



**1-70 OPEN SPACE UNIT**

**Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s), and Rescinded Special Order(s):**

A. Related SOP(s)

- 1-78 Police Service Aide (PSA) Program (Formerly 4-6)
- 2-1 Uniforms (Formerly 2-06)
- 3-31 Physical Fitness Assessment (Formerly 3-83)

B. Form(s)

None

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

None

**1-70-1 Purpose**

The purpose of the Open Space Unit is to protect, maintain, and manage areas designated as City of Albuquerque Open Space, areas that are outside City limits, and within Bernalillo County through strict law enforcement and by educating the community about the use and preservation of the designated areas.

**1-70-2 Policy**

It is the policy of the Albuquerque Police Department (Department) to provide a specialized unit to patrol designated areas.

N/A

**1-70-3 Definitions**

A. Dive Team

1. Department personnel who provide professional and technical recovery capabilities in the aquatic environment both locally, and throughout the State of New Mexico, if requested. The Dive Team works jointly with the New Mexico State Police Dive Team, which is subject to being activated by the federal government as needed. The Dive Team is comprised of Open Space Unit sworn personnel, including:
  - a. Dive Sergeant: The direct supervisor of the Dive Team during dive operations;
  - b. Dive Team Leader: A team member who is selected to be the team leader based on their performance and experience;



- c. Dive Team Instructor: A team member who has been certified as a dive instructor by Scuba Schools International (SSI) or the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) with at least one (1) year experience on the Dive Team;
- d. Dive Control Specialist: A team member who has been certified by SSI or PADI as a Dive Control Specialist or assistant instructor;
- e. Diver: A team member who has been certified in SSI standards, who has obtained specialized training for collection and recovery of evidence and crime scene processing in the water, who is swift water rescue certified, and who maintains additional standards as established by the Dive Team Sergeant; and
- f. Collateral Diver: A part-time team member who is normally assigned to a unit other than the Open Space Unit, who maintains the same standards as a full-time Diver, and, when activated, reports to the Open Space Unit chain of command.

B. Open Space

Areas of land that are designated in the City's adopted plan for major Open Space and acquired by the City of Albuquerque; that are any other lands designated at the time of acquisition or subsequently; and that are any lands for which the City has assumed control or management responsibility by lease, easement, or legal agreement.

C. Search and Rescue (SAR) Team

Department personnel who respond to any search and/or rescue operation within Bernalillo County, New Mexico, and around the State of New Mexico as requested. The Search and Rescue Team works jointly with the New Mexico State Police, and functions as a type of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) team, which may be activated by the federal government as needed.

**7** 1-70-4 **Open Space Unit Selection, Testing, and Training**

A. Sworn Personnel Selection

- 1. Sworn personnel who apply for a position with the Open Space Unit shall be aware that the position is strictly voluntary. Sworn personnel who volunteer with the Open Space Unit shall be members of the SAR Team and the Dive Team.
- 2. The selection process shall consist of the SAR physical fitness test, a rappelling test, and an oral board test.
- 3. Open Space Unit candidates shall have:
  - a. Basic first aid medical training, preferably licensed as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B) obtained within one (1) year of accepting a position;
    - i. The Department will make an exception based on the lack of available EMT B classes.



- b. A general knowledge of the outlying geographical areas of Bernalillo County;
- c. The willingness and ability to work in elevated positions and/or with helicopters;
- d. Experience in teaching, training, and a basic mechanical aptitude; and
- e. The ability to perform general maintenance and repairs to vehicles and equipment.

4. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or their designee shall review past performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, and other performance information when determining an applicant's suitability.

- a. Candidates with a sustained complaint or chargeable traffic accident within the past year will be considered unsuitable unless the totality of the circumstances involved in the complaint or accident include mitigating factors that indicate suitability.

5. The Dive Team Leader is selected to assist the Dive Sergeant with mission planning and deployment of sworn personnel during incidents.

6. The Dive Team Instructor is selected from current members of the Dive Team, based on performance and experience.

7. The Dive Control Specialist is selected from current members of the Dive Team, based on performance and experience.

## B. Testing

### 1. Swim Test

- a. Six-hundred (600) yard snorkel mask and fins, four-hundred (400) yard free-style, with no stopping or holding the side of the pool or lane lines.
- b. Fifty (50) yard weighted belt (10 lbs.) swim.
- c. Fifty (50) yard Brick Swim: Both hands must remain on the brick at all times.
- d. Fifty (50) yard Tank Push: No slamming or shoving the tank while maintaining control of the tank.
- e. Twenty (20) minute water tread, last two (2) minutes hands out of water.

### 2. Physical Training (PT) Test

- a. Candidates shall pass the Department Physical Fitness Assessment with a performance in the top tier of the "Good" category and no less than the bottom tier of the "Good" category, consistent with SOP Physical Fitness Assessment.

3. Pack Test: Open Space Unit candidates shall be able to hike Pino Trail in four (4) hours with a twenty-five (25) pound pack.

4. Rappel Test: Open Space Unit candidates shall use their own equipment to complete a forty foot (40') rappel.



5. Quarterly Testing

- a. All Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall pass quarterly physical fitness and proficiency testing.

January	Proficiency Testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rope system;</li> <li>• Raising and lower systems (MPD, 540);</li> <li>• Litter Packaging; and</li> <li>• Rappel system.</li> </ul> Dive Systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scuba system assembly; and</li> <li>• Underwater skills test.</li> </ul>
April	Department PT Test: The Open Space Unit candidate shall pass the Department Physical Fitness Assessment with a performance in the top tier of the “Good” category and no less than the bottom tier of the “Good” category, consistent with Physical Fitness Assessment.
July	Swim Testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dive Team swim test;</li> <li>• Open Space Unit swim test.</li> </ul>
October	SAR Pack Test

**7** 1-70-5 **Open Space Unit**

A. General Rules and Responsibilities

1. The Open Space Sergeant(s) shall:

- a. Provide direct supervision of Department personnel assigned to the Open Space Unit;
- b. Be responsible for the Open Space Unit's daily activities; and
- c. Manage the SAR Team and Dive Team.

2. Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall:

- a. Patrol open space lands that are outside of the City limits and within Bernalillo County;
  - i. Responding Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall notify the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) of all violent crimes that occur in these areas. Primary investigation responsibility shall be determined based upon the:



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL ORDERS

SOP 1-70 (Formerly 6-11)

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1. Type of crime;
  2. Capabilities; and
  3. Resources that are available in the area.
- b. Routinely patrol areas that are not formally declared Open Space areas but are inaccessible by Field Service Bureau (FSB) patrol cars;
  - c. Be cross-commissioned law enforcement officers;
  - d. Participate in SAR and Dive Team operations as directed;
  - e. Provide patrol and security for infrastructure assets not accessible by passenger vehicle. Open Space Unit personnel are responsible for securing these facilities at their designated closing times;
  - f. Work varied and extended hours based on the needs of the Open Space Unit;
  - g. Respond to call-outs when not on-call;
  - h. Travel out of town for SAR or dive missions;
  - i. Maintain a high level of physical fitness;
  - j. Be physically capable of performing SAR and dive missions;
  - k. Pass a quarterly Open Space Unit testing;
  - l. Purchase personal gear, such as mountaineering clothing, as necessary;
  - m. Patrol and take calls for service within all designated Open Space areas; and
  - n. During on-call rotation, be available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week for SAR and Dive Team operations, unless leave has been approved by the Open Space Unit Sergeant.
    - i. Open Space Unit sworn personnel cannot be on any other form of call status other than their Open Space Unit responsibilities unless special circumstances arise.
3. Open Space Unit Police Service Aide's (PSA) shall:
- a. Be used to supplement patrols and respond to calls for service in open space land and areas that are not formally declared Open Space areas but are inaccessible by FSB patrol vehicles;
  - b. Operate in accordance with the direction provided by the Open Space Unit chain of command;
  - c. Provide patrol and security for infrastructure assets not accessible by passenger vehicle. Open Space Unit personnel are responsible for securing these facilities at their designated closing times;
  - d. Address any criminal activity that is discovered or observed as outlined in SOP Police Service Aide Program and directed by their chain of command; and
  - e. Meet any training and physical requirements ordered by the Open Space Unit chain of command.
    - i. Open Space Unit PSA's may be required to complete specialized training or meet minimum physical requirements. These additional requirements will be based on the safety standards for any specialized job functions.

