



New Zealand Search and Rescue Council

Minutes of Meeting

New Zealand Search and Rescue Council
1.00pm – 3.00pm, Wednesday 4 August
Ministry of Transport
Level 6
Novell House
89 The Terrace
Wellington

Attendees: Martin Matthews (MoT), Catherine Taylor (MNZ), Steve Douglas (CAA) Rob Pope (Police).

Present: Carl van der Meulen (NZSAR), Duncan Ferner (NZSAR), Rachel Roberts (NZSAR), Amy Greig (MoT), Roger Brown (MoT), Bruce Johnston (Police), Nigel Clifford (RCCNZ)

Apologies: **Commissioner** Howard Broad (NZ Police), Air Commodore Kevin Short (NZDF)

1. Welcome.

Martin Matthews welcomed everyone to the Council meeting.

2. Minutes from Last meeting.

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

3. Matters Arising.

Develop an expanded MOU for SAR at national level between Police/RCCNZ and DoC describing capabilities, communications and responsibilities.

The MOU development is progressing.

Paragraph relating to section 9.1 initiative to be included in Ministry of Transport weekly report to Minister.

Paragraph was included.

Volunteer issues are to be discussed at the next combined meeting with Value for Money and Penalty/Payment Issues for false/hoax and unnecessary SAR

Item completed.

4. Service Level Agreements.

SLA Partners

There are some discrepancies with the information the SLA partners have reported compared to the Coordinating Authorities report. These have been discussed, and all the SLA partners are working collaboratively to improve the accuracy of the reporting.

LandSAR

- LandSAR has reported a significant increase in activity for this quarter, however, this is from an increased level of reporting compliance from LandSAR groups.
- LandSAR held its first “LandSAR Awareness and Fund Raising Week” in June to raise funds and awareness. There was a varied response around the country, and the results are being assessed for LandSAR.

Coastguard

- 5 new and 1 refurbished Coastguard Rescue Vessels have entered operational service over the last quarter.
- Coastguard is making progress on the review and reproduction of the Marine SAR Management manual. This work is sponsored by the NZSAR Council.

Coordinating Authorities – Financial Year Reporting

- Total of 3,603 lives at risk
- Total of 280 lives saved
- People Perished (preliminary)
 - 241 people reported as having lost their lives
 - Police report 111 people perished
 - RCCNZ report 130 people perished – 99 in NZSAR and 31 in other SRRs.
 - This includes the 74 people who lost their lives from the *Princess Ashika* sinking in Tonga.

SLA Partners - Financial Year Reporting

- Total volunteer hours – 25,593

- Coastguard has over reported – this was caused by some confusion around recording towing jobs as taskings.
- LandSAR has under reported
- SLSNZ has over reported – due to confusion as to what is a SAR job
- 8,876 Coastguard volunteers responded to 3,456 non-SAR related calls for assistance during the year.

NZSAR Secretariat Manager noted that much of this statistical data was new and better reflected both the work and achievements of the sector. The Secretariat is looking to be able to collate and share more reliable, accurate information that could be utilised by the Council and others for effective strategic decision making. The Council discussed differences between false and real SAR alerts and how they might be reported.

5. **Strategic Discussion.**

Discussion around New Zealand's practice of non-payment or legal penalty for false, hoax, malicious and unnecessary SAR operations

A wide ranging strategic discussion took place. The Council noted the following:

- The land environment is different from marine and aviation in terms of regulation and legislation.
- Would an invoicing system work as a deterrent for unnecessary rescues?
- How do you deal with the fine line between 'stupidity' and 'misfortune'?
- Will a cost recovery programme for SAR cause people to hesitate to call for help or hide away from rescuers?
- Are the main culprits of unnecessary/false/hoax SAR events repeat offenders?
- Can the sector capture and report with reasonable accuracy on the full costs of a given SAR event?
- If there is a revenue collection for certain SAR operations – how would any funding received be handled?
- How does the agency deal with media enquiries / internal questions around SAR operations that could easily have been avoided?
- Is there sufficient clarity about these issues and is there really a problem?

