

Intermont Search and Rescue

Standards of Conduct

Article 1: Mission Statement: The mission of Intermont Search and Rescue is to provide wilderness search and rescue, resource management, training, and response coordination to the communities of Southwestern Virginia and any other locality sanctioned by VDEM. This is accomplished under the Memorandum of Understanding of Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council of which Intermont Search and Rescue is a member.

Article 2: Scope: These standards describe conduct required of members of Intermont Search and Rescue while involved in official team related or sponsored activities, and while undertaking private actions that the public may understand to represent the team. "Conduct" includes roles and actions in rescue operations, demonstrations and instructional or training activities, and involvement as a bystander in related activities.

These Standards apply solely to situations in which officials or members of the public may identify the team member as acting for or as the representative of the team from the member's display of the Intermont logo, identification card, uniform, letterhead, verbal comment, or name.

Article 3: Discussion: For Intermont Search and Rescue to perform the mission stated above, and to maintain public respect and credibility, each member of the Intermont Search and Rescue Team must display high standards of training, performance and conduct.

Responsible Agents and members of the general public judge the credibility and professionalism of the Intermont Search and Rescue Team by the conduct and statements of each member of the team who displays group identification or who is perceived to be representing the team. While displaying the team logo, landowners, public agencies, law enforcement, and other groups often view a member's private statements and behavior as official action of the team.

Article 4: Standards of Conduct:

- A.** The Standard of Conduct for Intermont Search and Rescue is based on common sense and is intended to help promote harmony and create a team environment. It is recognized the Standard of Conduct is not all-inclusive. Misconduct not listed in the Standard of Conduct may require the members of Intermont Search and Rescue to take action out of common sense when that incident of misconduct is considered inappropriate.
- B.** Each member of Intermont Search and Rescue is equally responsible for maintaining group integrity and working in a mutually supportive and respectful manner. Unwillingness or inability to work in harmony with others is grounds for dismissal.

- C. Members of Intermont Search and Rescue are required to present professional appearance and demeanor in dealing with other team members, responsible agents, fire, EMS, emergency response agencies, Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council members, and the public with whom the team and its members interact in the course of official activities.
- D. Members of Intermont Search and Rescue must clearly identify themselves by their required uniform: clothing appropriate to the environment and mission, a laminated team photo-identification card, and a search and rescue pack containing equipment and supplies to perform tasks of the mission.
- E. Members of Intermont Search and Rescue must accurately identify their level of training to the Training Officer of Black Diamond Search and Rescue and the Operations Officer of the Council, and to search managers when signing into a mission base. In the event a member's completed training certification is not noted on his official laminated photo-identification card, the member should present a copy of a certificate or other evidence of completion of that training to search managers.
- F. Members of the team should report to each training activity and search operation with all appropriate safety equipment and personal equipment required to perform the tasks for which they have been trained. Each member's equipment should be selected from the Personnel Equipment list, according to the member's knowledge, skills, and experience in the environment and type of mission.
- G. Safety equipment must be worn and used at all times the team member is engaged in team training or search operations when the environment or the mission dictates the need. Disregard of safety rules, and common safety practices, including carelessness resulting in damage, destruction, or delay to work in progress, materials, tools, equipment, or the property of Intermont Search and Rescue, its members, or the property of other volunteers, is a violation of the Standard of Conduct.
- H. Each member must employ safe practices required by the mission and the search or training environment. Safe practices require members to observe best rescue practices and adhere to standards set by state or national training programs.

Article 5: Private Actions:

- A. Members of Intermont Search and Rescue may participate as private individuals in any activity they chose, including providing private instruction in technical rescue or climbing skills to individuals or groups unrelated to the mission of the team. Members may not represent nor imply that Intermont Search and Rescue is involved with, or has approved such private activities. Due to intense interest in technical skills such as caving or rope work, the public identifies a member with Intermont Search and Rescue or with rescue or other agencies associated with the team, even when that member is acting in a clearly private role. This public interest and visibility require that members act in a safe, professional, and responsible manner at all times.

Article 6: Team Apparel, Insignia, and Related Items:

- A.** Members may not display Intermont Search and Rescue insignia of any type, nor advertise their membership in Intermont Search and Rescue while they are performing private activities. Permanently affixed Intermont Search and Rescue team insignia on helmets or other equipment may be completely covered by tape or by other means when private actions may be confused with official duties.
- B.** Members may display generic “Search and Rescue” magnets and decals on vehicles at any time. The use of “Intermont Search and Rescue” on magnets/other is restricted to driving to and from training or incidents. However, small decals with “Intermont Search and Rescue” measuring seven inches by seven inches or smaller are allowed at any time. Vanity plates are permissible as long as the word “Intermont” is not used..Any use of the name/logo of Intermont Search and Rescue must be approved by the Board of Directors.
- C.** Use or display of the Intermont Search and Rescue team identification or announcement of the member’s membership to gain entry to any landowner’s property or to deal with agencies such as the National Park Service or law enforcement agencies while acting in a private capacity is prohibited. Members may use or display their laminated photo-identification or logo only while acting in an official capacity.
- D.** Improper use of Intermont Search and Rescue identification or insignia may be cause for dismissal from the team.

Article 7: Drug and Alcohol Policy:

- A.** Intermont Search and Rescue has a strong commitment to provide a safe and secure drug and alcohol free workplace for its volunteers. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance is prohibited during hours “on duty” while engaged in team missions, training, or other official activities. It is also the duty of each member to limit or restrict their own activity if they are taking prescription medication or remedies that would cause their functioning to endanger themselves or others.
- B.** “On duty” means the presence of the member on the site of training or rescue operations at any time, day or night, on the training ground or at the scene of Intermont Search and Rescue operations.
- C.** Working or reporting for duty, conducting team business, being at a team function or meeting while under the influence of an illegal drug or alcohol is a violation of the Intermont Search and Rescue Standard of Conduct.
- D.** Members shall refrain from displaying any Intermont Search and Rescue insignia while consuming alcohol in public.
- E.** Persons involved with alcohol or illegal drugs at the scene of Intermont Search and Rescue training or operation will be asked to leave.
- F.** Unsafe private practices by team members bring discredit upon Intermont Search and Rescue. A member’s actions that may discredit the organization will be taken under review as follows. The potential for risk to the team may require that the member who is

guilty of unsafe actions be removed from team membership, in order to protect the professional integrity and the reputation of Intermont Search and Rescue.

Article 8: Article Administrative Action on Behalf of Intermont Search and Rescue:

- A. The President or his/her designee shall give prior approval for any presentations concerning Intermont Search and Rescue. Interviews by the media or for publication will be given by the President or his/her designee.

Article 9: Convictions:

- A. Any person indicted for a felony conviction while a member of Intermont Search and Rescue must report that information to Black Diamond Search and Rescue for further review.

Article 10: Training Certifications:

- A. Operational members will successfully complete the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's Search Team Member course within one year from the date of becoming a member in order to maintain their call-out status. Documentation of attendance will be filed with the Training Officer of Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council.
- B. All other training requirements mandated by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Black Diamond Search and Rescue, Intermont Search and Rescue, and other official agencies will be required in order for members to be in compliance and eligible for call-out.

Article 11: Enforcement:

Enforcement of the Standard of Conduct will be administered through the By-laws of Intermont Search and Rescue – Article VII: Grievance Procedures.