

Inyo County Sheriff's Posse Search + Rescue Team

New Member Packet



2017

Welcome!

Thank you for joining the Inyo SAR team. At this point you should have a good idea of what you have signed up for. You can refer to our website (<http://inyosar.com>) for a general description of the team and our activities. This packet contains information about your role as a Candidate Member and how you can prepare for missions with the team.

We hold a General Meeting on the first Thursday of every month at our Posse Hut. At this meeting, we discuss the missions and trainings that took place during the past month and review current items of business.

Trainings are (usually) held on the third Thursday and Saturday of every month. The Thursday training is usually classroom-based, while the Saturday training will take place in the field and involve hands-on skill practice. We tend to train more in the winter to free up time for missions in the summer.

As a Candidate Member, we expect you to attend as many meetings and trainings as possible. Make sure you sign in to every activity and keep track of your attendance on Page 5 of this packet. When you have attended 6 meetings and 12 trainings, bring your Attendance Card to the next General Meeting and the team will vote on accepting you as a Support Member.

Glad to have you join us and looking forward to seeing you at the Posse Hut!

Access and Contacts

Codes to get into the Posse Hut:

Gate: 5150

Door: 4147*

Key to lock box above on metal beam.

If you are the first to arrive, open all the doors and PUT KEYS
BACK.

Access to the Posse Hut is a privilege granted to Inyo SAR
members only. Please respect our facilities and gear.

Public Email: inyosearch@gmail.com

Team Email: inyosar@googlegroups.com

Board Email: inyosarboard@googlegroups.com

Sheriff's Coordinator Sergeant Nate Derr

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SAR President Matt Larsen

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SAR Vice President Elsbeth Otto

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SAR Treasurer Ed Carlson

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First Steps

1. After you are sworn in you are covered by team insurance while “on the job,” and you can come to field-based trainings, ride in vehicles, and participate in missions at the discretion of the President, Board, and Team Leaders.
2. Read this packet - we made it to be useful, not to bore you. Check out the website. Come by the Hut in your free time and familiarize yourself with the equipment in the vehicles and gear rooms. Assemble your personal gear and ready-pack. Plan to attend the next scheduled Mission Skills Training.
3. Choose an orange Inyo SAR team shirt from the metal locker in the Med Room. This shirt is now your property and your badge of honor. Wear the shirt to all outdoor trainings, missions, and public events. Team jackets are also available for use on outdoor trainings and missions, but must be returned to the Hut after the event ends.
4. Attend as many team events as possible. We understand that you have a life outside of SAR and may not always be able to make every meeting and training, but the more you can come to the better we get to know you and your skills, and the sooner you can be voted in as a Support Member! Use the attendance card on the next page to document your trainings and meetings.

Attendance Card

Date	Event	Board Member Signature	Date	Event	Board Member Signature
	Meeting 1			Training 7	
	Meeting 2			Training 8	
	Meeting 3			Training 9	
	Meeting 4			Training 10	
	Meeting 5			Training 11	
	Meeting 6			Training 12	
	Training 1				
	Training 2				
	Training 3				
	Training 4				
	Training 5				
	Training 6				



Inyo SAR Home

How to Get Help

Join Inyo SAR

Mission Reports

Members

Support Us: Donate

Inyo County Search & Rescue



Our team's website, <http://inyosar.com>, is a great resource. To access the members-only portion of the website, login by clicking the 'Wordpress Admin' link at the bottom right of the page, or go to inyosar.com/admin

Username: first letter of first name and last name (ex. Jane Doe = jdoe)

Password: you will receive an email with your password in it after your user name has been created

To change your password, choose 'Team Members' >> 'Your Profile.'

There is an option in the website to send team emails. This system is outdated; we now use google groups.

After logging in, you can access the members only pages of the site. These pages are where we store team documents, meeting minutes, gear inventories, useful information, team history, reimbursement and expense forms, mission forms, and much more. Take a few minutes to look around so that you know what resources are available here.

