



**Eastern Shore  
Ground Search & Rescue  
(ESGS&R)**

**Operations**

**SAFETY MANUAL**

**- 1<sup>st</sup> DRAFT-**

**December 2005**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	4
REQUIREMENT FOR VACCINATIONS.....	4
SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS .....	4
<b>POLICY - FOR ALL PERSONNEL WORKING IN WOODED AREAS &amp; ON, OR IN THE WATER .....</b>	<b>5</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	5
SEARCH MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES .....	5
SEARCHER RESPONSIBILITIES .....	5
GENERAL RULES .....	5
EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE OPERATION .....	6
<b>ESGS&amp;R SAFETY GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	7
GENERAL RULES .....	7
SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS .....	8
PROCEDURES .....	8
<i>Task Review and Risk Assessment</i> .....	8
<i>Footwear</i> .....	8
<i>Thermal Protection</i> .....	8
<i>Eye Protection</i> .....	8
<i>Logging</i> .....	8
TRANSPORTATION OF MATERIAL, PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT TO A SEARCH SITE.....	9
<i>Fuelling</i> .....	9
GUIDELINE SIGN-OFF.....	9
<b>ESGS&amp;R VEHICLE POLICY GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>10</b>
VEHICLE SAFETY.....	10
RESPONSIBILITY .....	11
<i>The Person in charge is responsible for:</i> .....	11
<i>Drivers are responsible for:</i> .....	11
OPERATION.....	11
<i>Checks prior to departure</i> .....	11
<b>RECOMMENDED TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND OR COURSES.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>BASIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT &amp; CLOTHING.....</b>	<b>14</b>
FOOTWEAR.....	13
EYEWEAR .....	14
SUMMER WEAR.....	14
EQUIPMENT / SAFETY GEAR.....	14
<b>HAZARD/ACCIDENT REPORTS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1 .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2 .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## **Introduction**

The information contained in this document has been assembled to assist ESGS&R volunteers in achieving a safer and healthier environment in which to carry out the operation. The intent is to allow ESGS&R volunteers to perform all the fieldwork in a manner, which considers personal safety as the first priority.

It is realized that these guidelines require task specific training and personal protection equipment. Before performing any field task, each member, as a minimum, must have knowledge of the task to be performed, and must have available and use the personal protective equipment required for the task. Even with the required knowledge and equipment, if the team member still feels unsafe with the task to be performed, that person is obligated to express their concerns to the person in charge, and may choose not to perform the task. Clearly, the onus is on the team member to use common sense in determining if they consider a situation safe or unsafe.

It is the responsibility of the person in charge to ensure that training and direction for achieving a safe and healthy search environment is given to all team members. However, each of us is also responsible for our own safety every day. Emergency plans are to be preplanned for the tasks to be performed and are to be practiced to ensure maximum preparedness in the event of an emergency.

The work undertaken by the team must follow the methods described in these procedures to ensure maximum safety and efficiency. It is expected that the procedures will change from time-to-time as tasks change. Therefore, standards will require modification, which will be achieved through input from the personnel performing the duties. You may also become aware of the need for the development of new procedures. Please inform the person in charge of changes required for existing procedures and the need for new procedures.

## **Requirement for Vaccinations**

A Tetanus shot is recommended for all individuals who work in wooded areas and around water. The vaccination is good for 10 years.

## **Special Health Concerns**

Individuals with special health concerns (e.g. extreme food, drug or insect bite allergies, diabetes, asthma, back problems etc.) should communicate these to the person in charge and the team they are working with so that the team may provide more informed assistance in an emergency situation.

# **POLICY - FOR all Personnel Working in Wooded Areas & on, or in the Water**

## **Introduction**

This policy applies to all personnel working in wooded areas, and on, or in the water.

## **Search Manager Responsibilities**

- Ensure that the team is aware of hazards and have been instructed on how to perform tasks properly.
- Ensure that appropriate safety equipment is provided.
- Ensure that an Emergency Plan pertinent to operational activities is in place.

## **Searchers Responsibilities**

- Use such safety materials, equipment, devices and clothing that are intended for the person's protection and supplied by the team.
- Follow prescribed procedures with respect to the safety and health of all persons.
- Take all reasonable and necessary precautions to ensure the safety and health of the searcher, and any person likely to be affected by the searchers actions or omissions.

## **General Rules**

General rules of conduct have been set for all operational activities. These activities are considered to have the potential for seriously affecting the safety and health of the team's personnel. Therefore, personnel shall observe the following rules whenever carrying out their duties.

