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# NZLSAR News

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## NZLSAR Committee News

**D**uring the latter part of 2004 there have been a number of membership changes on the Committee. With Tony Macklin tabling his resignation as Region Four Representative at the February meeting, Warrick Price from Levin took over at the August meeting. Another change came when Paul Dale resigned from the Department of Conservation, which brought in Wayne Hutchinson from Christchurch onto the Committee in June as the DoC Representative. Mid year, Tric Moller from Dunedin relinquished the huge load of Specialist Subcommittee Chairman and moved into the equally onerous task of Region Seven Representative.

Then at the AGM held in August NZLSAR changed the Constitution splitting off the search dogs from the Specialist Subcommittee into a stand alone Subcommittee. Dave Erson from Auckland picked up the Chairmanship of the revised Specialist Subcommittee while Clair Robertson, another Dunedinite was confirmed at the November meeting as the Chairman of the Search Dog Subcommittee. In creating a new and altering the existing Subcommittees NZLSAR also did away with the Aviation Subcommittee. Andrew Pealing a NZLSAR Search Dog Assessor from Dunedin was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Search Dog Subcommittee.

**NZLSAR Committee meeting.** The last meeting of the Committee was in November and held at the De Havilland Room at the Wellington Airport. It was a full and busy day and below are extracted comments from the minutes or some of the reports.

**Finance.** The Police grant of \$206,000 has been received and the meeting expressed thanks to the Police for their continued funding. A review of each budget item was undertaken and taking into account the discussion held the budget spreadsheet has been updated and circulated.

**Funding and Promotion Working Group.** Dave Robertson advised that a number of options had been considered including funding from the Police, government, public and SARINZ. At the same time, the SAR Council released its strategic plan with advice that funding was one of the major issues affecting the search and rescue sector. This led to a meeting with SAR Council following a two-day workshop on risk management for the SAR sector where they had identified a lack of funding as a major risk to the sector. This in turn, led to a request that NZLSAR assist them in preparing a funding case to government by 10 December. A survey of available resources within NZLSAR was required to contribute to this case, with only a two-

week timeframe for completion. The case being prepared will include set levels of service based on a 30 minute response time.

There is a general feeling that SAR should be resourced without the need for volunteers to provide equipment or to seek funding from public charities. A summary of NZLSAR support requirements was provided based on this minimum response level which would require a cash injection and a larger infrastructure. Should funding be made available it is important that this is 'ring-fenced' to ensure the appropriate allocations are made. Figures provided are a 'best guess' extrapolation of known available resources and requirements. The importance of a strategic plan to ensure adequate infrastructure support to manage the process was again highlighted, as was the need for an implementation plan and the setting of priorities. The need to demonstrate the cost benefits to government in funding SAR will also help to strengthen the case. Pressures as a result of government legislation could be used in support, eg compliance costs, etc. Examples of attrition as a result of these pressures within the organisation would also be valuable.

Other avenues for private funding have been explored with some promising options. SARINZ Ltd have also indicated that should NZLSAR wish to enter into negotiation or discussion to form a strategic partnership for the purposes of fundraising they would be happy to sit down and talk about it.

The profile and branding of NZLSAR was also considered as part of this process, looking towards existing high profile rescue organisations such as coastguard to determine the point of difference and learning.

The need for a strategic plan, with underlying operational and implementation plans will need to be developed in a

relatively short timeframe to ensure that there are robust support mechanisms and systems put in place to take NZLSAR forward in this way.

Following lengthy discussion it was resolved that a small working group be asked to draft a strategic plan, a priorities implementation plan and report back to the Review Committee by 31 January. The Review Committee is to consider this report and recommend it for adoption (or otherwise) to the NZLSAR Committee at their February meeting.

A working group of Dave Robertson, Tric Moller, Roscoe Tait, and Dave Erson was set up and given finance to carry out the task.

**Regional Reports.** Written reports were received from six Regions and are precised elsewhere in the News.

**Subcommittee Reports.** Each of the five Subcommittees tabled an extensive report covering a wide range of activities and some of the points of interest included:-

**Communications Subcommittee.**

Steve Davis reported the new Department of Conservation member on the CSC is Bruce McLachlan.

