



2018 ANNUAL REPORT



**ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE
SEARCH & RESCUE**

Message from CEO and Board Chair

At this very moment, hundreds of highly trained RCMSAR volunteer search and rescue crewmembers are on alert, ready to respond to the needs of their communities and fellow mariners. This report encapsulates some of the key strategic goals achieved by our organization in 2018 and what they mean to our mission of saving lives on the water and our vision of excellence in community-based marine safety. We state confidently that these goals are on track with our 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. Most importantly, however, this reflects the passion, professionalism, and dedication to service of the over 1,000 volunteers that made these goals a reality. As this report offers only a small portal into RCMSAR and the community of responders we support, we encourage you to reach out to your local RCMSAR station or the Headquarters through www.rcmsar.com to learn more about our vocation of service.

2018 highlighted a strategic focus of initiating new program and operational capabilities. A major milestone was activating our new Memorandum of Understanding with the Province of British Columbia to better support our communities. This has already enabled RCMSAR to be responsive to emergencies not necessarily directly related to marine search and rescue, including supporting provincial and local authorities during the historic wildfire season of 2018. All the while, we remained true to our core function of marine search and rescue

and were vigilant to support approximately one third of the total of the Canadian Coast Guard Pacific Coast rescue missions in 2018.

In addition to responding to emergencies, we further strengthened the readiness of the network of emergency responders in British Columbia through activities such as hosting our first ever interagency search and rescue exercise at Albert Head, Vancouver Island. This exercise brought together ground, air and marine search and rescue operators and equipment, provincial authorities, Indigenous and local governments, as well as Canadian Coast Guard, Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Ranger participants. RCMSAR's leadership in this exercise contributed greatly to our collective learning and joint readiness and is a model that we will replicate in the future.

Our individual training efforts have also continued apace with the implementation of our new coxswain leadership qualification courses as part of our overall readiness framework development. Concurrently, our training team explored new program areas: supported by Canadian Coast Guard colleagues we conducted a pilot environmental spill response course and look forward to further exploring how this content may best fit into our curriculum; and we collaborated with the Canadian Coast Guard to develop RCMSAR courses to support Indigenous community training.

In parallel with these response and readiness efforts, RCMSAR led the preparations for the upcoming World Maritime Rescue Congress (www.WMRC2019.com), June 15-17, 2019 at the Vancouver Convention Centre, where we, along with our partners, will host the global maritime community in a celebration of learning and sharing of practices. This will be a key event for RCMSAR as we shift our strategic focus in 2019 to entrench aforementioned initiatives as core operations and develop a new Strategic Plan to set our course for the next phase of RCMSAR's evolution as a key partner in marine safety. On behalf of the Board of Governors, staff, and volunteers of RCMSAR, please enjoy this report. To our donors, partners, and the communities we serve, we are grateful for your trust and look forward to continuing our collaboration with you to deliver our shared goal of public safety.



Pat Quealey
Chief Executive Officer



Chris Gouglas
Board Chair

Conducting our Mission

RCMSAR is BC's preeminent charity saving lives on the water, and we depend on community support to help us meet the cost of supporting our volunteers. Our volunteer rescue crews give their time in communities throughout BC for free, but they need training, well-maintained equipment, rescue boats and on-shore facilities. The funding we receive means our RCMSAR volunteers are trained effectively to save lives on the water and stay safe.

We are careful stewards of the money we receive from key funding partners and private donors, and we are very proud of our track record as an efficient and dynamic non-profit organization serving the entire province.

RCMSAR is grateful for the support of its key funding partners in 2018:

- Canadian Coast Guard supporting search and rescue operations: \$1,403,000
- Province of British Columbia Community Gaming Grants to RCMSAR training centre to support the training centre and individual stations' vessel and equipment purchases: \$1,877,000
- Emergency Management BC to support for RCMSAR response to humanitarian aid in British Columbia: \$75,000
- The TK Foundation to strengthen RCMSAR presence in the province: \$103,000

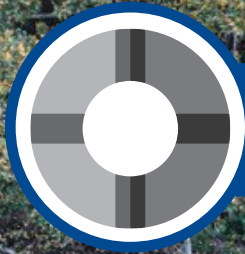
Please find detailed Financial Reports demonstrating our record of excellent fiscal stewardship under [About Us](#) on the RCMSAR website.



