



**AMBER<sup>®</sup>**  
**ALERT**

# CHILD ABDUCTION RESPONSE TEAM (CART) CERTIFICATION MANUAL

## AGENCY GUIDE



This publication was prepared under Cooperative Agreements 2008-MC-CX-K028, 2009-MC-CX-K058 and 2010-MC-CX-K050 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the author/authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Child Abduction Response Team (CART) Certification Program has been developed to assist local, tribal and state jurisdictions in the creation and implementation of CART Programs. This Program Guide provides valuable information on best practices regarding child protection and recovery strategies; and offers each jurisdiction the opportunity to comply with nationally sanctioned standards of excellence. This guide of best practices, promulgated by subject matter experts, practitioners and legal advisors is intended to provide a basis to determine the operational readiness of jurisdictions committed to the protection of children and especially children in crisis, missing, endangered or abducted.

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## THE CART PROGRAM

In 2005, the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention launched the Child Abduction Response Team (CART) Program training as part of its AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Initiative. Like AMBER Alerts, a CART represents a critical tool to provide law enforcement with an effective and efficient response to a missing child incident in which a child is believed to be endangered or abducted. As a result of the initial success and acceptance of the CART initiative by law enforcement professionals, the program has now evolved into an integral part of a community's enhanced comprehensive child recovery strategy.

Additionally, as CART gained momentum and broader acceptance in public and community safety arenas as the best practice approach to missing, endangered and abducted children, standards of excellence and evidence based practices have been created to determine the operational readiness of jurisdictions. Many of the CART Programs throughout the U.S. expressed interest and pursued continuous quality assurance to ensure policies and practices represented the most effective and efficient methods available to safely recover children in crisis. As a result of this pursuit of excellence, the Child Abduction Response Team Certification Program was created and adopted by OJJDP.

Leading subject matter experts, practitioners, policymakers and other child protective specialists were enlisted to develop operational standards of excellence and evidence based best practices related to the recovery of missing children. The group developed a process and criteria whereby jurisdictions could voluntarily seek an opportunity to comply with evidence based standards of excellence covering a variety of operational readiness areas; and conduct practical field scenarios to gauge their ability to function effectively, efficiently and test their policies and practices.

In 2007, the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Child Abduction Response Team Certification Manual was developed to guide CART through the certification process. The manual outlined the process for jurisdictions to achieve compliance with standards that represent evidence based practices. The Certification process required: compliance with 44 specific standards covering 11 topic operational areas, extensive policy review, interviews with team personnel and compliance with required training requirements. Included in the Certification process, teams were required to conduct an extensive field exercise to demonstrate operational readiness. After the agency met the application requirements and submitted the necessary documents, an onsite assessment was scheduled. A team of subject matter experts and trained assessors conducted an onsite assessment to ensure compliance with all applicable standards and requirements to achieve certification. The onsite review and assessment was a 2 day event and involved all facets required to be recognized as a jurisdiction which met the highest standards of excellence both in policy as well as practice. A field exercise was conducted in which critical components; actions and decision-making were observed to ensure agencies met the required standards. Following the completion of the onsite assessment, a field report was completed and submitted to the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance (AATTA) Program Director to determine if the CART was to be certified.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Certification Manual incorporates new standards and compliance requirements for CART Certification. The revised standards ensure that the CART Certification represents the highest and most meaningful recognition of jurisdiction efforts to respond expediently and effectively to missing, endangered and abducted children.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Certification Manual contains many standards or a preponderance of standards included in the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition; however, compliance is now required for 47 specific standards covering 12 topic operational areas. As previously required, an extensive policy review and interviews with team personnel, to include an in depth

examination of training requirements, are conducted. An extensive field exercise is also an integral piece of the certification process.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Certification Manual requires a comprehensive application process with enhanced eligibility requirements. Additionally, individual file folders are required to enhance and improve standard compliance review process and adherence with the intent of each applicable standard. To create a continuous improvement process and compliance with best practices an annual recertification is required for CARTs to retain certification on a continuous basis. A quality assurance component has been added as well as detailed duties and responsibilities of all key personnel involved. This includes the creation of a CART Certification Manager to oversee all facets of the certification process.

### ***Objectives of the CART Certification Program***

- To develop and implement evidenced based standards of excellence requiring CART Programs to continually evolve and improve capacities, competencies, skills and abilities to safely recover missing children.
- To enhance the critical and specific capacities and competencies of personnel from agencies comprising CART and other community components to safely recover missing children by maintaining adherence to recognized best practices.
- To require CART Programs to continuously update and improve policies, written directives, utilization and identification of resources and other necessary knowledge, skills and abilities related to a comprehensive child recovery strategy.
- To provide policymakers, elected officials, public safety organizations, child protection professionals and the general public assurance of due diligence, adoption of the highest standards of child recovery initiatives and overall confidence of operational readiness to protect, respond to and recover missing, endangered and abducted children.

## **THE CART CERTIFICATION TEAM**

### **CART CERTIFICATION MANAGER**

Programmatically, a designated CART Certification Manager (CCM) or function will provide overall guidance and oversight for the certification process. The CART Certification Manager will coordinate the process and serve as the principal point of contact with the AATTA Program Director and designated Program Manager.

#### ***Principle Duties and Responsibilities of Certification Manager (CCM):***

- Oversee the certification process.
- Coordinate final eligibility of any CART applying for certification with the AATTA Program Director and designated Program Manager.
- Assist as needed in the training and monitoring of CART certification assessors.
- Work closely with the AMBER Alert designated Program Manager, Program Director and Regional Liaisons to ensure compliance with stated objectives of the certification program and eligibility of various jurisdictions that may apply.
- Review all applications and recommend agencies/jurisdictions for onsite assessments for participation in the certification.

- Review and assist in the maintenance of qualified assessors and schedule onsite assessments with the designated Program Manager.
- Review all documents and reports completed by assessors for completeness, accuracy and consistency with Certification requirements and intent.
- Recommend approval for certification to the AATTA Program Director and designated Program Manager.
- Following an onsite assessment, if the CART is not recommended for certification, coordinate with assessors and the CART Coordinator to eliminate non-compliance issues or deficiencies identified and documented by the onsite assessors. This functional requirement will include official correspondence with the CART Coordinator and any agencies involved in the CART Program or Certification process.
- Review assessor peer performance evaluations and feedback.
- And, other duties and tasks as deemed appropriate by the designated Program Manager and Program Director.

## **CART ASSESSORS**

Appropriately trained assessors will be utilized for onsite assessments as required by the CART Certification. Assessors are proven public safety professionals who represent a wide variety of knowledge, skills and abilities. Designated assessors are responsible for onsite assessments and evaluation; and make appropriate determinations of compliance and non-compliance of the adopted standards.

### ***Principle Duties and Responsibilities of Assessor:***

- Complete assessor application and submit to the designated Program Director and designated Program Manager.
- Review and develop extensive working knowledge of all CART standards and demonstrate understanding of applicability.
- Demonstrate ability to complete required forms and appropriate documentation.
- Successfully complete required assessor training. Attend child protection training courses as deemed appropriate by Program Director for skill enhancement.
- Undergo required performance reviews.
- Assessors will not conduct assessments in their state of residence or where a conflict of interest could be perceived, unless approved by the Program Director. Be familiar with and complete all applicable assessor documentation relating to the particular certification assignment.
- Manage and coordinate all facets of the onsite assessment with the designated CART Coordinator to include scheduling of necessary personnel for interviews, providing work space and onsite transportation and coordinating any other facet of the onsite as requested by the assessors.
- Assessors will not advise CART personnel whether or not they will be awarded certification.



## AMBER ALERT REGIONAL LIAISONS

The Program Director for the AATTAP has designated liaisons based on regional responsibilities to the following: Region 1 (Eastern U.S. including Caribbean Territories); Region 2 (Western U.S. including Canada); Region 3 - Tribal Nations; and Region 4 - Mexico. In general the Regional Liaisons are designated with responsibilities to market and recruit jurisdictions to attend appropriate CART training and apply for certification.

### *Specific Duties and Responsibilities of Liaisons for the CART Program and Certification*

- Maintain list of all jurisdiction within designated region, which have completed CART training (all resources, including list of CART Programs, contacts, etc. are maintained on the AMBER Alert Program portal.
- Aggressively market CART initiatives to include certification process within designated region and provide referral information for any contacts outside the designated region.
- Provide contact report on recruitment and marketing of CART Program and Certification.
- May serve as the initial point of contact for any CART expressing a desire to pursue certification, however, all administrative actions will be completed by AMBER Alert Program staff and/or determined by the designated Program Manager and Program Director.
- Provide each requesting CART guidance on where to locate the certification application on the AMBER Alert website.
- Provide specific assistance to CART Programs as determined by the Program Director.

# CART CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

## SECTION 1: RESPONSE CRITERIA

This section describes the basis for a Child Abduction Response Team (CART) activation, mobilization or call out. CARTs must have established criteria in order to know when activation, mobilization or call out is appropriate. Standards require the criteria be well defined and acknowledged by all participating agencies. Activation, mobilization or call out are terms utilized interchangeably characterizing the assembly and deployment of a Child Abduction Response Team.

The following are examples of criteria for a CART activation, mobilization or call out discussed during CART training, however, additional deployment criteria may be considered/adopted by member agencies.

1. The true (non-family) abduction of a minor child (under the age of 18); or
2. The abduction of a minor child (under the age of 18 or consistent with state, tribal or local statues for proper age designation) with belief of endangerment or imminent harm circumstances. These circumstances must clearly be articulated to the CART Coordinator in order to activate, mobilize and deploy the team members. The child's disappearance or abduction should meet the agreed upon criteria if the child's life or well being is perceived to be at-risk (due to violence or health conditions), or if the identified parental abductor has a potential for violence or could endanger the child. This criteria could reflect the appropriate AMBER Alert criteria or any other activation criteria indicating endangerment of the child.
3. Any other abduction or missing child investigation that requires immediate response in order to protect the well being of the child. All incidents at this level shall require the approval of the CART Coordinator or his/her designee; or
4. To initiate a request for assistance, the criminal justice agency administrator (designated point of contact/ commanding officer) must contact the appropriate CART Coordinator, or other appointed administrator in the absence of the CART Coordinator, who will approve or disapprove the request based upon the criteria specified in the policy or operating procedure governing the CART. This process should be guided by interagency agreements or memorandums of understanding.

### ***Standards***

- 1.1 The CART has a written set of criteria to determine the circumstances in which CART activation can occur. (Policy/Written Directive/Proof of Distribution)
- 1.2 The criteria have been communicated to all participating agencies, and such criteria are supported through written documentation clearly indicating all member CART agencies are in agreement. (MOU/Training Roster/Policy/Proof of Distribution)
- 1.3 The criteria shall be incorporated in all participating agencies' policies, directives and/or Standard Operating Procedures. (Sample policies from all applicable agencies/Proof of Distribution)

## SECTION 2: TEAM COMPOSITION

This section addresses the composition of the team and personnel selection, to ensure team membership representation includes various stakeholders involved with missing and abducted child episodes. For a CART to be successful during an activation, mobilization or call out, the team must have personnel available with a level of expertise beneficial in a child abduction case or suspected episode necessitating the activation of a CART. Examples would include personnel who are experienced in interviewing, search and rescue, search and seizure issues, forensic evidence collection, information analysis, etc.

### *Standards*

- 2.1 The CART has an assigned CART Coordinator who has responsibility and oversight of the CART coordination, process, team development, training, debriefings, after action reports and other logistical needs as determined by the CEOs and CART members. The CART Coordinator determines who is responsible for coordination in the event of a CART call out. The CART Coordinator can be a sworn or non-sworn but must possess supervisory responsibilities and possess a proven background in leadership and management. (Job Description Document/Proof of Distribution/Posted Announcement)
- 2.2 The CART roster and team makeup will be posted at member agencies and distributed to all personnel of each agency. The CART Coordinator is responsible to maintain and update the CART roster, including all contact information and date of last update. (Roster of Personnel/Effective Date and Revisions Tracked)
- 2.3 The CART should include representatives of various agencies, to include public safety personnel (federal, state and local), U.S. Attorneys, correctional personnel, child welfare personnel, school resource officers, crime stoppers, search and rescue groups and/or personnel from other organizations who could assist the CART in the event of a missing, endangered or abducted child. (Roster of Personnel to include agency & specialty-should be current and reflect revisions)
- 2.4 CART Coordinator is responsible for and maintaining a selection criteria for assignment and replacement of CART personnel and consideration should be given to members in regards to specialized skills. Written policy or directive should include specifics for the selection process, position descriptions, training and skills inventory and other policy guidance to demonstrate personnel being utilized represent appropriate expertise to participate as a CART member. The CART must have demonstrated capacity to sustain activation, mobilization and deployment for multiple days. (Relief Schedule document/Call Out Schedule and example of how it has been done previously)

## SECTION 3: NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL

This section relates to how the notification of CART would actually occur. For CART to be successful in its mission, the agency of jurisdiction must have a method to enact the activation, mobilization, call out and deployment, know who to call and the team must be able to respond immediately.

### *Standards*

- 3.1 Each participating or member law enforcement or public safety agency has a written policy that provides specific and detailed information regarding how to activate, mobilize, call out and deploy. Further, the policy or written directive shall describe in its procedures the person within the organization who has the authority to request activation. (Policy/Directives for all involved agencies on CART/Proof of Distribution)
- 3.2 The CART has written documentation stating how the CART Coordinator is notified and how activations, mobilization, call outs and deployments are approved. (Policy/Directives on notifications and approval/Examples of past processes)

- 3.3 The policy or directive shall include the designated CART Coordinator and succession plan to substitute in the event the designated CART Coordinator is not available. This succession plan must be included in the policy or directive and updated prior to any announced changes in the CART Coordinator protocol. (Organizational Chart showing chain of command/Proof of Distribution)
- 3.4 There shall be written procedures/processes for CART activation, mobilization, call out and deployment, including notification to personnel, responsibility of CART members to respond, time requirements for response and, if applicable, equipment that assigned members should bring. (Policy/Directives/Observations and interviews can supplement policy or directives.)
- 3.5 Governance policy and written directives should include specific equipment availability, operational protocol to use equipment and any specific designation of personnel responsible to respond to and deliver the referenced equipment to the designated scene, location or staging area. Contact information for all CART personnel must be kept current and accessible to member agencies. (List of current contact info, should show revisions, be dated and if tested, copy of results)
- 3.6 The CART has an established method to ensure proper identification for CART members during CART activation, such as identification cards with photo, agency member name and name of CART member. Such protocol shall not conflict with an agencies security and confidentiality requirements, but if such conflict exists, the specific agency must be identified and a substitute identification protocol must be in place prior to an activation, mobilization or call out.(Observed/Photo should be placed in file)
- 3.7 The CART policy or written directive shall include an expected response time for activation, mobilization or call out to a designated location. This policy or directive should include proof of agreement by participating member agencies.

## **SECTION 4: COMMUNICATION**

During CART activation, mobilization, call out and deployment, multiple agencies will be on the scene in staging areas or actively engaged in the investigation requiring inter and intra agency communications. The purpose of this section of standards is to establish written protocol, directive or policy needed to provide a communications protocol, coordination and specific interagency agreements to support the CART and investigative response. CART agencies must recognize the need to have established communications protocols to accommodate the host of challenges when deployed to investigate, rescue and recover a child or children believed to be endangered or abducted.

### ***Standards***

- 4.1 The CART has a process in place to immediately establish a hotline number (preferably toll-free) for tips and leads. (Written Directive/SOP/Policy/Observation of phone bank/Lead Processing Operation/Interview)
- 4.2 The CART has written guidelines that indicate how staffing will occur at the hotline number to accommodate the tips and leads. (Written Directive/SOP/Policy/Schedule of Call Takers, observation/Interviews)
- 4.3 The CART has an established process/system for leads tracking, including the coordination, assignment, prioritization and resolution of leads. (Policy/SOP/Directive/Training Roster/Lesson Plan/Copies of Lead Sheets/Examples of completed lead sheets)
- 4.4 The CART Coordinator maintains a current list of all communication equipment to be utilized in CART activation. The list must include the personnel responsible for maintenance and upkeep (e.g., regular testing, fresh batteries); a log of personnel trained and tested for proficiency, field test records to ensure equipment is compatible with all impacted jurisdictions and backup plans for equipment failure. (SOP/Inventory List/Testing Schedules/Maintenance Records/Training Records/Skills Inventory/Emergency measures if failure occurs)
- 4.5 A procedure is in place to access equipment in a timely manner in the event of activation, and the equipment is accessible by more than one person. (SOP/Observable/Interviews)

## SECTION 5: COMMAND AND CONTROL

The requesting agency shall maintain the lead role during CART activation, mobilization, call out and deployment. The CART serves as an enhancement resource comprised of experts, equipment and a planned strategy to respond to critical incidents of missing/abducted children. This section recognizes the nature of CART activation, mobilization, call out or deployment implies multiple agencies/jurisdictions may be responding, and it is imperative a command and control structure and policy be in place, understood and agreed to prior to such activation.

### *Standards*

- 5.1 The CART maintains an organizational chart detailing authority within the CART component. This chart should include detailed language regarding who is in charge of the CART. (Organizational Chart/Policy/SOP/Directive/Command Responsibilities/Supervision)
- 5.2 A written directive must be agreed upon by all participating agencies that details an Incident Command System which includes the role of the CART Coordinator, the role that CART plays in the establishment of a command post, how the incident commander is determined once the CART has arrived on scene and how conflicts are resolved between CART and other responding components (e.g., federal, state or local authorities). Incident Command System (ICS) protocol shall be a component of the CART policy, directive and training; and, shall be consistent with the uniform ICS adopted by each state and political subdivision or Tribal Nation. The ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach developed and adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (Policy/MOU/Directives/SOP/ICS Training Logs/Lesson Plans)
- 5.3 A written directive exists describing the various assignments necessary during CART activation, mobilization, call out and deployment, including, but not limited to, a lead investigator(s), emergency operations coordinator (EOC), AMBER Alert representative, witness coordinator, leads analyst, media representative, support/logistics representative, search coordinator, family liaison, technical support, legal advisor and a crime scene/forensic evidence collection representative. (Directive/Policy/SOP/Assignment Roster/Training Schedules/Agendas/Certificates)

## SECTION 6: SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS

The importance of the “Search and Rescue Operations” cannot be overstated in CART activation, mobilization, call out and deployment. In child abduction or missing child events, time is of the essence, and agencies should use all available means to search the immediate and collateral area and to potentially obtain a direction of travel or investigative leads. Immediate and collateral areas include the last known location of the child or children, witnessed locations of activities of the suspects, individuals with knowledge of the abduction, or other identifiable locations critical to the determination of the location of the child or children. Analysis and review of child abduction investigations clearly indicates that it is imperative for searches to be controlled, coordinated and conducted by trained personnel. Additionally experience indicates the use of tracking dogs when available are essential in these types of investigations/episodes and can often provide information that leads to the rapid recovery of the child. This section recognizes the intricacies involved in conducting searches, and the standards reflect the various elements that must be in place to ensure that searches are not compromised and are conducted quickly and effectively.

### ***Standards***

- 6.1 The CART has a document detailing the types of searches it has been trained in and the forms that are to be used when conducting these searches (e.g., neighborhood canvass, sex offender interviews, roadblock canvass, and grid search). Documents should be personnel specific and should include any specialized skills or certification such as K-9 certification. (Policy/Directives/SOP/Training Logs/Lesson Plans/Sample Documents, Certification Documents)
- 6.2 The CART has a designated search coordinator responsible for ensuring that searches are conducted properly during activation, search areas and search participants are logged, searchers are kept up to date and briefed, search perimeters are defined and procedures are in place for handling evidence. (Policy/Directive/SOP/Training Certificates/Lesson Plans)
- 6.3 The CART has a written protocol in place for a tracking dog to be dispatched to the scene within a designated response time. (SOP/Directive/Policy/Interviews)
- 6.4 If CART utilizes volunteers, all appropriate personnel information, training, equipment and the volunteers' roles should be clearly explained and agreed upon. Special emphasis should be placed on integrity and background clearances of selected volunteers. If agency does not utilize volunteers, a plan must be in place to deal with volunteers who self dispatch to the area to offer assistance. (Policy/SOP/Directives/Interviews).

## **SECTION 7: TRAINING**

This section addresses the minimum training standards for CART development and ongoing proficiency. There should be a designated training coordinator for CART. The designated training coordinator could be a member of the CART or participating agency with the requisite skills, knowledge, competencies and abilities to design, develop and deliver required or designated training to support the CART. CART training should be designed and delivered for individual and team assignments, emphasizing expectations and responsibilities to ensure an effective multi-agency/multi-disciplinary response. The standards in this section provide direction as to who should be trained and the need for a set of training standards, competencies and capacity. Nothing in this standard should be interpreted to be inconsistent with established state, local or tribal statutes, legislative acts or executive orders to establish minimum standards training for law enforcement or public safety professionals. Appropriate minimum standards established by each state, local or tribal legislative or executive branch shall be the threshold for referenced training and represent the minimum standards for competencies, skills, knowledge and abilities.

### ***Standards***

- 7.1 There is a designated training coordinator for the CART. (Organizational Chart/Job Description)
- 7.2 Training occurs semi-annually, at a minimum, and team members practice and/or train together. \*At least 60% of CART must attend each training session or designated specialty training. All training of CART members must be documented and maintained to provide proof of compliance (Training Schedule/Policy/Directive/SOP/Rosters/Lesson Plans)
- 7.3 There is a mock activation exercise annually if the team has not had a real activation during the same timeframe. (After Action Report/Policy/Directive/SOP/Copy of Field Exercise/Roster of Attendees/Copy of Debriefed Document)
- 7.4 Assigned team members who require specialized skills, such as investigators, crime scene, search/rescue and K-9 personnel, etc., will receive training by their agencies for these skills. (Policy/Directives/SOP/Training Roster/Schedules/Lesson Plans/Copy of Certificates/Certification)
- 7.5 A current skills inventory document is maintained and includes details of all training each team member receives and the knowledge, skills and abilities that the member possesses as a result of the training. (Directive/SOP/Policy/Personal History form on each member/Training Roster/Schedules)

## SECTION 8: LEGAL ISSUES

The goal in child abduction/missing child cases is to rescue the child and develop a solid prosecutable case against the offender(s) without violating the constitutional rights of the innocent or the accused. This section contains standards that are required to ensure that all of the above takes place and that issues such as search and seizure and the role of the prosecutor in the CART command post are addressed in the overall CART protocol. Additionally, when establishing a CART, agencies must be fully aware of potential legal issues. If legal opinions are necessary or legal action needs to be taken immediately when a call out occurs, it is essential that a relationship with a legal advisor has already been developed, that all jurisdictional issues and liability concerns have been addressed and any necessary Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) or agreements are already in place.

### *Standards*

- 8.1 The CART has written policy or directive indicating the authority that team members have to operate outside of their area of jurisdiction. (Policy/Directive/SOP/MOU/Copy of Law/Authorization/Interview)
- 8.2 There is written policy or directive, either in the way of Mutual Aid Agreements, state statute and/or MOUs, that addresses any liability issues, including protection of CART members who may be injured while on an activation and protection of the members and their agencies from civil liability. (MOU/Policy/Directives/SOP/Mutual Aid Agreements/Status/Administrative Rules)
- 8.3 There must be written policy or a directive that addresses the role of the prosecutor in the CART command post. (Policy/Directive/SOP/MOU/Operating Agreement)
- 8.4 The CART has a relationship with a legal advisor or advisors and in case of civil litigation jurisdictions within the CART would have appropriate access to legal representation. (Policy/Directive/SOP/MOU/Binding legal statute/city and state administrative rules.

## SECTION 9: EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Several of the previous sections deal with the availability of human resources during CART activation, mobilization, call out and deployment. This section relates to the physical resources and equipment necessary during the activation, such as command vehicles, thermal infrared imaging systems, air support, tracking dogs, all terrain vehicles, etc. The standards in this section provide ways to address how the CART can answer the following questions with regard to the team's resources:

- What is the resource?
- Who has it?
- How is it accessed?
- Is access different for certain times of the day or days of week?
- What is the response time?
- Are there any costs involved?

### *Standards*

- 9.1 The CART maintains a current list of equipment, guidelines for use and any expert personnel who can be utilized to operate and/or troubleshoot the equipment during the CART activation, mobilization, call out or deployment. Documentation directives shall include the list of all equipment and resources available to the CART. This directive must be updated at least semi-annually and is accessible to all members of the team. (Policy/Directive/SOP/Interview/Observable/Prior Incidents)
- 9.2 The directive for the CART inventory shall provide specific details for gaining and securing the operational access to each specified item of equipment or resource. This standard requires the inventory of resources and

assets to include each item of equipment or resource, pre-agreement for use by the owner of such equipment or resource, estimated response time for mobilization of such equipment or resource and an assumption of cost agreement by the CART from the agency possessing the equipment or resource. (Policy/Directive/SOP/MOU)

- 9.3 The CART inventory must demonstrate the team has capacity to respond to the child abduction with an appropriate amount of physical and asset resources. This standard is assessed by CART Assessors prior to and during the onsite assessment and evaluation process. The purpose of this standard is to establish clear understanding the CART Assessors will determine the reasonable and appropriate resources and assets available to the CART meet an appropriate level to assist in the response to, rescue and recovery of missing, endangered or abducted children. (Policy/Directive/SOP/Interview/Observable/Organization Chart/Rosters/MOU)

## **SECTION 10: CART PROTOCOLS**

This section focuses on the need for establishing protocols and operating procedures/manuals to ensure the CART functions consistent with the standards established by this body of minimum standards and that any changes to team dynamics, policies or procedures are appropriately documented and maintained in a designated location. While the standards in this section reflect documents and protocols developed by the CART member agencies and managed by the CART Coordinator, it is required that all directives and documents are shared and accepted by each participating agency. Signature of the participating CEOs in the CART is required to signify acceptance and adoption by each of the respective agencies comprising the CART.

### ***Commentary for Standard:***

The following standards for operational protocol establish the responsibilities of the CART Coordinator during activation, mobilization, call out and deployment and the specific information required to be included in written protocol, policy or directive, under CART assignments.

### ***Responsibilities of the CART Coordinator:***

- a. Initiate the activation, mobilization, call out and deployment notice for CART members.
- b. Coordinate AMBER Alert (if applicable or designated) in accordance with department/agency procedures.
- c. Activate and provide notice to establish a public telephone number in order to receive information and leads from the public.
- d. Respond to the scene of the incident and assume or appoint the role of Incident Commander in order to facilitate the rescue, recovery and investigation:
  - 1) Establish law enforcement contact with lead agency.
  - 2) Assign CART members to designated positions, location or staging area.
  - 3) Obtain and document comprehensive incident briefing.
  - 4) Make investigative assignments as necessary or make assignment to supervisory investigative point of contact.
  - 5) Coordinate all activities on the scene with requesting (lead) agency.
  - 6) Coordinate the utilization of crime scene unit(s).
  - 7) Ensure that the Communications Center has made all required notifications.
  - 8) Ensure that the CART resources (E.O.C., private organizations, media, etc.) are utilized and initiated immediately.
  - 9) Provide or designate point of contact or public information for lead agency to manage all media inquiries and information releases.



- e. Provide timely and periodic briefing summaries to the lead agency and CART members. Provide other coordination and management as determined by the CEOs of respective agencies participating in the CART.

### ***Standards***

- 10.1 A written CART response manual shall be developed and approved by participating agencies to include at a minimum, the role of the CART Coordinator, all standards included in the appropriate edition of CART Standards for Certification, other critical team assignments, notification or activation, mobilization, call out and deployment of team members, the use of equipment, the use of an incident command structure on the scene, the designation of an Incident Commander, legal documents, forms to be used, leads tracking capability, the use of a tip line, the use of volunteers and the list of predetermined activities that will immediately take place as soon as CART arrives on the scene to limit downtime. (Policy/Directives/SOP/CART Manual with all referenced items highlighted and listed on table of contents)
- 10.2 Written documentation is available indicating and reflecting a debriefing and an after action report will be conducted after each real or field exercise. The documentation must also address how issues identified during the activation are resolved. For purposes of the field exercise conducted for certification, the assessor report will be considered as the After Action Report. A structured debriefing is required after the field exercise. (Policy/Directives/SOP/After Action Report/Debrief documents to include minutes and plan for collection/Roster of Attendees/Date and location of debrief to include distribution schedule)

## **SECTION 11: VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND REUNIFICATION**

A child abduction can absolutely devastate a family and paralyze a community. Families who have experienced this type of tragedy have indicated that they were not prepared for all the issues they faced such as being thrown in the spotlight of the media, being the focus of the investigation to eliminate them as suspects and dealing with psychics, volunteers and others who arrive at their doorstep or call to offer help. CART should identify a victim advocate or have identified other resources which can assist the family and act as a liaison with the responding law enforcement agency.

Once the child has been recovered, it is imperative that services be made available to the child and victim family as soon as possible, not only to assist the child with any physical or medical needs, but to also assist in determining psychological needs as a result of the abduction. The existing body of research supporting this standard clearly indicates a forensic interview be conducted by a recognized interviewer immediately following the recovery of the child or children. The forensic interview should be conducted to assist in apprehending suspect(s), determining if other crimes were committed against the child and determining if returning the child to his or her home is an appropriate safe environment. Additionally, the forensic interview may provide information to assist the prosecution of defendants and identify other potential victims and/or suspects resulting in additional investigation. This section contains standards that shall be in place as part of the CART initiative to assure proper services, response and responsibilities are immediately available to the child and a reunification plan exists as a part of the CART.

### ***Standards***

- 11.1 The CART has procedures in place to ensure medical and psychological assistance is readily available during CART activations, mobilization, call outs and deployments. The purpose of this standard is to ensure the medical and psychological services and assistance are available and not the exclusive requirement of the lead or responding agencies. This standard mandates a protocol to provide the services, but does not require a specific law enforcement or responding agency or organization to provide such services or assistance. (Policy/Directives/SOP/MOU/Contract with Service Provider/Redacted Examples)
- 11.2 The CART has a key position assigned to the team (e.g., victim advocate) to address family assistance during the investigation and during reunification and advocacy in the event the abduction resulted in the child's murder. This standard requires a description for the position, inclusive of the role of a victim advocate.(Org Chart/Skill Inventory/Policy/Directives/SOP/Observation/Interview)
- 11.3 The CART has a plan in place that identifies services and resources available at the community, state and national levels to assist in support during the investigation, reunification and post reunification referrals. These resources are documented in the Resource Inventory. (Resource Inventory)
- 11.4 The CART procedure includes a requirement for a detailed forensic interview of the child by a qualified forensic interviewer. If possible, forensic interviewers will be identified prior to activation of the CART and all listed forensic interviewers will provide a statement of qualifications accepted in the jurisdiction of prosecution. (Org Chart/Policy/Directive/SOP/Redacted examples of previous interviews)
- 11.5 The CART procedure includes a requirement for a risk assessment and background check on the family/shelter prior to returning the child to the family/shelter. (Copy of form/Document to be used/Examples of previous cases/MOU/Policy/Directive/SOP)

## **SECTION 12: COMMUNITY**

This section focuses on the importance of CART in community education both for adults and juveniles. The standards stress the vital need for community outreach relating to the prevention of missing and exploited children for citizens and children; and, proactive measures to make communities safer for children.

### ***Standards***

- 12.1 Jurisdictions represented in CART have an established community outreach plan relating to the prevention of child abduction and the AMBER Alert plan utilized in that jurisdiction (Lesson plan or established curriculum/roster/appointment letter/agenda; Facebook page)
- 12.2 Jurisdictions represented in CART hold educational sessions to juveniles and/or their parents regarding internet safety and other child safety prevention programs. (Lesson plan/roster/appointment letter/agenda)

## CART CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for CART Certification, jurisdictions must meet the following:

- The designated CART Coordinator and the core members of the team must have attended a DOJ sponsored CART training program or other appropriate AATTAP sponsored training.
- CART Coordinator or designee will maintain a training record of all personnel assigned to their team and assure that each member has received sufficient training and appropriate certifications to serve on the CART.
- Conduct one tabletop or field scenario exercise to test operational readiness and complete an appropriate after action report. Report is to be submitted as part of application package. If the CART has experienced an activation in the previous 12 months, this may be substituted but an after action report must be completed. Activation is defined as a mobilization of a substantial number of CART member components or the entire team, where a mission has been established and credible evidence supports activities to reflect an actual good faith response of a CART. The CART Coordinator may submit the agencies' After Action Report or the prescribed version provided in the CART Certification manual.
- Complete CART Certification application to include an endorsement letter by the chief operating officer (CEO) of the lead agency for the CART. The CEO of the lead agency is defined as the authorized or statutorily provided, appointed or elected official with policy (legislative) and budgetary powers for a political subdivision of a state or a state entity or federally recognized tribe. The intent of this working definition is to provide guidance on the identification of the elected or appointed executive designated as a CEO. Further clarification will be provided when requested by the AATTA Program Director.
- If several agencies are designated as a lead agency, then all CEO's must provide endorsement letters or sign a joint letter of agreement or memorandum of understanding. The documents should be included with the application packet.
- CART must agree to an onsite assessment by a designated team of assessors and make available all pertinent documents and appropriate personnel.
- CART must agree to conduct a full scale field exercise designed and provided by AATTP during the onsite assessment for the purpose of demonstrating practical and proficient understanding of CART standards and best practices.

# APPLICATION FOR CART CERTIFICATION ONLINE FORM

[CLICK HERE](#)

Fields with '\*' are required.

**Contact Information**

\* First Name:

\* Last Name:

\* Preferred Email:

**Confirm Preferred Email**

Send confirmation to preferred email

\* Preferred Phone:

\* Business Phone:

\* Cell Phone:

**Address Information**

\* Address 1:

\* City:

\* State:

\* Postal Code:

**Organization Address Information**

\* Organization Name:

Complete the following questions.  
Incomplete information will delay processing your request.

\* Name of CART

\* Name of CART Coordinator

\* Total number of members on CART

\* Provide us with your Tribal Affiliate (if applicable)

\* List all DOJ AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance training programs attended by CART members, to include name of course, location, date attended and number of agency personnel attending

\* List the entity or entities designated as the lead agency or organization (For each, provide organization and name of CEO including mailing address, email address and business phone)

\* As CART Coordinator, I have reviewed all of the standards relating to certification and do not anticipate any obstacles to our CART pursuing certification (type yes or no)

Our CART has conducted at least one tabletop or field scenario and did not encounter any obstacles that would interfere with us pursuing certification (type yes or no) \* Must include after action report provided as part of application packet

\* Our CART Program agrees to a full review of all policies and pertinent documents relating to our CART (type yes or no)

\* Once accepted as a candidate for certification, the requesting agency acknowledges that each of the following requirements will be met by the agency

- Provide transportation to/from the nearest airport for all assessors
  - Provide transportation to/from the certification site for all assessors
  - Provide lodging for all assessors
- (type yes or no)

\* I pledge and commit the information contained herein is accurate to the best of our knowledge and all signatures contained below represent our full support of our CART's efforts to achieve CART Certification (type yes or no)

\* The onsite assessment requires 2 days. What are your proposed dates for this request? (MM/DD/YYYY - include at least three possible 2-day periods)

Submit

***\*Signed letters of agreement from all of the lead agencies must accompany this application or signed and dated MOU with all CEO's signatures.***

## CART CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following are guidelines to both CART Coordinators and assessors regarding file review and compliance.

- All standards must be in full compliance. If disputes arise about compliance, the lead assessor is to contact the CCM for clarification.
- Standards can be addressed through a variety of proofs to include: General Orders, Standard Operating Procedures, Written Directives, Interviews or Observations, however where standards require specific documentation or proof, the language included in the standard will stand as the absolute requirement.
- Any documents presented as proof of compliance must be signed by the appropriate authority for other directives or policy by member agencies, show a current date and must be incorporated as part of official policy of the CART. Distribution of document to all applicable individuals must be exhibited. The purpose of this guidance is to ensure the CEO for each of the member agencies establishes directives reflecting CART participation and creates authority of enforcement of all directives.
- Each standard will have a separate file containing a Standard Compliance Document (SCD) and all necessary proof. Assessors will review each file and make necessary notations on the SCD to indicate compliance or other actions.
- In the event a standard is not in compliance, the CART Coordinator may be able to achieve compliance before the conclusion of the onsite. However, if not completed to the satisfaction of the assessors, the CART Coordinator and the lead assessor will develop a strategy to correct any deficiencies.
- For any standard that requires an observable or documented action, if action has occurred previously, proof of that action should be contained in the file. For example, for Standard 2.4, if during a callout a relief schedule has been created and utilized, documents relating to that event should be in the file to help achieve compliance. In other words, if you say you do something, and you have actually done it, place proof of that in the file.
- If a standard has an observable component, a photo should be placed in the file to aid in the compliance of standard.
- The proof requested for each standard is a guideline and all of the proof may not be needed. However, as a general rule, as much proof as possible should be placed in the file.
- When documents are placed in a file to indicate compliance, the applicable component of the document should be highlighted
- Simulation of certain events/task by the CART during the field exercise must be approved by the CCM before the onsite visit
- Generally the following definitions apply:
  - **Policy** – a binding document signed by CEO and distributed to all personnel in agency.
  - **Written Directive** – a binding document signed by CEO but often times only distributed to specific individuals serving a specific function.
  - **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)** – a binding document that is usually targeting a particular unit, skill or expertise and serving as a “how to” manual for applicable personnel. Generally distributed to the impacted unit only.

*\*Many agencies have different terminology when addressing policy, written directives and standard operating procedures. When in doubt, the impacted agencies definition and utilization of such documents will take precedence over assessor’s definition.*

## CART CERTIFICATION FORMS AND DOCUMENTS



### SAFETY PLAN FOR FIELD EXERCISE



*To be submitted to lead assessor prior to scheduling of onsite.*

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person completing safety plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Who will be designated safety officers: \_\_\_\_\_

How many designated safety officers will be assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

How will they be identified: \_\_\_\_\_

How/when will the safety briefing be conducted: \_\_\_\_\_

How will weapon issue be addressed: \_\_\_\_\_

*No live weapons will be allowed by any participants in the field exercise*

How will vehicle stops / suspects / K-9's and other high risk events be conducted to maximize safety: \_\_\_\_\_

How will the scenes be identified to the general public alerting them to the field exercise: \_\_\_\_\_

How will field exercise be advertised to the general public prior to date of event: \_\_\_\_\_

Will the safety officers have complete authority to stop the exercise if a safety risk occurs: \_\_\_\_\_

If a child is involved in scenario, what steps are being taken to provide for their well-being throughout exercise: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Acknowledgement:  \_\_\_\_\_



## AFTER ACTION DOCUMENT

*\*To be completed as part of application package detailing field scenario requirement or actual callout in the last 12 months.*

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of exercise/tabletop (*circle one*) or actual callout: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the exercise/tabletop (*circle one*) or circumstances of the callout: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of personnel utilized: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of agencies involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Special resources utilized: \_\_\_\_\_

List lessons learned relating to strengths and weaknesses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What changes have resulted from the exercise/tabletop or callout (*circle one*): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which processes did you correct that will improve your likelihood of achieving CART Certification: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_



**EXAMPLE APPLICATION LETTER**

*(To come from CART Certification Manager)*

Dear

Thank you for submitting your application to be considered for CART Certification. Your application has been approved/disapproved and you will be contacted by one of your assessors to determine the next steps necessary for you to continue your pursuit of certification. Thank you for working so diligently to protect children and we look forward to working with you on your efforts to achieve certification.

Sincerely,  
(CART Certification Manager)  
CC: Program Director  
Program Manager for CART



## STANDARD COMPLIANCE DOCUMENT

*\*This document is to be placed in each of the 47 standard file folders.*

Section # \_\_\_\_\_ Section Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Standard # \_\_\_\_\_

Standard Statement: \_\_\_\_\_

Proof Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Proof Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview conducted: Yes  No  Who: \_\_\_\_\_

Observation conducted: Yes  No

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### Assessor Use Only

Is proof enclosed sufficient to meet compliance with standard? Yes  No

Assessors name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Is additional proof needed to meet compliance with standard? Yes  No

If yes, what proof is needed:

Additional documentation, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview

Observation

Date additional proof is due: \_\_\_\_\_

If additional proof is needed and now provided, is standard in complete compliance:

Yes  No

Assessors name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CART ASSESSMENT FIELD SCENARIO SCHEDULE

### DAY ONE

#### **8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. *Review of Policies and CART Materials***

The assessors will meet with specified CART members and discuss materials that were reviewed in advance demonstrating compliance with CART standards. All 47 standards will be reviewed for compliance by examining the individual file folders and approving each standard compliance document contained in each file. All 47 file folders will be reviewed onsite.

#### **11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *Interviews of Designated CART Personnel***

The assessors will interview specific members of the CART for policy or procedure clarification and to validate the policies are communicated to personnel. The interviews and potential interviewees will be pre-determined with the CART Coordinator (e.g., Communications Center Supervisor, Public Information Officer (PIO), Investigations Chief, and Watch Commander). If CEO's request to speak with assessors or discuss any areas of the assessment, this can be done at this point.

#### **1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. *Agency Introductions***

The agency head, CART Coordinator and invited CART participants will begin this session with a welcome and introductions.

#### **1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. *Overview of Certification Process and Onsite Assessment***

The CART Certification Assessment Team will begin this segment with an introduction of the members and an overview of the next two days. Details and expectations regarding the onsite review, field exercise and subsequent debriefing, final certification process and an optional press event will be discussed. This presentation will be conducted in conjunction with a power point which highlights all appropriate areas of the onsite as well as history, process, expectations and other pertinent points.

#### **2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. *Field Exercise Briefing***

A representative from each agency participating in the field exercise and primary participants will meet for a briefing.

#### **4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. *Closing Onsite Review***

The agency head, CART Coordinator and any other invited agency representatives will meet to discuss preliminary findings and to answer any questions as a final preparation for the next day's events. It is expected that CEO's of each agency or appropriate command staff is represented.

#### **5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. *Assessor Debriefing***

## **CART ASSESSMENT FIELD SCENARIO SCHEDULE (CONTINUED)**

### **DAY TWO**

**7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *Field Scenario***

The activation begins at the Command Center

**12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. *Press Event/Media Availability***

All agency representatives and major participants will meet to debrief with assessors and stress importance of command staff participation in exercise.

**2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. *Closing Comments***

At the conclusion of the certification process, the CART Assessment Team will meet with agency representatives and agency heads to provide observations regarding the assessment and notify the CART Coordinator of the status of their certification process, including any necessary steps to complete CART Certification.

## CART CERTIFICATION EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

### QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS

In order to constantly improve individual and organizational efforts, an evaluation system will be utilized at all appropriate steps in the process. Two evaluations will be utilized.

**STEP 1** – *The CART Coordinator will be asked to evaluate their contact and relationship with the lead and co-assessor(s), and the certification process as a whole.*

*These completed evaluations will be forwarded directly to the CART Certification Manager (CCM) and only completed once certification is awarded.*

**STEP 2** – *The CCM will complete an annual evaluation of all assessors who are being utilized for the CART certification process.*



QUALITY ASSURANCE FORMS: AMBER ALERT REGIONAL LIAISON SURVEY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator completing the form: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Onsite: \_\_\_\_\_

***Evaluation of AMBER Alert Regional Liaison***

Name of liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Scale: 1 to 5 1=very poor, 2=poor, 3=average, 4=good, 5=outstanding*

Rate your impressions of the liaison in the following areas:

1) Accessibility of liaison in response to my questions/concerns

1  2  3  4  5

2) Explanation of information required relating to application process

1  2  3  4  5

3) Accuracy and knowledge of process of certification demonstrated by liaison

1  2  3  4  5

4) Helpfulness and cooperation of liaison

1  2  3  4  5

5) Overall interaction with liaison

1  2  3  4  5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## QUALITY ASSURANCE FORMS: ASSESSOR SURVEY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator completing the form: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Onsite: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Lead Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_

*1=very poor 2=poor 3=average 4=good 5=outstanding*

1) Contact and interaction with the lead assessor prior to my onsite was:

1  2  3  4  5

2) Contact and interaction with the lead assessor during the onsite was:

1  2  3  4  5

3) The explanation of the process relating to the file review and standard compliance was:

1  2  3  4  5

4) The understanding by the lead assessor relating to the standard was:

1  2  3  4  5

5) Contact and interaction with the lead assessor during the field scenario was:

1  2  3  4  5

6) Overall impression of the lead assessor throughout this process was:

1  2  3  4  5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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QUALITY ASSURANCE FORMS: CO-ASSESSOR SURVEY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator completing the form: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Onsite: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Co-Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_

1=very poor 2=poor 3=average 4=good 5=outstanding

1) Contact and interaction with the co-assessor prior to onsite was:

1  2  3  4  5

2) Contact and interaction with the co-assessor during the onsite was:

1  2  3  4  5

3) The explanation of the process relating to the file review and standard compliance was:

1  2  3  4  5

4) The understanding by the co-assessor relating to the standard was:

1  2  3  4  5

5) Contact and interaction with the co-assessor during the field scenario was:

1  2  3  4  5

6) Overall impression of the co-assessor throughout this process was:

1  2  3  4  5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of individual completing evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Acknowledgement:  \_\_\_\_\_





### QUALITY ASSURANCE FORMS: CERTIFICATION PROCESS SURVEY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART Coordinator completing the form: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Onsite: \_\_\_\_\_

*1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=agree 4=strongly agree*

1) I found the overall CART Certification process to be easily understood

1  2  3  4

2) The process was reasonable

1  2  3  4

3) I found the process worthwhile and meaningful

1  2  3  4

4) The standards and necessary compliance tools were practical and straightforward

1  2  3  4

5) The field scenario was useful and strengthened our CART

1  2  3  4

6) What would you change about the process? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of individual completing evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Acknowledgement:  \_\_\_\_\_



POST CART CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS



ANNUAL CART RECERTIFICATION FORM

CLICK HERE

\*To be completed each January by CART Coordinator.

Name of CART: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Certification was achieved (date on award letter): \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of individuals on team: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of agencies represented on team: \_\_\_\_\_

At least one activation and/or field scenario or tabletop must be completed each year to maintain certification.

Have you had any activations in the last 12 months: Yes  No

Summarize each activation to include, date, circumstances of incident, number of individuals and agencies activated through CART, outcome and lessons learned and changes made to policy, practice, use of resources or personnel deployment or other significant changes to CART. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you conducted any tabletop or field scenarios in the last 12 months: Yes  No

Summarize each event including the same information as requested above regarding activations. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have personnel changed on your CART? Yes  No

Summarize changes to include who and why change occurred. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have the number of participating agencies changed in last 12 months? Yes  No

Provide name of agencies which have left CART as well as any additions. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has your resource inventory changed in last 12 months: Yes  No

*Include details regarding any additions or deletions.* \_\_\_\_\_

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Have any other significant changes occurred that have impacted your CART? Yes  No

*If yes, please explain.* \_\_\_\_\_

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Is your CART still in compliance with all applicable standards as well as other certification requirements?

Yes  No

*If no, provide detailed explanation.* \_\_\_\_\_

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Has the leadership of your CART changed? Yes  No

*If yes, provide details of changes.* \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you wish to continue the certification of your CART? Yes  No

*If no, please elaborate.* \_\_\_\_\_

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All of the below signature acknowledgements represent the agreement that all of the information contained in this annual report is accurate.

Name of CART Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CEO Lead Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Agency \_\_\_\_\_

*If additional agencies are lead agencies please obtain signatures of appropriate CEO's to include title and agency.*

**TO BE SIGNED BY AN AGENT AUTHORIZED TO LEGALLY BIND THE AGENCY**

In consideration of the request for continued CART Certification, and to the extent allowable by law, the agency agrees to indemnify, hold harmless and defend Fox Valley Technical College, the United States Department of Justice, its agents, servants and employees, from any and all lawsuits, claims, demands, liabilities, losses, and expenses; including court costs and attorney's fees for or on account of any injury to any person, or any death at any time resulting from such injury, or any damage to property, which may arise or which may be alleged to have arisen out of, or in connection with the work covered by this project.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Acknowledgement:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMPLE AWARD LETTER

Dear,

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is proud of the continued progress of Child Abduction Response Team Programs being developed throughout America, Tribal Communities, Canada and Mexico. Child Abduction Response Teams are a great asset for any community and create a response multiplier when a child is endangered or abducted. We have all seen too often where inappropriate response has led to a less than successful recovery of a child endangered or abducted. One of the flagship programs of the DOJ/OJJDP AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program is the Child Abduction Response Team Program and Certification initiative. Over 200 teams have been trained to help prepare communities to favorably respond and recover missing, endangered or abducted children. To raise the bar on performance the CART Certification Program was created to test the operational readiness of a CART. The standards and requirements were developed by a variety of law enforcement professionals representing state, tribal and local governments. The standards establish the highest standards for responding to incidents of endangered and abducted children. This “gold standard” will establish a new measure for the CART program in existence today and challenge other teams as they are developed.

We are excited to acknowledge and recognize the CART (Program Name) to become Certified under the new guidelines and standards. Compliance with the standards and performance of the child abduction exercise clearly demonstrate the CART (Program Name) is prepared to respond if a child is missing, endangered or abducted and further establishes a professional standard for excellence. On behalf of the U. S. Department of Justice, the CART (Program Name) is Certified and recognized for the professional readiness to recover missing, endangered or abducted children.

Recognized Date

## **CART CERTIFICATION PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**Month, Day, Year**

**Contact:**

**Name**

**Agency**

**Phone Number**

**E-Mail**

# **AMBER ALERT ACCOMPLISHMENT (NAME OF TEAM) CHILD ABDUCTION RESPONSE TEAM EARNS NATIONAL RECOGNITION**

The (Name of Team) Child Abduction Response Team (CART) is being recognized for achieving the “gold standard” set for being prepared to respond to incidents of missing, endangered or abducted children. The (Name of Team) will be honored at a special ceremony on (date of ceremony) for achieving CART Certification, a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) initiative.

“Seconds count when an AMBER Alert is issued and the (Name of Team) CART will make sure valuable time is not wasted,” said (Local Official). “Parents in (Community of State) will know a significant team of talented and professionally trained men and women will respond quickly with all the resources needed to recover a child.” “The worse nightmare any parent can experience is the abduction of their child or fear their child is endangered; and, having a community prepared to respond increases the likelihood of a safe recovery in a timely manner”, said Phil Keith, Program Director for the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program.

More than five hundred children have been recovered through an AMBER Alert. The CART initiative began in 2005 as an extension of the AMBER Alert Program and to assess the operational readiness of teams, and has become one of the flagship programs of the DOJ/OJP/OJJDP. More than 200 teams have gone through the extensive training necessary to become a CART but the (Name of Team) CART is the (Number) team to achieve national certification.

The CART Certification Program was instituted to test and challenge the preparedness of the CART programs throughout America. The standards and requirements were developed by a variety of law enforcement professionals representing state and local governments.

“The (Name of Team) CART has earned the gold standard for professional standards and performance,” said Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program Director. “This certification recognizes that the (Name of Team) CART is clearly ready when a child is missing, endangered or abducted.”

On (Date of Exercise), the (Name of Agency) CART held a mock exercise to see if the team conforms to the vision and protocols set by the DOJ/OJP/OJJDP. More than (Number of participants) federal, state and local law enforcement representatives and child search experts showed up in (area of the exercise) immediately after a mock AMBER Alert was activated for an abducted child. After a methodical search using the latest technology and software, the “victim” and “suspect” were found (time of exercise) hours later at the (location where “victim” was found).

“We are stronger, smarter and better able to recover a missing child because we have the help and cooperation of so many law enforcement agencies,” says (Name of CART Coordinator). “Earning this certification recognizes the many people and agencies who came together to protect children.”

- What:** Presentation of national certification to the (Name of Team) CART  
**When:** Time, Day, Date, Year  
**Where:** Location  
**Who:** Names of local officials, names of presenters and list of agencies represented in the CART.

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