

# QuickStart

## Trainer and Assessor Tips



NZSAR would like to acknowledge the work the Search and Rescue tutors in supporting the success of the delivery of the suite of Search and Rescue Management courses.

This guide has been produced to assist our tutors to provide a positive learning experience for our Search and Rescue volunteers.

# TEACH FOR ADULT LEARNERS

*Adults, are more likely to remember new information if you can get them to:*

- *Understand why the new information is valuable by linking it to what they already know or do – the benefits to them or the task they are performing.*
  - *Have them think about the ways in which they could apply the information in their own SAR role.*
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- Please follow the course timetable and use the resources supplied. This is the training the sector has consulted on, planned, and needs delivered.
  - Start the first day by establishing the relevance and benefits of the information people are about to learn – explain to everyone why the overarching training relates to the search role or incident tasks they are being prepared for, where it fits into the SAR capabilities, and reference the pre-requisite training so it is apparent where that fits in the course.
  - Get everyone comfortable with one another using personal introductions at the start, don't take too long, your purpose is to engender group trust to facilitate future interaction, so, as a minimum, get people to say who they are, what group they belong to, and some form of free-form anecdote such as summing up their experience in the topic being taught.
  - At the start of each day, break down the timetable and what is involved in each part of that in terms of the training objectives – explain the topics and what they are going to learn in those.
  - Shortly after you start, check you are speaking loudly enough and everyone can clearly see the slide screen, charts, etc.
  - Aim to change the physical and mental state of the learners regularly so they are freshened and re-engage if they have dropped out of the communication cycle. For example, you may give them a simple 5 minutes break or use a short exercise to get them from sitting to standing, individual to shared, single to group, listening to talking.
  - At regular intervals pause to sum up the overall knowledge and skill acquisition progress *"So by now you should know how to..."*.

- You can supplement the supplied teaching material to provide examples or extend a concept where you feel that would be beneficial. You can also adapt the timetable to get the best out of your group, for example shorten some topics if you feel the group does not need the depth of detail planned, or take more time around concepts you can see they do not understand fully. Remember your teaching is preparing everyone to be able to successfully complete the assessment, which is reflected in the course timetable.
- At the end of the day briefly reinforce what has been covered, and introduce what's coming up if there is a subsequent training day.



# Tell stories

- Telling SAR anecdotes is an extremely powerful learning tool. Tell stories about your experiences, get others to tell theirs (but add an expert view and relevance commentary to those stories by pulling the information back to the course knowledge and skills: “So that example illustrates just how important it is to...”. “What do you think that tells us given what we have been talking about?”
- Stories are also a very effective way to get more experienced learners teaching or influencing the less-experienced, even if they are stories about mistakes.

*Good stories do more than create a sense of connection. They build familiarity and trust, and allow the listener to enter the story where they are, making them more open to learning. Good stories can contain multiple meanings so they're surprisingly economical in conveying complex ideas in graspable ways.*

*Learning which stems from a well-told story is remembered more accurately, and for far longer, than learning derived from facts and figures. Similarly, research suggest that facts are 20 times more likely to be remembered if they're part of a story.*

*Adapted from Vanessa Morris. Harvard Business Publishing*

# Manage questions

- Have a ‘come back to’ list set up on a whiteboard or chart. If you get a question that is out of synchronisation with the topic being discussed, or you need time to think about the answer, put it in that holding space on the board and come back to the questions at the end of the day.
- It is fair practice to answer a participants’ question by asking a question which forces the original questioner (or the group) to consider the issues for themselves “So what would you do?”, “What do you think the answer is?”, “Can someone answer that question?”, “What are the options here class?” etc.
- Check the completeness of your answer with the listener after answering a question – “Does that answer your question?”, “Have I missed anything?”.
- Be aware of the potential for answers to questions to soak up course time, especially if you are talking about a topic that you or a course member are enthusiastic about. It is possible to use a break to come back to questions that are not critical to the course understandings.

- Get into the habit of allowing space for questions from the group during and after your presentations. Check understanding with individuals during breaks as people can be shy and may not want to appear to be asking naive questions in front of their peers.

