

SEARCH and RESCUE PLAN



Adopted by:

NEVADA SEARCH and RESCUE BOARD

Published by:

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Nevada Department of Public Safety
Division of Emergency Management

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This document is the product of a cooperative effort of the Nevada Division of Emergency Management (DEM), the Nevada Board of Search and Rescue, the Committee on Training in Search and Rescue, and the Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association.

The Nevada Division of Emergency Management gratefully acknowledges the valuable input and collective expertise of all involved.

This document was accepted and endorsed by the Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association on February 23, 2012 and approved by the Nevada Board of Search and Rescue on March 12, 2012.



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INTRODUCTION

Nevada, due to its diverse topography and climates, creates many challenges for search and rescue personnel throughout every year. The following are characteristics and considerations in Nevada that have been incorporated throughout the development and planning process of this plan:

- Nevada covers 109,806 square miles, making it the seventh largest state in the nation, with the highest point reaching 13,140 feet above sea level and the lowest point at 479 feet with a mean elevation of 5,500 feet.
- Nevada is characterized by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the Basin and Range region, which is divided by more than 150 mountain ranges running north to south. Scattered among these ranges are buttes, mesas, and flat valleys with lakes or alkali flats.
- The Sierra Nevada and other mountain ranges are forested but the state is also the most arid state in the nation, mostly made up of desert vegetation, which include sagebrush, short grasses, low bushes, cacti, and shrub-like trees, such as the mesquite.
- The rivers that run through Nevada are the Carson, Colorado, Humboldt, Truckee and Walker. The major lakes located in the state include: Pyramid Lake, Lake Mead, Lake Mojave, Lake Tahoe, Lake Lahontan, and Walker Lake. In Nevada, 761 square miles is covered by water.
- Approximately 86% of the state's land is federally owned. However, the Sheriff of each county remains responsible for all search and rescue activities within their county regardless land ownership, with the exception of federal lands and tribal reservations retaining exclusive jurisdiction .
- There are 17 counties in Nevada which are some of the largest, geographically, in the nation. While Clark and Washoe Counties are the most populous, other counties have the same or greater land areas that are the responsibility of their respective sheriff's offices pertaining to search and rescues operations. The following is a table provide some of Nevada's demographics:

Nevada Demographics

County Name	County Seat	Population	Percent of Total Population	Area (square miles)	Percent of Total Area
Carson	Carson City	56,506	2.08%	144	.13%
Churchill	Fallon	26,859	.99%	4,929	4.49%
Clark	Las Vegas	1,952,040	72.00%	7,783	7.16%
Douglas	Minden	51,390	1.90%	710	.65%
Elko	Elko	51,325	1.89%	17,182	15.65%
Esmeralda	Goldfield	1,187	.04%	3,589	3.27%
Eureka	Eureka	1,562	.06%	4,176	3.80%
Humboldt	Winnemucca	17,690	.65%	9,648	8.79%

Lander	Battle Mountain	6,003	.22%	5,493	5.00%
County Name	County Seat	Population	Percent of Total Population	Area (square miles)	Percent of Total Area
Lincoln	Pioche	4,317	.16%	10,635	9.69%
Lyon	Yerington	53,825	1.99%	1,994	1.82%
Mineral	Hawthorne	4,474	.17%	3,757	3.42%
Nye	Tonopah	46,360	1.71%	18,185	16.56%
Pershing	Lovelock	7,149	.26%	6,009	5.47%
Storey	Virginia City	4,317	.16%	263	.24%
Washoe	Reno	416,632	15.37%	6,342	5.78%
White Pine	Ely	9,570	.35%	8,877	8.08%
	TOTALS:	2,711,206	100.00%	109,806	100.00%

The immensity of land mass and diverse topographical conditions in Nevada necessitate that sheriff's offices conduct search and rescue operations over vast areas in terrain that may require capabilities satisfactory to response via water, air or land and may be inclusive of components that are of a technical nature.

The Nevada Search and Rescue (SAR) Board wrote and approved, by majority vote, the previous Nevada Search and Rescue Plan in 1999. The Nevada SAR Board directed that the 1999 plan be revised for purposes of improving the federal, state and local coordination of search and rescue operations, as applicable.

