

N.Z. LAND SAR Inc.

STANDARDS

Field Controller

Introduction

This document specifies the standards of performance required for the Field Controller role in Land SAR.

A Field Controller is appointed for the duration or part thereof of an operation and provides Search and Rescue operational expertise; planning and co-ordination of field personnel during a SAR operation.

The Field Controller is the Operations Manager for all activities that occur in the field during an operation.

This role, for the purposes of the standards, has been divided into five parts:

Part 1	Non-Operational
Part 2	Pre-Operational
Part 3	Operational
Part 4	Post Operational
Part 5	Background Knowledge

The criteria should each fit into one of three categories:

- 1 Tasks which the Field Controller must attend to personally
- 2 Tasks which can be delegated but which the Field Controller needs to ensure are properly carried out.
- 3 Tasks which are carried out by a third party, such as the Police and/or Advisers, but in which the Field Controller needs to make input or be a catalyst.

NB: All bullet-point lists in this standard are not intended to be definitive lists but as guidelines as to the sort of things that should be considered.

Part 1 **Non-Operational**

Maintain a SAR readiness status and participate in training.

Criteria

- 1.1 Maintain a state of preparedness which enables a response for a SAR operation in the shortest possible time .

These include:

- Availability
- Contactability
- Mental condition
- Awareness/Knowledge of the outdoors

- 1.2 Develop and maintain a personal resource kit which meets the likely requirements of SAR operations.

Likely needs include:

- Techniques and tools
- Aides memoire / Check lists
- Lists of resources
- Maps, message pads, pens, pins, tape, overlays, tide charts etc.
- Copy of SAR Plan (preplan)

- 1.3 Develop skills for dealing with and handling people involved in the field during a SAR operation.

Likely needs include:

- Awareness
- Delegation
- Counselling
- Active listening skills
- Motivational skills
- Communication skills
- Leadership skills

- 1.4 Be able to apply currently accepted search management practices, as appropriate, to a SAR operation.

This includes new methods and techniques such as:

- Segmentation
- Mattson Consensus
- Probability analysis

- 1.5 Provide assistance to the Adviser(s) in the training and development of SAR skills in other members of the local SAR organisation as required by the organisation.

- SAREX's
- Courses
- Workshops

- 1.6 Contribute to the SAR Plan (preplan) prepared by the Advisers to ensure that it is up to date and accurate.

- 1.7 Maintain an overview of local areas, contact with local experts and areas and/or types of potential operation(s).

- 1.8 Maintain knowledge of SAR personnel.

Likely factors include:

- Fitness
- Availability
- Capability/ Competence/ Skills
- Experience

- 1.9 Maintain familiarity with specialist s and their resources;

This includes:

- Helicopters
- Four wheel drive

- Communication
- Specialist Groups/ Skills, eg Dog Teams

Part 2 Pre-Operational

Provide SAR operational management expertise during the Pre-Operational phase of a SAR Operation.

Criteria

- 2.1 Assist, where appropriate, the Adviser(s) in the development of the **concept plan** that meets the requirements of the SAR operation.

NB: The Concept Plan is, at this stage, the outline plan proposed by the Adviser(s) at the initiation of the search. This may have been done over the phone with the Police contact.

- 2.2 Assist, where appropriate, and in conjunction with the Adviser(s), in the **selection of the field headquarters** planning and control staff **personnel** to meet the likely requirements of the SAR operation.

Planning and control personnel would include;

- Assistant Field Controller(s)
- Communication staff
- Local Expertise
- Media and Family Liaison
- Police Liaison
- Intelligence Officer
- Team Manager
- Log Keeper

- 2.3 Liaise with Adviser(s) to ensure sufficient SAR personnel, who meet the initial requirements of the SAR operation, are located and prepared for involvement.

NB: This will need to be reviewed as the operation proceeds.

- 2.4 Participate, where appropriate, in the selection of Field Headquarters site(s) that meet the likely requirements of the SAR operation.

Likely needs include:

- Access,
- Proximity,
- Communications requirements,
- Helicopter landing site(s),
- Working space, comfort and catering facilities.

NB: Could just be a meeting place

Consider:

- Medical requirements,
- Assembly areas,
- Security.

- 2.5 Discuss and agree with the Adviser(s) the conditions for the appointment as Field Controller for the operation.

Conditions may include:

- Length of term of the appointment,
- Shift work options
- Briefing on the operation,
- Appointment review conditions,
- Hand-over procedures,
- Any specific limitations or requirements of the operation.

- 2.6 Develop a SAR operational plan based on the concept plan, and all relevant information, which meets the requirements of the SAR operation.

Information provided may include:

- Background information such as
 - Missing party description
 - Medical condition(s)
 - Physical & Psychological profile
 - Previous history
 - Family/Business situation
- Available resources (personnel, skills, capability, equipment, transportation).
- Availability of those resources (time to arrival, limitations, time available).
- Nature of the environment in which the SAR operation is to take place (terrain, weather, rivers, shelter, hazards, access, times to cover distances) including forecasts for weather, tide times, etc.
- Advice regarding the suitability of the available resources to meet the requirements of the SAR operation.
- Risk assessment.
- Reconnaissance

Use should be made of new SAR planning methods and techniques. These include:

- Segmentation
- Prioritisation
- Mattson Consensus
- Search Theory, LKP, POA, POD, etc.
- Lost Person Behaviour
- Lost Person Profiling

The plan should incorporate the following:

- Current and accepted search theory and methodology, including active and passive search methods;
- Current and accepted rescue practices
- Skills, experience, equipment, food, self sufficiency, local knowledge
- Team/ personnel management
- Appropriate use of resources
- Risk Assessment
- Intelligence gathering and analysis
- Resupply of food, equipment, personal, etc.
- Shift changes.
- Allocation and use of resources, e.g. helicopters, dog teams, Track and Clue Awareness people,

- Notification to Land Owner(s)
- Search suspension criteria.

Consider the need for review and feed back on the search plan as it develops.

2.7 Advice is sought from all appropriate sources, as is appropriate to the operation.

These include:

- Local knowledge
- Other Advisers, Police and people with field control experience
- Family and friends of the missing party
- Logistics requirements.

Part 3 Operational

Provide SAR operational expertise during a SAR Operation

These criteria can be divided into six main functions; Set-up, Deployment, Strategies, Reviews, Rescue and Close Down.

Also note that many of these functions may run occur simultaneously.

Criteria

SET-UP

3.1 Field Headquarters are established which provide appropriate control of the operation.

- Police Station
- Interim
- Field Base
- Sub Base

3.2 Implement the SAR Operational Plan, as is appropriate to the operation.

3.3a Liaison is maintained with Adviser(s) / PLO(s) etc. as is appropriate to the operation.

3.3b Recommendations of Adviser(s) are implemented as appropriate to the operation.

3.4 Liaison with Adviser(s) ensures SAR personnel who meet the requirements of the SAR operation are located and prepared for involvement in the operation.

Requirements may include:

- Specialist Skills,
- Experience,
- Self sufficiency
- Local knowledge

3.5 Tasks are prioritised and allocated as is appropriate for the operation.

- 3.6 Appointment of Team Leaders and teams meet the requirements of the allocated tasks.

Requirements may include:

- Search skills,
- Leadership skills,
- Specialist skills,
- Personal equipment,
- Fitness,
- Food, etc.

Circumstances may warrant the appointment of a Team Manager

- 3.7 Briefing of Team Leaders and Teams covers all aspects of the SAR operation.

These include:

- Background
- Search area and methods
- Reporting
- Lost Person Profile
- Lost Person behaviour
- Risk briefing
- Trauma briefing
- Notification of land owner(s)

- 3.8 Review the logistics arrangements ensures that they meet the requirements of the SAR operation.

Logistics include:

- Food, equipment, etc.
- Transport
- Resupply
- Communications
- Technology

Deployment

- 3.9 Deployment of the search teams is appropriate for the operation.

Factors to consider may include:

- Time involved from arrival to departure
- Extent of briefing for search and communications
- Checks on equipment and radios
- Location of the Teams
- Transportation requirements
- Withdrawal of Teams
- Resupply
- Accounting for all staff

If appropriate consider appointing a Team Manager to manage the Team logistics.

Strategies

- 3.10 Strategies devised ensure identification and management of events arising during the course of the operation.

Events arising may include:

- Unexpected hazards,
- Accidents to search personnel,
- Changing weather or environment conditions,
- Extended time requirements,
- Communication difficulties,
- Change in party/patient status,
- Cold body finds,
- Appointment and briefing of a Rescue Controller,
- Scene preservation,
- Police/DVI requirements

- 3.11 Contingency planning meets the possible long term requirements of the SAR operation.

Requirements may include:

- Additional resources
- Additional and replacement personnel
- Operation suspension options
- Field Headquarters location(s).
- Expansion of search area

- 3.12 Strategies put in place for the management/co-ordination of the media with the Media Liaison Officer assists the SAR operation.

