



# New Zealand Search and Rescue Combined Council and Consultative Committee Meeting

## Minutes of Meeting

New Zealand Search and Rescue Combined Council and  
Consultative Committee Meeting  
1.15pm – 3.45pm, Wednesday 21 April  
Ministry of Transport  
Level 6  
Novell House  
89 The Terrace  
Wellington

### Attendees:

Rachel Roberts (Nzsar)	Brett Sullivan (SLSNZ)
Brendon Comerford (MOC)	John Fogden (CAA)
Darryl Carpenter (MSC)	David Waters (Ambulance NZ)
John Scobie (LandSAR)	Roger Brown (MoT)
Haydn Smith (LandSAR)	Martin Matthews (MoT)
Mike Sheridan (SARINZ)	Carl van der Meulen (Nzsar)
David Shearer (SARINZ)	Tony McLeod (NZ Police)
Bruce Reid (Coastguard)	Jeff Sayer (AREC)
Ian Coard (Coastguard)	Gerry Prins (NZ Police)
Colin Small (Coastguard)	Capt Kevin Keat (NZDF)
Bruce Johnston (NZ Police)	Amy Greig (MoT)
John Seward (RCCNZ)	Catherine Taylor (MNZ)
Rodney Bracefield (RCCNZ)	Steve Douglas (CAA)
Nigel Clifford (MNZ)	Flt Lt Marc Bridgeman (NZDF)

### Apologies:

Commissioner Howard Broad (NZ Police)  
Air Cdre Kevin Short (NZDF)  
Erik Barnes (Antarctica NZ)  
Mike Davies (DoC)

### 1. Welcome

Martin Matthews welcomed everyone to the combined Nzsar Council and Consultative Committee meeting.

### 2. Minutes from Last meeting

The minutes from the previous Consultative Committee meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

### 3. Matters Arising

#### ***Sector Update***

The email from Ambulance NZ regarding Skills Active training for managers of volunteers was forwarded to the NZSAR secretariat.

#### ***NZSAR Awards***

The nomination process has been closed off; the awards are being this evening, 5.30pm, Grand Hall, Parliament.

### 4. Items for Council approval/endorsement:

#### **a. NZSAR Documentation Study (for approval)**

The Council agreed/noted the following:

**Agreed** to adopt the proposed NZSAR Documentation Framework comprising of a family of NZSAR documents at the strategic, leadership and operational level.

**Noted** that the NZSAR Documentation Framework will not interfere with the activities of individual agencies and organisations.

**Agreed** to develop an overarching strategic document that complements the NZSAR strategic plan which:

- Presents a unified approach
- Common understanding of SAR including agreement around roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, protocols, terminology and standard operating procedure.

#### **b. Independent SAR Review (for approval)**

Maritime NZ has requested an independent review into the search and rescue operation for the yacht TAFADZWA. Terms of reference for the proposed review have been distributed to the Council prior to the meeting.

The Council **approved** the establishment of an independent review into the Tafadzwa search and rescue operation and its terms of reference.

#### **c. NZSAR National SAREX Guidelines (endorsement)**

A copy of the SAREX guidelines was circulated to the Council before the meeting. The guidelines were well received by the group. It was requested that a one page covering note was added to the front of the document and a version number and current date were also included.

On confirmation of these requests being included in the document, the SAREX Guidelines were **endorsed** by the Council.

**d. SAREX Plan 2010/2011 (endorsement)**

The SAREX plan for 2010/2011 was distributed prior to the meeting. The plan received positive feedback from the Council. A concern was raised that it may be difficult to keep the plan up to date. The Secretariat believes keeping the plan up to date will be easier with it being online.

The Council **endorsed** the SAREX Plan.

