good leader can adapt their leadership style giving more or less direction and support, depending on the assignment and the people involved. This model for situational leadership is built upon the combination of two concepts: leadership style and development level.

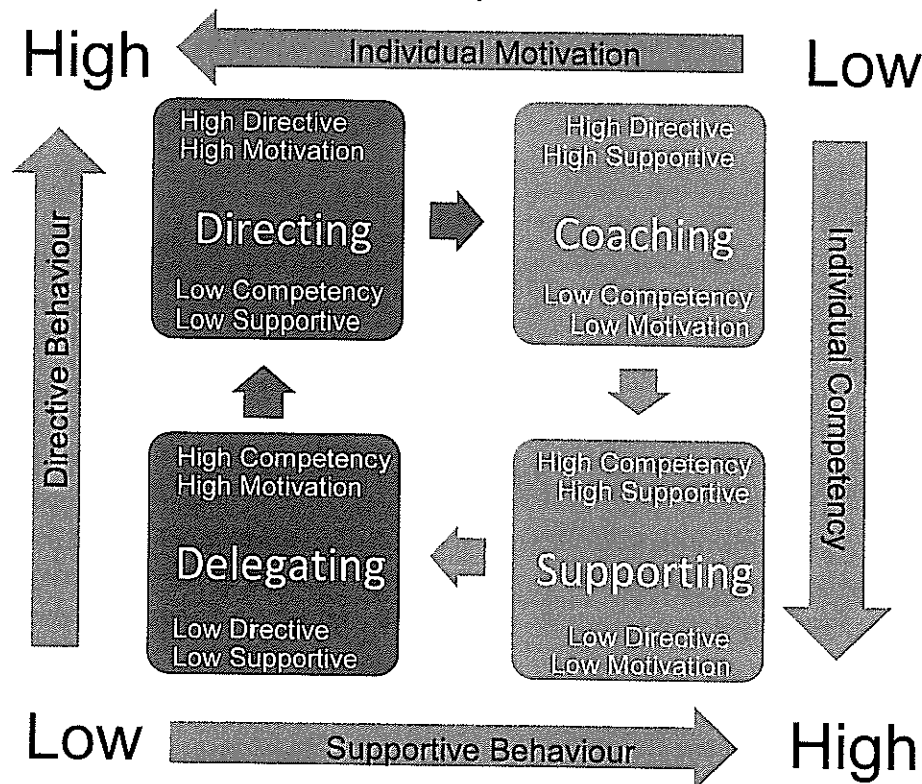


Figure 9: Situational Leadership

Leadership style is influenced by beliefs, values, ethics, knowledge, and skills, and is communicated to the team with every interaction. It can be categorized into four behavioural types based on the level of direction and support the leader provides:

- Directing: Roles and tasks are clearly defined and specific instructions are provided. Decisions are made by the leader and communicated down to the follower. There is a high degree of supervision and communication is primarily one-way.
- Coaching: Roles and tasks are still defined, but the leader seeks ideas and listens to suggestions. With coaching there is less direction, fewer instructions, more explanation of decisions, and more support. The leader is still the decision maker, but there is enhanced two-way communication.
- Supporting: Day-to-day decisions, such as assignments and processes are passed to the follower. Supporting behaviour involves facilitating and supporting another's

efforts and sharing decision-making responsibility. The leader still takes part in making decisions, but control is with the follower.

- Delegating: Control is with the follower. Delegating behaviour involves assigning the task and giving the other person the responsibility for decision making and problem solving. The leader can still be involved with problem solving and decision-making, but the follower decides how and when the leader will be involved.

The most effective leadership style in any given situation is the one that best matches the development level of the follower. There are four development levels based on competency and motivation. Competence is the person's ability to do the task while Motivation is the commitment and confidence to do it.

- Low Competence/High Motivation: When a team member lacks the skills or knowledge to complete a particular task but is keen to take it on, a telling/directing leadership role should be adopted. The team member will require detailed instructions and a high degree of supervision. This style is well suited to supervising convergent volunteers.
- Low Competence/Low Motivation: When a team member is capable, at least to some extent, of completing the task but lacks the confidence or motivation to take it on, a coaching style of leadership is most appropriate. Try to determine why the team member is hesitant; it may be that they have the necessary training, but have simply not had an opportunity to practice the skills. This follower will need support and encouragement to build both their skills and their confidence, which may require a little more time than is needed by others on the team.
- High Competence/Low Motivation: When a team member is more than capable of completing the task but is unwilling or unmotivated to do it, the participating/supporting leadership style should be used. In this situation, additional training is probably not necessary, but a great deal of encouragement and support will be needed. Try to determine what his/her motivational barriers are, and take steps to remove them, if possible.
- High Competence/High Motivation: When a team member is highly capable and motivated to complete the task, the delegating style can be adopted - leave the person to it and trust that the job will get done. While someone at this level requires less support than someone at a lower level, it's still very important to recognize his/her efforts.

Situational leadership is the art of matching leadership style with the development level of the follower (Note that it is the leader who adapts, not the follower). Remember that the person's development level will likely vary by assignment or situation and will certainly change over time. The team leader needs to be flexible enough to adapt their style as the situation changes.

## **Conflict Management**

As a team leader you will have to deal with conflict. Being part of a team for an extended time, the team leader will have to deal with all kinds of personality types and past experiences. In taking on an assignment with a group of people, the team leader

could encounter different ideas on what and how assignments are carried out. A team leader will not always get unanimous support. The key to being a successful team leader will be to blend the different approaches, to manage conflict, and keep the team focused on carrying out the assignment.

When conflict happens, a team leader's first reaction might be to take flight, or a need to hide or a need to fight and become aggressive. Whatever the instinctive reaction is, it is possible to learn how to overcome these instincts and effectively manage conflict. When faced with a conflict take a moment to take stock and consider the following:

- Personal goals and needs.
- Relationship with the other team member(s).

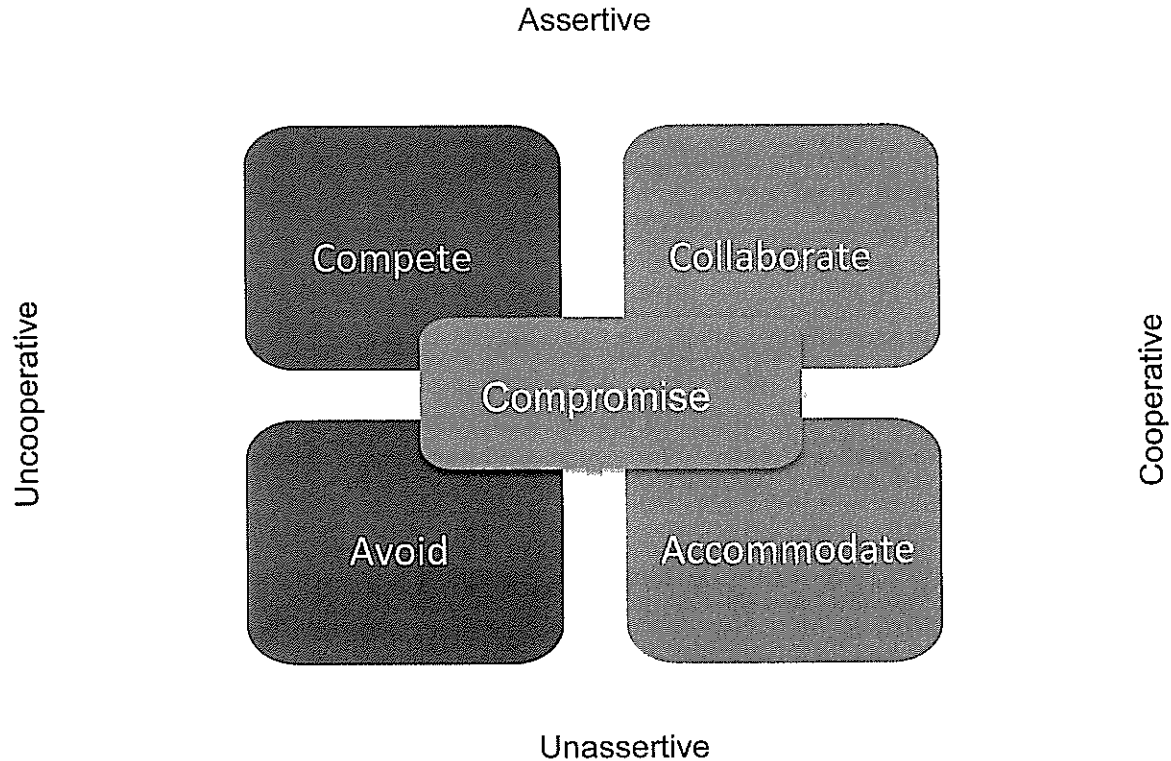
**First Response.** A team leader's choice to respond will depend in part, on the importance placed on personal goals and the significance of the relationship with the other party. If the relationship is more important than the goal then the approach may be to negotiate, so the conflict can be resolved while maintaining a positive relationship. If the goals and needs are more important than the team leader may need to risk damaging the relationship.

**There are a number of approaches to conflict management** You can manage your response to conflict by consciously choosing your approach to the situation. The approaches to conflict have been grouped under five terms as follows:

- Avoid
- Compete
- Accommodate
- Compromise
- Collaborate

These different approaches have been placed on a grid based on the level assertiveness and cooperation of the response.





**Figure 10: Conflict Management**

Personal preference and the specific situations will influence the approach used in any particular conflict. Each of these approaches will be useful at various times. Understanding the different conflict management approaches will equip the team leader with a broader range of options when facing conflict.

Avoid - The avoidance approach is the “*tomorrow*” or the “*no way*” thought. This method of handling conflict is low on being assertive and cooperative, indicating a low concern for both personal goals and the relationship. While this approach tends to worsen the conflict over time, there are occasions when it is useful. The avoidance approach is appropriate when:

- The issue is of low importance.
- It’s necessary to reduce tension in the situation.
- It’s necessary to buy some time.
- The immediate needs of the mission outweigh the need to resolve the conflict.

Compete - The competitive approach is the “*my way or the highway*” thought. It is high on being assertive but low on being cooperative. The emphasis is on personal goals at the expense of the relationship. The competitive approach is useful when:

- The situation requires quick action.
- An unpopular decision needs to be made.
- The issue is of vital importance.
- It’s necessary to protect self-interests or safety of others.

Accommodate - The accommodative approach is the “*it would be my pleasure*” or the “*your way*” thought. This method is low on being assertive and high on being cooperative; therefore, it places more importance on the relationship than on personal goals.

An accommodative approach can be useful when:

- It's necessary to demonstrate being reasonable.
- It's important to create good will.
- The goal is to keep the peace.
- The issue is of low importance.

Compromise - Compromise approach is the “*let's make a deal*” or “*meet me half way*” thought.

The compromise approach involves being moderately assertive and cooperative. It is essentially finding a balance between your personal needs with the importance of the relationship. This approach is useful when:

- The issue is of moderate importance.
- There are time constraints requiring a temporary solution.
- There is a strong personal commitment to resolution.
- There is an equal power relationship with the other party.

Collaborate - The collaborative approach is the “*two heads are better than one*”, or “*our way*” thought. It is high on both being assertive and cooperative, putting equally high importance on both personal goals and the relationship. The collaborative approach is often considered the best way to resolve all conflicts; however, it does require a great deal of time and energy. The collaborative approach is useful when:

- The issues are too important to compromise.
- Attempting to gain commitment.
- The situation requires a merging of perspectives.
- The conflict is important to those trying to find an integrated solution.
- Trying to improve relationships.

### **Counseling (Feedback)**

During a SAR operation, circumstances may arise where safety or other considerations make it necessary for the team leader to provide immediate corrective feedback or, in extreme situations, possibly removing a member from duty. Wherever possible, such action should be carried out privately and discreetly, and in coordination with command. The team leader must fully document the incident, along with any corrective actions taken, and provide a full report to command the need for any formal disciplinary action. As a team leader you need to know your teams policies and practices and the process of counseling and or disciplining members.

As a team leader you must also be concerned about the welfare of the members of your team. There will be occasions when addressing performance issues or showing concern will lead you to hearing about personal problems of team members.

### **Team Leaders Responsibility on Personal Issues**

A team leaders responsibility in terms of dealing with personal issues is twofold:

- Must initiate corrective action when performance on the job is adversely affected.
- Must be prepared to respond to a request for assistance to solve a personal issue.

Whether you initiate counseling or are asked for help, a team leader's approach to the problem must be the same. The team leader must assist the team member to discover the solution to their problem. Listed below are some general considerations on dealing with issues:

- Be available to all team members.
- Develop the ability to listen.
- Resist any tendency to sit in judgment.
- Let team members understand that raising a problem will not affect their standing in the team except when team policy and regulations specify otherwise.
- Respect the need for strict confidentiality.
- Address serious personal issues immediately.

### **Letting the Member Define the Problem**

No matter what a team leader thinks the problem is, encourage the member to define it in their own words. Having determined that the problem is of a personal nature the team leader response should be to provide support, useful information or to suggest referral to an expert. A counseling session should have two definite outcomes:

- The member should have defined the problem.
- The member has set a corrective course of action.

The team leader must be prepared to listen, question, summarize the facts and point out the consequences of possible actions. Ideally the member should decide on the corrective course of action to be taken. No matter what actions were proposed, a team leader must follow up to ensure that the action took place and that the problem is being addressed.

### **How to coach and address inappropriate actions by a team member**

Coaching is an important function of leading a team. It differs from supervision or management, which is more concerned with controlling material and coordinating work groups. Coaching also differs from mentorship, which is more about providing a role model and support, such as advice, experience, and skills for advancement of an individual. Coaching is a form of guidance to help team members to do the assignment and grow personally and professionally in the process. It is a supportive function so that the assignment is completed efficiently and effectively. Coaching is an interactive process when it takes place and is:

- One person teaching or demonstrating to another.
- A two-way street, the team member learns from the leader and vice versa.
- To develop the recipients skills or abilities in its immediate objective.
- Not evaluating or judging.
- More that advice given.

The job of a team leader is to try to bring out the best of all members within the team. When dealing with inappropriate actions, if time and circumstances permit, give a member an opportunity to correct or improve deficiency or shortcomings before any "official" counseling is initiated and recorded.

