

Western Massachusetts **Technical Rescue Team**



OPERATIONS MANUAL

Approved by the Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association

March 28, 2013

1) WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS TECHNICAL RESCUE TEAM

- a) The Western Mass. Technical Rescue Team is a division of the Western Mass. Chiefs Association. The district is comprised of 101 communities. The team is made up of technically trained fire personnel from across the district.

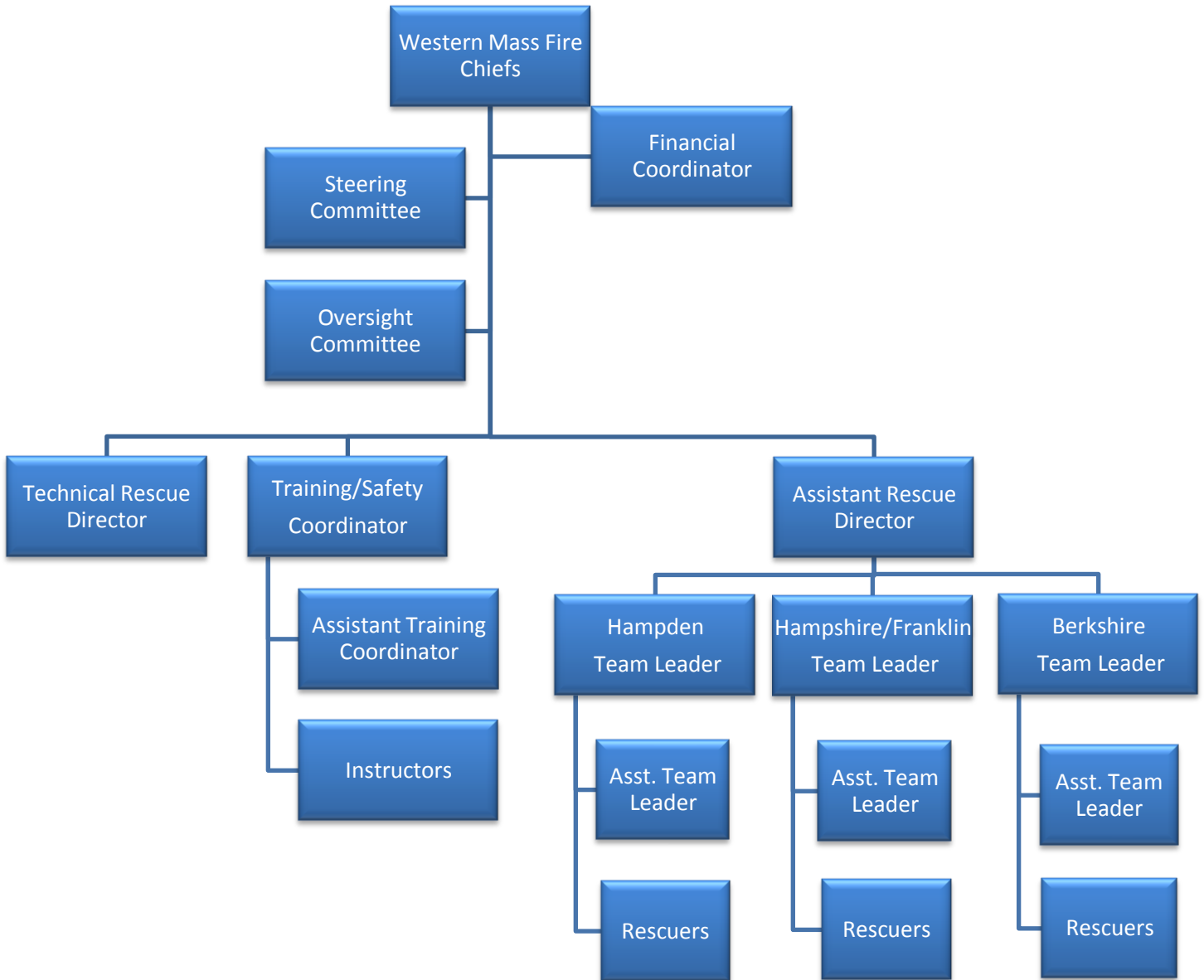
2) MISSION STATEMENT

- a) The mission of the Western Mass. Technical Rescue Team (WMTRT) is to assist and coordinate life-saving efforts in the search, extrication, and the safeguarding of trapped or stranded victims during natural, man-made accidents and or disasters. The Western Mass. Technical Rescue Team will offer support, assistance and cooperation when a technical rescue incident occurs, to all surrounding agencies when requested.

3) PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- a) The purpose of The WMTRT is to provide a nucleus of highly trained special rescue personnel to assist the surrounding agencies with technical knowledge and support to safely and effectively mitigate the following types of incidents:
 - (1) Any situation where a victim is trapped, buried or experiencing a medical emergency in a trench or excavation.
 - (a) Any situation where a victim is trapped, buried or experiencing a medical emergency in a confined space as defined by OSHA and/or NFPA
 - (b) Any Technical rope rescue situation in which 51% of the load is maintained by the rope system and or any incline over 40 degrees.
 - (c) To educate agencies to the dangers of these environments for injury prevention.
 - (d) Building collapse to be added later.

WMTRT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



4) ADMINISTRATION/TECHNICAL RESCUE DIRECTOR

- a) It shall be the duty of the Technical Rescue Director to direct the delivery of services and be responsible for the management of the Administrative functions of the WMTRT. The Technical Rescue Director shall coordinate the efforts of all members in achieving and or maintaining levels of adequate training necessary for the continued operation of the Technical Rescue Team. It shall also be the duty of the Technical Rescue Director to communicate with the WMTRT, and the Steering Committee in order to affect essential long range planning, goal setting, and program and budget development. The Technical Rescue Director will call and chair all meetings of Steering Committee and membership meetings including training sessions sponsored by the Team. The Technical Rescue Director will form committees and assign a chairperson as the need arises. The Technical Rescue Director will be appointed by the Executive Board of the Western Mass Chiefs Association and with recommendation of the Steering Committee on the basis of merit and ability for a Biennial (2 year) term, removable only for just cause.

5) ASSISTANT TECHNICAL RESCUE DIRECTOR

- a) It shall be the duty of the Assistant Technical Rescue Director to assist the Technical Rescue Director with all administrative functions and perform any other tasks required by the Technical Rescue Director. The Assistant Technical Rescue Director will perform all duties of the Technical Rescue Director in his/her absence. The Assistant Technical Rescue Director will record all meetings and maintain all Team records. The Assistant Technical Rescue Director will be a member of the Steering Committee. The Assistant Technical Rescue Director will be appointed by the Technical Rescue Director and with the approval of the steering committee on basis of merit and ability to work in his/her capacity.

6) TRAINING/SAFETY COORDINATOR

- a) It shall be the duty of the Training coordinator to coordinate the efforts of all members in achieving and or maintaining levels of adequate training necessary for the continued operation of the Technical Rescue Team and establish all training drills, maintain all records and certifications. Supervise instructor staff to ensure uniformity across all teams, and ensure compliance with all NFPA/ OSHA technical rescue standards. It shall also be the duty of the Training coordinator to communicate with the Technical Rescue Director and the Steering Committee in order to affect essential long range planning, goal setting, and program and budget development. The Training coordinator will be appointed by the Executive Board of the Western Mass. Chiefs Association and with recommendation of the Steering Committee on the basis of merit and ability for a Biennial (2 year) term, removable only for just cause. Training coordinator must be certified to MFA standards or equivalent for Technical Rescue Instructor.

7) ASSISTANT TRAINING COORDINATOR

- a) It shall be the duty of the Assistant Training coordinator to assist the Training coordinator with all administrative functions and perform any other tasks required by the Training coordinator. The Assistant Training coordinator will perform all duties of the Training coordinator in his/her absence. The Assistant Training coordinator will record all training meetings and maintain all Team training records. The Assistant Training coordinator shall be appointed by the Technical Rescue Director and with the approval of the steering committee on basis of merit and ability for a Biennial (2 year) term,

removable only for just cause. Assistant Training coordinator must be certified to MFA standards for Technical Rescue Instructor or equivalent.

8) FINANCIAL COORDINATOR

- a) It shall be the duty of the Financial Coordinator to keep all financial records of the team.
- b) The Financial Coordinator will work with Steering Committee to identify and acquire funding sources. The financial coordinator will work with the treasurer of the Western Mass. Fire Chiefs Association with regards to all payments and billings. The Financial Coordinator will be appointed by the Technical Rescue Director with approval of the steering committee on basis of merit and the ability to work in his/her capacity.

9) GROUP LEADER

- a) The Group Leader shall identify all technical rescue hazard target areas in his/her district.
- b) Group Leader will coordinate with property owners to arrange for the Group to have access to technical rescue hazard targets. It shall be the duty of the Group Leader to coordinate all training exercises with the training division. Group leader will keep list of all personnel who are not available for training or response do to long term sickness or injury from their home department. Group leader will be responsible for collecting all response and training paperwork, and transferring paperwork to the Director. Group Leader will be appointed by the Technical Rescue Director with approval of the steering committee on basis of merit and the ability to work in his/her capacity.

