

N.Z. LAND SAR Inc.

STANDARDS

Patient Care

Introduction

This document specifies the Standards for performance required for patient management in the field.

Responsibility for implementing and maintaining these Standards is that of District or Local NZLSAR Committees.

Explanation for the purpose of these Standards has been divided into four parts.

- Part 1 Non Operational**
- Part 2 Pre Operational**
- Part 3 Operational**
- Part 4 Post Operational**

Part 1 Non Operational

Maintain a level of SAR readiness in patient care.

Criteria

- 1.1 The SAR groups should ensure all field personnel hold a current first aid certificate. This certificate should be revalidated before the certificate expiry date.
- 1.2 All field personnel must know what first aid equipment is used by SAR teams, and where it is located.
- 1.3 All field personnel must have an awareness of the types of situations they may be confronted with, including serious trauma and death. They should know what means and assistance is required to assist with coping during and post traumatic situations.
- 1.4 All field personnel must carry a personal first aid kit for self or team member care.
- 1.5 The maintenance of the district SAR plan must include a list of nominated field first aid personnel.

- 1.6 The criteria for nominated field first aid personnel is:
- Must be prepared physically and mentally to stay with the patient, in potentially difficult conditions for an extended period of time.
 - Must have an intimate knowledge of field first aid equipment available and how to use it.
 - Competently perform a patient assessment
 - thorough primary and secondary survey with baseline observations
 - assessment of events prior and mechanism of injury
 - actions to date (i.e.. action by bystanders/rest of party)
 - Must be capable of treating injuries as priorities dictate, with regular monitoring and recording of vital signs. **Treatment must promote patients comfort, safety and recovery.**
 - Must be capable of preparing the patient for appropriate means of transportation.
 - Must be capable of providing clear written and verbal patient reports.
 - Must be capable of providing a comprehensive patient hand-over to the next level of care.
- 1.7 To ensure standards of performance are maintained and training needs are identified, nominated first aiders should undertake an annual assessment, performed by an external emergency care provider.¹
- 1.8 The SAR group must maintain liaison with medical resources (e.g. ambulance service, air ambulance) which may be utilised or called upon operationally.

Part 2 Pre Operational

Provide patient care planning in initial stages of operation

Criteria

- 2.1 The search operation plan must ensure a field first aider is placed in each field team, with appropriate equipment. This equipment should be appropriate to provide patient care for the missing/injured party and should not consist of personal first aid kits.
- 2.2. The search operation plan must provide for secondary medical care support/liaison for field first aiders. This will provide immediate medical advice/personnel for the first aider as required.

¹ The objectives and criteria for this assessment is still to be developed.

Part 3 Operational

Provide comprehensive patient care during an operation

Criteria

- 3.1 Field Headquarters should be established such that they provide liaison with appropriate secondary medical care.
- 3.2 Field first aiders must be briefed on what secondary medical care is available, and how it can be accessed from the field.
- 3.3 Upon discovering the missing party, the field first aider should perform a patient assessment. Findings must be reported to FHQ as quickly as practical. The report should include intended plan of action and/or requests for assistance.
- 3.4 Injuries should be treated as determined by the patient assessment, with a view to the means of transportation.
- 3.5 Any concerns about treatment should be referred to secondary medical care.
- 3.6 In the case of multiple casualties, the field first aider should determine the priority of casualties, and personally deal with the most urgent. Other field personnel should provide first aid care as required.
- 3.7 The patient should be prepared for transportation with a view to optimal comfort and safety.
- 3.8 Regularly monitor, record and report patients condition. The frequency will depend on the nature and severity of the patients condition. Monitoring continues throughout the operation, including transportation.
- 3.9 Patient hand-overs should include a comprehensive verbal report and all documentation.

Part 4 Post Operational

Ensure full operational availability maintained

Criteria

- 4.1 On completion of an operation all first-aid equipment is to be checked and restocked in order to return to full operational capability.
- 4.2 Counselling services must be made available to team members as required.
- 4.3 Field first aiders should be given the opportunity to participate in the operation debrief.

Glossary of terms

Baseline observations	Initial recordings, determining a baseline with which to measure patient improvement/deterioration during treatment, transport etc. These recordings include level of consciousness, pulse, respirations, skin temperature, pupil reaction and blood pressure (if possible).
Emergency care provider	Professional organisation or individual recognised in the field of providing emergency secondary medical care.
Field first aider	Person noted in SAR plan as meeting the criteria as set out in standard 1.6.
FHQ	Field Search Headquarters.
Primary Survey	Assessment of potential life threatening problems, i.e. Airway, breathing and circulation problems.
Secondary Survey	Full hands on patient assessment to detect injuries or eliminate concerns, and determine the history of events leading to injury.
Secondary Medical Care	Specialist medical care provider, such as ambulance officers, doctor, or hospital medical retrieval team.