



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA SEARCH & RESCUE STANDARD 7100

SAR TRACKING GROUP

VASARCO Tracking Standards Committee chaired by Rob Speiden

**APPROVED BY THE VIRGINIA SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL and
THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

2019

This is the final document approved in 2019. It presents the standard for credentialing an organization as a Tracking Group. It is accompanied by additional COVSAR Tracking Standards 7100 – 7900.

COVSAR Standard 7100 Search & Rescue Tracking Group

7100 This standard is intended for any group that endeavors to provide tracking resources to any callout or search mission through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM).

7101 Purpose

These standards were developed to define the minimum qualification requirements necessary for certification of an organization as a Search & Rescue Tracking Group by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Search and Rescue program.

The certification issued under these standards is a requirement only for those groups who wish to voluntarily participate in the search and rescue program of the VDEM.

7102 Operational Standards

- 7102.1 Dispatch. Group shall have and demonstrate a dispatch capability.
- 7102.2 Equipment. Groups shall maintain all equipment described in Section 7103.3 of this standard and be able to deploy this equipment to a mission.
- 7102.3 Training. Groups shall train their members to meet or exceed applicable VDEM personnel certification standards such as Search Team Member, Search Team Leader, SAR Tracking Standards, Management Team Member and others.
- 7102.4 Resource Management. Groups shall be able to provide all tracking resources based on the number of operational teams they are expected to provide during the Group's activation. The group must be capable of performing these functions any time of the year, day or night, and in most weather conditions.

7103 Accreditation.

The MOU Committee of the Virginia Search and Rescue Council (VASARCO) will coordinate all paperwork associated with a group's petition for accreditation as a Search and Rescue Tracking Group. In order to demonstrate that it meets the Operational Standards described in Section 7102 of this policy, a Group shall complete the following:

- 7103.1 General Requirements. The group must comply with all of the requirements of the General Administrative Recognition Standards for All Teams.
- 7103.2 Dispatch. Submit Group callout and dispatch procedures to the MOU Committee.
 - 7103.2.1 MOU Committee will validate that these procedures comply with the VASARCO General Administrative Recognition Standards for All Teams.
 - 7103.2.2 MOU Committee will confirm the Group's dispatch capability has been successfully tested.

- 7103.3 Equipment. Group will demonstrate, and the Group leader will provide written documentation to the MOU Committee, that the Group possesses and maintains the following required equipment:
- 7103.3.1 Personal Equipment
 - 7103.3.1.1 Each member shall possess and maintain the 10 essentials, pack and other equipment to be self-sufficient in Virginia’s wilderness environments for a minimum period of forty-eight (48) hours.
 - 7103.3.1.2 Each member shall possess and maintain tracking tools such as field book/writing utensil, measuring tape, camera, flashlight, track markers and others described in 7300 section 1.1.3.
 - 7103.3.2 A minimum of four (4) hand-held radios capable of communicating on standard VDEM SAR frequencies as well as interoperability with other SAR agencies.
 - 7103.3.3 Operations kit that includes the following:
 - 7103.3.3.1 Sufficient office supplies to commence a mission (e.g. highlighters, writing utensils, stapler, folders, clipboards, etc).
 - 7103.3.3.2 Appropriate ICS, VASARCO, COVSAR and VDEM forms including but not limited to the following:
 - a. SAR Volunteer Sign-in sheet
 - b. SAR Vehicle Registration sheet
 - c. Task Log
 - d. Clue Log
 - e. Unit Log
 - f. Task Assignment Forms
 - g. Search Mission After Action Report
 - 7103.4 Training. Submit training program to the MOU Committee and gain satisfactory evaluation of the program. A Group training program includes:
 - 7103.4.1 A Group Training Officer (GTO);
 - 7103.4.2 Group policy defining how the group implements the Virginia Credentialing Policy for field credentials for SAR Tracking resources;
 - 7103.4.3 An annual training schedule including a minimum of fifty (50) training hours per year.
 - 7103.4.4 Each of the six certified trackers and minimum of two (2) trainees as described below in 7104.2 must demonstrate minimum training requirements as outlined in COVSAR Tracking Standards 7400, 7500 and 7600 for the respective certification levels.
 - 7103.5 Field Evaluation. Candidate Group must participate and successfully complete a field evaluation as described in Section 7109.

