OKANOGAN COUNTY
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION 9
SEARCH AND RESCUE

RESPONSIBILITY SUMMARY:

Primary Response

Okanogan County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Coordinator
Law Enforcement Agencies

Supporting

Okanogan County Communications Center
Okanogan County Department of Emergency Management
Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services
American Red Cross
Emergency Medical Services
Okanogan County Public Information Officer
Fire Services
Public Works Departments
Civil Air Patrol
Washington State Emergency Management Division

Plan Preparation & Maintenance

Lead – Okanogan County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Coordinator
Okanogan County Sheriff's Office

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

To provide guidelines for the effective utilization of search and rescue resources and for the coordination of search and rescue efforts within Okanogan County. According to the Revised Code of Washington: *"Search and rescue" means the acts of searching for, rescuing, or recovering by means of ground, marine, or air activity any person who becomes lost, injured, or is killed while outdoors or as a result of a natural, technological, or human caused disaster, including instances involving searches for downed aircraft when ground personnel ar used...."*. (RCW 38.52.010(7))

B. Scope

1. Search and Rescue (SAR) operations are classified as land SAR. State law encompasses both wildland and disaster SAR within the definition of land SAR (Section 38.52.010 (7) RCW).
2. SAR can also be used at the discretion of the Okanogan County Sheriff Office (OCSO) for various incidents or occurrences as deemed appropriate by the sheriff.

II. POLICIES

A. SAR operations are initiated, coordinated, and directed by the Okanogan County Sheriff in accordance with state and local jurisdiction plans. Requests for additional resources including special skills, expertise, or equipment are sent to Washington State Emergency Management Division (WAEMD) by SAR Coordinator~~.~~

B. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the method of on-scene incident management for SAR operations within the state. In accordance with RCW 38.52.400(1), ICS shall be used for multi-agency/multi-jurisdiction SAR operations.

III. SITUATION

A. Emergency/Disaster Conditions and Hazards

1. The wide range of and easy access to outdoor recreational activities in the county` and the large number of people who participate in those activities results in a significant number of people becoming lost and/or injured or killed every year.
2. The Okanogan County Sheriff is responsible for all Search and Rescue efforts within Okanogan County.
3. The SAR Coordinator will work with all law enforcement agencies within the county, but primarily with the OCSO personnel since their jurisdiction is where most SAR operations will take place. These efforts will include the coordination and the planning for training of personnel qualified to participate is SAR operations.
4. Maps to be used during SAR exercises and real events should have the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid overlaid on them. This will allow for uniform reporting between state agencies and local SAR agencies.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. SAR missions will continue to increase as the population, recreational opportunities, and the wildland/urban interface continue to grow.
2. The widely differing terrain and climatic conditions in the county mandate a locally based SAR first response system.
3. Natural and technological disasters will greatly increase the scope of SAR operations.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATION

A. General

1. In Okanogan County, SAR operations are initiated, coordinated, and directed by the OCSO in accordance with state and local jurisdiction plans using local resources registered pursuant to Chapter 118-04 WAC.

2. Requests for additional resources including special skills, expertise, or equipment are coordinated by the WAEMD.
3. Air SAR for missing or downed civil aircraft is the responsibility of WSDOT.
4. OCSO will request a mission number from the WAEMD Duty Officer either directly or via County DEM.

B. **Organization**

The OCSO or SAR Coordinator are responsible for SAR operations and will provide training and education, as well as, for the organization and deployment of SAR resources.

Procedures

1. **Land SAR**
   a. Law Enforcement response will be in accordance with their SOPs and the Okanogan County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).
   b. WAEMD, when notified of a SAR mission by the SAR Coordinator or designee, will issue a state mission number. The issuance of this mission number authorizes the employment of volunteers under the provisions and protection of Chapter 38.52 RCW.
   c. WAEMD, upon receiving a request for assistance from an authorized official, will coordinate the resources of other political subdivisions, as well as state, out-of-state, federal, and international agencies in support of the requesting jurisdiction. The state SAR Coordinator may be deployed to the scene to provide this coordination.
   d. Multi-jurisdictional SAR operations may be coordinated by the WAEMD, when requested.
2. **Air SAR**

   Air SAR for missing or downed civil aviation aircraft is the responsibility of WSDOT Aviation Division (Chapter 47.68 RCW).

C. **Mitigation Activities**

Each law enforcement agency should identify hazards and risks in their jurisdiction and implement actions to reduce the likelihood of these events occurring, and/or reducing the impact if they were to occur.

D. **Preparedness Activities**

1. Each law enforcement agency can help prepare for SAR situations by keeping their policies and procedures current and associated with identified potential hazards and risk analysis. Also, each agency needs to be involved with the development and maintenance of this emergency plan.

2. SAR Coordinator or designee will train personnel, try out and test equipment and communications, and evaluate this emergency plan by actively participating in emergency exercises and drills.

