

HB

320

SFIN

FILE

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 3/26/08

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: _____

Finance Committee considered CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 320(FIN)

HB 320 SEARCH & RESCUE: CERTIFICATION/WORK.COMP

"An Act relating to search and rescue training and search and rescue parties; requiring certain search and rescue volunteers to be considered state employees for purposes of workers' compensation coverage; and allowing political subdivisions to elect to provide workers' compensation insurance coverage for search and rescue personnel."

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

SENATE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title

HOUSE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

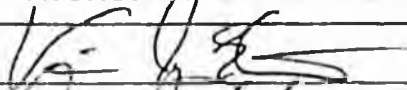

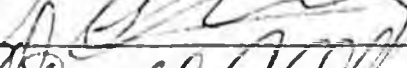


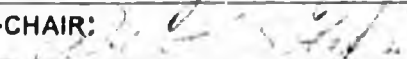
NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
ADM	4/10/08	✓			

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
ADM	1/25/08		✓		2
DPS	3/18/08	✓			5
LWT				✓	6

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	Eliza			✓	
	Thomas			✓	
	Hughes			✓	
	Olson				✓
CO-CHAIR: 					✓
CO-CHAIR: 					

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 6
Bill Version: CSHB 320(FIN)
(S) Publish Date: 3/26/08

Identifier (file name): HB320CS-DOLWD-WC-02-20-08 Dept. Affected: Labor and Workforce Development
Title: Search & Rescue: Certification/Work.Comp RDU: Workers' Compensation
Component: Workers' Compensation
Sponsor: Representative Meyer
Requester: House Rules Component Number: 314

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information					
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
OPERATING EXPENDITURES							
Personal Services							
Travel							
Contractual							
Supplies							
Equipment							
Land & Structures							
Grants & Claims							
Miscellaneous							
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES							
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()							
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts							
1003 GF Match							
1004 GF							
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
1157 Workers' Safety/Comp Account							
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2008) cost: None

POSITIONS

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

There is no anticipated financial impact to the department as a result of this legislation.

Prepared by: Paul F. Lisankio, Director
Division: Workers' Compensation
Approved by: Click Bishop, Commissioner
Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Phone: 465-6059
Date/Time: 2/20/08 9:15 AM
Date: 2/20/08

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 2
Bill Version: CSHB 320(L&C)
(H) Publish Date: 2/8/08

Identifier (file name): HB320-DOA-RM-01-25-08 Dept. Affected: Administration
Title: "An Act relating to certain search and rescue volunteers to be considered state employees for purposes of worker's..." RDU: Risk Management
Sponsor: Representatives Meyer, Buch and Holmes Component: Risk Management
Requester: _____ Component Number: 71

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services
Travel
Contractual
Supplies
Equipment
Land & Structures
Grants & Claims
Miscellaneous
TOTAL OPERATING	.	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()								
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts
1003 GF Match
1004 GF
1005 GF/Program Receipts	.		.	.	.	.	.	.
1037 GF/Mental Health	.		.	.	.	.	.	.
Other Interagency Receipts	.		.	.	.	.	.	.
TOTAL	.	0.0	.	.	.	.	.	.

Estimate of any current year (FY2008) cost: 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Risk Management (RM) will be financially impacted by the changes in this legislation.

RM administers the self insurance program providing workers' compensation protection for all state employees, which will now include any claims filed by the new statutory employee group created by this legislation.

As the number of searchers covered by this new law is not certain and actual exposure is very intermittent, it is impossible to present loss cost projections.

Future Risk Management's workers' compensation assessments to Public Safety will increase to reflect actual costs incurred as premiums charged each agency are developed from actual claims expenses incurred. RM cannot predict and present those costs at this time.

Prepared by: J. Brad Thompson, Director
Division: Risk Management
Approved by: Kevin Brooks, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Administration

Phone: 465-5723
Date/Time: 1/25/08 12:00 AM
Date: 1/25/2008

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 5
Bill Version: CSHB 320(FIN)
(S) Publish Date: 3/26/08

Identifier (file name): CS(FIN)HB320-DPS-SAR-03-18-08 Dept. Affected: Public Safety
Title: "An Act relating to the certification of search and rescue personnel and organizations; . . ." RDU: Alaska State Troopers
Sponsor: Representative Meyer Component: Search & Rescue
Requester: Senate Labor and Commerce Component Number: 513

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services	91.9		91.9	91.9	91.9	91.9	91.9	91.9
Travel	2.0		2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Contractual	7.5		7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
Supplies	2.0		2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Equipment	3.0							
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	106.4	0.0	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()								
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF	106.4		103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
TOTAL	106.4	0.0	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4	103.4

Estimate of any current year (FY2008) cost: 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time	1.0	1.0	1	1	1	1	1
Part-time							
Temporary							

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill requires DPS to provide worker's compensation insurance to search and rescue volunteers during DPS authorized search and rescue missions and DPS authorized search and rescue training exercises. HB 320 requires DPS to develop regulations to comply with this requirement. HB 320 also allows DPS to organize search and rescue training operations. This bill requires one non-commissioned employee to create the regulations, manage the program and help organize search and rescue training exercises if necessary.

Prepared by: Lt. Rodney Dial
Division: Alaska State Troopers
Approved by: Walt Menegen, Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

Phone: (907) 247-4480
Date/Time: 3/18/08 9:00 AM
Date: 3/18/2008

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SCS HB 320 (FIN)
 () Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): _____ Dept. Affected: Administration
 Title Search and Rescue: Certification/Work. Comp RDU Central Administration Services
 Component Personnel
 Sponsor Representative Moyer
 Requester Senate Finance Committee Component Number 56

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel	7.0							
Contractual								
Supplies	0.5							
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()								
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
1002 Federal Receipts							
1003 GF Match							
1004 GF	7.5						
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other Interagency Receipts							
TOTAL	7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2008) cost: _____

POSITIONS

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

ANALYSIS: *(Attach a separate page if necessary)*

This note assumes two meetings per year and includes associated travel and supply expenses.

Prepared by Senator Bert Stedman
Senate Finance Committee, Co-Chair
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senate Finance Committee, Co-Chair

Phone 465-3873
 Date/Time _____
 Date 4.10.2008



REPRESENTATIVE KEVIN MEYER

HOUSE DISTRICT 30

Sponsor Statement for House Bill 320

“An Act relating to certification of search and rescue personnel and organizations; requiring certain search and rescue personnel to be considered state employees for purposes of workers’ compensation coverage; and allowing municipalities to elect to provide workers’ compensation insurance coverage for search and rescue personnel.”

The majesty of the last frontier is a primary reason many Alaskans live here and one of the main reasons more than a million tourists visit Alaska annually. Alaskans are raised with an awareness and appreciation for the great outdoors and the dangers that exist in the wilderness. Alaskans are prepared for accidents and are rarely surprised when accidents do occur. When accidents do happen, it is primarily volunteers that perform the search and rescue missions Alaskans and our visitors rely upon.

House Bill 320 extends workers compensation coverage to volunteers during the course of providing a search and rescue service. HB 320 also allows municipalities to extend the same coverage they provide to search and rescue volunteers that they extend to volunteer firefighters, police officers and ambulance attendants. HB 320 however does not require a municipality to extend workers compensation coverage.

Currently, the volunteers assisting with disaster recoveries in other states are given workers compensation coverage by the State, but the volunteer search and rescue personnel who respond in Alaska do not have the same coverage. Municipalities are also allowed to provide coverage to their volunteer fire departments, ambulance attendants and police, but not the volunteers that perform search and rescue operations.

Most Alaskans know someone who has had an accident while enjoying the outdoors, and many have lost loved ones to tragedy. When accidents do happen, the volunteers in Alaska’s search and rescue community are ready 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to put themselves at risk saving others in the backcountry. In the past six years, the Department of Public Safety and the volunteers in the search and rescue community have safely returned over 2,350 individuals to their friends and families.

HB 320 recognizes the valuable service these volunteers provide and ensures that if they are injured while providing a search and rescue service, they will receive workers compensation.

3/26/2008



REPRESENTATIVE KEVIN MEYER

HOUSE DISTRICT 30

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 5, 2008
TO: Representative Kevin Meyer
FROM: Mike Pawlowski
RE: Sectional Analysis for CSHB 320
(Version No. 25 – LS1176E)

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents. If you would like an interpretation of the bill as it may apply to a particular set of circumstances, please advise.

Section 1. Adds a new section to AS 18.60 allowing the Commissioner of Public Safety or his designee to organize and conduct a search and rescue training mission.

Section 2. Amends AS 18.60.120 to clarify that only the Commissioner of Public Safety or his designee may authorize a person to participate in the search and rescue party.

Section 3. Makes a conforming amendment to AS 18.60.125 to include a reference to new AS 18.60.115.

Section 4. Makes a conforming amendment to AS 18.60.175 to include a reference to new AS 18.60.115.

Section 5. Amends AS 23.30.092 to allow a political subdivision to elect to provide workers compensation benefits to search and rescue personnel.

Section 6. Adds a new section to AS 23.30 providing workers compensation coverage to search and rescue volunteers participating in a search and rescue mission under AS 18.60.120 or a training exercise under AS 18.60.115.

State of Alaska Sarah Palin Governor	Alaska Workers' Compensation Division PO Box 115512 Juneau, Alaska 99811-5512		
Department of Labor and Workforce Development	BULLETIN	Number 07-10	Date December 06, 2007
Clark Bishop Commissioner	SUBJECT REFERENCE	Alaska Average Weekly Wage and Minimum/Maximum Compensation Rates for Calendar Year 2008 AS 23.30.041(k), AS 23.30.175(a) and AS 23.30.175(d)	

The Alaska Average Weekly Wage (AAWW) determined by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development by December 1, 2007, and applicable for the period from January 1 through December 31, 2008, is \$782.68.

The maximum compensation rate under AS 23.30.175(a) is 120% of the AAWW, which is \$939.

The minimum compensation rate under AS 23.30.175(a) is 22% of the maximum compensation rate, which is \$207.

The maximum compensation rate under AS 23.30.041(k) is 105% of the AAWW, which is \$822.

New compensation rate tables for 2008 will be completed in the near future. The new tables are to be used for all injuries occurring between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2008. The new tables will be available on the Division's website: www.labor.state.ak.us/wc/rate.htm.

Preparing for the Avalanche



The sun rises while search and rescuers participating in multi-agency avalanche training exercise prepares in staging area to dispatch people to the four different avalanche sites in Hatcher Pass and the Independence Mine State Recreational Area on Sunday, Dec. 16. The orange tent served as a warning tent for those coming back from the field.

