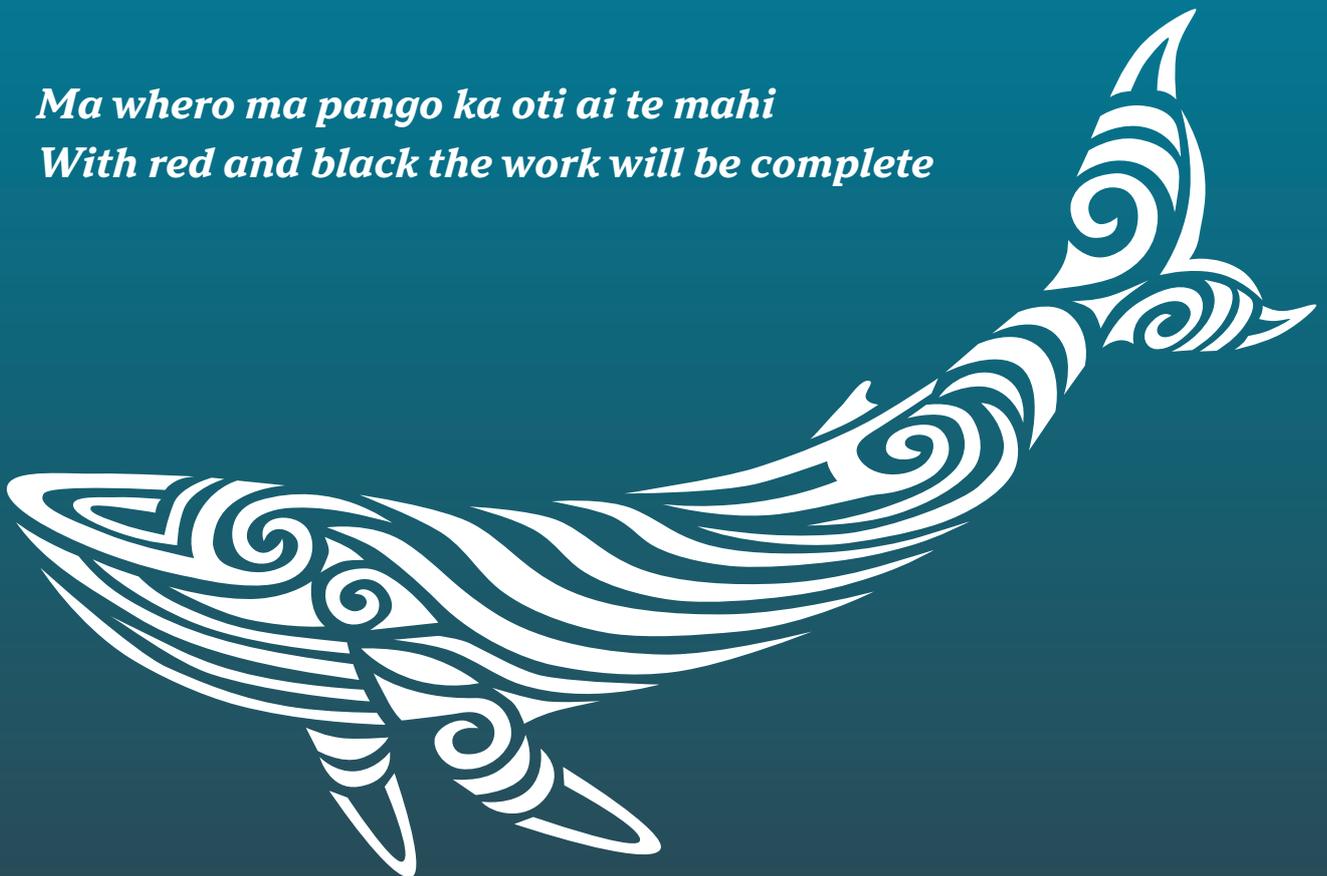




GUIDELINES TO CREATE MULTI-AGENCY READINESS PLANS FOR MARINE ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

2022

*Ma whero ma pango ka oti ai te mahi
With red and black the work will be complete*



This refers to co-operation where if everyone does their part, the work will be complete.
The colours refer to the traditional kowhaiwhai patterns on the inside of the meeting houses.

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SECTION 1

Purpose

These guidelines provide information on how to prepare a local readiness plan for when marine animals are posing a 'clear and present danger' at Surf Life Saving (SLSNZ) patrolled and unpatrolled beaches.

Background/context

If there is a danger from a marine animal at a SLSNZ patrolled or unpatrolled beach, a key action will be to engage with key stakeholders to warn potential beachgoers of the danger. Each key stakeholder will have different responsibilities in a response, and building a relationship between them pre-event will be key to a successful response to the encounter. This template holds the things to consider in a readiness plan, and what the likely issues that key stakeholders will be most focussed on.

'Rāhui' – a form of tapu restricting access to, or use of, an area or resource by the kaitiakitanga of the area.

