

## **EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION 9 SEARCH & RESCUE**

### **PRIMARY AGENCY:**

Sequim Police Department

### **SUPPORT AGENCIES:**

Fire District No. 3  
Emergency Management

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. **PURPOSE:** To provide better coordination and utilization of resources in Search and Rescue (SAR) operations.
- B. **SCOPE:** This ESF details the roles and responsibilities of agencies responding to Search and Rescue operations, either wildland or urban. State law encompasses both wildland and disaster (urban) SAR (Section 38.52.010(7) RCW).

### **II. POLICIES**

- A. Land SAR activities are initiated, coordination and directed by the local law enforcement agency responsible for the jurisdiction.
- B. Air SAR for mission or downed civil aircraft is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation (WSDOT) (RCW 47.68)
- C. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the preferred method of on-scene incident management for all SAR operations.

### **III. SITUATION**

- A. Emergency/Disaster Hazards and Conditions
  - 1. The community is threatened by major events such as avalanches, earthquakes or airline crashes. Such disaster have the potential of resulting in large SAR operations that could be multi-jurisdictional.
  - 2. Lost children, seniors, and others requires coordinated response under certain conditions.
- B. Planning Assumptions
  - 1. Local resources are capable of handling day to day SAR activities.

2. The military will respond to most requested rescue situations for air support.
3. Law Enforcement Agencies, by RCW, are the responsible agency for SAR activities.
4. Searches for overdue / lost aircraft are coordinated by the Aeronautics Division of the Department of Transportation.

#### **IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

##### **A. General**

1. All SAR operations will be managed by the concepts of the Incident Command System (ICS), with the Police Department as the Command Agency.
2. SAR operations will normally be controlled from a field command post location.
3. Large scale SAR may utilize the EOC for coordination of resources.
4. In the event of a search and rescue emergency, all necessary equipment and personnel, including organized volunteer services, will be mobilized and dispatched to the scene. Control of all emergency search and rescue functions will remain the responsibility of the Sheriff.
5. Upon notification of a search and rescue emergency, Emergency Management may be requested to advise the state Division of Emergency Management of any search and rescue mission which utilizes volunteers and request a mission number. This extends liability coverage to participating registered personnel and equipment. The Sheriff office may also request the mission number.
6. Whenever local resources are exhausted, unavailable, or unqualified for a particular search and rescue mission, Police Department or Emergency Management may request assistance through the state Division of Emergency Management. The state office will authorize state, federal and state-wide search and rescue volunteer organization resources and initiate the access of personnel, equipment, air support, and other specialized or requested supplies.
7. The radio frequency 155.160 MHz has been dedicated state wide for search and rescue communications purposes.

##### **B. Organization**

1. The Local chief law enforcement officers are responsible for SAR operations within their jurisdictions.
2. The Police Department will work in a coordinating capacity in all search and rescue activities and:
  - a. Obtain state mission number for actual and training missions
  - b. Register local search and rescue volunteers as emergency workers

4. Fire/EMS agencies will assist SAR operations with technical, medical and personnel support.

C. Procedures

1. Upon receiving information of a possible SAR operations, the responsible law enforcement agency will initiate their SAR procedures.
2. When personnel from outside the law enforcement agency are used, the responsible agency will contact Emergency Management for a State Mission Number.
3. Direction and Control of the SAR operations will follow the concepts of the Incident Command System (ICS), with the responsible law enforcement agency being the Incident Command agency.

D. Mitigation Activities

1. Provide ongoing public education.
2. Maintain an active SAR program.

E. Preparedness Activities

1. Primary agency
  - a. Provide SAR training to responsible personnel and appoint a SAR coordinator. SAR training shall include response to Urban SAR as well as wildland SAR.
  - b. Develop and maintain support procedures for response to SAR operations.
  - c. Develop and maintain a training program for personnel and volunteers for SAR operations.
2. Support agencies
  - a. Establish coordination with primary agency.
  - b. Develop and maintain procedures for responding to SAR operations, which are coordinated with primary agency's procedures.
  - c. Develop and maintain training for SAR operations.

F. Response Activities

1. Primary agency
  - a. Initiate all SAR operations within their jurisdiction, except those operations tasked to State DOT, Aeronautics Division.
  - b. Establish ICS for SAR operations and become Incident Command for all SAR operations, this includes Urban Search and Rescue.

- c. Provide trained personnel for SAR operations.
- d. Request additional resources, as appropriate.
- 2. Support agencies
  - a. Provide resources for SAR operations, as appropriate.
  - b. Respond following the concepts of the Incident Command System.
- G. Recovery Activities: All Agencies assist in the return for all SAR resources in an organized fashion, so as to be able to respond to future SAR missions.

**V. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Primary agency
  - 1. In accordance with RCW 38.52.400 the chief law enforcement officer of each political subdivision is responsible for conducting search and rescue operations within the jurisdiction.
  - 2. Provide a 24 hour point of contact for the public to report possible SAR operations.
  - 3. Provide direction and coordination for SAR operations, to include Urban SAR operations.
- B. Support agencies: Upon request, provide support in search and rescue operations and aid victims within their means of personnel, training and equipment.

- V. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:** Search & Rescue resources are obtained and kept, for the most part, by the Clallam County Sheriff's Office. They have obtained a pool of active volunteers and equipment.