

# **SEARCH and RESCUE PLAN**



**Adopted by:**

**NEVADA SEARCH and RESCUE BOARD**

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## INTRODUCTION

Nevada, due to its diverse topography and climates, creates many challenges for search and rescue personnel throughout every year. The following are characteristics and considerations in Nevada that have been incorporated throughout the development and planning process of this plan:

- Nevada covers 109,806 square miles, making it the seventh largest state in the nation, with the highest point reaching 13,140 feet above sea level and the lowest point at 479 feet with a mean elevation of 5,500 feet.
- Nevada is characterized by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the Basin and Range region, which is divided by more than 150 mountain ranges running north to south. Scattered among these ranges are buttes, mesas, and flat valleys with lakes or alkali flats.
- The Sierra Nevada and other mountain ranges are forested but the state is also the most arid state in the nation, mostly made up of desert vegetation, which include sagebrush, short grasses, low bushes, cacti, and shrub-like trees, such as the mesquite.
- The rivers that run through Nevada are the Carson, Colorado, Humboldt, and Truckee. The major lakes located in the state include: Pyramid Lake, Lake Mead, Lake Mojave, Lake Tahoe, Lake Lahontan, and Walker Lake. In Nevada, 761 square miles is covered by water.
- Approximately 86% of the state's land is federally owned. However, the Sheriff of each county remains responsible for all search and rescue activities within their county regardless land ownership, with the exception of federal lands and tribal reservations retaining exclusive jurisdiction.
- There are 17 counties in Nevada which are some of the largest, geographically, in the nation. While Clark and Washoe Counties are the most populous, other counties have the same or greater land areas that are the responsibility of their respective sheriff's offices pertaining to search and rescues operations. The following is a table provide some of Nevada's demographics:

The immensity of land mass and diverse topographical conditions in Nevada necessitate that sheriff's offices conduct search and rescue operations over vast areas in terrain that may require capabilities satisfactory to response via water, air or land and may be inclusive of components that are of a technical nature.

The Nevada Sheriffs and Chiefs Association approved the previous Nevada Search and Rescue Plan on February 23, 2012. The plan was then approved by the Nevada Search and Rescue Board on March 12, 2012. Under NRS 414.210 (7), a plan for searches and rescue must be developed by the State SAR Coordinator. While the plan has not changed substantially, additions and clarifications have been made to support changing requirements.

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The Nevada Search and Rescue Plan is outlined herein, and has been adopted by the Nevada Board of Search and Rescue.

## AUTHORITY

During the 1983, and subsequently the 1991, sessions of the Nevada Legislature, laws were passed creating a state Board of Search and Rescue with the intent, in part, that the Board would formulate policy regarding search and rescue within the state, as well as provide direction and guidance for the State Coordinator for Search and Rescue (State SAR Coordinator). These laws were placed within the provisions of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), Chapter 414.170-260. This plan is specifically developed under the authority of NRS Chapter 414.210(7).

**NRS 414.210 Coordinator of Search and Rescue: Duties.** The Coordinator shall:

7. Prepare a plan for searches and rescues;

Also during the 1983 session of the Nevada Legislature, a law was passed designating the responsibility for search and rescue to the sheriff of each county, which was subsequently added to the NRS as Chapter 248.092. It is understood that the creation of this plan, under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414, does not usurp the authority of the sheriffs within this state and the provisions of NRS Chapter 248.092, as it would relate to search and rescue.

**NRS 248.092 Searches and rescues.** The sheriff is responsible for searches and rescues within his or her county.

(Added to NRS by [1983, 1354](#))

## Additional Governing Information/References

- a. The Nevada SAR Board recognizes the political implications derived from the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution and the jurisdictions dictated by the Nevada Constitution that identifies how the State has determined to serve the citizens and visitors of Nevada with consideration given to the environmental, geographical and demographic elements.
- b. The Nevada Constitution states that the Legislature shall establish a system of county and township governments which shall be uniform throughout the State (Article 4, Section 25); and provide for the selection of a county sheriff by the people and fix by law his/her duties (Article 4, Section 32).
- c. The Nevada SAR Board recognizes that the sheriff's office of each county is not a department under county government, but rather the sole responsibility of an elected official; and the office of a sheriff is a statutory entity having exclusive powers and authorities under state laws.
- d. State-level departments and agencies within are under the authority of the Governor as an elected official having executive power as outlined within the Nevada Constitution.

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- e. In the event of an emergency or disaster beyond local control, the Governor, as authorized under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.060, may assume direct operational control over all or any part of the functions of emergency management within the State. In performing his/her duties under this chapter, the Governor may make, amend and rescind the necessary orders and regulations to carry out the provisions of this chapter within the limits of the authority conferred upon the Governor within chapter 414, with due consideration of the plans provided by the Federal Government.
- f. The Chief of the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (DEM) is responsible for the appointment of the Nevada SAR Board and the State SAR Coordinator, as well as statutorily assigned duties, pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.170-250. The Chief of the DEM does not have any established or implied statutory authority relative to the operations of search and rescue missions within the state, as this is the statutory responsibility of the sheriff within each county. However, the DEM is responsible for the coordination of state and federal resources, when requested, to support any emergency or disaster within the State. This may include the coordination of local-to-local resources when requested under the provision of the Nevada Emergency Management Assistance Compact (NEMAC).
- g. Under the provisions of NRS Chapter 277.035, a law enforcement agency is allowed to request the assistance of another law enforcement agency in the absence of an interlocal or cooperative agreement.
- h. Under the provisions of NRS Chapter 277.045, two or more counties are allowed to enter into a cooperative agreement for a governmental function.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Nevada Search and Rescue Plan (NVSARPLAN) is to provide a framework by which the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (DEM) and political subdivisions may provide assistance to a requesting sheriff's office or other agencies and aid, support or coordinate in the sharing of search and rescue resources. It is further intended to act as guidance for response to search and rescue missions within the state, and outline how the State SAR Coordinator, as established under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.200-210, shall assist a sheriff in obtaining and coordinating resources, as requested.

