



LEAST RESISTANCE TRAINING CONCEPTS

PROCEDURE GUIDE No. 20-44

ICE RESCUES INVOLVING LIVESTOCK

Issue Date: 1-14-2020, Revised: 5-23-2023



This Procedure Guide supersedes all previous guides in order to comply with the latest Lyon County, state and national training and operations standards.

Discussion:

Occasionally a large animal (typically a horse) will break through an ice-covered body of water and require extrication. This Procedure Guide applies to incidents where it is practical to extricate the animal without having to undertake extreme measures.

Responder Qualifications:

IS-100.c, IS-700.b, National Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Certificate, TLAR Emergency Horse Handling Module, TLAR Technical Large Animal Rescue Operational Level

1. Safety Policy:

- 1.1 Safety is the overarching priority in all responses. No procedure or protocol provided in this Procedure Guide shall supersede the use of sound judgment as may be appropriate to maximize incident safety.
- 1.2 All responders shall wear appropriate helmets at all times, and wear ANSI Class-II or Class-III vests or jackets whenever operating on or near any active traffic lanes.
- 1.3 A qualified Safety Officer shall be designated for all technical rescue responses.
- 1.4 In circumstances where responders cannot reliably communicate by direct voice, portable radios shall be utilized.

2 Response Matrix:

2.1 Minimum responses to technical large animal rescue incidents shall include:

- Closest available TLAR Rescue Unit
- Rescue-2 (heavy rescue)
- Special Operations-1 (additional ladders and ground pads)
- Transport trailer with loading panels

2.2 Incident Support Unit-1 and/or an additional TLAR Rescue Unit may respond if the need for additional equipment and/or rehab is anticipated.

3 Incident Organization / Chain of Command:

3.1 Each response shall have an Incident Commander (IC) who will direct the activities being undertaken.

4 Incident Assessment:

4.1 Upon arrival a complete and comprehensive size-up shall be undertaken, risks and probable rescue activities shall be determined, and information shall be relayed to incoming units.

5 Unified Command:

5.1 When public safety or facility personnel are present, operations should be conducted with the lead personnel from all stakeholder entities functioning by agreement in an ICS Unified Command structure.

5.2 The Commander of Technical Large Animal Rescue operations may be part of the Unified Command structure or be designated as Technical Rescue Group Supervisor in a module subordinate to Incident Command, as incident conditions may warrant.

6 Incident Briefing / Incident Action Plan:

6.1 Subsequent to securing the scene and before initiating definitive technical operations, an Incident briefing shall be conducted including all responders present.

6.2 The Incident Briefing shall include at minimum:

6.2.1 The Incident Safety Plan, including identifying the Incident Safety Officer

6.2.2 Identified hazards and risks (compliance with NRS 41.519)

6.2.3 The Incident Action Plan (IAP)

6.2.4 Functional assignments and designation of Functional Unit Leads

6.2.5 Success measurements, including benchmarks warranting a change in the IAP

6.3 All members present shall indicate that they understand the IAP and are capable of safely and effectively carrying out their assignments

6.4 All material changes to the IAP shall be conveyed to all responders before changes take place.

7 General Safety Orders:

7.1 Rescuers shall not attempt ice rescues in deep water.

7.2 Ground pads and slip sheets, ladders and similar equipment shall be deployed to protect rescuers from breaking through ice.

- 7.3 All personnel working in hazardous positions shall wear safety harnesses with tag lines.
- 7.4 All activities in or near exposed water shall be in accordance with Water Rescue Practices.
- 7.5 All activities requiring rope rescue shall be in accordance with Rope Rescue Practices.

8 Critical Response Practices:

- 8.1 Extreme care shall be taken when working near fractured ice.
- 8.2 The animal shall be protected from drowning when applicable.
- 8.3 Recovery straps shall be of the widest material practical for incident circumstances.
- 8.4 Anchor points shall be established clear of the ice. Vehicles may be used.
- 8.5 The animal should be moved onto slip sheets for extrication whenever practicable, however in some instances the animal may attempt to stand while still on the ice sheet.
- 8.6 Steps shall be taken to prevent the animal from inadvertently slipping back into the water

9 Post-incident Issues:

- 9.1 Horses and other large animals involved in ice rescues almost always suffer hypothermia and injuries.
- 9.2 Handling of potentially hypothermic animals shall be in accordance with Hypothermia Protocols (Procedure Guide 23-02.)
- 9.3 In cases of hypothermia, immediate veterinary intervention is warranted. Appropriate notifications shall be made as follows:
 - 9.3.1 If a Virginia Range horse, the Range Manager
 - 9.3.2 If domestic livestock where the owner is known or can be identified, the owner
 - 9.3.3 If domestic livestock where the owner is not known or cannot be identified, a Brand Inspector and the Animal Control agency having jurisdiction

10 Interference by Bystanders:

- 10.1 Interference by bystanders can create distractions that can impact the safety and performance of field operations. Furthermore, allowing bystanders to interfere can create liability issues. If bystanders encroach into the operational area and refuse to step back or they otherwise create distractions, law enforcement should be called to remove them before continuing operations.