**5. Service Level Agreement Monitoring Report for the Jan-March Quarter.**

*Summary of NZ Police SAR Activity for the Quarter*

NZ Police coordinated **490** Category 1 SAROPs

- 693 people were at risk
- 44 people were saved
- 203 people were rescued
- 259 people were assisted
- 18 people not located
- 26 people perished
- *NZ Police Taskings for the Quarter*
- 95 LandSAR
- 134 Coastguard
- 10 AREC
- 23 SLSNZ

*Summary of RCCNZ SAR Activity for the Quarter*

RCCNZ coordinated **179** Category 2 SAROPs

- 296 people were at risk
- 14 people were saved
- 54 people were rescheduled
- 224 people were assisted
- 1 person not located
- 3 people perished
- *RCCNZ Taskings for the Quarter*
- 5 LandSAR
- 5 Coastguard
- 0 AREC
- 0 SLSNZ

### ***LandSAR Service Level Agreement***

LandSAR provided assistance for **65** SAROPs

- 435 LandSAR volunteers used during the Quarter
- 2,142 volunteer hours provided
- 85 people were designated as being at risk during these SAROPs
- 50 people were rescued
- 33 people were assisted
- 2 people were not located.

### ***Coastguard Service Level Agreement***

Coastguard provided assistance for **195** SAROPs

- 1,531 Coastguard volunteers used during the quarter
- 2,405 volunteer hours provided
- 412 people were designated as being at risk during these SAROPs
- 16 people saved
- 146 people rescued
- 242 people assisted
- 19 people were not located
- 8 people perished.

### ***Summary of non-SAR Activity for the Quarter***

Coastguard responded to 1,130 non-SAR related calls for assistance during the quarter

2,136 Coastguard volunteers involved

Coastguard provided 76,614 non-SAR volunteer hours during the quarter.

### ***AREC Service Level Agreement***

AREC provided assistance for **14** SAROPs

- 26 AREC volunteers used during the quarter
- 118 volunteer hours provided
- 14 people designated as being at risk
- 2 people were saved
- 5 people rescued
- 2 people assisted
- 2 people perished.

## **6. Sector Update**

### **Maritime Operations Centre**

MOC is now at full staff strength and retention issues have stabilised. MOC is currently reviewing communications after the recent Tsunami warning to ensure all future warnings are dealt with in the best way possible. MOC was recently involved with the Tafadzwa SAR incident.

### **Mountain Safety Council**

MSC has several new staff members, a training manager and an avalanche manager. The Outdoor Safety Code was released the earlier in the year with safety information aimed primarily at in-bound tourists. A draft accord will soon be distributed asking participating organisations to align their messaging to the code. MSC is experiencing some challenges with core funding for preventative and educational work.

### **Civil Aviation Authority**

CAA has received positive feedback from the air ambulance workshop, it covered useful skills such as pressure points, decision making by crews in emergencies. CAA are participating in the exercise Guardian 3 – testing their ability to provide advice in emergencies. It is also working with local DHBs on emergency medical helicopters rules and regulations. CAA is looking at the development of unmanned aerial systems, these are going to make a feature in the future; there are some significant danger aspects to this that need to be addressed.

### **LandSAR**

LandSAR has experienced a busy quarter. LandSAR is pleased to advise that all groups have now affiliated. The capability review of all 60 groups is complete and will now be analysed. LandSAR is ensuring its understanding of terminology and definitions is shared by all members.

LandSAR is looking at the issues around having a minimum age for operational members to be used and secure funding continues to be an ongoing issue.

LandSAR representatives attended the recent Wander's Forum; they found it to be well run and useful. LandSAR will be attending the upcoming Avalanche and Marine workshops.

### **SARINZ**

SARINZ is moving towards more a collaborative training model. The research project – *looking ahead to 2030, planning for the SARINZ future*, will be released next month. SARINZ has ongoing funding challenges.

## **Coastguard**

Overall Coastguard activity is rising. Coastguard membership includes 2,136 volunteers. Having ongoing discussions with NZ Police about what is and isn't a CAT 1 SAR operation.

The Coastguard fleet replacement programme is largely complete with a large number of new and/or refurbished vessels being deployed around the country.

Coastguard has noticed a change in volunteer skills, with fewer volunteers having prior sea experience. Coastguard currently awaits the report from a MNZ review into several incidents.

Overall Coastguard in a very good heart, they have experienced some positive changes, they believe it's great to be involved as partners with the SAR. Coastguard appreciated collaborative work with the Government.

## **Surf Life Saving NZ**

The SLSNZ restructure continues and is progressing well. The organisation is experiencing a similar season to last year with approximately 1,300 – 1,400 rescues. SLSNZ believes the preventative messaging seems to be working limiting the rise in the number of rescues.

