

Exercise Evaluation Report

Exercise Rangiora

Location: Ashley River, near Rangiora, Chch

Date: 24-25 March 2018

Report version: V3 – IMT & Field Evaluation

Evaluator(s): *S/Sgt J L HOLDEN (PNHQ)*
Dave DITTMER, DOC Mt Cook
Rachel McKENZIE, Coastguard Southern Region

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Executive Summary

Police Instructions require each District to conduct one Land and one Marine SAREX annually; this was the annual Land SAREX for the Canterbury District and served as the major training event for the year.

The intent of the exercise was to build some depth within the Canterbury IMT capability while giving field teams an opportunity to practise their field skills.

The SAREX was centred on a SAR Operation from late 2017 that was suspended when the missing subject was not located.

The SAREX HQ was established at Loburn School. A large number of field team members attended the event, therefore 3 separate IMTs were established at Loburn School which managed 4 field teams each.

Each IMT was presented with a file containing information from the original search and an IAP and taskings for teach team. The intent was for the exercise to start in day 3 of the original search. IMT members were required to absorb the information, brief, task and deploy each of their 4 field teams.

Teams were briefed at Loburn School, then completed a helicopter safety briefing before being deployed by helicopter to the nearby Ashley River.

The exercise ran from 0800hrs to around 1800hrs on Saturday; the missing person's body was located by a search team at around 1630hrs.

Most field teams remained in the field and were debriefed the following morning; the exercise finished at around 1400hrs on Sunday after the group debrief for all participants.

1. Recommendations

Feedback from the exercise evaluators and participants has been captured. The summary of the recommendations from the feedback process are:

IMT:

- Provide more training opportunities for prospective IMT members to complete relevant training, i.e. CIMS4, MTIR – core training & refreshers.
- In a similar Cold Case SAREX, provide plenty of lead-in time for the IMT to thoroughly absorb the information in the file.
- In a similar Cold Case SAREX, appoint an experienced mentor who was in the IMT of the original search.
- Provide more opportunities for IMT members to practice setting up the ICP with appropriate work areas, whiteboards etc.
- Provide more opportunities to become familiar with SARTrack.
- Ensure that the participants and mentors understand the outputs required.
- Ensure that the mentors provided work within their role to help participants achieve those outputs.

FIELD:

- Ensure field teams are instructed in the pre-exercise information to bring protective clothing and tools suitable for searching river bank dense scrub areas
- Research a supply source of protective leg chaps for field team members and provide this information to Canterbury Land SAR Groups

SURVEY MONKEY FEEDBACK

- More experience in the IMT to increase learnings.
- With 3 ops going and lack of trained IMT people we had IC's appointing Intel/Planning and Ops managers that had never been in an IMT or even done CIMS. This is something we need to add to training to consider who is being appointed and their level of training/experience.
- Have a robust plan for the event that a cold case is solved during the exercise – i.e. the missing person is located deceased. A number of respondents were not happy to learn that Emma had been located via Stuff or social media. This has potential to make volunteers feel undervalued.
- Hold the IMT briefing / handover the night before with a cold case.
- Provide more clarity around what the Police trainers were expecting to see in the field and what we (LandSAR) were providing.

- Consider using the SAREX for training new recruits - don't bring assessors/evaluators in until at least the afternoon - give people time to do some training.
- Consider 1 or 2 more such events per year to keep up with technology alone.
- Utilise a long weekend or make the most of people arriving on Friday night to extend the exercise a bit.
- Don't make people 'camp out' just to test their ability to stay out for 24hrs - all groups could have camped back at base.

2. Introduction

This event was the annual Land SAREX for the Canterbury District and served as the major training event for the year.

The exercise was designed to build some depth within the Canterbury IMT capability while giving field teams an opportunity to practise their field skills.

The SAREX was centred on a SAR Operation from late 2017 that was suspended when the missing subject was not located.

The Exercise Controller was Sgt Phil Simmonds.

The exercise was planned, prepared and coordinated by Sgt Phil Simmonds and key members of Canterbury LandSAR, many of whom had been involved in the original search.

The IMT part of the exercise was planned and coordinated by Allan Pritchard from Canterbury LandSAR.

3. Background

3.1 Background to the Exercise

Emma BEATTIE was last seen at her Fernside, Mt Thomas address on December 2nd 2017. An extensive search was completed over several days, but she was not located.

The main search effort was suspended on December 9th after a week of intensive searching, but limited informal searching did continue over the summer months.

Canterbury SAR revisited this SAR Operation to build some depth in their IMT capability, and to give field teams an opportunity to refresh field skills in the context of an actual SAROP.

3.2 Dates, location, organising agency(s), key people

DATE: March 23/24/25

LOCATIONS: ICP – Loburn School; Search area - Ashley River

ORGANISING AGENCIES: NZ Police, LandSAR Canterbury

KEY PEOPLE: Sgt Phil Simmonds, Allan Pritchard

3.3 Participating organisations

Canterbury Police, LandSAR, AREC, Garden City Helicopters

3.4 Exercise aim

To promote and enhance Search and Rescue Management capability and Field Skills in a full scale Search and Rescue exercise based on an actual unresolved Search.

3.5 Exercise objectives

- To provide current IMT members an opportunity to refresh and practice SAR IMT knowledge and skills;
- To build depth within the IMT capability by mentoring less experienced IMT members;
- To identify gaps in knowledge, skills and capabilities that need further exploration or development;
- To provide Field Team members with an opportunity to refresh skills including Helicopter Operations;
- To provide opportunities for competencies to be signed off as appropriate for Field Team members.

A table outlining the exercise objectives and KPIs for the IMT can be found in Appendix 1.

3.6 Exercise Scenario

This particular SAR Operation was revisited with the intention to develop IMT skills and practise Field skills in the context of a real (but unresolved) SAROP.

3 IMTs were set up by EXCON, with each team containing a range of experienced SAR practitioners. Each Team was provided with a file containing a selection of documents from the original 5 day search, plus a list of outputs they were required to achieve during the SAREX. The outputs were developed into agreed KPIs.

Allan PRITCHARD from Chch LandSAR prepared 3 separate IAPs and a set of taskings for each IMT. 4 Field Teams were allocated to each IMT. The makeup of teams was determined prior to the exercise.

An experienced LandSAR member and Police SAR Squad members were deployed into the field to observe Field teams.

4. Evaluation Methodology

4.1 The agreed outcomes of the evaluation activity

The evaluators and the exercise planners agreed on what was to be observed; evaluators rotated between all syndicates to observe and ask relevant questions of each syndicate.

