



Prepared for the San Diego County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Team, Search Management Unit

San Diego Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Team

Search Management Unit Operating Procedures

Further distribution authorization requests shall be referred to the San Diego County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Team Coordinator, ASTREA Base, 1745 N. Marshall Ave., El Cajon, CA 92020, office phone: (619) 956-4990

1. Introduction

This document contains standards for the sworn and non-sworn members of the San Diego Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Team (SDSDSAR) Search Management Unit. These standards are intended to be used as a reference for Search Management Unit members on expected personal conduct. This document also provides guidance for participation in SDSDSAR events. It is intended to ensure that Search Management Unit members understand their roles and responsibilities for maintaining a high level of professionalism and capability. This document supports SDSDSAR Policy and Procedures.

This document also describes standard procedures to be used by Search Management Unit members during search callouts. The procedures described herein do not represent a comprehensive list. Search deployment variability requires a flexible approach. Search strategies and tactics must reflect the circumstances of the search being conducted.

1.1 Updates and Revisions

The Search Management Unit will review this document periodically. Suggested updates and revisions will be submitted to the appropriate Reserve Captain/Division Leader for review and submission to the SDSDSAR chain of command for final review and approval.

1.2 Terms and Abbreviations

SDSDSAR uses different titles for sworn reserve deputies and non-sworn volunteers holding the same position. For simplicity, this document will use the non-sworn position titles but it is understood that the reference includes the parallel reserve deputy titles as well.

Title	Includes
Rescue Volunteer	Rescue Volunteer and Reserve Deputy
Supervisor	Squad Leader, Supervising Rescue Volunteer, and Reserve Sergeant
Unit Leader	Unit Leader and Reserve Lieutenant
Division Leader	Division Leader and Reserve Captain

The use of the term "Unit" (capitalized) refers specifically to the Search Management Unit.

The term "Search Manager" (capitalized) (See Section 3.2) refers to the specific search management position. When in lower case, "search manager" refers to any SDSARSAR personnel involved in the management of a search.

Other common abbreviations

AS	Administrative Sergeant
CalOES	California State Office of Emergency Services
EMR	Emergency Medical Responder
EMT-8	Emergency Medical Technician- Basic
IC	Incident Commander
ICS	Incident Command System
MM	Mission Manager
POST	Peace Officer Standards and Training
SAR	Search and Rescue
SDMRT	San Diego Mountain Rescue Team
SDSD	San Diego County Sheriff's Department
SDSARSAR	San Diego County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Detail
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TS	Training Sergeant
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue

2. Search Management Unit

2.1 Overview

The Search Management Unit is responsible for directing lost person searches. Its members, and those of other units it trains, develop search strategies, deploy resources, gather information, and ensure that Incident Command System structure and principles are followed. During a search, search managers are also responsible for the planning of activities of future operational periods and the identification of needed resources.

The Unit trains qualified search managers, including experienced SDSARS and SDMRT members assigned to other units, to ensure that every search is conducted to a high standard of excellence. As part of this responsibility, the Unit creates and documents search procedures and train others within SDSARS and SDMRT with an interest in search management.

Search and rescue management techniques and theories are in a state of constant development. The Unit is responsible for scouting potential improvements in SAR procedures and management practices and for bringing to SDSARS those that improve its effectiveness and efficiency.

2.2 Organizational Structure

The Unit is part of Division 1 and is led by the Search Management Unit Leader. The Search Management Unit Leader reports to a specified Division Leader who in turn reports to the SDSARS Reserve Commander who in turn reports to the SDSARS Coordinator (Figure 1).

The Unit is comprised of squads, the number of which is dictated by the number of personnel in the Unit and is subject to adjustment. Each squad is led by a Supervisor who reports to the Unit Leader.

The Unit Leader may designate an Administrative Sergeant to assist with personnel and planning issues. The Administrative Sergeant reports to the Unit Leader and holds the rank of Supervising Rescue Volunteer (or Reserve Sergeant).

The Unit Leader may designate a Training Sergeant to be responsible for the Unit's training program and ensure that Unit members maintain appropriate certifications.

The Training Sergeant reports to the Unit Leader and holds the rank of Supervising Rescue Volunteer (or Reserve Sergeant).

