

List of Revisions

Rev	Section	Description of Change	Effective Date
1.0	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First Draft	July 2019

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SOG #500.01 Membership

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Membership in the Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society requires the ongoing maintenance of a minimum level of certifications and other requirements. Members must continuously meet the requirements as outlined by the Society.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOG is to outline the minimum requirements that a member of BCSARS must meet in order to be considered compliant with the groups policies.

GUIDELINE

New recruits will be considered Probationary Members-in-Training (PMITs) for a minimum of 6 months and successfully completing their GSAR course. After having met all the requirements of the Society, a PMIT may request acceptance to the Society.

Former members of BCSARS (working to become active) or other recognized Search and Rescue groups may have their name put forward by a current member in good standing, to the Society for approval as a probationary member. After meeting all the requirements of the Society, the probationary member may request acceptance to the Society after a probationary period of 3 months.

The Society may nominate and accept members as honorary lifetime members of the Society, for outstanding service and commitment to the Society. Recognition of this special status will be at the discretion of the Executive with the approval of a majority of the membership at the time of appointment.

Following are the requirements for initial and continuing membership in the Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society:

1. Successful completion of the Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) course.
 2. All SAR volunteers must make a reasonable effort to complete a 20-hour first aid certificate (wilderness FA preferred) and maintain at least that level of certification while a registered SAR volunteer. Higher certifications are encouraged.
 3. Maintain an acceptable level of attendance at Training, Meetings, Operations (Tasks) and Fundraising events including a minimum of **50 hours** of documented service hours in each calendar year (subject to review in any 6-month period, and subject to exceptions in the Membership Policy Interpretation Guidelines i.e. Leaves of Absence);
 - a. Training
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- i. Regular scheduled training times shall be designated by the society.
 - ii. Document a minimum **20 hours** of Training service hours.
 - b. Meetings (Committees, Working Groups, General)
 - i. Regular scheduled meetings shall be every second Tuesday, every 3 months (January, April, July, and October) or as designated by the society.
 - ii. Document a minimum **4 hours** of Meeting service hours.
 - c. Fundraising (Including public relations events)
 - d. Operations (Tasks)
 - i. Maintain an acceptable level of operational competence as defined by the Society, outlined in Standard Operating Guidelines and appropriate references in JIBC GSAR material and Emergency Management BC (EMBC) policy.
4. Act in a manner to maintain the honorable reputation of the Society and its members.
 5. Members on an approved leave will be required to contribute an amount of documented service proportional to the duration of their leave (e.g., a 6 month leave results in a 25-hour requirement with each area of the society having a proportional minimum).
 6. A member's work, family or personal situation shall be taken into consideration at the discretion of the directors or Conflict Resolution Committee when evaluating attendance.
 7. The Conflict Resolution Committee will interpret this policy and will follow the Conflict Resolution Policy to decide any appropriate sanctions.
 8.
 - a. Submit a written application on a form designated by Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society.
 - b. Submit a driver's abstract and vulnerable persons criminal record check, both to be approved by the Executive.

PROCEDURE

1. A member's team manager is responsible for monitoring these requirements. If the member's team manager is unavailable, then the assistant team manager will take over monitoring.
2. Members are required to RSVP on D4H for training, meetings or events.
3. The team manager will be required to provide an accurate report at the annual general meeting, detailing each members current standing.

REFERENCES

SOG #500.02 Auxiliary Membership

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

An Auxiliary Member is defined as a person who may or may not hold certification in EMBC GSAR but has the desire to assist the society in a role alternate to the requirements a regular BCSARS member fulfills, and generally outside the EMBC GSAR program duties.

If an Auxiliary Member wishes to apply for regular membership status, they must meet the requirement of the “Society Membership Policy.”

PURPOSE

This SOG outlines the definition, duties, rights and obligations of a BCSARS Auxiliary Member.