The Nevada Search and Rescue Plan is outlined herein, and has been adopted by the Nevada Board of Search and Rescue.

AUTHORITY

During the 1983, and subsequently the 1991, sessions of the Nevada Legislature, laws were passed creating a state Board of Search and Rescue with the intent, in part, that the Board would formulate policy regarding search and rescue within the state, as well as provide direction and guidance for the State Coordinator for Search and Rescue (State SAR Coordinator). These laws were placed within the provisions of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), Chapter 414.170-260. This plan is specifically developed under the authority of NRS Chapter 414.210(7).

Also during the 1983 session of the Nevada Legislature, a law was passed designating the responsibility for search and rescue to the sheriff of each county, which was subsequently added to the NRS as Chapter 248.092. It is understood that the creation of this plan, under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414, does not usurp the authority of the sheriffs within this state and the provisions of NRS Chapter 248.092, as it would relate to search and rescue.

Additional Governing Information/References

- a. The Nevada SAR Board recognizes the political implications derived from the 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution and the jurisdictions dictated by the Nevada Constitution that identifies how the State has determined to serve the citizens and visitors of Nevada with consideration given to the environmental, geographical and demographic elements.
- b. The Nevada Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish a system of county and township governments which shall be uniform throughout the State (Article 4, Section 25); and provide for the selection of a county sheriff by the people and fix by law his/her duties (Article 4, Section 32).
- c. The Nevada SAR Board recognizes that the sheriff's office of each county is not a department under county government, but rather the sole responsibility of an elected official; and the office of a sheriff is a statutory entity having exclusive powers and authorities under state laws.
- d. State-level departments and agencies within are under the authority of the Governor as an elected official having executive power as outlined within the Nevada Constitution.
- e. In the event of an emergency or disaster beyond local control, the Governor, as authorized under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.060, may assume direct operational control over all or any part of the functions of emergency management within the State. In performing his/her duties under this chapter, the Governor may make, amend and rescind the necessary orders and regulations to carry out the provisions of this chapter within the limits of the authority conferred upon the Governor within chapter 414, with due consideration of the plans provided by the Federal Government.
- f. The Chief of the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (DEM) is responsible for the appointment of the Nevada SAR Board and the State SAR Coordinator, as well as statutorily assigned duties, pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.170-190 and 414.210-210 respectively. The Chief of the DEM does not have any established or implied statutory authority relative to the operations of search and rescue missions within the state, as this is the statutory responsibility of the sheriff within each county. However, the DEM is responsible for the coordination of state and federal resources, when requested, to support any emergency or disaster within the State. This may include the coordination of local-to-local resources when requested under the provision of the Nevada Emergency Management Assistance Compact (NEMAC).
- g. Under the provisions of NRS Chapter 277.035, a law enforcement agency is allowed to request the assistance of another law enforcement agency in the absence of an interlocal or cooperative agreement.
- h. Under the provisions of NRS Chapter 277.045, two or more counties are allowed to enter into a cooperative agreement for a governmental function.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Nevada Search and Rescue Plan (NVSARPLAN) is to provide a framework by which the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (DEM) and political subdivisions may provide assistance to a requesting sheriff's office or other agencies and aid, support or coordinate in the sharing of search and rescue resources. It is further intended to act as guidance for response to search and rescue missions within the state, and outline how the State SAR Coordinator, as established under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.200-210, shall assist a sheriff in obtaining and coordinating resources, as requested.

It is not the purpose of the NVSARPLAN to address emergency or disaster response as this is addressed within the emergency operations plans that are maintained within each political subdivision and the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (SCEMP). Additionally, it is not the intent of this plan to address urban search and rescue (USAR), which involves the locating and rescuing of victims trapped in confined spaces resulting from the collapse of a structure.

The NVSARPLAN is not intended to supersede or replace any local search and rescue plans, operations or functions. The NVSARPLAN shall not be interpreted in such a manner as to alter, exceed or modify authorities provided within the provisions of any chapter(s) of the NRS. Therefore, no provisions of the NVSARPLAN, or its supporting documentation, are to be construed in such a way as to contravene responsibilities and authorities as defined by statute.