'Clear and present danger' where there is an obvious and/or imminent risk to life or limb (note, this does not include sightings).

Documents that provide further background and context are available in Appendix 1.

SECTION 2

Organisations involved in creating a plan

The following key organisations should be invited to meet to discuss the creation of a response plan.

Key stakeholders to a plan and potential responses to marine animal dangers	
Surf Life Saving NZ	As the organisation present at the patrolled beach, SLSNZ will be a central organisation for any response, communicating with other stakeholders and the public on the presence of a danger (or reporting on an incident). Once the danger/incident has been responded to, SLSNZ are likely to provide the ongoing presence at the beach while any rāhui, or other response, is observed. For the creation of a local readiness plan, it is most likely that this will be initiated by the SLSNZ Regional Manager.
Iwi / hapu	A pre-existing relationship with the local iwi/hapu is strongly advised prior to engaging on marine animal dangers. Each iwi/hapu will have different perceptions on the presence of marine animals, so local knowledge/relationships will be key. The local iwi/hapu will be able to advise on both cultural aspects, the potential imposition of a rāhui and on how to communicate with wider stakeholders on the response.
Police	The Police may be able to attend marine animal dangers, depending on the circumstances and operational needs at the time. The Police will always attend a fatality, due to a likely coroner's enquiry. The Police will create or update a District Mobilisation Plan to reflect the local marine animal danger response plan. Note that the Police may be the first organisation contacted, particularly in non-SLSNZ-patrolled areas.
Department of Conservation (DOC)	DOC has a mandate for the protection of marine mammals, as well as listed species of corals, sharks, rays and fish – see Schedule 7A of the Wildlife Act 1953: https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1953/0031/latest/DLM278598.html . They are unlikely to send response staff but are happy to share information on the behaviours of the relevant species of animals, whose presence has triggered a response. Due to their knowledge, DoC should be invited to create local plans. DoC may also be the first organisation notified of an encounter.
Local councils	The local council is connected to the local community, and has access to social media, and other communications platforms. Some (but not all) councils have an interest in beach access and management. Invite councils to discussions and take their lead on how they wish to engage. Some councils have Rangers that would be able to provide input and expertise.

Other stakeholders

Coastguard	While having a concern for dangers, these organisations do not have direct mandates (requirements to respond) to marine animal dangers, and while being interested are unlikely to be involved in either the creation of a readiness plan or a response. Each of them may, if approached, be happy to share social media posts about a known marine animal danger. If a pre-existing relationship exists, feel free to engage the organisations for information sharing during/following an incident or danger.
Emergency Management	
Harbourmaster	
Maritime NZ	
Ambulance	
FENZ	
Others, including recreational fishing clubs, may be included in the creation of local plans.	

SECTION 3

Creating a plan

To create a local plan, meet with the local key stakeholders. As above, these will be (at least) the local iwi/hapu, SLSNZ, the Department of Conservation, the local council(s) and the Police. The most likely organisation to initiate the planning process is the local SLSNZ, although this document could be used by any of the stakeholders to create a plan.

Use the readiness plan elements detailed in Section 4 as a starting point. Step through the elements of the template and agree likely local responses to the incident/danger. Assume that a meeting to go through the plan with stakeholders will take up to two hours. If possible/appropriate, hosting the meeting near the beach (at a SLSNZ club) provides good context for the reason for the meeting.

The two key outputs to such planning sessions are:

- A written plan of 'who will do what' in the event of a danger/incident, and...
- Most importantly, the creation of working relationships with the key stakeholders that will be responding. Knowing who you are talking to on the phone in an event helps all parties greatly to make quick and effective arrangements in a response.

The template plan has a renewal section. The plans should be renewed at agreed intervals (every two years?). These renewals are a great way to check back with stakeholders, update anything that needs to be updated (based on the experience since the last version of the plan was made) and update any key contacts – sometimes staff or contacts change, and it is good to be up to date with them.

SECTION 4

Response plan elements

The following elements are the things that should be considered in a readiness plan:

Title	(Beach name) marine animal dangers – a local response plan		
Date of plan	(Date completed)		
Documentation	Reference any key documents, such as key SLSNZ Standard Operating Procedures (see Appendix 1 of this document for some suggestions).		
Stakeholders and contacts	List the organisations that will be involved in a response, and their contacts. These could be in the following format:		
	Surf Life Saving NZ	Name & Role	Phone
	Iwi / hapu	Name & Role	Phone
	Police	Name & Role	Phone
	Department of Conservation	Name & Role	Phone
	Any other key stakeholders...	Name & Role	Phone
Identification of responsibilities	The plan must identify the likely responses of each of the key stakeholders in an event. The descriptions in Section 2 provide a starting point for identifying roles.		
Key tasks to be considered for the response plan	<p>Initial response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SLSNZ respond to initial incident. · In the case of a fatality or injury, call: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 111 for the Ambulance and Police. – The local iwi/hapu and be led by their advice on a rāhui. <p>Co-ordination of communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In the event of a 'clear and present danger' or incident the readiness plan may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Contact (normally by phone) the local iwi/hapu and discuss the potential for a rāhui. If appropriate, the iwi/hapu will lead the rāhui. Information to share may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nature of risk. – Sightings. – Any harm already caused. – Animal (if present) activity. – Notification of responses already carried out. · Place signage at appropriate places (see Section 5). · Post a Facebook (or other social media) post, with the template wording used in Section 5.1. (If time allows, messages could be sent to other local stakeholders for them to share the post.) · SLSNZ to log the danger on the 'Swim Safe' website. 		

