

## **RESTRICTED**

### **ABSTRACT**

During the past decade, it is observed that there had been an increase of natural disasters in Sri Lanka. However, Sri Lanka armed forces have actively participated in relief operations during natural and manmade disasters in the past decades. Though there was a search and rescue (SAR) procedure in the Sri Lanka Army collaboration with Disaster Management Centre, Commando soldiers were asked to deploy for SAR operations during most of the disaster situations. Aranayake and Meeriyabedda landslides can be identified as recent situations in which Commando soldiers were deployed for SAR operations. Nevertheless, there is a system for other SAR teams in Sri Lanka Army there is no proper system to activate Commandos for SAR operations during disaster situations since this is not assign task for the Commando soldiers. However, inherent capabilities of Commando soldiers can effectively be utilized for SAR operations. Hence, this study was basically focused on finding a new procedure how to utilized Commando soldiers for SAR operations during flood and landslide hazards. Primary data for the study were collected through questionnaire which was distributed among the Commando soldiers who participated for SAR operations previously. Secondary data were gathered from subject related books, journals, websites, government publications previous researches and paper articles. The new procedure was developed based on incident command system. Moreover, inherent capabilities of Commando soldiers are been taken to develop the procedure. Further, effectiveness of the SAR operations measured in terms of specialized training, special equipment, skills/techniques and physical and mental fitness. The result of the study shows that the relations between training, equipment, skills/techniques and physical and mental fitness with the effectiveness of the SAR operations. Recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the SAR operations encompass new trainings, new equipment, and new skills/techniques. Developed countries' training method, equipment and skills/techniques were also considered.