86-015 Mountain Rescue Team Operational Guideline

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE

The overriding objective of this Department is to provide best possible assistance to lost or injured persons. To do so requires a cooperative effort on the part of numerous units of this Department. It is of extreme importance that searches and rescues be initiated in an atmosphere of cooperation and that all necessary resources of the Department are properly utilized.

EMERGENCY SERVICES DETAIL (E.S.D.)

The primary purpose of the Emergency Services Detail is to provide the Department with a group of personnel who are highly skilled in a wide variety of search and rescue techniques spanning land, water, and air.

- They are available to respond to all stations. Although mountain stations have Mountain Rescue Teams assigned, **E.S.D. shall be consulted and shall respond on all search and rescue calls**.
- They shall assist Departmental units in criminal investigations wherein their skills are needed regardless of area.
- **On search and rescue operations they shall advise the incident commander regarding the level of response necessary to handle the operation**.
- **They shall provide patrol of mountainous areas as needed or upon the request of station commanders**.
- They shall provide helicopter observers and helicopter air rescue personnel.
- They shall provide trained personnel to be crew chiefs on all air rescue helicopter responses.
- They shall provide training in their special skills to regular and reserve units, as directed.
- They shall maintain proficiency in their assigned tasks by engaging in regular training programs, including training with Departmental units having similar responsibilities.
- They shall develop and expand their paramedic responsibility.
- They shall develop the capacity of the Reserve Medical Company.
- They shall develop the capability of the Reserve Marine Company. They shall serve as the primary dive team for the Department, and provide instruction and training for other sanctioned Department Dive Teams.
- They shall provide paramedics for all activations of Rescue Mountain Rescue Teams (not to include practice or training sessions.)
- They shall perform other assignments as directed by proper authority.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAMS

The primary purpose of volunteer Mountain Rescue Teams is to provide a specific station with a group of personnel who are highly skilled in mountain search and rescue techniques.

- Station coordinators, or in their absence a trained assistant coordinator, station supervisor **or member of E.S.D.** shall respond and have overall responsibility of the search or rescue effort.
  - Mountain Rescue Teams will be assigned a search or rescue mission by the coordinator or person in charge of the operation.
  - The person in overall charge of a search or rescue mission shall ensure that a timely notification to the Emergency Services Detail has been made by the concerned station.
- Their primary responsibility is to provide mountain search and rescue for a given station area. Each team shall be the primary responding unit in their respective station area.
- They are a supplemental unit to the Department's other Mountain Rescue Teams.
- They shall perform rescue patrols as directed by their station commanders.
- They shall be responsible for establishing a procedure to provide immediate status reports on all searches and rescues within their area of responsibility. Status reports shall include involvement of manpower, equipment, and forecast of extended needs, together with other pertinent information. This procedure will be developed by Mountain Rescue
- Teams and be subject to approval by the Sheriff.
- Mountain Rescue Team members may perform as helicopter observers on search missions, **upon satisfactory completion of Departmental training conducted be E.S.D. and Aero Bureau**.
- Mountain Rescue Team members may perform as air rescue men on active rescue operations upon satisfactory completion of Departmental training, **conducted by E.S.D. and Aero Bureau**.
- They shall maintain proficiency in their assigned tasks by engaging in regular training programs, including training with Departmental units having similar responsibilities.
- They shall perform other assignments as directed by proper authority.

AERO BUREAU

The aero Bureau provides a service to ground search and rescue units by flying search missions, engaging in actual rescue by airlift, or transporting concerned personnel to and from field operations.

- Aero Bureau shall respond to all search and rescues, safe flight conditions prevailing, **as determined by the pilot in command who is responding to the call**.
- Upon entering a search or rescue area, they shall report their presence to the station coordinator or person in overall charge of activity for appropriate direction.
- Persons assigned to air rescue shall respond with the helicopter.
- They shall develop techniques with Emergency Services Detail and Mountain Rescue Teams to improve rescue responses and operations through use of helicopters.
- They shall maintain proficiency in their assigned tasks by engaging in regular training programs, including training with Departmental units having similar responsibilities.