



**Date:** October 2024

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**To:** All SLSNZ SAR Leaders & Teams

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**From:** Andy Kent – National Lifesaving Manager

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**Subject:** National SAR Committee update

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Hi all,

It's been a while since we the last update in July, and there is a lot happening, so we're keen to share the following with you.

On behalf of the SLS SAR Staff and National SAR Committee, we'd like to tell you what we've been up to in terms of re-shaping the SLSNZ SAR approach as well as some practical, operational info that you might find useful.

### **Update on SLS SAR Approach**

Since we last updated you in July, SLS Staff and the National SAR Committee has pulled together a project that we intend will provide clarity as well as address many of the known frustrations that we have all experienced for some time.

The Project will be delivered by a Project Team (named below) supported by the SLSNZ Programme Manager, who has been brought in to deliver multiple strategic projects for the organisation.

This project relies on the National Resilience Plan funding (that we were promised on Budget Day (30<sup>th</sup> May 2024) coming through before Xmas 2024. Below is some key information on the current Project framework.

### **The SLS SAR Framework Project:**

Purpose of the Project:

- To co-create a document to be shared with the SLS SAR Community that is strategic and provides direction, but is also practicable and action-oriented.
- To provide clarity, consistency and best-practice procedures across the SLS SAR Community
- To address the known issues identified by SLSNZ, the SLS SAR Community and SLS Clubs.

Benefits from the Project:

- Clarity on funding, standards, clothing, equipment, training and accountability
- Improved SAR Volunteer experience
- Reduced admin for SLS SAR Volunteers
- Removal of securing funding as a task for SAR Squads and SLS Clubs
- Lift in quality and frequency of training
- Streamlined compliance

Tangible outputs we'd like to see from this Project:

- Core range of clothing, equipment and training agreed
- Core range of clothing, equipment and training fulfilled and fully funded
- Specialist range of clothing, equipment and training agreed for each specialist area
- SAR Volunteer & Squad compliance audit

*In it for life*



- New Service Level Agreement (SLA)
- New SLS SAR Structure in place and roles appointed

#### Project Team for this Project:

- Sponsor – Steve Fisher (SLSNZ CEO)
- Project Lead – Andy Kent (SLSNZ GM Lifesaving)
- Programme Manager – Carlene Creighton (SLSNZ Programme Manager)
- Project Team Members – SLSNZ National SAR Committee – Dave Bentley, Courtney Moir, Imogen Doyle, Kath Manning, Adam Glenister, Ben Flynn, Chris Jeffery
- Project Team Members – SLSNZ Staff & Board – Cam Burrow (SLSNZ Board Member), Allan Mundy (SLSNZ SAR Manager), Belinda Slement (SLSNZ Education Manager), Laura Beanland-Stephens (SLSNZ SurfCom Manager), Sam Blackmore (SLSNZ Lifesaving Development Officer)

#### Principles underpinning the Project:

1. Focus on readiness, not deployment (We acknowledge that there are certainly some areas to work on in the deployment space (such as centralised tasking for example), however, the bulk of the frustrations we are all experiencing are in the readiness space, so we want to focus on these for now).
2. A more centralised funding model for SAR Volunteers, Teams (both area teams & club teams), & this funding needs to be sustainable for the long term & is heavily dependent on government funding.
3. Increased support to ease SAR Volunteers' administrative burden
4. National alignment with Local delivery (Agree on nationwide standards, responsibilities and processes that are applied locally)
5. Centralised provisioning (Do nationwide-deals with certified suppliers, so that everyone receives the same quality kit, ordered centrally so every Squad/Volunteer/Club doesn't have to order their own)
6. Distinguish between core and specialist (Agree on a core range of clothing, equipment and training that everyone in SAR receives, then agree on the specialist clothing, equipment and training that those specialising in a certain field will receive).

#### What the SLSNZ SAR Framework Project will include:

- Purpose (vision, mission, role within SLSNZ, values, customers)
- Strategy (funding, standards)
- Structure (team overview, roles & responsibilities, key relationships & alignment)
- Resourcing (processes/admin, clothing – core/spec, equip – core/spec)
- Training (processes/admin, core/spec)
- Action plan (design (now until Xmas): implementation (Jan–June '25))

#### What is the SLSNZ SAR Purpose:

- "To support the SLSNZ purpose '*No-one drowns at the beach in Aotearoa, New Zealand*' by providing coastal SAR services outside of the red and yellow flags".