There has been an audit of HF Radios which had found quite a number to be no longer serviceable. It was initially intended to add them to equipment purchase proposals for the next financial year but instead it is hoped that these can be replaced under a Police Maintenance Budget this financial year. Concern was expressed that the Radio Equipment Plan/Budget submitted to the Police over two years ago had not been able to be financed. It had been indicated that funding would come available in the 04/05 financial year but this has still not been confirmed.

A draft educational document for the use of PLBs/EPIRBs has been put together and has been circulated to a number of

interested parties. Changes have been incorporated and more are to come.

As CSC Chairman Steve has recently attended a number of meetings and presentations relating to electronic mapping and data. One was a "GIS in Incident Response Workshop" which was mainly aimed at larger incidents such as large rural fire and Civil Defence type incidents. However it did provide some worthwhile comparisons for SAR. In many respects what land search and rescue is doing with TUMONZ and iMan is comparable to what is being done for larger incidents with more expensive software systems. Steve also has had a meeting with TerraLink who provided some sponsorship of products and a display at the Conference. They are interested in being involved in some form of sponsorship for Land SAR. While they have a number of products, good data sets, and good aerial photography, he believed their products did not match our requirements as well as TUMONZ did.

He also attended a workshop presentation by LINZ on their up and coming Topographical Strategy. LINZ have held a number of meetings with "Stakeholders" and they have taken on board a number of key points the outcome being that they will:-

- Continue to provide paper based maps
- Advance the move to Geodetic 2000 and NZTM based maps
- Acknowledge the need for better accuracy in their map data

Steve reported that dependent on government funding, we can expect a move to a new 1:50 000 map series to start in the next 12 months or so and that LINZ will try to phase in all new map sheets in a three year period.

He said he has made a response to a questionnaire on an "all of government" coordinated effort to obtain low cost, high resolution (0.6m pixel cf 2.5m pixel currently available for 40% coverage of

NZ) ortho-photography (like aerial photographs) from satellite imagery. This may hopefully be a solution to better aerial photographs for our use with TUMONZ and other mapping products.

He has circulated to the SAR email list, details of a Government level call for submissions on a Geospatial Strategy. This process is being coordinated by LINZ, and he will coordinate a submission for NZLSAR. If anyone is interested in the details see

<http://www.linz.govt.nz/geospatial/>

### **SAR Dogs Subcommittee.**

Clair Robertson reported on the recently held three day reunion of dogs and handlers from the North Island assessment course in May. Eighteen teams attended, plus an additional Instructor from Christchurch. It was felt that such weekends allow for intensive training and exchange of ideas, and can accelerate the progress of novice dogs. Such courses help to resolve problems for dogs who appear to have reached a 'plateau' in their training, and offer support and encouragement for new dog handlers joining SAR. As well they are a valuable learning forum for more experienced handlers. They are an essential addition to the assessment courses, and it is hoped to be able to run more of them in the future. She mentioned the work being done for the South Island Course being held later in November (see December NZLSAR News for more details).

### **Specialist Subcommittee**

Dave Erson reported that due to the complexity of the role he is taking some time to get acquainted with it. He reported that progress had been made in the three areas that come under his portfolio. Namely:-

- Medical

He had been in regular contact with Carey Dobbs Chairman of the Medical Working Group and they have two main items on the "to do" list.

- Facilitate the process for achieving a Nominated Medic Course. This process will commence shortly via TPP and SARINZ.
- The Working Group is to further develop the Medical Adviser concept.

- **Vertical Rescue**

He has met briefly with Don Bogie and discussed Don's pending South Island Needs Analysis and the framework for a North Island equivalent.

He has a meeting with Grant Prattley in early December at Grant's request.

- **White Water**

Dave repeated his appreciation for the work Tric Moller had done in this area and tabled the Summary of Proceedings from the Whitewater Symposium that she had organised at the Conference.

### **Training Subcommittee**

Barry Were reported that the Conference had been a major focus for the Subcommittee since the last NZLSAR meeting. In terms of training the Conference presentations and the pre-Conference courses were in most cases of a very high standard. Financially the Conference has been successful although the full extent of the surplus has yet to be determined. A meeting of the Subcommittee was held immediately prior to the Conference and other issues concerning the Training Subcommittee included:-

The relationship with SARINZ is considered important and that representatives of the Training Subcommittee and SARINZ should meet at least once per year to review proposed course development and the process of

the development of the standards for each course.