SLSNZ is currently working well with MNZ on rules around the speed at which SLSNZ can travel if they are within 200 meters of people. The risk/hazard assessment is on-going.

## **Ambulance New Zealand**

Contracts for the air ambulance review will be going out for tender shortly and the Air Ambulance and Rescue Standard will soon be finalised once a few technical issues are sorted out.

## **NZ Police**

NZ Police noted that a number of organisations mentioned a lack of funding during their sector updates. NZ Police is also under considerable funding pressure which limits its ability to support other organisations.

The NZ Police Commissioner has directed a review of police structures and policies being undertaken. All organisations that work with the NZ Police will be consulted during this review; feedback from these other agencies will be very valuable.

There is a significant offshore demand for the services of our NZ Police in a Search and Rescue capacity; this means there is a large impact on resources and money being spent domestically.

## **AREC**

AREC is using the SLA funding to purchase some new equipment.

## **NZ Defence Force**

NZDF is also experiencing a challenging funding environment. The Defence review and transformation paper is nearing completion.

## **MNZ**

MNZ received a favourable review for the reporting carried to on the Princess Ashika incident. MNZ received a lot of media attention regarding the Tafadzwa incident and they welcome the review into this.

RCCNZ is developing an online registration system for distress beacons. 23,000 beacons are currently registered with around 400 new registrations per month (approximately 50/50 split between EPIRBs and PLBs).

## **Summary**

The Chair summarised the sector update by reiterating three key points he noted throughout the updates as:

1. There is a clear effort to improve capability across the sector.
2. There has been some significant progress in initiatives and collaboration across agencies – all organisations are working well together.
3. It's clear there are some resourcing pressures and issues regarding available funding.

## **7. Strategic Discussion – SAR Volunteer Issues**

This part of the agenda was an opportunity to have a wide ranging future focussed discussion looking at factors that may affect the SAR voluntary sector including:

- Demographics
- Workplace and lifestyle changes
- Regulations and liabilities
- Technology
- Competition for people
- Public expectations
- Other issues

Carl van der Meulen talked the group through a series of comments made about Volunteers – they are:

- *“Without our SAR volunteers, we are non-functional”*
- *“They are the brain and brawn of SAR*

- *“Volunteers are critical to running any SAROP – it’s simple – Police do not have the resources*
- *“In large scale events, time required from volunteers can put pressure on employers”*
- *“Unavailability sometimes due to work/family commitments (but you get that with cops also”*
- *“Numbers in big searches during weekdays”*
- *“Sometimes not having enough and therefore over-extending the ones you have available”*
- *“Recruitment and retention:*
- *“You never know who will show up at a job”*
- *“Diminishing numbers of volunteers”*
- *“Overcoming resistance from employers to release them”*
- *“Dealing with their overly bureaucratic national organisation”*

Carl van der Meulen also provided the group with other aspects of Volunteering that may facilitate discussions, these are:

### **Training Time**

A new LandSAR volunteer – who has reasonable outdoor skills – requires a minimum of 50 hours of training before they can become an operational team member.

A new Coastguard volunteer required a minimum of 44 hours training to become an operational crew member.

A Coastguard operational crew member requires an additional minimum of 104 hours training to become a senior crew member.

A Coastguard senior crew member requires an additional minimum of 123 hours training to become a master.

- *“The new training does lead to better operational confidence, especially when working with other groups, but it comes with a huge time commitment”*
- 
- *“Need to be upfront with volunteers about the workload – training and operational”.*

Carl noted that for volunteers, their largest and most pressing concern is time. For the NZFS, the top two reasons given for volunteers leaving were – moving out of the area, and not enough time.

## **Characteristics of Generation Y**

The 'Click and Go' Generation (1980 – 1995) – our next volunteers

The new generation of volunteers are living their lives differently:

- More time pressured
- More choices
- More leisure time and more ways to fill it
- More technology and more ways to explore and understand the world in which they live.

*This generation is just as active as previous generations in volunteering – however, the type of volunteering commitment is different.*

Discussion was contributed to by all organisations around the table, Air Ambulance commented that they have an issue with modern technology; the new generation of volunteers aren't familiar with pagers which is a pivotal communications tool for Air Ambulance.

