



Nevada Search and Rescue Bulletin

Published by the Nevada Division of Emergency Management, State SAR Coordinator, 2478 Fairview Drive, Carson City, NV 89701

Hiker Recovered on Turtlehead



Annabelle Sollosco(left) with a hiking companion just prior to her disappearance. Courtesy of LVMPD Missing Persons Unit

On March 7, 2016, LVMPD SAR concluded an overnight search operations with the discovery of Annabelle Sollosco, 27, on the east side of Turtlehead Peak, west of Las Vegas, NV. Sollosco was found deceased after apparently falling more than 300 feet from the summit.

According to those working the search, Sollosco and three others left on a hike Sunday morning, March 6th, 2016, intending to hike the Turtlehead Peak Trail. This hike is one of the more strenuous hikes within the Red Rock National Conservation Area. After making the summit, Sollosco separated from the party to head down but was not at the car when the remaining hikers returned.

LVMPD SAR and the Missing Persons Unit initiated a search for the missing hiker using both ground and air resources until late in the evening. On March 7, 2016, the Nevada Division of Emergency Management assisted in the search by providing a Virtual Search Plan for responding agencies to assist in defining the search area. At approximately noon, Sollosco was located by crew from an LVMPD helicopter.

NAASIC Announces 1st Annual UAS Search & Rescue Symposium

When: April 6 - 8 in Reno, NV

<http://www.unr.edu/naasic/symposium>

The potential for unmanned autonomous systems to aid first responders and assist in emergency situations is enormous, but adapting existing UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems) technologies to work in public safety offices requires understanding the specific needs and constraints of how drones and other autonomous systems could be used in emergency or public safety scenarios.

The Nevada Advanced Autonomous Systems Innovation Center is proud to partner with area businesses to host a symposium on the uses of unmanned autonomous systems for first responders. Bringing together first responders, vendors and industry leaders, the symposium will foster dialogue on how first responders use or would like to use autonomous systems while also informing those potential users about the current state-of-the-art in UAS technologies.

Please check with the NAASIC Website for registration information

NDEM Initiating Resource Typing Project

The Nevada Division of Emergency Management has initiated a voluntary SAR resource typing project as part of the Homeland Security Grant Program. This project is designed to identify and classify search and rescue resources based on FEMA established standards for Search and Rescue / Emergency Support Function 9.

Under this process, SAR teams will be self-evaluated by their agency using typing standards based on the FEMA 508-8 standards adopted by the Nevada Board for Search and Rescue in 2011. Once the self evaluation is conducted, the report is provided to NDEM for inclusion in the Resource Management Program. The information allows the state and all jurisdictions to maintain an up-to-date resource list. The typing process also identifies gaps in SAR capabilities throughout the state so future planning, training, and exercise may be identified to strengthen this capability. If you would like further information on this project, please contact the State Search and Rescue Coordinator at 775.687.0423 or at pburke@dps.state.nv.us. The project is voluntary and at no cost.

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“Train as if someone’s life depends on it. In this business it most often does”.

Unk



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U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Innovation * Partnerships * Safer Neighborhoods

NamUS 2.0: Upgrades Are In The Works

(reprinted with permission from <http://namus.gov/new-features.htm>)

Throughout the coming year, the National Institute of Justice will be upgrading the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) to provide additional features and make it easier for everyone to use — from the input of new cases to searches across the databases.

OJP will be updating the NamUs community on planned features and functions as well as release dates when they become available.

The first of these new features under development that we want to announce is a new solution for reuniting families during critical incidents.

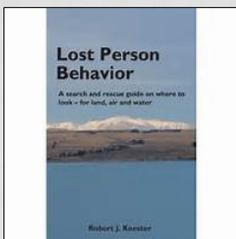
Mass casualty, large-scale, or multi-state incidents – often called “critical incidents” – present unique challenges when it comes to finding the missing and reuniting families.

September 11th, the Boston Marathon bombings, hurricanes, disease outbreaks, and transportation disasters are just a few of the tragic incidents that have occurred on a massive scale and at a very human cost.

NamUs has taken up the call to help law enforcement, medical examiners, coroners, emergency responders, and the public reunite families during critical incidents. We are currently developing technology to provide:

- A centralized, secure data warehouse for victim accounting (missing, injured, deceased and unaccounted for victims).
- Real-time victim data and situational awareness to help emergency officials guide the response.
- An intuitive interface that ensures the right data is collected on the missing.
- The ability for state emergency managers to collaborate and work with other states and federal resources seamlessly.
- Ways for the public to self-report themselves safe.
- Training materials and environments to promote preparedness.
- Free and secure access for state, local and federal officials.

For nearly a decade, the National Institute of Justice's NamUs has brought together and assisted families, law enforcement, forensic experts, coroners and medical examiners to help reunite families and find the missing. We're excited to leverage that deep experience and relationships to help do the same during the chaos of critical incidents.

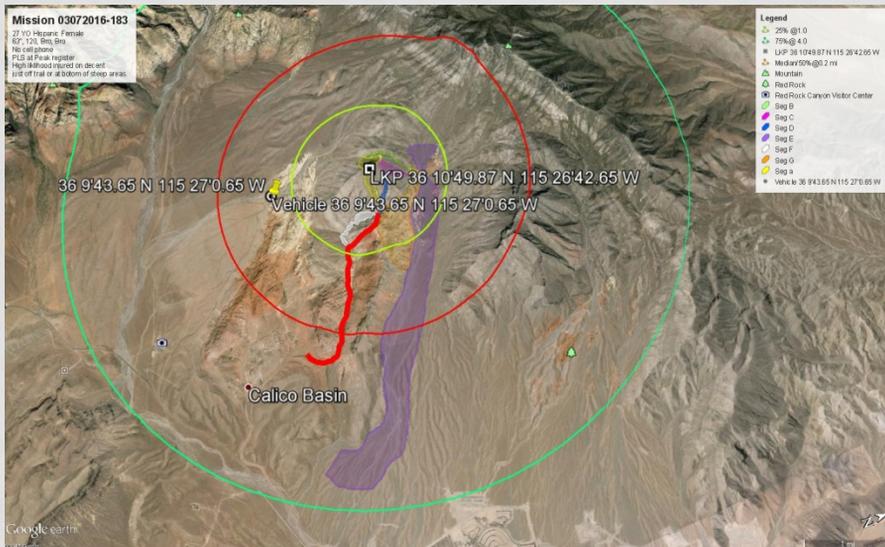


Lost Person Data: If you are an active search team member or responsible for the overall management of search operations, and you want to know just about everything there is to know concerning your subject, look no further than “Lost Person Behavior” by Robert Koester. This text offers insight on human behavior based on over fifty thousand lost person cases from around the world. The book is available on the web and where outdoor books are sold.



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One of the search segmentation maps used during the Sollosco SAR highlighted on Page 1. METAR data was used to shape the probability areas based upon weather effects faced by the subject the day she became lost.

METAR Data: What The Weather Can Tell Us

We most often think of the weather as it affects current and future operations. We either prepare for what is currently happening or we anticipate how operations and our resources will be affected by changes in future conditions. But have you ever thought about how weather affected your missing subject at the time of their disappearance? METAR, which stands for Meteorological Terminal Aviation Routine Weather Reporting, is a standardized format for reporting weather information. While used predominantly by pilots, it is also used by Meteorologists who use the aggregate data to assist in weather forecasting.

Raw METAR data is the most common format in the world for sharing observational weather data. The standard METAR data includes information on temperature, dew point, wind speed and direction, gust information, precipitation, cloud cover, ceiling, barometric pressure, and visibility. There may also be a short period *forecast* at the end of the METAR data suggesting any changes anticipated within a two hour window following an observation. While there are a number of sites which provide current METAR data, there are sites and resources available which can provide specific METAR data related to past times and dates, giving us insight as to what faced a missing person during their initial loss. On particularly long or historic searches, data may be available going back several months and even years. If involved in a search operation, remember that your weather, and the weather faced by your missing subject, may have a dramatic impact in the final outcome. Most local National Weather Service offices can provide both current and historic METAR data, and you may also try obtaining the data online through NWG.gov or <http://www.aviationweather.gov/adds/metars/>

Planning Data: Weather and Its Effects on SAR Operations

Do you have the capability to evaluate weather and its effects on your search operations? And too, have you evaluated the weathers effects on your missing subject?

On a recent search, temperature and dew point were a significant factor in determining the behavior of a missing subject. The dew point is the saturation temperature for water in air. Dew point is associated with relative humidity, and the closer to ambient temperature, the higher likelihood of fog. In this case, METAR data gathered for the day the subject went missing indicated that at the time of loss, the subject was moving in heavy fog. In flat terrain this may not pose much of a threat, but in mountainous terrain, this plays a significant role on the subjects descent.

In this same case the additional factor of wind was present. During the subjects descent, a route requiring the subject to walk predominantly south, they faced a very strong wind (30+knot) from the southwest. Being relatively small in stature, and coupled with the dense fog, the subject most likely chose to find an alternate route off the mountain, walking NNE a short distance till she walked off of a 300' cliff.

Weather and its relationship to a missing subject should always be considered when determining your probability area for a given search. It may very well be the determining factor in the subjects overall behavior and eventual survivability.



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SAR Team Profile: Carson City County Search and Rescue



Carson City Co. Search & Rescue is a growing resource within the community dedicated to finding the lost, and assisting their community whenever possible. Vice -Commander Mitch Watts spoke passionately about the group and the future growth of the organization. Most of the unit's SAR operations center on two locations around Carson City: Brunswick Canyon to the southeast, and Kings Canyon to the west. Both of these areas are frequented by locals and tourists, and on occasion folks run into problems due to the remote nature of these sites.

Carson SAR has both standard Wilderness SAR Technicians, with some of the crew maintaining standard and Wilderness EMT qualifications as well. They have trained on, and work, to build capabilities in low-high angle rope operations, swiftwater, and other specialties. Although Carson SAR is one of the smaller teams in the state at approximately 20 members, the members are dedicated to providing the best services possible. Recently, Vice Commander Watts attended the Nevada Land Search Management Course held in Las Vegas. With this training and additional courses lined up, Carson City SAR is poised to grow and become a highly capable asset for their community and the state.

As a 501c.3 tax-exempt organization, Carson SAR relies on the generous donations of their community and resources from the Carson Sheriff's Office to maintain their training and equipment for ready response. Should you have questions or wish to join, please email at: carsoncitysr1@gmail.com

Carson SAR Mission Statement:

To assist the Carson City Sheriff, by providing specialized search and rescue skills and techniques, combined with a rapid and professional response.



Communications: A Volunteers Link to the Organization

Research shows only 67% of organizations report they regularly communicate with volunteers. And a mere 45% do more than just a brief conversational screening before placing volunteers in positions. Only 35% report making time for volunteer recognition, and an even lower 30% examine and report back the impact of volunteer work. And a sad 25% offer training or development.

Finding and retaining volunteers for any organization is almost a full time job, and many organizations have key personnel to recruit and train their volunteers. But it also means that the organization as a whole must have a culture where those volunteers are respected and used appropriately. This means training...on the organization and their specific job. Train and use volunteers, and they will be a tremendous asset for years to come.

If you would like to contribute to this Newsletter, or provide a SAR Team Profile, please submit original materials or materials with appropriate credits to:

Paul M Burke, NV SAR Coordinator
2478 Fairview Drive, Carson City, NV
89701, or

Email: pburke@dps.state.nv.us

Materials will be considered on a topical basis and may be edited for length.