

---

---

# NZLSAR News

---

---

Volume 7 Issue 6

December 2001

---

---

## CONTENTS

Chairman's Christmas message  
TCA as a crime analysis tool.  
NZLSAR provided services.  
Canterbury SAR Competition

MLSO Course  
Operation Paris  
Initial Attack Course  
Emergency Ration Packs

### Chairman's Christmas Message.

**G**reetings to you all out there in SAR land. It's that time again when we can hang up our stockings and look forward to that much needed break from the daily rigors of the workplace. The pressures on everyone are not getting any less and it becomes noticeable that, as a volunteer organisation, it is getting more difficult to find the time to cover all the bases that confront us. The easy way out is to spend time on the interesting things and ignore the difficult bits. Unfortunately, this doesn't become an option for the many members who hold key positions and hence it is critical for those who are working on some of the difficult tasks to put them aside for a month or so and allow the batteries to be recharged.

The key is to share the tasks around and spread the workload. It is a New Year's resolution I would recommend to all our members. For those that try to do all the work single handed, take a step back and guide some of the younger members through the systems and processes. You may be surprised how well they can cope when given the opportunity and it can be a great team

building exercise. For those that sit quietly in the background, make an effort to assist where you can. Make an offer to help and you will also be surprised just how much you can get out of being an important part of the team.

In keeping with the theme, I will keep it short and limit myself to thanking everyone for the outstanding contribution that has been made by so many people to the maintenance of the Land SAR network throughout the past year. Without your input Land SAR couldn't operate to the standards currently being achieved. It is a credit to everyone involved.

On behalf of the National Committee I would wish all our members and associated organisations a happy and safe Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Get those batteries recharged and we will look forward to working with you in 2002.

Regards

**Graham Thorp.**  
Chairman, NZLSAR.

### "Value added" to track and clue awareness skills

**H**omicide investigation is all about obtaining evidence to connect a person with the crime. Much effort is spent in being able to place the suspect at the scene itself, or with the victim. Over the years, police have developed their own skills and embraced technology, which had advanced the opportunity for successful resolution of crime.

The advent of fingerprint examination was a major advance for Police. Spectacular results were achieved when this technique was still in

its infancy. Famous cases include a murder where a barometer was used as a murder weapon, shattering a glass front, but when the glass was painstakingly pieced together, it revealed the murderer's fingerprints. Another was a murder involving the burning down of the victim's house, where the offender had dropped a torch. The torch was badly burned, but the batteries were protected and revealed the identity of the killer. Later, fingerprints could be identified on paper. Experimentation with glue fumes identified fingerprints on



surfaces even subjected to fire. Lasers are now being used to locate the most obscure prints.

A chemical found to luminesce when in contact with blood and semen was discovered, and is now routinely used in homicide and rape scenes. The chemical is sprayed in complete darkness, and footprints in blood, invisible to the eye, appear to tell their story.

DNA technology was not developed as a crime-fighting tool, but has been adapted to this use, and promises to have the same impact as fingerprinting did. A number of serial rape and murder cases have been solved by the comparison of body samples found at scenes, with the blood of the offenders.

From time to time, Police call on expertise in many fields to assist with solving crime. Entomologists can tell Police how long a body has been in place by determining the development of insect infestation. Horticultural specialists can connect an offender to an area by pollen or other plant materials. Computer experts now join the ranks of helpers where computers are somehow involved in a crime.

All the foregoing deals with links to scenes or victims, where the suspect denies involvement. Things become more complicated when the suspect admits being at the scene or having contact with the victim. In such cases it becomes necessary to disprove an innocent explanation or involvement.

A good example was a murder of a man in his flat. A coffee cup had been found with the suspect's fingerprints. He claimed that was as a result of a visit to the victim many days

before the murder. This admission gave the fingerprint evidence limited value. However, the coffee remains had developed a fungus growth. Tests made of the rate of growth of the fungus, showed that the cup had been used on the day of the murder, so disproving the innocent explanation.

In early 2000, a man was shot in a farm and bush area in the Te Puke area. A suspect admitted the shooting, and detailed his movements prior to and after the fatal shot was fired. In essence, the victim had been tending cannabis plants which he had planted on a farm amongst secondary growth bush. The farmer and his son cornered them and called on them to come out and give themselves up. The son was armed with a .308 rifle, which he fired twice in an effort to flush the cultivators out. The victim broke cover, and vaulted a fence, putting him on the neighbour's property. The terrain was very steep, and covered with bush. The cultivator was bolting down the hill, away from the man with the gun when the fatal shot was fired, hitting him between the shoulder blades.

