

Search and Rescue Teams; HB 2097

HB 2097 authorizes the State Fire Marshal to enter into contracts to establish regional search and rescue teams to respond to search and rescue incidents, and to appoint a Search and Rescue Advisory Committee.

The Search and Rescue Advisory Committee will meet periodically to provide input to the search and rescue program and act as advisors to the State Fire Marshal and the Director of the Division of Emergency Management. The Committee will be composed of one member or representative of each of the following:

- Each search and rescue region;
- Kansas Division of Emergency Management;
- Kansas National Guard/Crisis City;
- Kansas Fire and Rescue Training Institute; and
- Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association.

Committee members receive *per diem* compensation and subsistence, mileage, and reasonable and necessary expenses as provided in KSA 75-3223.

The State Fire Marshal is authorized to adopt rules and regulations governing the composition, training requirements, response, and operations of the regional search and rescue teams.

Any member of a regional search and rescue team or regional hazardous materials response team contracting with the State Fire Marshal is included within an exemption under the Kansas Tort Claims Act in connection with authorized training or upon activation for an emergency response.

The Hazardous Materials Emergency Fund of the State Fire Marshal is redesignated as the Emergency Response Fund. Moneys in the Fund will be used to establish and maintain regional emergency response teams to provide a response to hazardous materials or search and rescue incidents, in addition to other authorized purposes. If the balance in the Emergency Response Fund falls below \$500,000, the State Fire Marshal may transfer from the Fire Marshal Fee Fund the amount necessary to return the balance in the Emergency Response Fund to \$500,000.