



Certification / Recertification / Reciprocity Guidelines

Date / Revisions:

17 March, 2015;
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Purpose:

To establish clear procedures, forms, and requirements for obtaining certification through the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue Program Office for all Search and Rescue certifications.

Scope:

All personnel seeking certification for Search and Rescue Disciplines managed by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue Program Office

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Responsibilities:

Individual:

- **Individual personnel are ultimately responsible for maintaining their certifications.**
- Individuals should submit all certification requirements to their Group Training Officer (GTO)
- Individuals should maintain the following records of their own:
 - Training Record – Simple record of training attended (forms available)
 - Mission Record – Simple record of missions attended (forms available)
 - Mission After Action reports – Report outlining the activities, observations, and any notes that you may want to keep following the mission. (forms available)
 - Copies of all Certificates of completion – These are typically obtained from the LMS.
 - Copies of all co-requisites for certification.
 - Copies of all applications for certification.
 - Copies of all Certifications

Group / Group Training Officer (GTO):

- **The Group is responsible for providing adequate training opportunities to maintain certifications for the disciplines they have an MOU for.**
- The group should maintain the following:
 - Group Roster
 - Rosters of all attendees at training events
 - Group Training Record (forms available)
 - Group Training Summary (required if requesting a Training Activity Number)
 - Group After Action Reports outlining all personnel's activities pertaining to the mission.
 - Group Mission Record (forms available)
- The group should report all training and mission activity to VDEM Quarterly. (at or before the Quarterly VSARCO Meeting)
- The group should maintain a training record for each individual that contains:
 - Training Record – Simple record of training attended
 - Mission Record – Simple record of missions attended
 - Mission After Action reports – Report outlining the activities, observations, and any questions that they may have following the mission.
 - Copies of all Certificates of completion – These are typically obtained from the LMS.
 - Copies of all co-requisites for certification.
 - Copies of all applications for certification.
 - Copies of all Certifications
- The GTO should submit the application for certification on behalf of the individual once endorsements are completed.
- **All questions pertaining to training requirements / courses / and certification should be routed through the GTO.**
- The GTO should submit only the application for certification to the SAR Training Specialist either hard copy or electronically (preferred). The GTO should maintain a copy of the application in the individuals training record.

VDEM SAR Training Program / SAR Training Specialist (STS):

- **The STS will receive, process, and issue all certifications.**
- In general turn-around time for issuance of certification will be 7 days, but no longer than 30 days.
- The STS will email the GTO the Certifications for all individuals.
- The STS will handle all requests for Reciprocity thru the GTO.

Search and Rescue Team Member (STM)

- Certification good for 3 years from date of issuance noted on Certification.
- Co-requisites are recommended to be completed prior to STM Course.
- Initial Certification
 - Complete Prerequisites for certification.
 - Current CPR / First Aid certification
 - National Incident Management System (NIMS) / Incident Command System (ICS) Courses
 - IS-100.b - (ICS 100) Introduction to Incident Command System
 - IS-700.a National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
 - IS-800.b National Response Framework, An Introduction
 - IS-809 Emergency Support Function (ESF) #9 – Search and Rescue
 - National Park Service (NPS), Basic Search and Rescue Online Course
 - ~~Interagency Aviation Training (IAT), Aviation 101 Online Course~~
(Form available to attest to completion of A101 and NPS Course)
 - ~~Criminal Background check~~
 - Complete 40 hour Search and Rescue Team Member (STM) Course (successfully pass written and practical assessments).
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Recertification
 - Ensure all prerequisites are completed.
 - Documentation of completion of 40 hours of training relevant to the Search and Rescue Team Member (STM) obtained in the last 3 years.
 - Documentation of 9 field tasks completed on missions or exercises in the last 3 years. (6 should be missions). Documentation should be in the form of individual mission record or individual After Action Report.
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Reciprocity / Challenge
 - Complete Prerequisites for certification.
 - Provide documentation of 40 hours of training relevant to the Search and Rescue Team Member (STM) obtained in the last 3 years.
 - Completion of *Introduction to the Virginia SAR Program* Module (available thru SAR Training Specialist).
 - Request and successfully pass the written and practical assessments for STM.
 - Submit Application for Certification.
 - Contact SAR Training Specialist with questions.

