

# **Yakima County Fire District 12 – Standard Operating Procedures**

## **SOG 4-9 – Snow Rescue**

**Reference:** Policy 2403

### **1.0 General**

**1.1 Purpose** The purpose of this standard operating guideline is to provide a guideline for District personnel in providing emergency rescue in the winter recreational areas of Fire District 12 and surrounding areas.

**1.2 Scope.** This standard operating guideline shall apply to all members of Yakima County Fire District 12.

**1.3 Enforcement.** Enforcement of this standard operating guideline is the responsibility of the District's officers. Any person deviating from the provisions of this guideline may be required, at the discretion of the officer in charge, to submit in writing, within five (5) calendar days, an explanation for such deviation to the requesting officer who will forward the explanation up the chain of command for further review.

### **2. DISPATCHING OF SNOW RESCUE TEAM**

- 2.1** All four stations will be dispatched for the snow rescue team. Station four will respond to the station, pickup WV-46 and rescue sleds and respond to the appropriate location for a command post. (Ahtanum Ranger Station, Nasty creek etc.) Set up a command post and staging area. Station four needs to communicate with the Duty Officer before leaving the station.
- 2.2** WV-47 will respond to staging unless instructed different, and WV 27 will cover station fours area with input from Duty Officer or IC. WV-27 is to standby at Station Four or remains at Station Two based on IC or Duty Officer's needs. Good communications between all responding units is essential.
- 2.3** One of the Operators needs to be present to unload the snow machines and set up the equipment. One Team Leader needs to be present on all missions and one support person.
- 2.4** Senior medical person at base could use backpack first aid kit, and have witnesses of accident take him into scene, this person shall have established communications before departing. Command will be established at this base area. If at all possible leave a witness at command post to lead incoming units to the scene.
- 2.5** Snow rescue equipment can be transported by team leaders or operators using department equipment or approved personal vehicles. Equipment can be unloaded and prepared to depart by team leaders or operators. To depart on a mission a team leader must be present at all times.

- 2.6 At no time will snow rescue equipment be operated by non-department members. Only snow rescue team members that have been properly trained are to operate equipment. Proper winter clothing will be worn at all times, and helmets worn by all operators and passengers including reflective vests. Proper snowmobiling etiquette must be used at all times. Any misuse, damage, or accidents are to be reported immediately through the chain of command.
- 2.7 MAST helicopter would be the best mode of transporting patient(s) to medical facility and should be put on standby as soon as possible if there is a potential need. Due to winter weather this may not always be possible. Patient would then have to be transported by rescue ground crews. The safety of rescuers and patient/s are the top priority in all missions.
- 2.8 If more help is anticipated or needed other team members may be asked to respond. At the time of dispatch Yakima County Search & Rescue Shall be notified, and were the command post/staging and approximate location or area of the patient. They will be asked to meet at the staging area if needed. Any special needs are to be communicated with them.

### **3. Out of District Response**

- 3.1 Dispatch will contact Duty Officer first. Then after consulting the District Duty Officer activate all four station pagers for snow rescue team, members. Station four may be dispatched to transport snow rescue equipment to a designated meeting point, or the Duty Officer will respond to station four and pickup the equipment. The Duty Officer will contact three team members one being a team leader. No team member is to respond with out contacting the Duty Officer. Only our personnel are to operate the equipment. Requesting agency personnel may ride as passengers, provided they have the proper clothing. Anyone riding or driving snowmobiles will wear reflective vests.
- 3.2 Team members are encouraged to call the Duty Officer if they are available to respond.
- 3.3 Every effort will be made to use different personnel on each mission. This will help maintain skills and interest.
- 3.4 Equipment will be kept in a ready response state at all times. Safety checks will be performed as machines, sleds and equipment are unloaded from trailer. Only equipment approved will be allowed to trailer equipment. The snow machines are not to tow other sleds.

### **4. Training**

- 4.1 Members of the rescue team will be assigned each year. Three areas of participation will be used: team leaders, operators, and support members. Training in each category will happen during the winter season to keep members current with equipment and responsibility. Each area of participation will the following amount of hours of documented training time each year either on the district sled or private.

Team leader = 20 hrs

Operator = 10hrs

Support = 5 hrs

## **5. Communications**

- 5.1** All communications shall be established before leaving the command/staging area. The district the frequencies used will be. When working with SAR Sedge repeater shall be the designated frequency between WFD and SAR.

Upper valley main	F-1
Sedge	F-2
TAC 4	F-4

- 5.2** For out of district it will be up to the team leader to communicate with the IC for frequencies.