

Black Diamond SAR Council

PO Box 22, Marion, VA 24354 • www.bdsarco.org

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The Coordinator's Desk

Bryan Saunders



The other day I was doing the one thing that I like more than Search and Rescue, and was doing it horribly. We all have bad days at work, at home, etc – but there's never supposed to be a bad day on the golf course. Well, never say never!

Golf is a game that is learned through practice. Much like Search and Rescue, very few "get it" from day one. I have not been playing golf as long as I've been doing SAR, but if I were doing as poorly in SAR, as I sometimes do in golf, then I probably would have quit one or both years ago. Luckily, as I look for golf balls, I can use a little bit of clue awareness to help me find those wayward shots. Maybe I should be logging the hours playing golf as clue awareness training!

Back to the bad day... So there are certain fundamentals in golf that every person must learn. Head down, bring your weight through, finish your swing, and without those, you're not going to be very successful. As you can tell from the beginning of this article, I wasn't doing some of those things.

After another poor shot, one of my usual golfing friends looks at me and says "It's not my place to say anything, but you're not even doing what you know. It's as if you've forgotten the fundamentals. Go back to the fundamentals and quit trying to ace every shot."

Go back to fundamentals? Hmmm, that's an interesting concept. Golf is mostly muscle memory. Typically the more you play, the easier the swing gets. However; if your mind is elsewhere, and you forget the fundamentals, then you're going nowhere fast.

Well, my mind didn't join that game at all that day. After that profound statement, my mind immediately went to SAR. Go back to fundamentals.... Go back to fundamentals.... Such a simple statement! Easier said than done that day. But is it that difficult for SAR?

BDSAR provides a monthly training for every member. We try to build fundamentals at each of those. If we continue to practice those fundamentals, they become muscle memory. When you don't come to trainings, you're not building any fundamentals. So, I ask you, when your back is against the wall because you look at a compass and don't know what to do,

you're first on scene or you've been handed a rope to tie an anchor or belay, and you can't remember what to do, you haven't built the fundamental skills needed.

It amazes me of the folks that are not worried about their skill set when they miss trainings. Are they building the fundamental SAR skills? Do they think they know it already? Do they think they don't need the practice? None of us know it all, and we all need the practice.

At least when I forget the fundamentals on the golf course, someone's life is not in my hands. Unless I throw I club!! But with SAR, every time we respond, we need the fundamentals just to respond. I wish I had the answer to get folks to come to trainings, and I know a lot of other Coordinators across the Commonwealth wish they had the answers as well. If you don't want to practice for your sake, practice for the sake of the victim, and the continued professionalism that is BDSAR.

Bits & Pieces

...NOT COMING TO THE AUGUST TRAINING, COOKOUT AND GEAR AUCTION? If the gear auction continues to do well, then we may supplement the dues income with the money from the gear auction. This could possibly erase the dues altogether! Come and be part of a great function!

...HUNGRY MOTHER GSAR REGISTRATION IS OPEN! Use VDEM's Learning Management System to register for classes now to reserve your spot!

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2013 Third Quarter Training

Aug 9-11	Backbone Rock (Annual Meeting, Cookout, and Gear Auction)
Sept 13-15	GHSP

From the Training Officer*Mike Maggard*Current scheduled training: BDSAR - Team Wide Training

Aug 9-11	Backbone Rock
Sept 13-15	Grayson Highlands State Park, Camping will be in the large, group, camping area. Also with a night exercise
Sept 27-29	SAR Simulation Blue Ridge Mountain Council reservation, Hiawassie, VA
Oct 18-20	GSAR - Hungry Mother State Park
Nov 1-3	GSAR - Hungry Mother State Park

VDEM SPONSORED TRAINING

Sign up for all VDEM classes on the LMS

GSAR	Hungry Mother State Park
October 18 - 20	<u>First Weekend</u> Field Team Member (FTM), Field Team Leader (FTL), Field Team Signcutter (FTS), and Management Team Member (MTM) Classes Lodging and meals provided.
November 1 - 3	<u>Second Weekend</u> Field Team Member (FTM), Field Team Leader (FTL), Field Team Signcutter (FTS), and Management Team Member (MTM) Classes Lodging and meals provided.

