

Canterbury Marine Exercise

26th July 2015



*Report written by Mark Whitehouse
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	3
Key findings.....	3
Key Recommendations.....	3
Background.....	4
Objectives for the Exercise.....	4
Observation.....	4
Scenario.....	5
Summary	6
Abbreviations.....	7

On Sunday 26th July 2015 Mark Whitehouse, Operations Manager, Coastguard Southern Region evaluated elements of a marine search and rescue exercise in the Christchurch area. The aim of the exercise was to test how multiple search and rescue agencies can work together effectively. How their Standing Operating Procedures work together and identify any changes needed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the local response.

KEY FINDINGS

1. SARNET was used at the IMT and on at least one vessel. This is an excellent communication tool and well utilised by all users.
2. Not all assets were set up to use SARNET and needed individual tablets on the vessels
3. The IMT did not have plotting equipment to plot search area determination.
4. Wet crew need to get a better understanding on the difficulties encountered in the IMT to get a different perspective on what happens on shore.
5. Tracplus 2 software needs to installed on Laptops in the IMT.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Coastguard to make funding applications for x 3 Tablets/iPad to be used on PCCR, Kaiapoi 1 and Blue Arrow.
2. Plotting gear plus the Red Boat book and Marine SAR Manual needs to secured in the EOC in the SAR box - **completed**
3. Wet crews and shore staff need to exchange roles often so a full appreciation of roles and challenges are made.
4. IMT Laptops to be loaded with TracPlus 2 software – **completed**

BACKGROUND

Periodically Coastguard and other SAR agencies participate in exercises that consider or simulate a real life situation. The aims of these exercises are to improve operational readiness and identify any gaps or weaknesses in all SAR participating agencies. They also clarify roles, demonstrate agency capabilities and provide a sound training platform.

The scenario was initiated by a flare sighting north of Port Levy off Banks Peninsula. This constituted a Category I SAR Operation which was led by local Police.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE EXERCISE

The three main objectives for the exercise which were:

- To enhance multi-agency and inter-group coordination between the Police and Coastguard and their support agencies and personnel within the area in the event of a marine search and rescue incident.
- To provide all participants the opportunity to refresh and practice their search and rescue incident management knowledge and skills during a full scale operational exercise. To identify gaps in training and knowledge and procedures and areas that require further development.
- To ensure value is delivered for all personnel involved.

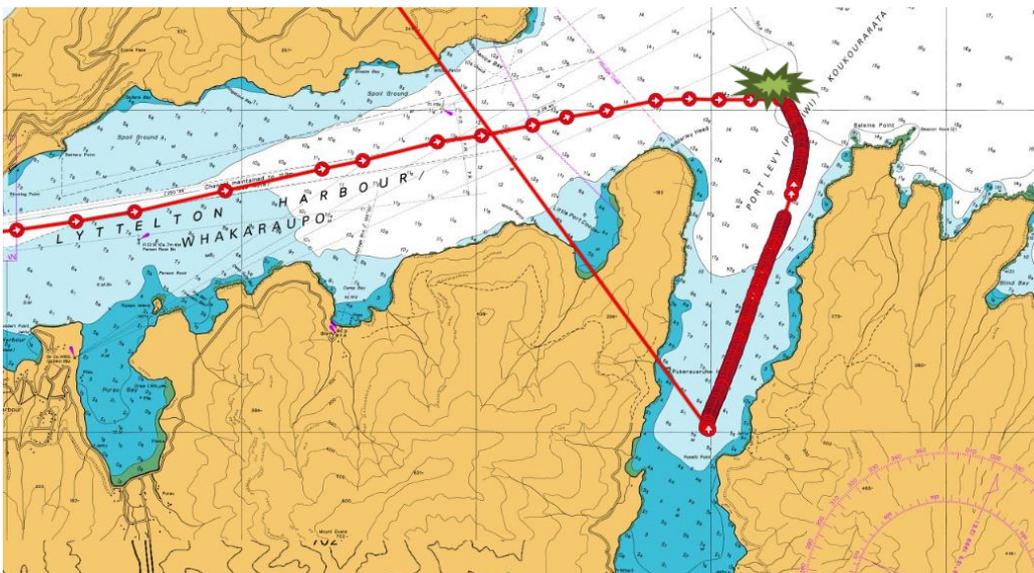
OBSERVATION

Mark Whitehouse who was also the Exercise Coordinator observed parts of the exercise and participated in running the scenarios for the exercise. Observations were made at the designated Incident Control point which was situated at the EOC at Christchurch main Police station. Paul Beaver who was Exercise Director also observed and ran the exercise from the Police station.

