

Maine Association for Search And Rescue

Meeting Minutes

6 October 1996

Meeting is called to order at 1605 at the Sidney Warden Service Headquarters by John McDonough.

Present

John McDonough, Rick Grant, Mark King, Paul Magoon, Mark Coleman, Keith Heavrin, Al Martin, and Buzz Caverly of Baxter State Park.

Announcements

Introductions are made due to several new people being present. Notably Buzz Caverly of Baxter State Park, and, Rick Grant and Mark King of Lakes Region Rescue. Lakes Region Rescue also announces that they are selling a chain counting device in order to raise money for their group. The device is a series of glow in the dark beads on a leather thong, each fifth bead is a different color, and they can be slid down the thong thus keeping track of distances walked during search operations. They are available through Lakes Region Rescue.

Treasurer's Report

A copy of the treasurer's report was not available at the meeting but John remarked that he had seen it and estimates that the MASAR portion of the balance was at around \$400 with \$850 total in the regular Checking. The final check on the command post has been sent.

Secretary's Report

As copies of the minutes from the previous meeting aren't ready at hand, Keith reads the minutes. There being no corrections errors or omissions, the minutes are accepted as written by unanimous vote.

Committee Reports.

Standards Committee

Steve relays through John that the BASAR Curriculum is complete at this point. No other report is available.

Training Exercise Committee

Comments about the recent MASAR training weekend, held at Camden Hills State Park, started with Lakes Region's Mark King saying his group's attendees felt very positive about the way it came off. Keith Heavrin relates that he hadn't heard from all the MESARD members who attended but those he had talked to said it went very well. Al Martin said the only problem he knew of was that for a portion of the search simulation, radio communications was not real good. During the round table talk after the exercise it was brought up for discussion to identify the problem and seek solutions.

Turns out that some of the field teams were out of communications for much of the exercise due to terrain and distance. Relaying messages, as a service by other units that could do it, was undesirable for all but highest priority messages because it ties up the designated frequency with a lot of extra traffic. Two possible solutions emerged with placing a radio or the CP on high ground to improve reception and the possibility of looking to run the exercise in two separate sections at some future training weekend.

ID Cards

A short discussion ensues, spurred by Lakes Region Rescue's interest. They are directed to contact Randy Armour to get new cards issued to them.

Communications

Brief discussion of radio frequencies MASAR uses is held for the benefit of Lakes Region. Mark says there is a state wide EMS channel that they have used. They are advised to use 155.160 for training purposes.

Correspondence

There is none at this time

Old Business

The Silva GPS units do operate on true North as a basis and not magnetic North. John says he has read the literature and it seems to imply that the units can be set for magnetic based readings. Al says it was stated in the courses offered at the fall training session and by the salesman that Silva GPS units ran true north based readings period. This represents a major problem because for decades of training personnel, both volunteer and agency, magnetic North has been used as a basis for map work in Maine. Al suggests we contact Silva and ask for answers to address concerns about confusion that is likely to arise in field navigation with the departure from how it has always been done.

New Business

On August 27th MASAR got a memo that seemed to asking for MASAR volunteers help in Baxter Park. The memo wasn't very specific so Buzz Caverly attends this meeting to clarify the ideas he generalized in the memo.

Buzz explains that responsibilities for various aspects of park operation are placed into several different groups and delegated to park rangers. He feels that a whole new category of responsibilities is arising with Search and Rescue. When a serious incident occurs, it precipitates huge time requirements in overtime pay for the discharge of duties related to the incident. Further, it causes the Rangers involved to have to forego seeing to their other responsibilities at campgrounds and other places they would normally be on duty. SAR volunteers have been very important to search and rescue operations in the park in the past. Buzz says he'd like to explore the possibility of two person volunteer response teams coming to the park during peak or busy times. One of this team would be an EMT and the other someone who could assist and run radios etc. They would be given a place to stay at the Park and would be available to act as a strike team on a moment's notice for emergencies in the park. He'd like to see possibly developing a roster of names of interested volunteers, perhaps as many as 60. These volunteers would then be paired up and be assigned to times, convenient for them, to be in the park for 2 or 3 days at a time during the park's high use times. The roster would also provide a pool of trained people to call for extractions if needed. This will allow the park rangers to get back to seeing to their regular duties so that unsafe conditions are not created elsewhere in the park by their absence. He feels it would also give the volunteers a chance to work in their field and some recognition for what they will be doing. Buzz would like to see this plan implemented during 1997 if it is viable.

John asks how insurance issues would be addressed. Buzz responds saying that any volunteers working in the park under such a project would get the same

coverage as other park personnel. Buzz would like to make it very clear that we should convey to everyone that the proposal he is forwarding is for the purpose of considering and discussing options to see what is possible. It is not a requisition for free man power.

Buzz addresses a few questions forwarded by Lakes Region concerning the experience of duty officers and rangers concerning medical decision making. Park duty officers are very experienced and capable in this area. Buzz also says that most of their need is in evaluating and extractions. They do not often require help with search operations but when they do it is usually a good one.

John brings up a Colorado mapping ad in Rescue Magazine. No one seems to know much about it but it is speculated that perhaps the digital and computer recorded topo is about to arrive. Maps on disc? John says he'll ask Rick Farris to investigate.

Next Meeting

This meeting will be the first to be held at 1300 hours. We will skip the month of November so the next meeting will be on December 1st at Sidney Warden Service headquarters. Meeting is adjourned at 1745 hrs.

Agenda

1. Announcements
2. Secretary's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Committee Reports
5. Correspondence
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Set Next Meeting's Agenda