

Red Deer Search and Rescue

New Member Information



This booklet is designed to give new members the information they require to be a contributing member of our team until they have gained their basic courses. As it is a new venture we are very open to any feedback both positive and constructive. Your input is welcome and appreciated.

Also, please check out our website: <http://www.reddeersar.com/>

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Vision Statement

"This We Do...
That Others May Live"

Mission Statement

RDSAR is striving to:

- ❖ Be prepared to respond wherever necessary to incidents requiring personnel with search and rescue skills
- ❖ Continue development of skills resources and training programs to increase operational effectiveness and readiness
- ❖ Deliver our services with professionalism and compassion while preserving the safety of our members

Values

1. We are a team that is here to provide an essential and necessary service to our community.
2. We conduct ourselves as search and rescue professionals.
3. We place the safety of team members as our primary priority during all search and rescue activities.
4. We show respect for others in our words and actions.
5. We acknowledge the value of the time and resources contributed by individual team members.
6. We view the personal growth and continued learning as essential to the efficient and effective operation of the team.
7. We, both individually and collectively, strive to maintain a maximum state of readiness to respond to search and rescue incidents.
8. We strive for excellence while contributing to the team according to our abilities.
9. We, both individually and collectively, maintain a ready inventory of search and rescue resources to assist us in performing our tasks.

A Brief History

Red Deer Search and Rescue is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1996 by a group of outdoor enthusiasts with a desire to contribute their skills for the benefit of those who are lost or missing.

The RCMP is the federal agency tasked with the primary responsibility for ground search and rescue in Canada. As a result, Red Deer Search and Rescue works with the RCMP to provide services in the event of emergencies. As well as operating within our own area, Red Deer Search and Rescue is ready and able to provide search and rescue services in other areas.

Every member of Red Deer Search and Rescue is an unpaid volunteer who is dedicated to assisting others in distress. Our members' backgrounds are diverse and include students, electricians, fire fighters, soldiers, nurses, mail carriers and engineers. Members of the Team provide all of their own basic gear for searches and surviving in the outdoors. (See what to take on a search section)

Membership in the Association is open to any member of the public who is prepared to invest the time and energy in being trained. Annual membership dues for the Association are \$20.00. A criminal records check is required.

For membership information please contact Randi Butler: 403-392-8226 or sargirl67@hotmail.com .

Funding

As an independent volunteer association, Red Deer Search and Rescue receives all its funding through donations and fundraising events. As a charitable organization registered with Revenue Canada, donations to the Association are tax deductible. Members of the team are expected to help with fundraising as and when they can. Fundraising can be a time for the team to get together in a fun environment, raise money for the team and gain beneficial PR.

Meetings

The Team meets on the second Thursday of every month, except for the months of July and August. Our meetings are held at the RDSAR Headquarters, on the SW corner of 19th Street (Delburne Road) and 40th Avenue, Red Deer (the property with the big yellow quonset). In addition to our formal meetings and training, the Team schedules social events on a "member pay" basis throughout the year.

Training

All members of the Team take the Basic Skills course as provided for by SAR Alberta. This 40-60 hour course is a standardised course covering search theory, the incident command system and basic survival. The Basic Skills course culminates in a multi-hour night search. Members also take a navigation course together with Standard First Aid and Level C CPR. Members of the Team can take training throughout the year with the Team. Participation in training exercises is essential to maintaining skill levels.

After the basic courses have been taken you have the option to further your knowledge and skills in other areas. Additional training/courses are offered throughout the year and would be beneficial if you want to improve your skills in certain areas.

Technical Rescue Team

The Technical Rescue Team specializes in High Angle Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Collapsed Structure Rescue, and Mountain Rescue.

We train two evenings per month, and periodic weekend dates.

The only prerequisite to be a member of the Technical Rescue Team is to be a member in good standing of the Red Deer Search & Rescue ground search team, and take the SAR Basic Skills Course within one year of joining.

The yearly membership fee is \$50.00, which goes toward the purchase and upkeep of equipment.

Extra equipment required includes: personal class III rescue harness, helmet, leather gloves, safety toed boots, coveralls, and 4 steel 40kn carabiners. The extra equipment is to be purchased at the new member's convenience.

For more information contact - Marcel Schur, Team Leader, 403-340-9602

- Shawn Hare, Team 2 I/C, 403-304-4272

What to do in The Event of a Search

When we get called for a search, it begins with an automated phone out system. The pertinent search information will be included in the recorded message. We have implemented a feature called Group Polling which will ask you to enter a response by pressing a specific number key on your phone. If you have call display, please be aware that the number will most likely be 877-698-3261 which some people have mistaken for telemarketers. There may also be a slight pause between the time you answer the phone and when the message begins. Again this gives the impression of a telemarketer.