## Manage groups

- People often arrive and sit with those they travelled with, know, or who belong to the same organisation. That arrangement can potentially influence engagement dynamics such as willingness to answer questions and volunteer to take lead in practical exercises through deferment to seniority, rank, experience, age. At times, if possible, mix the initial groups up even if it means you choosing who goes where.
- When groups first start an exercise, get into the habit of quickly going around each to make sure they understand the task, answer any questions, check they have the resources needed. Repeat as work progresses.
- Be proactive and energetic in managing groups during practise work. Give them coaching feedback about the technical direction they are taking, the speed with which they are working, how they are using the group skills and knowledge. Stop and reteach the group if you feel they need that to make progress.
- If you perceive common misunderstandings or errors being made across groups, it may be more effective and efficient to bring the class back together and reteach before resuming the group work.

## Receive and give feedback

### Receiving

- At the start of the training identify for yourself one or two not very experienced people in the group. Informally check with them during the breaks to establish how the course is going from a participant's perspective.
- Make time at the end of the day to ask the group how the day has gone from their perspective. Check aspects such as the pace of the day, adequate resources supplied, questions about the day's topics in general, the training facilities.
- Have a chat to a couple of experienced people at the end of the training to see how they felt it went overall.

## Giving

- As well as giving feedback to individual groups on their self-management during practical exercises, you can give feedback to the class as a whole on how you feel they are progressing and any areas you feel could do with improvement. For example, you might mention the progress they have made, the pace of the course, the general level of participation.
- If you have improvement suggestions regarding the training materials or course organisation you can give your feedback to NZSAR using the email: [training@nzsar.govt.nz](mailto:training@nzsar.govt.nz)

# Assessing

## Terminology

**Assessor Guide:** A document that advises the tutor about what professional practises they need to follow when they are performing the role of an assessor.

**Assessment:** A set of theory questions and or practical exercises that permit the learner to demonstrate to an assessor that they have the all the skills and knowledge the training course set out to achieve.

**Assessment Rigour:** The assessment topics and methods have been designed to be suitably challenging and appropriate for the training outcomes and level. The assessor needs to maintain that rigour.

**Assessor:** A subject matter expert, often the tutor, who formally evaluates the competency of participants compared to the SAR Standards / assessment criteria. On behalf of the sector, the assessor arrives at an overall decision about each learner's competency.

**Competent (C):** Displays all the skill and knowledge set out in the Standard, confirmed by the assessor's judgement based on the evidence the learner has presented to them.

**Evidence:** A participants answers or work (possibly as part of a group) that proves they are competent in the course outcomes. For example, answers to theory tests, group documents, photographs of group whiteboard work, completed forms, decisions and actions made by a group. The assessor uses evidence to compare the performance of an individual course member to a set of sector-agreed knowledge and skills. All the evidence created is compiled and kept for post course review purposes.

**Evidence Schedule:** Relates to practical assessment activities. Sets out the range, type and quality of evidence that demonstrates competency.

**Marking Guide:** The range of acceptable answers to theory questions.

**New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) Unit Standard:** For example, CIMS 4. Unit standards are developed by transitional industry training organisations and by NZQA.

**Not Yet Competent (NYC):** Displays just some of the skill and knowledge set out in the Standard. NYC indicates more training is needed.

**Practical Exercise:** An assessment exercise set to test the application of skills and knowledge. No tutor coaching/teaching is permitted during a practical assessment exercise, only guidance around the wording of the task.

**Practise:** Participants are given the opportunity to rehearse what they have learnt, and improve through feedback, reteaching, rework – in this setting tutor coaching / teaching is encouraged.

**Sector Standard:** For example Manage the Initial Response. A document that states the level of competency that the SAR sector has set for itself. Worded in terms of outcomes that set out the knowledge, skills and attributes a learner needs to demonstrate to be competent.

**Theory Test:** Written or verbal answers to questions, creating or completing diagrams, charts, etc. No tutor coaching / teaching is permitted during a theory test. Theory tests knowledge, and whether key facts are individually memorised and understood.

## The craft of assessing

- Assessment is a formal responsibility where the tutor is standing back observing and considering competency on behalf of the SAR sector.
- If several tutors are assessing the course, consult together beforehand and develop a system of shared assessment understanding, and consult again at different times about the competency perception of group members.
- Explain what the assessment involves, and the assessors role, to the learners. Take the time to check everyone is clear on what competency is.
- You must follow the assessment methodology required and use any model answers, evidence guides as the basis for your competency judgements. Note the assessment cannot be altered.
- Please do not disadvantage learners by leaving them too little time to fully complete the assessment tasks.