Search and Rescue Team Leader (STL)

- Certification good for 3 years from date of issuance noted on Certification.
- All applicants for the STL Course must complete the co-requisites below.
- Initial Certification
 - Complete co-requisites for certification.
 - Current CPR / First Aid certification
 - Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - IS-200.b (ICS 200) ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
 - Certificate of completion / Prior Certification for STM
 - Documentation of all co-requisites for STM.
 - Documentation of 6 tasks as an STM on missions or exercises. (4 should be missions).
Documentation should be in the form of individual mission record or individual After Action Report.
 - Complete 40 hour Search and Rescue Team Leader (STL) Course (successfully pass written and practical assessments).
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Recertification
 - Ensure all prerequisites are completed.
 - Documentation of completion of 40 hours of training relevant to the Search and Rescue Team Leader (STL) obtained in the last 3 years.
 - Documentation of 9 tasks on missions or exercises in the last 3 years. (6 must be missions).
Documentation should be in the form of individual mission record or individual After Action Report.
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Reciprocity
 - Currently there is no accepted reciprocity for STL.
 - Contact SAR Training Specialist with questions.

Search and Rescue Management Team Member (MTM)

- Certification good for 3 years from date of issuance noted on Certification.
- Initial Certification
 - Complete Prerequisites for certification.
 - Current CPR / First Aid certification.
 - Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - IS-200.b (ICS 200) ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
 - Certificate of completion / Prior Certification for STM.
 - Documentation of all co-requisites for STM.
 - Complete 40 hour Search and Rescue Management Team Member (MTM) Course (successfully pass written and practical assessments).
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Recertification
 - Ensure all prerequisites are completed.
 - Documentation of completion of 40 hours of training relevant to the Search and Rescue Management Team Member (MTM) obtained in the last 3 years.
 - Documentation of 9 missions or exercises in the last 3 years where you functioned as an MTM. (6 should be missions)
Documentation should be in the form of individual mission record or individual After Action Report.
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Reciprocity
 - Currently there is no accepted reciprocity for MTM.
 - Contact SAR Training Specialist with questions.

Search and Rescue Management Team Leader (MTL)

- Certification good for 3 years from date of issuance noted on Certification.
- All applicants for the MTL Course must complete the co-requisites below.
- Initial Certification
 - Complete Prerequisites for certification.
 - Current CPR / First Aid certification
 - Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - IS-200.b (ICS 200) ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
 - G300 (ICS-300) Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents
 - Certificate of Completion for Lost Person Behavior Class
 - Certificate of completion / Prior Certification for MTM.
 - Documentation of all co-requisites for STM
 - Documentation of 9 missions or exercises in the last 3 years where you functioned as Management Staff. (6 must be missions).
Documentation should be in the form of individual mission record or individual After Action Report.
 - Complete 40 hour Search and Rescue Management Team Leader (MTL) Course (successfully pass written and practical assessments).
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Recertification
 - Ensure all prerequisites are completed.
 - Documentation of completion of 40 hours of training relevant to the Search and Rescue Management Team Leader (MTL) obtained in the last 3 years.
 - Documentation of 9 missions or exercises in the last 3 years where you functioned as Management Staff. (6 should be missions)
Documentation should be in the form of individual mission record or individual After Action Report.
 - Submit Application for Certification.
- Reciprocity
 - Currently there is no accepted reciprocity for MTL.
 - Contact SAR Training Specialist with questions.

FAQ's

- 1. Who is responsible for maintaining certification documentation and ensuring the proper number of hours of training, missions, and exercises attended, and all co-requisites are completed?**

The individual is ultimately responsible for all of this.
The group should provide opportunities to train and participate in exercises, as well as maintain a training record on each member.
- 2. Is the certificate of completion for a course and the actual Certification different?**

Yes, by completing the course you have completed a large portion of the requirement...however the other co-requisites are also necessary in order to submit for the Certification. These can be completed at any time before or after completing the course work.
- 3. Who do I submit Application for Certification through?**

Once you have completed all requirements and provided the Group Training Officer (GTO) copies of all items required to be in your training record...submit the application for certification to the GTO. The GTO will sign the application attesting to your complete training record and meeting requirements. They will obtain the group leader's signature and then they will submit to VDEM SAR Training Specialist. You should receive an electronic copy of your certification within 30 days of VDEM receiving the application.
- 4. Can I respond on a mission without a current certification?**