The webpage will also show you the team calendar, mission reports, and photos.

If you have ideas for the website or would like to help with content, please email jvargo@inyosar.com.

Gear You Will Need

As a team member you will need to provide your own personal gear for basic operations. In some cases, technical gear will be available for use. If you like to play in the mountains, you likely will have the majority of the required gear already. What you bring will depend somewhat on your personal standards and needs.

The team will provide all of the patient care gear.

Our missions often run through the night, sometimes at high elevation and with great exposure to wind and cold. Many team members like to throw in an ultralight sleeping bag or bivy sack for good measure. Food is also a matter of personal preference. If you can survive for days on end on bars and trail mix, that's fine. If you need warm drinks and meals to function at your best, consider bringing an ultralight stove and a bit of fuel. Bring a personal first aid kit.

Also a note about **backpacks**. While most team members could probably fit their personal gear for the average overnight Whitney mission into a 30L pack, team gear requires much more storage capacity. Your pack should probably be in the 50-70L range. Budget around 20-30L for team gear.

It is helpful to **keep your gear together and prepared at all times** so that you don't have to rush around to find what you need. Many team members find it useful to keep a "ready pack" loaded with essential items, and a duffel bag or two with all of the optional gear. When you arrive at the hut, you can gain information about the mission and talk with fellow team members about packing strategy. The following page provides a fairly comprehensive overview of the gear you'll need.

Gear You Will Need

As a team member you will need to provide your own personal gear for basic operations. In some cases, technical gear will be available for use. Most backpackers will have the required gear.

BASIC EQUIPMENT				CLIMBING EQUIPMENT			
Backpack (large capacity)				Helmet			
Sleeping Bag				Harness			
Sleeping Pad				Belay/Rappel device			
Headlamp				Prussik Slings or Ascenders			
Sunglasses				Daisy Chain/Personal Anchor			
Water/Food							
1st Aid Kit							
Fire Starter				MISSION SPECIFIC or AS NEEDED			
Compass/Maps				Bvy sack of Tent			
Whistle				Trekking Poles			
Knife				Space Blanket			
Cup, Bowl, Utensil				Crampons			
Bandana				Showshoes or Skis			
Notebook, Pencil				Snow Shovel			
				Glacier Glasses			
				Ice Axe			
				Signal Mirror			
				Trach Bags			
				Parachute Cord			
				Winter Sleeping Bag			
				Stove/Fuel/Pot			
				TEAM EQUIP SAR MAY PROVIDE			
				Flare			
				Survey Tape			
				Snowshoes			
				Crampons			
				Ice Axe			
				Maps			
				Orange SAR shell jacket			
				Radio/Harness			
				GPS/Batteries			
				Team First Aid Kit			
				Avalanche Probe			
				Avalanche Transceiver(s)			

You will probably always need more layers than you think you think you do. BE PREPARED

Callout Timeline and Instructions

- Call comes in from (405) 308-4474. We suggest saving this number in your phone to avoid confusion.
- Listen to the message. It is often best to ignore the call and let it go to voicemail so that you can replay it if needed.
- Respond to instructions/call back to say you are coming.
- Go to the Posse Hut with your gear.
 - Don't forget to wear your SAR shirt!
- When you get to the Hut, sign in.
 - If you are first, get the room key and open all of the rooms. Leave the key on the captain's desk.
 - Gather the gear you need, including radio and GPS unit. Sign out your gear on the sign in sheet.
- Roles may be assigned at the Hut, and you will have to help gather additional gear and prep the vehicles. Before the team leaves the Hut, a team leader for this mission will be chosen.
- Get in the vehicles quickly. When leaving the Hut, you must call in the vehicle to dispatch. Instructions are in the vehicle binder. First Out is usually the first vehicle to leave. Secondary vehicles are usually one or both of the jeeps, as we like to reserve one of the main vehicles (either the Suburban or First Out) in case there is a second callout while the other main vehicle is already in action.
- Drive to the site as directed, safely!
- Gather any additional information, continue coordination with Sheriff, and make final preparations of choosing, dividing, and packing gear. If the general location of the victim is known, a Hasty team should leave the trailhead as soon as possible both to gather more information about the situation and to provide medical care quickly. The other team members usually carry more gear and leave a bit later. If the location of the victim is unknown, a search will be generated according to search theory and protocols and roles and sections will be assigned at the site.
- Now you start hiking! Hiking speeds should be swift but sustainable. You might end up hiking all night to reach a patient and then get the patient out, with more gear than you started. Carry out the mission, adjusting to circumstances as they arise. Use your backcountry knowledge. Stay safe and pay attention to the safety of your teammates.