N/A



- ii. The Open Space Unit chain of command shall document any additional requirements in writing and a copy of the order shall be kept on file with an Open Space Unit supervisor.

**B. Vehicle Lock-Ins**

1. When the gates at open space trail heads are being closed or locked and there are vehicles that are parked in the parking areas after posted park hours and are required to be locked in overnight, Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall:
  - a. At the appropriate hour, announce over their Public Address (PA) system that the park is closed and that the owners of the remaining vehicle(s) must return to their vehicle immediately;
  - b. Ensure that signs are clearly posted with hours of operation;
    - i. If the hours of operation are not posted, a work order shall be placed with the Open Space Unit.
  - c. Run the vehicle license plate for stolen vehicle reports, informational be on the lookout (BOLO) reports, and/or missing person alerts;
  - d. Indicate the vehicle description, license plate, and time of gate closure on the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system; and
  - e. Not be dispatched to unlock gates.
    - i. The gates will reopen the following day at 0700.
2. Any Department personnel assisting in the locking of gates shall abide by the directives set forth in this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
  - a. Department personnel shall advise the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) Dispatcher that the vehicle is a lock-in at the respective park.
  - b. The ECC Dispatcher shall make a dispatch log note of this information.

**C. Open Space Wild Land Fires**

1. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or their designee shall coordinate with the Open Space Unit, Albuquerque Fire Rescue (AFR), Bernalillo County Fire Department (BCFD), and the State Forestry Department to evaluate the fire danger in the Open Space areas.
2. In the event of a fire, Open Space Unit supervisors shall ensure that AFR, BCFD, or the jurisdictional fire department is notified.
3. Open Space Unit personnel shall:
  - a. Concentrate patrols within the high-risk areas during extreme fire conditions to reduce the fire danger;
  - b. Thoroughly shall investigate all calls for service that involve possible fires or smoke within the Open Space areas;
  - c. Establish a Unified Command in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS);



- d. Staff the access points that best allow fire equipment to access the area;
- e. Start an evacuation of park visitors, contractors, or other persons in the area;  
and
- f. Set up a perimeter to keep non-public safety personnel out of the area.

**D. Methods of Patrol**

1. Due to varied terrain and special challenges in providing law enforcement coverage in and around Open Space areas, Open Space Unit personnel shall use several methods of routine and emergency patrol:
  - a. SUV Vehicle Patrol: To combat terrain challenges in Open Space areas.
  - b. Foot Patrol: To check bridges transecting Open Space areas and to deter illegal activities in the Bosque and foothill areas.
  - c. Bike Patrol: To patrol all Open Space areas.
  - d. ATV/Motorcycle Patrol: To patrol rugged and inaccessible areas, as well as general Open Space areas.
  - e. Hovercraft Patrol: To patrol the Rio Grande River for routine patrol, Bosque closure scenarios, and for emergency or special operations situations.
  - f. Airboat Patrol: To patrol the Rio Grande river for routine patrol, Bosque closure scenarios, and for emergency or Special Operations situations.

**E. Equipment**

1. Open Space Unit personnel shall use specialized equipment, including, but not limited to:
  - a. All-terrain vehicles (AVT);
  - b. Airboat;
  - c. Hovercraft;
  - d. Off-road motorcycles;
  - e. Mountain bikes;
  - f. Side-by-Side off-road vehicles;
  - g. 4x4 patrol vehicles; and
  - h. All SAR and dive equipment.

**F. Uniform and Patch**

1. Open Space Unit personnel shall abide by the uniform requirements outlined in SOP Uniforms.
  - a. The on-duty supervisor may approve modification of the Open Space Unit uniform while working in an adverse environment and/or terrain.
  - b. Open Space Unit personnel shall be authorized to wear the Open Space Unit patch and shall wear the patch in accordance with SOP Uniforms.



2. Open Space Unit PSA uniforms shall be determined by the Open Space Unit Commander.

**7 1-70-5 Search and Rescue (SAR)**

- A. The Search and Rescue Program shall be administered by the Open Space Unit chain of command.

B. Selection

1. Minimum Qualifications

- a. Sworn personnel shall:
  - i. Have a minimum of two (2) years as a police officer with the Department and shall have completed the probationary period;
  - ii. Be willing to be "on call" and respond on a twenty-four (24) hour per day basis;
  - iii. Be in good physical condition and able to work in severe terrain and weather conditions;
  - iv. Pass the SAR physical fitness standards on a quarterly basis; and
  - v. Be able to give directions clearly to communicate effectively with individuals in a variety of circumstances, speak before large groups, and be willing to work flexible shifts and varying hours.

2. Selection Process

- a. The selection process shall consist of the SAR physical fitness test, a rappelling test, and oral board test.
- b. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or their designee shall review past performance evaluations, disciplinary actions and other performance information when making a determination about an applicant's suitability.
  - i. Candidates with a sustained complaint or chargeable traffic accident within the past year may not be considered depending on the totality of the circumstances involved.
- c. Candidates shall have:
  - i. Basic first aid medical training, preferably licensed as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B) obtained within one (1) year of accepting a position;
    1. The Department will make an exception based on the lack of available EMT-B classes.
  - ii. A general knowledge of the outlying geographical areas of Bernalillo County;
  - iii. The willingness and ability to work at heights and/or with helicopters;
  - iv. Experience in teaching, training, and a basic mechanical aptitude; and
  - v. The ability to perform general maintenance and repairs to vehicles and equipment.





C. Physical Fitness Standard

1. SAR team personnel shall be able to carry all SAR and medical equipment during operations. SAR team personnel shall operate in extreme terrain, under harsh weather conditions.
2. SAR team personnel shall be required to maintain a physical fitness standard, which shall be tested quarterly.
3. A SAR team member who fails to pass the physical test in the allotted time shall be taken off on-call status for ninety (90) days.
  - a. They shall then have up to ninety (90) days to train, prepare, and practice for retesting.
  - b. If at the end of ninety (90) days they cannot pass the test, they shall be removed from the Open Space Unit.

4. Physical Fitness Standards

- a. SAR Team personnel shall be able to swim fifty (50) meters in Battle Dress Uniform (BDU) style pants with a ten (10) pound weighted belt. No stopping or assistance from any object or person.
- b. For the pack test, SAR Team personnel shall be able to hike Pino trail #140 to Crest trail #130S and return within four (4) hours.

i. Start location:

N 35° 9.704'	W 106° 28.191'	Elena Gallegos parking lot
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ii. Turn around point:

N 35° 10.144'	W 106° 24.850'	Pino Trail: South Crest Trail junction.
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iii. SAR Team personnel shall start and finish with a minimum twenty-five (25) pound pack.

iv. SAR Team personnel shall have SAR/survival gear.

D. Certifications, Training, and Testing

1. Certifications

- a. NM SAR Certification: SAR Team personnel shall be certified through New Mexico State Police Search and Rescue (NMSAR) or certified in an equivalent program.
- b. During their assignment, SAR Team personnel shall obtain and maintain the following certifications:
  - i. New Mexico State Police Search & Rescue;
  - ii. Wilderness Rope Rescue Level I & II;



- iii. Swift Water & Flood Control Rescue;
- iv. Airboat;
- v. Hovercraft;
- vi. ATV/UTV;
- vii. Bike Patrol;
- viii. Alternate Carry Course;
- ix. Horse familiarization; and
- x. Aviation familiarization.

