

Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council

Annual Meeting Minutes

December 3, 1994

Attendance: see **Attachment #1**.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 by President Peter McCabe [M/SAR](H:301-596-5554 (up to 12/94); H:301-596-9994 (after 12/94)/peter_mccabe@ed.gov).

Officer Reports

Secretary's Report

The Secretary, Keith Conover, M.D. [AMRG/NCRC] (H:412-561-3413/kconover+@pitt.edu) noted that the minutes of September Membership Meeting and November Board of Directors meeting were distributed to those present; the Membership Meeting minutes had also had been mailed to teams, and the November Board of Directors minutes are attached to these minutes (**Attachment #2**).

Moved by Keith, seconded by Andy Appel [WEST], that "the official list of Delegates and alternates being now circulated in this meeting, when signed or modified by the official delegate, shall be accepted as official notification to the Secretary" carried by unanimous consent. (A copy is attached; please send a letter if your team's entries are blank.) Moved by Peter, seconded by Keith, to accept both Membership and Board of Directors minutes as distributed. Accepted by unanimous consent.

Quorum: 11 organizations were represented by official representatives present at the initial roll call, a quorum being 7. Later arrivals brought the total to 16.

Regional Reports

Eastern Region: Jay Cooke [GPSR] (H:215-673-1047): no report.

Central Region: Roy Keiser [STRIKE] (H:717-742-8846; W:717-742-2319): no report.

Northern Region: Nelson Haas [Mountaineer SAR] (H:814-486-1784), not present, no report.

Western Region: Mike Yee [AMRG] (H:412-462-7285; Pager:412-575-1312): not present, no report.

Committee Reports

Membership

Martha-Ann Ackroyd-Geary [Somerset SAR] (H:814-926-2554)

Evergreen SAR (Indiana, PA): all paperwork complete, needs to be voted in.

DER Parks: have paid 1994 dues.

DER Forestry: have paid 1994 dues.

SAVES: had paid for two years' dues in 1993 and thus accidentally listed as unpaid for 1994.

Standards Committee

Tom Hirschak [Keystone SAR] H:814-946-0168, chair

Tried for a meeting in November in Bedford, but canceled due to schedule conflicts. Will form Subcommittees and meet in the morning immediately prior to upcoming Council meetings. Peter: have talked about this problem in the past; will talk about restructuring membership meetings to include Committee meetings prior to the membership meeting.

Training Committee

Jim Howley [Thornhurst SAR] (H:717-842-9412), chair

Not present, no report.

Bylaws Committee

Jim Hill [Mifflin SAR] (H:717-248-5595), chair; also members Andy Appel, Alan Houck, and Carol Prosseda; with assistance from Peter McCabe and Keith Conover.

Some changes to the Bylaws proposed by Irv many months ago, also input from committee members and others. The Committee suggests changing the title from Articles of Incorporation to Constitution and Bylaws from Article of Incorporation. Andy Appel [WEST], a practicing attorney, said that the Articles of Incorporation for Pennsylvania is just a form to fill out and the state doesn't need to see the Bylaws. Steve Houck [WEST/SMRG] confirmed this, as he had completed three incorporations in the last year.

Other recommended changes are detailed in two handouts; first, Irv Lichtenstein's [GPSR] proposed changes (**Attachment #3**) and the Committee's recommendations regarding these (**Attachment #4**).

Irv, regarding his proposal, item 5: the intent is as follows. If there are more than a certain number of teams in the Council, there will be no more than one director from each region; but if we don't have enough teams in a given Region, or if we change the Region boundaries, we may have problems filling all the positions. The intent of this proposal was to allow us to waive the Region restriction by a 2/3 vote if needed.

Communications Committee

Steve Houck, Chair; [WEST/SMRG], (H:703-257-7659/shouck@fcc.gov)

No news to report.

Teller Committee

Steve Houck and Vicki Coup were appointed by the President to be the teller committee and to count the votes from the Summer Ballot (Bylaws and canceled Directors vote) and Fall Ballot (Directors vote). The following three candidates received the highest number of votes, in order of the number of votes:

Nelson Haas; Roy Keiser; and Andy Appel.

How to deal with Ballots: consensus was that the Secretary will seal in an envelope and keep for a year and then destroy.

