



# SEARCH and RESCUE COUNCIL of NEW JERSEY

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## Land Searcher I Standard Guide, Policy and Practices

v.4.2

1/21/2014

This document provides for the governance of the standard guide, policies and practices of Land Search I Team Member.

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## **OVERVIEW**

The SARC NJ has identified the need to create and maintain a qualification system within the state for land search assets. This enables the state through the NJ State Police to accredit the SARC NJ as the regulatory agency for all SARC NJ assets. The Land Searcher I Standard Guide, Policy and Practices program provides for a method of training, qualification, requalification and tracking of qualifications.

## **STANDARD**

The council wide accepted standard guide for all land search assets is the ASTM 2209 (Standard Guide for Training of Level 1 Land Search Team Member.)

## **TRAINING**

SARC NJ member teams are required to provide training to their membership that meets or exceeds ASTM 2209.

## **QUALIFICATION**

The SARC NJ provides a qualification program for all member teams. The following qualifications apply:

1. All personnel affiliated with the SARC NJ shall qualify through the SARC NJ to be eligible to serve as a land search asset.
2. Once qualified, the person will be issued a qualification card by the SARC NJ.
3. Land search personnel should present the qualification card to command post upon checking in at a search to allow the command post to be able to ascertain that all personnel on scene meet the minimum requirement.
4. Qualification is current for a three year time period. Searchers are required to re-qualify every three years.
5. If a searcher has not re-qualified in a five year time period from the initial qualification or any renewal, they will be required to train and qualify as an initial qualification instead of a re-qualification.
6. Written examination. The SARC NJ maintains a 100 question bank. Prospective land searchers must pass a 30 question exam drawn from the question bank.
7. To pass the written examination a grade of 75% or better must be attained.
8. Alternative Exams: The following written exams are accepted by the SAREC NJ, National Parks Service, NASAR SAR Tech III, DCNR Field Team Member or other nationally recognized exam acceptable to the SARC NJ.
9. Field evaluation. Prospective land searchers must pass a field evaluation conducted at a council wide field exercise by a SARC NJ accepted Land Searcher I evaluator.
10. Failure to meet qualification. If a prospective searcher fails to pass the written examination or field evaluation the prospective searcher may attempt to qualify again at the next available council training event after remediation of the delinquent information has been accomplished.
11. K9 handlers must take the same written exam as other searchers prior to being considered qualified as a land searcher.

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12. K9 handlers may conduct the field evaluation in conjunction with the K9 field evaluation.
13. Nothing in this guide prevents a K9 team from being deployed as a K9 team provided that the K9 handler has passed a K9 evaluation that includes all ASTM 2209 requirements.

### **RECERTIFICATION**

The following rules apply to the re-qualification process.

1. All searchers must recertify every three years, or sooner if desired, to maintain qualification and be deployable as a search asset
2. Written examination. The SARCNJ maintains a 100 question bank. Searchers attempting to re-qualify must pass a 20 question exam drawn from the question bank. The question bank is the same bank as that used for the initial qualification.
3. To pass the written examination a grade of 75% or better must be attained.
4. Field Continuing Education. All searchers must participate in a council wide land search field exercise conducted by a SARCNJ accepted Land Searcher I evaluator.
5. Failure to pass the written examination will result in the searcher being considered not qualified until passing the exam.
6. If a searcher fails to re-qualify in five years from the original qualification, then the searcher must repeat the initial qualification process.

### **EVALUATORS**

The council will maintain a list of no fewer than 8 land searcher evaluators. The evaluators should be reasonably evenly spread among the SARCNJ member teams. No team shall have more than 3 evaluators on the evaluator committee. Evaluators shall be highly experienced and qualified members of the council and come from varying backgrounds. When conducting an evaluation, one independent evaluator, from another SARCNJ team, must be present to oversee the skills testing portion of the qualification process.

### **SCHEDULE**

The evaluator committee will maintain an annual schedule of at least 3 training/evaluation opportunities. The venue may vary (WinterTech, PSAREX, or council training event hosted by a member team). The locations should be evenly spread throughout the state to enable training opportunities in varying terrain and conditions.

### **MUTUAL SUPPORT**

Any searcher from another jurisdiction that meets similar testing and training standards in compliance with ASTM 2209 is considered similarly qualified in NJ and may serve as a search asset in the capacity they are trained in that state.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

As of the initial date of the acceptance of this program the burden of qualifying every member of the council is a significant and potentially unmanageable requirement. Further immediate implementation of this program could mean that previously qualified, talented

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available SAR assets would not be available for real world searches until the requirements of the program are met. Therefore, as of January 1, 2014 all previously qualified land search personnel and all other disciplines are considered qualified (qualification cards to be issued). These personnel will have to re-qualify within a two year time period beginning 30 days after the approval of the Land Searcher I Standard Guide, Policy and Practices.

### **OVERSIGHT**

All aspects of this program are considered to be eligible for oversight by the NJ State Police. Therefore thorough record keeping practices is necessary. Training/evaluation events must be published well in advance to allow the necessary oversight.

### **APPROVAL**

Having been duly accepted by a majority vote of the membership of the SAR Council of New Jersey, the standard guide, policies and practices stated herein are considered governing for all member teams of the SAR Council of New Jersey and therefore all members of those teams.

Approved on: November 19, 2013

Diana Akeret  
President  
SARCNJ