

Searcher Duties

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Organisation

The searcher must be organised, both when initially reporting and during an activity. By being properly organised, the searcher will be ready to go into the field when required. Time is often critical in a search activity, and the Search Managers need to know that the entire search team is ready to go into the field as soon as possible.

Being properly organised will also allow the searcher to respond quickly and efficiently to immediate, emergency or hazardous situations. Because we are dealing with life threatening conditions, the searcher must be ready to intervene when the Team locates the subject, and cannot be fumbling through equipment before taking action.

Discipline

Searches are highly organised activities, planned and executed according to detailed plans. The Search Managers rely on the searcher's discipline in executing instructions. They issue directives under the assumption that the searcher will carry out their tasks with discipline. Failure to do so can result in a search area being missed, sometimes with catastrophic results for the subject.

As we often operate in extreme conditions, instructions from the Search Managers are for the protection of the searcher. Discipline in following these instructions will save the searcher from harm.

SEBEV Search and Rescue depend on the support of the general public, partners and sponsoring organisations. The discipline of individual searchers reflects on the organisation as a whole. Lack of discipline will endanger the effectiveness of the Team.

Confidentiality

It is usually the police force in Berkshire that call upon SEBEV Search and Rescue for assistance. Our activities lead to our being involved in events that are often coloured by either personal tragedy or by criminal investigations. Both types of event require that information obtained through the Team be kept confidential.

Personal tragedy and misfortune are difficult enough for the subjects and their families without details of the events spreading through the community. Searchers have a duty (both legal and moral) to refrain from discussing the details of activities with anyone except those who have a need to know. Searchers should take care that "civilians" or media do not over hear their conversations. Members should also exercise caution in radio communications, as our frequencies are accessible by commercially available scanners.

Police investigations require confidentiality to proceed effectively. They also require the exploration of all possible avenues. Searchers are to treat all information obtained during search activities as sensitive & confidential. The searcher is also responsible for protecting that information access by civilians or the media.

Co-operation

Our search activities are very much team activities. To be effective each member must work co-operatively with all other players. Co-operation at all levels ensures the cohesion of the Team. It allows us to maintain the required flexibility to carry out the searches in rough terrain and under unforeseen circumstances. Co-operation also provides others with learning opportunities not available when working alone.

High Performance Standards

The people that become our “subjects” depend on us for their very lives. They have a right to expect the highest standards of personal performance from each member of SEBEV Search and Rescue.

Self-Sufficiency - Proper Clothing and Equipment

People require our assistance in all types of terrain, seasons, weather conditions and times of the day. Our subjects are, by definition, in environments that require a healthy respect. It is therefore imperative that each searcher has the proper clothing, equipment and food to contribute positively to the search activities. Effectiveness requires that the searcher remains safe and comfortable at all times.

Proper materiel ensures that the Team can concentrate on finding the subject, rather than taking care of improperly equipped team members.

Advise

The team requires information if it is to properly co-ordinate the search effort. Each searcher has a duty to advise the Search Managers of their activities and of any other information they feel will allow a more effective operation.

Although the Search Managers have detailed information on the subject and the geography of the area, they are confined to the Control Base. They require the active use of eyes and ears in the field to provide information to allow maximum flexibility. They have to know where you are, what you are doing and what you have found.

Positive Attitude

As mentioned before, we deal with life and death situations, often in difficult physical and emotional conditions. Each member of the Team has a duty to remain positive and to encourage others. Despair can lead to carelessness; negative attitudes can demoralise the entire team.

We must also remember that we often work in close proximity to friends and relatives of the subjects; our attitude is particularly important to their outlook on the situation. We therefore have a responsibility to them to ensure we display a positive attitude.

Other Expectations

In addition to the duties of a searcher when engaged in an operation, being a member of SEBEV Search and Rescue implies other responsibilities. Search and Rescue is a structured activity requiring knowledge, training and experience. It also requires a positive and progressive attitude about continuous improvement.

