§ 156-g. Establishment of teams for urban search and rescue, specialty rescue and incident support. 1. Authorization to establish urban search and rescue task force teams, specialty rescue teams, and incident support teams. The commissioner of the division of homeland security and emergency services after consultation with the state fire administrator shall have the authority to establish, organize, administer, support, train, and fund urban search and rescue task force teams, specialty rescue teams, and incident support teams created pursuant to this section.

2. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "urban search and rescue task force team" shall mean a specialized team or group of teams, formed pursuant to this section, organized with capabilities equivalent to urban search and rescue task force teams established under the federal emergency management agency in order to assist in the removal of trapped victims in emergency situations including, but not limited to, collapsed structures, trench excavations, elevated locations, and other technical rescue situations.

(b) "specialty rescue team" shall mean a specialized team, formed pursuant to this section, organized to provide technical rescue assistance to first responders including, but not limited to, canine search and rescue/disaster response, cave search and rescue, collapse search and rescue, mine and tunnel search and rescue, and swift water/flood search and rescue teams. Such teams shall be aligned with one or more of the search and rescue categories within the federal emergency management agency's national resource typing system.

(c) "incident support team" shall mean a team of trained response personnel, formed pursuant to this section, organized to provide coordination with governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations as well as technical, and logistical support to urban search and rescue task force teams and specialty rescue teams.

3. Appointment and training of team members; equipment. (a) The commissioner of the division of homeland security and emergency services is hereby authorized to appoint members to any team created pursuant to this section. Team membership shall consist of local emergency response

personnel, state agency personnel and specialty personnel as required.

(b) The commissioner of the division of homeland security and emergency services shall be responsible for training and equipping the teams established pursuant to this section and for training such other teams located within the state for response to man-made or natural disasters to the extent appropriations are provided. The commissioner of the division of homeland security and emergency services shall support the capabilities of each team established pursuant to this section with the necessary training and equipment to ensure mobilization and deployment for rapid response to emergencies and disasters to the extent appropriations are provided.

4. Accreditation of teams. The commissioner of the division of homeland security and emergency services shall have the authority to establish an accreditation program to review and evaluate new and existing local and regional technical rescue capabilities, and provide recommendations for capability enhancement in accordance with the national incident management system, the national response plan, and nationally recognized standards.

5. Defense, indemnification and insurance coverage of team members. Members of the teams formed pursuant to this section who are volunteer firefighters, volunteer ambulance workers, municipal or state employees, or employees of a non-governmental entity shall be provided coverage by their respective municipalities, organizations, and entities for purposes of sections seventeen and eighteen of the public officers law and/or other defense and indemnification coverage and workers' compensation coverage pursuant to applicable provisions of the workers' compensation law or benefits pursuant to applicable provisions of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law or the volunteer ambulance workers' benefit law. Individuals appointed to an urban search and rescue task force team, a specialty rescue team or an incident support team, for which such coverage is not available, shall be deemed volunteer state employees for purposes of section seventeen of the public officers law and section three of the workers' compensation law.

6. Rules and regulations. The commissioner of the division of homeland

security and emergency services after consultation with the state fire administrator shall have the authority to promulgate rules and regulations as deemed necessary relating to the accreditation of urban search and rescue task force teams, specialty rescue teams, and incident support teams and to the formation and operation of all teams established pursuant to this section.

7. Funding. The division of homeland security and emergency services shall expend the necessary monies for training, equipment, and other items necessary to support the operations of urban search and rescue task force teams, specialty rescue teams and incident support teams within appropriations provided. The division of homeland security and emergency services also may, pursuant to applicable rules and regulations approved by the director of the division of the budget, approve grants of funds from monies allocated and appropriated for any or all such teams.