#### Our thinking on the future structure of SLSNZ SAR Staff (dependent on funding):

- Employ 3 Regional SAR Support roles (one in each of the 3 new regions), whose roles are to "effectively resource the SAR Squads and Volunteers in their readiness for deployment, specifically in the areas of clothing, Equipment and training".

#### Core Clothing

- A list of core clothing has been agreed and agreements are being signed with the respective suppliers. Our intention is to have this core range of clothing available (and paid for) for all SAR Vols and Squads.

#### Project Workplan Timing (again, dependent on funding):

Without a 'crystal ball', below is our best guess of when we will deliver this project, given that many variables are out of our control.

SAR PROJECT - DRAFT WORKPLAN		2025																	
PHASE	TASK	OCT			NOV			DEC			JAN			FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	
		30*4	7*11	14*18	21*25	28*1	4*8	11*15	18*22	25*28	2*6	9*13	16*20	23*27	30*3	6*10	13*17	20*24	27*31
CORE CLOTHING	PRESENT TO COMMITTEE	6th																	
FUNDING	CONFIRMATION				???														
1 - DESIGN	BACKGROUND/CURRENT STATE																		
	ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES																		
	PURPOSE																		
	FUNDING																		
	STANDARDS																		
	REGIONS																		
	STRUCTURE - ROLES, RESP, R'SHIPS, ALIGNMENT																		
	CLOTHING CORE VS SPECIALIST																		
	EQUIPMENT CORE VS SPECIALIST																		
	TRAINING CORE VS SPECIALIST																		
2 - DELIVER	IMPLEMENT NEW STRUCTURE, ROLES																		
	WRITE NEW SLA																		
	TRAINING, CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT AUDIT																		
	WRITE THEN SHARE TRAINING CALENDAR																		
	WRITE TRAINING CONTENT																		
	ORDER CORE CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING TO FILL GAP																		
	BOOK EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE																		
	MANAGE EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE																		
	FULFILL CORE CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT & TRAINING GAP																		
	ORDER SPECIALIST CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING TO FILL GAP																		
FULFILL SPECIALIST CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING GAP																			

## Update on SLS SAR Operations

- Swiftwater Training

Swiftwater technician courses continue to be delivered through Rescue 3, which is growing our base of trained SAR Volunteers with Swiftwater skills.

However, in parallel to this training, SLSNZ Staff and the National SAR Committee are still in discussions on refresher training, requirements and process. As we all know, working in this space is still relatively new for SLSNZ, is not our core BAU, and is a high-risk environment.

Even with training, the SLSNZ National SAR Committee are not yet confident that we ready to operate/deploy in this space.

- SAREX

Our SAR Volunteers have attended several SAR Exercises in recent weeks. It's been awesome to see our teams working alongside our sector partners, especially in Milford Sound, Coromandel, Hawkes' Bay, the Manawatu and other locations across the motu.

- SAR Peer Support

SLSNZ are enhancing the wellbeing support available to SAR squads following critical incidents to ensure that these Squads are provided support that is more tailored for their uniquely demanding roles. The National Wellbeing Lead has been working through feedback from a range of SAR wellbeing workshops to adjust our post-incident support procedures for SAR Squads.

Rather than use the standard incident process which we use on patrols for our SAR squads, from the end of November 2024, there will be an adapted response process. The main change is that SAR squad members will receive an initial follow-up phone call from an experienced member who has peer support training and SAR/First Responder/other relevant experience, instead of a counsellor. Counsellor follow-up will still be available to SAR squads but on more of an as-needed basis.

Well done if you read this far! Lots to digest.

Please get in touch, either with us or any of your SLSNZ National SAR Committee Members if you have any questions or feedback. The National SAR Committee typically meets monthly so if you have any feedback for them, get it to us before the next meeting which is scheduled for November 13<sup>th</sup>.

Nga Manākitanga

Andy Kent  
SLSNZ GM Lifesaving

Dave Bentley  
SLSNZ SAR Advisory Committee