Rotation of offices: noted that one director's position should expire each year. Proposed by Martha-Ann Geary [Somerset SAR] and seconded by Keith Conover [AMRG/NCRC] that the director who got the most votes gets a three year term (Nelson Haas), the next number of votes gets a two year term (Roy Keiser), and the third gets a one-year term (Andy Appel). Unanimous vote in favor.

The Nominating Committee will immediately start the nominating process for the Director position now occupied by Ron Wisbith, whose term expires at this meeting (at the President's request, he will continue until his successor is elected).

Bylaws vote ("Purposes" section): Steve: 17 teams voted, 12 yes, 5 no. Quorum is seven, which applies to this vote; requirement is for a 2/3 plurality, so the amendment is accepted.

PSARC Operations and Mutual Aid Activities

Had one PSARC multi-agency search in the East, one in the West, and two in the Central Region. All were quick searches.

Old Business

None to act on.

New Business

M/SAR Membership Status

Moved by Keith Conover [AMRG/NCRC], seconded by Irv Lichtenstein [GPSR], that M/SAR be accepted as a member in good standing; this had been questioned in the past based on a misunderstanding about when there dues were paid. Unanimous consent in favor.

SAR Net

An alert about Hantavirus being found along the Appalachian Trail in Virginia has appeared in the national and regional news and on the Internet. Keith: note that this does **not** indicate an epidemic locally. Hantavirus has probably been along the Appalachians all along, and we just now are able to test for it. Though it can be fatal, the person in question did fine.

Medical

WEMSI Wilderness EMT dates:

SW PA, near Seven Springs resort (Information: Center for Emergency Medicine at 412-578-3203):

2/25-26 Basic Wilderness Rescue

3/11-12 WEMT Part I

3/24-26 WEMT Part II

10/21-27 Basic Wilderness Rescue

11/4-5 WEMT Part I

11/17-19 WEMT Part II and Wilderness Command Physician

NE PA, near Danville (tentative; contact Brad Bason at 1-717-271-1314 (H))

WV, near Elkins, colocated with the Eastern Region National Cave Rescue Commission weeklong training class:

6/17-26 Includes NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue class; contact John Appleby, ER-NCRC Regional Coordinator, at 1-215-541-4994 (H).

Medico-Legal

Keith Conover, M.D. [AMRG/NCRC]: The Atlantic EMS Council (PA, NJ, DE, RI, WV, VA, DC) is in the process of revising its mutual aid agreement. It already provides for EMT and paramedic reciprocity across state lines, but does not provide reciprocity for the medical command physicians who give them medical direction. The Wilderness EMS Institute is working with the Atlantic EMS Council to provide for Wilderness EMS reciprocity across state lines as well. The next quarterly meeting of the Atlantic EMS Council in February will address Wilderness EMS.

Pennsylvania's Act 45 (Emergency Medical Services act) can only be definitively construed to apply to emergency care given on or near ambulances or other EMS vehicles, per discussions with the Pennsylvania

Department of Health's lawyers. Surprisingly, this can be interpreted to mean that an EMT or paramedic in the Pennsylvania backcountry is outside the EMS scope of practice. However, the Wilderness EMS Institute provides medical direction for EMT-level SAR personnel working in the backcountry in the form of Wilderness EMS Protocols, which represent the regional state of the art in wilderness EMS. Ken Boyles: what does this mean when I'm hours away from a road and try to apply my EMS skills? Keith: The very bottom line, though, is that when in doubt, do the very best for your patient that you can. Providing bad care because you're afraid of the legal consequences is an almost sure way to get in both medical and legal trouble. Providing good care even if you're not sure it's "legal" is the best way to care for your patient and keep yourself clear of the court system. Let's say you respond on an ambulance to a cave rescue. You put a pair of coveralls and go into the cave. You find someone with a shoulder dislocation. You say "I'm an EMT. I've been through Wilderness EMT training and I've been trained how to reduce a shoulder dislocation, but I've still got my EMT patch on. Therefore, as an EMT I can't reduce this shoulder, even though it's the standard for wilderness care." You transport the patient eight hours out of the cave, in agony the whole time, due to an unreduced shoulder dislocation. If you did this, you might be found liable for any permanent damage to the patient's shoulder, because you didn't follow the accepted wilderness standard of care. This is regardless of the Good Samaritan provisions of the EMS law. (Remember, the Good Samaritan provisions exclude acts of gross negligence. If you don't provide proper care as you've been trained, this might be construed as gross negligence). James Bender [AMRG]: What if you, as a Wilderness EMT, turn over a patient to a street ambulance; don't you have to go along? Keith: assume you, a Wilderness EMT-basic, are treating a patient with severe hypothermia, and you turn over the patient to a "street" paramedic. You've been acting according to your extensive hypothermia training, and have hot packs on the patient, thick insulation, and warm, humidified oxygen. The paramedic, who only had a few minutes of hypothermia training, only remembers "don't rewarm hypothermic patients in the field." After the ambulance leaves, the paramedic takes off the insulation and the hot packs, and turns off the heat and opens all the windows of the ambulance so the patient won't "rewarm in the field." The patient develops refractory ventricular fibrillation on the way to the hospital and dies. You, as a Wilderness EMT-Basic, could be charged for abandoning your patient. So, if the patient has a wilderness-related problem, Wilderness EMTs need to ride to the hospital with the patient. What if you and the paramedic disagree? Then you both contact your command doctors and let them fight it out.