Callout Timeline and Instructions

- Roles in a mission can be varied. You could be assigned to a medical team, litter team, gear carrying team (mule), driver, keeping people awake, radio relay, or any number of other teams and tasks that may arise. Or sometimes you may be doing all of that yourself. Bummer. Don't worry, you will never be asked to do anything you don't feel comfortable doing, but you are the one in charge of making your comfort level clear.
- Basically your goal is to work as part of the team to attend to the patient and get the patient out of the backcountry and to definitive medical care, without getting anyone on the team injured. Everyone on a mission serves a role, no matter how small.
- Communication is essential at all times... locations, your condition, patient updates, terrain conditions.
- When you return to the vehicle, rest before driving if needed. Call someone else to drive if you need to. Driving is the most dangerous part of the mission. Be careful and aware. Usually the team will debrief over a meal on the way back to the posse hut - the county will pick up the bill! Make sure you stop on the way home at the correct gas station (East Line) to refuel the trucks. **Always return the vehicles with a full tank of gas.**
- When you get back to the Posse Hut, you may really want to go home, but you can't just yet. Sorry. Call your vehicle back in to dispatch. Reorganize and restock First Out and first aid equipment. Dry out gear if wet. Refill oxygen bottles. Clean trash out of vehicles. Make note of any vehicle problems or supplies that are missing or replaced. Clean gear as needed. Return radios and GPS units and all other group gear. Take the batteries out of the GPS units. When everything is done, sign out, and note that you have returned your gear after you return it.
- Continue to be careful driving home!
- Thank you!!!

Membership Levels

- SAR team members are unpaid volunteers from the community.
- Each member shall meet minimum standards and qualifications.
- SAR team members are at-will employees of the Sheriff's Department, and serve at the discretion of the Sheriff.
- These positions are independent of any SAR office or board position held by a member.
- All member levels can be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as circumstances warrant.

Candidate

A Candidate is defined as a trainee in the process of working towards becoming a Support Member. Candidates must have completed the application process and have been sworn in by a designated member of the Sheriff's Office. After being sworn in, Candidates may be invited to go on missions at the discretion of the President or Team Leader or Coordinator.

Support Member

After a Candidate has attended at least 6 general meetings and 12 trainings within one year of becoming a Candidate and has obtained at least a current CPR certification or basic Red Cross first aid certification or equivalent, the Candidate may be voted onto the team as a Support Member. While involvement at the Support Member level can take many different forms, each Support Member is expected to maintain status by regularly attending meetings and trainings. If no team events are attended in a full calendar year, the member will be made Inactive. A Support Member may go on missions but a minimum number is not required to maintain membership level.

Rescue Member

Support Members may move up to a Rescue Member position by filling out an MRA type-sheet, obtaining and maintaining a current medical certification* and a CPR certification, and submitting qualifications to the Board for a vote. To maintain rescue member status, members must make a consistent effort to maintain skills and must participate in a minimum of 4 missions each year.

Rescue members will be eligible to have trainings outside of the team (such as WFR courses) paid for by the team, and will be eligible to attend MRA or national SAR meetings and conferences. Rescue members will be eligible for team pro-deals and other rewards.

*Additional medical certification could be a Wilderness First Aid (WFA), Wilderness First Responder (WFR), EMT or WEMT, or Wilderness Advanced First Aid (WAFA).

Membership Levels

Inactive Status - Voluntary

Members at any level who for one reason or another cannot participate in team events or missions for some period of time may choose to go on Voluntary Inactive Status. The member shall inform the President or an officer of the status and reason, and will be removed from the callout list for the time of inactivity. Members on Inactive Status will not be eligible for pro-deals or other rewards. These members will maintain their member level upon returning to the team.

Inactive Status – Involuntary

Failure to maintain Active Status or give notice of Inactive Status will result in being made Involuntarily Inactive at the discretion of SAR Board Members.

Members returning to the team after being Involuntarily Inactive will start again at Candidate level and will have to be voted up to other levels after fulfilling qualifications. Involuntarily Inactive Members will have no pro-deals or rewards and must return all SAR gear including jackets to a team officer or Board Member.

Specialist Member

The team recognizes that some persons will bring a specialized skill to the team but are not necessarily involved in the greater workings of the team. These members will hold the Specialist Status. These members must have passed a background check with the Sheriff's Office and possess a valid skill-set for their area of speciality, and are encouraged to lead one training a year in the specialized skill. The Board must approve all members with a Specialist Status. Pro-deals will be awarded to these members on a case-by-case basis.

Emeritus Member

There are some members whose long-term commitment to Inyo SAR we would like to recognize with a special designation: SAR Member Emeritus. Emeritus Members might no longer be actively involved in the day-to-day functioning of the team, but due to their years of service Inactive Status does not apply to them. Emeritus Members are welcome to determine their own level of involvement in Inyo SAR, but we request that these members attend at least one meeting a year and consider drawing from their expertise to lead or plan a training.

Members may qualify for Emeritus Status by any of the following achievements:

- President/Captain
10 years or more of service
100 or more missions
By special vote

Article 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be "Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, Inc." (Posse), and as such, this organization is duly constituted as a volunteer unit under the direction and control of the Inyo County Sheriff's Office (ICSO), in accordance with the Inyo County Volunteer Policy.

Article II. Objectives

The purpose of the Posse is to provide services in cooperation with the ICSO in cases of emergency, disaster, searches, or rescues, and to perform other duties as requested by the ICSO.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. The requirements for membership on this team will be those set forth in these Bylaws, the Inyo County Sheriff's Department Rules and Regulations, and the Inyo County Volunteer Policy.

Section 2. All applicants will be subject to background character checks by the ICSO and must be approved by the ICSO.

Section 3. Levels of membership and their requirements are detailed in the Addendum to these Bylaws entitled "Membership Levels."

Section 4. Only Members who have completed the probationary period, have been accepted by the Board of Directors (Board), and have been approved by a majority vote of the Membership at a General Meeting have voting privileges.

Section 5. Posse equipment may be furnished to Members for the purpose of Posse operations and training. Such equipment shall remain the property of the Posse. Any Member leaving the Posse for any reason shall return such equipment to the President. No unauthorized patches shall be worn on Posse uniforms. An identification card may be issued to each Member by the ICSO. No Member shall display his or her identification card for unofficial or unauthorized purposes.

Section 6. Any Member who plans to be absent for six weeks or longer shall notify a member of the Board to obtain a Leave of Absence. A Member on Leave of Absence shall leave his or her Sheriff's credentials and Posse equipment with the Board until they return.

Section 7. Members of the Posse who have not paid their dues by January 31 shall forfeit their membership. Subsequent to payment of delinquent dues, such Members may be reinstated by the Board.

Section 8. Any Member of the Posse who ceases activity may be designated Inactive by the Board. Inactive Status is determined as described in the Addendum "Membership Levels."

