

## AUCKLAND LANDSAR FIRST TEAM

### MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR AN ACTIVE MEMBER

To be certain that searchers have the knowledge, skills and experience required to effectively participate in a search or rescue operation, it is necessary to have an accepted set of standards and a method of measurement.

Standards ensure that SAR personnel are suitably trained and experienced and can therefore be relied on to operate efficiently and safely.

This document spells out the standards required for Auckland FIRST Team members and notes assessment methods. It can also serve as a checklist for consideration for a team member's suitability for a particular role in SAR and will also serve as the basis for a training needs analysis thus determining group and individual training requirements.

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## **1.1 PERSONAL FITNESS**

It is considered important that all team members maintain a reasonable level of personal fitness to ensure the safety of all personnel involved in search operations.

### Requirements:

- Must be physically fit
- Able to carry a full pack over difficult terrain for extended periods.
- In good general health.
- Must be aware of own limitations and act appropriately.

### Assessment:

- By observation on appropriate training and operational events.

## **1.2 BUSHCRAFT**

It is considered important that all team members have appropriate and adequate Bushcraft skills as SAR personnel are required to be self sufficient and search deployment often takes place in hazardous regions and adverse conditions.

### Requirements:

- Can site a camp to be free of natural hazards.
- Is able to demonstrate good camp hygiene practices.
- Can organise gear/cooking in tents in adverse conditions.
- Understands principles of environmental care code and iwi matters.
- Knows what clothing to take and how to care for it.
- Uses the appropriate clothing at all times.
- Knows how to care for and maintain own equipment.
- Has high standards for own equipment.
- Can light and maintain common types of gas and liquid fuel stoves.
- Is aware of the dangers of stoves.
- Understands food values and can organise suitable food for self and party.
- Ensures that emergency food is carried.
- Is capable of finding and following suitable routes in all types of terrain.
- Is aware and can cope with the hazards encountered in bush travel.

### Assessment:

- By observation on appropriate training and operational events.
- Practical exercise
- Appropriate certification, ie MSC - Bush2.

### **1.3 MAP AND COMPASS / NAVIGATION**

It is considered important that all team members are conversant with map and compass techniques. They must be able to navigate safely and be able to determine their position at any time. [This is essential if instructions are to be correctly followed and the Search HQ kept informed of the exact area searched.]

#### Requirements: Maps.

- Is aware of various map types and their uses.
- Can demonstrate the use of scales.
- Fully understands contours and relief shading.
- Can orient a map using natural features and/or the sun.
- Can differentiate between true, grid and magnetic north.
- Able to give and plot grid references.
- Able to navigate using a map.
- Can determine positions on the map using features.
- Can calculate travel time and distance from a map.

#### Requirements: Compass.

- Understands the features of a Silva type compass.
- Can orient map with the compass.
- Can determine grid and magnetic bearings.
- Able to transfer bearings to and from a map.
- Can demonstrate the use of a compass for travel.
- Able to determine and plot positions using a compass and map.

#### Requirements: Navigation

- Can navigate from and to a given point using map and/or compass and GPS and be able to confirm absolute position.
- Can perform the above navigation in all weather conditions and terrain.
- Can navigate as above, selecting the best possible and safest routes.
- Can apply map/compass/navigation principles to define and mark a given search area.

#### Assessment:

- Practical exercise
- By observation on appropriate training and operational events

## **1.4 SURVIVAL SKILLS**

It is considered important that all team members have the appropriate skills to enable them to a) operate effectively and b) manage their own wellbeing, alone and in all conditions.

### Requirements:

- Must know how to react when "lost" and how to aid searchers.
- Have and know how to use the contents of an "approved" survival kit.
- Can demonstrate various survival skills in a "below the bush line" environment (shelter, morale, wildfood, water, fire.)
- Be able to manage the situation (illness, injury, missing person, fatality.)

### Assessment:

- Practical exercise
- By observation on appropriate training and operational events

## **1.5 RIVER CROSSING & WATER TRAVEL**

It is considered important that all team members are able to conduct themselves and others safely across and along waterways.

### Requirements:

- Can identify river dynamics.
- Know when and when not to attempt a crossing.
- Can identify best crossing points.
- Can prepare a group for a river crossing and manage the risks.
- Is able to identify hazards in various types of rivers.
- Able to demonstrate the mutual support and individual crossing methods.
- Can recover from mishaps (self rescue skills).
- Is aware of the hazards peculiar to coastal travel.

### Assessment:

- Practical exercise
- By observation on appropriate training and operational events

## **1.6 FIRST AID**

It is considered important that all team members have a basic grounding in current First Aid techniques and practices and can communicate patient information by radio. Searchers must be able to assess patients and assist and manage patient comfort and maintain life wherever possible.

