

THE GOVERNOR'S SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK FORCE



REPORT TO GOVERNOR TED KULONGOSKI

March 31, 2007

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**Search & Rescue Task Force
Members**

The Honorable Ted Kulongoski
Governor, State of Oregon
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Re: Governor's Search and Rescue Task Force Report

Dear Governor Kulongoski:

On behalf of the members of your Search and Rescue Task Force, I am honored to provide you with the following report pursuant to Executive Order No. 07-01.

This report contains recommendations that the members of the Task Force believe will help advance search and rescue efforts throughout Oregon, ensure proper communication and coordination between federal, state and local authorities, and ultimately save lives.

Over the last two months, the Task Force dedicated many hours researching and discussing the issues outlined in this report. As this report reflects, the contributions of the individual task force members were exemplary. The members consistently demonstrated a wide breadth of knowledge in their areas of experience, and they all showed upstanding professionalism and commitment to the mission of the Task Force.

Opinions about issues evolved, and changed, in the course of our often lively discussions. While the members did not reach resolution on every subject, our recommendations are the result of a thoughtfully built consensus. The Task Force also identified areas where further research and expertise is needed.

The members of the Task Force look forward to assisting you in the implementation of these recommendations, through the legislative process or otherwise, as we continue to strengthen search and rescue efforts in Oregon.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to serve you and the people of Oregon on this important matter.

Very truly yours,

Joseph O'Leary, Chair
Governor's Search & Rescue Task Force

Joseph O'Leary, Chair
Governor's Office

Senator Betsy Johnson
D-Scappoose

Representative Ron Maurer
R-Grants Pass

Ken Murphy
Office of Emergency Management

Georges Kleinbaum
Office of Emergency Management

Lindsay Ball
Department of Administrative Services

Captain Travis Hampton
Oregon State Police

Colonel Bruce Prunk
Oregon Air National Guard

Sheriff Tim Evinger
Klamath County

Detective Michael Weinstein
Portland Police Bureau

Major David Rudawitz
Oregon Wing Civil Air Patrol

Debbie Henderson-Norton
U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Jeff Jaqua
U.S. Forest Service

Dave Prouty
Pacific Northwest Search and Rescue

Kevin Keillor
Edge Wireless

Ian Yurdin
Member of General Public

Ex-Officio Members
Senator Joanne Verger
D-Coos Bay

Representative Debbie Boone
D-Cannon Beach

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	2
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.....	2
TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP.....	3
WORK OF THE TASK FORCE.....	3
ISSUES IDENTIFIED.....	4
TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS.....	9
CONCLUSION.....	13
APPENDIX A.....	14
APPENDIX B.....	15

INTRODUCTION

Governor Ted Kulongoski created the Search and Rescue Task Force by Executive Order 07-01 on January 19, 2007, in order to facilitate a close examination of Oregon's search and rescue system and infrastructure in the wake of several high-profile search incidents in the State. The Governor charged the Task Force with reviewing Oregon statutes, administrative rules and related policies, and search and rescue best practices. The Governor asked the Task Force to determine whether any changes are necessary in order to ensure coordination and communications between federal, state and local authorities and effective pooling of resources in search and rescue operations.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

As more fully detailed in the balance of this report, the Task Force makes the following recommendations to the Governor:

- 1) Amend 401.560 to Address Multi-Jurisdiction Searches**
- 2) Amend 401.573 to Require Compliance with the National Incident Management System**
- 3) Enhance Funding for the Oregon Office of Emergency Management**
- 4) Enhance Funding for Search and Rescue and Incident Command Training**
- 5) Enhance Training on Application of Telecommunications Technology to Search and Rescue**
- 6) Encourage Formation of Regional Search and Rescue Councils**
- 7) Create a State Search and Rescue Policy Commission**
- 8) Create a Workgroup to Research and Plan for Volunteer Insurance Coverage**
- 9) Provide for Leaves of Absence for Search and Rescue Volunteers**
- 10) Require More Search and Rescue Critiques**
- 11) Revive Aviation Search and Rescue Account**
- 12) Create Authority for Missing Persons Subpoena**

13) Require Proof of Pilot Insurance for Volunteer Pilots

14) Enhance Public Education and Outreach

15) Update Outdated Sections of Chapter 401

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

The Governor appointed the following persons to the Task Force:

Joseph O’Leary, Chair, Governor’s Senior Policy Advisor for Public Safety

Senator Betsy Johnson (D-Scappoose)

Representative Ron Maurer (R-Grants Pass)

Ken Murphy, Oregon Office of Emergency Management Director

Georges Kleinbaum, Oregon Office of Emergency Management Search and Rescue Coordinator

Lindsay Ball, Oregon Department of Administrative Services Director

Captain Travis Hampton, Oregon State Police

Colonel Bruce Prunk, Oregon Air National Guard

Sheriff Tim Evinger, Klamath County

Detective Michael Weinstein, Portland Police Bureau

Major David Rudawitz, Emergency Services Director for the Oregon Wing Civil Air Patrol

Debbie Henderson-Norton, U.S. Bureau of Land Management Branch Chief

Jeff Jaqua, U.S. Forest Service District Search and Rescue Coordinator

Dave Prouty, President of Pacific Northwest Search and Rescue

Kevin Keillor, Corporate Counsel of Edge Wireless

Ian Yurdin, Member of the General Public

Ex-officio members:

Senator Joanne Verger (D-Coos Bay)

Representative Debbie Boone (D-Cannon Beach)

WORK OF THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force met over two months to review laws and policies, hear presentations on various topics and discuss various ideas. At the first meeting, the group brainstormed a list of topics, which served as the basis of the Task Force’s work plan.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) provided each Task Force member with a notebook of background materials and presented an overview of the current search and rescue (SAR) system and relevant state and federal laws and regulations. A trained Incident Commander with the Bureau of Land Management and the director of OEM explained the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and its implementation process in Oregon. Representatives from Edge Wireless presented to the Task Force on

cellular phone technology and its usefulness in search and rescue. A representative of the Department of Justice presented on insurance coverage, liability and related legal issues for search and rescue volunteers. The Task Force also heard a presentation on Washington and California's insurance coverage for volunteers. The Governor's Office discussed the Oregon Wireless Interoperable Network and the transfer of OEM into the Military Department.

Several members of the Task Force presented recommendations from outside stakeholders, including the Mt. Hood Search and Rescue Council and the Oregon State Sheriff's SAR Advisory Council, and discussed the concept of a regional approach to search and rescue and its success on Mt. Hood. The Military Department presented on military assets and the Task Force discussed the use of civilian aircraft in SAR. The Task Force was provided with an informational session and demonstration of various electronic locator devices by the Civil Air Patrol and a device vendor.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Certain fundamental structural principles of SAR have evolved in Oregon over the years. Those principles are the foundation from which the Task Force built its recommendations. Certain principles contribute to the strength and ultimate relative success of Oregon SAR that the Task Force seeks to highlight, enhance and encourage. Other principles seem to be at the root of SAR shortcomings. This report will discuss the underlying principles and conclusions and then make recommendations as to how to strengthen and enhance the weakest links in Oregon SAR. Throughout its work, the Task Force found the following policy themes to be of paramount importance to SAR: command and control, communications, training, and resources.

Volunteers

SAR in Oregon relies almost exclusively on the good will and generosity of volunteers. SAR volunteers give generously of their time and personal resources. Volunteers provide the majority of their equipment, supplies, transportation and organization at their own expense. They put their personal safety and well-being at risk in order to save the lives of others. These volunteers and potential volunteers require increased and continued training and organization in order to maintain their skills, readiness and ability to be utilized to their full potential in SAR efforts. Volunteers are typically otherwise employed, and they must take leave at their own expense and at the risk of harming their employment status or personal business in order to participate in SAR efforts and necessary training.

County Sheriff Responsibility

SAR is the statutory responsibility of the county sheriffs pursuant to ORS 401.560. The Task Force believes that this is the best policy and practices in Oregon. The sheriffs are best positioned to know their jurisdictions, the terrain and their constituents. They are ideally situated to establish and maintain the critically important relationships at the local level and to coordinate local resources. Each

county provides its own resources, personnel and volunteers, and each county provides different support, coverage and funding depending on the resources available to them.

Personal Responsibility

Oregon citizens and persons visiting the state have a duty to exercise personal responsibility and assume the inherent risks of wilderness travel and mountain climbing. This concept is codified in statute at ORS 401.650(1). Personal responsibility is critical to preventing tragedy and plays a role in preventing the need for SAR efforts. However, increased personal responsibility cannot eliminate the need to dedicate resources, train personnel, and coordinate and maintain lines of communication to ensure readiness when a SAR effort is required.