### **How to Mentor/Coach**

The ability to provide constructive feedback is an important skill for a team leader. Feedback is used to reinforce desirable behaviour, as well as to correct behaviour that is considered negative. While supervising, watch for both effective as well as ineffective actions and make sure that positive feedback is part of the team debrief. Use the following to guide you:

- Describe specific and changeable behaviour: Be specific on what is observed and what needs to be changed or improved upon. The purpose of feedback is to change behaviour. Commenting on behaviour that the person cannot change is counter-productive. Describe the facts and avoid judgments, opinions, or interpretations. Focus on the behaviour to be changed, not the individual. Here are some tips:
- Use "I" statements: "I" statements are less accusatory than "you" statements, and can reduce the likelihood of a defensive reaction.
- Be respectful: Some people receive feedback better than others. Be sensitive to how the member receives feedback and allow them an opportunity to respond to, and perhaps disagree with your feedback. After giving feedback, remain available to discuss it further and make an effort to follow up.
- Emphasize strengths as well as weaknesses: The "sandwich approach" is a good way to balance feedback. Provide reinforcement to positive behaviour by starting with comments on specific strengths. Then identify the detailed areas requiring improvement, making sure to include ways of making changes. Finish with another positive comment.
- Check for understanding: Make sure the receiver understands what needs to be changed and how it can be changed.
- Do not dwell: Once feedback has been given, move on. Although it may be necessary to follow up to ensure the behaviour has changed, try not to allow the current situation to colour future interactions with the team member.

### **When to Coach**

Provide guidance when required. Be alert to the opportunities of when to correct and improve skills and knowledge. Ensure the team knows that helping is part of a team leader role. Unless the situation poses an immediate risk to health and safety, feedback is generally more effective and relevant if given soon after the behaviour is observed. During a debriefing, be prepared to provide constructive feedback to the team as a whole, and not to a specific individual.

### **Where to Coach**

Provide guidance any place however, A team leader will run into situations where it is advisable to provide guidance in a private area or somewhere away from the team. Praise can be given in public, while constructive criticism should always be delivered in

private. Team members do not enjoy having their shortcomings exposed to their peers. If a team leader must utilize the private approach, it is advisable to do it quickly, without fuss or fanfare. If promptness is critical, then being positive in the approach will minimize the chance of the team member reacting negatively to guidance.

### Receiving Feedback

When a team leader provides guidance, be ready to receive feedback from the team. It is not easy to listen without reacting defensively, but it is just as important for a team leader to get feedback, as it is to give feedback. See the following guidelines:

- Apply listening skills: Use the active listening.
- Don't interrupt: concentrate on understanding, not on preparing your response.
- Check for understanding: Before responding, confirm what is being said. If necessary, paraphrase or ask questions to clarify meaning.
- Be receptive: Be open to new ideas and different opinions. There is often more than one way of doing something.
- Acknowledge and reflect: Express appreciation for the feedback, and give proper consideration to the feedback received before deciding if any action is warranted.
- Be gracious: Many people find it more difficult to receive positive feedback than constructive feedback. It is just as important to learn to take a compliment, as it is to accept criticism.

### What Coaching or Guidance is Not

- Pep-talks: Pep-talks do not transfer information, they transfer feelings. They may be helpful to create or change attitudes in groups, but they are not an effective means of motivating improved performance in team members. They are largely for the benefit of the talker as they try to communicate enthusiasm or displeasure.
- Advice and suggestions: These are largely opinions and most welcomed when asked for. For most, advice invites counter-argument especially if unsolicited. If a team leader is seen as an expert in some area this advice will be solicited and respected. If not then the team leader can expect their attitude to be "*your guess is as good as mine*". Too much advice can hamper development of the team member's initiative. Encourage members to make their own decisions on how to improve performance. Give advice when asked, give direction when necessary and make sure to understand the difference.
- Criticism: Is threatening and tends to arouse defensiveness and hostility. Searchers will judge criticism to be opinion backed by authority. Don't make the mistake of thinking of it as a form of guidance. Don't think that it is good so long as it is "*objective*". In a climate of disrespect the most "*objective*" criticism will generate resistance. Don't sandwich it between compliments unless they are relevant to the criticism, it makes no sense to tell them they made a mistake while telling them they are doing a great job. Don't criticize a member for being unable to do a particular job. Rather, you must offer guidance in the form of explanations or demonstrations and remove whatever barrier it is that prevent the member from performing the task. Criticism does nothing to develop ability and can produce defeatism, or stop an

individual from experimenting with new ways to increase performance on the job. When you want to change behaviour, be positive.

- Excessive praise: Like criticism, it is also seen as the opinion of one in a position of authority. Praise in itself does not help an individual learn to perform better. Unwarranted praise (in the eyes of the team member) erodes their respect for the team leader's standards and judgment. Praise judiciously when the job is completed, not beforehand.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.2.1
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Section 2.14 Team Roles
- GSAR Team Leader Manual, Justice Institute of British Columbia

### 5.2.2 Risk Management

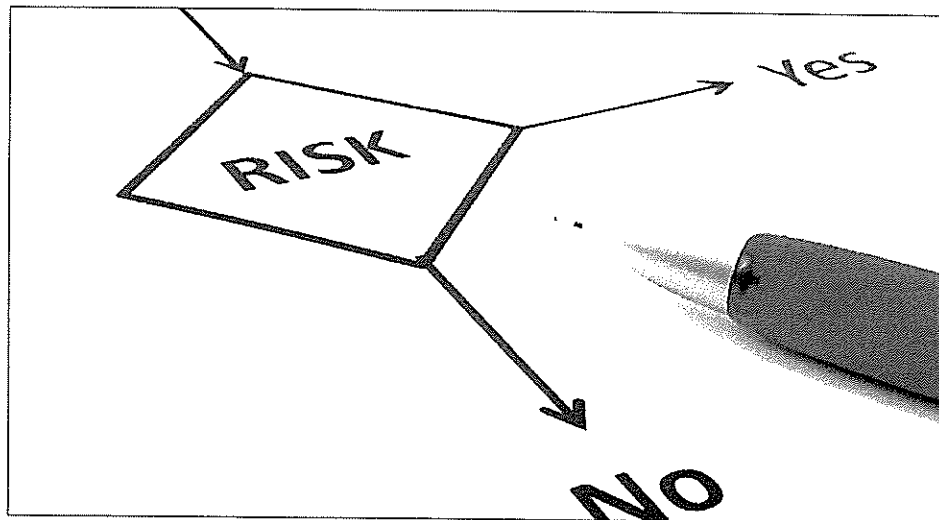


Figure 11: Risk Management

#### Role of the team leader:

As a member of the leadership structure, the team leader plays a key role when it comes to identifying, assessing, and managing and mitigating the risks to which team members may be exposed. At any time, the team leader can suspend or terminate the assignment if the safety of the team would be compromised. The team leader should immediately inform command of this decision and underlying situation and seek further instructions.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Potential hazards to the team from weather, natural hazards, wildlife, and humans (unstable and/or harmful)
- How to anticipate and assess level of risk,
- Strategies to manage and mitigate risks.

Observable Performance (Do):

- Identify and communicate risk to the team and command on ongoing basis.
- Use effective strategies for identifying, assessing, managing and mitigating risks.
- Inform command if a decision is made to suspend or terminate an assignment due to hazardous conditions.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.2.2

### 5.2.3 Team Safety

Role of the team leader:

Team safety should be the first priority for the team leader in the implementation of search assignments from beginning to end: providing safety information when briefing the team, considering team members' capabilities in assigning tasks, monitoring the physical conditions of team members in the carrying out of the assignment, ensuring the safe operation of vehicles and equipment, ensuring appropriate health break and rest, and demobilizing.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Factors that can affect searcher's safety and level of competency (e.g. fatigue, medications, alcohol, etc.
- How to evaluate the physical and psychological demands of a search assignment and assess whether the team has the appropriate capabilities.
- How to prevent injuries by ensuring rest, taking breaks, traveling safely as a team, and preventing environmental issues such as hypothermia.

Observable performance (Do):

- Have an injury prevention strategies for the search team which includes:
  - a) Utilization of PPE
  - b) Avoiding overexertion
  - c) Take appropriate breaks
  - d) Proper lifting techniques
  - e) Travelling safely
  - f) Strategies to prevent hyperthermia, hypothermia, and other environmental injuries.

- Before setting out on an assignment, confirm that all team members are alert, effective and competent.
- Assign tasks based on searcher skills.
- Confirm that team members are rested, healthy, can listen and react effectively, and are prepared for any environmental concerns by being dressed appropriately (including footwear) and having a SAR pack that is ready with items based on the search.
- Encourage team members to communicate if they are experiencing fatigue or injury, and communicate with command if such issues occur.
- Have strategies to prevent hyperthermia, hypothermia, and other environmental injuries.
- Take all reasonable and practical steps to ensure the safety of team members.
- Ensure team members implement safe work practices
- Assign members to activities that are consistent with their knowledge, skills and ability.
- Remove any member from activities if there are concerns as to the member's ability to safely perform their duties.
- Ensure appropriate emergency medical response services are provided or available to members. (See **First Aid**).
- Ensure hazards are identified and proper steps are taken to control the risks. (See **Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)**).
- Report incidents and near misses (including those that had the potential to cause serious injury) and accidents.
- Ensure only authorized and trained members operate equipment.
- Ensure necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided to members and that PPE is used, inspected and maintained properly.
- Ensure the safe handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials.
- Ensure contaminated equipment is adequately decontaminated or disposed of correctly.
- Promote a culture of safety and member care awareness.
- Cooperate with other agencies and first responder groups in dealing with safety and member care issues.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.2.3

### **5.2.4 Psychological Health and Safety**

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- The role of the Team Leader including:
  - Personal considerations that can affect a searcher's ability to respond
  - Steps to assist team members who appear to be affected by an incident and might be suffering from stress



- Steps to help prepare the team psychologically for the outcome of a search.
- The team leader's role in critical incident stress identification and management.
- How to recognize signs of critical incident stress in team members. What resources are available for assistance to team members.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Recognize signs of critical incident stress and provide direction/resources as needed.
- Follow policy and procedure for reporting search-related mental health issues affecting team members.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.2.4
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 –Safety in the Field

### **5.2.5 Transport**

Transportation to and from the training or search site must be done in a safe manner. Operators of vehicles must have the required licenses and be comfortable operating them in the conditions that will be encountered. All vehicles must be in proper operating condition and licensed/insured as required by law.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Procedures or protocols covering transport of the team to and from the search base or search area to ensure an organized response considering the various modes of transportation and the types of vehicles, machines, and equipment that might be used.
- The required driver's licence(s), training, and insurance for the vehicles and equipment that team members are authorized to use.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information and procedures to the team members regarding transportation to and from the search base or search area.
- Inform the team members about the types of vehicles, machines, and equipment that will be used for the assigned search mission.
- Validate that team members have the required driver's licence(s), training, abilities, and insurance for the vehicles and equipment that they are authorized to use.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.2.4
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field

## 5.3 Environment

### Overview:

A team leader will take appropriate precautions for protecting the safety of the team and others and will be able to identify potential hazards associated with environmental factors in the search area and communicate that information to the search team. Team leader competency elements covered in this competency category are:

- Weather
- Natural Hazards
- Animals
- Insects and Arachnids
- Plants
- Terrain

### 5.3.1 Weather

#### Role of the team leader:

Knowledge of various weather conditions and the risks they may represent for team members is a key component in fulfilling the team leader's responsibility for the safety of the team and the efficient implementation of search assignments.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be aware of the weather conditions that have occurred or are likely to prevail.
- Understand search hazards that can result from extreme weather, including freezing rain, major snowfall, strong winds, extreme cold and/or wind chill, lightning, extreme heat and/or humidity.
- Be familiar with weather information sources that can be utilized to prepare for a search assignment.
- Be familiar with the precautions to take for the variety of weather conditions and understand the limitations to respond.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information to team members about weather conditions that have occurred or are likely to prevail before departing on an assignment.
- Communicate information about potential search hazards that can result from extreme weather.
- Inform team members about weather information sources to utilize to help prepare for a search mission. Adapt to changing weather conditions and advise team members accordingly.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.3.1
- Government of Canada website <http://www.weather.gc.ca/>

### 5.3.2 Natural Hazards

Role of the team leader:

Knowledge of natural hazards and the risks they may represent for team members is a key component in fulfilling the team leader's responsibility for the safety of the team and the efficient implementation of search assignments.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be familiar with natural hazards, including flooding, landslides, avalanches, fires, wild land fires, lightning, earthquakes, hurricanes, high winds, tsunamis, and terrain that are relevant to the region.

Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information to team members regarding potential natural hazards.
- Ensure team members are aware of the risks natural hazards represent.
- React quickly to the changing environment and refocus the team when distracted.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.3.2
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field

### 5.3.3 Animals

Role of the team leader:

Knowledge of wild and domesticated animals, the risks they may represent for team members and how to handle animal encounters is a key component in fulfilling the team leader's responsibility for the safety of the team and the efficient implementation of search assignments.

Knowledge and understanding of:

The team leader must be familiar with:

- Animal species that can cause harm, including:
  - Bears
  - Moose
  - Coyote
  - Dogs and other domestic animals/livestock
  - Snakes
- Actions that can be taken to reduce the risk of negative animal encounters and what to do when confronted with an animal or attack.

- Symptoms of disease that animals can cause if bitten (e.g. rabies).
- First aid treatment for animal attacks and/or bites.
- The process for reporting animal encounters or attacks.

Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information to team members about animal species in the area that can cause harm. Ensure team members react appropriately when encountering animal species that may be a threat to the team.
- Inform team members about recommended actions to take to reduce the risk of animal encounters, including what to do when confronted with an animal or attack by a predator.
- Instruct team members about the potential for disease and how to recognize symptoms that may not develop till long after a search operation or training event has taken place.
- Ensure that first aid supplies are available for treatment of animal attacks and/or bites.
- Inform team members about the procedures for reporting animal encounters or attacks.



Figure 12: Animals

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.3.3

### 5.3.4 Insects and Arachnids

Role of the team leader:

Knowledge of insects and arachnids and the risks they may represent for team members is a key component in fulfilling the team leader's responsibility for the safety of the team and the efficient implementation of search assignments.

