



# Scarborough Fire Department Scarborough, Maine



## Standard Operating Guidelines

<b>Book:</b>	<b>Emergency Operations</b>
<b>Chapter:</b>	<b>Rescue Operations</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>3650 - Large Area Search Procedures</b>
<b>Revision Date:</b>	<b>09/23/2015</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<i>B. Michael Thurlow</i>

### PURPOSE

To establish the guidelines for initiating and conducting a Large Area Search.

### POLICY

The Incident Commander must be able to recognize the need for a Large Area Search when an effective and safe search for life or fire cannot be accomplished by ordinary search techniques. These procedures shall be followed when conducting a Large Area Search for search team accountability and safety.

### SCOPE

Large Area Search's may be initiated and conducted during extreme conditions involving large open areas, such as gymnasiums, churches, industrial buildings, supermarkets, 'box' stores, or any other identified hazard that is beyond the scope of ordinary search techniques.

### EQUIPMENT

The Large Area Search Kit located on Ladder 1 shall include:

- A. 1 large area search bag
- B. 200 feet of guideline rope with metal rings placed every 20 feet on the guideline
- C. 4 - 15-20 feet personal ropes with carabineer or large snap hook on both ends
- D. 1 strobe marker light on the bag
- E. 1 stopwatch
- F. An accountability/time recording form
- G. Assorted webbing

## **PROCEDURES**

- A. Command shall assign a dedicated separate radio channel for the large search operation.
- B. Considerations prior to a large area search
  - a. The IC shall give due weight to the risk and benefits involved.
  - b. The IC shall have discretion in the selection of assigning personnel to a large area search.
  - c. A Control Person will be designated to supervise the operation. This should be a Chief Officer if available.
  - d. A minimum of 2 teams with 3 members per team, should be used for large area searches.
  - e. An additional alarm may be needed for personnel when the IC recognizes the need for a large area search.
- C. Equipment requirements for large area search teams
  - a. Full structural PPE
  - b. SCBA (use 1 hour bottles, if available)
  - c. Thermal Imaging Camera
  - d. Large area search rope kit
  - e. Flashlights
  - f. Radio
  - g. Tools: each member carries one different tool: Flat head axe, Halligan or Hook
- D. Establishment of large area search team
  - a. A large area search team shall operate on a separate radio channel.
  - b. The designated Control Person shall monitor the large area search team's communications and fire ground operations channel.
  - c. The Control Person is responsible for the accountability and air management of the team and shall be located in a safe zone near the anchor point
  - d. The Bag Person is the search team leader and keeps accountability while searching
  - e. Each member shall carry a portion of the equipment requirements
  - f. The initial team shall have a backup team ready in a safe zone near the anchor point
- E. Operations of the large area search team
  - a. The rope line should be anchored outside the IDLH
  - b. The rope should remain taut
  - c. Tethered members should not cross the center line
  - d. Crew integrity is critical, all members enter and leave together as a team.
  - e. Leave the rope bag when exiting unless a distressed victim is attached
  - f. If a victim is on the rope the team members on the outside of should coordinate with the inside team and assist with victim removal by pulling the rope and victim towards the exit while the inside team members help lift and guide the victim.
  - g. Air management principals - one third for entry, one third for exit, one third for a safety reserve.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the responsibility of all Scarborough Fire Department members to adhere to this policy.

## **REFERENCES**

NFPA 1670 – Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents