

CAVE RESCUE

DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Efrain MERCADO

CAVE RESCUE

■ ORIGIN

- Could be traced back to 1960 (Puerto Rico)
- Lot of expeditions from other countries in Latin America
- Some information and equipment exchange by that time

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- Great need to have a trained resource to respond to emergencies locally
- Several incidents and accidents
- Ways to improve and to support local caving groups

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■ Techniques

- US Cave Rescue Techniques
- European Cave Rescue Techniques

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■ Development

- Puerto Rico (from 1989)
- Mexico
- Venezuela
- Argentina
- Costa Rica

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■ Development

- 1995 Puerto Rico starts providing international cave rescue training
 - Cuba
 - Venezuela
 - Costa Rica



Rescue Guaguas Mexico



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- Results
 - Cave Rescue teams organized or redefined in:
 - Cuba
 - Argentina
 - Costa Rica
 - Venezuela

Cave rescue Mexico
Cacahuamilpa River



Rescue Mexican Mountain



Rescue Practice Mexico



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- Countries with strong cave rescue teams
 - Mexico
 - Puerto Rico
 - Cuba

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- Update
 - Mexico is promoting cave rescue strongly
 - Antonio Aguirre (ERM) have trained cavers from
 - Peru
 - Costa Rica
 - Venezuela

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- Cave Rescue Techniques Exchange
 - Puerto Rican cavers trained by mexicans during their 3rd. Cave Rescue training in Chiapas
 - Plans for future exchange with Spanish and Mexicans

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- Cave Rescue in Puerto Rico
 - Certified instructors according NCRC (NSS) standards
 - Instructors have to be re certified every three years (theory and practice)
 - Annual technique update is required
 - Have to be members of NSS

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- Cave Rescue in Puerto Rico
 - Puerto Rico is in charge of one of the ten (10) regions the NCRC is divided, Caribbean Region
 - Curriculum is setted by NCRC
 - Manual is being translated to Spanish
 - NIMS is the operational system

CAVE RESCUE

- NIMS CAVE RESCUES
 - National Incident Management System
 - Standardized among government agencies
 - Mandated by US President
 - Cuts troughout bureaucracy

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- NIMS Components
 - Incident Commander
 - Operations section
 - Logistic section
 - Planning section
 - Finance section

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- Fatalities in Puerto Rico
 - Very low (1 each 6 yrs average)
 - Most related to drownings
 - Water streams in 80% of caves
 - Lots of flashlight cavers (tourists with little or no expertise)

CAVE RESCUE

- Arrangements for cave rescue
 - Main responsibility of government
 - Cave rescue recognized
 - Help provided
 - Exchange training provided
 - Could use any government resource

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- In the near future
 - Integration of several US/European techniques
 - Better means of communication (cave radios)
 - Fast deployment to other countries in case needed

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THANKS