

# **RANDALL'S ADVENTURE AND TRAINING SEARCH AND RESCUE (RAT-SAR)**



# **MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES**



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### CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND & TEAM PURPOSE

RAT-SAR is a 501(c)(3) regional search, rescue, and training organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Alabama. RAT-SAR is founded on the Mountain Rescue / Alpine principles of self-sufficient, mobile teams trained to operate for extended periods of time in remote wilderness, mountainous, high angle, subterranean and other austere environments. RAT-SAR does not charge for its services.

Its purpose shall be:

- A. Provide trained search and rescue volunteers working under an incident command system for the purpose of technical rescue, search, and recovery operations in wilderness, high angle and/or natural subterranean environments, and to assist in search and rescue and recovery efforts during natural disasters.
- B. To provide search and rescue training to Search and Rescue (SAR) personnel operating in wilderness, high angle and/or natural subterranean environments.
- C. To further the science, knowledge and practice of technical search and rescue in remote wilderness, natural subterranean, and other austere environments.
- D. To be active at a membership level with the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads supporting their goals and mission for search and rescue in the state of Alabama.

The primary training discipline for all RAT-SAR members is **L.A.S.T.** (the ability to **Locate, Access, Stabilize** and **Transport** a subject from a wilderness or other austere environment to definitive care).



## **CHAPTER 2 TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

### **Section 1 – Membership Eligibility**

Membership is open to anyone 18 years of age and older who, (a) provides all necessary documentation, (b) successfully meets minimum training and physical fitness requirements, and (c) is approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

### **Section 2 – Meetings and Training Sessions**

RAT-SAR meetings may coincide with monthly training days. RAT-SAR Training Officers will set an agenda for training days, and scheduled training days may apply to mandatory continuing education credit hours. All members will be notified of scheduled training days or changes in scheduled training days. In addition, all RAT-SAR meetings and training days will be posted on the [www.ratsar.org](http://www.ratsar.org) website. All Regular Members are required to attend satisfactory training each year to maintain current membership as stated in Chapter 3, Section 4 of these guidelines.

### **Section 3 – Dues**

RAT-SAR members are not required to pay membership dues for membership in RAT-SAR; however, RAT-SAR may institute membership dues at a future time by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

### **Section 4 – Documentation**

The following documentation will be required from each member of RAT-SAR:

- RAT-SAR membership application form
- Liability release form
- Current, valid, state-issued driver's license

### **Section 5 – Voluntary Leaves of Absence**

RAT-SAR members needing extended leaves of absence from the RAT-SAR team and training schedule shall submit a request to the Executive Board. Any leave of absence shall be noted in that team member's file.

### **Section 6 – Insurance**

RAT-SAR team members must have their own health, accident, vehicle and property insurance.



## CHAPTER 3 PERSONNEL GUIDELINES

### Section 1 – Volunteer Membership

Participation and membership in RAT-SAR is strictly voluntary. No compensation or expense reimbursements are provided to any member of RAT-SAR unless approved by the Executive Board. All levels of membership require active participation in meetings / training sessions.

### Section 2 – Regular Membership

Regular Members are members in good standing who have met all training requirements. Regular Members will complete a satisfactory number of training hours per calendar year. This training will be reviewed continuously by RAT-SAR Training Officers and by the Executive Board to determine competency.

- Regular Members may respond to call-outs.
- Regular Members hold full voting privileges.
- Regular Members can serve on the Executive Board.
- Regular Members can deploy to rescues as requested by AHJs.
- Within the RAT-SAR organization, Regular Members can assume Incident Command roles, Team Leadership roles, or Rescuer roles **as per their training level**.

### Section 3 – Support Membership

- Support Members may operate in roles defined by the Team Leader or Executive Board.
- Support Members hold no voting privileges.
- Support Members may attend RAT-SAR training events.
- Support Members do not have to complete the Regular Member minimum training requirements, but are encouraged to do so.
- Support Members can deploy to callouts when requested by the Executive Board.
- All new members are considered Support Members until all Regular Member training has been completed.

### Section 4 – Regular Member Required Training

RAT-SAR will maintain a training file for each member. Training files will be updated regularly by the Training Officer(s) with certifications, re-certification requirement dates, and continuing education hours. It is the responsibility of the member to forward appropriate certificates and training documentation to the RAT-SAR Training Officer.

The following training modules are required to achieve full Regular Member status with RAT-SAR:

- FEMA IS-100 (FEMA online course)
- FEMA IS-700 (FEMA online courses)
- RAT-SAR Land Navigation Course or equivalent



- RAT-SAR Wilderness SAR Course or NASAR SARTECH II or equivalent
- BLS/CPR Course (WFR or higher medical certification preferred)
- Primary Response / SarTopo and Avenza (RAT-SAR class)

Applicants may demonstrate skills and knowledge sets listed above by way of verification and evaluation by the Executive Board.