## 2. Training

- a. SAR Team personnel shall attend all training unless excused.
  - i. SAR Team personnel shall notify the SAR Team Supervisor that they will miss or have missed training.
  - ii. SAR Team personnel shall complete all mandatory training and makeup training to maintain currency.
  - iii. SAR Team personnel who have not completed all mandatory training may be required to remain at the SAR command post to assist with logistics and support functions during rescue operations.
  - iv. SAR Team personnel with poor training attendance, or have an attendance rate of less than eighty percent (80%) shall be considered for dismissal from the Open Space Unit.
- b. Training is normally conducted to maintain proper operational proficiency in the following general areas:
  - i. Technical rope rescue Techniques;
  - ii. Helicopter operations;
  - iii. Medical treatment;
  - iv. Land navigation;
  - v. Wilderness search techniques;
  - vi. Wilderness survival techniques;
  - vii. Alpine search and rescue operations (snow and ice);
  - viii. Swift water rescue operations; and
  - ix. Man-tracking techniques.
- c. SAR Team personnel shall participate in weekly training.
- d. SAR Team personnel shall continually train with other agencies and participate in specialized training opportunities to enhance skills or techniques.
  - i. Mandated monthly rope training may be conducted with AFR, BCFD, Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council, and the National Guard.

## 3. Testing

- a. SAR Team personnel shall conduct their swim and pack test during the months of July and October.
  - i. A SAR Team officer who fails to pass the physical test in the allotted time shall be taken off on-call status for ninety (90) days.



- ii. A SAR Team officer shall have up to ninety (90) days to train, prepare, and practice for retesting.
- iii. If at the end of ninety (90) days they cannot pass the test, they shall be removed from the Open Space Unit.

E. General Responsibilities

1. The SAR Team Coordinator shall be a lieutenant who has overall responsibility for the team, including budget, personnel, equipment, and training.
2. The SAR Team supervisor shall:
  - a. Oversee all phases of the SAR Program;
  - b. Be responsible for the selection, training, evaluation, and use of all personnel;
  - c. Be responsible for the completion of all SAR incidents and the coordination of efforts with all other agencies, specifically AFR Technical Rescue, or individuals;
  - d. Be responsible for the maintenance, upkeep, and inventory of all SAR Team equipment and supplies; and
  - e. Provide the on-call roster to the ECC, the New Mexico Search and Rescue Coordinator, AFR, BCFD, and BCSO.
    - i. The Open Space Unit Supervisor shall approve any changes to the on-call SAR Team roster and shall notify the ECC of the changes.
3. SAR Team personnel shall:
  - a. On a weekly basis, rotate primary on-call responsibilities;
  - b. Conduct or provide all training and direct new team members on all search and/or rescue incidents;
  - c. Respond to and handle search and/or rescue incidents on a twenty-four (24) hour a day, call-out basis in all of Bernalillo County;
  - d. Provide training to other members of the Department as needed;
  - e. During SAR operations, adhere to the basic SAR principle: Locate, Access, Stabilize, and Transport, (LAST);
  - f. Teach specialty classes to other Department personnel;
    - i. SAR Team personnel shall teach and make presentations to a variety of public groups and gatherings in the various areas involving search and rescue or wilderness preparedness techniques.
    - ii. SAR Team personnel shall actively pursue preventive search and rescue programs and forums to educate the public and reduce search and rescue incidents.
  - g. Maintain and service assigned equipment and vehicles;
  - h. When appropriate, use aircraft when searching for emergency locator transmitters (ELT), missing aircraft, and missing persons;
    - i. Wear a uniform that is suitable based on terrain and weather environment; and
    - j. Be responsible for initial primary patient care until help arrives.



#### 4. Patient Transport

- a. Normally, SAR Team personnel will conduct operations for the sole purpose of safely extricating persons from extreme and/or hazardous locations and SAR Team personnel will not transport a patient to a medical facility.
- b. Once a person is safely extricated from the location, SAR Team personnel shall transfer the person for care to qualified medical transport personnel if medical attention is needed.
  - i. If the patient's condition is serious and transport resources are unavailable or impractical as determined by the SAR Team Medic, SAR Team Leader, and Officer-In-Charge, SAR Team personnel may transport a patient to a medical facility in a lifesaving effort.
  - ii. SAR Team personnel shall use medically-equipped helicopters for transporting persons when injuries dictate or transport time is a critical factor.
  - iii. SAR Team personnel shall work with and coordinate activities with all rescue agencies to ensure the best care for the person.

#### F. Swift Water and Flood Control Rescue

1. SAR Team personnel shall successfully complete a nationally-recognized swift water rescue training course with AFR and shall recertify annually.
2. SAR Team personnel shall successfully complete a nationally-recognized flood control water rescue training course with AFR and shall recertify annually.

#### G. Alpine SAR

SAR Team personnel shall be responsible for alpine searches and rescues in snow and ice.

#### H. Call-Out Procedures

1. Call-out requests for SAR Team personnel shall be made through the ECC; however, SAR Team personnel requests may also come directly from other agencies that have a copy of the SAR Team on-call roster.
2. The ECC Supervisor shall notify the SAR Team Supervisor or their designee of the request for SAR services.
  - a. SAR Supervisors are then notified to respond to a designated area and to establish a Command Post or staging area with the appropriate equipment that is necessary to complete the operation.



3. The Mission Coordinator or Officer-In-Charge (OIC) shall request all necessary support services that may be needed.
4. The Mission Coordinator or OIC shall notify any agency whose jurisdiction in which the operation may be taking place, if they are not requesting services.

I. Chain of Command for SAR Operations

1. SAR Incident Commander (IC)

- a. The Incident Commander (IC) shall be responsible for all personnel and shall oversee the overall operation.
- b. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or Sergeant shall act as the IC. However, a representative of the command staff may act as the IC on a large-scale operation or delegated to a Department officer during minor incidents.

2. SAR Team Leader

- a. The Team Leader shall be responsible for the operational completion of SAR activity during an operation; however, supervisory personnel may assume the position of SAR Team Leader in complex operations. Sworn personnel may assume responsibility in simple incidents not requiring the need to make significant decisions to ensure completion.
- b. The SAR Team Leader shall be at a location that is away from the command post operational area.

3. SAR Edge Person

- a. The SAR Edge Person shall act as a signal relay between the raise/lower team and a rescuer who is over the edge of a high-angle drop. The SAR Edge Person shall be secured by a safety or rappel line.
- b. The SAR Edge Person shall maintains open communication between the rescuer(s) who are down-rope and the raise/lower team.
- c. The SAR Edge Person shall assist victims, litters, and rescuers in getting over the edge of a drop.
- d. The SAR Edge Person shall place and maintain edge protection for ropes.

J. Mountain Rescue Helicopter Operations

1. The Mission Coordinator or SAR Team supervisor shall document their justification to use the Department helicopter as a rescue tool during SAR operations based on various circumstances and criteria, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Nature and extent of injuries;
  - b. Weather conditions and forecast;
  - c. Location of victim both in remoteness and accessibility;
  - d. Logistics and manpower needs and availability; and



e. Practicality of mission completion through other means.

2. After the Mission Coordinator and SAR Team supervisor justify their use of the Department helicopter, they shall request it by adhering to the call-out procedures outlined in this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

#### K. Mountain Rescue Operational Guidelines

##### 1. General Safety

- a. SAR Team personnel shall:
  - i. Use a safety line during all operations where there is potential risk of a fall;
    1. The Mountain Safety Officer shall determine the location of the placement of the safety line and shall approve all exceptions through the SAR Team Leader or SAR Team supervisor.
  - ii. Use gloves when handling a working rope in an operation that is loaded or has the potential to be loaded, unless it is impractical or unsafe to do so; and
  - iii. Wear a Department-approved harness and helmet while working in a vertical environment.

#### L. Rappel Guidelines

1. SAR Team personnel shall not begin rappel without having all equipment and connections checked by the Mountain Safety Officer or their designee unless it is unsafe or impractical to do so.
  - a. SAR Team personnel shall do all rappels on a minimum of a 7/16" (11-mm) static kern mantle line.
  - b. SAR Team personnel shall practice the single-line rappel technique to maintain proficiency.
  - c. SAR Team personnel shall use a belay line for single line rappels when used for rescues and exposures. SAR Team personnel shall evaluate hazards to minimize risk.