Attendance and Participation

SEBEV is only as strong as its membership and that strength can be measured by the participation members give. To provide SAR services in any weather, in any environment and at any time requires continuous training and development. To operate an effective search also requires an administrative structure that ensures that the team is fully functional when the call comes.

Members must be prepared to devote at least 6 hours a month to Search and Rescue, in addition to the actual operations to which we respond. This means attendance at least two meetings a month.

New members should also be prepared to participate in extra training activities as required to bring them to the same level as the rest of the team.

Physical Stamina

You don't have to be a triathlete to be a member of a SAR team, but you do have to be in sufficient physical shape to carry out your assigned search tasks. If you are to be effective in the field you have to ensure that you can travel effectively over the distances we walk. You should be able to complete a 4mile walk, with your SAR pack, with little difficulty. If you are like most of us urban types, you may have to put a little extra time during your first few months of membership to develop the tone and stamina needed for operations.

Participate in tasks, committees, and events

Members are required to participate in tasks, committees, meetings, events and operations. This is not only a membership requirement but is also only common sense. The team has to maintain its equipment, organise its own administration and continually improve our abilities, knowledge and techniques.

All members are expected to participate in these activities. Not everyone has to be involved in everything, but everyone is expected to be involved in something.

Continually develop new skills and knowledge

As you will see from our training program, the scope of SAR is very wide. Medical training, navigation, communications, SAR techniques and tactics, operations planning and technical rescue are but a few areas a member must master to be truly effective as a search and rescue volunteer.

The only way to remain current and make the best contribution is to continually seek to improve your skills.

Respond to the call

The whole focus of Search and Rescue is being able to respond, on an emergency basis, to a call for help. The call can come at any time of the day or night, in any season and in any weather conditions. As a member of a SAR team you have to be prepared to respond.

Loading up your gear and leaving your home on a callout will invariably require changes in your plans. It is important that you take the time to consider, with your family, the implications of your assuming SAR responsibilities. Responding to an emergency requires that you drop whatever you are doing and head off to help someone in trouble. You will have to make sure that your family understands your responsibilities and that a change in your personal plans may be required at any time.

Fortunately, many employers will make allowances for employees who provide emergency services to their community. We have a letter that officially requests your employer's assistance in making you available for SAR operations. This letter can be made available once you become a member. It is your responsibility to discuss your SAR duties with your employer.

If your family, work or other commitments make it difficult for you to respond to callouts you should seriously consider your involvement with Search and Rescue. We need members who have a high availability.



SEBEV Search and Rescue

Minimum Standards of Training

Team Leader (TL)

Completed and qualified on all courses in advance (Basic Search, Navigation, Team Leadership)
Must be an established/qualified Team Leader for their unit.
Must attend at least 35 hours of training per year (excluding day exercises)
Must attend at least 2 Night and 4 Day Exercises per year
Must be physically fit, well and able to undertake any tasks given
Must have worked in each of the other SAR roles at some time
Must provide personal equipment in accordance with the unit rules
Have signed an NDA and received a satisfactory Police check.

Radio Operator (RO)

Completed and qualified on all courses in advance (Basic Search, Navigation, Radio Operations)
Completed a Basic First Aid course.
Must attend at least 35 hours of training per year (excluding day exercises)
Must attend at least 1 Night and 2 Day Exercises per year
Must be physically fit, well and able to undertake the tasks given
Must have a working knowledge of the other SAR roles (Control, TM, TL, FA etc)
Must provide personal equipment in accordance with the unit rules
Have signed an NDA and received a satisfactory Police check.