GUIDELINE

1. The Auxiliary Program will be overseen by the Second Vice President.
 2. The duties and responsibilities an auxiliary member may participate in are:
 - a. Fundraising events and activities
 - b. Special projects, i.e. map production and sales
 - c. Equipment maintenance
 - d. Radio communications and hall operations
 - e. Any other way the society deems necessary, subject to a general vote following society guidelines.
 3. An auxiliary member is entitled to attend regularly scheduled Tuesday night meetings and participate in training sessions given “in house” that are related to their duties. Auxiliary members are not entitled to attend “outside training sessions” that involve any risk or element of danger regarding situations that would be covered under the EMBC GSAR program.
 4. Attendance at any society meeting or event or function is at the discretion of the society.
 5. Attendance at any call out is at the discretion of the active search manager(s).
 6. An auxiliary member is not entitled to hold any elected position within the society and does not have voting privileges. If an auxiliary member wishes to hold a position on a sub-committee as a chair or regular member, they must have the permission of two executive board members and be assigned a regular member advisor who will oversee their actions within the committee.
 7. An auxiliary member is required to maintain the good name and image of the society at all times.
 8. An auxiliary member is required to be available to attend to the responsibilities of the tasks they have been assigned to.
 9. Auxiliary members are not required to meet the 50 hour attendance requirements of a regular member, but may have other requirements imposed by subsequent guidelines, and must fulfill their assigned tasks to the satisfaction of the Society during the course of one calendar year, reviewed annually at every annual general meeting. If the auxiliary member’s conduct or
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performance has been unsatisfactory according to a general vote, the person in question will be dismissed from the group immediately and forfeit all rights and responsibilities. They must return in good condition all property of the society. A person may reapply if they can show that the reason that they were dismissed is no longer applicable.

10. An auxiliary member will be subject to whatever background and application process the society deems necessary.
11. An auxiliary member is not entitled to a SAR labeled jacket or other Operational Equipment, except for safety equipment required for the performance of their specified duties. An auxiliary member is entitled to hats, tee shirts badges, pins, etc. with BCSARS logo on it, on the same conditions and price as regular members receive, auxiliary members are entitled to participate in all and any social events the society host and entitled to the same privileges regular members receive at those events.
12. In the case of overlap, these general guidelines are superseded by those in following policies tailored to specific roles.

PROCEDURE

1. An auxiliary member will be assigned to operational team for accountability purposes and will be activated in the same manner as a regular member on a call out if necessary or required. Auxiliary members will be assigned a regular member as a supervisor to act as liaison between the group, but supervision of an auxiliary member's behavior and actions in regards to society business will ultimately be the responsibility of the Executive. Supervision of an auxiliary member's behavior and actions in regard to operational tasks and EMBC duties will be the responsibility of the active search manager(s) and/or the search management team.
2. An auxiliary member may be issued a key and personnel number if the society deems it necessary for the performance of their duties.

REFERENCES

SOG #500.03 Communications and Logistics Auxiliary Membership

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

A Communications and Logistics Auxiliary Member (CLA Member) is defined as an Auxiliary member with the specific role of providing communications and logistical support during tasks. As such, a CLA member is subject to the Bella Coola SARS Auxiliary Policy with the following additional or updated guidelines.

PURPOSE

This SOG outlines the definition, duties, rights and obligations of a BCSARS Communications and Logistics Auxiliary member where they differ from those of any other Auxiliary member.

GUIDELINE

1. CLA Members will be required to meet specific attendance requirements as follows. Maintain an acceptable level of attendance at Training, Operations (Tasks), and Fundraising events including a minimum of 10 hours of documented service hours in each calendar year (subject to review in any 6-month period);
 - a. Training
 - i. Document a minimum of 5 hours of Training service hours.
 - b. Fundraising (Including public relations events)
 - c. Operations (Tasks)
 2. A CLA Member is entitled to attend regularly scheduled meetings and participate in training sessions given “in house” that are related to their duties. Participation in “outside training sessions” is permitted only with the specific approval of the event organizer and the Training Officer.
 3. A CLA Member is entitled to a SAR labelled jacket or other Operational Uniform in addition to hats, tee shirts badges, pins, etc. with BCSARS logo on it, on the same conditions and price as regular members receive.
 4. A CLA Member is subject to the same restrictions when driving Society vehicles as other BCSARS members, including all documentation, training, and/or probationary requirements.
 5. A new CLA Member wishing to join Bella Coola SARS must meet the following requirements prior to gaining membership:
 - a. Submit a written application on a form designated by Bella Coola SARS
 - b. Submit a driver’s abstract and vulnerable persons criminal record check, both to be approved by the Executive
 - c. Complete any required training as assigned by the Training Officer
 - d. Complete a 3-month probation period.
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SOG #500.04 Conflict Resolution

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Conflict resolution is a confidential system of verbal and written dialogue to obtain and investigate any complaint from a member about another member or to resolve a matter of discipline from a superior or a committee in regard to performance, attitude, attendance ethics, public relations or harassment in a satisfactory manner in the best interests of Bella Coola Valley Search and Rescue

PURPOSE

This document is intended to outline the procedures for members to understand and have access to conflict resolution within the structure of the Bella Coola Valley Search and Rescue.