Operational Reviews are felt desirable and the Police are still to determine their position on the issue.

It has been suggested that SARINZ be approached to create an Initial Response Course and to develop this as a one day introduction to the MLSO course based on the six step process and standard search management principles.

A copy of the latest draft of the Field Guide has been secured and the completion of the document should be possible in the near future.

### **Underground Subcommittee**

Colin Daniell reported that a Cave SAREX was run by the Greymouth Cave SAR group during the first weekend of October. It was attended by cavers from the West Coast, Nelson and Christchurch. The aim of the practice was to perform multiple vertical extractions of a patient from a tomo following the vertical rope rescue standards. A secondary purpose was to prepare a pre-plan for the tomos as DoC had raised concerns about some tomos being within a metre of the edge of a tourist track.

There have been no CAVE SAR callouts since the last report in August.

A North Island Cave SAREX is planned for the first weekend in March. A meeting of the Underground Subcommittee is being planned to coincide with that SAREX. The Cave SAR operational guidelines are being updated.

**John P Tristram**  
National Field Officer

## Operation Kapakapanui

*Wellington Land SAR organisation has an excellent group email facility that covers some 150 members and interested parties. After each operation, both big and small, a "thumb nail" sketch is sent out which gives us all a sense of belonging and involvement. Amongst the numerous messages I get from Wellington is the one below which suggests the missing*

*subjects knew little of the Boy Scout motto of "Be Prepared". The area rises steeply to Mt Kapakapanui at 1100 metres. For a fit person the round trip takes several hours and a couple of years ago two people died of hypothermia walking through the bush up to the hut.*  
JPT

## **Wellington Search and Rescue Organisation**

One item in this message.

A 41 yr old man with a reported 20 years bush experience took two boys aged 12 and 15 for a day walk around Kapakapanui leaving at 1400 - 1500 (possibly 1530 - 1600) yesterday - Monday.

They had **none** of the following items - torch, matches, cooking gear, sleeping gear, proper raincoats, warm spare clothing, First Aid. Their food was two cans of creamed rice and a bag of chips.

By dark they were lucky to find the Kapakapanui Hut where they sheltered, huddled up to keep warm. Weather overnight was VERY wet and quite cool.

Police were advised at 0145 and SAR was activated. The absence of good gear, the ages of the boys and the heavy rain in the area meant that a prompt response was required. One of the possible scenarios was that the man had become injured and that the boys were unable to find the way out. The potential for hypothermia was significant.

Four Parawai TC members led by Jim Watt and Phil Curran turned out at 0600 and were joined by two new Police SAR

squad members. A Police Dog, Handler and a Police SAR Squad member were already sniffing around the base of the Kapakapanui Track but heavy rain had destroyed scent.

Two teams began the traditional Kapakapanui track search with both finding interesting footprints. The missing party were found near the hut shortly after 0900.

The Operation Plan was to call an additional three teams - thanks Jo Mckenzie, Marty Green and Mike Judd - and the Westpac for inserting teams and aerial searching. Paraparaumu Police laid on a splendid morning tea, the missing party were "spoken to" and the tired Land SAR and Police staff stood down.

Incident Controller was Dan O'Connell. Logistics was Bruce Johnson and Operations Manager was Matthew Nolan.

Thanks to all who turned out, answered phones at early hours and were available on standby.

**Matthew Nolan**  
Adviser, Wellington District

## **Around the Regions**

*A number of reports were tabled by the Region Representatives at the November Committee meeting and below are excerpts from some of them.*

### **R**egion One

Auckland Land SAR was involved in three operations - the Asher search at Piha for five days (still unresolved), a successful search for a dementia patient and a successful search for three canyoneers in a flooded stream (found by a ranger before LSAR teams arrived).

Training has included a first aid course, and a Team Leaders course. The FIRST team now has a two tier callout system which is based on a member's performance on attendance at callouts and training.

Northland had an unsuccessful search for a kayaker missing off Bream Bay. The

body was located later by a member of the public. Another search for an elderly woman in Waipoua (also involving the Far North Team) failed to locate the victim. The teams returned three times to the area. A search for a teenager at Parahaki was resolved when the person was found at home! Another operation for a missing couple near Kawakawa and using the Far North team found both individuals over two days. The group's caravan is proving to be very useful.