The exercise evaluators evaluated the IMT against KPIs taken from the Land Search and Rescue Response Guidelines to reflect the objectives of the exercise.

Each KPI can be:

- Achieved
- Partly achieved
- Not achieved

Evaluator comments are included.

4.2 Evaluation scope

The following activities fell within the scope of the SAREX:

- Establishing 3 separate Incident Management Teams, each with a pre-allocated search area and search teams;
- Commencing the exercise as if the SAROP is in day 3 of the original search;
- Running SAR track, with each IMT running its individual SAR track system;
- Assigning teams (approximately 4) to each allocated search area;
- Teams locating items of interest (specific to the original search) within each search area;
- Running a helicopter safety briefing for all participants;
- Deploying the search teams by helicopter to their respective search areas;
- SAR teams staying overnight in the field;
- Debriefing the search teams following the completion of their tasks.

4.3 Aspects of the exercise observed, what was not observed

IMT evaluators rotated between all syndicates to observe and ask relevant questions of each syndicate.

The Field Team evaluator observed teams in the field on Saturday; the process was suspended after the MP was located on Saturday afternoon.

4.4 The process followed in preparing and submitting the report

IMT:

IMT evaluators rotated between all syndicates to observe and ask relevant questions of each syndicate and take notes. Evaluators compared notes and comments are included in the KPIs in Appendix 1

FIELD:

The Field Team evaluator observed teams in the field on Saturday;

SURVEY MONKEY:

A Survey was circulated to all participants after the SAREX; feedback from that is included in the recommendations.

5. Findings

EXERCISE PLANNING

A significant amount of time was spent to collate information from the initial search to prepare a file for each of the IMTs. Each file was prepared to a high standard and included maps showing GPS downloads from the original search, IAPs and team taskings.

The Exercise Plan itself outlined the background, objectives and desired outcomes for the SAREX; however, more detail in terms of KPIs was required in this Plan for evaluation purposes.

EXERCISE CONDUCT

The exercise was conducted well with emphasis on safety.

Participants were very engaged in this SAREX as many had been involved in the original search. A large number of LandSAR volunteers participated in the field; creating 3 separate IMTs to manage 4 teams each was an effective way to manage this number of volunteers.

It was beneficial to use the SAREX to refresh helicopter familiarisation.

Providing each IMT with a prepared file, IAP and taskings enabled the Field activities to commence in a timely manner with little waiting around. However, more lead-in time may have been beneficial for the IMT members to absorb the large amount of information in the short amount of time given.

Mentoring of the less experienced members in the IMT by practised SAR managers proved to be a valuable method to build relevant and applicable IMT knowledge and depth without the urgency of a live SAROP. However, some IMT members struggled initially as they had never been in an IMT or completed MTIR and/or CIMS training.

The use of SARTrack was enhanced due to the input from experienced operators.

The team who located the MP deceased was managed well; a Police member took control and communicated the find appropriately. Followup with LandSAR members has been addressed.

SURVEY MONKEY FEEDBACK

The vast majority of respondents felt that the objectives (briefing, tasking etc) were clear and were satisfied with the SAREX.

All respondents rated the Cold Case scenario positively (excellent, very good or fairly good)

84% of respondents found the helicopter safety briefing/deployment at the start of the SAREX useful.

Mention was made around having Police SAR people in the teams which helps narrow the 'them & us' thing.

"The cold case searches are a great way to cover off those last lines of enquiry. The fact we were able to locate Emma was a great result and goes to show what SAR is all about with time and a bit of perseverance".

"I love the way the Phil (and the other boss police man) talk to us and value our contribution. It is fantastic."

EXERCISE EVALUATION AGAINST OBJECTIVES / KPI'S

The IMT was evaluated against KPIs taken from the Land Search and Rescue Response Guidelines to reflect the objectives of the exercise.

Each KPI can be

- Achieved
- Partly achieved
- Not achieved

Evaluator comments are included – refer Appendix 1

6. Conclusions

The concept of using an unresolved SAR Operation worked well; many attendees found it motivating to be actively involved in an actual real life exercise, and participants were engaged and found the SAREX worthwhile.

However, it does require a large amount of work beforehand from experienced SAR Managers to research the original search and plan the exercise including Objectives and outputs.

Using mentors to support each part of the operation, IMT and Field Teams, provides opportunities for new personnel to gain experience, but the appointment of inexperienced people into the IMT can create issues for those who have not completed the relevant training beforehand.

This SAREX provided a valuable opportunity to refresh and revise Helicopter Safety including loading and unloading.

7. Appendix

APPENDIX 1

Key Performance Indicators - IMT

OBJECTIVES

- To provide current IMT members an opportunity to refresh and practice SAR IMT knowledge and skills;
- To build depth within the IMT capability by mentoring less experienced IMT members;
- To identify gaps in knowledge, skills and capabilities that need further exploration or development;

KPI	Achieved?	Comments
Existing information is analysed and reviewed – Police file, debriefs, existing intel etc	Partly achieved	Teams struggled a little to absorb the large amount of information in the short amount of time given. More lead-in time to absorb the file may have been beneficial.
Existing taskings are evaluated		
Timely deployment of teams into the field	Achieved	Team deployment was delayed until after the Helicopter Safety briefing, but this was largely unavoidable, as teams were deployed to the field by helo.
IMT facilities are established with appropriate, work areas, whiteboards etc	Achieved	Further training and practice will be beneficial.
IMT members understand their roles and responsibilities.	Partly achieved	CIMS positions were appointed, vests allocated and worn; however, many IMT members had never been in an IMT or understood CIMS. Core and refresher training will be beneficial
Incident Action Plans (IAP) are prepared	Achieved	Completed with mentoring
IAP is appropriate to the development of the scenario.	Achieved	IAPs were not actioned due to the MP being located before subsequent IAPs could be actioned
IAPs are workable with SMART objectives.	Achieved	Core and refresher training will be beneficial
IAP is communicated to and understood by all members of the IMT.	Achieved	As above
Comms Plan is developed	Achieved	Workable Comms Plans were developed by each syndicate – no significant issues emerged
IMT Planning Meetings are conducted	Achieved	IMT meetings were conducted at regular intervals