It was therefore important to the investigators, to establish the movements of both the victim and the suspect. Land SAR experts were consulted, and provided a team of Track and Clue Awareness searchers. They examined the scene at night, and were able to identify the path taken by the victim and the suspect. The experts were able to track both persons over pasture and bush surfaces and even determine whether they were running or walking. The relative positions of each party at the time of the fatal shot was important given the view that the shooter had. He was alleging an accidental shooting, the rifle just being pointed in the general direction of the victim in order to scare him. The Land SAR experts were able to detect the likely position in which the victim had been at the time the shot was fired.

The combination of the Track and Clue Awareness examination, and the discovery of the ejected cartridge cases, gave the investigators the confidence to reconstruct the crime. The shooter had a clear view of the victim from his vantage point. The suspect

was charged with murder, and after two trials was convicted of manslaughter.

This case was a good example of the Police recognising a skill available to be used in

criminal investigation, and the success of this operation has been flagged nationally.

**Ron Cooper**  
Inspector, Tauranga Police

## **“NZLSAR provided services**

NZLSAR has a number services to offer SAR organisations and individuals and it is worthwhile mentioning them from time to time. All below are available by taking the steps noted, contacting the office at 04-470-7247, email [tristram.nzlsar@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tristram.nzlsar@xtra.co.nz) or PO Box 12081, Thorndon, Wellington.

### **Communication equipment**

A “six pack” of VHF radios and a “back to back” repeater are held at the Police College. If you have a major operation and are in need of more communication equipment then they are available upon request. Your SAR Sergeant needs to ring the 24-hour Police Help Desk and your request will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

### **Display panels**

Four panels with a number of photos showing aspects of search and rescue both above and below ground. They come in a carry case which can include a large banner with the NZLSAR logo and a number of pamphlets as handouts can be supplied as well.

### **Library**

There are a small number of books and videos available for loan upon request. A sum has been budgeted for the purchase of further material so if you know of any suitable books with a SAR flavour let me know and they may be able to be added to the collection.

### **Cloth badges**

These NZLSAR logo badges are available, \$2 small and \$2.50 for the large. The small fits nicely on a hat while the larger is more suitable for putting on a pack or other bigger object.

### **Field Guide, Work Book, certificates of attendance, certificates of appreciation and SAR organisation membership cards.**

The Field Guide is in the process of being updated but a few are still available and we have lots of Work Books. The membership cards are a gloss finish and some have experienced difficulty in printing names on them. Most

groups have got around this and we promise to have the next printing done with a matt finish.

### **Advisers ID Card**

These are for Advisers who have attended a two day Advisers Standard Workshop. There is a proforma (available upon request) to fill in and we need two passport type photos. The cards are now being made professionally and I wait until I have half a dozen requests before I approach the firm. The cards as an item are “slow movers”, less than a third of Advisers have taken advantage of this service. Consequently the one I received recently is going to be in for a long wait unless I get a few more orders. Remember we require four things: you need to be an Adviser, have attended a Standards Workshop, and have provided us with the completed form and two photos.

### **NZLSAR Award**

It is difficult for a volunteer organisation to show appreciation and acknowledgement to an individual for their contribution. To assist an Award was created which is a framed certificate signed by the Chairman of NZLSAR and the Minister of Police. A form, obtainable from the Regional Secretary or this office, can be submitted by any Local, District or Regional Organisation for consideration by the NZLSAR Committee. The basis for it being presented include: has given long (over 15 years) outstanding service, or has given long (over 10 years) outstanding service and is retiring, or has provided a singularly outstanding contribution to NZ Land SAR.

### **General Land SAR information**

A wide range of information and contact to other sites is available on the NZLSAR website at <http://www.nzlsar.org.nz>

**John P Tristram**  
National Field Officer

### Rescue and medical equipment supplier

A representative from **Frontier Medical (NZ) Limited** called into the office recently for a chat on his company's products and the application they have for the rescue phase of SAR. Amongst the many products the company sells are the Ferno Washington stretchers and spare parts for them. Some time ago I became aware of difficulties with spare parts when a person asked me about the pins that lock the two halves of these stretchers together. They were paying a horrendous price for them from some other firm and Frontier came up with a much more realistic cost. For more information on their equipment have a look at their online catalogue at [www.frontmed.co.nz](http://www.frontmed.co.nz)

### Canterbury SAR Competition

It was grey, wet and in mist when Jo (Anne) Casualty climbed a tree to try and see the way out but fell and landed on the right ankle fracturing it. That caused him/her to fall off balance onto their left side and a stick penetrated the 5<sup>th</sup> intercostal space mid-axillar (ok in layman's terms in line with the middle of the armpit between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> ribs). The stick impaled the chest creating an open pneumothorax causing a section of the lung to collapse and result in coughing up blood and fast shallow breathing. The ankle caused the most pain and focus for the victim.

Not surprisingly the casualty was a bit upset by all this but the good news was that help wasn't too far away. Canterbury Land Search and Rescue and Police happened to be in the area and when word reached them they sprang into action, noted the rough location where the person lay injured, gave base a radio call and then set off into mist.

Yes it was 15<sup>th</sup> Harris Trophy, a competition between search and rescue groups in the Canterbury area. This year the event was held on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October, it was grey, it was wet, it was misty but the event was on. 11 teams participated this year with five areas of assessment: search techniques including finding their patient; radio communications;

first aid and patient care including transportation by stretcher; observation (a test of the visual skills of the team) and an audit of the clothing, equipment and food that should be carried in any SAR operation.

When all areas were completed teams took time out to change into dry clothing, enjoy a few sausages, hot and cold drinks while the results were collated and calculated.

0.27 of 1 point separated the first three teams with the spread from a low of 72.69 to the top score of 88.07 points. **Third place** went to a team from the **Ellesmere SAR Group**, **second** the **Christchurch Police SAR Squad** and **the winning team** from the **Methven Search and Rescue Group**. Neil Harris, instigator of the event, then presented the cup to the Methven team.

The event received a bit of media interest with a brief item on the TV 1 weather segment on the evening of the event, news coverage by Radio NZ and a reporter accompanying a team, (purely by chance the winning team) who was obtaining audio clips for an upcoming Radio NZ Spectrum documentary.

**Peter Summerfield**  
SAR Coordinator, Canterbury District

## Managing Land Search Operations Course

Over the last couple of years NZ Land SAR and Police have been running very successful joint training (50:50 Police and NZLSAR personnel) of the above course at the Police College. The course, which is run by Ross Gordon of Emergency Management Ltd, is a week long course and is aimed at those people who are responsible for organising and running SAR operation, especially extended ones.

Two further sets of courses are planned for the next calendar year. These will be held at the Police College during the weeks of 11 to 15 and 18 to 22 March 2002 and tentatively the weeks of 5 to 10 and 12 to 17 August 2002. Usually North Island people attend the first week and South Island people the second. It has been found to be very beneficial for police

and volunteers from the same area attend the same course.

The course starts about midday, Monday and finishes mid-afternoon the following Friday. NZLSAR and Police meet all transport, accommodation, meals and course fees.

Any NZ Land SAR personnel who are interested in attending this course should contact their Regional Committee and register their interest as soon as possible. The Training Subcommittee, in consultation with the Regional Committees, will make final selection of the course attendees.

The Regional Committees can be contacted via the Regional Secretary as follows:-

	Name	Home phone	Email
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>Roscoe Tait</b>	<b>09-575-6288</b>	<b><a href="mailto:roscoet@xtra.co.nz">roscoet@xtra.co.nz</a></b>
<b>Region 2</b>	<b>Brent Martin</b>	<b>07-567-4583</b>	<b><a href="mailto:Bjmartin@mustard.co.nz">Bjmartin@mustard.co.nz</a></b>
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>Vaughn Neill</b>	<b>06-867-4595</b>	
<b>Region 4</b>	<b>Andy Warnes</b>	<b>25-434-707</b>	<b><a href="mailto:Andrew.warnes@police.govt.nz">Andrew.warnes@police.govt.nz</a></b>
<b>Region 5</b>	<b>Eric Macdonald</b>	<b>03-541-9410</b>	<b><a href="mailto:emacdonald@doc.govt.nz">emacdonald@doc.govt.nz</a></b>
<b>Region 6</b>	<b>Rodney Perrin-Smith</b>	<b>03-768-7885</b>	
<b>Region 7</b>	<b>Glenn Mitchell</b>	<b>03-471-0545</b>	<b><a href="mailto:glenm@clear.net.nz">glenm@clear.net.nz</a></b>

If you require any further information on this course please feel free to contact either John Tristram or myself.