Thank you to our corporate, individual and private donors. Last year, RCMSAR volunteers saved and assisted hundreds of mariners in distress in BC's coastal waters and on Shuswap and Mara Lakes, and we couldn't have done any of this without you. Your donations help train and equip our volunteer crews so they're ready to take the next call and keep saving lives on the water.



2018 Highlights



Our volunteers conducted over **500** missions



Our volunteers saved **\$19,001,776** in property



Our volunteers participated in **2,620** training exercises



Our volunteers saved and assisted **413** people



Over **990** members volunteered at our stations



Our volunteers took part in **1,507** classroom training sessions



Our rescue crews spent **984** hours on search and rescue missions



Our stations responded to **32%** of all marine SAR calls on BC's coast



Our volunteers spent **9,223** hours on classroom and on-water training exercises

Collaborating with our Partners

In 2017, RCMSAR achieved a significant milestone through a memorandum of understanding with Emergency Management BC, formalizing our ability to support local governments and response agencies. This expansion allowed our volunteers to respond to calls for assistance from within their communities during times of need.

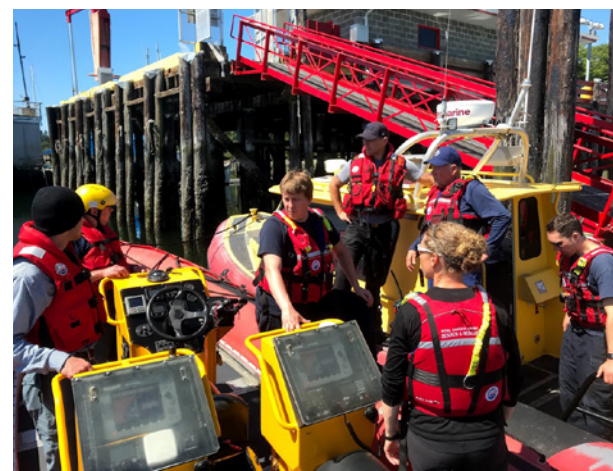
Although our mission remains saving lives on the water, since the implementation of our provincial MOU, RCMSAR stations have supported significant provincial missions, including assistance with Ground SAR transportation and extraction, BC Ambulance personnel transfer and assistance to local police departments. In addition, Station 106 – Shuswap alone has responded to over 35 missions in their region under the auspices of this MOU.

“*The increased clarity in, and streamlining of, mutual support request protocols is a step ahead in the long standing excellent relationship between our organizations.*”

— Chris Kelly, President,
British Columbia Search and Rescue (BCSARA)



Interoperability and support of emergency humanitarian aid through training, policy development and exercising for volunteer crews and joint agency events will continue to be a key focus through 2019. The spirit of volunteerism and enhancing safety on the water transcends jurisdictional boundaries, and we are heartened to have experienced tremendous endorsement for our volunteers from senior and local government levels as well as continued support from the marine industry.



Collaborating with our Partners continued...



**Canadian
Red Cross**

The Canadian Red Cross Society's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity, and Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue's mission is saving lives on the water.

By linking these forces through a Memorandum of Understanding, RCMSAR and the CRCS are combining volunteer personnel on or off the water, to assist in cases of domestic emergency.

"Selfless community service is key to the ethos of RCMSAR," said Pat Quealey, CEO, RCMSAR. "Our members have told us overwhelmingly that even if they aren't needed on the water in a given emergency, they still want to be able to serve."

Teaming up with the Canadian Red Cross gives RCMSAR the opportunity to support broader humanitarianism through a trusted partner. The overall network of emergency response will be stronger, and members will be able to serve in more diverse meaningful ways as a result.

"The Canadian Red Cross is so pleased to be working in partnership with RCMSAR, sharing resources and personnel to support people affected by disasters," said Kimberley Nemrava, Vice President, Canadian Red Cross, BC & Yukon.

"As a former Unit Leader for Coast Guard Auxiliary in Victoria, I believe the training and experience of RCMSAR personnel will be very transferable to disaster work," said Nemrava.



