

# Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference



## BYLAWS

**Revised April 1997**

## Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference Bylaws

Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference, Inc.

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# ASRC BYLAWS

Revised 19 April, 1997

## **Article I. Organization**

### **1. Groups**

The Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference, Inc. (ASRC) shall be divided into field organizations called "Certified Groups" and "Affiliate Groups." Each Certified or Affiliate Group shall provide for itself whatever name, organization, operating procedures, and training it deems appropriate, provided it adheres to the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, operational procedures specified in the ASRC Operations Manual, and training requirements and standards specified in the ASRC Training Standards.

### **2. Board of Directors**

2.1. The administrative and executive authority of the ASRC shall be vested in a Board of Directors. The responsibilities of the Board of Directors shall be:

- a. to coordinate the efforts of the various Groups and to provide liaison among them;
- b. to establish, publish, and enforce standards of procedure for search and rescue operations in the form of an ASRC Operations Manual;
- c. to establish, publish, and enforce standards of competence for ASRC members in the form of ASRC Training Standards;
- d. to solicit monetary and material contributions for the support of the ASRC, and to draft and administer its budget;
- e. to inform the appropriate civil and military authorities of the activities and capabilities of its Groups, and to cooperate with those authorities in making the services of the ASRC available to the public;
- f. to inform other search and rescue and related organizations of the ASRC and its Groups, and to cooperate with those organizations in the effort to provide an effective search and rescue capability to the public;
- g. to fulfill other incidental duties specified in these Bylaws; and
- h. to fulfill the requirements of the Articles of Incorporation.

2.2. The Board of Directors shall have no power over the conduct of Group business, except for enforcing the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, operational procedures specified in the ASRC Operations Manual, and the training requirements and standards specified in the ASRC Training Standards.

- 2.3. The responsibilities of the Chairman shall be:
- a. to call and conduct meetings of the Board of Directors in accordance with the provisions of Article III;
  - b. to call and conduct meetings of the Membership in accordance with the provisions of Article III;
  - c. to oversee the administration of the ASRC and to ensure that the provisions of Article I, Section 2.1 of these Bylaws are carried out; and
  - d. to serve as President of the ASRC.
- 2.4. The responsibilities of the Vice Chairman shall be:
- a. to serve as Chairman in the absence or incapacitation of the Chairman; and
  - b. to fulfill other duties as designated by the Chairman.
- 2.5. The responsibilities of the Secretary shall be:
- a. to record the proceedings of the meetings of the Board of Directors and of any Membership Meetings;
  - b. to maintain the Conference Roster;
  - c. to maintain the records and correspondence of the ASRC; and
  - d. to serve as Chairman in the absence or incapacitation of both the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
  - e. The Secretary's recording duties may be assigned to a Recording Secretary appointed by the Chairman; any active member may serve in this position.
- 2.6. The Treasurer shall keep the financial records and accounts of the ASRC.
- 2.7. Board of Directors membership:
- a. The Board of Directors shall consist of voting and non-voting members; and
  - b. Only active ASRC members shall be eligible for voting membership on the Board of Directors.
- 2.8. Selection of the members of the Board of Directors shall be as follows:
- a. Each Certified Group shall elect for two-year terms,<sup>1</sup> from its active membership, two delegates, one to be installed 1 April of each year. Delegates from Probationary Certified Groups shall not vote.
  - b. Each Affiliate Group shall elect from its active membership one voting delegate to be installed 1 April of each year. Delegates from Probationary Affiliate Groups shall not vote.

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this 1997 change is to make the terms of ASRC delegates longer, and to stagger the terms, so as to provide better continuity for the Board of Directors.

