

Terms of Reference – Oamaru Search and Rescue Incident, 11 May 2003

Following a search and rescue incident involving a fishing boat accident off the coast of Oamaru on 11 May 2003 the Minister of Transport has requested the New Zealand Search and Rescue Council to commission Mr John Bowdler to conduct an urgent independent review of the search and rescue procedures involved. Mr Bowdler will be provided with an independent SAR technical assistant, as well as the services of an independent legal advisor.

The purpose of this review is not to allocate fault (if any) on any party or to pre-empt or duplicate any other inquiry into this incident, such as the forthcoming Coroner's inquest or any New Zealand Maritime Safety Authority investigation of the accident. Rather, this review is to provide a prompt investigation, within the terms of reference, to enable the earliest possible implementation of any improvements in current arrangements and procedures that may be necessary.

The New Zealand Search and Rescue Council has requested that the Reviewer complete this review by the end of July 2003.

The Terms of Reference for the Review are as follows:

1. To gain an understanding of the sequence and times of events in the search and rescue response to the incident of 11 May 2003;
2. To ascertain whether the current search and rescue arrangements and procedures were followed;
3. To ascertain whether the arrangements and procedures are appropriate for an incident of this nature;
4. In the light of the findings of 1 - 3 above, to consider whether the arrangements and procedures need immediate remedial attention; and
5. To make recommendations to the New Zealand Search and Rescue Council, as appropriate, by 31 July 2003.