

North East Search and Rescue Association

Constitution

1. Title

- 1.1 The organisation shall be known as "**The North East Search and Rescue Association**" or by the abbreviation "**NESRA**", hereinafter referred to as NESRA.
- 1.2 The NESRA Area is defined as the North East of England.

2. Objectives

To relieve suffering and distress amongst persons affected by accidents, disasters or natural hazards within the North East of England, or any other place if requested.

In furtherance of this object but not otherwise NESRA shall have power to:

- 2.1 further co-operation and relationships between the member teams and between the teams and police forces and other interested parties with similar objectives to those of NESRA, within the operational area of NESRA;
- 2.2 represent member bodies on the Mountain Rescue Council (MRC) or its successor in tide;
- 2.3 maintain and improve the standards of the member teams.

3. Management

- 3.1 NESRA will be managed by its committee.
- 3.2 The Committee will endeavor to meet at least six times a year; an AGM will be held each year.
- 3.3 Meetings of the Committee, annual and special general meetings will be managed by the Chairman, but the conduct of business at all meetings remains the prerogative of the committee.
- 3.4 The minutes of all meetings will be taken by the Secretary and a copy of these will be sent to each member of the NESRA committee.
- 3.5 In the absence of either or both the Chairman or/and the Secretary the committee will elect a substitute or substitutes to perform the office or offices for a meeting.
- 3.6 The quorum for the meeting will be 10 voting committee members.
- 3.7 Voting rights are accorded only to Officers; representatives of Member Rescue Teams, Member Police Forces and Member Associated Organisations and NESRA representatives on the MRC. Each voting member of the NESRA committee will have only one vote on each occasion, except for the Chairman who will only vote to resolve a tied vote.
- 3.8 Any motion gaining a majority of votes will be regarded as passed, except those concerning alterations to the Constitution of NESRA or the rescission of a decision.

4. Committee

4.1 The NESRA Committee shall consist of:

- a. The Officers;
- b. Two representatives from each Rescue Team having Full Membership;
- c. One representative from each Police Force having Full Membership;
- d. One representative from each Organisation having Associate Membership;
- e. NESRA representatives on the MRC Council.

4.2 The following shall have power to attend and speak at meetings of the NESRA Committee but shall have no power to vote at such meetings:

- a. President
- b. Training Co-ordinator;
- c. Public Relations Officer;
- d. Representatives of NESRA on the Medical, Equipment, Training, Radio, Publications and Finance sub-committees of the MRC.

5. Membership

5.1 Membership of NESRA shall be in three categories, namely Full Membership, Honorary Membership and Associate Membership.

5.2 Honorary and Associate Membership may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Committee, at an SGM held for that purpose.

5.3 The NESRA committee may expel any member or representative for conduct damaging or likely to damage the reputation of NESRA, or for breaking any NESRA rule laid down in this constitution or any other NESRA rule governing safety, the organisation or the conduct of NESRA. In the event of any expulsion an appeal may be lodged with independent arbitrators acceptable to both parties and whose decisions will be binding on both parties.

6. Full Membership

6.1 Full Membership shall be offered to all rescue teams and organisations affiliated to the MRC whose area of responsibility lies within or includes territory within the NESRA Area.

6.2 Full Membership shall be offered to all Police Forces whose area of responsibility lies within or includes territory within the NESRA Area.

7. Honorary Membership

7.1 At the discretion of the Committee, positions of Honorary Membership may be awarded, by election, to individual persons or to organisations with the knowledge and approval of the person or organisation concerned, at an AGM or SGM.

7.2 Positions of honorary membership shall consist of Honorary President, Honorary Vice President and Honorary Member.

7.3 No honorary member will have any voting rights but honorary members may attend NESRA committee meetings and may take part in discussion.

8. Associate Membership

8.1 Associate Membership may be offered to organisations with similar aims to those of NESRA which operate within the NESRA area, but which do not wish to be full members or which NESRA does not wish to be full members.

