

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2013

FILED SENATE  
May 27, 2014  
S.B. 854  
PRINCIPAL CLERK

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SENATE DRS15424-MDa-110A\* (05/09)

Short Title: Establish Urban Search & Rescue Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Meredith (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM AND TO  
3 ESTABLISH THE URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM ADVISORY  
4 COMMITTEE.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 166A-19.12 reads as rewritten:

7 "§ 166A-19.12. Powers of the Division of Emergency Management.

8 The Division of Emergency Management shall have the following powers and duties as  
9 delegated by the Governor and Secretary of Public Safety:

10 ...  
11 (21) Maintenance of an effective Statewide urban search and rescue program."

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 166A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
13 Article to read:

14 "Article 6.  
15 "Urban Search and Rescue.

16 "§ 166A-65. Definitions.

17 The following definitions apply in this Article:

- 18 (1) Urban search and rescue team. – A specialized team or group of teams,  
19 organized with capabilities equivalent to urban search and rescue teams  
20 established under the Federal Emergency Management Agency in order to  
21 assist in the removal of trapped victims during emergencies, including, but  
22 not limited to, collapsed structures, trench excavations, elevated locations,  
23 and in other technical rescue situations.
- 24 (2) Specialty rescue team. – A specialized response team, organized to provide  
25 technical rescue assistance to first responders. The term includes, but is not  
26 limited to, a canine search and rescue or disaster response team, a cave  
27 search and rescue team, a collapse search and rescue team, a mine and tunnel  
28 search and rescue team, and a swift water or flood search and rescue team. A  
29 specialty rescue team shall be aligned with one or more of the search and  
30 rescue categories within the Federal Emergency Management Agency's  
31 national resource typing system.
- 32 (3) Incident support team. – A team of trained emergency response personnel,  
33 organized to provide coordination between governmental agencies and  
34 nongovernmental organizations as well as technical and logistical support to  
35 urban search and rescue teams and specialty rescue teams.



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1           (4) Contract response team. – An urban search and rescue team, specialty rescue  
2           team, or incident support team.

3           (5) Secretary. – The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety.

4 **"§ 166A-66. Urban Search and Rescue Program.**

5           (a) The Secretary shall adopt rules establishing a program for urban search and rescue  
6 that relies on contracts with contract response teams. The program shall be administered by the  
7 Division of Emergency Management. To the extent possible, the program shall be coordinated  
8 with other emergency planning activities of the State. The program shall include contract  
9 response teams located strategically across the State that are available to provide 24-hour  
10 dispatch from the Division of Emergency Management Operations Center. The rules for the  
11 program shall include:

12           (1) Standards, including training, equipment, and personnel standards required  
13 to operate a contract response team.

14           (2) Guidelines for the dispatch of a contract response team to an urban search  
15 and rescue team or specialty rescue team mission.

16           (3) Guidelines for the on-site operations of a contract response team.

17           (4) Standards for administration of a contract response team, including  
18 procedures for reimbursement of response costs.

19           (5) Refresher and specialist training for members of contract response teams.

20           (6) Procedures for recovering the costs of an urban search and rescue team or  
21 specialty rescue team mission.

22           (7) Procedures for bidding and contracting for urban search and rescue team and  
23 specialty rescue team missions.

24           (8) Criteria for evaluating bids for urban search and rescue team and specialty  
25 rescue team missions.

26           (9) Delineation of the roles of the contract response team, local public safety  
27 personnel, the Division of Emergency Management's area coordinator, and  
28 other State agency personnel participating in an urban search and rescue  
29 team or specialty rescue team mission.

30           (10) Procedures for the Division of Emergency Management to audit the contract  
31 response teams to ensure compliance with State and federal guidelines.

32           (b) Within available appropriations, the Division of Emergency Management shall  
33 spend the necessary funds for training, equipment, and other items necessary to support the  
34 operations of contract response teams. The Division of Emergency Management may also  
35 administer any grants of other funds made available for contract response teams, in accordance  
36 with applicable rules and regulations approved by the Director of the State Budget.

