



SRRRMN Newsletter

Search Rescue and Recovery Resources of Minnesota

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Search, Rescue and Recovery Community

M.U.S.T.A.N.G. Weekend 2012: Search and Rescue Training in Minnesota!

The **Multi-Unit Search (and Rescue) Training And Networking Gathering** will take place June 22-24, 2012 at the Arden Hills Army Training Site (AHATS).

State-wide resources, including Mounted units, Canine, Civil Air Patrol, technical interests, **who else?** and emergency responders will partake in field training exercises and scenarios in the heart of Arden Hills, just north of St. Paul.



Multiple Agency Search Scenario

This is a rare opportunity for searchers and management teams to develop and practice their skills with others within their own disciplines as well as with other agencies and varied technical skill levels. Classroom instruction sessions and field skills training will be offered. Appropriate for all experience levels – beginner to advanced.



Don't miss this opportunity to train at this secluded primitive site, offering diverse geographical experiences. This is a premier opportunity for practical training with teams and individuals who will serve their communities in a search and rescue event.

For further information contact:

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Who is Responsible for Searcher Safety?

By Jeff Hasse
President, MTRTA

In the not-too-distant past, several SRRRMN members were involved in an incident during a search. A search dog team disturbed a hornet’s nest and both the handler and the dog were stung multiple times. Occupational hazard. The real problem came when another dog team was dispatched to the area an hour later and they disturbed the *same* nest and were also stung multiple times. The first incident was probably not preventable, but the second definitely was. This begs the question: Who is responsible for ensuring searcher safety during a search? The answer depends in part on the management structure in place during the incident.

The most common SAR management model still utilized today is known as the SAR Boss model. In this model, a single person runs the show—usually from the hood of a vehicle. Some duties may be assigned to subordinates, but there is typically no breakdown of functional roles such as ops, plans, logs, and admin. Because of this, the SAR Boss very quickly becomes overwhelmed with the many decisions required during a search (he/she usually deploys each team) and important duties are overlooked—such as ensuring searcher safety. In this management model, the teams are generally on their own to ensure their own safety. See NASAR’s Managing the Lost Person Incident textbook for a more in-depth



Safety Officer

discussion of the inadequacies of this management model. In the standard Incident Command System (ICS) management structure, the role is clearly defined. It is the Safety Officer (SO) and is a command staff position that reports directly to the Incident Commander (IC). If the IC hasn’t named a person to the SO position, then the IC is responsible for it. The Incident Action Plan (IAP) is the official ICS mechanism for informing teams of all hazards within an incident. It is written by the overhead team. The Incident Objectives section of the IAP (ICS Form #202) contains a section titled General Safety Message. Since hazards change frequently (some are consciously mitigated, some go away on their own, sometimes the incident moves away from the hazard, etc.), the IAP should be updated every operational period. For hazards that pop up during an operational period, they are communicated up the chain of command and back down to whoever is briefing individual teams.

In the SAR Task Force Model of search management developed and utilized by several SRRRMN members (a task force is a functional unit within ICS), the communications support team member assumes this safety role. It is his or her job to document and communicate specific hazards to and from the field teams.

However, neither of the latter two positions works very well if there aren’t

solid lines of communication in place. The Safety Officer cannot act on what he or she does not know. Did the team report the incident when it took place? Did they provide an accurate location of the nest? Was this information recorded on a Communications Log? Was the location transferred to a Master Map? Was this information passed on to subsequent command staff? Did they include it in their briefings? **All** these things needed to be in place for the second team to have avoided the hazard. I believe that there are two lessons to be learned here.

The first is that **each and every team member is, in part, responsible for searcher safety**. We each should keep an eye out for hazards in our search area, not just for our own safety, but also for the safety of teams that might follow us. Do canine teams look for holes in the ground into which horses might step? Do mounted teams keep an eye out for stray dogs that might be hostile to search dogs? If so, do you report it? Perhaps the best way to report any significant hazard is by radio.

“The Safety Officer cannot act on what he or she does not know.”

It is common practice to document all radio traffic on a Communications Log. This is the start of a permanent record of the hazard. It is then the command staff’s responsibility to act on this information. In addition, you should also report the hazard during your team debriefing. If you wait until you write your search report to report the hazard (often days later), it may be too late for the next team.