Far North Organisation as well as assisting the Northland Group in two operations, was involved in two callouts which were resolved before the team's arrival. First Aid, TCA, and Team Leaders courses were conducted, and the organisation has been concentrating on basic SAR skills training. A Publicity Officer as well as a fundraising person have been appointed, new members have swelled the ranks and the team's morale is high. The group is finding that 50% of their calls involve "P" users, usually hunters or pigeon poachers.

**Region Two**  
Training throughout the Region was quiet with some attending the conference and training courses run beforehand. The number of searches is also down except for Turangi which had six, Hamilton two, Te Kuiti two (also helping Hamilton on one and Tauranga one. Areas were asked by the Region Training Coordinator for a "wish list" of training they would like to do for the first six months of 2005. The response from some areas was in their words "we are SAREd out and will put our request in at our February meeting". Region Two now has a new SAR Organisation started up in Kuaotuna which is up the Coromandel Peninsular one and a half hours drive north of Thames, or 11 km north of Whitianga. This organisation was until recently part of Thames but with the distance needed to travel it was decided, with the support of the Thames Police, to become a stand alone organisation and run their own training.

**Region Three**  
Two Regional meetings have been held since the last meeting. There are at least 250 people associated with SAR in the Region. Quite a few operations over the last three months, most of which were solved with two-man teams in a few hours and with a helicopter. Possibility that two or three courses will be held in the coming year.

**Region Four**  
District and regional training and the National SAR conference have been well attended by the Region. Region Four hosted the North Island Search Dog refresher course on November 5, 6, and 7. The Regional Representative has attended the Horowhenua SAR AGM on 11 August, the Palmerston North SAR AGM 30 August, the Wellington SAR AGM on 18 October, the NZLSAR AGM, NZLSAR committee meeting, Regional Chairman and Secretaries meetings 27/28/29 August and the NZSLAR Conference weekend 15/16/17 October. Frustration was expressed by the Regional Representative in getting information requested in time for set deadlines.

**Region Five**  
Operationally it has been quiet throughout most of the Region. Nelson Area did have a rescue on Mt Owen that went over two days mainly due to weather conditions. This required a couple of teams including medics to go to the patient and give medical assistance until air evacuation could be carried out. Another involved a kyaker missing at sea who unfortunately was deceased when located. The annual SAREX that was due to be held in November had to be postponed until March 2005. Around 200 people are expected to participate. The matter of Hut Passes and the possibility of obtaining a discount on these as other organisation receive was raised by the Region and is to be followed up by the Committee.

## Region Six

Since the last Committee meeting the Region has been reasonably active both operationally and with training activities. The Canterbury SAR competition was held in October with 10 teams competing and regret was expressed that there were no entries from other parts of the country. 12 courses have been held covering Snowcraft, River Crossing, Avalanche (basic and advanced), TUMONZ, Iman/Gman, Search Methods, Suburban and Team Leader. This involved a total of 121 people and approximately 1365 hours. Further training planned through to the end of the year include TCA 2, Suburban Search and TUMONZ courses. During the period 7th August to the present there were 15 operations in the Region. The South Canterbury Area has had five operations during this period. Three of these were situated in the Mt Cook area and involved the DoC Team. The remaining 10 operations were spread throughout the rest of the Region with the most noted being the Arthur's Pass Operation for Carla Scott.

## Region Seven

Most Areas reported a quiet three months despite forty six SAR operations having been completed. Thirty-five of

these operations occurred in the Central Lakes area (Te Anau, Wanaka, Queenstown) with several of these avalanche related due to the extreme snow conditions. Tourist initiated incidents continue to feature significantly particularly in the Te Anau area. The majority of incidents were completed within 12 hours but an extended operation in the Alexandra/Roxburgh area has been a catalyst for improved liaison and integration of Regional SAR resources. Several Areas have held their annual SAREX's with good numbers attending. The Dunedin SAREX was held September 18/19 in sub Alpine conditions – a good test for those individuals who with the located missing parties overnights in a snow bush wonderland. A major Southland SAREX is planned. Few SARINZ courses have been held over the last three months but regular bi-monthly Area and inter-Area training initiatives have been held. The Region has recently appointed a new Secretary. Nicola Vallance takes on the role from Glenn Mitchell who previously held the position for five years.

**John P Tristram**  
National Field Officer

## Tai Poutini Polytechnic Sponsored Courses

The following are the courses and the Regions they will be held in for the next two to three month period. If you have an interest in attending one of these courses please feel free to contact one of the Regional Training Coordinators. **JPT**

| Region | Coordinator/s               | Hm phone                     | Email                    |
|--------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| One    | John Walsh                  | 09-811-8875                  | timmy@paradise.net.nz    |
| Two    | Bruce Sandford              | 07-577-0350                  | absandford@xtra.co.nz    |
| Three  |                             |                              |                          |
| Four   | Jean Garman                 | 06 354 3536.                 | Jean.Garman@fonterra.com |
| Five   | Ian Watts                   | 03-547-4592                  | all.watts@clear.net.nz   |
| Six    | Steve Davis                 | 03-348-0360                  | steve@zi2ucx.gen.nz      |
| Seven  | Tric Moller<br>Dunedin      | 03-453-0459                  | tric@ihug.co.nz          |
| Seven  | Bruce Smart<br>Invercargill | 03-216-9140<br>027-4474-386. | bruces@woosh.co.nz.      |

|              |   |  |                                 |
|--------------|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <b>Seven</b> | <b>Caroline Houghton-Brown<br/>Queenstown</b> |  | <b>caroline@paradise.net.nz</b> |
|--------------|---|--|---------------------------------|

|              | <b>Course</b>  | <b>Where</b>   | <b>Date</b>  |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| <b>One</b>   | 05/06 February<br>19/20 March<br>02/03 April   | Auckland<br>Kaikohe<br>Auckland  | TCA<br>TCA<br>Search Methods   |
| <b>Two</b>   | 05/06 February<br>12/13 February<br>19/20 February<br>05/06 March<br>05/06 March<br>09/10 April<br>16/17 April | Tauranga<br>Tauranga<br>Hamilton<br>Whakatane<br>Waitomo<br>Thames/Tauranga<br>Whakatane | SAR First Aid<br>SAR First Aid<br>Team Leader<br>TCA<br>Foundation Rope<br>Suburban Search<br>Search Methods |
| <b>Three</b> |  |  |  |
| <b>Four</b>  | 12/13 February<br>19/20 February<br>26/27 February<br>19/20 March<br>23/24 April                               | Palmerston North<br>Palmerston North<br>Mt Ruapehu<br>Taumaranui<br>Mt Ruapehu           | TCA<br>Iman/Gman<br>Int. Rope Slope<br>TCA<br>MLSO   |
| <b>Five</b>  |  |  |  |
| <b>Six</b>   | 19/20 February<br>05/06 March<br>16/17 April   | Christchurch<br>Christchurch<br>Christchurch   | Team Leader<br>TCA<br>Search Methods   |
| <b>Seven</b> | 12/13 February<br>19/20 February<br>26/27 February<br>12/13 March<br>16/17 April                               | Invercargill<br>Oamaru<br>Omarama<br>Oamaru<br>Oamaru                                    | Personal Rope<br>Search Methods<br>SAR First Aid<br>Tracking<br>TUMONZ                                       |

**A**n apology. With the issue of the December NZLSAR News as Volume 10, Issue Six I received a couple of messages as to where Issue Five had got to. This was supposed to come out early in October but with arriving back from leave mid October, having an illness in the family and not a lot of copy I decided to forgo the October issue and produce in December a “bumper Christmas edition”. For this decision and to those who are looking for issue Five, as mentioned at the start – sorry. My feeling of being pretty chuffed that people actually noticed the October issue was not produced is tempered by the realisation that only two people were concerned enough to contact me over it.

**Editors Comments.** A very big thank you to **Matthew** for your article and **Joe** for the training opportunity information. Copy for the **April News** is most welcome and the close-off date is **Thursday 24 March**. Articles on gear, SAR training or operations are most welcome. Please either mail as neatly hand-written, printed hard copy or on a disc to **NZLSAR, PO Box 12081, Thorndon, Wellington**. Alternatively email it to **tristram.nzlsar@xtra.co.nz** Even if you have some thoughts on an article but are diffident in putting pen to paper, feel free to give me a ring on **04-470-7247** and we can talk it through.

**John P Tristram, National Field Officer**