



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

***Massachusetts
Technical Rescue
Coordinating Council***

2025 Annual Report

**Chief Matthew Belsito
Chairman**

Iain McGregor – Vice Chairman

Deputy Secretary Susan Terrey

State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine

Deputy Chief Kelly Manning

Jason Saunders

Mark McCabe

May 2025

The Council, as established in Chapter 217 of the Acts of 2018, and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 22D s.6, is tasked with the overall coordination of a statewide technical rescue response program. The Council consists of the Secretary of Public Safety and Security, the State Fire Marshal, and five (5) appointees of the Governor, two (2) of whom shall be members of the Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts, Inc., two (2) of whom shall be members of the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts, and one (1) who shall be selected from a regional technical rescue team to represent the statewide teams as a whole.

The Council has several statutory functions including, but not limited to:

- Organizing and coordinating technical rescue services throughout the Commonwealth
- Developing uniform standards, rules, and procedures for the operation of a statewide technical rescue service program, and
- Establishing cost recovery mechanisms for technical rescue services provided within a technical rescue region
- Administering the Technical Rescue Services Fund

Council Activity July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025:

- Chief Matthew Belsito was nominated for another term as Chairman of the Massachusetts Technical Rescue Coordinating Council in September 2024.
- Iain McGregor was nominated for another term as Vice Chairman of the Massachusetts Technical Rescue Coordinating Council in September 2024.
- The Council and all subcommittees continue to meet regularly to create detailed portions of the technical rescue system.
- The Policy/SOG subcommittee now has 14 approved Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's). The team created a master list of 59 SOG's using category and naming convention copied from HazMat Response.
- The Training subcommittee has continued work on the NFPA standards matrix for training. The 5 main disciplines (Rope, Confined Space, Trench Rescue, Structural Collapse and Water Rescue) are in there and equate to 80 hours of training. The team asked for 8 additional hours for miscellaneous topics like tower rescue, large animal rescue and field force extrication bringing the annual requirement to 88 hours.
- The Membership subcommittee has continued work on the application and the application scoring tool. The application was modified to add details on training requirements, a letter of recommendation, years of acceptable training and additional training classes that would award additional points. The application scoring tool has been adjusted to match the new application. The final application is awaiting legislation approval so we can add MGL details.



- The equipment subcommittee has been focusing on understanding how many vehicles are owned by each regional, district or county teams. The results of the survey showed 92 assets across region 1, 3 & 4, still awaiting data from region 5. Future work will be assessing what assets would be donated to the state for use by the team.
- Statewide Mobilization Exercise Planning subcommittee was put on hold pending budget acceptance, exercise delayed.
- The Council partnering with Massachusetts Association of Technical Rescue Specialist (MATRS) on mini mobile exercises. The second event occurred at Fenway Park in Boston September 12, 2024. The event was a huge success with response from 6 teams (5 regions and Boston Fire). The 3rd event is in the planning phase in a new location for the fall of 2025.
- The Council began a partnership with Mass Task Force 1. As a FEMA asset doing similar Tech Rescue work, we set out to share information. There are members that are part of both teams. Future sharing will continue as we will be inviting them to our mobile exercises and vice versa. They allowed us to view their medical specialist class. Work is continuing as they have offered to support the regional teams with a disaster structural engineer since the state doesn't have that asset, working with MEMA on the process.
- Legislation is still not approved but a recent edit was done to bills S.1742 and H.2565. Once approved it will make DFS responsible for the state Technical Rescue teams as well as the budget, the Council would then transition to an advisory council.
- The Council's original Concept of Operations (CONOP) document was recently revisited, and the team needs to do a major rewrite as it is the original document from 2019. This will be a focus in the upcoming year.
- Region 5 working closely with MSPCA to expand their large animal rescue content and equipment for their team. They will be sharing training opportunities with other regional teams.
- Council working on Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). During this fiscal year the Council received 6 EMAC requests from other states for swift water teams. The team is working on having mission ready packages prebuilt for many different

missions. Region 3 & 4 working on partnering to make one team, so they don't deplete equipment and manpower.

- Region 1 team doing a pilot with the FIU group where structurally unsafe buildings are evaluated. A small Tech Rescue team would be sent to assess the structure before fire investigators proceed into the building. If the pilot is successful, it would be shared across all regional teams.
- Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (HART) activation process being revamped by MEMA, DFS as well as HART Coordinator Chief Rob O'Brien supporting. An easier activation of this team to support Tech Rescue life safety events is underway as well as a mobile exercise in the fall.
- DFS created a process for the future to reimburse Region 2 members that respond to Tech Rescue emergencies that are requested from one of the other 4 regions. MOA's will be done with the communities that partake in this process. Reimbursements to departments would be processed through D4H.
- Members of the Region 3 team (district 7 & 8) participated in the 2025 Operation F.O.R.C.E Devens Full Scale Exercise. It occurred on May 10th in collaboration with the US Army at Ft. Devens, local military and civilian agencies, and the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) Disaster Medicine Fellowship. The scenario involved 2 rolled over Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles that involved many people being trapped. The teams had to lift and stabilize the vehicles to enable patient rescue.