

# Sample Emergency Plan for Meet Directors

## Hosting Club responsibilities

1. Ensuring that participants have been reasonably informed of the
  - a. hazards common to Orienteering
  - b. responsibilities of participants, club & land manager/owner
2. Guiding participants to take reasonable steps to protect themselves from hazards
3. Serving as a facilitator for participants to access emergency resources (not as a primary provider of emergency resources) in circumstances in which the needy participant may not be capable of calling upon them him- or herself
4. Taking reasonable steps within the scope of meet officials' training and abilities to assist emergency responders with information and, if available, other resources to resolve an incident
5. Protecting the fiduciary interests of the club, the USOF and the land manager/owner through reasonable safety practices
6. Secure necessary information for accessing resources
  - a. Land manager/owner - phone number, physical location, radio channels, etc.; under what circumstances/emergencies does he/she want to be notified
  - b. National Weather Service - copy of local forecast; weather band radio on site
  - c. Emergency medical services - names/locations of pre-designated meet volunteers who are F/A trained (assigned exclusively to EMS or in add't to other duties); location/contents/currency of first aid kit; phone numbers of local EMS/911; response time to location; "golden hour" estimation; are they aware of "O" meet (in large events); sources of first aiders; location/directions to local hospital/clinic, etc.
  - d. SAR - name/location pre-designed meet volunteers who are SAR trained/oriented (assigned exclusively to SAR or in add't to other duties) to be "first responder"/reporter; local teams (as appropriate) contact information; written roster of all meet staff (to identify resources in event hasty search/containment is necessary)
  - e. Law Enforcement - names/locations agencies responsible for handling incidents that might reasonably occur; potential response time; are they aware of "O" meet (in large event)
7. Develop functional/hazard specific annexes
  - a. Functional - who will do what when

- i. Meet staff-director, etc. - general management, identity of person responsible for recording/reporting emergency incidents
    - ii. Land manager/owner - under which circumstances will he/she assume control & under which will meet staff be left to their own devices
    - iii. Emergency medical - first aider, additional on-site resources, local EMS agencies
    - iv. SAR - responsibilities of meet SAR person, coordination with local authority
    - v. Law enforcement - which agency handles common issues such as traffic jams, accidents, thefts, problem individuals, etc.
  - b. Hazard-specific - if a given happens, what will be done by whom
  - c. Keep it general; an overly specific plan becomes inflexible to an evolving emergency
  - d. Annexes don't have to be complicated – simple paragraph or "fill in blank" on form to address key issues can be enough
8. Communicate to youth groups and leaders such as Scouting, 4H and JROTC:
- a. Requirement that clothing appropriate to weather forecast for meet location for event date be worn during event
  - b. Requirement that each participant carry a whistle on the course
  - c. Chaperone requirements
    - i. Chaperone or other person not involved with the event organization with authority to deal with emergencies involving their participants available at meet HQ or finish
    - ii. Ensure that each participant wears appropriate clothing for prevailing conditions and that a change of dry clothing is available to their charges upon finish
    - iii. If extreme weather is reasonably foreseeable for the date of the meet, must bring their own supplies for mitigating conditions
    - iv. If Safety Cards are not in use, present to meet management a roster of their participants each morning that they participate

### **Items to be carried by participants**

- 1. A whistle
  - a. After water & suitable clothing, the most critical necessity of life to a lost person is the ability to signal help

- b. Whistle - Lightest, cheapest, least complex means of signaling help
  - c. Sound of a whistle can be heard from farther away than a human voice
  - d. Implement a requirement that each runner carries a whistle
2. A garbage bag
- a. Inclement weather is particularly likely during the spring "O" season on the East Coast
  - b. Competitors are generally averse to carrying any more weight than absolutely necessary
  - c. SAR community recognizes that a large plastic garbage bag can be an excellent item from which to improvise either a poncho for a walking "runner" or an emergency shelter for an immobilized one
  - d. Can be stuffed into a pocket

### **Safety Cards**

1. Improvements to registration information. Safety card requests information on the competitor for
  - a. Make/model/year/color/tag of vehicle
  - b. Name(s) of accompanying competitors
  - c. Competitor physical description-race, sex, age, height, weight, clothing. If a runner is genuinely overdue or lost, a description is helpful in sorting the runner in question from the flurry of others in the woods
  - d. Description of vehicle. Most overdue runner situations could be resolved by simply knowing in which vehicle the runner arrived. By verifying that the vehicle is gone from the meet parking area, a reasonable presumption can be made that the runner is no longer in the area
2. Can be distributed at check-in and collected at the Start line

### **SAR Training**

1. While relatively few participants annually may become lost for more than an hour, an orientation to SAR methods for meet directors could help
2. Improve initial response
3. Guide them in collection of initial information necessary to start the search/pass

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