



MOSR5-3

17 May 2013

NZSAR SECRETARIAT AND COORDINATING AUTHORITY APPROACH TO HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

The Search and Rescue (SAR) sector is invaluable in New Zealand. Operated predominantly by volunteers, the SAR sector is responsible for the search and rescue of nearly 2,400 people annually.

Those involved with the SAR sector – our volunteers and the paid employees from the SAR organisations, are critical to the success of the SAR sector. We the coordinating authorities (Rescue Co-ordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) and the New Zealand Police) recognize that ensuring the health and safety of those in the SAR sector is essential for our long-term sustainability.

Our commitment

We are committed to ensuring all people working in the SAR sector, whether on a paid or voluntary basis, are kept healthy and safe during their activities with us.

We are in the business of searching for and rescuing people – often from dangerous situations or locations. We require all SAR organisations – formal or informal, who provide us with people and expertise to have the capability to manage the health and safety of their people (volunteers or otherwise).

We will not put SAR peoples' lives at unacceptable and unnecessary risk while they are carrying out activities for us, and we will therefore not tolerate or engage the services of SAR organisations or people who are unable to demonstrate that they have the capability to manage health and safety during their activities for us.

To ensure good health and safety performance in the SAR sector, we;

- Support continuous improvement in health and safety performance through the facilitation of information sharing and communication across the sector
- Operate a strategic health and safety committee which meets twice per year to discuss health and safety performance across the sector, and makes recommendations for improvement

Our expectations for all organisations that regularly participate in co-ordinated Search and Rescue Operations (SAROPs)

We have outlined our minimum expectations to ensure all organisations regularly involved in SAROPs co-ordinated by RCCNZ or the NZ Police have the capability to manage health and safety. We expect all SAR organisations to:

- Know the limits of their expertise and capability, and to only take on SAR tasks or activities which will not put the lives of their volunteers, employees or others at unacceptable risk.
- Meet all legal requirements for the management of health and safety
- Systematically manage health and safety. This may involve having set processes or procedures, for example:
 - Health and safety policy.
 - Procedures for the systematic identification of hazards and the assessment and control of associated risk.
 - Accident reporting, recording and investigation procedures.
 - Training and supervision procedures for employees and volunteers.
 - Methods to stay up to date with health and safety information and developments.
 - Emergency procedures and plans.
 - Contractor health and safety management procedures – if you contract or subcontract any work to other parties.
- Train volunteers and employees in health and safety principles and application, as relevant to their activities.
- Ensure volunteers and employees maintain licenses, qualifications or certification as required for their SAR role.
- Report and record all serious harm injuries which occur during a coordinated SAR operation to the enforcing authority in line with statutory requirements.
- Report and record all serious harm injuries and incidents which involve their volunteers or employees to the NZSAR Secretariat.
- Require the SAR organisations that provide SAR services on a regular basis to report their performance against key indicators annually or on request.
- Require all regular volunteer organisations in the SAR sector to provide us with verification of their health and safety management capability on request.

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NZSAR STRATEGIC OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The SAR sector is diverse both geographically and in terms of operations and expertise. With over 90 organisations (formal and informal) providing SAR expertise and people during coordinated SAROPs, ensuring the health and safety performance of the sector is complex.

To provide oversight of health and safety performance, and to ensure consistency, continual improvement and support, a NZSAR Strategic Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) steering committee has been implemented.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the operating processes for the Committee including:

1. How the Chair and Secretary are identified
2. How representatives are identified
3. The roles and responsibilities of the representatives with respect to the committee
4. The roles and responsibilities of the committee
5. Meeting procedures including the agenda and minutes
6. Reports to be sent to the committee prior to the meetings
7. Outputs from the committee

The ToR document for the committee is reviewed on an annual basis.

Purpose

The purpose of the OHS committee is to encourage a planned and structured discussion about health and safety management across the sector enabling opportunities for improvement to be identified.

The aim is to encourage a cooperative approach between the coordinating authorities and the SAR organisations, their volunteers and employees.

The members of the committee are ambassadors for health and safety. They work in partnership with the NZSAR Secretariat to endorse and provide feedback on the strategic direction of health and safety in the sector, and assist to plan and implement health and safety actions and initiatives.

The strategic health and safety committee will consider and make recommendations to the NZSAR Council and to SAR Organisations on:

- Methods for improving the way health and safety is managed in the SAR Sector, or within specific SAR organisations.
- Any matter relevant to health and safety raised by employees, volunteers or others.
- Ways to communicate health and safe issues to the sector.
- Any incidents or near miss events.
- Health and safety training requirements.
- Potential health and safety issues associated with changes to operational practices or new equipment / assets.
- Actual or potential issues relating to hazard management.

Membership of the committee

The number and composition of the committee is agreed with the SAR organisations, and modified from time to time to reflect operational or sector changes. The members of the committee include:

1. NZSAR Secretariat
2. RCCNZ
3. NZ Police
4. Surf Lifesaving
5. Coastguard
6. LandSAR
7. Ambulance NZ

Other representatives may be invited to a meeting by the NZSAR Secretariat, or as agreed at the previous meeting.

1.1.1 Meeting procedures

- The Committee will meet twice per calendar year.
- Three representatives must be present to make up a quorum for meetings.
- An agenda will be sent out two weeks prior to the meeting by the NZSAR Secretariat. The agenda will include as a minimum:
 - The sectors health and safety performance.
 - Health and safety objectives for the following 6 months.
 - Review of previous health and safety objectives.
 - Actions and resources required to improve health and safety performance.

- Prior to each meeting a progress and performance report will be sent to all representatives. This report will outline as a minimum:
 - The health and safety performance information required through SLA / MoU agreements, as well as from those organisations specifically requested to provide data.
 - Results of health and safety visits or audits undertaken since the previous meeting.
 - Health and safety incident reports for the sector.
 - Progress against pre-determined objectives.
- Minutes will be taken at each meeting, and these will be sent out to all representatives within 4 weeks of the meeting.
- The minutes of each meeting will be sent to the next NZSAR Council meeting for their information and consideration.
- The committee will review the health and safety committees' terms of reference each year.
- If there is a failure to agree on any item brought before the committee, or where the proposed resolution of any matter has cost implications beyond the authority of those present, the committee will refer the matter to the Council for determination and the Councils' decision on the matter will be final.

1.1.2 Responsibilities of SAR organisation representatives:

The roles and responsibilities for the representatives are:

- Promoting a safe and healthy working environment by championing the health and safety message throughout their organisations.
- Disseminating information from the strategic health and safety committee to their organisations.
- Being an essential point of contact for NZSAR Secretariat and the strategic health and safety committee to discuss their health and safety concerns and ideas relating to their SAR organisation.
- Attending the strategic health and safety committee meetings and arranging a replacement in their absence.
- Assisting or participating in health and safety management system reviews and audits where required.
- Setting health and safety objectives for the sector.
- Preparation and readiness for committee meetings to ensure constructive contribution.
- Completion of agreed action points assigned to them.

1.1.3 Responsibilities of the strategic health and safety committee Chairperson

The Chair of the committee is responsible for:

- Planning and running all meetings.

- Ensuring that meeting goals are achieved.
- Being the official representative of the group at NZSAR Council meetings as required.
- Liaising with the secretary concerning arrangements and agendas for the meetings.
- Starting the meeting on time and keeping to time limits allowing reasonable time for each agenda item.
- Facilitating discussion during the meeting encouraging all members to participate.
- Bringing items on the agenda to a conclusion with a brief review of points (may involve inviting proposals/decisions from the committee).
- If a vote has to be taken the chair clarifies the voting procedure and in the event of a tie the chairperson may have the casting vote.

1.1.4 Responsibilities of the strategic health and safety committee Secretary

The responsibilities of the secretary are:

- Noting all correspondence (in and out) on the agenda for the forthcoming meeting.
- Collating and maintaining an up to date membership list and changing the email distribution list to reflect this.
- Writing up and distributing the minutes as soon as possible following meetings.
- Convening meetings and prepare agendas.
- Consulting with committee members over items to be included on the agenda.
- Recording the names of those in attendance and apologies for non attendance.
- Ensuring there is a quorum.

1.2 Training for the health and safety committee members

- Each Representative will be provided with health and safety principles and practice training that is agreed as beneficial and relevant to the role.

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DRAFT CLAUSES FOR SLA AGREEMENTS

Police and Rescue Co-ordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ)

- Require the operator to verify their capability to manage health and safety during Search and Rescue (SAR) activities
- May periodically assess or re-verify the health and safety management capability of the operator and any contractors or subcontractors to the operator, through any means they deem appropriate
- Will provide the operator with any health and safety information specific to the particular SAR operation for which the operator's services are being engaged. This information, where relevant, will be provided at the time of engagement to enable the operator to determine whether they have the capability to undertake the activity safely

SLA PARTNER XXXX

- Agree to comply with all legal requirements and standards that apply to the provision of the services or assets provided during co-ordinated SAR activities
- Will develop and maintain systems to manage the health and safety of employees, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors during co-ordinated SAR activities
- Will ensure that all employees, volunteers, representatives, contractors and subcontractors are properly trained and have the necessary competence to undertake their tasks in a healthy and safe way
- Will report all serious harm incidents sustained in the course of activities provided under this agreement to the enforcing authority in line with statutory reporting requirements
- Will report all serious harm incidents sustained in the course of activities provided under this agreement to the NZSAR Secretariat as soon as possible after the event
- Agree to permit access at a mutually agreed time to the Police, RCCNZ or their nominated representative for the purpose of verifying any aspect of the operators' activities or systems relevant to meeting the health and safety requirements of this agreement
- Will report health and safety performance data to NZSAR annually or on request
- Will participate in the NZSAR Strategic Health and Safety Committee on request

Performance reporting

The operator agrees to report the following information to NZSAR on an annual basis or on request:

- Number of health and safety incidents recorded over the past 12 months
- Any health and safety enforcement activity which has occurred over the past 12 months
- The number of people provided with health and safety training over the past 12 months
- The results of any internal or external health and safety audits