

MASAR Meeting Report
February 3, 2002

Attending:

Brad Rounds	Randall Armour	Susanne Kynast
Deborah Palman (MWS)	Rachel Breton	Pat Dorian (MWS)
Julie Jones	Paul Magoon	Al Martin
Dave Martin	Steve Hudson	John McDonough
Jennifer Fisk		

1. Meeting convened at 1300 by Steve Hudson – John McDonough arrived at 1305
2. Search Activity:
Pat stated the Portland search for the body of Amy St. Laurent was extremely successful. He debriefed two weeks ago with detectives. There were 84 searchers, 12 state police officers, 6 Portland police officers. The first hour was the typical mayhem associated with starting searchers in the field. Then it went very smooth. They did not have a specific spot in mind, although there was a sense that the west side of the turnpike was most likely. There were 17 areas to search. The POA was worked out with the police officials. On February 13th there is a CID presentation. A 2nd site yielded evidence and it is not believed that she was killed at either location.

Comments: The briefing was excellent. Some teams felt awkward with detectives on the scene, sometimes making inappropriate choices requiring delicate handling by team leaders and members. The team that made the find was moved from the area and ultimately assigned to search, and started to search an area that had already been covered. While it was understood why they needed not to be in the area of the find and should not return to the CP, it was felt this could have been handled better. Having dogs right on at least one of the teams was quite helpful as, in the case of the search area near the turnpike construction, there were literally a hundred fresh plantings with soft soil covered by wood chips.

Pat also shared that recently a case was handled where a NH couple was reported missing by one of their sisters. They were going to snowmobile in free time around a conference. MWS eventually chased down the fact that they had stayed at a Skowhegan motel the night before. CID was involved on Monday and it was ascertained that they had stayed in a motel in Rangeley and rented a snowmobile there on Saturday. Officials found there had been a credit card inquiry in Pennsylvania, now involving officials there. They surfaced in Erroll, NH on Wednesday. They had gone down a forest road that was single lane, gotten sideways on a bridge over a river-bed and were overhanging on the bridge overnight – the vehicle was unstable and they could

not exit, there was no cell-phone service available. Because they ran the car on and off, eventually it melted the ice and the vehicle settled on the bridge structure itself, allowing them to exit. The continued down the road to a camp, stayed there two nights while salvaging the vehicle using its winch, then returned to pavement.

3. Spring training from MWS will be May 4th. It will be a classroom event at Unity College, with some outdoor activity for dog teams during the afternoon. Topics will include urban SAR, courtroom testimony, crime scene preservation. There may also be a computer workshop training for selected parties.
4. Pay Dorian also reported that Mrs. Jenkins, Amy St. Laurent's mother, is donating a SAR puppy to MWS. MWS may also be getting two more laptop computers for the CP, they are down to one.
5. The secretary was absent but the notes taken at the December meeting were circulated. Item 2d was corrected to include that MESARD had responded and arrived on scene 15 minutes before the find. Lincoln SAR assisted with the carry-out. It was moved by Steve Hudson to accept as amended and so voted.
6. Standards:

Steve reported that he is participating in the 2nd review of the ASTM ground searcher standard. He believes it will be ready within a year and we may be able to reference it with Maine-specific qualifiers added.
7. There was no update info available on the fall exercise except that Mike Sawyer has been communicating with NH officials. John McDonough will contact Bob Baribeau and Mike Sawyer.
8. Maine Warden Service is now using their new pager system. Initial feelings are that it is working better than the old system.
9. Al and Dave Martin reported that there is an initial legislative hearing for concept summary for an emergency bill allowing local fire departments and others to get involved with SAR related activities (including dive team related,) without conflict with existing statute regards MWS. It is believed that fire chiefs will push pretty hard to get it. Fire chiefs assoc. will want language that they can rescue unencumbered. There was much discussion including that there may be antagonism. MASAR's primary fear is that there will be no clear definition regards responsibility and when it changes. Dave Martin has an old road show, and when combined with Jennifer and Susanne, it may be possible to do presentations to fire and police officials re their response and SAR

interactions. It was strongly felt that a joint MWS/MASAR presentation would be most beneficial. John McDonough will talk to Tim Peabody in the morning re the situation. Susanne and Jennifer will try to share their presentation info along with Dave's.

Steve Hudson moved and Dave Martin seconded – MASAR membership is not in support of this concept of legislation. With a system already in place that works well, we feel it would be best handled by discussion and clarification between MWS and appropriate local authorities – passed.

Steve Hudson moved and Pat Dorian second – MASAR will send a representative from the board of directors to testify if requested.

10. There was discussion in regard to the Wilderness Rescue Team/Maine EMS situation. Wilderness had surrendered their license last year when EMS officials required all team members be licensed to provide care. A clarification has been received that unlicensed SAR team members may provide care until a licensed person arrives. It was felt that this situation only affects Wilderness due to the fact it is the only licensed team, no teams have a duty to respond under law, and MEMS regulations affect only teams that are licensed. Wilderness is in the process of reapplication for licensure. Although through the Kennebec Valley Region, it is understood by EMS that Wilderness responds statewide.
11. Deb Palman is writing an article on MASAR for the IFW newsletter and requested support in terms of a logo copy, good SAR photos, and statistics. Steve and John will be helping to provide same.
12. Dave Martin will be attending the NASAR symposium in Charlotte, NC from May 30 – June 3 and is driving down. Anyone interested in going with him should contact him.
13. *Ropes that Rescue* will be finishing a class for MDI early in June and so will be in the area should other teams be interested in getting them for a time around that time-frame.
14. Meeting adjourned at 1509, motion Randy Armour and second Steve Hudson.

Brad Rounds
Recording