Resource Challenges at State and County Levels

The county-based SAR construct is increasingly challenging, as sheriffs' budgets shrink and the counties prepare for expected loss of county payments under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. Last year, this federal program provided \$500 million to rural counties that are dominated by federally owned forest lands, where logging revenues traditionally shared with local governments have diminished. This crisis will disproportionately affect many rural Oregon counties. Some counties could ultimately lose three-quarters of their revenue. The threatened loss of county payments and the resulting financial strain on Oregon counties will likely have a detrimental effect on counties' ability to address critical SAR needs such as training, equipment and personnel. The situation is compounded by the fact that the Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is not adequately funded to perform its current statutory duties and is not in a position to fill in the gaps that will be created by large county budget shortfalls.

SAR Coordinators

Each county is required to have a SAR plan pursuant to ORS 401.573, and each has a SAR coordinator. Most often the SAR coordinator is a deputy sheriff or the elected sheriff. The county SAR coordinators meet quarterly as the SAR Advisory Council to the Oregon State Sheriff's Association. The State is also required by ORS 401.550 to have a State SAR Coordinator.

Office of Emergency Management

The Oregon Office of Emergency Management is currently understaffed and underfunded. OEM provides logistical support to search and rescue efforts statewide, obtaining state and military assets and assisting in other collaborative efforts. OEM does not have the resources or personnel to directly assist in search efforts.

Multi-Jurisdictional Searches

The lack of specific statutory guidance and practical implementation of command and control inhibits the efficient utilization of resources of large multi-jurisdictional search efforts. Many SAR efforts span more than one county or local jurisdiction, either because the missing party's location has not been narrowed to a specific

county, or because the circumstances of the incident draw from more than one local jurisdiction, i.e., city police, county sheriff, local fire district, Oregon State Police, etc.

Mutual Aid

Pre-need mutual aid agreements are a best practice. Oregon county sheriffs operate under the principle of mutual aid. Sheriffs aid one another upon request and with the understanding that the assistance will be mutual. Not all counties have memoranda of understanding allowing each to operate across county lines when the need arises. The US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management also maintain mutual aid agreements with Oregon sheriffs. OEM is available to assist in this coordination.

Regional SAR Councils

Local SAR councils such as the Mt. Hood SAR Council and the California Oregon Regional Search and Rescue Task Force (CORSAR) provide excellent opportunities for training and coordination and greatly increase the effectiveness of SAR efforts. These councils are formal groups comprised of representatives of the various bodies that contribute to SAR efforts in a given jurisdiction or area. A list of organizational members to each council is included as Appendix A.

Command and Control

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is an integrated system that establishes a uniform set of processes, protocols, and procedures that all emergency responders should use in managing the response to emergencies. Originally developed as the Incident Command System (ICS), NIMS was adopted by the Department of Homeland Security in a 2003 Presidential directive, and federal funds are conditioned upon compliance. NIMS provides an excellent organizational structure for use in SAR planning and operations. NIMS provides certainty in command and increases effectiveness of search and rescue efforts by reducing confusion under the pressures of stress and exigency. NIMS compliance is a continuing effort, as the skills are perishable and the personnel and volunteers are often fluid.

Incident Management Teams

The availability of trained incident management teams statewide is a best practice for SAR efforts. Incident management teams have the training and ability to manage large search operations. Due to the nature of SAR and its often 24-hour clock, each region should have a sufficient number of trained personnel to develop incident management teams to support a SAR mission around the clock.

Insuring Volunteers

The Task Force spent considerable time discussing the issue of medical and liability insurance coverage for SAR volunteers. Currently each county provides different amounts and types of insurance coverage for their volunteers. The Task Force heard of the great disparity in insurance coverage provided by different counties, from one that provides coverage through the worker compensation system, to others that

provide no coverage at all. Some volunteers are covered by their regional SAR team, funded through their own dues. The Task Force was not able to determine exactly what coverage exists for volunteers when responding to a mission outside of their own county or in another state. There was consensus among the Task Force members that there is a need for insurance coverage for volunteers in order to assure that volunteers, on whom our State SAR system is heavily reliant, continue to be dedicated, willing and ready to volunteer for SAR. Many legitimate policy questions remain on this topic that the Task Force could not resolve, such as the appropriate role of the State in funding a function over which it has no operational control, the cost and the source of funding, and how to determine eligibility. The Task Force agreed that a more specialized workgroup is necessary to research this issue and make a recommendation for resolution.

