

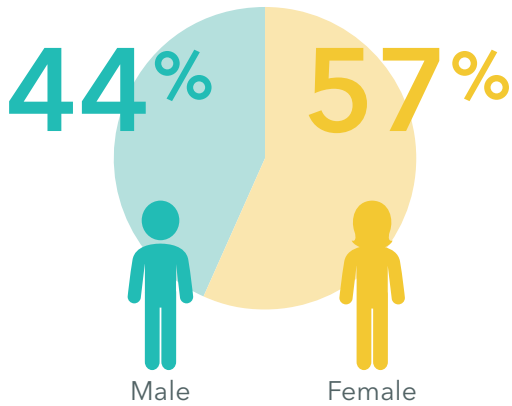
**V O L U N T E E R**  
**S T U D Y**

**FOR**  
New Zealand  
Search and Rescue  
2019

# REPORT SNAPSHOT

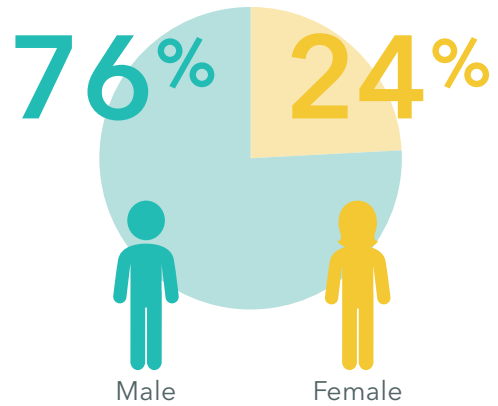
## VOLUNTEER POPULATION

Gender



## ALL OF SAR

Gender



Age over 50 years old

54%

Age over 50 years old

48%

## ALL OF SAR

ETHNICITY OF SAR InvolveMe 360 SURVEY RESPONDENTS

89%

European

3%

Māori

2%

Pasifika

1%

Asian

5%

Other

## VOLUNTEER TO STAFF RATIO

### LandSAR

3,432

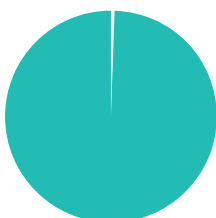
VOLUNTEERS

14

STAFF

0.4

% of STAFF TO VOLUNTEERS



### Coastguard NZ

2,055

VOLUNTEERS

59

STAFF

2.9

% of STAFF TO VOLUNTEERS



### SLSNZ

5,526

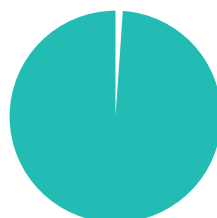
VOLUNTEERS

75

STAFF

1.4

% of STAFF TO VOLUNTEERS



### AREC

255

VOLUNTEERS

0

STAFF

0

% of STAFF TO VOLUNTEERS





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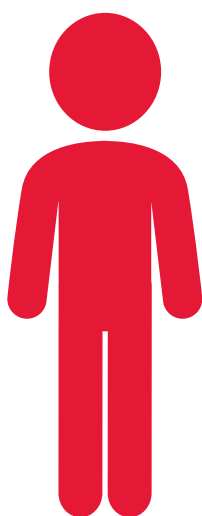
## PURPOSE

**VNZ has been engaged by NZSAR to complete two key tasks:**

1. Volunteer Workforce Reports for SLSNZ, LandSAR, Coastguard NZ and AREC.
2. A summary report for NZSAR that updates the 2010 Volunteer Study, brings together general findings of the Workforce Reports, and summarises information pertinent to NZSAR's strategic planning.

This study is intended to inform the strategic processes of the New Zealand Search and Rescue Council, and the voluntary Search and Rescue (SAR) organisations in New Zealand.

**11,416** People involved in the NZ SAR Sector



Over  
**98%**  
Volunteers

SLA Partners provided



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **New Zealand has one of the highest rates of volunteer SAR involvement in the world**

The SAR workforce in New Zealand is 94% unpaid volunteers. For the organisations reviewed this increases to over 98%. The strength of the SAR sector lies in its dedicated, trained and professional volunteer workforce across New Zealand, supported by small teams of capable and committed staff. This enables the provision of a 24/7 search and rescue service that contributes to the safety, resilience and wellbeing of communities.

### **Investment is needed to better support the SAR volunteer workforce**

The ethos of voluntary service is highly visible throughout the sector. Recognition is needed that volunteering is not free to an organisation or community, and does not happen in a vacuum. It requires an enabling environment that needs to be resourced.

The current government funding of volunteers in the SAR sector does not take into account the true costs of supporting volunteers, particularly given the specialist skills required. The bulk of sector funding comes from contestable sources. Funding is an ongoing challenge that impedes development within the sector.

### **NZ and international trends show a shift to episodic and shorter-term volunteering**

This trend is strongest amongst younger age groups. High levels of skill and substantial ongoing training required for all operational roles means that the SAR sector needs volunteers who will make an ongoing commitment and be readily available at short notice. There is an opportunity to find meaningful ways for volunteers to contribute in support and shorter-term roles.

### **The New Zealand SAR sector is heavily reliant on males, two thirds of whom are aged over 40 years**

There has been little change in the demographic makeup of volunteers in the sector over the past eight years. This contrasts sharply with the demographic changes in New Zealand's population over the same period. With increased competition for volunteers, organisations that are monocultural recruit from a smaller pool of volunteers and have difficulty retaining those from diverse backgrounds.

The quality and range of information collected on volunteers prevents robust analysis of future workforce needs and risks. Indicators are that if the current membership demographic trend continues it will create a succession risk in the medium term.

### **The federated structure creates additional resource needs and challenges to consistent practice**

The federated structure within the sector means that each unit, group or club is a separate entity and required to meet governance and reporting requirements. This multiplies the resource required and creates challenges in ensuring consistent practice across the sector. It is, however, recognised that a strength of the club structure is the ownership and commitment of members and their connections within local communities.

One positive change since the last volunteer study in 2010 is the level of collaboration across the sector, with numerous examples of organisations now working together to increase the safety of their communities.

### **This report focuses on specific, implementable solutions and identified recommendations to raise volunteer management practices and the quality of SAR services**

Developing volunteer workforce strategies, both for the sector and individual organisations, will provide a base for maintaining and developing a volunteer workforce that matches ongoing and future operational needs. This report identifies opportunities to better support and resource volunteers within the sector.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that NZSAR:

## STRATEGY

- Fund, and include in NZSAR service level agreements, the requirement that SAR volunteer organisations develop a volunteer workforce strategy and plan.
- Include in the SAR service level agreements that organisations' workforce strategies address diversity.
- Work with the SAR volunteer organisations to develop and implement a sector-level set of Guiding Principles for Volunteer Involvement within the sector.

## FUNDING

- Make explicit the need for investment to raise volunteer management practice in the sector and funding to better deliver support for volunteers, families and employers.
- Support applications from LandSAR, Coastguard NZ and SLSNZ for funding to develop blended and eLearning delivery of theory and assessment. This will increase training accessibility and reduce time to becoming operational and for recertification.
- Provide additional funding for active operational volunteers' equipment.
- Provide advice to the Government on a legislative framework that compensates employers for volunteers' absence.

## LEADERSHIP

- Fund cross-SAR sector leadership development programmes to equip volunteer leaders to address the distinctive needs of volunteers.
- Explore options for providing SAR sector leadership programmes for volunteers between the ages of 18 and 30.

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- Establish a standard set of workforce data to be collected across SAR organisations.
- Share research with SAR organisations on ideas, strategies and tools to enhance their capacity for effective engagement with young volunteers and other target groups.
- Commission resources that SAR organisations can use to develop cultural awareness and inclusive volunteer management practices.
- Commission the development of a sector wide online volunteer health and safety module to be customised by SAR organisations.
- Commission the development of core governance training resources to be customised and branded by each SAR organisation.

## METHODOLOGY

### VOLUNTEER ORGANISATION WORKFORCE METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was used to review strategic and operational volunteer engagement practices for each of the four organisations:

- Analysis of documentation and volunteer resources and policies for each organisation
- Interviews with operational volunteers, governance personnel and key external stakeholders selected by the four organisations
- InvolveMe 360 surveys (VNZ's digital organisational assessment tool on best practice volunteering) were customised for each organisation to enable additional information to be collected<sup>1</sup>
- Follow up interviews were held with managers and key staff to discuss the findings
- Analysis of information from volunteer databases.

The focus of information gathering and analysis was volunteer management and support practices. Operational processes were not reviewed as part of this study.

### Volunteer Study Methodology

Desk based research and a review of the Volunteer Workforce reports was undertaken to inform this report, including reviewing data and research generated from this process.

Building on the findings of the Volunteer Workforce reports, Section One of this report summarises general findings of significance across the four SAR organisations. The key recommendations in the executive summary are discussed with detail from the research findings. This includes a summary of the strengths and opportunities presented across the sector, along with a best practice example in each area.

The tables in the Appendix delve further into the detail of the findings from the InvolveMe 360 research that form the basis of the current opportunities and key recommendations.

Section Two of this report contextualises these findings in relation to national and international trends in volunteering. Demographic data from the four SAR organisations is updated with 2018 data. The trends since 2010 are compared with general volunteering and demographic trends in the population to inform future volunteer workforce planning in the SAR sector.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the limited availability of AREC personnel, as yet the survey of its membership has not been completed and further interviews are required.



# SECTION ONE: VOLUNTEERING IN THE NEW ZEALAND SAR SECTOR

The New Zealand search and rescue (SAR) sector in New Zealand relies heavily on volunteers for the delivery of search and rescue services. Of 13 countries surveyed for benchmarking purposes, New Zealand had the highest level of volunteer involvement in SAR<sup>2</sup>.

In 2016/17, NZSAR's Service Level Agreement partners provided a total of 44,822 volunteer hours in direct operational assistance to the SAR Coordinating Authorities during SAR operations<sup>3</sup>. For the year 2017-2018, NZSAR estimates that New Zealand averted \$686 million in social costs as a result of the 181 lives that were saved.

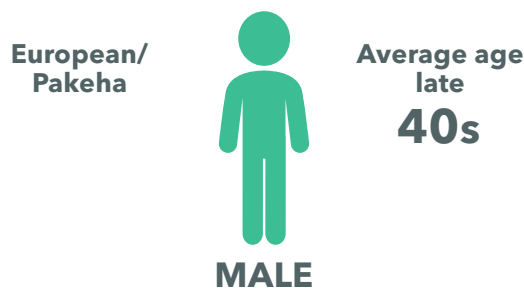
Volunteerism and volunteer satisfaction is strong within the SAR sector, which has much to offer volunteers through training and opportunities. However, as the NZSAR Strategic Plan 2017-2020 identifies, there are 'risks around volunteer recruitment, retention and training', and they are 'subject to mitigation activities'.

