



NEW ZEALAND POLICE

EXERCISE EVALUATION REPORT

Tamaki Makaurau SAREX 2021

Location: Hunua Ranges national Park

Date: 25th to 28th February 2021

Report Version: Final

**Evaluator:
Vince RANGER
Waikato Police SAR Co-ordinator**

Contents

1. Exercise Summary.
2. Recommendations.
3. Introduction.
4. Background.
5. Exercise Scenario.
6. Evaluation Methodology.
7. Findings.
8. Conclusion.

1. EXERCISE SUMMARY

This SARex was wholly based on a scenario-based Search and Rescue operation. The exercise began on Thursday the 25th February, 0900 hrs, at the Tamaki Makaurau Police Search and Rescue Base at Harbour Bridge, where the IMT was selected from the Police SAR squad. This team was briefed on the scenario and the team deployed from there.

The Police SAR squad deployed from there to the selected SARex base at Moumoukai Hill Road.

The IMT developed an initial plan and tasked available staff to the scenario.

The Scenario continued through to Friday and Saturday, 26th and 27th February, with additional support throughout from Landsar teams being deployed and support from Landsar IMT members and AREC members.

During this time also included an IMT changeover.

The SARex concluded with the finding of the lost parties, mid afternoon on the Saturday followed by demobilisation through to Sunday morning.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Police Investigation Management Tool (IMT) be utilised in future SAR operations to enhance information sharing between the Search management Team and the Enquiry team (CIB).
2. To provide Police Investigation Management Training (IMT) to all SAR squad members used in the Incident Management Team functions.
3. To fully staff the Incident Management team functions at the earliest opportunity.
4. Consider Incident Management Team desk top exercises and training to enhance incident management capability. (IMTex)
5. Further develop SAR group training on the use and set up of SAR track capability.

3. INTRODUCTION

This exercise was planned and managed by the Tamaki Makaurau Search and Rescue coordinator, Sergeant Scott ISZARD.

He had previously discussed the exercise with the evaluator and identified the objectives of the SARex.

The SARex was developed to test the ability of the Auckland Landsar community to operate the search management out of the watercare Depot, on Moumoukai Hill Road, for searches in that part of the Hunua range.

This is a common operational Search area for this district.

The exercise was also to test various functions of the Search and Rescue teams, including search management and field teams.

The agencies involved included
Tamaki Makaurau Police SAR Squad
Auckland Landsar group
Auckland AREC group.

Other agencies involved included the Department of Conservation and Auckland watercare, both who, while not directly involved. Gave support by the way of advice and resources.

4. BACKGROUND

My involvement in the exercise was that of evaluator for the whole exercise. Contact was made from Sergeant ISZARD late in 2020, seeking advice and setting objectives, and on SARex planning.

The exercise planner recognised that the area of the Hunua ranges as a common area for operations. There was a need to check the suitability of the watercare Depot as an Incident Control Point, hence the decision to locate the SARex in this area.

The exercise was conducted between the 25th and 27th February, with the 28th being a demobilisation and pack up period.

The aim of the exercise in general was to test the role of the Incident management team and to also test the field teams for extended search periods. To also examine the use of the Police Investigation Management Tool (IMT) within the Incident Management Team to enhance the information sharing between the Incident management team and the Enquiry teams.

My evaluation is on the SARex as a whole.

5. **EXERCISE SCENARIO**

3 x associates are going into the bush for 2 x nights. They all work at the same construction company. 2 are experienced hunters and the 3rd is someone that they are going to take for a hunt down on Stewart island later this year. This is just an opportunity for him to get some experience in the bush.

The missing party are

- (1) John JONES (Dean Rowlands)- experienced hunter, knows area well. Has wife at home. Known issues with alcohol. Took gun with him.
- (2) Tammy SMITH (Sharon Osman)- Experienced hunter, knows area well.
- (3) Jimmy Campbell (Will Flapper)- never been hunting before. Not experienced in bush.

They parked at Upper Mangatawhiri Dam. The plan was to stay at Piggott's the first night (Tuesday) and then Kohukohunui the second night (Wednesday). Then walk out first thing Thursday morning as Jimmy had a meeting with his probation officer.

The partner of one of them has called the Police at 10.00 a.m. to say they are not out; she was going to meet them to take Jimmy to an appointment. The vehicle is still there. (rego plate to be given to I/C, car to be brought back to search base).

The exercise will start with that phone call to on call coordinator at 10.00 a.m. from comms.

They will then run the scenario as a normal search as they see fit.

Statements from the family and friends of the lost parties will be available if asked for. If the media release is made there will be 3 pieces of information come back. 1 will be a false sighting and 2 good sightings.

Location of Lost Parties.

Jimmy will be inserted on Friday afternoon. He will be found on one of the bait lines off Kohukohunui track, depending on where they are searching. He will then fill in the details of the scenario once they got into the bush. He left the hut to make his appointment on Thursday morning but got lost on his way out and stayed overnight on the bait line. He will be uninjured. Able to walk out and able to impart intel needed.

John Dean will be located at a grid reference. He went hunting on the Wednesday night after getting drunk. He is known to use bait lines in the area to get around. He went down a bait line and walked right off the end of it to his grid reference. Depending on the time he is located, he may be injured.

Tammy will be located at a grid reference. On the Thursday she has walked out to find John. She knows that he liked bait lines and had done some illegal hunting around Piggott's before, so she went there first. She has walked off the back of a bait line and onto her find location.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

My evaluation was to identify wherever the objectives of the exercise were met or not, and to offer advice on the success of this exercise.

The objectives relating to the IMT functions were evaluated by direct observations and discussions with IMT members.

The objectives relating to field teams were evaluated by direct observations as teams left for their taskings, and by discussion with team members and team leaders.

7. **FINDINGS**

Objective 1

To test the CIMS structure with the IMT including the SAR documentation required for Coronial files.

The CIMS structure was understood by the participants within the IMT. The IMT was generally calm with decisions made based on sound SAR practices.

At times functions became a little confused with the incident controller delving into planning and operation functions. While not uncommon in the initial operational period, it needs to be recognised when this is happening. It prevents the management team evolving from initial planning into extending search planning.

The SAR documentation was very well presented, in a chronological format, logical and tidy. The end result was easy to read and understand.

Objective met

See recommendations

Fully staff IMT functions at the earliest opportunity

Consider IMT exercises (IMTex) to enhance capability

Objective 2

To test the use of SARtrack on a local server.

SARtrack was utilised on the second day of the exercise with the introduction of AREC members to the IMT and further enhanced with the IMT changeover, introducing members with SARtrack skills.

The technology worked well, but the reception through the local server was fragile.

Taskings and messages were passed between the radio room and IMT.

This was a good test of this technology in a remote environment.

Objective Met.

See recommendations

Introduce group training for IMT staff on the use and set up of SARtrack technology.

Objective 3

Test the liaison between the SAR IMT and CIB. Include the use of Investigation Management Tool (IMT) and the profile.

The IMT during this exercise included the function of CIB liaison. This was loosely attached to the Intel function, where that function rightly sits.

That member is an experienced CIB member well versed on the Police Investigation Management Tool. (IMT)

This exercise proved the worth of utilizing Police IMT to enhance the communication between an enquiry team and the SAR IMT, particularly when they are operating in separate locations.

A sound profile was developed as a result of that enhanced communication with enquiry teams and the Intel function on the IMT.

Objective met.

See recommendations

Utilize Investigation Management Tool (IMT) to enhance the communication between SAR IMT and the enquiry team.

Objective 4

Test the field team's ability and equipment for extended searches.

Field teams were allocated with a mixture of experience within the teams. The teams were tasked initially at the search base, with further taskings by radio.

All teams appeared to have the appropriate equipment, with no observed deficiencies and no reports of equipment not being available.

All teams carried all the required equipment for their tasks.

Objective met.

There are no recommendations for this objective.

Objective 5

To give team leaders experience and ensure they are competent.

The objective was evaluated by observing team leaders with their teams prior to being deployed, and then by interviews with some team leaders.

They reported that they appreciated the opportunity to display their leadership skills, in a safe environment. All team leaders spoken to reinforced the need to allocate functions to each of the team members.

This was a great opportunity to develop leaders who had slightly less experience. All demonstrated sound leadership skills.

Objective Met

There are no recommendations for this objective.

8. CONCLUSION

This was a well run and successful SARex. It was a simple scenario-based exercise run over a 3-day period. It demonstrates that this style of exercise is well within the capability of districts to plan and manage.

While outside the scope of the evaluation, this SARex demonstrated the strong relationship between agencies and gave a great opportunity to enhance those relationships.