



WHITE PAPER

January 22, 2025

TO: FIRESOPE Board
of Directors 23300
Castle Street
Riverside, CA 92518-2200

FROM: FIRESOPE Operations Team, Task Force & Technical
Search & Rescue Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Resource Typing and
Qualifications (Reduction of qualifications to Type 3 and
addition of a Type 4)

SUMMARY

To consider cost for requirements for all stakeholders within the state for small and medium agencies while still enabling a safe response to water rescue incidents within our state.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE

The Current ICS 162 Swiftwater/Flood Search & Rescue has Type 1, Type 2 and Type 3 classifications. These typing requirements require all technical rescue requirements including Firefighter I. See below

Required Training:

1. Complete all General Training requirements.
2. Complete FEMA GPS Awareness Level course, or equivalent
 - a. Meet requirements of NFPA 1006 Rescue Technician
3. Complete the required:
 - a. California State Fire Training, Firefighter 1 or equivalent
 - b. California State Fire Training, Rope Rescue Operations
 - c. California State Fire Training, Structural Collapse Specialist 1
 - d. California State Fire Training, Confined Space Rescue Technician
 - e. California State Fire Training, Structural Collapse Specialist 2
 - f. California State Fire Training, Trench Rescue Technician
 - g. California State Fire Training, Rope Rescue Technician
 - h. California State Fire Training, River & Flood Rescue Technician



SUMMARY OF ISSUE PER ALL STAKEHOLDERS FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM AGENCIES

ICS 162 does not take into consideration all stakeholders within the State including small and medium departments. The cost for required training and sustainability for all stakeholders within the state is not realistic. Reducing the requirements for a Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Type 3 and adding a Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Type 4 would give small and medium- sized agencies the ability to respond in a typed capacity and provide more resources for our State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FIRESCOPE TS&R Subcommittee is recommending a reduction in the required qualifications for a SF S&R Type 3 team (6 members)

Required Training:

1. Complete all general training requirements
2. Complete GPS Awareness level course, or equivalent
3. Rope Rescue Operations
4. Rope Rescue Technician
5. River & Flood Rescue Technician (Water Rescue Technician) (Auto Extrication pre-req)
6. River & Flood Rescue Boat Technician (Motorized Watercraft Technician)
7. Current Certification as a California Emergency Medical Technician
8. Annual demonstration of swimming proficiency pool swim evaluation. Min. 500 yards in 19 minutes or IADRS Watermanship evaluation per NFPA 1006.
9. Annual refresher of related search and rescue skills and abilities in water environments per NFPA 1006
10. Refresher of rescue skills in moving water by functioning in this position during an operational incident, planned event, participation in exercise, drill, or simulation once every three years.
11. GPS and data collection awareness with annual refresher training.
12. Helicopter awareness training
13. Every 5 years, Peer evaluation (Evaluation of staffing and requirements for staffing, evaluation of training records, and evaluation of required equipment)



FIRESCOPE TS&R Subcommittee is recommending that we add a SF S&R Type 4 team (6 members) to the ICS 162 that includes the following requirements.

Required Training:

1. Complete all general training requirements
2. Complete GPS Awareness level course, or equivalent
3. Rope Rescue Operations
4. Rope Rescue Technician
5. Water Rescue Technician (River & Flood Rescue Technician) (Auto Extrication pre-req)
6. Current Certification as a California Emergency Medical Technician
7. Annual demonstration of swimming proficiency pool swim evaluation. Min. 500 yards in 19 minutes or IADRS Watermanship evaluation per NFPA 1006.
8. Annual refresher of related search and rescue skills and abilities in water environments per NFPA 1006
9. Refresher of rescue skills in moving water by functioning in this position during an operational incident, planned event, participation in exercise, drill, or simulation once every three years.
10. GPS and data collection awareness with annual refresher training.
11. Helicopter awareness training
12. Every 5 years, Peer evaluation (Evaluation of staffing and requirements for staffing, evaluation of training records, and evaluation of required equipment)

Recommended Training:

1. FEMA Technical Search Specialist Course or Regional Technical Search Specialist Course
2. Non-Motorized Watercraft Rescue Technician

SF S&R Type 4 MEL is equivalent to a SF S&R Type 3 with the below changes:

1. Remove 1 IRB and outboard motor, replace with 1 self-bailing raft, non-powered, 4-person minimum.

MEL will remain identical as the Type 3 with the changes listed here.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The document will be sent for approval through the FIRESCOPE decision process. Once approved, it will be routed for ADA compliance and publication.



FINDINGS

Consideration of cost requirements is needed for all stakeholders within the state to include small and medium agencies while maintaining a safe response to water rescue incidents within our State. Safety, cost, and sustainability have been at the forefront in this recommendation.

Cost savings for a Type 3 change would be \$15,000.00 per person and \$16,000 per person for a Type 4. These costs are an approximate figure from the hourly wage of an individual attending the required course and approximate tuition of the course or courses.

CONCLUSION

Adopting these proposed changes will create an achievable standard for our SF S&R Typing. The achievability of the proposed changes can be measured through its capacity to meet applicable NFPA Standards while being more sustainable for stakeholders than the alternative options as it relates to budgets, time investment, time allotment for completion, equipment, procurement, and certification. In addition, the proposed solution helps maintain the strong Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue operational capability currently available to the citizens of California.