## VOLUNTEER WORKFORCE OVERVIEW

### BACKGROUND

The 2010 Volunteer Study identified that the search and rescue (SAR) sector in New Zealand relies heavily on volunteers for the delivery of search and rescue services.<sup>4</sup>

### AVERAGE VOLUNTEER



- The New Zealand SAR sector is heavily reliant on men, two thirds of whom are aged over 40 years. The exception to this is Surf Life Saving NZ, which has a significant amount of younger and women volunteers as lifeguards.
- Volunteers provided 549,785 hours of their time during the 2009/2010 financial year. Only 5% of this time was spent in direct support of category 1 and 2 search and rescue operations.
- Volunteers in the New Zealand SAR sector are primarily motivated by a public good/altruistic behavior.
- Concerns about the use of the volunteers' time in training and nonSAR activities.

<sup>2</sup> NZSAR (2010) Volunteer Study: *An Overview of the voluntary segment of the New Zealand SAR sector*. Retrieved from [www.nzsar.govt.nz](http://www.nzsar.govt.nz).

<sup>3</sup> NZSAR (2017) *NZ Search and Rescue Environmental Scan*. Retrieved from [www.nzsar.govt.nz](http://www.nzsar.govt.nz)

<sup>4</sup> NZSAR (2010) Volunteer Study: *An Overview of the voluntary segment of the New Zealand SAR sector*. Retrieved from [www.nzsar.govt.nz](http://www.nzsar.govt.nz).

Many of the areas of interest in the 2010 report are revisited here eight years on. In addition to age and gender, this analysis expands to include volunteers' ethnicity and links the information to broader trends in volunteering and demographics. Given that many of the 2010 findings remain relevant, there is a focus on identifying strategic opportunities for improvement.

A high level scan conducted in 2017 of the SAR service model suggests that there are multiple risks stemming from the environment that may converge over the next 5 years. One of the top three risks identified was the decline in the number of volunteers in the future, undermining response capacity and capability was identified as one of the top three. This report confirms that the operational model of long-term, committed and skilled volunteers is in direct contrast to the trend towards short-term volunteering with fewer hours and a reduction in organisational loyalty. Together with SAR's current volunteer demographic, the ageing population structure and likely increased demand for SAR services, the sector will need to invest in future-focused strategic planning and resourcing, as outlined in the following pages.

## SECTOR STRENGTHS

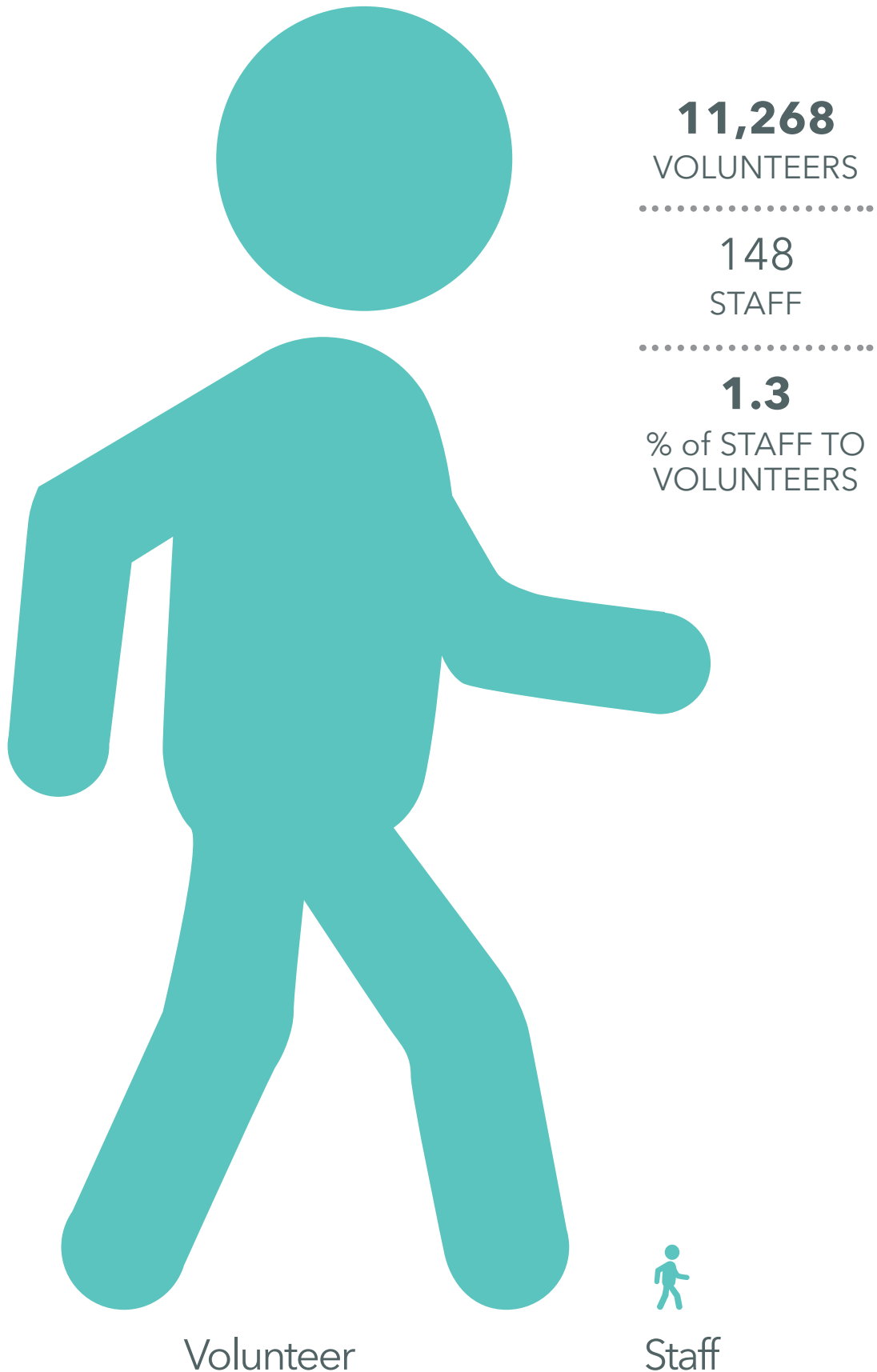
*“Being part of an organisation that not only values search and rescue but volunteer safety, training, support, crew bonding between all unit members, and being part of one massive family”* (volunteer comment).

Overall there are many effective volunteer support practices evident in the organisations that make up the NZSAR sector. These include:

- A significant, committed, trained and professional volunteer workforce across New Zealand, contributing to the safety, resilience and wellbeing of their communities.
- The ethos of voluntary service is highly visible throughout and motivations to volunteer are primarily based on wanting to do the right thing.
- A sector that is strategically supported at a national and local level.
- A network of local organisations embedded in their local communities and completing significant governance, systems, and membership management.
- Paid staff are professional, talented and committed.
- Relationships are connected and developed throughout the sector and include practices such as having a representative from other SAR organisations on committees (e.g. Coastguard in LandSAR Wanaka).
- National organisations engage with and consult volunteers on policy changes and requirements affecting them.
- Strong partnerships across the SAR sector with increasing numbers of joint initiatives such as:
  - Coastguard NZ, SLSNZ and the Marine Rescue Coordination Centre are working together to develop a shared national digital communications platform.
  - The Marlborough Coastguard marine rescue ambulance that services all St John Ambulance, Fire and Police emergency callouts in the Marlborough Sounds. It carries both Coastguard crew and paramedics on board.
  - In LandSAR the Central North Island (six groups) and the Tararua Alliance (five groups) work together. Each year these Alliances meet for two informal operational support meetings, sharing lessons learnt and collaboratively planning training.

# SNAPSHOT

## VOLUNTEER TO STAFF RATIO TOTAL



## SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Recognition is needed of the level of investment required to support volunteer workforces

The bulk of sector funding comes from contestable sources, which creates a funding risk and can inhibit long term planning, investment and degrade sector effectiveness. The current government funding towards the SAR sector does not take into account the true costs of supporting volunteers, particularly given the high skill levels required. Coastguard, LandSAR and SLSNZ all have extremely small regional and national support offices given the size of their workforces. AREC is totally volunteer run and consequently there are risks around sustainability, health and safety and staying abreast of changes in technology. Fair pay for volunteer managers was also identified as an issue.

*“When not well supported there can be negative effects from volunteering. These include when the quality of volunteer work is low; when volunteering results in burnout; when volunteer needs take precedence over organisational needs; or when there are conflicts of interests.”<sup>5</sup> (interviewee).*

### On average, the four SAR organisations are made up of over 98% volunteers:<sup>6</sup>

Organisation	Volunteer Numbers	Staff Numbers	Percentage to staff to volunteers
LandSAR	3,432	14	0.4%
Coastguard NZ	2,055	59	2.9%
SLSNZ	5,526	75	1.4%
AREC	255	0	0.0%
TOTAL	11,268	148	1.3%

Coastguard NZ has the highest percentage of paid staff at 2.4%. This is for an organisation that requires the capital outlay and maintenance of 79 rescue vessels, two planes and 63 operational sites. It also operates a boating education centre, providing courses for boaties and the public and two regional coordination units. SLSNZ also provides education programmes, community safety messaging and a vibrant sporting branch, in addition to search and rescue services.

The organisations are aware of many opportunities to improve the support of volunteers, but have limited resources to implement new initiatives. All need to invest considerable effort into fundraising at both national and local levels. For operational volunteers this is a dissatisfier.

Police and defence forces are not expected to run lotteries and sausage sizzles or to apply for grants to fund operations or vehicles, yet Coastguard, LandSAR, SLSNZ and AREC are only funded for a small proportion of the total cost of providing SAR services and ensuring operational capacity is available.

<sup>5</sup> Mook (2012) Organisational Factors Affecting Strategic Volunteer Management *e-Volunteerism*, Volume XIII, Issue 1, October 2012

<sup>6</sup> Volunteer numbers are taken from Coastguard and SLSNZ annual reports and the number of people on LandSAR's database. AREC's figures come from provided documents. Staff numbers have been calculated from websites and verified. SLSNZ staff numbers includes FTE calculation of paid patrol hours.

Note: these figures do not include staff contracted by clubs, group or units. Numbers for these were not available and are low.

AREC provides a salient example of what can happen to any volunteer organisation that is not adequately supported. A small organisation with 255 members; it is entirely volunteer run. A couple of years ago AREC was deregistered as a charity for failure to meet reporting requirements. AREC is a crucial part of New Zealand's SAR capability. In times of crisis and natural disaster amateur radio provides a means of emergency communication when landlines, cell phones and other means of communications fail.