**Roscoe Tait**  
Chairman, Training Subcommittee

## “Operation Paris

After a phone call from Senior Sergeant Lyn Manning on Wednesday 26 September 2001 regarding a missing person, I arranged to meet him and two detectives at the Greerton Police Station. Information had come to hand regarding a person, Stephen Tango, who had not been seen since 9 April and was reported missing on 27 July. We headed up to the Kaiate Falls area near Tauranga and with new information and the site assessment, a search was considered worthwhile. It was arranged for the following Saturday with 17 volunteers and a Police Officer.

Saturday morning and the volunteers arrived at the Station to be given a briefing from the Detective in Charge, the salient points of which were.

- Stephen at the time of his disappearance had been staying at his parent's address in Papamoa.
- In early April he obtained a red 1985 Honda Accord motor vehicle.
- On Sunday 8 April Stephen had a telephone conversation with his ex partner and was visibly upset as a result of this conversation.
- On Monday 9 April he left home at approximately 1000 hours for an unknown destination.
- At about 1800 that day the vehicle was found parked outside a Waitao Road address. It was parked on the wrong side of the road, unlocked, the keys still in it and the vehicle still had a small amount of petrol. Stephen was not in the vehicle and had not been seen since.
- A local boy then used the vehicle as his own for a least a month driving around and

finally crashing it in a ditch further down Waitao Road. It was then towed to a friend's house and subsequently recovered by the Police.

- Stephen was report missing on the 27 July and after some initial enquires the Police commenced an in depth investigation into his disappearance.
- Over 140 people had been spoken to and over 200 enquires had take place.
- Nothing of significance had arisen from the enquires that related to any criminal activity by the missing person resulting in foul play, however this had not been ruled out.
- His bank account had not been touched and there had been no contact with friends or family.
- When last seen he had been wearing blue/green beach type shorts and a black tee shirt. He had been either barefooted or wearing soft brown shoes

Following the briefing the volunteers were arranged into two teams of four persons, two of three, one AREC radio operator and three including the Police Officer in HQ. After a lot of thinking over the previous night I put one team of four into a small pine plantation over the road from where the car was reported left. All other teams were assigned areas up and around Kaiate Falls. All teams were to use the "aimless wandering" search method with the expectation of a probability of detection of 90 – 95%

The search went as thus.

**0900** hours The VHF repeater was set up at the Kaiate Falls carpark and communications were established with all teams via VHF handhelds.

**0910** Teams One and Four working together, Team Two in a smaller area at Kaiate Falls.

**0915** Communications established with Tauranga Base.

**0918** Team Three who were tasked the pine plantation area reported finding a rugby jersey, grey hooded sweat shirt and a pair of brown boots which they were asked to mark and continue searching.

**0928** Team Two at the Falls area report the finding of someone's camp.

**0935** Team Three reports finding a body. They had also found a total of seven clothing items over an area of 50 metres.

**0940** All teams at Kaiate Falls are told to return to base. Detectives informed of the find.

At this point I advise Team Three to return to the roadside and moved all other personnel down to that area. Arriving at the property where Team Three were, approximately three to four kilometres down the road from the Falls the teams were told to rest. The Police Officer, myself, and Team Three leader went into the site and taped of the area around the body and the items of clothing. We then waited for the Detectives to arrive.

**1055** approximately Detectives arrive from Tauranga and taken to the site.

**1120** Asked by Detectives if SAR volunteers could search each side of the cordoned off area for further clues using "Track and Clue" skills.

**1130** SAR group divided into two groups, given task and again the Aimless Wandering method was used.

**1212** No new clues and all teams back out.

**1300** Back at the Greerton Police Station for a debrief and a beer.

**1400** Call from detective at the site asking could they have some assistance from the SAR volunteers in removing Stephens body.

**1600** Back home, task complete.

The missing person was within the 300 metre radius of the last known position of his car (150 metres). Although at the time we were unsure who left his car there and there were several houses in close proximity, I felt we couldn't rule the area out. The body was found in the hole left by tree roots from a windfall. At the time he went missing the ground would have been dry with blackberry and fern over the top. A well hidden, warm resting spot.

**Bruce Sandford**

Adviser, Bay of Plenty District.

## Initial Attack Course

Experience, both locally and internationally, shows that some 80% of operations are resolved in the first 12 to 18 hours of the operation. Rick La Valla (Emergency Response Institute) has taken this observation and developed a course (Initial Attack Course) that teaches some basic concepts and provides a number of tools that have been proved to be effective in running an operation during the initial phase. For extended operations, the Managing Land Search Operations would still remain the primary qualification.

The Training Subcommittee of NZLSAR is very keen to investigate the possibility of introducing the Initial Attack course as part of the national training program and have developed a proposal to encourage NZLSAR personnel to not only undertake training in this course, but to also become trainers to pass on the knowledge to other NZLSAR personnel.

The proposal is that NZLSAR sponsor two people (one from each island) to attend the National SAR conference in Washington State, USA in May 2002 and the Initial Attack Training course that is run immediately after the conference. In return the attendees would then be required to run six Initial Attack training

courses each over the following 12 months to train NZLSAR personnel.

NZLSAR would provide airfares, conference fees and some accommodation costs. It is expected that the people chosen would present at paper on an aspect of New Zealand SAR at the Washington conference. This is a unique opportunity for NZLSAR personnel to attend an internationally recognised SAR conference (approx 1000 delegates) and to learn some new skills and to make a significant contribution to NZLSAR.

Any NZ Land SAR personnel who are interested in the above concept, ie in attending the conference and being trained (and providing training) in the Initial attack course and who believe they have the skills and ability to be able to run training courses to train NZLSAR personnel in this course should contact myself to register their interest by 9 February 2002. The Training Subcommittee will have the final say in the selection of those people, if any, to be sent to USA for training.

### **Roscoe Tait**

Chairman, Training Subcommittee

## Emergency Ration Packs,

After Alliance Freezing Company ceased its freeze dry food operation one of the former employees went out on his own and established Back Country Foods. Arthur Ballantyne's company now produces a wide range of Freeze dry products.

The old Army Ration Pack had a number of problems in particular that they:

- Were designed to supply a soldier for 24 hours with different needs to SAR people.
- Contained items not required by SAR
- Were heavy
- Were expensive

Constable Greg Baird of Invercargill Police SAR Squad got together with Arthur and came up with an emergency pack specifically for SAR. Invercargill has purchased Emergency packs of breakfast, lunch and main meal consisting of three different options:

- A. Rice and Apricots with milk, Savoury Pasta, Roast Lamb & Vegetable.
- B. Corn flakes and fruit salad with milk, Sweet and Sour Rice, Beef and pasta Hotpot.
- C. Instant porridge with Raisins and Nuts, Sweet and Sour Rice or Savoury Pasta, Honey Soy

Chicken. All components A, B, C, are reconstituted in the pack with addition of water.

Each unit has an extra pack containing, Moro Bar, Mars Bar, two Chocolate biscuits, three barley sugars, orange drink, milk powder, milo, coffee, tea bags, sugar, salt, pepper. These extras are sealed in foil packets with oxygen scavengers for extended shelf life.

Total weight A. 790g, B. 760g, C 750g (Approximately)  
Minimum calorific value = 2100 kCal  
Minimum shelf life = Three years  
Price \$12.80 plus GST

Postage may be extra.

Arthur has been very good to deal with and can make packs to your own specifications. You can contact Constable Greg Baird at Box 808 Invercargill ph 03-215-0310 or Arthur Ballantyne, Back Country Foods Ltd, 150 Otepunu Avenue Invercargill, freephone 0800 223583 fax 03-216-1771 email [arthurb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:arthurb@xtra.co.nz)

### **John DeLury**

Sergeant SAR, Invercargill.

**Editors Comments.** The content of NZLSAR News is very much reliant on the contributions from the land search and rescue participants. Accordingly a huge thank you to **Graham, Ron, Peter, Roscoe, Bruce, and John** for your articles in this edition and the authors of the articles printed during the past year. To Pat my wife who proof reads, checks the spelling, grammar and knocks some sense into it from a more laypersons viewpoint, thank you also. For those who's articles I didn't have room to include, apologies but watch out for the bumper February edition

Well it's the end of another year. For me the Christmas break includes co leading with Pat a ten day tramping club trip with lots of walks in the top of the South Island, then we have a 15 day tramping trip in the Torre del Paine National Park in southern Chile and then four or five days walking the Inca Trail to Machu Pichu in Peru. Consequently the February News is going to be a little late but it will help immensely if I come back to work on the **18 February** and there are lots of articles in the intray.

Many thanks to all I have had an association with in the last year for the assistance, guidance and friendship I have received. I think it is unrealistic to expect the management of something as important as search and rescue to always go smoothly. That we are all able to work through the differences and continue to work together shows the dedication of the volunteers and the strength of the organisations they represent.

So to you and yours, may your Christmas stockings be full, your skies be blue, the winds light (unless you are sailing) and see you next year. **Best wishes John P Tristram**, National Field Officer