



Standard Operating Guideline

Water Rescue



Scope: Sacramento Regional Fire Departments

Policy Contact

Sacramento Regional Operations Group

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References

- Fire Scope: Chapter 19
- Regional Standard
- ICS –SF-SAR-020-1
- ICS –US&R 120-2
- ICS –US&R-120-1

01. Guideline

This document establishes a Standard Operating Guideline for water rescue operations and may be applied generally.

02. Definition

- 2.1 Water Rescue (WR-1): Victim is reported OUT of the water.
- 2.2 Water Rescue (WR-2): Victim is reported IN the water. (Ponds, reservoirs, standing water)
- 2.3 Water Rescue (WR-3): Victim is reported IN the water. (American River, Sacramento River, Scott Road, Folsom Lake, Nimbus Lake)
- 2.4 Boat Types
 - a. Fire Boat (FBT): Rigid hull boat with fire suppression capabilities.
 - b. Rescue Boat (BOT): Rigid v-spaded hull boat with inflatable pontoons around the perimeter of the boat. Typically, with an inboard jet drive and a center helm. Requires a boat ramp.
 - c. Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB): Inflatable boat (zodiac style). Typically powered by outboard motors.



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- d. Jon Boat (JON): Aluminum flat bottom boat. Typically powered by outboard motor.
- e. Rescue Watercraft (RWC): Any jet powered personal watercraft.

03. Resources

3.1 WR-1:

- Engine
- Medic
- Boat
- Battalion Chief

3.2 WR-2:

- Engine
- Medic
- Boat
 - Specialized boat: IRB, Jon boat, non-motorized raft
- Battalion Chief

3.3 WR-3:

- Two Engines
- Two Boats
- Helicopter
 - Metro Fire Helicopter when available.
 - Law Enforcement Helicopter when available.
- Battalion Chief
- Medic
- Rescue Company (SFD's jurisdiction)
- Considerations:
 - Law enforcement marine unit. (Under water robot)
 - Additional watercraft
 - UAV if Helicopter is not available.
 - Request Law enforcement for confirmed death / victim recovery underwater.
 - These incidents are under law enforcement jurisdiction. All considerations for crime scene preservation should be taken.



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04. Procedure

4.1 Initial Radio Report/Size-up

- Unit designation of the unit arriving on the scene
- Establish incident orientation (“River Right” or “River Left”)
- A brief description (“In water” or “Out of water”)
- Confirmation of the incident location
- Life hazard
- Any obvious safety hazards
- Identification and location of incident command post (if taken command)
- Request additional resources if necessary

4.2 WR-1

4.2.1 Engine

Provide initial size-up report and communicate initial actions based on incident priorities; the first arriving company officer needs to obtain, but is not limited to:

- Who or what the target is (adult, teen, child, or baby)
- Confirm the target is out of the water
- Any and all events which led up to the incident occurring
- Any access issues
- Local water history and potential hazards

4.2.2 Medic

Report to command post or designated location per IC

Based on incident priorities Command may assign to:

4.2.2.1

Considerations

- Medical
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter

4.2.3 Boat

Based on incident priorities

4.2.3.1

Considerations

- Mark Point Last Seen / Reconnaissance



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- Search (shoreline from water)
- Medical transport (to a location that can be accessed by ambulance and/or helicopter)
- Rescue Company

4.2.4 Chief Officer

Assume or establish command if not already established

4.2.4.1

Considerations

- Request additional resources, as needed
 - Law Enforcement
 - Patrol officers
 - Park Rangers
 - Helicopter
 - Metro Fire if available
 - Law Enforcement if available
 - UAV if Helicopter is not available
 - Rescue Company (for advance rope operations)
- Establish appropriate command structure
- Establish personnel accountability

WR-2

5.1 Engine

Provide initial size-up report and communicate initial actions based on incident priorities:

- Victim description and point last seen.
- Confirm the victim is IN or OUT of the water
- Any access issues

5.2 Medic Report to command post or designated location per IC

5.2.1

Considerations

- Medical
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter



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5.3 Boat

Based on incident priorities and boat type

5.3.1

Considerations

- Reconnaissance
- Rescue (boat or rescue swimmer(s))
- Search
- Medical transport (to a location that can be access by ambulance and/or helicopter)

5.4 Chief Officer

Assume or establish command if not already established

5.4.1

Considerations

- Request additional resources, as needed
 - Law Enforcement
 - Park Rangers
 - Helicopter
 - Metro Fire if available
 - Law Enforcement if available
 - UAV if Helicopter is not available
 - Rescue Company (for advance rope operations)
- Establish appropriate command structure
- Establish personnel accountability

WR-3

6.1 First Engine

Provide initial size-up report and communicate initial actions based on incident priorities; the first arriving company officer needs to obtain, but is not limited to:

- Victim description, point last seen.
- Local water history and potential hazards

6.2 Second Engine – Report to the opposite side of the dispatch location



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6.2.1

Considerations

- Shoreline search
- Upstream spotter

6.3 Medic Report to command post or designated location per IC

Command may assign to:

6.3.1

Considerations

- Medical
- Shoreline search
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter

6.4 First Boat

Based on incident priorities: search or rescue

6.4.1 Search

- Reconnaissance – gathering information from bystanders and/or witnesses
- Hasty (rapid) - searching a large area in a rapid pace
- Primary – searching in a define search area in a fast pace
- Secondary – search in a define search area in a slower and methodical pace

6.4.2 Rescue

- **Surface**
 - Surface of the water
 - Against strainer
- On object (rock, vehicle roof top, against or on bridge pillar)
- **Subsurface**
 - Below surface of water (if agency supports this operation)

6.4.3

Considerations

- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter



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6.5 Second Boat

Based on first boat incident needs

6.5.1

Considerations

- Assist with Search and Rescue
- Downstream protection
- Upstream spotter
- Staging at boat launch

6.6 Helicopter

Metro Fire if available

Law Enforcement if available

UAV if Helicopter is not available

6.6.1 Considerations

- Search
- Reconnaissance
- Rescue operations
- Medical Transport

6.7 Rescue Company

6.7.1 Considerations

- Rescue swimmer
- Land based/shoreline search
- Advanced rope operations
 - High tension diagonal
 - Tether boat
 - High pick point (victim on or against bridge pillar)
 - Kiting

6.8 Truck Company

6.8.1 Considerations

- High pick point
- Land based/shoreline search
- Advanced rope operations

7.1 Chief Officer



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Assume or establish command if not already established

7.1.1 Considerations

- Request additional resources, as needed
 - Law Enforcement
 - Park Rangers
 - Coroner
 - Rescue Company
- Establish appropriate command structure
- Establish personnel accountability

7.2 Dispatch request by Law Enforcement

- **Confirmed Death/Victim Recovery Underwater**
 - These incidents are under Law Enforcement jurisdiction. All considerations for crime scene preservation should be taken

Appendix

Fire Boat (FBT)





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Rescue Boat (BOT)



Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB)





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Guideline: Water Rescue

Jon Boat (JON)



Rescue Water Craft (RWC)





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