Investment in infrastructure and support for volunteer-involving organisations is not only good practice; it is vital in a sector that provides critical life-saving services.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Explore more comprehensive funding for the sector. Volunteering is not free to the organisation and does not happen in a vacuum. It requires an enabling environment that needs to be resourced.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** More recognition and utilisation of the specialist skills in SLSNZ across the wider SAR sector.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Create and deliver a sector-wide communications strategy that amplifies and demonstrates the value of the impact of the SAR voluntary organisations and over 10,000 volunteers to New Zealand.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Use the language of wellbeing for individuals and communities to measure and communicate the value and impact of SAR volunteering.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Identify, promote and advocate for ways of recognising and encouraging employers to support their employees to be SAR volunteers.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** For AREC to recruit staff to manage and develop the organisation.

## Sector good practice examples

### **FENZ:**

In 2015 Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) was directed by government to fund structures and support programmes to better deliver support for volunteers, families and employers. Since then FENZ has increased staff resources focused on developing volunteer support within the organisational development unit from nil to 15. This has enabled the development of resources and programmes to support volunteers and their families. This is in addition to resources invested in training, health and safety and operational support. They have an Employer Recognition Programme that provides branding, public recognition and an annual recognition event.

### **Cross-SAR:**

Discussions are underway to enable SLSNZ, Coastguard NZ, FENZ and St Johns to operate a mixed model for delivery and training to a level where they can support each other during a search and rescue operation.

### **Recommendation:**

- Make explicit the need for investment to raise volunteer management practice in the sector and funding to better deliver support for volunteers, families and employers.

## Strategic workforce planning is required to ensure a consistent SAR service into the future

Workforce planning is the systematic identification and analysis of what an organisation is going to need in terms of the size, type, and quality of workforce to achieve its objectives. It determines what mix of experience, knowledge, and skills are required, and it sequences steps to get the right number of right people in the right place at the right time.

Data collection varies across NZSAR sector, making strategic volunteer recruitment challenging.

Coastguard, LandSAR and SLSNZ all review workforce needs to match demand and each takes a different approach. While information is collected on operational demands and trends, better quality data on the characteristics and needs of volunteers is required to raise planning to a strategic level. This also requires an understanding and commitment from operational volunteers to improve data collection.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Sector wide workforce planning to help to identify and manage capability and capacity risks. Better data could facilitate planning for succession, targeted role recruitment and greater diversity.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Establish information required for workforce planning and develop a 10 year workforce plan. Include and fund the requirement to develop a volunteer workforce plan in NZSAR service level agreements, specifying a standard set of data to be collected across the search and rescue groups.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** For organisations to develop a volunteer workforce strategy and metrics to align their volunteer workforce with operational needs and ensure sustainability in the medium to long term.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** To conduct targeted recruitment campaigns to manage succession risks.

## Sector good practice examples

### Coastguard NZ:

The Northern Region Coastguard management team monitors capacity risks in operational roles on an ongoing basis. Volunteer shortages are being addressed with strategies such as increased investment in training and a refocused recruitment campaign.

### Recommendation:

- Fund, and include in NZSAR service level agreements, the requirement that SAR volunteer organisations develop a volunteer workforce strategy and plan.
- Establish a standard set of data to be collected across SAR organisations.

## Volunteer management is a specialist field

Volunteer management has been strongly influenced by classical human resource management. A growing body of research shows that volunteers differ from paid staff and that Volunteer Managers should therefore respond to the special characteristics of a volunteer workforce.

Studies<sup>7</sup> show significant differences between volunteers and paid staff, including their motivation, needs satisfaction, perceived value of reward, role, time investment, career lifecycle, inclusion in decision-making, and 'contractual' obligations.

While the paid staff interviewed demonstrated an intuitive understanding of these differences, current policies and the management training available are operationally focused. There is a need to complement the operational and workforce support policies, with resources and training that address the different people management requirements of a volunteer workforce.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Develop volunteer management resources for leaders.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Encourage greater SAR participation in leadership professional development and volunteer management training e.g. VNZ's Pivot conference and Certificate in Managing Volunteers.

## Sector good practice examples

### LandSAR:

LandSAR staff are creating a culture that encourages learning by providing examples of good practice. They encourage conversations about challenges and enable groups to generate local solutions. This consultative approach facilitated the development and adoption of LandSAR's member support policy and code of conduct. These are examples of volunteer policies that provide a framework to develop and reinforce a culture of safety and respect.

### Recommendation:

- Fund cross-SAR sector leadership development programmes to equip volunteer leaders to address the distinctive needs of volunteers.

## There is a mismatch between SAR organisations' requirements and trends in volunteering

A significant mismatch exists between SAR organisational requirements and trends in volunteering. NZ and international trends show a shift to episodic and shorter-term volunteering, especially in younger age groups. A key challenge is to maintain a skilled workforce, available at all times for search and rescue operations (SAROPs). This requires long-term and regular commitment from a large core of volunteers. Yet, the trend is for volunteers to engage for shorter periods, reflecting the many competing demands on peoples' time. Addressing these changes requires organisations to find meaningful opportunities for volunteers in support and shorter-term roles while maintaining a substantial core of volunteers prepared to make a longer term commitment.

Organisations also need to deepen their understanding of the motivators of different groups of volunteers. For example a key finding on Millennials (1980-1995) is that nonprofit organisations should engage on multiple levels of communication and involvement<sup>8</sup>. The research points towards technological innovation and a multilevel approach that can and should include direct mailing, websites, social networking site, mainstream media, and even text messaging.

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7 Struder, S (2016) Volunteer Management: Responding to the Uniqueness of Volunteers, *Nonprofit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Aug 2016, Vol. 45 Issue 4, p688-714

8 Volunteering Queensland (2011) *Young People as Volunteers: A Guide to moving beyond Traditional Practices*. Retrieved from [www.volunteeringqld.org.au](http://www.volunteeringqld.org.au).

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Looking towards the future, the SAR sector needs to broaden its appeal to attract younger, female and more ethnically diverse volunteers. This requires developing an understanding of the motivations and needs of different groups to create opportunities to match.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Promote the benefits of volunteering within the SAR sector using messages and channels directed to targeted groups.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Develop people management strategies and processes to maximise efficient use of available volunteer time. For example online induction and health and safety packages.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** For organisations to undertake a needs analysis of tasks required and identify work that can be chunked into a short term assignments for skilled volunteers. For example web design, development of a business continuity plan or marketing resources.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Identify work that can be undertaken by episodic volunteers e.g. contribute to a street appeal or fundraising activity and explore the use corporate volunteering e.g. to undertake building maintenance.

## Sector good practice examples

### Coastguard NZ:

Coastguard New Zealand recruits for 'shore crew', who do not require the level of training and time commitment of 'wet crew' (operational) roles. These include roles such as administration, crew managers who see to the welfare needs of volunteers, and fundraising and community relations.

### SLSNZ:

The Bay of Plenty SLSNZ SAR coordinator encourages volunteers to provide support for SAR operations in roles such as providing provisions and looking after equipment.

### Recommendation:

- Share research with SAR organisations on ideas, strategies and tools to enhance their capacity for effective engagement with young volunteers and other target groups.

## The New Zealand SAR sector is heavily reliant on males, two thirds of whom are aged over 40 and a predominately Pakeha/NZ European membership

The demographic makeup of SAR volunteers does not reflect the diversity of the overall New Zealand population.

Workforce capacity and succession risks are heightened by the age profile of volunteers within LandSAR, Coastguard NZ and AREC. The exception to this trend is SLSNZ, which has a high proportion of younger and female lifeguard volunteers. However, SLSNZ's SAR volunteers are predominantly male and NZ European.

With increased competition for volunteers, organisations that are monocultural recruit from a smaller pool volunteers and have difficulty retaining those from diverse backgrounds.



Implementing a diversity strategy is a medium to long term process and it requires resourcing. Understanding the culture, attitudes and perceptions of members towards diversity is the first step to identifying and addressing barriers to inclusion.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** For NZSAR to fund the development, and support the implementation of, Volunteer Strategies for the Voluntary SAR agencies.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** To identify the barriers to the participation of female and younger volunteers and develop strategies to address these.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** To promote examples of female and younger volunteers in the media.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** To strengthen the pathway for volunteers to move between organisations e.g. between SLSNZ and Coastguard.

## Sector good practice examples

### **SLSNZ:**

A high proportion of SLSNZ media coverage profiles young and female volunteers and utilises a range of social media channels. Its relationship with the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme enables members to get credit for their experience and volunteer work. This should assist retention. The development pathways, National Lifeguarding schools and Leadership programme for those aged 18 to 35 support the retention of younger volunteers.

### **Surf Life Saving Australia:**

Following incidents between surf life savers and Muslim youth on Cronulla beach, Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) developed the “On the Same Wave” initiative, partnering with community and both central and local government. The aims were to increase harmony between all beach users and develop inclusive practices within SLSA and clubs. It involved developing surf awareness programmes for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, cultural awareness training for volunteers and partnering with organisations working with newly arrived migrants.<sup>9</sup>

### **SLSNZ:**

In 2014 SLSNZ partnered with Ngāti Porou to establish a club in Gisborne/Tairāwhiti. Te Runanganui o Ngati Porou provide administrative and governance support and SLSNZ provide training and operational support to the new club. SLSNZ also utilises information on beach user populations to identify and engage groups such as the Indian community.

### **Recommendation:**

- Work with the SAR volunteer organisations to develop and implement a sector level set of Guiding Principles for Volunteer Involvement within the SAR Sector.
- Explore options for providing cross sector leadership programmes for volunteers between 18 and 30.
- Include in the SAR service level agreements that organisations’ workforce strategies address diversity.
- Commission resources that the SAR organisations can use for developing cultural awareness and inclusive volunteer management practices.

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<sup>9</sup> Note: While SLS Australia’s current strategic plan includes the Inclusive Beaches initiative (a partnership with Autism Australia making it easier for people with backgrounds different abilities and to get involved) with Surf Life Saving, the only membership demographic information provided is on gender and age.

## Volunteer induction and training could be more efficient

The time it takes for a new volunteer to train and become operational is a significant issue. Training is the largest demand on SAR volunteers' time. SAR volunteers give up an average of 4.9 hours of their time on administration and fund raising activities for every hour of operations. Non-SAR workloads and training demands are problematic for the consumption or 'feel good' motivation and may create retention challenges.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Create e-learning resources to replace some of the theory-based training.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Clarify training needs, benefits and expectations when recruiting volunteers
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Develop a sector-wide online volunteer health and safety module that can be customised by organisations within the SAR sector.

## Sector good practice examples

### Coastguard NZ:

Coastguard Southern Region has developed a range of volunteer guides and resources including a welcome pack, induction and health and safety guides.

Coastguard Northern Region has introduced a six day block course to accelerate progression from trainee to operational crew members. This is open to all regions.

### SLSNZ:

SLSNZ have a new online learning portal. Members of SLSNZ can log in and undertake the Surf Lifeguard Refresher course and complete the theory assessment online. The approved club instructor is also able to sign off their practical elements via the online platform. This reduces study time and removes the requirement to sit a one hour exam and marking by assessors.