It is not the purpose of the NVSARPLAN to address emergency or disaster response as this is addressed within the emergency operations plans that are maintained within each political subdivision and the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (SCEMP). Additionally, it is not the intent of this plan to address urban search and rescue (USAR), which involves the locating and rescuing of victims trapped in confined spaces resulting from the collapse of a structure.

The NVSARPLAN is not intended to supersede or replace any local search and rescue plans, operations or functions. The NVSARPLAN shall not be interpreted in such a manner as to alter, exceed or modify authorities provided within the provisions of any

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chapter(s) of the NRS. Therefore, no provisions of the NVSARPLAN, or its supporting documentation, are to be construed in such a way as to contravene responsibilities and authorities as defined by statute.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

- a. Nevada SAR must remain a county-level response with the DEM available to obtain and coordinate additional resources, as requested. It is understood that such coordination of resources does not obligate the State for payment of those same resources.
- b. The Sheriff of each county should be able to readily and rapidly utilize all necessary assets within their jurisdiction for search and rescue to protect life and safety. In addition to existing resources, a Sheriff may be required to seek additional resources outside of their jurisdiction which may be coordinated county-to-county, city-to-county or state-to-county. This scenario is most common with smaller communities within Nevada that do not have the population or resources to be independent in their search and rescue efforts.
- c. A Sheriff should have in their region resources who have intimate knowledge of wilderness areas common to the varying, topographical environments within the state and that are efficient in other SAR response activities, such as: operation of related machinery and vehicles, community search procedures, operation of radio systems, etc.
- d. Due to a significant reliance on volunteers for Nevada SAR, cooperation between volunteers and sheriff's offices should be nurtured, protected, promoted and enhanced.
- e. Nevada SAR is heavily reliant and dependent on the inter-relationships of sheriff's deputies, search and rescue auxiliary deputies and volunteers to staff SAR efforts. Without this network, search and rescue activities would be cost prohibitive and, therefore, not properly managed.
- f. In Nevada, given the distances between population centers, as well as the remoteness of areas, it is necessary that a flexible and standardized approach be taken in respect to Nevada SAR personnel training and operational preparedness.
- g. The topography of the state creates many challenges related to communications capabilities. Nevada SAR teams currently use all available methods for communication to include, but are not limited to: 800 MHz, VHF, cell phones, and satellite phones. Currently, sheriff's offices systems allow for an overlapping network of 24-hour field communications through the state. Interoperable communications capabilities are further explained in Annex III of this plan.

## **CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

All entities involved with search and rescue activities within this state may respect and comply with all statutory provisions related to search and rescue, as well as this plan, and shall foster a cooperative environment consisting of mutually supporting relationships. This concept will further extend to the content of any regulations developed pursuant to the provision of NRS Chapter 414.190.

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It is further understood that, whenever possible and applicable, all agencies involved in a search and rescue incident should operate under the Incident Command System (ICS) structure.

The following concepts for operation may be recognized and adhered to by all entities performing search and rescue activities within the state:

## **Notification**

A request for search and rescue assistance usually begins with a call to a local law enforcement agency, fire department or public safety dispatch center. If a request is received by an agency other than a county sheriff's office, the call shall be transmitted to the Sheriff's Office in the county having jurisdiction.

## **Response**

As previously stated, search and rescue is the statutory responsibility of the Sheriff within each county. Therefore, it is acknowledged that the Sheriff of the county with jurisdiction, or their designee, shall assume command of all aspects of a search and rescue mission within their county through implementation of the following procedures:

- a. The Sheriff may utilize available agency resources to rapidly provide assistance in a search and rescue incident.
- b. If the Sheriff's available resources become overwhelmed or are not sufficient to provide for an efficient and/or effective response, the Sheriff may contact other law enforcement agencies within the county or other counties for mutual aid assistance. All responding resources should operate under the direct operational control of the Sheriff having jurisdiction or their designee.
- c. Upon exceeding the capabilities of the affected Sheriff's Office and/or available mutual aid resources, the Sheriff may contact the DEM Duty Officer for coordination of other federal, state and/or local resources. All responding resources shall operate under the direct operational control of the Sheriff or their designee.

## **Operational Expansion and Incident Management**

The State of Nevada is a National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant agency and follows the incident management model under NIMS; the Incident Command System (ICS). The Nevada SAR Board understands that ICS provides beneficial structure to an incident and for the Incident Commander. The Nevada SAR Board further understands and supports the ICS as it provides an environment that allows for resource management to include: a standardized system for typing and ordering resources, coordinating resources, resource staging, and the promotion of unity of effort among all responders, as well as a seamless expansion of required response activities as the incident progresses.