Section 9. Any Member may apply in writing for retirement status upon completion of five years or more of service to the Posse. A Retired Member may attend meetings, but shall not vote or hold office.

Section 10. The ICSO may refuse the services of any Member of the Posse, as provided for in the Inyo County Volunteer Policy. Such an action by the ICSO constitutes expulsion from the Posse. Any such expelled Member shall be given ten days' notice in writing, and shall, upon his or her request, be entitled to appear before and be heard by a quorum of the Board. Upon a majority affirmative vote of its members, the Board shall designate a representative to plead the affected Member's case before a representative of the ICSO.

Section 11. The Board, by vote of five or more of its members, may recommend the expulsion of a Member from the Posse. Before any such expulsion goes into effect, the affected Member may present his or her case to the Membership at a General Meeting, prior to which the Member shall be given ten days' notice in writing. A representative of the Board shall present its case at the same meeting. The expulsion shall become final only upon a two-thirds vote of the Membership present.

Article IV. Dues

Dues are assessed annually to each Member. Dues are payable January 1 of each year and must be paid in full by January 31.

Article V. Elected Officers

Section 1. The Officers of the Posse shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers shall serve one-year terms. The President and Vice President shall be limited to two consecutive terms.

Section 2. The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Posse and Chairperson of the Board, and shall preside at all General Meetings. In any committee appointed by the Board or the President, the President shall serve as an ex-officio member.

Section 3. The Vice President shall assume all presidential duties in the absence of the President. Upon the permanent absence or resignation of the President, the Vice President shall preside until the next election.

Section 4. The Secretary shall keep a record of all General Meetings of the Posse. The Secretary shall maintain an accurate roster of the Membership and shall update the list every sixty days. The Secretary shall send out notices and other correspondence when required by the President. The Secretary shall furnish a written copy of the minutes of the previous General Meeting to the President prior to the next Board Meeting.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper accounting of all Posse funds. The Treasurer shall pay Posse debts regularly and submit a written financial report at each General Meeting. The Treasurer shall submit a written year-end financial statement at the January General Meeting.

Section 6. Board of Directors

6a. A seven-member Board, consisting of the President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, and four other elected Members shall be responsible for overall policy matters of the Posse.

6b. The Board shall assume duties as a nomination committee and membership status review committee, and shall have authority to approve expenditures not exceeding one thousand dollars. All expenditures exceeding one thousand dollars shall be subject to approval by a majority of the Members in attendance at a General Meeting.

6c. Any action by the Board may be rescinded by a two-thirds vote of the Members in attendance at a General Meeting.

6d. During meetings of the Board, other Members may be recognized by the Board Chairperson at the Chairperson's option.

6e. No Member of the Board has authority in matters of policy apart from a scheduled Board Meeting.

6f. If a Board Member is absent three consecutive board meetings without notifying the Board Chairperson, the Board may replace that Board Member.

Section 7. The Officers and Board shall be nominated and elected annually as follows:

7a. Any Member in good standing may be nominated for any office.

7b. Exclusive of the President, Vice President, and Immediate Past President, two Board Members shall be elected each year.

7c. Candidates for the Board shall be nominated at the November and December General Meetings of each year for two-year terms.

7d. Election of Officers and Board Members shall be by plurality vote of the Membership at the December General Meeting.

7e. Officers and Board Members shall be installed at the January General Meeting.

7f. In the event of a vacancy in any office except President, or on the Board, the President shall appoint a qualified Member to fill the vacancy, subject to approval by the Membership at the next General Meeting. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the President.

7g. Absentee voting shall be permitted only for the annual election. Absentee ballots must be delivered to the December General Meeting at least fifteen minutes prior to the start of the voting. The voter must sign the ballot in a place and manner so that the signature can be removed. The Member(s) appointed to count the ballots shall also open and count the absentee ballots. In the event of a runoff, absentee ballots shall be counted for each successive vote as long as the candidate is still in the runoff. If the candidate is no longer in the runoff, the absentee voter shall have no vote.

