

# NC Search And Rescue (SAR)



*Sustaining Core Search & Rescue Response Capability*



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# Funding Considerations – Federal System

- While there is a Federal USAR System, **there are no federal teams in NC**
- The federal system is exponentially more expensive to deploy than state teams
- **The federal system takes considerable time to respond** and thus is not an effective means to meet primary response requirements for Search & Rescue in NC



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# NC SAR

## TYPE I TEAM

- 80 member team
- Completely self sufficient for 72 hours
- Designed to maintain 24 hour a day operations
- Can respond with smaller response packages based on incident requirements
- Can provide other specialized search and rescue resources to respond to all-hazards
- Equivalent collapse response capability to a FEMA USAR task force



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# NC SAR

## Type II Team

- Up to 40 personnel
  - Two Type II task forces can combine to become a Type I team
- Completely self sufficient for 72 hours
- Designed to maintain 12 hour a day operations
- Can respond with smaller response packages based on incident requirements
- Can provide other specialized search and rescue resources to respond to all-hazards



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- Self contained 72 hour capability, up to two week deployments
- Contain diverse search & rescue mission packages to provide everything from acute technical support for small jurisdictions to full all-hazards disaster responses anywhere in the state
- Can function in wide range of missions:
  - Structural Collapse
  - Confined Space
  - High Angle
  - Trench
  - Wilderness
  - Flood / Swiftwater



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# Structural Collapse Responses



- ConAgra Foods – Garner NC**
- Explosion and collapse at food processing plant, 3 fatalities that TF8 located under heavy rubble
  - When first units arrived the brown Mercedes pictured above was still running, NC TF8 searched to ensure no one was trapped in the cars



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## Church – Charlotte, NC

- Collapse from snow load at a local church in Charlotte
- NC TF3 searched to confirm no victims





# Swiftwater Responses

## Peek's Creek – Macon County

- Hurricanes Francis and Ivan in Western NC - over 1550 rescues and 33 counties were FEMA declared disaster areas, 26 State Swiftwater teams deployed.
- Responders were awarded with a Higgins & Langley International Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Swiftwater Rescue for the response



## Haw River – Chatham County

- Stranded kayakers up and down the Haw river after torrential rains fell across central NC
- Other rescues were conducted across the state as the storm system dumped rain



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# Helicopter Responses

## Shortoff Mountain – Burke County

- Rock Climbing Guide fell 50ft down the face of the mountain sustaining life threatening injuries and landing on a small ledge
- Helicopter Rescue Crew rescued the climber as the incident was broadcast live across the nation by a news helicopter
- The Climber was transferred to a waiting critical care medical helicopter for transport and has since made a full recovery

## Rescue of man clinging to ledge by Black Hawk helicopter in N.C. captured on video



## Great Smokey Mountain National Park– Haywood County

- Hiker was struck by a falling tree from an EF1 Tornado in the mountains, estimated 12 hour carry out time by ground rescuers arrived
- Hiker had life-threatening internal injuries but made a full recovery, medical personnel stated the victim would not have survived his injuries without the helicopter rescue

# NC Wilderness Responses

## Heady Mountain – Jackson County

- Search for a 17 year old male in extremely rugged wilderness terrain with no cell phone or radio coverage
- NC TF 2, 3, and 6 provided communications support for field searchers as well as at the incident command post
- Over 150 rescuers responded
- Subject was located deceased, secondary to what is believed to have been a fall from a tree while trying to get above the thick scrub brush





# Hurricane / Tornado Responses

July 2014 - Hurricane Arthur – Ocracoke Island

- All communications were out on the island, including 911 service
- NC TF10 Communications Unit responded and restored all communications until power, phones, and VIPER could be restored



April 2011 – Tornado Outbreak

- Tornadoes across central / eastern NC, including through Lowes in Sanford
- NC TF6 responded to assess, stabilize, and search structures and support Lee County in the response
- NC TF 8, 9, 10 also responded to other affected areas



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# Funding Considerations

- The regional NC SAR Response concept saves money by reducing duplication of effort, just as the Regional Response Teams do for Hazardous Materials Response in NC
  - The NC Regional Response Teams have been state funded since FY1993-1994 as established in 1993 Session of the General Assembly
  - The Regional Response Team System has been a model system for the nation
- Regionalized NC SAR Response Teams are able to supply specialized equipment and personnel, in a cost effective and timely manner to **small jurisdictions across the state that would otherwise not have access to this type of service.**



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# Funding Considerations

- Local host agencies recognize there is some benefit in being a host agency and are willing to support a cost share
- *NC resources respond to more than just urban areas*
  - State SAR resources respond to all type SAR incidents in all areas of the state
- NC responders depend on a regional network of specialized search & rescue resources to **provide technical support to smaller jurisdictions**

# Funding Considerations

- NC SAR Teams are dependent on each other to sustain long complex responses we have in NC such as the response to Hurricane Floyd
- The strength of the NC SAR Response system is the collaboration between all players large and small to provide a consistent and comprehensive search & rescue response through the model system of statewide regionalized response teams
- The collaboration between resources in the state has significantly improved information sharing and response capability across all jurisdictions and emergency response disciplines



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# Questions?



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