The second lesson is that **it is in our best interest to ensure that there is a functional command structure in**

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Scene Safety

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place during all searches. Too often, this is not the case. If the local agencies have not established a functional incident command structure prior to our involvement, chances are fairly high that the key role of Safety Officer hasn't been assigned. As we discussed in past SRRRMN meetings, it is often a delicate and challenging problem to suggest to authorities that they adopt a more formal incident command system. However, the SAR Task Force Model was designed to specifically address this and other issues. But it is of no use

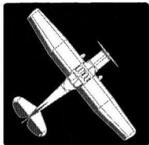


Safety is everyone's Responsibility

if it isn't implemented. To implement it, you can develop your own task force and practice it or you can simply ask for assistance from a SRRRMN member that

has dedicated the time and effort to develop a functional and efficient task force.

In conclusion, it takes the diligence of both the command staff and every search team member to create a safety system that protects everyone on scene. Clearly, the system broke down for the second team that was stung by the hornets. It is up to all of us to create the open lines of communication that will prevent something like this from occurring again in the future.



MN Winter Survival Weekend in January

*Major Robin Helgager
Civil Air Patrol*

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) members, Seniors and mostly Cadets, from 14 squadrons including one from North Dakota traveled to Lake George in northern Minnesota January 6, 2012 for the start of this year's Winter Survival Weekend. Unseasonably warm temperatures and light snow greeted the ground teams. With last year's temps being -24 degrees, temperatures of 30 degrees above zero seemed like March instead of the middle of January.



Ground Teams received their briefings at the staging area in downtown Lake George and were transferred to a wooded area a few miles away. A central fire was built, shelter building began and the temporary town started taking shape. By the end of the evening, glow sticks hanging from branches and shelter ropes could be seen throughout the forest.

Saturday January 7th activities included, making meals over an open fire, adjusting their shelters if needed, compass work, map reading, terrain identification and how to build a small animal snare. Cadets spent the day learning new skills and team building with cadets from other squadrons.



CAP aircraft from Duluth, Brainerd and Walker practiced search and rescue scenarios all across Group 1(Northern Minnesota) as part of the training exercise. Practice included searching for missing persons, downed aircraft and communicating with ground teams.

Another night in the mild winter was great but they did not have an opportunity to experience the challenges of winter as the team did last year in the subzero temperatures.

Bright sun came up on Sunday and the day's activity included more search and rescue training along with how to survive outdoors. Then it was time to take down the shelters, return the forest to what is was before they arrived and say goodbye to new friends.

The return home trip for some was long as the young Cadets couldn't wait to tell their friends and family of the fun weekend living in the forest. What do you think they will tell their young adults someday? Let's go to Northern Minnesota camping in January.



2011 MN NAPWDA Workshop

Reprinted by Permission of North American Police Work Dog Assoc.

Sharolyn Sievert
Central Lakes Search and Rescue

Minnesota in the fall can be an unpredictable place, so when Central Lakes Search and Rescue (CLSAR) arranged for NAPWDA Master Trainers, they had to promise not to have any snow while they were here. When Jan Scofield and Steve Mackenzie arrived at Camp Ripley and saw a snowplow drive by, they didn't worry as they had assurances of



served as home base for the week and provided on-base housing and food. It also gave everyone some amazing search areas which included the base area, woods, pine groves, buildings,

“Excellent training opportunity with some of the most purposeful terrain used. All the instructors were well-rounded and knowledgeable with open minds to different styles or approaches to tracking/trailing.”

Tony Kotschevar,
Deputy, Stearns County Sheriff's Office

no snow. Until they saw three more plows drive by in succession. The first question the hosts of the 2011 Minnesota NAPWDA Workshop had to answer was what our forecast really was for the week. Thankfully it wasn't impending snow that brought out the plows, just the Minnesota Dept. of Transportation's annual snowplow driver training.

Joining Steve and Jan was Master



Trainer Jeanne Frost for the first ever NAPWDA Workshop held in Minnesota. Camp Ripley, a state owned facility that encompasses 53,000 acres,

water venues, prairie fields and even a military-tidy rubble pile.