For all GSAR classes Register online at the VDEM Learning Management System (LMS)

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aloutfitter@gmail.com
www.aloutfitter.com

Things I Learned From This Search*Nina Cipriani*

(We had the urban in Chilhowie the night before the Robbie Wood search)

1) I learned that this is why we spend so much time and effort in Search and Rescue, we do it to respond, to be able to gather skills to utilize in bringing home that lost person or to bring closure to a family. With out a clear and obvious intent to respond there would be no reason to do these things we do.

2) We must learn to adapt and work with others. On a search where there are so many responding agencies we need to be able to change as needed to fit with others ideas of "how to do things". Nothing will delay a search, debrief or tasking longer than whining and complaining.

3) Be ready. Stay rested. I know it sounds odd...but enough call outs really makes you realize that being THAT tired before bed is not the best idea. To be ready at "any time" for that call out...stay rested and ready.

4) Have your gear prepared to go out the door. I know it is difficult if you have been going on a lot of call outs. One of the most difficult times for us for organization is JUST after we come back home. This happened with this search. I had moved all my gear to the truck to respond Tuesday night for an urban (yep, changed up the gear for urban) and what happens...a NEW callout and a need to prepare in a totally different way.

5) My gear plan from this search (yeah each search brings one to light) included something that we found a new use for. As K9 handlers we keep tarps in our vehicle to provide shade for the dogs. This really helped Tuesday night when we had to sleep in the Excursion with HUGE stadium lights all around. Just popped the tarp over the windows and we had darkness. And we never know where we may end up sleeping on a search!

6) This also brought to light my blessing (and Don's) for working for a company that supports SAR. So my recommendation is that you discuss your involvement with your employer. IF they are supportive, that is half the battle. Save money...put back some funds for lost wages, gas and any type of incidentals you may incur by responding. It costs us to respond. But, if we are committed to being searchers, we need to plan for those call outs. Save personal days for times you just need to rest after responding, or if you have to use one to actually respond. Have a plan for who to contact to care for pets at home or any other aspects of your life, that need over seeing if you have to leave in the middle of the night.

No one said SAR was easy or that it didn't take some personal sacrifice but by planning for that call, you can really eliminate alot of the stress and difficulty associated with responding to it.

:-) **Nina**

OVERVIEW of TRACKING STANDARDS SUBMISSION to VASARCO FOR APPROVAL

The tracking standards committee was formed by the VASARCO in January 2011 to develop a standard for credentialing trackers as a SAR resource in the Commonwealth of Virginia. After extensive work and collaboration with VDEM, the committee has prepared (and is pleased to submit for approval) one training standard and three certification standards.

The training standard is for Foundations for Awareness, Signcutting & Tracking (F.A.S.T.) (i.e. that which is currently called the Field Team Signcutter (FTS) standard and course). Due to the proven historical success of the FTS program, this course will remain relatively the same with minor adjustments.

The committee has identified a set of critical Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) that a Tracker needs to be able to demonstrate at a search for a missing person. The committee has also developed a written test and a set of objective field evaluation stations to assess a tracking candidate's KSAs.

The largest addition to the tracking program for VASARCO and VDEM (as well as the AHJ and missing person) is the reformulation of certifying a tracking resource from one level (currently the FTS certification) to three (3) levels. These three levels will be

- (highest level) Level 1 – Tracking Specialist
- (middle tier) Level 2 – Tracking Technician
- (lower tier) Level 3 – Operational Tracker

This table is an oversimplification of the minimum achievements necessary for a tracking resource to be certified. There are additional requirements for certification and re-certification, which are explained in further detail in the standards.

Level	Title	Minimum Written Test Score	VDEM Core Certification minimum prerequisites	Minimum Field Evaluation Scores (in a 5 point scoring system)
3	Operational Tracker	80	STM	3.0
2	Tracking Technician	90	STL, MTM	4.0, some at night
1	Tracking Specialist	95	STL, MTL	4.5, some at night

Thank you for your interest in Virginia's tracking certification program. If you have any questions feel free to direct them to any committee member.