- c. At the first meeting of the Board after 1 April, the voting delegates shall elect from among all the delegates the officers of the Board of Directors. The Chairman and the Vice Chairman shall be elected from among all the delegates. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected from the general membership of the Conference. The following conditions shall apply: (1) officers shall be elected from Certified or Probationary Certified Groups; (2) officers shall have votes in accordance with constituent Group voting status if they are delegates; and (3) the Chairman or Vice Chairman, if and only if from a Group not holding voting status, shall be accorded a vote only at such times as needed to break a tie vote.
- 2.9. In the event a Board delegate's position becomes vacant, that delegate's Group shall hold a special election to fill that vacancy from among its active membership.
- 2.10. In the event a Board Officer's position becomes vacant, the remaining Board members shall elect from their membership a replacement.
- 2.11. Non-Voting Members
- a. The Board of Directors may elect anyone to be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.
  - b. In the event that the Registered Agent of the ASRC is not a voting member, then the Registered Agent is automatically appointed to be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.
  - c. In the event that the Secretary and/or the Treasurers are not members of the Board of Directors, then they are automatically appointed to be non-voting members of the Board of Directors.
- 2.12. The individuals fulfilling the following positions: the ASRC Operations Officer, the ASRC Communications Officer, the ASRC Safety Officer, the ASRC Medical Officer, the ASRC Training Officer, and any other standing committee chair, liaison, or Conference officers (excluding the ASRC Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) shall be nominated by the ASRC Chair and approved by a simple majority vote of the ASRC Board of Directors at a Board of Directors meeting.
- 2.13. ASRC Board delegates may be represented by written proxy at Board of Director meetings. The proxy must specify the effective date, duration of the proxy, and be signed by the Delegate and replacement. The proxy need not state specific issues to be discussed at the meeting.

## **Article II. ASRC Membership**

### **1. Applications and Roster**

- 1.1. Each Group may accept applications for, and grant memberships to, applicants for all types of ASRC membership, in accordance with procedures specified in these Bylaws and in accordance with the requirements and standards specified in the ASRC Training Standards.
- 1.2. The ASRC Membership or Board of Directors may accept applications for, and grant memberships to, applicants for at-large membership in all types of ASRC membership, and may revoke such memberships.
- 1.3. Each Group shall maintain its own personnel records. Each Group shall supply the Secretary with a Roster of its members, including the following information for each member:
  - a. name;
  - b. type of membership, and date it was conferred;
  - c. types of training certification, as defined in the ASRC Training Standards, date it was conferred, and expiration date if applicable;
  - d. mailing address; and
  - e. telephone numbers.
- 1.4. Changes to the Conference Roster shall be reported to the Secretary within 90 days of the time changes are effective.
- 1.5. The Secretary shall maintain a Conference Roster of the total membership if the ASRC, with information for each member as described in Section 1.3 (above). Access to the Conference Roster shall be open to any Active Member. The Secretary shall keep a permanent record of all Conference Rosters.

### **2. Group Training Officers**

- 2.1. Within each non-probationary Group, the Board shall appoint a Active Member, or shall approve a Group-appointed Active Member, as Group Training Officer. For a Certified Group, or an Affiliate Group with Field Team Leaders, this Group Training Officer must hold Field Team Leader certification, as set forth in the ASRC Training Standards. This Group Training Officer shall be charged with:
  - a. enforcing the procedures, standards, and requirements of the ASRC Training Standards;
  - b. evaluating member applicants for training certification for compliance with the ASRC Training Standards, in accordance with procedures specified therein;

- c. acting as executive agent of the Board of Directors in conferring the various types of training certification to Group (and any sponsored probationary Group) members and applicants, except that Incident Staff and Incident Commander certification must be granted directly by the Board itself;
  - d. proposing to the Group for a vote all applicants for Active Membership;
  - e. informing the Secretary of the ASRC Board of Directors of all membership actions taken by the Group Training Officer, within 90 days of such action; and
  - f. working closely with a Training Coordinator in any sponsored probationary Groups.
- 2.2. The Board may, with just cause, reverse a decision of a Group Training Officer regarding the membership status of an individual.
- 2.3. The Board may, with just cause, remove or replace a Group Training Officer.
- 2.4. In the case of applicants for at-large Probationary or Active Membership, the Board shall charge a Group Training Officer from one of the Groups with examining the applicant and with reporting to the Board regarding the suitability of the applicant for that membership category. Further, this Group Training Officer or his successors shall be responsible for continued monitoring of this individual's compliance with the provisions of the ASRC Training Standards and these Bylaws, should the individual be granted such membership by the Board of Directors.

