



New Zealand Search and Rescue Council

**Minutes of Meeting
New Zealand Search and Rescue Council
1-3pm Wednesday 31 May 2017
Police National HQ
180 Molesworth Street, Wellington**

Present:

Peter Mersi – MoT (Chair)
Mike Rusbatch - NZ Police
John Kay – CAA
Nigel Clifford – MNZ (left at 2.30 pm)
Lt Gen Tim Keating - NZDF
Harry Maher – DOC
Dave Comber – Independent Member

In Attendance:

Brigadier John Boswell – NZDF
Mike Hill – RCCNZ
Rachel Roberts – NZSAR
Duncan Ferner – NZSAR
Rhett Emery – NZSAR
Chris Scahill – NZ Police
Jo Holden – NZ Police
Carl van der Meulen – NZSAR
Lauren James – Minute taker

1 Welcome

Peter Mersi opened the meeting by welcoming attendees.

2. Apologies

Graeme Harris – CAA Keith Manch – MNZ

3. Minutes of Meeting held 8 March 2017

The minutes from the 8 March 2017 meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

4. Actions Arising from Previous Meeting

NZSAR Council Action and Responsibility Table - Meeting of 8 March 2017

Item	Actions & Decisions	Responsibility
7.	NZSAR Strategy The Secretariat is to update the Strategic Plan and circulation it out of session for approval.	Completed Refer agenda item 7
8.	Terms of Reference The Secretariat is to update the NZSAR Consultative Committee Terms of Reference	Secretariat Completed
9.	Operational Framework The Secretariat is to update the Operational Framework	Secretariat Completed
10.	NZSAR Awards The Council agreed with the 2016 NZSAR Award recommendations of the sub committee	Secretariat Completed
11.	NZSAR Risk Matrix The Secretariat is to update the Council's Risk Matrix	Secretariat Refer agenda item 12
14a	Significant NZSAR initiatives Council agreed that the Ministry of Transport lawyer would examine the SLA's first and provide advice to other agency legal teams.	Secretariat Refer agenda item 8

5. SLA Monitoring Report for the January – March 2017 Quarter

There were 708 SAROPS recorded in the database for the quarter. The Police reported 408 category 1 incidents but the average over the last six years for the quarter is 626. There is a lag in inputting data. A sharp increase in category 2 incidents is noted for the quarter. There has been a significant increase in PLB activations for the quarter compared to previous years.

The reporting requirements for the Quarter have been met by three of the SLA partners. No report was received from AREC as the reporting person has passed away and the organisation has not yet appointed someone to take over the responsibility.

The Council **noted** the SLA Monitoring Report.

6. Sector Update

A verbal update to the Sector update report is that the LandSAR CE is on sick leave and Pete Corbett is the acting CE.

The sector update report was **noted** and taken as read.

7. NZSAR Strategy 2017-2020

Following the Council's discussion at the March meeting, the Strategy has been updated. The list of NZSAR Council risks remains as presented previously. The section on values now includes reference to a strong community service ethic. The strategy is sufficiently flexible to meet the potential demands the SAR sector faces and would adapt to changing SAR demand as it is based upon a robust SAR system.

Decision: The Council **approved** the NZSAR Strategy 2017-2020.

8. Service Level Agreements 2017/18-19/20

The five Service Level Agreements (SLA) administered by the Secretariat are currently being reviewed for 2017/18-2019/20. The Secretariat received independent advice to ensure the SLAs meet government requirements for contracting with NGOs. The payment schedules for the Coastguard NZ and LandSAR NZ SLAs have been updated to reflect the increased funding agreed to by joint Ministers. Other non-substantial changes were made to the layout and structure of the Agreements.

Four SLAs are for the provision of SAR services:

- NZSAR, Police, MNZ, and AREC
- NZSAR, Police, MNZ, and Coastguard NZ
- NZSAR, Police, MNZ, and LandSAR NZ
- NZSAR, Police, MNZ, and Surf Life Saving NZ

One SLA is for the provision of an avalanche advisory service:

- NZSAR, DOC, and Mountain Safety Council

Ongoing concerns about AREC's organisational and governance arrangements have been highlighted during the review process. Failure to file an annual return has resulted in deregistration of the AREC Charitable Trust. No funding will be provided to AREC until the Secretariat is satisfied with their governance and organisation arrangements. Withholding funding will not affect service delivery.