1. No unnecessary risks are to be taken when performing a task.
2. Horseplay, practical jokes, and other similar activities shall not be engaged in if they create the potential for inadvertent injury.
3. Safety guards and protective devices on equipment and machinery shall remain in place, except for cleaning, maintaining and repairing purposes. They shall be replaced immediately after cleaning, maintaining, or repairing.
4. Equipment and machinery shall be shut-off and locked-out when cleaning, maintaining, or repairing.
5. All hazardous occurrences, including near misses, occurring in the area of operation shall be reported immediately.
6. All unsafe conditions and sub-standard practices shall be reported to the person in charge immediately.

7. Personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be worn and shall not be altered in any way.
8. Drivers and passengers of team vehicles shall wear seat belts while the vehicle is in motion.
9. Alcohol and illegal drugs are not allowed on any site of operation. No ESGS&R personnel will be allowed to participate if under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or if prescription or non-prescription drugs impair their ability.
10. ESGS&R personnel shall not participate with members of other groups, or any other personnel, if those persons are under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or if their ability is impaired by prescription or non-prescription drugs.
11. Directions given by the search manager in regards to the prevention of accidents, injuries, and work related illnesses must be followed.

## **Equipment and Vehicle Operation**

The maintenance of ESGS&R vehicles, equipment, and tools is an area where hazard reduction and prevention can be accomplished to a high degree. One goal of a preventative maintenance program is to prevent injuries resulting from unexpected breakdowns or failures. Highly maintained facilities, machinery, tools, equipment, etc. also contribute to a more productive search environment.

ESGS&R vehicles, equipment, and tools will be maintained in such a way so as to prevent the development of hazards that may endanger team members. The team is responsible for our own preventative maintenance program based on:

- Manufacturer's maintenance specifications or recommendations;
- Legal requirements, e.g. Motor Vehicle Act, etc.; and

In addition to preventative maintenance, team members shall ensure that ESGS&R vehicles and equipment are operated in a safe and responsible manner as outlined in the manual of the vehicle/equipment being used. Vehicles must also be operated in compliance with the Motor Vehicle Act and drivers must ensure that every vehicle they operate is properly licensed.

# ESGS&R SAFETY GUIDELINES

## Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to raise awareness and assist team members in safely carrying out the objectives of the team. The intent is to allow team members to perform their duties in a manner, which considers personal safety as the first priority.

These guidelines may require task specific training and personal protection equipment. Even with the required knowledge and equipment, if the team member still feels unsafe with the task to be performed, the team member is obligated to express their concerns to the person in charge of the operation and may choose not to perform the requested task. Clearly, the onus is on the individual to use common sense in determining if a situation is safe or unsafe.

It is the responsibility of the search manager to ensure that training and direction for achieving a safe and healthy workplace is given to all team members. However, each of us is also responsible for our own safety every day.

To ensure maximum task related safety and efficiency, it is expected that the procedures will change from time to time as requirements change. Therefore, input for modifications required to the existing procedures is critical for ensuring consistent safety standards. You may also become aware of the need for the development of new procedures. Please inform the person in charge, of changes required to the existing procedures and any need for new procedures.

## General Rules

Operational activities have the potential for seriously affecting the safety and health of team members. Therefore, team members shall observe the following rules whenever carrying out their duties.

1. No unnecessary risks are to be taken when performing a task.
2. Horseplay, practical jokes and other similar activities shall not be engaged in if they create the potential for inadvertent injury.
3. Safety guards and protective devices on equipment and machinery shall remain in place, except for cleaning, maintaining and repairing purposes. They shall be replaced immediately after cleaning, maintaining or repairing.
4. All hazardous occurrences, including near misses, shall be reported immediately.
5. All unsafe conditions and sub-standard work practices shall be reported immediately.
6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be worn and shall not be altered in any way.
7. Drivers and passengers of ESGS&R vehicles must wear seat belts while the vehicle is in motion.
8. Alcohol and illegal drugs are not allowed on search sites. No team members will be allowed to participate if under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or if prescription or non-prescription drugs impair their ability.

9. ESGS&R team members shall not participate with members of other groups, or any other team members, if those persons are under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or if their ability is impaired by prescription or non-prescription drugs.
10. Directions given by the search manager in regards to the prevention of accidents, injuries and related illnesses must be followed.