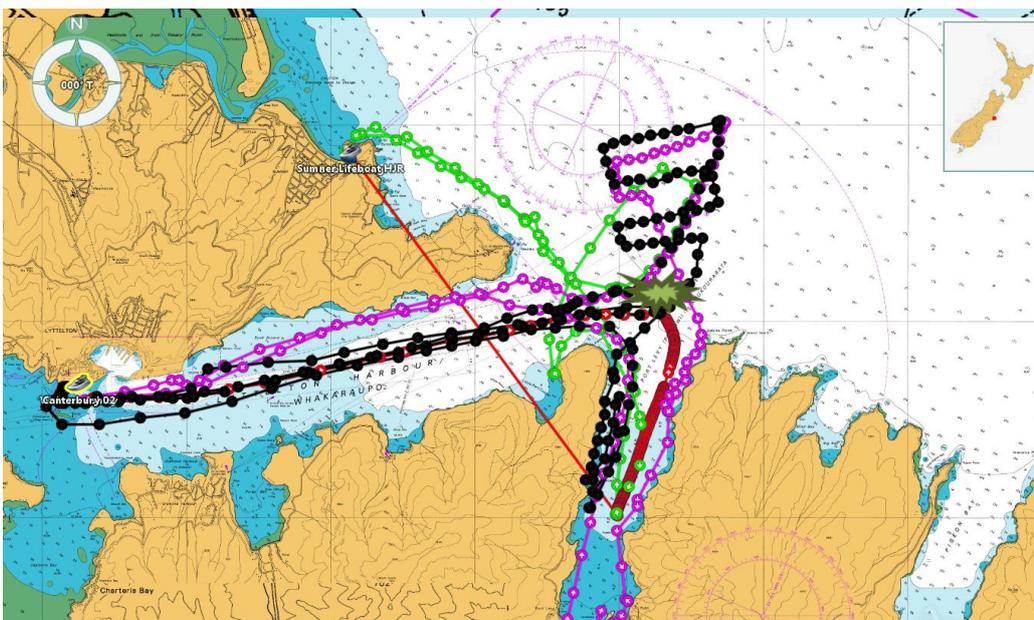
The scenario: A flare was sighted off Port Levy and after further info was gathered it was identified that potentially a vessel could be in distress.

Two manikin dummies were placed out at 0830hrs on the Sunday morning, one with TracPlus device on to track its location. See route the dummy called 'Bob' took.

The IMT assembled at the Police station at 0800hrs and the vessels were briefed for deployment not before 1000hrs. Three vessels deployed to the search area. Kaiapo 1, Pub Charity Canterbury Rescue and Hamilton Jet Rescue. See tracks below.



Bobs Trail



Vessels trails see key below

<u>Key</u>	
Splash Point/ Last Know Point (LKP)	
Green Trail Sumner Lifeboat - HJR	
Mauve Trail Coastguard Waimak – Kaiapoi 1	
Black Trail Coastguard Canterbury - PCCR	
Red Trail 'Bob '	

The weather conditions were poor with swell up to 4m and breaking caps. Vessels did their initial risk assessment and then were tasked to deploy to set up a search area with PCCR as on scene command.

Notionally Surf were conducting shore line searches.

The IMT then tasked the smallest vessel HJR to carry out a shore line search of the most probable area namely Port Levy. Kaiapoi 1 and PCCR were then directed to the area to also conduct a shoreline search in Port Levy. HJR located Bob and PCCR located the second Manikin.

ENDEX was then called and SARNET was used at Canterbury and Sumner for the IMT to debrief individual vessels crew and then as a joint SAREX debrief.

SUMMARY

To summarise this was a good well run exercise that achieved its aims. The wet crews were tested by operating in testing poor weather. The IMT were tested in incident control and made good use of the tools available to them. As always there are some issues and problems identified which is why we carry out these types of exercises in a controlled environment.

Looking back and seeing how far we have come in the Canterbury area around managing Incidents arguably Canterbury is leading the way in SAR management in the South Island and possibly nationally.

Mark Whitehouse
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Operations Manager

Dated Thursday, 20 August 2015

Abbreviations

CIMS = Co-ordinated Incident Management System

COMMS = Communications

CRV = Coastguard Rescue Vessel

DS = Exercise Directing Staff

GSMEAC = Orders format: Ground, Situation, Mission, Execution, Administration and Logistics, Command and Control

HELO = Helicopter

IAP = Incident Action Plan

IC = Incident Controller

ICP = Incident Control Point

IMT = Incident Management Team

LOGM = Logistics Manager

MLSO = Managing Land Search Operations

OG – The Other Guy which is a term used for a person who fulfils the roles of P&I and Ops and Logistics at the start of an Operation

OPSM = Operations Manager

OSC = On Scene Command

P&I = Planning and Intelligence

PIM = Planning/Intelligence Manager

POA = Probability of Area

POD = Probability of Detection

POS = Probability of Success

RCCNZ = Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand

SAR = Search and Rescue

SAREX = Search and Rescue Exercise

SAROP = Search and Rescue Operation

SMART = (normally used in conjunction to setting goals) Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable, Timely

SME = Subject Matter Experts

SAP = Stop Assess and Plan