Knowledge and understanding of:

The team leader must be familiar with:

- Insects and arachnids that can cause harm, including:
  - Ticks
  - Bees
  - Wasps and hornets
  - Mosquitoes
  - Black flies
  - Spiders
- Actions that can be taken to reduce the risk of contact with insects and arachnids that could cause harm.
- Symptoms of disease that insects and arachnids can cause if bitten

Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information to team members about insects and arachnids in the area that can cause harm.
- Communicate information about actions to take to reduce the risk of contact with insects and arachnids that could cause harm, including the use of insect repellent.
- Instruct team members about the potential for disease and how to recognize symptoms of disease from insect and arachnid bites that may not develop until long after a search operation or training exercise has taken place.
- Ensure that team members have the necessary first aid supplies for the treatment of insect bites and seek medical treatment for insect-borne diseases
- Communicate to team members the reporting procedures for insect bites.
- Find out which team members have severe allergic reactions to insects and if they know how to administer their own medication.
- Be on the lookout for members being distracted due to the annoyance of insects and stop and refocus the team when needed.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.3.4

- Government of Canada — Healthy Canadians website:  
<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/diseases-conditions-maladies-affections/index-eng.php>

### 5.3.5 Plants

#### Role of the team leader:

Knowledge of poisonous or harmful plants and the risks they may represent for team members is a key component in fulfilling the team leader's responsibility for the safety of the team and the efficient implementation of search assignments.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

The team leader must be familiar with:

- Plant species in the area that are poisonous or can cause harm.
- Actions to take to reduce the risk of contact with poisonous or harmful plants.
- Actions to take upon discovery of a person suspected of poisoning by a plant.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information to team members about plant species in the area that are poisonous or can cause harm.
- Communicate information to team members about actions to take to reduce the risk of contact with poisonous or harmful plants.



Figure 13: Plants

- Inform team members about the steps to take upon discovery of a person suspected of suffering from poisoning by a plant.
- Confirms that team members have the necessary first aid supplies for the treatment of poisoning by plants such as Giant Hogweed or Cow Parsnip

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.3.5
- Government of Canada — Canadian Poisonous Plants Information System website: <http://www.cbif.gc.ca/acp/eng/poisonous-plants/search>

### 5.3.6 Terrain

#### Role of the team leader:

Knowledge of the terrain and the risks it may represent for team members is a key component in fulfilling the team leader's responsibility for the safety of the team and the efficient implementation of search assignments.



Figure 14: Terrain

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Understand how the terrain can have an impact, including:
  - Selection and use of clothing and footwear, search gear, equipment and vehicles.
  - Type of search technique utilized.
  - Method of travel.
  - Rescue technique.
  - The need for additional or specialized resources.

- Be familiar with the terrain types and hazards for the search area, including:
  - Forests and wetlands.
  - Lakes, rivers, creeks, canals, moving water.
  - Mountains (avalanche hazard), hills, cliffs.
  - Mine shafts, caves, crevices, wells.
  - Urban environment.
  - Snow or ice travel.
  - Farmland, pastures.
  - Gas lines, power lines.
  - Construction sites, industrial sites.
  - Roads, highways, railroads.
  - Sunlight and/or darkness.

Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate information to team members about terrain types and hazards for the area.
- Check that team members are wearing the appropriate clothing and footwear for the terrain.
- Make informed decisions based on terrain, including:
  - Appropriate search gear.
  - Use of equipment and vehicles.
  - Type of search technique to employ.
  - Method of travel.
  - Rescue technique.
- Ensure searchers remain focused on searching while maintaining sight of potential terrain hazards Stop the team from entering dangerous terrain features if unequipped or untrained. See Section 10 Specialized Resources.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.3.6
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual



## 5.4 First Aid and Survival Skills

### Overview:

The team leader must ensure that team members have the required first aid credentials and survival skills suitable to their assignment and that the team is equipped with essential first aid/survival supplies and equipment. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- First Aid
- Survival Skills

### 5.4.1 First Aid



Figure 15: First Aid

### Role of the team leader:

In situations requiring first aid or a rescue, the team leader is responsible for overseeing the process, assigning tasks to team members and requesting additional resources as required.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Standard first aid for search operations.
- Essential first aid supplies to be included in SAR ready pack.

Observable performance (Do):

- Complete and provide proof of standard first aid training as required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)
- Check to ensure team members have required first aid training and credentials.
- Inform team members about the first aid supplies to be included in the SAR ready pack.
- In situations requiring the application of first aid or a rescue, the team leader must:
  - Assign first aiders to care for the patient.
  - Notify command of the situation.
  - Keep proper documentation of the entire process and stay in constant communication with the lead first aider.
  - Stay in contact with command informing them of the progress being made as well as passing on information about the patient so that EMS is aware of subject's condition and prepared when patient arrives.
  - Assess the situation and determine what resources are necessary to provide proper care for the ill or injured person or perform a rescue if needed.
  - If rescue is necessary:
    - Ask for as many additional personnel or resources as may be required (do not bring in any more than necessary). Too many people on scene only create confusion.
    - Assign members to find and flag the best possible route to transport the patient to safety.
    - Have the routes cleared sufficiently to allow safe passage of personnel carrying a rescue basket or any other equipment being used (e.g. Snowmobile, ATV, etc.).
    - Clear an area in order to prepare the patient for transport.
    - If a chainsaw is necessary, make sure the person operating it is well skilled, preferably having completed the chainsaw safety course.
    - Be prepared to receive any additional equipment and assign appropriate personnel to take charge of each piece as it arrives
  - If specialty skills are required for extrication, notify command of the need and what skills are required.
  - Allow leaders of special teams to perform his/her duty without interference; however stay in touch with him/her so as to pass on information to command as it becomes available.
  - If it is necessary to carry a patient in a basket for any distance, remember it is exhausting work. Have members trade off regularly so as not to become fatigued. Tired people may stumble causing further injury to the patient or to someone else.
  - Remember slow and steady gets the job done safely.

- Stop regularly to check on the patient.
- Upon arriving at the EMS vehicle, allow only one person, preferably the lead first aider, to make a report to EMS personnel.
- Check that all rescue personnel are accounted for.
- Assign one person to over-see that all equipment is accounted for and stored.
- Upon completion of all tasks, make a full report of the incident to command, and be prepared to answer any questions, which may arise.
- Once the report has been made, take the team aside and debrief the incident from start to finish. Make notes of any errors and any recommendation to improve efficiency in the future. Remember make it a positive debrief.
- Ensure the team participates in the overall debrief.
- The first aid equipment carried will be based on the level of training and the program that the team has been qualified. As a team leader, ensure that you are aware of these requirements and that equipment is checked prior to taking on an assignment.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.4.1
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field

### **5.4.2 Survival Skills**

#### Role of the team leader:

As search operations may take place in remote areas and in adverse conditions, the team leader must have a firm understanding of the skills necessary to survive in these conditions. These skills must extend to caring for an injured or ill person for an extended period of time. The team leader must remember these two rules of thumb: *“Dress for the season not for the day”*. *“Prepare for the worst and hope for the best.”*



**Figure 16: Survival Skills**

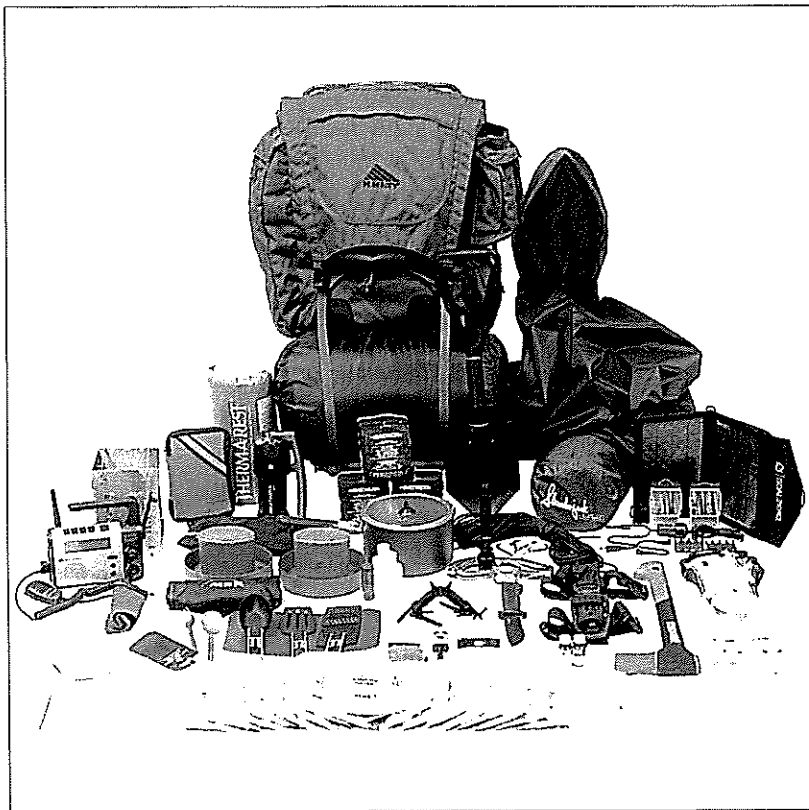
Knowledge and understanding of:

- Psychological demands associated with being in a survival situation (e.g. Importance of a positive mental attitude).
- Risks associated with fear and how to control.
- Systemic survival planning and how it can be applied.
- Contents of a personal survival kit.
- Actions to take when mission personnel become lost or injured.
- Actions to take when a victim is located and requires assistance.
- Necessities of life elements and how they are relevant in GSAR.
- Steps involved in building and using fire and the materials required.
- Types of emergency shelters and how they are constructed.
- Selection of locations for emergency shelters.
- Methods of water purification.
- Potential sources of water in survival situations.
- Selection of food and food preparation.
- Sources of food in survival situations.
- Emergency signaling in survival situations.
- Basic knot tying.

Observable performance (Do):

- Coach team members about the physical and psychological demands associated with a survival situation, including how fear can be controlled and how systematic survival situation planning is used.
- Check to ensure that team members have complete personal survival kits in their SAR ready packs.
- Coach team members about necessities of life requirements in a survival situation.
- Inform team members about how necessities of life elements factor into search operations, including:
  - a) Food:
    - i) nutritional requirements for GSAR missions;
    - ii) food selection; and
    - iii) sources of food in survival situations;
  - b) Water:
    - i) hydration requirements for GSAR missions;
    - ii) hazards of dehydration;
    - iii) methods of water purification
    - iv) sources of water in survival situations;
  - c) Shelter:
    - i) types of emergency shelters and how they are constructed
    - ii) appropriate locations for emergency shelters

- d) Heat:
- i) how to build a fire and what materials are used
  - ii) what fire is used for
- Demonstrate various emergency signals methods to team members.
  - Team leader role and responsibilities related to preparedness for and handling of survival situations also include:
    - Ensuring team has survival equipment required for search environment
    - Informing team members about actions to take when personnel become lost or injured
    - Overseeing process of survival planning
    - Overseeing implementation of survival actions, including signaling, emergency shelter construction, fire building, and water purification.



**Figure 17: Survival Pack**

**References:**

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.4.2
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 4 – Basic Survival and First Aid

## 5.5 Transportation and Equipment Safety

### Overview:

A team leader must have knowledge of applicable legislation and regulations regarding the vehicles and equipment used for search assignments. The key role of the team leader with regards to transportation and equipment safety is to ensure that team members authorized to operate the vehicles and equipment have the required training and licenses and that all safety procedures are followed. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- Personal Vehicles
- SAR Response Vehicles
- Vehicle and Trailer Combinations
- Marine Emergency Vessels
- Snowmobiles
- All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV)
- Aircraft – Rotary Wing
- Mountain Bikes

### 5.5.1 Personal Vehicles

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Have a working knowledge of the safe use of the vehicle on route to search area, on assignments and on return trip.
- Be familiar with applicable regulations, including insurance and licensing requirements.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Ensure vehicles are in good working condition, insured and licensed appropriately.
- Understand the capabilities of the vehicle be utilized as to not over extend the capacities.
- Ensure that all members follow local traffic regulations (e.g. seat belts).
- Ensure members concentrate solely on driving; additional activities are delegated to others in the vehicle.
- Once on scene, ensure vehicles are parked in the correct location as to not interfere with search operations.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.1
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field

## 5.5.2 SAR Response Vehicles



**Figure 18: SAR Response Vehicles**

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Have a working knowledge of the safe operation of the SAR response vehicle.
- Be familiar with applicable laws and requirements for the safe operation of SAR response vehicles, including user authorization and license requirements.
- Transportation policies and procedures with the specific jurisdiction.
- Items to include in the inspection of vehicles for replacement and serviceability.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Assess skills of team members in the assignment of driving duties.
- Check that operators have all required training and licenses for the operation of SAR response vehicles.
- Check vehicles pre- and post-trip to ensure that they are running safely, are serviceable, and equipped properly.
- Assign tasks for operating SAR response vehicles to team members.
- Once on scene, ensure that the vehicle is parked as to not interfere with search operations.

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.2
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field

### 5.5.3 Vehicle and Trailer Combinations



Figure 19: Vehicle and Trailer Combination

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Be familiar with safe loading and securing procedures for vehicle combination
- Have a working knowledge of how to safely operate this combination during all weather conditions.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Communicate tasks and assignments to team members for the loading and operation of vehicles and trailer combinations.
- Conduct inspections of tow vehicle and trailer.
- Assess team member's ability to operate vehicle combination and provide feedback.
- Ensure gross vehicle towing weight is appropriate.
- Once on scene, ensure that the vehicle combination is parked as to not interfere with search operations.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.3
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field



### 5.5.4 Marine Emergency Vessels



Figure 20: Marine Emergency Vessels

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

The team leader must be familiar with:

- Legislation and regulations concerning watercraft operations and licensing.
- Information to be covered in pre-departure briefings.
- A marine vessel utilized by a SAR team is considered a commercial vessel, rather than a pleasure craft.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Ensure that all team members are wearing appropriate protective equipment (e.g. PFD and/or SAR PPE).
- Conduct pre-departure briefing.
- Ensure operator is authorized and license to operate vessel.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.4
- Safe Boating Guide – Transport Canada – Office of Boating Safety

### 5.5.5 Snowmobiles



Figure 21: Snowmobiles

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

A team leader must be familiar with:

- Laws and regulations for the use and operation of snowmobiles.
- Safe operating procedures for snowmobile.
- Required safety equipment to be available for use.
- Importance of having a minimum of two snowmobiles travelling in a group

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Check to ensure team members are trained and familiar with the operation of a snowmobile and required safety equipment (e.g. helmets)
- Assign snowmobile operations to qualified team members.
- Ensure reliability and safety of snowmobile prior to departure.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.5
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 8.14 – Snowmobile Searches

### 5.5.6 All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV)



Figure 22: All-Terrain Vehicle

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

A team leader must be familiar with:

- Laws and regulations for the use and operation of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).
- The safe operating procedures for ATVs that will be used for search missions.
- The required safety equipment to be available and used.
- The importance of having a minimum of two ATVs travel together

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Check to ensure team members are trained and familiar with the operation of ATV and required safety equipment (e.g. helmets)
- Assign ATV operations to qualified team members.
- Ensure reliability and safety of ATV prior to departure.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.6
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3 – Safety in the Field
- ServiceNL ATV Safety website <http://www.servicenl.gov.nl.ca/drivers/atvsafety/>
- Motorized snow vehicle and all-terrain vehicle regulations website <http://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/Regulations/rc961163.htm>

### 5.5.7 Aircraft – Rotary Wing



Figure 23: Helicopter

Knowledge and understanding of:

A team leader must be familiar with hazards and safety procedures when working around or in rotary wing aircraft.

