

MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

MASAR Certification Standards and Related Documents

In 1993 the Maine Association for Search and Rescue began developing certification standards for SAR personnel to provide SAR management in Maine with a method to determine the capabilities of SAR resources. The standards and related documents MASAR has created to date are described below:

Volunteer SAR Units

MASAR created a standard for evaluation of SAR units to insure that they were organized and operated so as to provide both regular training and management of their members. Certification under the **Unit Certification Standard** is required before a unit may request certification of its members under MASAR's other standards. To prepare for applying for unit certification a **MASAR Unit Certification Application Checklist** is provided. A **Unit Recertification Application Checklist** is also provided for those units that wish to recertify under the MASAR standard.

Ground Search

To provide a method to document the ability of ground search team members, MASAR has developed the **Search Team Member** and **Search Team Leader** certification standards. The former defines how a person may be certified by MASAR as a member of a ground search team, while the latter defines how a person may be certified to lead a search team.

The **STM Individual Documentation and Test Checklist** is provided to track the completion of all tasks and tests required to apply for Search Team Member certification. Additional checklists are available for the use of units preparing applications for certification or recertification of its members.

The **Search Team Member Certification Standard** has four appendices. **STM Appendix A - Aerobic Fitness Evaluation** provides methods for testing the aerobic fitness of ground search personnel. An individual's fitness testing can be documented using **STM Appendix A- Aerobic Fitness Evaluation Form**. **STM Appendix B - Grandfathering of Searchers** defines the circumstances under which experienced SAR personnel could be certified without testing when this standard was originally accepted by MASAR. **STM Appendix C – Training Requirements** lists the specific knowledge and skills a search team member is expected to demonstrate for certification and **Appendix D - Recommended Equipment List** describes the equipment he or she will need to function effectively on a search.

The **Search Team Leader Certification Standard** lists the requirements for certification of an individual as a ground search team leader. The **STL Individual Documentation and Test Checklist** allows an individual to keep track of his or her progress toward meeting the certification requirements and checklists are also provided for units preparing applications for certification or recertification of its members.

The **Search Team Leader Certification Standard** has two appendices. **STL Appendix A – Training Requirements** defines the skills and knowledge required for certification and **STL Appendix B – Grandfathering of Search Team Leaders** defines the process for units to certify members they considered capable of leading search teams prior to acceptance of this standard. An application checklist is provided to assist in preparing for this application.

Search Dog Teams

For evaluation of the capabilities of search dogs and their handlers, MASAR has put into place a **Search Dog Team Certification Standard**. It defines the requirements for certification and testing of search dog teams, and includes the basic tests all dog teams must pass before requesting evaluation of advanced skills. The **Basic Certification Tests Evaluation Form** is provided to document testing of the obedience and social skills listed in the standard.

Currently the search dog team standard is augmented by six appendices.

Appendix A - Grandfathering of Dog Teams defines the method by which operational dog teams could be certified when the standard was originally accepted, without going through the entire initial certification procedure. The balance of the appendices define the requirements and testing methods for further certification of dog teams.

Appendix B - Air Scent for Wilderness Search lists the tests which must be passed for a team to be certified for air scent searching in a wilderness environment. For evaluating teams to be certified in basic and advanced tracking and trailing abilities, **Appendix C - Basic Tracking & Trailing Tests** and **Appendix D - Advanced Tracking & Trailing Tests** were created. A dog team's ability for water search can be evaluated using **Appendix E - Air Scent Water Search Tests**. Finally, dog teams that wish to be certified in article detection can be tested using **Appendix F - Wilderness Article Search & Clue Detection Tests**. For each of the testing appendices an evaluation form is provided, i.e. **Appendix B - Search Test Form**, etc.

Mounted Teams

The formation of mounted SAR units in Maine led to the development of standards for horse and rider teams. The **Mounted Team Certification Standard** defines the minimum requirements for mounted teams that wish to be certified in Maine; an evaluation sheet, the **Certification Test Evaluation Form**, is provided for testing mounted teams under this standard. For units wishing to request certification or recertification of members, suitable checklists are also provided. Teams which were certified within their unit prior to acceptance of the MASAR standard could be certified by meeting the requirements of **Appendix A - Grandfathering Teams**. **Appendix B - Recommended Equipment List**, is provided to insure that mounted teams are equipped for the field.

Rescue Teams

A standard for training and certifying members of a wilderness rescue team was

accepted by MASAR in September 2010. The **Rescue Team Member Certification Standard** lists these requirements for certification. The **RTM Individual Documentation and Test Checklist** allows an individual to keep track of his or her progress toward meeting the certification requirements; checklists are also provided for units preparing applications for certification or recertification of its members.

The **Rescue Team Member Certification Standard** has two appendices. **RTM Appendix A – Training Requirements** defines the skills and knowledge required for certification and **RTM Appendix B – Grandfathering of Search Team Members** defines the process whereby units may certify members they considered capable of acting as members of a rescue team prior to acceptance of this standard. A checklist is provided to assist in preparing for this application.

Miscellaneous

MASAR has also accepted the **MASAR Standard Definitions**, which defines the specific meaning of terms used in the MASAR standards.

Questions or comments regarding application of these standards, suggestions for improvements, or proposals for new standards should be directed to the chairman of the Standards Committee:

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