

**Constitution and Bylaws of the  
Mohave County Sheriff's Search & Rescue Bullhead City Unit  
Mohave County, AZ**

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Sheriff of Mohave County

## **Article I**

This organization shall be "Mohave County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue, Bullhead City Unit" hereinafter referred to as "Bullhead City Unit" (BSR).

## **Article II**

### **Section 1 - Objectives:**

The objective of SAR shall include the following:

- A. To assist and support the MCSO and to help achieve the Sheriff's Mission.
- B. To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, in and for the State of Arizona, the laws of Mohave County, the Policies and SOP of the Sheriff, and the Bylaws of BSR.
- C. At all times comply with the Mohave County Sheriff's Code of Ethics.
- D. To participate in appropriate attire, and to bring into closer fellowship the individual members of the Sheriff's SAR unit.
- E. To recognize, advocate, and demonstrate that safety is the responsibility of all SAR members.

## **Article III**

### **Section 1 – Qualifications:**

Membership in BSR shall be open to all persons 21 years of age or older, who are of good moral character and in good physical and mental health. An application by any person residing in Bullhead City or surrounding areas for membership in BSR shall be considered when recommended by the membership committee of BSR. All such applications for membership shall be referred to the membership committee for proper investigation.

- A. Members in good standing must reside in Bullhead City or surrounding areas.
- B. New members shall own an appropriately licensed 4-wheel drive vehicle, as described in the Sheriff's SOP's.

### **Section 2 - Application Procedure:**

In order for a new applicant to become a member in good standing (MIGS), the applicant shall fulfill the following:

- A. The applicant will be invited to and shall attend three consecutive regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The applicant will be interviewed by the Board of Directors (BOD) and or their designees as a Membership Committee. The applicant will be furnished with the formal MCSO application, the Bylaws, the MCSO SOP and the Volunteer Program Policy at the first meeting. The completed application will be submitted to the MCSO for the background investigation.

- B. Pay a non-refundable fee of \$150.00 to cover the cost of initial issuance of SAR Uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment and Associated gear. This fee is due upon being voted into the unit by the end of the follow meeting.
- C. At the third monthly meeting attended, the applicant will be voted on by the membership for the acceptance into the unit and will be issued a BSR unit number after completion of the background check.
- D. The applicant will serve in good standing and demonstrate good character for a probationary period of 12 months. The unit's probationary period shall commence on the date of the vote to accept them into the unit. During the probationary period the applicant may participate in some training and other community activities of which the SAR unit is participating as approved by the Captain or designee.
- E. The probationary member shall attend and complete the 16-hour Basic and 16-hour Advanced SAR Academies. Upon successful completion of the Basic and Advanced SAR Academies, basic SAR equipment provided by the unit will be issued.
- F. Upon completion of the Basic SAR Academy and clearance of the MCSO background check, the applicant may participate in callouts with their vehicle but is subject to direct supervision in the search unless the Captain or designee requires otherwise during the probationary period.
- G. During the remaining months of probation, the new member will be monitored for the purpose of determining their attendance status at meetings, SAR call outs, unit required training and overall performance. Furthermore, should any other matter surface within the probationary period, the Captain and the BOD may recommend terminating the probationary member and taking it to the membership for a vote.

**Section 3 – Committees:**

Any committee shall consist of active members. Various committees may be appointed by the president and serve until the end of the term, or as needed for the function or purpose the committee was designated for. It is expressly understood that the Sheriff of Mohave County, or his duly appointed representative, shall act in an advisory capacity to all committees.

**Section 4 – Classification:**

The membership of this unit shall consist of active members, inactive members, and support staff members.

- A. Active Members:
  - 1. An active member that participates in meeting and other official functions of this unit and maintains "on call" availability.
- B. Inactive Members:
  - 1. After filing a request for leave of absence, and being granted by the BOD, a member shall be placed on inactive status. An inactive member shall be unable to participate in any official functions of this unit.
  - 2. Inactive Members shall not be eligible to run for office, nor shall he/she be eligible to vote in any capacity while on inactive status.

3. The Inactive status may be for up to a period of six (6) months, and if necessary, may be extended by one additional (6) month period.
  4. If an inactive member is unable to return to active status after a period of one (1) year, their membership shall be revoked by the BOD.
- C. Support Staff Member:  
A member who is in good standing and contributed to the unit for a determined amount of time may go on support status. They shall attend regular meetings as an active member and they may provide support during all unit functions. They are permitted to vote as an active member.

## **Article IV**

### **Section 1 – Offices:**

- A. There will be a combined administrative and operational body.
- B. Any member who has three (3) unexcused absences within the previous twelve (12) months shall not be eligible to hold any office, elected or appointed, or be on any committee and may be subject to disciplinary action or termination from the unit based on a recommendation of the BOD and voted by the membership.
- C. The required elected BOD shall be:
  1. President/Captain
  2. Vice President/Lieutenant
  3. Secretary
  4. Treasurer
  5. Quartermaster
  6. Training Officer
  7. Non-elected members of the BOD shall be MCSO representative.
- D. Nominations and Elections will be held at the December meeting. Nominations shall cease upon the elections taking place. Proxy votes shall be allowed and counted.
- E. Each office shall be filled before electing the next position, should a nominee not be elected they may be nominated for any position still available.
- F. If any officer shall fail to attend three (3) meetings, regular or special, without an approved excuse by the President, or upon any position retiring, or resigning, the President shall declare the office vacant and may appoint someone for the balance of the term.
- G. In the absence of a quorum a BOD meeting shall not be held.
- H. A quorum will constitute 4 members.
- I. New members shall not be able to hold any office until they have completed their 1-year probationary period. This may be waived by a vote of the membership.
- J. Term limits for: Captain/Treasurer/Quartermaster will be two years changing in December of odd numbered years. Term limits for: Vice President/Secretary/Training Officer will be two years changing in December even numbered years.

## Section 2 - Elected and Appointed Officers Pre-Requisite Qualifications:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Yrs</u>	<u>Pre-Req.</u>
A. President *	Capt.	(elected)	1	MIGS
B. Vice President*	Lt.	(elected)	1	MIGS
C. Treasurer		(elected)	1	MIGS
D. Secretary		(elected)	1	MIGS
E. Quartermaster		(elected)	1	MIGS
F. Training Officer		(elected)	1	MIGS

\*The Sheriff has the authority (per MCSO Policies) to relieve the President / Captain and Vice President / Lieutenant for cause and approve the appointment of an Interim President / Captain and Vice President / Lieutenant.

## Section 3 - Duties of the President / Captain:

The President shall hold the rank of Captain and shall direct all operations of the Sheriff's SAR unit. The President / Captain shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the BOD. The President / Captain shall also perform such other duties as the BOD may prescribe. The President / Captain shall have the authority to expend SAR funds not to exceed \$200.00 per transaction without prior approval of the BOD or the membership. It shall also be the duty of the President / Captain to appoint and relieve as necessary; Vice President/Lieutenant, Secretary, Treasurer, Squad Leaders, Training Officer(s), Safety Officer(s), and Quartermaster with the majority consent of the BOD and SAR Volunteer Coordinator. **Vacant BOD positions can be filled by the President/Captain with the approval of the BOD.** The President / Captain shall act as liaison between the Sheriff's Office and the BSR.

## Section 4 - Duties of the Vice President / Lieutenant:

The Vice President shall hold the rank of Lieutenant and in the absence or disability of the President / Captain, shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President / Captain and shall perform such other duties as the BOD deem appropriate and necessary. The Vice President / Lieutenant will not at any time deviate from the policies having been set down by the President / Captain and the BOD and shall perform such other duties as the President / Captain or BOD deem necessary. The Vice President / Lieutenant will act as the Safety Officer, as such, is responsible for making sure those policies and procedures are in place and adhered to and make sure training and missions are as safe as possible. If the Vice President / Lieutenant / Safety Officer notices, or is made aware of an unsafe situation, he/she is responsible for making sure that the situation is corrected. The Vice President / Lieutenant / Safety Officer also has the responsibility of educating SAR volunteers about the safety procedures and methods that should be used during training and missions. They may also investigate safety violations and recommend corrective measures.

### **Section 5- Duties of the Secretary:**

The secretary is a position that ensures all rules and bylaws of the organization are adhered to by the board during meetings and the implementation of board decisions. The secretary is also in charge of all the records and documentation for the organization. One of the most important aspects of a board secretary's position is to record the minutes of each board meeting. The secretary records everything that happens during the meeting including what was discussed, what actions were voted on and what actions are being taken as a result. A board secretary also keeps complete, detailed records of all the business relations of the company or non-profit organization. Throughout the year the secretary is required to distribute documentation to the board and members as well as complete any legal filings on behalf of the organization on time. The secretary also makes sure that all records are properly and safely stored. A board secretary shall complete administrative tasks in addition to attending and recording board meetings. In this capacity the secretary completes correspondence on behalf of the board and organization, answer and return phone calls and provide personal administrative support to board members when needed. The Secretary will in the absence or disability of the President / Captain and/or the Vice President shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the officers. The Secretary will not at any time deviate from the policies having been set down by the President / Captain and BOD and shall perform such other duties as the President / Captain and BOD deem necessary.

### **Section 6 - Duties of the Treasurer:**

The Treasurer shall collect and have custody of all funds, keep accurate and proper records, which shall be provided to the BOD and its individual members as needed. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to present at the monthly meeting a report showing the unit's current financial condition. This report will consist of a summary of credits and debits for the previous month. It shall also be the duty of the Treasurer to pay all authorized bills. All bills over \$50.00 are to be paid by check or credit/debit card. The Treasurer has the authority to expend SAR funds not to exceed \$200.00 without prior approval of the BOD or the membership.

### **Section 7 - Duties of the Quartermaster:**

The Quartermaster shall be the custodian of all unit equipment and keep an accurate inventory of said equipment. No equipment shall be released to any member without said members' signature on appropriate unit sign out form. No unit equipment will be issued to any member for personal reasons unless approved by the BOD. The Quartermaster will determine the condition of any equipment received from members and report to the BOD. The Quartermaster will advise the BOD if any equipment needs repair or replacement.

### **Section 8 - Duties of the Training Officer:**

The Training Officer shall develop, deliver, and evaluate basic and advanced SAR training courses for members of the unit. The Training Officer may be required to coordinate or develop certain certification processes and be responsible for maintaining records. The Training Officer shall also plan, direct, and coordinate training projects, certification processes, and programs. The Training Officer will provide guidance, consultation and assistance in training and

development for SAR volunteers. Will establish and maintain a timetable, including look-ahead scheduling of training programs coordinated with MCSO SAR advisors. The training officer may assign assistants as needed to assist with the duties they are assigned.

**Section 9 – Squad Leader:**

The Squad Leader will hold the rank of Sergeant and must be current on all training. Must fill a vacancy and be appointed by the BOD. They will be responsible to ensure members of their squad are current or working on all required training. The Squad Leader will be used to callout their squad in the event of a failure of the primary callout system. Must have served or qualified in extra capacities that may include but not limited to rope support, TRT, swift water, tracking, UTV/ATV instruction, and any other advanced training that may be required or available to the unit.

**Section 10 - Board of Directors:**

The BOD shall be made up of: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Training Officer, Quartermaster, and a representative from the Mohave County Sheriff’s Office. Each Member shall have one (1) vote and the MCSO representative shall have the tie breaking vote. The BOD shall have control of all real and personal property belonging to the unit. The BOD shall consider policies and present them to the regular membership at regular or special meetings with proper, unbiased recommendations. The BOD shall assign all Squad Leaders for promotion to ensure they meet minimum qualifications. The BOD shall have discretion to waive up to 25% of the attendance requirement based on member work schedule conflicts, if the conflicted schedule can be shown by the member. The BOD will conduct the affairs of this unit in such a manner that this unit will function smoothly and assume its proper place in the community and within the Sheriff’s Office. The BOD shall meet before every scheduled membership meeting or upon the call of the President and at the time and place designated by such. The January meeting shall be the installation meeting. At such time all positions will be surrendered to the incoming BOD. Books, papers, records, and equipment will be turned over to the new BOD.

**Article V**

**Section 1 – Membership Requirements:**

Members shall hold a valid driver’s license. Members need not be citizens of the United States of America but must have and be able to prove a legal right to be in this country.

Members shall have access to a capable four (4) wheel drive vehicle that is properly licensed and insured for highway use in the State of Arizona. Member shall present their vehicle for inspection at the request of the BOD. The BOD shall determine capability of a vehicle.

Members shall possess a smartphone that is capable of running CALTopo and Resgrid applications.

## **Section 2 – Uniforms and Equipment:**

Refer to Uniform and Equipment Policy.

## **Section 3 – Callouts:**

Members of the BSR may be called by the Sheriff of Mohave County for any emergency that may arise when the Sheriff deems it necessary to call them for duty. This may include civic or public affairs and the appropriate uniform shall be worn.

## **Section 4 – Attendance:**

All members must make a conscientious effort to attend all monthly meetings, callouts, special assignments, training maneuvers and other community SAR events. It is understood that a member may be excused for work obligations, sickness or may be excused for family matters. Members should not take advantage of this and may at the discretion of the Captain not be excused. Failure to attend nine out of twelve monthly meetings or failure to make a conscientious effort to participate in SAR functions will result in a review by the BOD and will be grounds for termination of membership. Any member that fails to respond to any RESGRID activation shall within 24 hours notify the Lieutenant or Captain, via email, the reason for failing to respond to the callout. It will be up to the Lieutenant or Captain to decide whether to consider the absence excused or unexcused. The secretary will maintain a record for each member for review by the BOD.

## **Section 5 – Conduct of Members:**

Members upon admission to the unit shall always conduct themselves as a professional and shall not be boisterous or loud in public. The Member must maintain the dignity of the Sheriff's Office at all times. All members must remember that while in the uniform of this unit, they reflect on officers of the law. Members with any unit stickers or emblems that represent the Sheriff's Office, or SAR, shall maintain good driving habits. Any members that have complaints on their driving may be brought up on disciplinary charges. Any member in violation of any bylaws may be suspended or terminated from the unit and/or have disciplinary action brought against them.

## **Section 6 – Leaving the Unit:**

Any member(s) resigning or being removed from the unit shall be required to surrender to the Quartermaster their MCSO identification card and any other equipment belonging to the BSR. The leaving personnel will agree that any and all uniforms, hats, etc. shall be altered as such that its identity as a uniform of the MCSO SAR unit no longer is recognizable and are encouraged to donate items to the units Quartermaster.



### **Section 7 – Disciplinary Action:**

Upon written complaint against a member of this unit, the BOD will convene a special closed meeting to address the complaint. The member in question shall not sit in attendance of the initial meeting. If the BOD determines there to be sufficient cause to proceed, they shall direct the Secretary to send a certified letter to the member in question, requesting they appear before the BOD for a meeting no sooner than 15 days from the date of the mailing of the certified letter.

### **Section 8 – Termination:**

If any member, without consent and approval of the President or Squad Leader:

- misses three (3) general membership meetings and/or
- 50% of scheduled or emergency call outs and/or
- 50% of scheduled training

shall be called to answer to the BOD where he/she may be suspended from the membership pending disciplinary hearing by the BOD. Any member forfeiting his/her membership for any reason, shall surrender to the Quartermaster all uniforms, emblems, hats, equipment and other materials issued to the member by the unit.

### **Section 9 - Reinstatement:**

Any past member that has resigned their membership in good standing shall be reinstated after filing application and approval of the majority vote of the membership. The reinstated member shall be given priority over new applicants. Upon completion of these requirements the reinstated member shall complete a 12-month probationary period before becoming a regular member with all rights and privileges restored.

### **Section 10 – Bylaws:**

Changes to the Bylaws must be made in writing and submitted to the BOD for approval. Changes must be read and/or distributed to all active members. The first reading may be in person or via email. The second reading will be during the next monthly meeting where changes can be made and then voted on by the membership. If approved by the majority of the active membership, then the changes will take effect immediately.

## **Article VI**

### **Section 1 – Meetings:**

Regular monthly meetings shall be held at a place to be decided by the BOD. Regular monthly meetings shall be held on the first Tuesday of the month and shall be at 1830 hours (6:30pm). The President may convene a BOD meeting prior to the scheduled monthly meeting. All meetings will be conducted using the Roberts Rule of Order-current edition. The order of business shall be at the discretion of the President.

- A. Call to Order
- B. Flag Salute
- C. Roll Call
- D. Introduction of Visitors
- E. Training
- F. MCSO Representative report
- G. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
- H. Approval of Treasurer Report
- I. Quartermaster Report
- J. Training Officer Report
- K. Operational Commander Report
- L. Vote on any new Members (when applicable)
- M. Nominations of elections of officers (when applicable)
- N. Old Business
- O. New Business
- P. Good of the Order
- Q. Adjourn

## **Section 2 – Special Meetings:**

Special meetings may be called by the signatures of any five (5) active members of this unit or the President at such a time and place as the authority calling the meeting may determine.

## **Acronyms:**

- ATV: All-Terrain Vehicle
- BOD: Board of Directors
- BSR: Bullhead City Unit
- MCSO: Mohave County Sheriff's Office
- MIGS: Member in Good Standing
- SAR: Search and Rescue
- SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
- TRT: Technical Rope Team
- UTV: Utility Task Vehicle