37           (c) In developing the Urban Search and Rescue Program and adopting the rules  
38 required by this section, the Secretary shall consult with the Urban Search and Rescue Team  
39 Advisory Committee established pursuant to G.S. 166A-69.

40 **"§ 166A-67. Contracts; equipment loans.**

41           (a) The Secretary may contract with any unit or units of local government for the  
42 provision of a contract response team to implement the Urban Search and Rescue Program.  
43 Contracts are to be let consistent with the bidding and contract standards and procedures  
44 adopted pursuant to G.S. 166A-66(a)(7) and G.S. 166A-66(a)(8). In entering into contracts with  
45 units of local government, the Secretary may agree to provide any of the following:

46           (1) A loan of equipment.

47           (2) Reimbursement of personnel costs, including the cost of callback personnel,  
48 when a contract response team is authorized by the Department to respond to  
49 urban search and rescue team and specialty rescue team missions.

50           (3) Reimbursement for use of equipment and vehicles owned by the contract  
51 response team.

1           (4) Replacement of disposable materials and damaged equipment.

2           (5) Training expenses.

3           (6) Anything else agreed to by the Secretary and the contract response team.

4       (b) The Secretary shall not agree to provide reimbursement for standby time.

5       (c) Any contract entered into between the Secretary and a unit of local government for  
6 the provision of a contract response team shall specify that the members of the contract  
7 response team, when performing under the contract, shall not be employees of the State and  
8 shall not be entitled to benefits under the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System or  
9 for the payment by the State of federal Social Security, employment insurance, or workers'  
10 compensation.

11       (d) Contract response teams that have the use of a State vehicle may use the vehicle for  
12 local purposes. Where a State vehicle is used for purposes other than authorized contract  
13 response to an urban search and rescue team and specialty rescue team mission, the contract  
14 response team shall be liable for repairs or replacements directly attributable to that use.

15 **"§ 166A-68. Immunity of contract response team personnel.**

16       Members of a contract response team shall be protected from liability under the provisions  
17 of G.S. 166A-19.60(a) while on an urban search and rescue team or specialty rescue team  
18 mission pursuant to authorization from the Division of Emergency Management.

19 **"§ 166A-69. Urban Search and Rescue Team Advisory Committee.**

20       (a) The Urban Search and Rescue Team Advisory Committee is created. The Secretary  
21 shall appoint the members of the Committee and shall designate the Director or Deputy  
22 Director of the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management as the chair. In making  
23 appointments, the Secretary shall take into consideration the expertise of the appointees in the  
24 management of urban search and rescue or specialty response team missions. The Secretary  
25 shall appoint one representative from each of the following:

26           (1) The Division of North Carolina Emergency Management, who shall be the  
27 Director or Deputy Director of the North Carolina Division of Emergency  
28 Management and who shall serve as the chair.

29           (2) Each state USAR regional contract response team's Chief or Deputy Chief.

30           (3) The North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal.

31           (4) The North Carolina Highway Patrol.

32           (5) The North Carolina National Guard.

33           (6) The North Carolina Association of Rescue and E.M.S., Inc.

34           (7) The North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs.

35           (8) The North Carolina State Firemen's Association.

36           (9) The North Carolina Emergency Management Association.

37       (b) The Advisory Committee shall meet on the call of the chair, or at the request of the  
38 Secretary, provided that the Committee shall meet no less than once every year. The  
39 Department of Public Safety shall provide space for the Advisory Committee to meet. The  
40 Department shall also provide the Advisory Committee with necessary support staff and  
41 supplies to enable the Committee to carry out its duties in an effective manner.

42       (c) Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve without pay, but shall receive  
43 travel allowance, lodging, subsistence, and per diem as provided by G.S. 138-5.

44       (d) The Contract Response Team Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretary on the  
45 establishment of the Urban Search and Rescue Program. The Committee shall also evaluate and  
46 advise the Secretary of the need for additional contract response teams to serve the State."

47       **SECTION 3.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
48 Public Safety the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in recurring funds for the  
49 2014-2015 fiscal year for the Urban Search and Rescue Program created by Section 1 of this  
50 act.

1                   **SECTION 4.** Section 2 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2014. The remainder  
2 of this act is effective when it becomes law.