#### M. Equipment and Vehicles

1. SAR Team personnel shall be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of all equipment and vehicles assigned to the SAR Team.
  - a. Emergency Response Vehicles:
    - i. Each officer assigned to the SAR Team shall be responsible for a four-wheel drive (4WD) emergency response vehicle.
    - ii. Each vehicle contains the necessary and minimum team equipment needed to successfully complete the majority of rescue situations.



- iii. Each SAR Team officer shall be responsible for the maintenance, upkeep, and repair of emergency response vehicles to ensure the vehicles are in good, serviceable condition.
- b. Specialty Vehicles:
  - i. SAR Team personnel shall maintain their certifications and familiarity with the maintenance and operation of specialty vehicles.
  - ii. Under normal circumstances, SAR Team personnel shall be the only persons authorized to operate the vehicles.
  - iii. The SAR Team Safety Officer or OIC may authorize SAR Team personnel to wear a helmet and any other gear considered appropriate for the situation or terrain; in some instances, SAR Team personnel may wear a helmet during Bosque patrol due to a required low speed, limited visibility through foliage and other shrubbery, and face-to-face contacts with the community.

**7** 1-70-6 **Dive Team**

A. Dive Team Rules and Responsibilities

1. The Dive Team Supervisor shall:

- a. Assess information about the call for service from the on-scene supervisor or the Department employee who is requesting assistance;
- b. Determine whether a full call-out or partial call-out of the Dive Team is required in coordination with the IC or their designee;
- c. Secure transportation of Dive Team personnel and equipment if necessary;
- d. Assume supervision of the mission and coordinate activities under the direction of the IC or Dive Team Commander;
- e. Continuously assess the possibility of increasing or decreasing Dive Team manning levels;
- f. Provide updates to the Open Space Unit chain of command;
- g. Provide information to the Department Public Information Officer (PIO), if necessary;
- h. When applicable, provide an After-Action Report in accordance with the guidelines in the Emergency Operations Plan;
- i. When requested, provide a Supplemental Report;
- j. Inspect and secure all Dive Team equipment by using the applicable, approved methods for maintenance;
- k. Maintain Dive Team personnel rosters, line-ups, gear maintenance schedules, physical schedules, expense logs, reports, and any other documentation as required to administer the Dive Team;
- l. Inspect dive logs to ensure accuracy;
- m. Maintain training records for all Dive Team personnel;
- n. Promptly notify the Department Safety Officer of any injury and prepare necessary reports as required; and
- o. Conduct an annual inventory and physical inspection of all Department-issued equipment.



2. A Dive Team member shall:

- a. When on call, promptly respond to call-outs;
  - i. In the event a Dive Team member cannot respond to a call-out, a Dive Team member shall notify the Dive Team Supervisor.
- b. Report to the staging area that is equipped and prepared to respond to the event;
- c. Comply with procedures and protocols as trained, with safety as a priority for all Dive Team personnel and victims;
- d. Promptly report all equipment malfunctions, and all lost, stolen, or damaged equipment to the on-scene supervisor;
- e. Report all incidents of injury to the on-scene supervisor;
- f. Inspect all equipment prior to usage and after each event as required by protocols;
- g. Report any maintenance needed to the supervisor;
- h. Write Uniform Incident Reports or Supplemental Reports of any activity as required;
- i. Maintain accurate dive logs for inspection by Dive Team supervisors;
- j. Ensure equipment is available for immediate use;
- k. Report all training attended to the Dive Team Sergeant and the Academy Division;
- l. Participate in training to maintain proficiency as required;
- m. Demonstrate an acceptable physical assessment level by maintaining an overall score of eighty percent (80%) in the Department Physical Assessment standards;
- n. Pass the Dive Team and Open Space Unit swim tests;
- o. Stay current on all vaccines as deemed necessary by the Safety Officer;
- p. Rotate the primary on-call responsibility among all Dive Team personnel on a weekly basis;
- q. Maintain a minimum of an eighty percent (80%) participation rate in all training and call-outs during a twelve (12) month period on a rotating calendar year; and
- r. Have an Open Space Unit supervisor approve any changes to the on-call roster and shall notify the ECC of the changes.

B. Activation of the Dive Team

1. Dive Team Deployment

- a. The Dive Team Sergeant shall:
  - i. Contact the on-scene supervisor for a briefing about the situation;
  - ii. Evaluate the circumstances and determine whether an immediate or delayed Dive Team response shall be most appropriate based primarily on safety;
    1. The Dive Team Sergeant or Team Leader shall be authorized to refuse a mission if it cannot be safely executed in accordance with established diving protocols.





- b. Prior to committing to a dive mission, the Dive Team Supervisor or their designee shall:
  - i. Conduct the risk-benefit field analysis to identify the risks and identify the benefit of conducting the dive at each site;
  - ii. Ensure that a fully-dressed Safety Diver is prepared to immediately enter the water in the event the primary diver needs assistance;
  - iii. Develop an emergency action plan, including transportation of an injured diver to the nearest operational hyperbaric chamber, or the closest emergency medical facility; and
  - iv. Develop a safety plan for all surface support prior to any operations being initiated.

### C. Dive Team Uniform and Unit Patch

#### 1. Callout Uniforms

Uniforms shall be dictated by search conditions and weather environment.

#### 2. Dive Team Patch

- a. Dive Team personnel may elect to wear the Dive Team patch on their patrol uniform, consistent with SOP Uniforms.
- b. The Dive Team patch shall be issued to Dive Team personnel who have successfully completed training and sufficiently demonstrated operational effectiveness, as determined by the Dive Team Supervisors.
- c. Dive Team personnel may not wear the Dive Team patch until authorized by the Dive Team supervisors.

#### 3. Dive Team Pin

- a. Only full-time Dive Team personnel may elect to wear the Dive Team pin on their standard Department uniform.
- b. Dive Team supervisors shall issue the Dive Team pin to Dive Team personnel who have successfully completed training and sufficiently demonstrated operational effectiveness.
- c. The Dive Team pin shall be identical to the military Scuba Diver pin and shall be silver in color.
- d. The Dive Team supervisor pin shall be gold in color.
- e. Dive Team personnel shall wear the Dive Team pin above the right pocket of the uniform shirt, centered one-half-inch (1/2") above the nametag on the vertical shirt seam.
- f. Dive Team personnel shall not wear the Dive Team pin on the Open Space Unit uniform.
- g. Sworn personnel and sergeants who work for the Open Space Unit Collateral Program shall not wear the Open Space Unit patch.
  - i. Collateral Program personnel may wear the SAR Team patch or the Dive Team patch when they have successfully completed training and sufficiently



demonstrated operational effectiveness, as determined by the respective team supervisors.

**7 1-70-7 Open Space Unit Collateral Program**

- A. An officer or sergeant may be accepted into the Open Space Unit Collateral Program if they are:
  - 1. Off probation;
  - 2. In good standing with the Department;
  - 3. In an on-duty status while attending training or an event;
  - 4. Willing to purchase necessary gear to include mission specific summer and winter clothing; and
  - 5. Not on-call for any other unit.
- B. The Open Space Unit Sergeants shall make the final decision about whether an officer or sergeant is suitable for the Open Space Unit Collateral Program.
  - 1. An Open Space Unit Sergeant's final decision shall not be subject to a grievance because the Collateral Program is a secondary duty that is beyond the officer or sergeant's primary assignment.
- C. Open Space Unit Collateral Program personnel shall:
  - 1. Be called out in the event there is a SAR or dive call-out on an as needed basis;
  - 2. Be allowed to earn overtime or compensatory time when working special events that are approved by the Open Space Unit Sergeant;
  - 3. Be required to pass the same physical assessments as Open Space Unit sworn personnel; and
  - 4. Attend a minimum of twenty (20) hours of training per month in order to maintain proficiency.
    - a. An Open Space Unit Collateral Program officer shall be removed from the rotation for that month for failure to complete the minimum training and shall be considered for removal from the Open Space Unit Collateral Program.
- D. While in training and on call-outs, full-time Open Space Unit sergeants and sworn personnel shall maintain operational command and control over the scene and over all Open Space Unit Collateral Program personnel.



