



Cabinet Business Committee

1571
CBC Min (03) 2/14

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Minute of Decision

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National Search and Rescue Governance

On 28 January 2003 the Cabinet Business Committee:

- 1 **noted** that, as recommended by the government's Maritime Patrol Review, the Maritime Safety Authority, Police, New Zealand Defence Force, Civil Aviation Authority and Ministry of Transport have undertaken a review of all maritime search and rescue in New Zealand;
- 2 **noted** that the maritime search and rescue review has identified as a key priority the need to establish stronger strategic co-ordination and governance of all search and rescue (SAR) modes in New Zealand because it is not practicable to isolate maritime from land and air search and rescue;
- 3 **noted** that a SAR Governance Working Group has developed a SAR governance structure comprising a New Zealand SAR Council supported by a permanent Secretariat and linked through a Consultative Committee to SAR stakeholders (as set out in the attached Appendix);
- 4 **noted** that the estimated \$200,000 annual cost of running the proposed SAR Secretariat will be funded from within the participating agencies' existing baselines during an initial two year trial period;
- 5 **noted** that a proposal for dedicated long-term Crown funding of the Secretariat will be developed separately on the assumption that a successful SAR Secretariat would be retained beyond the initial period;
- 6 **noted** that further proposals arising from the review of maritime SAR will be developed once the new SAR governance measures are in place;
- 7 **agreed** that:
 - 7.1 the SAR governance structure referred to in paragraph 3 be implemented;
 - 7.2 the SAR Secretariat's functions be reviewed after two years of operation;

8 **noted** that the Minister indicates that consultation with government caucuses and other parties represented in Parliament is not required.



Sue Sharp
Secretary

Reference: CBC (03) 4

Present:

Rt Hon Helen Clark (Chair)
Hon Dr Michael Cullen
Hon Jim Anderton
Hon Steve Maharey
Hon Phil Goff
Hon Trevor Mallard
Hon Pete Hodgson
Hon Margaret Wilson
Hon Parekura Horomia
Hon Lianne Dalziel
Hon Paul Swain
Hon Marian Hobbs
Hon Ruth Dyson

Officials present from:

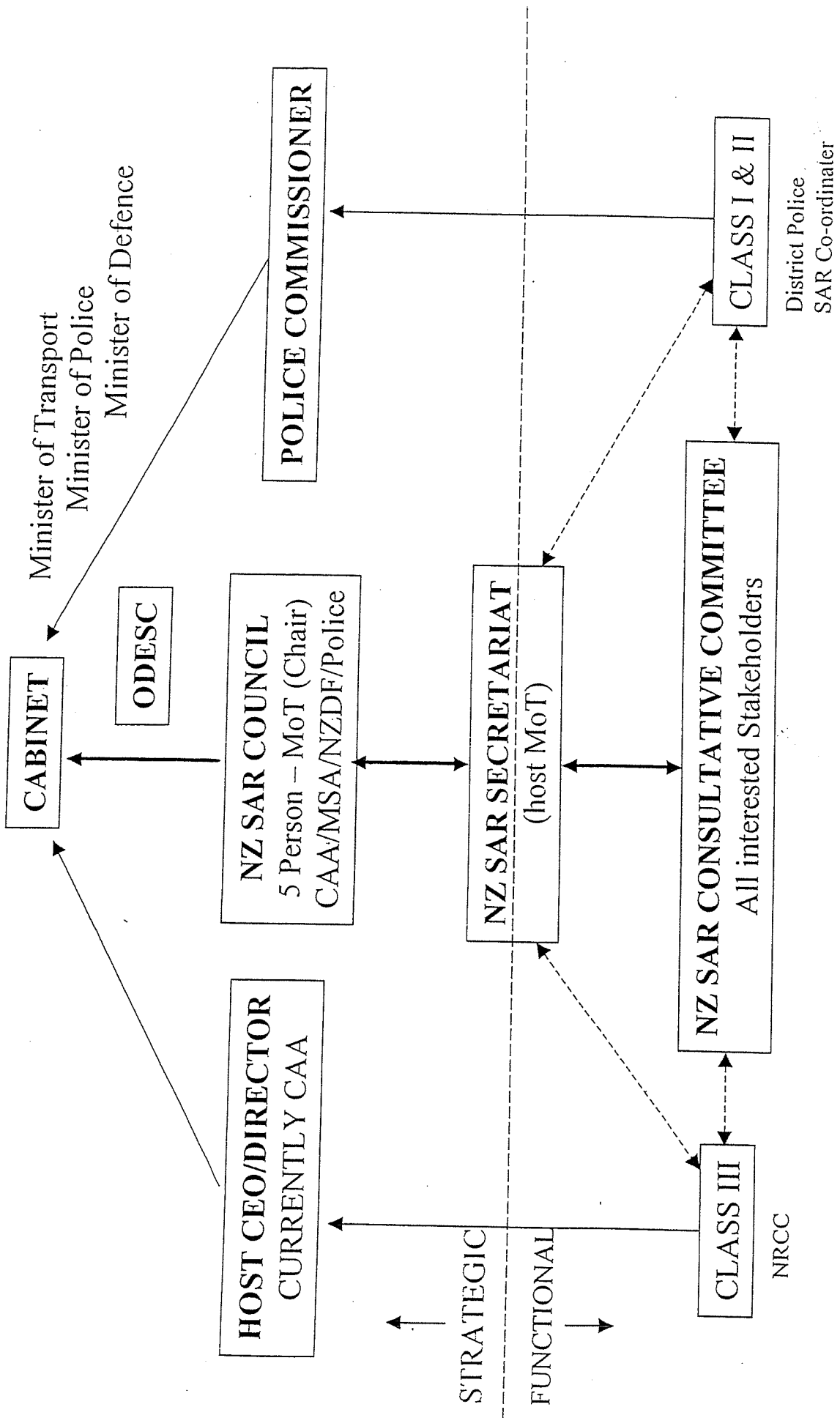
Office of the Prime Minister
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