PHOTOS AND STORY
BY BETH IPSEN, PIO

Emergency response vehicles were parked next to family Subarus at the Independence Mine State Recreational Area December 15-16. Children raced down on sleds and adults swooshed down mountainsides on skis and snowboards after the arduous hike up.

But there was more activity than just recreationalists enjoying the snow at Hatcher Pass.

The more-than-usual activity was a weekend full of avalanche rescue training for a multitude of search and rescue agencies and volunteers. The first day was spent going through training on how to find a person buried beneath avalanche debris using beacons and avalanche probes. They also trained for recovering and tending to the subject after the recovery.

For many of the 60 people there, the training was a refresher, or as Andy Dietrick of the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group and Alyeska Ski Patrol said, "to knock off the dust from the summer."

On the second day, the knowledge and skills were put to the test.

Four avalanche scenarios were created and run by the incident command that tasked volunteers with searching the areas and combing the debris for people. Somewhere around 60 searchers including skiers, snowshoers, snowmachiners, search and rescue dogs, incident managers, Alaska State Troopers and

AST's helicopter, Helo 1, spent the day shuttling between the four avalanche areas. Many skied to the top of Hatcher Pass and spent hours probing the mountainside for subjects trapped beneath the snow.

One recreational skier remarked as he headed out for a day of telemark skiing – a mixture of downhill and cross-country skiing – it was comforting to see all the emergency responders in the area.

Like the day of training where temperatures dipped as low as zero degrees, avalanche search and rescuers often spend long hours in sub-freezing weather combing the landscape for a virtual stranger.

And they do it for free.

Training Incident Commander Dean Knapp, who's been involved with Alaska Mountain Rescue Group for nine years, said what sparked his interest in the rescue side of wilderness adventure was to ensure the safety of his son, who at an early age, accompanied him on many of his rafting and climbing trips.

For Knapp, whose son is now 26 and climbing big rocks and kayaking whitewater all over the northwest, knowing somebody is willing to drop everything to rescue his son if he's in trouble gives him comfort – something he hopes the people in Alaska feel as well.

"Every person we look for is somebody's son, daughter or husband," Knapp said. "Their family and friends count on us to drop whatever we're doing, get into the area, be highly organized, search with

dedication and competence, do everything possible to help and not get hurt ourselves."

"That means the pager going off at 1:37 a.m., and getting up and going," Knapp said. "But what could be more important?"

Corey Aist of the Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs put his years of experience teaching, guiding and playing in Alaska's backcountry to good use, first as a member of the Nordic Ski Patrol, then as a member of ASARD after seeing a rescue dog in action on an avalanche. He said the first few years require training three to four times a week. It's a lot to ask of a volunteer, but he believes he's "paying it forward."

He works aside Snap, a 7-year-old chocolate lab, who is his second partner since joining ASARD in 1994.

"It's not only search, its obedience, temperament, chaotic situations, gunfire and other loud noises," Aist said. "Dogs must be comfortable with the uncomfortable. Chaos must be the norm for a search dog."

The ASARD dogs are the "most loyal partners and unconditional friends," Aist said. "The biggest downside is they leave us far too soon."

Alaska State Troopers rely heavily upon these volunteer search and rescue organizations. By state statute, the Department of Public Safety is responsible for overseeing search and rescue operations within the state. Sometimes that responsibility is shared with the U.S. Coast Guard or the Air National Guard's Rescue Coordination Center. Seventy to 75 percent

Corey Aist tells his partner, Snap, to stay while Aist goes back to Alaska State Trooper's Helo 1 to collect his gear after the two disembarked on top of Hatcher Pass. The pair joined a search for a dummy buried underneath avalanche debris as part of a training exercise Sunday, Dec. 16. Both belong to Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs.



of all SAR operations are done by volunteers on behalf of the DPS and the Alaska State Troopers.

"Without the search and rescue volunteers, the Alaska State Troopers would be extremely limited on our ability to do search and rescues across Alaska," said AST Lt. Barry Wilson, who took over as the statewide SAR coordinator six months ago. Wilson was also shadowing Knapp who was coordinating the avalanche response during the training at Hatcher Pass.

As of 2007, there are 45 volunteer search groups

Jill Missal of the Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs uses a RECCO unit to detect a reflector buried underneath the snow. Missal, who is also an avid backcountry downhill skier, turned the unit in different directions until she picked up a signal from a reflector during one of the training sessions at the multi-agency avalanche training at Hatcher Pass on Saturday, Dec. 15. The RECCO unit increases its volume the closer it gets to the reflector, guiding rescuers to the buried subject. Unlike beacons, which can hit on the rounded flux line sent out by a transmitter, the RECCO can take the searcher on a straight line to the buried reflector. Beacons of varying designs can cost hundreds of dollars, but have been increasing in numbers due to public awareness. They also can detect another beacon from 20 to 40 meters away, depending on the type of beacon. The reflectors, on the other hand, cost only about \$5 at an outdoor store and are increasingly sewn into outdoor gear. However, the RECCO unit is expensive and there are only a few in Alaska. They also have a range of about 20 meters.





Searchers line up in a line and probe in a 50-by-50 centimeter grid as marked by tape along the orange guidon cord. Once the searcher probes 50 centimeters to the left, then to the middle and finally to 50 centimeters to the right, the guidon is moved 50 centimeters forward with the searchers following. This is then methodically repeated over and over throughout the avalanche debris area. This method of probing greatly increases the probability of finding a person buried underneath the snow, but is monotonous. However, as session instructor Trish Herminghaus pointed out to those attending the training on Saturday, Dec. 15, SARs are about being thorough and finding people, not cutting corners to save time.

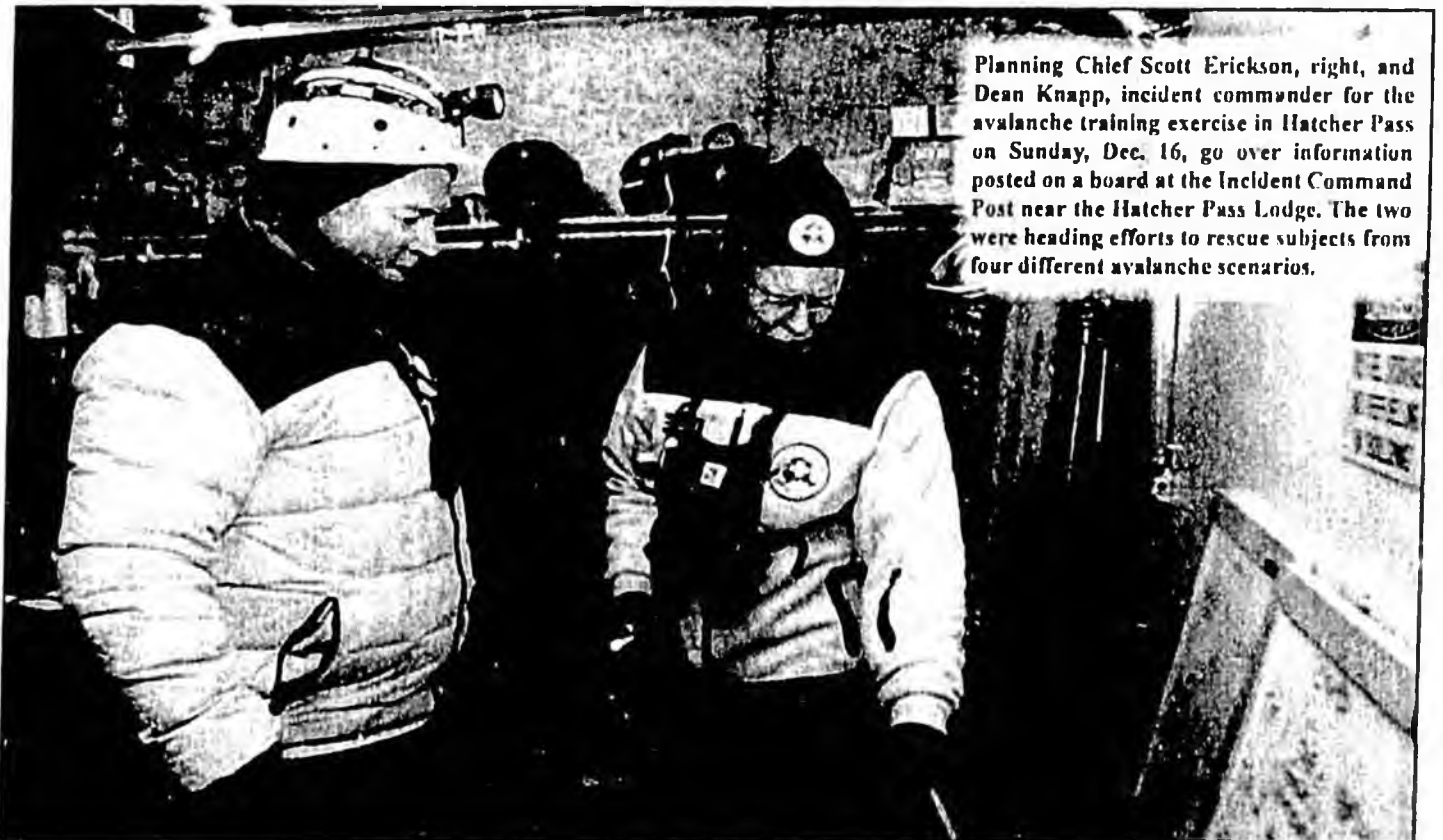
throughout Alaska. Knapp said AMRG has been called out about 40 times to help with SARs this past year. In 2006, volunteer search teams contributed to more than 13,500 hours of actual search time. This does not include time volunteers spend training.

A lot of extensive and repetitive training and planning is put into place beforehand in order for a search and rescue to be successful. And that planning

takes some practice.

The goal of December's annual avalanche training was to practice doing it the right way, not floundering or rushing things, but to take it slow, sometimes stopping and correcting actions.

"The concept is, everyone should be using these scenarios to practice good skills," said Paul Brusseau with the Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs. "When this



Planning Chief Scott Erickson, right, and Dean Knapp, incident commander for the avalanche training exercise in Hatcher Pass on Sunday, Dec. 16, go over information posted on a board at the Incident Command Post near the Hatcher Pass Lodge. The two were heading efforts to rescue subjects from four different avalanche scenarios.

Alaska State Troopers' Helo 1, piloted by Mel Nading, comes in for a landing in the parking lot leading up to the Independence Mine. The helicopter is utilized virtually weekly for search and rescues both large and small.

becomes a real event, it will be right from the get-go."

