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FAQS: AIRFLARE PARTNERSHIP WITH MOUNTAIN RESORT PATROL TEAMS

WHAT IS AIRFLARE?

A set of technologies that help Mountain Patrol find resort guests in need of assistance via their cell phone whether their phone is in or out of cellular service.

HOW DOES AIRFLARE WORK?

Resort guests download the AirFlare app to their IOS or Android mobile phone and fill out a short profile which is stored in a Registry. That's it, once downloaded, the AirFlare app never needs to be opened to be discoverable by Mountain Patrol if they become the subject of a search.
If a guest does become the subject of a search, AirFlare Search Technology provides Mountain Patrol multiple mechanisms to pinpoint the exact location of the guest, in or out of cell service, or whether the guest is on or off resort property.
A full description of AirFlare Features can be found in: *How AirFlare Works*

IN WHAT SEARCH SCENARIOS IS AIRFLARE EFFECTIVE?

AirFlare is designed to leverage features on mobile phones already carried in the pocket of the majority of resort guests and staff. It provides tools to help Mountain Patrol locate and reach people in need of assistance in the following search scenarios:

1. ***Rescue self-initiation:***
    a. With a single push of a button, an AirFlare subscriber can pull their phone's GPS coordinates into a message that can be sent to an emergency contact, to 911, or can be read to a dispatcher over the phone. Text messages can often be sent in poor cell service environments where phone calls will not connect.
    b. In a situation where someone calls in a rescue, but cannot describe their location, the patrol team can send a text message to the caller. Upon receipt, the caller "accepts" the message, and GPS coordinates are automatically pulled into a reply message that are sent back to Patrol.

2. ***Lost / Missing Guest or Staff:***
    a. When a search is initiated by Mountain Patrol for an AirFlare subscriber, a notification is automatically and immediately sent to the subject's phone. If the phone is within cell service, it will push its coordinates back to Patrol.
    b. If the subject phone is out of cell service or in airplane mode, an AirFlare Detector is configured to search specifically for the subject's phone. Carried in a jacket pocket or flown in the air via drone or helicopter, the Detector acts as a powerful second set of eyes that sees through trees and other terrain barriers. When the Detector comes within range of the subject's phone (typically within ½ mile), it alerts the searcher the subject is in the vicinity, and can be used as a homing device.
    A Detector can be configured to search for a non-AirFlare subscriber also, but performs with a reduced probability of detection.
    c. When a Detector comes within range of a lost subject phone with AirFlare installed, it instructs the phone to push it's GPS coordinates back to Patrol.

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d. Returned GPS coordinates can be viewed by Patrol from a desktop or mobile device in GIS applications such as Google Earth, mobile GPS applications such as Gaia or Avenza, or native IOS Maps or Google Maps applications.

3. ***False Alarms***
   Searches often end as false alarms. It's just the nature of the business.
   When a search is initiated for an AirFlare subscriber, a notification is sent to the subject's phone. If the phone is in cell service, it will push its coordinates back to Patrol*, regardless where in the world the subject is located.
   If the subject phone is out of cell service, the notification is queued, and coordinates will be returned when the phone comes back into cell service.
   ** The subject is provided 20 seconds to decline sending coordinates to Patrol. If declined, Patrol is notified of the action.*

4. ***Peer-to-Peer Assistance:*** (Aug 2019 Release)
   Two or more AirFlare subscribers can pre-authorize the ability to locate each other within cell service with a push of a button from the AirFlare app, and view the returned location on a map. This feature will help reduce the number of calls to dispatch, and is a powerful tool for time-sensitive scenarios like snow suffocations where a partner might be the closest person to locate and assist.

WHAT IS THE TRAINING AND ONBOARDING COMMITMENT NEEDED FROM MOUNTAIN PATROL?

AirFlare Search Technology Onboarding Training is conducted in-person, onsite at the resort by one of the co-founders. Training requires 2-3 hours indoors with an option to go out to the field for mock exercises. The following Mountain Patrol roles should be considered:

1. ***Dispatch***: Plays a central role in AirFlare operations. All resort dispatch personnel responsible for fielding assistance calls should be trained and competent in AirFlare Search Technology use.
2. ***Field personnel***: Play a critical role when AirFlare Detectors are deployed (e.g. when searching for a non-AirFlare subscriber, or when a Location Return Request for an AirFlare subscriber does not return GPS coordinates). The AirFlare team recommends onboarding a handful of Patrol heavy hitters – i.e. those personnel most likely to be involved in searches. It is not necessary for all Mountain Patrol field personnel to be trained AirFlare operators.
3. ***Drone Operators***: If Mountain Patrol has adopted drone technology to aid in searches, the team's drone operator(s) should also be trained in AirFlare Search Technology operation.
4. ***AirFlare Point of Contact***: The AirFlare team requests the resort assign a Patroller to act as a point of contact to the AirFlare team and to manage AirFlare technology at the resort (e.g. Detector charging, hardware and software update and maintenance notifications, etc.).