The Council agreed that unnecessary/false/hoax SAR events could be considered in terms of SAR involving:

- inadequate preparation or capability: leading to a genuine need for SAR.
- questionable need for rescue, i.e. "I'm tired, hungry, cold etc." (Could still involve inadequate preparation/capability but is more about the view that the situation did not merit a SAR operation)
- Hoax calls for assistance.

The Council also noted that recidivist users of SAR services existed but that it would be difficult to identify them

The NZSAR Council **directed**:

1. the NZSAR Secretariat to work with the two coordinating authorities to closely monitor the instances of unnecessary/false/hoax and repeat SAR events.
2. the NZSAR Secretariat to develop recommended common communication messages for SAR agencies when dealing with unnecessary/false/hoax and repeat SAR incidents.
3. the NZSAR Secretariat to report back to the NZSAR Council in due course with an assessment about the prevalence and impact of unnecessary/false/hoax and repeat SAR events.
4. the two coordinating authorities to develop processes to capture and report on the costs of SAR events.

6. Draft NZSAR Performance Measures.

The Secretariat sought agreement about the proposed outcome based SAR performance measures.

During discussion, the Council noted its preference for two outcome measures, one centred on the delivery of effective SAR services (a ratio between lives saved/rescued/assisted and SAR events), the second is to take into consideration SAR prevention measures (a ratio between SAR events and outdoor activity participation). Taken collectively, these measures should give reasonable guidance about the relative effectiveness of SAR services and of the overall safety/incident levels of people conducting outdoor pursuits.

The Council noted the range of output and impact measures already in place for the sector.

The Council also noted that outcome measures should be considered in terms of trend over time (5 to 10+ years) while output and impact measures could be examined over shorter time frames.

The council **agreed** to the outcome performance measures proposed by the NZSAR Secretariat.

7. Secretariat Report 2009/10.

The NZSAR financial report was presented to the Council. The NZSAR Secretariat spent less than budgeted for 2009/10. Unexpended funds were returned to the Crown.

A summary of NZSAR activities held in 2009/10 financial year includes:

- 6 workshops completed
 - Land Communications, 25 people attended, held in Wellington
 - Hoist, 120 people attended, held at Ohakea
 - Wander, 44 people attended, held in Auckland
 - Marine SAR, 113 people attended, held in Wellington
 - Avalanche SAR, 48 people attended, held in Twizel
 - On Scene Coordinator, 53 people attended, held in Wellington

Total of 403 people attended the workshops

Each workshop addressed specific issues

NZSAR have noticed a positive shift within the SAR culture.

- Air Observers – RCCNZ trained and refreshed air observers throughout NZ
- Research – Outdoor Participation, Volunteer Study, Beacons, GIS
- Documents – Core Curriculum, Tafadzwa Independent Review, Outdoor Code, Documentation Study, SAREX Guidelines, Link Newsletters x4, Annual Report, NZSAR Communications Audit.
- Business – NZSAR Meetings (Council and Consultative Committee), NZSAR Calendar of Events (now available online), SAREX support, Annual SAR asset stock take, SLA Monitoring, Sector Statistics, Contract and Financial Management, NZSAR Website Redevelopment, Lessons Learned System, Stakeholder Management, RCCNZ Developed NZSAR Asset Database.

2010/11 NZSAR Budgets. The NZSAR Secretariat proposed a budget for the operation of the Secretariat and for the national SAR support programme.

The NZSAR Council:

- **accepted** the NZSAR Financial report for 2009/10.
- **approved** the 2010/11 budget for the operation of the Secretariat.
- **approved** the 2010/11 budget for the national SAR support programme.
- **noted** the requirement to revisit the budgets midway through the FY.

8. NZSAR Goal Implementation Guide

The NZSAR Secretariat presented the 2010/11 update of the NZSAR Goal Implementation Guide.

The NZSAR Secretariat also presented the 2010/11 national SAR support programme. The programme intends to:

- Develop and run 2 – 3 OSC courses
- Run fixed wing air observer refresher courses (x6, 116 people)
- Run rotary wing air observer refresher courses (x7, 112 people)
- Run fixed wing air observer training (x1 course, 30 people)
- Support 10 Police District major SAREXs
- Support SAR sector prevention initiatives
- Redevelop incident management courses
- Run SAR related workshops

The Council:

- **approved** the national SAR support programme.
- **noted** the progress made against the 2009/10 NZSAR Goal Implementation Guide.
- **approved** the 2010/11 NZSAR Goal Implementation Guide.

9. Volunteer Study

The Volunteer Study was distributed to all Council members before the meeting. Main topics from the summary of the report are:

- Demographics – could target more females and more people in the 20-29 age bracket
- Impact – during 09/10 volunteers provided 542,367 hours (260.8 FTE)
- Motivations – confirm the FRSITO study of altruism, but also note the consumption motivation, especially with training and retention issues.
- Common Issues – mainly relate to the use of the Volunteers' time with training and non-SAR workloads. Relationship issues are improving. Some personal cost, recruitment and retention issues. Response was uniform that new volunteers need to have a good induction process. Would like a full time Police SAR Coordinator in each District.
- Linkages – no new linkages identified.

NZSAR Secretariat noted concerns raised during the recent Consultative Committee meeting, which indicated that volunteers' can experience difficulties with their insurance, in one particular instance, a volunteer was not able to secure mortgage insurance because of being a SAR volunteer.

It was also noted that volunteers feel the relationship between volunteers' and the Government is a good one.

NZSAR will forward a copy of the study to Volunteer NZ, Minister for Community and Voluntary Sector and the Lottery Grants Board OS Committee. A copy of the report will also be made available online at www.nzsar.org.nz.

The Council:

- **accepted** the NZSAR Volunteer Study.
- **instructed** the Secretariat to ensure the study was widely distributed.
- **directed** the Secretariat to follow up on the issues identified in the study.

10. Strategic Funding:

Roger Brown briefed the Council on the next steps with regard to NZSAR strategic funding.

The Council **noted** the proposed process and timings.

11. NZSAR Consultative Committee meeting of 21 July

The sector update from the Consultative Committee meeting was distributed to the Council members.

The Council **noted** the report.

12. Department of Conservation

There was discussion on extending an invitation to DoC to become a member of the NZSAR Council.

The Council **Agreed** to invite the Chief Executive of DoC to become a member of the NZSAR Council.

13. General Business

➤ NASO Update

Nigel Clifford briefed the Council on a recent air ambulance sector meeting and on progress with the Air ambulance and Air Rescue standard.

➤ **Beacons**

There is now a total of 21,989 registered beacons

➤ **NZSAR Asset Database**

Now available online

➤ **Visitor Intentions**

The Secretariat sought approval from the Council to begin scoping work with the Mountain Safety Council around a national visitor intentions system. Police and RCCNZ noted their concerns about such a system.

The Council:

- **agreed** to the scoping phase of this work with the Mountain Safety Council.
- **directed** the Secretariat to ensure both Police and RCCNZ were fully involved.

Next Meeting 24 November 2010.

Meeting concluded: 3.00pm

Martin Matthews
Chair
NZSAR Council

Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility
5 Unnecessary/false/ hoax and repeat SAR	Monitor the instances of unnecessary/false/hoax and repeat SAR events	Secretariat NZ Police RCCNZ
	Develop common communication messages for SAR agencies when dealing with unnecessary/false/hoax and repeat SAR incidents	Secretariat
	Develop processes to capture and report on the costs of SAR events	NZ Police RCCNZ
	Report on the prevalence and impact of unnecessary/false/hoax and repeat SAR events	Secretariat
9 Volunteer Study	Ensure the volunteer study is widely distributed.	Secretariat
	Follow up on the issues identified in the study.	Secretariat
12 Department of Conservation	Invite the Chief Executive of the Department of Conservation to become a member of the NZSAR Council.	Chair
13 Visitor Intentions	Participate in the scoping of a national visitor intention system.	Secretariat NZ Police RCCNZ