



# New Zealand Search and Rescue Council and Consultative Committee Meeting

## Minutes of Combined Meeting

New Zealand Search and Rescue  
Consultative Committee and Council Meeting  
Wednesday 13 April 2011  
1.00pm – 3.30pm  
Ministry of Transport  
Level 6, 89 the Terrace  
Wellington

### Attendees:

Martin Matthews – Chair NZSAR/CE MoT	Brenden Comerford – MOC
Air Commodore Kevin Short – NZDF	John Scobie - LandSAR
Steve Douglas – Director, CAA	Haydn Smith - LandSAR
Barry Taylor – Police	Dave Comber - LandSAR
Dave Jane - Doc	Leonce Jones – MSC
Catherine Taylor – Director, MNZ	Darryl Carpenter - MSC
Amanda MacKinnell – AMSA	David Waters – Ambulance NZ
John Seward – MNZ/RCCNZ	Garry Prins - Police
Nigel Clifford – MNZ/RCCNZ	John Yaldwyn - AREC
Paul Craven – MNZ/RCCNZ	Jeff Sayer - AREC
Alan Walker – MCDEM	Duncan Ferner – NZSAR
Roger Brown – MoT	Carl van der Meulen - NZSAR
Bruce Ried – Coastguard	Ken Matthews – CAA
Colin Small – Coastguard	Brett Sullivan – SLSNZ
Lloyd Mattheson – Air Industry Association	Heather Staley – MoT
Sqn Ldr Geoff Pierce - NZDF	Mike Davies – DOC
	Amy Greig - MoT

### Apologies:

Commissioner Marshall – Police  
Carl McOnie - SARINZ

### 1. Welcome

Martin Matthews welcomed the group to the joint NZSAR Consultative Committee and Council meeting. A special welcome was extended to Alan Walker (MCDEM) and Amanda MacKinnell (AMSA).

### 2. Minutes from Last meetings

The minutes from the previous Consultative Committee meeting held 9 February 2011 were accepted as a true and accurate record. The minutes of the previous Council meeting held 24 November 2010 were accepted as a true and accurate record. The Council meeting scheduled for Wednesday 23 February 2011 was cancelled due to recovery efforts for the Christchurch Earthquake.

### 3. Matters Arising

#### ***Council Confirmation of items approved out of session from scheduled meeting of 23 February 2011.***

- 2010 NZSAR Awards recipients were approved out of meeting cycle by email.
- NZSAR Operational Framework for the NZSRR was approved out of meeting cycle by email.

### 4. Service Level Agreement Monitoring Report for the Oct - Dec 2010 and Jan – March 2011 Quarter

#### *Coordinating Authorities*

Police and RCCNZ notable statistics include 99 lives saved for this period, 295 people rescued, 516 people assisted and 54 (83)\* perished.

\*this number doesn't include the 29 victims of the Pike River Mine disaster.

#### *SLA Partners*

All reporting requirements for the Oct – Dec 2010 Quarter have been met by the SLA partners. Police and SLSNZ need to work together to clarify reporting of incidents involving SLSNZ. Statistics to note – 6,784 volunteer hours used during this quarter.

All reporting requirements for the Jan – March 2011 Quarter have been met by the SLA partners. Notable statistics include SAROP'S up 7% on the previous quarter. Volunteers involved up 15% on previous quarter. Volunteer hours up 98% on previous quarter. 2,148 Coastguard volunteers responded to 1,252 non-SAR related calls for assistance during this quarter.

### Issues and Updates

#### **a) Coastguard:**

- Local volunteers were involved in the Christchurch earthquake response.
- The 3 Canterbury Units haven't had any call outs since the February earthquake.
- There are significant changes to the management team and structure for Coastguard Northern Region taking place.
- Work continues in reviewing the training of Coastguard volunteers.

#### **b) LandSAR**

- First national mobilisation of LandSAR volunteers to assist in the response to Christchurch quake.
- Work continues on analysing training needs and wants.
- Work continues on brand development – uniform and membership identifications.

