



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE BUREAU DE GESTION DES URGENCES
NOVA SCOTIA NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Standards and Operational Guide for

Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue



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1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 Agency of Jurisdiction (AOJ)** - The agency having jurisdiction and responsibility for a specific geographical area or mandated function. Complaints of lost or missing persons are the responsibility of the police force (agency) of jurisdiction. This responsibility stems from the common-law-duties of Peace Officers to investigate matters involving possible breaches of the Criminal Code, and to preserve members of the public from harm. The AOJ includes the RCMP and Municipal Police Services.
- 1.2 Civil Emergency Response (CER)** - Also known as aiding the Civil Authority whereby a GSAR team assists the municipality in the event of a disaster (natural or man-made). Responsibilities are non-hazardous and include such tasks as setting up and manning road blocks and assisting in and/or conducting evacuations. This type of mandate would fall under the authority of a municipality. However, the team would be tasked to assist by EMO NS.
- 1.3 Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA)** - The Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) is a Canada-wide volunteer aviation association dedicated to the promotion of aviation safety and to the provision of air search support services to Canada's National Search and Rescue program.
- 1.4 Emergency Management Office of Nova Scotia (EMO NS)** - The Emergency Management Offices' mission is to ensure the safety and security of Nova Scotians, their property and the environment by providing for a prompt and coordinated response to an emergency. EMO NS assists with the administration, coordination, and training of Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association's (NSGSARA) teams.
- 1.5 Emergency Service Provider** - Provides advice, assistance and support to First Responders (defined as Police, Fire and Emergency Health Services) in the achievement of operational objectives. Teams of the Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association are Emergency Service Providers.
- 1.6 Evidence Search** - A search for evidence (an item or items used to support a judgment or conclusion) in relation to a missing person file, crime, or lost material.
- 1.7 First Responders** - Any resource dispatched via 9-1-1 or similar system, including Police, Fire /Rescue, and Emergency Health Services.
- 1.8 Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR)** - Is the act of searching through a means of ground activity for a lost/missing person, marine vessel, aircraft, etc. This may be done by actively deploying personnel to the field/shoreline or through supporting investigative efforts. The "rescue" component of a Ground Search and Rescue is the activity undertaken by a GSAR team to extricate a person or persons, after locating, within their capability and training.
- 1.9 Ground Search and Rescue Team** - Ground Search and Rescue Teams are self-directed and managed community organizations that are organized, trained, and

equipped, to locate, access, stabilize, and transport to safety person or persons lost and/or injured in wilderness or wilderness interface areas of the Province.

- 1.10 GSAR Volunteer** – Members of an organized group of volunteers who assists in the operation of ground search and rescue incidents. “Organized” means working cooperatively and systematically to apply recognized skills toward the successful resolution of a GSAR incident.
- 1.11 Incident Commander (IC)** - The IC is the person with 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 (AOJ).
- 1.12 Incident Command System (ICS)** - The Incident Command System is a standardized, on scene, all hazard management concept. ICS allows its’ users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional or political boundaries.
- 1.13 Joint Rescue Coordination Centre Halifax (JRCC Halifax)** - The Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Halifax is responsible for the coordination of all Search and Rescue (SAR) operations associated with aircraft and marine emergencies in eastern Canada. (Note as define in JRCC’s website http://www.jrcchalifax.forces.gc.ca/JRCC_home_E.htm)
- 1.14 Lost Person Incident** - An organized search for a person who has been reported missing to a jurisdictional police authority.
- 1.15 Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association (NSGSARA)** - The NSGSARA consists of 24 teams providing ground search and rescue expertise and resources. The member teams of the NSGSARA are comprised of volunteers and operate under the authority of the Emergency Management Office of Nova Scotia.
- 1.16 Operational Period** - The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of operation actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan. Operational Periods can be of various lengths, but “best practices” suggests that they should be no longer than 12 hours.
- 1.17 Operational Standards** - Operational standards are a minimum service level that accredited teams must maintain.
- 1.18 Search Manager** - Under the direction of the Incident Commander, will manage the ground search and lead and direct individual ground search and rescue resources. The Search Manager is usually an experienced and trained member of a

volunteer ground search and rescue team or police authority. In certain circumstances the Incident Commander may act as the Search Manager.

- 1.19 S.M.A.R.T Program-** the Search Management and Record Tracking (SMART) program is the current database software used by the GSAR Teams to assist with documentation and management of a ground search and rescue operation.
- 1.20 Spontaneous Volunteers -** Any member of the community at-large who arrives at a lost person incident with a desire to help with the search operation.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0.1 Preamble

Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) in Nova Scotia is a community-based resource that combines Agency of Jurisdiction (AOJ) resources and civilian volunteers. The GSAR program is designed to support the AOJ's responsibility of conducting a search and/or rescue operation by providing specialized resources and expertise.

Governance of the provincial GSAR program is undertaken by the Emergency Management Office of Nova Scotia (EMO NS).

By these standards, it is the intent of EMO to be both a leader and a partner in a high quality and sustainable ground search and rescue program for the people of Nova Scotia. This partnership includes the various AOJs throughout the Province as well as the GSAR community.

2.0.2 Acknowledgements

EMO (NS) would like to acknowledge the many individuals and groups who assisted during the development process. We specifically want to recognize; GSAR Teams, Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association, Parks Canada, Halifax Regional Police, Cape Breton Regional Police, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police "H" Division.

Several search management consultants assisted in the development of the GSAR Standards and Guidelines. Paul Olmstead and Daryl D. Black collected data and provided the groundwork. Michael Murray provided valuable input and editorial comments.

2.0.3 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure a well-managed and effective GSAR program for the people of Nova Scotia by:

1. Establishing measurable standards, operational procedures and defining clear roles and responsibilities for EMO, GSAR teams, and AOJs;

Note: This document does not establish responsibilities for AOJs, however the AOJ's responsibilities during an incident involving GSAR are established by agreement between EMO and the various AOJs.

2. Ensuring a consistent approach to the management, administration, and operations of GSAR resources in Nova Scotia;
3. Promoting co-operation with partners to enhance and further EMO's management goals as they relate to GSAR in Nova Scotia.

2.0.4 Authority

The Emergency Management Office, as defined in the Emergency Management Act, has the authority to create standards and operational procedures for the Ground Search and Rescue program in Nova Scotia.

The Emergency Management Act states in Section 25(1) (f); the Governor in Council may make regulations respecting the establishment, operations, liabilities, and responsibilities of the ground search and rescue organizations.

Ground Search and Rescue Teams are tasked by an AOJ and/or EMO NS to respond to a variety of incidents such as lost persons, evidence searches, or civil emergency response. Responsibilities are defined by the operating protocols of EMO NS and the internal policies of the AOJs, NSGSARA, and individual teams. It is the practice of EMO NS to work with the AOJ's, and the NSGSARA to determine a uniform approach when tasking and working with volunteer resources.

2.0.5 Nova Scotia Search and Rescue Committee

EMO NS has established a Search and Rescue Committee with representation from EMO NS, NSGSARA, RCMP, Halifax Regional Police, Cape Breton Regional Police, CASARA and Parks Canada. The purpose of this committee is to provide a venue for discussing issues pertaining to the GSAR program in Nova Scotia. This committee acts as an advisory committee and it makes recommendations aimed at improving the GSAR program in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Search and Rescue Committee will be a venue for monitoring compliance and developing new standards or making revisions as required.

2.0.6 Scope

All GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia will be governed by this document. EMO NS understands that the search for missing persons in Nova Scotia is an AOJ responsibility; therefore the success of the GSAR program in Nova Scotia is dependent on AOJ cooperation in ensuring compliance at GSAR operations.

2.0.7 Responsibilities (as related to the Standards and Guidelines Document)

2.0.7(1) EMO (NS)

1. Developing GSAR Standards, Guidelines and Procedures;
2. Monitoring overall performance of GSAR teams as it relates to administration, training, and operations;
3. Identifying areas in which additional or revised standards are required;
4. Identifying critical issues related to the performance of GSAR team members, teams and/or AOJs, EMO as it relates to a "Lost Person Incident" and working with the various stakeholders to resolve these issues.

2.0.7(2) AOJs (as established by agreement)

1. Monitoring performance of GSAR teams during lost person incidents;
2. Identifying areas in which additional or revised standards are required;
3. Identifying critical issues related to the performance of GSAR team members, teams and/or AOJs, EMO as it relates to a “Lost Person Incident” and working with the various stakeholders to resolve these issues.

2.0.7(3) GSAR Teams

1. Complying with the standards and protocols;
2. Identifying areas in which additional or revised standards are required;
3. Identifying critical issues related to the performance of GSAR team members, teams and/or AOJs, EMO as it relates to a “Lost Person Incident” and working with the various stakeholders to resolve these issues.

2.0.8 Role of Ground Search and Rescue Teams

The role of a volunteer Ground Search and Rescue Team is:

1. Assist the AOJ in locating missing or overdue individuals and/or objects;
2. Access, stabilize, and evacuate distressed or injured individuals to ensure their timely transfer to appropriate care or place of safety;
3. Provide such other assistance to municipal, provincial, and federal agencies as required, able to, and authorized.
4. Reducing the number and impact of SAR incidents by proactive prevention initiatives such as: Wood’s Proofing, Project Lifesaver.

2.0.9 Eligible Search Team Task Activities

1. Wilderness search rescue, and recovery;
2. Urban search: defined as a search for a missing person in any area included in the definition of an urban environment;
3. Surface searching on water. This is limited to searching for lost individuals and clues along a shoreline;
4. Searching by use of dogs using AOJ certified/approved search dogs when approved by the AOJ;
5. Air search when properly trained (spotters only);
6. Medical rescue (rescue and transportation from remote areas to EHS).
7. Evidence search.

2.0.10 Ineligible GSAR Activities:

1. Underwater Search and Recovery;
2. Avalanche rescue;
3. Cave rescue;
4. Urban Search and Rescue (defined as locating and extracting people from collapsed building or other entrapments);
5. High Angle rescue;
6. Helicopter rescue (except spotters);
7. Mountain Rescue;
8. Domestic animal rescue;
9. Hazardous material response and/or clean up;
10. Tree rescue (arboreal rescue)
11. Fire Suppression (structural, vehicle, and wild land);
12. Searching for potentially dangerous individuals (people who may be armed with weapons, people who may be violent, people engaged in criminal activities, people fleeing from police, etc.)
13. Transporting patients to medical care (riding in ambulances, driving ambulances, etc.)
14. Transporting police or other law enforcement or regulatory agencies, involved with search/apprehension of dangerous individuals;
15. Transporting fire department crews engaged in fire response activities.

2.0.11 GSAR Team Boundaries

Insert Map Here

3.0 GSAR TEAM INCORPORATION (NS Joint Stocks)

3.0.1 Preamble

A society is a non-profit organization which is incorporated under the Societies Act. The registration process is completed through the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

3.0.2 Purpose

The purpose of the GSAR Team Incorporation Standard is to ensure that GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia are afforded the advantages and protection provided by incorporation under the Nova Scotia Societies Act.

