

PSARC STANDARDS FOR EQUESTRIAN SEARCH & RESCUE TEAMS

Submitted to:

Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council (PSARC) Ops Committee

I. PURPOSE

- A. These standards define the minimum (Basic) qualifications expected of Mounted Search and Rescue (MSAR) responders and their equines. These standards recommend that a minimum of not less than two MSAR responders comprise a MSAR field team.
- B. Compliance with this standard is a requirement only for those personnel who wish to voluntarily participate in the search and rescue program at the levels as indicated within these standards. This standard meets ASTM International F-32 F2794 Basic level Mounted SAR Responder Standard. In addition to SAR certifications, all MSAR responders shall obtain all required Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Command System (NIMS) certifications.
- C. This standard does not purport to address all of the safety issues (or safety plans) if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use or as defined within a (regional or geographical) response region.
- D. This standard does not address the wearing of a riding helmet while deployed on an MSAR mission. However, users of this standard shall be aware that many AHJ's require the wearing of riding helmets while deployed on an MSAR mission and out of area response may require wearing a riding helmet
- E. Operational Mounted SAR Responders are expected to perform the following functions within the scope of their training will respond to and provide the following services:
 - 1. Wilderness, rural, and urban searches for missing/lost persons
 - 2. Disaster response ground teams and manpower assistance
 - 3. Mounted Perimeter Patrols for large restricted SAR access areas
 - 4. Assist with Large Animal Recovery, when applicable.
- F. All PSARC MSAR responders should be capable of performing these functions anytime of the year, day or night, and in all weather conditions experienced in the region. MSAR responders may work with a variety of individuals and organizations, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, casual volunteers and family members of the missing subject(s). In order to do this, all MSAR responders should be able to:
 - 1. Understand the search and rescue system used by Federal, State, Tribal and Local governments.
 - 2. Understand the theory and practice of a missing person search.
 - 3. Understand the security-related and confidentiality procedures related to SAR incidents.
 - 4. Plan, execute, debrief, and document a variety of search tasks.
 - 5. Navigate accurately on land.
 - 6. Survive an unexpected rural or wilderness emergency.
 - 7. Serve as a self-supporting resource for a minimum duration of 48 continuous hours.

8. Be physically able to perform field assignments that could have a deployment period of up to 12 hours.
- G. These standards do not address any particular breed, size, or sex of the equine family. In order to be qualified as a MSAR mount equines shall:
1. Have the stamina for up to 12 hours of work under varied conditions of terrain and weather.
 2. Be sociable and controllable in situations involving crowds, noise, traffic, other horses, dogs or other domestic animals, and other distractions encountered during an assignment as a public service equine.
 3. Shall pass all items listed within the MSAR Horse and Rider Evaluation

II. TERMINOLOGY

The definitions listed here are for the purposes of these standards only. They may or may not reflect other definitions used by other groups, individuals, or organizations.

- A. **Aggressive Horse Behavior:** Biting, lunging, kicking, or striking out at people or other animals.
- B. **Area of Search:** An assigned specific geographical area. The area could be urban, suburban, rural or wilderness.
- C. **Equine:** Any member of the equine family, being any breed of horse, mule, or donkey.
- D. **Handler:** The person who is responsible for the control of the horse, may also be known as the rider, while either on foot or horseback. The person need not own the horse, but is required to have taken the horse through the test included in this standard.
- E. **Horse:** Any member of the equine family.
- F. **Horse Team:** One handler with one horse.
- G. **HRE:** Horse and Rider Evaluation
- H. **Mount:** The equine used for MSAR
- I. **Mount unassisted:** The act of mounting an equine without the aid of another person or equine. This does not preclude the use of a mounting block, trailer fender, log, step, or other natural or man-made object to assist the rider in mounting the equine.
- J. **Mounted:** The act of riding a horse while in the performance of the duties of search and rescue. Being on horseback.
- K. **Mounted SAR Team:** The combination of a certified equine and a certified handler/rider, for the purposes of performing search and rescue duties. Note: A minimum of two Mounted SAR teams comprise one MSAR Field Team
- L. **MSAR:** Mounted Search and Rescue
- M. **NASAR:** National Association of Search and Rescue.
- N. **Ponied:** One horse led by a handler riding another horse.
- O. **PSARC:** Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council
- P. **Rural:** Country often given to farming or to woodland and sparsely to moderately populated.
- Q. **SAR Equine Standards:** An established set of guidelines for mounted SAR units who are utilized during a search or rescue incident, which meet or exceed ASTM International F-32 [F2794 Basic level Mounted SAR Responder Standard](#).
- R. **Urban or Suburban:** Moderately to heavily populated areas given primarily to business and residential development with limited but accessible greenways.
- S. **Wilderness:** An area generally uncultivated and uninhabited, and often inaccessible via improved roadways.

III. HANDLER KNOWLEDGE AND SAR PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The handler will demonstrate an understanding of the items listed under each subject and the ability to perform the skills listed. Operational handlers must have successfully completed a recognized (ground SAR) Search and Rescue training program; i.e.: PSARC Field Team Member, NASAR SAR Tech II or other equivalent.

A. SAR Operations

1. Describe how state and local SAR missions are originated.
2. List several resources that might be utilized during a SAR event.
3. Identify major staff functions of the ICS and two coordination centers as defined by NIMS.
4. Demonstrate the ability to develop basic mounted SAR team assignments for a search incident and provide appropriate recommendations for additional resource support to the incident.
5. Define the functions of these field positions.
 - a. Field Team Member
 - b. MSAR Strike Team Leader
 - c. Incident Commander
 - d. Operations Section Chief
 - e. Safety Officer
 - f. Strike Team
6. Describe proper searcher conduct as it relates to law enforcement, the family of missing subject(s), and the media.
7. Describe general safety considerations in SAR operations, including dealing with critical incident stress.

B. Legal Aspects of Search and Rescue

1. Describe SAR responsibilities at the local and state level.
2. Identify the limitations of the "Good Samaritan law"
3. Define several factors necessary to prove negligence.
4. Describe several methods of reducing liability exposure.
5. Describe the circumstances when entry upon private property may be justified.

C. Personal Equipment

1. Explain the basic principals of clothing and equipment selection for the search environment.
2. Demonstrate possession of adequate personal equipment for the search environment. (See Team Standards APPENDIX A for guidelines for minimum suggested personal equipment list.)

D. Wilderness Travel

1. Describe several problems commonly encountered on SAR missions that lead to a survival situation.
2. Describe the body's physiologic response to cold, heat, and psychological stress.
3. Define the following environmentally related problems and their recognition, treatment, and prevention:
 - a. Dehydration
 - b. Frostbite
 - c. Heat Exhaustion
 - d. Heat Stroke
 - e. Hypothermia
4. Demonstrate the ability to bivouac overnight in the out-of-doors. See APPENDIX B for guidelines for an overnight bivouac.

E. Land Navigation

1. Define the following terms or concepts:
 - a. True north
 - b. Magnetic north
 - c. Grid north
 - d. Declination
2. Demonstrate the ability to read and interpret topographic map border information, colors, and symbols.
3. Demonstrate the ability to use a compass to plot a course on a map.
4. Demonstrate the ability to use the following plotting methods or tools to determine the coordinates of a given point.
 - a. U.T.M.
 - b. GPS unit
 - c. Ungridded map
 - d. U.S. National Grid
5. Demonstrate the ability to perform the following navigational functions:
 - a. Obtain and follow a simple compass bearing
 - b. Determine a reciprocal
 - c. Move around obstacles
 - d. Measure distance by pacing
 - e. Determine position by terrain feature identification
 - f. Determine position by triangulation
6. Describe how to use these land navigation concepts:
 - a. Catching features
 - b. Collection features
 - c. Attack points
 - d. Aiming off

F. Search Skills

1. Demonstrate an understanding of these search tactics:
 - a. Attraction
 - b. Containment
 - c. Contour search
 - d. Hasty search
 - e. Sweep search (Open grid search)
 - f. Line search (Closed grid search)
 - g. Sign cutting
 - h. Interviewing
 - i. Ridges/Drainages
 - j. Corridor search
2. Describe procedures for working with ground teams and sign cutters.
3. Given a search task, discuss and demonstrate the ability to plan the task considering weather conditions, visibility, terrain characteristics and desired probability of detection (POD).
4. Demonstrate the ability to perform the task planned above.
5. Demonstrate the ability to translate field activity onto a topographic map, including route taken, areas

searched and not searched, clues located, times for all of the above, and estimated POD for the task.

6. Demonstrate the ability to accurately debrief the task, providing the debriefer all of the information listed in F-5 above.

G. Clue and Site Procedures

1. Describe the proper approach to a site containing clues or a subject.
2. Describe methods to preserve clues or evidence and how to secure a site.
3. Explain the importance of accurate documentation of clues and of subject's location.

H. Helicopter Operations

1. Describe the hazards and danger zones to ground and mounted personnel working around a helicopter
2. Describe the proper approach to a helicopter, including direction of approach and communication with the crew.
3. Describe the considerations for selecting and preparing a landing zone (LZ).

I. Field Communications

1. Define the common problems associated with the field use of portable radios and list some possible solutions.
2. Describe basic radio procedures with Command during an incident.
3. Describe the status codes when finding a victim.

J. First Aid

1. The handler must maintain a Basic First Aid certification.
2. The handler must maintain basic CPR Certification.

IV. EQUINE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The horse will demonstrate compliance with the expectations of this section. Specific tests designed for this purpose are described in Appendix D of these standards

A. Behavior

1. The horse should be quiet and well mannered.
2. The horse should show no aggression toward people and/or non-aggressive domestic animals.
3. The horse must demonstrate the ability to be transported between search sites easily.
4. The horse must demonstrate the ability to stand quietly while tethered.
5. The horse must demonstrate the ability to work independently from the herd.

B. Agility

1. Using multiple gaits (walk, trot, rack), the horse must demonstrate the ability to move forward.
2. The horse must demonstrate the ability to move backward.
3. The horse must demonstrate the ability to ford creeks and streams.
4. The horse must demonstrate the ability to cross bridges.
5. The horse must demonstrate the ability to cross paved roadways
6. The horse must demonstrate the ability to stand quietly near moving traffic
7. The horse must demonstrate the ability to negotiate obstacles normally found in the regional response area.

V. TEST METHODS

The following testing procedures are designed to provide a representative evaluation of the expectations listed in Sections III and IV.

A. Handler Testing (minimums)

1. Complete a recognized SAR Course
2. Successfully complete a First Aid and CPR course
3. Obtain a PSARC FTM, NASAR SAR Tech-II or equivalent rating
4. Successfully complete a horse and rider evaluation (HRE)
5. Successfully attend a minimum of 32 hours of in-service training per year
6. Attend as a MSAR responder (on horseback) one Mock Search or Search Mission per year

B. Equine Field Test

The mounted HRE will perform the following tests at a walk unless otherwise indicated. During the evaluation, the handler/rider must maintain control of the horse, and the horse should act mannered and calm. Any horse displaying actions that could lead to injury of persons or property shall immediately be deemed unsafe for public service use and removed from testing. Testing must be conducted under the supervision of an authorized evaluator(s). If HRE attendees need a break during the testing seek permission from an evaluator. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider during each exercise. (See Appendix D-3)

NOTE: Any equine rearing above knee height, at any time during the Horse and Rider Evaluation (HRE), will be immediately removed from testing. Any horse that bites or kicks a person during the HRE will also be removed immediately.

VI. MOUNTED SAR TEAM HRE FIELD EVALUATION PROCEDURES

- A. Except where required for the examination, evaluations should whenever possible be conducted without interference from other non-SAR horses or people.
- B. Each team member shall be observed by two (2) evaluators who must be authorized according to the requirements in Appendix D.
- C. Evaluation scoring:
 - 1. The evaluator shall have a checklist for scoring each mounted team. (See Appendix D)
 - 2. Performance of the mounted team will be rated as either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.
 - 3. Disclosure of personal identifiable information shall be avoided and limited to the scope and vision of these standards.
 - 4. The MSAR Written 25 question test is an open book test comprised of equine and SAR related questions. A copy is available to recognized MSAR evaluators.

VII. HRE RETESTING (See Appendix D)

- A. If the handler's written test score is below the passing score, the handler must arrange for a retest with the testing agency. The written test may be repeated according to the testing agency procedures.
- B. If any one of the field tests is scored Unsatisfactory, that test may be repeated once that same day at the discretion of the field evaluator. No practice attempts will be allowed, however, a rider may be excused for a short period not to exceed 20 minutes to work with their equine or to take a personal break, away from other HRE participants, but under the supervision of the HRE safety officer. No coaching is permitted during an HRE..
 - 1. The evaluator that originally tested the team, and judged it to be Unsatisfactory on the first two (2) attempts at the original HRE, should be the same evaluator for the third (3rd) retest HRE. Should a rider have more than three (3) unsuccessful attempts including the initial failed attempt during the original HRE, they must attend a future HRE and shall be tested on all items. In the event the original evaluator is not available on the retest HRE date, then the evaluator for the retest HRE shall be deemed acceptable.
 - 2. Applicants having three (3) or more unsatisfactory attempts at a test item, will be removed from testing and must re-apply at a future HRE
 - 3. If the Rider/Handler who was tested feels they were unfairly rated, he/she may request a retest with a different evaluator at the next scheduled testing opportunity. The evaluator who rated the team unsatisfactory may observe the retest but will have no input on the evaluation results. The Handler being retested will submit a request for retest by a different evaluator in writing to their Team Commander. This written request will state reason(s) for the request to retest.
- C. The approved written test answer sheet and field test will be completed and signed by the evaluator(s), with testing dates, to include any notes of other performance details, and kept in the individual's training folder by the Training Officer.

VIII. CERTIFICATION AND BENCHMARKS

A. Benchmark for Mounted SAR

1. In order to be certified as a Mounted responder, each applicant's team must be recognized by PSARC.
2. All MSAR teams must ensure all its team members have satisfactorily completed all written and practical evaluations.
3. The owner of the horse must provide a current copy of a negative Coggins test issued by the state and maintain a current list of all vaccinations and proof that an annual exam that was preformed by an large animal veterinarian.
4. Each MSAR responder shall have 24/7 access to a tow vehicle and registered horse trailer. The operator of the MSAR tow vehicle/trailer must know how to navigate forward and back the vehicles in a safe manner.

B. Requirements for MSAR responders

- a. Each MSAR responder must maintain a personal SAR log that includes information for self and equine.
- b. Each MSAR responder must successfully complete all field evaluations and complete one (1) mounted task per year,.
- c. Team members with more than one MSAR mount must train with each equine a minimum of 16 hours yearly. A team member with two (2) horses is thus required to train 16 hours with one horse and an additional 16 hours with the other horse in order to maintain two operational mounts.
- d. Documentation that the applicant possesses personal equipment at least equivalent to the listed in APPENDIX A.
- e. Documentation that the applicant has completed at least one overnight bivouac at an MSAR camp/event once every two years and has the required equipment for ad hoc MSAR Base Camp living conditions.
- f. When utilized as an "Out of State Resource," a copy of these standards shall be given to the Logistics Officer. The MSAR Team Commander shall maintain documentation of the event, to include the name of requesting official. During debriefing, a valid mission or event number designation should be obtained by the assigned Team Leader.

C. Conditions of Certification

1. This certification does not constitute a license to practice the skills tested, but signifies only that the team has met an established standards of knowledge and performance and has demonstrated competency at the SAR levels indicated. No MSAR responder shall self-deploy to a search or incident.
2. Yearly in-service attendance and training records will serve as a continuing education validation tool.
3. The certification will be for the handler and horse (team) that completed the testing together. If the handler wishes to certify with a second horse, the entire testing procedure, with the exception of the written test, must be repeated with each new horse. The certified handler/rider will be allowed to ride only the horse they have been certified on. However, during a search emergency; a certified handler/rider may ride another HRE certified equine other than their own.
4. All MSAR training and certification will also be conducted under the supervision of a Safety Officer.

IX. RE-CERTIFICATION AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROCEDURES

- A. The minimum 32 hours of annual in-service training time may include the 16 hours 'with mount' training time as well as actual 'call out' time. Documentation from outside training sources will be the responsibility of the Operational member.
1. The Team Training Officer will maintain documentation for all active members in good standing. The Team Training Officer shall validate all training times for each Operational member and notify them when the minimum training requirements have been met.
 2. The Team Training Officer will document the number of searches and training events in which the team has participated within the current year. The documentation shall include the total man-hours expended at each event as well as a narrative of what transpired at the event.
 3. Team documentation will be available for inspection or review by any authorized SAR Management Agency or official, no later than March 30th of each year.
 4. The Team Training Officer shall notify members not meeting yearly re-certification by November 1st of the current year. They will be informed of their total training hours to date and informed of the number of hours needed to remain in compliance.
- B. A training year begins on January 1st and concludes on December 31st of that year. After the first calendar year as a trainee, 32 hours of in-service must be obtained in conjunction with other requirements needed to become an Operational Handler or they shall retain their status as a trainee.
1. The Team Commander and Training Officer shall interview trainees who have not received operational status at the beginning of their second year. This interview will attempt to determine training deficiencies.
 2. Each handler shall obtain 32 hours of annual In-service training. A minimum of 16 training hours per year must be with mount. Training sessions per year should include four (4) or more of the following subject areas:
 - a. First aid or CPR
 - b. Safety related courses
 - c. Communications
 - d. Map and compass
 - e. Topographical map reading
 - f. GPS navigation
 - g. Mock searches
 - h. Lost person behavior
 - i. Clue awareness
 - j. Search operations
 - k. Rescue operations
 - l. Emergency preparedness
 - m. Stress management
 - n. ICS operations
 - o. Man tracking
 - p. NASAR approved training courses

q. PSARC approved training courses

C. Failure to Re-certify for HRE

1. Each MSAR mount shall pass an HRE once every three years.
2. When a team member fails to re-certify within six (6) months of the expiration date, of the year, they will be reduced to Trainee status for remaining calendar year. One (1) 3 month extension may be granted if extenuating circumstances exist. Such a member will be required (within 90 days) to begin the entire application and testing process for certification.
3. The decision to drop any member from the Team shall be jointly decided by the Team Commander, Team Training Officer, Membership Director and an operational handler. PSARC shall be advised of such action.
4. The Team Commander shall notify members regarding modifications to personnel lists and make other appropriate notifications as deemed necessary.
5. The Team Commander shall seek the aid of lawful authorities, should difficulty occur while retrieving any team property remaining in the possession of a dropped member.

X REVIEW OF STANDARDS

Standards shall be reviewed tri-annually. Generally this review will occur within the first 60 days of a new calendar year. Modifications or attachments to these standards may occur at any time year. Any and all changes to these standards must be properly documented.

Approved: dd/mm/yyyy

MSAR Team Standards: APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR SUGGESTED MINIMUM PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE EQUESTRIAN SEARCH TEAM

These items are suggested equipment. Equivalent gear would be acceptable and this list may be modified to adapt to the seasonal and special conditions. Not all of this would be carried into the field, but should be available to the individual searcher on the mission in some form. This would include a vehicle cache or pack to be left at base. The following equipment is commonly compiled to form what is referred to as a "response ready pack". Such a pack (or packs) holds those items that would allow the rider to function in a safe, effective manner during a SAR incident. Some items may be carried on a belt, in pockets, or strapped to the person. This equipment should be carried on all missions in rural or wilderness areas and is considered the minimum amount. Keep in mind that "any" additional items should be included on this list. Some search events may require a security search of you vehicle and trailer, utilizing this list may assist a security officer during a screening process. It is recommended that all items are initialed, in the event items are needed for identification purposes. In the event you are reassigned to a ground assignment, refer to the NASAR manual for 24-hour ready pack requirements.

Note: Consult your physician, regarding recommendations about analgesics and other drugs that you may carry.

Personal First-Aid Items

4 - Acetaminophen, 80 mg min (Aspirin)	1 - Gauze Roll, 2" x 4.5 yds min
4 - Antacid tablets	1 - Leaf bag, large
2 - Antihistamine, 25 mg min (Benadryl)	1 - Moleskin, 2" x 2" min
2 - Antiseptic cleansing pads	1 - Plastic bag, zip lock, quart size, for kit
1 - Antiseptic ointment	1 - Razor blade, single edge safety type
6 - Band aids, various sizes	1 - Roller Bandage, elastic, 2" x 4.5 yds min
1 - Candle, long burning	2 - Safety pins, large
3 - Cotton swabs, non sterile	1 - Scissors, multi-purpose
1 - Exam Gloves, vinyl or latex, non-sterile	1 - Space blanket or space type sleeping bag
1 - First Aide Tape, 7 yds min	1 - Splinter forceps, tweezers
2 - Gauze Pads, dressing, 4" x 4"	1 - Towelette (handi-wipe)

Personal SAR Equipment

1 - SAR personal photo identification badge	50 ft - Braided rope, 1850 lb rating
1 - Pack or Packs, 1,800 cu. In. min.	2 - Carabineers, locking
1 - Safety Vest, Orange or Yellow, with reflective tape front & rear	20 ft - Webbing, 1", Tubular, for harness or stokes litter
1 - Safety Helmet (riding helmet)	2 - Prusik slings (suitable for 9 or 11mm rope)
1 - Safety Goggles/glasses, clear lens	50 ft - Nylon twine, small rope or cord
1 - Footgear, sturdy, adequate for conditions, pair	1 - Raingear, durable (jacket & pants recommended)
1 - Gloves, adequate for conditions, pair	1 - Bags, plastic, various sizes, zip lock type
1 - Sunglasses, 97% UV protection	2 - Bags, Leaf/Trash, extra-large
1 - Watch	1 - Candle, long burning
1 - Topographic map of search area	1 - Sunscreen lotion, SPF 15 min
1 - SAR VHF 2-way Radio	1 - Insect repellent
1 - FRS radio	1 - Lip balm with sunscreen
2 - Water containers, 1 liter size	10 ft - Duct Tape, roll
1 - Bandana, handkerchief	1 - Flashlight, backup w/ extra bulb
1 - Cap or other headgear	8 - Matches, in waterproof container
1 - Bag for clothes, waterproof	1 - Measuring device, 18 inches min
1 - Clothing, extra set, including socks	1 - Metal cup or pot
1 - Extra socks	2 - Quarters for phone call
1 - Compass, orienting type	1 - Shelter Material, tarp, 8 X 10 feet
1 - Flagging tape, 100' roll w/ 'sharpie' marker	2 - Space Blankets
1 - Flashlight, primary, w/ extra bulb	1 - Tissue paper pack or 'baby wipes' pack
1 - Batteries, extra set for each device	1 - Tracking Stick, sectional, 48"
1 - Knife, multi-purpose	10 ft - Wire, woven steel (picture frame wire)
1 - Signaling mirror	8 - Wire ties, plastic, self locking, 6" – 12"
1 - Small pad and pencil/pen	1 - Whistle

Additional Support Equipment

	Camp Stove or Sterno		Food, non-perishable (3 days worth)
	Foam ground pad (closed cell)		Water, 3 gallons & extra container
	Gaiters		Trail snacks in sealed bags
	Lantern		Bouillon cubes, packaged jello, etc
	Sleeping bag		Rain cover for pack
	Water Purification tablets (3) or system		Tent or sleeping cover

Equine Related Equipment

	10 ft lead line		Saddle, pad and tack
	Water bucket		Extra Saddle pad & Girth strap
	Hoof pick & brushes		Extra halter & lead line
	Fly spray, enough for 3 days		Turnout sheet or blanket
	Hay & Grain for 3 days (supplements)		Extra water, 18 gallons minimum
	50 ft picket line or portable corral		Power source, 12 volt
	Road maps of MD, DE, OH, NY, WV & PA		Muck bucket & fork
	Tow Vehicle in safe working condition		Horse Trailer in safe working condition
	Equine First Aid kit		Vet Wrap
	Electrolyte paste or powder		Sponge
	Butte / pain meds		DMSO / wound spray
	Fly mask		Hay rack or net
	Feed bucket or pan		Hooks, water/hay/tack
	Boom		Shovel

Team Standards: APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES FOR AN OVERNIGHT BIVOUC ENCAMPMENT

1. The purpose of the overnight bivouac Mounted Search and Rescue (MSAR) Base Camp is to test the individual's ability to spend the night in the out-of-doors in a bivouac encampment environment, with their horse, and still be able to function adequately. It is permissible for members to share equipment that makes for a more useable and relaxing MSAR Base Camp. All team members must always be prepared for a deployment of 48 continuous hours.
2. This is a requirement for all team members and shall be performed at least once every two years for operational members to maintain their operational call out status. The overnight MSAR camp exercise provides the basic knowledge, skills and abilities that would be needed for SAR personnel finding themselves in a situation where they are forced to spend the night with whatever equipment they normally to have with them during deployment at an incident base camp.
 - a. This exercise also serves as a team building event and helps identify strengths and differences of individual team members.
 - b. Documented overnight stays (with horse) at a team search and rescue exercise or similar SAR event hosted by other recognized SAR entities will be credited to the two year requirement, providing it is done so with at least one other MSAR team member and with prior approval of team's training officer.
3. In order to simulate this situation for an evaluation, the following guidelines should apply:
 - a. The individual's equipment should be restricted to what they normally carry in daypacks during an actual search or equipment that is readily available from their tow vehicle/trailer, and what would normally be used at a MSAR Base Camp. All handlers shall provide their own equipment.
 - b. The base camp area should be typical terrain found in searches and far enough from roads and vehicles to create some sense of realism and safety.
 - c. All team members should have the knowledge, equipment and ability for a solo overnight bivouac away from a MSAR base camp, should such event ever occur in the field and if you were to become separated from your deployment partner.
 - d. Team members may elect to bivouac away from the MSAR base camp to create an emergency (like) overnight condition, but such an election must be done so in pairs (with another team member) and radio connectivity must be maintained with the primary base camp.
4. The bivouac encampment should not become an exercise in raw survival. The exercise evaluator or safety officer should inspect each person's equipment and help ensure that it is at least adequate for the environment.
5. Team members with generators shall allow other team members to charge battery operated equipment. Unless condition warrants otherwise, generators shall not be used from 2200 hours until 0600 hours.
6. Safety is of paramount importance. The participating individuals should be monitored carefully during the night to ensure that problems such as hypothermia do not develop. The evaluators should have a contingency plan for emergencies.

7. The overnight encampment exercise should be planned in conjunction with training or testing activities the following day. This will give the evaluators an opportunity to observe the effects of the bivouac encampment on the performance of the participants.
8. The bivouac encampment exercise must be done with an equine that has completed a Horse and Rider Evaluation. Each person must have adequate equipment, such as rope to make a picket line or a portable corral to secure the horse. The area should pose minimal danger to person or property in the event a horse gets loose.

Team Standards: APPENDIX C

HRE EVALUATOR GUIDELINES

1. All test materials are confidential and security of information is the responsibility of the Horse and Rider Evaluation (HRE) evaluator.
2. All tests and evaluations will be conducted in a professional manner and documented on appropriate forms. All test must be signed and bear the evaluator(s) name, trainee's name and test or course title.
3. Since no equine can be guaranteed totally safe, the objectives of the behavior and agility evaluations are to be utilized as an indicator that both the horse and handler can work together as a team and they have demonstrated the ability to safely and efficiently work in conjunction with other teams in public service situations.
4. Performance results of evaluations will be documented and maintained by the team Training Officer and reviewed yearly by the Team Commander.
5. A minimum of two evaluators must be present at all HRE's.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATORS

In order to be a recognized evaluator for equestrian public service search & rescue teams, an individual must satisfy the following criteria:

1. Must hold a minimum of a SAR Tech-II, PSARC FTL or equivalent certification.
2. Must have submitted to a criminal background check.
3. Must hold an Operational SAR status, or have been certified by government agencies or PSARC as being eligible to respond to searches.
4. Must have responded as a mounted searcher to a minimum of five (5) searches or multi-jurisdictional multi-discipline full-scale exercise mock searches within the past 8 years prior to becoming an evaluator.
5. An evaluator who has not been completed a mounted SAR task in the past four years shall be removed as a MSAR evaluator.
6. Must have attended three overnight bivouac encampment exercises.
7. Must have served as ring aid for three (3) horse and rider evaluations.
8. Must have been appointed by their parent MSAR Team as an evaluator.

Team Standards: APPENDIX D
Horse and Rider Evaluation Testing

See current Horse and Rider Evaluation documents for current protocols. These documents are:

1. HRE Testing Sheet (Appendix D-1)
2. HRE Testing Ring Template (Appendix D-2)
3. HRE Guide Book (Appendix D-3)

(Team Standards: Appendix D-1)
MSAR RESPONDER Horse and Rider Evaluation (HRE) Testing

Name of Rider: (PRINT) _____

Was applicant on time w/required paperwork? Yes ___ No ___

Gender, Color & Name of Mount: _____

Evaluator #1: _____ Date of HRE: _____

Evaluator #2: _____

Ratings used: "S" for satisfactory "U" for unsatisfactory.

All testing items must reflect a "S" score for a passing grade.

More than 3 "U" grades in any combination of 2nd attempts result in a failed test

Held with another horse for 2 minutes

Skills Tested	1st Attempt	2nd Attempt	3rd Attempt
Unloads from trailer in less than 2 minutes			
Remains tied to trailer for 30 minutes			
Tack in safe condition			
Stands quietly while being tacked			
Remains calm when being mounted			
Remains calm when being mounted			
Leads willing with rider sitting in saddle			
Turning Left/Right/Stop w/ 1 hand (cone weave)			
Walks over 18" obstacle			
Backs 6 feet through parallel poles			
Turns 180 degrees within 7 ft circle			
Demonstrates control at a walk			
Demonstrates control at speed faster than a walk			
Safely crosses wooden bridge, min 4 ft long			
Pony another horse 100 ft			
Remains in a search formation			
Reacts well to safety flares			
Reacts well to flashing lights and siren			
Reacts well to people			
Reacts well to radio chatter			
Reacts well to dogs and other distractions			
Reacts well to parked vehicles			
Stands quietly near passing traffic, 2 minutes			
Safely crosses paved road			
Safely crosses water – 3" deep, 4 steps wide			
Safely crosses mud – 3 ft wide			
Stands quietly on a 40 degree hill, 2 minutes			
Rides in trail formation with other horses			
Safely walks up a 40 degree grade, 50 ft			
Safely walks down a 40 degree grade, 50 ft			
Leaves herd at a gait faster than a walk			
Willingly travels off path through woods			
Loads in Trailer in less than 5 minutes			

Rider/Handler: _____ Date: _____

Name of Equine: _____

Coggins Accession Number: _____

State & Date where/when coggins test was drawn: _____ / _____

All tests items **were** ___ / **were not** ___ accomplished on the 1st or 2nd attempt
check one block (If not all accomplished list in notes section)

All tests items **were** ___ / **were not** ___ accomplished on the 3rd attempt

NOTE: Three failed third attempts in any category results in a failed test. Date: _____

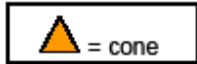
Testing standards were met - **PASS:** _____

Testing standards were **not** met - **MUST RE-TEST:** _____
check block or mark N/A

Evaluator Signatures: _____

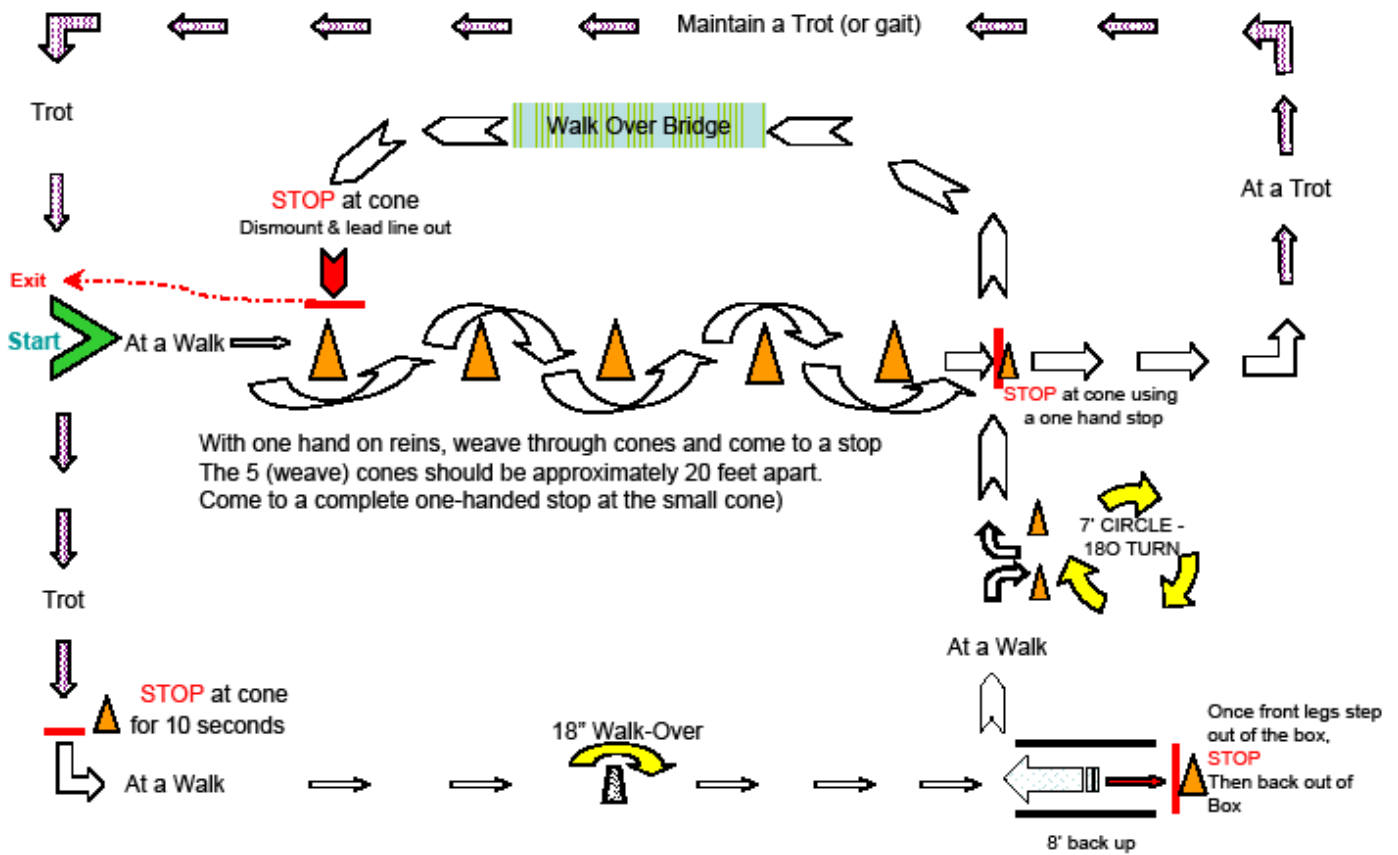
Notes:

(Team Standards: Appendix D-2)
Horse and Rider Evaluation (HRE) Testing Ring Template



HRE Individual Trail Test Pattern
 Only one equine in the testing area at a time
 Trail pattern direction may vary depending on ring

Note: Remove props before bringing all HRE teams into ring for the traffic flares, flashing lights and pony testing.



(Team Standards: Appendix D-3)

Horse and Rider Evaluation (HRE) Testing Guidebook

The below guidelines are designed to provide guidance for the evaluator and riders and define what items will be tested and what performance objectives are being evaluated. If at any time you do not understand what to do or are not clear about the performance expectations of a testing item; ask for clarification before you attempt the test item. This form shall be used in conjunction with the HRE Testing Sheet.

The mounted SAR team will perform the following tests at a walk unless otherwise indicated. During the evaluation, the handler must maintain control of the horse, and the horse should act mannered and calm. Any horse displaying actions that could lead to injury of persons or property shall immediately be deemed unsafe for public service use and removed from testing. Testing must be conducted under the supervision of an authorized evaluator(s). If HRE attendees need a break during the testing seek permission from an evaluator. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider during each exercise.

NOTE: Any equine rearing above knee height, at any time during the Horse and Rider Evaluation (HRE), will be immediately removed from testing. Any horse that bites or kicks a person during the HRE will also be removed immediately.

NOTE: If anyone (evaluator, rider, observer, etc.) observes an unsafe act they are to say the word HALT in a loud voice.

1. **Unloads from Trailer in less than 2 minutes:** Horse shall remain calm during the unloading process and exit the trailer in a safe manner. Rider may have one person as an assistant to help them with this task.
2. **Remains tied to trailer 30 minutes:** Horse shall remain tied to the trailer for 30 minutes. Hay bags may be placed on the trailer or near the horse. If an equine pulls away or breaks free before the 30 minute time period, it may be retested again with the clock reset to zero. No more than 90 minutes total elapsed time may be used to pass this test during an initial HRE, timed from the beginning of the initial start time. If the breakaway was violent in nature and/or could cause injury to a person or property, then the applicant can be asked to leave.
3. **Tack in safe condition:** All tack shall be in safe and workable condition. This is to include the safety helmet. If the evaluators agree that a rider's tack is not safe, then the testing will stop at this point. Testing may continue when the faulty equipment is replaced with safe/workable equipment, as determined by the evaluators.
4. **Stands quietly while being tacked:** Some movement of the mount is acceptable. This test is to insure the mount can be tacked in a safe manner.
5. **Remains calm when being mounted:** Some movement of the mount is acceptable. This test is to insure the mount can be mounted in a safe manner. Mounting shall be unassisted by another person or equine.
6. **Held with another horse, 2 minutes:** Some movement of the mount is acceptable. This test is to insure the mount can be held by another person in close proximity to another equine in a safe manner.
7. **Leads willingly with rider sitting in saddle- 100':** Horse shall not display acts of aggression, such as biting or pawing at the handler, which is an automatic failure.
8. **Turning left/right using 1-hand (cone weave):** Ride the horse with using only one hand. This is not necessarily neck reining, so any one handed technique can be used. The evaluator is looking for control of the mount and not showmanship.
9. **Walk over 18" obstacle:** The horse shall walk calmly over the obstacle. A small hop is permitted if two legs remain on the ground. If all four legs leave the ground then it shall be considered a jump, which is not an acceptable attempt. Clipping the walkover/obstacle is acceptable as long as the mount remains calm.
10. **Backs 6 feet within 4' wide parallel ground poles:** The equine shall back in a relatively straight line between the guide rails for a minimum distance of 6 feet. Placing a hoof outside of the poles before the conclusion of the test is a failed attempt.
11. **Turns 180 degree within a 7' circle:** The rider enters the circle/box and can turn either left or right. The equine must keep all four hoofs within the circle/box during this test.

12. **Demonstrates control at a walk:** This item shall be observed both in the testing arena/ring as well as in the field. The horse should remain calm, relaxed and walk at a speed not to exceed 3 to 4 miles per hour. (This gait is sometimes called a dog walk or slow walk)
13. **Demonstrates control at speed faster than a walk:** This item shall be observed both in the testing arena/ring as well as in the field when asked to do so. Gaits for this speed shall include: a trot, lope, rack, running walk or other similar gait at a speed of 5 to 12 miles per hour.
14. **Safely crosses wooden bridge- 4'long:** The horse shall safely cross the entire length of the bridge. Each attempt shall have duration of no more than 2 minutes. Jumping over the obstacle is a failed attempt, as is stepping off to the side before reaching the end.
15. **Pony another horse 100':** The rider and horse shall remain calm and the rider shall show control over both their mount and the equine being ponied. Kicking or biting is not permissible by either equine.
16. **Remains in a search formation:** Rider shall ride 2 to 6 teams abreast for a distance of 100 yards. Horses shall remain calm and riders shall maintain even distance and spacing with the other teams. The exercise is to be completed at a walk.
17. **Reacts well to safety flares:** This will be conducted as a group exercise with riders in single file formation at a walk. Riders shall walk their mounts around burning traffic flares in a circle and then a figure 8 pattern, remaining not closer than 5 feet nor farther than 20 feet from the flare. Riders shall keep spacing and distance and demonstrate control over their mount. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider as well as reaction to the flare and smoke.
18. **Reacts well to flashing lights and siren:** This will be conducted as a group exercise with riders in single file formation at a walk. A 2 to 3 horse spacing length is required. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider.
19. **Reacts well to people:** Horse shall stand quietly in an area and shall remain within that area. Biting, kicking or pawing at a person is grounds for failure. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider.
20. **Reacts well to radio chatter:** Horse shall either stand quietly in an area with other teams or walked in a single file formation. Equines shall remain calm during this part of the test. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider.
21. **Reacts well to dogs and other detractions:** Horse shall either stand quietly in an area with other teams or walked in a single file formation. Equines shall remain calm and shall not strike or bite any dogs or other detractions. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider.
22. **Reacts well to parked vehicles:** This will be conducted as a group exercise with riders in single file formation at a walk. 2 to 3 horse length spacing is required. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider.
23. **Stands quietly near passing traffic:** This will be conducted as a group exercise with riders in a line abreast of each other. Horse shall remain calm as traffic passes. Horses shall be placed approximately 8 feet from roadway. Each attempt shall have duration of at least 2 minutes but no more than 3 minutes. The evaluator is looking for a calm mount that is willing to obey its rider.
24. **Safety crosses paved road:** This will conducted under strict supervision of the evaluators. Each equine shall cross a paved roadway and return. Rider is graded on hazard awareness and control of mount. Mount should remain calm and slowly walk across the roadway and show no fear of painted lines. Each attempt shall have duration of no more than 2 minutes.
25. **Safely crosses water- 3" deep, 4 steps wide:** The horse shall calmly walk through the water obstacle. The equine may stop to drink. If the water crossing has a muddy bottom, then this test may be counted as a mud obstacle too. Jumping over the water is a failure and a second attempt may be conducted, provided the evaluator feels it is safe to do so. Each attempt shall have duration of no more than 2 minutes.
26. **Safely crosses mud- 4 steps wide:** The horse shall calmly walk through the mud obstacle. If the water crossing has a muddy bottom, then that test may be counted as a mud obstacle too. Jumping over the mud is a failure and a second attempt shall be conducted, providing the evaluator feels it is safe to do so. Each attempt

shall have duration of no more than 2 minutes.

27. **Stands quietly on a 40-degree hill, 2 minutes:** The horse shall calmly stand alone on the hill (approximately 45-degree) for the testing period. The horse may eat grass if the rider allows. Rearing or bucking is a failure. The horse may face downhill or uphill, but may not stand perpendicular to the slope of the hill.
28. **Rides in trail formation with other horses:** This item shall include riding in single file, abreast and other similar formations. The exercise is done at a walk. Riders shall rotate their position within the group and shall be observed in the lead, the middle and at the end of the formation. Horses that bite or kick another horse shall be removed and receive a failing grade.
29. **Safely walks up a 40-degree grade- 50':** The horse shall walk up a steep grade (approximately 45-degree). Trotting or cantering is not allowed and will constitute a failed attempt. Each attempt shall have duration of no more than 2 minutes.
30. **Safely walks down a 40-degree grade- 50':** The horse shall walk down a steep grade. Trotting or cantering is not allowed and will constitute a failed attempt. Each attempt shall have duration of no more than 2 minutes.
31. **Leaves herd at a gait faster than a walk:** This test item is to be conducted first within a ring then again out on the trail.
32. **Willingly travels off path through woods:** The horse shall calmly walk off a path through woods or light brush.
33. **Loads in Trailer - less than 5 minutes:** Horse shall remain calm during the loading process. Rider may have one person as an assistant to help them with this task.