LandSAR provided a business case for increased funding, but have not yet provided outcome measures and KPIs. Their additional funding will not be released until these requirements are satisfied.

Council members who are signatories to the Agreements were asked to ensure these get signed in a timely manner when delivered to their respective offices.

Decision: The Council **approved** the five Service Level Agreements.

9. SLA Letters of Intent for 2017/2018

The Council considered the draft SLA letters of intent for 2017/18. Carl highlighted the main points to note for the letters for 2017/18:

Support of NZSAR projects

All the SLA providers are to apply some of the SLA funding to support the following major initiatives:

- IT project SARdonyx
- System assurance programme
- New Zealand's SAR Guidelines

Governance

AREC is to apply SLA funding to develop robust governance and financial management, including governance training for Trustees.

WanderSAR

LandSAR is to apply SLA funding to implement the objectives of the Safer Walking Partnership Framework (2013). LandSAR is also informed that the Council is concerned by the lack of tangible progress to date.

Council members considered whether the letters should be more assertive in regards to milestones and KPIs. After discussion, it was agreed that the letters should include a statement that the Council will write to the partners again in March, asking them to report back on their progress against the Council's priorities outlined in the letters of intent.

Carl noted the letters will only be sent after the Service Level Agreements have been signed.

Decision: The Council **agreed** to the SLA letters of intent, with the addition of a statement that the Council will write again in March.

Action: The Secretariat to **update** the letters, and to **send** them once the SLAs are signed.

10. NZSAR Secretariat Performance Assessment

Council members were asked to complete the Secretariat performance assessment forms for MoT reporting purposes.

11. NZSAR Secretariat Budget and NSSP

The proposed 2017/2018 National SAR Support Programme and associated budget was presented for approval. Duncan reported there is a degree of uncertainty about some of the projects, as a result of the unknown final cost for IT Project Sardonyx.

Duncan briefed the Council on the initial project governance and scoping meeting held that morning IT project SARdonyx. It was noted that someone from Police Operations needs to be involved at this level.

Decision: Council **approved** the 2017/2018 National SAR Support Programme and associated budget.

12. NZSAR Risk Matrix

Duncan reported that the Health and Safety, SAR Technology and Recreational Knowledge sections of the risk matrix had been updated as requested by the Council. The post-treatment section of the matrix has also been updated.

The Consultative Committee has proposed that SAR Demand (changes to the nature of SAR demand) be added to the risk matrix. The Committee notes that SAR demand is a multi-faceted risk that can change for different reasons.

The Council noted there may be constraints for the SAR sector to quickly adapt to changes in SAR demand caused by volume, demographic changes, or technology. Examples of changes in SAR demand include: increasing Wander SAR; an increase in recreational boats equipped with EPIRBs; and an increase in fishing activity in the Southern Ocean/Antarctic waters.

The Council noted there will be a challenge in determining the best way to adapt to identified changes in SAR demand. This will rely on the proposed assurance programme to provide a clear picture of SAR demand and trends.

Council members suggested the risk needs to include a better articulation of individual risk elements and risk treatments, bearing in mind the different levels of coercion that can be applied in assisting the sector adapt to changes in SAR demand.

Peter suggested choosing one of the risk elements for discussion at the next meeting. The focus needs to be on the risks we are aware are significant.

Decision: The Council **agreed** that SAR demand be included on the risk matrix.

Action: The Council directed the Secretariat **update** the risk elements and treatments of the SAR Demand risk, and to include one of the risk elements for discussion at the next Council meeting.

13. SAR(ACE) Individual Training

Rhett presented a report on SAR individual training outlining some ongoing issues and challenges. Across the sector individual training occurs in different organisations in a markedly different way. There is evidence that SAR(ACE) training is largely delivering training to a good standard. The SAR Individual Training Survey of 2016 SAR(ACE) students (repeat of 2015 survey) showed the overall level of satisfaction with training is high. However, the level of satisfaction is lower in 2016 than 2015. LandSAR is the largest consumer of training and is currently undertaking a review of their internal non-SAR(ACE) training.

While the current training model delivers quality training, there are some significant issues impacting on the administration, governance and management of the training. These issues impact upon the ability to fully meet the skills acquisition training needs of the sector.

The issues summarised in the report fall under four areas:

- Funding and reporting
- Ownership, control and change
- Ongoing viability – course credits, course attendance, remote regions
- Overhead costs

The Secretariat is engaging with relevant stakeholders to discuss agency individual training preferences and the viability of potential alternate arrangements. The Tertiary Education Commission (the funding provider) has acknowledged the difficulties of the current ACE arrangements but as yet, have not committed to engaging on change.

The situation is hugely frustrating with a decline in the efficacy of the training. The Council considered how they should engage with the Tertiary Education Commission outlining the issues facing the SAR(ACE) programme, and directed the Chair of the Council to write to the TEC in the first instance.

Decisions:

1. The Council **noted** the issues and challenges related to the current SAR(ACE) funding arrangements.
2. The Council **noted** that there is a growing consensus to either change or replace SAR(ACE) arrangements with some other, more fit for purpose construct.

Actions:

3. The Chair of the Council to **write** to the Tertiary Education Commission expressing concern with the current SAR(ACE) arrangements, and to explain the need for change to the current system.

14. Major Transport Incident Policy and 2019 NEP Exercise

Duncan briefed the Council on the Ministry of Transport project to develop a Major Transport Incident (MTI) Policy. The purpose of the project is to:

- develop a transport sector strategy for managing MTIs
- provide clarity and transparency around MTI roles and responsibilities
- plan for a coherent risk and outcome focussed transport sector response to all-hazard national emergencies
- establish flexible and all level contingency plans by all key sector stakeholders
- align with and support national hazard emergency management and response
- develop assurance programme to test sector coordination and response arrangements

There are multiple agencies within the transport sector and the policy will need to explain in detail how the various agencies will work together. Mass rescue and extended search operations are the two areas where this policy will interact with the SAR system.

MTI Exercise –NEP April 2019

Duncan briefed the Council on the status of the inter-agency National Exercise Programme (NEP) activity NEP12 – major transport incident exercise. This activity is scheduled for April 2019, and the aim, objectives and KPIs are still to be determined. The exercise planning will be led by the Ministry of Transport.

The NZSAR Secretariat believes there is value for this exercise to include a mass rescue component, as this will build on the current Rauora series of MRO exercises. The Secretariat has outlined this to both MoT and DPMC.

DPMC has informed the Secretariat that the NEP priorities are likely to change as New Zealand prepares to host APEC in 2021. No decisions have been confirmed for exercises in 2019 at this stage.

The Council confirmed its desire to maintain (if possible) the current April 2019 date and for the NEP12 major transport incident exercise to include a mass rescue component. Peter Mersi agreed to reflect the Council's desire to the various NSS fora he attends.

Action: Peter Mersi to reflect the Council's desire that the major transport incident include a mass rescue component at the NSS fora he attends.

15. HRB follow up

Duncan reported on his meeting with the Hazard Risk Board where SAR organisation, goals and risks were discussed. The Board was advised that the Rauora II exercises conducted to date have identified four serious systemic weaknesses.

- a. *The development of a single plan for nationally significant SAR operations (Mass Rescue / Extensive Search) remains an urgent requirement,*
- b. *Incompatible organisational IT systems is a major impediment to gaining and maintaining situational awareness,*
- c. *Many people in response organisations at the District level possess an inadequate understanding of CIMS (particularly at the multi-agency/multi-response level), and*
- d. *No common system or process for the reconciliation of large numbers of distressed / missing people exists.'*

HRB invited the NZSAR Secretariat to engage with the HRB Senior Officials Group on working collaboratively with other government agencies to resolve the identified systemic weaknesses.

Outcome: The Council **noted** the report, and **noted** the Secretariat will engage with the HRB SOG.

16. Maritime Surveillance

Peter Mersi provided a brief update on the timings of decisions for the maritime surveillance strategy and the MoD/NZDF Future Air Surveillance Capability project. The Secretariat will be included in this work at the appropriate levels.

17. Wills Enquiry

Duncan reported that the NZ Search and Rescue Guidelines project will commence in the new financial year. The Guidelines will provide an agreed doctrinal base for SAR operations. Rhett Emery would be leading the project and the intention is to have a document developed within 18 months. Duncan stressed this is not an operational review. The majority of the identified systemic issues would be addressed by the development of the Guidelines.