**1-70 OPEN SPACE UNIT**

**Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s), and Rescinded Special Order(s):**

A. Related SOP(s)

1-78 Police Service Aide (PSA) Program (Formerly 4-6)

2-1 Uniforms (Formerly 2-06)

3-31 Physical Fitness Assessment (Formerly 3-83)

B. Form(s)

None

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

None

**1-70-1 Purpose**

The purpose of the Open Space Unit is to protect, maintain, and manage areas designated as City of Albuquerque Open Space, areas that are outside City limits, and within Bernalillo County through strict law enforcement and by educating the community about the use and preservation of the designated areas.

**1-70-2 Policy**

It is the policy of the Albuquerque Police Department (Department) to provide a specialized unit to patrol designated areas.

N/A

**1-70-3 Definitions**

A. Dive Team

1. Department Sworn personnel who provide professional and technical recovery capabilities in the aquatic environment both locally, and throughout the State of New Mexico, if requested. The Dive Team works jointly with the New Mexico State Police Dive Team, which is subject to being activated by the federal government as needed. The Dive Team is comprised of Open Space Unit sworn personnel, including:

a. Dive Sergeant: The direct supervisor of the Dive Team during dive operations;



- b. Dive Team Leader: A team member who is selected to be the team leader based on their performance and experience;
- c. Dive Team Instructor: A team member who has been certified as a dive instructor by Scuba Schools International (SSI) or the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) with at least one (1) year experience on the Dive Team;
- d. Dive Control Specialist: A team member who has been certified by SSI or PADI as a Dive Control Specialist or assistant instructor;
- e. Diver: A team member who has been certified in SSI standards, who has obtained specialized training for collection and recovery of evidence and crime scene processing in the water, who is swift water rescue certified, and who maintains additional standards as established by the Dive Team Sergeant; and
- f. Collateral Diver: A part-time team member who is normally assigned to a unit other than the Open Space Unit, who maintains the same standards as a full-time Diver, and, when activated, reports to the Open Space Unit chain of command.

B. Open Space

Areas of land that are designated in the City's adopted plan for major Open Space and acquired by the City of Albuquerque; that are any other lands designated at the time of acquisition or subsequently; and that are any lands for which the City has assumed control or management responsibility by lease, easement, or legal agreement.

C. Search and Rescue (SAR) Team

Department Sworn personnel who respond to any search and/or rescue operation within Bernalillo County, New Mexico, and around the State of New Mexico as requested. The Search and Rescue Team works jointly with the New Mexico State Police, and functions as a type of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) team, which may be activated by the federal government as needed.

**7** 1-70-4 **Open Space Unit Selection, Testing, and Training**

A. Sworn Personnel Selection

1. Sworn personnel who apply for a position with the Open Space Unit shall be aware that the position is strictly voluntary. Sworn personnel who volunteer with the Open Space Unit shall be members of the SAR Team and the Dive Team.
2. The selection process shall consist of the SAR physical fitness test, a rappelling test, and an oral board test.
3. Open Space Unit candidates shall have:
  - a. Basic first aid medical training, preferably licensed as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B) obtained within one (1) year of accepting a position;



- i. The Department will make an exception based on the lack of available EMT B classes.
      - b. A general knowledge of the outlying geographical areas of Bernalillo County;
      - c. The willingness and ability to work in elevated positions and/or with helicopters;
      - d. Experience in teaching, training, and a basic mechanical aptitude; and
      - e. The ability to perform general maintenance and repairs to vehicles and equipment.
  4. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or their designee shall review past performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, and other performance information when determining an applicant's suitability.
    - a. Candidates with a sustained complaint or chargeable traffic accident within the past year will be considered unsuitable unless the totality of the circumstances involved in the complaint or accident include mitigating factors that indicate suitability.
  5. The Dive Team Leader is selected to assist the Dive Sergeant with mission planning and deployment of sworn personnel during incidents.
  6. The Dive Team Instructor is selected from current members of the Dive Team, based on performance and experience.
  7. The Dive Control Specialist is selected from current members of the Dive Team, based on performance and experience.
- B. Testing
  1. Swim Test
    - a. Six-hundred (600) yard snorkel mask and fins, four-hundred (400) yard free-style, with no stopping or holding the side of the pool or lane lines.
    - b. Fifty (50) yard weighted belt (10 lbs.) swim.
    - c. Fifty (50) yard Brick Swim: Both hands must remain on the brick at all times.
    - d. Fifty (50) yard Tank Push: No slamming or shoving the tank while maintaining control of the tank.
    - e. Twenty (20) minute water tread, last two (2) minutes hands out of water.
  2. Physical Training (PT) Test
    - a. Candidates shall pass the Department Physical Fitness Assessment with a performance in the top tier of the "Good" category and no less than the bottom tier of the "Good" category, consistent with SOP Physical Fitness Assessment.
  3. Pack Test: Open Space Unit candidates shall be able to hike Pino Trail in four (4) hours with a twenty-five (25) pound pack.



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- 4. Rappel Test: Open Space Unit candidates shall use their own equipment to complete a forty foot (40') rappel.
- 5. Quarterly Testing
  - a. All Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall pass quarterly physical fitness and proficiency testing.

January	Proficiency Testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rope system;</li> <li>• Raising and lower systems (MPD, 540);</li> <li>• Litter Packaging; and</li> <li>• Rappel system.</li> </ul> Dive Systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scuba system assembly; and</li> <li>• Underwater skills test.</li> </ul>
April	Department PT Test: The Open Space Unit candidate shall pass the Department Physical Fitness Assessment with a performance in the top tier of the "Good" category and no less than the bottom tier of the "Good" category, consistent with Physical Fitness Assessment.
July	Swim Testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dive Team swim test;</li> <li>• Open Space Unit swim test.</li> </ul>
October	SAR Pack Test

**7** 1-70-5 **Open Space Unit**

A. General Rules and Responsibilities

- 1. The Open Space Sergeant(s) shall:
  - a. Provide direct supervision of Department sworn personnel assigned to the Open Space Unit;
  - b. Be responsible for the Open Space Unit's daily activities; and
  - c. Manage the SAR Team and Dive Team.
- 2. Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall:
  - a. Patrol open space lands that are outside of the City limits and within Bernalillo County;
    - i. Responding Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall notify the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) of all violent crimes that occur in these



areas. Primary investigation responsibility shall be determined based upon the:

1. Type of crime;
  2. Capabilities; and
  3. Resources that are available in the area.
- b. Routinely patrol areas that are not formally declared Open Space areas but are inaccessible by Field Service Bureau (FSB) patrol cars;
  - c. Be cross-commissioned law enforcement officers;
  - d. Participate in SAR and Dive Team operations as directed;
  - e. Provide patrol and security for infrastructure assets not accessible by passenger vehicle. Open Space Unit personnel are responsible for securing these facilities at their designated closing times;
  - f. Work varied and extended hours based on the needs of the Open Space Unit;
  - g. Respond to call-outs when not on-call;
  - h. Travel out of town for SAR or dive missions;
  - i. Maintain a high level of physical fitness;
  - j. Be physically capable of performing SAR and dive missions;
  - k. Pass a quarterly Open Space Unit testing;
  - l. Purchase personal gear, such as mountaineering clothing, as necessary;
  - m. Patrol and take calls for service within all designated Open Space areas; and
  - n. During on-call rotation, be available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week for SAR and Dive Team operations, unless leave has been approved by the Open Space Unit Sergeant.
    - i. Open Space Unit sworn personnel cannot be on any other form of call status other than their Open Space Unit responsibilities, unless special circumstances arise.

3. Open Space Unit Police Service Aide's (PSA) shall:

- a. Be used to supplement patrols and respond to calls for service in open space land and areas that are not formally declared Open Space areas but are inaccessible by FSB patrol vehicles;
- b. Operate in accordance with the direction provided by the Open Space Unit chain of command;
- c. Provide patrol and security for infrastructure assets not accessible by passenger vehicle. Open Space Unit personnel are responsible for securing these facilities at their designated closing times;
- d. Address any criminal activity that is discovered or observed as outlined in SOP Police Service Aide Program and directed by their chain of command; and
- e. Meet any training and physical requirements ordered by the Open Space Unit chain of command.
  - i. Open Space Unit PSA's may be required to complete specialized training or meet minimum physical requirements. These additional requirements will be based on the safety standards for any specialized job functions.

