

Summit to Sound Search and Rescue Policies

Article I. Incorporation

Once a year a committee comprised of unit members will review unit documents including bylaws, policies and all documents necessary for the day-to-day coordination of the unit's business. Any member of the unit may access all unit public records.

Article II. Mission

Summit to Sound Search and Rescue is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to provide professional level search and rescue services through the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office.

Article III. Membership

Section 3.01 Eligibility and Application

Any member of the unit may give application forms to interested volunteers. The application form and accompanying letter must be submitted in person to a Board of Directors member. Received applications shall not be returned and become the property of the unit. Application form is attached. *(Appendix a)*

A Board of Directors member shall record on the application form that the application has received preliminary acceptance or has been denied at the first level of approval. After the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office has completed a background investigation, the Board of Directors reviews the application, conducts an oral interview with the applicant, and accepts or denies membership. If the application is denied, the Board of Directors shall record the reason on the application. If the application is accepted, the applicant is a probationary member for 6 months. The applicant will become a full member without further vote if no issues arise during probation.

If the application has preliminary acceptance, a new personnel record shall be started and include the application. This record will include the original application once it has been returned to Summit to Sound Search and Rescue. If the applicant is denied, the application and a copy of the denial letter sent to the applicant shall be filed with other denied applications.

Section 3.02 Dues and Roster

Dues will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The treasurer or designee shall collect any established dues from new members and from current unit members at the first regular meeting of the year, provide receipts, deposit monies in the unit account and record payments.

The treasurer shall report to the Board of Directors any member failing to pay the dues within one month of the collection meeting. Any member who is three months in arrears shall be removed from the roster. The Board of Directors will meet with any member in arrears, if requested by the member, to resolve any discrepancies.

The secretary or designee shall maintain a current list of members and personal information including contact information and state emergency worker card numbers. The secretary or designee shall provide copies of the roster to all members and local emergency managers. Information deemed private including Social Security Number, medical information and other personal information will not be a part of the roster. The roster will be available to all members through the www.summittosound.org website, members-only section.

The rosters and callout lists are for search and rescue use only. Never share phone numbers or member information without prior permission. Never use email addresses for anything other than SAR communications without prior permission from the addressee.

Section 3.03 Maintaining Membership

This unit defines training as part of its mission: members must train to be the best and must meet training standards and expectations. Members may be assigned to positions within the unit for business and training purposes. Members are expected to meet the WAC 118.04.120 and the basic member qualifications defined in the "Qualification Level" section of these policies. Auxiliary members must meet basic safety standards and certifications approved by the majority of the Board of Directors.

All members, except auxiliary members, are expected to participate in meetings, training, and organizational activities at a minimum of 75% aggregate participation. Auxiliary members are expected to participate in 75% of general and Board of Directors meetings. Members are expected to participate in as many missions as available for.

A member failing to meet the required level of participation or training will meet with the Board of Directors to assess the sub-standard

performance level. If sub-standard performance is ongoing without just cause, the member will be removed from the callout roster and membership will be terminated.

All members must be actively involved in acquiring required skills and any additional skills, which further the unit's mission. These may include unit skills, qualifications in another group, unit positions or external certification.

Qualification Levels

- A novice level member with First Aid, CPR and Blood Borne Pathogens may respond to the operations base for all callouts.
- Support-qualified members must meet minimum qualifications specified in WAC 118.04.120 and must have unit instruction in radio communications and base management functions and completed Incident Command System 100 and NIMS 700.
- Field qualified members must meet field qualifications specified in WAC 118.04.120

Volunteer Hours

Each member is required to turn in his or her volunteer hours to the designated officer by every monthly meeting.

External Certifications

It is the responsibility of the member to file with the training officer copies of current certification of skills, licenses, or permits obtained outside the training purview of search and rescue.

Field Debriefing Forms

Each member is required to submit his or her field debriefing form to the secretary within 72 hours of the conclusion of each mission.

Section 3.04 Termination of Membership

When a member leaves or is excused from Summit to Sound, all unit owned equipment, DEM Card & Issued ID must be returned within 30 days.

After leaving Summit to Sound, retained logos may be kept for nostalgia, but not for public display.

Section 3.05 Leaves of Absence

Members who intend to be unavailable for missions, trainings or meetings for an extended duration must submit a letter requesting a leave of absence stating when the member will resume participation. The letter will be submitted to the secretary or designee and filed in the

personnel file. As training is a primary part of our mission, no member shall take an extended leave of absence from trainings or meetings without a leave of absence from missions.