Membership

Moved by Martha-Ann Geary [Somerset SAR], seconded by Jim Hill [Mifflin SAR], to accept Evergreen SAR, Team 600, Indiana County, and apply 1994 dues to 1995 paperwork completed. Unanimous consent in favor.

Standards

Irv Lichtenstein [GPSR] sent in equine standards, TROT sent in some different standards. These are currently being worked on. Rescue Specialist, Medical Specialist, Communications Officer, Mantracker are on hold now, though Medical and Rescue were circulated in early draft form. Get comments in to Tom Hirschak ASAP, and let him know if you want to join a subcommittee working on one of these. Discussion about whether Rescue standards need to be team or individual.

Appointments

Pat Hawn [Palisades] appointed to the Canine Subcommittee of the Training Committee.

Operations:

Ken Boyles [DER Parks]

This came out of a request from the Council to Ken about a year ago, and the current form of his plans are based on the initial proposal he made a year ago, and PSARC member and PEMA comments on the plan. The plan is to establish several PSARC EPLOs (Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers) who meet criteria that PSARC would set. One of these EPLOs would be contacted if PEMA's Emergency Operations

Center (EOC) receives a call for a search and rescue incident or for information. EPLO and PEMA are a "conduit for information" and don't actually run things. The PSARC EPLO would then call a PSARC Mission Coordinator (MC) to coordinate resources; the MC would rarely go to the scene. However, in 80% of cases, the EPLO would probably just turn things over to a MC and then go "off-line."

PEMA could be called by a county with no SAR resources (e.g., Fulton). If Fulton calls for a dog, PEMA EOC will provide them with information on how to get a local dog **and** alert an EPLO. If the county simply calls for generic assistance, the EPLO will be alerted. It is the responsible agency's decision when to drop off the EPLO, based on the resources that have arrived. We would need 3-4 EPLOs close to Harrisburg, to access PEMA's resources. We also need to make sure that a PSARC team doesn't arrive and tell the local responsible agency to let the EPLO off duty unless Base Incident Command functions are covered as well as field personnel. There needs to be constant communications between the EPLO, the EOC, the local responsible agency, and the responding PSARC teams.

This is a two-tier system. The reason for the EPLO level is that the local teams or the MC may need someone at the EOC with access to PEMA. Bruce Barton [NESAR]: why so much emphasis on the EPLO in Harrisburg? Why not just have regional MCs? Peter/Ken: the SAR database isn't available by data sharing to the County EMA offices. Keith Conover [AMRG/NCRC]/Ken: PEMA wants just three EPLOs with whom to work. Ken: the EPLO can go to the EOC and serve as a knowledgeable person who has access to phone banks. The MC could say over his scratchy cellular phone connection to the EPLO "I need 3 dogs, 10 Team Leaders and a helicopter" and the EPLO can use the PEMA EOC phone bank and computer system to contact additional resources. What about liability coverage for the EPLOs and MCs? Shouldn't be significant liability as it's only resource coordination; the local responsible agency bears the brunt of the liability risk.

Long discussion about the overall plan. Also noted that having EPLOs at the EOC will help us make sure that PEMA database is kept up to date.

Bob Long, long-time PSARC PEMA liaison, has been "pulled" from SAR duty to work on the newly-upgraded chance of a major earthquake in Pennsylvania.