10) ASSISTANT GROUP LEADER

- a) It shall be the duty of the Assistant Group Leader of technical rescue operations to assist the Group Leader with all administrative functions and perform any other tasks required by the Group Leader. The Assistant Group Leader will perform all duties of the Group Leader in his/her absence. The Assistant Group Leader will be appointed by the Technical Rescue Director and with the approval of the steering committee on basis of merit and ability to work in his capacity.

11) VACANCIES IN OFFICE

- a) When an office becomes vacant, the vacancy will be posted on the Group website for thirty (30) days and an e-mail sent to all members. Any member wishing to be a candidate for the vacant office will put it in writing and send it to the Technical Rescue Director within the thirty (30) day period. Within 2 weeks after the closing date the Technical Rescue Director or the Executive Board of the Western Mass. Fire Chiefs Association as spelled out in the job title will appoint a candidate to the vacant position with the approval of the Steering Committee on basis of merit and ability to work in his/her capacity.

12) STEERING COMMITTEE

- a) The Steering committee (hereafter referred to as S/C) will consist of four Chiefs (one from each county), Team director, assistant director, and a team leader. Membership to the steering committee will be for a term of 2 years. All members must be in good standing. The S/C will meet twice a year (March and September) at a minimum. The duties of the S/C are as follows:
- b) Act as governing body and provide leadership for the Team.
- c) Approve all administration and operational guidelines and procedures.
- d) Assist the DIRECTOR and ASSISTANT DIRECTOR with administrative tasks.

- e) Act as the review board for membership and suspension or revocations of members. The S/C will follow Robert's rules of procedures when conducting any meetings and minutes of said meetings will be held on file indefinitely.
- f) A quorum of the S/C will be a minimum of five (5)

13) OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

- a) The Oversight Committee shall be made up of two (2) Fire Chiefs selected by the Western Mass Fire Chiefs Association and members of any other organization having members on the Technical rescue team. The Oversight committee will be in charge of reviewing the selection process and answering any disputes that arise from said process. The oversight committee will hear any disputes that arise from termination or suspension from the team. They will coordinate with the Steering Committee (S/C) to rectify any dispute. The Oversight Committee will review all team documents and make recommendations to the S/C.

14) LEAD AGENCY

- a) The Western Mass. Fire Chiefs Association will serve as the lead agency. It will be the responsibility of the lead agency to provide resources necessary to allow the Team to function. The responsibilities are as follows:
 - b) Funding for the team
 - c) Support all team activities
 - i) Appoint the team DIRECTOR
 - ii) Select two (2) Liaisons (see below)

15) LIAISONS TO THE WMTRT

- a) The WMTRT will have two (2) Liaisons to the Western Mass. Fire Chiefs. These individuals will be chosen by the Chiefs and will be invited to all meetings and training sessions the Team conducts. The DIRECTOR will also update these individuals on a continued basis so as to keep the Western Mass. Fire Chiefs informed and familiar with all aspects of the Team. Any issues should always be communicated through the liaison when dealing with both agencies. One or both of the liaisons will report to incidents and assist in coordination of efforts between the team and the local incident commander.

16) MEMBERSHIP

- a) Membership will be granted by a majority vote of the Steering Committee. A candidate for membership must meet the minimum qualifications list (see Appendix A). Prior to candidate notification the Oversight committee will review the selection process.
- b) To maintain membership the member must be active and comply with the following:
 - c) Attend 80% of the training sessions per year that are sanctioned by the team.
 - d) Respond to 50% of incident activations.
 - e) Does not violate the Rules and Regulations of the Team.
- f) Members who fail to comply and have not had a reasonable excuse or able to prove they have received technical rescue training outside the Team may be dismissed by the S/C. This dismissal may be appealed to the Oversight Committee within in 10 days in writing. The decision by the

- g) Oversight Committee is final. The member must have on file with the Team an application, all documents of training in the Technical Rescue field that he/she may have, a signed Memorandum of Understanding from their department head, and current immunizations and vaccinations.
- h) All members will be classified as to the levels of their training. They will only be allowed to perform in the three disciplines listed below, provided they show documentation from a recognized teaching institution. The S/C will approve of the teaching institution as a recognized institute. Members not yet trained in that area of discipline will be classified as support help only and be expected not to put themselves or their Team members in harm's way, by engaging in a discipline in which they are not trained. The S/C will approve the levels of training and assign the member to one of the following classification.
 - (1) Technician
 - (2) Operations
 - (3) Support staff
- i) Disciplines sanctioned by the Team:
 - i) Confined Space Rescue
 - ii) Trench Rescue
 - iii) Rope Rescue
 - iv) Building collapse
 - v) Water Rescue