Most of the recommendations are under way. Recommendations 10.1 (File Management) and 11.1 (Family Liaison Role) which relate to training have been referred to Tai Poutini Polytechnic but no action has been taken yet.

Outcome: The Council **noted** the progress report.

18. PacSAR

Mike Hill reported that New Zealand hosted the 7th Pacific Regional SAR Workshop in Auckland in May with involvement from 26 Pacific Island Countries and Territories. The PACSAR steering committee is a collective of five nations (New Zealand, Australia, France, USA and Fiji). A strategic plan was launched at the workshop which encompasses the four pillars of SAR capability: SAR Governance, SAR Coordination, SAR Response, and SAR Prevention. The next PACSAR workshop will be held in Hawaii in two years time.

19. NSSP 2016/17

The Council noted progress on the National SAR Support Programme and the decision made to defer four projects to the coming financial year. These are:

- SAR Demand and Supply Study – Marine
- SAR Demand and Supply Study – Land
- Mass Rescue Study
- SAR Performance Measurement

20. Wahine Disaster 50th Commemorations 10 April 2018

Duncan reported he had met with Rhys Jones, Chair of the Wahine Trust, to discuss hosting the 2017 NZSAR Awards on 10 April 2018 as part of the wider 50th anniversary commemorations of the Wahine disaster.

The Consultative Committee has discussed opportunities for the commemorations to include an array of options such as public displays, exercises or demonstrations.

21. SAR Sector Health and Safety

Rhett reported on the NZSAR Strategic Occupational Health and Safety (H&S) Committee meeting held on 22 February. The embodiment of an H&S culture within the SAR system appears to be developing at a satisfactory level. However, nation-wide some PCBU responsibilities are not well known, and need to be continually reinforced.

Work continues on the H&S procedures of engaging regular SAR assets that are not SLA partners, and assets of opportunity. There are still ongoing issues relating to engagement at different levels with a number of aviation assets. The implementation of the Aviation Framework will continue during 2017/18.

22. General Business

a. H&S Award nomination

Duncan reported the Secretariat was encouraged to submit an H&S collaboration award nomination, but this was not successful.

b. NZSAR Annual Awards

Peter expressed thanks to all the Secretariat team for organising the event, which had gained a reasonable amount of publicity.

Proposed next meetings:

- Wednesday, 13 September 2017
- Wednesday, 22 November 2017 – Combined Workshop

Peter Mersi
Chair
NZSAR Council

NZSAR Council Action and Responsibility Table - Meeting of 31 May 2017

	Item	Actions & Decisions	Responsibility
7.	NZSAR Strategy 2017-2020	The Council approved the NZSAR Strategy 2017-2020.	Decision
8.	2017-2020 Service Level Agreements	The Council approved the five NZSAR Council Service Level Agreements.	Decision
9.	Letters of Intent	The Council agreed to the SLA letters of intent, with the addition of a statement that the Council will write again in March. The Secretariat to update the letters, and to send them once the SLAs are signed.	Decision Secretariat
11.	NZSAR Secretarial Budget and NSSP 2017/2018	The Council approved the 2016/2017 National SAR Support Programme and associated budget	Decision
12.	NZSAR Risk Matrix	The Council agreed that SAR demand be included on the risk matrix. The Council directed the Secretariat update the risk elements and treatments of the SAR Demand risk, and to include one of the risk elements for discussion at the next Council meeting.	Decision Secretariat

	Item	Actions & Decisions	Responsibility
13.	SAR (ACE) Individual Training	<p>The Council noted the issues and challenges related to the current SAR(ACE) funding arrangements.</p> <p>The Council noted that there is a growing consensus to either change or replace SAR(ACE) arrangements with some other, more fit for purpose construct.</p> <p>The Chair of the Council to write to the Tertiary Education Commission expressing concern with the current SAR(ACE) arrangements, and to explain the need for change to the current system.</p>	<p>Decision</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>Secretariat and Chair</p>
14.	Major Transport Incident – 2019 Exercise	Peter Mersi to reflect the Council's desire that the major transport incident include a mass rescue component at the NSS fora he attends.	Chair