If you are a member of an MOU'd Group you must maintain a certification for the task(s) you intend to participate in on a mission. All individuals that respond on missions must certify and maintain one or more of: STM, STL, MTM, or MTL regardless of specialty certifications. Field deployable personnel must maintain STM or STL and Base Staff must maintain MTM or MTL. The only exception to these requirements, are members that have not yet attended and certified for STM but have completed a Call-Out Qualified program with their group.
COQ is not a recognized certification, this is a program that allows personnel having completed a minimum training program an opportunity to respond on missions **under the direct supervision of a certified individual**. The certified individual is accountable for the actions and supervision of the COQ individual.
By not being current on a certification you open yourself, the group, and ultimately the entire SAR program up to liability.
- 5. For personnel that are affiliated with more than one SAR Group, what do they have to do?**

Each group should maintain complete records on all rostered personnel. It is up to the group leadership to decide what they will accept from other groups as far as meeting the individual's certification and activity requirements for their group. Ultimately, the individual should decide on a primary affiliation to submit certification applications thru this group. As for specialty groups (tracking, canine, equine, rescue), they may or may not provide all the opportunities for a member to maintain all their requirements for STM, STL, MTM or MTL. Therefore, members would need to train with or belong to another group that does in order to maintain those requirements. As long as the specialty group is willing to accept these hours training with another group then the specialty group can maintain all documentation and submit certification applications for that individual for all certifications. For specialty certifications, ie...Operational Tracker, the Specialty Group would only need to maintain a copy of the certification that individual holds (STM) if they are not the primary affiliation for STM, STL, MTM, MTL. They would not need to maintain all documentation supporting the STM certification for the individual.
- 6. What is the COVSAR ID# and how do I get one?**

The COVSAR ID# will be a unique 4 digit Identification number to assist with tracking records. This number will be a permanent number issued to you as an individual and will never change. You will receive this number through your GTO and / or when you are issued your first VDEM Certification. All correspondence with the SAR Program office should include this number. This number is the same regardless of number of affiliations or if you change groups.
- 7. Do I need to complete the final test for the Aviation 101 class?**

~~No, the A101 class content only has to be completed...the new test incorporates several other classes. You are welcome to complete these classes however they are not required. The Completion of A101 Form is available to complete and submit to the group training officer as endorsement that you completed the course work.~~
Currently the Aviation 101 Course is unavailable and therefore the requirement for completion has been suspended until further notice.
- 8. Do mission hours count as training hours?**

No, Training and activity at missions are greatly different. You will need to complete both requirements in order to maintain certification. Any exceptions or extenuating circumstances can be directed thru the SAR Training Specialist to determine further actions needed.



Commonwealth of Virginia - Department of Emergency Management - Search and Rescue Program

Completion of Aviation 101 (A101)

Member Name

Sponsoring Group

By signing the following section I affirm that I completed the Interagency Aviation Training- Aviation 101 (A101) Course materials. I understand that I am completing this coursework as part of the requirements for application for certification / recertification / reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Program. I further understand that the group and individual's training file will be made available upon request for audit at anytime with reasonable notice. Further, knowingly falsifying information or lack of complete information may prevent, delay, or disqualify the individual, the group, and others involved from certification or renewal of the Group Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the future.

Requesting Member Signature

VDEM SAR ID#

Date

Please submit this form to the Group Training Officer to be placed in your training record.

Group Training Officer Signature

VDEM SAR ID#

Date received



Commonwealth of Virginia - Department of Emergency Management - Search and Rescue Program

Completion of National Park Service Basic SAR Course

Member Name

Sponsoring Group

By signing the following section I affirm that I completed the National Park Service Basic SAR Online Course materials. I understand that I am completing this coursework as part of the requirements for application for certification / recertification / reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Program. I further understand that the group and individual's training file will be made available upon request for audit at anytime with reasonable notice. Further, knowingly falsifying information or lack of complete information may prevent, delay, or disqualify the individual, the group, and others involved from certification or renewal of the Group Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the future.

Requesting Member Signature

VDEM SAR ID#

Date

Please submit this form to the Group Training Officer to be placed in your training record.

