

Maine Association For Search And Rescue

Meeting Minutes

6 June 1999

The MASAR June meeting was called to order by President John McDonough at 1603 at the Maine Warden Service Headquarters in Sidney. Present were:

Randy Armour - Lincoln CEP SAR	Bob Baribeau - Mahoosuc Mt. Rescue
Keith Heavrin - MESARD	Steve Hudson - MDISAR
Paul Magoon - MESARD	John McDonough - Wilderness Rescue Team
Pat Dorian - Maine Warden Service, arrived at 1650 due to a prior commitment.	

Announcements

None

Mission Critiques

There were no operations for MASAR member units reported for the past two months.

Secretary's Report

After a thank you to Keith Heavrin for the timely way in which the latest meeting minutes were sent out, John asked if there were any corrections to be made to those minutes. Hearing none, he called for a motion to accept them as read. Steve so moved, seconded by Randy. The vote to accept was unanimous.

Treasurer's Report

Peter Laveway had faxed the Treasurer's Report to John before the meeting, and John passed out copies to those attending. At the April meeting Al had requested that a \$250 item in the income section of the account be explained before the report was accepted. Since this income is still not clearly accounted for, last meeting's Treasurer's Report remained accepted contingent upon an explanation at the August meeting. Keith moved that we table the latest report until this confusion is resolved. Following a second, the motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

Spring 1999 Statewide Training Exercise

Exercise Critique

The evaluation forms filled out by attendees of the Spring 1999 Statewide Training Exercise were discussed. The most important concerns noted on the forms were:

- the camping area should be clearly marked
- there should be someone present to show campers around
- there should be someone at a prearranged meeting spot on Friday night and Saturday morning to give directions and answer questions
- maps should be correct, complete, and include clear directions to all locations
- operations sites should be prepared well in advance so required base lines and other features are in place when trainees arrive
- notification of dates, locations, and schedule should be provided to MASAR members at least one month before the event, and preferably two months in advance
- wardens attending could participate more - there seemed to be little effort on the part of those wardens present to take an active part in the search exercise. In addition, warden attendance at the technical rescue demonstration was minimal as those present were talking to Rick Estes from New Hampshire Fish and Game as he showed them his unit's technical rescue equipment.
- the technical rescue demonstration was too advanced for most of the attendees
- although of interest to many, the technical rescue demonstration showcased techniques of use to climbers and guides which are not generally used by most rescuers

Keith suggested that we return to using a committee to plan these exercises. This would ensure that the training offered would meet MASAR's objective of providing education useful for the majority of the membership. He offered to put together a general outline or guideline for planning the exercises which would reduce organization problems. He will present this at an upcoming meeting.

Bob asked if we were still in close contact with the Warden Service, as at that point in the meeting there were no wardens present. John explained that those who normally attended had been called away by other responsibilities. Keith informed us that MESARD frequently has wardens with dogs attending their training exercises. He would like to find a way that field wardens could take part occasionally in local SAR unit exercises. Bob commented that Mahoosuc has been working on getting to know their local wardens, but it takes a lot of time to get schedules to coincide.

John reported that at the officer's meeting which took place before this regular MASAR meeting discussion had included the idea that these exercises should be planned by a committee. The officers felt that the committee should include a representative from the sponsoring unit, a representative from the Warden Service, as applicable, and the MASAR Education Director. The exercises should be planned to serve MASAR and must be organized under their purview. The needs of the member units of MASAR should be the first consideration in planning these activities.

Fall Exercise Plans

Mahoosuc Mountain Rescue is sponsoring the Fall statewide training program. Bob Baribeau reported that they will be using the Outward Bound site in Newry as a base. They have contacted Outward Bound, Wilderness Medical Associates, SOLO, Maine Bound at UMO, Brunswick Naval Air Station, and the Warden Service looking for potential instructors. They are still working on the topics of instruction to be offered and the logistic details.

This will be a return to the past symposium style of program but it will include more hands-on field exercises. Keith and Bob will put together a committee to set the direction of the training to be offered. Discussion of possible training topics followed. Those present felt that some instruction should be in new topics of broad interest, while the rest would cover more basic material for new or less experienced SAR personnel. One suggestion was to use this as an opportunity to offer a joint training exercise for technical rescue people. Basic techniques for water rescue and risk avoidance were also mentioned as possibilities. Keith suggested that since MEMA has offered the ICS-100 home study training material to MASAR units, and it is also available for no charge on the World Wide Web, MASAR could offer the final test at the Fall exercise.

Committee Reports

Technical Rescue Subcommittee Report

Keith reported on the progress of the committee developing the proposed technical rescue standard. The committee has met four times, with the last meeting on 1 June at UMO where they evaluated various raise and lower systems. He is still confident that the committee can complete the initial development process by the end of the year. They are trying to avoid cast-in-stone requirements for techniques and equipment, addressing concepts and safety considerations and not the specifics of use. Given the climbing guide orientation of the technical rescue demonstration provided at the Spring statewide exercise, Steve pointed out that units should be training to perform rescues with equipment intended for technical rescue use, and not just the normal equipment carried by a climber. Bob Baribeau informed the attendees that the standard is being drafted with that in mind.

ASTM

Steve reported on the latest information from ASTM regarding dog standards. At present, there are three parts of a complete search dog standard in place. These are:

F1847 - Guide for Demonstrating Minimum Skills of Search and Rescue Dogs and Handlers

F1878 - Classification of Search and Rescue Dog Crew/Teams

F1879 - Specification for Demonstrating Obedience and Agility in Search and Rescue Dogs

These will be followed at a later date by a standard containing specific test methods. Steve has ordered a copy of all of the ASTM SAR standards approved to date, but has yet to receive it. As soon as it comes in he will report on the details of these dog standards.

Standards Committee

There has been no activity in the MASAR Standards Committee recently, except for the formation of the Technical

Rescue Subcommittee. In past minutes Steve has asked for input from members regarding any changes, additions, or deletions they might want to see made in our standards, but has received nothing to date. John suggested that the committee should meet soon to review the existing standards. Steve suggested that the next standard we develop should be one for Search Team Leaders, building on the skills required for Basic Ground Searcher. This process can wait until the Technical Rescue Standard is complete.

EMS Committee

Andy Robidoux was not present, but Keith reported that due to overwork Andy has turned this committee's chairmanship over to Charles Blankenship of Wilderness Medical Associates. As reported in past minutes this committee is working on ways to allow MASAR unit members to provide emergency medical assistance throughout the state.

Communications Committee

Al Martin was not present, so there was no report for this committee.

Old Business

ID Cards

John would like to see personal qualifications included on the MASAR ID cards. This information could be in barcode format so it could be read into a computer at a search or rescue scene to provide an accurate database of personnel capabilities on scene. However, to make this work will require that units keep their membership and personal qualifications up to date. Randy reported that about 25% of the units in state have provided him with their membership and qualifications information for this year, and have done little better in years past. To help bring the importance of this information to member units, John asked the officers if they would be willing to go to other unit meetings to meet their members and explain the function of MASAR. The officers present agreed to work on this process.

MEMA Meetings

John reported that there is a draft working agreement between MEMA, the Warden Service, MASAR, the 112th Air Ambulance, Brunswick Naval Air Station, and the Civil Air Patrol to facilitate transportation of SAR personnel and equipment throughout the state. He will report further on this when the agreement is complete.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1740 hours. The next regular business meeting will be held on 1 August at 1600 hours at the Sidney Warden Service headquarters.

Note - Any member units wishing to use the Announcements section in these minutes to convey unit information, training opportunities, or news related to MASAR's mission should contact Keith Heavrin by phone at 326-8538 or by e-mail at <krheavrin@acadia.net>.