The K-9 teams, coming from four states, included members of law enforcement,

county SAR agencies and volunteer civilian SAR handlers. The workshop, designed for search and rescue handlers, began on Tuesday morning and ended on Saturday. The only complaint registered was by Master Trainer Jan Scofield who was quoted as saying, "Excellent workshop! Very dedicated teams! Also the weather was beautiful, except for one freezin' morning and I couldn't get Doc to warm up the car!"

Next time CLSAR should maybe consider a rental car with remote start for the Southern Master Trainers.

Tuesday dawned with sunshine and the groups sorted themselves by discipline and departed for their training areas. Within a short time, Jeanne, Jan and Steve had a chance to meet the teams in their groups and learn what each handler hoped to work on over the course of the week-long workshop.

Jan's Trailing group found Ripley's Cantonment area in and around the base a great place to train. With the constant traffic of a normal military base, plus the addition of snowplows, the hard surface trailing work created some interesting training opportunities. In addition, the area included woods, pine groves, and a

park with camping sites all along the Mighty Mississippi River. And not to forget the C-130's that were performing touch & go landings nearby, or the tanks that periodically rumbled by.

As Master Trainer Jan pointed out, there was one morning that was rather drizzly and cold; however that was just that one morning. Otherwise the weather was, indeed, beautiful, staying just cool



enough no one had to worry about dogs overheating in vehicles or while working, but not so cold we had to bundle up either. And the cadaver dog handlers didn't have to break ice to enjoy some water training on Ferrel Lake, nestled in the heart of a large tract of woods and trails.

The cadaver teams under Master Trainer Jeanne Frost really did take advantage of the different venues available at Rip-

“A cadaver certification test often is just the bare minimum required of a team, but NAPWDA challenges the dog & handler with a gamut of various scenarios over two days of testing. It gives you a feeling of true accomplishment if you pass. And even if you don't, you realize how much more there is to learn.”

Wendy Deane, HRD K-9 LLC

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ley, finding several places to train and test in. Each day brought them to a new area with different challenges that helped

searches, expand map skills as well as work on search strategy for a variety of terrain. Doc used several exercises that sharpened the handler's awareness of the



power of the right reward for their dog.

used to help defray the cost of the workshop and start "seed" money for another NAPWDA workshop in 2012 as the response to this one was so positive. The workshop ended Sunday morning with some very tired dogs, handlers and even Master Trainers as Jeanne, Jan and Steve put in long hours all week. When asked if they would be willing to return to Minnesota next year however, the best compliment a hosting unit can receive is an immediate "yes"! So by popular request, the K-9 handlers here in the upper Midwest are all looking forward to working with these NAPWDA master trainers again in 2012. For more information on NAPWDA, check their website at:

www.napwda.com

"Steve did a great job. While his objective was to have all of his students achieve the goals set out at the beginning of the week, he was also forthright about where we could improve and we all appreciated that. He introduced us to a number of training situations that we have now incorporated into our Northstar unit training sessions. I look forward to attending next year's workshop!"

Denise Schultz, Northstar SAR

the teams practice for the six-station test at the end of the week. From a simple burial that caused some headaches because of wind conditions, to building searches that allowed the dogs to work in the dark. While wilderness is abundant at Ripley, finding an acceptable rubble area wasn't so easy, so everyone was pleased with the pile provided which resembled a collapsed structure.

power of the right reward for their dog.

Wednesday night CLSAR invited everyone to an evening with Dr. Sue Myster, Forensic Anthropologist. Sue talked about her work with NamUs, a federal online database that can be utilized by civilians and law enforcement agencies in regards to missing person cases (www.namus.gov). Incorporated

into her talk were cases that she herself has participated in as a forensic anthropologist, including how K-9's are utilized to locate the remains that end up with her for analysis. Central Lakes Search and Rescue hosted a fun pizza party and auction Thursday night, giving everyone a break from the training and testing. Funds raised were

Area search teams enjoyed a smaller, more personal class with Steve "Doc" Mackenzie. They found the abundant acreage had hidden distractions like wild turkeys and deer, although thankfully none of the dogs encountered any porcupines which are also common to the area. It was an exciting opportunity to work on techniques for building