Key tasks to be considered for the response plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Initiation and co-ordination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – When there has been a fatality, the Police are the lead agency. – Where a clear and present danger exists (no fatality), the response plan needs to identify which organisation will take the lead agency role. – The local SLSNZ club will most likely initiate the response at patrolled beaches only. · Create a safety plan for the response – using the relevant agencies’ SOPs. · Agree with the local iwi/hapu and Police a time when this situation will be re-appraised. · Agencies’ wellbeing checks and procedures should be referenced in the plan. · Include a section on a debrief session with the key stakeholders and members of the public that may have been involved (both ‘hot’ (immediate) and ‘cold’ (some time following the event) sessions may be held). · Any other plan aspects that are relevant to a likely local response.
Resources	<p>The plan may list the resources (personnel and assets) that may be drawn upon in a response (this may include first aid resources).</p>
Public communications plan	<p>A public communications plan needs to be created to identify what messages will be sent out, and which organisation will be responsible for taking each action, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sign-board messages (see templates in Section 5). · Website and media messages (see templates in Section 5.1). · Any other messaging thought necessary / relevant to the danger or incident. · Management of other media organisations – which organisation will take the lead on messaging to the media.
Renewal of plans	<p>Agree how often you will update the plan. Every two years, or after responses / activations (and their debriefs)? (See comments in Section 3)</p>
Mana whenua	<p>Māori place names and purakau (stories of the local areas) can provide context for how particular locations are viewed by mana whenua.</p>
Historical events	<p>Each plan may include an appendix of events that have happened in the area in the past. A short summary of each event will help stakeholders understand the nature of the dangers previously faced, and any key lessons learnt from those responses.</p>
Sharing your plan	<p>Include a section on who this plan will be shared with... likely to include those that were involved in the creation of the local plan, plus potentially the neighbouring SLSNZ clubs etc.</p>
Acknowledgements	<p>You could list the people who helped create the local plan, including their organisations. This would help if you later needed to get clarification on sections, or for when you want to renew the plans.</p>

SECTION 5

Public information

Sign boards and template wording

Place signage, as outlined in the SLSNZ as per <https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/stay-safe/beach-safety-messages/hazard-signs>

5.1

Websites and social media and media release template wording

The following are templates for media posts:

In the event of a fatality:

- “Emergency services are responding to a fatality at (BEACH) involving (NAME SPECIES). The (NAME SPECIES) is/are still in the area, posing an ongoing danger to public safety. We are asking people to avoid the area.
- The (NAME OF LOCAL IWI/HAPU) have placed a rāhui on the beach until (DATE). This means that (INSERT WORDING THAT THE IWI/HAPU PROPOSES WHICH OUTLINES WHAT THE RAHUI MEANS).
- Our thoughts are with the whanau, family and friends of everyone involved with the incident.
- For ongoing updates regarding recreational activity in this area, see the Safe Swim website.”

In the event of a ‘clear and present danger’ (from a marine animal):

- “Emergency services are asking people to stay away from (BEACH) due to a (NAME SPECIES) in the area.
- The (NAME OF LOCAL IWI/HAPU) have placed a rāhui on the beach until (DATE). This means that (INSERT WORDING THAT THE IWI/HAPU PROPOSES WHICH OUTLINES WHAT THE RAHUI MEANS).
- For ongoing updates regarding recreational activity in this area, see the Safe Swim website.”

Appendix 1 – related documents

Surf Lifesaving NZ (SLSNZ) documents:

SLSNZ protocols exist for how local SLSNZ clubs should respond to dangers. While these refer only to SLSNZ's responses, they do provide some background on how to deal with dangers:

- Shark sighting: https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/995551/3-shark-sighting-nsop_final.pdf
- Operations around Marine Mammals: https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/995542/5-operations-around-marine-mammals-nsop_final.pdf
- General Risk Assessment: https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/995536/1-general-risk-assessment-nsop_final.pdf

Department of Conservation (DoC) documents:

- Link to Department of Conservation documents to behaviour around marine animals: [https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/marine-mammals/sharing-our-coasts-with-marine-mammals/...](https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/marine-mammals/sharing-our-coasts-with-marine-mammals/) including DoC Hazard Guideline.