- Not all topics in the course timetable will necessarily be assessed. Those topics need to be taught regardless; it may be, for example, that the topic underpins a broader concept or is an introduction that is expanded on in a subsequent course.
- The ideal answer or evidence for the assessment has been pre planned and is in the Marking Guide or Evidence Schedule. This is the basis as to what is acceptable / admissible. As a subject matter expert you can accept variations so long as you consider the answer or evidence related to the question or task is accurate in sector terms.
- Trainees are generally allowed two attempts at an assessment. If the first answer is wrong, or they have not shown the necessary evidence performing as part of a group, you can give them feedback about the errors, omissions, or aspects they need to improve on. If they need a third attempt, their competency is in doubt. It is acceptable to mark them as NYC and suggest they take part in the next iteration of the course and they can be assessed as part of that.
- If the learner is coached in a task by a tutor or others during an assessment, the assessment is immediately suspended as the learner cannot do it on their own and is receiving assistance to demonstrate the necessary competence. The assessment then needs to move to another time. Note that this does not include giving information to supplement scenario briefings.
- Learners are able to appeal your assessment competency decision if found NYC. Should this occur their individual work, the assessor comments, and the compilation of group evidence will be reviewed by a third-party assessor to establish how you arrived at your competency judgement.



# Reading an NZSAR Training Standard

A Standard sets out the skill and knowledge that a competent person would display in relation to a given SAR role or task. It is that skill and/or knowledge being checked during assessments.

A few Standards that the SAR sector trains to, such as CIMS 4, are 'owned' and written by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority who maintain those, or use national Standard Setting Bodies for that task. An NZSAR Training Standard will have been developed and agreed by the SAR sector partners – they represent the partner relationships, operational contexts and ways of working in both readiness and response. Using SAR Training Standards gives the sector sole control over the content, and nimbleness for revisions.

NZSAR Training Standards are not part of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, however they do share many common features<sup>1</sup>.

## Example of the parts of an NZSAR Training Standard

### Training purpose<sup>2</sup>

People completing this training will have demonstrated the skills and knowledge necessary to operate as a member of an Incident Management Team managing land-based search and rescue operations beyond the initial response period.

This course is a pre-requisite for Police SAR and / or LandSAR members who will participate in the SAR Managers course.

*Note: This training does not cover a number of Lead Agency / Controller topics covered in the NZ Police SAR Managers Course and/or RCCNZ SARO training courses.*

**<sup>1</sup> features – illustrating parts of the standard.**

**<sup>2</sup> purpose – explains what the Training Standard is about and its SAR sector context.**

## Pre-requisite training and experience

- MTIR
- CIMS 4
- Have experience operating as a member of an IMT

*Useful to have, but not essential pre-requisite courses<sup>3</sup>*

- SAR Leadership (SARL)/Action Orientated Team Leadership (AOTL)
- Outdoor Risk Management (ORM)

## The primary references for this training<sup>4</sup>

- NZ SAR Guidelines: <https://nzsar-resources.org.nz/Guidelines/nz-s-sar-guidelines>
- Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) Third Edition

### Further references

- Managing the Inland Search Function, Brett and Robert Stoffel
- Lost and missing person statistical references, including but not limited to:
  - Lost Person Behaviour by Robert. J. Koester
  - Grampian Police (UK) Missing Persons
  - Men Missing on a Night Out – UK 2017
  - Missing Person Behaviour – An Australian Study (2006)
  - iFind
  - Red Book

**3 courses – this is any extra training or experience that is advantageous, but not compulsory.**

**4 training – references guide the technical / operational scope of the training.**

## Training Outcomes<sup>5</sup>

1. Perform the Intelligence function.

### Evidence requirements<sup>6</sup>

- 1.1 Identify sources of intelligence relevant to search planning.

**Range:** May include but not limited to: Missing Person Report, weather, terrain analysis, witnesses, friends, family, clues, computers and IT, public transport operators, social media.

- 1.2 Conduct analysis to assess the relevance and reliability of information.

- 1.3 Develop Intelligence Function outputs.

**Range:** Subject profile, area, scenarios.

- 1.4 Process and evaluate information from various sources to create an intelligence picture to assist in operational response planning.

- 1.5 Evaluate the intelligence picture generated against new evidence coming in to the IMT; identify any gaps and develop an intelligence collection plan.

**5 outcomes – are a set of detailed statements that specifying what a learner needs to be able to know or do after training.**

**6 requirements – each Training Outcome has a number of Evidence requirements. These set a common SAR sector understanding as to what competency is. They also guide the evidence required for that outcome.**

**7 range statements – tell assessors what to consider / require in relation to the Evidence requirements.**

### There are four variations for range statements<sup>7</sup>:

**Variation One.** If there is no wording that indicates otherwise, then all items in the Range have to be considered. For example: Develop Intelligence Function outputs.

