



FOUR WHEEL DRIVE TEAM GUIDELINES

03-09-07

These GUIDELINES are just that, GUIDELINES. Each SAR Team, and/or team member will need to consider what is appropriate for the work to be done. Keep in mind terrain, weather and most important the SAFETY of those involved. Make your own choices, but know your vehicle and operate within your own limitations. A team out of commission not only fails to perform a needed assignment but also becomes an added problem to the mission.

PURPOSE:

The purposes of Four Wheel Drive Teams (4 W Dr Team) in Search and Rescue are multiple and varied. The basic purpose is to provide a quicker response over seldom-used, rough, unmaintained tracks or through snow or mud conditions. This would generally be a quicker response than could be offered by a ground team.

TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

Some typical 4 W Dr vehicle assignments could include the following.

1. Transportation of teams or subjects to or from the Incident Base.
2. Serving as a radio relay at a point that better serves the mission operation.
3. Searching along roads in a quicker manner that could be accomplished by foot teams.
4. Containment duties, making sure that subject does not slip out of the area being searched.
5. Transporting supplies, medical gear or EMS personnel to another location.

TEAM MAKE UP:

Generally a 4 W Dr Team would consist of one vehicle with two search team members. Poor weather conditions might make it advisable to send out units in groups of two vehicles. This way one could assist the other in case of a mishap. The Incident Commander or the Operations Section Chief makes this decision. One person per vehicle is not advisable unless there are two vehicles making up one team.

VEHICLE CHOICE:

This is up to the individual vehicle owner but it should be realized that a *sedan with all wheel drive* for slippery city streets would not be appropriate for Search and Rescue purposes. Each owner must be familiar with the vehicle and know its limitations. Pickups and SUVs each have their own advantages and disadvantages. It's your choice but know your vehicle.

PERSONAL GEAR:

The equipment enumerated for the PACE exam is a good place to start for your personal gear. The following is that list:

1. Hiking Boots appropriate for season. Not athletic shoes
2. Extra Clothing as appropriate for season including;
 - head cover
 - gloves or mittens
 - extra socks
 - poncho or rain jacket with hood
 - extra layers for cold (middle layer)
 - non-cotton inner layerNOTE; Clothing must follow the three-layer system. Cotton is not appropriate for any layer except for some cases in the summer time only and then not for the inner or outer layers. Polar fleece or wool is the best.
3. Food for 24 hours
4. Minimum of 2 quarts of water
5. Knife
6. Pack. A large daypack and a duffle bag could suffice.
7. Fire starter
8. Compass with 5-degree accuracy
9. Whistle
10. Signal mirror
11. Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
12. Personal first aid kit
13. Space blanket
14. Pencil or pen and paper
15. 20 feet of 1" nylon webbing
16. Leather work gloves
17. Watch
18. Snowshoes
19. Cell phone
20. SAR radio

Some of these items might seem unnecessary but 4 W Dr. vehicles are man made and as such are subject to breaking down at the wrong time requiring the team's members set up a camp or walk out.

Additional items might include a sleeping bag and "comfort." food.

Think about hot food and dry clothes for a hypothermic subject.

Be prepared to stay out 24 hours or longer in emergency conditions.

VEHICLE GEAR:

A lot of the gear listed here is subject to the Team Members own desires, weather conditions and the type of country in which the team is operating.

1. Roof rack
2. Set of hand tools
3. Tire chains
4. Tow strap
5. Come-a-long
6. Shovel / Snow shovel
7. Axe
8. Saw
9. Fire extinguisher
10. Heavy duty jack
11. Flat fixer aerosol can
12. Extra water and fuel
13. Tarp.
14. Electric air pump
15. Battery jumper cables
16. Flares
17. Power inverter 12v dc to 110 ac
18. Shock cords
19. Rope
20. Stove and pots
21. Power cords and extra batteries for electronic equipment.
22. Duct tape
23. Electrical tape
24. Baling wire
25. Zip ties
26. Fuses
27. Water Can w/water
28. Gas can w/gas
29. Air Pump
30. Jump start battery

SEARCH GEAR:

1. Vehicle spot light
2. Rechargeable search light
3. Horn or whistles
4. Larger first aid kit
5. Maps, compass and GPS. Know how to use them.
6. Clip board for Maps
7. Pencils, pens, paper etc.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Mobile Radio, 50 watt
2. Amateur Radio either HTs or vehicle mounted
3. CB, FRS/GMRS radios and aircraft radios. (Optional)
4. Cell phone
5. SAR Radio

It is recommended that team members have a HAM Radio license. For some of your seldom-used gear, the use of "cheat sheets" is highly recommended. These should be made up by you and in your own words.