Section 8. Any Officer or Board Member may be recalled by a two-thirds vote of the Members present at a General Meeting. Notice shall be given to all Members at least thirty day in advance of any recall election.

Article VI. Meetings and Quorums

Section 1. There shall be a General Meeting held on the first Thursday of each month, except when the first Thursday of the month falls on a national holiday, in which case the General Meeting shall be held on the second Thursday of that month.

Section 2. Special General Meetings may be called by the President, the Sheriff's Search and Rescue Coordinator, the Assistant Coordinator, or any ten Members. The Membership shall have at least ten days' written advance notice of the date, time, and place of any such meeting.

Section 3. The Board shall meet monthly or as necessary.

Section 4. There may be other meetings for the purposes of training or work details or for other purposes deemed necessary by the President or Training Officer. These meetings can be held on any Thursday not reserved for a General Meeting. Other meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the President or Training Officer.

Section 5. A quorum for all business conducted by the Board shall be four of its seven members.

Section 6. One-half of the active Membership shall constitute a quorum for any General Meeting.

Article VII. Training

The President shall appoint a Training Officer to oversee administration of trainings.

Article VIII. Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall govern the proceedings of the Posse, except when they are inconsistent with the Posse Bylaws, in which case the Bylaws shall prevail.

Article IX. Changes to Bylaws

Section 1. These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new Bylaws adopted by a majority vote of the Board, subject to approval by two-thirds vote of the Members present at the next General Meeting.

Section 2. The Board and Membership shall be given at least one month's notice at a General Meeting of any meeting where changes in the Bylaws will be considered.

Article X.

Anything not addressed in these Bylaws shall be referred to the Board.

Miscellaneous Team Policies

1. All trainings must be approved by the Board of Directors or Captain.
2. The training Team Leader has the authority to refuse anyone's participation in the training due to poor physical condition or lack of equipment, and to permit participation of non-team personnel for good reason.
3. All members must own the required equipment according to the approved list and are expected to carry these items on trainings and operations.
4. Helmets will be worn on all technical trainings and missions and during helicopter operations.
5. Personnel will remain with the team during all trainings and operations unless excused by the Team Leader. Personnel leaving without permission are detached from the trip and are subject to further discipline, including dismissal from the team.
7. Members and Candidates should conduct themselves in a manner that would be expected from a professional rescue team. Members must take every precaution to keep themselves and their teammates safe.
8. The operational leader should conduct a critique of the operation as soon as possible after the training or actual operation. If it is not possible at the site it should be done at the next regular meeting.
9. There will be no illegal activity at any team function. Drugs are specifically prohibited, both using and carrying. Drinking of any alcoholic beverages can only be done after completion of the operation or training, and at discretion of the Team Leader. Firearms shall not be carried. Commercial station radios are not permitted on trainings or operations unless necessary. Smoking is discouraged where it would affect the performance of teammates. No dogs or pets are allowed on trainings. All wilderness courtesies will be observed, including protection of the environment and picking up trash.
10. All publicity and contacts with the public concerning the team must be cleared by the Board or Captain.
11. All spending must be cleared by the Board or Captain. If you are cleared to spend money, you must use your own funds and turn your receipt in to the treasurer for reimbursement.

Technology Information and Social Media Guidelines

The Inyo SAR team often uses a GPS app called GAIA on our personal smart phones. This app can be downloaded to your phone and used in the field. If you have a smart phone and are interested in using the app for missions, you can get a free pro subscription to GAIA GPS. Email support@gaiagps.com and tell them you are a volunteer with Inyo County SAR and are interested in using their program. Also, tell them if you are using an Android or iOS device. They will send you a link to download the app and then sign you up for the pro version.

