



National Search and Rescue School

U.S. COAST GUARD TRAINING CENTER
YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA 23690-5000
(757) 856-2273, fax (757) 856-2242
E-mail: sar.school@langley.af.mil

Inland SAR Planning Course *Sponsor Requirements*

While the Inland SAR Planning course is offered at no charge, it is a traveling course and the faculty needs a good deal of help from local sponsoring agencies, some of which may involve minor costs to the sponsor. To provide the best class possible, sponsors must fulfill the following responsibilities.

1. Help fill class quotas. The class works best when students are well mixed from all types of SAR agencies: state, local, law enforcement, emergency services, CAP, military, etc. (see attached page "Selecting the Right Students"). Since the sponsor should be most familiar with the SAR requirements of the area, the sponsor should be the primary individual responsible for determining and soliciting the agencies and people who most need the course to improve SAR in their area. The sponsor and the National SAR School coordinate in making final attendance selections 30 days before class start.
2. Find, reserve, and help set up classrooms and facilities as identified in the attached list.
3. Find, reserve, and help set up the audio-visual and electronic equipment identified in the attached list.
4. Provide lodging recommendations for students and instructors; work block reservations and group rates, if possible. If the class is being held in a hotel or at a training facility with attached lodging, reserve an appropriate number of rooms for the class (generally 25 students and 2 instructors, minus local students who want to commute to class).
5. Provide written arrival instructions that the school can send to students in an e-mail "Welcome Package." Instructions should include clear maps and written directions to the facility and classroom, any clearances required, check-in instructions, special instructions like parking restrictions, etc. Electronic maps (graphics files) are preferred.
6. Provide a single person as a Point Of Contact. The POC must:
 - Provide telephone and fax numbers (office and home).
 - The POC **MUST** have a reliable weekend telephone number in case the instructors' flights are delayed or the set-up time must otherwise be changed.
 - Be readily available to solve problems and make last-minute adjustments, especially during the 2 weeks immediately prior to the class and the days of instructor arrival and classroom set-up.
 - Provide postal and shipping addresses for the course materials.
 - Three 45# boxes via US Postal Service and two 2'x2'x1.5' hard cases via FedEx.
 - Establish a time to meet the instructors for classroom set-up (generally in the afternoon the day before class start).
 - Bring shipped materials, classroom keys, and all needed equipment to the facility at the pre-designated set-up time and help the instructors set up the classroom and equipment.
 - Set-up generally takes about an hour and includes arranging the classroom (tables, chairs, projection screens, white boards, etc.), laying out course materials, testing the laptop-projector connections, testing/learning classroom systems (lights, projection, sound, etc.).
7. Provide modest supplies and access to a copy machine:
 - Easels/chart paper, white board markers, etc. appropriate for the classroom and exercise breakout rooms set-ups on the attached list.
 - Arrangements for coffee or other appropriate refreshments throughout the class.

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Inland SAR Planning Course *Facility and Equipment Requirements*

Facilities are required 0730 - 1700 daily Mon - Fri and for approximately 1-1.5 hours on the Sunday prior to class starting. Prefer single-use rooms so that students can leave items overnight without worrying about security.

Mon - Wed (Classroom days)

Room Size - Large enough for:

- 24-26 students to be comfortably seated with sufficient table space to use maps concurrently with reference and note-taking materials (3 students to a standard 8' folding table is tight but adequate),
- 2 instructors with a table full of materials and handouts,
- Presentation aids and audio/visual equipment listed below.

Room Configuration:

- Tables arranged in rows with a front-to-back aisle between adjacent tables works well.
- Sufficient space between student tables is needed for the instructors to move around the room during presentations and to monitor student and small-group work.
- Sufficient depth (from front to back) is needed so projected materials can be easily read by all without the projectors blocking student views or drowning out instructor voices.

Projection and presentation aid requirements:

- Digital projector (faculty brings laptop to connect to it), SVGA capable (800x600 resolution) or better with high lumen capability so the graphics can be seen even while lights are on for note-taking.
- Projection screen large enough to be easily read by all students.
- A combination of chart board easels (and paper), white boards, etc. (equiv. 2-3 chart boards minimum).
- Extension cords, power strips, connecting cables for the above equipment, with at least two remaining outlets for faculty computers

Thurs - Fri (Table-top exercise days)

Students are split into 6 groups of 4-5 students each. They need:

- Table space for map plotting and materials (minimum equiv. to 2 large desks or an 8' table)
- Floor space for each group: 12' x 12' minimum, 3-4' on each side of tables for easy movement
- Physical separation from other groups so they do not interfere with each other verbally or visually.