3.0.3 Scope

The GSAR Team Incorporation Standard applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia.

3.0.4 Standard

GSAR teams must be incorporated as a non-profit society with the Nova Scotia Joint Stock Companies and their incorporation status must be “active”. Teams that are registered with the Canadian Revenue Agency for charitable purposes must be in good standing with CRA.

3.0.4(1) Advantages

The following advantages apply to GSAR Teams incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act:

1. Protection of name. (Once reserved and registered the team name is protected from use by other organizations);
2. Public Record. (Organization is placed on public record);
3. By-Laws of the team are registered;
4. Personal Liability Protection. (Under Section 27 of the Nova Scotia Society Act individuals are protected against financial liabilities of the society);
5. Registered charity. (Allows for accepting donations and issuing receipts);
6. Grant Availability. (Some grant sources require incorporation such as the Nova Scotia Emergency Services Provider fund.

3.0.4(2) Incorporation Requirements

To become incorporated in accordance with the Nova Scotia Societies Act, teams will be required to:

1. Register the team name with the Registrar of Nova Scotia Joint Stock Companies;
2. Provide a Memorandum of Association;
3. Select Society Classification;
4. Develop and submit their organizational By-Laws;
5. Appoint and identify Directors and Officers;
6. Appoint a Recognized agent;
7. Provide notice of Registered office;
8. Pay the appropriate fees.

For the complete process to incorporate any society, please contact the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies and visit their website

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/access/business/registry-joint-stock-companies.asp>.

3.0.4(3) Annual Requirements

Every society must file annually:

1. A list of directors¹
2. A financial statement

More detailed information is available on the Registry of Joint Stocks website at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/access/business/registry-joint-stock-companies.asp>.

¹ Only when there is a change required to do so

3.1 OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

3.1.0 Preamble

This section details allowable expenses so that search teams and members can consistently bill and be reimbursed for expenses they incur in the volunteer search and rescue role.

3.1.1 Scope

This procedure applies to all submissions for expense reimbursement by GSAR teams in Nova Scotia covers eligible and ineligible expenses covered by EMO NS and the AOJs.

3.1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to outline administrative standards for payment of expense claims.

3.1.3 Operational Expense Standards

1. Claims are to be submitted to the EMPO within 60 days of the time they were incurred. Claims submitted outside of this time frame will be rejected or accepted for payment only at the discretion of the agency responsible for payment.
2. Claim forms for search incidents must be accompanied by a search report form and supporting documentation. Failure to submit a search report form and supporting documentation with a search related claim will result in the claim being returned to the team or member for correction.
3. Claim forms must be done on EMO claim forms only. The use of any other form will result in the claim being returned to the team or member for correction.
4. Claim forms need to clearly breakdown costs and not simply be a total. This includes the breakdown of on-route and on-site expenses. Attach additional pages as necessary to sufficiently document claim details.
5. All forms are to be filled out as complete and as neat as possible, using ink not pencil.
6. All forms must be approved, signed, and dated by the appropriate team officers. Forms not signed will result in the claim being returned to the team or member for correction.
7. Supporting documentation (i.e. receipts, invoices, proof of payment) must be submitted to substantiate specific claims where flat rates (e.g. mileage,) do not apply.

3.2 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

3.2.1 Preamble

The GSAR program in Nova Scotia is a partnership between three individual agencies/groups; The AOJ, EMO NS, and GSAR teams. Each of these groups/agencies has specific roles, responsibilities, authorities, and accountability within their jurisdiction.

3.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to define the responsibilities of the AOJ, EMO NS, and GSAR teams as it pertains to the Ground Search and Rescue program.

3.2.3 Scope

This section applies to the AOJ, EMO NS, and GSAR teams as it relates to incidents and/or events where the services of GSAR teams(s) are utilized for operations.

3.2.4 AOJ Responsibilities (as established by agreement, AOJ Policy, or legislation.)

3.2.4(1) Notify the appropriate GSAR team once a need is determined.

Time is a critical factor in GSAR operations and any delay can negatively affect the effectiveness, efficiency, outcome and financial cost of the search. The AOJ should notify the GSAR team as soon as possible after a lost/missing person incident has been reported. The theoretical search area expands quickly for each hour that a person becomes lost. By the end of the first hour the area is 3.1 square miles by the end of the 3rd hour it has become 28.3 square miles. This rapid growth in theoretical search area is a major factor in why GSAR teams should be activated as soon as possible.

3.2.4(2) Assign a trained on-scene Incident Commander to the Incident.

The IC should have completed the National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) course “Managing the Lost Person” (MLPI) or equivalent and ICS 300.

3.2.4(3) Financially support the needs and requirements of each team operating at an incident.

3.2.4(4) Provide the necessary items to sustain the GSAR team(s). (food, fuel, portable toilets, etc.)

3.2.4(5) Request appropriate resources that are required to support the GSAR mission.

- 3.2.4(6)** Ensure that a debriefing is held within two weeks of the conclusion/suspension of the search at a designated time and location convenient for GSAR team.
- 3.2.4(7)** Ensure the safety of all personnel, police, GSAR volunteers, and others involved in the search.
- 3.2.4(8)** Ensure GSAR teams comply with the Nova Scotia GSAR Standards and Operational Guide.
- 3.2.4(9)** Immediately address issues or concerns regarding safety, ability, competency, etc. the GSAR team with GSAR team leadership.
- 3.3.4(10)** Report any issues/concerns in regards to safety, ability, competency, of GSAR teams to EMO NS.
- 3.2.4(11)** Provide the GSAR Search Manager with a completed Lost Person Questionnaire (LPQ) and operational briefing.
- 3.2.4(12)** Provide investigation services.
- 3.2.4(13)** Provide a liaison with other agencies such as JRCC, Fire, etc.
- 3.2.4(14)** Scene control and protection.
- 3.2.4(15)** Logistical support.
- 3.2.4(16)** Documentation of incident.
- 3.2.4(17)** Assign an Information Officer.
- 3.2.4(18)** If required arrange for a Critical Incident Stress debriefing and/or defusing for GSAR team at the conclusion of a difficult or stressful search.
- 3.2.4(19)** Ensure that persons operating vehicles at search scenes such as ATVs, vessels, etc. have the required registration, license, insurance coverage, and meet any standards required (such as the Provincial Standard Operating Regulation for ATVs) to operate the type of vehicle being used.
- 3.2.4(20)** Certifying GSAR team and/or members' expense claim for lost/damaged equipment.
- 3.2.4(21)** Remain on scene at the conclusion of a search during demobilization until all searchers and other support personnel have been accounted for.

3.2.4(22) Ensure compliance with all applicable safety legislation such as the Canada Labour Code, NS Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, Criminal Code of Canada, etc.

3.2.5 EMO NS Responsibilities

3.2.5(1) Provide financial assistance to the GSAR teams operating in NS under the authority of EMO NS by way of an annual grant.

3.2.5(2) Provide travel allowances (meals, mileage) based on EMO approved rates for travel related to the on-route to/from costs associated with team deployment within the scope of activities authorized by EMO NS.

3.2.5(3) Fund liability insurance for GSAR teams through the NSGSARA.

3.2.5(4) Ensure compliance by teams and individual members to the NS GSAR Standards and Operations Guide.

3.2.5(5) Monitor performance of GSAR teams and address any issues or concerns in a timely manner.

3.2.5(6) Provide financial assistance to support training initiatives of the GSAR teams. This fund is activated by submitting a training proposal to the appropriate EMPO for approval.

3.2.5(7) Provide Worker's Compensation coverage to individual team members who are registered with a recognized GSAR team and meet the membership requirements.

3.2.5(8) Request JRCC assistance on behalf of the AOJ for Ground Search operations. Failure to follow this procedure may result in cost recovery action.

3.2.5(9) Authorize the use of the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) as requested by the AOJ for Ground Search Operations.

3.2.5(10) Upon being informed provide GSAR teams with timely information about federal, provincial, or municipal policies, legislation, guidelines, etc. that may affect GSAR operations.

3.2.5(11) Maintain a database of GSAR statistics as derived from the Lost Person report.

3.2.6 GSAR Responsibilities

- 3.2.6(1)** Provide up to date emergency contact numbers for 24/7 availability to the NSGSARA for further distribution to EMO NS and the appropriate AOJ(s).
- 3.2.6(2)** Within 30 days of an individual becoming a GSAR team member, the team must ensure that all relevant information pertaining to the new volunteer is entered into the SMART database.
- 3.2.6(3)** Maintain equipment and vehicles in a state of readiness.
- 3.2.6(4)** Provide an Incident Command Post unless otherwise provided.
- 3.2.6(5)** Conduct training sessions at least once per month.
- 3.2.6(6)** Arrive on scene fully operational, ready to be deployed, and self-sufficient for the first 24 hours.
- 3.2.6(7)** Provide a trained Search Management team including a Search Manager and appropriate General staff.
- 3.2.6(8)** Comply with the EMO (NS) standards as set forth in the Nova Scotia GSAR Standards and Operational Guide.
- 3.2.6(9)** Operate in a professional manner.
- 3.2.6(10)** Operate in a safe manner on route to/from the scene complying with the NS Motor Vehicles Act.
- 3.2.6(11)** Comply with all safety procedures/policies while on scene of the AOJ and as outlined in the NS GSAR Standards and Operations Guide as well as any relevant safety legislation.
- 3.2.6(12)** Provide timely and accurate response to request for information or reporting from EMO NS and/or the AOJ.
- 3.2.6(13)** Identify and inform, through the NSGSARA, the established Search and Rescue committee of any areas in which EMO/AOJ did not fulfill their responsibilities as defined in the NS GSAR Standards and Operational Guide.

3.3 REPORTING

3.3.1 Preamble

A comprehensive reporting system is critical to the GSAR program. In addition to documentation of the incident, information gathered is vital to other aspects such as prevention and training.

3.3.2 Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to ensure that search incidents are properly documented and that the required forms are submitted in a timely manner.

3.3.3 Scope

All GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS will comply with the requirements for reporting s outlined below.

3.3.4 Reporting Procedure

- 3.3.4(1)** As soon as it is practical information collected at a search shall be entered on the Lost Person Report Form. All relevant fields must be completed.
- 3.3.4(2)** The information collected on the Lost Person Report form shall be entered into the SMART database within 30 days of the search.
- 3.3.4(3)** Information related to the search such as team members, equipment, tasking, etc. must be entered into the SMART database immediately and on-going during the search operation.
- 3.3.4(4)** Completed Lost Person Report forms must be signed and submitted to EMO NS within 60 days.

3.4 WORKERS COMPENSATION

3.4.1 Preamble

Active members of GSAR teams in the Province of Nova Scotia are covered under NS Worker's Compensation when involved with activities sanctioned by EMO NS. These activities would include conducting searches for missing persons, training, and other events/incidents as approved by EMO NS.

