



Meeting Minutes Nevada Search and Rescue Board

Attendance	DATE	Tuesday, February 24, 2026	
	TIME	2:00 p.m.	
	METHOD	Zoom/Teleconference: 1-669-219-2599 Meeting ID# 202 331 8963	
	RECORDER	Loren Borst	
Appointed Voting Member Attendance			
Member Name	Present	Member Name	Present
Sheriff Dan Coverley - Chair	X	Carol Lynn	X
Sgt Matthew Marlow	X	Sgt Garrett Bird	X
Eric Antle	X	Patty Polish	X
Kevin Haywood	X	SFC Ian Fritzsche	X
Doug Fisher	X	Brian O'Neal	X
Legal/Administrative Support Attendance			
Representative	Entity		Present
Rodney Wright	SAR Coordinator– Nevada Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security		X
John Fansler	Nevada Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security		ABS
Samantha Ladich	Senior DAG – Nevada Office of the Attorney General		X
Loren Borst	Admin – Nevada Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security		X

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Sheriff Dan Coverley, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, SAR Director, called the meeting to order. Roll call was performed by Loren Borst, Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security (OEM/HS). Quorum was established for the meeting.

2. Public Comment

Chair Sheriff Dan Coverley, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, SAR Director, opened the first period of public comment for discussion. There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes

Chair Sheriff Dan Coverley, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, SAR Director, called for a motion to amend or approve the draft minutes of the July 8, 2025, SAR Board meeting. Sgt Garrett Bird, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, SAR Coordinator, made the first motion to approve the minutes. Patty Polish, Lyon County Sheriff, seconded the motion. All were in favor with no opposition. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Review of Search and Rescue (SAR) Statistics in Nevada 2025

Rodney Wright, OEM/HS, stated the agenda item was discussed the prior year to get an idea of how many search and rescue calls run in any given year. He stated attachment four had specific details on various counties that had responded, as well as personnel that participated in the calls. He did a brief overview of the questions that were asked and the responses received from these counties. He listed Churchill, Lander, Lincoln, Las Vegas Metropolitan Search & Rescue, Lyon, Nye, Nevada Task Force One, and Washoe were the respondents.

Mr. Wright then had members look at the back of material four, stating there were 47 calls received over the year, breaking them down by jurisdiction. He singled out a few calls that were unique, speaking about a helicopter to rescue an individual off a mountain, in response to a California request, a missing aircraft call from the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, and a previously stolen personal locator beacon went off and was found to be located in a garbage dump, having been activated from the heavy equipment rolling over it.

Chief Brian O'Neal, Clark County Fire Department, asked if there was a specific definition of a SAR call, as it would help in capturing and categorizing data better. Mr. Wright indicated there was no definition, stating that this was something that could be worked on at the next meeting.

Sgt Garrett Bird, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, SAR Coordinator, stated his agreement, indicating that they have verbal/handshake agreements with local fire agencies in Washoe County, where if a call is a certain distance into Wilderness, those agencies will handle it, despite that, technically, it would be considered a search and rescue call. Sgt. Bird then suggested a standardized list of what calls are, with a small description for each, so that gathered data can be categorized more easily.

Eric Antle, Nevada Division of Forestry, then suggested that such descriptions or definitions would be helpful, giving helicopter requests as an example. He stated that a hoist rescue versus a recon call would be a good thing to have to make data more comprehensive by the state. Mr. Wright inquired if Mr. Antle was speaking of the state call reviews, to which Mr. Antle stated that he was. Mr. Antle then stated that if it was for NDF, then it would be for the National Guard, because he helps facilitate some aviation operations. Mr. Wright indicated they could break that data down even further than it currently is.

Mr. Wright indicated he would put something together and bring it to the next meeting, making it an action item for the next agenda, to enable forward movement for next year's survey.

5. Discussion about State Search and Rescue Gap Analysis

Rodney Wright, OEM/HS, stated that he has reached out to the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) agency in Connecticut, having multiple productive conversations. They discussed their gap analysis and shortcomings in developing their program, but did indicate that it took them ten years to work with their legislature to get it into place and properly funded. He reiterated to the members that state-level funding of a USAR agency is critical, as the current unknown and unpredictable nature of federal funding is too much of a risk to depend on, and that setting up a program that is state level and independent of federal funding is the appropriate path.

Mr. Wright indicated he would be reaching out to members for suggestions and data as he moves forward with development of this agency, wanting to ensure the correct data is captured, ensuring complete data to make sure all the details are obtained.

Chief Brian O'Neal, Clark County Fire Department, stated that there had been discussion about statistics and accurate reporting, with fire department involvement. He suggested that Kelly Baratti at Nevada Fire Chiefs would be a good resource to tap into for data.

Chair Sheriff Dan Coverley, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, SAR Director, inquired if Mr. Wright had asked Connecticut what their funding looked like and what funding their USAR agency was getting from the state. Mr. Wright indicated it was a struggle stating they received an initial, one-time fund of around \$200,000, which would barely get what was needed and what took them so long to get the agency established.

Mr. Wright stated he thinks they currently get around \$500,000 annually, for one position to run everything in the entire program -- inventory, locations, maintenance, training, and more. Despite that, they have offered to help Nevada every step of the way in their journey to establishing and fund a program. He stated he is still waiting on other states for a response, but he continues to reach out to them for assistance.

Chair Coverley stated he felt it is a worthwhile project, but not quick and easy. He asked Mr. Wright to continue working on it.

6. Discussion on SAR Board Approved Radio Frequencies

Rodney Wright, OEM/HS, stated that this agenda item was requested by member Patty Polish. These radio frequencies were approved on April 4, 2024, but being reviewed by board members again to refresh their memories about them, as well as informing members that the list will be sent out to all SAR coordinators for counties.

Additionally, Mr. Wright indicated that the Nevada Interoperability Field Operating Guide (NViFOG) has been updated since the 2024 approval. They weren't attached to today's presentation, as it is a very large document. They are available and can be obtained by reaching out to OEM to access the file.

Patty Polish, Lyon County Sheriff, had no comment, but expressed her appreciation of Mr. Wright disseminating the list to all SAR coordinators within the counties, as she didn't think all have the list currently. Mr. Wright stated he had just updated his county coordinators list, so everyone will have a copy now.

Carol Lynn, Humboldt County Emergency Manager, asked Mr. Wright if anyone from Civil Air Patrol had contacted him. Mr. Wright indicated that no one had. Ms. Lynn noted she would share their contact information with Mr. Wright.

7. Public Comment

Chair Sheriff Dan Coverley, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, SAR Director, opened discussion on the second period of public comment. There was no public comment.

8. Adjournment

Chair Sheriff Dan Coverley, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, SAR Director, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sgt Garrett Bird, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, SAR Coordinator, made the first motion to adjourn the meeting. Doug Fisher, Elko County Sheriff's Office, SAR Coordinator, made the second motion. All were in favor with no opposition. Meeting was adjourned 2:21 p.m.