ASSUMPTIONS

- a. Nevada SAR must remain a county-level response with the DEM available to obtain and coordinate additional resources, as requested. It is understood that such coordination of resources does not obligate the State for payment of those same resources.
- b. The Sheriff of each county should be able to readily and rapidly utilize all necessary assets within their jurisdiction for search and rescue to protect life and safety. In addition to existing resources, a Sheriff may be required to seek additional resources outside of their jurisdiction which may be coordinated county-to-county, city-to-county or state-to-county. This scenario is most common with smaller communities within Nevada that do not have the population or resources to be independent in their search and rescue efforts.
- c. A Sheriff should have in their region resources who have intimate knowledge of wilderness areas common to the varying, topographical environments within the state and that are efficient in other SAR response activities, such as: operation of related machinery and vehicles, community search procedures, operation of radio systems, etc.

- d. Due to a significant reliance on volunteers for Nevada SAR, cooperation between volunteers and sheriff's offices should be nurtured, protected, promoted and enhanced.
- e. Nevada SAR is heavily reliant and dependent on the inter-relationships of sheriff's deputies, search and rescue auxiliary deputies and volunteers to staff SAR efforts. Without this network, search and rescue activities would be cost prohibitive and, therefore, not properly managed.
- f. In Nevada, given the distances between population centers, as well as the remoteness of areas, it is necessary that a flexible and standardized approach be taken in respect to Nevada SAR personnel training and operational preparedness.
- g. The topography of the state creates many challenges related to communications capabilities. Nevada SAR teams currently use all available methods for communication to include, but are not limited to: 800 MHz, VHF, cell phones, and satellite phones. Currently, sheriff's offices systems allow for an overlapping network of 24-hour field communications through the state. Interoperable communications capabilities are further explained in Annex III of this plan.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

All entities involved with search and rescue activities within this state may respect and comply with all statutory provisions related to search and rescue, as well as this plan, and shall foster a cooperative environment consisting of mutually supporting relationships. This concept will further extend to the content of any regulations developed pursuant to the provision of NRS Chapter 414.190.

It is further understood that, whenever possible and applicable, all agencies involved in a search and rescue incident should operate under the Incident Command System (ICS) structure.

The following concepts for operation may be recognized and adhered to by all entities performing search and rescue activities within the state:

Notification

A request for search and rescue assistance usually begins with a call to a local law enforcement agency, fire department or public safety dispatch center. If a request is received by an agency other than a county sheriff's office, the call should be transmitted to the Sheriff's Office in the county having jurisdiction.

Response

As previously stated, search and rescue is the statutory responsibility of the Sheriff within each county. Therefore, it is acknowledged that the Sheriff of the county with jurisdiction, or their designee, shall assume command of all aspects of a search and rescue mission within their county through implementation of the following procedures:

- a. The Sheriff may utilize available agency resources to rapidly provide assistance in a search and rescue incident.
- b. If the Sheriff's available resources become overwhelmed or are not sufficient to provide for an efficient and/or effective response, the Sheriff may contact other agencies within the county or other counties for mutual aid assistance. All responding resources should operate under the direct operational control of the Sheriff having jurisdiction or their designee.
- c. Upon exceeding the capabilities of the affected Sheriff's Office and/or available mutual aid resources, the Sheriff may contact the DEM Duty Officer for coordination of other federal, state and/or local resources. All responding resources shall operate under the direct operational control of the Sheriff or their designee.

Operational Expansion and Incident Management

The Nevada SAR Board understands that ICS provides beneficial structure to an incident and for the Incident Commander. The Nevada SAR Board further understands and supports the ICS as it provides an environment that allows for resources to be fielded in a more efficient manner, giving responding units a central staging location, a common and standardized system for coordinating resources and the promotion of unity of effort among all responding, as well as a seamless expansion of required response activities as the incident progresses.

While the Nevada SAR Board endorses the use of the ICS for use in the field, the requirement for its use will not be construed as a requirement to fill staff positions or provide ICS forms to the detriment of field efforts before outside support can be requested, approved, or rendered.

