

## **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>



Monday, July 23, 2007

## Bill Summary - A00050

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### 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

S03650 AMEND= LEIBELL

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

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**A00050 Votes:**

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**A00050 Memo:**

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S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

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2007-2008 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

(PREFILED)

January 3, 2007

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 ASSEM-  
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

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

3 S 156-G. ESTABLISHMENT OF TEAMS FOR URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE, SPECIALTY  
4 RESCUE AND INCIDENT SUPPORT. 1. AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH URBAN SEARCH  
5 AND RESCUE TASK FORCE TEAMS, SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAMS, AND INCIDENT  
6 SUPPORT TEAMS. THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR SHALL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO  
7 ESTABLISH, ORGANIZE, ADMINISTER, SUPPORT, TRAIN, AND FUND URBAN SEARCH  
8 AND RESCUE TASK FORCE TEAMS, SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAMS, AND INCIDENT  
9 SUPPORT TEAMS CREATED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

10 2. DEFINITIONS. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE FOLLOWING TERMS  
11 SHALL HAVE THE FOLLOWING MEANINGS:

12 (A) "URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK FORCE TEAM" SHALL MEAN A SPECIALIZED  
13 TEAM OR GROUP OF TEAMS, FORMED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, ORGANIZED WITH  
14 CAPABILITIES EQUIVALENT TO URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK FORCE TEAMS

15 ESTABLISHED UNDER THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY IN ORDER TO  
16 ASSIST IN THE REMOVAL OF TRAPPED VICTIMS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS INCLUD-  
17 ING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COLLAPSED STRUCTURES, TRENCH EXCAVATIONS,  
18 ELEVATED LOCATIONS, AND OTHER TECHNICAL RESCUE SITUATIONS.

19 (B) "SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAM" SHALL MEAN A SPECIALIZED TEAM, FORMED  
20 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL RESCUE ASSIST-  
21 ANCE TO FIRST RESPONDERS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, CANINE SEARCH  
22 AND RESCUE/DISASTER RESPONSE, CAVE SEARCH AND RESCUE, COLLAPSE SEARCH  
23 AND RESCUE, MINE AND TUNNEL SEARCH AND RESCUE, AND SWIFT WATER/FLOOD  
24 SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS. SUCH TEAMS SHALL BE ALIGNED WITH ONE OR MORE OF  
25 THE SEARCH AND RESCUE CATEGORIES WITHIN THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
26 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  
2 PERSONNEL, FORMED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE COORDI-  
3 NATION WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AS  
4 WELL AS TECHNICAL, AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE  
5 TASK FORCE TEAMS AND SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAMS.

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

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

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

25 5. DEFENSE, INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE COVERAGE OF TEAM MEMBERS.  
26 MEMBERS OF THE TEAMS FORMED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION WHO ARE VOLUNTEER  
27 FIREFIGHTERS, VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE WORKERS, MUNICIPAL OR STATE EMPLOYEES,  
28 OR EMPLOYEES OF A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY SHALL BE PROVIDED COVERAGE BY  
29 THEIR RESPECTIVE MUNICIPALITIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND ENTITIES FOR  
30 PURPOSES OF SECTIONS SEVENTEEN AND EIGHTEEN OF THE PUBLIC OFFICERS LAW  
31 AND/OR OTHER DEFENSE AND INDEMNIFICATION COVERAGE AND WORKERS' COMPEN-

32 SATION COVERAGE PURSUANT TO APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE WORKERS`  
33 COMPENSATION LAW OR BENEFITS PURSUANT TO APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE  
34 VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS` BENEFITS LAW OR THE VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE WORKERS`  
35 BENEFIT LAW. INDIVIDUALS APPOINTED TO AN URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK  
36 FORCE TEAM, A SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAM OR AN INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAM, FOR  
37 WHICH SUCH COVERAGE IS NOT AVAILABLE, SHALL BE DEEMED VOLUNTEER STATE  
38 EMPLOYEES FOR PURPOSES OF SECTION SEVENTEEN OF THE PUBLIC OFFICERS LAW  
39 AND SECTION THREE OF THE WORKERS` COMPENSATION LAW.

40 6. RULES AND REGULATIONS. THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR SHALL HAVE THE  
41 AUTHORITY TO PROMULGATE RULES AND REGULATIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY RELAT-  
42 ING TO THE ACCREDITATION OF URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK FORCE TEAMS,  
43 SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAMS, AND INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAMS AND TO THE FORMATION  
44 AND OPERATION OF ALL TEAMS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

45 7. FUNDING. THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR  
46 SHALL EXPEND THE NECESSARY MONIES FOR TRAINING, EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER  
47 ITEMS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THE OPERATIONS OF URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE  
48 TASK FORCE TEAMS, SPECIALTY RESCUE TEAMS AND INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAMS  
49 WITHIN APPROPRIATIONS PROVIDED. THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE STATE  
50 FIRE ADMINISTRATOR ALSO MAY, PURSUANT TO APPLICABLE RULES AND REGU-  
51 LATIONS APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF THE BUDGET, APPROVE  
52 GRANTS OF FUNDS FROM MONIES ALLOCATED AND APPROPRIATED FOR ANY OR ALL  
53 SUCH TEAMS.

54 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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