

NEW ZEALAND SEARCH AND RESCUE

Rapu Whakarauora Aotearoa ●●●●●●●●●●

NZSAR Consultative Committee Minutes

Tuesday, 16 May 2023, 9.30am – 1 2noon
3 Queens Wharf, Wellington and MS Teams

1. Present

Name	Agency
Andrew Greig (Chair)	NZSAR
Michael Bassett-Foss	Independent
Rob Hewitt	
Karen Linwood	CNZ
Steve Campbell	YSAR
Allan Mundy	SLSNZ
Bruce Webster	DOC
Kathryn Steel	St John's Air Desk
Richard Milner	Aviation NZ
Megan McLeod	LandSAR
Daniel Gerrard	Water Safety Council

Name	Agency
Justin Allan	RCCNZ
Don Robertson	AREC
Callum Gillespie	CNZ
Gavin Lawrence	YSAR
Adam Wooler	SLSNZ
Richard Appleton	NZDF
Dan Clearwater	NZSAR
Mike Daisley	MSC
Carl McOnie	LandSAR
Craig Rendel	NZ Police

2. In attendance

Name	Agency
Peter Gent	MBIE
Bridget Hesketh	NZSAR
Wendy Harrison	NZSAR

Name	Agency
Matt Wheble	NZSAR
Daryl Bloomfield	NZSAR
Evan Hughes	NZSAR

3. Apologies

Name	Agency
Kate Weinberg	RCCNZ

Name	Agency
Scott McKenzie	Aviation NZ

Name	Agency
Liz Smith	NEMA

Name	Agency
Grant Redvers	Antarctica NZ

4. Welcome

Andrew Greig opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

5. Minutes of meeting on Tuesday, 7 March 2023

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

6. Summary of actions from previous meetings

#	Item	Actions	Responsibility	Actions taken/ Status
8.	NZSAR Risk Matrix – COVID & SAR Information	<p>Action: Duncan to update the COVID Risk in the Matrix and change the title to Pandemic.</p> <p>Action: Duncan to update the SAR Information Risk in the Matrix but keep the Data exchange and storage risk as yellow.</p>	Duncan Ferner	Completed
16.	General Business	<p>Action: Duncan will email back Andy Roberts with comments from this discussion and will copy in Rupert Friend, Kate Weinberg and Mike Daisley.</p>	Duncan Ferner	Completed

7. Sector Updates

Agencies provided brief sector updates.

Ambulance NZ

No report provided.

AMSA

No report provided.

Antarctica NZ

No major updates but note there will be a SAR workshop at the upcoming COMNAP AGM in Hobart. Here is the link – www.comnap.aq/annual-general-meeting

AREC

Back to normal after TC Gabrielle. Now focusing on projects and milestones to the financial year end. The new website is due to go live in May.

The volunteer roadshow was held in mid-May and is aligned to what people want in each area. It will rollout over the next 12 months. SAR Track training was completed in the South Island and intend to do North Island training. Planning for next two years, working on project plans, recruiting for regional managers and the National Operations Manager.

Have been researching satellite technologies and how this might help or hinder SAR operations.

Aviation NZ

The TAIC report on the 2019 Auckland islands helicopter crash has been published and there are lessons for helicopter operators.

There has been positive discussion with TAIC and an expectation that reporting time will be reduced to two years from five.

Aviation NZ is suggesting a small flyaway team in place to assist from an aviation tasking perspective for situations like TC Gabrielle.

CAA

No report provided.

Coastguard NZ

There have been about two thirds of normal activity on the water in the year to date. This is probably due to weather and the financial landscape. There are roughly the same number of Cat 1 and Cat 2 jobs, but a reduced number of preventative taskings.

The Titirangi Unit took a major hit with the loss of their base and damage to their vessel. It is expected the vessel will be up and running by the end of June.

Coastguard's second national recruitment campaign starts during National Volunteer Week.

Coastguard has made a public statement expressing its support for mandatory lifejacket wearing by people on boats of six metres or less underway.

Department of Conservation: Aoraki Mt Cook Alpine Rescue Team

The last period has been reasonably quiet with most of the Aoraki team dispersed.

Don Bogie is retiring and finishes on 26 May 2023.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand

No report provided.

Land Search and Rescue

The numbers of SAROPs are back to pre-pandemic levels. This is a busy time for Land Search and Rescue.

There have been some significant incidents, such as the cave incident in Whangārei. Land Search and Rescue thanked NZSAR for the financial support recently for the cave sump workshop, as this proved invaluable during the Whangārei incident.

LandSAR carried out the Easter sweep at Tongariro, which negated possible SAR events.

Land Safety Forum

No report provided.

MOC/Kordia

No report provided.

Ministry of Transport

No report provided.

Mountain Safety Council

The avalanche advisory is starting up – some South Island areas have started forecasting.

Mike Daisley spent time in Canada with Avalanche Canada, Quebec and Colorado discussing climate change and what that might mean for us. Also looked at the National Parks and visitor safety programmes.

Spent time looking at modelling of satellite connectivity – this was triggered by the iPhone14 satellite emergency capability.

The duck season is underway and no significant events to speak of.

NEMA

No report provided.

New Zealand Defence Force

There has been no significant change from a Defence Force perspective. The P-8A Poseidon was used recently during the *MV Shilling* incident. Anticipate the P-8A will be online for SAR tasking as scheduled in July.

New Zealand Police

Police National Head Quarters are about two thirds of the way through the recent engagement with districts. There has been good feedback from the districts from being able to deliver some initiatives over the last year.

Police have introduced a new selection training and competency framework which aligns with LandSAR. This will roll out in June 2023. Police are now looking to review the national qualification course.

Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand

Operationally, the RCCNZ is very busy, in numbers as well as with the impact of complex incidents.

Follow up of the significant SAROPs (*Kaitaki*, Ultramarathon, TC Gabrielle and *MV Shilling*) is currently exceeding capacity.

Two of three follow up activities are completed for *Kaitaki*; two debriefs completed for TC Gabrielle; Ultramarathon follow up is ongoing; *MV Shilling* ongoing operational, and TAIC and other investigations are underway (the *Enchanter* TAIC report is still in draft stage).

The first operational employment of the P-8A Poseidon occurred on 12 May Friday providing ISR and top cover for the *MV Shilling* incident.

Staff have completed a successful training and liaison visit to Tonga, good outcome and there is confidence they have appropriate SAR capabilities in place.

Safety Systems and Infrastructure team are leading the NZ delegation at the Navigation, Communications and SAR Committee of the IMO. Successful engagements and other jurisdictions interested in our world leading MSI API system and updated Beacon database system.

Negotiations with Kordia for the next iteration of the National Maritime Distress and Safety Communications contract have commenced (very early stages).

Looking to develop an FED budget bid to build resilience and enhance RCCNZ's ability to support major SAR operations, asset coordination (initial focus on aviation), maritime incidents (first 24 hours) and bolster QA and automation. RCCNZ is feeling the increase in tempo and need to do something about this.

St John Air Desk

Very busy in the SAR space with about 70-80 incidents per month. There were 91 SAR incidents in January. This is significantly higher than normal.

Currently working with NZ Police in the communications centre to ensure the messaging about tasking of helicopters is going to the correct people.

Surf Life Saving New Zealand

There has been a significant increase in work during the last quarter, which has been impacted by the cyclone.

There has been a lot of SAR training recently. This time of the year, SAR squads undertake IRB training and events around the country.

Paul Dalton finishes as the chief executive officer on Friday 19 May. Adam Wooler will be acting CEO from 22 to 26 May, and Chris Emmett from 29 May onwards. There is no replacement for Paul yet.

SLSNZ advised they are now a full member of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF).

Water Safety New Zealand

Focussed on getting the Annual Drowning Report for 2022 out. There have been delays processing insights and intend to look deeper than before including overlaying information around near misses.

Continue to push for life jackets and giving more tools for safety on watercraft.

There have been up to 44 water deaths for the year, which is in line with the 10-year average.

Fostering relationships with the Ministry of Education – would like to get water safety skills for life into the curriculum along with ACC prevention work.

Te Whatu Ora and National Ambulance Sector Office

There has been some recent restructuring within Te Whatu Ora, which has impacted NASO. Any changes that impact the SAR sector will be communicated.

There has been no significant progress of the Aeromedical Commissioning Programme.

Te Ao Māori Engagement

Rob Hewitt is working with several agencies including FENZ and NEMA, along with SAR partners, to hold a Kaihautū forum in November 2023. This is designed to start the conversation as to what Māori want.

Youth Search and Rescue

This was Youth Search and Rescue's (YSAR) first time at the Consultative Committee.

For background, YSAR is an organization established in 2005 and has five branches across New Zealand. The primary focus is a long-term approach of training college students to become community volunteers in SAR. YSAR aims to expand to ten branches by 2024 and 22 branches by 2028.

YSAR has set its sights on establishing new branches in Northland, South Auckland, Dunedin, Wakatipu, Christchurch, and Hawkes Bay by 2024.

NZSAR Secretariat

The annual NZSAR Awards will be held tonight. Work is being done on business planning and budget. The SLAs and MOUs, which are very complex agreements, are almost there. Last week a Rauora exercise was held in Auckland and had three separate IMTs running. The nationally significant exercise continues to be built.