- a. Upon identification of the need to expand operational capabilities through request for federal, state and/or local (if applicable) resources, the Sheriff or their designee may make notification and request to the DEM Duty Officer. This is in no way to be interpreted as an obligation on the part of the State to assume financial responsibility unless the State has clearly delineated such intent in writing.
- b. Upon realization that a search and rescue incident may encompass more than one county, the Sheriff's of the affected counties may establish a unified command structure, unless an agreement has been reached between the Sheriff's allowing one to assume command. Such agreement may be communicated to the DEM Duty Officer and/or the State SAR Coordinator.
- c. NRS Chapter 414.210(4) provides for the State SAR Coordinator to "coordinate assistance during intrastate searches and rescues and searches and rescues involving two or more counties." This is not to be interpreted as the State assuming control of the search and rescue incident, but rather that the State SAR Coordinator may provide assistance in the coordination of resources and efforts due to the involvement of federal or state resources if and when requested. In any instance, all coordination efforts of the State SAR Coordinator may be performed

in cooperation with the designated Unified Command staff or Incident Commander, whichever is applicable, unless otherwise directed by the Governor.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Nevada Counties

1. The Sheriff of each county is responsible for any search and rescue incident within their county.
2. The Sheriff of each county may assign a Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Coordinator to work directly with Search and Rescue Coordinators from other counties, as well as the State.
3. A sheriff's office, knowing of an incident in or near the border of another county, shall notify that county's sheriff's office.
4. A Sheriff's Office sending a team into another county shall notify the Sheriff's Office in that county.
5. When two or more counties are involved in a search and rescue incident, a unified command may be established and each sheriff's office will provide a liaison for purposes of coordination unless it is mutually agreed upon that one sheriff will assume command. Such agreement may be communicated to the DEM Duty Officer or State SAR Coordinator.
6. The Sheriff of the county in which an incident occurs is responsible for all related costs of their resources, unless the cost is covered by another agreement.
7. A sheriff's office responding to assist another county's sheriff's office accepts the cost(s) associated with their team's response activities unless other arrangements are either existing or are in place in advance of the deployment.
8. When requesting resources from other than another county within Nevada, a sheriff's office Search and Rescue Coordinator may identify responsibility for costs and ensure that appropriate provisions for liability coverage are in effect.
9. When requesting state or federal resources through the DEM, the sheriff's office Search and Rescue Coordinator is required to obtain a state mission number. The state mission number, in and of itself, is not an obligation for payment on the part of the State unless specifically specified in writing.
10. A Sheriff of a county whose jurisdiction borders that of another state's county is encouraged to develop a memorandum of understanding between the two counties for mutual aid. In the absence of such, the interstate request may be coordinated through the DEM Duty Officer.
11. When the operational costs of an incident are projected to exceed the financial capabilities of the jurisdiction, the county may apply to the State of Nevada for funds from the Nevada Emergency Assistance Subaccount as provided for under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.135 and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) Chapter 414, and the State Disaster Relief Account (SDRA), as provided for under the provision of NRS Chapter 353, whichever is applicable.

Nevada Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (DEM)

1. The DEM shall provide support and coordination of resources, as requested.
2. The DEM shall accept financial obligation for deployment of resources if the DEM specifically provides, in writing, its agreement to such obligation.
3. The State SAR Coordinator, with the direction, guidance and subsequent approval of the Nevada SAR Board, will develop and maintain the following annexes to the NVSARPLAN for purposes of establishing and clarifying direction, control and coordination procedures, which will be distributed to the Search and Rescue Coordinator within each county. These annexes will establish standardized operating procedures and frameworks by which Search and Rescue coordinators will operate.
 - a) Operations Annex (Annex I)
 - b) Logistics and Resources (Annex II)
 - c) Communications Annex (Annex III)
 - d) Planning, Training, and Exercise (Annex IV)
4. The State SAR Coordinator may obtain from search and rescue coordinators within each county all search related data and will prepare, maintain and publish statistical information regarding search and rescue activity within the state by the 31st of January in each year. This will be accomplished through the development of a standardized search and rescue data form that is approved by the Nevada SAR Board.