Private Resources

Commercially chartered or privately owned aircraft and other private resources are frequently offered and used to assist in SAR efforts. Private resources can be critically significant in certain efforts, but must be managed within the Incident Command System by the incident commander. State law allows for reimbursement for fuel and oil for SAR volunteers that respond with chartered or private aircraft. This is paid out of a SAR fund at the Department of Aviation.

Missing Persons Investigation Transition into SAR

Missing persons investigations sometimes result in the need for a SAR effort. Such investigations often are initiated with a law enforcement agency other than the county sheriff. The transition between, or merging of, the investigative phase and the resulting SAR mission can trigger a passing of command, the need for a unified command or folding the investigative phase of the search for a missing person into the Incident Command System.

Communication in the Field

Communication is central to successful SAR efforts. The current public safety radio communication network in Oregon is a patchwork that in many areas is supported by infrastructure that is dangerously out-of-date. At this time, our first responders frequently do not have the ability to communicate between different agencies, as each agency utilizes different frequencies and equipment. The legislature directed state government to address this by developing the Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN). Once implemented, OWIN will provide critical support to emergency responders including, but not limited to, SAR personnel.

Technology

Technology and its application in SAR efforts is increasingly useful. Cellular telephone technology has proven to be a critical tool in narrowing search areas in its ability to determine the last known location of a missing person. Current federal law (18 U.S.C. 2702) already provides law enforcement with access to telecommunications records when exigent circumstances exist. This federal statute allows telecommunications providers to provide records to a governmental entity in

circumstances where “an emergency involving danger of death or serious physical injury to any person requires disclosure without delay.” Telecommunications records and mapping are technical and complex and require interpretation by trained professionals. Public/private partnerships and leadership at the state level can assist local SAR personnel in utilizing emerging technology.

Use of Locator Beacons in the Wilderness

The Task Force discussed the concept of mandated use of locator beacons in backcountry and ultimately determined that voluntary use is the best policy. The Task Force opposes mandates requiring such use. Several types of locator units have wilderness applications. The Mountain Locator Unit (MLU) is a custom device manufactured after an incident in which several children died on Mt. Hood. The MLU is not approved by the FCC for this use. The MLU program is currently funded by the Clackamas County Sheriff. The MLU must be activated by an individual when rescue services are needed, and it is not monitored until a person has been reported missing. The Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), which is specifically designed and approved for this use also must be activated, but once activated will send a distress signal that automatically initiates a SAR response.

Mountain search and rescue is expensive and places SAR personnel and volunteers in high-risk conditions. The existence of an operating beacon or locator can help to focus a search area, thereby reducing manpower and rescue resources and potentially reducing response and rescue time. In narrowing a search area, this technology also could reduce impacts to wilderness areas and other natural resources.

Mandatory use of signaling technologies could actually diminish personal responsibility by giving climbers a false sense of security and a false expectancy that activating a signaling device will automatically result in a rescue. Technology can never be substituted for skill, education, experience and preparation.

Many logistical and practical barriers to mandatory use of beacons exist. Locator devices are expensive, and there are not enough rentable devices available to support a mandated use. Mandatory use would require the purchase of more devices and payment of the costs of administering a program, periodic maintenance, service and training on both the locator units and the receiving units, which require extensive training to operate proficiently. No clear method of enforcement has been identified. Further, inexplicably, ORS 401.635 assigns the Oregon State Police the responsibility of outlining specifications and distribution procedures for all electronic signaling devices.

Data indicates that in more than half of the deaths on Mt. Hood, a signaling beacon would not have changed the outcome because the circumstances of the incidents involved avalanche, crevasse falls, rockfall or icfall, where the subject likely would not have been able to activate the beacon. Climbers on Mt. Hood account for only a small percentage of SAR incidents in the state. Drivers, hikers and hunters account

for the majority of the searches. Appendix B to this report provides a statistical breakdown of SAR incidents in Oregon.