A leave of absence will not be extended to members for more than one year.

Section 3.06 Membership Meetings

The general membership shall meet at least 10 months of the year to conduct unit business including debriefings and training. Additional training opportunities will be provided outside the general membership meetings.

Section 3.07 Equipment

Members are expected to outfit themselves with personally owned equipment and consumables. This equipment shall be the sole responsibility of the member and must include these 10 essentials as appropriate for your specialty group.

- Water
- Food (minimum 24 hours)
- Fire starter
- Light source
- Whistle
- Map & Compass
- Knife
- Clothing
- Shelter
- First Aid Kit

Members are expected to respond to callouts and training with equipment appropriate for the mission, climate, terrain, and skill level.

Members must have a pager or SMS text messaging device in the family to receive search calls, information calls and mission cancellations.

Section 3.08 Member Behavior and Responsibilities

Members are expected to foster an atmosphere of positive cooperation and support and maintain professional behavior. It is in the best interest of the unit to have members who are courteous, thoughtful, alert to danger and respectful of other persons and property. Search and Rescue is a team activity and members are expected to be able to work with others in a positive team environment.

- Bring before the membership any condition affecting the safety of a member or of any activity
- Take the pledge on safety: "**Any** time **any** thing is wrong **any** where, **all** will know about it"
- Members must conduct themselves so their actions are a positive reflection on Summit to Sound

Members must comply with WAC 118.04.200 which outlines the state expectations and requirements of emergency workers.

Members are expected to follow the chain of command. For example, take suggestions or issues to your team leader first. If not satisfied then a unit officer. If still not satisfied, the STS Board is the next step. The top of the chain is the SAR Council. Complaints beyond your team leader must be submitted in writing.

Members not acting in the best interest of the unit shall be subject to the Quality Consistency Plan. (*Appendix b*)

Section 3.09 Multi Jurisdiction DEM Card Holders

Members holding DEM cards from multiple jurisdictions, shall honor restrictions issued by one jurisdiction in all jurisdictions.

When responding to a mutual aid involving home jurisdiction, members must sign in with the unit from their home jurisdiction.

Section 3.10 Logos

Logo purchases must be approved by the President or Vice-President.

Logos will not be displayed by non-members or probationary members.

If financially feasible, the unit may buy items with unit logos from members leaving the organization, for resale to current or new members. The Board of Directors will determine the amount offered based on condition.

Article IV. Governing Body

Section 4.01 Governance

This unit shall be directed by a Board of Directors comprised of the elected officers and a representative from each specialty group.

Section 4.02 Elections

The positions of president, treasurer, and training officer are elected on even numbered years to begin their term in the following January. The president must have been a member in good standing for at least two years prior to being nominated.

The positions of vice-president and secretary are elected on odd numbered years to begin their term in the following January.

Section 4.03 Duties

The Board of Directors shall have the following duties:

- establish yearly dues
- review and act on all submitted applications for membership
- facilitate and support any member needing help to execute duties and fulfill responsibilities
- Propose an annual budget in October. The budget will be reviewed and approved by a majority of member at November general meeting, to go into effect January 1 of the following year.
- establish any policy necessary to carry out these duties

Each officer of the Board of Directors shall have the following individual duties:

President

Position Summary:

The president manages the unit identity and public perception of the unit. The president interacts with agencies outside the unit and outside the search and rescue community to represent the interests of Summit to Sound Search and Rescue (STS)

Position Duties:

- Attends STS general and Board of Directors meetings
- Attends SAR Council meetings and votes on behalf of the unit
- Maintains a vigil on Homeland Security issues as they relate to STS activity
- Helps to steer the unit to meeting the local and state demands for terrorist threat response
- Works with the web-site or its maintenance personnel, the media, the sheriff's department, their personnel and the community
- Informs the Board of Directors of trends and upcoming events of interest to STS Board of Directors
- Informs the Membership of trends and upcoming events of interest to the STS Membership
- Votes in Board of Directors meetings
- Confers with vice-president frequently so each is able to do the work of the other with minimal disruption of the leadership process
- Fills-in for the vice-president when the vice-president is unable to attend key meetings
- Runs meetings with the vice-president
- Reports to and is accountable to the membership
- Make an officer on call list and prioritize call order
- Send officer on call list to the DEM and SAR Coordinators
- Must work collaboratively with others

Skills and Qualifications:

The president must have at least a Support level of training.

Vice-President

Position Summary:

The vice-president manages the internal workings of the unit personnel and related issues. The vice-president works with the president to attend meetings of other units and organizations to keep in touch with trends and events of interest to Summit to Sound Search and Rescue (STS)

Position Duties:

- Attends STS general and Board of Directors meetings
- Attends SAR Council meetings
- Integrates Homeland Security threat training with the training officer
- Integrates terrorist threat activity awareness and training with the training officer so members of the unit are prepared to respond to domestic threat
- Informs membership of SAR trends, upcoming training possibilities, changes in Policy and By-law
- Creates in conjunction with secretary needed forms and records to document the actions of STS
- Runs meetings in the absence of the president
- Performs the duties of the president as required in president's absence
- Must work collaboratively with others

Skills and Qualifications:

The vice-president must have at least a Support level of training.

Secretary

Position Summary:

The secretary documents all activities of Summit to Sound by maintaining records of equipment, personnel, searches, and trainings.

Position Duties:

- Attend STS general and Board of Directors meetings to document pertinent decisions and issues and takes meeting minutes
- Compile reports for the Board of Directors as requested
- Collect and compile reports and records as directed
- Work closely with the group leaders to make sure new members are fully integrated and certified to meet Summit to Sound requirements
- Get minutes out in a timely manner

Skills and Qualifications:

The secretary should have good computer skills, be proficient in Word and Excel. A good working knowledge of Access is recommended. The secretary must have the ability to organize data and coordinate all the various records.

Treasurer

Position Summary:

The treasurer is responsible for handling the day-to-day finances for the unit and keeping the unit in compliance with Federal and Washington State reporting requirements.

Position Duties:

- Attends STS general and Board of Directors meetings
- Does banking, including making deposits and writing checks to pay approved bills/invoices submitted
- Reconciles the Checking and Savings Accounts monthly
- Maintains the monthly bookkeeping for the unit on QuickBooks Pro or unit approved accounting system
- Maintains bookkeeping filing system for original financial documents
- Keeps the Unified Business License current by filing the “Nonprofit Corporation Annual Report” annually with the Secretary of State, Corporations Division in Olympia, WA. Deadline is September 30th of each year
- Keeps the unit in compliance with any Federal Tax reporting requirements
- Reports to and is accountable to the membership
- Provides an activity report at each general meeting
- Votes in Board of Directors meetings

Skills and Qualifications

The treasurer must have bookkeeping skills.

Training Officer

Position Summary:

The training officer arranges training sessions and applies for training mission numbers from DEM as requested. The training officer oversees members' training status and apprizes members of certifications about to lapse. The training officer interacts with the group leaders and the DEM staff.

Position Duties:

- Attends STS general and Board of Directors meetings
- Record training activities for each member who submits records of training
- Posts trainings that meet requirements of the WAC monthly for the unit at local and state levels
- Informs the Board of Directors of trends and upcoming trainings of interest to STS Membership
- Reports to and is accountable to the Board of Directors and the membership
- Must work collaboratively with others

Skills and Qualifications:

Text-processing, database and spreadsheet manipulation are the minimum computer skills recommended.

Group Leader

Position Summary:

The Group Leader is responsible for coordinating the training of the specialty group through the training officer. Keeping members in compliance with both group and unit requirements.

Position Duties:

- Attend STS general and Board of Directors meetings
- Coordinate with the training officer on DEM training mission numbers
- Align training sessions with the training officer to assure all safety and tactical aspects of all group operations meet Washington Administrative Codes and Summit to Sound Search & Rescue safety guidelines
- Keep sign in sheets and turn them over to the secretary
- Assist group members to set training goals and attain them
- Reports to and is accountable to the training officer
- Votes in the Board of Directors meetings
- Establish equipment and skill level requirements for specialty group
- Schedule training for specialty group
- Find qualified instructors for special training
- Assist new members with all documentation and policies and forms

Skills and Qualifications:

The Group Leader must have Field level of training. Familiarity with various search techniques and search management adds to the officer's effectiveness. The Group Leader should have a strong background in the group's specialty. The Group Leader must be capable of working in a collaborative manner with the members of the group as well as other members of STS.

Section 4.04 Officer On Call

This unit shall have an officer on call readily available 24 hours a day and is responsible for responding to requests for assistance from local and state agencies. The list of Officers on Call and the call priority will be decided by the president. The list will be submitted to the SAR Coordinators and DEM each and updated as needed.

Upon receiving a request for assistance, the officer on call shall determine if the unit should respond and initiate the callout procedure if warranted.

Section 4.05 Specialty Groups

Specialty groups consists of DOGS, Mounted (Equine), Swiftwater, ATV, and Ground

Article V. Amendments

Section 5.01 Proposed Amendments

Amendments to these policies can be suggested by any member of the unit. Proposed amendments to the policies shall be drafted by the Board of Directors and presented to the general membership at a regularly scheduled meeting at least 1 month prior to the scheduled vote. The amendments will require a majority vote of the unit's members present at a regularly scheduled meeting to become effective.

Section 5.02 Recording Amendments

Successive generations of all unit documents will have a creation date in the document footer along with the title. References to "versions" of documents will be made by this creation date.

(Appendix a)
Summit to Sound Search and Rescue:
Membership Application

This is an application for membership in Summit to Sound Search and Rescue, a private not for profit organization who's mission is to provide professional level search and rescue services through the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office. To achieve this goal, we:

- Train to provide professional level search and rescue service
- Educate to maximize safety of individuals participating in outdoor activities
- Respond to complement other county and state rescue services

Name: (Last) _____ (First) _____ (MI) _____

If you have a current Emergency Worker Card issued by Whatcom County, what is the card number _____ and expiration date: __/ __/ ____; if not, please complete the DEM form-card.

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

E-mail address for correspondence and newsletters: _____

Driver's License Number _____

Phone Numbers: please list numbers in order of preference, including pagers. Type = (home, cell, work, page, other):

- 1: (____) _____ - _____ type: _____
 2: (____) _____ - _____ type: _____
 3: (____) _____ - _____ type: _____
 4: (____) _____ - _____ type: _____

Pager or cell phone messaging device to receive callout notices; please list the e-mail address of any pager or SMS device that you routinely carry.

3607734018@verizon.net is an example
 (1) _____
 (2) _____

Areas of Interest (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ground SAR (Search on foot) | <input type="checkbox"/> Logistics Section (Supply a SAR) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Search Dog Handling (Search with dog) | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance/Administration (Keep records) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ATVs (Search/transport by ATV) | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Officer (Talk/write to media) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equine (Search by Horseback) | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations Section (Manage a mission) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swiftwater (Search/recover in water) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications (Run radio/keep log) | |

Please provide a letter detailing why you would like to join the organization and how you think you could contribute to the organization's mission.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY	
<p style="text-align: center;">Board of Directors</p> <p>Decision: _____</p> <p>Date: __/__/____ Chair: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Local Sheriff's Office</p> <p>Background check completed: __/__/____</p> <p>Emergency Worker Card #: _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Administration Section</p> <p>Date Record Created: __/__/____</p> <p>Date included on roster: __/__/____</p> <p>By-laws/Policies reviewed: __/__/____</p> <p>Mentor: _____ __/__/____</p> <p>Gear check: __/__/____</p> <p>Date probation ended: __/__/____</p>

(Appendix b)
Summit to Sound Search and Rescue
Quality Consistency Plan

Philosophy:

Members are expected to maintain professional behavior that is courteous, thoughtful, alert to danger and respectful of other persons and property. Search and Rescue is a team activity, and members are expected to be able to work with others in a positive team environment.

The philosophy of this document is to enhance Summit to Sound operations, policy, and procedures through guidance and training. Any member who violates policy, procedure, or certification requirement, who has had infractions documented in accordance with the procedures of this plan, and who has not responded to guidance and training will be brought before the Board of Directors for membership review.

Infractions:

Infractions occur when a member either violates Summit to Sound policy, procedures, or certification requirements or creates a non-safe situation.

Infractions may be obvious and direct (e.g. no PFD worn when in a boat) or nebulous and opinion based (e.g. one person believes another person's actions are unsafe). For that reason, addressing any infraction will involve the opportunity for both involved parties to present their "side" of what happened.

Infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Allowing WAC required training or certifications to lapse
- Abandoning an assigned task
- Not following directions from a team leader or the Incident Commander (IC)
- Deviating from an assigned task without the permission of a team leader or the IC or such that the assigned task is not completed
- Not using safety equipment appropriate for a mission or task
- Utilizing personal or unit equipment that is unsafe or not appropriate for a mission or task
- Behavior that creates a dangerous situation or that is inappropriate for a mission, task, or situation
- Behavior that reflects poorly on the STS unit or SAR in general

Documentation Concerning Infractions:

When an infraction is believed to have occurred, the member or members who believe an infraction has been committed must, immediately or as soon as possible after the incident occurred, bring it to the attention of the member or members who "committed" the infraction.

If the infraction is believed to have created an unsafe situation, all related tasks will cease until the situation is resolved.