Observable performance (Do):

- Ensure team members are familiar with all safety procedures while working around or in rotary wing aircraft.
- Communicate safety procedures to team members.
- Follow communication protocols in reporting routing to SAR manager.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.5.7
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 3.9 - Transportation

## 5.6 Navigation

### Overview:

A team leader must have the knowledge and ability to utilize maps, compasses and Global Positioning System (GPS) units during operations while leading a search team. A key role of the team leader is to determine which device would apply for a specific search assignment, to assign navigation tasks to team members and to provide quality control regarding their use. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- Maps
- Compass
- Global Positioning System (GPS)
- Map and Compass
- GPS and Map

### 5.6.1 Maps

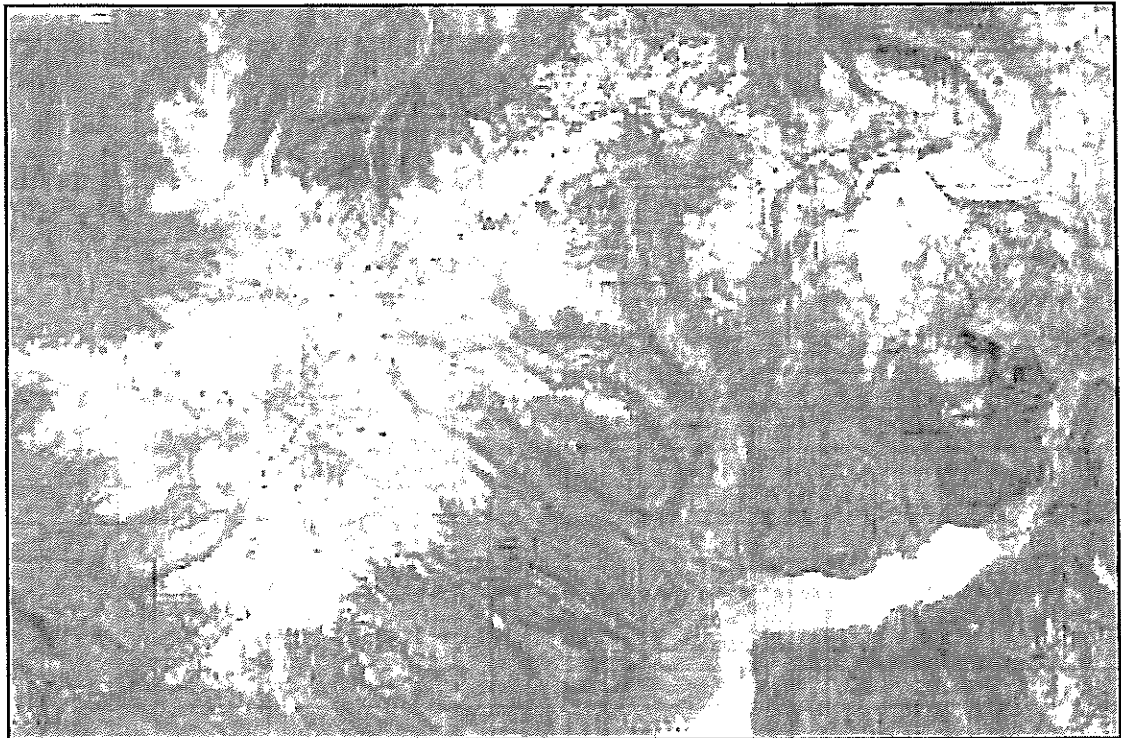


Figure 24: Map

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Understand the differences between types of maps that would be used in the search area and the limitations of the various types, including:
  - Topographical
  - Road
  - Marine
  - Aeronautical

- Orthophoto
  - Trail
  - Park
  - Forestry
- Understand the differences between technical versus non-technical terrain and the need for specialized resources. (See Section 10.4 When to Call in a Technical Team).
  - How to complete a hazard assessment based on map information.
  - How to identify potential hazards not identified on a map due to scale (e.g., lack of details).

Observable performance (Do):

- Ensure the map being used is appropriate for the search assignment.
- Be able to identify the terrain variations from the map(s).
- Complete a hazard assessment based on map information. (See Section 10.2.1 Hazard Identification).
- Identify potential hazards related to the terrain.
- Identify resources and safety equipment needed to manage potential hazards.
- Demonstrate how to use maps to plan and implement searches including:
  - Coordinates of assigned search area
  - Distances to and from assignments
  - Best approaches to implement search assignments
  - Terrain, vegetation, trails, roads, obstacles, and other features found within search area
  - Position of radio relays

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.6.1
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 2 – Compass and Navigation

## 5.6.2 Compass

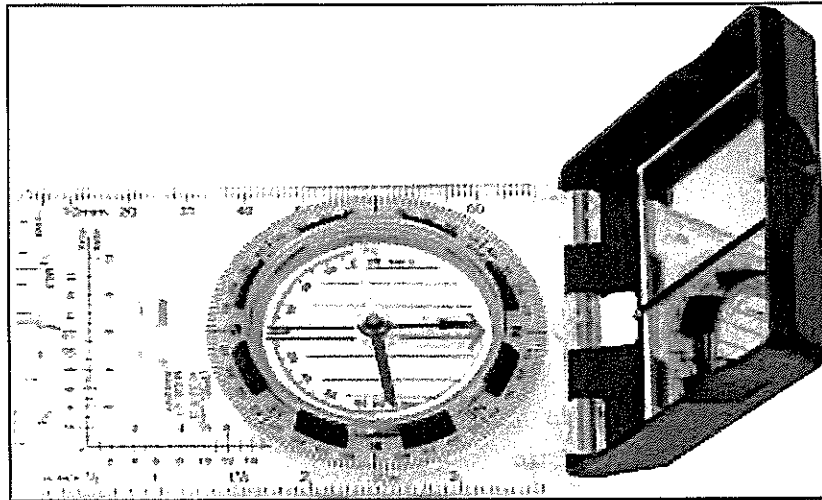


Figure 25: Compass

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Have a working knowledge of the use of a compass including:
  - Taking or following a bearing.
  - Setting or allowing for declination.
  - Assessing the serviceability of the compass.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Be able to instruct team members on checking that declination is correct for the area.
- Check for serviceability and proper use of the compass including:
  - Proper movement of the dial.
  - Presence of bubbles in the dial.
  - Proper orientation of magnetic arrow.
  - Interference such as metal objects, magnetic interference and geologic interference.
  - Alignment and position of compass.
  - Proper use of mirror.
- Be able to demonstrate proper maintenance and care of compass.

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.6.2
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 2 – Compass and Navigation

### 5.6.3 Global Positioning System (GPS)



Figure 26: GPS

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Have a working knowledge of the features of a GPS that are beneficial during a search assignment.
- Understand the features and menus of pages commonly used during a search.
- Be familiar with how to program different pages to customize views.

Observable performance (Do):

- Be able to verify the proper use of GPS by team members for various search related purposes, including:
  - Marking, entering and projecting waypoints.
  - Navigating to specific locations in a safe and efficient manner.
  - Reporting coordinates of various positions (team, clues, evacuation points, etc.).
  - Recording tracks to be downloaded following completion of search assignment.
  - Application to search patterns.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.6.2
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual – Unit 5 Global Positioning System



## 5.6.4 Map and Compass



Figure 27: Map and Compass

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Have a working knowledge of how map and compass can be used to determine a safe and appropriate travel route between two points.
- Know how to read a map and identify physical features that may affect the route.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Use map and compass to support the implementation of search assignments, including:
  - The safest and appropriate travel routes to and from assignments
  - Bearing of grid sweeps
  - The safety bearing to be used by team members during search assignments
  - The safest and most appropriate route to converge on other teams to assist with evacuation or other assignments
  - Using the map scale to determine distance.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.6.4
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 2 – Compass and Navigation

**5.6.5 GPS and Map**

**Figure 28: GPS and Map**

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Having a working knowledge of how to use the GPS with the maps being utilized including:
  - Paper maps.
  - Digital maps.
  - Pre-loaded maps in GPS unit.

Observable performance (Do):

- Be able to verify the proper use of map and GPS by team members for various search related purposes, including:
  - Transferring GPS coordinates to a map.
  - Transferring map coordinates to the GPS.
  - Accessing the map feature on the GPS.
  - Checking that the GPS and the map datum are the same.
  - Changing the map datum to coordinate with the map in use.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.6.5
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 2 – Compass and Navigation
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 5 – Global Position System

## 5.7 Communication

### Overview:

A team leader must be familiar with all communication equipment, systems, and protocols utilized while deployed on a search assignment and understand how vital communications are, to and from command, as well as to and from search teams. The role of the team leader is to ensure efficient communications between the team, other teams and command to help transmit key pieces of information in a timely and professional manner. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- Awareness of Role of Communication during an Incident
- Radio Operations
- Satellite and Cell Phones
- Alerting Technologies
- Emerging Communication Technologies

### **5.7.1 Awareness of Role of Communication during an Incident**

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Best practices for the care of communications equipment before, during, and after a search.
- Communication protocols within team, between individual teams, and relaying to command, including the role of the team leader in directing communications.
- How to establish intra-team communications, such as message relay and line search team communications.
- Team leader's responsibility for field notes.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Direct all communications following established protocols.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.7.1
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 6 Radio Communications

### **5.7.2 Radio Operations**

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Use of radios for different search techniques (e.g., swift-water, sound sweep, high-angle, road search, etc.).
- How to keep field notes.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Troubleshoots problems with telecommunication systems and equipment.
- Sets up and operates repeaters, base stations, and mobile radios specific to the team or organization.
- Communicates effectively through air-to-ground radios (e.g., land mobile VHF-FM or air VHF-AM), specific to the team or organization.

- Maintains field notes.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.7.2
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 6 Radio Communications

### 5.7.3 Satellite and Cell Phones



Figure 29: Satellite and Cell Phones

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- When to control use of personal devices, including device applications such as cameras.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Use satellite and cell phones as alternate sources of communication.
- Instruct team members on specific types of messaging.
- Send data using satellite communication, specific to the team organization.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.7.3
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual
- Transport Canada <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/menu.htm>

### 5.7.4 Alerting Technologies

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- When and how to best use alerting technologies.
- Search devices on 406 frequencies, where available. (Note: 406 MHz is a new frequency utilized for emergency locator transmitters and beacons.)
- Beacon devices, where available, for air, marine and ground searches.
- Device limitations.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Lead team in use of appropriate alerting technologies.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.7.4
- Transport Canada <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/menu.htm>

**5.7.5 Emerging Communication Technologies**Knowledge and understanding of:

- Best practices for the care of new technology equipment before, during, and after a search.
- Importance of maintaining back-up conventional communications.

Observable performance (Do):

- Assess team member's competencies with new communication technology equipment.
- Ensure team members follow appropriate guidelines established for the use of new communication technology equipment.
- Recognize limitations of existing equipment and identify and/or request new resources needed (and the urgency of the need) to SAR manager.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.7.5

## 5.8 Lost Person Behaviour

### Overview:

A team leader must be knowledgeable of the characteristics of a lost person and how they may support and influence search efforts. Team leader competency element covered in this category is: Lost Person Behaviour

### 5.8.1 Lost Person Behaviour

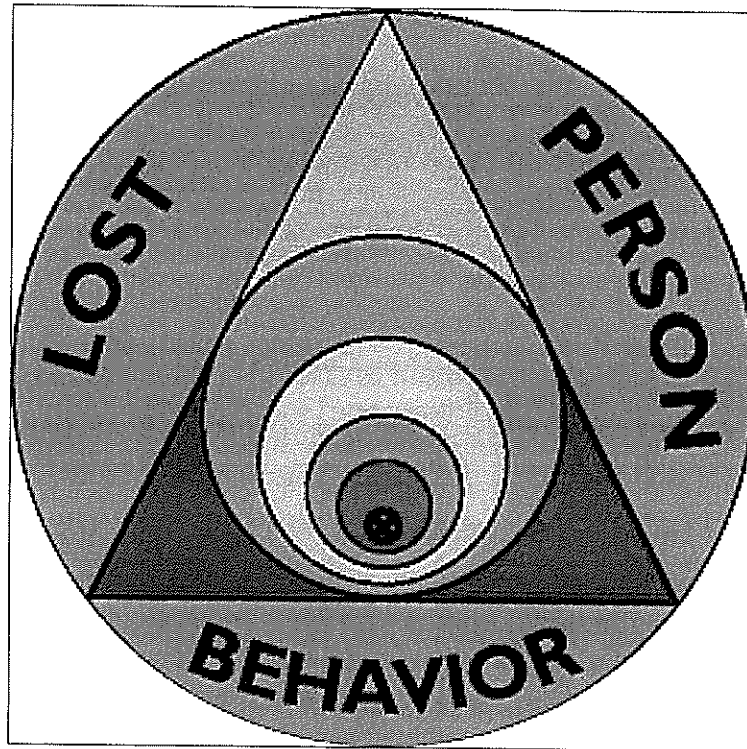


Figure 30: Lost Person Behaviour

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Lost-person behaviour analysis as it applies to GSAR tactics.
- The relationship between lost-person behaviour analysis and search theory.
- The different styles of searching (i.e., active and/or passive) and their relationship to lost-person behaviour.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Undertake terrain analysis to provide SAR manager with planning data.
- Identify decision points in the field and communicates these to SAR manager to aid in search planning.
- Direct and coach team members to search effectively considering lost-person behaviour information.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.8.1
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 7 – Lost Person Behavior
- Lost Person Behaviour, A Search and Rescue Guide on Where to Look – for Land, Air and Water: Robert J. Koester
- Missing Person Behaviour Handbook – First Edition (June 2003): Dave Perkins and Pete Roberts
- Why do people get lost? UK Mountain Rescue Conference, Stirling, Scotland, Sept 6, 2008

## 5.9 Search Competencies

### Overview:

A team leader must be able to integrate search theory and types, patterns and techniques into search operations. The team leader is responsible for directing the operation of a search team and assigning tasks in order to complete an assignment in a safe and efficient manner, ensuring that policies and procedures are followed. The team leader monitors the performance and dynamics of their team throughout search operations to ensure an effective and efficient response. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- Search Theory
- Notification
- Activation (call-out), Checking in, and Initial Briefing
- Assignments
- Search Techniques
- Confinement/Containment
- Attraction Methods
- Clue Awareness and Detection
- Demobilization Process
- Night Searches
- Land-Water Interface Searches
- Evidence Handling
- Dealing with Deceased Persons
- Urban Searches

### 5.9.1 Search Theory

#### Role of the team leader:

Although team leaders are not directly involved in search management, their ability to ensure the safe and efficient implementation of team assignments is enhanced by a solid understanding of search theory, as it provides a rationale and context for the assignments. This understanding is particularly important when briefing team members about what is being asked of them and in reporting back to the overhead team with regards to the implementation of the assignment.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Factors that make SAR incidents emergencies. These factors include the potential, as time passes, for:
  - Expansion of the search area.
  - Deterioration of physical or mental condition of the lost person.
  - Change in level of responsiveness of the lost person.
  - Deterioration of weather conditions.
  - Contamination or loss of clues.
  - Exhaustion of available resources.
- Evaluation of search urgency, Be familiar with the criteria used to determine the level of search urgency and how they are rated as this may affect their decision/recommendation in the field as they carry out team assignments.



