

CIVIL AIR SEARCH AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION (CASARA)

Introduction

This is my personal page dedicated to those who serve "that others may live", specifically, my fellow volunteers--spotters, navigators, pilots and ground crew--who fly out of Zone 2, CASARA Manitoba (CASARAMAN).

Where We Are

Zone 2 flies largely out of Brandon (CYBR) and surrounding airports. Our area extends from the US/Canadian Border north to The Pas Zone 3 and Thompson Zone 4, west to the Saskatchewan border, and east to Portage la Prairie. Manitoba Zones include Zone 4 - Thompson, Zone 3 - The Pas, Zone 1 - Winnipeg and Zone 5 of the Province. All participate and share resources with each other depending on the search tasking. Our Zones also participate with other CASARA units in various Search and Rescue Exercises (SAREX's) and searches. A current goal is to expand internationally with our American counterparts, the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), which began with Canadian participation in 2004 at Minot's USAF Base's Northern Neighbor's Day.

Who We Are

Civil Air Search and Rescue Association fly simulated and actual search operations often with the coordination of military and police operations. CASARA stretches across all of Canada and is funded by the federal government largely through the Military with some participation by Transport Canada. Its largely air component is supplemented with its own ground search and other Ground Search and Rescue units that include the Office of the Fire Commissioner, the Rangers and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The Association is complete with experienced veterans and very interesting characters from all walks of life who put exemplary dedication into saving life, often through the night and in isolated sparsely settled and uninhabited areas.

How We Do It

In a typical actual search, JRCC (Joint Remote Control Centre) out of Trenton, Ontario (8 Wing Canadian Military) receives a request from a public safety agency or "hit" by an ELT (Emergency Locator Transmitter) located by its Satellite monitoring systems. JRCC then relays a request protocol to a CASARA Zone. The CASARA team will then setup a base operation with communications and designate aircraft and spotter/navigator/pilot crews. A selected search pattern and tasking will then be issued by the Search Commander which may include a Creeping Line Ahead, Track Crawl, Expanding Square, Sector, Shore Crawl and/or Contour Search. The latest in equipment is used, including search software such as Ozi-Explorer, Flight Wizard, GPS tracking and computer upload evaluation and ELT homing devices such as the L'il Helper. Other search techniques such as the

aural null may be implemented. Missions often include simultaneous operations with various aircraft, helicopter, C-130 Hercules and ground teams.

Regular training involves work in spotting, navigating, piloting, ground search and ground operations. Every two years, each Zone is tested and evaluated by the Military. All members have a C-130 Hercules training option while some act on reserve with training by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on their Bell Long-Ranger IV helicopter using the latest in Nite-Sun and FLIR (Forward Looking Infra-red) equipment.

Kevin A. Choy CD Zone 2/VP CASARAMAN