



CHARLOTTESVILLE - ALBEMARLE RESCUE SQUAD



STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

TOPIC: High Angle Rescues	S.O.P. # 4.2a
Approved by: Lair D. Haugh, Chief	Revised: 2/9/2003 Approved:

I. PURPOSE

- a. To provide guidelines for the safe and effective use of technical rope rescue equipment during emergency operations.
- b. These guidelines are designed to provide guidance to CARS personnel, the CARS TRT, and other personnel who may be involved in a high-angle rope rescue operation.

II. DEFINITIONS

- a. High Angle Rescue - a situation where a victim is elevated above ground greater than 10 feet or below ground and must be moved and/or rescued by the use of rope and/or mechanical advantage systems and rigging.

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- a. It must be understood that rope rescue operations are to be attempted only as a last option. All other means of access and egress must be considered first.
- b. It should also be understood that this SOP is not intended to be all inclusive. During high-angle rope rescue operations judgment, experience, training and coordination among team members is an absolute necessity.
- c. While often times it is much simpler and easier to use power equipment found on the scene such as cranes, derricks, fork lifts, etc., the use of such equipment for patient transfer is a violation of Federal OSHA law. Only as a last resort should such equipment be used.

IV. ACTIVATION

- a. Upon notification of a High-Angle Rescue situation, ECC will immediately dispatch the following:
 - i. A trauma level ambulance.
 - ii. Squad 135.
 - iii. Squad 133 (if necessary).
 - iv. The Technical Rescue Team.
 - v. The Duty Officer.
 - vi. The Fire Department.
 - vii. The Police Department.

V. SIZE UP

- a. During the initial stages of a potential incident in which rope rescue may be used it is necessary for first-due personnel to obtain certain key information. The following information needs to be gathered and relayed to the incident commander.
 - i. What is the victim's location?
 - ii. How is he/she suspended or supported?

- iii. Is the patient injured?
- iv. Is the victim "hanging" or is he simply "stranded"?
- v. Can the victim be reached by any other method?
- vi. Is there a on-going rescue attempt by untrained personnel or bystanders?
- b. If the information that is gathered suggests that rescue by rope is the only method usable to rescue the victim, the following shall be completed:
 - i. Is this a rescue or recovery?
 - ii. Verify TRT team response and full assignment.
 - iii. Advise the Duty Officer of the situation.
 - iv. Establish a visible command and control access to area.

VI. COMMAND

- a. Since Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group (BRMRG) maintains their own high-angle rescue team, it should be recognized that they may be first on-scene and have command of the operation.
- b. In that case the CARS TRT will act in a support and advisory role unless their command requests we take over the incident.

VII. RESCUE OPERATIONS

- a. NFPA Standard #1983 will be followed as conditions warrant whenever possible.
- b. All victim loads will be on at least two separate lines of at least ½ inch in diameter. Both lines will be attached to separate bombproof anchors.
- c. All victim transport systems (i.e. Stoke basket, LSP Half back and Miller, Class II harness etc.) must be securely attached to the victim. No free, short non- secured rides will be permissible.
- d. Any point where the rope passes, a stationary object must be padded or the direction of the rope altered to prevent rope chaffing.
- e. All single line rappels will be bottom belayed. If a bottom belay is not possible a top belay will be used.
- f. Helmets will be worn at all times when on an emergency scene, and gloves will be worn whenever actually on rope.
- g. All non-essential personnel shall be removed from the rigging and operations area.
- h. A clearly established "RIG MASTER" and "SAFETY OFFICER" will be established.
- i. If the victim to be accessed and packaged must be attended by non-team members/EMS personnel, at least one trained team member will coordinate packaging and will be responsible for safely transporting the patient and stretcher tending.
 - i. In all cases, TRT ALS personnel shall be considered first in place of other EMS providers.
- j. All stages of rescue operations shall be communicated to Command for logging of times and coordination.
- k. The minimum number of TRT members to effect a high- angle rope rescue will be three (3).