

# NEW ZEALAND SEARCH AND RESCUE

Rapu Whakarauora Aotearoa



**Minutes of Meeting**  
**NZSAR Strategic Occupational Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Committee**  
**Tuesday 17 March 2021, 2:00 to 3:30pm**  
**NZSAR (Ministry of Transport), 3 Queens Wharf, Wellington**  
**Online meeting only via MS Teams**

## In attendance

Name	Agency
Andy Greig (Chair)	NZSAR Secretariat
Chris Lind	NEMA
David Waters	Ambulance NZ
David Wilkins	AREC
Paul Dalton	SLSNZ
Pete Healy	Coastguard NZ
Jodi Starr	LandSAR
Ivor Smith	NZ Police
Pete Theobald	NZ Police
Rodney Bracefield	RCCNZ
Kate Weinberg	RCCNZ
Michael Bassett-Foss	Independent Council Member
Wendy Harrison (Minutes)	NZSAR Secretariat

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

Andy Greig opened the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.

## 2. Apologies

Jim Young (DOC), Dennis Fitzmaurice (FENZ).

## 3. Minutes of Meeting held 17 August 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2021 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

## 4. Matters arising from previous meeting

#	Item	Action / Decision	Responsibility	Status
5	Health and Safety Performance	<b>Decision:</b> The Committee decided the reports for the HSW Committee will include the HSW section of the SLA reports along with the requirements of the HSW	SLSNZ, Coastguard, AREC, LandSAR	Complete

		Committee Terms of Reference and an incident register.		
5	Health and Safety Performance	<b>Action:</b> NZSAR will email the terms of reference to the Committee	NZSAR	Emailed on 18 Aug 2021
13	Positive Performance Indicators	<b>Decision:</b> The Committee endorsed the PPIs.		NFA
14	Advice on Overlapping PCBUs	<b>Action:</b> NZSAR to develop proposed guidelines for a contractor working with SAR organisations regarding PCBU responsibilities	NZSAR	Discuss on 17 March 2022 – agenda item 13.
15	Operational Risk Assessment Tools	<b>Action:</b> NZSAR will work with the SAR NGOs to determine whether a workshop for risk assessment is appropriate	NZSAR	Discuss on 17 March 2022 – agenda item 16.
16	Helicopter Training	<b>Action:</b> The NZSAR Aviation Workshop to discuss standards around working with helicopters.	NZSAR	Workshop postponed and scheduled for 16 & 17 June 2022

There was follow-up discussion about health and safety around helicopters. David Wilkins advised that when he has audited rescue helicopters operations, one of the things he noticed was the different ways of extracting people and lifting people on winches. He suggested that there should be a standard procedure/approach on winching.

Chris Lind mentioned when he was at FENZ, there was a particular incident which the risk of a helicopter was involved and there were several good learnings. He cannot share that report but may be able to get permission to share some of the learnings.

Andy advised that NZSAR have engaged a contractor to give advice on helicopter standards. The issue around aircraft standards and health and safety will be discussed at the NZSAR Aviation Worksop, which is now scheduled to be held on 16 and 17 June 2022. (David Waters also gave an update on the *New Zealand Aeromedical & Air Rescue Standard* – see Ambulance New Zealand update below.)

## 5. Health and Safety Performance (past 6 months)

### a. AREC

The AREC report was provided. David mentioned that as they are a small organisation the number of incidents are relatively minor.

b. Coastguard NZ

The Coastguard report was provided.

Peter gave an update on RAT testing. Since December, the two Communications Centres had the ability to use RAT tests, and this continues. Observations tests are done prior to staff starting their shifts. For the Northern and Eastern Communication Centres, RATs have been taken on board for the wet crews. Tests are at all crew sites and used for CAT 1 and CAT 2 search and rescues. When crews get called out, they do a RAT test first.

Peter advised that they are in the planning phase of having an independent health and safety check. This has been firmed up now and will be completed by the end of April, and then a new strategic plan will be added for the next five years.

c. LandSAR NZ

The LandSAR report was provided.

One notifiable event was a LandSAR person driving home from a SAR operation in the early hours of the morning and three pedestrians were hit causing injury. Fatigue seems to be a major factor as the search started at night and finished at 10am the following morning.

A big push is being done with the group support officers to encourage better reporting and LandSAR have started to see an increase in reports.

d. SLSNZ

The SLSNZ report was provided. PPIs are a work in progress.

For SAR operations, there are no incidents to report. Callouts are relatively low in terms of total activity so would not expect many incidents. With normal activities, SLSNZ are seeing the same amount of injuries occurring through regular patrolling. The number of notifiable injuries to Worksafe and Maritime NZ have dropped. Of note, IRB injuries are still happening and the primary area being focussed on.

The patrolling season wraps up at Easter.

## **6. SARdonyx HSW reports**

There are no reports since the last Committee meeting August.

Jodi advised there was a SAROP with four different injuries that had been reported to them. There were six incidents from this SAROP. There was some follow-up discussion about whether incidents are being reported correctly and being inputted into SARdonyx.