Medic (FA)

Completed and qualified on all courses in advance (Basic Search, Navigation, Basic First Aid)
Must be a minimum of 4 day HSE First Aid (not Public First Aid)
Must attend at least 35 hours of training per year (excluding day exercises)
Must attend at least 1 Night and 2 Day Exercises per year
Must be physically fit, well and able to undertake the tasks given
Must have a working knowledge of the other SAR roles (Control, TM, RO, TL etc)
Must provide personal equipment in accordance with the unit/ALSAR rules
Must carry a First Aid kit or Trauma pack (equipped to skill level only)
Have signed an NDA and received a satisfactory Police check.

Team Member (TM) – Entry level for all members

Completed and qualified on all courses in advance (Basic Search, Navigation, Basic First Aid)
Must attend at least 35 hours of training per year (excluding day exercises)
Must attend at least 1 Night and 2 Day Exercises per year
Must be physically fit, well and able to undertake the tasks given
Must have a working knowledge of the other SAR roles (Control, TL, RO, FA etc)
Must provide personal equipment in accordance with the unit rules
Must be able to walk long distances
Have signed an NDA and received a satisfactory Police check

Frequently Asked Questions

How often do you meet?

We meet every Thursday night between 7:30pm and 10pm at our HQ in Wokingham. We also hold ad-hoc training sessions on Tuesday nights (these are advertised in advance) as well as holding two training weekends per year (one at home and one away)

Do I have to attend all the training sessions?

No! We recognise that today's busy lifestyles mean that people cannot give that sort of commitment however we do ask that you make at least 70% of Thursday training sessions per year (unless other arrangements have been made). You will appreciate the seriousness of our role and that it is vital to keep up the skills associated with this role.

How often is there a callout?

We usually get a couple of callouts per month however this is variable. Some months we can get no callouts and some months we could have 4 in a row. Generally speaking callouts occur at night and at the weekend.

Do I have to attend all the callouts?

No! *Again* we recognise that today's busy lifestyles mean that people cannot give that sort of commitment but we would ask that members make as many as possible. Searchers are always in short supply on a callout and the more members that can attend drastically increases the chances of a successful outcome for the missing person.

What equipment am I expected to provide?

Please read the enclosed sheet which gives details of the *recommended* (although not mandatory) equipment. It is necessary that all members are properly equipped for the conditions and may not be allowed to attend a search if this is not the case.

Why do we have to be Police checked?

Our main job is to search for missing 'vulnerable' persons such as children and the elderly. It is perhaps a sad reflection on society that all are members are carefully vetted before being allowed to join.

What sort of skills can I learn?

You can learn skills such as:-

First Aid
Search Management
Command & Control
Light Rescue Techniques

Search Techniques
Communications
Team Leadership
.... And many more

Can I specialise?

Yes! We have members who chose the specialise in areas such as Search Management or First Aid and wherever possible we try to send our members on external courses to attain specialist qualifications such as EMT (Emergency medical Technician)

Are there jobs that do not involve the physical aspect of Search and Rescue?

We need people to perform all sorts of jobs within SEBEV such as:-

- Radio Control
- Marketing and Promotions
- Public Relations
- And many more

Personal Equipment List

This is the recommended list of personal equipment. Whilst the items on the list are not mandatory, your team leader will stop you from attending callouts if he/she feels that you are improperly equipped for the conditions.

Essential Items

Walking boots or strong ankle support boots which have been worn in.
Waterproof jacket (thin, light and breathable)
Fleece or warm top
Spare warm socks
Spare underwear
Whistle
Food for 24 hours
Personal torch
Spare batteries
Watch
Daysac (25 Litre minimum)
Personal first aid kit (containing plasters, 3" crepe support bandage, safety pins, blister kit)
Glucose tablets/High Energy Food
No jeans or denim

Preferable but not essential

Gaiters
Waterproof trousers
Towel in waterproof bag
Compass
Woolly or warm hat
Isotonic drink
Walking Stick/Staff (preferably hooked)

Optional

Map case
Foil space blanket
Plastic survival bag

Note : put all kit in plastic bags and seal them to prevent your equipment from getting wet.