Group polling captures touch tone responses from our group members. This allows us to ask questions in the body of our message and to tell our members to enter their response by pressing a number on a touch tone phone key pad.

For example, during message recording, we will ask a question such as, "We have been called for a search tomorrow morning. Meet at HQ @ 7:30 for a 8:00 a.m. departure. If you are able to attend, press 1. If you are unable to attend, Press 9. Please enter your response now." Your touch tone responses are saved and displayed in the Call Detail Report that we will review to get a member response head count.

If you have answered your phone and hear the message you can press the appropriate response any time during the playing of the message. The message will replay from the beginning to ensure that the message is heard in its entirety. If you have received the message on your answering machine, or voice mail you will need to call into the system and respond to the poll. If you are responding to a message received on your pager (Rescue Team) you will need to enter your phone number not the pager number. See below for more information.

Responding to a Message Left on Voice Mail or Calling In to Hear a Message (This is handy if someone else in your residence has answered the phone and you did not receive the message)

1. Members can dial **877-698-3261** (Additional numbers are **866-321-4255** or **614-384-2335**).
2. You will hear the prompt "To hear your group's latest message, press 1." **You Press 1.**
3. You will be prompted to enter your telephone number. They enter their phone number (include area code). (You must enter the same phone number that was dialed else the phone number will not be recognized. This is your member code)
4. You will hear a prompt telling you of the most recent message. To listen to the most recent message, press 1, to listen to an older message, press 2. **You press 1.**
5. Your message is played, and if the Group Leader requests a touch tone response, your members can press it at any time the message is playing. (See [Using Group Polling](#) for more information about recording touch tone responses.)

Once you have been added to the call out system, you will receive a quick guide wallet card. Please print off the quick guide wallet card to carry with you for reference. The blank line labeled "Caller ID" on the reference card is for use if we choose to use a custom phone number for identification. At this time we have not chosen to do this. We will try the system default numbers (also listed on the card).

Generally we meet at our compound, however if this is not the case, you will be given an address to meet at. Our head quarters is our usual meeting place, it is located at the intersection of 19th Street and 40th Avenue. It is a large yellow Quonset on the south side of 19th Street. When you arrive at the command post you will be required to sign in on our team sign in sheets. There is a small amount of preparation required before we leave the compound - once vehicles etc... are ready, we can proceed to the search site. As we are reimbursed for gas monies, you are required to car pool with other members whenever possible.

If you drive to a search site it is important that you log your mileage both to and from the search. When we return from a search, gas receipts as well as mileage are required for you to be reimbursed. These items are generally given to the president, and you will be advised of this when you return from the search.

What to Take on a Search

All searchers are required to carry what is called a 'ready pack', this is basically a back pack which consists of all your required gear. Once you have taken your basic skills course and various other courses, your gear required will grow and also become clearer. There are essential items however that you can collect now, which will allow you to be able to assist in searching if the need occurs.

The Ready Pack - it is important to get a well fitted back pack. There isn't an ideal size for the ready pack as it will be different for everyone. You need a pack that will fit the equipment you wish to take on a search, this is a personal decision. Your pack should be waterproof, or have a waterproof cover; in order to keep you gear dry.

The following items are necessary for you to be allowed to attend a search:

Correct clothing: clothing is dependent on the weather conditions at the time of the search. The clothing you wear needs to be comfortable and safe to search in and also needs to be appropriate for a SAR volunteer. Our team requires that you wear long sleeves and long pants when searching.

Appropriate Footwear: you will need to purchase a pair of good hiking boots. Waterproof and with good ankle support will make you most comfortable on your search.

Safety Glasses: protective glasses are a necessity when searching in the bush; they can be purchased cheaply at most safety or hardware stores. There are various lens colors available; however clear are the most adaptable if you are just purchasing one pair of glasses.

Gloves: gloves are required if you are searching in the bush; gloves should be well fitting and have a leather palm to prevent puncturing of the skin.

Food: most searches will allow searches to break for a meal or a snack; these are usually provided on larger searches. You should however be prepared by taking snacks that can be consumed easily while searching. Protein/granola bars are ideal as they are easy to pack and can be kept in your ready pack for long periods of time.

Water: You are required to carry 2 litres of water on a search.

