
NZLSAR News

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OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Another year has rolled by and Christmas is again fast approaching. 2006 has been an interesting and exciting year for NZLSAR. It has been a year of change.

The review of our organisation was completed at the end of last year and has resulted in a restructuring of how the organisation is administered. In brief, the annual Regional Chairman's and Secretaries meeting, held in August at the Police College, has now become the NZLSAR Council, which is the ultimate authority of NZLSAR. A Board structure has been put in place to run the organisation and Board members appointed. The new position of Business Manager is being advertised and I would expect an appointment to be made early in the New Year. The appointment of additional staff will follow once the Business Manager is in place.

This year has seen the formation of a YSAR Group in Hamilton. Driven by Barry Were and the Hamilton SAR group, this pilot programme is designed to get young people interested in search and rescue and to give them the necessary training and skills so they can become effective Land SAR members in the future.

The third NZLSAR Conference was held in Dunedin in November. This was a very successful conference and we were fortunate to have three international speakers, two from Canada, Jean Murray and Don Webster, as well as welcoming back Bob Koester. Their key note papers complemented a great array of papers presented by NZLSAR members and associated organisations. The conference was well attended with some 200 delegates, including several from Australia. Congratulations to Brian Benn, Tric Moler, Dave Robertson and their team for a very well organised and run conference.

SAR appears to have been a little quieter this year. There were, however, two week long searches; one at the head of the Kauaeranga Valley near Thames and one at Hunua. In both searches Land SAR and Police SAR

teams from adjacent areas assisted in the operations. It is great to see this level of cooperation and assistance is now becoming the norm.

The Fitzharris report into the ZK-HTF helicopter crash was presented. The assistance that NZLSAR was able to offer and the skills that our members have was recognised in the report.

My term as Chairman of NZLSAR finishes this December. I have been in the position for four and a half years, which is slightly longer than that stipulated in the NZLSAR constitution due to implementation the impending changes with the formation of the NZLSAR Board.

I have found the role of chairman a fascinating and rewarding experience. I have been privileged to meet a huge number of SAR people during my travels around the country. I am extremely humbled by the amount of time and effort that everyone puts into Land SAR. It is this unqualified dedication to search and rescue that is the basic strength of our organisation and enables us to give the level of service that we do to the Police and public of New Zealand.

It is always dangerous to thank individuals as inevitably some gets accidentally left out. However, I would like to thank the members of the NZLSAR National Committee for their support during the year and for making the step change to the new structure of NZLSAR so the organisation can move forward and let the SAR volunteers concentrate on providing the high level of service they do. A big thank you must go to Tony McLeod and his team, Gerry Prins and Geoff Logan, for their support of the restructuring of NZLSAR. Without this support we would not be able to put in place the changes that are necessary. My thanks to Phil Whitelaw for stepping into the breach and keeping the office ticking along after John Tristram retired earlier this year. Finally thank you to all the Land SAR people out there who have undertaken the training during the year and who are prepared to go out on a search and rescue operation at any time of the day or night and in all conditions.

On behalf of the National Committee and the new Board, I would like to wish all members of the SAR community and their families' sincere and grateful thanks for the work that they have done during the past year. I hope that you all have a happy and relaxing Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Enjoy this special time with your families and friends and we look forward to catching up with you next year.

Roscoe Tait, Chairman, November 2006

NZLSAR RESTRUCTURING

I thought it opportune to bring everyone up to date with progress on the restructuring of NZLSAR. There has been an initial meeting and induction of the NZLSAR Board.

The NZLSAR Board is made up of Ray Bellringer, Dave Comber, Stu Davies, Gavin Marshall (Treasurer), Phil Melchior, Ray Polson (Chairman), John Scobie (Deputy Chair) and Roscoe Tait. We expect to be able to announce the name of the third independent board member shortly.

Ray Polson has had considerable experience in setting up new boards and we will be using his skills and expertise to put the appropriate governance and systems in place for the new Board.

RAP Consulting has been engaged to recruit a Business Manager for NZLSAR and the position has been advertised in the regional papers. The appointment of the Business Manager is expected to be complete by early in the New Year.

Roscoe Tait

OFFICIAL HANDOVER TO NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of NZLSAR held its inaugural meeting in Christchurch on the 3rd of December. Present were Ray Bellringer: Dave Comber: Stewart Davies: Ray Polson: John Scobie: and Roscoe Tait: Gavin Marshall Treasurer.

The board was briefed by Barry Were Training Sub Committee, Andrew Peeling Dogs Sub Committee, And Colin Daniell Underground Sub Committee these briefs were a review of the work past and present forward work, projects and any issues particular to these groups. Unfortunately Steve Davis Communications Sub Committee was prevented from attending due to a previous commitment.

After lunch, the board was briefed by Roscoe Tait and David Langman on the Strategic review and the outcomes to date.

The Board then formally met and elected Ray Polson Chairman, John Scobie Deputy Chairman, and formally accepted the budget for the 06/07 financial year. The work programme was then set for the next two months. This included the recruitment of the business manager, the appointment of two independent directors and various other "housekeeping" matters necessary for the smooth and efficient running of the board.

The new board would like to pay tribute to the previous NZLSAR committees and for the work they have put into NZLSAR since its inception in particular to Roscoe Tait, Graham Thorp and Rodger Barrowclough for the blood sweat and sometimes tears that they put into NZLSAR during their respective stewardships.

The board recognizes that there are some big shoes to fill but will use their best endeavors to work in the best interest of the "lost party" and the volunteers that make up the organization known as NZLSAR.

A merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year to you all and your Families.

A more in-depth look at the board, and the members that make up the board will be in the next news letter.

