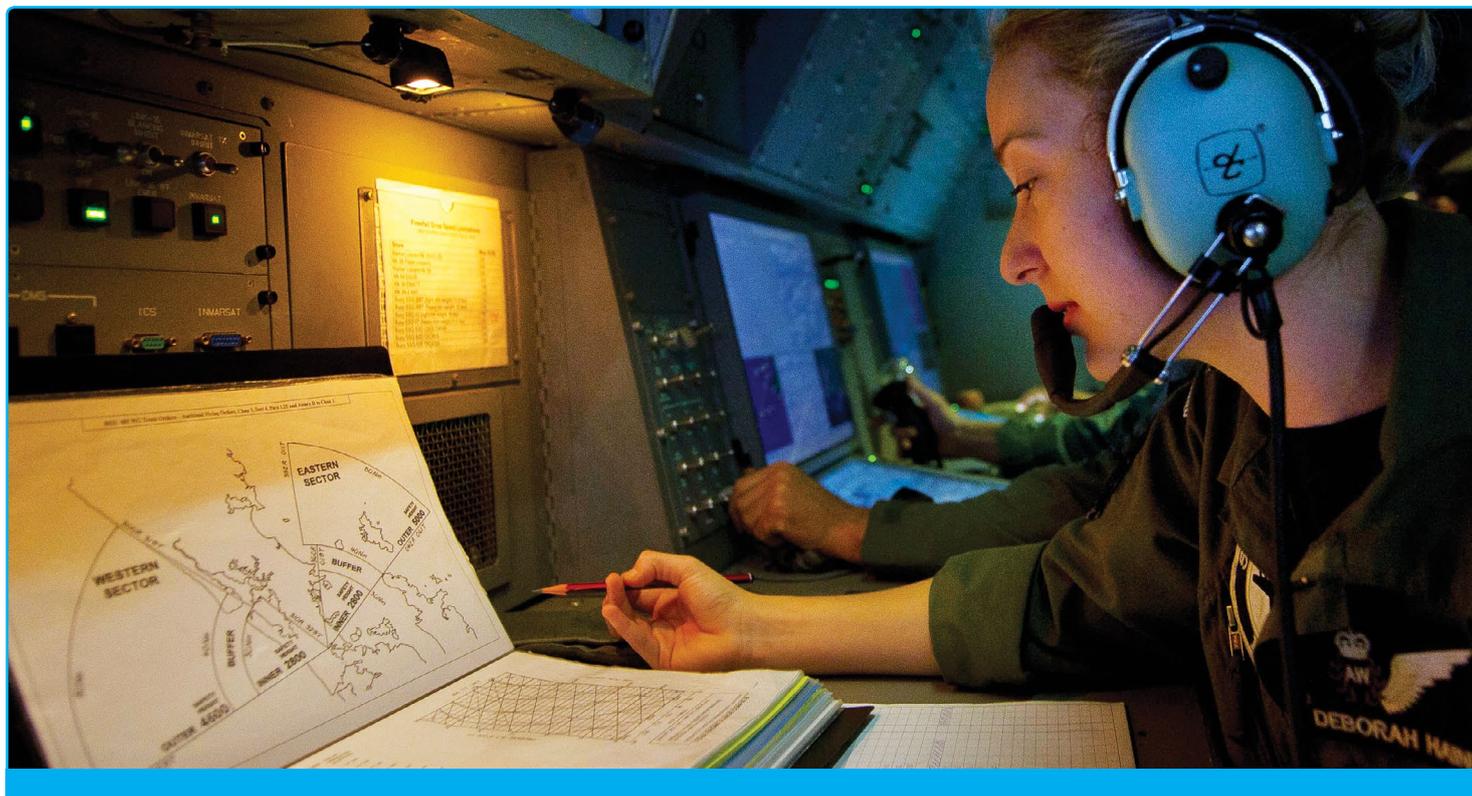


# CONNECTING THE SEARCH AND RESCUE SECTOR



## NEWS

## ABNORMAL FLIGHT BEHAVIOURS WORKSHOP

On 8 March 2014, Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 disappeared during its scheduled flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. What started on that day was the largest search and rescue operation the world has ever seen. Nine days later the focus of the search moved to the Southern Indian Ocean, within the Australian Search and Rescue Region.

This incident, of course, raised a number of questions in the public's mind – most prominently how could a plane just disappear? For those involved in search and rescue one issue stands out: What if this happened in New Zealand's area of responsibility? To address this, the NZSAR Secretariat hosted a workshop on abnormal flight behaviours in July, which was attended by 34 people with responsibilities in this area.

John Young, the General Manager Search and Rescue from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, gave the key-note presentation explaining how the Australian SAR authorities coordinated the search for MH370, with a focus on the Australian whole of government arrangements. Having John present was hugely valuable as he provided important insights during other presentations and discussions throughout the day.

Following on from John, a series of presentations canvassed the '4R's' approach (reduction, readiness, response, recovery). Focussing on reduction and readiness, the attendees were briefed on the current and future state of being able to track aircraft (for more information visit the New Southern Sky website [www.nss.govt.nz](http://www.nss.govt.nz)), and the large amount of

safety planning the airline industry has undertaken over the years. The response and recovery aspects were covered with briefings on New Zealand's capacity to respond to incidents in the remote areas of the NZSRR, presentations on the roles and responsibilities of accident investigators and the coroner, and in presentations/discussions on how other agencies would be able to support international requirements.

The afternoon session included a small series of quick-fire "what if..." scenarios, and was wrapped up with an open discussion about the key points raised during the day. The Rescue Coordination Centre, with support from NZSAR, is now planning a desktop exercise to further examine possible abnormal flight situations. ●



Sharleen Edwards issuing gear to the team

**I** am the person the Police contact when they initiate a search. I send out the e-text to everyone and monitor the replies to see who is available. I then head to the police station and straight to the SAR shed to get the tasking cards ready for people to sign in. Next I issue gear: GPS, radios, PLBs, etc. I also help get the team packs ready by filling in the initial missing person report and filling out the team tasking forms once the tasks have been decided.

“Once the teams are deployed I record the radio messages using the Iman programme, keep a timeline of events and help keep track of the teams by recording their co-ordinates on a map. When the search is over I collect any gear that has been issued and make sure it is all returned.”

The list of responsibilities Sharleen Edwards has as Marlborough LandSAR’s Management Support person and Group Secretary goes on, and the significance of what she does saw her pick up the Ken Large Memorial Trophy for “outstanding performance and contribution to Marlborough LandSAR” in August.

Sharleen’s unit, like many other LandSAR and Coastguard units throughout the country, is recognising the increasing importance of matching people to the specific skills required in SAR administrative roles.

Peter Kara is Coastguard Nelson’s Unit Training Officer. Having recently stepped down as their Vice President, Peter and the management team have re-organised the unit to become more proficient with an emphasis on bringing in people with particular skill sets.

“We have asked our volunteers to step up; it is no longer about having the odd crew training to keep us up-to-date, running sausage sizzles to raise money and then a meeting once a month. We need qualified people in management and support positions, not just on board our vessels. Having people who know what they are doing gives us a much greater situational awareness, which means we can function easily and comfortably meet our obligations.”



Peter Kara (in the white shirt)

Peter points to the growing legislative requirements as just one aspect.

“The onus is on us as a unit to ensure our health and safety is up to scratch, so it makes sense to hand that responsibility to someone capable of handling that role.”

The emergence of tighter health and safety responsibilities is also cited as a motivator to bring on board skilled administrators by Hawke’s Bay LandSAR’s Group Secretary Debbie Harrington.

“Keeping safety plans up-to-date and ensuring the required paperwork is done is one of many vital components of an administrator’s role now. You really need a background with the skills to meet the growing responsibilities. Experience, being organised, and having an eye for detail seem to understate the importance of what administrators do, but a unit would fall apart without someone with that aptitude.”



Debbie Harrington

Debbie says their unit has also restructured itself – acknowledging the value of having the right people in the right roles. With a background in business

banking she thought she would be more useful in the Group Secretary role rather than out in the field. “It was the best move for me and for the unit. I have the soundest overview of the group, which extends far beyond keeping the paperwork in check. I work closely with our Group Training Officer who spends countless hours ensuring the team is trained and ‘fit for purpose’. So when it comes time to plan an operation we can sit down with Police and outline each member’s capabilities, ensuring the most effective team is deployed. That all comes down to having systems in place.”

Debbie, Peter and Sharleen have all spent time out in the field, something they believe enhances their ability to do their behind the scene roles.

“Of course we love to have accountants take over the treasury role, as they don’t really need field experience, but it helps to get people who have an understanding of what it is like out on an operation to put their hands up for these administrative roles. They get what is going on and that gives the unit a sense of security,” says Peter.

There is considerable cross-over between units’ administrative work and being involved in operations: both Sharleen and Debbie are Group Secretaries as well as being part of Incident Management Teams.

“Having good admin is just as important as having good field teams during a search. Without a good IMT to direct the search and collate all the data, a search would take much longer and not be as effective. We keep track of any clues that are found and check the relevancy so that the search area can be narrowed down or refined. And we support the teams by keeping track of them and making sure they are all right. It makes a huge difference to them knowing we have spent time in the field. They know someone is at base looking out for them and if we don’t hear from them we will go out looking,” says Sharleen.

She adds a lot of people may not understand the administrative roles and would encourage people to consider using their full skill base to support SAR.

“I didn’t understand it when I started. There is so much more to SAR than people turning up for an operation – that’s not how a real search is done now. A lot more goes on behind the scenes than anybody realises,” Sharleen – who is presently looking for full time paid work – says.

Debbie agrees, “It’s all about being organised around being effective. Acting and looking professional brings in the right people. Success breeds success.” ●

# IMRF WORLD MARITIME RESCUE CONGRESS



Finnish Border Guard Vessel Turva at Bremerhaven, Germany

The World Maritime Rescue Congress is a four-yearly gathering of people from all around the maritime SAR world, organised by the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF). This one, in June, was hosted by the Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffbrüchiger (DGzRS) or German Maritime SAR Service (which was also celebrating its 150th anniversary) in Bremerhaven, Germany. NZSAR Secretariat Manager Duncan Ferner attended, here's his summary:

The IMRF comprises 112 member organisations and/or countries and seeks to represent and unite the world's operational

marine rescue services to achieve their common aim of 'preventing loss of life in the world's waters'. It is currently headed up by our very own Bruce Reid - ex CEO of Coastguard New Zealand.

By New Zealand standards, the congress was huge, with 400 delegates (including 7 Kiwis), 72 presenters and 47 exhibitors from all over the world. It was preceded by a truly massive regatta of rescue vessels, young and old, from all over Europe as a part of the 150th anniversary celebrations for the DGzRS.

The congress programme included topic-focused discussion streams and

practical workshop sessions relating to: SAR organisation & management; SAR operations; SAR programmes for developing countries; SAR mission coordination; mass rescue operations; rescue boat guidelines; migrants & refugees; IMRF SAR awards, and; vessel triage.

Almost all the presentations from the congress are now available online. If you are interested I would encourage you to have a look. ●

<http://www.international-maritime-rescue.org/index.php/presentations-downloads-download>



## NZSAR Award Nominations

Do you know an organisation, a group, or an individual who you think should be acknowledged for their contribution to search and rescue?

There are two categories - Operational Activity and Support Activity. All the details about the NZSAR Awards and information about these two categories, plus the simple nomination process, can be found on our website: [www.nzsar.org.nz/awards](http://www.nzsar.org.nz/awards).

The 2015 NZSAR award nominations close 31 January 2016.

# MIGRANT MASS RESCUE

The ongoing refugee/migrant crisis has led to our colleagues in other parts of the world having to deal with some pretty daunting situations. Several presentations at the IMRF World Maritime Rescue Congress discussed a number of the issues. As search and rescue people, we don't concern ourselves with the politics. However, we do have a very clear, UN mandated role to search for, rescue and deliver people to a place of safety.

The 2015 numbers will undoubtedly be much higher. In Europe, the bulk of the

would-be migrants are refugees escaping violence, persecution and hardship from places as far off as Eritrea, Somalia, and more recently, Syria and Iraq.

A number of the crossings to Europe are organised by criminal gangs. Migrants are often placed on rickety vessels with very few resources, in the hope that they will be rescued by authorities before they dehydrate or drown.

The burden this places on government and non-government rescue organisations in the Mediterranean is immense.

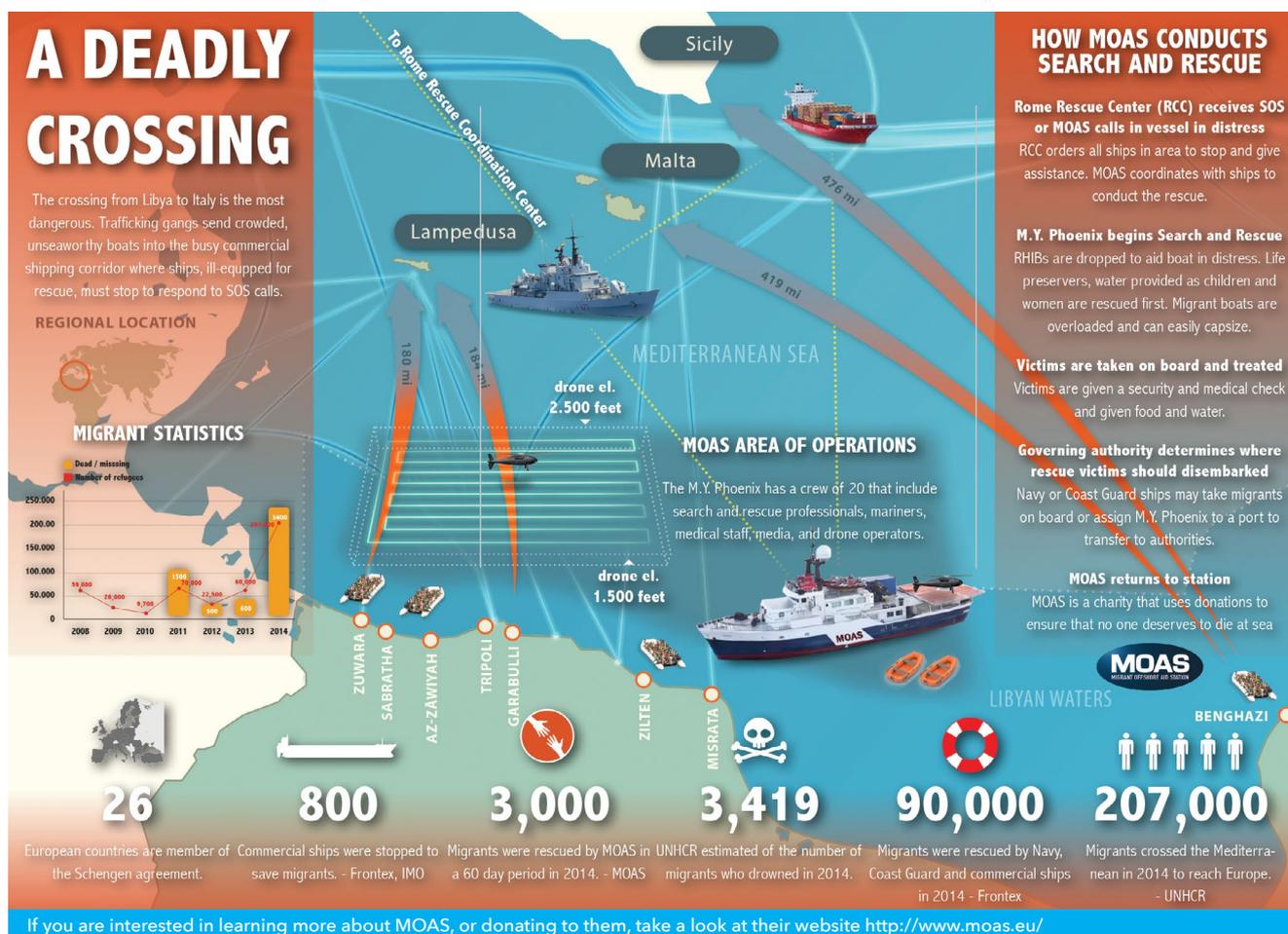
Organisations such as the Italian Coastguard, navies in the area, Greece's Hellenic Rescue Team and the Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS) based in Malta are at the sharp end of responding to this international crisis.

In October 2013, two vessels packed with migrants capsized off the coast of the Italian island of Lampedusa. At least 400 people died in this incident alone. In response, Christopher and Regina Catrambone created MOAS, a non-governmental organisation that aims to help prevent further catastrophes in the Mediterranean.

At time of writing this article, MOAS alone has saved 11,124 lives in its short existence. ●

## The 2014 numbers are overwhelming:

- 348,000 migrants risked their lives at sea
- 4,300 of them died, 3,300 of them in the Mediterranean Sea alone.



Contact Rhett: [r.emery@transport.govt.nz](mailto:r.emery@transport.govt.nz)

## WELCOME RHETT!

### Rhett Emery is NZSAR's new National SAR Support Programme Coordinator.

Rhett comes from an extensive background in training and assessment, having recently worked for NZQA.

Rhett welcomes the opportunities to continue to support and develop the capabilities of the SAR sector and is particularly keen to progress the 'one SAR body' culture. He is really impressed with the commitment and dedication of SAR people, noting the number of hours volunteers are willing to devote to training and continually improving. Rhett is busy getting out across the country meeting the various faces and growing his understanding of the role so he can ensure the sector's training needs are best met.



## facebook

### A SUMMARY OF THE FACEBOOK POSTINGS DURING THE INCIDENT



May 28 at 5.40pm  
**Just found a Green Coreban Paddle Board at Houghton Bay with a snapped leg rope... Anyone know who it belongs to?**  
 Like • Comment • Share



May 28 at 5.41pm  
**Is it [redacted]?**



May 28 at 5.42pm  
**The question is where is the paddler...**



May 28 at 5.43pm  
**The Police are looking now and the coast guard is on the way but the swell is massive and it's getting dark.**



May 28 at 5.43pm  
**Look like that?**



May 28 at 5.44pm  
**Someone who knows him call him.**



May 28 at 5.47pm  
**Surfers NEVER abandon their boards.**



May 28 at 5.55pm  
**Yeah that was that dude that was out day before yesterday way out back of Lyall.**



May 28 at 6.18pm  
**Shit! Any more updates? Any thing we can help with. Shoreline search.**



May 28 at 6.19pm  
**Getting a mate to call kev to check.**



May 28 at 6.22pm  
**Hey guys I found him!**



May 28 at 6.24pm  
**Mad bastard! Hahaha**



May 28 at 6.29pm  
**I told the Police that he wouldn't launch at Houghton Bay so I went looking for a surfers car at Princess Bay and found it on the road. It was dark so I ran down the beach and could hear a faint cry. I sprinted out on the rocks and found him completely exhausted from nearly drowning. I guided the helicopter to him and he's in hospital being treated for hypothermia... scary shit!**



May 28 at 6.35pm  
**Fantastic work [redacted]. Awesome he made it obviously, wow pretty close by sounds of it, must be some lessons in there,,,,,check gear,,,match ability to conditions,,,surf with a mate,,,don't go out just before dark when its that big.**



Dave Houston: May 28 at 7.53pm  
**Great to see social media works!! It was the first point of contact made for this incident. It helps cut down the search area and confirm someone is in difficulty, well done [redacted] thanks**

**W**hen a paddleboard with a broken leg-rope was found washed up on the Wellington coast at dusk – on an evening with extremely rough seas – there were fears for the safety of the board's owner.

The member of the public who located the paddleboard, and notified the Wellington Police Maritime Unit, also placed a post on the 'Stand-up Paddleboard' Facebook page asking whether anyone knew who the owner might be.

Senior Sergeant Dave Houston, Officer in Charge at the unit, who is a keen surfer and paddleboarder himself, immediately accessed the Facebook page where he was able to identify a likely owner for the board from the various posts.

"People are constantly posting on sites like this one, because most people like doing these activities together and they all know each other. I had a pretty good idea, from my own experience, that someone would know who owned that board. It cut the time right back on our initial inquiry phase."

Additionally, the various posts on the Facebook page guided the team's thinking on the most likely location to begin searching – which was not where they might otherwise have begun to search.

"Getting an idea of where he started out from changes the focus. After thinking he would have been surfing the waves close to shore, the information we got from Facebook led us to search further out."

Along with ground-based police staff, the man who initially located the board then located its owner, who was stranded on rocks, and police were able to coordinate a successful rescue effort to save the stranded paddleboarder.

As a result of the rapid communication made possible by Facebook, only 40 minutes had elapsed from the time the board was located until its owner was rescued. This was fortunate because by the time he was rescued, the man was already suffering from the early stages of hypothermia.

"The beauty of social media sites is having a lot of people jumping in with information straight away. People have a lot of good information, they know what each other's boards look like, who has gone where and when. And you can also go back and look through the history to establish behaviour patterns. This would be the same for many recreational activities."

Dave suggests you find out who the recreational clubs are in your local area, as most will have a social media site. "Be aware of who is involved, and monitor it. Join in so you build up relationships."

The use of social media provided the search team with important information that helped guide their rescue efforts and save the paddleboarder. It also illustrated the ability of social media to enable rapid communication between disparate individuals and official agencies that might not otherwise be possible.

## INSIGHTS

- Find the local recreational clubs in your area – join their social media platform.
- Get involved in the site so you learn more about what people are doing.
- People love sharing their stories with others – use that history to gain intel.
- Be aware of social media's constraints – ensure you understand the quality, relevance and importance of the information posted.

# CALENDAR

SAREXs and SAR training see:

[nzsar.org.nz/calendar/events](http://nzsar.org.nz/calendar/events)

**Boating Safety Week: 17-24 October**

**Coastguard AGM: 17 October, Auckland**

**Consultive Committee Meeting:  
5 Nov, Wellington**

**NZSAR Council Meeting:  
19 Nov, Wellington**

# WEBSITES

New Zealand Search and Rescue Council.  
This newsletter is available as a PDF on this website:

[www.nzsar.org.nz](http://www.nzsar.org.nz)

Safety information and tips for the public  
planning outdoor activities

[www.adventuresmart.org.nz](http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz)

Information about 406 Beacons, including  
where to purchase, rent and register a  
distress beacon

[www.beacons.org.nz](http://www.beacons.org.nz)

Migrant Offshore Aid Station

[www.moas.eu](http://www.moas.eu)

Connect with businesses who employ  
volunteer emergency service workers

[www.vollypages.co.nz](http://www.vollypages.co.nz)

World Maritime Rescue Congress  
presentations

[www.international-maritime-rescue.org/  
index.php/presentations-downloads-  
download](http://www.international-maritime-rescue.org/index.php/presentations-downloads-download)

New Southern Sky

[www.nss.govt.nz](http://www.nss.govt.nz)

# DUNCAN'S DESK



**Y**ou've just gotta love winter! Snow, wild weather, the occasional tough job, SAR training, SAREXs - what's not to like? As a sector, we know that our busy operational period tends to favour the warmer months so winter is the time when we try to refresh, train, organise and prepare.

Over the past few months we at NZSAR, along with a large array of partner agencies, have been rolling out the Rauora series of mass rescue desktop exercises. Each Rauora exercise is designed to familiarise participants with the local Police District mass rescue plan and then test their understanding using a scenario-based walk through. We've run five of these now and have five more to go as part of this series, which will wrap up in Auckland in March 2016. Typically we have around 60 people attending each exercise spread across 15-20 organisations and it's obvious that, alongside the technical aspects of the day, they are also an excellent opportunity to establish or refresh emergency management relationships.

The Rauora project has been very important because mass rescue (and possibly extended search - think MH370) scenarios, while fortunately rare, may have

very significant consequences for New Zealand. We, the search and rescue bit, will be (by definition) extended beyond our capability to cope.

And then there is all the other stuff - like the incident possibly being the lead international media item for days, maybe having to medically treat hundreds of people, or possibly needing to provide food, clothing and shelter for several thousand people. At the same time we need to protect the environment, brief family members, engage with other governments, investigate the incident, the list goes on. Search and rescue is perhaps fortunate to have a fairly narrow focus, but a large-scale mass rescue or extended search incident is likely to require a massive and prolonged response from a lot of agencies. To think these things through in advance, NZSAR, RCCNZ and the NZ Police are working with other government and non-government agencies to ensure we can plug into the wider capabilities that an NZ Inc approach can offer these situations.

It's also worth noting that the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, which has recently been passed by Parliament, will come into effect on 4 April 2016. As a sector, we have made very good progress in lifting our health and safety performance over the past few years, but there remain a few areas where we will need to do better. It's very important that we embed health and safety thinking and processes into our DNA so it just becomes part of business as usual. After all, no one joined SAR to get injured (or worse).

Duncan Ferner

[d.ferner@transport.govt.nz](mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz)

If you're interested in knowing more about either our sector approach or the legislation, follow these links for more information: [nzsar.org.nz/HealthandSafety](http://nzsar.org.nz/HealthandSafety)  
[www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/about/reform](http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/about/reform)



## Boating Safety CODE

**5** simple rules  
to help you stay safe



## Outdoor Safety CODE

**5** simple rules  
to help you stay safe



## Water Safety CODE

**4** simple rules  
to help you stay safe



Link is produced by New Zealand  
Search and Rescue Council

[www.nzsar.org.nz](http://www.nzsar.org.nz)

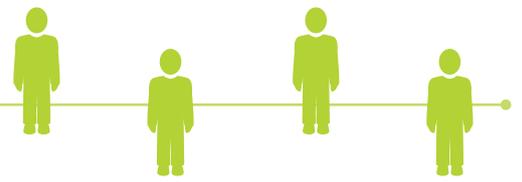


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and contribute to it

[www.adventuresmart.org.nz](http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz)

[www.beacons.org.nz](http://www.beacons.org.nz)

# SAR (ACE) SNAPSHOT



SAR Adult and Community Education (ACE) is funding provided by the Tertiary Education Commission, coordinated by NZSAR and delivered by Tai Poutini Polytechnic. It makes training available and achievable for all SAR personnel. Courses are requested by the SAR sector and cover a myriad of disciplines from field skills, leadership and management.

SAR (ACE) Snapshot appears twice a year in Link. It canvasses the courses on offer, profiles the tutors and analyses trends and techniques.

## PROFILES



Rae Tailby

## Programme leader Rae Tailby

Former policewoman and firefighter Rae Tailby has the key ingredients to lead Tai Poutini Polytechnic's Emergency Management & Search and Rescue programme.

Rae started as a casual tutor in the Emergency Management sector over two years ago before taking on the Programme Leader's role. The job involves the management of a large tutor pool spread throughout New Zealand and keeping tutors up-to-date on best practice and guidelines within their areas of expertise. Also key is understanding the needs of the sector, to ensure TPP deliver courses that are requested by the sector, and having the ability to react to deliver to those needs.

She says her team is achieving this by having a presence in the sector and developing a reputation for 'getting things done'.

"We rely heavily on the vital feedback that comes from those out there 'doing it' to achieve this.

"Every tutor is encouraged to give feedback after every course, and at the Programme Advisory Committee, we listen to educated predictions about what may be coming up that would benefit the sector."

Rae says if she was asked to describe her dream job, she would easily describe this one.

"I get to meet and work with some amazing people, some humble people, and people whom you see in the media doing amazing and selfless tasks. There are not many parts of New Zealand that I have not seen, and am truly grateful for the ongoing support I have received from some people who are very passionate about their roles out there."



Nick Coyne (left) with Gisborne's SAR Trust Chair Chris Sharp

## Tutor Nick Coyne

Nick tutors a lot of the SAR (ACE) funded courses, from suburban search to tracking and search techniques to management courses.

He feeds off the 25 years' experience he has as a LandSAR volunteer where he has worked as a field team leader and as a member of Incident Management Teams.

"I've been involved during an interesting period in LandSAR's history where I've gained quite a bit of 'meta' knowledge, formative stuff. With time spent on the job comes a certain level of knowledge, and that is what I am sharing.

"I think coming from a practical background helps put the necessary theory into practice. For a volunteer it is all about doing, it is not about sitting and theorising,

so a lot of the courses are practice and scenario-based. Facilitation and mentoring plays a big role in any refresher training in which I am involved."

Nick enjoys really getting to know the people in the various LandSAR groups and says there is immense value in bringing not only LandSAR but also other responders together.

"One SAR body is having a huge impact. For example, the standardised practice we have now, so that people can go from one area to another and know what to expect. That used to be hit and miss."

In Nick's opinion the training is making a real difference in areas such as search recording and in reviewing the files: "Everything is a lot more measurable."



Although technology and more effective search techniques are cutting down on search times there are still operations that run for extended periods of time.

These searches require complex analysis and decision making over and above the initial response actions.

To further enhance the incident management teams we are running the inaugural Extended Search Planning course in Wanaka from 2-4 October.

This is a three day course using scenarios (based on actual searches) as the context for learning. It is for students who have previously learned how to operate as part of an incident management team (CIMS4) and manage the initial response (MTIR).

If a search continues past the initial phase it will transition into the extended search planning phase, the most detailed level of search planning. Extended search planning focuses on how to develop a search operation that runs beyond the initial response phase.

Search and rescue should be evidence based and intelligence led. This course is about looking in the right place and being able to detect what it is that you are looking for.

The course consists of five fundamental components; Operational Management, Search Area Determination, Search Implementation, Search Evaluation and Operational Review. It is a cyclical process incorporating the NZSAR Response Guidelines.

The Extended Search Planning course is being tutored by Jo Holden, and Sean Judd from Police and Pete Corbett from LandSAR. With such experienced tutors, this course is bound to be a fun and positive experience for participants.

You can find fliers outlining the SAR (ACE) courses provided by TPP on our website: [nzsar.org.nz/Knowledge-and-Training/SAR-Training-Fliers](http://nzsar.org.nz/Knowledge-and-Training/SAR-Training-Fliers)

