



FIELD ORDERS

Chapter

BASIC FIELD OPERATIONS

Subject

Search and Rescue

PURPOSE

To successfully coordinate and use available resources to facilitate search, rescue, or recovery operations.

OVERVIEW

1. The Scottsdale Fire Department (SFD) has primary command for operations involving the search or rescue of persons. Search operations continue until the hiker(s) are located or unified command ceases further search and rescue efforts.
2. During the search and rescue phase, a unified command of the Scottsdale Police Department (SPD) and SFD decides what resources are staged and deployed, such as search teams, air support, K9s, etc.
 - Note: Do not call for these resources without authorization from unified command.
3. The Investigative Services Division (ISD) assumes command and initiates a missing persons case for the following situations:
 - Hiker is found, and a crime has been committed.
 - Hiker is found deceased.
 - Hiker is not found.

PROCEDURE

COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. When a missing hiker or search and rescue call is dispatched, working within a mutual aid system, immediately contact SFD to respond.
2. Dispatch appropriate patrol units and notify the Watch Commander.
3. Assist in establishing and maintaining interagency radio channels (e.g., Phoenix Regional Wireless Cooperative interoperability channels).
4. Work with the Patrol Supervisor or Watch Commander to determine if an emergency ping is needed.

RESPONDING OFFICER/PA RESPONSIBILITIES – Gather critical information on the victim:

- Name, age, physical description.

- Medical or mental health conditions.
- Hiker experience/local knowledge.
- Last known location.
- Locate victims' vehicles.
- Timeline of events.

PATROL SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Respond to the staging area and coordinate with SFD leadership.
2. Create a unified command alongside the SFD Battalion Chief, who is the primary command officer, with the department Watch Commander in support.
 - Note: This command structure remains in place until the search and rescue phase ends.
3. Establish a Command Post (CP).
4. Ensure SPD resources are effectively managed.
5. Assist in scene control, officer deployment, and manage search-related assignments.
6. Support the Watch Commander with staffing needs or mutual aid requests.
7. Notify and consult with the following:
 - Crime Analysis Unit (CAU).
 - Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU)
 - Patrol Enforcement Section (PES) Lieutenant or designee.
 - Crimes Against Persons Commander.
 - Traffic Enforcement Section (TES).
 - Preserve staff, stewards, and volunteers.

WATCH COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Respond to the scene and assume SPD lead role in the unified command.
2. Notify the District Commander.
3. Determine when the transition of command is necessary (from rescue to investigation).
4. Authorize deployment of SPD specialty resources.
5. Ensure coordination with ISD when the call becomes a criminal or prolonged missing persons case.
6. Initiate an after action report or debrief if warranted.

**ADDITIONAL
CONSIDERATIONS**

When coordinating a search, rescue, or recovery operation, the incident commander considers the following:

- First aid.
- Lighting equipment for dark hours.
- Proper clothing/footwear.
- Sun/weather protection.
- Water.

**ASSOCIATED POLICY and
CHECKLIST**

- See the [Supervisor Missing Hiker Operations Checklist](#).
- See also Field Order (FLD) [1170/Missing Person Reports](#).