KPI	Achieved?	Comments
The Missing person profile is further developed.		MP was located before teams were able to further develop her profile.
Scenario Analysis is undertaken	Achieved	Completed by all teams prior to MP being located Core and refresher training will be beneficial
The Search Area is further refined/defined including POA & segmentation.	Partly achieved	Further practise required as MP was located before teams were able to further develop her profile.
The refined Search Area is used to develop new objectives, strategies and assignments.		Not applicable – MP located
All actions and messages are logged	Partly achieved	IMTs were reliant on the SARTrack radio log for messages and actions – no evidence seen of an Operational log being kept.
Information is displayed in the IMT.	Achieved	Relevant information was displayed including timelines, IAP, Team status. Information Collection Plans were not displayed
Information Collection Plan is expanded	Achieved	IMTs identified further information to be obtained (completed prior to the MP being located).
Search file is collated and completed.	Achieved	Files have been collated with a view that some documents will be included in the Coronial File
Team taskings are clear and cover all the relevant points.	Achieved	New Taskings were written to a good standard
Taskings are achievable within the timeframe given.	Partly achieved	Not fully tested due to the MP being located before teams were re-tasked
Taskings include maps that identify the area(s) to be searched.	Achieved	Completed for initial taskings
Search teams understand their tasks.	Achieved	Refer SEE forms
Relevant points are communicated to the Field Teams using the GSMEAC format	Achieved	Generally good standard covering the required points
Procedures to debrief teams are established - interviewing personnel, downloading of GPS tracks, use of maps, ROC etc	Achieved	
Information collected via the SEE Form is comprehensive	Partly achieved	SEE forms were generally completed well; information collected was not used to further

KPI	Achieved?	Comments
and adds to the SAR Plan going forward		develop the SAR Plan as the MP was located.
Communications are maintained between Field Teams and the IMT	Achieved	Teams communicated their progress back to the IMT via SARtrack
Capability in the use of SARTrack by Managers and Admin Support people is improved	Achieved	This was restricted to one or two people in each IMT who benefited from exposure to the programme. Use of SARTrack significantly reduces "noise" from radio traffic and allows the IMT to focus on the tasks at hand rather than radio chatter
Risks are identified and safely managed.	Achieved	Risks were broadly identified during the GSMEAC briefings
Safety Manager is appointed.	Partly achieved	Appointed by some IMTs, others relegated this function to the IC
Planning is put in place for a "No Duff"	Partly achieved	While no actual plans were created, ICs relied on their institutional knowledge to manage a "NO DUFF" incident
LandSAR SMS Plan is developed	Not achieved	No IMT developed the LandSAR Plan – relied instead on the NZSAR Form provided
Accidents, injuries and notifiable incidents are reported?		Police will follow up with the LandSAR member who located the deceased wrt PTSD
A Demobilisation Plan is developed	Achieved	
All equipment is returned and accounted for	Achieved	
Radio Comms are maintained until all teams are back at the ICP	Achieved	

Key Performance Indicators - Field

OBJECTIVES

- To provide Field Team members with an opportunity to refresh skills including Helicopter Operations

KPI	Achieved?	Comments
To participate in the helicopter safety briefing	Achieved	All field teams received a comprehensive briefing from the helicopter pilots prior to deployment
To be deployed by helicopter	Achieved	Field teams were deployed by helicopter into their respective search task areas.
Field assessor/s interact with field teams	Partly achieved	Three groups of assessors travelled around the search area and observed most of the field teams in a field setting.
Feedback returned to field teams from assessors	Achieved	Feedback was provided to field teams based on a spot observation basis either by confirmation of sound field operation or coaching on specific skills



Exercise BEATTIE

24th-25th March 2018

Canterbury District SAREX

FINAL REPORT

Introduction

The Canterbury Police District Land Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) for the 2017-18 year was held in the environs of the Ashley River, North Canterbury, near Rangiora on the 24th and 25th of March 2018.

The exercise involved approximately 120 consisting of LandSAR, AREC and Police SAR Squad participants from throughout Canterbury.

The ICP for the SAR Exercise was Loburn School, Loburn.

In recent years Canterbury District SAR Exercises have alternated between holding a Rogaine style SAR Ex's followed the next year by a scenario based SAR Exercise.

With the large numbers participants typically our scenario style SAR Exercises will end up with excessively large team numbers in the field and a large IMT group, this has previously presented difficulties in managing and not being an effective training structure, it also represents larger than the numbers you would expect on a realistic search operation.

It also has limited the learning opportunities available to those participating both within the IMT and field teams due to the large numbers involved.

In the lead up to our 2018 SAR Ex a planning team made up of Canterbury Land SAR and AREC meet several times before the District SAR Exercise, these meetings discussed the framework and the basic objectives of the SAR Ex were developed.

Invitation to SAR Ex ***attached as Appendix A.***

Scenario

The Canterbury District SAR Exercise for 2018 was a scenario based training exercise, it revisited the search for missing person Emma BEATTIE.

Emma BEATTIE aged 20 years went missing from her Fernside, Mount Thomas Road address on the 2nd December 2017. An extensive search operation was conducted and she was not located.

Having an unresolved search so close to the timing of our District SAR Exercise made it an ideal opportunity to revisit the search. Given the expected number of participants it was a good opportunity to use those resources to extend the area covered by the original search.

A lot of the participants were searchers on the original BEATTIE search, and for many of them it seemed like it was unfinished business (Emma not being found), during the period between the December search and the District SAR Exercise I heard of many people and groups that had returned to the Ashley River in an effort locate Emma.

Being based on an actual recent search operation I'm sure it was a factor in motivating many of the participants committing to attending the SAR Exercise.

SAR Ex Base/ICP

The principal at the Loburn North School was approached, given that we intended to run 3 separate IMT's, the use of adjoining classrooms seemed a perfect fit for the SAR Ex.

Its location near the Ashley River made it a short hop to the allocated search areas with good cell phone coverage.

It has a decent sized hall for briefings, toilets, meeting rooms and grassed grounds for tents and parking etc.

The school was happy to assist, giving us full use of the schools facilities, ensuring they were available for the SAR Exercise.

The Friday prior to the SAR Exercise I spoke at the schools assembly, told them of our training exercise and the intention to search for Emma, I invited them to visit us at the school during the SAR Ex.

It was pleasing to see the students and families coming to see us during the SAR Exercise, a lot donating food and baking and keen to see what was happening.

SAR EX structure

The district is keen to build greater depth within our IMT capacity, CLSAR canvased their groups for those keen to gain experience and be mentored those in an IMT environment.