Searchers included people from the Alaska State Parks, Alaska Mountain Rescue Group, Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs, Nordic Ski Patrol, National Park Service, Alaska Avalanche School, Mat-Su SAR, Anchorage Fire Department, Mat-Su Emergency Services, North American Outdoor Institute, National Outdoor Leadership School Alaska (NOLS-Ak) and Backcountry Avalanche Awareness Response Team. Many of the people have been involved with numerous avalanche rescues within the Hatcher Pass area and used some of these experiences to illustrate a point when instructing others on things such as beacon searching and probing.

Many times, rescue missions are too dangerous to send in a person off the street. Within the various search and rescue organizations are people who have years of experience in mountaineering and wilderness travel, the right equipment and extensive additional training in search operations and technical rescue. Many hold some form of medical certification such as EMT or paramedic. Emergency room physician and AMRG member Herman Ellemberger was one of two who taught medical care for victims on Saturday. On Sunday, he manned the radio and relayed orders between field and command teams.

Unfortunately, sometimes a search and rescue can be for one of their own.

AMRG was tapped to look for the lost LifeGuard helicopter by searching the shorelines of Blackstone Bay near Whittier for signs of the helicopter and its lost crew.

On Sunday, those at the training observed a moment of silence for the lost LifeGuard medical helicopter crew. At noon, Knapp called for all rescuers working search dogs out on avalanche slopes and those shoulder to shoulder in probe pole lines to come to a stop.

Over the net, he called out "Rescuers down" and read the names of the crew and the patient who went down on a flight on Dec. 3.

After a pause, the activity started again with a message to be safe. ■



Mike LaMagdeleine and Frank Amodemo, both of Alaska Mountain Rescue Group, act as volunteer snowmachiners sitting atop Hatcher Pass waiting orders from the Incident Command Post during the avalanche training exercise on Sunday, Dec. 16. The two not only shuttled people, but relayed information to a group of searchers on the other side of the pass.

Membership in AMRG

Goals of the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

- 1) AMRG is committed to ensuring that all members of AMRG and all persons who are involved in AMRG-operated search and rescue missions or training events return home safely and are not injured during these operations.
- 2) AMRG will be available 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to conduct backcountry search and rescue operations and will take all reasonable steps to safely locate and assist any person who becomes lost, stranded, or injured in the Alaska backcountry and return them home to their family members.
- 3) AMRG will assist in the recovery of the bodies of deceased victims of accidents in the Alaska backcountry if such recovery can be safely done without unduly endangering the lives of our members.
- 4) AMRG will promote backcountry safety awareness through local efforts to educate the public about backcountry hazards and safe backcountry travel techniques.

Section 1. Membership in the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

The categories of AMRG membership shall be:

- 1) Prospective Member
- 2) Operational Member
- 3) Technical Advisor
- 4) Auxiliary Member
- 5) Inactive Member

Section 1.1 Membership Category Descriptions & Requirements

1. Prospective Member

A. Requirements: To become a Prospective Member, you must:

- 1) be at least 18 years old.
- 2) meet any State of Alaska requirements for SAR volunteers.
- 3) self-certify that you have no medical or physical condition that would prevent participation at the membership level you choose.

B. Application Process – In order to be considered for Prospective membership, you must submit to the AMRG Board a completed AMRG Application packet. (Attachment A) The AMRG Board will promptly review all pending Applications for membership. A

person will become a Prospective Member only upon approval of a majority vote of the AMRG Board.

C. Position Description - Prospective members may:

- 1) attend AMRG meetings and training classes.
- 2) respond to AMRG missions and assist at the Incident Command Post
- 3) be deployed on AMRG missions in non-technical terrain at the discretion of the Incident Commander.

2. Operational Member

A. Position Description: Operational members are AMRG's core field personnel for SAR missions and may be deployed for up to 72 hours. All Operational Members will be considered field resources for ground search missions and avalanche missions, and may serve as team leaders for trained or untrained searchers. Each Operational Member may also have one or more Advanced Proficiency Certifications noted on the AMRG callout sheet as described in Section 2.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications – To become an Operational Member, you must:

- 1) Complete at least 6 consecutive months as a Prospective Member; and
- 2) Complete the AMRG "Basic Training" course¹
- 3) Participate in at least 6 AMRG field or classroom training events including one of the following:
 - i) an AMRG interagency avalanche field training
 - ii) an AMRG interagency ground search field training.
- 4) Complete all training requirements on the Operational Member Certification Checklist (Attachment B)

C. Application Process – To apply to become an Operational Member, you must submit to the Board of Directors a completed AMRG Operational Member Certification Checklist (Attachment B) and all necessary attachments. The Board shall promptly consider each application. Advancement of a Prospective Member to Operational Member requires approval by a majority of the Board.

D. Time limits - Prospective Members who do not meet all of the requirements to move to Operational Member Status within 16 months of joining AMRG must submit to the Board a written request for an extension of time, not to exceed 12 months. Failure to do so may result in loss of Prospective member status. Approval of a time extension is discretionary for the Board.

¹ Previous SAR training and experience can be used to substitute for some modules of the Basic Training Course and waiver of individual modules will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Board or Training Coordinator.

E. Continued Proficiency:

- 1) An Operational Member must maintain all skill proficiencies and all required equipment as listed in the Membership Handbook and the Operational Membership Certification Checklist (Attachment B).

F. Other Attributes of Operational Membership

- 1) Operational Members must pay annual membership dues as set by the Board of Directors. Failure to do so can result in suspension of membership status.
- 2) Operational Members are eligible to vote in AMRG elections, hold officer and committee chair positions.
- 3) Operational Members are eligible for pro-deals through AMRG and MRA.

3. Technical Advisor

A Technical Advisor is a person who has significant experience and skills in a key SAR discipline whose affiliation with AMRG shall be as an advisor, instructor, consultant or provider of specialized technical skills. Technical Advisor status can only be conferred by a majority vote of the Board following a written request to the Board to consider an individual as an AMRG Technical Advisor. Technical Advisors shall be required to pay dues, will be entitled to vote in AMRG elections, and are eligible for pro-deals through AMRG. Status as Technical Advisor shall be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis and can be revoked at the discretion of the Board.

4. Auxiliary Member

An Auxiliary Member is a member who wishes to assist AMRG in ways other than field service, such as performing mission callouts, assisting with equipment/cache maintenance, communications, logistics, fundraising, etc. Auxiliary Members will be required to pay dues and can vote in AMRG elections, but they cannot assist in the field aspects of any mission or training. They are eligible for AMRG pro-deals after 12 months of service to AMRG at the Board's discretion. Auxiliary members must provide 10 hours of service to AMRG in a calendar year to remain in active status. Hours of service can be documented in a simple written log a copy of which must be submitted to the AMRG Board by May 1 of each year.

5. Inactive Member

An Operational Member, Technical Advisor, or Auxiliary Member who does not meet the minimum required proficiency requirements may be placed by the Board on the Inactive Member list. Members can remain on the inactive list for up to 3 years, and at any time during those three years may petition the Board to regain their former membership status by meeting the basic proficiency requirements. Inactive members will not pay dues and will not be eligible to vote in the annual AMRG elections. Inactive members will not be eligible to participate in AMRG pro-deals. After three years on the Inactive list, membership status will be terminated.

Section 1.2. Advanced Proficiency Certifications

Operational Members may be recognized as having advanced skill proficiencies as described below. The purpose of maintaining these certifications is to provide Command staff with information with which to assign field personnel with maximum safety and efficiency. To achieve certification, the member shall submit to the Board the pertinent Advanced Proficiency Checklist (Attachments C-K). Certifications shall be awarded for a term as described below. Upon expiration, any member wishing to renew certification shall submit the pertinent Advanced Proficiency Renewal Checklist to the Board. Approval of certifications and renewals thereof shall be discretionary for the Board.

1. Technical Rescue Certification (TR or TR-L)

A. Position Description: Operational Members who have achieved a level of training and experience to safely perform rescue and recovery operations in technical terrain (steep ice, rock, snow, and glacier environments). Operational members with technical rescue certification (TR) will be called upon to participate as a team member in the technical aspects of rescue and recovery missions. Operational members who have achieved a level of training and experience to lead teams in rescue and recovery operations in technical terrain will be designated as TR-L. This certification requires a high level of knowledge, skills, and abilities in technical environments, and has a higher number of proficiency requirements due to the high-risk/low frequency nature of such missions.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications

- 1) Minimum of 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member; and
- 2) Experience in alpine mountaineering, including technical rock, snow and ice terrain. (Experience may be demonstrated by a climbing resume or through written recommendations by no fewer than 2 AMRG members with Technical Rescue certification); and
- 3) Submission of a completed Technical Rescue Certification & Renewal Checklist (TR or TR-L option (Attachment C)).

C. Expiration/Renewal – All Technical Terrain Certifications shall expire on January 31 of even numbered years. In order for a Technical Rescue Certification to be renewed, the member must submit to the Board a Technical Rescue Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment C) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

2. Medical Certification (M)

A. Position Description: Operational Members with advanced training in wilderness medical care. Medics will be called upon to perform medical assessments in the field and direct the care, packaging, and transport of injured subjects consistent with their medical certification(s), and standing medical protocols approved and reviewed by the AMRG Medical Director and Board of Directors.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum of 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- 2) submission of documentation showing current Alaska or National Registry certification as a
 - a) WEMT-B* or
 - b) EMT I, II or III + WFR or
 - c) M.D./D.O/R.N./P.A + WFR (under an Alaska license) or
 - d) Equivalent certification and licenses as determined by the Board. Expiration or other loss of the required underlying certification shall result in concurrent loss of AMRG Medical Certification.

C. Expiration/Renewal— All Medical Certifications shall run concurrent with the required underlying certification. Photocopies of the current, required certifications must be submitted to the Board to obtain Medical Certification. Operational Members with Medical Certification will be required to submit copies of their current WEMT-B or (EMT I,II, or III + WFR) certification card in January of even years to demonstrate continued certification(s).

3. **Avalanche Certification (A)**

A. Position Description: Operational Members who have a high level of training and experience in avalanche hazard assessment, mitigation, and rescue/recovery. AMRG will rely on avalanche certified operational members to assess current avalanche conditions and whether it is safe to perform rescue and/or recovery of avalanche victims. They will also serve as avalanche site commanders—directing field teams and search efforts on scene. Persons with this certification will have considerable experience as a professional ski patroller, mountain guide, avalanche instructor, or SAR responder with a solid background in avalanche hazard assessment/forecasting, rescue, and control/mitigation measures.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum of 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- 2) Submission of written documentation showing completion of a Level II (or higher²) Backcountry Avalanche Hazard Evaluation course (or AAA equivalent 30+ hr course), and
- 3) Minimum 5 years of experience in winter backcountry travel (skiing, snowboarding, climbing, snowmachining,) or as a professional ski patroller, avalanche educator, r. Experience may be shown by resume or the written recommendations of at least 2 AMRG members with Avalanche certification.
- 4) Submission of a completed Avalanche Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment D).