Coastguard commented that the group needs to think more about how people can be assisted to volunteer their time, is there enough encouragement from their employer? Are tax breaks possible, would it be possible to organise a 'payroll giving scheme?'

There are also possible insurance risks which can deter some people from volunteering – if the volunteer is seen to be risking their life, their life insurance premiums may increase.

The NZ Police commented that it's hard to look so far ahead into the future (2040) and try to plan as the participants in this SAR meeting have no idea what the future will hold, especially in a technology and volunteer aspects, will volunteers be required? NZ Police also commented – are volunteers being utilised enough by the organisation they volunteer with? Some people may find it challenging to have to complete hours of training to volunteer but rarely ever get 'hands-on' in the role.

The NZDF commented that they have a successful employer agreement programme which allows people to volunteer (members of the territorial force etc) and they are still supported and encouraged by their employer. NZDF are happy to share their ideas around this if it would be helpful to the other organisations around the table.

The Chair summarised discussions on this topics by reiterating that this is a national issue and required more thinking. The Chair encouraged organisations to take up the offer from the NZDF and learn more about employers

encouraging and supporting their staff in volunteer work. The NZSAR secretariat is to facilitate ongoing discussions around this area; it may be useful to hold a Volunteer NZ symposium that includes attendance from those volunteers not just restricted to SAR.

## **8. General Business**

### **a. NZSAR Awards for 2009**

The Awards ceremony is being held this evening. There will be the presentation of 1 gold award and 5 certificates of achievement. Campbell Live may be filming this ceremony.

### **b. NZSAR Funding and SLAs**

MoT is currently working with The Treasury regarding funding being available for future years. MoT are working with Ministers regarding this funding, Martin Matthews is feeling positive about this process to date but will not make any announcements.

### **c. SAR Research Update**

NZSAR is about to undertake Beacon based research, there has been a lot of questioned generated from a political level enquiring about beacons.

*Distress Beacons* – The purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of the usage, performance, and costs of 406 MHz distress beacons in the New Zealand Search and Rescue region.

*GIS* –

- Regional information provided using Police data
- Trying to help out with specialist requests

### **d. NZSAR Workshops**

SAR for People Who Wander. Held in Auckland on 21 and 22 March. This workshop enabled attendees to share ideas and improve the conduct, management and coordination of SAR incidents for people who wander in New Zealand due to some form of incapacity. This workshop was very successful with positive discussion and a number of follow up points.

Marine SAR. To be held in Wellington on 16 and 17 May.

This workshop is structured to improve the management and coordination of marine SAR incidents in and around New Zealand. Approximately 120 people due to attend.

Avalanche SAR. Due to be held in Twizel on the 1 and 2 June.

This workshop is designed to improve the conduct, management and coordination of SAR for avalanche incidents in New Zealand. Approximately 42 people will attend.

## **Possible NZSAR Workshops for 2010 / 2011**

- SAR Trainers and Educators (1 day workshop)
- SAR aviation providers (run by RCCNZ)
- Marine SAR Communications
- Future challenges for SAR symposium (with a University?)
- SAR technology trends and developments

### **9. NZSAR Communications Channel Review**

The NZSAR secretariat has engaged a consultant to conduct a review of the current communications channels that are being utilised by the Secretariat.

### **10. Tertiary Education Commission changes impact on SAR**

TEC are about to make changes to their funding structure which may effect some training courses. Coastguard commented that they run their own training.

**11. Other**

John Scobie (LandSAR) thanked Tony McLeod (NZ Police who is retiring in June 2010, this was his last meeting) for all his help, assistance and his contribution to the SAR industry.

The Chair also thanked Tony for all his great work on behalf of the group.

**12. Next Meetings**

NZSAR Consultative Committee meeting is scheduled for 21 July  
Location will be Maritime NZ Boardroom

NZSAR Council meeting is scheduled for 4 August.

Meeting concluded: 3.50pm

Martin Matthews  
Chair

<b>Actions</b>	
<b>7. Strategic Discussion – SAR Volunteer Issues</b>	NZSAR secretariat to facilitate ongoing discussions regarding SAR volunteer issues.