Reimbursement for Search and Rescue Costs

ORS 401.590 permits a public body to collect not more than \$500 as reimbursement for the cost backcountry SAR activity under certain circumstances. County sheriffs in Oregon generally do not seek reimbursement of SAR costs as allowed under the statute. The sheriffs and their SAR coordinators seek to encourage early reporting of missing persons. The call for assistance may be delayed if a person in need of rescue services believes that they may be subject to any penalty. Often times in search and rescue operations, any delay can mean the difference between life and death.

Military Assets

Military assets to support SAR efforts are coordinated through the OEM SAR coordinator. Oregon's local, regional and state emergency response agencies traditionally have relied upon the readiness and availability of the Oregon Army and Air National Guard to support civilian authorities at the direction of the Governor through the Adjutant General. The National Guard's ability to provide military support while in state duty status provides for a timely and flexible response as required.

However, this Task Force recognized that due to the demands on Oregon National Guard personnel and equipment to support the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan, coupled with the Department of Defense's reallocation of Oregon Army National Guard equipment, less than one-half of Oregon's equipment is available to assist in SAR operations. At any given time, Oregon Army National Guard aviation assets and other SAR related military personnel may be deployed and not available to respond when requested. It is critical for Oregon to recognize the impact of the Global War on Terrorism and redouble our efforts to replenish equipment shortfalls for the Army National Guard.

In SAR efforts where reserve or active duty USC Title 10 assets are needed the OEM SAR coordinator will request support through the United States Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC). The SAR incident commander, working with the OEM SAR coordinator, and the Military Support to Civilian Authority (MSCA) lead, will work together to determine and direct military support requirements.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Amend 401.560 to Address Multi-jurisdiction Searches

- 1) The Task Force recommends that ORS 401.560 be amended to provide guidance in multi-jurisdictional searches in the following manner: when search and rescue resources are deployed and the search area involves more than one jurisdiction, then one sheriff, or their authorized designee, shall assume command, or the jurisdictions shall form a unified command, as outlined in the National Incident

Management System. If one particular sheriff or regional council does not take or authorize command of the incident, by default the sheriff's office that received the call first will be in charge of the search.

Amend 401.573 to Require NIMS Compliance

- 2) Continue to promote and encourage NIMS training and compliance by strengthening the legal requirements that currently exist in statute. Amend ORS Chapter 401.573 to require county SAR plans to address NIMS compliance. The amendment should include language that requires OEM to ensure that the sheriffs review annually the existence and adequacy of county SAR plans and mutual aid agreements.

Enhance Funding for OEM

- 3) The State should provide adequate funding to OEM to enable it to support statewide SAR efforts. With increased funding, OEM should fund regional SAR coordinators to collaborate with counties on a regional basis. OEM should also provide grants to counties to enable them to inventory and type their available resources, as provided by NIMS, and provide that information to OEM annually for the statewide resource inventory that is required by current law. OEM should also perform yearly reviews of county SAR plans and ensure that each county is NIMS compliant.

Enhance Funding for SAR and ICS Training

- 4) The State and counties should increase funding for training in SAR and incident management. Standardized training is necessary to ensure that volunteer resources can be shared across jurisdictional lines. Currently, training for volunteers is performed by the search coordinators on a volunteer and somewhat inconsistent basis. Training is costly and involves significant personal costs to local government employees and volunteers, who must pay for the training, travel, lodging and related expenses. Given appropriate staff and funding, OEM should support and train first responders and volunteers on a regional level.

Enhance Training on Application of Telecommunications Technology to SAR

- 5) The Task Force encourages increased education and training of SAR leaders, the technology industry and the public on how to use technology in SAR. There has been a good deal of attention on the use of cellular technology to determine the last known location of missing persons. Current federal law that allows governmental entities to access cell phone records in emergencies obviates the need for any modification to Oregon law on this issue. Instead, education and outreach as to how to obtain, interpret and use such records would enhance the usefulness of this technology to search and rescue.

Encourage Formation of Regional SAR Councils

- 6) Encourage the creation of Regional Search and Rescue Councils, modeled after the Mt. Hood SAR Council and the California Oregon Regional Search and Rescue Task Force (CORSAR). See Appendix A. The Oregon State Sheriff's

Association should work with OEM to define additional regions and council memberships. Councils should be comprised of the various stakeholders in the region and should work to build and support their own capacity to conduct SAR missions. Each council should work to build regional incident management teams that are discipline-specific to SAR.