Search Rescue and Recovery Resources of Minnesota / www.srrrmn.org

Organizational and affiliate Members:

- ◇ Lake County Rescue / Finland Unit
- ◇ Washington County Sheriff's Posse
- ◇ Emergency Food Support Services
- ◇ Canine Search Solutions

SRRRMN is a non-profit confederation of autonomous groups and individuals who are dedicated to providing quality search, rescue, and recovery services to assist and support public, private, and/or governmental agencies. The purposes of this organization are to promote and develop search, rescue, and recovery capabilities and resources in the State of Minnesota with the underlying principle of saving lives and reducing suffering.





Narrowbanding: FCC Mandate

(What does this mean to me?)

By Ken Anderson
Emergency Support Services
KOSAR
With help from Kelly Kugler

We all enjoy the latest advances in wireless technology, but with these advances came a problem that was not expected to occur so quickly or affect so many. The problem: there are not enough radio frequencies available to serve all the products and services coming to consumers, businesses and public safety agencies. The adage of “packing ten pounds into a five pound bag” kind of fits the predicament the FCC is in.

The FCC had few options. They could reallocate licensed organizations to different bands or frequencies. However, this would likely require the purchase of new equipment, making this change extremely expensive for the operators (you and me).

Another option for that overloaded five-pound bag is for the FCC to change the size of what is trying to squeeze in that bag. The FCC has

The FCC had few options. They could reallocate licensed organizations to different bands or frequencies.

decided that instead of trying to fit ten one-pound units into the bag, they would try fitting ten *half-pound* units. To accomplish this, the FCC needed to decrease the size of the bandwidths (the “pounds”) that were trying to fit into the radio spectrum (the “bag”).

Now for the technical jargon: The first step for the FCC was to cut the current spacing, or what is referred to as bandwidth, in half. Currently, frequencies in the 155-170MHz (VHF)

and the 421-512 MHz (UHF) bands are allowed to have a bandwidth of 25 kHz. By cutting the bandwidth from 25 kHz to 12.5 kHz, the FCC effectively doubled the number of frequencies that can be used within a given radio band. As technology continues to use more wireless features, the FCC will have to meet the ever-growing communication demands by decreasing the bandwidth size *again* to 6.25 kHz (now we’re down to 20 quarter-pound units in that five-pound bag). The result is that each time the FCC cuts the bandwidth in half, they effectively double the amount of frequencies that can be utilized within a given band.

To accomplish this, the FCC is requiring all Public Safety and Industrial/Business licensees using 25 kHz bandwidth in the 155-170MHz (VHF) and the 421-512 MHz (UHF) bands to migrate to minimum 12.5 kHz efficiency by January 1, 2013. (Ref: Private land mobile radio (LMR) systems (FCC Part 90)-including municipal government, State, and local public safety)

I'm sure you're still asking “What does this mean to me?” In general, what it means is that if you have an FCC license to operate in the those above mentioned frequencies, you are **REQUIRED** to ensure that your equipment is capable of and configured to use the 12.5 kHz or better frequency spacing (6.25 kHz) by the 2013 deadline. Many organizations who have purchased radios that were manufactured and certified within the last ten years may already be compli-

ant capable but will still need to ensure that their equipment will function properly with the new narrower bandwidth. The best way to get answers on your equipment is by contacting your radio equipment provider and providing them with the make and model of your radio equip-



ment. Your provider should then be able to help you through this process of ensuring compliance. Furthermore, the organization must apply for new narrowband licenses or modify existing licenses while justifying channel requirements by that deadline.

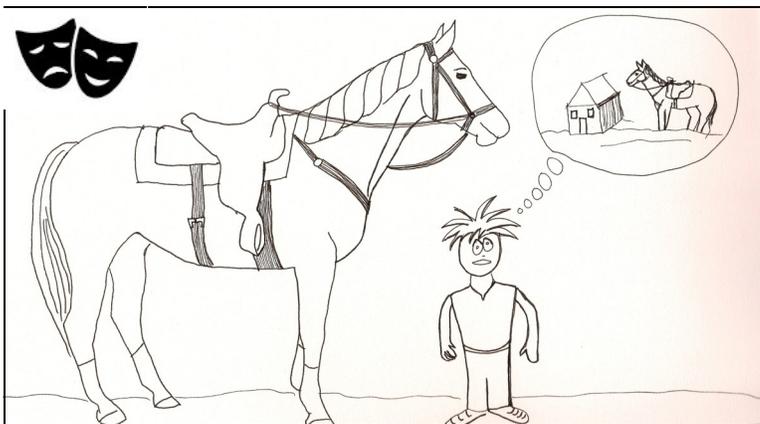
If your radio system is inter-operable with other agencies or other organizations’ radio systems, you should coordinate conversions, activities and plans with those agencies or organizations to insure that radio inter-operability capabilities are factored into any narrowbanding conversion plan.

One source of further detailed information can be found here:

<http://siec.wa.gov/links/files/narrowbanding.pdf>.

An FCC workshop held on this subject can also be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdV5DC5Kb7o>.



When you are 8....

At a recent safety event for a group of children, one little boy learned that the Mounted Posse horse he was petting was the same age he was - 8 years old. His eyes grew larger and larger, and he finally raised his hand to ask a question.

“How big is he going to get?” He asked, pointing to the horse. It suddenly became clear to everyone that the poor lad had visions of the horse growing at the same rate as himself for another ten years!



CSI K-9s – Utilizing Canines at Crime Scenes

By Wendy Deane
HRD K-9

Most law enforcement agencies have heard of search and rescue dogs that assist in searches for missing hunters, children or Alzheimer’s victims in the woods and in urban environments. Many agencies also know that search and recovery dogs can find the remains of subjects that have been missing in the woods for weeks, months or even years, but did you know that there are human remains detection dogs that can not only search those woods months or years later, but that they can also locate a homicide scene for you in a building, vehicle or urban environment?

K-9 teams that have gone through specialized training can help in locating a number of things that would assist in criminal investigations. Things like graves in a crawl space or basement, even if covered in concrete. The scene where a homicide took place even if the body is no longer there, based on residual odor. The dogs can still detect the odor of human remains after an area has been cleaned, such as floors, walls, and ceilings.

Imagine using a vehicle line-up to see if a body was transported in a vehicle days, weeks or months later. They can even help to locate the bloody weapon that has been wiped clean on a wall of other tools, or that might have been tossed out into the environment.

Handlers receive continuous training and yearly certification from Master Trainers from national organizations such as NAPWDA (North American Police Word Dog Assoc.), LETS, Int’l (Law



Enforcement Training Specialists, Int’l), IPWDA (International Police Work Dog Assoc.), and NASAR (National Association of Search & Rescue). Training is received not only in k9 handling skills, but also in crime scene preservation, keeping proper training logs, writing search reports that will stand up in court, and court room testimony. Much of this is learned from law enforcement personnel, to better serve the law enforcement community.

What to look for in a good K-9 team:

- Able to provide a C.V. (curriculum vitae) or SAR resume of their experience and certifications

- ✓ *K-9 reliability should not be established by resume or C.V.*
- Able to provide references
- Able to provide a copy of a search report they’ve done to be sure it meets your standards
- Able to provide access to their training logs
- Allows you to attend a training with them or attends a training of yours to get an idea of what they can do
- Should have a recent federal background check
 - ✓ *Civilian members of NAPWDA and IPWDA are required to provide a background check yearly as well as have a law enforcement member in good standing sponsor them*
- Doesn’t claim a 100% success rate
 - ✓ *No team is perfect*
 - ✓ *K-9 teams are used to eliminate areas as often as to find clues / remains*

A well trained human remains detection dog team can be of great service to a criminal investigation. Feel free to contact myself or any of the SRRRMN member K-9 teams with any questions of how we can be of service to your agency.

HRD K9, LLC
Hrd_k9@yahoo.com

Check out our upcoming events:

SRRRMN Events

January 28, 2012

Cass County Ice Rescue Class

February 25, 2012

General Membership Meeting

April 14, 2012

General Membership Meeting

May 4-6, 2012

VCC Search Mgmt Seminar

June 22-24, 2012

MUSTANG Weekend



SRRRMN
341 Perch Lane
Winsted, MN 55395

TO: