



Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council Administrative Manual

**Version 1.1
May 5, 2008**

Change History

Date	Version	Who	Changes
Aug 15, 2005	1.1	Don Scelza	Updated Version number. Removed Draft. This is the version approved at the Aug 13 PSARC meeting.
Aug 3, 2005	1.0 Draft	Don Scelza	Incorporated comments received
Mar 2, 2005	0.5	Don Scelza	Added standing committee list with Chairs to the Committees section
Mar 1, 2005	0.4	Don Scelza	Changes from the February meeting. Added correct dues amount. Changed wording about the membership approving bills. Added a copy of the ethics policy.
			Did not make the changes to the disciplinary policy about notification. This will require additional discussion.
			Did not make change to Membership section about dues payment. I think we decided this was covered in the By-Laws.
Feb 9, 2005	0.3	Don Scelza	More updates.
Feb 1, 2005	0.2	Don Scelza	Included changes from Board Members. Started to fill in sections.
Jan 19, 2005	0.1	Don Scelza	Started manual. Sent to BOD for comment on contents.

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1. Introduction & General Information on Process

The PSARC maintains a series of documents to aid in the creating, maintaining and overseeing of PSARC activities and member teams, both administrative and operational. These documents include:

- Articles of Incorporation
- Bylaws
- Administrative Manual
- Operations Manual

1. Authority

Article V of the Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council, Inc (PSARC) grants the Board of Directors (Board) the power to manage all affairs of the PSARC. This includes the creation of policies and procedures to be used in managing and enforcing those affairs.

2. Precedence

In cases of conflict the PSARC Articles of Incorporation and PSARC Bylaws shall take precedence over this manual. In the case of conflict between this document and any other policies or procedures used in the PSARC, this document shall take precedence. In the event of a conflict between this document and the Board or the PSARC Membership, the Board or the Membership shall take precedence.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to disseminate the policies and procedures used by PSARC to the membership.

4. Maintenance of the PSARC Administrative Manual

The Secretary of the PSARC shall be responsible for the maintenance, control and dissemination of this manual.

The Secretary is responsible for the maintenance of the Change Log at the beginning of this document.

The Secretary is responsible for periodically publishing and making available to the membership updated versions of this manual that include all previously applied changes.

5. Authority for Changes and Updates

The information in this Administrative Manual may be changed under the direction of the PSARC Board or the PSARC Membership. The majority of the changes to this document are envisioned to be made in a routine fashion by the Board. The PSARC Board or Membership must approve, by a simple majority, changes to this manual.

6. Annual Review

The PSARC Secretary shall conduct an Annual Review of this manual and will present suggested changes to the PSARC Board and Membership at the February Meeting of the PSARC.

7. Emergency Changes and Updates

The information in this manual may be changed under the authority of the PSARC *Board of Directors*. Such changes take effect immediately. All Emergency Changes and Updates must be approved by the Membership at the next Council meeting. If the changes are not approved by the PSARC Board or Membership, they shall be removed.

2. Administration of General Administration Policy

This policy shall be administered by the following:

1. President of the PSARC

The President of the PSARC shall serve as the Chief *Executive* Officer of the Corporation when the Board of Directors is not in session. The President is responsible for ensuring PSARC-wide compliance with all PSARC policies and procedures, including those in this manual.

2. Vice President of the PSARC

The Vice President shall serve in the President's absence if the President is incapacitated or otherwise unable to fulfill their duties.

3. PSARC Member Group Responsible Authority

The PSARC is comprised of organizations called Groups or Organizations. Each Group has an executive officer that for the purpose of this manual shall be called the Group *Delegate*. The Group *Delegate* is responsible for ensuring Group compliance with the policies and procedures set forth in this manual.

3. Financial Policy

1. Financial Year

The PSARC fiscal year coincides with the calendar year of January 1st thru December 31st.

2. PSARC annual dues

The annual dues for PSARC member teams are \$40.00 per year.

3. Treasurer of the PSARC

The PSARC Treasurer is responsible for the accurate reporting and maintenance of the PSARC financial reports and accounts.

- a. **Financial Reports:** The PSARC Treasurer shall submit a financial status report at each regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. This report should include any changes to accounts, funds spent and funds received. The Treasurer shall submit an annual financial status report at the February meeting of the Board
- b. **Maintenance of financial accounts:** The PSARC Treasurer shall create and maintain the necessary checking, saving and other financial accounts. The Treasurer has the authority to move funds between accounts as necessary.
- c. **Authority to pay bills:** The Treasurer shall be responsible for the payment and reimbursement of expenses as directed by the membership. The Treasurer shall have the authority to pay standing and recurring bills that are less than \$250.00 without expressed membership approval.
- d. **Authority to write checks:** The Treasurer and President shall have the authority to write checks and be delegated signatory on any account held by PSARC
- e. **Financial Emergency:** If a financial emergency arises, the Treasurer, upon consultation with the *Board of Directors*, has the authority to pay the emergency bill. However, at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the *PSARC* the issue shall be brought to the attention of the *PSARC Membership*.
- f. **Authority to accept finances:** The Treasurer shall accept donations and other financial resources and properly deposit those funds into accounts maintained by PSARC. The Treasurer is responsible for providing a reply or if appropriate a thank you note to the provider of the funds.

- g. **Authority to submit financial statements:** The Treasurer shall prepare and submit all necessary financial statements to financial institutions, the federal, state and local governments. This includes all financial statements for tax purposes, opening and closing accounts, *etc.* All financial statements shall conform to standard accounting principles.

- h. **Storage of Financial Records:** All financial records shall be stored for a minimum of seven (7) years.

4. Records

1. Secretary of the PSARC

The PSARC Secretary is responsible for maintaining all records and historical documents of the PSARC.

2. PSARC Minutes Dissemination

The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes at every Board or Membership meeting. The Secretary is responsible for the dissemination of those minutes to the Board and the Membership. Additionally, the Secretary is responsible for supplying a copy of minutes to the PSARC Webmaster for posting onto the PSARC website.

3. PSARC Member Group Information

It is the responsibility of the PSARC Secretary to see that the information about PSARC Member groups is maintained and accurate. The actual function of updating this information may be delegated to the Chair of the Membership Committee however; the Secretary is to validate said information periodically.

5. *Disciplinary Procedures*

1. **Officers and Board Members**¹

Policy: This policy is for discipline of elected and appointed Officers; this includes regional representatives and appointed committee members, or any individual charged to act on behalf of PSARC. Additionally, it covers PSARC member team or organization Delegates. It does not address discipline of member teams or individuals who are members of those teams. Resigning from a position does not remove an individual from proceedings under this policy.

Initial Charge: Any person with a complaint against any PSARC Delegate or other Officer shall make such complaint in writing to the President, unless the charge is against the President in which case the written complaint shall be delivered to the Vice President. Verbal complaints shall not invoke this or any other formal disciplinary process unless subsequently submitted in writing. Anonymous complaints shall not be accepted.

- a) Complaints will only be accepted if they charge a specific violation of PSARC policy, procedures, or directives, or if they involve violations of Law. The specific document, page number and section or legal code/subsection must be cited in the complaint.
- b) The written charge must state the specifics of the violation to include specific items violated, date of violation, names of witnesses, and other information that describes the violation so that said violation can be investigated if appropriate.

¹ This is based on the presupposition that the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution may apply to disciplinary proceedings of PSARC. The Fourteenth Amendment states: "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Black's Law Dictionary provides the following under "due process":

" . . . Due process of law implies the right of the person affected thereby to be present before the tribunal which pronounces judgment upon the question of life, liberty, or property, in its most comprehensive sense; to be heard, by testimony or otherwise, and to have the right of controverting, by proof, every material fact which bears on the question of right in the matter involved. If any question of fact or liability be conclusively presumed against him, this is not due process of law."

"Fundamental requisite of "due process" is the opportunity to be heard, to be aware that a matter is pending, to make an informed choice whether to acquiesce or contest . . . "

"Embodied in the due process concept are the basic rights of a defendant . . . and include, timely notice of a hearing or trial which informs the defendant of the charges against him or her; the opportunity to confront accusers and to present evidence on one's own behalf before an impartial jury or judge; the presumption of innocence under which guilt must be proven by legally obtained evidence and the verdict must be supported by the evidence presented . . . "

- c) If the complaint is against the President, the Vice-President, instead of the President, shall fulfill the disciplinary process duties as described below. The President shall continue to fulfill all other duties of the office.

Notification of Charge: The President shall immediately provide a copy of the complaint to the individual against which the complaint is filed (the "accused individual"). Sending a registered letter to the individual's PSARC member team at the PSARC member team's official address as recorded by the Secretary shall be the method for notifying the individual. If the member team cannot or does not for any reason forward the complaint to this individual, then the individual shall no longer act for the team or for PSARC as a whole in any PSARC matters until the complaint is forwarded to the individual and the complaint resolved according the further provisions of this policy. If an individual believes that a team has not forwarded a complaint to him or her, that individual may contact PSARC at its official address to arrange for direct contact with PSARC. The President shall provide the accused individual with copies of any known written materials, reports or documents on which the accusation is based.

- a) If the accusation is of such a nature as to possibly prevent the accused individual from safely performing his or her duties as far as participating in PSARC search and rescue or training activities, the *Board of Directors* shall immediately place the accused individual on leave of absence or suspension.
 - a. Notification of suspension shall require that a registered letter be sent to the accused individual's PSARC member team, stating that
 - i. the accused Individual shall not participate in any PSARC search and rescue or training event until further notice,
 - ii. the individual has been accused of a particular complaint, and that
 - iii. an Investigation Board will be appointed.
 - iv. Along with the letter may be copies of written materials, reports or documents on which the accusation is based.
 - b. The *Board of Directors* shall immediately convene an Investigation Board (see below).
- b) If the accusation is not of such a nature that the accused individual might not be able to safely participate in search and rescue or training activities, the *Board of Directors* shall request, in writing, that the accused individual provide the *Board* with a written response.

- a. If such a response is received within sixty (60) days, the *Board of Directors* shall attempt to resolve the complaint without recourse to further formal proceedings. If resolved satisfactorily, the *Board of Directors* will provide the accused individual and the complainant with identical copies of a single letter stating that the complaint has been satisfactorily resolved. If both parties are satisfied with this letter, the matter shall be closed.

Failure to Resolve: If the *Board of Directors* cannot bring the parties to a mutually acceptable resolution, or if the accused individual does not provide a written response within sixty (60) days, the *Board of Directors* shall appoint an Investigation Board.

- a) The Investigation Board shall consist of three (3) individuals. One member of the Investigation Board shall be a respected person who is unrelated to either the accuser or the accused individual (or acceptable to both if related) but who has general knowledge of the type of complaint in dispute. This individual shall chair the Investigation Board. One member shall be an elected or appointed officer of PSARC *Board of Directors*. One member shall be from the accused individuals PSARC member team. The accused individual and accuser shall have the right to reject, without specifying any cause, the first two appointments of the *Board* for each of the two positions. If a member of the Investigation Board cannot serve, the *Board* shall appoint a replacement, with the accused and accuser having the right to reject the first appointment *by the Board of Directors*. However, an individual who does not respond, within 60 days, to a registered letter to the PSARC member team's official address (or the individual's address if the individual has arranged with the Secretary for direct contact) with the *Boards* nomination(s), shall lose the right of rejecting the *Boards* appointee(s), and the *Boards* appointee(s) shall constitute the Investigation Board.²
- b) The *Board of Directors* shall provide the Investigation Board with all written materials and other evidence pertinent to the case. The Investigation Board shall ensure that the accused individual has copies of all such materials. The Investigation Board shall meet in person and shall discuss the complaint. The meeting of the Investigation Board shall be open only to the Investigation Board, the accused and accuser, and witnesses for both sides. The Investigation Board shall be empowered to request additional information from either accuser or accused individual. The Investigation Board shall inform the accused

² This is based this on the standard rejection of jurors used in federal trials, which helps ensure that the jury is acceptable to both sides.

individual of the sanctions that may be instituted by the Board of Directors. These are:

- a. No sanction.
 - b. A written reprimand.
 - c. A period of suspension from all PSARC activities, not to exceed one year.
 - d. Revocation of officer status and/or search and rescue certification.
 - e. A period of probation, the period to be set by the Investigation Board, but not more than one year. At the end this time the Investigation Board shall again meet and institute one of the other options above.
- c) The Investigation Board shall make no decision until the accused individual has had an opportunity to confront the accuser, and respond both verbally and in writing to all accusations. If an individual is unwilling or unable to meet with the Investigation Board within 60 days of official notification, by registered letter to the official PSARC team address (or the individual's address if the individual has arranged with the Secretary for direct contact) of possible meeting dates, places, and times, then the complaint shall become inactive. No individual with an inactive complaint against the individual may act as a delegate from a PSARC member team or may be nominated for or serve as an officer of PSARC until such time as the complaint is resolved according to the provisions of this policy. An individual may reactivate a complaint by official communication with the *Board of Directors* of PSARC.³
- a. **Presentation of Case:** Each side will be permitted to present evidence in the case and will follow the rules of evidence normally used.
 - b. **Examination of Witnesses:** Witnesses may be cross-examined by either side in the case.
 - c. **Summary of Case:** Each side will be allowed to summarize the evidence prior to Investigation Board discussion and decision.
- d) The Investigation Board shall base all its decisions on established standards of conduct for PSARC personnel; this shall include specific tasks assigned to an individual by the PSARC membership or Board of Directors. The Investigation Board shall make any such standards available, in writing, to both accuser and accused individual.

³ Items 1, 2, and 3 codify the basic rules of due process as established by the judicial system in the U.S.

- e) The Investigation Board may deem a complaint frivolous and present the President with a formal complaint against the originator of the original complaint, to be dealt with by the mechanisms of this Policy.
- f) The findings of the Investigation Board shall be final. The only recourse to Investigation Board findings and sanctions shall be through the court system.

2. Teams

This Policy: This policy is for discipline of PSARC team or a member of that team. Resigning a position does not remove an individual from proceedings under this policy. Resolution of issues of this type is rightly the responsibility of the individual teams. This policy defines actions in the event that the accused team is not capable of willing to take action.

Initial Charge: Any person with a complaint against any PSARC team or member of that team shall make such complaint in writing to the *Board of Directors*. Verbal complaints shall not invoke this or any other formal disciplinary process unless subsequently submitted in writing. Anonymous complaints shall not be accepted.

- a) Complaints will only be accepted if they charge specific violation of PSARC policy, procedures, or directives, or if they involve violations of Law.
- b) The written charge must state the specifics of the violation to include specific items violated, date of violation, names of witnesses, and other information that describes the violation.

Notification of Charge: The *Board of Directors* shall immediately provide a copy of the complaint to the President or Chief of the team against which the complaint is filed (the "accused team"). Sending a registered letter to the team at the PSARC member team's official address as recorded by the Secretary shall be the method for notifying the team. If the member team cannot or does not for any reason accept the written complaint, then the team shall no longer act as part of PSARC or represent itself as part of PSARC until the complaint is accepted and the complaint resolved according the further provisions of this policy. If a team believes that it has not been delivered the written complaint, the team President or Chief may contact PSARC at its official address to arrange for direct contact with PSARC. The *Board of Directors* shall provide the accused team with copies of any known written materials, reports or documents on which the accusation is based.