Some of the points and processes we wanted to cover on the SAR Ex were:

- To peer review the original search file/missing person file.
- Run 3 separate IMT's, each having an allocated area and allocated search teams.
- Start the operation as if it is day 3 of the original search.
- Run SAR track, with each IMT running its individual SAR track system.
- Assigning field teams (approximately 4) to each located search area.
- To place items of interest (specific to the original search) within each search area, providing this information to the IMT's for the search teams.
- Run helicopter safety briefings, deploy the search teams by helicopter to their respective search area.
- To complete field refresher training, to develop and complete a report based on the Land SAR competencies.
- To deploy the teams overnight in the field.
- To supply each field team member with a 24 hr ration pack

- To run robust debriefs the search teams following the completion of their tasks (scribe/use of track logs).
- To fully inform and update the families of the SAR Ex progress

Proposed SAR EX Objectives

1. To mentor prospective IMT participants in IMT roles.
2. To complete a comprehensive helicopter safety brief to participants.
3. To document effective and thorough Search Effort Evaluation.
4. To complete field refresher training.
5. To maintain and collate a comprehensive search file for each IMT.

Proposed SAR EX Outcomes

IMT

1. Assist setting up an Operational IMT.
2. Develop and maintain an IAP.
3. To prepare a GSEMAC briefing.
4. To prepare tasking forms.
5. Participate in regular IMT briefings
6. Increase the capability of IMT managers and support in the use of SAR track
7. To prepare situation reports
8. Prepare an IAP for the next operational period
9. To prepare tasking forms for the next operational period

Helicopter safety

1. To participate in the helicopter safety briefing
2. To be deployed by helicopter
3. Participant documentation as having completed helicopter safety is completed

SEE (Search Effort Evaluation)

1. Associated GPS tracks logs used to assist with SEE
2. Debrief and SEE forms are completed

Field refresher training

1. Field assessor/s interaction with field teams
2. Field teams check list and comments completed
3. Feedback returned to field teams from assessors

Operational search file

1. Operational search file is collated, completed and submitted from each IMT

I wanted the SAR Exercise begin winding up mid-morning Sunday, this is to get teams to return to the ICP, allow plenty of time for going through a comprehensive debriefing process (SEE), and also a chance to relax and enjoy a BBQ lunch together followed by a hot SAR Ex debrief. And most important a chance to socialise and mingle. This is something we have found hard to achieve in previous SAR Exercises due to delays and holdups.

Exercise Evaluation Report

The SAREX was reviewed by:

Senior Sergeant Jo Holden, *Training and Development Manager PNHQ*
Rachel McKenzie, Coastguard, *Volunteer Training & Support Manager, Southern Region*
Dave DITTMER, *Senior Ranger, Search and Rescue, DOC, Aoraki Mt Cook.*

Report ***attached as a separate document***

Feedback

Feedback is important, it ensures we are achieving the goals and objectives, and making the most of the training opportunity. Also important in developing future Canterbury District SAR Exercises, it needs to address any lessons gained, to ensure any lessons learnt are documented and developed for future SAR Exercises and or Operational Deployments.

A hot debrief was held at the conclusion of the SAR Ex, discussion was mixed about the delay verse the benefit aspect of helicopter safety training at the start of the SAR Ex, and whether the IMT should have had a longer lead in time.

A survey was sent to all exercise participants and other people involved with the SAR Ex. For our next SAR Ex attendance should be electronic or completed prior to the SAR Ex, this would speed up the role allocation and also save me having to contact people with scratchy handwriting to confirm e mail addresses.

The Survey Monkey results ***attached as Appendix B.***

The comments from Questionnaire were overall positive, with many complimenting the organisation and the concept of the cold case SAREX. Most seem keen to see the same style SAREX being held every 2nd year, with a traditional SAREX or Rogaine being held alternatively. Teams should have been advised when Emma was found.

There were some valid points raised which we will try to incorporate in the next District SAR Exercise.

Here are some sample comments:

*I love being in landsar!
Awesome outcome. Thanks to everybody involved
You cant better that outcome.
I think it was about spot on
Good to have Police SAR people in the teams. Helps narrow the `them & us thing`,
great result for the family. thanks for the great weekend*

Conclusions (Evaluation)

The concept of using an unresolved SAR Operation worked well; many attendees found it motivating to be actively involved in an actual real life exercise, and participants were engaged and found the SAREX worthwhile.

However, it does require a large amount of work beforehand from experienced SAR Managers to research the original search and plan the exercise including Objectives and outputs.

Using mentors to support each part of the operation, IMT and Field Teams, provides opportunities for new personnel to gain experience, but the appointment of inexperienced people into the IMT can create issues for those who have not completed the relevant training beforehand.

This SAREX provided a valuable opportunity to refresh and revise Helicopter Safety including loading and unloading.

Police funding/management

Police funding supplied catering for the exercise for the ICP, the final BBQ, refreshments, a portion of the helicopter costs, venue hire and other miscellaneous associated costs. It also covered the planning costs leading up to the SAR Ex.

Inspector Craig McKay, Operations Manager Canterbury attended on both days of the SAR Ex,, he spoke to the group at the start of the SAR Ex and then during the debrief. He spoke of his appreciation to LSAR the groups for attending training and for the outstanding service they have provided Police.

The District Commander commented favourably on the concept and outcomes of the SAR Ex. He was grateful to LSAR for their ongoing commitment towards training and operational deployments. Letter to LSAR ***attached as appendix C***

Effect of funding

Canterbury typically has large numbers participating in District SAR Exercises, this year there were up to 120 people involved. The time and costs associated with the logistics, planning and running and exercise of this scale comes at a cost.

It is important that the SAR Exercise is well planned and engaging, that all those participating have a role and contribute to the SAR Exercise.

Having such large numbers attending the SAR ex reflects well on the state of SAR within Canterbury.

The funding provided by NZSAR has enabled us to get a comprehensive look at the standard and abilities of LSAR groups within the district. It allows groups to address shortcomings in their abilities and training possibilities going forward.

NZSAR funding

The funding was applied as follows:

Travel and costs for assessors

Ration packs for participants

Planning, staffing, stationary and printing

Helicopter hire

Venue plus miscellaneous

TOTAL

Summary

This is likely to be the only time all the SAR groups in Canterbury come together at an event like this during the year, the training has to be productive but also enjoyable.

For me the SAR Exercise went very well, running a cold case scenario SAR Exercise has had many positive outcomes for those attending.

Emma's body was located during Saturday afternoon, finding her was the best result we could hope for from the SAR Exercise. The scenario of developing the SAR Exercise, and using the resources locate Emma has so many positives, it not only closed the book on the unresolved search but also gave her family closure.

For any large scale SAR Exercise like this it is important to involve capable people in the planning phase, especially from Police SAR Squads, LSAR and AREC. I have to make special mention of the contribution of the planning teams, in particular the many hours of work put in by Allan PRITCHARD and Margie SHARKY, the result indicative of everyone's commitment and dedication for the end product and SAR Ex.

Lastly planning a SAR Exercise of this nature takes a lot of work, to maximise the benefit it requires a lot of preplanning and administrative work before the SAREX, but given the benefit and positive outcomes for the participating teams it has been a valuable training and positive addition to our SAREX calendar.

SAR Ex images ***attached as Appendix D***



Phil Simmonds
Sergeant C661
SAR/DVI Coordinator - Canterbury
11th June 2018

Appendix A - Exercise Invitation



New Zealand
POLICE
Nga Pirihimana O Aotearoa

SEARCH & RESCUE
LAND SAR
NEW ZEALAND

Invitation to Canterbury District Land SAR EX 2018

To all Canterbury LandSAR groups.

The district land SAREX will be held on March 24th and 25th March 2018.

The two day exercise will be based on a traditional style SAR Ex.

Location

The ICP will be at Loburn School, Waimakariri. (see image below), at 73 Hodgsons Rd, Loburn.



Scenario

The SAR Ex will be revisiting the search for missing person Emma BEATTIE aged 20 years, she went missing from her Fernside, Mount Thomas Road address on the 2nd December 2017. An extensive search operation was completed and she was not located.



Emma BEATTIE

Arrival

Teams must arrive by 0800 hrs on Saturday 24th March 2018.

If teams want to arrive on the Friday afternoon/evening an area for tentage will be made available, however teams will have to provide their own food for Friday night/Saturday morning.

The exercise will finish mid-afternoon on Sunday, there will be a BBQ lunch provided around midday followed by a hot debrief.

Programme

During the SAR Ex we be running 3 IMT's, each IMT will have a separate search area assigned. These IMT's will manage their own teams, area and be responsible for tasking, debriefing and other operational decisions as required.

The intention is to run smaller IMT groups managing a handful of search teams, which in reality is more typical of an actual operational SAR response.

Prior to the start of the exercise we intend to hold helicopter safety briefing, this will include a briefing, hover load and unload, it is expected that everyone attending the SAR Ex will complete this training.

We hope to have refresher training of the search teams in the field during the exercise. This will looking at search methods, team work and leadership techniques.

Equipment food

Teams must bring all equipment they would normally be expected to carry in the field, they should anticipate being deployed in the field overnight or for the duration of the exercise. HF radios will be available for teams. A 24 hour ration pack (Back Country) will be supplied 1 per participant. Participants can bring their own food if they prefer or supplement the ration pack if they wish.

A BBQ will be provided at the end of the exercise on Sunday midday, prior to a hot debrief.

People attending

For the allocation of team (field and IMT) roles, planning and tasking can groups please let me know the number of your group's members attending the SAR Ex by **Friday 9th March 2018**. Can you also include their preferred role for IMT.

General

This is our major SAR training event for the year, it would be good to get involvement from every LSAR group including those in South Canterbury. The areas to be searched are considered to be high probability, these areas have not been covered to any high degree by previous searchers during Operation BEATTIE.

Wouldn't it be great to find Emma and bring her home to her family, giving them closure.

There will be articles of interest placed within each allocated area for search teams to find during the exercise.

This is an excellent opportunity for those interested in CIMS and IMT to get some experience and training. They will be mentored in the role that they have been assigned.

With the weekends planned training and the chance of finding Emma I see this as being a successful SAR Exercise.

We hope to see you there.

Phil Simmonds
SAR Coordinator

Phil Simmonds

**Sergeant | Coordinator Search and Rescue/Disaster Victim Identification
Operations Services | NZ Police | Christchurch Central Police Station**

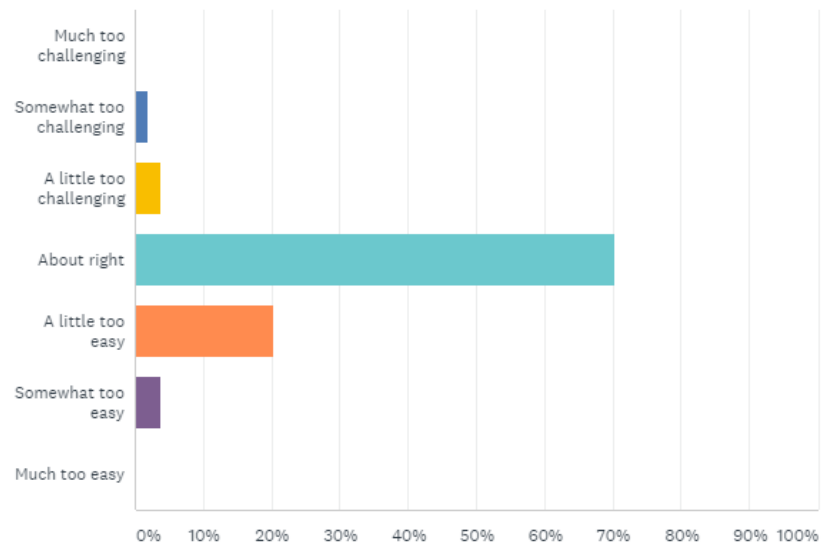
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Appendix B - Survey

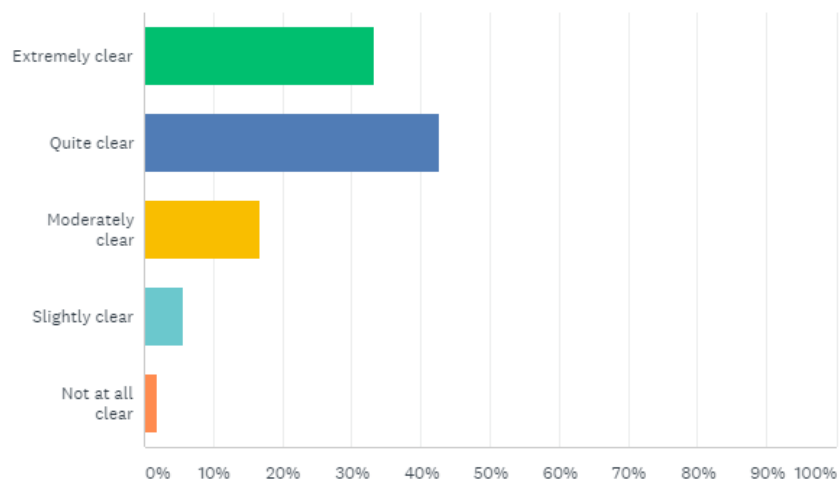
Did you find the SAR EX too challenging, too easy, or about right?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



