



Standard Terminology Relating to Search and Rescue¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology document is a compilation of definitions of terms, abbreviations, and acronyms used in the search and rescue field collected in order to provide consistency in communication when used in actual operations, training, and literature dealing with this field.

2. Terminology

access, *n*—the process of reaching the patients or subjects and establishing physical contact with them.

belayer, *n*—the one who performs the belay.

brake bar rack, *n*—a variable friction device consisting of a u-shaped metal bar to which are attached several metal bars that create friction on the rope. Also known as a rappel rack.

chest harness, *n*—a type of harness worn around the chest for upper body support.

dynamic rope (rope systems), *n*—a class of ropes that is used for rescue work and rappelling when greater energy absorption qualities are required, such as in lead climbing or whenever a high fall potential exists. Such ropes are typically certified to UIAA or CE climbing rope standards.

evacuation, *n*—the process used to move the patient/subject between the completion of extraction and the beginning of transportation.

extraction, *n*—the process of removing the patient/subject from an immediately hazardous environment along with assessment, treatment, stabilization, and packaging.

john boat (maritime), *n*—a skiff with a flat bottom.

low stretch rope (rope systems), *n*—a class of ropes that is used for rescue work and rappelling with an elongation greater than 6 % and less than 10 % at 10 % of its minimum breaking strength.

pike pole (maritime), *n*—a long, slender, hooked pole used by boaters to retrieve line, objects, and so forth from water. Also known as a *boat hook*.

ring buoy (maritime), *n*—a Type 4 personal floatation device, usually made of a hard buoyant material with a line encircling it.

safety factor (rope systems), *n*—the ratio between the breaking strength and the load; commonly used interchangeably with the term *load ratio*, the term *safety factor* is properly applied only to systems and not to individual components.

static rope (rope systems), *n*—a class of ropes that is used for rescue work and rappelling that has a maximum elongation of 6 % at 10 % of its minimum breaking strength.

third party certification, *n*—a certification by an independent testing organization that a particular product meets a referenced standard.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F32 on Search and Rescue and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F32.06 on Terminology.

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