The Secretariat is undergoing a change process. The NZSAR Senior Adviser Learning and Development position is being advertised.

8. NZSAR Risk Matrix

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Andy Greig advised that a Health Safety and Wellbeing workshop was held in March and this risk had been discussed. The Workshop decided that the risk of injury to people should be moved to the top. The Committee agreed.

Operational Capability

The NZSAR Council had a discussion on the broader Operational Risks starting with long range aerial risk and then extended into other areas.

Long range aerial search is a challenge. This has been impacted by the withdrawal of the P-3 and the introduction of the P-8A Poseidon. This is only a short-term risk.

The Committee discussed the various risks embedded in Operational Capability. As a result of the discussion, Duncan will make changes to the Operational Capability risk and send this to the NZSAR Senior Officials Group for its input before going to the NZSAR Council.

9. RCCNZ Response to Recent Events

Mike Clulow gave a presentation on RCCNZ's response to recent events.

Kaitaki January 2023

The *Kaitaki* ferry lost power at 5.10 pm just south of Wellington's south coast and declared a mayday as its anchors were dragging. A pilot vessel and tugs responded to the distress call. Around 6.10 pm, the vessel gained power and made her way back to the harbour. A mass evacuation plan was initiated.

Lessons learnt

- RCCNZ's mass rescue plan is policy but not actionable in event.
- Sector understanding of capability and procedures was limited and varied.
- Undertaken workshops to support response collaboration.
- Holding sector C2 workshop to support incident control for future events.
- Undertaken inhouse debrief, education and training.
- NZ Police supported operation well with land-based support.

Cyclone Gabrielle

NZ Police asked RCCNZ to take over aviation tasking for the Cyclone Gabriel response. During this event, about three months of normal RCCNZ SAR tasks were completed in three days.

Lessons learnt

- The command and control structure discussed from the *Kaitiaki* incident was implemented and confirmed.
- Avalon is well set up and suited as an EOC.
- Aviation coordination is well practiced, understood, and communicated at RCCNZ.
- Individual agency IT represents a challenge for inter-agency work like this.
- Limitations of staffing and the current shift model prevent prolonged response on this scale.

Southern Lakes Ultra Marathon

During the Southern Lakes Ultra event in February 2023, 10 PLBs were set off overnight which belonged to competitors in the event. With no communication between event organisers, safety relied on PLBs and RCCNZ. Events like this need to be encouraged to come up with robust safety and communication plans.

MV Shiling

The cargo ship *MV Shiling* Vessel requested assistance off Farewell Spit. There were 24 passengers and 1458 containers on board. The Master initially wanted to abandon ship. Tugboat assistance was sought from Taranaki and the ocean-going tug *Skandi Emerald* aided. Rescue helicopters were on standby and Police and St John stood up mass response in Motueka. The NZDF provided assistance with a C-130 and the P-8A Poseidon. (This was the P-8A Poseidon's first-time involvement in a NZ SAR incident.)

Lessons learnt

- Maritime incident response was cohesive and well planned and communicated.
- Call out procedure and liaison were straight forward.
- Relationships and familiarity with support agencies is maturing.

Summary

RCCNZ are getting better with practice and getting too much of it! Have gained significant experience which is beneficial for future events. Well resourced for short duration localised events but require human resources for longer duration events. Relationships and partnerships are increasingly important.

10. Future Technological Changes and Impact on SAR

Matt Wheble introduced Peter Gent from Radio Spectrum Management (MBIE) who is part of the Technology Forum.

Peter gave a presentation on satellite connectivity for cellular.

There are two approaches to mobile connectivity – unmodified devices and modified devices.

In New Zealand, One (formally Vodafone) announced their partnership in April 2023 with SpaceX. 2Degrees is partnering with Lynk Global.

Matt advised there are risks around public awareness and safety. People could rely on cellular devices not realising there may not be 100 percent coverage. There are issues with battery life and tracking. There may be a false confidence in replacing beacons.

11. SAR Sector Carbon Emissions Report

Justin Allan thanked Evan Hughes for the work done to date on this.

It was asked if there was confidence in the baseline. Evan replied that yes, it is as close as possible to best practice.

12. Noting Paper – Quarterly Activity Report

The Quarterly Activity report provided a summary of SAR activity during the period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023. Note that Auckland floods and Cyclone Gabrielle statistics are captured separately.

13. Noting Paper – National SAR Support Programme 2022-23

Duncan advised that the Secretariat is trying to reshape our support programme via BAU. Duncan will send out copies of this paper.

14. Next meetings

15 August 2023 and 14 November 2023