Nevada Search and Rescue (SAR) Board

1. The Nevada SAR Board may develop, and by majority vote, adopt regulations for the administration of laws regarding searches and rescues pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.190.
2. The Nevada SAR Board shall strive to promote mutually supporting relationships among Search and Rescue Coordinators in support of their respective responsibilities through the development of effective and efficient formulation of policy regarding search and rescue as is provided for under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.180(3).
3. The Nevada SAR Board may develop direction and guidance for the State SAR Coordinator, which incorporates a standardized, statewide approach in the development of training standards, enhancement and sustainment strategies.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Basic Plan

- a. The Nevada SAR Board approved the 1999 plan. The Nevada SAR Board is a representative State body that approves a plan as a policy function and is the only state-level body that can, by majority vote, approve the NVSARPLAN as developed by the State SAR Coordinator under the provisions of NRS 414.210(7). However, prior to its implementation, the Chief of the DEM will

submit the NVSARPLAN to the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association for acceptance and approval, as demonstrated in letter form to be attached to the plan as Appendix A.

- b. The NVSARPLAN shall be reviewed, at a minimum, every two years. All amendments to this plan must be subsequently approved by the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association.

Annexes

- a. This document assigns responsibility for the development of the Annexes to the State SAR Coordinator.
- b. Upon completion, each annex will be reviewed and voted on by the Nevada SAR Board. Following approval, and as is consistent with the Basic Plan, the Chief of the DEM will submit the Annexes to the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association for acceptance and approval demonstrated in letter form to be attached to the back of each Annex respectively.
- c. As information in the Annexes will be continuously evolving, they will require annual review to be conducted by the Nevada SAR Board at the first scheduled meeting of each calendar year. All amendments to this plan, its Annexes or Appendices must be subsequently approved by the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association.

Document Storage

- a. The approved NVSARPLAN will be stored within the Planning Section of the DEM.
- b. The State SAR Coordinator will ensure that a copy of the NVSARPLAN, inclusive of all Annexes and Appendices, is provided to each county sheriff electronically.

APPENDIX A – Letter of Approval/Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association

ANNEX I – Operations

ANNEX II – Logistics and Resources

ANNEX III – Communications

ANNEX IV – Planning, Training, and Exercise

Annex I

Operations

Objective

Provide basic recommendations and guidelines for DEM and Sheriff coordination during a SAR incident involving a request for assistance to DEM from the affected County jurisdiction.

- a. All SAR incident involvement by the DEM will be managed with the ICS.
- b. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to utilize the ICS for the conduct of SAR operations and to utilize ICS-based Unified Command to satisfy jurisdictional and other agency responsibilities during multi-jurisdictional incidents.
- c. All requests for DEM SAR assistance will be directed from the on scene Incident Commander (IC) through the Sheriff, or their designee, to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Duty Officer.
- d. The SEOC Duty Officer will notify the State SAR Coordinator upon a request for DEM SAR assistance, if appropriate.
- e. After the initial request for assistance from a local jurisdiction, the SEOC Duty Officer or the State SAR Coordinator will maintain communication with the requesting jurisdiction's Sheriff, or their designee. Additionally, contact with the requesting jurisdiction's Emergency manager (EM) may be established to ensure local resource utilization.
- f. The SEOC Duty Officer, the State SAR Coordinator, or their designee, at the request of the responsible Sheriff, will coordinate assistance during multi-jurisdictional, intrastate SAR incidents. All interstate SAR assistance will be coordinated by the SEOC Duty Officer, the State SAR Coordinator, or their designee. The respective sheriffs in a multi-jurisdictional incident will retain full authority and responsibility for the resolution of the incident.

The State SAR Coordinator, or their designee, will act as the State of Nevada liaison during out-of-state SAR incidents.

Annex II

Logistics and Resources

Objective

The primary purpose of this annex is to provide SAR contact information for Nevada's counties. Additionally, this annex details the various sources of resource assistance provided by the State upon request.

County Contact Information

County	Sheriff	SAR Coordinator	Dispatch
Carson City	Ken Furlong 775-887-2020 x 41901	Steve Albertsen 775-887-2020 x 41902	775-887-2009
Churchill	Ben Trotter 775-423-3116	Mark Joseph 775-423-3116	775-423-3116
Clark	Doug Gillespie 702-828-3231	Tom Monahan 702-828-3552	702-828-3111
Douglas	Ron Pierini 775-782-9900	Dave Aymami 775-782-5126	775-782-5126
Elko	Jim Pitts 775-777-2501	Dave Prall 775-275-0107	775-777-7300
Esmeralda	Ken Elgan 775-485-6373	Ken Elgan 775-485-6373	775-485-6373
Eureka	Ken Jones 775-237-5330	William Tilton 775-468-0243	775-237-5330
Humboldt	Ed Kilgore 775-623-6419	Thomas Casey 775-421-2291	775-623-6429
Lander	Ron Unger 775-635-1100	Meshel Prawitz 775-635-1100 x 238	775-635-5161
Lincoln	Kerry Lee 775-962-5151	Kerry Lee 775-962-5151	775-962-5151
Lyon	Allen Veil 775-463-6600	Brian Veil 775-577-5020	775-463-6620
Mineral	Mike Dillard 775-945-1046	Mike Dillard 775-945-1046	775-945-2434
Nye	Tony DeMeo 775-751-7012	Mike Dolfen 775-482-8158	775-482-8101
Pershing	Rich Machado 775-273-2641	Rich Machado 775-273-2641	775-273-2641
Storey	Gerry Antinoro 775-847-0959	Gerry Antinoro 775-847-0959	775-847-0950

County	Sheriff	SAR Coordinator	Dispatch
Washoe	Mike Haley	Sgt. Ralph Caldwell	775-785-4629
	775-328-3001	775-742-3344	
White Pine	Dan Watts	Dan Watts	775-289-8808
	775-289-8808	775-289-8808	

The DEM Duty Officer number is 775-687-0498. In addition to direct resource assistance you may receive from County Sheriffs, DEM can provide assistance in a variety of ways, if requested.

- Intra-state assistance from County Sheriffs and other entities.
- Inter-state assistance via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or existing inter-state mutual aid agreements.
- Federal assistance, including resources of the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC).
- Remote operational planning assistance.
- Lost person behavior/subject profile information.
- SAR/Missing Person Statistical Database information.
- Incident Action Plan (IAP) development assistance.
- Direct incident management support.
- Incident management and SAR responder training.

Annex III

Communications

The national SAR frequency is VHF simplex 155.160. All Nevada jurisdictions are encouraged to program radios with this frequency and utilize it during SAR operations, as appropriate.

This annex is not intended to provide a matrix of jurisdictional frequencies for operational use during SAR incidents. Incident specific communications coordination is a function of Incident Command and can neither be anticipated or provided as a component of this plan.

A resource that can be of significant value is the “National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG). The NIFOG is a technical reference for radio technicians responsible for radios that will be used in disaster response applications and for emergency communications planners. To request copies of the NIFOG, email the Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Communications at OEC@HQ.DHS.GOV.

Additionally, the Nevada Tactical Interoperability Field Operation Guide (NEViFOG) can be acquired electronically at <http://167.154.3>. Go to Plugins, click File Library, click Interoperable Communications, click on the blue arrow, view for the NEViFOG. Access to this WebEOC link can be acquired through each respective county’s Emergency Manager.

This FOG is a quick reference document derived from information contained in each of the three Nevada regional tactical interoperability plans.

Annex IV

Planning, Training, and Exercise

Objective

This Planning, Training, and Exercise (PT&E) Annex has been prepared to assist users of this plan in developing and maintaining processes for the planning of search operations, the training of resources to assist in search and rescue operations, and the regular exercising of those resources to verify capability.

The foundational premise of this annex is such that all guidelines and recommendations made herein are based upon national standards and best practices, and they establish a continuum of excellence for any organization wishing to adopt them. They are voluntary in nature, and to that extent they are offered to any organization wishing to form or maintain standards that are recognized throughout the country.

Planning:

Search and Rescue Pre-Planning:

A Search and Rescue pre-plan is a document to assist in the operations of a SAR event. It is recommended that all organizations tasked with SAR responsibilities maintain such a plan to assist in operations when they occur. It allows an organization to predict SAR problems, anticipate solutions, and develop associated methodologies and resources for the solution of these events.

Purpose of a Pre-plan:

1. Assists in minimizing oversight due to the emergent nature of SAR operations
2. Places all known resources within a single document, i.e.: not searching through several documents and reference books for resources.
3. Reduces stress load by providing guidance on the orderly flow of events.
4. Facilitates a realistic assessment of SAR resources, i.e.: if tracking skills are essential at the outset of a search, are teams available and capable of performing this function?
5. Orients personnel to operational procedures and policies, ie; gives new personnel a thumbnail sketch of how operations are conducted while providing supporting agencies information on how they are integrated into an operation.

Contents:

There are three generally associated categories of planning documents maintained as part of a comprehensive SAR pre-plan:

1. Agency Documents: These are directives, policies, or other documents that speak to the responsibilities, authorizations, job descriptions, interagency agreements and legal constraints related to SAR. They provide the umbrella under which all other documents are prepared.
2. "How to..." Manuals: These are standards, guidelines, reference materials and other documents that provide instruction on how perform. They provide guidance that SAR personnel use while becoming proficient in certain skills.
3. Operational Pre-plan: This provides incident management with information, instructions, checklists and standard operating procedures that will be referred to during an actual search and rescue.

Other contents of a preplan should include, but are not limited to:

1. Checklists for:
 - a. Hazardous Operations
 - b. Call-out procedures
 - c. Planning actions in which oversight errors may be critical
 - d. Complex tasks involving groups (Base camp set-up, etc.)
 - e. Vehicle and equipment maintenance
 - f. Tactics based on type and kind of resources
 - g. Any activity that is infrequently performed for which trained personnel are scarce.
2. Resource Lists:
 - a. Personnel
 - b. Equipment
 - c. Vehicles
 - d. Supplies
 - e. Base camp locations
 - i. All resources should be based on Kind and Type using national standards.
3. Referenced Documents
 - a. Identification of documents used to guide operations
 - b. Page numbers referenced, where appropriate
4. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)
 - a. Any accepted procedures not noted in other documents
 - i. First notice requirements
 - ii. Call-out
 - iii. Incident priorities
 - iv. Mobilization / demobilization
 - v. Communication protocols

- vi. Procedures for evidence, family influences, death of the subjects
- 5. Memorandums
 - a. Memorandums of Agreement (MOA), Understanding (MOU), in which one agency agrees to cooperate or support another agency, and which should include:
 - i. Financial considerations
 - ii. Duties
 - iii. Authorities
 - iv. Liabilities
- 6. Miscellaneous Information
 - a. Mapping
 - b. Planning formulas
 - c. Lost person statistical information

Structure

- 1. Purpose and objective of the plan:
 - a. Concise statement orienting the reader to the document and its purpose.
- 2. Incident priority guidelines:
 - a. Dependent on the incident, does the call merit full or partial activation of resources?
- 3. First notice procedures:
 - a. Who is contacted and when?
- 4. Procedure for conducting an investigation:
 - a. Who gathers information on the missing subject and how is it shared?
- 5. Strategies for finding lost subjects:
 - a. Based upon terrain and category of the subject.
- 6. Search tactics:
 - a. What methods will be used and in what order to maximize the search efforts of resources?
- 7. Emergency authorities and responsibilities:
 - a. Conditions that may alter the search such as changes in the search boundaries.
- 8. Organizational Structure:
 - a. How will the search be managed? Will managers use ICS or another method?
- 9. Incident facilities.
 - a. Where will the search be managed from and how will it be laid out?
- 10. Communications.
 - a. What systems and frequencies will be used during the search?
- 11. Briefing and debriefing procedures
 - a. How will this be performed and documented?

12. Medical Considerations:
 - a. How will searcher injuries be handled and what are the locations of health facilities used in the operation?
13. Fatalities:
 - a. How are fatalities managed?
14. Rescue / Evacuation:
 - a. What are the capabilities and limitations of resources used in the operation?
15. Mission Suspension / De-escalation:
 - a. How will the agency determine when to suspend a mission and what is the criteria for suspension?
16. Demobilization:
 - a. What process will be used when bringing resources back from the field and how will tires resources be managed?
17. Documentation:
 - a. How is the search effort documents and what standardized process is used ?
18. Critiques
 - a. How will constructive review be performed?
19. Special Problems:
 - a. Airspace restrictions
 - b. Aircraft crash for private, commercial, and military
 - c. Safeguarding victims valuables
 - d. Resource protection and environmental protection
 - e. Cost accounting
 - f. Press briefings and media
 - g. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
 - h. HAZMAT and blood-borne pathogen issues
20. Appendices:
 - a. Resource Lists
 - b. Phone Lists
 - c. Equipment Lists
 - d. Frequency Lists
 - e. Forms

The development and subsequent use of a SAR Pre-plan will facilitate a realistic assessment of SAR resources and identify training needs. It orients new and experienced SAR personnel to the organizations operational processes and promotes efficient and cost-effective search and rescue management.

Training:

The Committee on Training in Search and Rescue (SAR Training Committee), appointed by the State SAR Coordinator, with the advice of the SAR Board, establishes recommendations for organizations specializing in Search and Rescue, and certifies those organizations which meet those recommendations at the appropriate level.

In November, 2010, the SAR Training Committee adopted the guidelines of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F-32 Committee for the training of Level I and Level II Land Search Team Members, as guidelines that meet the requirements for individuals to be credentialed in Nevada as a Search and Rescue resource. Credentialing of an individual is not the same as certification of a team. Credentialing of an individual means that individual meets a set of skills and capabilities which have been adopted by the credentialing organization, typically the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Thus, any individual who meets the credentialing requirements for their parent organization may be credentialed. Any organization who adopts the ASTM Standards for Level I and Level II Land Search Team Member, or other equivalency adopted by the SAR Training Committee and approved by the State SAR Board, meets the standard for credentialing their members in Nevada.

The development of the credentialing process for individual search and rescue members is the responsibility of the State SAR Coordinator, who shall establish a program and process for credentialing SAR personnel. This voluntary program may be administered through the local AHJ, Nevada's sheriffs.

The State of Nevada, through the State SAR Coordinator, may recommend various programs and training which will assist local teams, Sheriff Department SAR Teams, and others involved in SAR Operations. These programs and curriculums are based on national standards and "best practices" within the SAR environment. Additionally, there are courses approved by Nevada POST which support SAR operations and have standardized skills particular to search operations.

At the county level, organizations that conduct search and rescue operations, at the behest of the County Sheriff, have the option of establishing their own training recommendations, guidelines, and processes for the administration of those, or may adopt guidelines established under the SAR Training Committee. The State of Nevada, however, will only certify SAR Teams that meet or exceed the requirements of the state program.

The State certification of teams is based upon the FEMA 508-8 document entitled: Typed Resource Definitions / Search and Rescue. This standard provides guidelines for the size and capability of any team requesting certification, and allows a team to be typed at any stage in the team's development. This certification process is initiated either through a request to the State SAR Coordinator or upon a review of the team's listed SAR Resource Inventory, which details a team's size and capability. Upon receipt of the request, the State SAR Coordinator shall contact the team, verify the team size and capability with the team administrative agent, and certify the team at the defined level.

Exercise:

The ability to exercise resources is integral for the training and preparation of all resources, SAR Personnel not withstanding. Exercises are used to verify prior training,

determine what additional training is required, and validate procedures and processes. The local AHJ may wish to establish and maintain an exercise program, integrate within another jurisdiction exercise program, or engage with the State of Nevada as part of the annual exercise process.

Exercises run by the state must meet certain program requirements to be funded by the state and various grant programs, primarily the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP).

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is one of several processes that guide and direct exercise development, production, and evaluation. The HSEEP process includes an After Action Report (AAR) and, when necessary, Improvement Plan (IP) for any exercise funded under HSGP.

Local jurisdictions may opt to conduct exercises using other funding sources and processes.