

Canada Command



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3385-1 (Comd)

30 March 2012

Distribution List

GSAR PROTOCOLS IMPLEMENTATION

References: A. 03385(Comd), Recommended Amendment to GSAR-Related Protocols, 17 February 2012

B. 3385-1(Comd), Newfoundland and Labrador Ground Search and Rescue Review, 2 March 2012

1. In response to our review of current protocols related to CF support to Ground SAR (GSAR) events, which are the responsibility of law enforcement agencies, Canada Command conducted a series of consultations regarding the interaction of the Joint Rescue Coordination Centres (JRCC) and Provincial and Territorial authorities responsible for missing person searches. It was clear from the review that the existing protocols work well, having been tested over time. However, through the consultations, it was determined that we could strengthen our communication with GSAR authorities; more specifically, by identifying the process whereby the CF closes a GSAR case file, and how this is performed and communicated to the requesting agencies and/or Other Government Departments.

2. Amended protocols in support of provincial/territorial-led GSAR will be introduced in all SAR regions effective immediately. The key protocol change is the implementation of a confirmation/feedback mechanism, where the JRCC will re-establish communication with the requesting authority (even if no assistance has been provided) prior to closing an active case file. In short, a GSAR-related case file cannot be closed until this positive action "call back" is complete between the JRCC and the requesting authority. The following protocols are to be implemented across DND-CF Search and Rescue Regions:

- a. When a request for assistance from a Provincial or Territorial Requesting Authority (RA) is received the appropriate JRCC will automatically open a case file;
- b. The JRCC will obtain from the RA all possible information on the case in order to establish clear situational awareness and the severity/urgency of the incident. For example, the search model being used by GSAR operators would provide the JRCC with detailed information with which to make decisions;



- c. The JRCC will record what assets the Province has committed or will commit to the incident. After reviewing this information a needs assessment will be made as to what SAR asset could be best suited to assist the Provincial authority;
- d. The RA will be advised whether or not the CF can assist, and if so, how. This will be done as quickly as possible following the needs assessment described above;
- e. If unable to assist, the JRCC will explain why this is the case and ask the RA to re-establish contact (normally a call back) at a suitable time based on the conditions and circumstances affecting this situation. The case file will remain open throughout this period;
- f. As operational conditions permit, and on a periodic basis should the case remain open for a lengthy period of time, the JRCC should contact the RA to receive an update on the situation and review the needs assessment if the situation warrants such a review; and
- g. Prior to JRCC closing the case, a confirmation call with the RA will be made to ensure that no further assistance is required. The JRCC case file cannot be closed until this positive-action "handshake" is complete between JRCC and the RA.

3. Search and Rescue Region Commanders are to initiate contact with Provincial and Territorial Ground SAR leads within your SRR AORs immediately, in order to advise them of the introduction of the amended protocols. I would ask that you provide me with an update and evaluation of these enhanced protocols by 1 September 2012.

4. In closing, I recognize and appreciate the tremendous efforts that you and your SAR teams make on behalf of all Canadians each and every day. For that, all Canadians are truly proud of what you do.



W. Semianiw
Lieutenant-General

Enclosures: Two

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