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While the Nevada SAR Board endorses the use of the ICS for use in the field, the requirement for its use will not be construed as a requirement to fill staff positions or provide ICS forms to the detriment of field efforts before outside support can be requested, approved, or rendered.

- a. Upon identification of the need to expand operational capabilities through request for federal, state and/or local (if applicable) resources, the Sheriff or their designee may make notification and request to the DEM Duty Officer. This is in no way to be interpreted as an obligation on the part of the State to assume financial responsibility unless the State has clearly delineated such intent in writing.
- b. Upon realization that a search and rescue incident may encompass more than one county, the Sheriff's of the affected counties may establish a unified command structure, unless an agreement has been reached between the Sheriff's allowing one to assume command. Such agreement may be communicated to the DEM Duty Officer and/or the State SAR Coordinator.
- c. NRS Chapter 414.210(4) provides for the State SAR Coordinator to "coordinate assistance during intrastate searches and rescues and searches and rescues involving two or more counties." This is not to be interpreted as the State assuming control of the search and rescue incident, but rather that the State SAR Coordinator may provide assistance in the coordination of resources and efforts due to the involvement of federal or state resources if and when requested. In any instance, all coordination efforts of the State SAR Coordinator may be performed in cooperation with the designated Unified Command staff or Incident Commander, whichever is applicable, unless otherwise directed by the Governor.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Nevada Counties**

1. The Sheriff of each county is responsible for any search and rescue incident within their county.
2. The Sheriff of each county may assign a Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Coordinator to work directly with Search and Rescue Coordinators from other counties, as well as the State.
3. A sheriff's office, knowing of an incident in or near the border of another county, shall notify that county's sheriff's office.
4. A sheriff's office Search and Rescue Coordinator sending a team into another county shall notify the sheriff's office in that county.
5. When two or more counties are involved in a search and rescue incident, a unified command may be established and each sheriff's office will provide a liaison for purposes of coordination unless it is mutually agreed upon that one sheriff will assume command. Such agreement may be communicated to the DEM Duty Officer or State SAR Coordinator.

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6. The Sheriff of the county in which an incident occurs is responsible for all related costs of their resources, unless the cost is covered by another agreement.
7. A sheriff's office responding to assist another county's sheriff's office accepts the cost(s) associated with their team's response activities unless other arrangements are either existing or are in place in advance of the deployment.
8. When requesting resources from other than another county within Nevada, a sheriff's office Search and Rescue Coordinator may identify responsibility for costs and ensure that appropriate provisions for liability coverage are in effect.
9. When requesting state or federal resources through the DEM, the sheriff's office Search and Rescue Coordinator is required to obtain a state Incident number. The state Incident number, in and of itself, is not an obligation for payment on the part of the State unless specifically specified in writing.
10. A Sheriff of a county whose jurisdiction borders that of another state's county is encouraged to develop a memorandum of understanding between the two counties for mutual aid.
11. When the operational costs of an incident are projected to exceed the financial capabilities of the jurisdiction, the county may apply to the State of Nevada for funds from the Nevada Emergency Assistance Subaccount as provided for under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.135 and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) Chapter 414, and the State Disaster Relief Account (SDRA), as provided for under the provision of NRS Chapter 353, whichever is applicable.

### **Nevada Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (DEM)**

1. The DEM shall provide support and coordination of resources, as requested.
2. DEM or the State SAR Coordinator shall act as liaison with other states' operations involving searches and rescues;
3. The DEM shall accept financial obligation for deployment of resources if the DEM specifically provides, in writing, its agreement to such obligation.
4. The State SAR Coordinator, with the direction, guidance and subsequent approval of the Nevada SAR Board, will develop and maintain the following annexes to the NVSARPLAN for purposes of establishing and clarifying direction, control and coordination procedures, which will be distributed to the Search and Rescue Coordinator within each county. These annexes will establish standardized operating procedures and frameworks by which Search and Rescue coordinators will operate.
  - a) Operations Annex (Annex I)
  - b) Logistics and Resources (Annex II)
  - c) Communications Annex (Annex III)
  - d) Planning, Training, and Exercise (Annex IV)
5. The State SAR Coordinator shall maintain a system for the collection and dissemination of statistical information related to SAR Operations. The DEM shall publish statistical information regarding search and rescue activity within the state and prepare a report on the Search and Rescue Program within Nevada by the 31<sup>st</sup> of January in each year. This will be accomplished through the

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development of a standardized search and rescue data form that is approved by the Nevada SAR Board.

### **Nevada Search and Rescue (SAR) Board**

1. The Nevada SAR Board may develop, and by majority vote, adopt regulations for the administration of laws regarding searches and rescues pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.190.
2. The Nevada SAR Board shall strive to promote mutually supporting relationships among Search and Rescue Coordinators in support of their respective responsibilities through the development of effective and efficient formulation of policy regarding search and rescue as is provided for under the provisions of NRS Chapter 414.180(3).
3. The Nevada SAR Board may develop direction and guidance for the State SAR Coordinator, which incorporates a standardized, statewide approach in the development of training standards, enhancement and sustainment strategies.