Moved by Ron Wisbith, seconded by Martha, that Ken proceed with this program with whatever input members will provide to him. Unanimous consent in favor. What about the next steps? Criteria for EPLOs, then picking EPLOs, then criteria for MCs, then selecting MCs. Will discuss this over lunch and vote on the general principles.

LUNCH BREAK!

Operations Continued, AKA the "Boyles Plan"

Criteria for MCs and EPLOs: "when it gets down to actually choosing, the sparks will fly!" [Some sparks did fly in the meeting, but this being a family oriented set of minutes, none will be reproduced here --KC] The only difference between MCs and EPLOs would be that MCs more geographically oriented, with knowledge of local resources.

The EPLO might just appoint a MC and then go off duty, leaving the EOC. However, the EPLO would be available by pager if the EOC needed the EPLO again about the same operation. What if we have a search on Laurel Hill in SW PA and at the same time in Pine Creek Canyon in NE PA? The EPLO can serve as an ICS ACA (Area Command Authority) with MCs in both areas.

What if a SAR team gets on-scene and needs help getting resources; SAR team, with local responsible agency approval, can call PEMA to get an EPLO and MC appointed to help getting resources. Do we have to go to PEMA through the county EMA? Depends on the county, but PEMA will probably call the County EMA even if they were not alerted initially.

Both MCs and EPLOs would need to meet the following criteria:

- • access to a multiple-phone line facility;
- • 24-hour alerting;

- • have completed the MSF (Managing the Search Function) or MSO (Managing Search Operations) course;
- • have working knowledge of search management above and beyond MSF or MSO;
- • 4 missions as Incident Staff;
- • knowledge of SAR resources available; and
- • experience and communication skills in coordinating with local responsible agencies.

Moved by Irv Lichtenstein [GPSR], seconded Ron Wisbith [R-40], that we accept the above criteria for EPLOs and MCs; and, that at the 1995 Annual Meeting we will formally review their effectiveness. Unanimous consent in favor.

Now need to come up with people to be EPLOs and MCs. How many MCs do we need? About 10. Bruce Barton [NESAR]: we should make sure that every area (e.g., every county) has at least two MCs who are familiar with the area, for backup. Ken get the names and a short resume of those who would be good for PSARC MCs and EPLOs to him within 30 days (Ken Boyles, 1599 Doubling Gap Rd., Newville, PA 17241, W:717-776-5272, H:717-776-7949). Peter McCabe [M/SAR]: the SAR Net going out in about a week, and will contain an announcement to this effect. Ken: I don't want to select the people for MCs! It's going to be a big problem. Who decides on the names? Consensus was that the Board of Directors will decide at the January meeting. Ken should propose a slate of proposed EPLOs and MCs to the Board of Directors, and the Board of Directors will decide on the appointments. Peter: these are appointments, not elections; they can be revoked as needed. Tom Hirschak: what if someone moves out of state? Peter: the Board of Directors can appoint a replacement. Tom: what about having one primary and one alternate for each area of the state? That way there is no question of favoritism? Ken: better to rotate so that everyone gets some experience.

Nominating Committee

Vicki Coup [STRIKE], once again appointed as chair.

Keith: usual procedure is to have the nominating committee propose a **single** nominee for each position. Open nominations for the one Director position will be officially announced in the SAR NET and nominations will close the 30th of January. Nominations should be sent to the SAR Council P.O. Box (see letterhead). A mail ballot will follow.

Preplan Committee

Ron Wisbith [R-40] appointed as Chair; Pat Hawn [Palisades] will also join the committee.

First question to investigate: Do we have preplans with DER and ASRC as some think?

Membership Committee:

Don Scelza [AMRG/NCRC] appointed as chair to succeed Martha Geary, who will be taking over the Presidency.

Bylaws

Rewording of items 5 and 6 achieved over lunch and are as follows:

#5: "The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, one Director from each geographic region as defined in Article XIII, and Directors elected at large, to a total membership of ten (10) individuals. Should a vacancy occur on the Board of Directors, and there are insufficient members in a Region to provide a replacement Director from this Region without violating the limitations contained in Article II, Paragraph 3, section (e), the membership by a 2/3 (66.7%) majority may waive this rule for the period from the appointment until the next Annual Meeting at which time the Regions may be realigned."