C. Expiration/Renewal — All Avalanche Certifications shall expire on January 31 of odd numbered years. In order for an Avalanche Certification to be renewed, the member must

²(e.g.,) AAA—Level III avalanche course, CAA—Level II Avalanche Modules 1, 2, or 3, AAA Professional Avalanche Worker Seminar (PAWS)

submit to the Board an Avalanche Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment D) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

4. Search Manager Certification (SM)

A. Position Description: Operational members who have sufficient training and experience to fulfill key ICS Command and General roles such as: Incident Commander, Planning Section Chief, or Operations Chief, for AMRG SAR missions, particularly wilderness search missions.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- 2) Submission of a completed Search Manager Certification Checklist (Attachment F).

C. Expiration/Renewal – All Search Manager certifications shall expire on January 1 of every third year, beginning in 2008. In order for a Search Manager Certification to be renewed, the member must submit to the Board a Search Manager Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment E) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

5. Agency Representative (AR)

A. Position Description: An AMRG Operational member who shall serve as initial point of contact by an agency requesting AMRG's services and shall act as initial coordinator of AMRG's response until such time as an Incident Commander has been appointed. Agency Representatives will be required to share the responsibility of carrying the AST notification pagers for periods of time throughout the year. Agency Representatives have the necessary SAR experience and judgment to commit the group to a mission, direct field resources, but can be exempt from the field proficiency requirement of Operational Members due to physical limitations.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum of five (5) years of experience with organized search and rescue, and
- 2) Minimum of one (1) year of experience as a member of AMRG, and
- 3) Current or previous AMRG certification in Search Management, Technical Rescue, or Avalanche.
- 4) Submission to the Board of an Agency Representative Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment F)

B. Duty time – An Agency Representative must be willing and able to carry the AST notification pager for 3-4 weeks at a time, and respond 24-7 during that period to AST requests for assistance.

C. Expiration/Renewal – All Agency Representative Certifications shall expire on Oct 30 of every third year beginning in 2007. In order for an Agency Representative Certification to be

renewed, the member must submit to the Board an Agency Representative Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment F) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

6. Swiftwater Certification (SW)

A. Position Description: An Operational Member who has the ability to assess whitewater hazards and lead/direct searches and rescues in water environments. They are expected to have a significant background in whitewater rafting or kayaking and some training in swiftwater rescue as noted below.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum one (1) year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- 2) Minimum five (5) years experience in whitewater rafting, whitewater kayaking or 2 years of experience as an active member of a Swiftwater Rescue Team, including experience with glacial rivers, rapids to class IV and night swift water rescue operations.
- 3) Successful completion of a nationally certified 5-day advanced swiftwater rescue course with training in river search management, rope systems and night operations. *(Note: AMRG does not require three-year renewal for this certification.)*
- 4) Submission to the Board of a Swiftwater Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment G)

C. Expiration/Renewal – All Swiftwater Certifications shall expire on Jan 1 of even-numbered years. In order for an Swiftwater certification to be renewed, the member must submit to the Board a Swiftwater Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment G) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

7. Helicopter Certification (H)

A. Position Description: An Operational Member who has sufficient training and experience to manage helicopter operations, both at a helibase, or remote helispots. A member with Helicopter certification has extensive knowledge of helicopter flight operations, including communications, helicopter systems and aerial observation techniques.

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum one (1) year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- 2) Successful completion of any Alaska Department of Public Safety helicopter safety and observer training program(s).
- 3) Successful completion of the Dept. of Interior (DOI) Interagency Aviation Training B-3 module, or equivalent.
- 4) Submission to the Board of a Helicopter Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment H)

C. Expiration/Renewal – All Helicopter Certifications shall expire on Jan 1 of even-numbered years. In order for a Helicopter certification to be renewed, the member must submit to the Board a Helicopter Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment H) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

8. Transportation Certification (TN)

A. Position Description: An Operational Member who own and operate snowmachines and ATVs, and have sufficient training and experience to coordinate the transportation efforts associated with AMRG missions. Transportation Specialists will also be called upon to direct the transportation efforts associated with AMRG missions when needed, particularly participation of untrained or spontaneous transportation resources that assist with missions. They will also assist with maintenance of AMRG transportation equipment (Equipment trailer, sleds, etc.).

B. Prerequisite Qualifications:

- 1) Minimum one (1) year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- 2) Minimum 3 years of experience in backcountry mechanized travel (snowmachining, ATVs, etc). Experience may be shown by resume or the written recommendations of at least 2 AMRG members with Transportation certification.
- 4) Submission of a completed Transportation Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment I).

C. Expiration/Renewal – All Transportation Certifications shall expire on Oct 30 every third year beginning in 2008. In order for a Transportation certification to be renewed, the member must submit to the Board a Transportation Certification & Renewal Checklist (Attachment I) no later than the date of expiration of the prior certification.

Section 1.3 Participation of minors within the group

Participation in training (only) by a member's family (minors more than 16 years old) must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Board. The member must supervise and accept responsibility and liability for the minor during the training exercise.

Attachment A

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group Application for Membership - Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group! We are a volunteer organization that performs search and rescue services in backcountry areas of southcentral Alaska. Before submitting this application, please give a moment to consider participation in the Group.

Time – Participation in the Group means attending meetings and field training events. We hold two evening meetings and one training day each month from September through June. While no one can attend every meeting and training, there are minimum attendance and training proficiency standards for active members. Also, missions tend to happen around weekends and late at night, 365 days a year. Missions may last hours or days. Think about whether this will work with your family and job before you apply.

Work – The Group can use some help with town chores, such as office work. However, the vast majority of our work is done in the backcountry. This could mean anything from a city park to a glacier in the Alaska Range. Our work is often done in the cold, in the rain or snow and in hazardous places. Active members must be able to carry heavy packs and/or a litter in steep, rough terrain and through thick brush for hours at a time. Members must be able to survive AND function efficiently in any Alaskan weather at any time of year. You need not be a climber, but you need to have strong backcountry skills before you join the Group. If you are new to the Alaska backcountry, you might look into membership in the Mountaineering Club of Alaska or other outdoor organizations and/or training to hone your backcountry skills before joining AMRG. If backcountry field work isn't your thing, but you want to help AMRG in other ways, consider joining AMRG as an Auxiliary member which has less stringent participation and physical requirements.

Expense – As people become more involved with AMRG, they find that they need a considerable amount of backcountry gear. This is expensive stuff. Since your life may depend on it, members tend to try to obtain the best equipment available. Gear is often lost or used up on missions, some of which may be replaced by the Department of Public Safety. Gas, food and other consumables, as well as wear and tear on personal vehicles are also a cost to the member.

Still interested? If we haven't scared you off, fill out the attached application, noting whether you wish to join as an auxiliary member or operational member, and mail it to our mailbox (P.O. Box 241102, Anchorage, AK 99524), or hand it to one of our Board members. The Board will want to look over your application and maybe talk with you before responding. In the meantime, feel free to attend our meetings and get to know folks.

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Application for Membership

Membership Type Applying For:

- Operational Member
 Auxiliary Member

Date of Application:

Name:
Address:
Home / Work / cell telephone numbers
e-mail address:
Tell us about your backcountry skills and experience, especially any search and rescue training or experience (you can also attach a letter with this information):

<p>Medical training – list any first aid, emergency medical training or experience you may have, including any current or expired certifications</p>	
<p>Medical background – Many of AMRG’s missions are hazardous. The following is intended to give us some medical background should you be injured. If you prefer, you may provide this information after the Board has considered your application.</p>	
Age/Birthdate:	Sex:
Height/weight:	Bloodtype:
Emergency contact(s):	
Regular physician (name and phone):	
<p>Relevant Medical Conditions / Allergies (If you are on any regular medication or have a condition that an emergency physician should know about before initiating treatment, such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, etc., please describe here. Please list if you are allergic to any medications or if you have a severe allergic reaction to any substance.</p>	
<p>I certify that I do not have an medical, physical, or mental conditions that would prevent me from assisting AMRG in the membership capacity I am seeking:</p>	
Signature _____	Date _____
<p>*(PLEASE ALSO FILL OUT AMRG MEDICAL INFO CARD AND SUBMIT**</p>	

Please read carefully and sign the Release and Assumption of Risk and Ethics forms below, then submit your membership application to any Board member, or mail it to Membership Coordinator, AMRG, P.O. Box 241102, Anchorage, AK 99524, e-mail: wromberg@acsalaska.net

AMRG Release and Assumption of Risk

I am aware that there are certain risks involved in participating on a mountain rescue team. I am aware that these risks can include, but are not limited to, bodily or mental injury, disability or even death. I am aware that hazards include, but are not limited to, travel in remote and/or mountainous terrain, exposure to weather, system or equipment failures, human error, rock, snow and ice fall, including avalanches, and travel by air, automobile, snow machine or other conveyance. I am aware that I may be exposed to these risks both in training and on actual missions.

After considering these risks, I desire to receive training and to participate in missions with the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group. I ASSUME ALL RISK AND AGREE TO HOLD THE ALASKA MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP AND ANY OF ITS MEMBERS HARMLESS FROM ANY LIABILITY, ACTIONS, CAUSES OF ACTION, DEBTS, CLAIMS OR DEMANDS OF ANY KIND WHICH MAY ARISE IN CONNECTION WITH MY PARTICIPATION IN ANY TRAINING ACTIVITY OR MISSION. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and assumption of risk for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, guardians, or any member of my family. The effect of this release and assumption of risk shall continue despite the cessation, if any, of my participation with the Group.

I understand that the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group is a non-profit organization operated solely by volunteers. I am aware that it has no liability, medical, workers compensation or similar insurance.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND I UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS AND IMPACT. I AGREE TO ITS TERMS.

Date:

_____ (signature)

_____ (print name)

AMRG Principles of Ethical Conduct

Membership in AMRG entails a commitment to provide assistance to those in need, and as such, engenders a public trust that requires the highest level of personal and professional conduct. The ability of AMRG to serve those in need depends on being recognized as a professional volunteer organization with the highest level of skills and standards. It is the duty of each member to reflect the values of the Group. To the extent possible, the following are the principles of conduct that every member shall adhere to.