The members involved will discuss what occurred, why it is believed to be a safety issue, and what can be done to rectify the situation

The team leader has the authority to determine the ensuing course of action in the field during that event.

If the issue is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties involved, the issue will be considered closed.

If any person feels the incident warrants an infraction report, that member shall notify all members involved, so the situation can be documented by each member involved and on an individual basis.

Documentation will include:

- Date, time, location of believed infraction
- Description of overall event (e.g. mission, training, meeting, public forum)
- Members involved and, if possible, members who witnessed the believed infraction
- Detailed description of what the member believed to have happened and why it is believed to be or not to be an infraction

Documentation will be completed and presented to the STS President or Vice President within 72 hours of the end of the overall event

If the infraction is not a safety issue, the members involved will discuss what occurred and why it is believed to be an infraction.

If the issue is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties involved, the issue will be considered closed.

If the issue can not be resolved, the situation will be documented by each member involved and on an individual basis.

Documentation will include:

- Date, time, location of believed infraction
- Description of overall event (e.g. mission, training, meeting, public forum, etc.)
- Members involved and, if possible, members who witnessed the believed infraction
- Detailed description of what the each member believes to have happened and why it is believed to be or not to be an infraction

Documentation will be completed and presented to the STS President or Vice President within 72 hours of the end of the overall event

Review Board

If documentation for a believed infraction is received by the STS President or Vice President, the STS President (or Vice President in the absence of the President) will convene a review board that will meet within 30 days from receipt of documentation.

The Board will consist of at least the President and/or Vice President, the Leader of the involved Group, at least one leader from another group, and at least one member designated by the member being accused of an infraction. The resulting total of voting board members must be an odd number to facilitate majority votes if required.

The presiding board member will request the STS Secretary or someone else to take minutes. That person is not a voting member of the Review Board.

All members involved in the incident, to include identified witnesses, are encouraged to attend.

The President or Vice President, in the absence of the President, may invite other members or people outside STS for expert or knowledgeable opinions/inputs. These participants will have no vote.

If a member of the Review Board is involved in the incident as either a reporting member or as the member being reported, that Review Board member will excuse themselves from the Review Board for that incident.

Review Board Actions

The review board will conduct an open discussion of the situation and will determine whether or not an infraction occurred. It is important that both “sides of the story” be heard. In the event a determining consensus can not be reached, a majority of the Review Board members shall make the final determination.

If the review board decides that no infraction occurred, the issue will be considered closed.

If the review board decides an infraction has occurred, actions taken will depend on whether or not such infractions have occurred previously and on the attitude and response of the member(s) who committed the infraction.

A first infraction will involve both a brief discussion outlining the reasons the member’s actions are considered an infraction and an acknowledgment by the member(s) that the reasons are understood and that such actions will not occur again.

A second infraction for the same type of incident will involve mandatory participation in the next available training session pertinent to the type of infraction.

A third infraction for the same type of incident will be dealt with by the review Board depending on the member's general attitude and desire to improve. Using a majority ruling, the Review Board may:

- Require additional training or proof of additional training
- Require the member to pass a written examination on the subject matter pertinent to the infraction
- Demote the member to a lower state of readiness
- Remove the member from participation in Summit to Sound activities

An infraction of a different type of issue will be dealt with as a first infraction.

General Performance

Accumulation of more than five first infractions within any three year periods will be considered a signal that the member needs additional training or counseling. Any member having five first infractions within a three-year period will be notified by the STS President through the member's Team Leader that the member's level of performance is unacceptable. The STS President (or Vice President in the absence of the President) may convene a Review Board to discuss and recommend actions (using a majority vote) to assist the member in improving performance and learning how to work safely and effectively.

Review Board Minutes

Any time a Review Board determines an infraction has occurred or that a member's performance has warranted creation of a Review Board, the minutes of the Review Board and all other documentation will be filed with the STS Secretary. A copy of the Review Board minutes will be placed in the personnel folder of each member involved. A copy of the Review Board minutes will go to the Search and Rescue Council chairperson.

**Summit to Sound Search and Rescue
Member Infraction Report**

On (date) _____ at about (time) _____ I, (member's name)

_____, witnessed the following infraction which I am reporting to a Board Officer by submitting this report. This infraction was committed by (name of member who committed offence)

_____ at (location) _____ while (tell what was being done)

Others present at the time who also observed the infraction are:

(name) _____

(name) _____

(name) _____

Write a brief description of the infraction. Tell how it is discordant to Summit to Sound policies. Tell what you and the person who committed the infraction discussed.

Signature of observer: _____ Date signed: _____