N/A



- ii. The Open Space Unit chain of command shall document any additional requirements in writing and a copy of the order shall be kept on file with an Open Space Unit supervisor.

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#### B. Vehicle Lock-Ins

1. When the gates at open space trail heads are being closed or locked and there are vehicles that are parked in the parking areas after posted park hours and are required to be locked in overnight, Open Space Unit sworn personnel shall:
  - a. At the appropriate hour, announce over their Public Address (PA) system that the park is closed and that the owners of the remaining vehicle(s) must return to their vehicle immediately;
  - b. Ensure that signs are clearly posted with hours of operation;
    - i. If the hours of operation are not posted, a work order shall be placed with the Open Space Unit.
  - c. Run the vehicle license plate for stolen vehicle reports, informational be on the lookout (BOLO) reports, and/or missing person alerts;
  - d. Indicate the vehicle description, license plate, and time of gate closure on the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system; and
  - e. Not be dispatched to unlock gates.
    - i. The gates will reopen the following day at 0700.
2. ~~An FSB patrol officer~~ Any Department personnel assisting in the locking of gates shall abide by the directives set forth in this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
  - a. ~~The FSB patrol officer~~ Department personnel shall advise the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) Dispatcher that the vehicle is a lock-in at the respective park.
  - b. The ECC Dispatcher shall make a dispatch log note of this information.

#### C. Open Space Wild Land Fires

1. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or their designee shall coordinate with the Open Space Unit, Albuquerque Fire Rescue (AFR), Bernalillo County Fire Department (BCFD), and the State Forestry Department to evaluate the fire danger in the Open Space areas.
2. In the event of a fire, Open Space Unit supervisors shall ensure that AFR, BCFD, or the jurisdictional fire department is notified.
3. Open Space Unit ~~sworn~~ personnel shall:
  - a. Concentrate patrols within the high-risk areas during extreme fire conditions to reduce the fire danger;
  - b. Thoroughly shall investigate all calls for service that involve possible fires or smoke within the Open Space areas;





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- c. Establish a Unified Command in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS);
- d. Staff the access points that best allow fire equipment to access the area;
- e. Start an evacuation of park visitors, contractors, or other persons in the area; and
- f. Set up a perimeter to keep non-public safety personnel out of the area.

D. Methods of Patrol

1. Due to varied terrain and special challenges in providing law enforcement coverage in and around Open Space areas, Open Space Unit ~~sworn~~ personnel shall use several methods of routine and emergency patrol:
  - a. SUV Vehicle Patrol: To combat terrain challenges in Open Space areas.
  - b. Foot Patrol: To check bridges transecting Open Space areas and to deter illegal activities in the Bosque and foothill areas.
  - c. Bike Patrol: To patrol all Open Space areas.
  - d. ATV/Motorcycle Patrol: To patrol rugged and inaccessible areas, as well as general Open Space areas.
  - e. Hovercraft Patrol: To patrol the Rio Grande River for routine patrol, Bosque closure scenarios, and for emergency or special operations situations.
  - f. Airboat Patrol: To patrol the Rio Grande river for routine patrol, Bosque closure scenarios, and for emergency or Special Operations situations.

E. Equipment

1. Open Space Unit personnel shall use specialized equipment, including, but not limited to:
  - a. All-terrain vehicles (AVT);
  - b. Airboat;
  - c. Hovercraft;
  - d. Off-road motorcycles;
  - e. Mountain bikes;
  - f. Side-by-Side off-road vehicles;
  - g. 4x4 patrol vehicles; and
  - h. All SAR and dive equipment.

F. Uniform and Patch

1. Open Space Unit personnel shall abide by the uniform requirements outlined in SOP Uniforms.
  - a. The on-duty supervisor may approve modification of the Open Space Unit uniform while working in an adverse environment and/or terrain.
  - b. Open Space Unit personnel shall be authorized to wear the Open Space Unit patch and shall wear the patch in accordance with SOP Uniforms.



~~2.~~ Open Space Unit PSA uniforms shall be determined by the Open Space Unit Commander.

**7 1-70-5 Search and Rescue (SAR)**

A. The Search and Rescue Program shall be administered by the Open Space Unit chain of command, ~~the SAR Team, and the FSB.~~

B. Selection

1. Minimum Qualifications

a. Sworn personnel shall:

- i. Have a minimum of two (2) years as a police officer with the Department and shall have completed the probationary period;
- ii. Be willing to be "on call" and respond on a twenty-four (24) hour per day basis;
- iii. Be in good physical condition and able to work in severe terrain and weather conditions;
- iv. Pass the SAR physical fitness standards on a quarterly basis; and
- v. Be able to give directions clearly to communicate effectively with individuals in a variety of circumstances, speak before large groups, and be willing to work flexible shifts and varying hours.

2. Selection Process

- a. The selection process shall consist of the SAR physical fitness test, a rappelling test, and oral board test.
- b. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or their designee shall review past performance evaluations, disciplinary actions and other performance information when making a determination about an applicant's suitability.
  - i. Candidates with a sustained complaint or chargeable traffic accident within the past year may not be considered depending on the totality of the circumstances involved.
- c. Candidates shall have:
  - i. Basic first aid medical training, preferably licensed as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B) obtained within one (1) year of accepting a position;
    1. The Department will make an exception based on the lack of available EMT-B classes.
  - ii. A general knowledge of the outlying geographical areas of Bernalillo County;
  - iii. The willingness and ability to work at heights and/or with helicopters;
  - iv. Experience in teaching, training, and a basic mechanical aptitude; and



- v. The ability to perform general maintenance and repairs to vehicles and equipment.

C. Physical Fitness Standard

1. SAR team personnel shall be able to carry all SAR and medical equipment during operations. SAR team personnel shall operate in extreme terrain, under harsh weather conditions.
2. SAR team personnel shall be required to maintain a physical fitness standard, which shall be tested quarterly.
3. A SAR team member who fails to pass the physical test in the allotted time shall be taken off on-call status for ninety (90) days.
  - a. They shall then have up to ninety (90) days to train, prepare, and practice for retesting.
  - b. If at the end of ninety (90) days they cannot pass the test, they shall be removed from the Open Space Unit.

4. Physical Fitness Standards

- a. SAR Team personnel shall be able to swim fifty (50) meters in Battle Dress Uniform (BDU) style pants with a ten (10) pound weighted belt. No stopping or assistance from any object or person.
- b. For the pack test, SAR Team personnel shall be able to hike Pino trail #140 to Crest trail #130S and return within four (4) hours.

i. Start location:

N 35° 9.704'	W 106° 28.191'	Elena Gallegos parking lot
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ii. Turn around point:

N 35° 10.144'	W 106° 24.850'	Pino Trail: South Crest Trail junction.
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- iii. SAR Team personnel shall start and finish with a minimum twenty-five (25) pound pack.
- iv. SAR Team personnel shall -have SAR/survival gear.

D. Certifications, Training, and Testing

1. Certifications

- a. NM SAR Certification: SAR Team personnel shall be certified through New Mexico State Police Search and Rescue (NMSAR) or certified in an equivalent program.
- b. During their assignment, SAR Team personnel shall obtain and maintain the following certifications:



- i. New Mexico State Police Search & Rescue;
- ii. Wilderness Rope Rescue Level I & II;
- iii. Swift Water & Flood Control Rescue;
- iv. Airboat;
- v. Hovercraft;
- vi. ATV/UTV;
- vii. Bike Patrol;
- viii. Alternate Carry Course;
- ix. Horse familiarization; and
- x. Aviation familiarization.