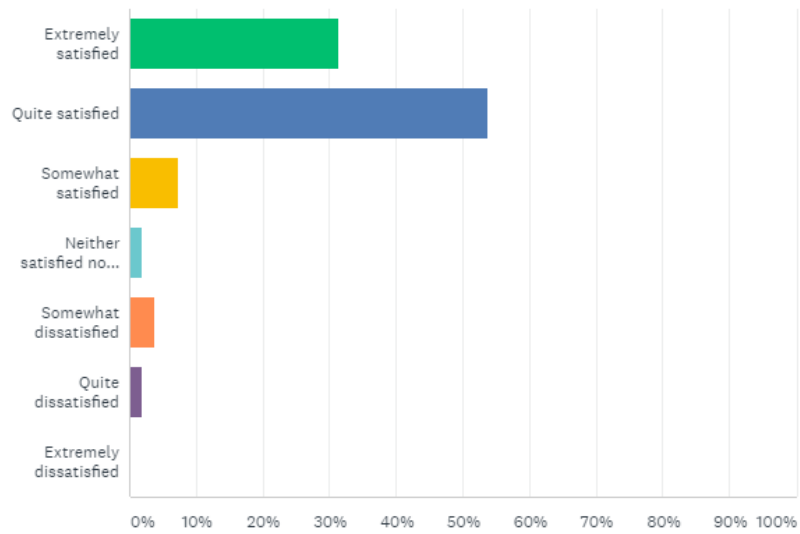
How clear were the objectives (briefing tasking etc) for the SAR EX?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



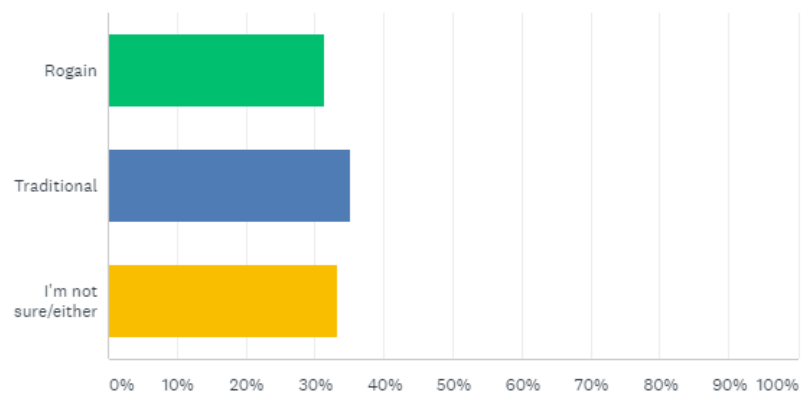
Overall, were you satisfied with this event, dissatisfied with this event, or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



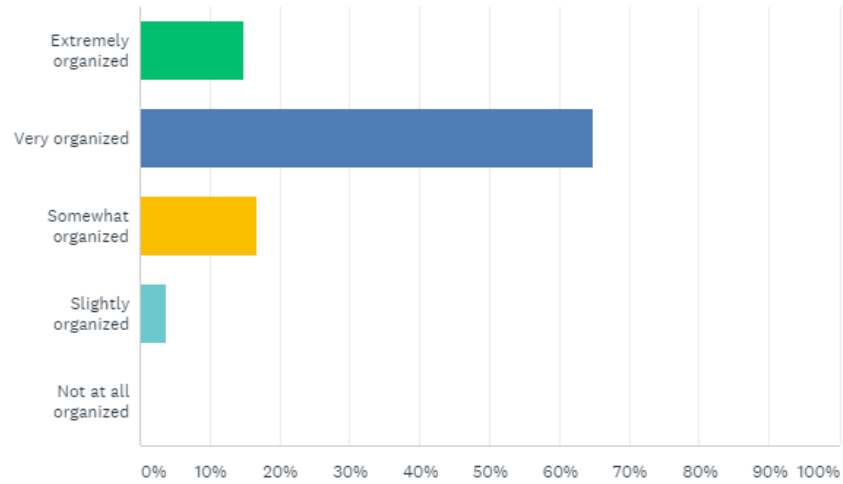
For next year would you like a Rogain style SAR Ex, or a traditional style SAR Ex

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



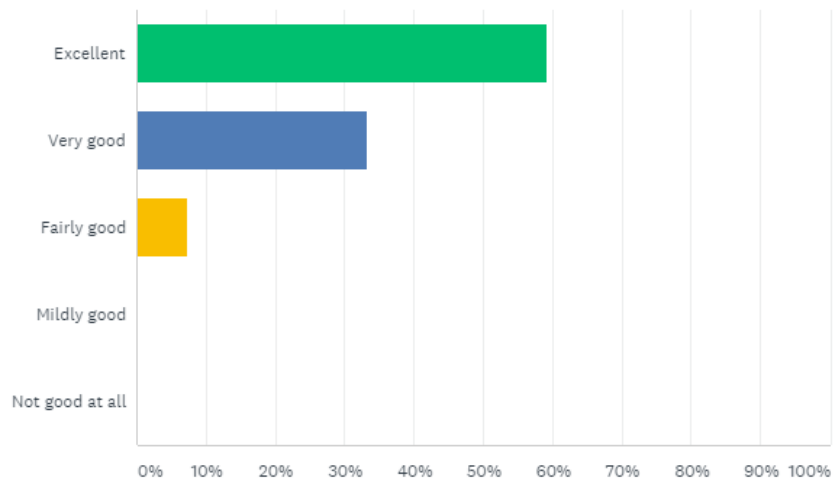
How organized was the SAR EX event?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



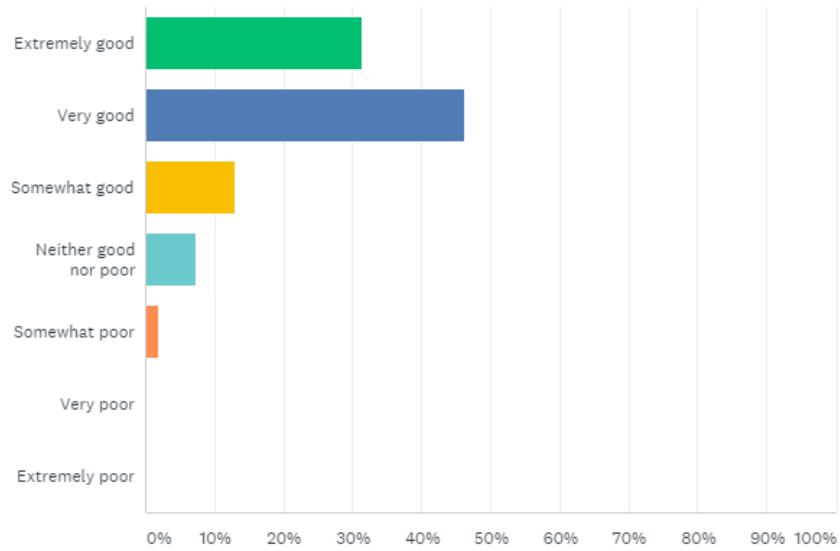
How did you rate the cold case SAR Ex scenario?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



