



NEW ZEALAND POLICE

EXERCISE EVALUATION REPORT

EXERCISE WAKATOPATOPA

Location: Taupo

Date: 11 August 2018

Report Version: FINAL

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1. EXERCISE SUMMARY

This was a successful exercise of a major marine search and rescue incident in the Lake Taupo environment. In this case a rotary aircraft reported missing across the lake.

The agencies involved including Coastguard, Police and Department of Internal Affairs (Harbour Masters).

The exercise was managed by the Exercise Facilitators and Exercise Manager at the Taupo Police Station.

The on-water evaluation was conducted separately. This report relates to the evaluation of the Incident Management Team (IMT) component of the exercise.

The exercise displayed a strong relationship between the agencies all of who appear to display professional behaviours throughout the exercise.

The exercise started at 1000 hours with a refresher of the CIMS (Co-ordinated Incident Management System) structure to all involved in the exercise. The exercise continued with a practical scenario from mid-day to about 1600 hours. A hot debrief of the IMT followed along with a full exercise debrief.

The IMT by and large worked very well together with the functions of the IMT filled by Police and Coastguard personnel in line with the CIMS in SAR structure.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That annual practical scenario based exercises be held annually to reinforce the functions of the CIMS structure.
2. That action plan templates (A0 size) be made available to the IMT for exercises and operations.
3. That agencies provide sufficient resources to fill the functions of the IMT.
4. That desktop exercises be held regularly to reinforce the CIMS structure and focus on action planning.
5. That tasking sheets be developed for marine SAR operations.

3. INTRODUCTION

This exercise was planned and managed by the Taupo Search and Rescue Co-ordinator, Barry SHEPHERD and LandSAR Manager, Dave COMBER. They were assisted in a planning stage by Mike WRIGHT.

The exercise was developed as a learning of the CIMS system and functions and to test the application of the CIMS process within the Incident Management Team. It was also developed to practice and develop on-water activities and operational activities.

The agencies involved included:

- Police
- Taupo Coastguard Unit
- Turangi Coastguard Unit
- Taupo Harbourmaster

4. BACKGROUND

My involvement in the exercise was that of the evaluator of the IMT component of the exercise.

The exercise was based on the ability of responding agencies to work under an IMT operating in the CIMS structure.

The exercise was conducted on 11 August 2018. The Incident Control Point was the operations room at the Taupo Police Station.

The aim of the exercise was to practice and develop skills in:

1. Operation of vessels in a search and rescue operation on Lake Taupo specifically:
 - (i) Search patterns, open water and shoreline.
 - (ii) VHS communications.
 - (iii) Beach landings.
 - (iv) Management of incident affected Persons.
2. The management of a marine search operation with an IMT established under the CIMS structure.

My evaluation is primarily on the IMT component of this search exercise.

5. EXERCISE SCENARIO

1. A classroom activity for all involved in the exercise focused on updating knowledge of the CIMS structure.
2. Followed by the main SAREX scenario. That scenario being:

The Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) had advised of an overdue civilian Iroquois helicopter, registration IMK. The pilot advised an intended flight path direct from Mokau over the Waihaha Stream mouth, across Lake Taupo to the Taupo Airport.

The Iroquois left Mokau at 0810 hours and was due to land at the Taupo Airport at 0900 hours. No radio contact had been made with the aircraft. I had a locator beacon fitted but this has not been activated. The Iroquois had one pilot and two passengers on board. The machine is white with registration IMK in black on the tail boom. It carried passenger and crew lifejackets. It is not believed to be carrying any cargo other than the passengers.

An aerial search over the intended flight path to the west of Lake Taupo is currently underway. RCCNZ has requested a water search of the flight path across the lake to Taupo Airport as there is no current available aircraft to conduct this search area. If one became available to assist in the lake search RCCNZ will notify.

The pilot is familiar with this flight path and will normally notify if he changes it due to weather etc.

RCCNZ has contacted the families of the pilot and passengers to confirm there has been no contact since take off at 0810 hours.

From this scenario a late inject was made to direct searchers to a specific beach to locate and rescue the target.

6. **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

My evaluation was to identify the response of the Incident Management Team and the relationship with their response to the CIMS structure.

The exercise manager and I discussed the scope of my evaluation prior to the exercise date. All of my observations were of the response activities of the IMT at the Taupo Police Station. The on-water activities were not observed and do not form part of this evaluation.

7. FINDINGS

1. The CIMS structure was understood by participants within the IMT. The IMT was calm and decisions made were based on sound SAR practices.
2. At times functions became a little confused with the Incident Controller delving into Planning and Intel roles and Operations role and the Operations Manager at times carrying out functions of Planning and Intel functions.
3. The action plan was drawn up on the whiteboard as the exercise unfolded. Tasks developed by the IMT were documented by the log keeper as those tasks were verbally communicated to search resources.
4. The meetings of the IMT were ongoing throughout the exercise and all functions were involved in that planning process.
5. The taskings to the Units were based on action plan develop and given were sufficient room for on-water Units to have some movements ie correct spacing deciding by on-water Units.


8. CONCLUSION

Objective: The management of marine SAR operation with IMT established under the CIMS model.

Everybody within the IMT had sufficient knowledge of the CIMS structure with some functions within the roles confused.

The multi-agency relationship – Police, Coastguard – was sound with all participants actively involved in the planning process.

As a whole the objective was achieved.



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