

MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

Duty Officer (DO) Responsibilities Policy

I. Purpose

- A. This policy, developed by the Board of Directors of the Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MASAR), defines the responsibilities of MASAR Duty Officers when activating and dispatching Maine's volunteer Search and Rescue (SAR) resources.
- B. A person who agrees, in writing, to fulfill these responsibilities, and who is accepted by the MASAR Resource Director, shall be considered a qualified Duty Officer.

II. Background

- A. The Maine Warden Service has been charged with the statutory authority, via Title 12, MRSA, Chap. 903, Section 10105, to perform search and rescue missions for all those persons that become lost, injured, or stranded on the inland waters and woodlands of the State of Maine. To carry out this mandate they have the authority to call on any resource they deem appropriate to the successful accomplishment of the mission.
- B. Prior to the establishment of the MASAR Duty Officer system, the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's SAR Coordinator was responsible for contacting Maine's volunteer SAR resources. This process took hours and detracted from his other SAR responsibilities. Therefore, MASAR established the DO system to assist the Maine Warden Service by handling the resource notifications itself. Since then, the Duty Officer system has been expanded to respond to all legitimate state agency requests for SAR resources.
- C. The MASAR DO represents MASAR to the requesting agency, and is a crucial link in the provision of appropriate SAR resources to an incident in a timely manner.

III. MASAR DO Dispatch Responsibilities

- A. MASAR Duty Officers shall dispatch volunteer SAR resources for only the following agencies:
 - 1. Maine Warden Service
 - 2. Baxter State Park Authority
 - 3. Acadia National Park
 - 4. Maine Marine Patrol
- B. When an agency requests SAR assistance, the MASAR DO will activate SAR resources based on the following criteria:
 - 1. The first resources activated shall be those geographically closest to the incident;

2. Resources further away shall be activated, as necessary, until the desired number of personnel is obtained;
 3. Other resources may be put on standby as the incident type, severity, and available resources dictate;
 4. In all cases, the DO will notify all MASAR units that there is an incident in progress.
- C. If an agency requests resources not certified by MASAR, the DO shall:
1. Note that uncertified resources were requested;
 2. List the uncertified resources;
 3. Include the name and position (e.g. job title) of the requesting agency's representative.
- D. When notified by an Incident Commander, or the agency contact, that an operation has concluded, the MASAR DO is responsible for ensuring that all MASAR units are informed that the mission is over.
- E. For each incident, the MASAR DO shall log the following information:
1. When the DO system was activated;
 2. All information provided about the subject;
 3. The location of the incident;
 4. The types and quantities of resources requested;
 5. The types and quantities of resources responding.
- F. For each incident, the Duty Officer shall prepare a standard MASAR Duty Officer Report from the incident log and shall store it on D4H.

IV. MASAR DO System Responsibilities

- A. The incoming Duty Officer is responsible for doing the following when he or she goes on duty:
1. Send a test page on Sunday evening;
 2. Update the D4H whiteboard with the incoming DO contact information.
- B. The Duty Officer going off duty is responsible for ensuring the test page is sent. He or she is not relieved of his or her Duty Officer responsibilities until the test page is sent and the whiteboard is updated.
- C. If a Duty Officer will not be able to take his or her duty, it is his or her responsibility to find a qualified DO as a replacement.
1. The replacement's name and contact information must be provided to:
 - a. The current Duty Officer;
 - b. The Warden Service SAR Coordinator;
 - c. The IF&W Safety Officer;
 - d. The MASAR Resource Director;
 - e. The Waldo County Regional Communications Center (WCRCC) (at 207-338-2040).

2. The replacement's name and contact information also must be posted on the D4H Whiteboard.
- D. If, for any reason, a Duty Officer can no longer perform his or her duties, he or she must pass the responsibility to another qualified Duty Officer.
 1. If this occurs during a SAR mission, the current Duty Officer must notify all responding resources and the Incident Commander or requesting agency contact.
- V. Unit Responsibilities**
- A. These are stated in the current versions of the MASAR Board of Directors' "Unit Dispatch and Response Policy" and "Unit Rights and Responsibilities Policy".
- VI. Duty Officer Procedures**
- A. When managing agency requests and dispatching resources, the DO shall follow the current version of the MASAR Dispatching Procedure.

VII. Acceptance of Duty Officer Responsibilities

- A. The signature below indicates that the Duty Officer agrees to accept the responsibilities defined above:

Signature

Date

Printed name