

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM'S
STANDARDS FOR
FIELD TEAM LEADER (FTL)

I. PURPOSE

- A. The Field Team Leader (FTL) standards were developed to define the minimum requirements necessary to perform the following functions in the general environment of the Commonwealth of Virginia (in addition to the requirements of Field Team Member).
 - 1. Lead various types of field teams to perform
 - a. Missing person search
 - b. Ground search portion of missing aircraft search
 - c. Non-technical rescue
 - 2. Participate in semi-technical rescues as a belayer or as a litter team member.
- B. The FTL should be capable of performing these functions anytime of the year, day or night, and in all weather conditions experienced in the Commonwealth. In order to accomplish this, the FTL should be able to:
 - 1. Lead FTMs and other less qualified searchers
 - 2. Ensure that the team is properly equipped and ensure compliance with all safety and operational protocols
 - 3. Understand how field teams interface with the mission staff
 - 4. Understand the operational significance of assigned tasks

II. COURSE ADMISSION CRITERIA

A. Age

Minimum age for FTL is 18.

B. Affiliation and Experience

Applicants for FTL training should hold active membership in a professional SAR group, or an established emergency services organization such as a law enforcement agency, a rescue squad, or a fire department. First consideration for training will be given to these applicants. Additional factors such as prior experience, potential for use of training, number of SAR missions per year and other criteria may be considered.

C. Applicant must hold a current FTM certification.

D. Applicant must hold a valid Advanced First Aid or equivalent or higher rating.

III. KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The FTL will demonstrate an understanding of the items listed under each subject. Some items may require the performance of manual skills.

Field Team Leaders are expected to fully meet the expectations of Part III of the FTM Standards. The items listed here are additional.

A. SAR Operations

1. Define the role of the field team for these types of missions.
 - a. Lost person search
 - b. Downed aircraft
 - c. Disaster assistance
2. List the various types of resources in each of the following categories that may be utilized in a typical SAR event.
 - a. Ground search
 - b. Air search
 - c. Logistics
 - d. Communications
 - e. Command
 - f. Rescue

B. Search Tactics

1. Describe the responsibilities of the field team leader when carrying out a field task.
2. Explain the execution of these search tactics.
 - a. Containment
 - b. Attraction
 - c. Survey search

- d. Scratch search (hasty search)
- e. Sweep search (open grid search)
- f. Line search (closed grid search)
- g. Sign cutting
- h. Interviewing
- i. Area search with air-scent dogs
- j. Mantracking
- k. ELT-DF search

3. Describe the tasks that must be completed once the field team returns to base camp.

C. Search Management

1. Outline search strategy for
 - a. Downed aircraft
 - b. Lost person, rural and wilderness
 - c. Lost person, urban and suburban
2. Describe the primary phases of a search mission and the basic activities that occur during each phase.

D. Rescue Operations

1. Describe how to formulate a rescue plan.
2. List the primary phases of a rescue mission.
3. Describe the major factors a team leader must consider once a victim is located.
4. Describe the manpower and equipment requirements and the team organizational structure necessary to accomplish a semi-technical rescue operation.
5. Describe the principles of safe interactions with aircraft commonly used in SAR operations.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of ground operations involving aircraft.

E. Equipment

Describe basic team equipment, other than required personal gear, for a wilderness SAR team.

F. Mission Performance

1. Demonstrate the ability to manage a team traveling cross country on foot, in any weather conditions, navigating by map and compass, and to establish an emergency bivouac, all without compromising the assigned task.
2. Demonstrate the ability to organize and execute the tactics listed under Part III, B, 2.

3. Demonstrate the ability to properly secure a scene, extricate and treat a patient, and evacuate the patient using the method most appropriate for a given situation.

G. Ropes and Technical Hardware

1. Demonstrate the ability to correctly tie these knots:
(In addition to those listed in the FTM Standards)
 - a. Butterfly
 - b. Figure 8 on-a-bight
 - c. Redundant seat harness
2. Demonstrate the ability to safely direct a litter team in moving a litter up and down a slope, using a belay system.

H. Belaying

1. Demonstrate proper belay techniques including:
 - a. Anchorage
 - b. Stance
 - c. Calls
 - d. Uphill and downhill travel
 - e. Tree wrap and mechanical brakes

I. ELT-DF Search

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the operational principles of the ELT, and of the SAR system that exists to locate activated ELT's.
2. Describe the basic principles of DF search.
3. Define problems associated with DF search.
4. Demonstrate the ability to do a simple ELT search using DF equipment.

IV. TEST METHODS

A. Written Test

1. The test consists of at least 100 multiple choice questions representative of the material presented in the course.
2. The test is administered at the beginning of the course as a pre-test and again at the end of the course as a post-test. Students who pass the pre-test are not required to take the post-test. Passing score is 80 percent.

3. Failure of the post-test constitutes failure of the course.

B. Practical Test

1. The practical test consists of several stations that test certain skills presented in the course. Students are requested to perform those skills in the presence of an examiner.
2. Each station has specific requirements and well defined criteria for pass/fail.
3. A student who fails a practical station(s) may repeat that station(s) once on the same day. Failure of a second attempt constitutes failure of the course.

C. Retesting

1. Students who complete the required training, but fail either the written or practical test, are eligible for retesting.
2. Each student is responsible for making arrangements for retesting with the course coordinator on an individual basis.
3. If a student fails any portion of a retest, the record reverts to inactive and the course must be repeated or challenged.

V. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- A. The following criteria must be met in order to qualify for certification as a Field Team Leader.

1. Attend a complete FTL training course
2. Pass the FTL written test with a score of at least 80 percent
3. Pass the FTL practical test within the limits defined for each station

B. Equivalent Training and/or Experience

1. Those individuals who, by virtue of past training and experience, possess the necessary knowledge and skills may be permitted to challenge the written and practical exams and be certified as an FTL, provided all prerequisite requirements are met.
2. Members of recognized search and rescue organizations who receive their training from that organization and who hold a valid organizational certification may apply for DES certification as an FTL, provided the

organization's training standards meet or exceed the DES program standards for FTL certification. These applications will be processed on a case by case basis.

C. Certification

1. Upon successful completion of training, a certificate will be issued to the trainee by DES. This certificate does not constitute a license to practice the skills taught in the training program, but signifies only that the person holding the certificate has met an established standard of knowledge and performance and should be able to function in a competent manner at the level indicated on the certificate.
2. Certification will be valid for three (3) years from date of issue.

VI. RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

A. Notification Of Expiration Of Certification

1. Six (6) months prior to the expiration date, a letter will be sent noting the expiration date and defining the recertification procedure.
2. A second letter will be sent during the expiration month stating that if recertification is not accomplished within six (6) months of expiration, certification will be dropped.
3. Six (6) months after expiration, the record reverts to inactive.

B. Procedure

1. Certification may be renewed by successfully completing the written and practical tests, and meeting any other requirements for certification for Field Team Leader that exist at the time of recertification.
 2. Each person is responsible for making individual arrangements for recertification testing with the DES SAR Coordinator.
 3. Certification will be valid for three (3) years from date of issue.
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FIELD TEAM LEADER (FTL) PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

1. All equipment listed on the "FTM Personal Equipment List"
2. Twenty (20) feet of one-inch nylon tubular webbing or a commercial seat harness
3. Two (2) pieces of 6mm or 7mm climbing grade nylon rope for making slings -- each piece should be 5 or 6 feet long.
4. Two (2) locking-D carabiners
5. Climbing helmet or hardhat with chin strap
6. Electric headlamp
7. Suggested additional pack items:
 - Zip-lock bags
 - Parachute cord
 - Toilet paper
 - Wet wipes
 - Moleskin
 - Disposable space blanket
 - Backpacking stove
 - Mess kit
 - Signal mirror
 - Signal smokes
 - Aerial flares
 - Small note book and pen
 - Insect repellent
 - Iodine-type water purification tablets