## 2. Training

- a. SAR Team personnel shall attend all training unless excused.
  - i. SAR Team personnel shall notify the SAR Team Supervisor that they will miss or have missed training.
  - ii. SAR Team personnel shall complete all mandatory training and makeup training to maintain currency.
  - iii. SAR Team personnel who have not completed all mandatory training may be required to remain at the SAR command post to assist with logistics and support functions during rescue operations.
  - iv. SAR Team personnel with poor training attendance, or have an attendance rate of less than eighty percent (80%) shall be considered for dismissal from the Open Space Unit.
- b. Training is normally conducted to maintain proper operational proficiency in the following general areas:
  - i. Technical rope rescue Techniques;
  - ii. Helicopter operations;
  - iii. Medical treatment;
  - iv. Land navigation;
  - v. Wilderness search techniques;
  - vi. Wilderness survival techniques;
  - vii. Alpine search and rescue operations (snow and ice);
  - viii. Swift water rescue operations; and
  - ix. Man-tracking techniques.
- c. SAR Team personnel shall participate in weekly training.
- d. SAR Team personnel shall continually train with other agencies and participate in specialized training opportunities to enhance skills or techniques.
  - i. Mandated monthly rope training may be conducted with AFR, BCFD, Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council, and the National Guard.

## 3. Testing

- a. SAR Team personnel shall conduct their swim and pack test during the months of July and October.



- i. A SAR Team officer who fails to pass the physical test in the allotted time shall be taken off on-call status for ninety (90) days.
- ii. A SAR Team officer shall have up to ninety (90) days to train, prepare, and practice for retesting.
- iii. If at the end of ninety (90) days they cannot pass the test, they shall be removed from the Open Space Unit.

E. General Responsibilities

1. The SAR Team Coordinator shall be a lieutenant who has overall responsibility for the team, including budget, personnel, equipment, and training.
2. The SAR Team supervisor shall:
  - a. Oversee all phases of the SAR Program;
  - b. Be responsible for the selection, training, evaluation, and use of all personnel;
  - c. Be responsible for the completion of all SAR incidents and the coordination of efforts with all other agencies, specifically AFR Technical Rescue, or individuals;
  - d. Be responsible for the maintenance, upkeep, and inventory of all SAR Team equipment and supplies; and
  - e. Provide the on-call roster to the ECC, the New Mexico Search and Rescue Coordinator, AFR, BCFD, and BCSO.
    - i. The Open Space Unit Supervisor shall approve any changes to the on-call SAR Team roster and shall notify the ECC of the changes.
3. SAR Team personnel shall:
  - a. On a weekly basis, rotate primary on-call responsibilities;
  - b. Conduct or provide all training and direct new team members on all search and/or rescue incidents;
  - c. Respond to and handle search and/or rescue incidents on a twenty-four (24) hour a day, call-out basis in all of Bernalillo County;
  - d. Provide training to other members of the Department as needed;
  - e. During SAR operations, adhere to the basic SAR principle: Locate, Access, Stabilize, and Transport, (LAST);
  - f. Teach specialty classes to other Department personnel;
    - i. SAR Team personnel shall teach and make presentations to a variety of public groups and gatherings in the various areas involving search and rescue or wilderness preparedness techniques.
    - ii. SAR Team personnel shall actively pursue preventive search and rescue programs and forums to educate the public and reduce search and rescue incidents.
  - g. Maintain and service assigned equipment and vehicles;
  - h. When appropriate, use aircraft when searching for emergency locator transmitters (ELT), missing aircraft, and missing persons;



- i. Wear a uniform that is suitable based on terrain and weather environment; and
- j. Be responsible for initial primary patient care until help arrives.

4. Patient Transport

- a. Normally, SAR Team personnel will conduct operations for the sole purpose of safely extricating persons from extreme and/or hazardous locations and SAR Team personnel will not transport a patient to a medical facility.
- b. Once a person is safely extricated from the location, SAR Team personnel shall transfer the person for care to qualified medical transport personnel if medical attention is needed.
  - i. If the patient's condition is serious and transport resources are unavailable or impractical as determined by the SAR Team Medic, SAR Team Leader, and Officer-In-Charge, SAR Team personnel may transport a patient to a medical facility in a lifesaving effort.
  - ii. SAR Team personnel shall use medically-equipped helicopters for transporting persons when injuries dictate or transport time is a critical factor.
  - iii. SAR Team personnel shall work with and coordinate activities with all rescue agencies to ensure the best care for the person.

F. Swift Water and Flood Control Rescue

- 1. SAR Team personnel shall successfully complete a nationally-recognized swift water rescue training course with AFR and shall recertify annually.
- 2. SAR Team personnel shall successfully complete a nationally-recognized flood control water rescue training course with AFR and shall recertify annually.

G. Alpine SAR

SAR Team personnel shall be responsible for alpine searches and rescues in snow and ice.

H. Call-Out Procedures

- 1. Call-out requests for SAR Team personnel shall be made through the ECC; however, SAR Team personnel requests may also come directly from other agencies that have a copy of the SAR Team on-call roster.
- 2. The ECC Supervisor shall notify the SAR Team Supervisor or their designee of the request for SAR services.
  - a. SAR Supervisors are then notified to respond to a designated area and to establish a Command Post or staging area with the appropriate equipment that is necessary to complete the operation.



3. The Mission Coordinator or Officer-In-Charge (OIC) shall request all necessary support services that may be needed.
4. The Mission Coordinator or OIC shall notify any agency whose jurisdiction in which the operation may be taking place, if they are not requesting services.

I. Chain of Command for SAR Operations

1. SAR Incident Commander (IC)

- a. The Incident Commander (IC) shall be responsible for all personnel and shall oversee the overall operation.
- b. The Open Space Unit Lieutenant or Sergeant shall act as the IC. However, a representative of the command staff may act as the IC on a large-scale operation or delegated to a Department officer during minor incidents.

2. SAR Team Leader

- a. The Team Leader shall be responsible for the operational completion of SAR activity during an operation; however, supervisory personnel may assume the position of SAR Team Leader in complex operations. Sworn personnel may assume responsibility in simple incidents not requiring the need to make significant decisions to ensure completion.
- b. The SAR Team Leader shall be at a location that is away from the command post operational area.

3. SAR Edge Person

- a. The SAR Edge Person shall act as a signal relay between the raise/lower team and a rescuer who is over the edge of a high-angle drop. The SAR Edge Person shall be secured by a safety or rappel line.
- b. The SAR Edge Person shall maintains open communication between the rescuer(s) who are down-rope and the raise/lower team.
- c. The SAR Edge Person shall assist victims, litters, and rescuers in getting over the edge of a drop.
- d. The SAR Edge Person shall place and maintain edge protection for ropes.

J. Mountain Rescue Helicopter Operations

1. The Mission Coordinator or SAR Team supervisor shall document their justification to use the Department helicopter as a rescue tool during SAR operations based on various circumstances and criteria, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Nature and extent of injuries;
  - b. Weather conditions and forecast;
  - c. Location of victim both in remoteness and accessibility;



- d. Logistics and manpower needs and availability; and
- e. Practicality of mission completion through other means.

2. After the Mission Coordinator and SAR Team supervisor justify their use of the Department helicopter, they shall request it by adhering to the call-out procedures outlined in this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

#### K. Mountain Rescue Operational Guidelines

##### 1. General Safety

- a. SAR Team personnel shall:
  - i. Use a safety line during all operations where there is potential risk of a fall;
    1. The Mountain Safety Officer shall determine the location of the placement of the safety line and shall approve all exceptions through the SAR Team Leader or SAR Team supervisor.
  - ii. Use gloves when handling a working rope in an operation that is loaded or has the potential to be loaded, unless it is impractical or unsafe to do so; and
  - iii. Wear a Department-approved harness and helmet while working in a vertical environment.

#### L. Rappel Guidelines

1. SAR Team personnel shall not begin rappel without having all equipment and connections checked by the Mountain Safety Officer or their designee unless it is unsafe or impractical to do so.
  - a. SAR Team personnel shall do all rappels on a minimum of a 7/16" (11-mm) static kern mantle line.
  - b. SAR Team personnel shall practice the single-line rappel technique to maintain proficiency.
  - c. SAR Team personnel shall use a belay line for single line rappels when used for rescues and exposures. SAR Team personnel shall evaluate hazards to minimize risk.

