



# New Zealand Search and Rescue

## NEW ZEALAND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NZSAR) COUNCIL

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

The New Zealand Search and Rescue Council was established by Cabinet in April 2003 (CBC Min (03) 2 14).

#### **Purpose**

To provide national level strategic governance and leadership to the New Zealand Search and Rescue (SAR) sector.

#### **Objectives:**

- Provide strategic search and rescue policy advice to government.
- Provide strong strategic coordination and leadership for search and rescue (sea, land and air) within New Zealand's search and rescue region.
- Provide a centralised public voice for strategic SAR issues.
- Maintain a New Zealand Search and Rescue strategy including:
  - Vision
  - Mission
  - Values
  - Goals
  - Risks
- Maintain New Zealand's Search and Rescue Plan (Framework).
- Monitor New Zealand's international SAR obligations and performance.
- Monitor search and rescue sector: trends, finances, capabilities, performance, agreements, strategies and goals
- Approve and monitor SAR Government funding to non-governmental organisations including the Joint Service Level Agreements.
- Approve and monitor the National SAR Support Programme.

#### **Scope and Operation**

While the Council is responsible for the provision of national level strategic governance to the New Zealand Search and Rescue (NZSAR) sector, it does not have a role in the coordination or execution of search and rescue operations at the functional operational or tactical levels.

The Council is supported by the NZSAR Secretariat and the NZSAR Consultative Committee. The Secretariat provides the Council with support services, policy advice and implements agreed measures to effectively coordinate strategic SAR activities in New Zealand. The Consultative Committee is a forum for all New Zealand based SAR stakeholders. The Committee provides advice to the Council and informs the strategic decision making process.

The Council, Secretariat and Consultative Committee operate cohesively to ensure the Council's objectives are successfully achieved.

### **Membership and Composition**

In keeping with the Council's high level strategic function, its membership is composed of the Chief Executives (or delegated to a person from the senior executive level) of the following government agencies:

- Ministry of Transport (Chair)
- New Zealand Police
- New Zealand Defence Force
- Maritime New Zealand
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Department of Conservation
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- A non-government Independent Member

Where representation is delegated, organisations are expected to be consistent in their representation to ensure familiarity with, and continuity in matters before the Council.

The non-government Independent Member is selected by the Council (with Consultative Committee endorsement) for a two year term. This person's role is to:

- Contribute meaningfully to the Council's strategic leadership, policy and advisory functions.
- Represent the non-governmental elements of the SAR sector at the NZSAR Council.
- Be a conduit of NZSAR Council thinking back to the wider SAR sector.

Council Members are expected to prioritise NZSAR Council strategic responsibilities ahead of their separate organisational search and rescue interests.

Representatives from external agencies with an interest in matters before the Council, including members of the NZSAR Consultative Committee, may attend NZSAR Council meetings by request or invitation.

Secretariat and secretarial functions for the Council are provided by the NZSAR Secretariat.

### **Quorum**

The Council quorum is a minimum of four NZSAR Council Members.

### **Reporting and Accountabilities**

Group. The NZSAR Council formally reports to the Government through the National Security System (NSS). This occurs via the Hazard Risk Board (HRB) and/or the Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (Governance) (ODESC (G)). The Council may report to Cabinet via the Minister of Transport.

The important relationship between the Council and the wider SAR community is supported by and maintained through the NZSAR Secretariat and the NZSAR Consultative Committee.

Individual. As representatives of their agencies, NZSAR Council members are expected to:

- attend, to the greatest extent possible, all meetings of the Council;
- examine issues before the council from a strategic viewpoint not withstanding individual agency responsibilities;
- support a consensus decision-making approach; and,
- support and endorse the decisions of the Council.

External Communication and Media. The Chair of the NZSAR Council is responsible for the conduct of all of the Council's external communications and media activity. The Chair is supported in this role by the NZSAR Secretariat.

### **NZSAR Council Senior Officials Group**

The NZSAR Council will be supported by a Senior Officials Group (SOG), chaired by the NZSAR Secretariat Manager.

The NZSAR SOG's purpose is to support the NZSAR Council's work programme by shaping the forward agenda and ensuring that action items are managed appropriately.

### **Processes**

Meetings. The NZSAR Council is to meet at least three times per year. The Chair may call additional meetings as required.

Meetings will follow an agenda which is to be circulated in draft to members for their consideration and comment in advance of the relevant meeting.

Minutes of meetings and a record of decisions made will be kept and confirmed at the next meeting of the Council.

Papers are to be circulated for member's consideration in advance of the relevant meeting where possible.

Consideration of issues and related decisions can be made outside of formal meetings as required through processes agreed to by members.

Conflicts of Interest. Occasionally, potential or actual conflicts of interest may arise between NZSAR Council members (or the organisations they represent) and the delivery of the Council's objectives. In such cases, members (or their representatives) should declare the potential conflict of interest to the Chair at the beginning of each meeting. Members holding or representing the conflict of interest may participate in discussions but are to withdraw from the decision making process in relation to the area of potential conflict.

Administration. The NZSAR Secretariat will provide administrative support to the Council as required.

The costs for members to attend meetings are to be borne by their respective organisations.