### Requirements:

- Holder of appropriate current First Aid Certificate or similar.
- Understands the theory and treatment of hypothermia.
- Can prevent/treat minor ailments.
- Can manage a medical emergency and provide appropriate care for a patient for possibly up to 24hrs.
- Can document and communicate (via radio) vital signs and other relevant patient information.
- Has, and carries, a "suitable" first aid kit.
- Can demonstrate an understanding of the various stretcher types used in SAR and can improvise if necessary.

### Assessment:

- Attend specific SAR training course
- Practical exercise
- By observation on appropriate training events

## **1.7 RISK MANAGEMENT**

It is considered important that all team members are able to plan, prepare for and implement search tasks identifying and managing all the risks involved.

### Requirements:

- Understands the concepts and principles of managing risk.
- Is aware of, and plans to reduce possible risks in the field.
- Identifies and discloses risks to members of a group.
- Have contingency plans in case of emergencies.
- Shows an ongoing awareness of developing or potential risks.

### Assessment:

- Written exercise
- By observation on appropriate training and operational events

## **1.8 COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNICAL**

It is considered important that all team members are conversant with use of, operation of, and message handling protocols for SAR radios.

### Requirements:

- Can demonstrate an understanding of VHF & HF radios.
- Is aware of the limitations of the various radios used in SAR.
- Can demonstrate how to set up, tune and care for radios.
- Be able to diagnose and fix basic problems.
- An understanding of correct "operating procedure" and message handling.
- Has a working knowledge of GPS system.
- Can place and erect a Repeater as directed.

### Assessment:

- Practical exercise
- By observation on appropriate training and operational events

## **1.9 SEARCH METHODS & TECHNIQUES**

It is considered important that all team members are familiar with current methods and techniques to maximize the efficiency of all search operations.

### Requirements:

- Demonstrate understanding of current search methods
- Must be able to demonstrate how to use different search techniques and understand when each technique is appropriate.

### Assessment:

- Attend specific SAR training courses
- By observation on appropriate training and operational event

## 1.10 HELICOPTER SAFETY

It is considered important that all team members are conversant with helicopter operation & safety issues, are able to transported if required, and are able to assist crew when necessary.

### Requirements:

- Can demonstrate specific safety procedures -
  - approaching (safety zone and pilot signals)
  - clothing and carriage of equipment.
  - boarding, both on ground and at a hover.
  - loading and unloading procedures (incl. slings, hooks etc.)
- Has a knowledge of -
  - landing point needs in terms of location, size, approach angles, marking, etc.
  - wind strengths and can indicate strength and direction to the pilot.
  - ground to air communication by radio and signals.
  - what to do in emergency situations.
- Knows the capabilities and limitations of various types of helicopters.

### Assessment:

- Attend specific SAR training course & helo briefings

## 1.11 ROPES

It is considered important that all team members have an understanding of ropes and can undertake search and rescue tasks safely on steep terrain.

### Requirements:

- Has a basic awareness of the use of ropes in assisting searchers or rescuers over steep ground.
- Can demonstrate using personal or group gear, some basic knots.

### Assessment:

- Practical exercise

## 1.12 WEATHER

It is considered important that all team members have knowledge of weather patterns and effects.

### Requirements:

- Has a good general knowledge of weather forecasting.
- Can recognise weather signs in the field and react accordingly.
- Is aware of the limitations of commercial weather maps and forecasts.

### Assessment:

- Written exercise

### **1.13 COMMITMENT**

It is considered important that all team members are aware of and accept the commitment necessary to be an operative SAR member, including the requirement to regularly train and attend SAR operations.

Requirements:

- Must demonstrate the right mental attitude for the situation. (patience, able to accept instruction, able to work as a team member, etc.)
- Must be aware of the importance of maintaining morale within a group.
- Needs to know how adverse conditions affect attitude and performance.
- Is aware of individual and group needs (pacing, food, rest, etc.)
- Can demonstrate good interpersonal skills in a group situation, (flexibility, empathy, respect, communication, physical and emotional stress, etc.)

In addition, a SAR team member should -

- Be available for SAROPS on a regular basis and be able to give a prompt decision re availability when called out.
- Attend training programs in order to attain and maintain the standards required by Auckland LandSAR.
- Understand that team members will not be called to a search unless required standards have been met.
- Ensure that information re personal fitness and any relevant health problems is conveyed to the appropriate person within the organisation.
- Keep a personal log book recording training and operational experience.
- Must have readily available, appropriate food and equipment for 48 hours in the field.
- Must be able to quickly coordinate and rationalise food and equipment within a SAR team. (party gear)
- Report accidents and incidents on searches

Assessment:

- Attend regular meetings, training sessions and exercises
- Be available for SAR operations

### **1.14 GEAR & EQUIPMENT**

It is considered important that all team members have available and carry with them, a minimum array of gear and equipment to enable them to be self sufficient in the field. It is also important that appropriate gear and equipment is carried for use when assisting missing persons.

Requirements:

- Is familiar with the Ideal SAR Pack Checklist and has an appropriately prepared SAR pack.

Assessment:

- Undergoes a SAR Pack inspection from time to time.