GUIDELINE

Terms of reference:

- Arbitrary- a decision where there is a decision made not necessarily based on a common belief
- Binding- a decision that is non-negotiable and all parties shall adhere to
- Board – a duly elected committee
- CRC – Conflict Resolution Committee
- CRP- conflict resolution procedure
- Shall- to be interpreted as “must” or a requirement, a point that must be adhered to and followed at every opportunity
- SOG’s – standard operating guidelines

Conflict Resolution Committee (CRC) shall include 1 member of the Executive, and 4 members from the general membership. The general members shall be voted through a regular secret ballot election procedure as per Robert’s rules of order at the AGM. The representative members of executive and operations committee shall be chosen by their respective committee to represent that group. Each member shall only represent one group – i.e. the Executive, Operations Committee, or General Membership – a member of the CRC cannot represent more than one group within BCSARS.

The members shall serve on the CRC for the term of one year which concedes with the AGM.

There is no limit on the number of consecutive years a member can participate in the Conflict Resolution Board. If a member is unavailable to participate during any period of their term, he/she must submit an alternative from their respective group.

The Committee shall elect a committee chair to organize, chair and administer the committee functions. All Committee decisions shall be based on agreement of the majority of the committee. Committee members cannot abstain from a vote, they must vote yes or no on any motion.

The BCSARS membership shall not have the ability to suggest, alter or dismiss the committee conflict resolution judgment, except termination of membership.

All statements, judgments and investigation notes shall be recorded during the course of the resolution process, only members of the immediate committee and parties of complaint shall have access to this documentation. No others are permitted to view these documents. The committee shall maintain one written record for safekeeping until that member ceases to be a member of BCSARS. Each party of complaint is entitled to access to any documentation collected in the process unless it will jeopardize the privacy rights of the individual.

All members and parties of complaint are required to maintain full confidentiality and shall not discuss or distribute any information acquired during the resolution process or after the judgment. If a member is determined to have violated confidentiality, disciplinary action may be taken against them.

A timely response is required to any committee activation and the process from initiation to judgment shall not exceed 60 days unless extenuating circumstances exists.

If any member of the committee has or feels they have a personal conflict in the matter they must step down from duties and an alternate from their respective group will be appointed by the committee in their place.

Any decision of the committee is binding and all parties shall comply. All judgments shall be summarized in writing and placed in the parties' personal file.

Non-compliance of any committee decision is to be viewed a rejection of the BCSARS membership policy and the CRC shall recommend an immediate arbitrary binding termination of BCSARS membership, shall take place through a GM vote.

PROCEDURE

Members are always encouraged to first engage in positive productive conflict resolution with any party face to face. If the member does not achieve satisfactory results, they should forward their concern to a member of the Conflict Resolution Committee directly or through an Executive Board Member

Any complaints brought to BCSARS from outside sources including, but not limited to other Search and Rescue groups, must be dealt with by the CRC. The complaining party shall contact any member of the CRC or Executive Board and wait for a committee response.

The member requesting involvement of the CRC shall provide any and all information requested by the CRC and be forthcoming and honest in all statements. The member lodging a complaint under the CRP can drop it for any reason they see fit without having to provide an explanation to the committee or resolution parties.

If the member lodging the complaint drops the resolution complaint, this shall be viewed as if no complaint was lodged and the member will not continue, dispute, engage or discuss any matter related to the complaint, it is a non-issue and further review by the membership in any forum will not be tolerated. A re-initiation of the same complaint cannot be lodged once a member drops the complaint

The Conflict Resolution Committee (CRC) will be activated by the Executive Board of the Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society when a conflict arises related to any Operational tasks, society functions, or when a member is representing BCSARS in any capacity, whether directly related to a BCSARS function or not. Members of the committee may also offer informal advice on an as needed basis.