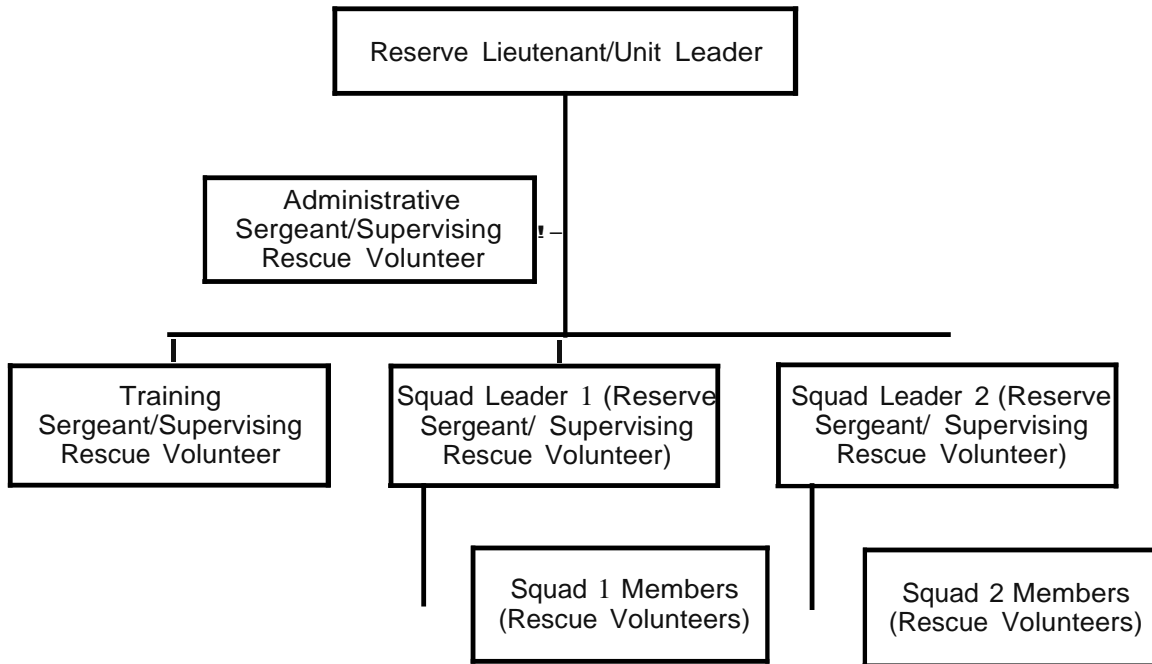


Figure 1. SDSARS Search Management Unit organization example, showing two squads

2.3 Unit Membership Requirements

To be a member of the Search Management Unit, an SDSARS member must meet the following requirements:

- Permission of the Search Management Unit Leader and the SAR member's current unit leader, if transferring between units
- SDSARS member in good standing
- Graduation from the search and rescue academy
- Minimum one year SAR experience following academy graduation
- Maintained field qualification status
- History of meeting minimum hourly participation requirements
- Record of consistent callout and training event attendance
- Completion of the CalOES Direction and Control of the Search Management Function ("D&C") course within one year of joining the Unit
- Ongoing commitment to participate in most search callouts and search training exercises

It is preferred that members of the Unit become qualified to drive MC5 to search callouts. Unit members should also become proficient with the operation and maintenance of the various IT and radio equipment and systems on MC5.

2.4 Unit Participation

All Unit members must meet or exceed each of the minimum participation requirements to remain a SDSDSAR member in good standing.

Because of the unique skillset required of Unit members and the fact that those skills are needed during every search callout, Unit members are expected to respond to most search callouts. This expectation for search mission participation is higher than for SDSDSAR members in other units.

Searches can extend to multiple operational periods, requiring a transition of search management to replacement personnel. It may be decided by the UL to limit the initial callout response by Unit members with the expectation that those held in reserve will make themselves available for subsequent operational periods.

Unit members who fail to meet SDSDSAR or Unit requirements are subject to having their field qualification and/or Unit membership status evaluated. A Participation Agreement may be instituted to remediate a participation shortfall. Unsuccessful remediation may lead to separation from the Unit and/or SDSDSAR.

Unit members will usually work in search management roles during search callouts. If search management roles are filled, unassigned Unit members may deploy in the field on search teams.

2.5 Unit Meetings

The Unit Leader will schedule Unit meetings and publish the events on Mission Manager in advance. Attendance at all Unit meetings is expected. If a Unit member cannot attend a scheduled Unit meeting, they shall notify their supervisor before the meeting.

There is no uniform requirement for Unit meetings, but Unit polo shirts are encouraged.

2.6 Unit Training Events

Unit training events will be scheduled periodically. They may either be exclusive to Search Management Unit members or may include other SDSARS and SDMRT members. Unit member participation in these training events is expected. If a Unit member cannot attend a scheduled Unit training event, they shall notify their supervisor before the event.

2.7 Specialized Training

Unit members are encouraged to pursue specialized training and certifications offered by other units. Participation in specialized training offered by other units requires the permission of the Search Management Unit Training Sergeant or Unit Leader and/or the Training Sergeant or Unit Leader of the unit offering the training.

2.8 Search Management Role Requirements

During a search callout, the roles of Planning Section Chief and Operations Section Chief are preferably filled by qualified Search Management Unit members. If Unit personnel are unavailable to serve in those roles, other qualified SDSARS or SDMRT members can fill them. To serve as Planning Section Chief or Operations Sections Chief during a search callout, an SDSARS or SDMRT member must meet the following requirements:

- Successful completion of the CalOES D&C course, and
- At least eight hours spent shadowing Search Management personnel during search callouts. Each of these eight hours can be replaced by two hours spent shadowing Search Management personnel during simulated callout training exercises.

Search Management Unit members who do not meet the Search Manager and Section Chief requirements listed above can be assigned to search management support duty, Section Chief shadowing, or field team duty during callouts. The position of Search Manager should be filled by the highest ranking SDSARS member present during a call out.

2.9 Unit Communications

Communications between Unit members regarding SAR issues is primarily accomplished through phone, email, and text message. Unit events will also be posted on the Mission Manager calendar. Unit members are expected to respond promptly to all Mission Manager RSVP requests received for scheduled SDSARS events. Unit members who will be unavailable for service due to upcoming vacations, business or family obligations, illness, or other reasons shall notify their supervisor in advance.

2.10 Unit Callout Procedures

When a search callout is initiated, Unit members shall respond promptly to any status inquiries received. Unit members will also send a text message to the UL within 15 minutes of the initial call indicating their availability. Examples of status text messages to the Unit Leader include:

"[Last name] 10-7 for [search location]" (unavailable for service)

"[Last name] 10-8 for [search location]" (available and responding immediately)

"[Last name] 10-8 for [search location]. ETA 2300" (available but delayed)

The SAR Information Line [(760) 856-0757] is available to hear callout information and to receive update messages.

2.11 Timekeeping

Unit members are required to log time and mileage on Mission Manager for their SDSARSAR volunteer hours. Timekeeping entries must be updated by the end of each month. At a minimum, each Unit member should log one hour each month for emails and other administrative activities.

The Unit Administrative Sergeant or UL will review each Unit member's time entries at the end of each month for accuracy and will submit quarterly reports to the SAR Coordinator.

2.12 Equipment

Unit members are expected to have, maintain, and bring all standard equipment for Rescue Volunteers to all callouts and training sessions.

3. Search Management Procedures

3.1 Mobile Command Units

The Unit is responsible to ensure that MC5 or another designated mobile command vehicle is available and on-scene for search missions. The Unit Leader or their designee will identify a qualified driver promptly after being notified of a callout.

The Unit is responsible for the IT infrastructure in MC5. The Unit will maintain the IT systems in working order and will notify the SDSARS Coordinator of any problems needing attention on MC5.

The Communications Unit is responsible for all communications systems, radios, and GPS units on MC5.

3.2 Search Management Structure

SDARS operations follow the organization prescribed by the Incident Command System. Whenever one is present, a full-time sworn member of SDSARS will serve as the Incident Commander.

The Search Manager is preferably the highest-ranking member of SDSARS leadership present. The Search Manager is responsible for search management operations and reports to the Incident Commander. The Search Manager will be the liaison between the Incident Commander and the Section Chiefs.

The Planning Section Chief and Operations Section Chief will be either member of the Search Management Unit or others in SDSARS who have been trained and are appropriately experienced in search management practices.

The Incident Commander or Search Manager will select the leaders of other ICS positions, as dictated by the needs of the search.

3.3 Search Management Procedures and Protocols

Searches will be conducted according to procedures and protocols adopted and approved by SDSARS. The Unit will ensure that searches are conducted in a professional manner and that all required and appropriate documentation is created and organized.

3.4 Post-Search Responsibilities

The Unit will conduct debriefs of search call outs and will present summaries to SDSDSAR leadership, including identified opportunities for procedure improvements.

The Unit is responsible for ensuring that documentation generated during a search is collected and completed in a timely manner. This includes hardcopy documents and electronic documentation in Mission Manager.

When appropriate, the Unit will ensure that PEER support is made available to SDSDSAR personnel after a search is completed.