Create Statewide SAR Policy Commission

- 7) Create a Statewide SAR Policy Commission by Executive Order of the Governor to work on an ongoing basis to increase coordination and communication among SAR stakeholders at all levels of government, in the volunteer community, in the private sector and the with the public. The Commission should be charged with continuing the work begun by the Task Force and working to reach resolution on issues that were identified by Task Force members, yet not resolved with specific recommendations such as the volunteer insurance issue. The Commission should stand ready to address new issues as they develop and make future recommendations for improving Oregon's SAR efforts. The Commission should be comprised of representatives of the Regional SAR Councils, the Oregon State Sheriff's Association, Oregon State Police, local police, the federal government, the Military Department, SAR Volunteers, OEM and state elected officials.

Create Workgroup to Research and Plan for Volunteer Insurance Coverage

- 8) The State SAR Policy Commission should create a workgroup to research and draft a plan for providing insurance coverage to SAR volunteers in a manner that ensures consistent coverage throughout the State. The workgroup should also explore the issue of coverage for volunteers or personnel who come from another state to assist in an Oregon SAR and coverage for Oregon SAR volunteers when they leave the state to assist in an out-of-state SAR. The Task Force was not able to make a specific recommendation because the issue requires closer analysis and involvement of persons with specific expertise in insurance coverage. The task force identified the following non-exclusive list of possible alternatives for further analysis by the workgroup: 1) require the state to pay for SAR volunteer insurance; 2) require counties to insure volunteers at some minimum level; 3) the state could carry an insurance policy that counties would pay into in order to provide coverage for SAR volunteers; 4) recommend that each county carry insurance for SAR volunteers and encourage pooling; and/or 5) the state could provide partial matching dollars to counties to insure SAR volunteers.

Provide for Leaves of Absence for SAR Volunteers

- 9) Amend ORS 476.574 to include SAR volunteers who are approved by the county sheriff or OEM in the provisions for leaves of absence from employment for volunteer duty.

Require More SAR Critiques and Create Standardized Format

- 10) Amend ORS 401.576 to strengthen the requirement for critiques of SAR incidents. The best practice is to critique every SAR incident. While that may not be practical, the current language is not strong enough. Also, add language to

require that critiques include the investigative body involved in the incident. The Oregon State Sheriffs' Association should develop a standardized critique form to be used in all critiques.

Revitalize Aviation SAR Account

- 11) Revitalize and/or reconstitute the Aviation Search and Rescue Account, created by statute in ORS 837.035 for use in air search and rescue and reimbursement of SAR volunteers. The Department of Aviation is authorized to collect pilot registration fees which are deposited into the Aviation Search and Rescue Account. The Task Force learned that this fee is not actively collected, thus diminishing the funds that OEM has available to support and reimburse for air SAR expenses. The Department of Aviation should be directed to enforce the statute to raise revenue for the Aviation SAR account.

Create Authority for Missing Persons Subpoena

- 12) Create statutory authority for a Missing Persons Civil Investigatory Subpoena for use in the search for missing persons. The subpoena would be a tool for obtaining information or documents, the use of which would be limited to aiding in the investigation of a missing person's whereabouts where a grand jury subpoena is not appropriate because no crime is suspected. This subpoena is not intended to obtain access to telecommunications records, as federal law currently provides for access to those records.

Require Proof of Pilot Insurance for Volunteer Pilots

- 13) In order to guarantee the safety and financial security of volunteer pilots, county sheriffs should require that volunteer pilots provide proof of insurance that is acceptable to the sheriff before being deployed on a SAR mission.

Enhance Public Education and Outreach

- 14) Public education and outreach are important components of improving SAR efforts. Education of the public about how they can limit risks and how they can aid in their own SAR can prevent the need for SAR, and contribute to more successful SAR efforts. The Task Force recommends that OEM, the sheriffs and volunteer rescue organizations form public/private partnerships with recreational businesses to initiate a public education campaign that addresses personal responsibility, the use of safety equipment, technology applications and general awareness of the inherent dangers of wilderness exploration. To that end, the Task Force supports making the OEM Public Outreach Coordinator positions permanent.