#### **c) SLSNZ**

- SLSNZ are concerned about the large number of drownings over the summer, many at remote locations.

**d) AREC**

- No Issues to report, apart from substantial involvement with the response efforts for the Christchurch earthquake.

**5. Sector Update**

This sector update provides the opportunity for organisations to brief the meeting on notable issues within their organisations. This included a focus on support and learning's from the Christchurch earthquake response.

**Ambulance New Zealand**

The Air Ambulance / Air Rescue standard has been fully endorsed and published for circulation.

The Christchurch earthquake had a significant toll on ambulance services. Generally the ambulance service can expect to get around 1,000 calls a day, immediately following the earthquake 1,000 calls an hour were experienced.

An Air Desk was established in Auckland to coordinate air ambulance services. This was the first time this has happened.

**Mountain Safety Council**

Preventative safety messaging is now active and visible for those looking to partake in adventures in the outdoors. The recent messaging has a particular aim at hunters/duck shooters at this time of year. MSC has recorded a number of active rescues which they believe were possible because of the safety messaging.

Winter adventure programmes continue to gear up which means a busy time for the MSC.

MSC is currently working with the recreation sector in implementing the recommendations of the Department of Labour's review of Adventure Tourism. MSC brought this to the attention of the group as some findings/recommendations may be of interest.

**LandSAR**

LandSAR had their largest ever mobilisation when they assisted with the response to the Christchurch earthquake. A total of 29,000 volunteer hours was recorded. LandSAR are currently working on their incident review report and extended a thank you to members from the Coastguard team for their assistance with this.

LandSAR are currently exploring new revenue streams and will be trying to capture some of the spirit from the Christchurch disaster as a way of receiving donations/funding for their work.

**Maritime Operations Centre**

The Christchurch earthquake caused a 1-2 second blip over the maritime radio network. The network was protected and re-routed as necessary, and was not adversely affected by the earthquake. MOC expressed some concerns about the tsunami threat following the Japan earthquake. The Oceanic Tsunami alert

ran to 7 pages in length. MOC thanked MNZ for its assistance with promulgating the tsunami warnings.

MOC is experiencing some deliberate interference on one of the HF distress frequencies, which is currently being investigated.

## **DOC**

There has been little SAR work for the DOC teams recently. Work continues around the preventative messaging (visitor intention) programme. DOC had a large contingent of staff/volunteers working on the Christchurch earthquake response.

DOC will run a debrief of this over the next few days and will meet to discuss the review and the national and local responses.

## **Air Industry Association**

'Air Care' code of practice is about to be launched, this will include new rules around Noise and Chemical Spraying. Currently working on a standard for fire fighting.

## **Surf Life Saving NZ**

The celebration for the 'Century of Life Saving' road-show is about to near completion.

SLSNZ is nearing the end of its 5 year strategic plan so work has begun on looking at the next 5 years – the organisation isn't expecting big changes to their main focus.

SLSNZ have experienced a busy summer with too many drownings in remote areas. People drinking and swimming with clothes on in remote areas are one of the biggest problems that need's addressing. The Water Safety Code has been completed and this looks to incorporate integrated safety messages and education around water safety.

The SLSNZ building in Sumner in Christchurch was severely damaged by the earthquake and therefore condemned. Two other buildings were also condemned and other facilities have some minor damage. This obviously creates some obstacles for SLSNZ. One of SLSNZ biggest roles during the earthquake response was ensuring people weren't swimming in contaminated water. The Japan earthquake tsunami warning created problems for SLSNZ as it was right in the middle of the SLSNZ National Championships and took around 2,000 people off the beach.

## **Coastguard**

Coastguard has some concerns regarding inconsistent messaging around Tsunamis warnings after the Japanese earthquake. Further discussion on this will take place outside this forum.

Coastguard experienced a busy summer – however there was a drop off in the larger scale 'crisis' but an increase in the smaller incidents such as boats breaking down or running out of petrol. This is a frustration for the Coastguard and will hopefully be addressed with the new preventative boating messages.

Work continues on the assessing of risks for bar crossings. Coastguard and SLSNZ are working together on this and will be assessing at least 30 bars across NZ.

Current consolidation of roles and positions continues throughout Coastguard due to the review of the national structure.

### **RCCNZ**

The response to the Christchurch earthquake was focussed on marine and port issues. There was no direct involvement on the rescue activities.

The recent search for a missing micro light had a fantastic response from the sector and from NZDF.

Paul Craven has been hired to the newly established position of Operational Support Officer, to strengthen the support side of RCCNZ.

A Value for Money review is to begin in the new financial year.

### **CAA**

CAA had no direct role in the response to the Christchurch earthquake. CAA provided input to the Transport Response Team. They also restricted air space, waived requirements for foreign aid aircraft, and waived medical certificate rules for NZ pilots involved in the response.

### **AREC**

The roll out of VHF and UHF radios continues throughout NZ. There is a need to focus on accurate and substantive reporting. AREC assisted the communications network during the Christchurch earthquake response, with relay stations in Auckland and Masterton to provide communications to Akaroa. AREC provided around 800 volunteer hours.

### **NZDF**

NZDF provided substantial levels of support to the response for the Christchurch earthquake. The Air Force provided a significant amount of transport flights, of both rescue personnel and cargo, and also used a P3K Orion to provide overhead imagery. The Navy was used to survey the harbour and port areas, and to transport larger items of rescue and response equipment to Christchurch. The Army was used to provide cordon support, and Burnham Army Camp was used for DVI.

During this time, NZDF assets were also on standby for SAR as required. NZDF is normally exceeding its SAR budget each year.

### **Police**

Police are currently making some updates to their database, working on SAREX planning for the coming year, and updating the SAR chapter of the Police manual.

Many of the Police SAR staff have been involved in the Christchurch earthquake response, mainly in their DVI capacity. Police have 150 staff on 14 day rotations assisting in Christchurch till at least early July.

The value of CIMS was apparent in the response to both the Pike River Mine disaster, and the Christchurch earthquake. Police are still looking at the lessons learnt from these two incidents. These have highlighted the need for Police to be able to run long-term operations in a sustainable manner.

### **Australian Maritime Safety Authority (Amanda MacKinnell)**

Amanda expressed her sympathies for New Zealanders that have been affected by the Pike River Mine disaster and Christchurch earthquake. Australia has recently been affected by flooding, cyclones, and bushfires which have been moderately large scale incidents.

Amanda briefed the meeting that SAR in Australia is organised across 8 disparate States and Territories, with one annual national meeting each year (including observers from NZSAR). AMSA hosts the Australian RCC.

Two of the main SAR issues that Australia is currently dealing with are:

1. Suspect illegal Entry Vessels – these vessels pose a significant risk, as was shown on 15 December 2010 when an illegal vessel sank with the loss of at least 30 lives. The coroner has raised concerns that the responsible agency (AFP) does not have marine SAR qualifications. This is already being addressed by the Australian National SAR Council.
2. Dementia related searches – these are increasing at a very large rate across Australia. A national working group has been established to identify strategies to deal with this issue.

Australia is also working on national standards for training, and expressed concern that the flood levies will cause donations to dry up, which could adversely affect volunteer coastal rescue groups.

The Australian beacon database has 200,000 registered beacons, with 8,000 activations in the last year. There are some issues around hoax/malicious beacon activations.

It will not be long before the batteries in 406MHz beacons will start to require replacing. It is unclear whether people will replace batteries or purchase new beacons. If people purchase new beacons, a risk is that old beacons may be disposed off incorrectly, leading to more refuse searches.

### **SARINZ (written report provided)**

SARINZ Staff has been extremely busy supporting operational callouts; the Christchurch earthquake in Feb saw every member of SARINZ involved in the response and recovery efforts (Including initial response on the Tuesday night, Operation Sumner, Operation Redcliff, Operation West and Operation Rubble). A number of staff have also been used operationally throughout the country within their own personal SAR groups.

SARINZ did notice a considerable drop in substantive training over this period but this is steadily increasing with record numbers attending entry level SAR training events (this past weekend saw a record number of 36 SAR volunteers at one entry level course).

SARINZ has noted a requirement for continuation training and are working with its partners to meet this demand for all SAR sector groups. All up 57 training events are scheduled to be delivered in the next 3 months, across the sector both nationally and internationally.

SARINZ will be working to continue to offer support to SAR members to meet training and non-training needs wherever we can. Feedback from stakeholders for the training events to this point has been extremely positive, and is a credit to the passion and dedication of all involved (Trainees, Tutors, National bodies, Volunteers, and Staff).

## **6. Strategic Discussion – Pike River and Christchurch Earthquake incidents**

A strategic discussion was held to reflect on the Pike River Mine disaster and the Christchurch earthquake. The aim of the discussion was to address:

- What did we learn?
- What can we do better?

The Secretariat Manager introduced the discussion by asking how we can improve relationships across the whole of the Emergency Management (EM) sector – including SAR. He had a follow up question on what does good practice look like?

Alan Walker from MCDEM then provided a brief overview of how the CDEM sector is organised, along Regional, then Group, then National levels. Operations to respond to events are delivered by the appropriate Territorial Local Authority. For the Christchurch earthquake (Feb 22) the scale and complexity of the event and response required escalated the responsibility for the operation to the National level, via a National Declaration. This is the first time that this has happened in New Zealand. The February earthquake was considerably different to the September 2010 earthquake, and required a much higher level of response.

Some general discussion followed. Some of the identified learning's from the SAR sector about the earthquake response are:

- It is difficult to work with another organisation (CDEM) if you have never worked or trained with them previously.
- It is imperative that you get to know other organisations/partners before an incident occurs.
- CDEM needs to understand SAR, and SAR needs to understand CDEM.
- There must be a full understanding of available resources and capabilities, both at the local and national levels.

Alan Walker responded with the following lessons that will help achieve the stated goal of good practice for collaboration between the SAR and CDEM sectors:

- It is critical to ensure that available resources are made known to the correct level, given the hierarchical structure of the CDEM sector.
- There can be no self-tasking into a disaster area.
- Local and regional relationships between the SAR and CDEM sectors are critical, and need to be established and maintained.

The discussion then shifted focus to the response to the Pike River Mine disaster. The Police advised that the very unusual nature of this incident led to questions of who should take the role as the lead agency. The other major issue in this incident is the extraordinary length of time of the operation. There were many logistical challenges for the Police in responding to the Pike River Mine incident.

There was a lot of media interest in this event (as well as the Christchurch earthquake). The level of media interest made managing communications difficult.

The Pike River Mine disaster and the Christchurch earthquake have led to the Police doing more from Police National Head Quarters than they previously have. The Police are analysing the functions that are required, and what can be done by Police National Head Quarters during these types of incidents and emergencies.

MCDEM has almost completed a set of guidelines outlining the capabilities required by the various Response Teams around the country, including the need to be self-reliant for up to 7 days.

The Chair summarised the discussion on the lessons learned from these two incidents. He expanded on the need for the SAR and CDEM sectors to identify opportunities that will enhance local, regional, and national level networks, and create a fuller understanding of the whole Emergency Management sector. The logistical challenges of large scale incidents highlight the importance of having a cohesive and collaborative Emergency Management sector.

The NZSAR Secretariat was asked to take the lead in identifying the appropriate relationships between the SAR and CDEM sectors, and to follow up on the learning's identified.

## **7. SAR Discussion – Prevention, a Shared Responsibility**

The chair deferred this item to the next meeting due to time constraints.

## **8. National SAR Support Programme 2010/2011 Update**

### *NZSAR Technology Challenge*

- Completed in December 2010
- This highlighted the need for robust processes when considering new technologies “tools, not toys”
- Emerging technologies
  - Video collaboration packages
  - UAS (Uninhabited Aerial Systems)

### *NZSAR Training and Education Workshop*

- Completed in March 2011
- Discussed
  - NZ Qualifications framework
  - Knowledge management



- Maintaining skills currency (this topic could be expanded as there wasn't enough time to cover it thoroughly at the workshop)
- Annual SAREX planning session
- OSC, IMC/M training development update
- Training needs analysis and design
- Successful workshop with consensus on future developments

#### *Aviation Workshop*

- Organised by RCCNZ
- To be held 24/25 May 2011
- The programme is currently under development

#### *Training Development*

- On Scene Coordinators
  - Initial course development complete
  - Pilot course being held 18 – 21 April
  - Initial course to be held 27 – 30 June.
- SAR Manager/Controllers
  - Training analysis and gap identification underway.

#### *SAR Prevention*

- Primarily positioned to inform the inbound visitor.
- Outdoor and Boating safety codes were widely distributed for Summer
- [www.adventuresmart.org.nz](http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz) now live
- Advertisements placed (Boaties book, Little Green Kiwi)
- Visitor intentions system being worked on.

#### *Air Observer Training/Refresher*

- A number of courses run over the summer and autumn period
- Some delays caused by the weather and large scale incidents

#### *Support to Police SAREXs*

- Only some of the SAREX support funding utilised
- Will continue to work with Police to improve overall SAREX quality.

#### *Avalanche SAR pre-Plan Guidelines*

- Complete
- To be launched at the MSC avalanche conference 10 June 2011.
- Good model for the rest of SAR?

## **9. National SAR Support Programme 2011/2012**

- Training Development (continued)
- SAREX support (incl large SAREX)
- Workshops – Marine, Wander and Hoist
- Prevention Activity
- SAR Evaluation / Moderation support and guidelines
- Wander study/plan
- Insurance / liability study / plan
- Aviation flight following guidelines
- Air Observer Training and Refresher
- Pre plan and debrief guidelines Land/Marine
- National SAR self assessment
- Video Conferencing trial

## **10. General Business**

### **Police SAR Review Update**

This is still in draft form and currently with the Commissioner. This was delayed due to the Pike River disaster and Christchurch earthquake.

### **Helicopter Human Slings Load Operations**

The CAA advised the meeting that some helicopter airframes have not been approved by the manufacturers to allow their hook to be used for Human Slings Load (HSL) operations. They have recently written to helicopter operators outlining the need for HSL operations to be conducted only if their airframe is certified appropriately.

Some questions were raised about the process required to have an airframe approved for HSL operations, and the limitations that this could have on SAR.

Further discussion on this issue is to be held outside of the formal meeting, with the CAA asked to take into consideration the concerns raised by the SAR sector.

### **2010 NZSAR Awards**

The awards are being held this evening in the Grand Hall at Parliament, 5.30pm. Thanks were extended to those who were involved in the panel judging the nominations.

#### Gold Award:

Cpt Greg Lyall and crew of F.V/ Amaltal Atlantis.

#### Certificates of Achievement:

- i. The Helicopter Line
- ii. Larry Charles
- iii. Harry Stevenson, Dave Greenberg, Peter Collins, W/O Darren Smith
- iv. Coastguard Kaikoura

## Beacons

There are currently 24,712 beacons registered in NZ. Australia and NZ are a lot further ahead in beacon registrations than most other countries. NZ averages 400 new registrations every month.

**Meeting ended** – 3.35pm

## Next Meetings:

13 July – NZSAR Consultative Committee

3 August – NZSAR Council

Martin Matthews  
Chair, NZSAR Council

<b>Actions Arising</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>6. Strategic Discussion – Pike River and ChCh Earthquake Incidents</b>	NZSAR Secretariat to take the lead in identifying the appropriate relationships between the SAR and CDEM sectors, and to follow up on the learning's identified during the strategic discussion.	NZSAR Secretariat
<b>11. General Business – Helicopter Human Sling Load Operations</b>	Discussion on this issue is to be continued outside the meeting, with the CAA asked to take into consideration the issues raised by the SAR sector.	CAA