9.0 Officers

- 9.1 The Officers of NESRA shall be the Chairman, the Secretary, the Treasurer (the committee can decide to combine this office with that of secretary).
- 9.2 Officers shall be elected at an AGM or 5GM; their term of Office shall last until the next AGM. Retired officers are immediately eligible for re-nomination.

10. Representatives on the MRC & its Sub-Committees

- 10.1 NESRA will elect to the MRC and the MRC sub-committees such NESRA representatives as are required by the MRC. These are representatives to the Medical, Training, Equipment, Radio, Publications and Finance sub-committees of the MRC. These elected representatives, where practicable, are to take directions from the NESRA committee, and are to report to NESRA at its committee meetings with a written report and verbal expansion and explanation.
- 10.2 Election of the NESRA representatives on the MRC and each MRC sub-committee will be at an AGM, an 5GM or a committee meeting. These representatives will be elected for a term ending at the next AGM, but may be re-nominated at that AGM. These representatives must be full members of a NESRA team.
- 10.3 The NESRA representatives on the MRC sub-committees may express their views on all matters at a NESRA committee meeting but will have no vote on the NESRA committee.

11. Training Officer, Public Relations Officer

- 11.1 The Committee will elect at an AGM or SGM, a Training Coordinator and a Public Relations Officer who are to report to NESRA at its meetings and may express their views at such meetings but will have no vote.
- 11.2 The Training Coordinator and the Public Relations Officer shall resign at the following AGM but may be nominated for re-election.

12. Elections

- 12.1 Any nominations for Officers, representatives for NESRA on the MRC, representatives on sub-committees of the MRC, positions of Honorary Membership or Associate Membership must be received in written form by the Secretary not less than 21 days prior to the AGM or SGM.
- 12.2 Nominations must be proposed and seconded by persons who are full members of any of the Rescue Teams having Full Membership of NESRA or are members of the NESRA committee.
- 12.3 Only a full member of a NESRA Team may be nominated for a position as a NESRA officer, NESRA representative on the MRC, a representative on an MRC sub-committee or rescue team representative to NESRA.

13. NESRA sub-committees

- 13.1 NESRA may create sub-committees to advise it on particular topics. A sub-committee will continue until it fulfils its terms of reference or until the next AGM, whichever is the sooner. Membership of a sub-committee will be determined by the committee. Membership of a NESRA sub-committee does not confer office or NESRA committee membership.

14. Meetings

- 14.1 The secretary must be informed of the demand for any meeting, except an urgent special general meeting, at least 28 days before the date of the meeting.

- 14.2 All motions and matters for consideration at a meeting must be given in writing to the secretary at least 21 days before the meeting, signed by the proposer and seconder. Motions may be made by any member of the NESRA committee. Nominations may be made by any full member or any Team or by any member of the NESRA committee.
- 14.3 All members of the NESRA committee must be informed in writing of any meeting, except an urgent special meeting, at least 14 days before the date of the meeting. This notice must include the meeting's agenda and motions with their proposer and seconder. If the meeting is to be a committee meeting the minutes of the last such meeting will be included with this notice, if not already received by each member of the NESRA committee.
- 14.4 All members of NESRA may attend any meetings (including committee meetings) but cannot vote at such meetings;
- 14.5 Only members of the committee who have the power to vote under the Constitution can vote at any meeting;
- 14.6 Notices of all meetings shall be given to:-
- i) All committee members (including representatives of the member Rescue Teams whose duty it is to notify their respective teams of such meetings).
 - ii) Member Police Forces.
 - iii) Representatives of NESRA on the Medical, Equipment, Training, Radio, Publications and Finance sub committees of the MRC.
 - iv) The Training Coordinator and Public Relations Officer.
- 14.7 A visitor may be invited to attend a meeting with the chairman's permission. Such a visitor may only speak to the committee when invited to do so by the chairman.

