

# JSAR

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The Journal of Search and Rescue (JSAR) is an open access peer-reviewed electronic journal for the collation and distribution of original scholarly material on search and rescue (SAR).

It is being supported by the in-kind work and contributions of the Editorial Board. There is still the need for a dedicated journal serving those with a direct interest in all disciplines of search and rescue including: rope rescue, water (flat, swift and marine), ice rescue, wilderness search and rescue, structural collapse rescue, trench collapse rescue, cave rescue, dive rescue, motor vehicle extrication, canine search, technical animal rescue, air rescue, search theory, search management, and mines rescue. JSAR exists to fulfil that need.

Article submissions from these and other SAR disciplines are welcome. Launching this journal on the internet offers a relatively cost-effective means of sharing this invaluable content. It affords the prompt publication of articles and the dissemination of information to those with an interest in SAR.

JSAR will provide a forum for the publication of original research, reviews and commentaries which will consolidate and expand the theoretical and professional basis of the area. The Journal is interested in theoretical, strategic, tactical, operational and technical matters.

Advertising within JSAR will be considered in the future to ensure sustainable funding is available to enhance and continue the work of the journal. The publication of an article in the Journal of Search and Rescue does not necessarily imply that JSAR or its Editorial Board accepts or endorses the views or opinions expressed in it.

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## **Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
Editorial <b>Meredith, T</b>	ii
Deriving Objective Probability of Detection for Missing-Person Search: Validating Use of Effective Sweep Width and Associated Mathematical Models <b>Chiacchia, KB &amp; Houlahan, HE</b>	1
Optimizing Wilderness Search and Rescue: Discovery and Outcome <b>Rossmo, DK, Velarde, L &amp; Mahood, T</b>	37
Postmortem submersion intervals in the River Thames <b>Greatbatch, I, Livingstone, D, Hunter, G &amp; Saunderson, Y</b>	46

**In memory of LCDR Frederick Koester 1932-2022**



## Editorial

Welcome to Issue 1 of the 6th Volume of the Journal of Search and Rescue. The recognition of the importance of SAR is increasing, as natural disasters increase in their frequency and ferocity. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have stated that extreme weather events and their impacts will increase throughout the 21st Century, and clearly this will impact upon the SAR community in both their work and lives.

It is essential that SAR organisations utilise methods and technology to optimise the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations through research and sharing best practices. The authors in this edition of JSAR utilise case studies, existing data sets and experimental techniques to identify strengths and weaknesses in various SAR techniques.

The dreaded 'networking' can often result in the development of ideas and SAR conferences are a perfect place for this. Lead JSAR editor, Dr Robert Koester, presented at the Icelandic SAR conference, Rescue 2022, and returned laden with business cards and prospective meetings. The Institute of Search and Technical Rescue hosted their inaugural annual conference in November 2022. Taking place at the Union Jack Club, London, the conference brought together experts in the field of SAR to share examples of past, present and future emergency response events, in order to develop SAR practices. Talks included topics on academic assessments of SAR using drones; how to improve cohesion, recruitment and selection in SAR teams; sea rescue of migrant crossings in the Mediterranean; the importance of putting the casualty at the centre of rescue efforts; and the risks/benefits of immersive training. The keynote speaker was Rick Stanton who gave a fascinating talk on his role in the Tham Luang cave rescue. The lessons learnt and shared were inspiring and enabled practitioners from across the world to forge new relationships to further their SAR skills.

International collaboration provides unique opportunities to train and be trained, building capacity for both home and visiting SAR teams. ServeOn, the UK lead for EVOLSAR (European Association of Civil Protection Volunteer Teams), have been invited to participate in a large-scale training event in Kosovo in March 2023. In the past six months UKISAR have been deployed for training in Kosovo, Singapore and Switzerland. As well as capacity building this is preparing UKISAR for the UN INSARAG External Reclassification in 2023. And on that note congratulations to SARAID (Search and Rescue Assistance in Disasters) for becoming the first and only UK voluntary team to be officially classified by the UN INSARAG as a Light USAR Team and only the third worldwide.

Lessons can be learnt from successes and failures and one such lesson is on the subject of equality, diversity and inclusivity. Following the November reports on alleged incidents of misogyny, racism and bullying in the London Fire Brigade\* we should all reflect how SAR organisations, either professional or voluntary, can foster an inclusive environment to recruit, and retain, a diverse range of people. There are many fantastic examples of inclusivity in the sector but we should all be striving to do better to access the skills of underrepresented people. We must question our unconscious biases and representation in recruitment. What actions, languages and behaviour could impact on retainment. There have been reports of women joining voluntary SAR teams only to find that none of the PPE equipment is suitable for their body size and shape. SAR teams should reflect and respond to the communities they serve, and diversity brings strengths and attributes that enable us to achieve that aim more effectively.

*(\*JSAR has no position on, nor makes any comment on the allegations themselves)*

**Toby Meredith, Portsmouth UK**