When the Conflict Resolution Committee is activated:

1. The parties are to provide the committee with any and all information they request and must make themselves available to attend meetings. Every effort will be made to schedule all meetings at a convenient time for all parties. If any resolution party refuses to cooperate or is determined to have provided false statements to the committee during the resolution process they may be subject to disciplinary measures including a 30-day suspension as a BCSARS member. After the 30-day suspension the resumption of the resolution process shall resume.
 2. The Committee will:
 - a. Interview the party lodging the complaint, a written summation shall be recorded and signed by the complainant and one member of the committee.
 - b. Interview the subject of the complaint, a written submission shall be recorded and signed by the subject of complaint and one member of the committee.
 - c. Interview any relevant witness that has direct knowledge of the event including BCSARS members and non-members as required. A written summation shall be recorded and signed by the witness and one member of the committee.
 - d. Review all information and investigate any further details they wish to have included in the process. All information received shall be recorded and signed by two members of the committee.
 - e. Determine a resolution through discussion, using existing Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG), constitution, bylaws and BCSARS policy as reference. No action of the CRC shall supersede any existing BCSARS policy, SOG, bylaw, constitution, or EMBC policy.
 - f. Attempt to resolve the conflict through a face to face meeting between the parties. The committee's recommendations shall be put forward to both parties and a positive resolution is suggested. Once a resolution is launched it shall be carried through until resolution and judgment.
 3. Outcome of the process may include:
 - a. No action by the committee
 - b. A suggestion that the parties of resolution come to an amicable solution outside the committee's influence.
 - c. A verbal warning to cease and desist from any further action that precipitated the initial complaint
 - d. A written warning to cease and desist from any further action that precipitated the initial
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- complaint
- e. A suspension from the society and operational duties, responsibilities and privileges for the period from one day to 180 days.
 - f. A period of Probation – not to exceed 6 months, with conditions as described below.
 - i. Disciplinary Probation
 1. The CRC will meet with the disciplined member and provide the reasons for the probation & steps necessary to have the probation removed.
 2. The CRC will prepare a written plan of remediation, feedback from the member subject to discipline may be considered in preparing the remediation plan
 3. The time period of probation shall be adequate to determine the member has improved their level of performance to an acceptable level, and shall not exceed 6 months.
 4. During the period of probation, the disciplined member shall be monitored by the members of the CRC on a monthly basis
 5. The disciplined member may have a Member in Good Standing assigned to them for the purpose of coaching the disciplined member if it is relevant to the situation.
 6. Members on probation will have their voting privileges suspended during their probationary period.
 - g. The committee can require that one or multiple parties provide a verbal or written apology to any of the parties of concern or to the general membership of BCSARS.
 - h. A recommendation of termination of all BCSARS membership benefits. This resolution requires BCSARS membership approval through a secret ballot vote at a regular or special GM, which will take place in accordance with the bylaws.
 4. If neither party is satisfied or unwilling to abide by the committee's recommendations the committee may impose an arbitrary binding resolution.

REFERENCES

SOG #500.05 Bullying and Harassment

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Bella Coola Valley Search and Rescue is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination, bullying and harassment and supportive of the dignity and self-esteem of every volunteer.

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this document to outline BCSARS's policy on bullying and harassment and the steps a BCSARS member should take if they are exposed to it.

GUIDELINE

Harassment for the purpose of this guideline is generally 'defined as any unsolicited, disrespectful or offensive behavior, which is known or should be known to be unwelcome due to its underlying sexual, bigoted, ethnic or racial message. It is also defined by WorkSafeBC as "any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated"

Personal harassment includes behavior, which is offensive, intimidating or hostile and is known or should be known to be unwelcome due to its relation to a person's race ethnic origin, religion, colour, gender, sexual orientation, or any other prohibited grounds.

Sexual harassment means engaging in a course of harassing conduct related to a person's sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, same sex partner status or any sexualized activity that is known or might reasonably be known to be unwelcome, unwanted, offensive, intimidating, hostile or otherwise inappropriate.

Incidents involving sexual harassment include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when

1. Such conduct might reasonably be expected to cause insecurity, discomfort, offence or humiliation to another person or group, OR
 2. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a condition of appointment, approval of privileges, an educational/training opportunity.
 3. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for any appointment or advancement decision.
 4. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person's performance or creating a difficult, intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
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Within this context, types of behavior which constitutes sexual harassment includes, but are not limited to:

1. Sexist jokes
2. Leering (suggestive staring)
3. Sexually derogatory or degrading remarks directed towards a person because of their sex or sexual orientation
4. Sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures
5. Unwelcome inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
6. Inappropriate or unwelcome focus/comments on a person's physical attributes or appearance
7. Persistent or unwelcome sexual flirtation(s), advance(s), proposition(s)
8. Displaying a printed material of a suggestive or sexually offensive nature
9. An implied or expressed promise of a reward, benefit, or advancement in return for sexual favours, or reprisal if such favours are not given
10. Persistent unwanted contact or attention after the end of a consensual relationship
11. Unwanted touching or patting
12. Verbal abuse or threats

If there is a conflict between this policy and the Human Rights Act, the Human Rights Act will prevail.

PROCEDURE

If you are subject to any unwelcome or unwanted behavior or comments, you may follow the following procedure:

1. Any person who believes that they are the subject of any form of harassment shall first advise the person involved that you are offended by the behavior and you want it stopped. This shall be done by normal person- to-person communications in the strictest of confidence.
 2. Refuse to participate in any exchange of comments, jokes or the kind of behavior that you are offended by.
 3. Should the harassment not stop, the aggrieved person shall document the complaint in writing detailing the incident(s) and efforts made to have the aggressor stop this behavior. The aggrieved person will then bring this to the attention of the executive committee.
 4. The executive committee will then investigate the complaint, which will include a discussion with the complainant, the alleged aggressor, and any witnesses to the incident(s). All written material will be returned to the complainant after the case has been dealt with by the executive.
 5. The executive shall attempt to mediate in order to resolve the situation. Remedial action may include, but not be limited to apologies in person or in writing, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
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6. Where there is an allegation of physical contact this may be deemed to be assault and subject to criminal action. This, and any other criminal behaviour, will be dealt with by the RCMP and therefore BCSARS will no longer be involved.

REFERENCES



SOG #500.06 Replacing Task Supplies

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Bella Coola Valley Search and Rescue requires all equipment and supplies used during tasks to be replaced.

Purchase may be made only to replenish supplies used up during BCSARS tasks.

PURPOSE

To describe how task supplies and equipment will be replenished and accounted.

GUIDELINE

Only Search Managers of Bella Coola Valley Search & Rescue may make purchases on account. Some other designate may pick up the supplies, as directed by the Search Manager.

PROCEDURE

1. Write the task number and SAR manager or designee's name on the invoice of the purchase.
2. The invoice shall state the item(s) purchased with the task number and manager's signature
3. All invoices must indicate the item(s) are paid for in full showing taxes
4. The Treasurer will pay invoices for the above purchases as soon as reasonably possible upon receiving a copy of the invoice and providing that the purchases meet the above conditions.

REFERENCES



SOG #500.07 Leave of Absence

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society will allow Leave of Absences for various personal reasons

PURPOSE

This guideline outlines how a member will request a Leave of Absence (LOA)

GUIDELINE

A LOA can be issued for a maximum of six months in a 12-month period by the directors.

If a member desires a LOA longer than six months, or more than one in a consecutive 12-month period, the member must apply to the directors who may then issue same. Circumstances regarding Leave of Absences for Parental, Adoptive Parent and Recurring Educational Leave are as follows:

PARENTAL LEAVE

A member in good standing with BCSARS can be granted 25 weeks parental leave of absence. Such leave may start 10 weeks prior to the due date or any time there after at the request of the member, which they will apply for in writing to the executive of BCSARS. This may be altered if the need for hospitalization prior to the birth, or for a premature birth or hospitalized infant. If further leave is need after the 25 weeks of maternity leave, then the member may apply in writing for a LOA under the LOA policy.

ADOPTIVE PARENT

A member in good standing with BCSARS may be granted the same leave following the guidelines as for Parental Leave with the exception that the leave starts when the adoptive child comes to the home, and in the case of parental leave, not taken after 52 weeks following the adoption of the child. If further leave is needed after the allotted time off then the member may apply in writing for a LOA under the LOA policy.

RECURRING EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

A recurring educational L.O.A. may be granted by the directors. The member will be expected to return to service in the society between school terms, if inter-term jobs allow this. At the end of an educational LOA, the member must notify the directors of their intentions with respect to participation in Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society.

A member on LOA will be considered as inactive and without voting privileges. The member remains welcome to participate in society and search functions when able.

A member granted a LOA with less than two years continuous active service must return all society property and operational equipment deemed necessary by the executive. Any society and operational equipment will be returned the when member returns to service, if it is available.

A person failing to return from LOA within 30 days of agreed return date may, through special resolution at a general meeting, be recommended for dismissal as a BCSARS Member.

A member returning from LOA will regain voting privileges upon achieving status as a regular active member.

A member's LOA status will be evaluated on an individual basis in regard to reason for application and proposed length of duration by the member's Team Manager and Executive. If the above come to a consensus, they may grant a longer period of LOA.

PROCEDURE

Submit a written application to either their team manager or the Executive, as appropriate for the type of LOA being applied for.

REFERENCES



SOG #500.08 Emails

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society encourage vocal, written and electronic communications between society members. Communications must be clear, concise and non-harassing.

PURPOSE

This document establishes guidelines for how to email other members of the BCSARS Society

GUIDELINE

Email contact list for BCSARS shall be current, complete and all outgoing emails shall only be sent to current members in good standing and members on LOA (if desired). If a member does not wish to have their name included on an email list for any of the following, they may choose to exercise that option.

Reasons for group (mass) email transmissions can include:

- An upcoming training event concerning the general group
- A fundraising event concerning the general group
- A society event concerning the general group
- A task event concerning the general group.
- A matter of significant importance concerning the general group

Emails transmitted to sub groups (rope rescue certified members, fundraising committee etc.) do not need be transmitted to the entire group if their input, participation or attendance is not required. Emails to specific groups should be confined to the members involved.

Other parties with an interest in the email can ask to be included as a contact

Transmissions that involve society issue should be CC to the exec.

Transmissions that involve the SAR managers should be CC to the SAR managers.

Only responses that have an answer or provide some additional information shall be replied to.

Comments or remarks that do not have any bearing on the original message should not be transmitted, or the response should be limited to the original sender and not mailed out as a mass response.

Communications between specific members regarding a personal matter or other issues that do not require the group as a whole to respond or be involved in shall not be mailed out in a mass email.

Members shall not engage in personal conversations with other specific members and include the general group in those transmissions. If the matter concerns a specific sub group IE Exec, they shall be CC'd but only if this is a matter that the sub group has a genuine interest or authority to respond or

participate in.

Emails shall not be a form of harassment and shall follow the existing BCSARS harassment policy guidelines.

Emails are not a substitute for general conversations or an opportunity to highlight a matter or issue that will cause unnecessary discourse within the group. In example- a matter between a small group of people that can not be solved or has led to some disagreement should not be mass mailed to the group as a form of advertising or lobbying. Issues that require of resolution, i.e. mediation, should be directed to the proper working group, i.e. executive

Members who regularly contact outside parties such as sponsors, media, vendors, etc. are strongly encouraged to obtain and use an email address in the BCSARS domain.

PROCEDURE

To obtain an email account in the BCSARS domain, a member should contact their team manager, or the IT specialty group representative.

REFERENCES



SOG #500.09 Social Media

Issued: July 2019

Revised:

POLICY

Social media has a place in emergency management and first response agencies, both operationally and to further the goals of the association.

With the exponential growth in Internet usage, information sharing through social media has become common place. Social media tools have become synonymous with popular culture and have enabled instant communication among large groups of users. People of all ages, and organizations of all types and sizes are using these tools in manners never encountered before. Social media use by organizations can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of marketing, community outreach and operational endeavors.

The increase in personal social media usage across demographics also means that more and more first responders are engaging in these tools on a personal level. Bella Coola SARS recognizes the role that social media may play in the personal lives of its members. The personal use of social media may have a bearing on Bella Coola SARS members in their official capacity and upon the image of Bella Coola SARS, the Central Coast Regional District and the larger BC SAR Community. As such, this policy addresses specific personal social media uses and provides guidelines to assist members in protecting their personal and professional images.

Like all forms of communication, social media must be utilized in a clear and responsible manner to ensure that the clarity of the messaging is maintained, privacy (and respect) of the subject is maintained and to prevent misinterpretation and erroneous messaging from occurring.

No use of social media should violate any laws, including Canadian and British Columbia privacy laws.

All information representing the team should come from easily identified “official” Bella Coola SARS accounts on each of the social media systems and using Bella Coola SARS email addresses.

SAR members are allowed to post about their own experiences and opinions as long as they adhere to these guidelines and do not purport to represent the team in any way.

PURPOSE

This document defines our policy and procedures with relation to appropriate and acceptable use of social media, both within and outside the SAR environment, by Bella Coola SARS Members. This policy provides our members with best practice guidance for their own personal safe and responsible use of social media in relation to Bella Coola SARS.

The use of Social Media by our SAR team has several goals, in order of importance:

1. To notify the public of the activities of the team.
2. To assist the team and our tasking agencies to locate a missing person(s).
3. To promote important public safety messages
4. To foster relationships with other SAR teams and emergency services agencies
5. To promote the team and its position in the community.

GUIDELINE

Definitions

- Blog: A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions, or comments.
- Member: Any member of Bella Coola SARS regardless of state (field active/non field active/Aux), and any SAR member tasked by Bella Coola SARS under a mutual aide agreement.
- Page: The specific portion of a social media website that displays content, and is managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- Post: Content a user shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
- Profile: Information that a user provides about himself or herself on a social networking site.
- Social Media: A category of Internet based resources that integrate user generated content and user participation/collaboration. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites such as Pinterest, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, Nixie, Flickr, YouTube, Wikipedia, Digg and personal/special interest blogs.
- Social networks: Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, and socialize with others using a range of technologies and media.
- Speech: Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, video, or related forms of communication.
- Team: The Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society, a charitable non-profit association incorporated under the laws of British Columbia, Canada
- Wiki: A Web site that is developed collaboratively by a community of users, allowing any user to add and edit content.

Task Related Usage

No member may release information via any channel during an active task for any purpose without the express approval of the SAR Manager in conjunction and with the tasking agency. This includes, radio,

cell phones, social media, email, blog, or by in person conversations.

This directive is in line with Ground SAR and Team Leader training that all SAR members in BC receive; all responsibility for an ongoing task flows through the chain of command. SAR members are free to comment on the weather conditions, terrain, difficulty of the task, and topics not related to tactics or strategy, all other questions should be referred to the command staff.

No information, including images or likenesses of the subject(s) of a search, are to be released without a pressing public safety mandate, and then only by order of the tasking agency. Release of information about the subject of a search is only for the express purpose of locating a missing person, and then only when publication of such information is judged to be helpful by the command staff. No information media shall be altered, edited, or changed in any manner from its original form and content

Examples of actions that are prohibited under this rule are

- Transmitting any images from an active task.
- Transmitting information, commentary, plans, or briefing notes
- Recording via video or audio any of the above without express permission.

The rationale for this directive is that SAR members may not be aware of all of the information pertaining to the ongoing task, and any release of information from the field can undermine continuing efforts by incident command, or be misinterpreted by the public.

All information received through the use of social media that pertains to an active task shall be forwarded to active SAR Manager for follow up as soon as possible.

Non-Task Related Usage

Images recorded during a SAR task can be used in limited circumstances as long as they adhere to the previously mentioned task-related usage, non-task usage and the guidelines following this section. The following include but are not limited to non-task related use of social media:

- Community outreach and engagement including, but not limited to:
 - Providing backcountry tips or education (i.e. Hug-A-Tree, 10 Essentials, etc.)
 - Advertising team events or activities,
 - Thanking sponsors or supporters,
 - Request assistance from community (i.e. missing person or funding)
 - Time-sensitive notifications or information on:
 - Backcountry conditions,
 - Special events,
 - Weather emergencies,
 - SAR events.
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- Interaction with other SAR agencies, teams and supporting groups to support the goals of SAR in BC, Canada and elsewhere.

Bella Coola SARS will not use the likeness nor reveal any identifying information about any subject of a search or rescue in any way without full consent of said subject, unless, as previously mentioned, the subject's information is released by the tasking agency under a pressing public safety mandate.

General Guidelines for Use

1. All Bella Coola SARS social media pages and posts shall clearly indicate they are the property of and maintained by BCSARS. Bella Coola Search and Rescue Society will brand the authenticity of this information with contact information prominently displayed or a link to that information being immediately obvious.
 2. Social media content shall adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies from both Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) and the RCMP. Any conflict in policies (part or whole) will result in the EMBC or RCMP policy superseding this policy (in part or whole).
 3. Social media content, where the public can add comment, shall state that the opinions expressed by visitors to the page(s) do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Bella Coola Valley Search & Rescue.
 4. Pages shall clearly indicate that posted comments will be monitored, and that Bella Coola SARS reserves the right to remove obscenities, off-topic comments, and other inappropriate material. These are considered reasonable restrictions of free speech and are not censorship by any definition.
 5. Pages shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure.
 6. No member shall represent Bella Coola SARS in any social media format without the written authorization of the Bella Coola SARS Media Manager or President.
 7. Representation of Bella Coola SARS's actions, activities or statements shall only occur through the official Bella Coola SARS social media outlets (listed below).
 8. Bella Coola SARS members and their actions are to be depicted in a manner consistent with a safe and professional rescue team, and be respectful to the public and the subjects we rescue.
 9. Where members are authorized to represent Bella Coola SARS through any media outlet(s), they shall:
 - Conduct themselves at all times as representatives of Bella Coola SARS and adhere to all Bella Coola SARS standards of conduct and professional behaviour;
 - Observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions in posting materials to electronic media;
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- Identify themselves as a member of Bella Coola SARS;
- Not make statements about their personal opinion regarding a task, subject, SAR team, governing body or related policies.
- They shall not personally comment on active tasks, nor post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate confidential information including photographs or videos, related to SAR training, activities, or related assignments.

Examples

Command

Bella Coola SARS managers will post updates to social media when the team is called out on a search. If the tasking agency has a missing person and deems public disclosure to be necessary, Bella Coola SARS will retransmit a link to the tasking agency's postings, or in certain cases where updates to an ongoing search are important, to our own web site.

Members

SAR members should not be depicted behaving in an irreverent or unsafe manner while on a search.

Photos of members "goofing off," laughing or in humorous situations should be properly identified as non-task related. No media containing any form of pornography, illicit drugs, alcohol or any form of a criminal activity with any BCSARS property, logo or member captured within the content shall be transmitted in any form from any Society computer, fax or phone to any person at any time.

Equipment

We should not show images of worn or damaged equipment being used or being used in a dangerous or unsafe manner.

Images of worn or improperly used equipment should be properly captioned to convey the intent of the image, possibly for public education.

Captions

Pictures should be captioned to lend them context. Captions should also reflect our values of being a skilled and professional team. Captions can also make clear when an image is being used in a humorous context.

Public

Photos and media that contain images of members of the public where they are not the primary subject of the photo are not considered to infringe on the rights of the people in the photos. It is assumed that if they are in a public place, they have no reasonable expectation of privacy, and as long as they are not

singled out or identified by name, they can be background in any image.

On some searches, the public are present and now have the capability to record and transmit images, video, audio and text directly from the site of a rescue. If any member of the public is present, we have to assume that they can record anything we say or do. They must be treated carefully since they do not always have the same code of conduct that a member of the media may have.

Blogging and Forum posting

Bella Coola SARS members are allowed to blog and post to online forums, social media, and other systems about their own thoughts, experiences, and opinions arising from their SAR activities as long as they adhere to the guidelines set in this document. Such blogging can be a very important form of public education, and allow SAR members to contribute to the SAR community as a whole. Bella Coola SARS is supportive of such efforts.

When commenting online about team related issues in a personal capacity, team members shall use their private (non- team) email address and identify themselves by name and ensure they are speaking for themselves and not as a representative of the team. Team name, logo, or branding will not appear in such private postings. No member speaking through private email accounts or non-official channels shall present themselves as a representative of the team.

All team members are expected to use common sense, caution and good judgment when participating in social media, for either official or personal usage.

It is highly recommended that opinions regarding active or past SAR incidents that involve safety, procedural or interpersonal conflicts be handled through systems in place to properly address the topic rather than by griping or complaining about them in a public forum. We seek to find solutions to such situations, and complaints in public do not serve this goal.

Social Media Assets

What follows is a list of Bella Coola Valley Search and Rescue social media accounts and systems, and their intended uses.

Team web site / Blog

<http://www.BCSARS.ca>

The web site is used as the definitive site for the story about Bella Coola SARS, who we are, what we do and how the public can help, and learn to be safe in the outdoors. We post articles about the team, tasks, history, equipment, members, and how to join when we are recruiting. We also provide links on how to donate to the team, and include links to thank our sponsors and donors.

Facebook

Facebook is used to post links to articles on Bella Coola SARS's blog, photos with captions, updates on team activities, announcements, public safety updates, and to allow public contact with the team. The team will also re-post certain links from partner agencies and provincial and federal emergency management agencies.

Other accounts

Other accounts can be created as systems evolve. The Technology Committee is responsible for the creation and maintenance of these accounts. Accounts will be created to fit similar purposes as outline in the goals section of this document.

PROCEDURE

REFERENCES