- c) If the accusation is of such a nature as to possibly prevent the accused team safely performing operations as far as participating in PSARC

search and rescue or training activities, the *Board of Directors* shall immediately place the accused team on suspension.

- a. Notification of suspension shall require that a registered letter be sent to the accused team, stating that
 - i. the accused team shall not represent itself as a PSARC team in any search and rescue or training event until further notice,
 - ii. the team has been accused of a particular complaint, and that
 - iii. An Investigation Board will be appointed.
 - iv. Along with the letter may be copies of written materials, reports or documents on which the accusation is based.
 - b. In the event of such a suspension, the *Board of Directors* shall immediately convoke an Investigation Board (see below).
- d) If the accusation is not of such a nature that the accused team might not be able to safely participate in search and rescue or training activities, the *Board of Directors* shall request, in writing, that the accused team provide the *Board of Directors* with a written response.
- a. If such a response is received within sixty (60) days, the *Board of Directors* shall attempt to resolve the complaint without recourse to further formal proceedings. If resolved satisfactorily, the *Board of Directors* will provide the accused team and the complainant with identical copies of a single letter stating that the complaint has been satisfactorily resolved. If both parties are satisfied with this letter, the matter shall be closed.

Failure to Resolve: If the *Board of Directors* cannot bring the parties to a mutually acceptable resolution, or if the accused team does not provide a written response within sixty (60) days, the *Board of Directors* shall appoint an Investigation Board.

- a) The Investigation Board shall consist of three (3) individuals. One member of the Investigation Board shall be a respected person who is unrelated to either the accuser or the accused individual (or acceptable to both if related) but who has general knowledge of the type of complaint in dispute. This individual shall chair the Investigation Board. One member shall be an elected or appointed officer of PSARC. One member shall be from the accused individual's PSARC member team. The accused team and accuser

shall have the right to reject, without specifying any cause, the first two appointments by the *Board of Directors* for each of the two positions. If a member of the Investigation Board cannot serve, the *Board of Directors* shall appoint a replacement, with the accused and accuser having the right to reject the first appointment by the *Board of Directors*. However, a team who does not respond, within 60 days, to a registered letter to the PSARC member team's official address with the *Boards* nomination(s), shall lose the right of rejecting the *Boards* appointee(s), and the *Boards* appointee(s) shall constitute the Investigation Board.

- b) The *Board of Directors* shall provide the Investigation Board with all written materials and other evidence pertinent to the case. The Investigation Board shall ensure that the accused team has copies of all such materials. The Investigation Board shall meet in person and shall discuss the complaint. The meeting of the Investigation Board shall be open only to the Investigation Board, the accused and accuser, and witnesses for both sides. The Investigation Board shall be empowered to request additional information from either accuser or accused individual. The Investigation Board shall inform the accused individual of the sanctions that it.
- c) The Investigation Board shall inform the accused individual of the sanctions that may be instituted by the Board of Directors. These are:
 - i. No sanction.
 - ii. A written reprimand.
 - iii. A period of suspension from all PSARC activities, not to exceed one year.
 - iv. Banning of the team from participating in PSARC activities or becoming a member of the PSARC.
 - v. A period of probation, the period to be set by the Investigation Board, but not more than one year. At the end this time the Investigation Board shall again meet and institute one of the other options above.
- d) The Investigation Board shall make no decision until the accused team has had an opportunity to confront the accuser, and respond both verbally and in writing to all accusations. If a team is unwilling or unable to meet with the Investigation Board within 60 days of official notification, by registered letter to the official PSARC team address of possible meeting dates, places, and times, then the complaint shall become inactive. No team with an inactive complaint against the team may represent itself as part of PSARC until such time as the complaint is resolved according to

the provisions of this policy. A team may reactivate a complaint by official communication with the President of PSARC.

- vi. **Presentation of Case:** Each side will be permitted to present evidence in the case and will follow the rules of evidence normally used.
 - vii. **Examination of Witnesses:** Witnesses may be cross-examined by either side in the case.
 - viii. **Summary of Case:** Each side will be allowed to summarize the evidence prior to Investigation Board discussion and decision.
- e) The Investigation Board shall base all its decisions on established standards of conduct for PSARC personnel; this shall include specific tasks assigned to an individual by the PSARC membership or Board of Directors. The Investigation Board shall make any such standards available, in writing, to both accuser and accused team.
- f) The Investigation Board may deem a complaint frivolous and present the *Board of Directors* with a formal complaint against the originator of the original complaint, to be dealt with by the mechanisms of this Policy.
- g) The findings of the Investigation Board shall be final. The only recourse to Investigation Board findings and sanctions shall be through the court system.

6. *Filling Unexpired Terms*

The PSARC By-Laws give the Board of Directors the power to fill vacancies. This policy is intended to give direction to the manner in which the new Officer or Board Member is chosen.

1. Officers

When a position of an Officer of the PSARC is to be filled, as identified in the By-Laws, Article IV Officers, the Membership will be asked to provide nominations to fill that position. This request will be sent to all teams using the PSARC email list. The Board may pick a replacement from these nominations or may choose another person to fill that position. Persons selected to fill the unexpired term must meet all of the requirements set forth in the By-laws. The person placed in the position should hold that position until the next scheduled election cycle for that position.

2. Regional Directors

When a position of Regional Director of the PSARC is to be filled, as identified in the By-Laws Article V – Board of Directors, 2 Composition, the Membership will be asked to provide nominations to fill that position. This request will be sent to all teams using the PSARC email list. The Board may pick a replacement from these nominations or may choose another person to fill that position. Persons selected to fill the unexpired term must meet all of the requirements set forth in the By-laws. The person placed in the position should hold that position until the next scheduled election cycle for that position.

7. Membership Policies

1. General Policies

General membership policies and procedures are to be defined and updated by the Membership Committee and brought to the Board of Directors for approval. All membership policies and procedures approved by the Board are to be documented in this manual by the Secretary.

2. Applying for Membership

A team that is applying for membership in the PSARC shall provide to the Membership Committee:

- (a) A copy of its By-Laws,
- (b) A copy of its Ethics policy or a signed copy of the PSARC ethics policy,
- (c) A copy of its Criminal Background Check policy for its members,
- (d) A check written on the team account for the first years dues,
- (e) The name of the current PSARC team that is sponsoring the applying team.

3. Role of the Sponsoring Team

The Sponsoring team is responsible for:

- (a) Assuring that the applying team is in fact a lost person search and rescue organization,
- (b) Assessing the applying team's ability to perform lost person search and rescue using currently accepted methods and techniques,
- (c) Reporting that assessment to the Membership Committee.

4. Criminal Background Checks

All PSARC teams in good standing shall have in place a policy that requires criminal background checks, in that teams home state, for every one of its members.

8. Standing Committees

1. SAR-EX

The SAR-EX committee is responsible for the organization and operation of the PSARC training event in the spring of each year. This committee is responsible for all aspects of this event including, but not limited to, securing instructors and speakers, securing the site, providing for meals during the event, providing for communications during the event, ensuring that all required permits are in place.

2. Operations

The Operations Committee is responsible for defining all policies and procedures that deal with operational issues of the PSARC. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining the PSARC team call out list, maintaining the PSARC team resource list, setting standards for PSARC Operational Levels, setting standards for PSARC training certifications.

3. Membership

The Membership Committee is responsible for all policies and procedures dealing with team membership in the PSARC. This includes, but is not limited to, providing information upon request about membership in the PSARC, gathering the application and required information from teams that wish to join the PSARC, presenting such information to the Membership when a vote on the application is held.

4. Legislative

The Legislative Committee is responsible for having the issues of the PSARC and of lost person search in the Commonwealth come before the legislature or specific Representatives. Additionally, it is the responsibility to present to the PSARC Board and Membership any current or proposed legislation that would affect the PSARC or the performance of lost person search and rescue in the Commonwealth. This Committee is forbidden by the PSARC By-Laws from supporting or opposing any political campaign of any political candidate.