### 3. **Probationary Members**

- 3.1. Probationary Membership may be offered to applicants who wish to become Active Members, but who have not yet met the requirements for Active Membership listed in subsection 4.1, below.
- 3.2. Probationary Membership shall be granted to any applicant who secures a simple majority of the votes cast in a scheduled membership meeting of the Group to which he or she applies.
- 3.3. Probationary Members shall have no rights of voting or of holding office in the Group or the Conference.
- 3.4. Probationary Membership shall be valid for a period of one year unless extended as follows.
- a. A Group Training Officer may extend a Probationary Member's membership by six months.
  - b. Extension of a Probationary Member's membership beyond a total of eighteen months requires both the recommendation of the Group Training Officer and an affirmative simple majority vote at a regular business meeting of the Probationary Member's Group, or for Probationary-Members-at-Large, of the Board of Directors of the ASRC.

**4. Active Members**

- 4.1. Active Membership (referred to as Certified Membership in the Articles of Incorporation) shall be conferred upon those applicants who are certified by the Group Training Officer (or the Board of Directors itself, for applicants for at-large memberships) to have:
  - a. served three months as a Probationary Member,
  - b. completed 32 hours of activity with the ASRC,
  - c. read the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Training Standards, SAROP, and Operations Manual, or a Board of Directors approved summary document, and signed a statement to that effect, and
  - d. secured a simple majority of the votes cast in a scheduled membership meeting of the Group to which he or she applies.
- 4.2. The standards and requirements for member training certification levels shall be set forth in the ASRC Training Standards. Member certification to all levels shall be determined by the Group Training Officer. In the case of a Group with no Active Members, or of a new Group, or for applicants for at-large Active Membership, applicants may be certified and elected directly by the Board of Directors.
- 4.3. All Active Members shall have all rights of voting and of eligibility for office in the ASRC and in the Groups in which they hold membership.
- 4.4. Active Members must state, to the Conference Secretary, the Certified or Affiliate Group in which they wish to hold their primary membership.

**5. Sustaining Members**

- 5.1. Sustaining Membership may be offered by the ASRC and by each of its Groups to those organizations and individuals who wish to contribute monetary or material support to the ASRC or to one of its Groups.
- 5.2. The ASRC Board of Directors shall establish standard membership fees for Sustaining Members who contribute financial support, and shall establish guidelines for the distribution of these monies within the ASRC and its Groups.
- 5.3. The ASRC Board of Directors shall establish guidelines for awarding Sustaining Memberships to those individuals or organizations which contribute material support to the ASRC or one of its Groups.
- 5.4. Sustaining Membership shall be granted to these applicants who meet the requirements of sections 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 (above) and who secure a simple majority of the votes cast in a scheduled membership meeting of the Group to which they apply, or who secure an affirmative vote of the Board of Directors.

**6. Termination Of Membership**

- 6.1. Any member may resign his or her membership upon written notice by him or her to the Group Training Officer of his Group or to the Secretary of the Board.
- 6.2. If in the estimation of a Group Training Officer (or of the Secretary of the Board for at-large members) a member has shown neither interest in the activities of the ASRC nor significant activity with it over a period of one year, the Group Training Officer or Secretary shall provide him written notice, at the address listed for him on the Conference Roster, that the Member's membership status is under review and that it will be revoked in six months unless the member demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Group Training Officer or the Secretary a commitment to fulfill the obligations of membership. If, six months after the notice, the member has not satisfied the Training Officer or Secretary of his commitment to fulfilling the obligations of membership, the Group or Board of Directors may revoke said member's membership.
- 6.3. No Active Member's certification may be revoked without written notice to that individual within 90 days of the revocation.
- 6.4. Active Members with training certification must continue to maintain compliance with the certification standards and requirements set forth in the ASRC Training Standards, as determined by the appropriate Group Training Officer.
- 6.5. Any Active Member found to be deficient in any current certification shall be so notified in writing; if, six months after the written notice, the Active Member has not redressed the lapse to the satisfaction of the Group Training Officer, the Group Training Officer shall revoke the appropriate certification.
- 6.6. (Expulsion.)
  - a. A member may be expelled from a Group only after three-fourths of the members with the right to vote in elections of that Group vote for his expulsion.
  - b. Voting on questions of expulsion shall be by written ballot, with vote by proxy accepted.
  - c. A record of the number of votes shall be made at the request of any member with the right to vote in Group elections.
  - d. A Group vote for expulsion may be reversed by a decision of the ASRC Board of Directors.
  - e. Any member expelled from a Group shall lose all Conference membership; any Active Member expelled from a Group may apply for at-large Membership as set forth in Subsection 2.4.

7. **Auxiliary Members**

(reserved)

8. **Associate Members**

8.1. Associate Membership may be offered by the ASRC and by each of its Groups to those individuals who wish to contribute time or services to the ASRC or to one of its Groups and yet do not want to become Active Members and fulfill all of the duties and obligations of Active Membership.

8.2. The ASRC Board of Directors shall establish standard membership fees and guidelines for Associate Members who contribute time or services.

8.3. The ASRC Board of Directors shall establish guidelines for awarding Associate Membership to those individuals who contribute time or services to the ASRC or one of its Groups.

8.4. Associated Membership shall be granted to those individuals who meet the requirements of sections 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 (above) and who secure a simple majority of the votes cast in a scheduled membership meeting of the Group to which they apply, or who secure an affirmative vote of the ASRC Board of Directors.

8.5. Associate Members shall have no ASRC voting privileges.

## **Article III. Operations**

### **1. Board Meetings**

- 1.1. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least once in each quarter of the calendar year.
- 1.2. The Secretary shall publish the date, time, and place of Board Meetings at least thirty days in advance.
- 1.3. Board Meetings shall be open to all interested parties.
- 1.4. The Secretary shall make the minutes of each Board Meeting available within sixty days of the meeting.

### **2. Membership Meetings**

- 2.1. General membership meetings of the ASRC may be called when deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors or by petition of twenty-five percent of the Active Membership.
- 2.2. Written notice stating the place, day, and hour of a meeting, and in case of a special meeting, the purpose or purposes for which it is called, shall be delivered, either personally or by mail, to each Active Member. Notice shall be delivered not less than twenty-five nor more than fifty days before the meeting.
- 2.3. At least twenty-five days before each membership meeting, the Secretary shall publish the agenda.
- 2.4. A report on the membership meeting, including reports of the Groups, Committees, and other pertinent information shall be prepared by the Secretary within ninety days of the meeting.
- 2.5. Membership meetings shall be open to all interested parties.
- 2.6. A quorum for general and special membership meetings shall be one-third of Active Members.
- 2.7. At the direction of the Board of Directors, or by petition of ten percent of the Active Membership, a motion may be distributed to the membership in accordance with VI, Section C of the Articles of Incorporation. In the event of a petition by the membership, the Secretary shall distribute the notice within thirty days of receipt of the petition at the expense of the ASRC.

### **3. Groups**

The ASRC shall be comprised of different types of Groups: Probationary Affiliate Groups, Affiliate Groups, Probationary Certified Groups, and Certified Groups.

#### **3.1. Probationary Affiliate Groups**

To become a Probationary Affiliate Group, an organization must meet all requirements for a Probationary Certified Group, except that:

- a. A Probationary Affiliate Group need have only ten Active Members, including six Field Team Member certified members, or equivalent, as determined by the sponsoring Group's Group Training Officer, and as defined in the ASRC Training Standards.

- b. A Probationary Affiliate Group may select only one non-voting delegate to the ASRC Board of Directors.
- c. The Group must possess minimum Affiliate, rather than Certified, Group equipment, as set forth in the ASRC Operations Manual.

### 3.2. **Affiliate Groups**

To receive a Charter as an Affiliate Group, a Probationary Affiliate Group must:

- a. have met all requirements to become a Probationary Affiliate Group, and completed 18 months as a Probationary Affiliate Group, during which period at least five Group members have attended each of nine Conference events.
- b. submit to the Board of Directors the following: (1) the Group's mission statement, (2) suggested additions to the Training Standards to support the Group's mission statement, and (3) suggested changes to the ASRC Operations Manual to support the Group's mission statement. Any Training Standards changes and Operations Manual changes shall be reviewed by the ASRC Training Officer and Operations Officer, respectively, and their reviews presented to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall first approve the submissions (not necessarily adopt the submissions) listed above, prior to accepting a new Affiliate Group.
- c. have at least sixteen ASRC Active Members, including ten with Field Team Member certification as defined in the ASRC Training Standards.
- d. pass a comprehensive Certified Group review, as specified in the ASRC Operations Manual.
- e. present a written recommendation for a full Affiliate Group Charter from the sponsoring Certified Group.
- f. obtain an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Active Members voting on the question in an ASRC membership meeting.
- g. select a Group Training Officer who must be confirmed by the Board of Directors.

### 3.3. Probationary Certified Groups

To become a Probationary Certified Group, an organization must:

- a. obtain a vote of two-thirds of the Active Membership voting on the question in a membership meeting.
- b. obtain a letter of sponsorship from a Certified Group.
- c. agree to the meet and maintain the standards and requirements of an ASRC Group as specified in the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Training Standards, and Operations Manual.
- d. have at least ten ASRC Active Members, including: two with Field Team Leader or higher certification, and six with Field Team Member or higher certification, as determined by the sponsoring Group's Group Training Officer, as defined in the ASRC Training Standards.
- e. possess minimum Certified Group equipment, as set forth in the ASRC Operations Manual.
- f. have its members' qualifications endorsed by the sponsoring Certified Group's Group Training Officer.
- g. provide evidence that all members have undergone an individual Medical Examination, as defined by the ASRC Training Standards.
- h. meet all Conference financial obligations as defined by the Board of Directors.
- i. provide evidence of tax exempt status to the Chief Financial Officer of the ASRC.
- j. submit a membership roster to the ASRC Secretary, and a guide to Group call-out procedures to the ASRC Operations Officer.
- k. provide the Group's Bylaws to the Conference Secretary.
- l. select two Active Members to become non-voting delegates to the ASRC Board of Directors.

**3.4. Certified Group from Probationary Certified Group**

To receive a Charter as a Certified Group, a Probationary Certified Group must:

- a. have met all requirements to become a Probationary Certified Group, and completed 18 months as a Probationary Certified Group, during which period at least five Group members have attended each of nine Conference events.
- b. have at least 16 ASRC Active Members, including: six with Field Team Leader or higher certification, and ten with Field Team Member or higher certification, as determined by the sponsoring Group's Group Training Officer, and as defined in the ASRC Training Standards.
- c. pass a comprehensive Certified Group review, as specified in the ASRC Operations Manual.
- d. present a written recommendation for a full Certified Group Charter from the sponsoring Certified Group.
- e. obtain an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Active Members voting on the question in an ASRC membership meeting.
- f. select a Group Training Officer who must be confirmed by the Board of Directors.

**3.5. Certified Group from Affiliate Group**

To receive a Charter as a Certified Group, an Affiliate Group must:

- a. obtain a letter of sponsorship from a Certified Group.
- b. have met all requirements to become a Probationary Certified Group, and complete six months as a Probationary Certified Group (though with a Board delegate who retains voting privileges), during which period at least five Group members have attended each of three Conference events.

**3.6. Good Standing**

To remain in good standing as a Certified or Affiliate Group, an organization must:

- a. provide evidence that all new members have undergone an individual Medical Examination, as defined by the ASRC Training Standards.
- b. undergo a comprehensive review, to be defined and conducted by the Board of Directors, at regular intervals, not to exceed thirty-six months.
- c. continue to meet all Conference financial obligations as defined by the Board of Directors.
- d. provide up-to-date membership rosters and Group call-out procedures to the ASRC Secretary.
- e. maintain an up-to-date version of the Group's Bylaws with the Conference Secretary.