### **PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

#### **Basic Plan**

- a. The Nevada SAR Board approved the 2012 plan. The Nevada SAR Board is a representative State body that approves a plan as a policy function and is the only state-level body that can, by majority vote, approve the NVSARPLAN as developed by the State SAR Coordinator under the provisions of NRS 414.210(7). However, prior to its implementation, the Chief of the DEM will submit the NVSARPLAN to the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association for acceptance and approval, as demonstrated in letter form to be attached to the plan as Appendix A.
- b. The NVSARPLAN shall be reviewed, at a minimum, every two years. All amendments to this plan must be subsequently approved by the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association.

#### **Annexes**

- a. This document assigns responsibility for the development of the Annexes to the State SAR Coordinator.
- b. Upon completion, each annex will be reviewed and voted on by the Nevada SAR Board. Following approval, and as is consistent with the Basic Plan, the Chief of the DEM will submit the Annexes to the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association for acceptance and approval demonstrated in letter form to be attached to the back of each Annex respectively.
- c. As information in the Annexes will be continuously evolving, they will require annual review to be conducted by the Nevada SAR Board at the first scheduled meeting of each calendar year. All amendments to this plan, its Annexes or

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Appendices must be subsequently approved by the Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association.

## **Document Storage**

- a. The approved NVSARPLAN will be stored within the Planning Section of the DEM.
- b. The State SAR Coordinator will ensure that a copy of the NVSARPLAN, inclusive of all Annexes and Appendices, is provided to each county sheriff electronically.

## **APPENDIX A – Letter of Approval/Nevada Sheriff's and Police Chief's Association**

### **ANNEX I – Operations**

### **ANNEX II – Logistics and Resources**

### **ANNEX III – Communications**

### **ANNEX IV – Planning, Training, and Exercise**

### **ANNEX V – Statistical Reporting**

### **ATTACHMENT 1. Coordinators Listing.**

### **ATTACHMENT 2. Statistical Form**

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**Appendix A**  
**Approval Letter from Nevada Sheriff's and Chief's Association**

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## **Annex I**

### **Operations**

#### **Objective**

Provide basic recommendations and guidelines for DEM and Sheriff coordination during a SAR incident involving a request for assistance to DEM from the affected County jurisdiction.

- a. All SAR incident involvement by the DEM will be NIMS compliant and managed under ICS.
- b. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to utilize the ICS for the conduct of SAR operations and to utilize ICS-based Unified Command to satisfy jurisdictional and other agency responsibilities during multi-jurisdictional incidents.
- c. All requests for DEM SAR assistance will be directed from the on scene Incident Commander (IC) through the Sheriff, or their designee, to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Duty Officer.
- d. The SEOC Duty Officer will notify the State SAR Coordinator upon a request for DEM SAR assistance, if it exceeds the scope or ability of the SEOC Duty Officer.
- e. After the initial request for assistance from a local jurisdiction, the SEOC Duty Officer or the State SAR Coordinator will maintain communication with the requesting jurisdiction's Sheriff, or their designee. Additionally, contact with the requesting jurisdiction's EM may be established to ensure local resource utilization.
- f. Either the SEOC Duty Officer, the State SAR Coordinator, or their designee, at the request of the responsible Sheriff, will coordinate assistance during multi-jurisdictional, intrastate SAR incidents. All interstate SAR assistance will be coordinated by the SEOC Duty Officer, the State SAR Coordinator, or their designee. The respective sheriffs in a multi-jurisdictional incident will retain full authority and responsibility for the resolution of the incident.

The State SAR Coordinator, or their designee, will act as the State of Nevada liaison during out-of-state SAR incidents.

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## **Annex II**

### **Logistics and Resources**

#### **Objective**

The primary purpose of this annex is to:

- a) Provide SAR contact information for Nevada's counties.
- b) Identify the Kind and Type of resources that may be requested under the State of Nevada typing standards.
- c) Identify the ordering process for resource requests to the State of Nevada

#### **Sheriff and SAR Coordinator Contact List**

NDEM shall develop and maintain a list of Sheriff and SAR Coordinators for each county and shall regularly update this information. See Attachment I

#### **Nevada Division of Emergency Management Duty Officer Contact Information**

**The DEM Duty Officer number is 775-687-0400.**

**The Department of Public Safety, Communications Bureau (NHP Dispatch)** will answer and contact the DEM Duty Officer for you at your request. In addition to direct resource assistance you may receive from County Sheriffs, DEM can provide assistance in a variety of ways, if requested.

- Intra-state assistance from County Sheriffs and other entities.
- Intra-state assistance under Mutual Aid.
- Inter-state assistance via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or existing inter-state mutual aid agreements.
- Federal assistance, including resources of the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC).
  - Civil Air Patrol
  - Cell phone forensics for no-criminal missing persons
  - Aircraft radar tracking
  - Federal military asset assistance
- Virtual Search Planning-assistance
- Lost person behavior/subject profile information.
- SAR/Missing Person Statistical Database information.
- Incident Action Plan (IAP) development assistance.
- Direct incident management support.
- Incident management and SAR responder training

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Upon receiving a request for assistance, the requesting agency will receive an “Incident Number” from NDEM. This number is for the sole purpose of tracking that incident within the NDEM reporting system. The incident number does not authorize or approve any expenditures by the State of Nevada.

If any resource is deployed under a state Incident Number, it will have its own unique Resource Request Form (RRF) number identifying that resource deployment in that Incident.

### **Resource Typing**

The National Incident Management System requires the typing of federally-deployable resources under the standards set nationally for a wide variety of assets. The current standard for Search and Rescue resources is the 508-8 standard. The State of Nevada Board for Search and Rescue adopted the 508-8 standard to type Nevada search and rescue resources in 2014. The State of Nevada evaluates and types all search and rescue resources under this standard.

The kind/ typing of a resource simplifies the ordering process of a resource to any incident, allowing the requesting agency to understand what their resource needs or requirements are, and then match those requirements with the most effective resource type when making the request.

This standard does not limit any Sheriff from using any resource for the purposes of search and rescue operations. It does dramatically aid the ordering, acquisition, and deployment of resources most appropriate to the requirements of the incident.

See Attachment A for current typing standard.

### **Resource Ordering to DEM**

When ordering resources from NDEM, the following information should be known for prompt and efficient resource ordering:

- a) Order Point and contact information
- b) Kind, Type, and quantity of resource
- c) Location / coordinates where they are to stage / respond to
- d) Time and date they should arrive (taking into account travel requirements)
- e) Length of deployment
- f) Reporting authority/person upon arrival
- g) Conditions for the search environment
- h) Any specific requirements of their deployment
- i) Preferences for resource if known

The DEM Duty Officer or the State SAR Coordinator will contact an appropriate resource based upon the above criteria and initiate a Resource Order.

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## Annex III

### Communications

#### Objective

The State SAR Coordinator is responsible to maintain a system of communications for use in SAR Operations.

**NRS 414.210 Coordinator of Search and Rescue: Duties.** The Coordinator shall:  
8. Establish and maintain a system of communication for use throughout the State for operations relating to searches and rescues;”

The National Search and Rescue frequency is 155.160 MHz. Due to the complexity and variations of communications systems maintained by Sheriffs within Nevada, it is a formidable task to maintain consistent and compatible communications for search and rescue operations across frequencies and bands.

The State SAR Coordinator shall provide input and recommendations to agencies and organizations on various communications systems available for operations.

The Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), a position within DEM, is responsible for the Nevada Tactical Interoperable Communications Field Operations Guide (NEViFOG). The NEViFOG is a collection of technical reference material to aid Communications Unit personnel in establishing solutions to support communications during emergency incidents and planned events. It is available to all agencies and organizations involved in search and rescue operations within Nevada. The NEViFOG is available online or from the office of the State SAR Coordinator.

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## Annex IV

### Planning, Training, and Exercise

#### Objective

This Planning, Training, and Exercise (PT&E) Annex has been prepared to assist users of this plan in developing and maintaining processes for the planning of search operations, the training of resources to assist in search and rescue operations, and the regular exercising of those resources to verify capability.

The foundational premise of this annex is such that all guidelines and recommendations made herein are based upon national standards and best practices, and they establish a continuum of excellence for any organization wishing to adopt them. They are voluntary in nature, and to that extent they are offered to any organization wishing to form or maintain standards that are recognized throughout the country.

#### Planning:

##### Foundational Plans for Search and Rescue Operations

1. National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual
2. Land Search and Rescue Addendum
3. Nevada / Air Force Rescue Coordination Center Memorandum of Understanding
4. Nevada Search and Rescue Plan
5. Local Search and Rescue Pre-Plan

##### Search and Rescue Pre-Planning:

A Search and Rescue pre-plan is a document to assist in the operations of a SAR event. It is recommended that all organizations tasked with SAR responsibilities maintain such a plan to assist in operations when they occur. It allows an organization to predict SAR problems, anticipate solutions, and develop associated methodologies and resources for the solution of these events.

##### Purpose of a Pre-plan:

6. Assists in minimizing oversight due to the emergent nature of SAR operations
7. Places all known resources within a single document, i.e.: not searching through several documents and reference books for resources.
8. Reduces stress load by providing guidance on the orderly flow of events.

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9. Facilitates a realistic assessment of SAR resources, i.e.: if tracking skills are essential at the outset of a search, are teams available and capable of performing this function?
10. Orients personnel to operational procedures and policies, ie; gives new personnel a thumbnail sketch of how operations are conducted while providing supporting agencies information on how they are integrated into an operation.

### Contents:

There are three generally associated categories of planning documents maintained as part of a comprehensive SAR pre-plan:

1. Agency Documents: These are directives, policies, or other documents that speak to the responsibilities, authorizations, job descriptions, interagency agreements and legal constraints related to SAR. They provide the umbrella under which all other documents are prepared.
2. “How to...” Manuals: These are standards, guidelines, reference materials and other documents that provide instruction on how perform. They provide guidance that SAR personnel use while becoming proficient in certain skills.
3. Operational Pre-plan: This provides incident management with information, instructions, checklists and standard operating procedures that will be referred to during an actual search and rescue.

Other contents of a preplan should include, but are not limited to:

1. Checklists for:
  - a. Hazardous Operations
  - b. Call-out procedures
  - c. Planning actions in which oversight errors may be critical
  - d. Complex tasks involving groups (Base camp set-up, etc.)
  - e. Vehicle and equipment maintenance
  - f. Tactics based on type and kind of resources
  - g. Any activity that is infrequently performed for which trained personnel are scarce.
2. Resource Lists:
  - a. Personnel
  - b. Equipment
  - c. Vehicles
  - d. Supplies
  - e. Base camp locations
    - i. All resources should be based on Kind and Type using national standards.
3. Referenced Documents
  - a. Identification of documents used to guide operations

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- b. Page numbers referenced, where appropriate
- 4. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)
  - a. Any accepted procedures not noted in other documents
    - i. First notice requirements
    - ii. Call-out
    - iii. Incident priorities
    - iv. Mobilization / demobilization
    - v. Communication protocols
    - vi. Procedures for evidence, family influences, death of the subjects
- 5. Memorandums
  - a. Memorandums of Agreement (MOA), Understanding (MOU), in which one agency agrees to cooperate or support another agency, and which should include:
    - i. Financial considerations
    - ii. Duties
    - iii. Authorities
    - iv. Liabilities
- 6. Miscellaneous Information
  - a. Mapping
  - b. Planning formulas
  - c. Lost person statistical information

### Structure

- 1. Purpose and objective of the plan:
  - a. Concise statement orienting the reader to the document and its purpose.
- 2. Incident priority guidelines:
  - a. Dependent on the incident, does the call merit full or partial activation of resources?
- 3. First notice procedures:
  - a. Who is contacted and when?
- 4. Procedure for conducting an investigation:
  - a. Who gathers information on the missing subject and how is it shared?
- 5. Strategies for finding lost subjects:
  - a. Based upon terrain and category of the subject.
- 6. Search tactics:
  - a. What methods will be used and in what order to maximize the search efforts of resources?
- 7. Emergency authorities and responsibilities:
  - a. Conditions that may alter the search such as changes in the search boundaries.
- 8. Organizational Structure:
  - a. How will the search be managed? Will managers use ICS or another method?

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9. Incident facilities.
  - a. Where will the search be managed from and how will it be laid out?
10. Communications.
  - a. What systems and frequencies will be used during the search?
11. Briefing and debriefing procedures
  - a. How will this be performed and documented?
12. Medical Considerations:
  - a. How will searcher injuries be handled and what are the locations of health facilities used in the operation?
13. Fatalities:
  - a. How are fatalities managed?
14. Rescue / Evacuation:
  - a. What are the capabilities and limitations of resources used in the operation?
15. Mission Suspension / De-escalation:
  - a. How will the agency determine when to suspend a mission and what is the criteria for suspension?
16. Demobilization:
  - a. What process will be used when bringing resources back from the field and how will tires resources be managed?
17. Documentation:
  - a. How is the search effort documents and what standardized process is used ?
18. Critiques
  - a. How will constructive review be performed?
19. Special Problems:
  - a. Airspace restrictions
  - b. Aircraft crash for private, commercial, and military
  - c. Safeguarding victims valuables
  - d. Resource protection and environmental protection
  - e. Cost accounting
  - f. Press briefings and media
  - g. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
  - h. HAZMAT and blood-borne pathogen issues
20. Appendices:
  - a. Resource Lists
  - b. Phone Lists
  - c. Equipment Lists
  - d. Frequency Lists
  - e. Forms

The development and subsequent use of a SAR Pre-plan will facilitate a realistic assessment of SAR resources and identify training needs. It orients new and experienced SAR personnel to the organizations operational processes and promotes efficient and cost-effective search and rescue management.

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## **Training:**

### **Credentialing and Certification**

A credential is an attestation of qualification, competence, or authority issued to an individual by a third party with a relevant or de facto authority. Individual search and rescue resources may or may not carry credentials within Nevada. The state does not mandate a credentialing requirement for an individual search and rescue member. This responsibility rests with the Agency Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). However, the Committee on Training in Search and Rescue (SAR Training Committee), appointed by the State SAR Coordinator with the advice of the Board, has established voluntary recommendations for individuals specializing in Search and Rescue.

In November, 2010, the SAR Training Committee adopted the current guidelines of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F-32 Committee, for the training of Level I and Level II Land Search Team Members, as voluntary guidelines that meet the requirements established for individuals to be credentialed in Nevada as a Search and Rescue resource.

In 2011, the State SAR Board adopted the FEMA 508-8 Standards entitled “Typed Resource Definitions / Search and Rescue” for the typing of search and rescue resources within Nevada. The standard may change dependent on the evolution of these and other guidelines adopted by SAR Training Committee and the State SAR Board at any time.

Under NRS 414.230 (2) the SAR Training Committee also has the responsibility to “certify organizations which meet those recommendations at the appropriate level.” Under this requirement, the state has adopted the certification requirements based upon the FEMA 508-8 document.

This document provides guidelines for the size and capability of any team requesting certification, and allows a team to be typed at any stage in the team’s development. This certification further allows for the identification and utilization of SAR resources under the state resource management program, a process that is dependent on understanding the relative size and capability of a resource to aid in ordering resource for any event.

Credentialing of an individual is not the same as certification of a team. Credentialing of an individual means that individual meets a set of skills and capabilities which have been adopted by the credentialing organization, the AHJ. Thus, any individual who meets the credentialing requirements for their parent organization may be credentialed. Any organization who adopts the ASTM Standards for Level I and Level II Land Search Team Member, or other equivalency adopted by the SAR Training Committee and approved by the State SAR Board, meets the standard for credentialing their members as a state resource.

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Team certification under the state requirement is based upon that standard under adoption at the time of certification. Certification does not require testing of the organization or its members, but the identification of capability reported, based on the standard. Certification level may change through the course of the organization's existence. Certification may change due to the change in capability, size, or availability of the team, or due to an evaluation of the performance of a team.