3.4.2 Scope

This coverage applies to all members registered with a recognized GSAR team in Nova Scotia and operating within parameters set by EMO NS. This coverage is also provided to volunteers who register with the GSAR team during search incidents.

3.4.3 Worker's Compensation Procedures

- 3.4.3(1)** To be eligible for coverage all team members and other volunteers must be registered with the applicable GSAR team. Documentation of date and time of registration must be readily available.
- 3.4.3(2)** All members shall take the necessary precautions to reduce the risk of injury such as complying with safe work practices or wearing appropriate personal protective equipment as required.
- 3.4.3(3)** All members must report incidents or injuries to their immediate supervisor (e.g. Team Leader) as soon as possible.
- 3.4.3(4)** All injuries must be documented using WCB Form 67 and reported as soon as practicable to EMO NS so as to comply with the requirement to report to WCB within 5 working days. All applicable sections of the Form 67 must be completed.
- 3.4.3(5)** Failure to comply with the requirement to report to WCB within 5 working days may result in monetary penalties therefore it is imperative that injuries are reported as required above.
- 3.4.3(6)** The completed Form 67 must be either electronically mailed or faxed to EMO NS at 1-902-424-5376. The original form should be submitted to the zone EMPO for delivery to EMO NS head office.

3.5 NEAR MISS/INJURY INCIDENT INVESTIGATION / PREVENTION

3.5.1 Preamble

Incidents which have or may have resulted in injury or property damage should be documented and investigated for the purpose of preventing future incidents. Identifying the cause of such incidents is a vital step in prevention.

3.5.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to outline procedures for documentation and investigation of incidents that have or may have caused injuries to personnel or property damage.

3.5.3 Scope

This section applies to all GSAR teams operating under the authority of EMO NS.

3.5.4 Near Miss / Injury / Property Damage Investigation Procedures

3.5.4(1) In addition to the WCB Form for injured workers, all incidents which may or have caused injury or property damage must be documented.

3.5.4(2) Near Miss / Injury / Property Damage incidents must be investigated by team leadership to determine the cause.

3.5.4(3) Actions must be taken by GSAR team leadership to prevent a future occurrence in a time frame relevant to the risk or potential risk. In situations that pose an imminent risk for injury action must be taken immediately.

3.5.4(4) A near miss incident or injury must be communicated to other team members and/or teams when necessary to prevent reoccurrence.

3.6 MOBILIZATION AND RESPONSE TIMES

3.6.1 Preamble

Response times are defined as the time it takes a GSAR team to respond to an operation and start effective search operations. Response times are critical to successful search operations in order to minimize the area to be searched and to locate the subject as quickly as possible and thus reduce the risk to the subject. Response time can be divided into a number of segments:

- a) Mobilization Period - time to mobilize team resources.
- b) Transit Period - time to move resources from the base location to the search site.
- c) Planning Period - time to implement management of the ground search operation and effectively deploy resources in search operations.

3.6.2 Background

- a) The total response time is influenced by a number of factors, some of which are beyond the control of the search team;
- b) The Mobilization period is within the control of the search team and reflects the operational readiness of the team. During the mobilization period, the overhead team must prepare the deployment of the team and activate both itself and the remaining resources of the team.
- c) The Transit period is the time required to travel from where the resources are based or staged to the search location and will be a function of the distances involved and conditions such as traffic/weather present at the time of the search.
- d) The Planning period is a function of the operational readiness of the team and the information available to the overhead team at the time the overhead team begins management of the ground search operation.
- e) The Search period is the first operational period within the search and is not considered part of the response time.

3.6.3 Scope

This standard applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia and under the authority of EMO NS.

3.6.4 Mobilization and Response Standard Response Times

1. Mobilization Period - 30 minutes
2. Transit Period - 60 minutes
3. Planning Period - 60 minutes

These response times will be deliverable to 90% of the operations occurring within a team's area of operation.

3.7 PERSONNEL RESOURCE LEVELS

3.7.1 Preamble

Responding to a search operation requires a minimum number of trained searchers and overhead managers.

3.7.2 Scope

This standard applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia.

3.7.3 Purpose

To identify minimum resource levels for individual teams in order to meet the service delivery expectations of the AOJ.

3.7.4 Personnel Resource Levels Standard

GSAR teams must ensure that the following resource levels are operationally available for response to a lost person incident.

- a) 1 Search Manager
- b) 2 General Staff (e.g. Plans Section Chief, Operations Section Chief, Logistics)
- c) 5 Team Leaders
- d) 15 Qualified searchers

GSAR teams have the ability to solicit assistance from neighboring teams to meet these minimum requirements. GSAR Teams unable to maintain personnel resource levels will be audited by EMO NS and their status will be reviewed to determine if further action is required.

3.8 GSAR ACTIVE MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

3.8.1 Preamble

A search and rescue incident is often a physically and mentally demanding task oriented operation. To perform under such conditions in a safe and effective manner requires team members to meet certain criteria. In addition any given search may have an element that could require members to appear in court or at the very least be part of a police investigation.

3.8.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish minimum requirements for active GSAR team members.

3.8.3 Scope

This section applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of NS under the authority of EMO NS.

3.8.4 Requirements for Active Membership

3.8.4(1) All fully active members must be at least 18 years of age

3.8.4(2) Members must not have a criminal record. (A criminal records check is required to be completed by the appropriate police authority and submitted to the team. Documentation must be entered into the SMART database).

3.8.4(3) Causes for automatic disqualification or dismissal includes:

1. Conviction of any crime, while an adult, involving a child, the elderly and/or a dependent adult;
2. Conviction of a indictable² offence as an adult;
3. Conviction of any violent crime within 10 years preceding the individual's application

² The most serious are the indictable offences. Examples of offences which are always indictable include murder (s.235), robbery (s.344) and break and enter of a dwelling-house (s.348(1)(a)). The available penalties are greater for indictable offences than for summary offences.

The most minor offences are summary conviction offences. They are defined as "summary" within the Act and, unless otherwise stated, are punishable by a fine of no more than \$5,000 and/or 6 months in jail. Examples of offences which are always summary offences include trespassing at night (section 177), causing a disturbance (s.175) and taking a motor vehicle without the owner's consent (s.335).

4. Conviction for any other crime deemed by the NSGSARA /EMO/AOJ to be disqualifying
5. Falsifying information on their application

3.8.4(4) Members must be physically and mentally capable of performing the tasks as assigned. *(Individual members are responsible to notify team leadership if they have any physical or mental issues that might affect their ability to perform tasks as assigned).*

3.8.4(5) All members must be registered with the team(s) and documented in the SMART database.

3.8.4(6) All members must be properly trained for the task assigned. **(Individual members are responsible to notify team leadership if they feel that they have not received sufficient training for the task assigned).**

3.8.5 Junior Membership

3.8.5(1) Persons who have not reached the age of 18 but are at least 16 years of age may be registered as members of a GSAR Team in Nova Scotia. However, “full” active membership cannot be obtained until at least age 18.

3.8.5(2) Members between the age of 16 and 18 years old must receive parental consent to be a member of a GSAR team in Nova Scotia. Consent must be provided in writing and documented in the SMART database.

3.8.5(3) Members between the age of 16 and 18 years old must be accompanied by an experienced team member who is at least 18 years old.

3.8.5(4) Careful evaluations must be conducted when deploying members who have not reached the age of 18 especially during incidents that may be traumatic. Duties should be limited to base related activities and training.

3.9 SEARCH MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS

3.9.1 Preamble

The search for missing/lost persons can be a complicated incident which requires proper training and experience to manage effectively. Search Managers work in conjunction with the Incident Commander to determine operational objectives. The Search Manager is the subject matter expert in relation to ground search and rescue activities.

3.9.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to define the minimum qualifications for the position of Search Manager.

3.9.3 Scope

This section applies to all GSAR team operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

3.9.4 Search Manager Qualifications Standard

3.9.4(1) Must meet all the eligibility requirements for active team member as outlined in **Section 3.7**.

3.9.4(2) Must be experienced and properly trained to perform the role of Search Manager. The National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) course “Managing the Lost Person” (MLPI) or equivalent is the recognized level of training for this position.

3.9.4(3) Must have successfully completed ICS 300.

3.9.4(4) Must have at least 5 years’ experience as a GSAR team member and have Team Leader Training and operational experience

3.9.4(5) Must attend refresher training at least every five years. This could be by being in attendance for a full “Managing the Lost Person Incident” course or other refresher training.

3.9.4(6) Must be approved by the appropriate GSAR team.

3.10 OPERATIONAL PREPLAN

3.10.1 Preamble

The importance of preplanning for tactical and strategic operations cannot be overstated. The Operational Preplan provides search management with a comprehensive plan that will enhance response efficiency and reduce stress. The information contained in the Operational Plan will greatly assist Search Managers to manage the incident by providing key information and a structured process to follow. The quality of the Operational Plan has a direct affect on the quality of the search response and management.

3.10.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish the requirement for an Operational Plan and provide information on the content of the plan.

3.10.3 Scope

The standard below applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

3.10.4 Operational Preplan Standard

All GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia shall develop a comprehensive team Operational Preplan. This plan shall be reviewed and updated annually. The contents of the Operational Preplan shall include but not be limited to:

3.10.4(1) Checklist(s)

3.10.4(2) Resource List

3.10.4(3) List of Reference Documents

3.10.4(4) Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines

3.10.4(5) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

Reference: “Managing the Lost Person Incident”, Kenneth Hill, Second Edition, Chapter 5.

3.10.5 Preplan Structure

The following is a suggested structure for an Operational Preplan as outlined in *“Managing the Lost Person Incident”, Kenneth Hill, Second Edition, pg 49-51.*

3.10.5(1) Purpose and objectives of the plan;

3.10.5(2) Incident Priority Guidelines (*e.g. RCMP Urgency Chart*);

3.10.5(3) Contacts / Call-Out Procedure;

- 3.10.5(4)** Investigation Procedures (Provided by AOJ);
- 3.10.5(5)** Search Strategies;
- 3.10.5(6)** Search Tactics;
- 3.10.5(7)** Authorities and Responsibilities;
- 3.10.5(8)** Organizational Structure (ICS System);
- 3.10.5(9)** Incident Facilities (Identified on-site);
- 3.10.5(10)** Radio Communications;
- 3.10.5(11)** Briefing / Debriefing Procedures
- 3.10.5(12)** Medical Information (Contacts, etc.)
- 3.10.5(13)** Fatalities (Procedures);
- 3.10.5(14)** Rescue / Evacuation (Procedures, Contacts, etc.)
- 3.10.5(15)** Incident Suspension;
- 3.10.5(16)** Demobilizing;
- 3.10.5(17)** Documentation;
- 3.10.5(18)** Critiques;
- 3.10.5(19)** Special Issues;
- 3.10.5(20)** Appendices

3.11 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

3.11.1 Preamble

The search for missing/lost persons and the training for such incidents are conducted most often in environments that pose a health and safety risk to personnel. Risks such as eye injury, sprains/strains, cold injuries, etc. are probable when carrying out duties in the search environment. To reduce the risk to safety and health of team members; personal protective equipment must be worn where required.