Group Training Officer Signature

VDEM SAR ID#

Date received

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Emergency Management
Search and Rescue Training Program

10501 Trade Court
Richmond, VA 23236
(804) 674-2732
Fax (804) 674-2419
www.vaemergency.com



6744 Thirlane Road
Roanoke, VA 24019

Cell - (804) 239-9495
sartraining@vdem.virginia.gov

Application for Certification

SEARCH and RESCUE TEAM MEMBER (STM)

Member Name _____

Sponsoring Group _____

☐ Non-affiliated

Initial Certification:

The following items must be documented in the above member's training file.

- ☐ Current CPR and First Aid (or higher) certification
- ☐ Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - o IS-100.b - (ICS 100) Introduction to Incident Command System
 - o IS-700.a National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
 - o IS-800.b National Response Framework, An Introduction
 - o IS-809 Emergency Support Function (ESF) #9 – Search and Rescue
- ☐ Completion of the National Park Service, Basic Search and Rescue Online Course
- ☐ Completion of the Interagency Aviation Training, Aviation 101 (A101) Online Course
- ☐ Certificate of Completion for the Search Team Member (STM) Course.
- ☐ Documentation of all previous SAR Training supporting certification.
- ☐ Documentation that a Criminal Background Check has been completed.
- ☐ Active member in good standing with the above named group.
(Non-affiliated personnel must submit all above documentation when requesting certification)

Recertification (All of the above and below listed items)

- ☐ Completed 40 hours of training relevant for the Search and Rescue Team Member (STM) in last 3 years.
- ☐ Completed 9 Tasks as an STM on Missions or Exercises in last 3 years. (6 must be on Missions)

Reciprocity will be handled on a case by case basis. Please contact the SAR training Specialist for further guidance.

By signing the following section I affirm that the above items are current and complete in the individual's training file. The above named individual is applying for certification / recertification / reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Program. All parties understand that the group and individual's training file will be made available upon request for audit at anytime with reasonable notice. Further, knowingly falsifying information or lack of complete information may prevent, delay, or disqualify the individual, the group, and others involved from certification or renewal of the Group Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the future.

Requesting Member Signature

Date

Group Training Officer Signature

COVSAR ID#

Date

Group Leader Signature

COVSAR ID#

Date

VDEM Search and Rescue Program Representative

Date Received

Date Cert Issued

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Emergency Management
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sartraining@vdem.virginia.gov

Application for Certification

SEARCH and RESCUE TEAM LEADER (STL)

Member Name _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Sponsoring Group _____

☐ Non-affiliated

Initial Certification:

The following items must be documented in the above member's training file.

- ☐ Current CPR and First Aid (or higher) certification
 - ☐ Must have completed all required training for Search Team Member (STM) previously.
 - ☐ Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - IS-200.b (ICS 200) ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
 - ☐ Certificate of Completion for the Search Team Leader (STL) Course.
 - ☐ Completed 6 Tasks as an STM on Missions or Exercises in last 3 years. (4 must be on Missions)
 - ☐ Documentation of all previous SAR Training supporting certification.
 - ☐ Documentation that a Criminal Background Check has been completed.
 - ☐ Active member in good standing with the above named group.
- (Non-affiliated personnel must submit all above documentation when requesting certification)

Recertification: (All of the above and below listed items)

- ☐ Completed 9 Tasks as an STL on Missions or Exercises in last 3 years. (6 must be on Missions)
- ☐ Completed 40 hours training relevant for the Search and Rescue Team Leader (STL) in last 3 years.

Reciprocity will be handled on a case by case basis. Please contact the SAR Training Specialist for further guidance.

By signing the following section I affirm that the above items are current and complete in the individual's training file. The above named individual is applying for certification / recertification / reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Program. All parties understand that the group and individual's training file will be made available upon request for audit at anytime with reasonable notice. Further, knowingly falsifying information or lack of complete information may prevent, delay, or disqualify the individual, the group, and others involved from certification or renewal of the Group Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the future.

Requesting Member Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

Group Training Officer Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

Group Leader Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

VDEM Search and Rescue Program Representative _____

Date Received _____

Date Cert Issued _____

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APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

SEARCH and RESCUE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBER (MTM)

Member Name _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Sponsoring Group _____

☐ Non-affiliated

Initial Certification:

The following items must be documented in the above member's training file.