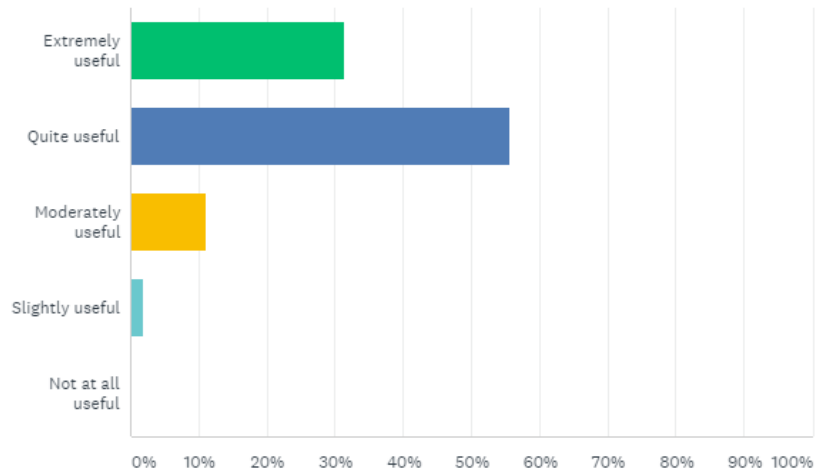
How would you rate the venue/location/search area?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



How useful for training (multiple IMT's, field refresher training) did you think the SAR Ex was?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



What changes, additions or suggestions would you make to any of the District SAR EX?

I think it was about spot on

For a cold case in that environment I thought the idea of having everyone carry full 24hr kit was wrong. Once at the river we couldn't leave it whilst we searched as its a public area and anyone could have taken it & the environment we were in didn't make for the best searching with a large pack on. It should have been like the initial searches where we just had our day pack - it would have made for effective searching.

Having 3 search and areas and IMT an excellant initiative

My main feedback would be related to hearing about the successful outcome of the search via Stuff news whilst in the field. That made me feel undervalued as a volunteer. I understand it would have been a busy time but we would all have understood if we had to stand by for possible redeployment the next day. I think it is always important to feed info back to the troops in the field. We were also told we had drinking water coming out to us in the field but this never eventuated. I tried to call base that night but all radios appeared to have been turned off. This is a possible safety issue if field parties cannot reach base in an emergency. Great outcome however and that is the main bit. sorry for the ranting!

Nothing

The delay in deploying was a bit frustrating but the helicopter training and transport was highly valuable so in weighing up the pros vs cons the pros training wise are definitely the winner.

At night instructors talking to different groups out in the field after tea.--they are long nights

As this was a re-search involving a missing person,our objective was to find this person.To find out via social media I thought was poor form. If communication via radio was considered too risky, then a visit from base would have sorted this.To keep your soldiers on the ground in the dark,doesn` t build confidence in the search organization.Police,to be specific.

decision to continue search dictated many objectives this year

If person/body found let all members know so they don't hear it though friends or media

Clearer organization and objectives

Keep up with what it is now and upgrade as required. All good.

Definitely have a robust plan for if a cold case is solved during the exercise. Keep using at least two constantly scanned radio channels to reduce congestion. Maximise the time spent by teams in the field - we arrived at around 0700, and weren't out searching until about 6 hours later. This meant we only did about five hours total, including the time taken for the field assessment which basically got in the way and didn't achieve anything. Ensure radio channels are constantly maintained - during saturday night when base was busy following the discovery of Emma, we radioed in to ask something and got no response after multiple times. If we had an emergency, we would have been on our own until finding another way to communicate. During the debrief, give feedback on as much as possible, such as the objects which were placed in the field for teams to find. We didn't hear about where they were or how many were found. Also, the field assessments were taken and nothing was said about the overall impression the assessors got, good or bad. Also, in light of the amount of time spent waiting when we arrived on saturday, perhaps those who were doing IMT could arrive an hour

or so before everyone else. That way, they could have plans in place, and taskings ready to give to teams as soon as they are ready, or at least a bit sooner.

If we are looking for a cold case then that is what we should be doing, not a made up scenario over the top of it

Nothing

There was some confusion around who was in charge in the IMT area. Was it LandSAR or police

We were informed afterwards that 'weed farmers' set up traps in order to discourage police from searching. Maybe these things could be included in the safety briefing as the field teams were wandering in no man's land.

Do not keep us waiting around for 4 hours, remember we are all volunteers. We were told to arrive at 8am yet the helicopters were booked for 10am and then the safety briefing took another 2 hours a complete waste of a morning especially if it had been a real search where time is of the essence. We had been on the road as a team since 6.30 in the morning.

I would have liked to be briefed that the 'planted clues' were labeled with 'landsar property';, this wasn't made clear to our team and as a result we reported in clues that we knew weren't relevant but may have been part of the 'game'. There seemed to be some discrepancy between what the Police trainers were expecting to see in the field and what we were providing. I think that it would be key for those assessors to remember that although we are volunteers (as landsar) that we are very passionate about doing a good job. There appeared to be some difficulties with the coms van. It was suggested that headsets would have helped operators focus on their own team's radio messages, as we recieved some poor responses based on the difficulties they had in the van. We would have preferred to have found out that a body had been found from SAR base, rather than from a text message from a work colleague and a link to the Stuff Article. I love the way the Phil (and the other boss police man) talk to us and value our contribution. It is fantastic.

This was my first one but in the debrief I was expecting more information on the successful outcome in terms of location and team involved in the find etc.

IMT briefing / handover the night before with a cold case Radios for IMT to observe radio chatter A way to speed up deployment of teams with helicopter training/briefing.

very well organised, enjoyed the helicopter safety brief and flight, well done

Using the Helo took to long.

Do you have any suggestions, or additions we should consider for the next District SAR EX?

Need to consider the SAR Ex as also used for training new recruits - need to allow for this when undertaking the exercises - i.e. don't have assessors standing over watching at least until the afternoon - give people time to do some training

Provide an opportunity for volunteers to socialise at some point during the SAREX

Nothing

cold case

I would suggest Rogain every three years at most.

The cold case searches are a great way to cover off those last lines of enquiry, the terrain in Ashley was challenging and there was no way we could have covered that all in the initial search phase. The fact we were able to locate Emma was a great result and goes to show what SAR is all about with time and a bit of perseverance.

You cant better that outcome.

Leave out the choppers. A big expense that could be better used elsewhere.

Something in the mountains

Back in the hills and remote environment

IMT training while field teams do the rogain

if we have a rogain style then maybe we could have times allocated for each station and less distance between station , less race more skill based

Some of the control was a bit sketchy but I appreciate the IMT's were training and as it was a "cold case" in easy terrain it was good to train IMT people. Oh just seen Q 11

Race between teams with preorganized teams

Consider 1 or 2 more such events per year to keep up with technology alone and help keep us well versed with what is happening. A lot of changes can occur in 6 months.

Perhaps utilise a long weekend or make the most of people arriving on friday night to extend the exercise a bit. Arriving on saturday morning and leaving on sunday afternoon leaves less than 24 hours including briefs and sleeping overnight. With everything going on it is easy for time to slip away.

Provide cold case if feasible

No

Rogain in the McKenzie or Rangitata area

Practice a search where there is more time pressure, when the person we are looking for is still alive.

If it was to be a traditional style more time in the field would be great

Please don't make it a rogain, competitions do not make for great search teams, we are there to learn not win at all costs.

I feel that I learn more from a Rogain style SAREX, but if we have the real chance of making a difference to a well, perhaps not 'cold case' , but 'luke warm case' that should take priority.

Having it based on a cold case was a real motivating factor to be actively involved and make the training an actual real life excercise. It would be good to do another cold case for the next one. Also adhering to a pre deployment and post deployment programme and having this posted on a large board at the base area would be good to let everyone know what the plan is. A0 size in big bold lettering times and activities etc.

This was my first SAR EX. It was a great learning opportunity which I thoroughly enjoyed with a great result.

No more of the same

Better sign in and people management ie assigning to teams early on as it became very rushed and teams didn't know which op the were assigned too making the team briefings rushed. This was a IMT fault also as the logistic managers were first time IMT

Do you have any additional comments about the District SAR Ex?

great result for the family. thanks for the great weekend

The venue was good for those that got to stay there. I thought making people 'camp out' just to test their ability to stay out for 24hrs was a bit of a waste - understand this in a remote environment but not in this scenario. I thought all groups could have camped back at base.

Using mentors to support each part of the operation, IMT and Field Teams, provides opportunities for new personnel to gain experience

It is a good use of personnel to have had us deployed for this cold case. It gives us a chance to use our field training, bond as a team and the helicopter training was very useful and for some very exciting! Good job guys

Great training, great result. Thank you

Obviously the outcome was very good. Consider using cold cases in the future, especially if the case is recent.

The SAREX this year resulted in a great outcome. The only confusion I encountered was that there were three teams using the same callsign and sometimes the radio traffic got a tad confusing but that was cleared up on the last day. Having found out via Stuff about the locating of Emma was a bit frustrating for the team and could have been mediated with a bit of communication, not necessarily by radio but a text message to the team leader or similar considering we were all in service would have been appreciated, I know by my team anyway. I thoroughly enjoyed the SAREX and just being able to get out into the bush and do these things is a great opportunity to re-emphasise things you already know but don't use in everyday life.

Training for accessers

Good to have Police SAR people in the teams.Helps narrow the `them & us thing` ,

I am very impressed with how the Police communicate with Landsar. There is no us and them which is brilliant and we seem work together very well. They are happy to take on board things from landsar too.

Took a long time to get going Saturday morning. Duplicate team numbers caused some radio confusion.

We should have been informed rather than find out through the media of the discovery. There needs to be a better trust model between the field members and IMT and at the end of a day field terms should all be updated on how things are going.

Job well done Thanks.

Venue...good, because in real life the terrain is what we're given,sand dunes,forest,river bed,mountains and even urban.we should practise in every type of terrain.

better pre-event briefing to ensure proper gear is bought

Keep up the good work. Things are changing as I have said above and we all need to keep up with it. Young folk may find it a lot easier, but the senior ones (who the young ones come from) maybe as good but it takes a bit longer to get to grips with tech matters. Otherwise all good.

Ultimately the exercise was a serious success, however the training value could have been increased with a plan for after finding our objective, a bit more time searching/less time waiting and being briefed, and possibly with more things deliberately placed for us to find.

Pre exercise information about what food, meals are provided

No

Well arranged and learned a lot! And the result was the best part about the SAR Ex!

This year's SAREX went extremely well; chopper training, high volume IMT training, good introduction to searching for a few new members this year and of course bringing closure to a family. It'd be difficult to plan another SAREX to follow this one!

Awesome outcome. Thanks to everybody involved

Once it finally got started it was very good, so all credit to those who made it happen. But there were a lot of disgruntled people from having to stand around for the entire morning.

I love being in landsar!

There was an apparent element of distrust between when the person was located between IMT and the teams in the field. All it could of taken was a phone call to the team leaders to inform them of the find and await further instructions. Instead teams were left in the dark and found out via "Stuff" of all places. This element of trust needs to be worked on by the NZ Police I would suggest.

This was my first SAR Ex and i really enjoyed it! It was a great learning experience and really satisfying to be part of the wider group having a successful outcome. I think prior to deployment a bit more of an in depth run down on the missing person, maybe some large maps of the area with different search zones on them could be good and background info on why we were searching the area we are tasked with would be a good thing. I had no idea why we were searching around the bridge in an area that seemed to be miles away from the original search and isolated, so some context around the basis of the search area would be good to know.

A well run event. Many thanks to all who put it together

I really enjoyed being part of IMT, it would have been good to have some more experience with these teams to increase learnings but it did force us to make decisions with a great result. Letting the teams know the result would have helped with overall end feedback.

A big thank you for putting what was an excellent sar ex, looking forward to next years one.

Appendix C – Letter of appreciation

Canterbury District Commander John Price

Kia ora Phil and SAR Team

Please pass on a massive thank you from me to your team and volunteers for their outstanding service over the last year. As you know I got to Loburn at 1200 hrs today but unfortunately missed many of your team who left early.

The value of s SAREX is many including the practical application of skills and knowledge but when applied to a cold case actually creates a level of possibility eg we may close a cold case and bring home a loved one to a family.

Yesterday your team did just that and missing person Emma Beattie, 20 years, has been found as a result of this weekend's SAREX in North Canterbury. Emma has been missing since 1 Dec 2017. Formal ID I know has not yet been done but circumstances strongly indicate it is Emma.

I know you and Snr Sgt Paul Reeves have informed the family who were all in town in anticipation of the SAREX finding Emma.

When we lose a loved one like this it is hard but to re unite the family with Emma is closure for all.

Thank you for your leadership and for the result of your team.

Well done as you are stars who I totally honour for what you do to keep our community safe in our environment.

Regards John

Appendix D – Images from SAR Ex