1. Every member shall consider the welfare of themselves and the welfare of their fellow team members, their primary concern, and shall not place another person in a position of known jeopardy.
2. The welfare of a living subject of a search and/or rescue shall be considered the next highest priority after the safety of the team.
3. Each member shall strive to preserve the dignity and privacy of living or deceased subjects that are the focus of AMRG missions.
4. AMRG and individual members shall not solicit contributions of money, goods, or services in connection with any mission, nor shall any member solicit or accept fees or remuneration for personal benefit, without approval of the Board.
5. No member may use their association with AMRG for political, financial, or business purposes without Board approval.
6. Each member is obligated by membership in AMRG to maintain the standards of their membership level, and to improve upon their ability and capacity to serve.
7. As an individual, a member shall not act on behalf of AMRG, or presume to represent AMRG, in instances of an emergency nature, or in matters of public relations, without Board approval.
8. AMRG shall not be utilized as an adjunct resource for matters relating to the pursuit of fugitives from justice, or other law enforcement missions unless a clear humanitarian issue has been identified, and only upon the concurrence of the Board.
9. Ethical conduct by members requires that their actions and words reflect a policy of nondiscrimination. AMRG and its members will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, social or economic circumstance, or national origin.
10. AMRG conducts itself within the public trust, and will not tolerate or retain any member that has been identified as drug and/or alcohol dependent.

I HAVE READ THESE PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL CONDUCT, AND I AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE PRINCIPLES.

Date: _____ (signature)



Alaska Mountain Rescue Group Medical Profile Information Sheet

Please fill out this information to the best of your ability. The medical information form you provide will be housed in the AMRG ICS kit kept in the AMRG trailer for ready access during field training and missions. Should you develop a serious medical condition (i.e., heart attack) or sustain traumatic injuries during a mission or training, this information will be made available to ER personnel upon your arrival should you be unconscious or have an altered mental status. It is the intent of the Board that this information be kept as confidential as possible—only being available to the Board and Drs. Ellemberger, Zafren, and Mike Moxness, R.N.

Please list all medical problems and past surgeries. On your medical form only those conditions that are significant enough to require a physicians attention in an emergency will be written on your card.

For allergies, please include reaction to drug (i.e., rash, anaphylaxis)

Your insurance company name and social security are put on the form to allow for smoother hospital registration. If you are against listing your SSN, then you can omit it. These sheets will be kept in an AMRG binder, if they are ever discarded, they will be shredded.

You can put more then one phone number for the Emergency Contact listing (i.e., cell and home number)

For medicines, please write down name, dosage and how often. For men, while a private matter, I ask that if you take a medication for erectile dysfunction, like Viagra, that you list that please. Nitrate medications like nitroglycerin are contraindicated if you take these medicines and can cause complications/death by dropping your blood pressure if given. For women please list any birth control pills, Depo shots, etc. Also please list herbal supplements you may take. There are some that can cause "blood thinning".

If this profile changes in any way, please let Dr. Herman Ellemberger know by submitting a new medical information form showing the updated information. These cards are being made to ensure the best possible care for our AMRG members. Thank you!

PLEASE TYPE OR WRITE AS LEGIBLY AS POSSIBLE

Name:

Date of Birth:

Social Security No:

Medical Problems:

Past Surgeries:

Medicines: (please include daily baby aspirin if taken)

Allergies to Medicines (including iodine or shellfish):

Blood Type (please include + or – if known):

Do you smoke ?

Emergency Contact Name:

Emergency Contact Phone Number(s):

Emergency Contact Relation to You:

Insurance Company:

Extra space for additional listing of important medical conditions:

Attachment B -- Operational Member Certification & Renewal Checklist Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Name: _____

Date became a Prospective Member: _____

First certification of Operational Member status: *date* *instructor*

Completed AMRG Basic Training class	_____	_____
AMRG cache orientation*	_____	_____
Radio communications*	_____	_____
Personal equipment*	_____	_____
Helicopter orientation*	_____	_____
Six AMRG training events*	1 _____	_____
	2 _____	_____
	3 _____	_____
	4 _____	_____
	5 _____	_____
	6 _____	_____

Current Wilderness First Aid (or higher) certification (attach copy)*

Current Basic CPR certification (attach copy)

NIMS IS-100 course certificate (attach copy)*

NASAR SAR TECH III (or higher) exam passed (attach copy)*

Date submitted to AMRG board: _____

Within 18 months of attaining Operational Member status:

NIMS IS-200 certificate (attach copy)*

NIMS IS-700 certificate (attach copy)*

NASAR SAR Tech II certification (attach copy)*

Level 1 Avalanche course certificate (attach copy)*

Date submitted to AMRG board: _____

Annual proficiency checklist:

Participated in minimum of five scheduled AMRG training events
(including at least two field training events)

Lead or assisted with at least one AMRG training event

Passed avalanche transceiver test*

Date submitted to AMRG board: _____

* See descriptions, next page.

Descriptions for Attachment B:

First certification:

AMRG Cache Orientation - Demonstrates familiarity with layout and inventory of AMRG Cache, trailer, and checkout procedures

Radio Communications - Demonstrates ability to operate AMRG portable radios, assemble and operate Base stations; assemble and operate repeater stations.

Personal Equipment - Confirms all mandatory equipment of Operational Member Equipment List, including appropriate pack.

Training - Confirms participation in at least six AMRG training events including at least one of the following:

AMRG interagency avalanche field training

AMRG interagency ground search field training.

Helicopter Orientation - Attend helicopter (AST Helo 1) orientation session

Current Wilderness First Aid - Attach copy of current Wilderness First Aid (or higher) certification with Basic CPR. (Note: persons who have completed a WFR or WFA course within the last 10 yrs but who may not have current certification can provide copy of most recent certification card)

NIMS IS-100 is a free online self-study course.

NASAR SAR Tech Certification – Attach documentation of completion of NASAR SAR Tech III (or II, or I) course (Note: SAR Tech III certification available online as a self-study course--course completion certificate from NASAR sufficient).

Within 18 months:

NIMS IS-200 is a free online self-study course.

NIMS IS-700 is a free online self-study course.

Level 1 Avalanche is a 24-hour nationally certified course.

NASAR SAR Tech II is a 43-hour nationally certified course. The course may be challenged by taking 1 written test and 6 field tests.

Annual proficiency checklist:

Passed avalanche transceiver test - Demonstrated the ability to locate at least two avalanche transceivers buried in a 30m x 30m area within six minutes.

Attachment C -- Technical Rescue Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Experience

- Minimum of 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member
- Experience in alpine mountaineering, including technical rock, snow and ice terrain as demonstrated by:
 - a climbing resume (attach copy), OR
 - written recommendation by no fewer than 2 AMRG members with Technical Rescue certification (attach copy)

Date & Initials of Trainer

Training

- Completion of AMRG Technical Training Program (attach copy:
 - Technical Training Program attendance sheet
 - Technical Rescue Proficiency Checklist (below)

- Participation in two (2) AMRG Rope Rodeo field trainings

Advancement to Technical Rescue Leader (TR-L)

- Completion of a formal, multi-day rescue rigging course (e.g., Rigging for Rescue 7-day seminar), containing at least 25 hrs of field training (attach copy), OR
- Technical rescue leader certification with another mountain rescue unit, the military, or mountain guide operation verified in writing by the unit (attach copy)

Biennial Proficiency Checklist (submit by Jan 31 of even years)

- Continued active involvement in technical climbing (rock, snow, and ice) as well as glacier travel/mountaineering (as verified by other AMRG Technical Rescue members or review by the Board).

- Demonstrated proficiency in current AMRG technical standards by completing two or more of the following requirements during the renewal period:
 - Participation in a minimum of five (5) scheduled AMRG technical field training events

 - Successful demonstration of skills at all stations of annual AMRG Rope Rodeo.

 - Serve as an instructor/co-instructor for at least three (3) AMRG technical training events in the renewal period

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Technical Climbing Proficiency Checklist

(To be completed through a combination of review of climbing resume and demonstration at AMRG training events while completing Technical Rescue Training Program.)

Date & Initials of Trainer

Rock

- free climb 5.7 or better
- safely place protection-
Bolts, pitons, chocks, cams
- rig protection, belays
- belay leader/follower

Snow / Ice

- Climb steep snow / ice (Grade III)
- Safely place anchors –
Ice screws, pickets, bollards
- Self arrest on snow

Glacier

- Glacier travel
- Crevasse extrication, patient and
Rope partner

Technical Rescue

- AMRG knots
- Rig harness / pickoff
- Anchor systems
- Belay / rappelling
- Raising systems
- Lowering systems
- Litter handling / tending

Attachment D -- Avalanche Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Experience

Date & Initials of Trainer

- Minimum of 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member.
- Minimum 5 years of experience in winter backcountry travel (skiing, snowboarding, climbing, snowmachining,) or professional ski patrol as demonstrated by any two of the following:
 - a outdoor resume (attach copy)
 - written recommendation by no fewer than 2 AMRG members with avalanche certification (attach copy)
 - a letter of recommendation from ski patrol director or another mountain rescue unit. (attach copy)

Training

- Has completed a Level II (or higher¹) Backcountry Avalanche Hazard Evaluation course (or AAA equivalent 30+ hr course) (attach copy).
- Participation in at least two (2) AMRG interagency mock avalanche response training events to demonstrate knowledge and skills in avalanche hazard assessment and response, preferably as avalanche site commander. _____
- Field participation in at least three (3) avalanche response missions with AMRG or another MRA-accredited team. _____

Biennial Proficiency Checklist (submit by Jan 31 of odd years)

- Active involvement in winter backcountry activities (as a skier, snowboarder, snowmachiner, climber, or professional ski-patroller) that regularly involves traveling in avalanche terrain, evaluating avalanche hazard, and practicing safe travel techniques (as verified by an AMRG member with avalanche certification)
- Assisted with coordination or instruction at the AMRG interagency avalanche training at least once during the renewal period.
- Involved in professional ski patrolling, avalanche education, or avalanche hazard assessment and mitigation efforts within Alaska during the renewal period (attach summary of work)
- Continues to pursue additional avalanche hazard evaluation, mitigation and rescue training and experience during the renewal period.¹

¹ e.g. AAA Level I avalanche course, AAA Professional Avalanche Member Exam

A Level I Avalanche Modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20
National Avalanche Association

Attachment E -- Search Manager Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Initials of Reviewer

Experience

- Minimum 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member.
- Experience in key ICS positions (IC, Planning, Operations) during at least two (2) mock ground search scenarios with AMRG.¹
- Experience in at least two (2) actual search events within the past 3 years.