"Both are intense situations that require a combination of expertise, compassion and teamwork. Another benefit of the two organizations working together is that we learn from each other and improve our collective ability to respond."

This agreement enhances the CRCS domestic emergency response capacity and capitalizes on RCMSAR's commitment to emergency preparedness by increasing the number of volunteers available, and readiness to respond in a domestic emergency should the size and scope of the emergency warrant additional volunteer recruitment.



Developing our People

RCMSAR provides the most comprehensive volunteer marine rescue training program in Canada. Our volunteer crew members commit to a rigorous and professional training program in order to develop the skills required for conducting marine search and rescue missions in BC's often treacherous coastal waters.

Our 25 acre Training Centre in East Sooke provides an exceptional learning environment for hundreds of volunteer crew members from throughout the region. Through RCMSAR's training program, students learn seamanship, navigation, search and rescue, communications, first aid, leadership, teamwork and techniques for dealing with the stress that can result from traumatic rescue missions.

RCMSAR crew members participated in a number of multiagency training exercises in 2018, working closely with partnering organizations to improve interoperability, readiness and support of emergency humanitarian aid.

“ *Our already strong relationship with RCMSAR took a significant leap forward in 2018. We continue to explore ways that, together, we can assist BC communities, not only along the coast but in the interior as well where RCMSAR members were deployed to great effect to help staff EOCs during this summer's wildfires.*”

— Stan Bates, Executive Director, Operations, Emergency Management BC



Training highlights in 2018 include:

- Delivery of 15 Coxswain Leadership courses
- Albert Head SAREX 2018, an annual training exercise with 170 RCMSAR volunteers and an additional 70 response agency participants
- Fulfilling 28 training positions at the Canadian Coast Guard Rigid Hull Inflatable Operator Training courses offered through March 2019

- Select RCMSAR members participation in a pilot one-day environmental response course at RCMSAR Headquarters, presented by CCG staff
- Development and delivery of two-day skills refresher training sessions allowing stations/crews to hone their skills through scenario-based simulator training



SAREX 2018

The joint station and SAR partner event of the year was held at the Albert Head Training Centre in Metchosin B.C. on September 22-23, 2018 with 170 RCMSAR volunteers in attendance, and over 70 additional response agency personnel participating in joint exercises. Albert Head is the home of the 4th Canadian Ranger Patrol Group (4CRPG) and this was the first large scale exercise undertaken with the Rangers as emergency response partners.

In addition to 4CRPG, RCMSAR members learned from, shared information and worked alongside members of Ground Search and Rescue crews, PEP Air, the Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Coast Guard.

Maintaining our Search and Rescue skills and capabilities in support of the Canadian Coast Guard is our primary function, and this SAREX had various activities with that focus including on-water towing drills and workshops detailing dewatering techniques, direction finding and first aid.

With the new provincial MOU, there was also a focus on working alongside other agencies to better understand what an effective response would look like. Other activities included conducting on-water search patterns for a person over board while PEP Air searched from above and transferring a patient in a litter and personnel with gear from a rocky shoreline.

All activities were designed to train and highlight effective communications capabilities for responders. Following SAREX 2018, we know our crews are more understanding and better prepared to respond to marine emergencies alongside different resources.



World Maritime Rescue Congress 2019

RCMSAR is honoured to be the host organization of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) quadrennial World Maritime Rescue Congress (WMRC 2019) in Vancouver on June 15-18, 2019. Search and rescue practitioners, industry and governments will join to share experience and best practice and to set the course for the future of maritime SAR.

The World Maritime Rescue Congress (WMRC) has been the flagship event of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) since 1924.

Learning from the Past; Looking to the Future – Maritime Search and Rescue in a Dynamic Operational Environment will be a tremendous opportunity for SAR volunteers to celebrate the achievements and share advances techniques used by SAR authorities as well as to showcase the assets and skills of our RCMSAR members.

In addition to SAR volunteers from the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Program, delegates from across Canada and around the world are expected to participate. This is our shared opportunity to highlight the successes of our marine safety system in Canada, the Pacific Northwest of the United States, and the broader Pacific. Delegates and exhibitors will benefit from marine search and rescue lessons learned and professional development that will help shape SAR operations of the future.

“*The training center is the Heart of RCMSAR. The staff set the GOLD standard in quality, experience and communication.*”
— Bart Porebski, Coxswain Leadership student



Contributing to the insight into innovations and technologies, WMRC 2019 will showcase an on-water search and rescue demonstration led by the Canadian Coast Guard and RCMSAR. The demonstration will include vessel and equipment displays, fast rescue craft capability demonstration rides, and operational scenarios. This exciting interactive opportunity will set the scene for social and networking events and a program of engaging speakers that will make your visit to Vancouver a truly memorable event!



An Example of What We Do: Halfmoon Bay Recognized for Rescue

Woodrooffe, Sophie (2018, December 3). Halfmoon Bay RCMSAR unit recognized for rescue. Coast Reporter. Retrieved from www.coastreporter.net

A rescue performed by Halfmoon Bay RCMSAR involving a lost boat and three victims, including one unwilling one, was recognized by the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) and RCMSAR as one of the top three missions of the year.

The three crewmembers involved in the effort – Trevor Chapman, Erin Heeney and Peter Forster – were presented with the JRCC Top 3 Mission Awards 2018 at a ceremony at the Seaside Centre in Sechelt, with other RCMSAR and SAR organizations in attendance. Missions from RCMSAR's 33 rescue stations on the Pacific Coast were reviewed for the award.

It was the complexity and “chaos of the event,” including uncertainty about how many people were in the water, and which boat the victims originated from, that made the rescue unusual and worthy of recognition, said RCMSAR CEO Pat Quealey. “All that highlights the strength of the training, the strength of the people we have in our organization and their ability to deal with challenging situations,” he told Coast Reporter after the ceremony.

The mission took place the evening of September 4, 2017, when the three crew members received a call about voices hailing for help off 4 Mile Point in Sechelt Inlet. It was “a very hot day,” said Forster, who was acting coxswain.

Chapman said he remembered the moon. “It was a full moon and clear skies that night and the visibility was absolutely amazing.”

It took the crew less than five minutes to drive to the scene. “We thought we’d have to turn off the engines to hear the voices, but we didn’t,” said Forster. Another vessel of opportunity arrived at approximately the same time, with two RCMP officers on board. They pulled in one of the people in the water, while the Halfmoon Bay crew focused on the other two.

“It was mayhem,” said Forster, who said one of the two people closest to the vessel was uncooperative. “For all the training we do, we think people want to be saved and want to come to the boat and want to be pulled in. This person was pulling away,” he said, adding that there was a possibility that one of the people in the water was not sober.

They were in the water because one woman, without a PFD, had jumped off the boat because she thought it was sinking and swam away from it. As she started drifting away, another woman, wearing a PFD, jumped off the boat to try to assist. Then the third person, a man wearing a PFD, jumped in after them.

Despite being in the water for up to 60 minutes before first responders arrived on scene, when approached by the RCMSAR vessel, the woman without a PFD evaded the RCMSAR crew by kicking off their boat and backstroking away. Forster said her behaviour and distress might also be explained by the shock of being in the water for so long.

The crew tossed a rescue line to her and, with the help of the man in the PFD, pulled her to the boat where Heeney and Forster performed



RCMSAR CEO Pat Quealey presents Trevor Chapman, Erin Heeney and Peter Forster with the JRCC Top 3 Mission Awards 2018 at the Seaside Centre on Nov. 27

- SOPHIE WOODROOFFE

a two-person lift to get her into the vessel. Following her retrieval the man was brought on board. “There was one incident where she was about 30 feet away, we saw her just go down, face first, the last was her head to go under. We thought we lost her,” said Forster. The crewmembers coordinated with BC Emergency Services at the Porpoise Bay dock and then began looking for the boat, which they later found “stashed underneath some branches and some trees” and containing about nine inches of water.

Forster said the rescue “had a different impact,” because of the critical situation, and that “if it weren’t for all the training and the strong support of the station and this organization, things could have been so much different.”

Heeney thanked JRCC for recognizing their efforts. “I’d love to track down who initially made the 911 call,” she said. “People hanging out at their homes in Sandy Hook who heard the calls for help and didn’t ignore it.”

Award-Winning Volunteers

RCMSAR's volunteers are our greatest strength. Prepared to respond at a moment's notice, they spend thousands of hours in preparation and training to give back to their communities and respond to potentially dangerous missions on the water.

Last year, we revitalized the RCMSAR recognition program to acknowledge the tremendous contributions of our volunteers through existing and newly-established awards at the local, organizational, provincial, national and international level. This year, we recognized the achievements of our colleagues and crewmates. The award winners below represent countless hours of selfless dedication.

The Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award

Issued by Public Safety Canada for the first time in 2018, this award is a partnership between provincial, territorial and federal governments, recognizing recipients who have achieved excellence in their respective fields. Across Canada, there are many deserving individuals and groups working on emergency management, such as community-based volunteers, people working in all levels of government in emergency management organizations, and Indigenous communities.

RCMSAR was proud to be able to nominate one of our members, Dugal Purdie, from Station 1 West Vancouver in the Search and Rescue category.

Dugal's nomination was evaluated by a select group of judges and was selected. Dugal received this award in Ottawa in a ceremony hosted by the Minister of Public Safety, Ralph Goodale.



Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers

Awarded by the Honourable, Lieutenant Governor, Janet Austin at Government House in September, Alex Muir, pictured above, was nominated for the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers by his crewmates at Station 33 - Oak Bay. Alex's volunteering extends beyond marine search and Rescue. Alex has also been an active volunteer at Government House in Victoria for 17 years, and is Past President of the Friends of Government House.



Dugal Purdie

Did You Know...

RCMSAR is proud to operate under the distinguished patronage of Her Honour, The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.

The Lieutenant Governor grants patronage in order to support and encourage worthy endeavors.

Her Honour is patron of many community, military and cultural associations, as well as public service organizations, lending them vital support and recognition for their outstanding contributions to society.



Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Honours

RCMSAR provides marine search and rescue with funding from the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Program. Nationally, the CCGA honours its volunteers for their service and recognizes heroism, leadership, merit and service milestones.

In 2018, a number of RCMSAR recipients were recognized for exceptional contributions in service and leadership.

EXEMPLARY SERVICE MEDAL

Brian Crompt Station 29 – Ladysmith

LEADERSHIP MEDAL

Rob Sutherland Station 106 – Shuswap

Roger Pilkington Station 20 – Pender Island

MEDAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE

Paul DeGrace Station 2 – North Vancouver

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Ian R. Arklie Station 39 – Port Alberni
Member since 1985

Margaret Slassor Station 39 – Port Alberni
Member since 1987

David G. Holmes Station 33 – Oak Bay
Member since 1989

Ron C. Robson Station 10 - Richmond
Member since 1989

Shawn Burchett Station 2 – North Vancouver
Member since 1991

Jay Willoughby Station 2 – North Vancouver
Member since 1991

Jerry Hunter Station 33 – Oak Bay
Member since 1991

Garry Brown Station 60 - Comox.
Member since 1992

Derek Harris Station 60 - Comox
Member since 1992

Hugh Kelsey Station 1 – West Vancouver
Member since 1992

Michael Janicki Station 10 - Richmond
Member since 1993



SAR Prevention

We don't just respond to emergencies. We work to prevent them.

While our crews are always ready to save lives on the water, the best rescue mission is the one that never has to take place. We want to make sure that families and children make it home safely after a day on the water. That's why we provide boating safety information, pleasure craft safety checks, and a loaner program for kids' lifejackets at many docks and marinas. RCMSAR's boating safety programs demonstrate our strong commitment to preventing boating tragedies.

In the words of Senator Fabian Manning, RCMSAR is a key contributor to marine safety on the West Coast and warrants support:

“*The \$1.3 million in federal funding [RCMSAR] receives is a bargain considering the value of the service it provides.*”

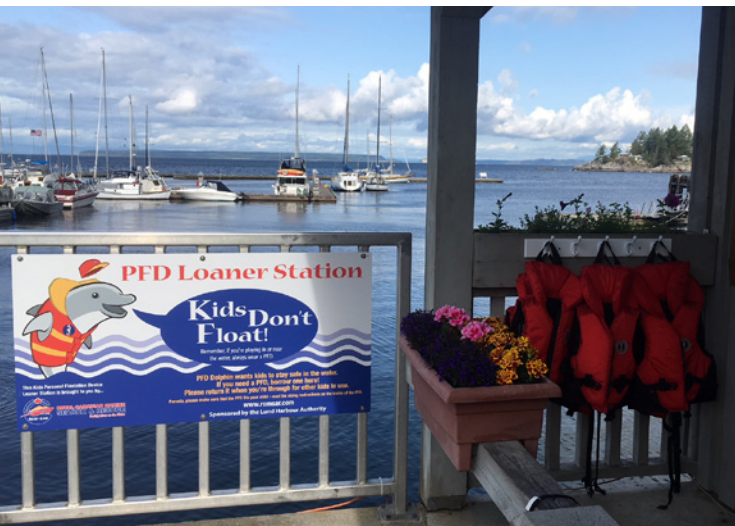


Kids Don't Float Program Wins National Award

The Kids Don't Float program was honoured by the Canadian Safe Boating Council, its members and stakeholders in Canada-wide recreational boating safety with a 2018 Canadian Safe Boating Award (CASBA) for Best Boating Safety Initiative.

Cathy Dupuis, SAR Prevention Officer, accepted the award on behalf of RCMSAR at the 2018 CASBA gala held January 20, 2019 in Toronto.

Successfully piloted in six RCMSAR stations during the summer of 2002, the KDF initiative is a cornerstone of the RCMSAR prevention program. Developed to increase public awareness of child drowning issues and reduce the fatality rate, RCMSAR has since established close to 100 KDF Loaner Boards throughout the west coast region. This lifesaving initiative continues to expand with new loaner boards and refreshed PFD inventory available for borrowing across the province.



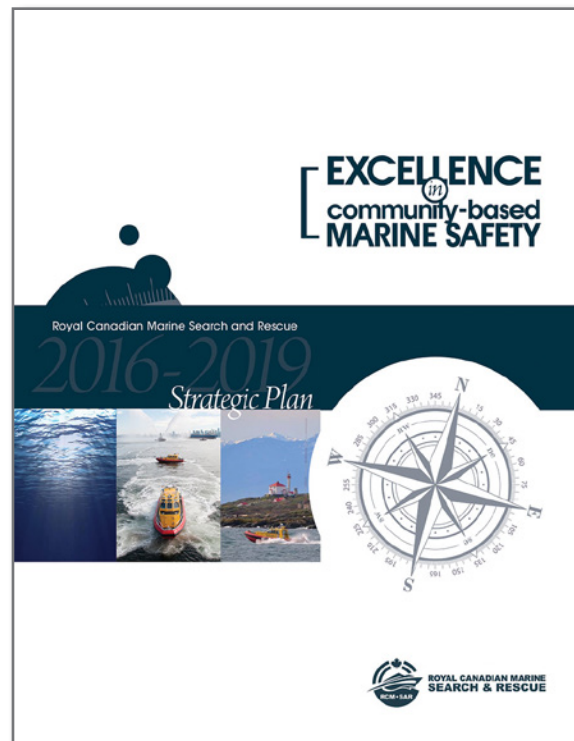
Looking Forward to 2019

As we pursue our vision of excellence in community-based marine safety, we are grateful for our many supporters.

You make it possible for us to provide excellent training for our volunteer crews, equip them with lifesaving vessels, and maintain round-the-clock emergency coverage in communities along the British Columbia coast.

Thank you for helping us save lives on the water, now and in the years to come. With your continued support in 2019, RCMSAR looks forward to...

- Hosting the global maritime community at the World Maritime Rescue Congress 2019 in a celebration of learning and sharing best practices with key leaders and practitioners
- Advancing key training and emergency response initiatives from early stages of implementation to core operations.
- Maintaining a continuous improvement review cycle for governance, operational effectiveness, fleet management, safety and training standards, support to station administration
- Developing a new Strategic Plan (2020-2025) to set the course for the next phase of RCMSAR's evolution as a key partner in marine safety, while carrying forward the lessons and successes earned through 2016-2019's Strategic Plan.



**ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE
SEARCH & RESCUE**

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