3.7. All Active Members of a probationary Group shall have full voting rights in the ASRC.

3.8. Violations of a Group's responsibilities as designated in the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Training Standards, or Operations Manual may be cause for the Group's charter to be revoked by the ASRC Board. A Group's charter shall be revoked by a vote of three-fourths of the Board of Directors, or by a vote of two-thirds of the Active Membership. All members of a Group which has had its charter revoked, except Probationary Members, shall be granted the opportunity of application for Conference member-at-large status, or equivalent membership in another Group.

3.9. Each Group will maintain as a minimum the standards of certification and operational readiness and capability specified in the ASRC Training Standards and Operations Manual.

**4. Association With Other Organizations**

4.1. The Board of Directors is empowered to enter into cooperative agreements, formal or informal, with other organizations and agencies, provided:

- a. such agreements are in the best interest of providing enhanced search and rescue or rescue-related service to the public;
- b. such agreements do not conflict with the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws;
- c. such agreements do not impair the effectiveness of the ASRC in providing services to the public;
- d. such agreements do not make the ASRC, or its Groups or members, more liable for prosecution;
- e. such agreements do not restrict ASRC officers or members in caring for the safety of victims or search and rescue personnel; and
- f. such agreements do not place ASRC personnel involuntarily under the direction of leaders not ASRC Certified, such that the ASRC personnel cannot decline to follow directions they consider unnecessarily dangerous to victims or search and rescue personnel, or deleterious to the goals of the mission.

5. **Parliamentary Authority**

- 5.1. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the ASRC in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the ASRC Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, or any special rules of order the ASRC may adopt.
- 5.2. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Groups in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the ASRC Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, and any other Constitution, Bylaws, special rules of order, or other governing rules a Group shall adopt.
- 5.3. Copies of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and any special rules of order of the ASRC shall be made available to every member of the ASRC.
- 5.4. Copies of any Group Constitution, Bylaws, special rules of order, or other governing rules shall be available to any Group member, and copies shall be kept on file with the Secretary of the ASRC.

## **Article IV. Finances**

### **1. Sources**

- 1.1. The Board of Directors shall provide for the financial needs of the ASRC by approving fund raising projects, soliciting donations of funds, equipment and services, dues, and administrative fees.
- 1.2. Neither the ASRC, its Groups, nor its members shall permit use of any name, symbol, or other identification of the ASRC or its Groups for the purpose of commending or endorsing any commercial product or service, except when such commendation or endorsement will contribute directly to the purposes of the ASRC, as determined by the ASRC Board of Directors.
- 1.3. All donations shall be acknowledged in writing.

### **2. Distribution of Funds**

- 2.1. ASRC funds shall be used only to advance the purposes of the ASRC.
- 2.2. ASRC funds may be used to:
  - a. provide for the administrative functions of the ASRC, including publications and mailings;
  - b. provide for the costs associated with the ASRC level of operations as defined in the ASRC Operations Manual;
  - c. purchase needed equipment to be issued to ASRC Groups or operational stations;
  - d. provide for outdoor safety education programs; and
  - e. provide additional funding to Groups exhibiting special needs.
- 2.3. No expenditures shall be made without the approval of the Treasurer or the approval of a majority of the Board of Directors.
- 2.4. A detailed financial report shall be submitted as part of the Treasurer's Report at each general membership meeting, and ASRC financial records shall be public record.

## **Article V. Amendments**

1. Proposal  
Amendments to these Bylaws must be proposed by the Board of Directors or by petition of at least ten percent of the Active Membership, or by proposal from the floor at a membership meeting.
2. Adoption  
The proposed amendment shall be adopted upon receiving more than two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by members present or represented by proxy at the meeting.
3. Notice  
Written notice stating the place, day, and hour of the meeting where Bylaw amendments shall be considered shall be delivered, either personally or by mail, to each Active Member, not less than twenty-five nor more than fifty days before the date of the meeting. The specific proposed amendments need not be included in this notice.