

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE, FOR THE GROUND SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

- ▶ Presentation to Ground Search and Rescue Groups
- ▶ By Jim McAllister
- ▶ Special Advisor to BCSARA and EMCR



GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE CURRENT SITUATION

- ▶ In the past year EMCR was asked to step away from the BCSARA table, this has led to a lack of engagement with the agency that has the responsibility for coordination and support of GSAR
- ▶ Requesting agencies had stopped participating on the BCSARA board; some due to voting status, others because so much time was spent on funding issues, and others were asked not to attend
- ▶ It is time to re-engage with the requesting/responsible agencies in a way that GSAR recommendations can be heard, and decisions can be made



GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ CURRENT SITUATION

- ▶ The overall responsibility for Ground Search and Rescue is held by the Province of B.C. under federal legislation
- ▶ The province delegates specific responsibilities to ministries/agencies within provincial legislation;
 - ▶ Police; lost/missing person searches
 - ▶ B.C. Emergency Health Services (BCEHS); pre-hospital care and transportation of injured persons
 - ▶ The Office of the Coroner; the recovery of human remains
 - ▶ Emergency Management and Climate Readiness; coordination and support of GSAR volunteers
- ▶ Requesting agencies are responsible for agreeing to and approving any changes to policies within the above-noted mandates, if they are not at the table change will not happen!

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ HISTORY

- ▶ BCSARA was established in 2003 to receive funding in support of GSAR, it operated separately from the advisory committee for 3 years
- ▶ The return to a separation of funding and advisory functions was recommended within the Alternative Support Model (ASM) proposal of 2015 that led to the major funding of 2016 and beyond
- ▶ The ASM recommended a new joint provincial/BCSARA entity to manage funding with BCSARA continuing to be the advisory table between the GSAR community and all agencies but noted if the funding was provided to BCSARA a separate advisory committee should be established
- ▶ The ASM was supported by all GSAR Groups in the province, with 50 groups providing letters of support

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ HISTORY

- ▶ Recognizes accomplishments over the previous 20 years of having requesting/responsible agencies at the table
- ▶ over 100 million in new funding; including tripling response reimbursement rates, SAR-NIF, one-time grants and sustainable funding
- ▶ health and safety program and joint committee, approval of CDFL, Swiftwater standards, BCAdventureSmart, the SAR Memorial, etc.

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

- ▶ The proposed new model separates the provincial-level funding management and the provision of advice to the government
- ▶ **Recognizes there are major concerns within the GSAR community regarding the lack of action on major issues they have brought forward**
- ▶ The proposed new model removes barriers that have seen requesting agencies leave the BCSARA board; voting status, focus on financial matters, and being asked not to attend

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ PROPOSED NEW MODEL

- ▶ The proposed new model separates the provincial-level funding management and the provision of advice to the government.
- ▶ It contains two tables :
BCSARA Board and The GSAR
Advisory Committee

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ NEW MODEL

- ▶ In the new model BCSARA will: manage and disburse funding from the province to GSAR Groups
- ▶ Funding and support for BCAdventureSmart, CISM, the Data Management System (DMS), SAR Response Reviews, and the SAR Memorial
- ▶ Support for the insurance program
- ▶ Fundraise, sponsorships, grants
- ▶ GSAR benefits like the ICBC fleet plan, Rogers cellular, and Pro deals

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

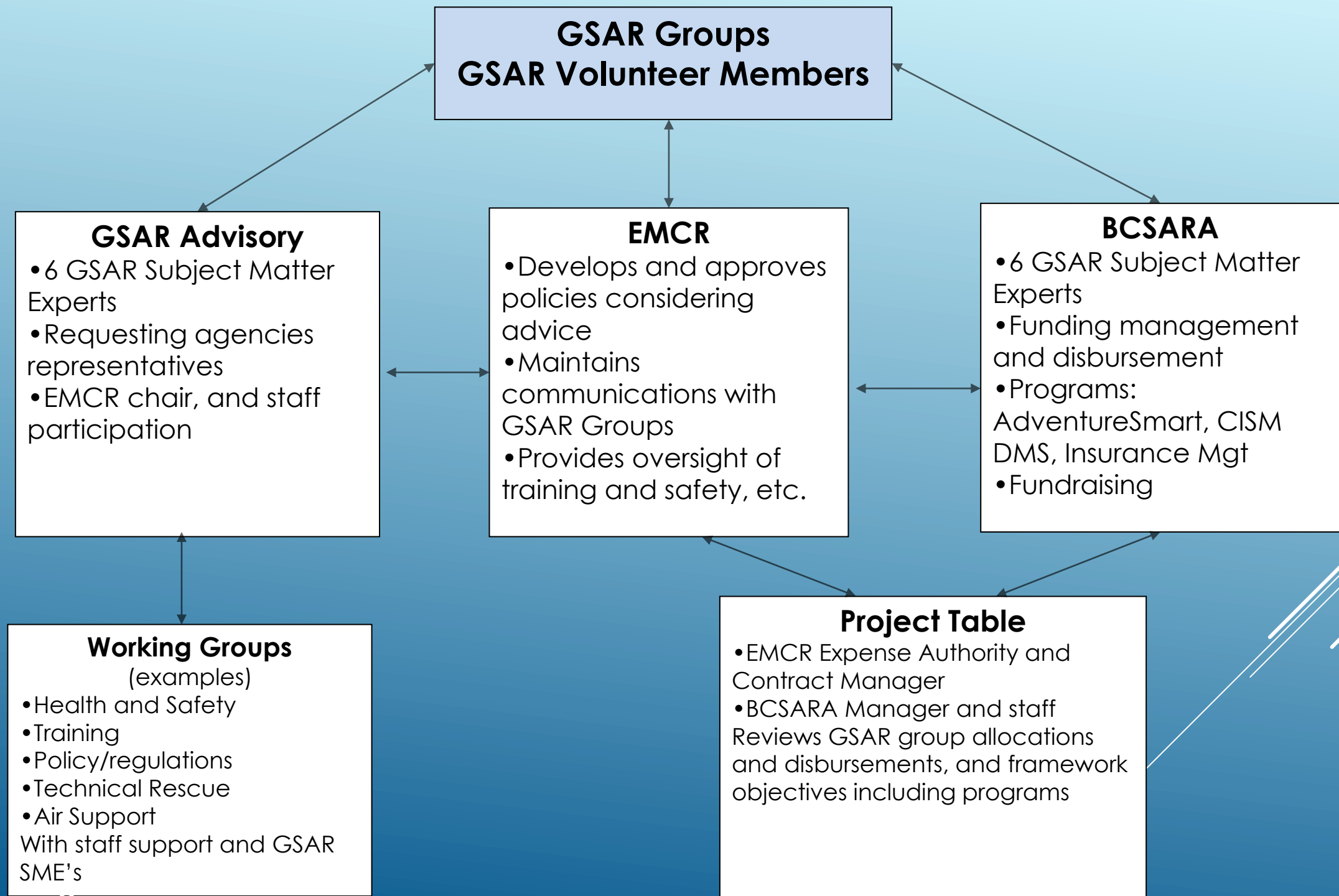
➤ BCSARA BOARD

- ▶ The BCSARA Board will consist of 6 elected members from the GSAR community with knowledge and experience in fund management, and programs, along with executive officers, and support from staff
- ▶ The board's focus will be funding: including supporting GSAR groups to meet reporting requirements, meeting agreements with the province, seeking increased provincial funding, and accessing additional sources of funding

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ GSAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- ▶ The GSAR Advisory Committee recently established by EMCRC will be expanded to include 6 members from the GSAR community with relevant knowledge and experience
- ▶ The Advisory Committee will include requesting agency representatives bringing relevant knowledge, experience, and recognition within their organization
- ▶ Working groups will be formed by the Committee; examples are Health and Safety, training, policy/regulations, technical rescue, air support, and other matters
- Additional GSAR members will be involved in working groups, all will be selected through an open Expression of Interest process involving the current advisory committee



**GSAR Groups
GSAR Volunteer Members**

BCSARA

- 6 GSAR Subject Matter Experts
- Funding management and disbursement
- Programs: AdventureSmart, CISM DMS, Insurance Mgt
- Fundraising

Project Table

- EMCR Expense Authority and Contract Manager
- BCSARA Manager and staff Reviews GSAR group allocations and disbursements, and framework objectives including programs

GSAR Groups GSAR Volunteer Members

GSAR Advisory

- 6 GSAR Subject Matter Experts
- Requesting agencies representatives
- EMCR chair, and staff participation

Working Groups

(examples)

- Health and Safety
 - Training
 - Policy/regulations
 - Technical Rescue
 - Air Support
- With staff support and GSAR SME's

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

WHY NOT FIX SOME OF THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES FIRST?

- ▶ Until the agencies representing the provincial government and representatives from the GSAR community get back to the table in a meaningful way the issues will not get resolved
- ▶ The status quo of volunteers on the BCSARA board and committees developing recommendations for the province to change policies has not worked over the past three years and has the risk of losing more gains made over the previous years of cooperation; the deepening divide between BCSARA, EMCR, requesting agencies and the GSAR community will grow
- ▶ It is recognized that time is of the essence; you the GSAR community, and the province need to see a road ahead in addressing the many outstanding concerns and see a level of cooperation re-established

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE

➤ SUMMARY OF WHY THE NEW MODEL IS RECOMMENDED

- ▶ Recognizes there are concerns within the GSAR community regarding the lack of action on major issues they have brought forward.
- ▶ Proposed new model separates the provincial-level funding management and the provision of advice to the government.
- ▶ The proposed new model removes barriers that have seen requesting agencies leave the BCSARA board; not vote on motions and asks them to attend where it really counts.... at the advisory table.

GETTING BACK TO THE TABLE Questions?

[CC BY-SA](#)

YOUR FEED BACK IS REQUESTED

- ▶ What advantages/disadvantages do you see with the separation between the board and advisory functions going forward?
- ▶ What considerations would you like to see in place when selecting new members for the board and the advisory members?
- ▶ Any other comments/observations
- ▶ Email : newmodel@bcsara.com