John Scobie (Deputy Chair)

NZLSAR XMAS ROUND UP FROM POLICE

2006 has been a slightly quieter year for SAR with a 10% reduction in activity for the last financial year. While this change may not seem large it has reversed an increase for the previous two years of 10% and 20%. Many things contribute to the reasons for SAR however better technology, better awareness of the risks outdoors plus continual improvements in training and procedures all assist 2006 has been a slightly quieter year for SAR with a 10% reduction in activity for the last in keeping the statistics down. No doubt harsher weather this winter has deterred some from venturing outdoors also.

CIMS for SAR, the field guide and message forms have all been printed and distributed over the past year. Each of these will assist in ensuring the right action is taken at the right time. The Police P130 system is being improved and we should see greater functionality from the upgrade that is currently occurring.

The modular version of Managing Land Search Operations courses will make this training more accessible, particularly to NZLSAR volunteers. The annual courses held at royal New Zealand Police College are being held the last week of January and first week of February 2007.

The SAR Council is seeking additional money for sustainable funding for SAR through Government. Police continue to support this initiative and have offered advice and assistance to complete the required work. Police continue to recognise that maximising use of local expertise and talents in SAR is the best way to give assistance to those who require SAR services.

In November the NZLSAR conference was well attended and the opportunity to engage with others from around the country was excellent. Otago did an excellent job of hosting the conference and a varied line up of speakers and topics made the weekend very worthwhile.

The NZLSAR Board is now governing NZLSAR and will be implementing the strategic plan to see strategic gains made for the organisation.

Year Ahead

The new environment in which NZLSAR operates for 2007 is going to make it a busy and rewarding year. Implementation of the strategic plan should facilitate significant advances in the efficiency and effectiveness of our SAR organisation.

It gives Police great comfort to know SAR participants are available all year round to assist should undesirable events occur during people's adventures

into the outdoors. Hopefully most will choose safe and enjoyable ways to experience New Zealand.

Thank you for being available for SAR through out the past year. May you and yours have a rewarding Christmas, enjoyable holidays and a prosperous New Year.

Geoff Logan
National Coordinator: Search and Rescue

MLSO Course Reminder

There are still a few spare spaces for the MLSO courses scheduled for next year at the Police College.

The dates are: First course – 29th January to 2nd February

Second course: 5th February to 9th February

Please send names to Barry Were and / or Phil Whitelaw ASAP.
This will be the first of the courses to be run using the new modular system.

International Conference attendance

The NZLSAR Training subcommittee has a budget to assist a couple of people to attend SAR conferences in other countries. There are two conferences that are worth considering although the funding is not exclusive to them.

The Washington state SAR Conference in the USA on 18th to 20th May 2007.
The Canadian SAR Scene in British Columbia on 17th to 20th October 2007.

Dunedin Conference Report

Months of plotting, planning (and last minute panic!) came to fruition with the National LandSAR conference held in Dunedin mid November. The three guest speakers travelled from North America and provided an excellent balance of practical, academic and “bureaucratic” concepts of SAR in their respective areas.

Registrants were offered bed and breakfast accommodation at one of the University Halls of Residence, which gave opportunity for catching up with old friends and meeting new ones – no doubt the 4 remaining students in residence are still wondering what was happening! The kitchen staff reported that it was a delight to feed people with “such healthy appetites” – it appears that many of their conference groups are less robust academic types.....

The option of a day of workshops on Friday was taken up by 130 registrants, with a total of 199 attending the conference itself on Saturday and Sunday. Concurrent workshops were presented over the day, medical advisors having

a dedicated programme throughout, but other participants being offered a choice of Tracking (New Advances), Rescue Belay, an Information Management working group, and Search Dog presentation. Two of the guest speakers also presented workshops, with Bob Koester discussing Advances in Search as relating to his research of lost person behaviour, and Don Webster (provincial SAR coordinator for Ontario, Canada) sharing his experience in “Lost in Canada!”.

Roscoe Tait formally opened the conference, with the opening address from NZ Police Commissioner Howard Broad prior to commencement of the formal programme. Keynote addresses were in the main Lecture Theatre to all registrants, followed by concurrent presentations to smaller groups. Presenters from SARINZ, police, DOC and Youth SAR covered practical and theoretical topics such as Remote Search Assistance, Reflex Tasking, Snow Anchors, Anchor Rigging, Working with Volunteers, and an overview of the pilot youth SAR group. A full programme précis can still be found on the conference website. ***(I assume this is so, Tric – if so, can you pl put in the website????!)***

Saturday night saw 190 registrants and partners attending the conference dinner, with dinner “piped” in by the bagpipes, and guest speakers magnificently attired to participate in the haggis ceremony and ode to the haggis before the meal. Educating Don Webster to what a Scot wears under his kilt caused some anxiety to our guest speaker, but his kilt gave Jean Murray the opportunity to open her address by reminding us that, though she is a self acclaimed bureaucrat with a hard act to follow after Don Webster’s presentation, her legs were better than his!

Keynote addresses were videotaped, and can be viewed by request to Tric Moller or Brian Benn. Along with a stunning Swazi beanie, chocolate from Cadbury’s, the conference shirt, Mainland cheeses and a variety of gifts from Dunedin sponsors, a list of “consenting” registrants was included in each pack, so that registrants will be able to track down new contacts and continue the invaluable networking process in the coming months.

The Dunedin Committee would like to recognize sponsorship received in goods and payment from many sources, particularly NZ Lottery Grants Board who granted substantial funds in order that we could subsidize volunteers who incurred personal cost in travelling to conference. They had never received an application of this nature before and we are extremely grateful for their consideration and support of volunteers in this way.

Teresa Wasilewska

EDITORS NOTE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who submitted articles for the newsletter and for making my life a little easies here at Head Office. I would like to wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy, prosperous and safe new year. Phil Whitelaw