#6: "Whenever the number of members of the Board of Directors shall increase, the initial term of the new Director(s) shall be adjusted so that only a fraction of the Directors other than the elected officers shall be elected annually. This fraction shall be the quotient of the division of number of Directors by the term of office in years."

The Bylaws Committee also recommended that Irv's suggested addition of Article XIII be accepted, but that the definition of the regions be modified to reflect the existing boundaries:

Northern Region: north of I-80.

Eastern Region: south of I-80 and east of the Susquehanna River.

Central Region: south of I-80, west of the Susquehanna River, and east of the crest of Laurel Ridge.

Western Region: south of I-80 and west of the crest of Laurel Ridge.

According to the East Penn Mountaineers and NESAR, both are right on I-80, but more north than south of it, and thus should be included in the Northern Region; the Secretary noted that the PSARC Alerting Map will be revised to reflect this.

The Bylaws Committee recommended the membership vote in favor of these revised proposed amendments. Question: what if at election time we don't have enough valid nominees because of the Region arrangement? We could rely on wording of the amendment and infer that by 2/3 vote we could make an exception. Unanimous consensus in favor of this interpretation.

Motion to accept by Irv, seconded by Ken Boyles [DER/Parks], 16 in favor, none opposed, none abstaining.

Medical

Moved by Keith Conover [AMRG/NCRC] and seconded by Martha-Ann Geary [Somerset SAR] that PSARC register as a non-ambulance EMS agency with the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and request that the Wilderness EMS Institute provide medical direction at the Protocol level for all PSARC member teams who don't have their own physician wilderness medical director.

Discussion: The protocol level provides protocols for common wilderness medical situations, but not on-line direction or standing orders for medications. Advantages: (1) this would include a 1-800 number for consults or conflicts with local EMS; (2) medical direction for backcountry situations where Act 45 EMS doesn't apply; (3) access to medical radio frequencies (Steve Houck [WEST/SMRG] noted that with the change in FCC regulations we will lose 150.775 and 150.79 unless we become an EMS agency); (4) access to surplus sales on the same basis as other EMS agencies; and (5) possible access to EMS funding. Moved by Irv Lichtenstein and seconded by Tom Hirschak [Keystone SAR], to table this until the next meeting. Unanimous vote in favor. Request for more information about what this motion will entail; a copy of the WEMSI brochure and a letter explaining the WEMSI protocol level are attached to these minutes (**Attachments #5 and #6**) and should be sent out with the SAR NET.

Closing

A closing presentation by retiring Director Ron Wisbith (R-40) covered the following topics

- • cases where poor search management or tactics allowed a subject to die.
- • Rescue 40's program to provide seminars to local fire departments in basic search management.
- • Rescue 40's new search response folders, which are available for purchase from R-40.
- • Their new team assignment and Task Assignment Forms (on two-part forms); packages of 25 for \$12.50. A future and slightly more expensive version will be printed on Write-in-the-Rain paper.
- • R-40 is becoming a distributor for Danner boots; selling all in catalog for \$15 above cost.

Equipment Deals

Peter McCabe (H:301-596-5554 (up to 12/94); H:301-596-9994 (after 12/94)): M/SAR is ordering Sherpa snowshoes for 15% less than dealer cost. This is possible because Sherpa will sell at a discount to Mountain Rescue Association teams. They also are planning to order Mont-Bell orange GoreTex parkas (retailing for about \$300) for about \$150 for use as uniform parkas.

Adjourned at 1535.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Conover, M.D., Secretary

- • Attachment #1: Attendance
- • Attachment #2: November Board of Directors minutes
- • Attachment #3: Irv Lichtenstein's [GPSR] proposed changes to the Bylaws
- • Attachment #4: Bylaws Committee's recommendations regarding the proposed Bylaws changes
- • Attachment #5: Wilderness EMS Institute brochure
- • Attachment #6: a letter explaining the WEMSI protocol level of medical control

Additional Enclosures:

- • New Constitution and Bylaws
- • 1994 Resource Form for State Parks.
- • 1995 Resource Forms for multiple teams.
- • Blank 1995 Resource Form for team to fill out and send back to the PSARC P.O. Box (on letterhead, first page)
- • Master of Delegate and Alternate Roster (please send a letter if your team's is blank!)
- • New alerting map.
- • Return form for Canine Subcommittee.