3.11.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish criteria for the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment while engaged in search activities or other assignments as tasked.

3.11.3 Scope

This standard applies to all members of GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

3.11.4 Personal Protective Equipment Standard

3.11.4(1) All GSAR personnel shall wear appropriate personal protective equipment as required by the Nova Scotia Occupational Safety and Health Act/Regulations when conditions exist that present a risk to the health and safety of personnel.

This includes but is not limited to:

1. Approved eye protection in areas of risk for eye injury;
2. Approved head protection in areas of risk for head injury;
3. Approved safety footwear for areas of risk for foot injury;
4. Approved safety gloves for areas of risk to hand injuries;
5. Approved reflective clothing for areas of vehicle contact risk;
6. All other required PPE as warranted by conditions.

3.11.4(2) All personnel shall wear appropriate clothing for the environmental conditions in which he/she will be tasked, such as appropriate dress for cold or wet conditions.

3.11.4(3) Personnel not wearing the appropriate personal protective clothing shall not engage in field operations.

3.11.4(4) Team Leaders shall ensure that all personnel under his/her span of control are properly dressed and equipped to engage in the task as assigned.

3.11.4(5) In situations where there is health risks such as performing First Aid or patient handling/transport universal precaution personal protective equipment shall be worn or used. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Rubber/Latex gloves;
2. Respiratory Protection (e.g. N95 Mask);
3. Approved eye protection;
4. Barrier Shield for Artificial Respiration.

3.12 ALCOHOL AND RECREATIONAL DRUG USE

3.12.1 Preamble

The search for missing/lost persons and other duties assigned to GSAR teams require that individuals be competent and coherent. Performing duties while under the influence of alcohol or drugs places the individual, his/her fellow searches, the lost/missing person and the public at risk. In addition the use of alcohol and/or recreational drugs will tarnish the image of the GSAR program and compromise the integrity of dedicated search members.

3.12.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish a zero tolerance policy in relation to alcohol and/or recreational drug use.

3.12.2 Scope

This policy applies to all GSAR personnel in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS. This policy also applies to Spontaneous Volunteers registered with the GSAR team during any particular incident.

3.12.3 Alcohol and Recreational Use Policy

- 3.12.3(1)** No GSAR team member shall report for duty or engage in training activities while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs;
- 3.12.3(2)** GSAR team members shall not engage in alcohol and/or recreational drug use while performing duties;
- 3.12.3(3)** No GSAR member shall operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and/or recreational drugs;
- 3.12.3(4)** All personnel are responsible to inform the Incident Commander or designate of any activity involving the use of alcohol and/or recreational drugs;
- 3.12.3(5)** Any GSAR team members found to be under the influence of alcohol and/or recreational drug use or engaging in the use of alcohol and/or recreational drugs shall be removed from the scene.

4.0 OPERATIONS - GSAR TEAM CALL OUT

This section includes standards/procedures in regards to operations.

4.0.1 Preamble

The GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia are a valuable resource to the various organizations and authorities that may require the specialized service they provide. The call out procedure for activating GSAR teams may vary depending on the incident and the tasking agency.

It is imperative that the AOJ conduct the initial investigation to determine as soon as possible whether the GSAR resource is required. The AOJ has the ability to consult with the appropriate GSAR Search Manager to assist with the investigation process to identify the need for GSAR resources.

4.0.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to outline the procedures for calling out the GSAR teams to respond to an incident or other tasking.

4.0.3 Scope

These procedures apply to all the GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

4.0.4 Call-Out Procedure

4.0.4(1) A GSAR team will initiate ground search operations on the basis of a call from:

- a) Police Authority
- b) Emergency Management Office (EMO) Nova Scotia

4.0.4(2) GSAR teams will initiate such other activities as requested by EMO NS.

4.0.4(3) When the services of a GSAR team are required, the appropriate police authority within whose jurisdiction the action originates will notify the appropriate GSAR contact person.

4.0.4(4) GSAR teams may be contacted and placed on stand-by during an investigation. This procedure will allow teams to prepare for the call out and expedite the response if required.

- 4.0.4(5)** The GSAR contact person must obtain the following information from the requesting agency:
- a) Name and contact phone number of the investigating/responding officer;
 - b) AOJ incident number;
 - c) Details of the nature of the incident- initial planning/searching data current actions;
 - d) Location of search;
 - e) Specific directions to search site and/or staging area;
 - f) Name of AOJ IC if known;
 - g) What actions have taken place or are about to take place;
 - h) If a police dog, helicopter, or other specialized resources have been ordered;
- 4.0.4(6)** Contact person must fill out an “Initial Contact” report. (ICS form GSAR001);
- 4.0.4(7)** After notification, the Search Director or designate, shall:
- a) Determine the urgency of the request;
 - b) Call the appropriate person for the role of SAR manager and discuss level of response appropriate to the situation;
 - c) Call the “Overhead Team”;
 - d) Initiate call-out;
 - e) Inform the EMO Duty Officer of the search 1-866-424-5620.
Provide basic information of search situation and contact number for Search Manager.
- 4.0.4(8)** If the AOJ deems that the GSAR team within the jurisdiction that the lost person is missing does not have the resources or expertise necessary to manage the search they have the authority to request that another team manage the search;
- 4.0.4(9)** If the AOJ deems that the GSAR team within the jurisdiction that the lost person is missing does not have the appropriate resources to deploy to the field they have the authority to request assistance from additional teams.
- 4.0.4(10)** The size, scope, and circumstances of the incident may require additional teams to support the host team operations. The IC can request additional teams or delegate this task to other staff;
- 4.0.4(11)** Teams arriving to support host team operations shall work under the established command system. (i.e. the host team will maintain the search management role until otherwise determined by the AOJ Incident Commander or as required by a change in Operational Periods).

4.0.4(12) Request for GSAR teams from outside of the Province must be done through EMO NS. The IC must be able to verify that all in Province resources have been exhausted prior to making the request to EMO NS. The process will be that the IC contact the EMO Duty Officer and provide a situation report in making the request for out of Province resources. The EMO NS Duty Officer will contact the EMO Director of Operations for authorization to fulfill the request.

4.1 INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)

4.1.1 Preamble

“The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard command control structure that allows users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries”.

GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia must operate using the ICS to ensure that they fit operationally with other agencies that are on scene and using the Incident Command System. This section will provide a brief overview of the components of the Incident Command System. Training in ICS is a requirement under the qualifications for GSAR team members and search management.

4.1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide a brief overview of the Incident Command System to be used during GSAR operations conducted in the Province of Nova Scotia.

4.1.3 Scope

All GSAR teams in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS shall use the Incident Command System.

4.1.4 Incident Command System Overview

The overall incident will be managed using the Incident Command System (ICS). Volunteer ground search and rescue team members and AOJ members must be familiar with the structure and vocabulary of the ICS in order to function effectively together and with other agencies.

The AOJ has the authority to use which operational management structure best meets the needs of the incident.

4.1.5 Operational Management Structure

Depending on the nature of the incident and/or experience of the AOJ representative and/or the GSAR search management overhead team one of two management structures may be used.

4.1.5(1) Single Command

The AOJ Incident Commander organizes the incident using single command structure. The AOJ assumes full responsibility for both the operational and tactical efforts of the volunteer GSAR team(s). All general staff will report and be accountable directly to the AOJ Incident Commander and will not have the authority to relieve or act for the Incident Commander. In this structure the GSAR Search Manager if present acts as a subject matter expert and advises the Incident Commander.

4.1.5(2) Unified Command

Under some circumstances the AOJ Incident Commander may decide to use a Unified Command structure while still maintaining the overall authority for the incident.

Unified command is a unified team effort to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives, strategies, and action plans. This can be accomplished without losing or abdicating the AOJ authority, responsibility, or accountability. The choice regarding which incident management structure is best suited is at the discretion of the AOJ. The choice can be determined by operational and administrative requirements, core competencies, need for confidentiality and availability of resources. In this structure the GSAR Search Manager cannot relieve or act on behalf of the AOJ Incident Commander.

4.1.6 Command Staff

4.1.6(1) Incident Commander (IC)

The Incident Commander role is filled by a representative of the police agency or other agency of jurisdiction. During typical search operation this role is filled by a qualified RCMP member or a municipal police officer. The Incident Commander retains responsibility for any function not assigned to other staff and always assumes overall responsibility for the incident.

Responsibilities include:

1. Establishes immediate priorities;
2. Establishes an appropriate organization;
3. Approves requests for additional resources;
4. Approve and authorize the implementation of an Incident Action Plan;
5. Coordinate with key people and officials;
6. Keep agency administrator informed of incident status;

7. Approve requests for additional resources or for the release of resources;
8. Approve the use of students, volunteers, and auxiliary personnel;
9. Order the demobilization of the incident when appropriate;
10. Ensure that adequate safety measures are in place;
11. Represents the Authority of Jurisdiction;
12. Summarizing, for public consumption, information pertaining to incident cause, size, current situation, resources committed, and other matters that may be of interest;
13. With the GSAR Search Manager assists with GSAR planning including overall objectives (ICS202 Incident Objectives);
14. With the GSAR Search Manager evaluates the urgency of the incident and determining the nature and magnitude of the initial response;
15. With the GSAR Search Manger selects the location of the incident base and command post, and approves locations of other incident facilities;
16. Organize and conducts an incident debriefing;
17. Assigns other Command Staff as Required:
18. With the SAR Manager ensures that a written Incident Action Plan is prepared if the incident spans 2 or more operational periods.

4.1.6(2) Deputy Incident Commander

The Deputy Incident Commander, if utilized, will be appointed by the Incident Commander.

The Deputy IC:

1. Performs tasks as requested by the Incident Commander;
2. Performs the incident command function in a relief capacity;
3. May represent an agency that shares jurisdiction;

Note: If a Deputy Incident Commander is assigned, he or she must be fully qualified and have the authority to assume command of the incident.

4.1.6(3) GSAR Search Manager

The GSAR Search Manager is a subject matter expert that may fill the functional side of a Unified Command format as determined by the Incident Commander for ground search operations. This position works in conjunction with the Incident Commander to ensure that the task progresses effectively and efficiently towards the objectives.

The GSAR Search Manager provides leadership and direction, makes, reviews, and approves decisions, in conjunction with the IC, relative to

the search. Additionally, the GSAR Search Manager oversees all other management functions in regards to the GSAR operations.

Responsibilities include:

1. Responsible for all GSAR operations under the direction of the IC;
2. Manages the functional aspects of the GSAR task;
3. Assists in determining overall objectives (ICS202 Incident Objectives);
4. In consultation with the Incident Commander assigns ICS staff positions of Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, Administration/Finance;
5. Determines operational periods;
6. Ensures planning meetings are scheduled;
7. Supervises general and command staff to ensure that the scope of their roles and responsibilities are being addressed;
8. Reports to and updates the Incident Commander;
9. Reviews team assignment debriefings and modify overall objectives accordingly;
10. Adequately briefs incoming GSAR Management team at shift changes;
11. Assists with evaluating the urgency of the incident and determining the nature and magnitude of the initial response;
12. With the IC selects the location of the incident base and command post, and approves the location of other incident facilities;
13. Initiates or approves the requisition of resources within their scope of authority as directed by the IC;
14. Solicits assistance from appropriate technical specialists when special problems arise;
15. Interfaces with representatives of other agencies involved in the incident;
16. Works to ensure the safety of personnel by identifying and mitigating hazards;
17. Provide an Assistant Safety Officer as required;
18. May assign a Deputy and/or scribe.

4.1.6(4) Information Officer

The information officer serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders. When assigned there is only one per incident. An Information Officer is not required on every incident. The IO acts as a central point for information dissemination for all information including:

1. Public Information
2. Media Relations
3. Internal Information

- a) The Information officer advises the incident commander on information dissemination and media releases.
- b) The IO is usually appointed by the AOJ.
- c) Obtains information from and provides information to the Planning Section.
- d) Obtains information from and provides information to the community and media.

4.1.6(5) Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer serves as the primary contact for assisting and cooperating agencies and organizations assisting at an incident. Only one Liaison Officer will be assigned, however staff may be assigned to assist.

The Liaison Officer:

- 1. Assists the Incident Commander by serving as a point of contact for agency representatives who are helping to support the operation;
- 2. Provides briefings to and answers questions from supporting agencies;
- 3. May act as a concierge to help integrate other organizations into the response,
- 4. Introduce them to the appropriate contacts; help get organizing answering the point of contact for all assisting agencies. All agency representatives report to the liaison officer.
- 5. May not be appointed at the incident and if not the role of this position is retained by the IC.

4.1.6(6) Safety Officer

The Safety Officer monitors safety conditions and ensures the safety of all incident personnel. Only one Safety Officer will be assigned for each incident.

The Safety Officer:

- 1. Advises the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety;
- 2. Works with the Operations Section to ensure the safety of field personnel;
- 3. Has the emergency authority to stop unsafe acts;
- 4. Is usually appointed from the Agency of Jurisdiction;
- 5. May not be appointed at the incident and if not the role of this position is retained by the IC;
- 6. May be assisted by the appointment of an Assistant Safety Officer.

4.1.7 General Staff

As with the Command Staff the number of General Staff positions will depend on the incident. The General Staff can be assigned to one of four sections; Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Administration/Finance. The incident will dictate the sections required and will be decided upon by the Incident Commander.

4.1.7(1) Operations Section

The operations section is responsible for managing all tactical operations at an incident. The build-up of the Operations Section is generally dictated by the number of tactical resources involved and span of control considerations. If required the Incident Commander may appoint an Operations Section Chief who is responsible for the tactical component of the incident.

4.1.7(1)(1) GSAR Team Leader

The GSAR team leader is the person responsible for the conduct of an individual ground search team resource, strike team or task force. The Team Leader reports to the GSAR Search Manager or designate. The ground search team leader plans, organizes, leads, supervises, and executes a Ground Search Team mission and rescue assignment.

Responsibilities include:

1. Responsible to the Search Manager or if appointed the Operations Section Chief or designate;
2. Ensure team members are adequately prepared and properly dressed and equipped for a mission;
3. Being easily identified;
4. Ensure the safety of the team;
5. Takes leadership role in relation to monitoring and overseeing tasks of the searchers;
6. Keeps accurate notes on team's activities;
7. Evaluates team effectiveness;
8. Ensures proper care of subject, evidence, finds;
9. Ensures well-being of team back at base (i.e. directing them to food, rest areas, etc.);
10. Evaluate team's condition to continue, rest, or stand down;
11. Additional duties as assigned.

4.1.7(1)(2) Searcher

The heart of any GSAR operations is the dedicated members who are assigned field tasks during search operations.

Responsibilities include:

1. Responsible to the team leader;
2. Searches in a safe and dedicated manner;
3. Assumes the task as assigned;
4. Will be properly outfitted and equipped for weather or conditions;
5. Prepares team and personal equipment;
6. Prepares and maintains personal equipment
7. Signing in/out;
8. Staying in staging area until assigned;
9. Will be properly identified.

4.1.7(2) Planning Section

The Planning Section is responsible for the collection and evaluation of incident situation information, preparing situation status reports, displaying situation information, maintaining status of resources, developing an Incident Action Plan, and preparing required incident-related documentation. This is done under the direction of the Planning Section Chief.

4.1.7(3) Logistics Section

The Logistics Section is responsible for providing services and support to meet all incident or event needs.

This may include but is not limited to:

1. Facilities
2. Transportation
3. Communications
4. Supplies
5. Equipment maintenance
6. Fueling
7. Food Services
8. Medical services
9. Ordering resources

This is accomplished under the direction of the Logistics Section Chief. Logistics service and support to an incident or event are important functions. Early recognition of the need for a separate logistics function and section can reduce time and money spent on an incident.

4.1.7(4) Administration/Finance Section

The Finance/Administration Section Chief may not be activated on all incidents. The Incident Commander will retain responsibility for all finance-related activities until Finance/Administration units or the section has been activated.

The Finance/Admin Section Chief:

1. Is responsible for financial and cost analysis;
2. Oversees contract negotiations;
3. Tracks personnel and equipment time;
4. Processes claims for accidents and injuries;
5. Works with Logistics to ensure resources are procured.

The above is meant to be an overview of the Incident Command System. Additional information and training is available on the EMO NS website <http://emo.gov.ns.ca/>

4.2 AIR SUPPORT RESOURCES

4.2.1 Preamble

The use of air craft can greatly enhance the ground search and rescue operation. The various air craft available are able to cover a wide range of territory in a relatively short time. In addition, aircraft resources can be used to search territory inaccessible or unsafe for ground search personnel. Air craft support can also be used to extricate persons from remote areas. Accessing air support resources requires following established procedures. The availability of air support resources is dependent on weather conditions.

4.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide the procedures to make a request when air support resources are required at an incident scene.

4.2.3 Scope

These procedures apply to all GSAR Teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

4.2.4 Air Support Resource Request Procedures

The Incident Commander is responsible for requesting assistance from the various agencies that provide air support. This responsibility can be delegated to staff working under the Incident Commander. The various agencies that provide air support resources require that specific procedures be followed.

4.2.4(1) DNR Helicopter

The DNR fleet of helicopters is the first choice for ground search and rescue air support. EMO NS has an agreement with the NS Department of Justice for the foregoing aircraft support of GSAR operations. The request for air support from DNR must be made through EMO NS to ensure costs associated are covered through the agreement. To request this resource contact the EMO NS Duty Officer at 1-866-424-5620.

DNR helicopters are equipped with GPS navigational units. It will assist the pilot to locate the GSAR operation if the requesting agency provides the U.T.M grid and map datum from the 1:50,000 map from the Nova Scotia Atlas 5th revised edition, including the page number.

4.2.4(2) RCMP Helicopter

The RCMP has helicopter resources equipped with Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) cameras. This thermal imaging resource may be beneficial during nighttime operations. This resource is request directly from the IC during RCMP jurisdictions. This resource can also be requested by the Incident Commander of other AOJs as per their protocols/procedures. The cost of this resource is either that of the RCMP or as established by agreement with other AOJs such as municipal police forces.

4.2.4(3) Canadian Forces (CF) Fixed Wing and Helicopter

Canadian Forces aircraft are to be considered a last resort only for ground search operations. CF air support cannot be authorized for GSAR operations without approval from EMO NS. To request air support from Canadian Forces contact the EMO NS Duty Officer at 1-866-424-5620. The EMO NS Duty Officer will make the request to the CF JRCC (Joint Rescue Coordination Centre). Requests made directly to the JRCC may result in the cost of the resource being the responsibility of the requesting agency.

Note: In addition to air craft support, some circumstances may require the services of CF Search and Rescue Technicians (SAR Tech). These circumstances would include rescue situations where access is not available through other routes such as cliff rescue. The same procedure is followed for requesting this type of resource, contact the EMO NS Duty Officer at 1-866-424-5620.

4.2.4(4) Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) Fixed Wing

CASARA is primarily a JRCC resource, however (if CASARA resources are not required by the JRCC), they may respond to emergency requests on behalf of the Province. CASARA can be activated on the request of DNR Air Services or the EMO NS Duty Officer at 1-866-424-5620.

4.3 VEHICLE / VESSEL SAFETY

4.3.1 Preamble

The search for missing persons is often conducted in areas where varying terrain and water ways interface. During these situations, GSAR members may be tasked to work with various vehicles and/or vessels. The use of such vehicles/vessels are the responsibility of the Incident Commander, however the safety of GSAR members is shared with EMO NS. To help ensure the safety of GSAR members when working with or around vehicles / vessel standards must be established.

4.3.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish safety standards in regards to operating or working with or around vehicles and vessels.

4.3.3 Scope

This section applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

4.3.4 All Terrain Vehicles (ATV)

All Terrain Vehicles include ATVs (rubber tired and track); snowmobiles; amphibious (Argo); etc. whether propelled over land or water.

4.3.4(1) ATV Standards

1. ATVs used during GSAR operations involving GSAR Team members, whether as an operator or passenger, must be operated in accordance with
 - a) The NS Off-Highway Vehicles Act;
 - b) The NS Off-Highway Vehicle General Regulations;
 - c) The NS Off-Highway Vehicles Safety and Training Regulations;
 - d) All other provincial legislation affecting off-highway vehicles.

2. The Incident Commander shall ensure that the operator of any ATV involving GSAR Team members provides proof of:
 - a) Vehicle Registration/Permit
 - b) Vehicle Insurance
 - c) Taken the safety operators course as described by the OHV Act.

- d) The Incident Commander shall ensure that any ATV vehicle used during a search operation involving GSAR Team members be in satisfactory condition, including but not limited to:
 - i. Tires in good condition;
 - ii. Brakes in good working order;
 - iii. All lights working properly;
 - iv. Safety equipment such as helmets are present and in good condition.
3. Operators and passengers shall wear adequate clothing and protective equipment including a helmet, face/eye protection, proper footwear at all times.
4. Passenger limits as set by the manufacturer must not be exceeded.
5. Operators shall operate in a safe manner and not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
6. Prior to deployment, the following shall be entered in the SMART database:
 - a) Name of owner/operator of the ATV;
 - b) Make and color of machine;
 - c) Task as assigned.
7. In addition to the Incident Commander, the GSAR Team management and Team Leaders share in the responsibility for the safety of GSAR members operating with or near ATV vehicles.