**Best: 2 rooms, large enough so the groups do not interfere with each other visually or verbally.
Plus an additional small room for 7 people to conduct simulated telephone interviews (see note 2).**

Considerations:

- Each instructor "controls" 3 groups, so rooms should be sized accordingly (see note 3).
- Occasionally throughout the 2 days, the entire group is pulled back together for short periods.
- Often the original classroom works well as one of the exercise rooms.
- About 30' x 30' seems to be needed for 3 groups, 30' x 60' for all six.

Room notes:

NOTE 1: Experience shows that groups need at least 12'x12' each, depending on the size of the tables provided, and about 12' laterally between any groups in the same room. Since all groups are working with the same scenario, but each proceeds differently, it is vital that the groups be separated enough to not be distracted by each other. Chart board easels and moveable white/chalk boards can help separate groups.

NOTE 2: If the main briefing room is used for some of the small groups, we then need an additional small room on Thursday for 8-10 people. This room requires at least one small desk and chairs for the people.

NOTE 3: All rooms must be close together so the instructors can move quickly between them to monitor and control the exercise and the students can move quickly between their small groups and the main briefing room.

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Inland SAR Planning Course *Selecting the "Right" Students*

The Inland SAR Planning course is aimed at the on-scene decision makers: the incident commander, planners, operations chief, and other people on and off scene who need to understand how the search decisions are made in order to build confidence and support the incident commander. Since such great responsibilities rest on the shoulders of these SAR leaders, it is important that the class sponsors select the right students to get the best impact and improvement in their SAR operations. Thus, the sponsor must help select approximately two-thirds of the students. Broadcast advertising does not often generate the desired applicants; you should target the specific people, counties, agencies, etc. whom you know should attend.

The ideal class size is 24 students.

- 16-18 (plus alternates) from the sponsor, diversely from:
 - State and county emergency services.
 - State police, county sheriff departments. (They are often the responsible agency for missing persons)
 - Local agencies with search response commitments.
 - Other SAR organizations; if they have key management decision-making responsibilities.
 - State and national parks. (NPS generally applies directly to the school)
 - Volunteer SAR team leaders with key management decision-making responsibilities.
 - Neighboring states.
- 2 for DoD and international students - returned to the state if not used.
- 6 CAP -- must apply through their wing to CAP National HQ only -- the incident/mission commanders for 85% of the searching on missions under national-level responsibility.

Some factors to consider in selecting students:

- Target people who should attend; those who need and can use the materials. The course focuses on mathematically based search planning tools to allocate limited resources on extended searches. Identify who has the highest potential for searches that last beyond the initial response/hasty search phase.
- Select experienced SAR leaders, not people new to SAR. The course consists of intense "graduate-level" instruction and is not a gentle introduction or orientation.
- Select people responsible for the on-scene decisions and daily search plans. The course focuses on tools to aid on-scene action plans and decision-making -- where to search, how to allocate limited resources, etc.
- Select people with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Much is gained from information cross-flow and networking between students.
- Select people who can commit to attending the entire class: while real-world disasters take precedence, out-of-class appointments and calls/pages from the office distract both the student and the rest of the class and may lead to dismissal of the student.
- The course addresses search planning; it does not address the concerns of the average searcher or FEMA response team member.
- Select wisely: with only 10-12 classes per year, the course may not be able to return soon.

You are not alone. In the weeks leading up to the class, the school faculty will help you balance the mix of students and suggest student sources. Often, just talking with the faculty about the way SAR is organized and conducted in your state can help clarify which agencies to contact for students.

Not later than 30 days prior to the class start date, the school needs a firm commitment on student names so the acceptance and read-ahead packages can be delivered in time. One-for-one substitutions can be made up to the day class starts. These should be held to a minimum since read ahead materials and reporting instructions might not arrive in time.

If you have questions concerning student selection or have requirements not addressed here please don't hesitate to contact us at (757) 856-2273 or via e-mail at sar.school@langley.af.mil.

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