It is common for members to want to share information about missions and post photos to social media. Inyo County Search and Rescue is required by law to abide by HIPAA privacy laws. HIPAA mandates that information about a patient must remain confidential. Therefore, SAR volunteers must use careful discretion in posting photos or commenting on missions. Inyo County's Public Information Officer, Carma Roper, should be consulted before posting photos or sharing information to any social media outlets. She can be reached at 760-878-0395 or croper@inyocounty.us.

Inyo Search and Rescue Skill Assessment

This is an initial assessment; your assessment will change with trainings and mission experience. For each question please choose the response that best describes your experience level.

General Backcountry Skills *

- Level A. You must have the equipment and skills to conduct SAR operations in extreme cold and severe weather conditions safely for a 24-hour period at elevations above 10,000 feet. You must be self-sufficient and sleep safely in snow and ice when night time temperatures may fall below 0°F.
- Level B. You must have the equipment and skills to be able to conduct SAR operations in moderate weather conditions safely for a 24-hour period for elevations above 10,000 feet. You must be self-sufficient and sleep safely when night time temperatures may fall below 20° F.
- Level C. You must have the equipment and skills to be able to conduct SAR operations in warm weather conditions safely for a 24-hour period at elevations of less than 10,000 feet. You must be self-sufficient and sleep safely when night time temperatures may fall below 40°F.

Climbing Skills *

- Level A. Must be completely familiar with climbing equipment, terms, knots, anchors, and procedures. Must be able to safely lead at least a 5.8 multi-pitch unbolted climb using natural protection, i.e. cams, nuts, etc. One must also be able to rappel and ascend a free hanging fixed rope. You must be able to use these skills to tie off a climber, escape a belay, and rescue an injured climber.
- Level B. Must be completely familiar with climbing equipment, terms, knots, anchors, and procedures. Must be able to safely follow at least a 5.5 pitch. One must also be able to rappel and ascend a free hanging fixed rope. You must be able to use these skills to tie off a climber, escape a belay, and aid a stranded climber.
- Level C. Must be familiar with climbing equipment, terms, knots, anchors, and procedures.
- Level D. None of the above.

Snow and Ice Travel Skills *

- Level A. Must be able to Backcountry Ski, i.e. 'skin' up and ski down at least a 35° slope. One must be able to effectively use crampons and an ice axe on a 40° consolidated snow and rock slope. You must be able to self-belay and self-arrest. You must be able safely travel in avalanche terrain and assess avalanche and winter weather conditions. You must be able to lead an avalanche beacon search.
- Level B. Must be able to x-country ski a 10° slope. And you must be able to use snowshoes or crampons and an ice axe to ascend a 30° snow slope. You must be able to self-belay and self-arrest. You must be able safely travel in avalanche terrain and assess avalanche and winter weather conditions. You must be able to operate an avalanche beacon and have participated in a practice beacon search.
- Level C. Must be able to use snowshoes, crampons, and an ice axe for low angle snow fields.
- Level D. No snow travel experience outside of a ski resort.

Navigation Skills *

- Level A. Must be able to use a compass to relate positions on a topo map. You must be able to explain the use of different datum's as they relate to LAT/LONG and UTM coordinates. You must be able to use mapping software and a GPS for route planning and navigation. You must be able to use an altimeter and a personal emergency locator beacon. You must be able to use celestial navigation to establish travel directions.
- Level B. Must be able to use a compass to relate positions on a topo map. You must be able to use mapping software and a GPS for route planning and navigation. You must be able to use celestial navigation to establish true north.
- Level C. Must be able to use a GPS and a topo map to navigate.
- Level D. None of the above.

