

Gisborne SAR

Ruatoria SAREX

26th May 2017

Evaluation



Not taken during SAREX

Summary:

Operation Jarden was a scenario based SAREX based on the foothills Mount Hikurangi, Ruatoria on the 26th – 28th of June 2017. The exercise simulated a Cat 1 SAROP initiated by next of kin in Wairoa. The party of three were due out Thursday the 25th and Police were alerted at 2.00p.m on the 26th after being 24hrs overdue. The weather was represented as being unsuitable for Helicopter requiring ground teams to be deployed into the SE foothills of Hikurangi.

The missing party were carrying rifles and a PLB, but there had been no activation at the time of deployment. Their intention were to hunt the Environs of Matahiia, Waingikia and Hukanui stations back to the foot of Mount Hikurangi.

An ICP was established at the Tairāwhiti Police station at 1400hrs. Communication with the field teams was via VHF DOC 5 and Cell phone. SARTRACK was also used for the first time by the Gisborne volunteer group.

Police SAR dog was used initially to try and get DOT form the LKP, but unfortunately they were unable to pick up a track.

Police and LandSAR teams deployed in to the search area on the evening of the 26th and the morning of the 27th May.

PLB was activated on the evening of the 27th and the lost parties were located on the morning of the 28th of June. One of the missing party was in pain due to severe stomach cramps and Diarrhoea. Patient assessed and after treating the patient, the locating search party was able to assist the missing back to safety.

All search teams were extracted from the search area and a hot debrief was conducted at the Matahiia woolshed. The SAREX concluded at 1400 hrs.

Objectives for the exercise

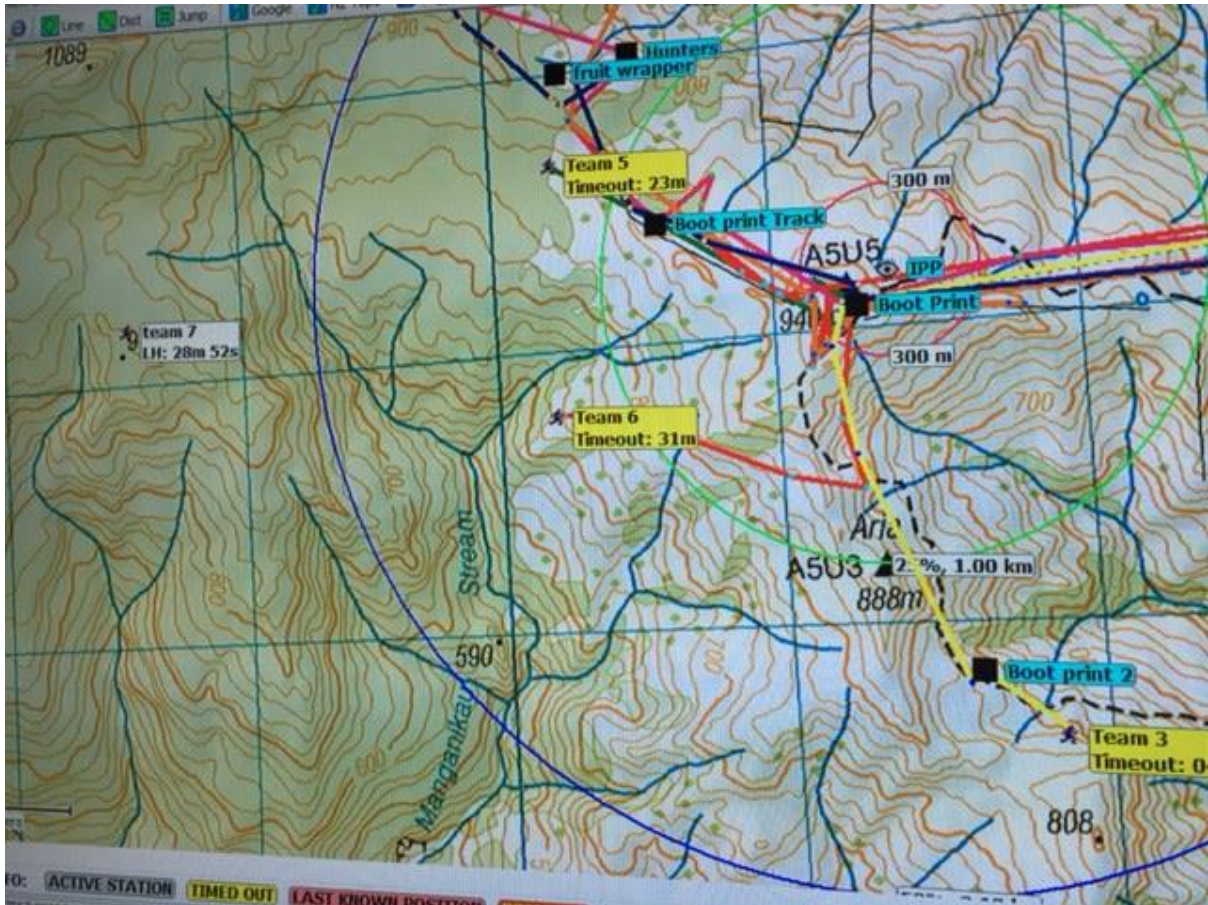
1. To test the incident management teams ability to manage missing hunter/tourist incidents from a remote base.
2. To test SAR pre-plan for missing hunter/tourist in the Ruatoria area.
3. To practice and test capability of search Resources.
4. To practise and test the use of SARTRACK and DF gear.
5. To familiarise search teams with the terrain and environs of the Ruatoria area.

Observations

Observations of the SAREX was conducted by Snr Const Tony MAULTSAID alongside Mike Spray and James O'Connell of Wairoa SAR. Scenario was designed and prepared by Snr Const Tony Maultsaid.

Key Findings

1. The exercise was based on a plausible scenario, given the increase of hunters/Tourists visiting the area.
2. Terrain, uncertainty of weather, access difficulties and Comms made it a worthy exercise to confirm and adapt response plans in the event of genuine SAROP.
3. There was some uncertainty regarding the role definitions in the IMT, however this was worked out and by the end of the exercise they were working as a good team. As a three Person IMT, there is always going to be a crossover of roles which I don't believe is an issues as long as everyone can work together and agree on common ground.
4. Local knowledge is great to have and a valuable asset, however it can't be allowed to interfere or take precedence over Process and Search planning
5. Comms worked very well even though there were some black spots which could have possibly been alleviated by the use of a portable repeater.
6. The use of an overhead projector, wallcharts and white boards were used to good effect and any incoming IMT or other person could get a good appreciation as to what was happening with the search before being briefed.
7. MSU were very well prepared and nothing was impossible even with the introduction of SARTRACK in to their role for the first time.
8. SARTRACK was introduced to the group for the first time and was well receive, further use and training will explore the full ability of SARTRACK and it functions.
9. Training PLB activation occurred on the evening of the 27th. Hand held DF gear was in the field, unfortunately one search team had both DF aerials, and a signal was eventually received. Further training on the use of the DF gear will ensure competent users in this field.



Debrief Notes

ICP

What went well?

- SAREX Objectives achieved
- SAR-Track visually impressive
- Comms went very well
- IMT communicated well
- MSU did a very good job
- Wall charts and visuals excellent

What could be improved upon?

- More role clarity in the IMT
- Allocate time to check that all SAR functions are operating effectively and staff are happy (Pulse check)
- Field team members were waiting for a long time before deployment
- More formal planning
- Trial of PLB tracker - slow to work but eventually activated
- SAR-Track a disruption to Radio Ops (Comms)
- Need to maintain paper flow and not let SAR-Track disrupt that
- Be mindful that a SAREX is not a real search (Logistics)
- Put field team members on standby so they wait at home and not at ICP

Debrief Cont.

Comms Team

What could be improved upon?

- Did not have a second base set to monitor the back-up channel. There is a second base set available in the cupboard of the SAR Operations Room.
- No HF radio set up in ICP.
- Lack of discipline in radio procedures EG Ops Manager getting on the radio and have a conversation without recording the detail.
- Comms staff were instructed to ask Teams for more information EG Get more detail e.g. D.O.T, Look Around, and thoughts on new taskings. These are items that the Team Leaders should be considering and giving in their sitreps. Not for Comms staff to be asking these questions.
- There was no telephone in the Comms room.
- The team was unfamiliar with SAR-Track and found it difficult to use both SAR Track and paper based systems.
- We need to develop a better picture of VHF coverage in Tairawhiti. Develop a plan to identify VHF radio coverage for Tairawhiti.
- DOC 99 is not loaded into the SAR Radios.

Management Support Unit

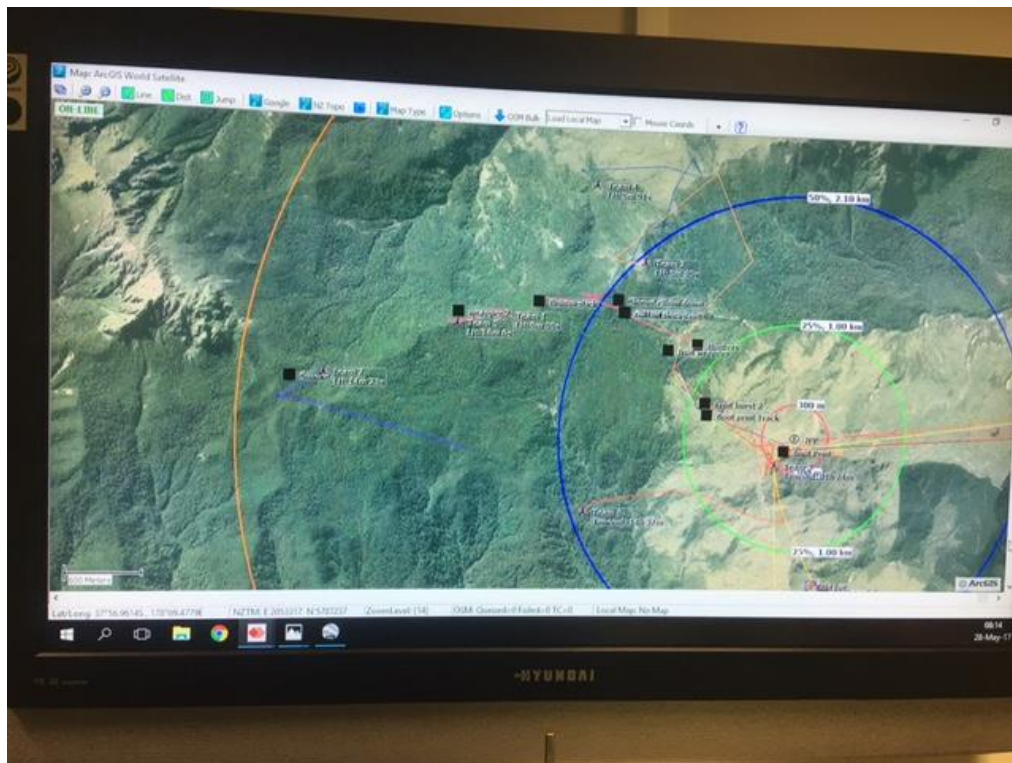
What could be Improve upon?

- Clarity of roles and the structure is important for the effective running of an operation, evening in a training setting. Some practices by the IMT managers creating ill feeling and confusion at times. MSU are training regularly but they are not being joined by those who take on Operations, Planning, and Intelligence roles. IMT need to train together.
- Team management issues identified EG gap in knowledge of how long MSU members are available for deployment,
- MSU asking to help with catering. Gisborne SAR have a caterer and he should be requested to help at the ICP and/or for the field teams as needed.

Field

What could be improved upon?

- Delays in tasking
- Some issues with Comms



Conclusion

Worthwhile exercise testing response to a remote location with a high possibility for the future Jobs in the area. Good familiarity exercise for the terrain and location.

In the past there have been a couple of SAROP's on and around Hikurangi and with the ever increasing number of tourists and hunters in the area there is a high probability of an increase in SAROPS in the area.

The use of Training PLB and hand held DF highlighted the need for further training in the event that definitive coordinates are not obtained in a PLB activation.

SARTRACK was an interesting tool to observe for the first time and I believe as MSU and IMT become more familiar with it functions it can only be of benefit in future SAROP'S



Evaluators

Tony MAULTSAID

SAR Coordinator

Wairoa

James O'Connell

SAR Chairman

Wairoa

Mike Spray

SAR training Coordinator

Wairoa

Actions List

Item	Description	When?	Who
1	<p>a. Set training objectives for the IMT for the next 12 months: EG proficient in application of CIMS roles, build unity between the various IMT functions, etc.</p> <p>b. Build capability of Gisborne SAR with SAR-Track and its application across all SAR functions.</p> <p>c. Gisborne SAR to become proficient in use of PLB trackers.</p> <p>d. Team leaders to be enabled and have enhance leadership with in-field deployment</p>	<p>01/08/17</p> <p>01/03/18</p> <p>01/03/18</p> <p>01/03/18</p>	Gisborne SAR Training committee
2	<p>a. The Police Radio base-set in the SAROP Room is portable and SAR-Track capable.</p> <p>b. Investigate the possibility of installing a second VHF aerial in the SAROP room in the Gisborne Police Station.</p>	<p>01/08/17</p> <p>01/08/17</p>	Police IT
3	<p>a. Set up HF remote access using Broadband.</p> <p>b. Load channel DOC 99 into the all SAR VHF Radios. Investigate the same for the Police SAR Radios.</p> <p>c. Investigate the need to identify VHF coverage (service providers, access, etc.) in the Tairawhiti area.</p>	01/03/18	Gisborne SAR Comms Manager and Police IT
4	a. Implement SOP for phone to be patched into Comms Room (Vid Conference Rm) as required.	ASAP	Police