7104 Qualification

Groups shall meet the following administrative requirements:

- 7104.1 Dues. Pay VASARCO MOU application fee and remain in good standing with payment of VASARCO dues each year thereafter.
- 7104.2 Group Resources. Demonstrate via the membership roster the Group possesses the appropriate minimum personnel for the requested MOU. Group membership, at a minimum, must consist of two (2) Tracking Technicians, four (4) Operational Trackers and two (2) additional trackers in training.
- 7104.3 At any time that the group does not have the resources listed in 7104.2, efforts will be made to rectify those circumstances or the group's MOU may be revoked.
- 7104.4 Group Administration. Demonstrate adherence to the VASARCO Bylaws and other administrative requirements by submitting the required documents to the MOU Committee including the following:
 - 7104.4.1 VDEM credentials for tracking resources listed in 7104.2
 - 7104.4.2 A roster showing the information for each member as specified in the General Administrative Recognition Standards for All Teams.
 - 7104.4.3 Training program as outlined in section 7103.4

7105 Approval Process

A Group shall meet the requirements as a SAR Tracking Group upon submission of adequate documentation, sponsor group endorsement, field evaluation, MOU Committee recommendation, VASARCO vote, and approval by VDEM.

- 7105.1 The applicant group will associate with a sponsor SAR Tracking group to assist and advise the applicant group in preparation for the MOU application process and provide endorsement to the VASARCO.
- 7105.2 The MOU Committee shall collect all appropriate paperwork that validates satisfactory completion of all Accreditation and Qualification requirements. Documents should be tendered from the applicant group's leader.
- 7105.3 The MOU Committee Chair may make a motion that VASARCO recommend that the applicant group be accredited for an MOU by VDEM.
- 7105.4 If the VASARCO accepts the motion, a vote in favor of the motion must be received from a minimum of 75% of the voting group representatives present.
- 7105.5 If the voting requirement is met, the VASARCO may move to recommend the applicant group receive an MOU from the VDEM.

7106 MOU Review

- 7106.1 Operational, Accreditation, and Qualification standards may be reviewed at any time by request of the Chief of SAR programs to ensure compliance.
- 7106.2 Review and evaluation of all administrative, operational, accreditation, and qualification requirements will be conducted in order to renew an MOU.
- 7106.3 Number of requests for response, response activity, training activity, and number of personnel qualified will be reviewed as well to ensure group is active and a viable resource.

7106.4 If the Groups' response activity is insufficient the Group may be required to complete a field practical evaluation to maintain or renew its MOU.

7107 Credentialing

- 7107.1 Upon Accreditation/Qualification or Re-Qualification, a Recognized Group will receive a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the VDEM once approved by the Attorney General of Virginia.
- 7107.2 The MOU shall be valid from the date of issue and shall expire after a period of three years, at which time the group will be reviewed.
- 7107.3 Upon successful review, the MOU will be renewed as outlined in this standard.
- 7107.4 If the review is unsatisfactory, the Group will be referred to the SAR Training Specialist to develop a training plan to assist the Group in meeting the requirements of the standard.

7108 Accreditation Authority

- 7108.1 The authority for Group Accreditation and Qualification is the VDEM which may take into consideration a recommendation from VASARCO.

7109 Field Evaluation

- 7109.1 The candidate group shall participate in a field evaluation to demonstrate its capabilities to satisfactorily perform the following functions:
- 7109.2 The group may unsatisfactorily perform no more than two (2) of the following functions:
 - 7109.2.1 Responds to evaluation event with minimum team contingency as described in section 7104.2
 - 7109.2.2 Commences accountability practices such as producing a personnel sign-in sheet and vehicle register at the beginning of the search event
 - 7109.2.3 Sets up, documents and executes a basic communications plan
 - 7109.2.4 Obtains briefing from search manager
 - 7109.2.5 Writes three different tracking tasks on Task Assignment Forms
 - 7109.2.6 Executes two of those tracking tasks
 - 7109.2.7 Works well as a team to complete task objectives
 - 7109.2.8 Protects points of interest such as PLS, LKP and other potential clues
 - 7109.2.9 Communicates point-of-interest information to search management
 - 7109.2.10 Considers and requests additional SAR resources
 - 7109.2.11 Properly protects and manages find scene
 - 7109.2.12 Properly manages subject's medical condition(s)
 - 7109.2.13 Debriefs results with search manager or representative upon task completion
 - 7109.2.14 Submits tracking report of search evaluation event to the evaluator(s)