The State of Nevada, through the State SAR Coordinator, may recommend or deliver at the request of an AHJ or organization, various programs and training which will assist local teams, Sheriff Department SAR Teams, and others involved in SAR Operations. These programs and curriculums are based on national standards and "best practices" within the SAR environment. Additionally, there are courses approved by Nevada POST which support SAR operations and have standardized skills particular to search operations.

At the county level, organizations that conduct search and rescue operations, at the behest of the County Sheriff, have the option of establishing their own training recommendations and guidelines, and processes for the administration of those, or may adopt guidelines established under the SAR Training Committee. The State of Nevada, however, will only certify SAR Teams that meet or exceed the requirements of the state program.

### **Courses:**

The State of Nevada Search and Rescue Training Committee and the SAR Board have approved two courses as standard courses for search and rescue training:

1. Nevada Land Search Management Course (NLSM)
2. Nevada Wilderness Search and Rescue Technician Course (NWSART)

Both of these courses have been Nevada Police Officers Standards and Training certified courses for POST credit.

### **Exercise:**

The ability to exercise resources is integral for the training and preparation of all resources, SAR Personnel notwithstanding. Exercises are used to verify prior training, determine what additional training is required, and validate procedures and processes. The local AHJ may wish to establish and maintain an exercise program, integrate within another jurisdiction exercise program, or engage with the State of Nevada as part of the annual exercise process.

Exercises run by the state must meet certain program requirements to be funded by the state and various grant programs, primarily the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP).

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The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is one of several processes that guide and direct exercise development, production, and evaluation. The HSEEP process includes an After Action Report (AAR) and, when necessary, Improvement Plan (IP) for any exercise funded under HSGP.

Local jurisdictions may opt to conduct exercises using other funding sources and processes.

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## Annex V

### Statistical Reporting

The State of Nevada Search and Rescue Coordinator is responsible for the maintenance of statistical information related to search and rescue activities within Nevada.

**NRS 414.210 Coordinator of Search and Rescue: Duties.** The Coordinator shall:  
3. Maintain statistics regarding searches and rescues;

The DEM through the State SAR coordinator has developed a repository of search and rescue mission statistics through a web based application and collection point located on the DEM website: <http://dem.nv.gov/Resources/SAR/>

Data collected meets the requirements of the International Search and Rescue Information Database (ISRID) and is ISRID compliant. The data is collected for statistical information on a wide variety of elements related to search and rescue operations.

While input of the data is not required of any Sheriff or SAR Coordinator, the DEM maintains this site in compliance with their requirements under the NRS and recommends that data be entered into this system to benefit the search and rescue program. The system, when case data is entered, reports on a wide variety of trends and information used within the state search and rescue program.

See Attachment II: Nevada State Search and Rescue Statistical Entry

# DRAFT

## Attachment I

County	Sheriff	SAR Coordinator	Email	Dispatch
<b>Carson City</b>	<b>Ken Furlong</b>	<b>Steve Albertson</b>		<b>775-887-2009</b>
	775-887-2020 x 41901	775-887-2020 x 41902		
<b>Churchill</b>	<b>Ben Trotter</b>	<b>Sgt Steve Summers</b>	<b>s.summers@co.churchill.nv.us</b>	<b>775-423-3116</b>
	775-423-3116	775-423-3116		
<b>Clark</b>	<b>Joe Lombardo</b>	<b>Sgt Nate Anderson</b>	<b>n4378a@lvmpd.com</b> <b>702-503-9322</b>	<b>702-828-3111</b> <b>702-343.0006</b>
	702-828-3231	<b>Lt. Kenny Delzer</b>	<b>k6841d@lvmpd.com</b>	<b>702.238.5840</b> <b>702.858.8181</b>
<b>Douglas</b>	<b>Ron Pierini</b>	<b>Cpt D. Coverly</b>	<b>dcoverly@*****</b>	<b>775-782-5126</b>
	775-782-9900	775-720-4986		
<b>Elko</b>	<b>Jim Pitts</b>	<b>Marvin Morton</b>		<b>775-777-7300</b>
	775-777-2501	775-777-2540		
<b>Esmeralda</b>	<b>Ken Elgan</b>	<b>Ken Elgan</b>		<b>775-485-6373</b>
	775-485-6373	775-485-6373		
<b>Eureka</b>	<b>Ken Jones</b>	<b>William Tilton</b>		<b>775-237-5330</b>
	775-237-5330	775-468-0243		
<b>Humboldt</b>	<b>Mike Allen</b>	<b>Capt. Andy Rorex</b>	<b>arorex@hconnv.com</b>	<b>775-623-6429</b>
	775-623-6419	665-623-6419		
<b>Lander</b>	<b>Ron Unger</b>	<b>Meshel Young</b>	<b>myoung@landerso.org</b>	<b>775-635-5161</b>
	775-635-1100	775-635-1100 x 238		
<b>Lincoln</b>	<b>Kerry Lee</b>	<b>Kerry Lee</b>		<b>775-962-8080</b>
	775-962-8080	775-962-8080		
<b>Lyon</b>	<b>Al McNeil</b>	<b>Sgt Frank Hunewyll</b>		<b>775-463-6620</b>
	775-463-6600	775-463-6600		
<b>Mineral</b>	<b>Mike Dillard</b>	<b>Glenn Bunch</b>		<b>775-945-2434</b>
	775-945-1046	775-945-0519		
<b>Nye</b>	<b>Sharon Wehrly</b>	<b>Kevin Mellinger</b>	<b>kmellinger@co.nye.nv.us</b>	<b>775-482-8101</b>
	775-751-7012			
<b>Pershing</b>	<b>Jerry Allen</b>	<b>Charles Sparks</b>		<b>775-273-2641</b>
	775-273-2641	775-273-9012		
<b>Storey</b>	<b>Gerry Antinoro</b>	<b>Gerry Antinoro</b>		<b>775-847-0950</b>
	775-847-0959	775-847-0959		
<b>Washoe</b>	<b>Chuck Allen</b>	<b>Jerry Wormington</b>		<b>775-334-2121</b>
	775-328-3001	775-328-2114		
<b>White Pine</b>	<b>Don Watts</b>	<b>Don Watts</b>		<b>775-289-8808</b>
	775-289-8808	775-289-8808		
<b>State SAR</b>	<b>Paul M</b>	<b>Duty Officer</b>	<b>pburke@dps.state.nv.us</b>	<b>775.687.0400</b>