Mountaineering Skills *

- Level A. You must have a level "a" for climbing, a level "a" for snow travel, and a level "a" for navigation at elevations higher than 11,000'. Must have a lot of experience with all types of snow and ice anchors as well as technical ice tools.
- Level B. You must have a level "b" for climbing, a level "b" for snow travel, and a level "b" for navigation at elevations higher than 10,000. Must have some experience with some types of snow and ice anchors as well as technical ice tools.
- Level C. You must have a level "c" for climbing, a level "c" for snow travel, and a level "c" for navigation at elevations higher than 8,000 feet.
- Level D. None of the above.

Technical Rescue Skills *

- Level A. Must be able to supervise and safely establish a high angle raise or lowering system in any conditions. You must have a level "b" for climbing. In addition to the climbing skills you must understand pulley systems, knot passing, and technical rescue anchors.
- Level B. Must be able to supervise and safely establish one aspect of a high angle rescue system. This could be one of the following; the main system, the belay system, or the litter management. You must have a level "b" for climbing. In addition to the climbing skills you must understand pulley systems, knot passing, and technical rescue anchors.
- Level C. You must have at least one high angle technical rescue training class and you must have a level "c" for climbing.
- Level D. No technical rescue experience.

Tracking Skills *

- Level A. Must be able to track a person when only a partial footprint is available on a poor surface.
- Level B. Must be able to track a person when a complete footprint is available on a poor surface.
- Level C. Must be able to track a person when a complete footprint is available on a good surface.
- Level D. Must be able to follow an established hiking trail.

Communication Skills *

- Level A. Must have extensive experience with the operation of handheld radios, mobile radios, base station radios, repeaters, and satellite phones. You must understand the statewide SAR radio and local law enforcement radio procedures and channels.
- Level B. Must be able to operate handheld radios, mobile radios, base station radios, repeaters, and satellite phones.
- Level C. Must be able to operate handheld radios, smoke signals, and whistles.

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- Level A. Must have extensive experience with the operation of handheld radios, mobile radios, base station radios, repeaters, and satellite phones. You must understand the statewide SAR radio and local law enforcement radio procedures and channels.
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- Level C. Must be able to operate handheld radios, smoke signals, and whistles.

Helicopter Safety *

- Level A. Must have attended a helicopter training session for safety, protocols, and procedures. You must have been on at least 5 helicopter flights as part of SAR operations or training. You also must be familiar with the safety and operations of all types of helicopters that may be used in the course of SAR operations. This experience should include the use of devices such as the red bag, the diaper, the winch, etc.
- Level B. Must have attended a helicopter training session for safety, protocols, and procedures, plus at least 1 flight in the course of SAR operations.
- Level C. Must have attended a helicopter training session for safety, protocols, and procedures.
- Level D. No experience with helicopters.

Medical Skills *

- Level A. Must have a current EMT-B certificate or higher.
- Level B. Must have a current Wilderness First Responder certificate or higher.
- Level C. Must have maintained a professional level First Aid and CPR certifications.
- Level D. No medical training.

OES Training *

- Level A. Must have successfully completed the “Direction and Control” and the “Winter Search Management” classes provided by the Office of Emergency Services.
- Level B. Must have successfully completed the “Direction and Control” or the “Winter Search Management” classes provided by the Office of Emergency Services.
- Level C. Neither.

Operations Experience *

- Level A. Must have participated in at least 50 SAR missions, and at least 30 of these missions must have been conducted with Inyo County SAR.
- Level B. Must have participated in at least 25 SAR missions
- Level C. Must have participated in at least 5 SAR missions.
- Level D. Minimal or no SAR Experience

Online Training Resources

The Mountain Rescue Association website offers numerous opportunities for mountain safety education. For newcomers to Inyo SAR, it is recommended that you take the “Helicopters in Search and Rescue, Basic Level” online course.

This course can be found at MRA.org, and then go to the Learning and Education tab. There you will be able to find that and many other valuable online trainings related to mountain rescue. Please take the time to explore the website and familiarize yourself with some of the resources that are available there.

On addition to the MRA website, the National Association for Search and Rescue website also has some good resources available. Their website is NASAR.org.