4.3.5 Vessel Standards

The use of vessels at a ground search operations may be required in areas where lakes, rivers, or the ocean interface with the search area. To ensure the safety of GSAR personnel working with or around vessels the following standards must be complied with:

- 4.3.5(1)** The Incident Commander shall ensure that all vessels used during search operations involving GSAR members will:
1. Be operated by a competent and experienced operator;
 2. Have on board the required safety equipment as per the Small Vessel Regulations;
 3. Have the proper lighting as required by the Collision Regulations if operated at night and in low visibility;

4. Comply with maximum Horsepower and Gross Weight Restrictions as indicated on the vessel hull;
5. Be in good working condition including the motor if attached.

4.3.5(2) All GSAR members shall wear an approved and appropriate sized PFD while on board.

4.3.5(3) Prior to deployment, the following shall be entered into the SMART database:

1. Name of owner/operator;
2. Number of persons on board;
3. Description of vessel;
4. Task as assigned.

4.4 SAFETY STANDARDS FOR SHORELINE SEARCHES

4.4.1 Preamble

The abundance of water ways in Nova Scotia often means that search operations will interface with various bodies of water such as rivers, lakes, streams, and the ocean. Searchers are often tasked to search along shorelines for missing persons and/or clues. These types of searchers often add to the risk of searchers therefore safety standards must be established.

4.4.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish safety standards for GSAR personnel working in close proximity to water.

4.4.3 Scope

The standards below apply to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

4.4.4 Shoreline Safety Standards

- 4.4.4(1)** GSAR team searchers shall be tasked in groups of 2 or more;
- 4.4.4(2)** GSAR team searchers shall be briefed on the conditions prior to tasking;
- 4.4.4(3)** GSAR team searchers shall wear an approved and appropriate size PFD at all times;
- 4.4.4(4)** GSAR team searchers shall not be tasked in areas of high risk such as storm surge, swift water, etc. until conditions are safe to operate;
- 4.4.4(5)** GSAR team searchers shall carry at least one throw bag per team (50 ft floating line);
- 4.4.4(6)** Harness and line tethers shall be used on steep or unstable shores;
- 4.4.4(7)** GSAR team searchers shall wear highly reflective vests or jackets.

4.5 Spontaneous Volunteers

4.5.1 Preamble

Spontaneous volunteers are defined as members of the community at-large who are not members of a provincial GSAR team that arrive at a lost/missing person incident with a desire to assist in finding the person(s). The use of volunteers is a decision of the Agency of Jurisdiction Incident Commander.

4.5.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish procedures and policies for using spontaneous volunteers at GSAR incidents.

4.5.3 Scope

These procedures/policies apply to all GSAR teams in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS. These procedures and policies only apply to incidents where spontaneous volunteers are tasked to work directly with or under the direction of the GSAR team.

4.5.4 Procedures/Policies

- 4.5.4(1) Spontaneous volunteers considered for participation in search activities must complete a “Volunteer Registration Form”;
- 4.5.4(2) The Volunteer Registration Form will be delivered to the Plans Section Chief or designate for filing with the search documentation;
- 4.5.4(3) Information collected on the Volunteer Registration Form must be entered in the SMART database;
- 4.5.4(4) Spontaneous Volunteer properly registered with the GSAR team will be covered by Worker’s Compensation;
- 4.5.4(5) The Safety Officer or designate will ensure that spontaneous volunteers are sufficiently equipped for the task(s) as assigned;
- 4.5.4(6) The Incident Commander and/or GSAR Search Manager may refuse to accept spontaneous volunteers based on operational or safety concerns;
- 4.5.4(7) If the spontaneous volunteer(s) are engaged in active searching, a team leader or designate must closely and constantly supervise them;
- 4.5.4(8) Spontaneous volunteers must be debriefed and signed out of the operation in the same way as team members;

4.5.4(9) To participate, spontaneous volunteers may be required to:

1. Provide verification of name, address, and age;
2. Submit to medical check of physical condition;
3. Sign a search and rescue volunteer waiver authorizing the AOJ to conduct a criminal background check;
4. Submit to an equipment check;
5. Submit to a brief skills check;
6. Receive and carry necessary equipment.

4.5.4(10) Spontaneous Volunteers who are untrained should be considered for the following types of assignments:

1. Parking duties;
2. Security;
3. Transportation of personnel and supplies;
4. Monitoring containment and boundaries;
5. Patrolling roadways;
6. Cooking or other logistical support.

4.5.4(11) As with any resource assignment, the final decision on accepting a spontaneous volunteer on a field team rests with the Team Leader.

4.5.5 Guidelines for Management of Family Members as Volunteer Searchers

The use of family members as Spontaneous Volunteers is a special case and the decision of whether or not to use any individual family members must be made by the Incident Commander who may consult with the GSAR Search Manager.

1. Family members may be used as guides to particular sites such as showing GSAR teams to a hunting or fishing camp;
2. Family members must be processed as spontaneous volunteers and entered into the SMART database and given clear instructions as to their role;
3. Family members must not hinder search operations;
4. Family members must always be escorted and should be under the supervision of a Team Leader;
5. Family members should normally not be assigned to search activities.

4.6 GSAR DOG TEAM

4.6.1 Preamble

The use of search dogs can be a productive component in the search for missing persons. The use of civilian GSAR Dog Team can be used to support canine resources of the AOJ. The decision to use civilian GSAR Dog Teams is that of the AOJ Incident Commander. To be considered civilian GSAR Dog Teams must apply and be approved for use during lost/missing persons incidents.

4.6.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to outline the criteria for application and approval for use of civilian Search and Rescue Dog Teams within the framework of the Ground Search and Rescue response program in the Province of Nova Scotia.

4.6.3 Scope

This standard applies to all civilian GSAR dog teams in the Province of Nova Scotia with the intent to provide canine search and rescue services during lost/missing person(s) incidents.

4.6.4 Application and Approval for Use

The RCMP will accept applications from Civilian Dog Teams to be examined for acceptance in searching for lost persons only.

- 4.6.4(1)** An applicant must be a member in good standing with a local GSAR team.
- 4.6.4(2)** An applicant must authorize the local team to complete a criminal records check and the local team must confirm the applicant's record is clean.
- 4.6.4(3)** An applicant must regularly attend local GSAR team operational meetings, training sessions, operational call outs and debriefings. The applicant must meet a 50% participation standard for training and operational searches within their local team.

- 4.6.4(4)** An applicant must be a qualified Searcher and have additional training and knowledge in:
1. Exhibit handling;
 2. Navigation Techniques (Map, Compass and GPS);
 3. Radio operations;
 4. Wilderness Survival Skills
 5. Wilderness Remote First Aid
- 4.6.4(5)** EMO may incorporate further search training and qualification standards and these higher standards will be incorporated into the training requirements for civilian dog handlers. All applications for testing or re-testing must be accompanied by documents demonstrating the appropriate training as required at the time of testing or retesting.
- 4.6.4(6)** Applicants must have demonstrated their dedication and commitment to the lost person and search team over time by obtaining additional training. An applicant must have successfully completed GSAR training in an operational setting before requesting local GSAR team to endorse application as a dog team resource.
- 4.6.4(7)** An application must be accompanied by a letter of support from the applicant's home team attesting to the team's support for the application and that the team attests to the eligibility requirements having been met.
- 4.6.4(8)** An application must be accompanied by a letter of support from an RCMP certified dog handler.
- 4.6.4(9)** An application for approval for a civilian dog team will be forwarded to the local GSAR team president and will contain:
1. The application;
 2. Letter of support from an RCMP certified dog handler;
 3. A statement listing the applicants training and search participation record;
- 4.6.4(10)** The local GSAR team will, if they support the application, confirm in writing:
1. That they have reviewed and support the application;
 2. Confirm that a successful criminal records check on the applicant has been completed;
 3. Confirm the training and GSAR participation submitted in the application.
- 4.6.4(11)** The application is to be forwarded to the RCMP Police Dog Service Coordinator will then make arrangements with the local handler for

testing. Any costs incurred will be the dog handler's responsibility. Testing will consist of oral questions and skills display.

- 4.6.4(12)** The responsibility to be tested lies with the Civilian Dog Teams. Because of RCMP Dog Handlers operational requirements and/or any other unforeseen circumstances, the RCMP assumes no responsible for scheduling or completing the testing within any given time frame.
- 4.6.4(13)** It is to be noted and understood that the RCMP is not validating Civilian Dog Teams for any purpose whatsoever and will ensure that persons volunteering and wishing to be tested do not have ulterior motives, either personal or business-wise. The RCMP's primary concern is relative to the caliber of the Civilian Dog Team being used during a search. The RCMP will ensure that they are qualified and competent and that they meet their continued standards. The RCMP does not accept / assume any liability related to any matter association with the use of, or actions of the Civilian Dog Team.
- 4.6.4(14)** Each Civilian Dog Team will be re-tested yearly to ensure standards are maintained.
- 4.6.4(15)** Any conflict of interest as determined by the RCMP will result in the RCMP withdrawing their approval / support of the civilian dog team and result in the Civilian Dog Team being removed from the program.
- 4.6.4(16)** Failure to maintain membership in good standing within the local team will result in the RCMP withdrawing their approval / support of the civilian dog team and result in the Civilian Dog Team being removed from the program.
- 4.6.4(17)** Failure to maintain continued training standards and participation requirements during the year will result in the RCMP withdrawing their approval / support of the civilian dog team and result in the Civilian Dog Team being removed from the program.
- 4.6.4(18)** The attestation of the Civilian Dog Team will only apply to the dog which was tested with its handler and to no other dogs, vice-versa.
- 4.6.4(19)** When testing has been completed, the RCMP Dog Handler will submit his findings and recommendations to the RCMP Headquarters. The RCMP Divisional Police Dog Service Coordinator will then either issue a letter of authorization / attestation to the team, valid for one year, or inform them of their failure. The NSGSARA president and GSAR Team President will be provided with copies of the authorization/attestation.
- 4.6.4(20)** Civilian Dog teams will be used only within searches for lost/missing persons activated by the police force of jurisdiction and directed by GSAR search operations within the NSGSAR member teams.

4.6.4(21) Civilian Dog teams will provide service on a voluntary basis and not for personal gain.

4.6.4(22) The program parameters apply only to lost/missing person incidents and do not include operations to recover evidence in criminal investigations, water searching or cadaver searches.

4.6.4(23) Civilian dog teams will only be used in situations where a risk assessment has determined, to the satisfaction of the Incident Commander, that there is no risk from an armed confrontation or unnecessarily hazardous situations.

4.6.4(24) The AOJ must approve the use of a civilian dog team in searches involving criminal matters.

4.6.4(25) Prior to the call out of any Civilian Dog Team, the AOJ (RCMP, municipal police force,) on call Dog Handler **MUST** be contacted.

4.6.5 Non RCMP Jurisdictions

4.6.5(1) While the above application and approval of civilian search and rescue dog teams is processed through the RCMP, the use of civilian search and rescue dogs teams is not limited to RCMP jurisdiction. Other jurisdictions such as municipal police have the authority and ability to establish additional criteria for approval within their jurisdiction.

4.7 MEDIA RELATIONS

4.7.1 Preamble

Missing person events, especially high profile cases such as a lost child, will attract media organizations as they seek information so they can produce the news and report to the public. Management of the media is critical to the operation and has the ability to provide assistance to the search effort. The Incident Commander or Public Information Officer must develop a plan for the media to ensure accurate information is provided without disruption of the search operations.

4.7.2 Scope

This procedure applies to all GSAR operations in the Province of Nova Scotia.

4.7.3 Media Relations Procedure

- 4.7.3(1)** The Agency of Jurisdiction having legal responsibility as well as expertise in dealing with the media will assume responsibility for all media relations during ground search incidents.
- 4.7.3(2)** All requests by the media to any personnel at a GSAR event will be referred to the (I/C, Information Officer or designate)
- 4.7.3(3)** The media, as well as the general public, are to be kept away from the search area during the search, except under very controlled conditions as approved by the AOJ.
- 4.7.3(4)** Consideration should be given to the priorities of the media by providing regular briefings, as well as tours of the search area when convenient and authorized by AOJ,
- 4.7.3(5)** At no time will the media be allowed into the active search area or be lead into the search area. Request for camera ready shots or video/live feed footage will be staged based on the generic and standard SAR tactics away from the search area.
- 4.7.3(6)** Under no circumstances should search members discuss the search incident with the media unless authorized by the Incident Commander. This is an AOJ responsibility.
- 4.7.3(7)** Once authorized by the IC, the GSAR Search Manager may provide information to the media on general search tactics, search conditions, etc. The Search Manager or designate shall not discuss confidential information or release information not authorized by the IC.

4.8 SUPPORT SERVICES (VICTIM AND SEARCHER)

4.8.1 Preamble

The search for missing persons may be a traumatic event for all persons involved especially tragic situations such as the incidents involving injury or death. Incidents such as this can be very stressful for the victim, families and the searchers themselves. There are organizations with the training and expertise to recognize abnormal stress and provide assistance to those affected. Incident Commanders and Search Managers should have contact information for various types of support services written into preplans. These services must be contacted as soon as possible to provide support to those in need. The responsibility to activate various support services at an incident lies with the AOJ.

4.8.2 The Support Services Standard applies to all GSAR operations in the Province of NS.

4.8.3 Support Services Procedure

4.8.3(1) Victim Services Unit

- 4.8.3.1(1)** Most Police Authorities have personnel trained to provide victim services to persons affected by a traumatic event;
- 4.8.3.1(2)** The use of Victim Services Unit should always be considered when dealing with family members on a search site;
- 4.8.3.1(3)** Family members should always be asked if they require or want the support before making service available;

4.8.3(2) Clergy

- 4.8.3.2(1)** The use of local clergy or Salvation Army and or church services should always be considered when dealing with family members at a search site.
- 4.8.3.2(2)** Family members should always be asked if they require or want the support before making the service available.

4.9 EVIDENCE SEARCHING

4.9.1 Preamble

Actions taken at the outset of an investigation at a potential crime scene can play a pivotal role in the resolution of a case. Careful, thorough search site management and investigation is key to ensure that potential physical evidence is not tainted or destroyed.

4.9.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to define cost and risk coverage responsibilities as well as provide guidelines for evidence searches.

4.9.3 Scope

This section applies to all GSAR teams in the Province of Nova Scotia while engaged in the task of evidence searching on behalf of the AOJ.

4.9.4 Definitions

4.9.4(1) Evidence

Something that may legally be acceptable before a court, such as an object or witness statement, which bears or establishes an issue.

4.9.4(2) Evidence Search

The search for facts, circumstances, objects, etc. that helps to support that a certain chain of events have taken place.

4.9.5 Cost and Risk Coverage

4.9.5(1) All costs associated with evidence searches is the responsibility of the AOJ. Expense claims shall be submitted directly to the AOJ for reimbursement. Expenses are to be paid at a cost recovery rate, except for mileage which will be paid at the established rate.

4.9.5(2) GSAR team members are covered by Worker's Compensation when performing duties as allowed under terms of reference of the federal-provincial agreement. When teams are utilized outside of the terms of reference, such as evidence searches, no protection is provided. All GSAR team should ensure that they have an agreement in place with the AOJ for risk/injury coverage while tasked for evidence searching.

"The description of hazards states that the (RCMP) policy provides insurance for injury sustained when participating in an "Evidence Search" in criminal investigation at the request and under the direction of the Policyholder, provided such search does not fall under the jurisdiction of the E.M.O. of the Province of Nova Scotia".

4.9.6 Evidence Search Guidelines

- 4.9.6(1)** Spontaneous volunteers shall not be used;
- 4.9.6(2)** Only team members who have completed a criminal background check will be authorized to participate in an evidence search;
- 4.9.6(3)** Proper documentation is critical. All activities conducted and observations made at the search site /crime scene must be documented as soon as possible after the event to preserve information;
- 4.9.6(4)** When possible evidence / clues are located by SAR Team members, all other searchers in that team should hold their position until the investigating officer has assessed and/or collected that evidence. This is to minimize cross contamination or destruction of additional clues. Evidence first seen or found by SAR team members must be properly handed over to law enforcement;
- 4.9.6(5)** Evidence will not be handled by volunteer personnel unless specifically directed by AOJ Incident Commander or designate;
- 4.9.6(6)** If established by AOJ, all searchers shall ensure they follow established entry/exit routes at the scene;
- 4.9.6(7)** Clues/evidence found by GSAR members must be thoroughly documented to ensure that the chain of evidence is maintained. It is imperative to be able to demonstrate that any evidence found was properly handled and accounted for until handled over to the AOJ;

Note: If available and applicable, metal detectors can be utilized as an effective tool for evidence searches.

4.10 URBAN SEARCHING

4.10.1 Preamble

Volunteer GSAR resources may be tasked to find lost or missing persons in urban areas. Urban searching can be used to describe two different activities: a search for a missing person in any of the areas included in the definition of urban environment or; locating and extracting people from collapsed buildings or other entrapments.

4.10.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish guidelines for searches conducted in an urban environment.

4.10.3 Scope

This section applies to all GSAR teams operating in the Province of Nova Scotia under the authority of EMO NS.

4.10.4 Definition

Urban searching is used to represent the ordinary, everyday search for a missing person in any of the areas included in the definition of an urban environment. The urban environment can be defined by three characteristics:

1. There are a significant number of people occupying the land;
2. The area has been significantly developed with structures and facilities;
3. There are roads and easy means of travel.

4.10.5 Restrictions

GSAR Volunteers are *ONLY* authorized to participate in searches for missing individuals in any of the areas included in the definition of urban environment. (See above).

GSAR Volunteers are *NOT* authorized by EMO NS to be used to locate and extract people from collapsed buildings or other entrapments.

4.10.6 Urban Search Guidelines

4.10.6(1) NSGSARA Teams may participate in urban searches as requested by the Agency of Jurisdiction;

4.10.6(2) If a door-to-door search / interview is required, an urban interview log must be maintained listing the following:

1. All civic addresses where the team attended;
2. Whom they spoke to;
3. Phone number;
4. If anyone was home;
5. Whether any pertinent information (clues) was obtained;

4.10.6(3) Under no circumstances may a search team enter a building / dwelling or search private property without the permission of the owner. If the owner or representative is not available, the AOJ may provide that permission;

4.10.6(4) Urban search teams shall be comprised of no less than 2 trained individuals;

4.10.6(5) When possible, if permission is given to search a property, the home occupant should be in attendance to ensure the safety of the searchers and if necessary to ensure that no property is damaged, stolen, etc.

Note: For detailed information see Urban Search; Managing Missing Person Searches in the Urban Environment, p. 5, C. Young & J. Wehbring, dbS Productions, Charlottesville, Virginia, 2007

5.0 TRAINING

This section contains standards as related to training.

5.0.1 Required Training for personnel involved in the GSAR training.

5.0.1(1) EMO NS personnel are not usually involved in direct tactical operations during GSAR events. However, EMO NS supports the GSAR program and assists during search operations as required. Therefore, Emergency Management Planning Officers (EMPO) must have the following:

1. National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) course Managing the Lost Person Incident (MLPI)
2. ICS 300

5.0.2 AOJ Investigator

1. As required by the AOJ

5.0.3 AOJ Incident Commander

1. National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) course Managing the Lost Person Incident (MLPI) is highly recommended for AOJ personnel filling the role of IC at GSAR incidents.
2. ICS 300

5.0.4 Basic Searcher

5.0.4(1) Includes but not limited to:

1. Incident Command System 100
2. Land Navigation and Orienteering
3. Search Philosophy;
4. Search Tactics;
5. Clue Consciousness;
6. Search Operations;
7. Communications;
8. Note Taking;
9. SMART (Search Management and Resource Tracking);
10. Handling Evidence;
11. SAR Clothing/Equipment;
12. Environmental Hazards and First Aid;
13. Health and Fitness;
14. NS GSAR Standards and Operations Guide

5.0.5 Searcher

The prerequisite for Searcher is successful completion of Basic Searcher training.

5.0.5(1) Topics to be included in training but not limited to:

1. Basic Survival;
2. Helicopter Operations;
3. SAR Ready Pack;
4. Personal Equipment;
5. SAR Resources;
6. Handling Evidence;
7. Lost Person Behavior;
8. Search Operations;
9. Ropes, Knots, and Rescue Equipment;
10. Legal Aspects for the Searcher;
11. Risk Management.
12. Search Philosophy (advanced);
13. Search Tactics (advanced);

5.0.5(2) Recommended Training

1. Tracking;
2. Wilderness First Aid;
3. Incident Command System 200

5.0.6 Team Leader

The prerequisites for Team Leader are successful completion of both Basic Searcher and Searcher training.

5.0.6(1) Topics to be included in training but not limited to:

1. Incident Command System 200
2. Small Unit Leadership;
3. Team Safety;
4. Team Leader SAR Ready Pack;
5. Maps, Symbology, & Land Navigation;
6. Search Techniques and Tactics;
7. Briefing;
8. Debriefing;
9. Hazardous Terrain Skills;
10. Stress Management Skills;
11. Handling of Deceased;
12. Victim Recovery;
13. Advanced GPS and RTT (Real-time tracking);
14. Principles of Search Management;

15. Advanced survival;
16. Search Operations;
17. SAR Technology.

5.0.6(2) Recommended Training:

1. Wilderness First Aid;
2. Hazardous Materials Awareness

5.0.7 Search Manager

The prerequisites for SAR manager is that all three levels of searcher training must be successfully completed.

