



Standard Guide for Training of a Land Search and Rescue (SAR) Strike Team/ Task Force Leader¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide establishes the minimum training for Land SAR Strike Team/Task Force Leaders as it relates to their general, field, and search and rescue specific knowledge, skills, and abilities.

1.2 A Land SAR Strike Team Leader/Task Force Leader is responsible for direct supervision, general leadership, wellness, and safety of multiple SAR teams and resources operating on all land and water environments, including intertidal areas, but not oceans or swiftwater.

1.3 Type I-IV teams which may utilize personnel trained to this guide are Kind A (wilderness), Kind B (urban), and Kind C (mountainous/alpine), Kind D (disaster/collapse), Kind E (inland water), Kind G (cave), Kind H (mine), Kind I (avalanche), Kind J (evidence/cadaver), Kind K (aircraft), and/or Kind L (unclassified). See ASTM [F1993](#).

1.4 A Land SAR Strike Team Leader/Task Force Leader may work in remote areas including urban or disaster areas that may be isolated or have lost their infrastructure.

1.5 Further training may be required depending on the regulations or policies of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).

1.6 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, 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 or by the AHJ.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [F32](#) on Search and Rescue and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [F32.03](#) on Personnel, Training and Education.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

- [F1773 Terminology Relating to Climbing, Mountaineering, Search and Rescue Equipment and Practices](#)
 - [F1993 Classification System of Human Search and Rescue Resources](#)
 - [F2209 Guide for Training of Level I Land Search Team Member](#)
 - [F2685 Guide for Training of a Level II Land Search Team Member](#)
 - [F2751 Guide for Training of Support Level Land Rescue Team Member \(LRT-Support\) Member](#)
 - [F2890 Guide for Hazard Awareness for Search and Rescue Personnel](#)
- 2.2 *NFPA Standards:*³
- [NFPA 1006 Standard for Technical Rescuer Professional Qualifications](#)
 - [NFPA 1670 Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 Acronyms:

- 3.1.1 *ASTM*—American Society for Testing and Materials
- 3.1.2 *AHJ*—Authority Having Jurisdiction
- 3.1.3 *AM*—Aviation Management
- 3.1.4 *DOI*—Department of the Interior
- 3.1.5 *ERI*—Emergency Response International
- 3.1.6 *FEMA*—Federal Emergency Management Agency
- 3.1.7 *ICS*—Incident Command System
- 3.1.8 *NASAR*—National Association for Search and Rescue
- 3.1.9 *NFPA*—National Fire Protection Association
- 3.1.10 *NPS*—National Park Service
- 3.1.11 *NWCG*—National Wildfire Coordinating Group
- 3.1.12 *PTB*—Position Task Book
- 3.1.13 *SAR*—Search and Rescue
- 3.1.14 *STL*—Strike Team Leader
- 3.1.15 *TFLD*—Task Force Leader

³ Available from National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471, <http://www.nfpa.org>.

3.2 Definitions:

3.2.1 *authority having jurisdiction, n*—an organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, and installation or procedure.

3.2.2 *division/group supervisor, n*—in ICS terms, responsible for supervising equipment and personnel assigned to a division or group. May also act as a Strike Team Leader/Task Force Leader.

3.2.3 *land search and rescue, n*—search and rescue operations that take place on ground and water environments on land, including intertidal areas, but not oceans. May also be referred to as “Inland SAR”.

3.2.4 *SAR technician, n*—an individual trained to perform wilderness search and/or rescue.

3.2.5 *single resource boss, n*—responsible for supervising a single piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or an established crew or team of individuals, equivalent to a Squad Officer in SAR operations.

3.2.6 *squad officer, n*—responsible for supervising and leading a group or team of SAR Technicians. Equivalent to a Single Resource Boss.

3.2.7 *strike team leader, n*—in ICS terms, manages 5-7 (or fewer) combinations of the same kind and type of resources.

3.2.8 *task force leader, n*—in ICS terms, manages 5-7 (or fewer) single resources of different types and/or kinds.

3.2.9 Refer to ASTM guides **F1993**, **F1773**, **F2209**, **F2685**, **F2751**, and **F2890** for a broader range of defined search and rescue terms.

3.3 The AHJ may use different acronyms or abbreviations for the positions defined above.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide establishes the minimum standard for training Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leaders as it relates to their general, field, and search and rescue specific knowledge, skills, and abilities.

4.2 This guide is to be used by individuals and AHJs that wish to identify the minimum training required for a Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader.

4.3 Every person who is identified as a Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall have met the requirements in this guide.