**Action:**

- *Andy and Jodi to check why these incidents were not entered into SARdonyx and whether there is a gap in the system.*

**7. Fire and Emergency NZ HSW Update**

Nothing to report.

**8. Police HSW Update**

Nothing to report.

**9. Ambulance NZ HSW Update**

The review into the *New Zealand Aeromedical & Air Rescue Standard* has been delayed until the current COVID surge allows. The intention is to have the review complete by the end of the year. The focus will be predominantly on rotary and not fixed wing aircraft.

**10. Maritime NZ / RCCNZ HSW Update**

It was reported that all staff had been vaccinated. There has been one positive case of COVID, but the person is now back at work on the roster. One other person is a close contact whose flatmate contracted COVID, but they are now back on the training course. There are two people in the operation room with a duty manager. The rest of the staff are working from home and all meetings are via Teams. A RAT test must be done before going on duty or going into the operations room.

A training course is being run with four students. Instructors are not to come back into the RCCNZ until they've done a RAT test.

**11. Department of Conservation HSW Update**

Nothing to report.

**12. National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) / NZ Response Teams (NZRT) update**

NZRT went through the new framework for the accreditation process a couple of weeks ago, and the gateway for this is they now report in six-monthly which will feed into this forum.

NEMA are fully entrenched in Omicron management and have had several staff that have been impacted, so are using RAT testing.

**13. Progress on Overlapping PCBUs**

Andy provided some background on overlapping PCBUs. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee discussed this matter in August, and asked Andy to progress

this work. The rationale behind this is that various agencies on search and rescue operations have different responsibilities as a PCBU for health and safety. It is important that all agencies are aware of their responsibilities.

Andy engaged a contractor who would work with the two Coordinating Authorities and the four NGOs around this matter to determine if overlapping PCBU responsibilities have been thought through, and if more work needs to be done on this.

This proposal went to the SAR Partnership Committee who were not in favour of this work proceeding at this stage due to the immediate focus needing to go on Covid-19 and there being no obvious track record of incidents coming from confusion over this.

The Committee is asked whether it still supports this work being done, and what next steps should be taken.

A broad discussion was had amongst the committee members and the view was that Andy should take this forward, and will talk to the agencies involved as well as both NZ Police and RCCNZ. If there is support from the various agencies involved, he will re-present a proposal to the SAR Partnership Committee.

**Action:**

- *Andy to take an updated paper to the SAR Partnership meeting which will be held in May.*

**14. Health and Safety Audit**

The Service Level Agreements with the with the four NGOs states an independent Health and Safety Audit will occur every two years. The last one was undertaken in 2020.

KPMG have advised they are prepared to undertake this year's audit, which is expected to occur after Easter and be complete by the end of June 2022.

**15. Health and safety with spontaneous volunteers**

Jodi raised this a couple of months ago as to who is responsible for the health and safety of spontaneous volunteers when coordinating a search and rescue operation. NSZAR are carrying out a review with Police around spontaneous volunteers and the findings are yet to come out.

Jodi advised that this is impacting trained LandSAR members who end up taking on these volunteers. This can result in untrained people being involved in search and rescue operations, which could result in a health and safety risk.

The Committee decided to wait for the results of the review and see if any recommendations or actions arose.

**Action:**

- *The committee will wait for the review that NZSAR are doing with the Police and see what the findings are. Next steps will then be decided.*

## 16. Operational Risk Assessment Tools

As this has been discussed previously and Ross Merrtt from SLSNZ gave a demonstration last year about the use of the app, it was agreed that this matter can be closed.

## 17. General Business

Jodi mentioned that, LandSAR are taking a different approach regarding COVID. LandSAR's focus is on people's wellbeing because of the stress that results. The approach is to regularly send out wellbeing messages to volunteers and provide online learning sessions about the science of stress.

David Wilkins (AREC) asked David Waters about single pilot helicopter accidents as there is a concern about the aging workforce in regard to pilots and the added increase of a medical event. In the next round of standards, David Wilkins asked if consideration be given to the standard setting some age limits around single pilot operations.

There was no other general business.

The meeting closed at 3.19pm.

## Action and Decision Table

#	Item	Action / Decision	Responsibility	Status
6	<b>SARdonyx HSW reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Andy and Jodi to check why these incidents were not entered into SARdonyx and whether there is a gap in the system.</i></li> </ul>	Andy Greig & Jodi Starr	Discussions were held.
13.	<b>Progress on Overlapping PCBUs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Andy to take a paper to the SAR Partnership meeting which will be held in May next year.</i></li> </ul>	Andy Greig	On hold at this stage.
15.	<b>Health &amp; safety with spontaneous volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The committee will wait for the review that NZSAR are doing with the Police and see what the findings are. Next steps will then be decided.</i></li> </ul>	Andy Greig	The Spontaneous Volunteers report will be discussed in October.

**Next meeting:** date to be advised.