Update Outdated Sections of Chapter 401

- 15) Update ORS chapter 401 to delete obsolete provisions and update statutes to more clearly reflect current circumstances and practice. The following ORS statutes are either outdated or meaningless:

- a) Delete ORS 401.560(4) concerning the duties of emergency preparedness managers. This statute is redundant.
- b) The first sentence of ORS 401.570, which authorizes certain personnel to restrict access to the SAR area should be changed as follows:

The county sheriff, the county SAR coordinator or the Incident Commander performing the sheriff's duties under ORS 401.560 or duly assigned military or state police personnel may restrict access to a specific search and rescue area.

- c) Delete ORS 401.635, which requires OSP to adopt specifications and distribution procedures applicable to electronic signaling devices. These specifications are set by federal and industrial standards. OSP is not the appropriate entity to carry out this mandate.

CONCLUSION

Each SAR incident is unique, with varying facts, terrains, participation and available resources. The majority of SAR incidents end successfully. However, the SAR efforts that are widely reported in the media tend to be the anomalies. The Task Force is wary of making recommendations based on those high profile incidents and urges the legislature to exercise caution so as not to over-legislate in an effort to fix SAR and unintentionally inhibit a system that has worked well for so many years.

Oregon's dedicated search and rescue community must focus on strong command and control, open communication, comprehensive training and adequate resources, all of which are essential to improving our ability to reduce the loss of life and injury to persons that can result from emergency situations. Implementing the recommendations contained in this report will help improve search and rescue efforts in Oregon. This Task Force was the start to a dialogue that needs to continue among the SAR community. The proposed SAR Policy Commission is one place where that dialogue can continue, to ensure that at all levels of government and throughout the volunteer community people are constantly working to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of search and rescue in Oregon.

APPENDIX A

Partial list of activities by subjects involved in search and rescue incidents as reported to the Oregon Office of Emergency Management pursuant to ORS 401.560(3)

Number of Missions per year										
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Motor vehicle	72	62	55	61	77	73	79	46	86	69
Hiking	59	59	79	68	84	124	102	86	71	87
Wandering	35	29	39	35	37	49	47	32	57	50
Hunting	53	58	39	53	48	32	37	37	47	36
Non-powerboat	16	24	18	16	21	27	24	34	31	43
Climbing	25	14	19	23	18	17	12	21	13	15

Definitions:

Motor vehicle: people using motor vehicles in rural or backcountry environments.

Hiking: Self-explanatory.

Wandering: General category describing travelers with no destination. This typically includes small children and people suffering from a variety of mental handicaps and illnesses such as Alzheimer's, dementia, autism, etc.

Hunting: Self-explanatory.

Non-powerboat: Use of any flotation device, raft, or boat that is not motorized.

Climbing: people attempting to summit mountains or climb rock and ice faces.

APPENDIX B

Mt. Hood Search and Rescue Council

Membership includes representatives of the following organizations:

1042 Army National Guard
304th Rescue Squadron, 939th Air Force Rescue Wing
American Red Cross
American Medical Response Reach and Treat Team
Clackamas County 4x4 SAR
Clackamas County Emergency Management
Clackamas County Sheriff
Clackamas County Sheriff's Posse
Hood River County Sheriff
Mazamas
Mountain Wave Emergency Communications
Multnomah County Sheriff
Northwest Search Dogs
Oregon K-9 Search Teams
Pacific NW Search and Rescue
Portland Mountain Rescue
Search One K-9
USFS, Mt. Hood N.F., Zigzag District
Wasco County Sheriff
Washington County Sheriff

California Oregon Regional Search and Rescue Task Force (CORSAR)

Membership includes representatives of the following organizations:

Jackson County Sheriff's Office	Crater Lake National Park Service
Klamath County Sheriff's Office	AMR Medical Services
Josephine County Sheriff's Office	Red Cross
Curry County Sheriff's Office	U.S. Forest Service
Coos County Sheriff's Office	Bureau of Land Management
Douglas County Sheriff's Office	Carson Helicopters
Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office	Brim Aviation
Del Norte County Sheriff's Office	Siskiyou County Emergency Services
Civil Air Patrol (Medford)	Josephine County Geographic Info Systems
Curry County Emergency Services	Josephine County Fire Defense Board
Oregon State Police	U.S. Coast Guard Air Station North Bend
Oregon Department of Forestry	