Standard Operating Guideline

Water Rescue

Scope: Sacramento Regional Fire Departments

Policy Contact
Sacramento Regional Operations Group

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References

- Fire Scope: Chapter 19
- Regional Standard
- ICS –SF-SAR-020-1
- ICS –US&R 120-2
- ICS –US&R-120-1

01. Guideline

To provide guidance for operating at Water Rescue incidents. There are a variety of bodies of water within the region.

- Rivers
- Lakes
- Ponds
- Streams
- Aqua Ducts
- Flooded Roads

02. Definition

2.1 Water Rescue (WR-1): Victim is reported OUT of the water.

2.2 Water Rescue (WR-2): Victim is reported IN the water. (Ponds, reservoirs, aqua duct, standing water)

2.3 Water Rescue (WR-3): Victim is reported IN the water. (American River, Sacramento River, Scott Road, Folsom Lake, Lake Natoma)

2.4 Fire Boat (FBT): Rigid hull boat with fire suppression capabilities.

2.5 Rescue Boat (BOT): Rigid V-Shaped hull boat with inflatable sponsons around the perimeter of the boat. Typically, with an inboard jet drive and a center helm. *REQUIRES A BOAT RAMP*

2.6 Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB): Inflatable (Zodiac style). Typically powered by outboard motors.

2.7 Jon Boat (JON): Aluminum flat bottom boat. Typically powered by an outboard motor.

2.8 Rescue Watercraft (RWC): Any jet powered personal watercraft.

2.9 Personal Protection Equipment (PPE): which will at a minimum; be a personal floatation device (PFD), approved Water Rescue Helmet, and approved footwear. *NO STRUCTURAL TURNOUTS, STRUCTURAL BOOTS OR FIRE HELMETS*

2.10 Rescue vs. Recovery: it must be determined if it will be a RESCUE operations or a RECOVERY operations based on survivability profile of the victim(s) which in factors such as the location and condition of the victim(s) and elapsed time since the incident occurred.

03. Resources

3.1 Water Rescue (WR-1)

- 1 - Engine
- 1 - Ambulance
- 1 - Boat
- 1 - Battalion Chief

3.2 Water Rescue (WR-2)

- 1 - Engine
- 1 - Ambulance
- 1 - Boat
    - Specialized boat: Jon Boat, non-motorized raft
- 1 - Battalion Chief
- 1 - Rescue Company (SFD's jurisdiction)

3.3 Water Rescue (WR-3)

- 2 - Engines
- 1 - Ambulance
- 2 - Boats
- 1 - Battalion Chief
- 1 - Helicopter
- 1 - Rescue Company (SFD's jurisdiction)

3.4 Considerations

- Additional Watercraft
- UAS
- Law Enforcement Marine Unit (Underwater Robot, Dive Team)
- Request Law Enforcement for confirmed death / Victim recovery underwater
    - These incidents are under Law Enforcement jurisdiction. All considerations for crime scene preservation should be taken.

04. Procedure

A systematic process of safely assisting or removing individuals in danger or entrapment in or around bodies of water (Rivers, Lakes, Aqua ducts or Floods).

4.1 Initial Radio Report/Size-up

First arriving resource activates the command process by giving an initial radio report.

- Unit designation of the unit arriving on the scene
- Establish incident orientation ("River Right" or "River Left")
- A brief description ("In water" or "Out of water")
- Confirmation of the incident location
- Life hazard
- Any obvious safety hazards

- Identification and location of incident command post (if establishing/assuming command)
- Request additional resources if necessary

4.2 Water Rescue (WR-1)

4.2.1 Engine

Provide initial size-up report and communicate initial actions based on incident priorities; Establish Command. As the initial Incident Commander, the first arriving company officer needs to attempt to obtain the following information:

- Who or what the target is (adult, teen, child, or baby)
- Confirm the target is out of the water
- Any and all events which led up to the incident occurring
- Any access issues
- Local water history and potential hazards

4.2.2 Ambulance

Report to command post or designated location per Incident Commander based on incident priorities Command may assign to:

4.2.2.1

Considerations

- Medical
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter

4.2.3 Boat

Based on incident priorities and boat type

4.2.3.1

Considerations

- Mark Point Last Seen
- Reconnaissance
- Rescue
- Search
- Medical transport (to a location that can be accessed by ambulance and/or helicopter

- Assist Law Enforcement with Recovery operations(if needed)
- Rescue Company

4.2.4 Battalion Chief

Assume or establish command if not already established

4.2.4.1

Considerations

- Request additional resources, as needed
  - Law Enforcement
    - Patrol officers
  - Park Rangers
  - Helicopter
    - Metro Fire if available
    - Law Enforcement if available
    - UAS
  - Rescue Company (for advance rope operations)
- Establish appropriate command structure
- Establish personnel accountability

4.3 Water Rescue (WR-2)

4.3.1 Engine

Provide initial size-up report and communicate initial actions based on incident priorities; Establish Command. As the initial Incident Commander, the first arriving company officer needs to attempt to obtain the following information:

- Who or what target is (adult, teen, child, or baby)
- Confirm the target is out of the water
- Any and all events which led up to the incident occurring
- Any access issues
- Local water history and potential hazards (low flows)

4.3.2 Ambulance

Report to command post or designated location per Incident Commander based on incident priorities that command may assign to:

4.3.2.1

Considerations

- Medical
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter

4.3.3 Boat

Based on incident priorities and boat type(these incident locations normally require specialized boats; Jon Boat or non-motorized raft).

4.3.3.1

Considerations

- Mark point last seen
- Reconnaissance
- Rescue
- Search
- Medical transport (to a location that can be accessed by ambulance and/or helicopter)
- Assist Law Enforcement with Recovery operations (if needed)

4.3.4 Battalion Chief

Assume or establish command if not already established

4.3.4.1

Considerations

- Request additional resources, as needed
    - Law Enforcement
        - Patrol Officers
    - Park Rangers
    - Helicopter
        - Metro Fire
        - Law Enforcement
        - UAS
    - Rescue Company
    - Coroner
- Establish appropriate command structure
- Establish personnel accountability

4.3.5 Rescue Company

Based off incident priorities. If Rescue Company is not available, a Truck Company can be requested to assist with Land based / Shoreline search and rope operations.

4.3.5.1 Considerations

- Rescue swimmer(SFD'S personnel)
- Land based/shoreline search
- Advanced rope operations
    - High tension diagonal
    - Tether boat
    - High pick point (victim on or against bridge pillar)
    - Kiting

4.4 Water Rescue (WR-3)

4.4.1 First Engine

Provide initial size-up report and communicate initial actions based on incident priorities; Establish Command. As the initial Incident Commander, the first arriving company officer needs to attempt to obtain the following information:

- Who or what target is (adult, teen, child, or baby)
- Confirm the target is out of the water
- Any and all events which led up to the incident occurring
- Any access issues
- Local water history and potential hazards (low flows)

4.4.2 Second Engine

Respond to the opposite side of the dispatch location

4.4.2.1

Considerations

- Reconnaissance
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter

4.4.3 Ambulance

Report to command post or designated location per Incident Commander based on incident priorities that Command may assign to:

4.4.3.1

Considerations

- Medical
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream protection(spotter)

4.4.4 First Boat

Based on incident priorities and boat type

- Rescue
- Search

4.4.4.1

Considerations

- Mark Point Last Seen
- Reconnaissance
- Rescue operation
- Search operations
- Medical Transport (to location that can be accessed by ambulance and/or helicopter)
- Assist Law Enforcement with Recovery operations (if needed)

4.4.4.2 Rescue Operations

- **Surface**
  - Surface of the water
  - Against strainer
  - On object (rock, vehicle top, against or on bridge pillar)
- **Subsurface**
  - Below surface of the water (if agency supports this operation and have trained personnel)

4.4.4.3 Search Operations

- Reconnaissance – Gathering information from bystanders and/or witnesses
- Hasty (Rapid) – Searching a large area in a rapid pace
- Primary – Searching in a defined search area in a fast pace

- Secondary – Searching in a defined search area in a slower and methodical pace

4.4.5 Second Boat

Based on first boat incident needs

4.4.5.1

Considerations

- Mark Point Last Seen
- Reconnaissance
- Rescue operations
- Search operations
- Medical Transport (to location that can be accessed by ambulance and/or helicopter)
- Assist Law Enforcement with Recovery operations (if needed)

4.4.5.2 Rescue Operations

- **Surface**
  - Surface of the water
  - Against strainer
  - On object (rock, vehicle top, against or on bridge pillar)
- **Subsurface**
  - Below surface of the water (if agency supports this operation and have trained personnel)

4.4.5.3 Search Operations

- Reconnaissance – Gathering information from bystanders and/or witnesses
- Hasty (Rapid) – Searching a large area in a rapid pace
- Primary – Searching in a defined search area in a fast pace
- Secondary – Searching in a defined search area in a slower and methodical pace

4.4.6 Helicopter

Provide air reconnaissance for units on scene or enroute to the incident. If Metro Fire Helicopter is not available, then Law Enforcement helicopter(SSD, SPD, CHP) can be requested.

4.4.6.1 Considerations

- Reconnaissance
- Search
- Rescue operations
- Medical Transport

4.4.7 Rescue Company

Based off incident priorities. If Rescue Company is not available, a Truck Company can be requested to assist with Land based / Shoreline search and rope operations.

4.4.7.1 Considerations

- Rescue swimmer(SFD'S personnel)
- Land based/shoreline search
- Advanced rope operations
    - High tension diagonal
    - Tether boat
    - High pick point (victim on or against bridge pillar)
    - Kiting

4.4.8 Battalion Chief

Assume or establish command if not already established

4.4.8.1 Considerations

- Request additional resources, as needed
    - Law Enforcement
        - Patrol Officers
    - Park Rangers
    - Helicopter
        - Metro Fire
        - Law enforcement
    - UAS
    - Rescue Company (for advance rope operations)
    - Coroner
- Establish appropriate command structure

- Establish personnel accountability

0.5 Dispatch Request by Law Enforcement

- **Confirmed Death/Victim Recovery Underwater**
  - These incidents are under Law Enforcement jurisdiction. All considerations for crime scene preservation should be taken

Appendix

Fire Boat (FBT)



Rescue Boat (BOT)



Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB)



Jon Boat (JON)



Rescue Water Craft (RWC)



Ditch Boat



Signatures

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