

Minutes of New Zealand Search and Rescue Council Meeting
held on Monday 5 December 2005 at 1pm
in MOT 10th Floor Boardroom

Present: Robin Dunlop (Chair)
Steve Long, Geoff Logan (NZ Police)
Dick Newlands (NZDF)
Russell Kilvington (by conference phone), Peter Williams, Chris Raley, Cath Taylor (Maritime NZ)
John Jones, Peter Garnett (CAA),
Bruce Johnson, Lyn Turner (MoT)
Brian Murray, Duncan Ferner (SAR Secretariat)

1. General Introduction & Welcome

Robin Dunlop welcomed the representatives from the agencies.

2. Apologies

Rob Robinson (NZ Police)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting with two amendments:

- 1) Insert the word **parties** following **external** in the third paragraph under item 6 ; Strategic Funding proposals;
- 2) Change **Ministry of Defence** to **New Zealand Defence Force** in item 7.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

5. Strategic Funding proposals

Brian Murray reported that the next ODESC meeting on 16 December 2005 would deal with pandemic planning exclusively so the SAR proposals could not be considered until 10 February 2006.

Brian Murray said that the MoT advisor with the Treasury background consulted after the last meeting had emphasised the desirability of providing Ministers with options. He had endeavoured to emphasise in the paper that the new response model could be introduced in one of three forms but it did not present an alternative of enhancing the status quo with a lower level of funding. Robin Dunlop said that such an alternative should be formulated as a fall back position.

The following points emerged from discussion on the draft document.

- a) Appendix 4 detailing the future partitioning of the SAR region, and paragraphs 62 and 63, need to be amended to show the Orions as the 'primary' aerial search and locate asset in the zones beyond 50 nautical miles. Although possibly not the cheapest aircraft that can be used in the medium range zone, it is almost certainly the most cost-effective. In reply to a query about availability given their other purposes, Dick Newlands said he believed that an Orion or a Hercules would be available for SAR 95% of the time.
- b) The minimum equipment specified for single and twin rotary aircraft in appendix 5 requires review. It is not clear whether the capability specified for rotary is in addition to that specified for the single craft. Doubts were also expressed about the cost effectiveness of some of the items specified, such as FLIR. Chris Raley explained that the specification was indicative; currently there was no standard specification and the list was an initial attempt at setting one.
- c) A footnote explaining the meaning of "declared" and "dedicated" would be useful.
- d) Some concern was expressed about the implications of basing the case for the new approach on the number of fatalities that could have been avoided over the last two years. Asserting that significantly more lives could have been saved with the new measures in place might call into question whether all incidents had been handled adequately under the existing SAR system. However, Robin Dunlop made the point that the approach was the same as that used in road safety. The suggestion was made that an attempt should be made to confirm the validity of the methodology used, perhaps by looking at how other countries approached the matter, now that more time is available.
- e) The text dealing with the impact on Vote: Police budget should be reviewed. While it was reasonable to assume that the amount disbursed to third parties would transfer to the new co-ordinating agency, the implication that there would be further savings in the Police budget was premature.
- f) CAA queried whether the full impact on Maritime NZ had been allowed for. Even if the new system did not start until July 2007, there would be preparatory costs that Maritime NZ would face that should be budgeted for in 2006/07.
- g) The fact that no funding was being sought for the SAR Secretariat in 08/09 could be misinterpreted as meaning the Council intended to discontinue it. A provision for funding in that year should be made with the text explaining that the role of the Secretariat was to be reviewed before the end of 07/08.
- h) The additional funding sought for RCCNZ (page 11) be shown as such rather than being identified as for Maritime NZ
- i) It was noted that some changes had been made to the original budget figures. These should be checked to confirm that the figures used are correct.
- j) Change the words **Joint Forces New Zealand** in para 71 to read **New Zealand Defence Force**
- k) Para 72 should make it clear that the organisations cited had not been consulted over the content of the paper.

Outcome:

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- Rework the document in light of the discussion in time for the February ODESC meeting ensuring that the overall recommendations stay intact.
- Bruce Johnson, supported by Russell Kilvington, thanked Brian Murray for his work on the paper.

6. Review of ZK-HTF SAR Operation

Robin Dunlop outlined the background to the decision he had made regarding a review. He stated that it was timely to do a review and made reference to the dynamics of private/official searches that this particular incident raised.

Maritime NZ tabled a paper on the Overview of the Erceg incident along with a proposed Terms of Reference (ToR). The idea of the paper was to inform the Council prior to the official debrief on Wednesday 7th December.

After taking time to read the paper the Council went through the proposed ToR in detail. The agreed ToR are attached.

In addition, it was agreed that the following matters should be further considered by the Council after examination by the Secretariat:

- The governance arrangements that should apply in exceptional cases, such as those attracting high media interest or involving non-operational external influences;
- The policy framework that should guide decision making over when post incident reviews should be undertaken.

Appointment of a Reviewer

After consideration of several candidates, the Council decided that Paul Fitzharris should be approached to take on the role of the Reviewer.

Budget for the review

Robin Dunlop stated his commitment to funding the review, finding the money from within existing budgets, and acknowledging that any other assistance forthcoming from other SAR Council members would be gratefully received.

7. General Business

There was no general business

8. Next Meeting

Next meeting to be organised for early March 2006 after the release of the 1st draft of the Review.

Meeting concluded at 2.45pm

ZK-HTF Search and Rescue Review
Terms of Reference

1. To gain an understanding of the sequence and times of events relating to the incident between 4 and 19 November 2005.
2. To ascertain whether the current search and rescue arrangements and procedures were followed by RCCNZ and the other government agencies that were involved.
3. To ascertain whether the current arrangements and procedures are appropriate for an incident of this nature.
4. To comment on the role of the On Scene Coordinators, their training, experience, and relationship with the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator, their ability to implement the RCCNZ SAR action plan and any conflicts of interest that may have arisen.
5. To review the effectiveness of the search and detection of the missing Helicopter including the suitability of the SAR units tasked.
6. To review the facts regarding the role of the distress beacon in this incident.
7. To review current arrangements regarding RCCNZ's SAR mandate in accordance with the Performance Agreement and search suspension criteria and its application in this incident.
8. To review the interaction between the official search and that arranged privately and recommend mechanisms for the future.
9. To review family liaison and support arrangements and recommend methods for their effective management.
10. To make recommendations to the New Zealand Search and Rescue Council, as appropriate, by 31 March 2006.