

SAR Controller Job Description

Responsible to the Regional Board

Key Relationships

- Coastguard volunteers in Units in operating area
- Regional Manager & Operations Manager
- Police
- RCC
- Other SAR partners

Purpose of the Position

The SAR Controller assumes command and directs operations and shall at all times maintain command of Coastguard assets and personnel, while liaising with the SAR Operation controlling authority.

Responsibilities

1. The SAR Controller remains in command until the operation is terminated or they are relieved by another SAR controller during a prolonged operation.
 - a. Obtain and evaluate all information on the operation.
 - b. Ensure that all participants are briefed with an initial full situation report (including action already taken and forward planning). Search teams and all participants must clearly understand their tasks.
 - c. Determine the number and type of vessels, aircraft and personnel required.
 - d. Define the search area(s) (or area(s) of probability) for immediate search and/or later coverage.
 - e. Define the task i.e. search the sea, the shoreline, radar search etc
 - f. Ensure 'all stations' broadcasts or relays by Coastguard and Maritime Radio are broadcast if warranted
 - g. Appoint 'On-Scene Commander(s)' when control at a scene is indicated and such control can be accomplished by a suitable capable person and advise them of the vessels and other assets under their command.
 - h. Designate radio channels and/or frequencies to be used back to Coastguard operations
 - i. Ascertain from search vessels / aircraft precise starting point of search in order that the search may be plotted at Coastguard operations
 - j. Determine the additional services required i.e. CAP unit, rescue helicopter, coastline search parties, fire ambulance, red cross, civil defence etc and discuss with Police SAR officer in command

- k. Define the target or objective i.e. vessel, windsurfer, person(s) in the water, wreckage, oil slick or origin of smoke or flare etc
 - l. Determine the search coverage required and if appropriate, discuss with On-Scene command possible search patterns to obtain the necessary coverage. An On-Scene Commander is responsible for determining the search technique to obtain the best result in the conditions on scene.
 - m. At all times be aware of and take into full consideration the safety of all resources and personnel being utilised.
 - n. Ensure adequate supply of food and equipment for operational personnel.
 - o. Regularly re-assess the situation with the Police/RCC and other appropriate persons and define extended areas of probability.
 - p. If appropriate or desirable, appoint another SAR Controller as deputy to assist with specific delegated tasks and provide relief as required.
 - q. Inform Police or RCC by regular situation reports of the progress and forward planning and
 - r. Recommend to the appropriate responsible agency the termination of Coastguard involvement.
2. In the event of a prolonged operation where fatigue may be an influencing factor consideration must be given to replacement of search, radio and support personnel.
 3. Arrange and recommend traumatic stress counselling for personnel impacted in incidents involving serious injury, loss of life, loss of vessels or other circumstances which in the SAR Controllers opinion requires such counselling
 4. As soon as reasonably practicable after a significant operation/incident the SAR Controller will arrange and chair (if appropriate) as debrief with all participating personnel to review and learn from the incident.
 5. At the conclusion of a major operation or significant incident the SAR Controller will prepare a concise report on the operation.
 6. Ensure the Unit President and Regional Manager are advised immediately of incidents involving serious damage to Coastguard assets or injury to Coastguard volunteers, or where a Coastguard vessel is involved in serious damage to another vessel. This is so the President / Regional Manager can assist with public relations and counselling.

Knowledge and Skills Required

1. Before being appointed as a SAR Controller the following basic minimum requirements are considered necessary
 - a. Restricted Radio Telephone Operators Certificate
 - b. Good working knowledge of the area of operation

- c. CIMS 4
 - d. Boatmaster Certificate or Coastal Skipper, Ocean Yachtmaster or suitable Marine Commercial qualification.
 - e. At least ten years boating experience in and around the area of operation
 - f. Either 3 years experience as a CRV Skipper, total Coastguard experience not less than 7 years
2. In addition it would be useful to have a sound working knowledge of
 - a. The use of the equipment, systems, information and records of their Coastguard Unit
 - b. The various search and rescue facilities available throughout the area both within and outside of Coastguard
 - c. The aims and objectives of Coastguard and a comprehensive knowledge of Coastguard operational policy
 - d. The duties and obligations of SAR Incident Controllers and sufficient management skills to perform the tasks and accept the responsibilities of the position
 3. They should be a person experienced in Search & Rescue techniques and procedures, knowledgeable in regard to the area involved, authoritative in regard to safety aspects, can capable of directing, coordinating and controlling the activities of Search & Rescue personnel.
 4. Compliance with all the above criteria does not necessarily guarantee appointment.
 5. The regional Board has the power of veto and makes the final confirmation of authorisation and appointment.