### LandSAR:

The Gisborne LandSAR Chair develops practical skills-based training events that develop skill and knowledge of the local topography. These are followed by group barbeques that keep members socially engaged. Video clips have also been developed for desktop training.

### Recommendation:

- Support applications from LandSAR, Coastguard NZ and SLSNZ and AREC for funds to develop blended and eLearning delivery of theory and assessment to increase accessibility and reduce time from recruitment to becoming operational and for recertification.
- Commission the development of a sector wide online volunteer health and safety module to be customised by organisations within the sector.

## Volunteering has a financial cost to many SAR volunteers

The cost of volunteering to individuals appeared in all three organisation's InvolveMe Surveys. This included petrol for travel, the need to provide personal gear (LandSAR and SLSNZ SAR squads) and the loss of earning while on SAROPs and training courses.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Provide additional government funding of gear for active operational volunteers. Note: For SLSNZ funding gear for all SAR squad members would be straightforward as they only number approximately 250 and the majority have over five years' service. However, for LandSAR with over 3000 volunteers, some of whom are not operationally active, this would require targeted investment.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Work with government to develop a legislative framework that compensates employers for volunteers' absence. This could include employer tax-breaks, as well as recognition and support for the employers.

## Sector good practice examples

### FENZ:

FENZ provides volunteers with full uniform and gear (approximately \$5,000) and reimburses wages for attendance at block courses. It also extends EAP support to volunteers' families.

### Recommendation:

- Provide advice to the Government on a legislative framework that compensates employers for volunteers' absence.
- Provide additional funding for active operational volunteers' equipment.

## The federated structure of operation creates additional resourcing requirements

Each unit, group or club is a separate entity with its own compliance and reporting requirements. This multiplies the significant resource effort that goes into fulfilling governance and management requirements. Within committees the understanding of, and skills in, governance, finance and leadership are variable.

- **OPPORTUNITY:** Develop core governance resources to be customised/branded for each SAR organisation.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Utilise technology to automate and streamline administrative and reporting requirements.
- **OPPORTUNITY:** Deliver a framework for organisations seeking to move away from a federated model, or towards amalgamation.

## Sector good practice examples

### Coastguard NZ:

Coastguard Southern Regional manager provides one on one induction for new Board Chairs and provides budgeting support and has developed and a treasurer's guide to using Xero.

### Recommendation:

- Commission the development of core governance training resources to be customised and branded by each SAR organisation.

# SECTION TWO: VOLUNTEERING TRENDS

## THE CHANGING VOLUNTEERING LANDSCAPE

New Zealand is one of the leading countries in the world for volunteer participation. Figures released in a report published by Statistics New Zealand in March 2016 showed that volunteer labour in organisations contributed \$3.5 billion (1.7%) to New Zealand's gross domestic product for the year ended March 2013.

The definition of volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. While the definition has changed little over time, we know that diverse trends and patterns shape current expressions of volunteerism.

As the recently released State of the World's Volunteerism Report (2018:17) states:

*“People’s volunteering evolves in line with a range of context-specific influencing factors, from demographic changes in the population to newly available technologies. Many countries with ageing populations are finding new resources and challenges for volunteering. Likewise, increasing youth populations are prompting some countries (particularly low- and middle-income countries) to emphasize volunteering as a means of constructively engaging young people. In some countries, formal volunteering is becoming more episodic than the regular and predictable volunteering of the past, influenced by factors such as work and leisure.”<sup>10</sup>*

Within New Zealand we are seeing several key trends impacting on expressions of volunteering. These trends are vital to understand in a search and rescue sector that is almost entirely volunteer run. Not only will these trends have a greater impact, they pose particular risks to a model that relies on long-term skilled volunteers.

- **TIME:** People are giving less of their time. The total number of hours volunteered fell by 42% between 2004 and 2013 – from 270 million to 157 million.<sup>11</sup>
- **CIVIC CORE:** We are seeing the rise of a civic core in New Zealand. That is that 14% of volunteers do over half of all hours volunteered. This trend is also reflected in the UK data <sup>12</sup>. With a small number of people doing a lot, related issues include both burn-out and succession planning.
- **ATOMISATION:** Recent stats show that although we are doing less hours in total there are actually more people volunteering<sup>13</sup>. This jumped by 21% between 2004 and 2013. This means that (civic core aside) we are seeing a lot more people are actually doing less. Over the same time period the total number of hours volunteered fell by 42%.
- **EPISODIC, MICRO AND PROJECT BASED VOLUNTEERING** are on the rise as how people want to volunteer is changing. This is a challenge for organisations that rely on long-term skilled volunteers, but opens up opportunities to utilise the professional skills of people who would not otherwise volunteer with these organisations.

10 UNV (2018) *State of the World's Volunteerism Report*, p17.

11 Statistics New Zealand (2016). *Non-profit institutions satellite account: 2013*. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

12 Mohan, J. And Bulloch, S (2012) The idea of a 'civic core': what are the overlaps between charitable giving, volunteering, and civic participation in England and Wales? *Third Sector Research Centre*. Working Paper 73.

13 Statistics New Zealand (2016). *Non-profit institutions satellite account: 2013*. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

- **SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERING** is facilitated by social media and on the rise. With clear leadership this generosity can be harnessed in a way that is useful to the cause. An example is Student Volunteer Army in response to the Christchurch earthquakes. Structuring opportunities for spontaneous volunteers means that their efforts will not hamper the professional SAR volunteer response.
- **STRAINS** on the 97% percent of VIOs that are entirely volunteer run in relation to capacity issues such as managing volunteers and organisations. But there has also been a 30% increase in paid staff working in the NFP sector.<sup>14</sup>
- **DEMOGRAPHICS IN NZ ARE CHANGING:** We have an ageing population structure. This will significantly impact who and where people will be available to volunteer in the future. Recent migrants are also increasing as a percentage of the population.

The decrease in volunteer hours is one of a number of complex changes in volunteer engagement currently facing the community and voluntary sector.

Respondents in the State of Volunteering Report 2017<sup>15</sup> noted a shift towards episodic and project-based volunteering rather than joining an organisation over the long-term. More people want to engage in 'episodic volunteering'. Episodic volunteering is where those who volunteer do so on a periodic or recurring basis, as opposed to an ongoing capacity.



14 Statistics New Zealand (2016). *Non-profit institutions satellite account: 2013*. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

15 Volunteering New Zealand (2018) State of Volunteering Report. Retrieved from [www.volunteeringnz.org.nz](http://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz)

We are also seeing a move towards skills-based volunteering. This is where individuals with professional qualifications and/or experience, offer their skills and expertise to volunteer-involving organisations to implement particular projects to enhance community capacity. This could be for web design, development of risk management/business continuity plans, evaluation frameworks, communications and marketing plans, financial management/account systems advice.

This reflects international trends. One of the key findings in the State of Volunteering Australia 2016 report was the disconnect between volunteering roles that people are interested in and roles that organisations are offering<sup>16</sup>. Comments from volunteer-involving organisations highlighted that many involve volunteers as manpower as opposed to developing volunteer roles to suit individual skills and experience.

One participant noted that “Despite rhetoric that the contribution of volunteers is valued equally with contributions of paid staff, there are still many organisations who treat volunteers as individuals who will do all the tasks staff do not want to do. In my experience, both complacency and ignorance of the enormous value volunteers contribute results in a lack of regard of volunteers as strategic assets.”

Understanding that people are likely to move on from volunteering roles once they have developed skills, completed the project they are working on or when circumstances change is becoming a prerequisite for volunteer-involving organisations in the current volunteering landscape. This situation does not necessarily need to be problematic if it is built into the way an organisation functions: The mode of volunteering has shifted. People in general are less willing to contribute/commit to medium/long term volunteer roles, but happy enough to volunteer hours/half day/day when it suits them.

It is essential to understand these trends in order to future-proof organisational models that include volunteers. These trends, coupled with changes in demographics, mean that all organisations need to adjust how they recruit, retain, train and recognise their volunteers. Ageing volunteers and a lack of volunteers were the most common concerns of the 1500 charities that completed the most recent State of Volunteering Report<sup>17</sup>.

## There has been a shift in the way we talk about, value and measure volunteering

### The Language of Wellbeing

Volunteers are critical to the successful delivery of frontline services and are essential in building community capacity and enhancing community resilience and wellbeing. At the same time, volunteering is associated with higher levels of individual wellbeing<sup>18</sup>. Thinking about, measuring and communicating wellbeing outcomes will place NZSAR at the forefront of an emerging field.

Wellbeing economics replaces the single measure provided by GDP with a huge variety of indicators - the Living Standards Dashboard, developed by Conal Smith for the New Zealand Treasury is one example<sup>19</sup>. Unlike GDP, the Dashboard counts market outcomes such as jobs, wages and housing as well as non-market outcomes such as health, knowledge, leisure, social connections and measures of environmental quality. This will align with the Wellbeing Budget to be delivered in 2019.

16 Volunteering Australia (2016) *State of Volunteering in Australia*. Retrieved from [www.volunteeringaustralia.org.au](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org.au)

17 Volunteering New Zealand (2018) *State of Volunteering Report*. Retrieved from [www.volunteeringnz.org.nz](http://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz)

18 Volunteering New Zealand (2018) *Submission on the Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand project*. Retrieved from [www.volunteeringnz.org.nz](http://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz)

19 Smith, C. (2018) *Treasury Living Standards Dashboard: Monitoring Intergenerational Wellbeing*. Retrieved from [www.treasury.govt.nz](http://www.treasury.govt.nz)

## Resilience

Organisations, such as the OECD and the United Nations, use the language of resilience not only in relation to disaster preparedness and emergency management but in relation to other kinds of vulnerabilities, such as ‘fragile’ nation-states or communities suffering from chronic poverty. Indeed, in the UN’s latest State of the World’s Volunteerism Report<sup>20</sup>, resilience becomes the dominant logic for intervention in communities through volunteering. Comparable SAR organisations, in the UK for instance, also work within a framework of local and regional ‘Resilience Forums and Partnerships.’