3. Response Activities

   Based on the type and size of incident, a variety of outside resources may be needed. It is critical for law enforcement or any other emergency services provider first on the scene to provide an accurate and timely size up. An IC (or Liaison with other agencies IC) must be identified. The Incident IC needs to promptly identify a staging area, and assign someone as the staging officer. The IC will assign personnel to specific areas or tasks, and coordinate and assign resources. Law enforcement may need to coordinate their command with fire service or emergency medical service command, and special groups such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), or other government agencies may also be involved.

E. **Recovery Activities**

1. The SAR Coordinator shall maintain accurate records, and recovery expense records for future possible reimbursement. Financial issues such as supplies used, equipment lost or damaged, wages for hours worked including overtime, and other costs require documentation before reimbursement is issued. If emergency vehicles, communications equipment or stations are damaged, special contracts may be needed for their quick repair or replacement, and temporary or long-term arrangements may be needed. During the recovery phase, it is imperative to maintain communication and coordination with the EOC. Law enforcement departments or the county Public Information Officer (PIO) may provide public information regarding safety issues as people return to their homes and businesses. Departments, districts, and individuals involved in the emergency or disaster should participate in post event reviews and critiques, and contribute to written reports regarding observations and recommendations.

2. Law enforcement will assist the return of all SAR equipment and personnel to a high state of preparedness, so as to be able to respond to future SAR missions with available resources, when requested.

3. Support for law enforcement and SAR personnel is also part of recovery and returning to normal operations. This support may include counseling, or Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). CISM is available, at no charge, through the Okanogan County Behavioral Health.

4. During the Recovery phase, it is imperative that the SAR IC maintains communication and coordination with the EOC/DEM.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Sheriff's Office

1. Responsible for local search and rescue activities.
2. The Sheriff will designate a deputy as SAR Coordinator and provide SAR training for that individual.

B. SAR Coordinator

1. Responsible for local search and rescue activities.
2. Initiate SAR operations.
3. Maintain Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for conducting searches. Review at least annually for possible revisions. Plans must specify the use of ICS for multi-agency/multi-jurisdiction search and rescue operations.
4. Operate Search and Rescue activities in accordance with state and local operations plans.
5. Call out volunteers, as needed.
6. Notify WAEMD and obtain a mission number.
7. After an operation is completed, verify the personnel and resources that were utilized during the operation and fill out necessary forms and make final reports to WAEMD to closeout missions.
8. Recruit, register, and train volunteers.
9. May restrict access to a specific search and rescue area to personnel authorized by the OCSO. Access shall be restricted only for the period of time necessary to accomplish the search and rescue mission.
10. Review and revise this ESF and Standard Operating Procedures, if needed, after any major SAR operation or at least every four years.
11. Assist emergency workers with submission of any claims that might be appropriate.
12. Maintain a current inventory of SAR resources.
13. Register volunteers and maintain roster.

C. DEM

1. The county DEM shall work in a coordinating capacity directly supporting search and rescue activities
2. When requested, notify WAEMD and obtain a state mission number for the OCSO.

   NOTE: <u>This mission number is necessary for liability coverage and possible compensation</u> but must be obtained <u>before</u> volunteers are utilized in an SAR operation.

D. **Volunteer Organizations**

1. Provide personnel and equipment, as requested by the OCSO.
2. Ensure that their personnel being utilized have the proper SAR identification, training and/or experience and are registered with SAR Coordinator.
3. Perform tasks as assigned by the Sheriff or SAR Coordinator.
4. Account for and maintain equipment used in the operation.
5. Participate in the mission critique.
6. Ensure that claims for any compensation are submitted to the SAR Coordinator within two (2) weeks after the mission has been terminated.
7. Provide SAR Coordinator with information so that SAR resource records may be maintained in a current status.
8. Provide SAR Coordinator with list of names and phone numbers of persons authorized to commit their organization's resources.

E. **SAR Council**

1. Organize SAR exercises and training for volunteer SAR organizations.
2. Provide a forum for volunteer organizations to meet and exchange information about SAR activities.

F. **WAEMD**

1. Issue mission numbers for training exercises and actual events.
2. Provide the coordination with other state agencies and with FEMA for any state and federal resources that may be requested.
3. Assist local jurisdiction with the processing of any claims that may result from a county exercise or mission.
4. Participate, if requested, in the mission critique if state or federal resources were utilized.
5. Assist local jurisdictions in the organization and training for SAR personnel.

VI. REFERENCES

A. Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 38.52

B. RCW 47.68

C. RCW 78.12

D. Washington Administration Code (WAC) 118.04

E. WAC 468.200

F. National Response Framework, May 2016

G. National Search and Rescue Plan, 2007
http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-o/g-opr/nsarc/nsarc.ht