



## 5.06 VOLUNTEER EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT AND ALLOWANCE RATE

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### 5.06.1 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 5.06 Volunteer Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Policy
- 5.06 Volunteer Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Procedures
- 5.06 EMBC Volunteer Reimbursement and Allowance Rates for 2013

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### 5.06.2 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### MILEAGE

Q. Is the mileage rate the same regardless of the size of the vehicle?

A. Yes. The 24 hour fixed rate for command, communications, feeding, and mutual support vehicle acknowledges the extra costs of operating these larger vehicles.

Q. What is meant by portal to portal?

A. Portal to portal refers to a round trip from the volunteer's residence to the assembly point plus mileage used during the response (when the group required the volunteer's vehicle during the response) and the return trip. Responders should ensure that the number of personal vehicles used on the response is minimized.

Q. Is there a separate rate for idle time due to weather?

A. No.

Q. Is the mileage rate included in the 24 hour fixed rate for command, communications, feeding, and mutual support vehicles?

A. No, mileage should be claimed over and above the eligible 24-hour fixed rate.

#### MEALS

Q. Can volunteers claim for individual meal rates if meals are provided by a feeding van?

A. Yes. Volunteers may claim meals for the travel period to and from the assembly site (location of feeding van) when this travel is over 3 consecutive hours in duration each way. As well, any volunteer with special dietary requirements may claim for meals when the food provided by a feeding van is not appropriate.



### ACCOMMODATIONS

Q. What is the rate for soft-sided accommodations (tents)?

A. The rate for this type of accommodation would be the same as the rate for private lodging.

### WATERCRAFT

Q. Is there still a two-hour minimum for powered watercraft?

A. Yes. The two-hour minimum applies for powered watercraft. This does not apply for river rafts used under rental agreements.

### COMMAND, COMMUNICATIONS, FEEDING, AND MUTUAL SUPPORT VEHICLES

Q. What does a SAR group claim if they have used their command vehicle to respond to two separate incidents within a 24-hour period?

A. It should claim  $2 \times \$500 = \$1,000$ . The call-out rate is used when a command vehicle is deployed but the deployment is cancelled on route or the vehicle is not used in the response. There is no call-out rate for communications, feeding or mutual support vehicles.

Q. In a mutual support situation, will EMBC pay for more than one command vehicle responding to an incident?

A. In general, no. EMBC will pay for one command vehicle per incident. In extenuating circumstances, the RM may authorize claims for other command vehicles due to the scope and size of the response.

Q. Has the "first vehicle rate" been dropped?

A. This rate has been replaced by the mutual support vehicle rate. Again, EMBC will normally only pay for one mutual support vehicle per organization per response.

Q. Can a group claim for both a command vehicle and a communications vehicle?

A. A group can only claim for a communications vehicle if emergency communications personnel staff it and the vehicle is used solely and specifically for communications purposes. In general, SAR groups for example, will use their command vehicle for communications as well and should only claim the command vehicle rate.

Q. Are the hourly rates for command, communications, feeding, and mutual support vehicles still in effect?

A. No, these rates have been replaced by per response per 24-hour rates.

### EQUIPMENT



Q. Is amateur radio equipment included in the equipment rates?

A. Yes. As EMBC only reimburses volunteers for the expenses incurred in using the equipment, amateur radio organizations should be able to claim these expenses.

Q. Can a PSL organization claim the \$25/person equipment rate for a call out?

A. No, this equipment rate can only be claimed for a response.

Q. Can a PSL organization that responds to two separate incidents in a day claim the \$25/person equipment rate for each incident?

A. Yes.

Q. Can an individual claim the \$25/person equipment rate?

A. No, this claim must be made by a PSL organization on behalf of its members and will be paid to the group.

Q. Can a PSL organization claim the \$25/person for converging volunteers?

A. No, a PSL organization can only claim for those members who have an EMBC ID card.

Q. Will the \$25/person equipment rate apply to ESS volunteers?

A. No, currently, ESS volunteers do not use specialized equipment. This rate only applies to SAR and Emergency Communications at this time. If a volunteer emergency communications group is deployed to provide communications for an ESS response, the emergency communications group can claim this rate.

Q. Are batteries included within the eligible equipment rate?

A. No, the equipment rate is provided to cover the 'wear and tear' on small equipment that does not have a specific rate (e.g. GPS, Avalanche Beacons). Batteries are not included in this specific rate so may be claimed separately.



### **THERMAL IMAGER, UNDERWATER CAMERA ETC. WHEN AUTHORIZED**

Q. These items can vary in price from a few dollars to many thousands. Will there be a scaled reimbursement rate to reflect this?

A. No, there is such a steady stream of new equipment coming on the market that EMBC decided to use one rate for all at this time. SAR groups must also note that the use of this type of specialty equipment must be pre-authorized by EMBC.

### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SUPPLEMENT**

Q. Is this supplement an addition to the Search and Rescue Equipment Allowance?

A. No, PSL organizations are now able to claim a \$25/person equipment allowance.

Q. Can the OSH supplement be claimed by an individual?

A. No, this must be claimed by the PSL organization.

Q. Can the OSH supplement be claimed by a local government?

A. No, this must be claimed by a recognized PSL organization.

Q. Does the OSH supplement apply to all teams during a mutual support operation?

A. Yes. Each team should claim the OSH supplement on their submitted claim total for the response.

Q. Why is it called an OSH supplement?

A. The intent is to provide teams with dollars towards training that will minimize OSH risks to volunteers during response.

Q. How do you round rates up or down?

A. Rates are rounded to the nearest hour, with the half hour rounded up to the full hour.

Q. Will the PSL organization need receipts for phone charges?

A. PSL organizations should retain their phone records but these will only be required if the claims for these charges is excessive.



Q. What is a 24-hour period?

A. 24 hours begins from the call out time of a PSL organization and regardless of the time of day.

Q. Do the interim policy, procedures, and Volunteer Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart apply to road rescue service providers?

A. No, please refer to 2.07 Road and Medical Rescue Policy.

### **RATES FOR CALLOUT AND MOBILIZATION**

Q. How do volunteer expense reimbursement and allowance rates apply when a GSAR group is cancelled or stood down at any point (callout, on route to the site or before volunteer activity has occurred) in an activation for an incident?

A. If the SAR Manager is advised to stand down whilst calling out SAR members, the GSAR group is eligible to claim the \$125 call out rate.

If the GSAR group has mustered at the SAR hall but is stood down before response vehicles leave the SAR hall the GSAR group is eligible to claim the \$125 callout rate.

If the GSAR group is stood down while on route, the group is eligible to claim the \$125 call out rate and vehicle mileage.

If the GSAR group is stood down on route and the members have to travel more than a total of 3 hours (back to portal), they are entitled to claim a meal.

If the GSAR group is stood down at the site and Incident Command has been set up or GSAR members have been deployed in the field, the group is eligible to claim the appropriate response rates.