Media use may also include:

- Information gathering
- Highlighting of lessons to be learned
- Conveying credit for the efforts of those involved.

- 3.13 Strategies put in place ensure that friends and relatives are dealt with honestly, openly and sensitively if they are at or near FHQ.

Strategies may include:

- Ensuring their comfort and welfare
- Information gathering
- Providing progress briefings
- Providing support services, eg Victim support
- Advising of search suspension plans
- Cultural liaison

Consider using agencies such a Victim Support.

- 3.14 Strategies put in place provide good crowd control and general management of the public as is appropriate to the operation.

Points to consider are:

- Preservation of clues
- Control of wanderers
- Information gathering

- 3.15 Communication and information sharing networks include Adviser(s), PLO(S), Teams, Police SAR administration.
- Communication networks may also include local knowledge people, local and neighbouring SAR resource groups specialists groups and Advisers.
 - Regularly brief teams on the status of the operation.
 - Regular SITREPS to Adviser(s) and Police Search Controller.

Reviews

- 3.16 Regular reviews of the operational plan in terms of the objectives of the SAR operation.

Points to consider are:

- Search Methods
- Reports from field on POA, POD, POS, etc
- Consider Operation escalation options.
- Consider Operation suspension options.
- Take time out to review information, field reports etc.
- Brain storming sessions with Advisers, Police, other SAR personnel

- 3.17 Regular reviews of the information gathering and processing systems to ensure effective analysis of all information.

NB: Include existing and newly available information.

Information sources include:

- Family/Friends
- Search Teams
- Local contacts
- Workplace
- Police enquiries
- Advisers
- Media

Consider using an Intelligence Officer.

- 3.18 Reviews of the performance of the Teams, Team Leaders and key FHQ personnel are undertaken to identify assistance or intervention required.

The review may include factors such as:

- Stress, fatigue, ongoing suitability where circumstances have changed
- Shift changes
- Reviews of team performance related to areas searched.
- Quality of information received from the Teams
- Personal, Business or Family circumstances.

The review should be undertaken with the assistance of an Adviser

- 3.19 The recommendations from periodic audits and/or reviews of the entire operation are implemented.

- The period prior to an audit/review would be of the order of two days searching with no significant finds.
- The audit/review should be conducted by an Adviser who has not been involved in the operation.

- 3.20 Procedures put in place provide for an effective hand over of control of the operation to another Field Controller.
- 3.21 Operational recommendations of the NZ Land SAR Organisation are implemented in the SAR operation unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

Rescue

- 3.22 Appoint a Rescue Controller with the appropriate skills and experience for the operation.
- 3.23 Brief the Rescue Controller on the requirements for the operation.
- 3.24 The co-ordination of resources for the Rescue Controller is appropriate for the operation.

Close Down

- 3.25 The suspension process is implemented when results match criteria set for the operation.
- 3.26 Management of the close-down is appropriate for the operation.
- Teams out of the field and accounted for,
 - Comfort supplied to Teams (fed, support if required, e.g. Victim Support)
 - Site cleared,
 - Equipment accounted for and prepared for immediate redeployment.

Consider using a Team Manager.

Part 4 Post-Operational

Manage the post operative phase of the SAR operation.

Criteria

- 4.1a Monitor team members and leaders who have been exposed to trauma or operational stress for indications of the need for counselling.
- 4.1b Recommend to Adviser(s) counselling services for team members as required.
- 4.2 Participate in interview(s) of the missing party to provide information for lost person behaviour analysis.
- 4.3a Participate in the SAR Operational Management Team review of the operation.
- The review may involve other Advisers, Field Controllers and/or experts.
- 4.3b Participation in the de-brief assists with the information sharing process.

- 4.4 Within two weeks of the completion/suspension of the operation provide a report to Adviser(s), PLO and other Field Controller(s).

The report should include:

- Outline of the operation,
- Strategies used,
- Information from debriefing of missing subject(s)
- Statistical data,
- Suggestions for improvements.

and be included with the P130 report.

- 4.5 Perform tasks as delegated at the debrief within the allocated time period.
- 4.6 Participation in periodic operational peer reviews for Field Controllers and Land SAR Advisers ensure standards of performance are maintained and training needs are identified.

Part 5 Background Knowledge

Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of SAR structure and terminology.

Criteria

- 5.1 The operational SAR structure, hierarchy and classes of operation are described.
- 5.2 The roles of the Land SAR Adviser and Field Controller are described.
- 5.3 Commonly used SAR terms are defined and their use explained.
- 5.4 Demonstrate a good knowledge of current Search Theory and techniques.