

MASAR MEETING MINUTES

4 October 1998

Present

Al Martin - Dirigo, John Lee - Katahdin, Chris Lee - Katahdin, Dave Martin - Dirigo, Mike Sawyer - Warden Service, Pete Laveway - Wilderness, Rick Grant - Lakes Region, Randall Armour - Lincoln, Robert Bohlmann - York County Emergency Response, Andre Robidoux - Mahoosuc, Steve Hudson - Mount Desert Island SAR, John McDonough - Wilderness, Keith Heavrin - Maine Search and Rescue Dogs

Meeting is called to order at 1605 hours by MASAR President John McDonough.

Search Critiques

Waite - 14 July

General discussion of effort with teams describing the parts they contributed. The search lasted 6 days the first push then an additional four when it started up again. Steve Hudson asks why the CP was set up in a deep gravel pit where radio communications were at a distinct and troublesome disadvantage. Mike adds that a relay system was eventually set up. Further talk of where evidence was found on this search and that there never was anything that actually put the missing man in the woods or waters. All the evidence was found on the roads. John asks if the teams involved would send him a list of the mileage and volunteer hours their units contributed to the search. Mike Sawyer is asked about whether there is a form that could be used by team leaders at searches to record this information. Mike says there is no form now but the Warden Service would be happy to have this information in any format so long as the numbers are there. John suggests that just time and mileage be used and not to assign a dollar value to anything. Mike again brings up the possibility of teams being reimbursed for some search related expenses. He says it must be based on clear records and data to be considered.

Harmony - 19 Sept

On the Saturday morning of the first day of the MASAR training exercise held at Pineland, just as the first class was finishing, the Warden Service informed the personnel present that a search was begun. The Warden Service asked for dog teams only at the start and many of the MESARD teams had deployed to the search by noon. MESARD dog teams worked the afternoon and well into the night. Most of the assigned areas were north of the PLS due to the fact that this subject had gone that way on the two previous departures for which a search effort was mounted. Louise Chadbourne, 71, has Alzheimer's disease and had been found twice before as she walked to return to where she had grown up on the Chadbourne Rd. Area search teams secured by 2200 hours but Wardens assigned vehicles to patrol the roads all night and had the town drag the roads to make new tracks apparent. On the morning of the 20th at around 0830, as teams were deploying to assigned areas, one end of a grid search line made up mostly of the Lakes Region unit members found the subject in a section of woods about half a mile east of the PLS. General comment was that this search effort went very well and was well organized. Mike relates that there was some problem getting aircraft for this effort in the beginning. Mike also relates that reports of the search effort on the radio initiated several calls to the Warden Service with sightings of the subject walking east on the main road. This led the CP to deploy the first teams to that direction on Sunday morning, which proved very productive. The subject was tired and cold but otherwise in good condition.

Randy relates that he was the OD for that time and was pretty much out of the information loop. The only team that let him know of the search and being deployed was MESARD. From his perspective there was confusion as to who was deployed and when. There was also no information to the OD about when stand down

occurred.

Dave reports that the new forms in the resource trailer work very well. Al reports there was some problem with some teams having not brought search gear to the MASAR training and therefore not having it for the Harmony search. Gear should be with the teams anytime they are doing SAR related activities. Rick Grant says his grid line had two EMTs in it that he was unaware of. He'd like to see that information on the cards and paperwork so team leaders will know who they are in the woods with. Al and Dave say, "Can do." Bob Bohlmann asks if the NIMS system forms are being used at searches. Not at this time.

Keith gives brief descriptions of seven search callouts MESARD worked during the period that resulted in five finds for the dog teams involved. Each of these searches was solved in the initial hours of the search or the first night, before ground search units were called or before they arrived at the scene. The searches involved from one to six dog teams being deployed.

The searches took place in: Jonesboro on 1 August, Milo on 3 August, Machiasport on 9 August, Lincoln on 10 August, Machiasport on 19 August, Acadia National Park on 23 August and Katahdin Iron Works on 24 August.

For further details of these efforts contact Keith Heavrin at 326-8538.

Secretary's Report

The minutes from the August 2 meeting are reviewed. Steve moves they be accepted as written. Seconded by Rick Grant. Vote is unanimous to accept as written.

Treasurer's Report

Pete relates that due to the changes of ownership the Fleet Bank account MASAR uses will be changed to Bangor Savings Bank. Pete delivers four pages of comprehensive financial report for the status of MASAR accounts and transactions. The custodial account balance is \$1266.39. Total from checking and savings accounts is \$2478.54. Steve moves to accept the report as written. Seconded by Rick. The report is unanimously accepted.

Pete asks if YCERRT shouldn't consider changing their membership category from agency to organizational membership for the purpose of them being able to vote at MASAR meetings. Bob Bohlmann agrees that voting would be an improved situation. He relates he will re register YCERRT as an organization and have an individual membership for himself.

John asks what the Warden Service will be doing with the Nite-Sun spotlight. Mike says there will be some maintenance needed eventually. Mike suggests that the custodial account be held in case expenses arise that can't be covered. Mike will look into the need for these funds.

Mike asks if there are current MASAR expenses that the Warden Service may consider for reimbursement. Dave relates that Dr. Murray Hamlet's fee for the MASAR training weekend was \$300 plus the motel room for him at \$50. Keith relates postage costs of \$77.86.

Committee Reports

Standards Committee - There is no report at this time.

Training Committee

Dave relates the executive committee decision to hold two exercises per year. We will encourage the Warden Service to have a set date for the spring exercise with the fall exercise being flexible, date-wise, depending on when the sponsoring unit can do it. Dave asks for comment but none is offered. Dave relates that a scheduled tracking course was cancelled due to no one signing up for it. Dave forwards that he will be doing an MLPI course during Oct. Dave needs to have the mailing list on labels. Keith will get the revised mailing list out to Randy who agrees to convert it to labels. Dave says a full set of overhead projections and the forms to

teach the course are available on disc for \$300. He wants to know if the Warden Service would be willing to chip in to help purchase these training aids.

Communications Committee

Al says the applications package he put together for getting use of radio channel 155.160 for MASAR has been lost somewhere in the place it was sent to. He will endeavor to get the whole thing together again. Steve advises that relicensing is free but there are several companies out there offering to do it for fees ranging from \$90.

Executive Committee Meeting

John relates some of the topics and conclusions resulting from the earlier meeting. He relates that consideration was given to MASAR's need to advocate more for the member units and teams. More and better organized trainings need to be set up. Public relations initiatives for the organization need to be started with attention to getting some radio and TV time, perhaps as public service spots. We need to revise and update the Find-A-Space program, particularly the video. Units and the Warden Service should work to develop liaisons with local wardens to make them aware of volunteer capabilities and availability.

General Discussion Topics

Dave expresses that he feels a MASAR Newsletter would be useful. No interest is expressed in this idea as the work involved to get it done is not worth the benefit. Keith offers that the MASAR minutes could easily be a vehicle for this type of information if the minutes simply make mention of such information in the announcements section of the minutes.

John announces the transportation issue with the new helicopters. Blackhawks are not going to be hauling search teams anywhere due to the lack of space for transporting. Al asks if the Warden Service should be talking to Baxter Park to inform them of this development so they can begin to explore other means of getting SAR specialist teams into the Park during emergency situations. Bob Bohlmann points out that the state does have responsibility to provide such support for SAR. MEMA is required to be able to assist in these situations so the folks in charge, Bill Libby, General Adams, and the governor should be advised and involved.

Mike points out that MEMA underwrote a lot of the expenses for the SARCADIA 98 event and that FEMA is starting its fiscal year on Oct 1. It is forwarded that FEMA has tripled funding for responses to terrorist-related disaster. The question is whether Maine teams could be considered as an extension of the resources that would respond to terrorist disasters. This could be a source of funding for Maine teams.

At 1745 hours John McDonough departs and turns the meeting over to Al Martin

Transportation issue continues. It is forwarded that it is unlikely the Brunswick Naval Air Station will be reliable for transport to emergencies. Mike offers that CAP should be worked with to see if they can help with this issue. He suggests meeting with them to see what is possible. There is certainly a need in this area and it relates to emergency SAR efforts. Mike feels we should invite Mike Grant of MEMA to the next meeting. He feels the invitation should come from MASAR.

Rick Grant moves to adjourn the meeting at 1805 hours. Steve seconds. Meeting is adjourned.

The next MASAR meeting will be held Sunday February 7th at 1600 hours at the Warden Service Headquarters in Sidney Maine.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Heavrin Jr. MASAR Secretary