## **Special Health Concerns**

Individuals with special health concerns (e.g. Extreme food, drug or insect bite allergies, diabetes, asthma, back problems etc.) should communicate these to the search manager and team they are working with so that the team members may provide more informed assistance in an emergency situation.

## **Procedures**

It is the responsibility of the person in charge to see that the procedures listed below are followed.

### *Task Review and Risk Assessment*

Prior to conducting operations, the officer in charge shall review the required task and assess the risks.

### *Footwear*

The use of appropriate type footwear for seasonal conditions must be worn while conducting search operations. Reporting for a search wearing sneakers at any time of the year is prohibited. Team members wearing unsuitable footwear will not be permitted to participate in the search.

### *Thermal Protection*

Where hypothermic conditions exist or can be reasonably anticipated, team members are advised to have and wear an acceptable form of thermal protection.

### *Eye Protection*

Appropriate eye protection shall be worn based on prevailing conditions.

### *Logging*

All operations shall be logged as to the time departed and the return to base. Entries shall include the number of persons.

Non-trained personnel shall be provided with a safety briefing prior to departure.

## **Transportation of Material, Personnel and Equipment to a Search Site**

The improper / unauthorized operation of equipment can result in serious injury and or death to the operator and other persons on the team, loss of materials, damage to equipment, environmental damage and jeopardize the operation.

### **Fuelling**

Gasoline fumes are heavier than air and are highly explosive therefore all enclosed spaces should be well ventilated if they contain fuel.

#### **FUELLING PRECAUTIONS:**

1. Shut off engines, electrical devices and equipment (including cellular telephones), and close all windows and doors before fuelling.
2. No smoking and extinguish all open flames.
3. Do not use electrical switches during fuelling.
4. Do not leave nozzle unattended during fuelling.
5. Do not overfill.
6. Clean up any spillage.

### **Guideline Sign-off**

All team members will sign a copy of these guidelines, signifying they have read the aforementioned guidelines:

# ESGS&R VEHICLE POLICY GUIDELINES

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure the safety of personnel while operating ESGS&R vehicles.

The objective of the policy is to ensure ESGS&R vehicles are operated in a fashion, which provides maximum support for team operations, the environment and any other identified objectives.

Motor vehicles shall be provided/used only when required to conduct team business. Motor vehicles shall be managed in accordance with the principles of economy, prudence and probity.

Vehicle use shall be entered in the vehicle logbook and checklists kept in the logbook. The executive has the responsibility to be able to determine who operated its vehicles at any given time in order to properly address or resolve traffic violations, accidents, complaints from the public etc.

## **Vehicle Safety**

Motor vehicles used to conduct team business shall be operated in such a manner as to avoid endangering the safety or health of team members and the general public, to avoid property damage and to comply with all provincial highway laws and regulations.

Drivers and operators must have a valid driver's licence appropriate for the class of vehicle, be qualified and capable of operating the vehicle assigned to them.

Prior to the start of any trip, vehicle drivers shall do an inspection of their assigned vehicle, and make note of any deficiencies.

For safety reasons, team members are advised against using cellular telephones (handheld and hands-free) while driving a motor vehicle. To place or answer a call on a cellular phone, the driver should stop or park in a safe place in accordance with applicable highway laws and regulations or have another team member use the cellular phone.

A vehicle shall not be used if its mechanical condition is unsafe; it has a defect likely to contribute to an accident or to perform a task that exceeds the manufacturers rated capacity; i.e. towing, cargo, number of occupants etc.

All accidents involving a motor vehicle shall be reported and investigated, even when there are no injuries and property damage is minor.

The drivers shall complete a written accident report the same day and submit it to the person in charge.

## Responsibility

The person in charge is responsible for:

- Controlling the use, the operation and the maintenance of motor vehicles.
- Ensuring that drivers have an appropriate and valid driver's license.
- Ensuring that driver inspections are performed and log books properly maintained.
- Ensuring that all motor vehicles are maintained in a safe and efficient operating condition.
- Ensuring that drivers are fully aware of the correct procedures to be followed in the event of an accident, and forwarding accident reports and investigation reports to the person in charge.

Drivers are responsible for:

- Following safe practices.
- Co-operating with civil authorities and observing traffic laws and regulations.
- Paying fines related to traffic violations.
- Participating in appropriate training and ensuring they possess adequate information about the operation of the vehicle assigned to them.
- Ensuring that only authorized passengers are transported in motor vehicles.
- Reporting any loss, suspension or restriction on their driver's license.
- Maintaining the vehicle logbook and performing the driver's inspections.