4.4 It is the responsibility of the AHJ to determine the depth or detail of training needed to meet the requirements in this guide and it may include additional requirements for its own members.

4.5 This guide by itself is not a training document. It is an outline of the topics required for training or evaluating a Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader. It can, however, be used to develop, or as part of, a training document or program.

4.6 This guide does not stand alone and must be used with the referenced documents to provide specific information needed by a Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader.

4.7 This guide can be used to evaluate a document to determine if its content includes the topics necessary for training a Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader. Likewise, this guide may be used to evaluate an existing training program to see if it meets the requirements in this guide.

4.8 The knowledge, skills, and abilities presented in the following sections are not in any particular order, and do not represent a training sequence.

4.9 The AHJ will determine the evaluation process to assess a person’s knowledge. This may be by written exam, oral exam, demonstration, or other means specified by the AHJ.

5. General Knowledge and Skills

5.1 A Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall complete the training defined in ASTM **F2685** Guide for Training of a Level II Land Search Team Member, or equivalent.

5.2 A Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall complete the following FEMA and National Incident Management System (NIMS) training, or equivalent:

5.2.1 ICS-300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents.

5.2.2 IS-800: National Response Framework (NRF), An Introduction.

5.2.3 E/L984 NIMS ICS All-Hazards Task Force/Strike Team Leader.

5.3 A Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall complete the following:

5.3.1 Land search operations and planning training to meet the requirements of the AHJ, such as National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR): Managing the Lost Person Incident (MLPI)⁴, Emergency Response International (ERI): Managing Land Search Operations (MLSO)⁵, NPS Search Management, U.S. Coast Guard: Inland SAR Planning Course,⁶ or equivalent.

5.3.2 Department of Interior (DOI), Aviation Management (AM) Directorate course A101 – Aviation Safety, or equivalent.

5.4 A Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall demonstrate an understanding of the concepts, principles, and processes of Operational Risk Management⁷ (Human Factors, Threat and Error Management), or AHJ equivalent.

5.5 A Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall have the following experience. This shall be documented by position task books (PTBs) or equivalent documentation which validates and verifies (through the AHJ) the completion of all required areas of training and the

⁴ <http://www.nasar.org/page/20/Managing-the-Lost-Person-Incident-MLPI-course/26>

⁵ http://www.eri-online.com/Managing_Land_Search_Operat.php

⁶ <http://www.uscg.mil/TCYORKTOWN/Ops/SAR/Inland/inland.asp>

⁷ http://www.uscg.mil/directives/ci/3000-3999/CI_3500_3.pdf

demonstrated ability to perform the tasks required in these positions in exercises and/or actual incident operations.⁸

5.5.1 Team Leader experience (to be completed under supervision):

5.5.1.1 Satisfactory performance as a Land SAR Squad Officer (also referred to as a Field Team Leader in **F2685**) on at least three separate incidents; and

5.5.1.2 Satisfactory performance as a Land SAR Strike Team Leader on an incident.

5.5.2 Task Force Leader experience (to be completed under supervision):

5.5.2.1 Satisfactory performance as a Strike Team Leader on an incident;

5.5.2.2 Satisfactory performance in an additional SAR Squad Officer (also referred to as a Field Team Leader in **F2685**) or Single Resource Boss position; and

5.5.2.3 Satisfactory performance as a Land SAR Task Force Leader on an incident.

5.5.3 The Land SAR Strike Team Leader/Task Force Leader should have either:

5.5.3.1 SAR operational management and field experience as the leader of a Land SAR resource; or

5.5.3.2 Operational experience in the Type and Kind of personnel that he/she will oversee.

5.6 A Land SAR Strike Team Leader/Task Force Leader shall demonstrate physical fitness at the same level as the Type and Kind of personnel that he/she will oversee as Land SAR Strike Team Leader/Task Force Leader.

5.7 A Land Search and Rescue Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall meet a minimum medical fitness standard as required by the AHJ.

5.8 These requirements are generally accomplished during initial training, exercises and/or actual incidents.

5.9 In order to operate safely around or in a given sub-environment, the AHJ shall consider the applicability of requiring additional knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to the hazard, technical challenge, or environment. Refer to ASTM **F2890** or NFPA 1006 for additional information.

6. Keywords

6.1 incident; land; leader; leadership; qualifications; rescue; SAR; search; search and rescue; strike team; task force; team; training

⁸ Certifications and qualifications shall be documented by the AHJ and reviewed and renewed for currency and competency every three years, or more often, as required by the AHJ.

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