The above items are not particularly expensive, although it is worth investing in a pair of good quality walking boots and socks, a good fleece jacket and a daysac which is comfortable to carry.



SEBEV Search & Rescue

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

PARTIES:

(1) SEBEV Search and Rescue ("SEBEV") (1) and _____ ("the Member") (2)

RECITALS

- (A) SEBEV possesses and will come into possession of valuable information experience and data of a sensitive and confidential nature ("the Information").
- (B) SEBEV is willing to disclose the Information to the Member on the condition that the Member does not disclose the same to any third party nor make use of it in any manner except as set out below.

OPERATIVE PARTS

1. In consideration of SEBEV disclosing the Information to the Member the Member hereby undertakes with SEBEV
 - 1.1 To use all Information so disclosed exclusively for the purpose mutually intended and
 - 1.2 To maintain confidential all Information that it may acquire in any manner;and it will accordingly not directly or indirectly use or disclose any Information in whole or in part save in accordance with this Agreement
2. The following restrictions on the Member shall not apply to any Information which:
 - 2.1 the Member can prove by documentary evidence produced to SEBEV within 7 working days of the later of the date of this Agreement and the date of disclosure that such Information was already in the possession of the Member and at its free disposal before the disclosure under this Agreement to the Member;
 - 2.2 is hereafter disclosed to the Member without any obligations of confidence by a third party who has not derived directly or indirectly from the Member;
 - 2.3 is or becomes generally available to the public in printed publications in general circulation through no act or default on the part of the Member.
3. Without prejudice to the generality of clause 2.3 the Information shall not be deemed to be generally available to the public by reason only that it is known to only a few of those people to whom it might be of commercial interest, and a combination of two or more portions of the Information shall not be deemed to be generally available to the public by reason only of each separate portion being so available.
4. To secure the confidentiality attaching to the Information, the Member shall:
 - 4.1. keep separate all Information and all information generated by the Member based on the Information from all documents and other records of the Member;
 - 4.2 keep all documents and any other material bearing or incorporating any of the Information at the usual place of business of the Member in the United Kingdom unless otherwise agreed by SEBEV in writing;
 - 4.3 not use, reproduce, transform or store any of the Information in an externally accessible computer or electronic information retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means whatever outside of its usual place of business;
 - 4.4 make copies of the Information only to the extent that the same is strictly required;
 - 4.5 on request of SEBEV made at any time deliver up to SEBEV all documents and all other material in the possession custody or control of the Member that bear or incorporate any part of the Information.
5. The terms of this Agreement relating to confidentiality and liability shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding the cessation of membership of the Member to SEBEV or termination of any contract of service or contract for services between SEBEV and the Member and in the event of inconsistency between the terms of this Agreement and the terms of any contract of service or contract for services between SEBEV and the Member the terms of this Agreement shall prevail
6. The construction validity and performance of this Agreement shall be governed by English law and the parties hereby submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts

Signature _____

Date _____

Full name of the Member: _____

Address of the Member: _____



SEBEV *Search & Rescue*

THAMES VALLEY POLICE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT DECLARATION

On behalf of: SEBEV Search and Rescue

My attention has been drawn to the provisions of the Official Secrets Act and I am fully aware of the serious consequences which may follow any breach of those provisions.

I understand that the sections of the Official Secrets Act cover material published in a speech, lecture or radio or television broadcast, or in the press or in book form. I am aware that I should not divulge any information gained by me as a result of my appointment to any unauthorised person, either orally or in writing, without the previous official sanction in writing of the Chief Officer of Police. I also understand that I am liable to be prosecuted if I publish without official sanction, any information that I acquire as part of my work as a member of SEBEV Search and Rescue (unless it has already been made public) or retain any sketch, plan, model, article, note or official document which are no longer needed in connection with my work, and that these provisions apply not only during the period of my membership but also thereafter.

Signature _____

Date _____

Full name of the Member: _____

Address of the Member: _____