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Standard Classification System of Human Search and Rescue Resources¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This classification is intended to aid search and rescue (SAR) managers in ordering resources for search and rescue incidents and to aid in communicating the types of tasks for which search and rescue crews have been trained.

1.2 This classification is intended as a supplement to the resource typing specifications of the Incident Command System and specifically as a means of typing human resources used in search and rescue activities.

1.3 This classification is suitable for classifying search and rescue crews for a wide variety of emergency management purposes.

1.4 This classification does not attempt to classify individuals or put forth standards of performance or training for individuals, nor is it meant to convey certification, skill proficiency or other measures of the level of performance of the resource. These qualifications are the responsibility of the local agencies responsible for utilizing the resource.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards*:²

[F1633 Guide for Techniques in Land Search](#)

[F1848 Classification for Search and Rescue Dog Crew/Teams](#)

2.2 *NFPA Standard*:

[NFPA 1670 Operation and Training for Technical Rescue Incidents](#)³

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F32 on Search and Rescue and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F32.02 on Management and Operations.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ Available from National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, PO Box, 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101.

2.3 *International Fire Service Training Association Standard*:

[ICS 420 Incident Command System Field Operations Guide](#)⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 Terminology not defined in this guide but referenced in the text can be found in Guide [F1633](#) and Classification [F1848](#).

3.2 *Definitions*:

3.2.1 *wilderness, n*—an uncultivated, uninhabited and natural area, usually but not necessarily, far from human civilizations and trappings.

3.2.1.1 *Discussion*—Wilderness areas often include collections of various environments such as forests, mountains, deserts, natural parks, animal refuges, rain forests and so forth. Depending upon terrain and environmental factors, a wilderness can be as little as a few minutes into the backcountry or less than a few feet off the roadway. (NFPA 1670)

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Typing of human resources in SAR is based upon the building and deployment of crews and teams for specific tasks. Because of the wide variety of tasks which are performed during SAR incidents, three common types of resources are acknowledged: search; rescue; and untrained resources.

4.2 The nature of typical search and rescue incidents in local jurisdictions and the financial resources of the local jurisdiction will dictate which types and kinds of resources will be maintained by the jurisdictions. Not all types or kinds of resources are expected to be available in all jurisdictions.

4.3 Kind classifications of human resources are based upon the specific environments in which SAR crews are asked to work. Specialties, of which there are many, within each of the kind classifications are not acknowledged by this classification. It is up to the jurisdiction ordering resources to ascertain whether additional subcategories of kind classifications are

⁴ Available from the International Fire Service Training Association, Fire Protection Publications, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078.