15. Annual General Meeting

- 15.1 The AGM shall be held each year, usually in March. The business of the AGM shall include the minutes of the last AGM and of any SGM since the last AGM; the reports of the president and officers including the audited accounts; Constitutional amendments; Proposals requiring a wider participation than that of a committee meeting; The election of members, officers and representatives, and notices.
- 15.2 Notice of the AGM shall include the minutes of the last AGM, the audited accounts for the previous financial year, a written report from the president and each officer and the agenda for this AGM including the wording, proposer and seconder of any proposal and the name, proposer and seconder for any nomination of office, post or membership.
- 15.3 All full members of all member teams and associations may propose motions and matters for discussion at an AGM and are to be invited to attend the AGM where they may take part in any discussion but not vote.

16. Special General Meetings

- 16.1 An SGM will be held at the request of any 2 voting members of the NESRA Committee given in writing to the Secretary, at least 28 days and at most 56 days before the day of the SGM. The request must include the matter to be considered at the SGM and the names of those calling the SGM.
- 16.2 If a nomination to be considered at an SGM is for an office or position which has an incumbent then the incumbent's holding of that office or position shall end at the start of the SGM.

17. Urgent Special Meetings

- 17 1 An urgent Special General Meeting may be called by any 2 voting NESKA committee members to try to resolve problems which cannot wait for an SGM or scheduled committee meeting.
- 17 2 An attempt must be made by the officers of NESRA, by any practicable means to tell each and every NESRA committee member of the urgent meeting, its subject, its venue, its date and its starting time.

18. Finance

- 18 1 NESRA will only hold funds for the purpose of fulfilling NESRA's objectives. The treasurer shall be responsible for the safekeeping of the funds and the presentation of accounts.
- 18 2 Full Members of NESRA are to pay an annual subscription. The amount of this subscription will be reviewed at each AGM. The treasurer will write to each subscribing organisation requesting payment within one month of the AGM.
- 18.3 The NESRA financial year shall end on 31 December.
- 18.4 Accounts shall be independently audited each year.
- 18 5 The written audited accounts shall be reviewed at each AGM, and a financial statement will be given to each committee meeting. The treasurer will get statements of accounts for all NESRA monies monthly from the banks.
- 18 6 All accounts held by NESRA will have payments authorised by an approved signatory up to a limit determined at the last AGM. Beyond that limit payments shall be authorised by 2 approved signatories.

19. Amendments

- 19 1 No decision made by a vote of the majority of the committee can be altered except by the agreement of two thirds of the voting committee present at a meeting.
- 19 2 Changes to the constitution may only be made at an Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting arranged for that purpose. A change to this Constitution may only be made by two-thirds or more of the votes being in favour of the change.
- 19.3 Changes to any thing under "2. Objectives" or "21. Dissolution" of this Constitution or any changes which may have the effect of causing the Association to cease to be a charity in law can only be made after receiving written approval of the Charity Commissioners.
- 19 4 Any matter brought for decision that is not covered by this Constitution may be decided upon by the NESRA committee subject to ratification at the next SGM or AGM.

20. Resignations

- 20.1 Except when a resignation coincides with the AGM the resignation of any officer may result in an SGM being called for the purpose of electing a successor.
- 20 2 If an officer, a NESRA representative on the MRC or its sub-committees, the training coordinator or the public relations officer ceases to be a full member of a NESRA Team his post in NESRA will be reviewed and NESRA may seek a new person for the post.

21. Dissolution

- 21.1 NESRA may be dissolved by a Resolution passed by two thirds majority of those present and voting at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose, of which 21 days notice shall be given to all members of the NESRA Committee. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by, or in the name of NESRA, provided that any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities such property shall not be to or distributed among the members of NESRA but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objectives similar to some or all the objectives of NESRA as NESRA may determine and if and in so far as effects cannot be given to this provision then to some other charitable purpose.

This is the constitution of the North East Search and Rescue Association as written amended to March 2002