## Operation

The logbooks should be used to record all comments regarding vehicle performance, problems noted during inspections and while driving.

The logbook should indicate the vehicle number, dates and times of use, start and end odometer readings, the drivers name and destination.

Drivers should carry out following checks and verify the following:

Checks prior to departure

1. Tire condition – inflation & wear.
2. Lights – headlamps signal & brake.
3. Rear-view mirrors.
4. Brake check including handbrake (emergency).
5. Gauges and indicators –note fuel level.
6. Horn.

7. Special vehicle equipment (proper size trailer hitch etc.).
8. Any unusual noises.

A tire gauge should be kept in each vehicle to enable the driver to check the tire pressure. Incorrect tire pressure causes increased fuel consumption and premature tire wear, is detrimental to vehicle safety and increases environmentally harmful gas emissions.

Using self-serve gas stations is suggested as a means of reducing fuel costs. Drivers are encouraged to use the station that offers the best value for the team.

# RECOMMENDED TRAINING REQUIREMENTS and or COURSES

Probationary Searcher

Regular Searcher

Team Captain

Search Manager

Logistics Officer

Bus Support (Drivers)

Bus Support

Wilderness First Aid

Radio Operator Training

Pleasure Craft Operators Card (Boating Safety)

Tracking Course

Equipment Personal

CFSC - Hunter Safety

Chain Saw Safety

Criminal Background Check

First Responder

# Basic Safety Equipment & Clothing

The following table lists the basic health and safety and personal equipment required for searchers.

<i><b>Footwear</b></i>	<i><b>Equipment / Safety Gear</b></i>	<i><b>Eyewear</b></i>	<i><b>Summer Wear</b></i>
Hiking Boots	GPS Receiver, Compass	Sunglasses	Hat (Ball cap)
Rubber Boots	VHF Radio	Safety Glasses	Sunscreen
Winter Boots	Mitts, gloves		Bug Spray
	Reflective Safety Vest		Coveralls
	Snowshoes		Rain Suits

## HAZARD/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Report all accidents for any incident where there is:

- Near Misses.
- A disabling injury or where First Aid was administered.
- Implementation of rescue or emergency procedures.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Damage to equipment.
- Death.

# APPENDIX 1

ACTIVITY	TASK	RESULT
Leaving Site:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all personnel are accounted for and any hazardous conditions / encounters are recorded for reporting</li> <li>• Conduct a “check-in”</li> </ul> <p>Clean, repair and store all equipment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hanging clothing to dry and storing safety equipment.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All team members are responsible for the care and proper storage of all personal equipment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Repair faulty equipment to ensure that it is not reused.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaving personnel behind.</li> <li>• Unreported hazards.</li> <li>• Failure to check-in may result in an unnecessary search being initiated.</li> <li>• Equipment that is not repaired or properly stored creates a hazard for the next user.</li> <li>• Downtime for the next operation.</li> <li>• All accidents or near misses must be reported.</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX 2

## Eastern Shore Ground Search & Rescue

### Recommended Standard Operating Procedure For Medical Emergency During Search

1. The medical emergency is declared by radio from the search team declaring the nature of the emergency and their location.
2. The search base acknowledges the medical emergency and states that they are beginning the emergency assist procedure.
3. The search base declares to all teams via radio that a medical emergency has been declared by team \_\_\_\_ and that all teams are to stop searching and leave radio priority for Team \_\_\_\_.
4. The search base determines the search team nearest Team \_\_\_\_
5. The search base requests the search team nearest Team \_\_\_\_ to proceed to Team \_\_\_\_ location and render assistance.
6. The search base determines the needs at the medical emergency site
7. The search base calls 911 and gives them the nature of the medical emergency and location.
8. The search base recalls all necessary teams to search base to transport emergency equipment to medical emergency site.
9. The search base dispatches the first available team from base with the extra first aid supplies
10. The search base dispatches the hypothermal bag and litter basket to medical emergency site using next available search group.
11. The Search base begins to plan for the transportation of emergency medical casualty to 911 rendezvous point. This is done with information received from the search teams on site and transporting equipment to emergency site.
12. The Search base secures the necessary equipment and directs the available search teams to prepare the transportation route for casualty evacuation.
13. The onsite emergency medical team and all available search teams initiates the transportation of the casualty to the 911 rendezvous point as soon as possible