7109.3 When the evaluation is complete, the evaluator(s) will submit an evaluation to the MOU Committee Chair.

7110 Field Evaluation Documents

In addition to the attached VASARCO Group Field Evaluation, the Field evaluation for ground teams will use the following document:

- 7110.1 VASARCO Tracking Group Field Evaluation

Group Field Evaluation
Virginia Search and Rescue Council

DATE: _____

GROUP: _____

EVALUATION LOCATION: _____

GROUP EVALUATION: Not Satisfactory _____

Satisfactory _____

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Group _____

Phone _____

Leader _____

Email _____

VASARCO _____ Phone _____

Rep. _____

Email _____

Evaluator _____

Phone _____

Group _____

Email _____

Evaluator _____

Phone _____

Group _____

Email _____

Evaluator _____

Phone _____

Group _____

Email _____

Group Field Evaluation

Virginia Search and Rescue Council

A recommendation by the Virginia Search and Rescue Council to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management for the consideration of a group Memorandum of Understanding is based on an evaluation of the overall ability of the group to field trained personnel who work together, perform competently in the field, and understand their role in the Virginia search and rescue system.

The field evaluation is not a test of small details, such as is administered by the instructors during the field team member and field team leader classes.

The evaluator observes the team in the field conducting a straightforward task and considers if the team:

	Not Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<u>PRE-TASK</u>		
• Has the 10 essentials based on a random sampling of team members	___	___
• Leader knows the limits of the personnel	___	___
• Leader obtains appropriate information at base briefing	___	___
• Leader conducts an appropriate team briefing	___	___
• Team is organized - radio operator, navigation, medical	___	___

DURING TASK

• Finds the task area	___	___
• Knows where they are	___	___
• Follows the instructions of the team leader	___	___
• Provides mutual support and coordination	___	___
• Uses appropriate radio protocols	___	___
• Appropriately handles clues:		
○ determine if it might be pertinent	___	___
○ request disposition instructions from base	___	___
○ preserve the find-scene	___	___
○ determine accurate location	___	___
○ request and/or recommends resources from base	___	___
○ if instructed, collects the clue without touching it	___	___
○ flag clue location	___	___
• Reacts appropriately upon finding the subject:		
○ preserve the find-scene	___	___
○ determine and report accurate location	___	___
○ determine appropriate people and equipment needs	___	___
○ request resources from base	___	___
○ determine appropriate location to meet transportation	___	___
○ flag evacuation route	___	___

Group Field Evaluation
Virginia Search and Rescue Council

	<u>Not</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>
• Provides appropriate subject care:		
○ assess and stabilize the subject	___	___
○ package subject on litter	___	___
○ provide medical attention during evacuation	___	___
○ litter handling: coordination, rotation, stability	___	___
○ navigate the terrain and obstacles	___	___
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

POST-TASK

• Leader conducts an appropriate debriefing with the team	___	___
• Leader provides appropriate information at base debriefing	___	___
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

7110.1 Tracking Group Field Evaluation

Virginia Search and Rescue Council

A recommendation by the Virginia Search and Rescue Council to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management for the consideration of a group Memorandum of Understanding is based on an evaluation of the overall ability of the group to field trained personnel who work together, perform competently in the field, and understand their role in the Virginia search and rescue system.

The field evaluation is not a test of small details, such as is administered by the evaluators during individual tracking evaluations.

The evaluator observes the team in the field conducting tracking tasks and considers if the team:

	<u>Not Satisfactory</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>
<u>PRE-TASK</u>		
• Responds to evaluation event with minimum team contingency as described in section 7104.2	_____	_____
• Commences accountability practices such as producing a personnel sign-in sheet and vehicle register at the beginning of the search event	_____	_____
• Sets up, documents and executes a basic communications plan	_____	_____
• Obtains briefing from search manager	_____	_____
• Writes three different tracking tasks on Task Assignment Forms	_____	_____

DURING TASK

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| • Executes two tracking tasks | _____ | _____ |
| • Works well as a team to complete task objectives | _____ | _____ |
| • Communicates point-of-interest information to search management | _____ | _____ |
| • Considers and requests additional SAR resources | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |

POST-TASK

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| • Submits tracking report of search evaluation event | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |