

LFC Requester:	Scott Sanchez
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AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2025 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO

AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov

(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Date Prepared: 2.17.25 *Check all that apply:*
Bill Number: SB 353 Original Correction
 Amendment Substitute

Sponsor: Jeff Steinborn, Shannon D. Pinto **Agency Name and Code:** New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management-79500
Short Title: Search & Rescue Emergency Responses **Person Writing:** Matthew Stackpole
Title: Responses **Phone:** 505-699-5807 **Email:** Matthew.stackpole@dhsem.nm.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26		
\$0	\$0	NA	NA

(Parenthesis () indicate expenditure decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26	FY27		
\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	NA

(Parenthesis () indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	NA

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: SB 353 amends the Search and Rescue Act to establish standardized procedures for coordinating search and rescue (SAR) operations among federal, state, and local agencies. The bill defines a SAR emergency as "an incident requiring urgent SAR assistance," clarifying when state-level resources should be engaged. It appears to have a goal of improving interagency communication, and formalize training requirements for emergency responders to ensure consistency across jurisdictions.

Under the provisions of SB 353, any federal, state, or local agency receiving a SAR-related request must promptly notify the state SAR control agency (New Mexico State Police) unless an existing memorandum of agreement (MOA) dictates otherwise. The bill explicitly states that notifying the state SAR control agency will not prevent immediate response by law enforcement, fire departments, or EMS personnel.

SB 353 further requires the state SAR resource officer to develop training programs for emergency responders, dispatchers, and 911 operators. Additionally, after receiving notification of a SAR emergency, the state SAR control agency must promptly inform the requesting entity whether state SAR resources will be deployed. If the state SAR control agency decides not to deploy resources, the requesting agency must be notified immediately to prevent delays in emergency response efforts. Federal land management agencies must also be included in coordination efforts when SAR operations occur on federal land.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

SB 353 does not allocate funds or generate revenue for DHSEM. However, it introduces new procedural requirements that may increase administrative burdens on multiple agencies, particularly in terms of training and interagency coordination. The bill mandates the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to coordinate SAR resources, establish activation criteria, and ensure interagency cooperation, all of which could incur additional administrative costs. Although no specific funding is provided by the bill, the implementation of these mandates may require additional funding in future budget cycles.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Senate Bill 353 introduces a framework for search and rescue (SAR) coordination, aimed at enhancing efficiency during a SAR emergency. However, this may necessitate adjustments from agencies accustomed to existing protocols. A potential challenge lies in ensuring effective communication among agencies with diverse operational structures and procedures. The bill mandates close collaboration with federal land management agencies, which may introduce additional procedural complexities if new agreements or memorandums of understanding are required.

Additionally, the bill places increased reliance on the volunteer SAR network. Should heightened administrative requirements deter volunteer participation, SAR operations might encounter

difficulties in maintaining an adequate response force. Ensuring that volunteers remain engaged while complying with new training and reporting standards will be crucial for the successful implementation of the bill.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

See Significant Issues.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Refer to the Significant Issues and Fiscal Impact. If enacted, the existing law may benefit from administrative rules to ensure consultation with DHSEM's EOC for appropriate public notices and financial responsibilities that DHSEM may have to assume when collaborating with National Guard resources.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

NA

TECHNICAL ISSUES

DHSEM is not aware of any technical issues in SB 353.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

NA

ALTERNATIVES

NA

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The status quo.

AMENDMENTS

NA