#### M. Equipment and Vehicles

1. SAR Team personnel shall be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of all equipment and vehicles assigned to the SAR Team.
  - a. Emergency Response Vehicles:
    - i. Each officer assigned to the SAR Team shall be responsible for a four-wheel drive (4WD) emergency response vehicle.
    - ii. Each vehicle contains the necessary and minimum team equipment needed to successfully complete the majority of rescue situations.





- iii. Each SAR Team officer shall be responsible for the maintenance, upkeep, and repair of emergency response vehicles to ensure the vehicles are in good, serviceable condition.
- b. Specialty Vehicles:
  - i. SAR Team personnel shall maintain their certifications and familiarity with the maintenance and operation of specialty vehicles.
  - ii. Under normal circumstances, SAR Team personnel shall be the only persons authorized to operate the vehicles.
  - iii. The SAR Team Safety Officer or OIC may authorize SAR Team personnel to wear a helmet and any other gear considered appropriate for the situation or terrain; in some instances, SAR Team personnel may wear a helmet during Bosque patrol due to a required low speed, limited visibility through foliage and other shrubbery, and face-to-face contacts with the community.

**7** 1-70-6 **Dive Team**

A. Dive Team Rules and Responsibilities

1. The Dive Team Supervisor shall:

- a. Assess information about the call for service from the on-scene supervisor or the Department employee who is requesting assistance;
- b. Determine whether a full call-out or partial call-out of the Dive Team is required in coordination with the IC or their designee;
- c. Secure transportation of Dive Team personnel and equipment if necessary;
- d. Assume supervision of the mission and coordinate activities under the direction of the IC or Dive Team Commander;
- e. Continuously assess the possibility of increasing or decreasing Dive Team manning levels;
- f. Provide updates to the Open Space Unit chain of command;
- g. Provide information to the Department Public Information Officer (PIO), if necessary;
- h. When applicable, provide an After-Action Report in accordance with the guidelines in the Emergency Operations Plan;
- i. When requested, provide a Supplemental Report;
- j. Inspect and secure all Dive Team equipment by using the applicable, approved methods for maintenance;
- k. Maintain Dive Team personnel rosters, line-ups, gear maintenance schedules, physical schedules, expense logs, reports, and any other documentation as required to administer the Dive Team;
- l. Inspect dive logs to ensure accuracy;
- m. Maintain training records for all Dive Team personnel;
- n. Promptly notify the Department Safety Officer of any injury and prepare necessary reports as required; and
- o. Conduct an annual inventory and physical inspection of all Department-issued equipment.



2. A Dive Team member shall:

- a. When on call, promptly respond to call-outs;
  - i. In the event a Dive Team member cannot respond to a call-out, a Dive Team member shall notify the Dive Team Supervisor.
- b. Report to the staging area that is equipped and prepared to respond to the event;
- c. Comply with procedures and protocols as trained, with safety as a priority for all Dive Team personnel and victims;
- d. Promptly report all equipment malfunctions, and all lost, stolen, or damaged equipment to the on-scene supervisor;
- e. Report all incidents of injury to the on-scene supervisor;
- f. Inspect all equipment prior to usage and after each event as required by protocols;
- g. Report any maintenance needed to the supervisor;
- h. Write Uniform Incident Reports or Supplemental Reports of any activity as required;
- i. Maintain accurate dive logs for inspection by Dive Team supervisors;
- j. Ensure equipment is available for immediate use;
- k. Report all training attended to the Dive Team Sergeant and the Academy Division;
- l. Participate in training to maintain proficiency as required;
- m. Demonstrate an acceptable physical assessment level by maintaining an overall score of eighty percent (80%) in the Department Physical Assessment standards;
- n. Pass the Dive Team and Open Space Unit swim tests;
- o. Stay current on all vaccines as deemed necessary by the Safety Officer;
- p. Rotate the primary on-call responsibility among all Dive Team personnel on a weekly basis;
- q. Maintain a minimum of an eighty percent (80%) participation rate in all training and call-outs during a twelve (12) month period on a rotating calendar year; and
- r. Have an Open Space Unit supervisor approve any changes to the on-call roster and shall notify the ECC of the changes.

B. Activation of the Dive Team

1. Dive Team Deployment

- a. The Dive Team Sergeant shall:
  - i. Contact the on-scene supervisor for a briefing about the situation;
  - ii. Evaluate the circumstances and determine whether an immediate or delayed Dive Team response shall be most appropriate based primarily on safety;
    1. The Dive Team Sergeant or Team Leader shall be authorized to refuse a mission if it cannot be safely executed in accordance with established diving protocols.



- b. Prior to committing to a dive mission, the Dive Team Supervisor or their designee shall:
  - i. Conduct the risk-benefit field analysis to identify the risks and identify the benefit of conducting the dive at each site;
  - ii. Ensure that a fully-dressed Safety Diver is prepared to immediately enter the water in the event the primary diver needs assistance;
  - iii. Develop an emergency action plan, including transportation of an injured diver to the nearest operational hyperbaric chamber, or the closest emergency medical facility; and
  - iv. Develop a safety plan for all surface support prior to any operations being initiated.

C. Dive Team Uniform and Unit Patch

1. Callout Uniforms

Uniforms shall be dictated by search conditions and weather environment.

2. Dive Team Patch

- a. Dive Team personnel may elect to wear the Dive Team patch on their patrol uniform, consistent with SOP Uniforms.
- b. The Dive Team patch shall be issued to Dive Team personnel who have successfully completed training and sufficiently demonstrated operational effectiveness, as determined by the Dive Team Supervisors.
- c. Dive Team personnel may not wear the Dive Team patch until authorized by the Dive Team supervisors.

3. Dive Team Pin

- a. Only full-time Dive Team personnel may elect to wear the Dive Team pin on their standard Department uniform.
- b. Dive Team supervisors shall issue the Dive Team pin to Dive Team personnel who have successfully completed training and sufficiently demonstrated operational effectiveness.
- c. The Dive Team pin shall be identical to the military Scuba Diver pin and shall be silver in color.
- d. The Dive Team supervisor pin shall be gold in color.
- e. Dive Team personnel shall wear the Dive Team pin above the right pocket of the uniform shirt, centered one-half-inch (1/2") above the nametag on the vertical shirt seam.
- f. Dive Team personnel shall not wear the Dive Team pin on the Open Space Unit uniform.
- g. Sworn personnel and sergeants who work for the Open Space Unit Collateral Program shall not wear the Open Space Unit patch.
  - i. Collateral Program personnel may wear the SAR Team patch or the Dive Team patch when they have successfully completed training and sufficiently



demonstrated operational effectiveness, as determined by the respective team supervisors.

**7 1-70-7 Open Space Unit Collateral Program**

- A. An officer or sergeant may be accepted into the Open Space Unit Collateral Program if they are:
  - 1. Off probation;
  - 2. In good standing with the Department;
  - 3. In an on-duty status while attending training or an event;
  - 4. Willing to purchase necessary gear to include mission specific summer and winter clothing; and
  - 5. Not on-call for any other unit.
- B. The Open Space Unit Sergeants shall make the final decision about whether an officer or sergeant is suitable for the Open Space Unit Collateral Program.
  - 1. An Open Space Unit Sergeant's final decision shall not be subject to a grievance because the Collateral Program is a secondary duty that is beyond the officer or sergeant's primary assignment.
- C. Open Space Unit Collateral Program personnel shall:
  - 1. Be called out in the event there is a SAR or dive call-out on an as needed basis;
  - 2. Be allowed to earn overtime or compensatory time when working special events that are approved by the Open Space Unit Sergeant;
  - 3. Be required to pass the same physical assessments as Open Space Unit sworn personnel; and
  - 4. Attend a minimum of twenty (20) hours of training per month in order to maintain proficiency.
    - a. An Open Space Unit Collateral Program officer shall be removed from the rotation for that month for failure to complete the minimum training and shall be considered for removal from the Open Space Unit Collateral Program.
- D. While in training and on call-outs, full-time Open Space Unit sergeants and sworn personnel shall maintain operational command and control over the scene and over all Open Space Unit Collateral Program personnel.