NEW YORK AUTHORIZES STATE USAR, RESCUE & INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAMS

Governor Eliot Spitzer signed into law Assembly Bill A00050/Senate Bill S3650 on 7/18/07 authorizing the State Fire Administrator to establish Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Specialty Rescue and Incident Support Teams.

- Urban Search & Rescue teams are envisioned to have capabilities equivalent to federal teams under the jurisdiction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). New York presently has FEMA NY-TF1 composed of FDNY (Fire & EMS) and NYPD members. There are 62 positions but to be sure a full team can respond to an emergency the roster has at the ready more than 130 highly-trained members. The team serves as a national resource for disaster response and is totally self-sufficient for the first 72 hours of a deployment.

- Specialty Rescue Teams would provide technical rescue assistance including but not limited to: canine search and rescue, disaster response, cave search and rescue, collapse search and rescue, mine and tunnel search and rescue, swift water/flood search and rescue.

- Incident Support Teams would provide coordination with governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations as well as technical and logistical support to USAR and specialty rescue teams.

The State Fire Administrator was given authorization to accredit teams, appoint members to the teams as well as the responsibility for training and equipping the teams “to the extent appropriations are provided”. Team members are covered by their respective municipality’s or organization’s indemnification and workers compensation coverage. For members who do not have coverage, they will be deemed volunteer state employees for purposes of the Public Officers Law and Workers Compensation law.

On the Assembly side the original sponsor of the bill as well as the four cosponsors all are from Nassau County. The Senate sponsor serves Putnam and parts of Westchester and Dutchess Counties. A good guess is that “downstate” areas will be first in line for any teams to be established. The full text of the new law is at [http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A00050](http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A00050)
Bill Summary - A00050

A00050 Summary:

BILL NO A00050
SAME AS Same as S 3650
SPONSOR Weisenberg
COSPNSR Alfano, Barra, Walker, Saladino
MLTSPNSR Galef
Add S156-g, Exec L

Authorizes creation of a program for development of urban search and rescue teams, specialty rescue teams and incident support teams.

A00050 Actions:

BILL NO A00050
01/03/2007 referred to governmental operations
06/21/2007 reported referred to ways and means
06/21/2007 reported referred to rules
06/21/2007 reported
06/21/2007 rules report cal.797
06/21/2007 ordered to third reading rules cal.797
06/22/2007 substituted by s3650
03/13/2007 REFERRED TO FINANCE
06/11/2007 COMMITTEE DISCHARGED AND COMMITTED TO RULES
06/11/2007 ORDERED TO THIRD READING CAL.1625
06/12/2007 PASSED SENATE
06/12/2007 DELIVERED TO ASSEMBLY
06/12/2007 referred to governmental operations
06/22/2007 substituted for a50
06/22/2007 ordered to third reading rules cal.797
06/22/2007 passed assembly
06/22/2007 returned to senate
07/06/2007 DELIVERED TO GOVERNOR

A00050 Votes:

A00050 Memo:

Contact Webmaster

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State of New York

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2007-2008 Regular Sessions

In Assembly

(Prefiled)

January 3, 2007

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Introduced by M. of A. WEISENBERG -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

An act to amend the executive law, in relation to the creation and coverage of urban search and rescue teams, specialty rescue teams and incident support teams

The people of the state of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 156-g to read as follows:

S 156-G. Establishment of teams for urban search and rescue, specialty rescue and incident support. 1. Authorization to establish urban search and rescue task force teams, specialty rescue teams, and incident support teams. The state fire administrator shall have the authority to establish, organize, administer, support, train, and fund urban search and rescue task force teams, specialty rescue teams, and incident support teams created pursuant to this section.

2. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Urban search and rescue task force team" shall mean a specialized team or group of teams, formed pursuant to this section, organized with capabilities equivalent to urban search and rescue task force teams
Bills

ESTABLISHED UNDER THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY IN ORDER TO
ASSIST IN THE REMOVAL OF TRAPPED VICTIMS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS INCLUDING,
BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COLLAPSED STRUCTURES, TRENCH EXCAVATIONS, ELEVATED
LOCATIONS, AND OTHER TECHNICAL RESCUE SITUATIONS.

(B) "SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAM" SHALL MEAN A SPECIALIZED TEAM, FORMED
PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL RESCUE ASSISTANCE TO FIRST RESPONDERS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, CANINE SEARCH AND RESCUE/DISASTER RESPONSE, CAVE SEARCH AND RESCUE, COLLAPSE SEARCH AND RESCUE, MINE AND TUNNEL SEARCH AND RESCUE, AND SWIFT WATER/FLOOD SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS. SUCH TEAMS SHALL BE ALIGNED WITH ONE OR MORE OF THE SEARCH AND RESCUE CATEGORIES WITHIN THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY'S NATIONAL RESOURCE TYPING SYSTEM.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets {} is old law to be omitted.

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1. (C) "INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAM" SHALL MEAN A TEAM OF TRAINED RESPONSE PERSONNEL, FORMED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE COORDINATION WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL AS TECHNICAL, AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK FORCE TEAMS AND SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAMS.

3. APPOINTMENT AND TRAINING OF TEAM MEMBERS; EQUIPMENT. (A) THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO ANY TEAM CREATED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. TEAM MEMBERSHIP SHALL CONSIST OF LOCAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL, STATE AGENCY PERSONNEL AND SPECIALTY PERSONNEL AS REQUIRED.

(B) THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING AND EQUIPPING THE TEAMS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION AND FOR TRAINING SUCH OTHER TEAMS LOCATED WITHIN THE STATE FOR RESPONSE TO MAN-MADE OR NATURAL DISASTERS TO THE EXTENT APPROPRIATIONS ARE PROVIDED. THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR SHALL SUPPORT THE CAPABILITIES OF EACH TEAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION WITH THE NECESSARY TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TO ENSURE MOBILIZATION AND DEPLOYMENT FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS TO THE EXTENT APPROPRIATIONS ARE PROVIDED.

4. ACCREDITATION OF TEAMS. THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR SHALL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH AN ACCREDITATION PROGRAM TO REVIEW AND EVALUATE NEW AND EXISTING LOCAL AND REGIONAL TECHNICAL RESCUE CAPABILITIES, AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, THE NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN, AND NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED STANDARDS.

5. DEFENSE, INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE COVERAGE OF TEAM MEMBERS. MEMBERS OF THE TEAMS FORMED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION WHO ARE VOLUNTeER FIREFIGHTERS, VOLUNTeER AMBULANCE WORKERS, MUNICIPAL OR STATE EMPLOYEES, OR EMPLOYEES OF A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY SHALL BE PROVIDED COVERAGE BY THEIR RESPECTIVE MUNICIPALITIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND ENTITIES FOR PURPOSES OF SECTIONS SEVENTEEN AND EIGHTEEN OF THE PUBLIC OFFICERS LAW AND/OR OTHER DEFENSE AND INDEMNIFICATION COVERAGE AND WORKERS' COMPEN-
6. RULES AND REGULATIONS. The State Fire Administrator shall have the authority to promulgate rules and regulations as deemed necessary relating to the accreditation of Urban Search and Rescue Task Force Teams, Specialty Rescue Teams, and Incident Support Teams and to the formation and operation of all teams established pursuant to this section.

7. FUNDING. The Secretary of State and the State Fire Administrator shall expend the necessary monies for training, equipment, and other items necessary to support the operations of Urban Search and Rescue Task Force Teams, Specialty Rescue Teams, and Incident Support Teams within appropriations provided. The Secretary of State and the State Fire Administrator also may, pursuant to applicable rules and regulations approved by the Director of the Division of the Budget, approve grants of funds from monies allocated and appropriated for any or all such teams.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.