17) RULES AND REGULATIONS, STANDARD OPERATING POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

- a) All Rules and Regulations and the Code of Conduct of the WMTRT will be strictly adhered to at all times. Members who violate the rules or regulations may be suspended or dismissed.
- b) Membership to the Team will be determined by the Steering Committee. The S/C has final authorization of acceptance or denial of an applicant.
- c) The procedure used to become a member is as follows:
 - i) A signed completed Team application must be submitted to the S/C
 - ii) The selection committee will review all applications on a regular basis and will submit approved applications to the S/C. The S/C will review all applications and vote to accept or reject. All applicants will be given reason for rejection.
 - iii) If an applicant disagrees with a rejection notice they may submit their case in writing to the Oversight committee within 10 days.
 - iv) The Oversight Committee will meet with the S/C committee to determine final outcome. All accepted applicants will be assigned as support status until an evaluation of their level of training is conducted by Training Division.
- d) Membership will be maintained by attending 80% of training sessions a calendar year and have ability to respond to 50% of team activations.

- e) Any member who falls behind in their training will be placed on inactive duty status. Members on inactive status will be able to participate in training sessions only. They will not be able to participate on Team responses until placed back on active status. The S/C will determine status.
- f) The S/C will set safety and SOPs for which will be adhered to at all times. The SOP's and Policy's will be updated as necessary. All members will strictly adhere to all safety protocols, procedures and practices that have been adopted and utilized during training sessions by the team. Members will also recognize any company policy or host Towns rules or regulations during training or emergency response.
- g) Members on sick leave or job related injury shall not be able to participate during team training or responses.
- h) Proper protective clothing and equipment will be worn at all times during training and responses.
- i) Members shall not participate in Team training or responses if physically or mentally impaired in any way.
- j) All injuries shall be reported to the Technical Rescue Team Safety Officer. See injury reporting below.
- k) Any reductions in team size for lack of funding will be done by the Steering Committee with the approval of the Oversight Committee. Personnel affected by this reduction will be immediately reinstated as funding becomes available prior to acceptance of any new personnel.
- l) In the event of Military Activation, the team member must submit a copy of orders. The time deployed will not count against the member. In the case of Military Leave status his/her position will be held until their return to active status on the local fire department.

18) CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1) Conduct unbecoming of a Team Member:
 - a) Insubordination
 - b) Misrepresentation
 - c) Stealing
 - d) Lying
 - e) Defacing Property
- 2) Harassment or Discrimination due to the following:
 - a) Sex
 - b) Age
 - c) Gender
 - d) Race
 - e) Religion
 - f) Sexual orientation

- 3) No member will act in a behavior which could result in injury or death.
- 4) No member will Act against the expressed direction of the Team coordinator or his designee.
- 5) No member shall respond to an incident on behalf of the Team without official activation.
- 6) No member shall discuss Team response outside the Team without expressed permission.

19) DISCIPLINE/APPEAL PROCESS

- a) Any action by a team member that is deemed to be a violation of the team's SOP/SOGs, Code of Conduct, Rules and Regulations or an act deemed to be detrimental to the well being of the WMTRT shall be subject to disciplinary action. The action shall be reviewed by the S/C of the WMTRT and determine the action(s) to be taken. The S/C shall issue the disciplinary action in a manner deemed just, based on the severity of the action. The disciplinary action shall be issued no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date of the review. Written notice shall be given to the member and his/her chief. Any Team member who has disciplinary actions taken against him/her will have the right to appeal the decision. The request to appeal the S/C's decision shall be made in writing to the oversight Committee, with a copy of the request going to the S/C. The appeal shall be heard by the Oversight Committee. The request for appeal must be received no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date of disciplinary action notification. Upon receipt of the request to appeal, the Oversight Committee shall set a date to hear the appeal. The Oversight Committee shall hear from both the Team member and the chairperson of the S/C before rendering a decision on the appeal. The Oversight Committee shall have the ability to uphold, dismiss, or amend the actions taken by the S/C based upon information given at the appeal. The decision of the Oversight Committee shall be final. Notification of the Oversight Committee decision shall be made in writing no more than ten (10) calendar days from the conclusion of the appeal hearing.

20) INJURY REPORT PROCEDURES

- a) All injuries shall be reported to the Technical Rescue Team Safety Officer and an injury report filled out.
- b) All members who must be transported for any medical treatment shall be accompanied by another Team member, when possible.
- c) The Technical Rescue Safety Officer will notify the Technical Rescue Leader, the agency I/C and the member's Chief as soon as possible after an injury has occurred. No injured members name shall be released to any other person.
- d) An Injury report shall be submitted to the Technical Rescue Leader and the members Chief as soon as possible. At a minimum, members are required to provide the following information: