

**CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Fire and Rescue Division  
3650 Schriever Avenue  
Mather, CA. 95655  
Phone (916) 845-8711  
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February 3, 2023

**Fire & Rescue Division  
Special Operations & Hazardous Materials Section**

**GENERAL MESSAGE #1**

**Update to FIREScope ICS-SF-SAR 020-1: SWIFTWATER/FLOOD SEARCH AND RESCUE  
RECOMMENDED TRAINING, SKILLS, AND EQUIPMENT LIST**

The FIREScope Board of Directors (through the FIREScope Operations Team/Task Force/Technical Rescue Specialist Group) has approved recommendations from the Cal OES-coordinated Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Work Group, which worked for more than two years in collaboration with subject matter experts, California Fire Service stakeholders and leadership, State Fire Training, and other stakeholders to update the following document: FIREScope ICS-SF-SAR 020-1 (Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Recommended Training, Skills, and Equipment List).

**Background:**

The original FIREScope ICS-SF-SAR 020-01 (Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue) guidelines were published in 2001, prior to establishment of the following currently recognized standards: The National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Standard 1670: Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue and NFPA 1006: Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications.

**Action:**

The FIREScope Board of Directors has approved the following updates to FIREScope ICS-SF-SAR 020-01, Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Recommended Training, Skills, and Equipment List:

**Increased Staffing for Type I Swiftwater Rescue Teams:**

Increase in Type I Swiftwater/Flood Search & Rescue Team staffing from 14 to 16 members, consistent with NIMS typing).

**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Team Vessel Staffing:**

Required: 2 qualified Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Boat Operators per Vessel.


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**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Technician requirements:**

Complete the following training and certifications:

- California State Fire Training, Firefighter I or equivalent
- California State Fire Training, Rope Rescue Operations
- California State Fire Training, Rope Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, Confined Space Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, Structural Collapse Specialist 1\*
- California State Fire Training, Structural Collapse Specialist 2\*
- California State Fire Training, Trench Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, Auto extrication
- California State Fire Training, River Flood Rescue Technician
- Helicopter Awareness Training
- GPS, Data collection awareness and training
- Current Certification Emergency Technician or equivalent

Required: Satisfactory performance as a SFT Firefighter I or equivalent.

**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Boat Operator requirements:**

Complete the following training and certifications:

- California State Fire Training, Firefighter I or equivalent
- California State Fire Training, Rope Rescue Operations
- California State Fire Training, Rope Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, Confine Space Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, Structural Collapse Specialist 1
- California State Fire Training, Structural Collapse Specialist 2
- California State Fire Training, Trench Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, Auto extrication
- California State Fire Training, River Flood Rescue Technician
- California State Fire Training, River/Flood Rescue Boat Technician
- Helicopter Awareness Training
- GPS, Data collection awareness and training
- Current Certification Emergency Technician or equivalent

Required: Satisfactory performance as a SFT Firefighter I or equivalent.



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### Refresher Training:

- Required Annual Swim Evaluation: 500yd in 19 minutes per or International Association Dive and Rescue Specialist (IADRS) Watermanship evaluation per NFPA 1006.
- Required Annual Refresher, of related rescue skills and abilities in water per NFPA 1006.
- Required every three years, refresher of rescue skills in moving water per NFPA 1006.

### Swiftwater/Flood Search & Rescue Team/Program Evaluation:

- Every 5 years, Evaluation
- Evaluation of staffing and requirements for staffing
- Evaluation of Training records
- Evaluation of required equipment

### Equivalencies:

NFPA 1670 (standards on operations and training for technical search and rescue incidents).

NFPA 1006 (standard for technical rescue personnel professional qualifications, from which the JPR's originate).

- Chapter 5 Rope Rescue / Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 6 Structural collapse Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 7 Confine Space Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 8 Vehicle Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 11 Trench Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 15 Helicopter Awareness/Operations
- Chapter 16 Surface Water Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 17 Swiftwater Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 21 Watercraft Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Chapter 22 Floodwater Rescue/ Awareness, Operations, Technician
- Annex C (overview of the JPR's for all chapters)

### Qualifications Equivalencies:

To assist personnel and agencies to develop and maintain compliance with the updated Swiftwater/Flood S&R Team qualifications, following is a list of equivalencies that consider the pertinent California State Fire Training Job Performance Requirements (JPR's) and equivalent training options.

1. The California State Fire Training Rescue Systems 1, Rescue Systems 2, and Rescue Systems 3 courses, combined, meet equivalency for the requirements of FEMA *US&R Structural Collapse Technician* or California *US&R Structure Collapse Specialist 1 and 2* courses. Rescue Systems 1 has been sunset, with Rescue Systems 2, and Rescue Systems 3 courses sunsetting in 2023.



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**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Organization Table:**

Resource	Component	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
		*Meets requirements for Mission Ready Package			
Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Team	Equipment	Type 1 Inventory	Type 2 Inventory	Type 3 Inventory	Type 4 Inventory
	Personnel	16 Member Team:  1 Team Leader 2 Squad Officers 4 Boat Operators 9 Swiftwater Technicians (2 must be Animal Rescue Technicians)	6 Member Team:  1 Team Leader 2 Boat Operators 3 Swiftwater Technicians (1 must be Animal Rescue Technician)	4 Member Team:  1 Team Leader 3 Swiftwater Technicians (1 must be Animal Rescue Technician)	3 Member Team:  1 Team Leader 2 Swiftwater Technicians
	Transportation	Transportation Equipment trailer Personnel transport vehicles	*	*	*

\*Requests should include vehicle capabilities when necessary (i.e., four-wheel drive).

\*\*All team personnel trained to the NFPA standard of River and Flood Technician level.