The previous list consists of the bare essentials; extras will depend on the search type and the training that you have. The following list consists of items you will need to acquire once you have taken your SAR fundamentals.

"A" Kit - Summer

- 1 Litre Water Container
- Whistle
- Compass
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Safety Glasses
- Bandana/Handkerchief
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent
- Flagging Tape
- Snack Food
- Sweetened Jell-O Powder
- Emergency (Space) Blanket
- Flashlight (Extra Batteries/Bulb)
- Knife
- Paper and Pencil
- Rain Gear/Cold Weather
- Matches/Fire Starter
- SAR Log Book
- Paper and Pencil
- Duct Tape
- Zip Lock Bag (Large) x2
- Glow Sticks x2
- Vest/Fanny Pack
- Toilet Paper
- Hat

"B" Kit - Winter

- In addition to all of "A" Kit
- 1 Litre Water Container
- Sweater or Fleece
- Closed Cell Sleeping Pad
- Emergency (Space) Blanket x2
- Cold Weather Clothing
- Candle

"C" Kit Summer (24 Hours)

- In addition to all of "A" Kit
- 50 feet of 550 Cord
- Zip Lock Bag (Large) x2
- Tarp/Shelter Material
- Garbage Bags x 2
- Sleeping Bag (Summer)
- Metal Cook Cup/Pot
- Extra Clothing
- Back Up Flashlight (Batteries & Bulb)
- Toilet Paper
- Gaiters
- 2 litres - Water
- 3 feet Wire

"D" Kit Winter (24 Hours)

- In addition to all of "C" Kit
- Extra Food
- Extra Clothing
- Sleeping Bag Winter
- Thermos/Hot Water
- Extra Liners/Boots

How Searches Usually Work

There is a lot of information that you will receive on your Basic Skills course, however for now there are a few key concepts to enable you to effectively help our team search. The type of activity you will be doing depends on the type of search you are attending, and the direction of the Search Manager. You should also be aware that as an untrained member you may be asked to perform non-searching duties that are equally as important as the actual searching itself.

Although you will not be directly asked about the definitions below, they are provided for you to be aware of, so that you do not feel overwhelmed on a search.

POA (probability of area) - probability that the subject(s) or clues are in the area minus the chances that he/she is in the rest of the world (ROW).

IPP (initial planning point) - the place and time that the search begins, this is either the PLS or the LKP.

PLS (point last seen) - place of the last sighting of the subject.

LKP (last known point) - last point that the subject is known to have been, this can be shown by evidence such as a footprint.

Hasty Team - a three man search team. This team will have a team leader and be designated a search call sign for communications.

The Search Cube - a four sided search area, this means that as a searcher you should be looking above, below, in front, and behind. (Look up, look down, look all around).

Critical Spacing - this is the spacing between the members of the hasty team. Your team leader, depending on the type of search and the conditions of the search area (i.e. terrain, lighting), will decide it.

The Incident Command System is used to manage a search. There are five major areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration. You will learn more about each of these areas on your Basic Skills course. You as a searcher will report to your Team Leader, this will ideally be a person whom has a great deal of experience searching. Team leaders report to a Search Manager, the Search Manager will be responsible for all search teams and has taken a specific course that has allowed them to fill this position. The Search Manager reports to an Incident Commander. The Incident Commander will usually be the RCMP officer who is in charge of the search. The order in which various people report to others is called the Chain of Command.

Types of Search

There are many types of searches that you will be exposed to, for now you need to know about two types of searches: grid searches and hasty team searches.

Grid searches are usually called to look for smaller pieces of evidence, for example a bullet casing. In grid searches you will be part of a line of searchers, spaced according to the items being searched for. For very small items you may even be needed to proceed on your hands and knees if the terrain requires it.

In a hasty team search you will be part of a three-man team. Your team will have a Team Leader and be designated a search area. The search will usually be indicated on a map, communications occur via the Team Leader's radio and the command post using your designated call sign.

The number one rule to remember on a search is that YOU come first. Look after yourself first, then your team members, and finally the subject. NEVER put yourself or a team member in danger to help the subject. This rule also links knowing your own comfort level and capabilities, never do anything you do not feel comfortable with. Always ask questions if you do not understand or need clarification.

Finally, thank you for choosing Red Deer Search and Rescue. Search and Rescue is an amazing volunteer opportunity, and one in which you can learn a lot, mix with a diverse group of people, and have fun. You will get from our team what you put in. We look forward to working with you, and are always available to answer any of your questions or concerns. Welcome to our team!