- ☐ Current CPR / First Aid (or higher) certification
- ☐ Must have completed all required training for Search Team Member (STM) previously.
- ☐ Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - IS-200.b (ICS 200) ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- ☐ Certificate of Completion / Previous STM Certification.
- ☐ Certificate of Completion for the Management Team Member (MTM) Course
- ☐ Documentation of all previous SAR Training supporting certification.
- ☐ Documentation that a Criminal Background Check has been completed.
- ☐ Active member in good standing with the above named group.

(Non-affiliated personnel must submit all above documentation when requesting certification)

Recertification:

- ☐ Completed 40 hours of training relevant for the Search and Rescue Management Team Member (MTM) in last 3 years.
- ☐ Functioned as an MTM on 9 Missions or Exercises in last 3 years. (6 must be on Missions)

Reciprocity will be handled on a case by case basis. Please contact the SAR Training Specialist for further guidance.

By signing the following section I affirm that the above items are current and complete in the individual's training file. The above named individual is applying for certification / recertification / reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Program. All parties understand that the group and individual's training file will be made available upon request for audit at anytime with reasonable notice. Further, knowingly falsifying information or lack of complete information may prevent, delay, or disqualify the individual, the group, and others involved from certification or renewal of the Group Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the future.

Requesting Member Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

Group Training Officer Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

Group Leader Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

VDEM Search and Rescue Program Representative

Date Received

Date Cert Issued

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Emergency Management
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APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

SEARCH and RESCUE MANAGEMENT TEAM LEADER (MTL)

Member Name _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Sponsoring Group _____

☐ Non-affiliated

Initial Certification and

The following items must be documented in the above member's training file.

- ☐ Current CPR / First Aid (or higher) certification
- ☐ Certificate of Completion for National Incident Management System Courses
 - o G300 (ICS-300) Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents
- ☐ Certificate of Completion of the Lost Person Behavior Class
- ☐ Documentation of 9 Missions or exercises in the last 3 years where you functioned as Management Staff. (6 must be on missions)
- ☐ Documentation of all previous SAR Training supporting certification.
- ☐ Documentation that a Criminal Background Check has been completed.
- ☐ Active member in good standing with the above named group.

(Non-affiliated personnel must submit all above documentation when requesting certification)

Recertification: (All of the above and below items)

- ☐ Completed 40 hours of training relevant for Search and Rescue Management Staff.
- ☐ Documentation of 9 Missions or exercises in the last 3 years where you functioned as Management Staff.

Reciprocity will be handled on a case by case basis. Please contact the SAR Training Specialist for further guidance.

By signing the following section I affirm that the above items are current and complete in the individual's training file. The above named individual is applying for certification / recertification / reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Emergency Management, Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Program. All parties understand that the group and individual's training file will be made available upon request for audit at anytime with reasonable notice. Further, knowingly falsifying information or lack of complete information may prevent, delay, or disqualify the individual, the group, and others involved from certification or renewal of the Group Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the future.

Requesting Member Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

Group Training Officer Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

Group Leader Signature _____

COVSAR ID# _____

Date _____

VDEM Search and Rescue Program Representative _____

Date Received _____

Date Cert Issued _____





Name: _____

Mission #	Location (City/County)	Mission Type / LPB Category		Depart	Arrive Mission	Depart Mission	Arrive Home	Total
			Time					
			Mileage					
Task #	Supervisor / Team Leader	Task Description (ICS Position / Team Role / Area)				Start Time	Finish Time	Total

Notes:



Commonwealth of Virginia - Department of Emergency Management - **Search and Rescue Program**

Individual After Action Report

Name: _____

Mission #	Location (City/County)	Mission Type / LPB Category		Depart	Arrive Mission	Depart Mission	Arrive Home	Total
			Time					
			Mileage					
Task #	Supervisor / Team Leader	Task Description (ICS Position / Team Role / Area)				Start Time	Finish Time	Total

Notes:







Commonwealth of Virginia - Department of Emergency Management - Search and Rescue Program

Training Event Summary

Training Event: _____

Location: _____

Dates / Times: _____

Group(s) involved: _____

Topics / Objectives / Training Summary:

Submitted by: _____

Date: _____

