

# MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

## Search Team Member Certification Standard

### I. Introduction

- A. The Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MASAR) is dedicated to providing a centralized clearinghouse of volunteer search and rescue (SAR) resources for the State of Maine. To this end, MASAR has developed the following standard for members of ground search teams used in SAR operations.
- B. Except where allowed by MASAR policy, this standard defines the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for a member of a MASAR-certified unit to participate in search and rescue operations managed by the Maine Warden Service.
- C. Testing of an individual for certification may be done within the unit of which the individual is a member, utilizing the objectives and procedures provided by MASAR. Testing of an individual may also be done by the instructor of a MASAR-recognized BASAR course. An individual who is not a member of a unit must apply to the MASAR Standards Committee for testing.
- D. These standards apply to wilderness search only. Other search specialties shall be evaluated based on additional specific standards and evaluation tests accepted by the MASAR Standards Committee.
- E. A person certified under this standard meets or exceeds the minimum training requirements defined in ASTM F-2209, "Standard Guide for Training of Land Search Team Member".

### II. Certification and Recertification

- A. Certification
  1. Search Team Member certification is issued only by the MASAR Standards Committee.
  2. The initial certification is valid for three years.
  3. Certification must be requested in writing, sent to the chairman of the MASAR Standards Committee. The request must come from one of the following:
    - a) an officer of a MASAR-certified unit;
    - b) an instructor of a Maine BASAR course, or a MASAR-accepted equivalent;
    - c) an individual seeking certification.
- B. Recertification
  1. Each Search Team Member certification must be renewed every three years.
  2. Recertification is issued only by the MASAR Standards Committee.
  3. Recertification must be requested in writing, sent to the chairman of the MASAR Standards Committee. The request must come from one of the following:
    - a) an officer of a MASAR-certified unit;

- b) an instructor of a Maine BASAR course, or MASAR-accepted equivalent;
- c) an individual seeking certification.

### III. Documentation Required for Initial Certification

- A. For initial certification the applicant must provide the Standards Committee with the following documentation:
  - 1. Proof of knowledge and field competency by one of the following:
    - a) Successful completion of a Maine BASAR course<sup>1</sup> within the past two years.
    - b) Successful completion of a MASAR-accepted equivalent<sup>2</sup> to the Maine BASAR course within the past two years.
    - c) A score of 75% or better on a written test, and written proof of the successful completion of all field evaluation objectives.
      - (1) A copy of the written test will be provided by the MASAR Education Director.
      - (2) The field evaluation testing objectives are defined in Appendix C of this standard.
      - (3) The written test and testing of the field evaluation objectives shall both be administered by a MASAR-certified unit.
  - 2. Written documentation from a unit officer showing that applicant has a complete ready pack, equipped per MASAR recommendations in Appendix D.
  - 3. Certificate of completion of IS-100\* "Introduction to Incident Command System".
  - 4. Current certification in basic first aid, or a higher level of emergency medical training.
    - a) The first aid course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
  - 5. Current certification in CPR from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or an equivalent organization.
    - a) The course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
    - b) The course must include training in adult, child, and infant CPR.
    - c) Inclusion of two-rescuer CPR training in the course is recommended.
  - 6. Proof that within the past six months the applicant has successfully completed one of the aerobic fitness evaluation tests in Appendix A of this standard, or an equivalent test.
  - 7. Letter of recommendation from a unit officer or the instructor of a

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1 Successful completion of the Maine BASAR course includes completing the on-line BASAR course, passing the written test, and demonstrating all of the field evaluation skills, including navigation.

2 An equivalent to the Maine BASAR course must include all of the training defined in Appendix C of this standard, and must provide proof that the attendee successfully demonstrated all of the field evaluation skills, including navigation, in that Appendix. A syllabus for the completed course, along with proof of completion, must be provided to the MASAR Standards Committee with the request for the attendee's certification.

MASAR-accepted course.

#### **IV. Documentation Required for Recertification**

- A. For recertification, the Standards Committee must be provided with the following documentation:
1. Proof of current MASAR certification as a Search Team Member.
  2. Proof of continuing training, as shown by one of the following:
    - a) Written records from an officer of a MASAR-certified unit attesting that the applicant has participated in a unit-approved SAR training program which includes the following:
      - (1) Actual training time of no less than 12 hours each year.
        - (a) Time spent actively searching during a mission counts as training time.
      - (2) Total training time since the last certification of no less than 36 hours.
      - (3) More than 50% of the training in the field, as opposed to in the classroom or on-line.
    - b) Successful completion of a Maine BASAR course<sup>3</sup>, or its MASAR-accepted equivalent<sup>4</sup>, within the preceding two years.
  3. Current certification in basic first aid, or a higher level of emergency medical training.
    - a) The first aid course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
  4. Current certification in CPR from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or equivalent organization.
    - a) The course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
    - b) The course must include training in adult, child, and infant CPR.
    - c) Inclusion in the course of two-rescuer CPR training is recommended.
  5. Proof that within the six months preceding the request for recertification the applicant successfully completed one of the aerobic fitness evaluation tests in Appendix A of this standard, or an equivalent test.
  6. Request for recertification from a unit officer, or the instructor of a MASAR-accepted training course.
- B. The Standards Committee reserves the option to independently test applicants with an evaluation team of its own choosing.

#### **V. Suspension and Revocation of Certification**

- A. Suspension

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3 Successful completion of the Maine BASAR course includes completing the on-line BASAR course, passing the written test, and demonstrating all of the field evaluation skills, including navigation.

4 An equivalent to the Maine BASAR course must include all of the training defined in Appendix C of this standard, and must provide proof that the attendee successfully demonstrated all of the field evaluation skills, including navigation, in that Appendix. A syllabus for the completed course, along with proof of completion, must be provided to the MASAR Standards Committee with the request for the attendee's certification.

1. Any person who is temporarily unable to work in the field for an extended period (usually greater than six months) should request inactive status from the Standards Committee.
  2. The Standards Committee may suspend any certified search team member who does not request inactive status when some deficiency significantly reduces that person's effectiveness in the field.
    - a) When a report of someone's deficiency is brought to the attention of the Standards Committee, the committee will consult with that person and their unit's training officer before taking any action.
    - b) The person in question will have the right to challenge any report of deficiency. He or she may provide written, oral, and/or recorded testimony in his or her support.
    - c) The committee may take one of the following courses of action when informed of a ground search team member's deficiency.
      - (1) The committee may confirm that person's continued certification.
      - (2) The committee may revoke that person's certification.
    - d) In the event that a search team member's certification is revoked, that person must complete the recertification process before once again taking part in search operations.
    - e) In all instances, the person in question shall have the right to request a field test, or the relevant parts thereof, in order to confirm his or her certification.
- B. Revocation
1. The committee shall have the option of permanently revoking a search team member's certification in the following circumstances:
    - a) Retirement of that person from active service.
    - b) Serious misconduct on the part of that person which endangers the operation or credibility of the SAR enterprise.

## VI. Appeals

- A. A person that fails any test in this standard when that test is provided by the MASAR Standards Committee may appeal the decision to the MASAR Standards Committee.
- B. A person that fails any test in this standard when that test is administered by the MASAR Standards Committee may appeal the decision to the MASAR Board.
- C. Appeals must be made in the following fashion:
  1. The appeal must be submitted in writing.
  2. The appeal must be postmarked no later than 15 days after the failed test(s) or receipt of the contested decision(s).
  3. A copy of the appeal must be sent to all members of the MASAR Standards Committee, or to the members of the MASAR Board of Directors in the case of an appeal of a decision of the MASAR Standards Committee.
  4. The appeal shall provide sufficient information for the Standards Committee or MASAR Board to make a decision. Such information may

include but is not limited to:

- a) Affidavits
  - b) Written statements of relevant parties, witnesses, and experts.
  - c) Complete description of the reason for the appeal.
  - d) The suggested remedy.
- D. The Standards Committee or the MASAR Board will have a total of 60 calendar days in which to investigate, obtain testimony (if necessary), question the parties involved, obtain outside professional assistance, or take other actions which the committee deems necessary and appropriate in the circumstances.
- E. The decision by the MASAR Standards Committee or MASAR Board will be written and sent to the appellant by certified mail (return receipt).
- F. The decision of the MASAR Board will be final.

## **VII. Acceptance and Amendment**

- A. This standard will take effect immediately upon acceptance by majority vote of the MASAR membership present at a regularly scheduled MASAR meeting.
- B. The MASAR Standards Committee may recommend amendments to the MASAR membership to improve or expand this standard.
1. The committee will present suggestions for amendment in writing to the MASAR membership.
    - a) MASAR members will have 30 days during which to comment on proposed amendments.
    - b) Amendments will be discussed and voted on at the next scheduled MASAR meeting after the comment period has ended.
  2. Amendments will be accepted by a majority vote of the MASAR membership present at a regularly scheduled MASAR meeting.
- C. Any MASAR Organizational Member may propose amendments by the same process outlined in Section V, Part B.

\*ICS-100 may be taken on-line, or taught by a certified instructor. The on-line course may be found at the web site of the Federal Emergency Management Agency: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>. The course materials and test may also be obtained from a county EMA office or the National Park Service.