

# MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

## Rescue Team Member Certification Standard

### I. Introduction

- A. The Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MASAR) is dedicated to providing a centralized clearinghouse for volunteer search and rescue (SAR) resources for the State of Maine. To this end, MASAR has developed the following standard for members of wilderness ground rescue teams used in SAR incidents.
- B. This standard is intended to define the minimum requirements necessary for any member of a wilderness ground rescue team.
- C. Certification issued under this standard is required for those who wish to participate in search and rescue operations managed by the Maine Warden Service and other agencies, as applicable.
- D. Testing of an individual for certification shall be done by the unit of which the individual is a member, utilizing the objectives and procedures provided by MASAR. An individual who is not a member of a unit must apply to the MASAR Standards Committee for testing.
- E. This standard applies to above-ground wilderness rescue in non-Alpine conditions.<sup>1</sup> Certification for rescue in Alpine conditions shall be evaluated based on other standards and evaluation tests which may be accepted by the MASAR Standards Committee.
- F. A person certified under this standard meets or exceeds the requirements of the following ASTM standards:
  1. F2751 Standard Guide for Training of Support Level Land Rescue Team Member (LRT Support) Member, with the exception of paragraphs 5.5.1, 6.3.1, 6.6.3, and 6.6.4.
  2. F2752 Standard Guide for Training for Level I Rope Rescue (R1) Rescuer Endorsement.

### II. Certification

- A. Certification under this standard shall be issued by the MASAR Standards Committee.
- B. Initial certification is valid for three years, following which the person must be recertified by the Standards Committee. After the last day of certification, a 1-year grace period is allowed during which a person may request recertification. Unless recertification is requested by the end of that period of time, a person's certification under this standard shall cease to be valid.
- C. Certification or recertification must be requested in writing, sent to the chairman of the MASAR Standards Committee. The request may come from one of the following:

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this standard, Maine alpine conditions are considered to exist in the mountains, in winter, above tree line.

1. an officer of a MASAR-certified unit;
2. the certified individual him or her self.

### **III. Suspension and Revocation of Certification**

#### **A. Suspension**

1. Any person who is temporarily unable to work in the field for an extended period (usually greater than six months) should request inactive status from the Standards Committee.
2. The Standards Committee may suspend anyone who does not request inactive status when some deficiency impedes that person's effectiveness.
  - a) When a report of someone's deficiency is brought to the attention of the Standards Committee, the committee will consult with that person and the unit training officer before taking any action.
  - b) The person in question will have the right to challenge any report of deficiency and has the right to know and confront the person who makes the report. He or she may provide written, oral, and recorded testimony in his or her support.
  - c) The committee may take one of the following courses of action upon the challenge of a ground searcher's competence.
    - (1) The committee may confirm that person's continued certification.
    - (2) The committee may require that the person in question complete the re-certification process before the normal re-certification time.
  - d) In all instances, the person in question shall have the right to request a field test or the relevant parts thereof, in order to confirm certification.

#### **B. Revocation**

1. The committee shall have the option of permanently revoking a Rescue Team Member's certification in the following circumstances.
  - a) Retirement of the Rescue Team Member from active service.
  - b) Serious misconduct on the part of a Rescue Team Member which endangers the operation or credibility of the SAR enterprise.

### **IV. Documentation Required for Initial Certification or Recertification**

#### **A. Rescue Team Member Initial certification**

The applicant must provide the MASAR Standards Committee with copies of the following:

1. Proof of current certification by MASAR as a Search Team Member.
2. Proof that he or she has met all of the requirements of Appendix A of this standard.
3. Proof of current certification in CPR from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or equivalent organization.
4. Proof of current certification in First Aid (or higher level certification), from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety

- Council, or equivalent organization.
5. Proof that within the past six months the applicant has met the requirements of an aerobic fitness evaluation test equivalent to one of those in Appendix A of the MASAR Search Team Member certification standard.
  6. Letter of recommendation from an officer of a MASAR-certified unit who is familiar with this person and his or her abilities. This letter shall state that the person is capable of the following, in his or her unit's regular area of operations:
    - a) Self-sufficient and able to function independently in the field for a period of at least 12 hours
    - b) Perform rescue duties in any and all "normally expected" conditions, including darkness
    - c) Perform rescue duties in all terrain likely to be encountered
    - d) Perform rescue duties under reasonably anticipated seasonal conditions (see Section I, Part E, above)
    - e) Understanding and avoiding hazardous environments
    - f) Safely and effectively work within the incident command system
- B. Rescue Team Member Recertification
- The applicant must provide the Standards Committee with copies of the following:
1. Request for recertification from an officer of a MASAR-certified unit who is familiar with this person and his or her abilities.
  2. Proof of continuing training as shown by written records from the Training Officer (or equivalent), the President, or the Director of a MASAR-certified unit. These records must attest to the successful continuance of a SAR training program administered by that unit.
  3. Proof of current certification by MASAR as a Rescue Team Member
  4. Current certification in CPR from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or equivalent organization.
  5. Current certification in First Aid (or higher level certification), from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or equivalent organization.
  6. Proof that within the past six months the applicant has met the requirements of an aerobic fitness evaluation test equivalent to one of those in Appendix A of the MASAR Search Team Member certification standard.
- C. The Standards Committee reserves the option to independently test an applicant for certification, or recertification, with an evaluation team of its own choosing.

## **V. Acceptance and Amendment**

- A. Acceptance
1. This standard must be accepted by a majority vote of the MASAR membership, in accordance with the current MASAR by-laws.

2. This standard shall take effect immediately upon acceptance by vote of the MASAR membership in accordance with the current MASAR by-laws.
- B. Amendment
1. Any MASAR member may propose amendments to this standard, in writing, to the MASAR Standards Committee.
  2. The MASAR Standards Committee may propose amendments to this standard.
  3. The MASAR Standards Committee shall present all proposed amendment(s), in writing, to the MASAR membership for review.
  4. All MASAR members shall have a minimum of 30 days in which to provide written comments on the proposed amendment(s) to the MASAR Standards Committee.
  5. If any comments are received by the MASAR Standards Committee, it shall review them and then do one of the following:
    - a) Return the standard to its original, unrevised, status;
    - b) Make additional revisions to the standard;
    - c) Retain the previous revision unchanged, and provide the membership with its reason(s) for doing so.
  6. If comments have been received by the Standards Committee, the proposed standard shall be presented to the MASAR membership, in writing, for another 30 day review period.
  7. If no comments are received by the Standards Committee, the proposed revision of the standard shall be scheduled for a vote of acceptance at the next MASAR meeting.
  8. Amendments must be accepted by a majority vote of the MASAR membership, in accordance with the current MASAR by-laws.