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Coord	Burke			
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## Attachment II

Nevada State Search And Rescue Statistical Entry

  

1. Reporting Agency for this SAR Report:

2. Reporting Agency Case Number; (used for statistical verification of entry)

3. Incident Date and Time of occurrence:

	MM	DD	YYYY	hh	mm	AM/PM					
Date / Time	<input type="text"/>	/	<input type="text"/>	/	<input type="text"/>	:	<input type="text"/>	-	<input type="text"/>	-	<input type="text"/>

4. Notification Date and Time of occurrence:

	MM	DD	YYYY	hh	mm	AM/PM					
Date / Time	<input type="text"/>	/	<input type="text"/>	/	<input type="text"/>	:	<input type="text"/>	-	<input type="text"/>	-	<input type="text"/>

5. Type of Incident:

6. Number of person(s) missing:

7. Gender of missing person(s):

8. Age of Missing Person(s):

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9. Category of Missing Subject:

10. Overall fitness level of subject or party:

11. Overall outdoor experience level of subject or party:

12. Overall equipment level of subject or party:

13. Overall clothing level of subject or party:

14. Overall survival training level of subject or party:

15. Terrain where subject(s) is/are missing:

16. Land cover where subject(s) is/are missing:

17. Initial Planning Point: Format- **US National grid, or ddd mm.minutes N and dd mm.minutes W**

18. Location where subject(s) were found: Format- **US National grid, or ddd mm.minutes N and dd mm.minutes W**

19. Linear distance from IPP to where subject(s) was/were found: (express in mile.mile) eg 1.4 miles.

20. Resources used and Capability grade: Effectiveness is measured by the resources proficiency on this incident. Proficiency is a measure of skill and its application to this environment.

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# DRAFT

	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat ineffective	Ineffective	Not utilized
Aircraft - Type I	<input type="radio"/>				
Aircraft - Type II	<input type="radio"/>				
Aircraft - Type III	<input type="radio"/>				
Helicopter - Type I	<input type="radio"/>				
Helicopter - Type II	<input type="radio"/>				
Helicopter - Type III	<input type="radio"/>				
K-9 SAR Team - Avalanche/ Snow, Air scent, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
K-9 SAR Team - Disaster Response, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
K-9 SAR Team - Land Cadaver, Air scent, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
K-9 SAR Team - Water, Air scent, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
K-9 SAR Team - Wilderness, Air scent, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
K-9 SAR Team - Wilderness, Tracking/Trailing, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
Cave SAR Team, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
Collapse SAR Team, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
Mine and Tunnel SAR team, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
Mountain SAR Team, Type I	<input type="radio"/>				
Mountain SAR Team, Type II	<input type="radio"/>				
Mountain SAR Team, Type III	<input type="radio"/>				
Mountain SAR Team, Type IV	<input type="radio"/>				
Mounted SAR Team	<input type="radio"/>				

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	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat ineffective	Ineffective	Not utilized
Radio Direction Finding Team	<input type="radio"/>				
Swiftwater/Flood SAR Team, All Type	<input type="radio"/>				
USAR Task Force, Type I	<input type="radio"/>				
USAR Task Force, Type III	<input type="radio"/>				
Wilderness SAR Team, Type I	<input type="radio"/>				
Wilderness SAR Team, Type II	<input type="radio"/>				
Wilderness SAR Team, Type III	<input type="radio"/>				
Wilderness SAR Team, Type IV	<input type="radio"/>				
EMS	<input type="radio"/>				
Fire	<input type="radio"/>				
Law Enforcement (non SAR)	<input type="radio"/>				
Marine Unit/Boat	<input type="radio"/>				
Psychic	<input type="radio"/>				
Spontaneous Volunteers	<input type="radio"/>				
Tracker	<input type="radio"/>				

\* 21. Search Numerical Data Questions:

Total Number of personnel used in this Incident:

Total Number of Volunteer searcher hours in this Incident:

Total Number of Paid searcher hours in this Incident:

Duration of this Incident in Hours:

22. Condition of subject(s) when search was concluded:

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23. Incident Narrative (limited to 200 words)