

Preface

Priests and monks are credited with first organizing a search and rescue system. The role has also been placed with military and natural resources personnel. At the local level the earliest searches were often haphazardly organized by community leaders. More current times have clearly shown that every search has the possibility of becoming a direct law enforcement issue.

Modern law enforcement thus faces another challenge. Not only must officers be familiar with criminal laws, personal protection, investigation, special constituent sensitivities, traffic control, terrorism, patrol, drug wars, public education, among other topics, but they must now also understand the basic elements of search and rescue. Many law enforcement agencies have faced this additional task by sending officers to search management classes, and organizing a response system.

Historically, search management training courses present limited material on the behavioral profile and statistics of several different categories of lost individuals. During the last several years, however, the caseload has seen a dramatic increase in older people with dementing illnesses. These memory disorders include Alzheimer's disease, vascular and multi-infarct dementia, Parkinson's dementia, and several other types of dementia. (A decade ago, the non-specific term "senile" was commonly used to describe people with dementia.) Unfortunately, older versions of SAR management courses did not address how to look for this class of lost subject. The following course was developed to assist law enforcement to quickly and efficiently conduct the initial aspects of a search.

This book would not have been possible without the assistance and advice of several important friends and colleagues over the years.