Training (attach copy of certificates)

- Completion of NSAR Managing the best Person Incident (MPI) (or equivalent) search management course
- Completion of:
 - NIS IS-300 (classroom)
 - NIS IS-800 (online course)
- Completion of at least one (1) of the following advance ICS courses:
 - NSAR Planning Section Chief (PSCSAR)
 - NSAR Incident Commander Emergency Response (ICER)
 - NIS IS-400 (Advanced ICS)
 - ERI I-400 (Advanced ICS) (Modules 12-14)

Triennial Proficiency Checklist

(submit by Jan 1 of every third year beginning in 2008)

- Served as the coordinator, mentor, and/or trainer for at least two (2) AMRG mock search scenario event during the renewal period
- ~~Was~~ involved in managing (as IC, OSC, PSC) at least 2 mock or actual search events during the renewal period.
- Conducted or assisted with at least two (2) AMRG classroom training events on ground search topics (ICS, search techniques, strategies, table top scenarios)

¹ Persons with extensive search management experience with another search and rescue unit will only be required to manage 1 mock search scenario with AMRG.

Attachment F -- Agency Representative Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Date & Initials of Reviewer

Experience

- Minimum of five (5) years of experience with organized search and rescue, and
- Minimum of one (1) year of experience as a member of AMRG
- Has served as Incident Commander, Planning Section Chief, or Operations Chief in at least (4) AMRG mock scenario exercises, specifically, the annual interagency avalanche and/or ground search training exercises.

Training (attach copy of certificates)

- Completion of AMRG Agency Representative Mentoring Program which may include one or more of the following:
 - Review and familiarization with AMRG Mission Pre-plan packet

 - Completion of an IS-300 or IS-800 course

Triennial Proficiency Checklist

(submit by Oct 30 of every third year beginning in 2007)

- Participated in at least 3 AMRG field training events during the renewal period

- Carried an AST notification pager for at least 4 weeks annually during the renewal period.¹

- Participated in the command structure of at least one (1) actual AMRG mission (or mission with another agency/organization) during the renewal period (IC, PSC, OSC, Administrative or "in-town" contact).

Attachment G -- Swiftwater Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Date & Initials of Reviewer

Experience

- Minimum 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member.
- Minimum 5 years experience in whitewater rafting, whitewater kayaking or 2 years of experience as an active member of a Swiftwater Rescue Team, including experience with glacial rivers, rapids to class IV and night swift water rescue operations.

Training (attach copy of certificates)

- Successful completion of a nationally certified 5-day advanced swiftwater rescue course with training in river search management, rope systems and night operations.¹
- Possession of personal protective equipment for swiftwater operations: dry suit, PFD, water helmet, throw rope.
- Demonstrated understanding of AMRG technical rope rescue standards and equipment by participation in at least (1) AMRG Rope Rodeo field training.

Biennial Proficiency Checklist (submit by Jan 31 of even years)

- Continued active involvement in whitewater boating and/or swiftwater rescue (as verified by another AMRG Swiftwater Certified member or review by the Board).
- Participate in at least one (1) AMRG "swiftwater refresher training" during the renewal period, during which they must demonstrate proficiency in:
 - Throw-rope rescue
 - Tethered swimmer rescue
 - Rigging for tethered boat rescue
 - Strainer swim
 - Night river search (may be a tabletop exercise)
- Instruct/co-instruct at least 1 AMRG swiftwater refresher training during the renewal period

¹ AMRG does not require three-year renewal for this certification)

Attachment H -- Helicopter Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Date & Initials of Reviewer

Experience

- Minimum 1 year as an AMRG Operational Member.
- Successful completion of any Alaska Department of Public Safety helicopter safety and observer training program(s).

Training (attach copy of certificates)

- Successful completion of the Dept. of Interior (DOI) Interagency Aviation Training B-3 module, or equivalent.
- Has completed AMRG Helicopter Training Program, that includes familiarity and proficiency in:
 - aviation communications
 - landing zone (LZ) management
 - helicopter loading and unloading
 - hand signals
 - night helicopter operations
 - external load operations
 - helicopter hoisting and litter management.
 - aerial search/spotter, including night vision equipment procedures.

Optional:

- Completion of a forward looking infrared (FLIR) training course and a Night Vision Goggle (NVG) training course is recommended, but not required.

Biennial Proficiency Checklist (submit by Jan 31 of even years)

- Completed at least two (2) of the following during renewal period:
 - Attended biennial refresher training on helicopter operations with other AMRG helicopter certified members,
 - Attend refresher training of DOI B-3 module, or equivalent, every 2 years
 - Served as an instructor of an AMRG helicopter operations training module.
- Performed helicopter operations management or in aerial search capacity in at least two (2) AMRG mock training events or missions during renewal period.

Attachment I -- Transportation Certification & Renewal Checklist

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group

Date & Initials of Reviewer

Experience

- Minimum one (1) year as an AMRG Operational Member, and
- Minimum three (3) years of experience in backcountry mechanized travel (snowmachining or ATV/ORV). Experience may be demonstrated by resume or the written recommendation of at least two (2) AMRG members.

Training

- Complete AMRG transportation orientation program to become familiar with AMRG transport protocols. _____
- Complete an initial checkout drive/ride with another transportation certified member of AMRG. _____
- Complete AMRG equipment trailer orientation and towing check-drive. _____
- Serve as "Transportation Chief" (head of motorpool) or Staging Area Manager for at least one (1) of the following: _____
 - AMRG interagency avalanche training
 - AMRG interagency ground search training

Required Equipment

- Own a personal trailer for transporting motorized equipment to scene of a mission.
- Must own 4-wheeler and/or snowmachine that:
 - Is properly maintained and ready to go at all times.
 - Has repair kit for flats, belts, and other basic repairs
 - Is equipped with winch or come-along, and a tow strap.
 - Is capable of carrying driver with his overnight pack and repair kit.
 - Is of appropriate size for our missions (i.e., carry 2 people) and can tow a sled/toboggan, OR a trailer into the field as needed.
- Must own a personal helmet(s) appropriate to the equipment driven (e.g., snowmachine) that is available at all times with eye protection.

Optional

- Own a vehicle capable of towing 5000 pounds, a trailer hitch and a 2" ball for towing AMRG equipment trailer(s)

Triennial Proficiency Checklist (submit by Oct 30 of every three years beginning in 2008)

- Participate in at least two (2) AMRG interagency field training events during the renewal period _____
- Complete at least two (2) of following during the renewal period: _____
 - Conduct AMRG equipment trailer orientation and towing check-drive training _____
 - Teach/assist with teaching AMRG transportation orientation program _____
 - Conduct a check-drive with another AMRG transport member _____

MAT + SAR
Search & Rescue

PO Box 876467, Wasilla, Alaska 99687

745-6727

Dear Sirs,

This letter is to express my views on, and to support the passing of House Bill #320.

As the President of MAT+SAR search and rescue I am very interested in House Bill #320 - "An Act relating to search and rescue training and search and rescue parties; requiring certain search and rescue volunteers to be considered state employees for purposes of workers' compensation coverage; and allowing political subdivisions to elect to provide workers' compensation insurance coverage for search and rescue personnel."

It is my understanding that this bill, if passed will offer workers compensation to search and rescue (SAR) personnel that are contacted by the Alaska State Troopers. When someone calls 911 and reports a loved one is not back from an excursion in the mountains Alaska State Troopers are responsible for this call regardless of the location. AST calls on which ever of the 40 + SAR teams in Alaska is best suited to perform the search and rescue.

Alaska's big and there are many ways for people to get into trouble once off the beaten path. Every year hundreds of people call for help from the backcountry of Alaska. Just this past week in Anchorage; a woman was lost on the side of a mountain, in a blinding storm, in the middle of the night. She was rescued by Volunteer men and women that were contacted by the Alaska State Troopers, they went out into that storm to search for and help a stranger in peril. She was found by the SAR team and removed from the mountain by an AST helicopter!

Volunteer search and rescue personnel spend countless hours training for just this reason. We (search and rescue volunteers) spend several hundreds- into the thousands of dollars - out of our pockets - to outfit ourselves with the equipment necessary for the missions we are called on to conduct.

We do what we do because, first we can. We know the areas we are called to work in because we play there too and second because we care!

If we injure ourselves while in the field we are left with no medical insurance at all, no way to cover lost wages while away from work, none of the basic assistance that every other employee in every other form of public services is entitled too. Volunteer fire fighters are covered under workers compensation if they are injured on the job, the same with ambulance services.

It's time to extend these same basic services to the volunteer search and rescue teams in Alaska.

I am asking you to take care of those that will, and do take care of you and yours when they need it the most. When they are alone, maybe injured, and scared in the wilds of Alaska.

I am asking you to pass House Bill #320 on March 20th.

Thank you for time and consideration.

H Joseph Sylvia, President
MAT+SAR Search and Rescue



*A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION
AFFILIATED WITH
MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION
EMPLOYER I.D. #92-0084973*

Alaska Mountain Rescue Group
P.O. Box 241102
Anchorage, Alaska 99524
www.amrg.org

March 24, 2008

TO: The Honorable Senators Johnny Ellis; Senator Gary Stevens; Senator Bettye Davis; Senator Lyman Hoffman; Senator Con Bunde

RE: HB 320

The Alaska Mountain Rescue Group (AMRG) would like to express its support for HB 320. This legislation would provide for worker's compensation coverage to those search and rescue volunteers injured or killed while engaged in search and rescue missions, for training mission, as authorized by the Commissioner of Public Safety.

At the request of the Alaska State Troopers, the vast majority of back country and/or non-urban search and rescue missions (SAR) are accomplished by non-paid volunteers. These volunteers devote extraordinary amounts of time away from their families and jobs, available 24 hours a day in every season of the year, in all possible terrain and weather conditions, to attain and maintain high levels of skills to accomplish a variety of SAR missions. These professional level skills encompass every facet of search and rescue, such as search management, ground and canine search, avalanche response, high-angle technical rope rescue, wilderness medical care, extrication and transportation of injured subjects, water rescue, and many others.

Worker's compensation has previously been extended to volunteer ambulance attendants, police officers, and fire fighters. This bill further extends coverage to a segment of the SAR community that has equal potential for injury or death, and to those volunteers who are certainly no less dedicated to helping those in need throughout the State of Alaska. I urge your continued support for HB 320 to extend worker's compensation to search and rescue volunteers. Thank you for your efforts on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Scott Erickson
AMRG - Chairman

Darwin Peterson

From: Weston Eiler
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2008 4:39 PM
To: Darwin Peterson
Subject: FW: HB 320

Letter of Support from Sitka for HB 320 (referred 3/26)...e-mail filed under 'Complete' Folder

From: Don Kluting [mailto:donk@cityofsitka.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2008 12:43 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: *****SPAM***** HB 320

Honorable Senator Bert Stedman,

I would like to voice my support for HB 320, which would provide for workers compensation coverage for search and rescue volunteers. The language in the bill allows the Alaska State Troopers to extend coverage to training as well as missions, which is important. The Alaska State Troopers expect highly trained, professional volunteers to respond on missions and the only way to maintain that proficiency is to train.