- Components of a search, including:
  - a) Pre-planning; (being familiar with the group's operational pre-plan and keeping knowledge current regarding: checklists, resource lists, reference documents, standard operating procedures (SOP's) and memoranda of agreement).
  - b) Notification; (See Section 5.9.2 Notification).
  - c) Response; (See Section 5.9.4 Assignments).
  - d) Tactics and/or operations; (See Sections 5.9.5 to 5.9.14).
  - e) Suspension; (contributing to determining factors such as safety of searchers, weather conditions, depletion of resources, lack of clues, search coverage achieved).
  - f) Evaluation. (Leading debriefings with their respective team and debriefing Planning Chief during incidents as well as participating in post incident reviews).
- Key concepts of search management, including:
  - a) Probability of detection (POD);
  - b) Probability of area (POA);
  - c) Point last seen (PLS);
  - d) Last known position (LKP);
  - e) Initial planning point (IPP). Which can be the PLS or the LKP (See Sections 7.1 and 7.2 of NLSARA Search Techniques Manual).

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Integrate search theory into search operations. Some examples:
  - a) Including relevant search planning information in briefing the team to provide context for the assignment.
  - b) Leading the team in determining POD for specific team assignments.
  - c) Leading the team in searching to a specific coverage, to achieve a set POD, as directed by the overhead team.
  - d) Providing feedback to the overhead team that may assist in revising search urgency rating, POA, cumulative POD, PLS or LKP.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.1
- ICS 202 Incident Objectives
- Managing the Lost Person Incident (NASAR, 1997 – 2011)

## 5.9.2 Notification

### Role of the team leader:

Although it is not a specific responsibility of team leaders to receive and initiate response to the initial notification, they should be familiar with the type of information that may help supplement planning and searching information in the event the team encounters individuals who may have information to contribute.

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Procedures to receive and respond to notification.
- Integration of notification into the initiation of search operations.

### Observable performance (Do):

- Receive and respond to notification.
- Integrate notification into the initiation of search operations.
- Ensure that team member's record and report new information received from persons encountered in the search area.
- Report new information received during the course of the search to the SAR Manager.
- Be familiar with the type of information that should be recorded when encountering an individual during an assignment that may have information about the lost person, including:

#### About the individual:

- Name
- Contact information
- Relationship to lost person
- State of mind

#### About the lost person:

- Name
- PLS/LKP
- Direction of travel
- Mode of travel
- Physical description
- Clothing/footwear
- Equipment
- Physical condition
- State of mind
- Purpose
- Number in party

### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.2
- ICS 201 Incident Briefing

### **5.9.3 Activation (Call-out), Checking In, Initial Briefing**

#### Role of the team leader:

At the onset of a search, the overhead team is busy gathering information, and developing plans, setting up teams, and developing assignments, and setting up facilities, and equipment. As experienced members of the group, team leaders can assist in this initial flurry of activity.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Procedures for assembling and/or checking in. Be familiar with assembling and/or signing-in procedures specific to their group and tasking agencies.
- Contingency plans and implementation.
- Characteristics of facilities (command post, staging area, base camp, etc.) and their requirements (e.g., safety, capacity, security, communications).
- Understand the impacts of human dynamics when working with a team and assigning tasks
- Equipment requirements.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Maintain team records, including equipment checklist.
- Assemble assigned team members.
- Ensure team members are checked in.
- Identify and obtain resources (e.g., equipment).
- Write briefings, when appropriate, to the team.
- Deliver briefings to the team.
- Consider human dynamics of the team when assigning tasks.
- Communicate initial tasks and assignments to team members.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.3

### **5.9.4 Assignments**

#### Role of the team leader:

A team leader's key role is to ensure the carrying out of team assignments in an efficient and effective manner utilizing available resources. Team assignments are initiated by a briefing from Operations Section, followed by team briefing, securing of equipment, delegation of roles and responsibilities, supervision of team assignment to ensure quality control, handling of unexpected circumstances, clear and timely communications with overhead team, debriefing with team and Planning Section and team demobilization/reassignment. At all times during this process, the team leader is responsible for the safety and cohesion of the team.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Assignment requirements (i.e., what needs to be done). Understand clearly the requirements of the team assignment prior to heading out in the field.
- Be cognizant of the team's capabilities and skills as they relate to the carrying out of the team assignment in the specific search environment.
- Be able to determine and obtain the equipment and supplies required for the team assignment prior to and as the assignment unfolds.
- Recording and reporting requirements.

Observable performance (Do):

- Identify and obtain resources for search missions prior to leaving the staging area and as the assignment unfolds.
- Communicate assignments to team members through the briefing including
  - a) Description of situation (e.g., incident, subject, map orientation, other search efforts);
  - b) Mission (i.e., who, what, where, when, how);
  - c) Execution (i.e., phases, tasks by phase, coordinating details);
  - d) Administration (i.e., logistics, safety requirements);
  - e) Communications (i.e., command structure, frequency, call signs, code words, radio checks);
  - f) Tools available (i.e., maps, assignment sheet, subject profile, track report).
- Delegate tasks and/or responsibilities of team members.
- Check to ensure that team members are prepared for the assigned search mission (e.g., equipped the appropriate clothing, equipment and supplies).
- Achieve assignment objectives.
- Maintain team records and/or data (assignment sheets, checklists).
- Prepare contingency plans.
- Implement contingency plans.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.4

### 5.9.5 Search Techniques

#### Role of the team leader:

A key responsibility of the team leader is to ensure the effective application in the field of search types, patterns and techniques. This requires both a clear understanding of the concepts described below and the ability to supervise their implementation to ensure that the search objectives are met in a safe and efficient manner.



**Figure 31: Search Techniques**

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Search types, patterns, and techniques, including
  - a) passive
  - b) active
- Search area segmentation.
- Clue-detection techniques.
- Types of searches:
  - a) hasty (quick search)
  - b) efficient search (open grid)
  - c) thorough search (closed grid)
  - d) evidence search
- Types of search patterns:
  - a) trail or route search
  - b) lookout search
  - c) contour search
  - d) wandering search
  - e) line search
  - f) grid searches
  - g) perimeter search
  - h) purposeful wandering search
  - i) binary search and/or sign cutting
  - j) sound sweeps
- How to match search types to patterns.
- Number of team members required for each search pattern.
- Importance of using all senses during search types and patterns.
- Critical distance techniques and calculations.

- Factors affecting search pace.

Observable performance (Do):

- Identify search types, patterns, and techniques best suited to the search mission and provides recommendations to the SAR Manager.
- Communicate with team members and with the SAR manager about search types, patterns, and techniques to be deployed.
- Demonstrate various search types, patterns, and techniques to team members in order to enhance searcher's knowledge and skills.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.5
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 8 – Search Techniques

### **5.9.6 Confinement/Containment**

Role of the team leader:

Teams may receive assignments requiring the implementation of confinement/containment methods. As for active search assignments, the team leader is responsible for the safe and efficient implementation of these methods. A clear understanding of the role and importance of confinement and containment will assist the team leader in maintaining team focus and motivation throughout the duration of the assignment to help achieve search objectives.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- The role of confinement and containment in search and associated challenges, including:
  - a) time
  - b) topography
  - c) resources
  - d) weather
  - e) cover
- Types of methods of containment:
  - a) road blocks
  - b) trail blocks
  - c) camps at strategic locations;
  - d) lookouts
  - e) listening posts
  - f) string line and/or hip chain
  - g) track traps
  - h) messages at strategic locations
  - i) perimeter sign cuts
  - j) vehicle patrols
  - k) use of media
- Timing of confinement/containment (e.g., early in the operation).

- Combining methods of confinement and containment with search tactics, such as attraction and tracking.
- Reasons why a confinement area might be expanded.
- Data and recording requirements.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Implement confinement/containment methods appropriate to the mission.
- Outline the equipment that can aid in confinement/containment and safe work practices.
- Communicate with team and with SAR Manager on confinement/containment methods used.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.6
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 8 - Search Techniques

### **5.9.7 Attraction Methods**

#### Role of the team leader:

Teams may be tasked to assignments requiring the implementation of attraction methods. As for other types of team assignments, the team leader is responsible for the safe and efficient implementation of these methods. A clear understanding of the role of attraction methods, and their related challenges, will assist the team leader in supervising their implementation to achieve search objectives.



**Figure 32: Attraction Methods**

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Various attraction methods and challenges associated with attraction.
- Reasons for incorporating attraction methods into a search.
- Urgency of using attraction methods (e.g., reduce search area).
- Various attraction methods, including
  - a) visual
  - b) night time tools
  - c) sound
- Challenges associated with attraction, including
  - a) responsiveness of subject
  - b) stopping to listen at appropriate intervals
  - c) weather conditions
  - d) natural sounds
  - e) topography
  - f) impairment of senses
  - g) hearing protection for searchers
- Importance of communication when using attraction methods.
- Notice to others of attraction methods being used and intervals established.
- Protocol for notifying when contact with subject is established.
- Equipment that aids in attraction.



Observable performance (Do):

- Implement attraction methods in a search operation, including coordination with others in the immediate search area.
- Communicate with team and with SAR Manager in accordance with established protocols and timing intervals.
- Provide feedback to team members on attraction method used.
- Manage records and data collected.
- Use equipment that aids in attraction.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.7
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 8 – Search Techniques

## 5.9.8 Clue Awareness

### Role of the team leader:

Clue awareness and detection is an ongoing, ever-present process during an incident. The team leader must have a full understanding of the aspects of clue seeking, detection, preserving, collecting, recording, and reporting within the search team and to the command or search manager. Constant monitoring of the team's focus while on assignment is a key skill that the team leader utilizes throughout the assignment.

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Equipment that can aid in clue awareness and detection.
- Clue awareness and detection and interpretation techniques. Some examples include:
  - a) Cognitive vision.
  - b) Seeing the unseen.
  - c) Searcher's cube.
  - d) Using all senses.
  - e) Tracking.
  - f) Sign cutting.
- When to use various clue awareness and detection techniques.
- When to suspend certain clue awareness and detection techniques.
- Clue-recording procedures.



Figure 33: Clue Awareness

Observable performance (Do):

- Integrate clue awareness and detection techniques into GSAR search operations.
- Implement various clue awareness and detection techniques in search operations.
- Provide initial interpretation of clues to SAR Manager (e.g., age, condition, indication of direction of travel).
- Suspend certain clue awareness and detection techniques in search operations.
- Identify, handle and record clues.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.8
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual Unit 8 – Search Techniques

**5.9.9 Demobilization Process**Role of the team leader:

An organized and cohesive set-up (mobilization) is vital to a search incident; the demobilization process is just as important in that all equipment, resources, and people must be accounted for. This allows the group to be fully prepared for the next incident. The team leader plays a very important role in this process as the search is set-up based on ICS structure, thus making the supervision of individuals a key component.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Team leader's responsibilities for tracking their people and equipment until final demobilization or reassignment.
- Demobilization process.
- Demobilization tasks (i.e., what needs to be done).
- Equipment requirements (restock, replenish, checklist).
- Team logistics.
- Elements of demobilization, including
  - a) preparation
  - b) returning to base, travel route
  - c) post-mission tasks
  - d) CISM recognition
  - e) ability to drive home

Observable performance (Do):

- Review team skills and resources.
- Identify and obtain needed resources.
- Communicate tasks to team members.
- Delegate tasks to team members.
- Integrate demobilization procedures into the search operations.
- Demobilize the camp.
- Complete and submit team records and data (assignments, forms, and reports).

- Review and revise contingency plans as required.
- Supervise demobilization of the unit/team, including all supplies.
- Review team development.
- Lead the debriefing with team members.
- Participate in SAR management team debriefing.
- Prepare documentation of team's debriefing.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations  
Section 5.9.9

### **5.9.10 Night Searches**

#### Role of the team leader:

A search is an emergency, which makes night searches unavoidable at times. The team leader must be focused on the management of the search team as darkness brings complications in terrain management, team fatigue, and individual stress. Initial planning, precise navigation and communication will be required for the team leader to be successful.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Reasons for implementing a night search.
- Advantages associated with implementing a night search, including:
  - a) stationary object
  - b) expanded search time
  - c) less noise and sound travels better
- Challenges associated with implementing a night search, including:
  - a) maintaining personal night vision
  - b) unresponsive subject
  - c) destruction of clues
  - d) poor visibility
  - e) topography
  - f) harder to coordinate team
  - g) reliability of light sources
- Risk considerations of night searches to searchers and subject (e.g., fear of dark, night vision, fatigue, need for experienced searchers).
- Critical separation and/or critical spacing considerations.
- Types of night vision equipment.
- Types of lighting devices.
- Specialized equipment that can aid in night searches, such as night vision and infrared goggles.
- Benefits and limitations of specialized equipment utilized in night searches.
- Human dynamics relative to night search operations and their impacts.
- Procedures for use of night vision equipment and preserving of personal night vision.

Observable performance (Do):

- Conduct night searches following established procedures.
- Use specialized equipment that can aid in night searches.
- Ensure that all team members have a main source and back-up source of light, complete with extra batteries.
- Instruct individuals to be careful not to impair their or others night vision, especially from careless use of light sources.
- Brief the team on the merits and the issues while executing night searches.
- Ensure that all team members follow communication protocols, so no one is missed or left behind.
- Brief the team on possible terrain/topography hazards.
- Be very observant for distress and/or fatigue amongst the team members.
- Instruct the team on the use of any specialized equipment.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.10

**5.9.11 Land-Water Interface Searches**Role of the team leader:

The interface between land-water searches sets up some very demanding challenges for a team leader. Vigilance and good team dynamics, through open communication will allow the team leader to assess and address situations as they arise.

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Specialized equipment and resources that can aid in shoreline searches.
- How to integrate equipment and resources with GSAR operations.
- Safety issues and mitigation strategies for shoreline searches.

Observable performance Do):

- Conduct shoreline searches.
- Use specialized equipment and resources that can aid in shoreline searches.
- Integrate specialized equipment and resources that aid in shoreline searches with GSAR operations.

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Section 5.9.11

### **5.9.12 Evidence Handling**

#### Role of the team leader:

The proper handling, reporting, and documentation of all evidence and clues are extremely important as every scene may be considered a potential crime scene. The team leader must adhere to protocols and procedures for protection of a crime scene. Team leaders may negatively impact the credibility of the SAR organization, not to mention themselves, if the team does not perform as instructed.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Chain of evidence concept.
- The steps to be taken to control the site and secure potential evidence.
- Path of contamination.
- Crime scene characteristics.
- How to recognize and secure a potential crime scene.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Recognize a potential crime scene.
- Avoid contamination or cross-contamination.
- Secure potential crime scene, including logging personnel on scene.
- Control access to a potential crime scene.
- Direct team members in protecting and preserving evidence.
- Advise and request assistance to deal with potential crime scene evidence.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations  
Section 5.9.12

### **5.9.13 Dealing with Deceased Persons**

#### Role of the team leader:

During the finding of and dealing with a deceased person, the team leader will need to guide and supervise members through the protocols, procedures, legalities and psychological stresses endured, all while doing this with an eye to being respectful and caring for the deceased individual as they are transported and transferred to the authorities. The team leader role will also be to constantly ensure confidentially, while dealing with the team and individual stresses that will surface at some time through the event. Throughout this event the team leader will require fortitude to maintain a calm demeanor and compassionate disposition in order to maintain a clear focused effort from all.

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Procedures and protocols for transporting human remains.

- Psychological demands on team members arising from dealing with human remains.
- Process to access assistance for team members, if required.
- Legal issues in dealing with deceased persons (e.g., accountability requirements, protection of personal information).

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Recognize the legal and psychological issues in dealing with deceased persons and provides guidance to team members.
- Ensure that personal protective equipment (PPE) is used and that proper procedures for transport are followed.
- Access critical incident stress assistance for team members.
- Monitor the entire team for signs and symptoms of stress induced from dealing with the deceased.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations  
Section 5.9.13

## **9.14 Urban Searches**

### Role of the team leader:

Urban searches are the most hazard-rich, clue-rich, logistically and legally complex search type that the team leader will likely encounter. Care in planning/execution and coordinated communication throughout the assignments are the keys to completing the assignments in a safe and efficient manner. Team safety is paramount.

### Knowledge and understanding of:

- Causes linked to disappearance in the context of urban search.
- Potential profiles, including
  - a) accidental (secluded areas)
  - b) criminals
  - c) mental illness and/or despondent
  - d) autism
  - e) dementia
  - f) children
  - g) runaways
- Dangers and difficulties of each profile in relation to an urban environment.
- Tactics for urban searches (e.g., door-to-door, urban confinement, building search, evidence search).
- Legal boundaries of urban searches (e.g., trespassing issues, privacy issues).
- Potential hazards associated with urban searches, including
  - a) traffic
  - b) abandoned or damaged buildings
  - c) industrial and/or chemical storage areas/contaminated areas

- d) rapid destruction of clues
- e) clue-rich environment
- f) scale of search areas (easy access to transportation for disappeared)
- g) convergent volunteers
- h) interference from media
- i) animals at large (e.g., dogs)
- j) criminal elements (e.g., gang members, grow ops)
- k) requirements to search refuse (e.g., needle sticks)

Observable performance (Do):

- Adapt causes of disappearance to the unique characteristics of the urban search.
- Communicate legal boundaries to the team.
- Lead team through each tactic (door to door, confinement, building, evidence) and identify potential hazards.
- Lead team through three levels of door to door canvassing (thorough, informing residents, flyers).

References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations  
Section 5.9.14



## 5.10 Specialized Resources

### Overview:

A team leader must be able to determine specialized resource needs for a search and know how to access and utilize these resources for search assignments in a collaborative and coordinated manner with other agencies and/or jurisdictions. Team leader competency elements covered in this category are:

- Specialized Resources

### 5.10.1 Specialized Resources

#### Knowledge and understanding of:

- How to conduct hazard and/or risk assessments and determine the capabilities required that might initiate the need for specialized resources.
- Interdependencies created with specialized resources in SAR team area of operations.
- When specialized resources have been or are operating within a search area.

#### Observable performance (Do):

- Incorporate specialized resources into team search area.
- Communicate with multi-jurisdictional and/or multi-functional resources.
- Conduct hazard and/or risk assessments and makes recommendations on the capabilities required that might initiate the need for specialized resources.
- Utilize specialized resource information in planning search tactics.

#### References:

- Z1620-15 Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations  
Section 5.10.1

## Reference

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The following documents were reviewed prior to the publication of this manual. These books and guides could assist team leaders to develop a better understanding for what is available as reference material.

- Core Competency Standards for ground search and rescue operations Z1620-15
- Training curriculum standards for ground search and rescue operations: Searcher, team leader, and SAR manager Z1625-16
- NLSARA Search Techniques Manual
- ICS 100 Introduction to Incident Command System
- ICS 200 Incident Command System
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Emergency Medical Aid Act (Good Samaritan Act)  
<http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/annualstatutes/RSN1990/E09.c90.htm>
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act <http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/p22.htm>
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Occupational Health and Safety Act  
<http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/o03.htm>
- Workplace NL website <http://www.workplacenl.ca/default.whscc>
- Newfoundland and Labrador Labor Standards Act  
<http://assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/l02.htm>
- Managing Lost Person Incident – NASAR (1997)
- Safe Boating Guide – Transport Canada – Office of Boating Safety
- Lost Person Behaviour, A Search and Rescue on Where to Look – for Land, Air and Water – Robert J. Koester

## Glossary

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- **Agency** - an agency is a division of government with a specific function, or a non-governmental organization (e.g. private contractor, business, etc.) that offers a particular kind of assistance. In ICS, agencies are defined as jurisdictional (having statutory responsibility for incident mitigation) or assisting and / or cooperation (providing resources and / or assistance).
- **Aging Sign and Track** - the ability to determine how long ago a particular piece of sign or track was produced.
- **Assignment** - a particular set of actions assigned to a GSAR team as part of a search operation in order to meet specific search objectives
- **Attraction** - a search tactic involving attempts to signal the subject and get him or her to travel toward searchers. Techniques include the use of sound as well as visual signals.
- **Authority Having Jurisdiction** - the agency established by a federal, provincial, or territorial government that has responsibility for search and rescue.
- **Azimuth** - same as bearing. Refers to the degree of bearing from your current position to a landmark or destination. Reversing the bearing would be known as a back azimuth or back bearing.
- **Back Bearing** - the 180° opposite of the azimuth or bearing. Also known as a back azimuth.
- **Back Country** - the area beyond mid-country access. More than four hours walking distance of a vehicle-navigable road/track or trail head.
- **Base** - the location at which primary logistics functions for an incident are coordinated and administered. There is only one base per incident. The command post may be co-located or shared with the base.
- **Basic Life Support** - a combination of emergency responses, which maintains the ABC priorities: AIRWAY, BREATHING, and CIRCULATION.
- **Bearing** - the direction of travel from your current position to a landmark of destination expressed in degrees from 1 to 360. Same as azimuth.
- **Belay** - to belay is to use a rope or ropes attached to a secure position and used to steady the movement of stretchers or to facilitate the secure movement of searchers up or down a slope.
- **Bench Mark** - a permanent object that is either natural or man-made and is a known elevation that can be used as a reference point when navigating.
- **Binary Search** - a search strategy that involves sending sign cutters in a direction that is perpendicular to the subject's assumed direction of travel, in an effort to narrow down the size of the search area.
- **Briefing** - the process of providing searchers with the information they need to adequately perform their task.
- **Call-out** - the authority having jurisdiction's call to conduct a search and rescue operation whereby GSAR personnel are requested to respond.

- **Camp** - a geographical site, within the general incident area separate from the incident Base, equipped and staffed to provide sleeping, food, water, and sanitary services to incident personnel.
- **Cardinal Points** - the four main points of direction on a compass are North, 360°; East, 90°; South, 180°; and West, 270°.
- **Closed Grid Search** - a closed grid search will normally be carried out with searcher spacing of less than 10m. This method is considered extremely thorough and is often taken as evidence that the victim or clue is not in the area searched.
- **Clue** - a tangible or non-tangible piece of evidence. A message or signal that serves to reduce uncertainty with respect to the subject's location, as well as identification purposes for police authorities.
- **Clue Awareness** - the ability to perceive clues left by the subject (i.e. tracks and other sign), rather than just the subject.
- **Command Post (CP)** - that location at which the primary command and control functions are executed. It is usually located with the search base.
- **Command Staff** - in ICS, those officers who contribute to the command function and report directly to the Incident Commander (or Search Manager) and may include Safety Officers, Liaison Officers, Information Officers, and Technical Specialists.
- **Confinement** - a strategy used to ensure the subject cannot leave a specific location in the search area without the searchers being aware of the departure.
- **Containment** - a tactic or geological feature such as a large body of water, which very likely will keep a subject within the limits of a search.
- **Contour Lines** - each contour line on a map comprises an often-irregular closed loop that connects points of equal elevation. Elevations are printed on some of the lines on a regular basis and elevations refer to elevation above sea level.
- **Convergent Volunteer** - an individual that offers his or her service and/or expertise for no remuneration during a recognized public safety line activity and is signed into the task and is not already registered as a public safety line volunteer.
- **Core Competency** - the essential knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes required to successfully accomplish assigned tasks or roles.
- **Craft** - any air or water-surface vehicle, or submersible of any kind or size.
- **Critical Incident** - An incident causing such a high level of psychological stress that many exposed to it, develop immediate or delayed stress reactions.
- **Course Deviation Indicator (CDI)** - is typically displayed with a line or an arrow as an indicator of your being on or off course when following a route.
- **Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)** - is a form of limited intervention that is highly effective in preventing many of the ill effects resulting from exposure to a critical incident and its immediate and delayed stress reactions.
- **Critical Incident Stress (CIS)** - a stress reaction experienced by searchers and/or emergency responders during the incident that could have long-term, debilitating psychological and physiological effects upon them.
- **Critical Separation** - two searchers walking away from a simulated subject in opposite directions, until each searcher can just see the simulated subject and determine critical separation. The distance between them is the critical separation.

- **Cumulative Probability of Detection** - the overall probability of detection that results when a segment has been searched more than once.
- **Cumulative Stress Reaction** - a set of abnormal and mal adaptive responses to chronic high levels of stress.
- **Datum** - the most probable position of a search object, corrected for drift, at any specific time.
- **Datum Line** - a line that runs perpendicular to the base line of a search area and are usually marked at either end of the search area to define the area adequately.
- **Debriefing** - the exchange of information, usually at the close of a tasking that conveys important knowledge and experience. A SAR team will be debriefed when it returns from the field so important information can be gathered to help with the search planning. At the end of a SAR incident all those who participated are usually debriefed on the event and how it unfolded.
- **Decision Point** - positions on trails, climbing routes and rivers where decisions must be made on a direction to take. Often, spots where people can make mistakes and take wrong directions.
- **Declination** - the angle between true north (geodetic north) from magnetic north (the direction a compass points toward the magnetic north pole).
- **Delayed Stress Reaction** - a psychological reaction characterized by unusual physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral signs and symptoms. Often occurring weeks or months after exposure to a critical incident and often triggered by a seemingly innocuous stimulus.
- **Delegation of Authority** - a statement provided to the incident commander by the agency executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The delegation of authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Many agencies require written delegation of authority to be given to incident commanders prior to their assuming command on larger incidents.
- **Demobilization** - occurs at the end of a search successful or otherwise and includes all of the sign-out procedures and the return of equipment and the debriefing, as well as the reorganization of personal gear for the next response.
- **Despondent** - a category of missing person who is characterized at the time as being depressed and having lost courage and hope.
- **Differential GPS (DGPS)** - a system, which incorporates a stationary GPS receiver at a known position, which calculates the cumulative positioning error and transmits a correction factor by radio/modem signal to other GPS receivers, the objective being a more precise fix.
- **Distress** - a search and rescue incident where there is a reasonable certainty that one or more individuals are threatened by grave and imminent danger and require immediate assistance.
- **Distress Alerting** - the reporting of a distress incident to a unit which can provide or coordinate assistance.
- **Distress Beacon** - a generic term used to describe any emergency locator transmitter (ELT), emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB), or a personal locator beacon (PLB).

- **Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT)** - aeronautical radio distress beacon for alerting and enabling rescue units to locate the scene of the distress.
- **Emergency Measures Organization (EMO)** - provincially mandated organization responsible for plans and operations of major emergency events in the province.
- **Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)** - a marine radio distress beacon carried aboard maritime craft that transmits a signal that alerts search and rescue authorities and enables rescue units to locate the scene of the distress.
- **Elopement** - the act of leaving without permission the place you are expected to be (see Walk away).
- **Estimated Position Error (EPE)** - a number expressed in feet or meters, and is an indicator of the expected accuracy of the coordinates shown on the GPS in real time.
- **Evidence** - something legally acceptable before a court, such as an object or a witness, which bears on or establishes an issue. In tracking, evidence is divided into physical and incorporeal.
- **Evidence Search** - a search for evidence that could be used in a court of law.
- **Extrication** - the act of releasing people trapped in or under vehicles, industrial machines, or natural or man-made enclosures or crevices as a result of an accident. These people might or might not be injured.
- **Field Evacuation** - the removal of a person, usually injured or adversely affected, from an isolated wilderness environment to a secure staging area, command post, or control centre.
- **First Responder** - a person trained in the medical and mechanical skills and knowledge necessary to successfully manage the care of an individual on the first discovery until the person can either be evacuated or placed under more intense care. The term *First Responder* is usually associated with police, fire and ambulance response in the non-SAR environments.
- **Front Country** - the area within one hour walking distance of a vehicle navigable road/track or trailhead.
- **Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping** - is system of computer software, hardware and data that will analyze and present information that is tied to a spatial search area.
- **Global Positioning System (GPS)** - a specific satellite-based system used in conjunction with mobile equipment to determine the precise position of the mobile equipment.
- **Grid Location** - most maps used in search and rescue has a grid superimposed to aid in describing the location of particular points. The rectangular grid runs approximately north south and east west. A point on the map can be described by its position relative to the grid.
- **Grid Search** - an attempt to find the subject (or clues) by lining up 3 or more searchers and having them proceed in a parallel fashion through their assigned search area (aka *sweep, line, or creeping line* search).
- **Ground (or Ground SAR Incident)** - a *ground* search or rescue activity is one that occurs on land. For the purposes of these procedures, this includes the ground portion of all activities associated with missing aircraft, and the air portion of all activities involving searches for or rescues of people on land.

- **Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR)** - the conduct of a search and rescue operation to assist persons lost, missing, or in distress on land and inland waters.
- **Ground Search Party** - a group formed to conduct all or part of an organized GSAR operation.
- **Hasty Search** - an initial response aimed at searching high probability areas, trails and likely spots, usually by the Hasty Team. Decisions will be focused around lost-person behaviour with concentration on trails, decision points, and other likely spots.
- **Hasty Team** - a group of trained individuals that can be convened quickly for the purpose of responding to an emergency situation.
- **Hip Chain** - used to measure distance. It is a belt case containing thin string that runs through a measuring device that registers as the string is paid out. Biodegradable string is recommended for a hip chain.
- **Human Trackers** - searchers who attempt to follow the visible signs left by the lost person (aka *man-trackers* or *visual trackers*).
- **Hypoxia** - low oxygen levels
- **Incident Action Plans** - a document outlining search objectives for the current operational period.
- **Incident Base** - the area where all primary incident services and support activities are located.
- **Incident Commander** - an individual charged with functional responsibility for an entire incident. Not necessarily the highest-ranking official, just the one in charge.
- **Incident Command Post (CP)** - a location, usually located with the search base, at which the primary command and control functions are executed.
- **Incident Command System (ICS)** - a widely applied management system for handling any type of emergency incident or public event.
- **Incident Critique** - procedure for constructive review of an incident.
- **Incident Objectives** - part of the Incident Action Plan, a document outlining search objectives for the current operational period.
- **Information Officer** - the officer in the Command Staff who serves as the initial contact person for the media and other persons seeking information about the incident.
- **Initial Planning Point (IPP)** - a point that is initially used to plan the search incident based on last known position (LKP) or point last seen (PLS).
- **Initial Response** - the first response to a search event usually by a small team of 3 searchers that are fit, fast and skilled that can quickly search high probability areas. Initial response teams are usually trained beyond the level of the basic searcher.
- **Last Known Position (LKP)** - the last known location for the missing subject as determined by physical evidence or clue such as a parked car, discarded object such as a wallet, or a footprint that places the missing subject. Note – LKP can be revised during the search.
- **Latitude** - the distance in degrees north of south from the equator. These lines run laterally (horizontally) around the globe and parallel to the equator. One minute of latitude equals one nautical mile.
- **Likely Spot** - features or areas that may offer attraction to the missing or lost person(s). Lost-person behaviour is often used along with interview information to determine likely spots a lost person might go.

- **Listening Post** - can be established anywhere in and around the search area where there is a chance that a searcher may overhear the subject of a search trying to get someone's attention.
- **Longitude** - the distance in degrees east and west from the prime meridian established in Greenwich, England. These lines run vertically (lengthwise) around the globe and connect each pole.
- **Lookout** - a searcher who takes a position on a hill or ridge affording a view of several potential travel routes. A lookout will have a radio and a set of binoculars and will often work with a partner at a lower elevation to inspect suspicious objects found by the lookout.
- **Lost Person** - a person who is disoriented, potentially in distress, and wishes to be found or return to a known location. Often referred to as "*the subject of the search.*"
- **Lost Person Behaviour** - the travel and self-help behaviour generally exhibited by persons in various age groups, mental conditions or demographic type when lost.
- **Lost Person Incident** - an organized search for a person who has been reported missing to a jurisdictional police authority.
- **Lost Person Profile** - a vivid biographical and character sketch of a lost person, derived from information gleaned through investigation, interviewing and the Lost Person Questionnaire.
- **Lost Person Questionnaire** - a written document that describes all available physical and mental characteristics of a missing or lost person(s).
- **Magnetic North** - the geographical region towards which all magnetic needles point. This point is approximately thirteen hundred miles south of the true north and moves slightly each year due to the earth's rotation and the friction between its solid crust and liquid centre.
- **Marine SAR** - the employment of vessels and/or aircraft for the conduct of a SAR operation that occurs on or under water.
- **Medical Plan** - the plan for treating and evacuating injured searchers.
- **Memorandum of Understanding** - an agreement drawn up to clarify roles, responsibilities, functions and procedures between two or more organizations. Not binding as a contract, but important to establish understandings and arrangements prior to the occurrence of an emergency situation.
- **Mid-Country** - the area within 1 to 4 hours walking distance of a vehicle navigable road/track or trailhead.
- **Military Grid Reference System (MGRS)** - a shortened version of UTM coordinate display currently in use by SAR.
- **Missing Person, Voluntary** - someone who has control over his or her actions and has decided to leave his or her home or society. A police investigation is generally initiated.
- **Missing Person, Involuntary** - someone who has gone missing against his or her will, e.g., abduction or murder victim. A police investigation is initiated.
- **National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS)** - reports to the Lead Minister for SAR (currently the Minister of Public Safety), coordinates the National Search and Rescue Program which aims to facilitate SAR prevention and response services of involved agencies and to maintain a coordinated national perspective on SAR.



- **Operational Period** - the period of time scheduled for the achievement of operational objectives as specified in the incident action plan. Operational periods can be of various lengths (typically 12h, although not usually over 24 h).
- **Orienteering** - using map and compass in the field to determine your route of travel. Has commonly come to mean a type of competition at which competitors try to navigate across challenging terrain from point to point arriving at the finish first.
- **Pace** - the distance between two successive stationary positions of the same foot in walking. (For example: 122 steps would equal 61 paces)
- **Passive Search Techniques** - passive techniques can include such procedures as looking out or listening, or attraction using light or sound to draw the subject of a search to you as opposed to going out and looking for the subject.
- **Performance Objective** - a level of skill of performance that must be attained as part of a training program.
- **Perimeter Cut** - experienced trackers may be able to check the Last Known Position (LKP) for tracks, clue, direction of travel, etc. and then sign cut the perimeter of the area to determine if the subject has left the search area; therefore eliminating the need to search it.
- **Personal Flotation Device (PFD)/Lifejacket** - a wearable flotation device. Note – These terms are used interchangeably in this manual
- **Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)** - a portable distress alerting beacon that is designed to be carried by individual persons that is manually activated and operates exclusively on 406 and 121.5 Mhz. PLBs signals can be received by the COSPAS SARSAT satellite system.
- **Point Last Seen (PLS)** - an essential bit of information when initiating a search, PLS comes from a reliable source that may describe the direction of travel, the time that the missing or lost person(s) was seen and the state of the person (distracted, tired, frisky, etc.). Also described as the location where a confirmed visual sighting occurred.
- **Police Force of Jurisdiction** - the police force within whose jurisdiction a GSAR response is initiated. As the search progresses the police force of jurisdiction may change at the agreement of the police authorities involved. The Search Commander will normally be appointed by the police force of local jurisdiction.
- **Preplan** - A document, which provides incident managers with information, instructions, resource lists, checklists, standard operating procedures, and technical data that, will be used during a search incident.
- **Probability Density** - the POA of a specific area or segment, divided by the size of the area. High probability density segments will normally receive higher priority.
- **Probability of Area (POA)** - the likelihood or probability that the subject is located in a specific area; expressed as a percentage (e.g. 50%) or decimal number (e.g. 0.50).
- **Probability of Detection (POD)** - the likelihood of probability of finding clues (assuming that clues are available to be found), given the nature of the search and the type of resources employed; expressed as a percentage (e.g. 50%).

- **Probability of Success** - the probability of finding the subject in a specific place or area, given the type of search tactic employed. Derived from the formula  $POS=POA \times POD$ .
- **Professional** - a person to whom SAR is a principal calling, vocation, or employment requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation, and characterized by or conforming to technical or ethical standards.
- **Provincial/Territorial Authority** - has overall responsibility for the organization and management of ground search and rescue policies within the boundaries of the province/territory, and has the authority to put in place regulatory measures to govern the conduct of GSAR activities within the province.
- **Record** - includes all of the expense forms, all of the sign in/out sheets, as well as the communications log and the equipment sign in/out log and any records or documents related to the search that may pertain to evidence and clues found and the outcome of the search. All of this information is kept as part of the teams or associations records for a reasonable amount of time.
- **Relief** - the elevations or inequalities of a land surface.
- **Rescue** - an operation to retrieve persons in distress, provide for their initial medical or other needs and deliver them to a place of safety.
- **Rescue Breathing** - mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-nose artificial respiration.
- **Rescue Coordination** - the function of integrating the efforts of search and rescue (SAR) facilities and resources to achieve concerted and harmonized resolution of SAR incidents in an effective and efficient manner.
- **Resource List** - a list of search or logistical resources that can be employed during an incident; part of the preplan.
- **Risk Control** - the process of decision making for managing risk and the implementation, enforcement, and re-evaluation of its effectiveness from time to time, with input from the results of risk assessment.
- **Risk Management** - the process of decision making for managing risk and the implementation, enforcement, and re-evaluation of its effectiveness from time to time, with input from the results of risk assessment. A structured, common sense approach to reducing the frequency and severity of loss events.
- **Recovery** - the retrieval of human remains following a fatal incident, also known as "body recovery."
- **Reporting Person** - the person who initially reported someone lost or missing.
- **Route (RTE)** - includes at least two waypoints (up to 20) and at any given time 1 waypoint is the, *from WPT* and the other is the, *to WPT*.
- **SAR Volunteers** - members of an organized group of volunteers who assist in the conduct of GSAR incidents. *Organized* means working cooperatively and systematically and apply recognized skills toward the successful resolution of a GSAR incident. There are various configurations of Canadian GSAR volunteers, and many groups have appointed officers to be responsible for different branches of the organization, such as operations, safety, and logistics.
- **SAR Manager** - a person who manages and coordinates a search and/or rescue incident, leads and directs the SAR resources, is trained and experienced in search

and rescue, and might or might not be the incident commander under the ICS system.

- **Scale** - the distance between two points on a map as they relate to the distance between those two points on the earth.
- **Scenario Analysis** - an attempt to prioritize the segments in the search area when more than one scenario is present, or when there is conflicting information about the missing lost person's PLS or direction of travel.
- **Scent Article** - an article of clothing or other material with which a trailing dog can determine the subject's unique scent.
- **Search** - a search involves assembling, coordinating and using the necessary resources to find lost, stranded, trapped, or injured people, to save lives or avoid further injury to them. Search is its own discipline with its own theories, strategies, and tactics.
- **Searcher** - the person, reporting to the team leader, responding to an incident as a member of a GSAR team.
- **Searching Data** - that information that searchers require in order to search for the lost subject, such as the subject's name, description, clothing, footwear and items carried.
- **Search and Rescue (SAR)** - the combined activities and tasks involved in both searching for and rescuing persons who are feared to be in distress. Many searches do not involve rescue and many rescues do not require searches.
- **Search and Rescue Plan** - a general term used to describe documents which exist at all levels of the international, national, provincial, and municipal search and rescue structure to describe goals, arrangements, and procedures which support the provision of search and rescue services.
- **Search and Rescue Unit** - a unit composed of trained personnel and provided with equipment suitable for the expeditious conduct of search and rescue operations.
- **Search Commander** - has the overall responsibility for the execution of the SAR operation and who represents the authority responsible for the area in which an incident has occurred. This is usually a police officer assigned to the search operation by the police force of jurisdiction. In Canadian National Parks, the Search Commander may be a park warden.
- **Search Dogs** - dogs who, with their handlers, have successfully completed a course of training resulting in the ability to track missing or lost person(s) and behave under handler control during the search operation.
- **Search Manager** - under the general direction of the Search Commander, will manage the search and lead and direct individual SAR resources. Is usually an experienced member of a volunteer ground SAR organization or park warden, forest ranger, or police officer. Under special circumstances the Search Commander may act as the Search Manager.
- **Search Tactics** - methods of searching; implementation of strategy.
- **Search Techniques** - a body of techniques used in the orderly conduct of a search. These include patterns of coordinated movement, employment of sound or visual signals, self-orientation during movement, and awareness of others and their positions.