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Director, Domestic and External Security Secretariat
Secretary to the Treasury
Minister of Police
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Minister of Defence
Secretary of Defence
Chief of Defence Force
Minister of Transport
Secretary for Transport
Minister of Conservation
Director-General of Conservation
Associate Minister of Transport (Hon Harry Duynhoven)

Appendix 1

NEW ZEALAND SAR GOVERNANCE



Chair
Cabinet Policy Committee

NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE GOVERNANCE

Executive Summary

1. The government's Maritime Patrol Review, released in February 2001, considered New Zealand's civil and military requirements for patrolling its ocean areas. The Review's recommendations included a recommendation for a review of maritime search and rescue in New Zealand. In late 2001 a maritime search and rescue review was carried out by a working group drawn from the Maritime Safety Authority, the Civil Aviation Authority's National Rescue Co-ordination Centre, the New Zealand Defence Force, the Police and the Ministry of Transport.

2. The review group identified as a key priority the need to establish stronger strategic co-ordination and governance of search and rescue (SAR) efforts in New Zealand because current arrangements are not designed or equipped to deal with these issues from a national perspective.

3. After examining overseas SAR governance in countries such as Canada, the UK, USA and Australia, a SAR governance working group (comprising Maritime Safety Authority, Civil Aviation Authority, Police, Defence and Ministry of Transport) developed a structure that can address the immediate SAR governance shortcomings through measures that can be implemented administratively and without immediate financial implications.

4. The proposed governance structure will involve the establishment of a New Zealand SAR Council that provides high level strategic governance, supported by a secretariat funded in the first two years by the participant agencies from within existing financial baselines. A consultative committee will provide a linkage between the Council and the SAR participants involved at the operational level.

5. This structure can be implemented relatively quickly because it can function within the scope of the existing legislative and funding framework and the participants already have a government mandate for their involvement in SAR matters. While the proposal has no immediate fiscal costs in the first two years, a separate proposal for Crown funding of the Secretariat as a permanent body will be developed on the assumption that the SAR Secretariat will be retained beyond the initial implementation phase.

6. This paper asks that the Cabinet Policy Committee endorse the SAR governance structure that has been developed to address the SAR

governance shortcomings identified by the maritime SAR review conducted in response to the government's Maritime Patrol Review

1. Purpose

1.1 To seek Cabinet Policy Committee endorsement of the adoption of a new governance arrangement for Search and Rescue (SAR) in New Zealand.

2. Background

2.1 The government's Maritime Patrol Review, released in February 2001, considered New Zealand's civil and military requirements for patrolling its ocean areas. As part of that exercise, the Review examined search and rescue in New Zealand.

2.2 On 2 April 2001, in conjunction with its decisions on the capability development plan for the New Zealand Defence Force, Cabinet directed the Officials' Domestic and External Security Committee (ODESC(M)) to draw up a plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the Maritime Patrol Review (CAB Min (01) 10/10 refers).