**Range:** Subject profile, area, scenarios.

**Variation Two.** If the Range wording 'includes but is not limited to', followed by listed items it means evidence for all the listed items must be considered, but other evidence from unlisted items

can be added also. For example: Use information intelligence to plan a search for a given situation.  
**Range:** Includes but is not limited to – IPP, LPB, PLS.

**Variation Three.** A list prefaced by 'may include but is not limited to' provides suggested factors for consideration. Assessors can consider evidence from the listed items, or evidence from a completely different list; the learner's training context will guide what those items might be.

For example: Apply intelligence for the purpose of search planning.  
**Range:** May include but not limited to: statistical data sets, subject profile, intelligence reports.

**Variation Four.** The Range specifies the minimum number of factors must be considered from the given list. More factors can be considered but are not required. For example: Describe responsibilities across function manager roles.  
**Range:** Evidence of three responsibilities is required.

## Allow time for learning before assessing

Participants need time to learn – to practice, experiment, make and correct mistakes, explore the topic, gain feedback from peers and tutors. Thus, NZSAR training always includes examples of sector current best practise, and opportunities to practise without being assessed.

### Fairness

Learners have the right to know how and when they will be assessed, and the processes and expectations around that.

## Theory Tests

- Please maintain the desired assessment rigour, do not regard theory assessments as group coaching or peer to peer answering exercises. Unless specifically noted in the assessment introduction, theory tests are for individuals to complete on their own. Set course expectations up accordingly, and intervene as appropriate where you observe obvious collaborative answering of theory questions.
- Related to the above; do not accept as a sign of competency the same wording for answers from several participants unless it is specifically stated a group answer is acceptable, or is one of the situations below:
  - The answer is not unique such as, a role title, the name of an organisation, legislation.
  - The answer is numeric.
  - Is a multi-choice answer.
- Pass 'commonly answered with no reason' assessments back and ask the learners for answers in their own unique words.

## Observation of practical assessment exercises

- Observational assessment is based on the learner showing you they can apply knowledge and demonstrate the requisite skills, and, as is common in SAR, do that as part of a team.
- Be active and purposeful when assessing by observation, with your observation assessment material or Evidence Schedule to hand as a reference point.
- The work a group produces is contributory evidence that points to the competency of each group member. But, and this important, the reliability of each person's contribution to that evidence is based upon the assessor's ability to observe that the team effort was fairly distributed amongst the group, and each individual was applying their own skill and knowledge to the group outcomes.

- During group observation, purposefully isolate each learner in your mind and follow their performance to the point where you can confirm they have demonstrated to you they are competent. It is not reliable to base an individual's competency solely on the group output. This means watching, listening and reviewing the part the learner is playing in the team and the records they played a part in creating as part of the group.
- Don't hesitate to ask a learner questions during a practical assessment to clarify their understandings e.g. "Why did you do it that way?", "What would you do if that didn't work?"
- Try to avoid filling in observation records long after the course; those records are to be used to capture information whilst the trainees are working and their performance is fresh in your mind. Fill in minor supplementary details later, but aim to get the core notes written during course time.
- Written comments should be added to assessment notes – they allow you to state what was great, and outline areas of competence that were not displayed or poorly displayed (for participants found NYC), and show you have considered individuals.
- Keep in mind that learners can appeal Not Yet Competent assessment decisions. The documents you keep, the evidence you gather and the notes you make are valuable for helping others understand the basis on which you arrived at your competency decision. Please take care to keep records and file documents.

## Feedback on course materials

If you want to give feedback on the course materials email your suggestion to: [training@nzsar.govt.nz](mailto:training@nzsar.govt.nz)

### Useful Training Links

NZ's SAR Guidelines: New Zealand's SAR Guidelines provide the single overarching repository of the guidelines for undertaking SAR operations in New Zealand.

[nzsar.govt.nz/sar-operational-support/operational-sar-information/nzsars/](https://nzsar.govt.nz/sar-operational-support/operational-sar-information/nzsars/)

START: START is a library of SAR knowledge and experience for practical SAR people.

[nzsar.govt.nz/training-resources/start/start-overview/](https://nzsar.govt.nz/training-resources/start/start-overview/)