- **Segmenting the Area** - parceling the search map up into manageable sections or segments with clearly defined boundaries.
- **Shifting POA** - changing the probabilities of area after segments have been searched.
- **Shock** - an inadequacy of the circulation system, which supplies the cells. Pallor and clamminess of the skin, decreased blood pressure, feeble rapid pulse, decreased respiration, restlessness, anxiety, and sometimes unconsciousness mark shock.
- **Sight Line** - sometimes called line of sight, this refers to the imaginary line that you sight along to take your bearing.
- **Sign** - is regarded as evidence of a person's passage through a search area.
- **Sign Cutting** - the process of looking for sign along natural barriers such as creeks, banks or roads.
- **SITREP** - the short form for situation report, it usually used to give updates to the command post and involved personnel and is often done on a scheduled basis throughout a search.
- **Sound Sweep** - sound sweeps utilize sound attraction in combination with wide searcher spacing to cover large search areas. A sound sweep is 3 to 4 times more effective than a visual sweep and is a practical night searching technique.
- **Specialized SAR Groups** - groups with special skills needed on GSAR operations and may include police, provincial or federal officials, volunteers, or military personnel. These could cover such special areas as avalanche rescue; cave rescue, cliff rescue, crevasse rescue, flat ice rescue, and underwater photography and rescue.
- **Spontaneous Volunteer** - a person not belonging to a participating agency of SAR team who appears at incident and volunteers assistance.
- **Staging Area** - that location where personnel and equipment are assigned to an operational status. Is usually in such a location that resources can be immediately committed to the field.
- **Standby** - is the period normally following alert when the Search Commander believes that deployment for the search is imminent. Personnel are placed on standby being ready to respond immediately
- **Stand-Down** - that period when the Search Commander declares that the search is terminated, personnel are recalled, debriefed and released.
- **Stress Defusing** - a short meeting (30 to 60 minutes) held shortly after an incident, conducted by qualified peer counselors, directed at those people who are assumed to be experiencing stress from the incident.
- **String Line** - or hip chain consisting of a spool of thin string and a measuring device that registers as the string is paid out. Can be used to mark search areas and to guide a missing or lost person(s) out of the wilderness.  
Biodegradable string is recommended.
- **Subject** - the object of a search.
- **Subjective Search Area** - the reduced area within a theoretical maximum search area, which is bounded by physical barriers, which would prevent or discourage the search subject from passing them.

- **Sweep Search** - can be open grid or closed grid and are conducted in high probability areas as an efficient way to search for clues and subjects. Searchers are spaced in a line according to the urgency assessment and other factors.
- **Tally System** - can be used to estimate distance and/or time traveled quite accurately. 1 Tally is equal to 100m and the number of steps taken to cover this distance varies from person to person but once entrenched it is a very useful skill.
- **Tasking** - a role delegated to a searcher or to a search team to carry out as part of a search and rescue operation
- **Team Leader** - the person responsible for the conduct of a GSAR team. The team leader reports to the search manager.
- **Terrain Analysis** - an attempt by a search planner to determine how the terrain may have affected the missing or lost person's behaviour, such as mazes, confusion factors, boundaries, and travel aides.
- **Theoretical Search Area** - the area that is defined by the distance that the subject could theoretically have traveled in the time elapsed since they became missing.
- **Track** - an impression left from the passage of a person or an animal.
- **Tracking** - following someone or something by stringing together a continuous chain of his or her sign. Following a chronology of sign.
- **Track Trap** – a track trap is an area that is especially good for finding sign.
- **Trained SAR Volunteer** - a person who voluntarily agrees to participate in search and rescue related activities and has attained at least the *Basic SAR* performance objectives suggested by the training requirements for his/her level of involvement.
- **Training Standard** - a set of requirements that define the amount and degree of training necessary to qualify a person as *trained* in the subject in question.
- **Universal Time Coordinated (UTC)** - a term used to define the 24 hr clock system and sometimes referred to as ZULU or Greenwich Mean Time.
- **Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM)** - UTM on most maps is a grid superimposed to aid in describing a particular point. This grid is called a UTM grid and it is rectangular with the grid running north south and east west with north being the top of the map.
- **Unfounded** - refers to a search subject that was never lost.
- **Urgency Analysis** - the use of data collected with values assigned affecting survivability, totaled to give a reasonable estimate of urgency of response.
- **Ventilation** - the exchange of air between the lungs and the atmosphere.
- **Volunteer** - an individual of group donating time and talents to a specific task or project without salary or compensation other than for allowable out-of-pocket expenses associated with the volunteer activity.
- **Vulnerability Assessment** - also known as urgency assessment. The SAR manager will use information collected to develop a relative urgency rating. Values are assigned to different factors affecting survivability and by totaling these values; a reasonable estimate of urgency of response can be determined.
- **Walk Away** – a type of missing person with some mental cognitive deficiency, who has wandered away from a constant care environment. Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia are often associated with a walk-away.
- **Waypoint (WPT)** - a checkpoint used as a point of reference for GPS.

- **Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS)** - a method of clarifying and improving accuracy or displayed coordinates using known ground based locations to accomplish the task (set GPS receivers to use this system whenever possible).

# Annex A – Check List – Briefing

CHECKLIST - BRIEFING TO TEAM	
1	<b>Incident Management Details</b>
	Task # / Police #
	Time of Police request
	Time reported missing
	Time SAR unit called out
	Summary of how subject went missing
2	<b>Subject Information</b>
	Name (include name to call out for)
	PLS/LKP - time last seen
	Physical description
	Circumstances / Trip plan
	Clothing types / colours
	Equipment
	Shoe print description
	Brands of candy, cigarettes, etc....
	Experience level
	Condition
	Physical
	Medical
	Mental
	Behavioural traits
	Concerns
Lost person behavioural data	
Urgency rating	
Theories	
3	<b>Map Orientation</b>
	Map number / Grid reference
	GPS datum reference
	Magnetic declination
	PLS/LKP - shown on map
	Hazards
	Physical description of segment/route/area
	Nature/type of terrain/vegetation
	Physical boundaries
Prominent geographic landmarks	

	Altitude	
	Exit routes	
	Radio repeater locations	
	Location of CP and other facilities	
4	<b>Weather</b>	
	Past	
	Current	
	Forecast	
5	<b>Other Search Efforts</b>	
	Where	
	POD	
	Clues found	
6	<b>Other Search Support</b>	
	Location of other teams	
	Capabilities of other teams	
7	<b>Significant Events/Information</b>	



# Annex B – Check List – SMEAC

CHECKLIST - SMEAC	
1	<b>Situation</b>
	Brief description of incident:
2	<b>Mission</b>
	Brief description search technique, specific location, POD and timeframe:

3	<b>Execution</b>	
	<b>General Overview of Team Plan by Phase</b>	
	PHASE 1 - Preparation	
	PHASE 2 - Movement to mission area	
	PHASE 3 - Execution of mission	
	PHASE 4 - Return to CP	
	PHASE 5 - Post mission actions (debrief, etc.)	
	<b>Specific Individual Tasks by Phase</b>	
	PHASE 1 - Preparation	
	PHASE 2 - Movement to mission area	
	PHASE 3 - Execution of mission	
	PHASE 4 - Return to CP	
	PHASE 5 - Post mission actions (debrief, etc.)	
	<b>Coordinating Details</b>	
	1. Timings (time of departure/return - by phase)	
	2. Movement	
	Staging area(s)	
	Vehicle coordination	
	Gas	
	Parking	
	Transportation routes	
	Group orders	
	Air Transport	
	3. Search Tactic instructions (details on how search task will be carried out)	
	4. Marking/flagging instructions	
	5. Attraction techniques	
	6. Clues (mark, isolate, protect, record and report)	
	7. Action on finding subject	
	Alive (walk out or evacuate)	
	Injured (carry out or helicopter)	
Dead/crime scene (preservation of evidence / proper documentation)		
8. Boundaries		

	9. Special equipment	
	10. Camp site / Bivouac	
	11. Safety	
	Hazards	
	Hypothermia / Hyperthermia	
	Equipment	
	Action on lost or injured searcher	
	Exit routes	
	"NO-GO "criteria	
	12. Fire and weather watch	
	13. Debriefing	
	Location	
	Time	
	To discuss by phase	
	Estimated POD	
	Subject survivability	
	Hazards/attractions and confusion factors	
	Map corrections	
	What went well / what did not	
	Recommendations	
	<b>Administration / Logistics</b>	
	<b>Food / Water</b>	
	<b>Shelter</b>	
	<b>Equipment / Clothing</b>	
	Individual	
	Team	
	Subject	
	Special safety gear	
	<b>Stores</b>	
	<b>Transport</b>	
	<b>Rest</b>	
4	<b>Medical</b>	
	<b>Sanitation</b>	
	<b>Media</b>	
	Policy on interviews	
	Policy on presence in area (CP or search area)	
	<b>Relatives / Co-workers / Video Cameras</b>	
	Present on team?	
	Where located/used	
	Warning - language/jokes - professionalism	
	<b>Firearms (if present - storage; use)</b>	
	<b>Expenses</b>	

	<b>CP / Other Facilities Routine</b>	
	<b>Command / Communication</b>	
	<b>Command</b>	
	Name of Incident Commander and Search Mgr.	
	Team Leader(s)	
	Assistant Team Leader(s)	
	Location of Command Post (CP)	
	<b>Communications</b>	
5	Frequency / channel	
	Call signs	
	Code words (if applicable)	
	Radio checks	
	Reports	
	<b>Synchronize watches</b>	
	<b>Questions - to / from</b>	

# Annex C – Check List – Mission Planning

CHECKLIST - MISSION PLANNING	
<b>Pre-Assignment</b>	
<b>SAR Manager Briefing</b>	
1	Review status map prior to briefing
	Take notes of search from SAR manager
	Ask questions to ensure you have all info
<b>PHASE 1 - Planning and Preparation</b>	
<b>Initial Planning</b>	
	Select Assistant Team Leader (ASL)
	Initial map review
	Initial time assessment (by phase)
	Select briefing area
	Initial plan
	Draft ATL briefing
	<b>ATL briefing</b>
	General situation (2-3 sentences)
	Mission - who, what, when, where, POD
	Personnel - who is on team
	Team briefing location & time
	Equipment needed
	Special Instructions
2	Deliver ATL briefing to assistant team leader
<b>Detailed Planning</b>	
	Detailed map review
	Detailed time assessment
	Plans for each phase
	Forward planning (anticipate contingences)
	Assign individual tasks in each phase
	Draft team briefing (refer to detailed SMEAC format)
<b>Team Briefing</b>	
	Situation
	Mission
	Execution
	Administration / Logistics
	Command / Communication
	Questions

	<b>Prepare to Move</b>	
	Final preparation	
	Complete any admin/logistic requirement	
	Radio checks	
	Equipment checks	
	<b>PHASE 2 - Move to Mission Area</b>	
3	Maintain control	
	Ensure team safety	
	Communicate effectively	
	<b>PHASE 3 - Complete the Mission</b>	
4	Report to CP at start/end of mission	
	Assume command	
	Delegate tasks	
	Supervise tasks	
	Poised under pressure	
	See the big picture	
	Remain focused	
	Communicate effectively	
	Use proper methods & procedures	
	Scene safety	
Complete mission in allotted time		
	<b>PHASE 4 - Return to Base</b>	
5	Maintain control	
	Ensure team / subject safety	
	Communicate effectively	
	<b>PHASE 5 - Post Mission Procedures</b>	
6	Confirm / check all members OK	
	Debrief team	
	Complete written report	
	Report to SAR management team	
	Close radio communication with CP	
	Update Team	

## Annex D – Media Contact Report


<b>Name of Event:</b>	
<b>Date of Call:</b>	<b>Time of Call.</b>
<b>Name and Organization of Contact/Reporter</b>	<b>Contact Number/Email or On-Site:</b>
<b>News Organization:</b>	<b>Type of Interview (Radio, Print, TV/Video, etc):</b>
<b>Person Contacted:</b>	<b>Person Requested for Interview:</b>

<b>Short Description of Reason/Rational and Topic of Interview:</b>	
<b>Questions (Provided by Reporter)</b>	<b>Suggested Answers or Other Information to be Provided</b>
1)	
2)	
3)	

Permission Granted for interview	Person to be Interviewed (Name and Title)	Location and Time	Permission Granted by (Name and Title)
(Y/N)			

<b>Interview Summary: (Additional Questions/Answers and/or Possible Contentious Issues)</b>

# Annex E – ICS 201 Incident Briefing

	<b>ICS Form 201</b>		
	<b>INCIDENT BRIEFING</b>	<b>1. INCIDENT NAME</b>	<b>2. DATE PREPARED</b>
<b>4. MAP SKETCH</b>			
<b>5. SITUATION SUMMARY AND SAFETY BRIEFING</b>			
ICS 201 Page 1 of 4	<b>6. PREPARED BY (Name and Position)</b>		







ICS Form 201

10. CURRENT ORGANIZATION


[Empty area for drawing the current organization structure]

ICS 201  
Page 3 of 4

11. PREPARED BY (Name and Position)



# Annex F ICS 202 Incident Objectives

		<b>ICS Form 202</b>										
INCIDENT OBJECTIVES	1. INCIDENT NAME	2. DATE	3. TIME									
4. OPERATIONAL PERIOD (Date/Time)												
5. GENERAL CONTROL OBJECTIVES FOR THE INCIDENT (Include alternatives)												
6. WEATHER FORECAST												
7. GENERAL SAFETY MESSAGE												
8. ATTACHMENTS (Check if attached) <table style="width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Organization List (ICS 203)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Medical Plan (ICS 206)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Assignment List (ICS 204)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Incident Map</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Communications Plan (ICS 205)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Plan</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> _____</td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Organization List (ICS 203)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Plan (ICS 206)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Assignment List (ICS 204)	<input type="checkbox"/> Incident Map	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications Plan (ICS 205)	<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Organization List (ICS 203)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Plan (ICS 206)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____										
<input type="checkbox"/> Assignment List (ICS 204)	<input type="checkbox"/> Incident Map	<input type="checkbox"/> _____										
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications Plan (ICS 205)	<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> _____										
9. PREPARED BY (Planning Section Chief)		10. APPROVED BY (Incident Commander)										

ICS 202

# Annex G ICS 204 Assignment List



## ICS Form 204

1. BRANCH		2. DIVISION/GROUP		<b>ASSIGNMENT LIST ICS 204</b>						
3. INCIDENT NAME			4. OPERATIONAL PERIOD Date _____ Time _____							
5. OPERATIONAL PERSONNEL Operations Chief _____ Division/Group Supervisor _____ Branch Director _____										
6. RESOURCES ASSIGNED TO THIS PERIOD										
Resource Identifier	Leader	No. of Persons	Contact Cell #, radio freq. etc.	Reporting Location, Special Equipment and Supplies, Remarks						
7. WORK ASSIGNMENTS										
8. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS										
9. DIVISION/GROUP COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY										
Function		Freq.	System	Chan.	Function		Freq.	System	Chan.	
Command	Local Repeat				Command	Local Repeat				
Div./Group Tactical				Ground to Air						
PREPARED BY (Resource Unit Leader)				APPROVED BY (Planning Section Chief)				Date	Time	

ICS 204

