

# **Additional Issues**

## **NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

The team must speak to the media with one voice. Unless you are designated as that voice, refer all questions to the designated PIO. If none has been appointed, speak to the IC or to another member of the overhead team. Never lie to the media, and always act professionally with them. If you are directed to speak to the media, the IC or others will provide instructions.

The news media generally reports on us in a very positive manner. Our missions and training provide great video footage, so they show up frequently to cover our activities. These guidelines for dress, behavior, and protocol apply to actual missions, trainings, and public service events, or anywhere the team may be seen in the eyes of the public or media.

Regarding social media such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook etc., it is not appropriate to report on our missions, internal team details, or information regarding the people we help. EPCSAR has a straight forward social media policy which all members are expected to be familiar and act in accordance with.

## **HELICOPTERS**

Helicopters are sometimes used during the search phase of a mission as well as during the rescue phase. Be aware that fatal helicopter crashes HAVE occurred during search and rescue missions. This is very serious business. If you are in the vicinity of a helicopter that is landing or taking off, take cover. Consider what would happen if the helicopter were to crash and debris were to go flying. A member will be designated ground contact and you may not approach the aircraft without their permission. Remember that helicopters

generate very strong winds when landing and taking off. They can blow snow, dirt, rocks and other debris at very high velocity. Protect yourself (especially your eyes) and your subject!

Landing Zone (LZ) selection and helicopter operations are beyond the scope of this manual. Other members may give you specific instructions as needed. Fundamental rules include always carry your pack in front of you when loading/unloading, ensure there are no loose objects and clothing, and follow the instructions of your team leader and ground contact. Always wear your helmet and gloves.

## **MISSIONS SUPPORTING OTHER RESCUE TEAMS**

EPCSAR frequently assists teams in other counties. A team leader will be established prior to your departure from Rescue Base. Upon arrival at the staging area, only the team leader should go to talk to the other team's Command. They may invite the rest of the team to come to Command but do so only if invited. Be professional, get your gear ready, and await your assignment. Realize that other teams operate differently than EPCSAR. Be adaptable.

EPCSAR may be asked to function as a field team (or teams), or you may be part of a team composed of members of several different rescue teams. In either case, your professionalism, behavior, and bearing all reflect on you and EPCSAR. Don't assume your EPCSAR experience gives you an edge. The quiet person on another team may be loaded with experience, skill, and knowledge. Learn from them. Be considerate of less-skilled individuals. Help them learn, but don't force your opinions on them. Work for the leadership of your host team as you would for your own. At the close of the mission, thank others for their help and express your appreciation for being asked to help. This is an opportunity to make strong friendships and build liaisons with other groups. In the future, you may need their help!