Sincerely,

Rob Speiden
 VASARCO Tracking Standards Committee Chairperson



Contributions are appreciated and hereby recognized from the following committee members (in no particular order): Theresa Crossland (SARTI, TSAR, PSAR), Kevin Brewer (TSAR, SARTI, JHPTS), Mark Gleason (APTG, JHPTS), Sharon Jefferies (SARTI, TSAR), Al Cire (CSAR, SARTI, DCR), Ashley Lewis (SARTI, SWVaMRG, BDSAR), Ted Andrus (SARTI), Ken Steen (SARTI, TSAR), Mike Hull (Law Enforcement Officer)

New Comms Standards

The below was submitted to the Virginia SAR Council at the July meeting as the new comms standard. The blank spaces will be filled with Grayson Highlands repeater and other Park frequencies. The weather frequency will be placed at the end. I have built the configuration for those that have Wouxun radios and the programming software.

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 Department of Emergency Management
Search and Rescue Program

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 sartraining@vdem.virginia.gov

Communications Plan

DRAFT Document

Channel #	Name	Title	Tx Frequency	Tone	Rx Frequency	Tone	License
1	NATSAR	National SAR	155.1600	91.5	155.1600	CSQ	VDEM
2	VMED	Statewide Mutual Aid (EMS)	155.2050	91.5	155.2050	CSQ	VDEM
3	VDEM Tac	VDEM Tactical	155.8950	91.5	155.8950	CSQ	VDEM
4	VFIRE21	Statewide Mutual Aid (Fire)	154.2800	91.5	154.2800	CSQ	VDEM
5	VFIRE22	Statewide Mutual Aid (Fire)	154.2650	91.5	154.2650	CSQ	VDEM
6	VFIRE23	Statewide Mutual Aid (Fire)	154.2950	91.5	154.2950	CSQ	VDEM
7	VMED28	HEAR 1	155.3400	91.5	155.3400	CSQ	VDEM
8							
9							
10	VCAL10	VCALL 10 Direct	155.7525	156.7	155.7525	CSQ	Interop
11	VTAC11	VTAC 11/36 Direct	151.1375	156.7	151.1375	CSQ	Interop
12	VTAC12	VTAC 12/37 Direct	154.4525	156.7	154.4525	CSQ	Interop
13	VTAC13	VTAC 13/34 Direct	158.7375	156.7	158.7375	CSQ	Interop
14	VTAC14	VTAC 14/35 Direct	159.4725	156.7	159.4725	CSQ	Interop
15	VT36RPT	VTAC 36 Repeater	159.4725	136.5	151.1375	CSQ	Interop
16							

Denotes Repeater Frequency

Group Optional Channels

17	UCAL40D	UCALL	453.2125	156.7	453.2125	CSQ	Interop
18	U40RPT	UCALL Repeater	458.2125	156.7	453.2125	CSQ	Interop
19	UTAC41D	UTAC 41 Direct	453.4625	156.7	453.4625	CSQ	Interop
20	U41RPT	UTAC 41 Repeater	458.4625	156.7	453.4625	CSQ	Interop
21	UTAC42D	UTAC 42 Direct	453.7125	156.7	453.7125	CSQ	Interop
22	U42RPT	UTAC 42 Repeater	458.7125	156.7	453.7125	CSQ	Interop
23	UTAC43D	UTAC 43 Direct	453.8625	156.7	453.8625	CSQ	Interop
24	U43RPT	UTAC 43 Repeater	458.8625	156.7	453.8625	CSQ	Interop

- This communications plan is compliant with the Commonwealth of Virginia Tactical Interoperability Communications Plan (TICP).
- This will provide a standard template for the first 16 channels of any VHF radio.
- Ch 11 and 15 would be Direct / Repeater pair.
- Repeaters would be programmed the opposite of the shown channels.
- The blue channels are optional in the line-up and allow agencies to utilize 16 channel radios with their own frequencies or others they need to utilize. EXAMPLE: BDSAR has an agreement with Grayson Highlands State Park to utilize their Repeater system while operating at the park. This would be programmed in on one of these channels.
- NWS/NOAA weather radio can be programmed on one of the blue channels.
- The UHF Frequencies listed are for those that now have dual band capability. Many localities that utilize the UHF spectrum have these programmed and can potentially provide interoperability with them during responses.
- VDEM is encouraging localities to utilize the Interoperability Channels (VTACs) when requesting outside agencies to facilitate communications.
- VTAC36 repeater channel is the frequency that the VDEM Technical Services Unit repeater has set up as a repeater channel. Any of the Comms Cache's throughout the state can also readily provide repeaters on this frequency. This would be the channel that would be advantageous for CAP to be able to utilize in the high bird and would not require a human relay.

LOST IN THE UNKNOWN



SAREX 2013 AUGUST 16, 17, 18, 2013

Location:
Shenandoah National Park (SNP)
Pinnacles Camp Ground, Mile 36.7
On the Skyline Drive

Catering after the event \$ 15.00 per person



Hosted by:
Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group in conjunction with the SNP.

POC: Trisha FitzGerald
703-966-4198 or operations@smrg.org

Exercise Objectives:

- Provide SAR members an opportunity to practice their SAR skills in a realistic simulation of a SAR mission.
- Conduct operations with other agencies, SAR groups, and non-ground SAR resource types (e.g., dog teams) to foster improved interoperability at future SAR missions.



ALL SAR GROUPS WELCOME

This exercise will be a simulation search for a missing person in wilderness. We will have ground and K 9 tasks.

There will be tent camping on site with restroom and potable water.

Please RSVP. Provide team name, team contact and how many from your team will be attending with food choice (vegetarian or meat).

Exercise will run until it is complete



VASARCO Member

Holds an MOU with VDEM

A member-group of the ASRC



Lost in the Mist

Search and Rescue Simulation

September 27-29
Info: DMurray@BDSARCO.org

Camp Powhatan
Hiawassie,VA

Commonwealth Search and Rescue | Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council

In conjunction with

Botetourt County Fire-EMS & Blue Ridge Mountains Council

CSAR and BDSAR will be hosting a SAR simulation at Camp Powhatan in Pulaski County, Virginia. This exercise will be a simulation of a search for missing person in the wilderness. We will have tasks available for ground crews, K-9 crews, and management staff. Boy Scout troops are welcome to come and participate to fulfill the requirement for a simulation in the SAR merit badge.

The event will begin at 1800 Friday, September 27, for night operations. Saturday morning, the search will resume at 0800 and run till around 1800. We will have camping available Friday and Saturday nights, along with a dinner for purchase at the end of the simulation on Saturday.

Any questions or to sign up, please email DMurray@BDSARCO.org or call 540-765-8447.



SAVE THE DATE!! April 9 - 13, 2014

Virginia SAR Council 2014 SAR Conference

The Virginia Search and Rescue Council

*is excited to announce the dates for the
2014 Virginia SAR Council SAR Conference.*

**To be held at the Appomattox 4H Center
in Appomattox, Virginia**

Plan for a full 4 days of SAR Training and Breakout sessions.
Some sessions in the past have included:

- 2 day Land Navigation
- Wilderness First Aid certification
- 2 day Air Scent K9 Track
- 2 day HRD K9 Track
- 2 day Trailing K9 Track
- Land Navigation competition
- SAR Planning with NTAP Data
- Searching for Human Remains & Clandestine Graves
- SAR Mission Tabletop
- Responding to the Disaster
- Leadership within your Agency
- Meth Lab Awareness
- Equine Search
- Exciting Clothing and Gear Vendors!

Bring your children and leave them with our wonderful instructors to participate in SAR related events in our **Kids Track** on **Saturday / Sunday!**

Be sure to follow the Virginia Search and Rescue Community Facebook page for updates or contact **Bryan Saunders** at bsaunders@bdsarco.org for info.