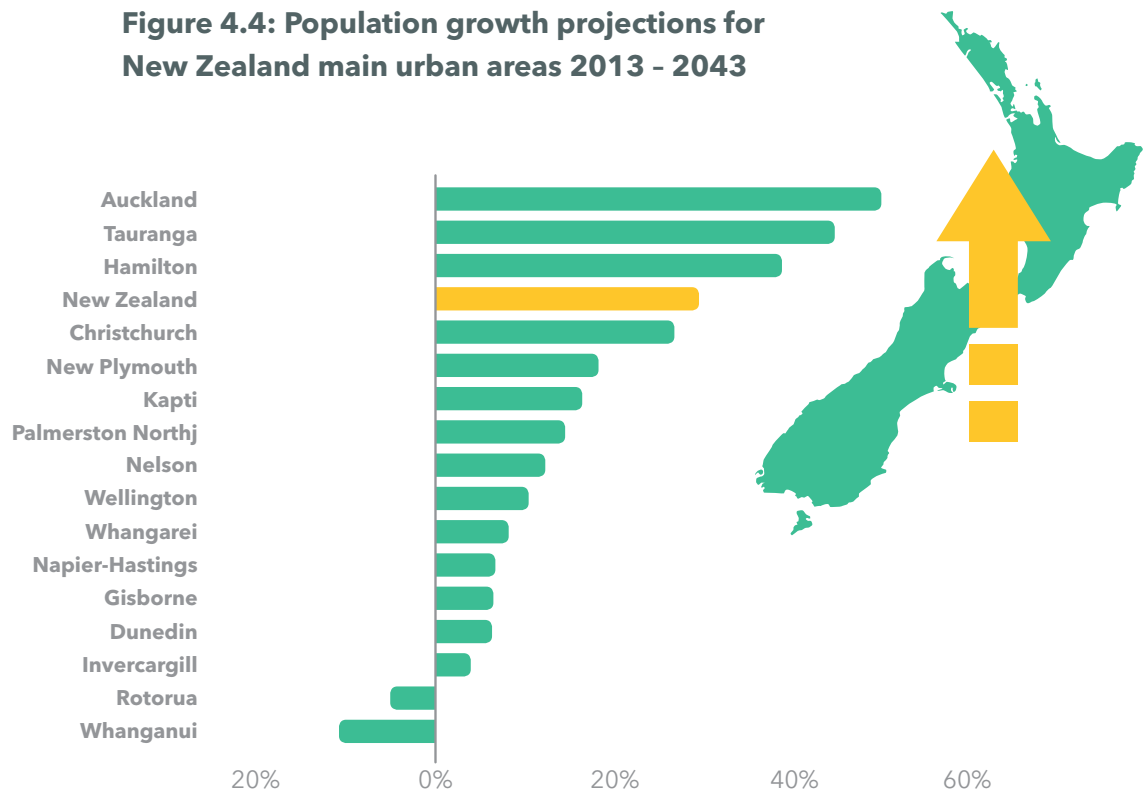
Like wellbeing, volunteering has a reciprocal relationship with resilience; it contributes both to community resilience while simultaneously building resilience within volunteers themselves. Volunteering not only widens our immediate social circle, it establishes networks of support across the community, and has the potential to empower marginalised groups. It creates opportunities for co-operation between central government and local groups, as well as opportunities for communities to determine and enact changes in a self-organised and autonomous way.

## Understanding changing demographics and the impact on volunteering

### Population growth

Population projections by Statistics New Zealand assume that current trends are likely to continue<sup>21</sup>. That means that high growth urban areas will continue to experience high growth, low growth or stable areas will continue to remain about where they are and declining centres will continue to decline. The rapid growth of the Golden Triangle means that almost half (45%) of the total population is expected to live in Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga by 2043.

**Figure 4.4: Population growth projections for New Zealand main urban areas 2013 - 2043**



20 UN Volunteers (2018) 2018 *State of the World's Volunteerism Report: The thread that binds - volunteerism and community resilience*. Retrieved from: [www.unv.org](http://www.unv.org)

21 Statistics New Zealand (2016) *National Population Projections: 2016 (base) - 2068*. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

**Figure 4.5: Projected population change of urban areas 2013 - 2043**

	Number of main urban areas	Number of main urban areas	Number of main urban areas
<b>High growth</b> (greater than 20%)	<b>4</b> eg. Auckland and Tauranga	<b>1</b> eg. Pukekohe	<b>23</b> eg. Rolleston and Warkworth
<b>Low to medium growth</b> (0% - 20%)	<b>10</b> eg. Dunedin and Palmerston North	<b>5</b> eg. Ashburton and Blenheim	<b>25</b> eg. Matamata and Westport
<b>Negative growth</b> (sub-zero)	<b>2</b> eg. Rotorua and Whanganui	<b>8</b> eg. Greymouth, Timaru and Whakatane	<b>51</b> eg. Bulls and Opunake

Source: productivity Commission Analysis of Statistics New Zealand Data

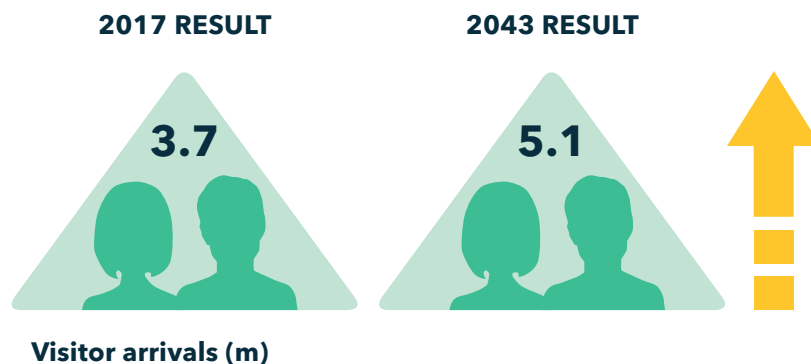
Notes:

1. Main, secondary and minor urban areas are based on Statistics New Zealand classification as outlined in Box 4.1
2. Auckland, Hamilton, wellington and Napier-hastings, urban areas are made up of smaller urban areas

### Tourism

By 2024 there are predicted to be more visitors to New Zealand than there are people living here. International visitors are expected to grow by 37 percent to 5.1 million. About a quarter of that growth will come from China<sup>22</sup>.

This presents particular challenges for NZAR in forecasting the number of volunteers needed, and in which areas, as tourist growth converges with demographic changes, such as our ageing population.



<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. (2018) *New Zealand Tourism Forecasts 2018 - 2024*. Retrieved from [www.mbie.govt.nz](http://www.mbie.govt.nz)

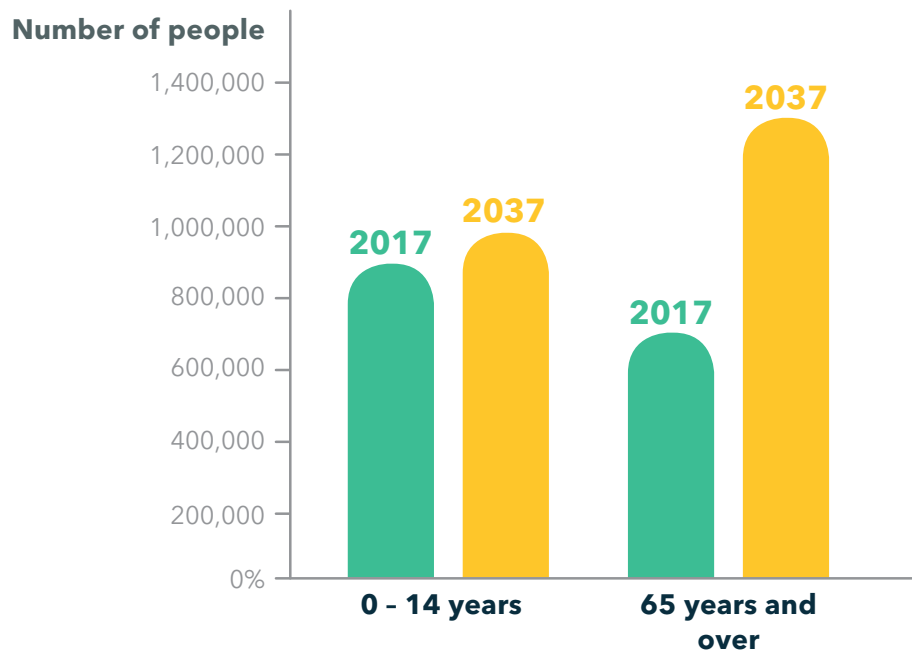


## Ageing population

The fact that our population is ageing is much discussed. However, this slow rising tide has not led to much action to plan for its impact on services generally and for volunteering more specifically.

By mid-century, the ratio of retirees to active workers is expected to double. In the medium-term, the number of older workers is also predicted to surge<sup>23</sup>. Baby boomer retirees are sometimes referred to as a demographic hump or bulge but in fact there is no foreseeable future where over-65s decline as a proportion of our population<sup>24</sup>.

## Population growth in the next 20 years



Older people are already over-represented in volunteering generally. SAR, however, is also a sector in which health and fitness is essential to most volunteer roles so there is an inherent risk in relying on a volunteer workforce that is ageing. We also cannot assume that baby boomers coming up to retirement age will volunteer at the rate seen in previous older generations as often they have competing demands, such as caring responsibilities for grandchildren, continued paid work and leisure time expectations.

There are two very different stories within the SAR volunteer age demographics. While SLSNZ has a majority of volunteers under the age of 20<sup>25</sup>, the SAR sector as a whole is much older, with the largest segment of the SAR volunteer population in the 60 years and older category. While the “all of SAR” average is no doubt skewed by the results from AREC – a comparatively small organisation – the overall trend is clear: SAR volunteers tend to be in late middle-age or older.

A comparison with the 2010 study shows a slightly older volunteer population eight years on, suggesting that many are the same people given the average length of volunteer service. An ageing population will only increase pressure on middle-age and late-middle age people to replenish the SAR volunteer workforce.

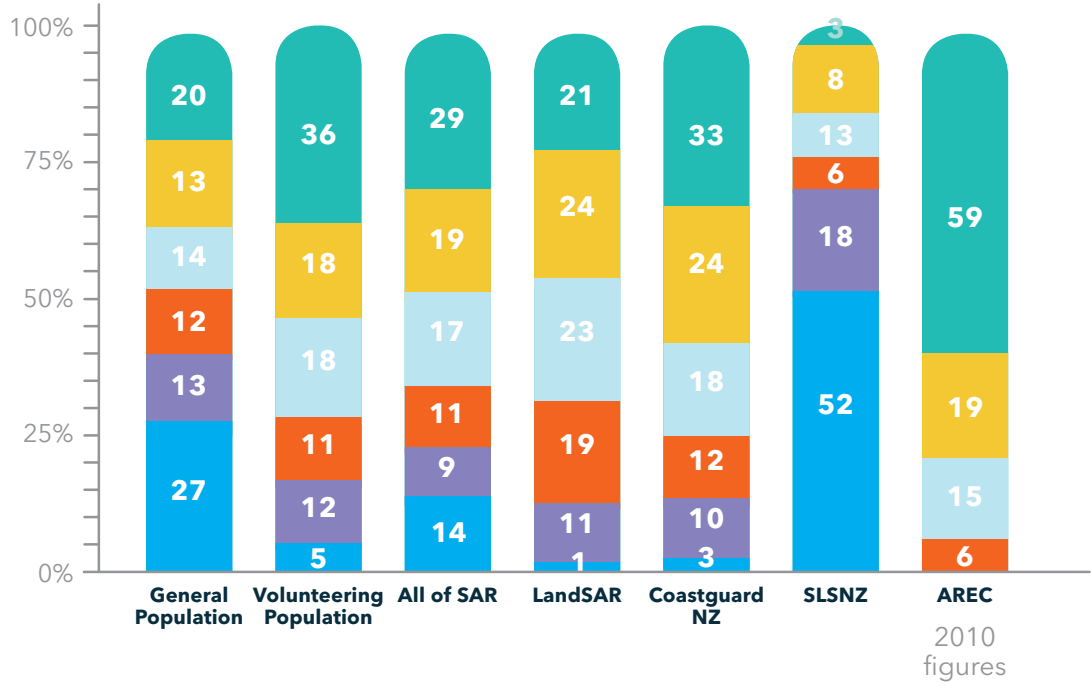
<sup>23</sup> Office for Seniors (2017) Our Ageing Population. Retrieved from [www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz)

<sup>24</sup> Statistics New Zealand (2016) *National Population Projections: 2016 (base) - 2068*. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

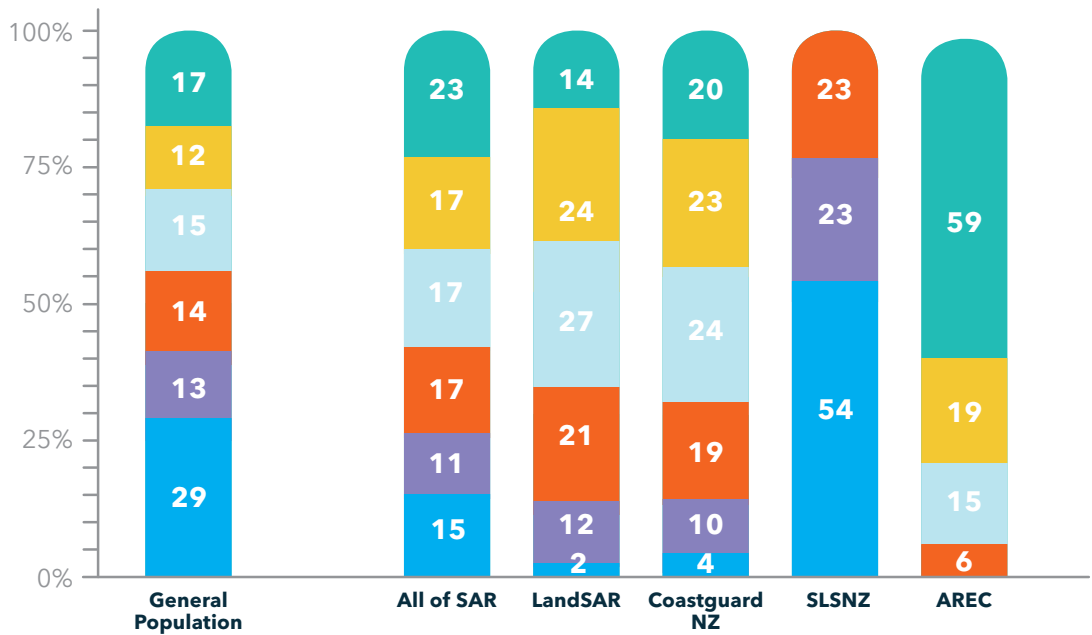
<sup>25</sup> Note that this includes all SLSNZ volunteers. Only 4% of SLSNZ SAR squad volunteers surveyed were under age 20, and 41% of them were over age 40.

% 60+ % 50-59 % 40-49 % 30-39 % 20-29 % >20

### Age and Volunteering



### Age and Volunteering 2010

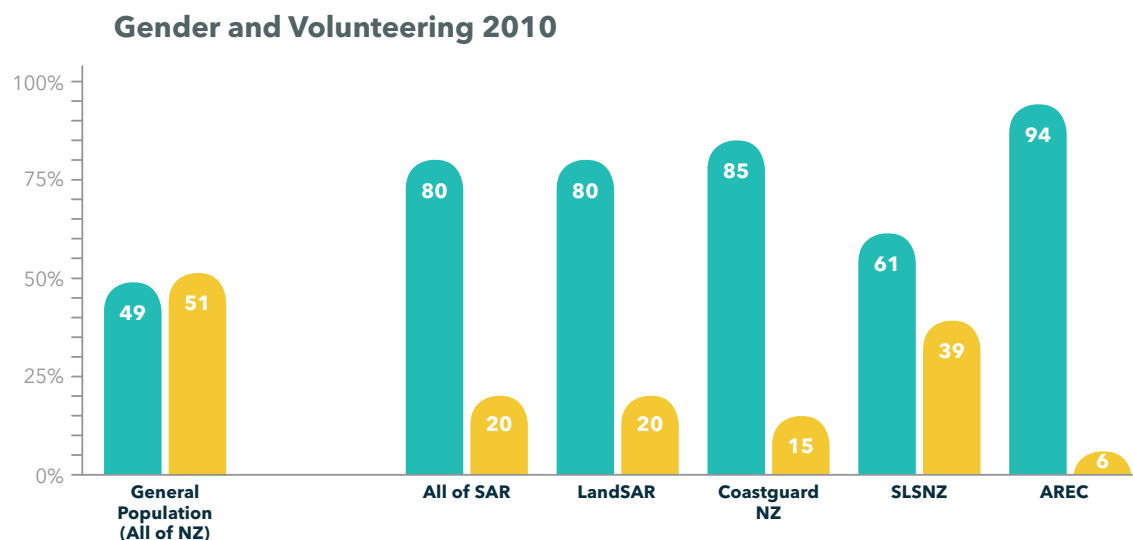
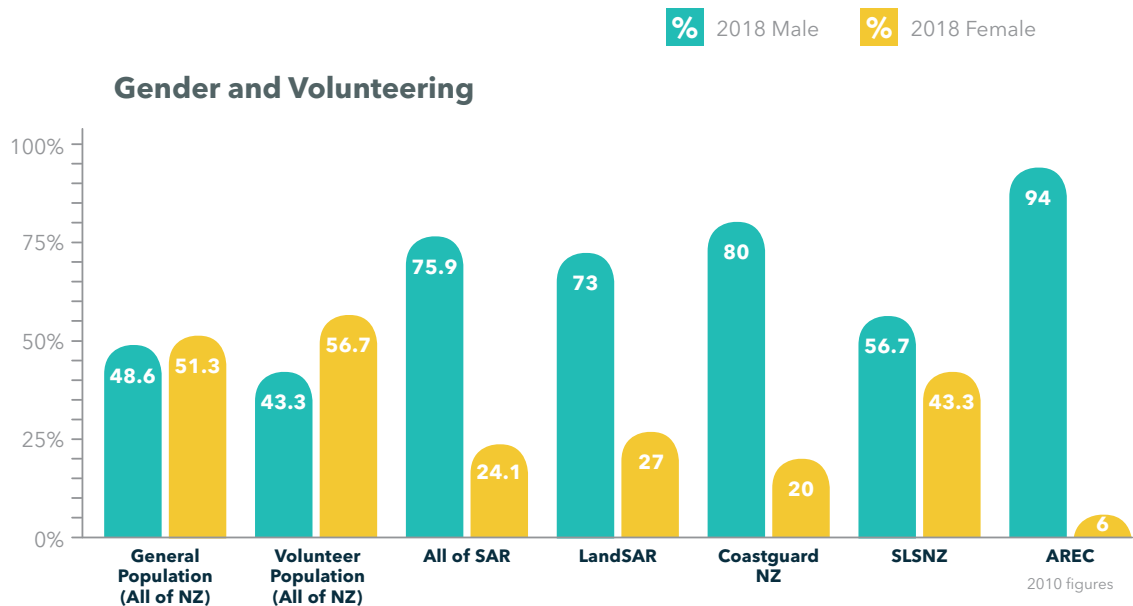


## Gender

The gender dynamic of the SAR workforce is stark. There has been some small progress made since the 2010 study, with an average 4% increase in women volunteers. SAR is not alone as women are under-represented right across traditionally male-dominated industries. This is an opportunity to be a sector that is welcoming to women and provides meaningful inclusive roles, particularly as women are already more likely to volunteer in general.

SLSNZ has a far more balanced gender representation and demonstrates that diversity in one area often supports diversity in another. A dedicated youth programme is undoubtedly linked to higher rates of participation of women. However, the SLSNZ SAR squads have gender inequities similar to the other SAR organisations (86% male from those surveyed).

These charts are based on information provided by the four SAR organisations and the trends are supported by demographic information collected through InvolveMe 360. Future data collection of this sort should include the category 'gender diverse' so as not to exclude some of your volunteers who indicated this option through the InvolveMe 360 survey.



## Ethnicity

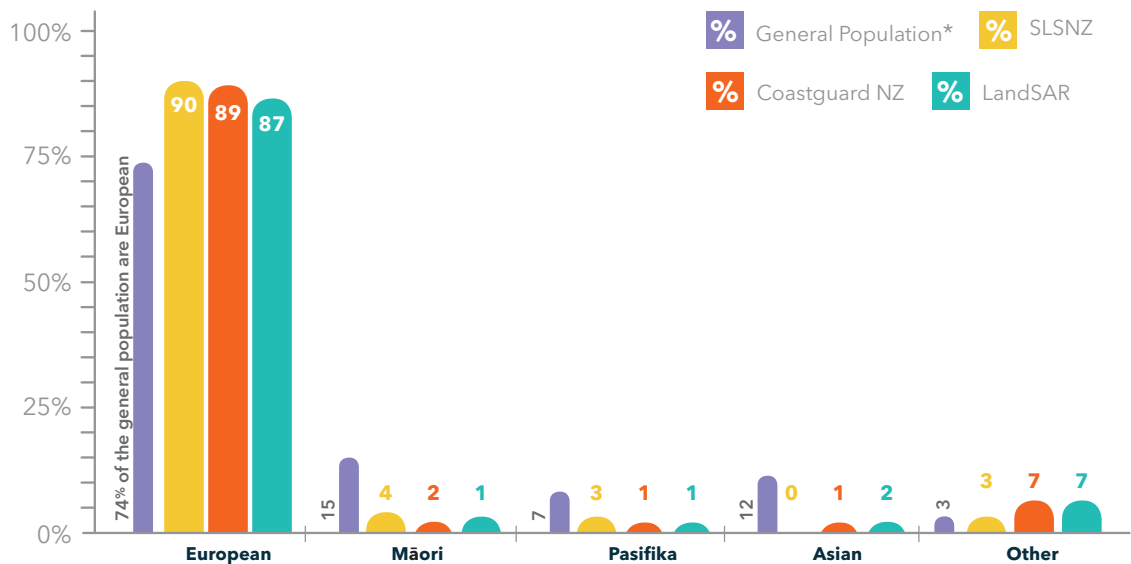
As the population of New Zealand becomes more urban, it also becomes much more ethnically diverse as a result of international migration and birth rates. New Zealand has one of the highest per capita inflows of migrants in the OECD. More than one in four members of the workforce is a migrant<sup>26</sup>.

The majority of New Zealand's population is of European descent, with Māori being the largest minority followed by Asians and Pacific Islanders<sup>27</sup>.

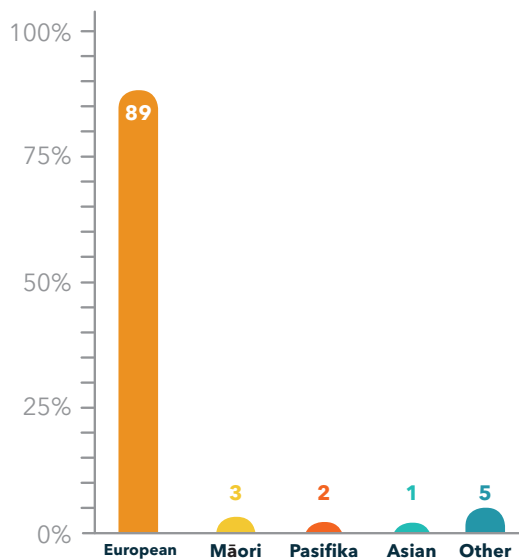
In Auckland – one of the most diverse cities in the world – the number of migrants is closer to half (44 per cent at last count). According to the 2013 Census, the greater Auckland area is home to 72 percent of the country's Pacific Island-born population, 64 percent of its Asian-born population, and 56 per cent of its Middle Eastern and African-born population<sup>28</sup>.

SAR organisations overwhelmingly white. This demographic information comes from InvolveMe 360 data as ethnicity of volunteers is not currently captured by the SAR organisations nor was it included in the 2010 Volunteer Study.

### Ethnicity and Volunteering 2018



### ALL of SAR\*\*\*



\* From 2013 census. Total adds up to more than 100% because people can select more than one ethnicity.

\*\* Sample data from InvolveMe 360 respondents. Data missing from AREC because this survey has yet to be completed.

The SAR sector needs to engage better with Māori and Pacific populations, as well as recent and second-generation migrants. Deciding not to engage and reduce barriers to participation for other ethnic groups means that your pool of potential volunteers will get smaller and smaller, not to mention the skills and experience the sector is missing out on.

26,27,28 Statistics New Zealand (2014) *Census 2013*. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

# APPENDIX VOLUNTEER WORKFORCE REPORTS: OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES



As part of our analysis, Volunteering New Zealand deployed its InvolveMe 360 survey tool based on volunteering best practice guidelines. This was used to gather information on SAR volunteer organisational effectiveness as assessed across four domains:

1. **Strategy**
2. **Organisational culture**
3. **Tools, processes, and resources supporting volunteering**
4. **Communication**

This survey tool was then further customised to include questions on the demographic composition of volunteers and factors that impacted their experience as volunteers. There were also questions specific to the needs of each organisation. These were designed in consultation with the leadership teams in each organisation after we completed extensive document reviews and interviews with volunteers and staff in each organisation.

## CURRENT STATE

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of volunteer SAR involvement in the world, with a workforce that is 94% volunteers who are unpaid. For the organisations reviewed this increases to 99%.

There is no national strategy to address workforce capacity and succession risks.

NZSAR services can have supply and demand issues.

*The NZSAR Secretariat and National SAR Support Programme* for 2018/2019.

identifies the task of developing volunteer strategies for LSAR, CG and SLSNZ.

The NZSAR Strategic Plan 2017-2020 identifies 'risks around volunteer recruitment, retention and training', and that these risks are 'subject to mitigation activities'.

## OPPORTUNITIES

## STRATEGY

NZSAR should lead the creation of a set of Volunteering Principles to guide the sector.

Fund the development of Volunteer Strategies for the SAR organisations.

Foster and develop strategic relationships with organisations that could provide interested and skilled young volunteers e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, Scouts, FIRE, Army Cadets, Sea Scouts, Sailing clubs, Girl Guiding and Rangers.

Support sector-wide communication of volunteering involvement and impact to illustrate how vital the sector is to the wellbeing of New Zealanders.

Develop governance, leadership and volunteer management toolkits and resources to be shared across the sector.

## CURRENT STATE

In 2018 there is still a significantly high volume of services delivered compared to the funding provided.

The volunteer part of the sector is under-financed. This means the sector struggles to maintain standards (including training and equipment) with too much of the financial burden falling back on the volunteers.

Many of the real costs are hidden at the moment and there is not an efficient mechanism for getting funding to where it may be most needed. Investing in volunteers brings massive benefit (compared to cost) but the government funding input is relatively meagre. The devolved SAR sector model means that funding for the service is highly fragmented across multiple Votes. NZ Police, the NZ Defense Force and Maritime NZ all seek funding for SAR, with a hypothecated fuel excise levy paying for other coordination and administrative functions.

AREC's current challenges are an example of the risks of a solely volunteer-run organisation. Within its membership there is "a breadth of experience aligned to unique technical depth."<sup>29</sup> Those that are aware of AREC are highly positive about its contribution.

*"AREC is old guys with huge knowledge and commitment. They know where to put repeaters and what channels to use. They take messages and run radios for us during SAROPs and SAREXs."* (LandSAR, volunteer interview).

A new structure and strategy enabling AREC to develop organisational capability and meet its NZSAR service level agreement obligations were presented to its membership in August. This has yet to be implemented.

<sup>29</sup> AREC (2018) Strategy and Operational Plan, page 1

## OPPORTUNITIES

## FUNDING

Demonstrate the true costs of service provision and the risks of underfunding.

Support applications for additional funding for volunteer infrastructure and support.

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

STRUCTURE

Coastguard, SLSNZ, and LandSAR are structured around a federated model run by local committees. This enables each local group to be autonomous, which fosters a culture of independence and an alignment with local community needs.

This significantly multiplies the resources needed to fulfil governance and reporting requirements. Within committees, the understanding of, and skills in, governance, finance and leadership are variable. This leads to significant variability of practice, procedure and implementation of H&S requirements.

Regions also expend time developing their own resources where these were not available nationally. This has heightened the resourcing pressures on the smaller regions who operate with limited resources.

Location of groups in LandSAR does not always match operational requirements.

Facilitate strategic shift towards de-federation. This could start with conversations across SAR on benefits and opportunities for amalgamation of groups or an examination of what incentives could be developed to encourage amalgamation.

Facilitate strategic planning for new groups and re-alignment of existing groups.

Facilitate a centralised database of policies and procedures for sharing across the sector.

STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT

**Workforce planning and data collection**

Data collection varies across the SAR sector, making strategic recruitment challenging.

Workforce capacity and succession risks are heightened by the age profile of volunteers within some organisations, with only 34% under 40 and 48% over 50 across the sector.

Recruiting rural in areas with small populations is especially challenging.

SARdonyx is expected to go live in mid-2019 providing a multi-agency solution to operational information collection and reporting. Its focus is land-based search and rescues.

Request a core standard set of data to be collected across the SAR groups.

Create a national sector database that enables analysis of turnover.

Establish information required for workforce planning and develop a 10 year workforce strategy with metrics to track progress.

Assess operational and succession needs and develop a national recruitment campaign targeted at specific groups e.g. young people.



## CURRENT STATE

## OPPORTUNITIES

## STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT

**Data and information quality on Volunteers**

The quality and range of information collected on volunteers prevents robust analysis of future workforce needs and risks. Indicators are that if the current membership demographic continues it will create succession risks in the medium term for Coastguard NZ and AREC.

Our research has shown that there is limited data collected on individual members and there are gaps in the recording of personal details by group members. This contrasts with the strong focus on the collection of operational data.

There are some instances of great engagement with young people that could be built on. For example, SLSNZ engage very successfully with young people and have a young leaders programme for 18-35 year olds.

Recognise and formalise SLSNZ's youth engagement and leadership that is sector-leading.

Lead strategic initiatives to build relationships with secondary schools, Iwi/Māori, Pacific communities and Venturers to provide a potential pool of younger volunteers.

School senior outdoor education courses could be used as a pathway for recruiting younger volunteers.

Explore contributing to the expansion of the Youth in Emergency Services Programme that has been run in Kaikohe, Gisborne, Rotorua, Mangakino/Turangi, Kaikoura, and Alexandra. This programme is only partially funded and heavily depend on volunteer input.

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships with partners in the sector such as the Police, Rescue Communication Centre NZ (RCCNZ) are strong.

Relationship issues between government agencies and voluntary organisations were 'steadily improving' at the time of the 2010 study. This improvement seems to have continued, especially regarding the NZ Police. Now officers in each police district are trained as search and rescue (SAR) coordinators.

At times, however, national agreements with Police do not always flow down to districts, impacting on consistency. This appears to be more common in areas of high turnover and where the SAR responsibilities are only part of the police coordinator's portfolio.

In some districts, there is limited utilisation of SLSNZ's SAR capabilities and a lack of regular inclusion in SAROPs. There are also cases of Police requesting the use of only one IRB, when the SLSNZ SAR policy guidelines requires two craft to be deployed.

A wet sector grouping of Coastguard NZ, SLSNZ and the Marine Rescue Coordination Centre are working together to develop a shared national digital communications platform.

LandSAR and AREC work closely together. The opportunity to make greater use of AREC's expertise is limited by AREC's lack of organisational infrastructure.

A secondary relationship issue can be the relationship between local volunteer groups and their respective national offices. These relationships are improving.

The recent FENZ's review of 'Work Policies, Procedures and Practices to Address Bullying and Harassment' shows the negative impacts of a poor organisational culture.

This has not emerged as a major issue for any of the organisations. Organisational culture, however, is likely to be a barrier to participation or retention is where a group, unit, branch or club has large core of long-serving members whose behaviour reflects expectations of a bygone error.

Continue to identify and support opportunities to develop shared resources for the SAR groups e.g. Coastguard NZ and SLSNZ.

Opportunity to strategically support communications around the value of the Head Office and the support provided to local organisations and leaders/managers of volunteers.

Ensure that all organisations have a confidential process that enables volunteers to safely raise concerns.

Use the FENZ report to raise expectations about behaviour.

Provide sector-wide training on the management of volunteers to provide leaders with the skills to address behavioural and performance issues.

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

RECRUITMENT

As in the 2010 study, recruitment issues are not consistent around the country. Some local LandSAR groups report that they are in a situation where they almost have too many volunteers, and other groups are struggling to attract enough volunteers to meet the local SAR needs.

With the exception of Coastguard and AREC, recruitment is typically not a concern with a pattern of sizable numbers of very long serving volunteers.

Across all services recruitment is a challenge for small rural areas with a limited population pool and competition from other emergency and SAR services (Fire and Emergency, St John and other SAR groups).

Successful groups often target recruitment for specific roles e.g. administration.

Opportunity to collect exit data would assist in analysing strategic recruitment solutions.

Provide episodic and project-based volunteering opportunities. NZSAR should enable the sector to better recruit for specific roles and expertise (e.g. administration or fundraising) based on a workforce needs analysis.

Targeted recruitment for each group based on information from the workforce strategy.

Develop recruitment and informational resources to assist groups with the recruitment of younger volunteers.

Champion best practice in all areas, with a particular focus on costs for equipment and resourcing, and communication of expectations and time commitments for SAR volunteers.

For AREC to build relationships with tertiary IT and engineering programmes.

## CURRENT STATE

Generally, retention of trained volunteers is a more significant issue than recruitment of new volunteers.

Except for Coastguard, retention is not a significant concern. Typically this sector sees sizable numbers of very long serving volunteers. Significantly, between 2013 and 2018 Coastguard volunteer numbers have decreased over 24%, from over 2500 to 2042. Over this period three times the number of volunteers exited than joined the organisation. The average length of service by Coastguard volunteers is 6 years.

Coastguard are tackling the consumption motivation issue by engaging volunteers in more training activities carried out on the water.

SLSNZ has a challenge in relation to retention of those aged 18-to-28, typically when their volunteers often move to study or travel. Conversely, they have a high rate of family participation, with a family history of membership in clubs across generations.

Previously it was noted that a significant reason that volunteers leave organisations is that they are not being involved in enough SAROPs. This is because of the consumption motivation that keeps the (current) volunteer workforce involved in the sector.

## OPPORTUNITIES

## RETENTION

Strategic engagement with a more diverse group of volunteers may need to consider different models of recognition.

Lead the development of a national framework for addressing core barriers to volunteering:

- Families of volunteers- better engagement with families.
- Relationships with Employers- e.g. Develop or extend an employer recognition programme such as the one Coastguard has developed

Address consumption motivation in regard to SAROPs through more training activities that are able to meet the consumption need. Ensure the inclusion of SLSNZ.

Encourage clear communications regarding expectations and contributions by volunteers.

## CURRENT STATE

## OPPORTUNITIES

## RECOGNITION

Typically awards and recognition often reflect high expectations and historic patterns of long service by volunteers.

At the local level there is variation in recognition practices across groups. Practices include small gifts for achievement of milestones, group social activities after training exercises and group events. Local recognition practices are dependent on the skills and approach of local leaders.

Recognition is a form of compensation for volunteer efforts. It includes thanking volunteers for their efforts and welcoming their input. While formal awards programmes can be motivating, equally important are daily support and informal expressions of appreciation.

Research highlights differences in the recognition between generations. For example Millennials (born 1980 - 1995) have a higher need for personal recognition practices such as 'being accepted as a valuable team member', 'personal thank you' and 'having feedback about my contribution' are particularly important to this generation.

Complement national and regional award schemes by developing a recognition framework that recognises:

- contributions on an ongoing basis
- achievement of milestones
- support roles
- motivations of different generations
- recognises shorter periods of contribution e.g. 3 and 5 years
- provides a range of small rewards to reinforce contribution
- the contribution of employers.

Develop ways to recognise volunteers' families e.g. family days.

## CURRENT STATE

## OPPORTUNITIES

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Health and Safety** is an organisational priority throughout NZSAR with safety standards and significant resources available to the SAR sector. There is increasing understanding of volunteer wellbeing and resilience needs. Consistency is a challenge with varied appreciation of the value of health and safety processes.

Health and safety is an issue with increased complexity, particularly for the SAR sector. There are unique and complex issues arising and examples of differentiated approaches within organisations.

The NZSAR secretariat sets health and safety expectations within the sector. It supports the continuous improvement in performance through the facilitation of information sharing and communication across the sector. It operates a strategic health and safety committee that discusses safety performance and makes recommendations for improvement.

#### Trauma support

Variation of availability and accessibility of support. There are models of good practice that can be shared e.g. Lifeguard debrief process and training, and the EAP provision in Coastguard Southern and Northern Regions. The SLSNZ critical incident management procedures are an exemplar for managing mental distress following SAROPs.

In LandSAR the Police are responsible for providing trauma support and accessibility varies according to the approach of the individual in charge and there is a time lag before receiving support. Support is also provided within groups, with examples of good practice by some group Chairs.

There is evidence of increasing organisational awareness in regards to volunteer wellbeing and resilience needs. It appears that a small percentage of volunteers provide a high proportion of volunteer hours. The risk of burnout needs to be monitored, as does the impact of volunteering on families and employment.

But, there are also demonstrated wellbeing benefits of volunteering. These include social connections, ongoing learning and a sense of achievement.

Continue to show leadership in embracing a positive culture towards health and safety and increase awareness of the resources available.

Promote examples of good practice across the sector.

Foster a mechanism that develops greater consistency within and between organisations.

Share the SLSNZ critical incident management procedures to assist other organisations to develop and roll-out a structured post-incident trauma and emotional debrief process.

Provide team leaders with training so that support is available in all regions and in areas of high activity.

Explore expanding the health and safety support into wellbeing for volunteers and their families.

Promote the wellbeing benefits of SAR involvement when recruiting.

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

LEADERSHIP

Volunteer leadership is a specialist skill and is not adequately resourced across the sector. Volunteering leadership and management training is not provided to the same level as operational training. Successful volunteer engagement requires trained and supported managers and leaders of volunteers. The leadership approach significantly impacts on the culture of organisations. There is a lot of variability in the experience and skill of leaders throughout the SAR sector. Burnout, succession planning and working styles can impact on the availability and quality of training provided to new or younger managers and leaders.

Expand development opportunities with a coaching and leadership programme that is accessible by self-referral and remotely, available as and when required.

Develop a young leader’s programme to assist in retention and engagement of younger members. Enable self-referral to these programmes.

Consider a mentorship programme that enables sharing of expertise across the SAR organisations. For example, in Marlborough Coastguard and St John share a vehicle to increase their joint capacity.

DIVERSITY

**Volunteer Workforce demographics and diversity**

Based on the available information there has been little change in the demographic makeup of SAR volunteers since 2010.

SAR continues to demonstrate a homogeneous workforce, with strong group cultures. This is likely to be barrier to recruitment and retention of volunteers from diverse backgrounds

- Male - 76%
- European - 89%
- Over 40 - 72%

Note - The ethnicity data excludes AREC and is based on our sample survey data from InvolveMe 360. Ethnicity data is not currently collected by the SAR organisations.

The demographics of SAR volunteers contrasts sharply with the demographic changes in New Zealand’s population over the same period. With trends in volunteering and increased competition for volunteers, over time this will continue to reduce the pool of, and ability to retain, volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

Create and reflect a sector wide group culture where people from diverse backgrounds can feel comfortable to join SAR as volunteers.

Develop a sector diversity strategy as part of workforce planning to build understanding of the need for, and benefits of diversity.

Use workforce planning and targeted recruitment to increase volunteer participation of young people, women and under-represented groups.

Engagement with wider volunteer demographics enables key SAR safety messages to be communicated more widely throughout NZ society.

## CURRENT STATE

## OPPORTUNITIES

## RESOURCING VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

A number of other sector groups hold training days before or after the VNZ Pivot conference to encourage teams to attend it: e.g. IHC, Cancer Society, Corrections and the Volunteer Centre Network. Consider working with VNZ to develop tailored content delivered by way of a masterclass. In 2018, of 175 attendees, only 2-3 participated from the NZSAR volunteer network.

Some organisations are using volunteers for administration. Coastguard Eastern office has a volunteer providing administrative support.

Good practice: LandSAR's Member Protection Policy that covers:

- Code of conduct
- Prevention of sexual misconduct and Sexual Harassment policy, and
- Duty of Care for minors
- Police vetting

They have clear guidelines and templates for sanctioning or terminating a group member.

Develop volunteer management resources for leaders.

Consider encouraging greater NZSAR participation in leadership, professional development and volunteer management opportunities. E.g. Volunteering New Zealand's annual Pivot Conference.

PIVOT OVERVIEW: growing sector leadership for Volunteer Managers- issues, trends, latest learnings networking and connecting. Strong attendance from FENZ and St John.

Encourage a collaborative approach to volunteer management and leadership challenges. Hold sector training either before or after Pivot to encourage participation and collaboration.

Explore funding or sponsorship for sector-wide consistently branded affordable clothing and gear.



**CURRENT STATE**

**OPPORTUNITIES**

**TRAINING**

Training programmes are comprehensive and robust.

The sector has started to work together collaboratively on common training issues. A training review has been carried out by the NZSAR Council, and this has led to the creation of a Core Curriculum for interagency training.

Limited use of e-learning which would reduce duplication of effort and increase accessibility.

Non-SAR workloads and training demands are problematic for the consumption or 'feel good' motivation. Local groups have addressed the issue of non-SAR workloads in different ways. Some groups have adapted to the new challenges of extra reporting, usually by identifying volunteers (that are not operational) with good IT skills to carry out the administrative tasks. Other groups have reported that they are struggling with the extra reporting requirements. However, it appears that for some of these groups it is a case of volunteers not wanting to hand over tasks to more suitable people highlighting the need for volunteer management training.

There is variation across New Zealand in the frequency of Police-led SAR exercises (SAREXS). In some Police districts SLSNZ SAR squads are not included in SAROPs.

Support the roll-out of infrastructure for blended learning and eLearning delivery of theory and assessment to increase accessibility and reduce time from recruitment to becoming operational.

Develop a repository of sharing training activities developed by groups.

Review and assess whether Sports Tutor meets training needs as a learning management system and platform. (Sport Tutor is available at no cost through Sports NZ).

Continue to encourage joint training across SAR volunteer involving organisations. Support groups with few SAROPs could provide interesting field-based training to maintain competency, connection and motivation.

Investment in training to meet sector capacity and capability requirements in the next 5-10 years and to replace those leaving the sector.

**EQUIPPING AND RESOURCING**

Cost to volunteers is a notable issue across the sector. People are having to buy their own gear in some SAR roles. Costs such as this create barriers to volunteering.

Good practice would be that volunteering does not incur a cost to volunteers.

Volunteers need to know from the outset what they are getting into when they join a voluntary organisation. They need to know what equipment they will require to be effective members of operational SAR teams (either land or marine based), and how much of this they will be required to pay for themselves. They should be aware of the costs they are likely to face (whether that is for petrol, travel, training costs, equipment).

**CURRENT STATE****OPPORTUNITIES****COMMUNICATIONS**

There is notably a high level of information about the impact of voluntary organisations operating in the SAR sector.

We are seeing great annual reports and impact capturing throughout the sector.

There is also evidence of extensive use of website/browsing communications.

Mitigation-communications are visible in the media, i.e. reducing risk of incidents.

There is need, however, for more externally-focused communication/stories about volunteer impact, using a range of media.

Develop a communications strategy with a focus on engaging youth and diverse demographics, communicating impact and illustrating that the SAR sector is significantly volunteer run.

Encourage the use of the full range of social media, analyse and collect information on the reach of each platform.

Amplify and create opportunities to increase the profile of volunteers and that fact that NZSAR is a volunteer based network.

Make current data work better to tell stories, prove impact and generate much needed resources for the sector.



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