

12.148 MARINE RESCUE TEAM

Reference:

Procedure 12.145 - Critical Incident Response Plan
 Procedure 12.146 - Marine Patrol
 Manual of Rules and Regulations
 Ohio Revised Code Chapter 1901.027 - Ohio River Jurisdiction
 Surface Water Rescue Swimmer Technician Course
 Technical Rescue Training, LLC
 Hamilton County Mutual Aid Agreement for Law Enforcement
 SB284 - 119th Ohio General Assembly
 Ohio v. Kentucky, 471 U.S. 153 (1985)

Definitions:

Marine Rescue Team (MRT) - The MRT consists of Cincinnati Police Officers trained and certified in accordance with National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) standards in water rescue operations. Members are trained to conduct open water/swift water rescue operations.

Rescue - Refers to the acts involved in removing a live person from a place of danger to a place of safety.

Water Rescue - The rescue of a live victim(s) from water in which the current, depth, floating or submerged hazards, contamination, or other risks exist for rescuers or victims.

Swift Water Rescue - Swift water rescue is a subset of technical rescue dealing in white water river conditions or any other body of water moving faster than one knot (1.15MPH). Due to the added pressure of moving water, swift water rescue involves the use of specially trained personnel, ropes and mechanical systems that are often much more robust than those used in standard rope rescue.

Recovery - The retrieval of a deceased person. Recovery in water should be coordinated with the Cincinnati Fire Department, Hamilton County Police Association Search and Recovery Unit, CPD Marine Patrol, CPD Criminal Investigation Section, Hamilton County Sheriff's Department and Hamilton County Coroner's Office.

Cold Water - Any significant sized body of water, whether in mid-summer or winter.

Cold Zone - Dry ground; distance greater than 10 feet from water's edge.

Warm Zone - Dry ground; distance less than 10 feet from the water's edge or bank.

Hot Zone - The water environment.

Personal Flotation Device - (PFD) must be Coast Guard Approved Type III or Type V life safety vest.

Spotters - The utilization of CPD officers to assist rescue operations by maintaining visual contact of victim(s) and relaying information between rescuers and the Emergency Communications Center (ECC).

Purpose:

Establish guidelines for certified Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) personnel and equipment, responding to water rescue incidents, evaluating and rescuing endangered individuals from life-threatening open water emergency situations while ensuring the safety and well-being of both rescuer(s) and victim(s).

Policy:

The primary responsibility of the Marine Rescue Team (MRT) is to respond to individuals needing surface or swift water rescue. Although the Cincinnati Fire Department (CFD) and CPD Marine Patrol may be dispatched for open water emergencies, the MRT can quickly reach victims to render aid and reduce fatal incidents.

MRT members have the authority to determine if conditions permit them to enter the water. MRT members will notify the district/section/unit OIC before performing any rescue attempt.

The MRT is the preferred method of rescuing individuals from inherently dangerous situations on the Ohio River, Mill Creek and other bodies of water within the City of Cincinnati and surrounding jurisdictions.

CPD personnel should not be inside the warm zone without a United States Coast Guard (USCG) approved Person Floatation Device (PFD) during MRT rescue operations.

Staging of equipment and personnel will be conducted in the cold zone.

Information:

The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) is the central agency for initiating emergency notifications of agencies affected by marine disasters or potential marine disasters with the possibility of loss of life on the Ohio River.

Refer to Procedure 12.146, Marine Patrol, regarding special 800 megahertz (MHz) radio communications and Cincinnati open water jurisdiction.

The MRT is assigned to the SWAT and Tactical Support Unit and can be dispatched from an on duty status or recalled 24 hours a day via ECC. Generally, team members can deploy to the scene of an incident within 30 minutes of being recalled. ECC and CBS maintain a current list of trained personnel.

Upon request, the MRT will provide assistance to jurisdictions with mutual aid or Homeland Security agreements. The SWAT and Tactical Support Unit is the point of contact for Homeland Security requests. ECC will coordinate with requesting agencies within Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

The CPD Marine Patrol boat, Hamilton County Helicopter (9H10) or the Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter may be utilized to transport and/or provide a diving platform for MRT and the Hamilton County Police Association Search and Dive Unit (HCPA/USRU) during rescue operations.

Procedure:

A. Responding to Open Water Emergencies

1. Officers who become aware of an emergency situation in any open body of water will contact ECC and provide the following information:
 - a. Nature of emergency, e.g. person(s) struggling to swim, suicidal subject or person(s) needing rescued as a result of urban flooding.
 - b. Location by river mile marker (if known), land address and or prominent landmark.
 - c. If the individual(s) in the water are moving, note direction and approximate speed.
 - d. If possible, maintain a visual contact with the person(s) until assistance arrives.
2. Request the MRT and CFD
3. ECC will:
 - a. Dispatch on-duty MRT members to the scene.
 - b. Dispatch CFD.
 - c. Dispatch the affected district OIC.
 - d. If no MRT members are available, the district OIC may authorize a minimum of two team members be recalled.
 - e. When requested by the on-scene OIC, make notifications according to the Situational Occurrences Notification.
4. The affected district OIC responsibilities:
 - a. Coordinate rescue efforts; utilize responding officers as spotters.
 - b. If needed, the Marine Patrol or HCPA/USRU can be requested through ECC.
 - c. The affected district OIC will complete and forward a Form 17, After Action Report, through the chain of command.

B. MRT member responsibilities:

- a. The first rescue team member on scene is authorized to request additional team members and specialized equipment.

- b. Whenever MRT personnel enter the water, they will wear an approved PFD.
 - c. A single rescue team member may enter the hot zone to conduct life-saving operations.
 - d. Members will conduct daily inspection of their equipment.
- C. Use of the MRT Outside City Limits
 - a. Approval must be given by the OIC of the nearest district or the Night Chief.
- D. SWAT and Tactical Support Unit Commander Responsibilities:
 - 1. Maintain an updated Emergency Notification Plan for responses to open water emergencies.
 - a. Forward copies to all districts and ECC.
 - b. Maintain an MRT SOP and recall roster.
 - c. Maintain a log of MRT deployments, recalls and training sessions.
- E. Recall Roster
 - 1. MRT members will immediately notify the SWAT and Tactical Support Unit Commander or their designee of any changes of address or phone numbers.
 - 2. The SWAT and Tactical Support Commander will provide an updated personnel recall roster to ECC.