5. Committee List

A list of Committees and Committee Chairs will be maintained by the Secretary and published on the PSARC Website.

9. PSARC Officer and Board of Directors Election Schedules

1. Actions at Quarterly Meetings

Month	Event
February Meeting	President reads positions up for election this year. Nominating committee is formed.
May Meeting	First reading of nominations for positions by the Nominating Committee. Ask for Nominations from the floor.
August Meeting	Second reading of Nominees by the Nominating Committee. Ask for Nominations from the floor. Motion accepted to close Nominations. Motion accepted for Secretary to cast ballot for uncontested positions.
September	Send out ballots (See By-Laws for details)
November Meeting	Elections. Officers take place immediately after the election.

2. Officer and Board Term Schedule

2001	President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Eastern Board, Central Board, Northeastern Board
2003	President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Northwestern Board, Western Board, At-Large Board
2005	President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Eastern Board, Central Board, Northeastern Board
2007	President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Northwestern Board, Western Board, At-Large Board

10. Meetings, Notices & Proxies

1. Meetings

In accordance with the Bylaws the Board of Directors shall meet from time to time, holding no less than one meeting in any calendar year. The general membership of the PSARC shall meet no less than once a year. The Board and the Membership may call for additional meetings as detailed in the Bylaws or as needed.

2. Notices

Notice of regular meetings shall be provided in accordance with the Bylaws. Notices provided by electronic means, either email or on the PSARC Web Site shall be acceptable as written notice.

3. Proxies

Proxies for voting at meetings may be sent to the PSARC Secretary, to be received before the meeting within a reasonable time period that the Secretary may declare from time to time.

4. Setting dates and times for PSARC general meetings

The time and date for standing PSARC meetings shall be set at the November meeting of the PSARC. Times and dates for four standing meetings in the next calendar year shall be set at this time. The four meeting dates may be set to occur:

- Second Saturday in February
- During SAR-EX
- Second Saturday of August
- Second Saturday of November

These dates may be changed or meetings eliminated by the PSARC Board of Directors or PSARC General Membership.

5. Electronic PSARC Board votes

The PSARC Board of Directors may vote electronically on items that come before them. The item that is to be voted on shall be sent to each member of the Board by the President in an email message. The Board member shall vote on the item by replying to the entire list of addresses associated with the email item with an Aye, Nay, or Abstain. Quorum and majority voting requirements shall be the same as for non-electronic Board votes. An expiration date or duration for the vote may be invoked. Anyone not voting during the allotted time period will not have their vote counted. The total number of votes must meet the quorum test.

11. Code of Ethics

As a Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council Organization, we agree to abide and honor the following values:

- ❖ As a volunteer search and rescue provider we agree to furnish search and rescue services and care, to the best of our abilities and training, to any individual who is missing or injured and in need of these services. We will do so regardless of race, sex, religion, cultural background, sexual preference and economic or social condition.
- ❖ We ensure that, in the performance of our duties, we will conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity and shall not misrepresent ourselves, or any member of our team, beyond our abilities or training.
- ❖ We will not seek publicity or financial retribution for our team, ourselves as an individual, in response to any search.
- ❖ Our first and foremost thoughts, at a search, will be to provide the most immediate response, and best of care to the missing or injured individual or persons, while ensuring the safety of all searchers involved.
- ❖ We agree to work in unity with all responding search personnel, called upon by the organizers of the search and know and respect the chain of command.
- ❖ We shall at all times conduct ourselves in a manner which does not discredit the PSARC and shall not be disrespectful, insolent, mutinous or insubordinate in attitude or conduct and be courteous and respectful in our official dealings with the public, fellow members, superiors, and subordinates.
- ❖ We support the rights of the victim to the utmost of discretion, on our part, in the matter of confidentiality of privileged information.
- ❖ We believe that we not only have an obligation to advance our knowledge and skills in relation to the search and rescue field; but also agree to assist, to the best of our abilities, with the development and training of any individual or team truly interested in this endeavor.
- ❖ No use or transportation of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- ❖ No firearms allowed on deployments.
- ❖ Do not utilize equipment or take possessions without expressed permission.
- ❖ Remain ready for duty, even when unassigned.
- ❖ Maintain all personal protective equipment and wear it when appropriate.

As an Officer of the following organization I realize that my signature upon this document instills, upon my team, certain responsibilities and conduct by which I/we are willing to enforce and abide.

Use of Electronic Communications

As electronic communications become a more critical part of the operation of the PSARC it is imperative that the PSARC web site and mailing lists be well maintained and updated in a timely manner.

1. PSARC Webmaster

The PSARC Webmaster is a Board appointed position. The Webmaster is responsible for the creation and maintenance of all forms of electronic communications used by the PSARC. These forms include, but are not limited to, the PSARC web site and the PSARC mailing list. The Web Master is responsible for validating information to be posted on the PSARC web site to the extent that the information must come from an authorized source, i.e. Financial from the Treasurer, membership and minutes from the Secretary, Operations from Operations Chair, Administration from the President, Legislative from the Legislative Chair, and Public Relations from the Public Relations Chair. The Webmaster is responsible for timely updates to the Website site.

2. Acceptable use of the PSARC Email lists

The Pennsylvania Search & Rescue Council email list server is for exchanging information pertinent to the PSARC and its member teams. Acceptable and appropriate types of information for posting on the server are, for example: Training announcements, Council business, Ideas and discussion on council issues.

This list server is not intended or provided for the purpose of “flame wars”, propagating derogatory comments of other teams, organizations, council members or individuals or any issue, derogatory or otherwise, that does not pertain to the Pennsylvania Search & Rescue Council.

In any case, remarks or comments that may be considered unprofessional by anyone or may offend someone are a violation of this use policy. The data transmitted must be objective and of business in nature.

If any of the aforementioned unacceptable postings occur, perpetrator(s) of such entries will be banned from the email list serve of the Pennsylvania Search & Rescue Council, pending review by the Board of Directors. The decision of the Board of Directors is final.

12. Allowable Use of the PSARC Emblem/Logo and Name

The PSARC logo is the Council's primary method of identifying the PSARC and its members. As such, its use must be guarded with the same attention given to any corporate trade mark.

1. Use of the PSARC Logo and Name

The PSARC Name, patch and logo is the most readily recognized symbol of the organization. Its use on missions or for official business is encouraged. The use of the PSARC logo shall be limited to official PSARC or Member Team business (including but not limited to training, missions and meetings). This does not prohibit the use of the name or patch on personal items provided those items are used while engaged in PSARC activities.

2. Display of the PSARC patch by Non-PSARC organizations

Non-PSARC organizations or individuals may receive PSARC patches for display in patch collections or other appropriate displays through request of the PSARC Directors.

13. Situations Not Covered

In the event of a situation not covered in this document or the PSARC Bylaws, the PSARC *Board of Directors* may then confer with Members of the Council to acquire information as required by the situation, but within the intent and scope of this manual or the PSARC Bylaws. Such action shall require approval of the Board of Directors.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY SECTION!

Our Board members, member teams, lost subjects and victims trust us to respect their privacy and dignity at all times. Therefore no one is permitted to disclose any form of confidential information relating to them.

Confidentiality is the preservation of information disclosed in a professional working relationship. All of the information you gain regarding Board members, member teams, lost subjects and victims is confidential. Disclosure of such information could make you legally liable for violating confidentiality laws.

All records and information, including names, concerning individuals are confidential. General information, policy statements, or statistical material not identified with any particular information is not considered confidential.

Breaching confidentiality or giving information to an unauthorized individual would be interpreted as acting outside the scope of your duties and the PSARC will not support you in the event of legal action.