5.0.7(2) Topics to be included in training but not limited to:

1. Management and leadership;
2. Incident Command System 300;
3. Operational Pre-Planning;
4. SAR Resources;
5. Clue Orientation;
6. Initiating the Search;
7. Planning the Search;
8. Gathering Subject Information;
9. Predicting Lost Person Behavior;
10. Establishing the Search Area;
11. Setting Priorities- Assigning Probabilities of Area (POA) to the Search;
12. Allocating SAR Resources-SAR Tactics;
13. Measuring Coverage-Tracking Probability of Detection (POD);
14. Changing Search Priorities-Shifting POA;
15. Briefing and Debriefing;
16. Documentation;
17. Suspending Search Operations;
18. Demobilization;
19. Managing Search Base Operations and Searcher Safety;
20. Managing Searcher Stress;
21. Managing External Influences;
22. SAR Technology;
23. Post Incident Considerations;
24. Role of the Agency Administrator.

5.0.7(3) Recommended Training

1. Public Speaking;
2. Media Training.

5.0.8 Recommended Additional Training for GSAR Members:

1. ATV Operators Course
2. Canadian Safe Boating Course
3. Hazmat Awareness
4. Provincial Occupational Health and Safety Regulations
5. Canada Labour Code

6.0 APPENDIX

6.1 Suggested Incident Command Post Equipment

1. First Aid Kits
2. Roadside Emergency triangles/pylons
3. Flares
4. Blankets
5. Stokes stretcher/spine board
6. Cables/extension cords
7. Rescue Flag tape
8. Rope (various sizes, if necessary), carabineers
9. Antennas/mast
10. Spare batteries (all required sizes applicable)
11. Spare light bulbs & fuses
12. Shelter shade (tarps/poles)
13. Folding table (for outside command post)
14. Chairs
15. Kettle/Coffee maker and supplies (coffee/tea/cream/sugar)
16. Mugs/cups/utensils/paper plates
17. Bottled water
18. Waterproof matches
19. Bungee cords
20. Fire extinguishers
21. Megaphone
22. Garbage bags
23. Snack foods (granola/power bars, etc) dried food pouches, etc.
24. Maps (topography/road of all applicable areas)
25. Dry erase markers
26. Paper pads and printed paper
27. Pens/pencils and erasers
28. Post-It Notes
29. Highlighters
30. Tape measures
31. Permanent markers
32. Stapler
33. Paper punch
34. Scotch tape/masking tape
35. Scissors
36. Rulers (geometry set w/protractor, etc.)
37. Basic tool kit for Command Post (wrenches, screwdrivers, etc.)
38. Jack and spare tire
39. Candies/suckers/teddy bears (for found children)
40. Mallet/hammer
41. Shovel
42. Generator and spare gas
43. Thermal imaging (infrared) equipment if acquired

44. Computers/printers
45. Fax machine/scanner
46. Handheld radios
47. Radio charger cradle
48. Radio batteries
49. GPS Units
50. Spare flashlights/headlamps
51. Satellite phone
52. Disposable cameras
53. Toilet paper/paper towel
54. Hand soap/sanitizer
55. Kleenex
56. Bug spray/sunscreen
57. Ziploc bags
58. Candies
59. White boards for outside command post
60. Sign in/out rosters
61. Resource contact info sheets (laminated)
62. Phone logs
63. Incident Report logs
64. Organizational Chart
65. ICS forms that are not listed here
66. Call-out sheets
67. Footprint cards/chalk dust

6.2 Search Managers Search Response Kit/Box

1. 8 color fine point overhead projection markers (water soluble). (Black, Brown, Green, Purple, Red, Blue, Yellow, Orange)
2. 4 color fine point overhead projection markers (permanent/alcohol soluble) (Black, Red, Green, Blue)
3. 6 Color highlighters (Pink, Green, Blue, Yellow, Red, Orange)
4. 3 Dry Erase Markers (Red, Blue, Black)
5. Several ball point pens
6. Several #2 pencils
7. Several pads of paper
8. Several rubbing alcohol pads
9. Roll of scotch tape
10. Roll of 1" copy, correction or cover-up tape
11. Roll of 1/3" copy, correction or cover-up tape
12. Map/Drawing Board (minimum 18"x18")
13. 4 Clear Sheets of Acetate (minimum 18"x18")
14. USGS 7.5 min Topographical Quadrangle Maps of Response Area
15. Search and Rescue Resource Directory
16. SOP for establishing a search map
17. Lost person characteristics
18. Procedures for first arriving Incident Commander
19. Procedure for developing task assignment forms
20. NASARS-Incident Commander Field Handbook-Search and Rescue
21. Field Coordinator's Handbook for Managing Search Operations (mini-text)
22. Field Operations Guide (ICS-420-1) for Incident Command System
23. 10 Multi-colored 1/3 tab file folders (Blue, Red, Yellow, Green, Manila)
24. 3 colored file folders pre-labeled
25. Task to be done (Red)
26. Task in progress (Yellow)
27. Task completed (Blue)
28. 10 clear 8.5x11 acetate transparencies
29. POA template for determining area and distance
30. Clear map tools (1km grid reader, clear protractor, longitude/latitude and UTM tools)
31. Acreage grids/calculation sheets

6.3 Search Forms

	<u>ICS Form Number</u>	<u>Form Description</u>	<u>Form Prepared By</u>
<i>1.</i>	GSAR001	Initial Contact Sheet	Search Manager
<i>2.</i>	GSAR002	Subject Profile	Plans
<i>3.</i>	GSAR003	Weather Status Sheet	Plans
<i>4.</i>	GSAR004	Volunteer Welcome and Waiver	Logistics
<i>5.</i>	GSAR005	Lost/Damaged Equipment	Member/AOJ/IC
<i>6.</i>	GSAR006	Search Urgency Form	Plans
<i>7.</i>	GSAR007	Clue Log	Plans
<i>8.</i>	ICS201	Incident Briefing	Plans
<i>9.</i>	ICS201A	Resource Status	Operations
<i>10.</i>	ICS202	Incident Objectives	Search Manager
<i>11.</i>	ICS204	Task Assignment Form	Operations and Plans
<i>12.</i>	ICS204A	Team Assignment Debriefing	Plans
<i>13.</i>	ICS205	Communications Plan	Communications
<i>14.</i>	ICS206	Medical Plan	Safety Officer
<i>15.</i>	ICS207	Organization Chart	Search Manager
<i>16.</i>	ICS209	Incident Status Summary	Plans
<i>17.</i>	ICS211	Team Control Form (Check-In List)	Logistics
<i>18.</i>	ICS213	General Message	Plans
<i>19.</i>	ICS214	Unit Log	Plans
<i>20.</i>	ICS215	Operations Plan	Operations
<i>21.</i>	ICS215A	Operations Plan Worksheet	Operations
<i>22.</i>	ICS216	Urban Search Log	Plans
<i>23.</i>	ICS219	T-Card Form	Logistics
<i>24.</i>	ICS220	Air Operations Plan	Operations
<i>25.</i>	ICS221	Demobilization Plan	Plans

26.	ICS301	Incident Report	Search Manager
27.	ICS302	Lost Person Questionnaire	Plans
28.	ICS303	Equipment Tracking	Logistics
29.	ICS304	Travel Expense Claim Form	Members
30.	ICS305	Safety Plan	Safety Officer
31.	ICS306	Press Release	AOJ/ Search Manager
32.	ICS307	Transportation Plan	Logistics
33.	ICS308	Food and Shelter Plan	Logistics
34.	ICS309	Communications Log	Communications
35.	ICS401	Sweep Search Data-Summer Forest	Plans
36.	ICS402	Sweep Search Data-Winter Forest	Plans
37.	ICS404	Cumulative POD Table	Plans

6.4 Suggested Contents for a 24-Hour Pack

6.5.1 Clothing

1. 3 clothing layers
2. Rain, wind gear (pants and jacket)
3. Boots
4. Wool, fleece gloves, polypro liners, waterproof over-mitts, spare pairs in plastic bags
5. Knit hat, balaclava, watch cap
6. Hat, ball cap, large broad brim hat
7. Bandana or handkerchief
8. Goggles or other eye protection
9. Wool socks (spare pairs wrapped in plastic bags)
10. Cold weather: polar fleece jacket and pants; insulated outerwear; mittens; extra liners; cold weather boots).

6.4.2 Bivouac or Shelter Material

1. Biv bag, nylon fly, tube tent, or plastic sheet
2. Several large garbage bags
3. Lightweight synthetic sleeping bag
4. Space blanket, heavier tarp type
5. “Sit pad” or sleeping pad, closed cell foam

6.4.3 Water and Food

1. Ready-to-eat; high energy food (power bars; chocolate; candy; dried fruit)
2. Electrolyte replacement drinks
3. Water bottles: two liters with insulated covers
4. 500 ml thermos in insulated cover
5. Water purification tablets, iodine or filter
6. Metal cup or pot for cooking and drinking

Note: Check expiry dates on food items and bottled water.

6.4.4 Personal Comfort

1. Sunglasses, sturdy, >97% UV protection
2. Sun screen, chap stick (summer and winter)
3. Insect repellent (seasonal)
4. Sanitation/Hygiene kit: soap, towelettes, liquid hand sanitizer/antibacterial lotion, toothbrush/paste, toilet paper, sanitary napkins or tampons, disposable gloves.

6.4.6 General SAR Equipment

1. Compass, map, map protractor
2. GPS
3. Thermometer, altimeter, barometer
4. Watch
5. Pencil and notebook
6. Walking/tracking stick; measuring tape
7. Personal ID, organization/jurisdiction ID
8. Flagging tape
9. Whistle
10. Plastic bags, garbage bags, Ziploc bags (various sizes) evidence bags
11. Disposable camera in Ziploc bag
12. Led light for backpack, red lens bicycle type
13. Chemical glow sticks
14. Webbing: nylon 25 mm x 45cm
15. Headlamp with batteries for entire night; spare bulbs, or light source
16. Spare batteries for flashlights, headlamps, and radio
17. Tape end of spare batteries

6.4.7 General Purpose Tools and Equipment

1. Signaling kit; signal mirror, whistle, smoke flare, cyalume sticks, bright colored clothing item
2. Fire starting kit: candle, waterproof/strike anywhere matches, steel wool, metal match, lighter in zip lock bag
3. Multipurpose “Leatherman” tool, and/or “Swiss Army” type knife
4. Repair/sewing kit: wire, needle/thread, Para cord, duct tape, large safety pins, snare wire, paper clips, quick links, clevis pins and stove parts

6.4.8 Personal Safety

1. Safety glasses, goggles
2. Ear/hearing protection, soft disposable type
3. Helmet (for rescue operations or hazardous environments)
4. Medic Alert Tags
5. Extra pair eye glasses/contacts/reading glasses
6. Bear spray: small bottle (if appropriate)
7. Avalanche beacon, probe, shovel (if appropriate)
8. Cell phone (where coverage is available)
9. Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) if appropriate
10. Personal Medical Kit: personal medication, acetaminophen/aspirin/ibuprofen; antihistamine, antacid/anti-gas tablets, antiseptic pads in foil; antiseptic/antibiotic ointment (tube); band aids, mole skin; safety pins; towelette; splinter forceps or tweezers, latex or non-latex disposable gloves.
11. Check expiration dates on all items.