2.3 The implementation plan developed by ODESC(M) included a review of maritime search and rescue in New Zealand, as proposed by the Maritime Patrol Review. That review was undertaken in late 2001 by a Maritime Search and Rescue Review Working Group comprising representatives from the principal agencies involved with maritime search and rescue, namely the Maritime Safety Authority, the Civil Aviation Authority's National Rescue Co-ordination Centre, the New Zealand Defence Force, the Police and the Ministry of Transport.

2.4 The Maritime Search and Rescue Review identified a wide range of measures that could be taken to improve maritime search and rescue system in New Zealand. It identified as a key issue the absence of any system for overall strategic governance of SAR efforts in New Zealand. The Governance Review was approved in principle in December 2001 by ODESC(M), which also agreed to the Review members setting up a working group specifically to examine how strategic SAR governance could be improved. That work has been completed and referred to ODESC(M) after endorsement by the National Search and Rescue Committee (NRSC - refer para 3.6).

3. Comment

Issues for SAR in New Zealand

3.1 The Maritime Search and Rescue Review identified a wide range of measures that could be taken to develop a more effective and efficient maritime search and rescue system for New Zealand. These measures pervade all levels of SAR operations and touch all participants. Opportunities for improvements were identified in most aspects of the system,

ranging from strategic co-ordination and governance, planning, training, education, operations, communications through to funding.

3.2 Both the Maritime Search and Rescue Review and the government's Maritime Patrol Review took particular note of New Zealand's high dependence on voluntary agencies, such as the Coastguard. Despite these organisations' importance, they have no formal, defined role and face continuing financial uncertainty because of their reliance on fund-raising and charity. The recent reduction in lottery grants has exacerbated the difficulties faced by the Coastguard and underlines the vulnerability of a system in which the voluntary sector is an important component.

3.3 The Maritime Search and Rescue Review team also concluded that, though it had been charged with reviewing maritime SAR, the maritime and other SAR environments, search and rescue must be viewed as symbiotic, with land marine and air all interconnected.

3.4 A pivotal finding of the Maritime SAR Review was that there is an overarching need for stronger strategic co-ordination and governance of all SAR efforts in New Zealand. SAR is carried out at three escalating levels: Class I, which can be carried out by Police alone, Class II, which is co-ordinated by Police using outside assistance, and Class III, which requires the co-ordination of a search by the National Rescue Co-ordination Centre (operated by the Civil Aviation Authority). Most SAR activity in New Zealand involves Class I and Class II searches (1120).

3.5 No single body was identified as being responsible for providing governance, strategic direction and oversight for search and rescue as a whole. The Police and NRCC have developed successful relationships with the providers of SAR services but overall governance is lacking.

3.6 Currently the only SAR advisory body is the National Search and Rescue Committee (NSRC), an informal group comprising representatives from government departments and agencies and volunteer groups involved in Class III SAR. The NSRC is an advisory body whose focus is confined to issues associated with SAR operations co-ordinated by the National Rescue Co-ordination Centre.

How can a governance structure help improve SAR?

3.7 If the SAR issues identified in the Maritime SAR review and the Maritime Patrol Review are to be addressed effectively, all key participants in the collective SAR system need to be involved. There must be a clear frame of reference for dealing with issues and action must be based on good information and sound knowledge. Links between SAR and government activity in other areas, such as maritime surveillance, will also need to be taken into account in addressing the issues facing SAR.

3.8 The current narrow approach to SAR governance has meant that no real attention has been given to the overall co-ordination, cohesion, capability and leadership of SAR at a national level across all SAR classes. Issues have been compartmentalised at SAR Class level, obscuring possible wider, collective implications and improvement opportunities for SAR as a whole.

3.9 In the absence of a national focal point for SAR strategic co-ordination, no vehicle exists to guide the overall governance of SAR in New Zealand, to lead efforts to improve the SAR system in light of the review findings or deal at a national level with SAR links to other areas of government activity. This shortcoming can be remedied by establishing a national SAR governance body to undertake the necessary functions.

National SAR Governance Review Process

3.10 The SAR Governance Working Group examined SAR governance arrangements in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The need for strong strategic governance proved to be a common theme, though the solutions adopted were influenced by such factors as geography, governmental structures and funding capabilities. The Canadian experience is particularly relevant, as New Zealand shares many of the issues faced there, especially a heavy reliance on voluntary organisations to provide SAR services and resources.

3.11 As improved SAR governance has clearly been identified as a matter that needs early attention, the working group sought governance improvements that could be made without departing from the existing legislative arrangements for SAR. At the same time, any changes would need to be compatible with other developments arising from the Maritime Patrol Review, most notably the establishment of the Maritime Co-ordination Centre and any eventual changes to functional SAR responsibilities that might emerge from the wider Maritime SAR Review.

3.12 As a result, the working group aimed for a governance structure that could address the core governance problem now, not later, by working within existing resourcing and legislative constraints. The group concluded that opportunities for improvement in this area included drawing on overseas models to form a New Zealand SAR Governance Council supported by a full-time SAR Secretariat.

3.13 Although the proposed SAR Council is made up from the core government participants in the existing SAR system, it has the important attribute of a clear mandate to look at issues from a collective, national perspective. This will allow it to address the problem of individual components of the wider SAR programme taking a narrow perspective of their roles in the absence of effective governance of SAR as a whole.

3.14 A permanent secretariat will provide dedicated expertise to support the Council and help implement ideas that emerge from the Council and the

Consultative Committee. Otherwise the Council would have to rely on participant agencies to provide support, which might not be readily available or of the standard necessary. The operative support of a well-resourced secretariat is seen as essential to reinforce the linkage between the Council's high level governance role and the actions necessary to translate policy and principle into action.

Description of Proposed Governance Model

3.15 The Appendix sets out schematically the arrangements proposed below.

Link to Government Crisis Management Model

3.16 The New Zealand SAR Council would link with the government's Domestic and External Security Co-ordination (DESC) system through the Officials' Domestic and External Security Co-ordination group (ODESC) and thence to Cabinet. Any future refinements to the DESC system may influence the linkage between SAR governance and the DESC system but would not alter the substance of SAR governance.

New Zealand SAR Council

3.17 To address the core issue of the absence of an over-arching governance body, the first step proposed is to institute a New Zealand SAR Council, whose function would be to provide strategic policy advice to government and strong strategic co-ordination for all search and rescue in New Zealand, from Class I through to Class III. The Council would be responsible for establishing a New Zealand SAR vision, mission and goals and developing and maintaining of a New Zealand SAR plan.

3.18 The Council would not have a role in the co-ordination or execution of Class I, II and III searches at the functional operational and tactical levels.

3.19 In keeping with the Council's high level strategic function, its membership should be drawn from chief executives or senior level representatives of the key government agencies directly involved in and responsible for SAR. Other agencies with an interest in matters before the Council would also be able to attend by request or invitation.

3.20 It is important that the handling of strategic considerations for SAR as a whole is distinguished from the narrower issues associated with performance of the functional responsibilities of individual SAR delivery agencies. High level representation drawn from the core agencies will ensure that those involved do have general SAR knowledge but will reduce the risk of organisational self-interest impinging on strategic thinking. At the same time, the composition and roles of the Council would leave scope for evolutionary adjustments on the basis of accumulated experience with the new structure. It is envisaged that the NZ SAR Council would meet at least

three times per year, with the Secretariat in attendance and providing secretarial support.

3.21 The Council would, where appropriate, report to government through the Domestic and External Security Co-ordination channels, at the level of the Officials' Domestic and External Security Co-ordination group. The equally important relationship between the Council and the wider SAR community would be maintained through a New Zealand SAR Secretariat, which would chair and lead a New Zealand SAR Consultative Committee.

New Zealand SAR Secretariat

3.22 The establishment of a high-level governance body in isolation would not be sufficient because that body must have constant access to the information, advice and support services necessary for it to perform its governance role effectively. A New Zealand SAR Secretariat, modelled on the Canadian National SAR Secretariat, would be an ideal medium for providing the necessary support for the New Zealand SAR Council.

3.23 The Secretariat's role would not be confined to providing support services to the New Zealand SAR Council. It would provide policy advice and development, serve as an ideas initiator and be instrumental in ensuring implementation of the measures necessary to make strong strategic SAR co-ordination a reality.

3.24 The Secretariat would, on behalf of the SAR Council, co-ordinate activities necessary to support the provision of SAR. Those activities would include the development, implementation and monitoring of a New Zealand SAR plan, vision, mission and goals and the establishment, validation and monitoring of national standards, procedures, preventative programmes training, agreements and documentation relevant to all participants in New Zealand SAR.

3.25 This will involve the Secretariat in promoting effective co-ordination among all the elements of the SAR community. It would need to be able to gauge the performance of participants in achieving SAR objectives, together with collating information on financial and service performance where activities are Crown funded. The Secretariat would be responsible for reporting to the SAR Council on such matters.

3.26 The Secretariat will not have a role in the co-ordination or execution of Class I, II and III searches, and the functional roles of the participants in SAR in New Zealand would not be altered by the establishment of a Secretariat. The relationship between the Secretariat and the SAR community will be an important aspect of the Secretariat's ability to discharge its responsibilities to the governing body and to facilitate "top down" advice and assistance from that body to the SAR community.

New Zealand SAR Consultative Committee

3.27 In view of the importance of the relationship between the Secretariat and SAR providers, a consultative committee should be established to serve as a link between the Secretariat and SAR providers and as a forum for all SAR stakeholders, including voluntary groups. A New Zealand SAR Consultative Committee would provide a channel through which issues generated at a functional level could be fed into the governance process. The New Zealand SAR Secretariat would chair the SAR Consultative Committee as part of the process of providing the SAR community with a greater voice in the strategic decision-making process.

Legal and Funding

3.28 The administrative measures proposed could operate within the scope of the existing legislative and funding framework, which means that their implementation can be effected relatively quickly. This is one of the key benefits of the model proposed.

3.29 The arrangements proposed would not alter New Zealand's ability to meet its legal obligations under international conventions and regional agreements relating search and rescue within this country's search and rescue region.

3.30 Initially, for a period of up to two years, the agencies represented on the governing body would fund the establishment and operation of the SAR Secretariat from within existing baselines, which, in the case of Police, the MSA and CAA and NZDF, already include SAR activities. It is anticipated that total costs for staffing, accommodating and operating the Secretariat will be in the order of \$200,000 per annum (GST incl), which the participating agencies would share between them, as negotiated prior to implementation.

3.31 It is anticipated that the Secretariat's functions will be reviewed after two years of operation. On the assumption that the Secretariat will become permanently established, a separate proposal will be developed for dedicated Crown funding beyond the initial implementation phase. That proposal would cover the costs noted in para 3.30 and, potentially, additional costs if decisions yet to be taken in other areas of the SAR system were to require any further development of the Secretariat's role.

Timing

3.32 Action on establishing the Secretariat will commence only when Cabinet has endorsed the proposal and the participating agencies have reached agreement on funding arrangements.

4. Consultation

4.1 The following departments and agencies were consulted on the proposals outlined in this paper: the New Zealand Defence Force, Police, Civil Aviation Authority, Maritime Safety Authority, Treasury and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of Conservation, Department of Internal Affairs.

4.2 The proposal has the full support of non-Government SAR participants, including the New Zealand Coastguard Federation, New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc and the Life Flight Trust.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this paper in the current year but, as indicated in para 3.31, future funding requirements will be evaluated and Crown funding will be sought for subsequent years on the assumption that the SAR Secretariat would continue in the longer term.

6. Legislative Implications

6.1 The paper has no legislative implications.

7. Human Rights Act and Privacy Act Implications

7.1 There are no direct implications for the Human Rights Act, or the Privacy Act arising from this paper.

8. Regulatory Impact Statement

8.1 The proposal in this paper has no regulatory impact, therefore no Regulatory Impact and Compliance Cost Statement has been prepared.

9. Publicity

9.1 All participating organisations and stakeholders will be contacted directly in the process of establishing the proposed structure, in which they will be closely involved.

10. Recommendations

We recommend that the Committee:

- (a) **note** that, as recommended by the government's Maritime Patrol Review, the Maritime Safety Authority, Police, New Zealand Defence

Force, Civil Aviation Authority and Ministry of Transport have undertaken a review of all maritime search and rescue in New Zealand;

- (b) **note** that the maritime search and rescue review has identified as a key priority the need to establish stronger strategic co-ordination and governance of all search and rescue modes in New Zealand because it is not practicable to isolate maritime from land and air search and rescue;
- (c) **note** that a SAR Governance Working Group has developed a SAR governance structure comprising a New Zealand SAR Council supported by a permanent secretariat and linked through a Consultative Committee to SAR stakeholders;
- (d) **note** that the proposed SAR governance structure can be funded within the participating agencies' baselines in the current financial year but a proposal for Crown funding in later years will be developed for submission to government;
- (e) **note** that further proposals arising from the review of maritime SAR will be developed once the new SAR governance measures are in place; and
- (f) **endorse** the SAR governance structure noted in recommendation (c).

Paul Swain
Minister of Transport

George Hawkins
Minister of Police

Mark Burton
Minister of Defence