The *AirFlare Search Technology User Guide* and supporting material is sufficient for self-onboarding additional team members periodically, especially in conjunction with a train-the-trainer model where Mountain Patrol personnel assist in onboarding new members. The AirFlare team intends to develop training videos as the technology matures.

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WHAT OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES DOES MOUNTAIN PATROL HAVE IN A PARTNERSHIP WITH AIRFLARE?

1. ***Awareness and education of Mountain Patrol staff.***
   AirFlare is a new product and an entirely new concept. Resort guests frequently ask questions of Mountain Patrol about AirFlare, how it works, and why it was adopted by the resort. The AirFlare team will provide material to help in high level education for all Mountain Patrol personnel, and will collaborate on a plan to disseminate the information.

2. ***Access to a smart phone for all AirFlare trained personnel.***
   All Mountain Patrol personnel trained in AirFlare Search Technology operation should have, or have access to a smart phone running IOS 10 or later or Android 5 or later. Many Patrol Dispatchers will opt to use the AirFlare Desk Console (the desktop version of Field Console) for the vast majority of operations, but will still find a smart phone running Field Console very useful for some critical operations. Please contact the AirFlare team if issues arise with this requirement.

3. ***Feedback and Support***
   We periodically ask assistance from Mountain Patrol to help us optimize our technology and to ensure it fits seamlessly into patrol operations. Specifically, Patrol personnel are asked to:
   a. Report any issues or bugs to the AirFlare team as soon as possible.
   b. Assist us in recreating an issue or bug if we cannot recreate it ourselves.
   c. Provide us feedback on how to improve AirFlare, and to optimize it to resort operations.
   d. Suggest ideas on how to expand and improve adoption with resort guests and the community

CAN AIRFLARE BE DEPLOYED TO AUXILIARY SEARCH TEAMS LIKE COUNTY SAR AND MOUNTAIN RESCUE?

Yes. If Mountain Patrol interfaces with other search and rescue teams to assist in in-bounds or out-of-bounds searches, the AirFlare team is happy to discuss the feasibility and logistics of deploying AirFlare Search Technology to those teams.
Additionally, the AirFlare team views Mountain Resorts as hubs and gateways to the local outdoor community. When we go-live at a Mountain Resort, we are very interested in opportunities to expand AirFlare adoption to other outdoor activities and venues; for example, mountain bike, trail running and skimo races, outdoor festivals, adventure outfitters, niche communities such as swift water paddling, etc. Expansion to these venues is also a catalyst for local SAR teams to adopt AirFlare Search Technology. Bottom line, the more AirFlare subscriber density we can encourage in a community, the more powerful our search technology becomes to community search teams.

WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS REQUIRED TO OPERATE AIRFLARE?

AirFlare Search Technology is entirely free to our Charter Mountain Resorts. Specific technology requirements are determined individually for each resort, but generally:

1. ***Field Console*** is an app downloaded to Mountain Patrol personnel mobile phones used to operate and administer AirFlare Search Technology. Field Console should be downloaded to the mobile phones of all Mountain Patrol personnel trained as AirFlare operators.

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2. ***Desk Console*** is the desktop computer (Windows) version of Field Console generally used by Patrol Dispatch.
3. ***AirFlare Detector*** is a small, lightweight device carried by Mountain Patrol into the field to detect a lost subject's phone. AirFlare Detectors are supplied to Mountain Patrol by the AirFlare team. One or more Detectors are stored at each Mountain Patrol command center until they are deployed into the field.
4. ***Google Earth Pro*** is a GIS application useful in visualizing search results on a map, for example when GPS coordinates are returned via Location Return, Location Capture or Location Request features. Google Earth is most useful for dispatch on their desktop if using Desk Console or mobile phone if using Field Console to translate GPS coordinates into recognizable landmarks such as ski runs or trails to instruct field personnel to navigate to. Google Earth may also be valuable for Mountain Patrol to have on their mobile phones in the field. Other GIS applications such as CalTopo or SARTopo can be substituted for Google Earth.
5. ***GPS Applications*** such as Gaia or Avenza are often desirable for Mountain Patrol to have on the mobile phones in the field to navigate to a search subject via GPS coordinates obtained during a successful AirFlare search via Location Return, Location Capture or Location Request. In the absence of a GPS application, native IOS or Android map applications (Apple Maps or Google Maps) can be used.