Last year Sitka Mountain Rescue responded to 59 missions in the Southeast Alaska area. Sitka Mountain Rescue is comprised of 45 volunteer members who contributed in excess of 10,640 hours of volunteer service to the State of Alaska last year. Our team, like all the rest in the Alaska, provides for full coverage search and rescue / mountain rescue services twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. The volunteers get up at 2 a.m. in the morning and leave their families to go out and look for those who are lost or rescue those in need, quit often in inclement conditions. Our volunteers are providing the majority of their own outdoor equipment in order to facilitate the response to the mission at no cost to the State. Our volunteers don't ask for pay, they are dedicated to the mission and believe in neighbors helping neighbors. HB 320 will provide some insurance to the volunteers and families of those volunteers who are providing the volunteer emergency service, in the case of an injury.

Last July one of our volunteers punctured his leg on a stick while responding to a search and rescue mission on Gavan Hill and required sutures. When I submitted the claim to the State Troopers I was informed that there was no coverage even though the Alaska State Troopers issued a case number and gave authorization to respond on the mission. I was informed that the state would cover the deductible if the volunteer had personal insurance that would cover the cost. HB 320 will provide protection for volunteers in instances like this.

HB 320 is a priority to the volunteer members of the Sitka Mountain Rescue Team. On behalf of the team, I would like to ask for your support on HB 320.

Respectfully,

Don Kluting

Don Kluting

Director of Search and Rescue
City and Borough of Sitka
330 Harbor Drive
Sitka Alaska, 99835
Voice: (907) 747-3225, Cell: (907) 752-0813
Fax: (907)747-8495, 24 hr. dispatch (907)747-3233

3/27/2008

Mike Pawlowski

From: Eric Muench [ericmuench@kpunet.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2008 11:25 AM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Con Bunde; Sen. Bettye Davis
Cc: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: HB 320

Dear Senators,

Please support HB 320. Our Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad has a continuing need for training new members and improving skills of long term ones. Without training, actual search operations would be longer and more hazardous with less chance of a successful outcome. Search dog training is a continuing need to keep dogs and handlers sharp. High angle mountain rescue operations can be extremely slow and dangerous if team members haven't trained together and learned the techniques. Boat crews need to learn the boat and its fire-fighting, towing and dewatering equipment to be safe and effective in an actual emergency response. Land navigation skills are vital if search teams are to be efficient in our typical wilderness search scenario.

Our people are entirely volunteer. Time, personal gear and similar expenses are not compensated. They should not also need to risk lost income or medical expenses in case of a training injury. If the KVRS had to pick up those expenses it could simply end the organization. Our fund raising efforts and donations barely pay equipment, utility, fuel and similar expenses.

Lastly, I believe that, state-wide in the long term, more training supported by medical insurance coverage would reduce the risk and incidence of rescue operation injury and actually save the State money.

Thank you,

Eric Muench, president
Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad

Mike Pawlowski

From: mcbelfry@gci.net on behalf of Mike & Cathy Belfry [mcbelfry@gci.net]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 7:33 PM
To: Sen. Con Bunde
Cc: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: HB 320

Dear Senator Bunde,

Please support HB 320. My husband has been active on the Ketchikan Search and Rescue for over 15 years. He has often been the leader for the Mountain Rescue team. We both firmly believe this is necessary to continue to have a rescue squad that is knowledgeable and prepared for any rescue.

Last year one of Mike's team fell and broke his ankle. While thankfully he had insurance through his work, he almost lost his job because he could not actively perform his work. His family lost his wages and he had over \$4000 in out of pocket expenses.

There are not many households that can afford to cover those losses and yet the Alaska community continues to need a volunteer search and rescue squad, whether for boating, airplane, hunting, hiking or even young children lost in the neighborhood.

Please support HB 320.

Thank you, Mike and Cathy Belfry

Mike Pawlowski

From: Quinn Sharkey [qsharkey@sitkahospital.org]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 5:40 PM
To: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: HB 320

All of us SAR Technicians need HB 320 on the agenda. It is the right thing to do and long overdue. We don't want a paycheck. We are happy to volunteer, but we deserve some back up if we take a hit for the team. Please do what you can to make it happen. I have written Senator Stedman formally and by email already. Thanks so much.....

Quinn Sharkey RN, CNOR
Sitka Community Hospital *and Sitka Mountain Rescue*
Dept. of Surgical Services
209 Moller Avenue
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-1728
(907) 747-1788 (fax)
email: qsharkey@sitkahospital.org

Mike Pawlowski

From: Jerry Kiffer [jkiffer@kpunet.net]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 11:21 AM
To: Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Con Bunde; Sen. Belye Davis; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Johnny Ellis
Cc: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: HB320

Dear Senate Labor and Commerce Committee,

I testified at the meeting last Thursday concerning HB 320 but I wanted to take a moment to respond to some of the discussions from the table. I have been a search and rescue volunteer in Ketchikan for 28 years. I have worked in all aspects of search and rescue and currently manage a team that has been providing services to a 5000 sq. mile area of southeast Alaska around Ketchikan since 1948. Our team responds to 20 - 30 searches each year, our non-paid professional volunteers had donated thousands of hours for the protection of our community. To the search and rescue volunteers throughout the state what we do is not just a hobby it is a passion that drives us to help our neighbors.

The language that allows DPS to cover search and rescue training is vital, when we are called by AST the expectation they have is for highly skilled, professional, and safe volunteers to respond to the emergency. We simply cannot provide that level of service without the scheduling of pertinent training missions. The current language allows coverage for training at AST discretion but does not require them to do the actual training, as it would be very expensive to provide a local training officer in each community that would have the experience and knowledge to train an all hazards search and rescue team. As written, 320 will require little effort on the part of AST to provide "approval" for local training missions. The Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad has for years had in place a program that provides a training mission profile including an evaluation of mission type, hazards, weather, available equipment, condition of equipment, training of responders, and a risk/benefit analysis, much the same procedure we go through for a search mission. This procedure is one of the main reasons we have operated for 60 years with just 3 minor injuries.

I feel very strongly that AST needs to be authorizing all training missions after all we are asking them to pay the premiums! Local AST detachment personnel would be the best for evaluating the necessity for insurance coverage as they have the eyes on the local conditions and can closely evaluate the local SAR group. As for the attached fiscal note to HB 320 please do not allow it to halt the passing of this bill.

There was some concern expressed regarding those who may take advantage of workers comp. Like any claim, worker's compensation will investigate the validity of all claims and if we could add language to the bill requiring AST to give permission to authorize insurance coverage for local SAR operators to conduct training missions on a case by case basis. The bill then would strictly control who would be insured and who wouldn't. As an example a local established SAR group with current training and safety protocols, known to AST could be given coverage but a group of well meaning civilians who may want the insurance to "go play" may be refused coverage.

I appreciate your support. It's in the spirit of Neighbors Helping Neighbors that search & rescue in Alaska has been founded on.

Jerry L. Kiffer, Commander
Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad

3/26/2008

Mike Pawlowski

From: Heidi Clifford [heidicifford@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 1:13 AM
To: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: HB 320

Your SAFE today in your seats- Please stay safe when you're out in the elements of Alaska- BUT if you need us we'll be there

re: HB320

I am writing as the patrol director for the Anchorage Nordic Ski Patrol. We are a group of 50 volunteer search and rescue, ski safety, community support, race support and back country support for the Anchorage community. We all spend a good \$800-\$1200.00 of our own money to fill our packs with the mandatory patrol equipment- avalanche probe, beacon, shovel, GPS, handheld radio etc..... We spend endless hours for training, medical, incident command, orientation, team work, avalanche, CPR, radio work and more every year. We meet 4 hours per month for 7 months for hands on training, and then we spend weekends training and patrolling the Turnagain Pass, Chugach mountains and Anchorage Ski trails. At the end of the day we are still ready for an incident 24/7 and dispatched by the Alaska State troopers.

Last week mid-march 2008 - 12:05am I got a phone call from a friend saying his girlfriend had not returned from her winter hike up Wolverine peak in Anchorage. Click-went the phone and the ringing began- by 1:00am 10 Nordic Ski Patrollers, A Trooper, Helo one, and a search dog team were there at the Prospect parking lot and ready. by 1:20am (3) patrollers on skis, with headlamps, safety packs and medical equipment were dispatched up the trail, Helo flew in for air search and the others rallied in the parking lot to set forth more plans. By 2:00am we had an APD officer on scene, (2) state parks guys with snow machines, and (2) more team members from AMRG.

Logistics, organization and plans were in process in the event that we would be needing a full ground search beginning early the next morning- If this were needed there would be another 50+ people on scene, more resources, more hours, more people putting themselves at risk to locate this missing hiker. However at 2:55 am the Nordic patrollers communicated to base to indicate that they heard a women yelling back to them in the dark and at that moment we knew she was alive. By 3:15am she was air lifted by Helo off the mountain to safety. she was cold, lost, and out of food & water. She had become disoriented many hours earlier due to the dark, battery loss in her headlamp and a snow storm. She had paced back and forth the stay warm but she was running out of

3/26/2008

steam. Now back in the parking lot her adrenaline was pumping and her 4:00am appreciation to this selfless group of volunteers and state employees was abundant. By the time she was taken home she could barely walk as her legs had carried her by sheer determination until that time of the morning. She indicated she was not sure how much longer she could have continued. She knows that she could have not made it- we know that many times people don't- she was lucky and we were psyched that she was lucky due to our time, efforts, training and willingness to crawl out of bed at midnight during the work week to come together as a team to help.

I returned to my home and wrote a summary and emailed it to the rest of the Nordic Patrol team and went to bed at 5:30 am- I woke up and was out the door for my 9:30am patient at the clinic. Was it a sacrifice NO it was a pleasure to be there to save someones life and know that we are supporting our Alaskan residents / recreationalists in a time that they are in danger.

Alaska is massive and there are not enough state and federal workers to keep us safe- Please accept my plea for recognition and support to our hard working "employees" (freebies) of the search and rescue community. Please support HB 320.

Sincerely,

Heidi E. Clifford
Nordic Ski Patrol (director - volunteer)
Heidi C. Alaska

907-350-3840

Mike Pawlowski

From: CM Springer [cmsinak@acsalaska.net]

Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 9:09 AM

To: Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Con Bunde; Sen. Lyman Hoffinan; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bettye Davis

Subject: HB 320

Senators: It has been my honor to work with many of the men and women who make up the trained volunteer search and rescue (SAR) teams across the state. They have given thousands of hours to the state in both training and actual response time resulting in the saving of countless lives over the years. They continue to be an invaluable resource for law enforcement and act as a force multiplier across the state. They have provided millions of dollars of volunteer service to our communities.

During my tenure I recognized a glaring oversight in regards to protection of this important asset. When they were training or during call out they had little financial protection and their livelihoods and families were at risk.

Trained volunteer SAR personnel were omitted from state statutes covering workers comp protection. Volunteer firefighters, volunteer EMT's and volunteer disaster workers were covered but not trained volunteer search and rescue personnel.

HB320, while modest in its coverage, would provide a minimum amount of protection to the majority of our trained SAR volunteers across the state.

I urge you to move this piece of legislation forward and provide some basic protection to these trained SAR volunteers and their families that are there when we need them to save our lives or that of our loved ones. They do so much for so little; Lets provide them and their families with some basic protection in the event they are hurt or killed.

Thank you

Chuck Springer

907-230-5306

past director Anchorage Police Department Auxiliary Search Team (APDST) &
past president of the Alaska Search and Rescue Association (ASARA)

This transmittal may contain confidential information intended solely for the addressee. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this transmittal in error; any review, dissemination, distribution or copying of this transmittal is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by reply. In addition, please immediately delete this message and all attachments. Thank you.

3/26/2008

Mike Pawlowski

From: lowboil@acsalaska.net
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 9:59 PM
To: Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Con Bunde
Cc: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: support HB 320

Dear Senators Ellis, Stevens, Davis, Hoffman, and Bunde,

As the current president of Wilderness Search and Rescue (WSAR) in Fairbanks, I am writing to urge you to support HB 320, which is scheduled for a hearing in your committee on Tuesday March 25. As a relative newcomer to search and rescue, I am impressed with the knowledge, skills, and generosity of the SAR volunteer community. Many of my colleagues in WSAR have decades of SAR experience. WSAR, and similar volunteer groups spread across the state, provide professional skilled services at no cost to the state, assisting the Alaska State Troopers in searches for missing persons.

I asked some of my colleagues in WSAR who have many more years of experience than I, and no one had any memory of any serious injury to a WSAR volunteer on a search.

I think that speaks of the training and professionalism of the searchers. Search and rescue IS inherently dangerous, and although searcher injuries are not common, insurance coverage through state worker's compensation would provide some security for SAR volunteers and their families. When you consider the value of the skilled worker-hours donated by SAR volunteers, doesn't it seem fair to offer worker's compensation coverage to those SAR workers?

The thing that makes trained SAR volunteers so valuable to the Troopers on a search is the skills we've developed through our training. Training is an essential part of what we do. I urge you to preserve language in the bill that allows coverage to be extended to SAR training when approved by the Troopers. Please don't let this add an unnecessary and expensive layer of bureaucracy to the plan! We don't need a new position created to oversee and approve SAR training at the statewide level.

The decision to approve training for the purposes of worker's comp coverage should be made at the local detachment level, by troopers who work with the local volunteers, know us, and are familiar with local training needs. Our local State Troopers are our bosses: they deploy us when they decide we are needed; they serve as Incident Commanders for searches; they decide who participates in searches. They are the ones most qualified to evaluate our planned training exercises.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will not be able to attend the hearing on Tuesday, but I wanted to let you know that the SAR volunteer community in the Interior strongly supports HB 320, and we hope you will make it law.

Sincerely,
D. Sarah Garland
President, Wilderness Search and Rescue

Mike Pawlowski

From: RS Bullman [fnrsb@uaf.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 11:15 AM
To: Mike Pawlowski; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bettve Davis; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Con Bunde
Subject: HB 320- Help Search and Rescue Volunteer Groups!

Dear Senate Labor and Commerce Committee,

I did not have a chance to call in to comment last Thursday but I wanted to take the moment now before your next hearing Tuesday afternoon.

I have been a dog handler and search and rescue volunteer for 17 years. Under the auspices of the Alaska State Troopers I have participated in over 100 searches traveling over many miles across the state with my two dogs Barley and Nike. I believe in the mission of search and rescue - I believe in volunteers - and I thank you for taking the time to consider HB 320. HB 320 will give a bit of extra protection to my family every time the Troopers call me and my dog to help locate lost and missing persons across Alaska.

As you well know, I am not alone in this mission. There are hundreds of dedicated search and rescue volunteers from every region of Alaska. Although safety practices and precautions are followed rigorously, these volunteers are put at additional risk of injury and harm by the nature of the activity, search and rescue.

HB 320 is a priority for us and I would like to address a few points I hear are being discussed in your committee.

First, the language that allows the Alaska State Troopers to extend coverage to search and rescue training is important. When the Troopers call its volunteer groups, the expectation is for highly trained, professional volunteers to respond in a specific capacity whether that be mountain rescue, search dogs, ground searchers, etc. That cannot happen without organized, scheduled, purposeful training.

The current language allows coverage to be extended to trainings at AST discretion. Once the bill passes (I am crossing my fingers) we will be able to work with the Troopers in creating criteria and a process to deem certain, specific, trainings to be covered.

Second, I understand AST has added a fiscal note to HB 320. Although this bill has been written in the spirit of volunteers, this may be an opportunity. Please do not allow the fiscal note to halt the passing of this bill.

Lastly, I have heard an argument that there may be those who take advantage of workers comp. Like any business, the state of Alaska worker's compensation department has methods to verify the validity of any claim. All aspects of search and rescue are at the discretion of the Troopers. They decide who participates in search operations, they will decide which trainings to cover with this bill.

On behalf of search and rescue volunteers, I appreciate your support. It's in the spirit of Alaska that brings us all together.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Bullman
PAWS Search and Rescue Dogs
Fairbanks, Alaska
fnrsb@uaf.edu

Mike Pawlowski

From: kimtrust@acsalaska.net
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2008 3:06 PM
To: kimtrust@acsalaska.net
Cc: Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Con Bunde; Mike Pawlowski
Subject: HB320: Trouble with Attachment

Dear Senate Labor and Conference Committee:

I apologize for my inability to attach the letter to this email. I've put the text in the body of this document.

I am writing to ask your support in passing HB320.

I have been a search and rescue dog handler for 9 years. As a volunteer working for the Alaska State Troopers I have participated in dozens of searches; traveling thousands of miles across the state with my dog Foster.

As part of the organized, volunteer search and rescue community in Alaska, we ask no compensation for the thousands of hours we spend training our dogs and ourselves to respond to those who need our help. Although safety practices and precautions are followed rigorously, we are put at additional risk of harm by the nature of search and rescue activities. HB320 will provide security for us and our families; knowing we will be covered should we become injured while providing a community service for our fellow Alaskans.

Several concerns have been raised by the Committee regarding this bill. I would like to address a few of the issues. First, it is important that volunteers be covered while participating in organized search and rescue training. The Troopers expect highly trained personnel when they call on their volunteer organizations. In order to provide responsible, qualified searchers we must participate in training that simulates the activities we conduct on actual missions. The current language allows coverage to be extended to trainings at the Troopers discretion. In cooperation with the search and rescue organizations, this can surely be accomplished to everyone's satisfaction.

Additionally, I have heard an argument that it may be possible for some to take advantage of workers compensation. Implementation of worker's compensation coverage for search and rescue volunteers will occur like it does for any other department or agency. The State of Alaska has methods to verify the validity of any claim, and the addition of search and rescue volunteers would not change that process.

I appreciate your consideration of HB320, and urge you to support and protect the search and rescue volunteers across Alaska.

Sincerely,

(electronically signed)

Kimberly A. Trust
Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs

Mike Pawlowski

From: Mike Pawlowski
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2008 11:43 AM
To: Mike Pawlowski
Subject: FW: Members of Senate Labor and Commerce

Dear Senate Labor and Commerce Committee,

I did not have a chance to call in to comment last Thursday but I wanted to take the moment now before your next hearing Tuesday afternoon.

I have been a dog handler and search and rescue volunteer for 15 years. Under the auspices of the Alaska State Troopers I have participated in over 250 searches traveling over 15,000 miles across the state with my two dogs Bean and Snap. I believe in the mission of search and rescue – I believe in volunteers – and I thank you for taking the time to consider HB 320. HB 320 will give a bit of extra protection to my wife and four children every time the Troopers call me and my pups to help locate lost and missing persons across Alaska.

As you well know, I am not alone in this mission. There are hundreds of dedicated search and rescue volunteers from every region of Alaska. Although safety practices and precautions are followed rigorously, these volunteers are put at additional risk of injury and harm by the nature of the activity, search and rescue.

HB 320 is a priority for us and I would like to address a few points I hear are being discussed in your committee.

First, the language that allows the Alaska State Troopers to extend coverage to search and rescue training is important. When the Troopers call its volunteer groups, the expectation is for highly trained, professional volunteers to respond in a specific capacity whether that be mountain rescue, search dogs, ground searchers, etc. That cannot happen without organized, scheduled, purposeful training.

The current language allows coverage to be extended to trainings at AST discretion. Once the bill passes (I am crossing my fingers) we will be able to work with the Troopers in creating criteria and a process to deem certain, specific, trainings to be covered.

Second, I understand AST has added a fiscal note to HB 320. Although this bill has been written in the spirit of volunteers, this may be an opportunity. Please do not allow the fiscal note to halt the passing of this bill.

Lastly, I have heard an argument that there may be those who take advantage of workers comp. Like any business, the state of Alaska worker's compensation department has methods to verify the validity of any claim. All aspects of search and rescue are at the discretion of the Troopers. They decide who participates in search operations, they will decide which trainings to cover with this bill.

On behalf of search and rescue volunteers, I appreciate your support. It's in the spirit of Alaska that brings us all together.

3/26/2008

Respectfully,

Corey Aist, President
Alaska Search and Rescue Association

On Mar 23, 2008, at 11:49 AM, Mike Pawlowski wrote:

Senate Labor and Commerce Committee are:

Senator Johnny Ellis (Chair) senator_johnny_ellis@legis.state.ak.us
Senator Gary Stevens (Kodiak) senator_gary_stevens@legis.state.ak.us
Senator Bettye Davis (Anchorage) senator_bettye_davis@legis.state.ak.us
Senator Lyman Hoffman (Bethel) senator_lyman_hoffman@legis.state.ak.us
Senator Con Bunde (Anchorage) senator_con_bunde@legis.state.ak.us

Thanks again,

Mike