## **Section 5 – Specialized Technician and Additional Training**

### **a) Technical Rope Rescue Technician**

RAT-SAR members shall complete the following training before operating in a technical rope rescue operation unless approved by a trained technician.

- Single Rope Technique
- Technical Rope Rescue
- Cave Rescue

### **b) Additional Training**

The following additional training is suggested (not mandatory) for all Regular Members.

- Swiftwater / Flood Rescue
- HAM Radio Technician License (2-Meter)
- NASAR SARTECH I
- FEMA ICS 200
- FEMA ICS 300
- FEMA ICS 400
- Wilderness First Responder
- EMT

## **Section 6 – Training Providers**

RAT-SAR members may use various training venues; however, outside Training Providers must be approved by the Executive Board by a majority vote of the Board. The Executive Board may choose to require Training Providers to submit a certificate of liability insurance, business license, and completed IRS W9 form to the RAT-SAR Executive Board before being approved as an official Training Provider.

All training for RAT-SAR members will be approved by the Training Officer(s). Training Providers will stipulate a full synopsis of the course being offered, a skills check-off sheet (Job Performance Requirements), and minimum gear requirements for the course. At the conclusion of each course, the training provider will provide copies of completed and signed Job Performance Requirements for each RAT-SAR student to the RAT-SAR Training Officer(s).



The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for certifying that all members have met the training requirements will be RAT-SAR. RAT-SAR, at its discretion, may choose to independently test each member who has completed training through an outside Training Provider before certifying that member as fit for operations with RAT-SAR.

## **Section 7 – Physical Fitness Requirements**

RAT-SAR members must be fit to serve in a search and rescue capacity that may require carrying patients in litters over long distances, hiking over rugged terrain, or accessing patients in remote areas. Each RAT-SAR team member shall maintain a level of physical endurance and agility required of strenuous search and rescue missions. At the discretion of the Executive Board, team members may be required to improve fitness levels in order to remain as Regular Members.

## **Section 8 – Grandfather Clause**

The Executive Board may choose to “grandfather” members into the RAT-SAR organization as Regular Members based on previous training records, membership with other search and rescue teams, and/or known ability to work under the conditions of membership in RAT-SAR. This Grandfather Clause may apply to all training and physical fitness requirements if so decided by the Executive Board.

The Executive Board may choose to allow prospective members to challenge the required RAT-SAR training via evaluations designed by the RAT-SAR Executive Board.

## **Section 9 – Team Member Duties**

- Team members assume the responsibility of clear-headed, competent performance when on scene in a rescue operation.
- Team members will adhere to a clearly delineated call-out procedure.
- Team members shall provide and maintain their own personal equipment.
- Team members shall maintain and keep in good condition all issued equipment and uniforms.
- Once a team member becomes part of an assigned search and rescue mission, he/she shall serve on that mission until the operational period is completed, or is relieved of duty by a RAT-SAR Team Leader or by the Incident Commander.
- During a non-training search and rescue mission, no team member shall attempt to perform or encourage another team member to attempt to perform a skill that is outside of that member’s scope of training.
- The rescuer’s personal safety, the safety of the team, the safety of other search and rescue personnel, and the safety of the subject of a search and rescue mission shall remain the top priority throughout a search and rescue mission and/or training exercise.
- Team Members shall report any injuries that occur before or during a callout that would adversely affect the ability to carry out duties.
- Team Members shall at all times conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of moral, ethical and legal behavior.



## **Section 10 – Disciplinary Policy / Membership Revocation**

RAT-SAR Team Members may have membership revoked without warning for any of the following reasons:

- Violating any provision of the RAT-SAR Membership Guidelines.
- Working outside their scope of knowledge without prior consent of the Team Leader or trained technician.
- Failing to complete training standards within a reasonable timeframe.
- Conducting any illegal or immoral activity that could bring harm to the reputation of RAT-SAR or its members.
- Acting on behalf of RAT-SAR without consent of the Executive Board.
- Failing or refusing to follow RAT-SAR command structure.

Membership may also be revoked for any other reason deemed by the Executive Board (a) to be detrimental to the RAT-SAR team or (b) to produce an unsafe environment when working in a search and rescue or training capacity.

In the event a RAT-SAR team member has their membership revoked, that member will immediately surrender any and all property belonging to RAT-SAR to an Executive Board member.

## **Section 11 – Inactive Membership**

Regular Members who fail to complete satisfactory training may be placed on inactive status while they work to develop competencies. If Inactive Members do not work to complete training in a timely fashion, they may have their membership terminated by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Inactive Members hold no voting privileges.



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**RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**  
(Please sign and give to Executive Board)

I, the undersigned Randall's Adventure & Training Search and Rescue team member applicant, acknowledged having received a copy of the MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

I agree to abide by all stipulations described therein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date