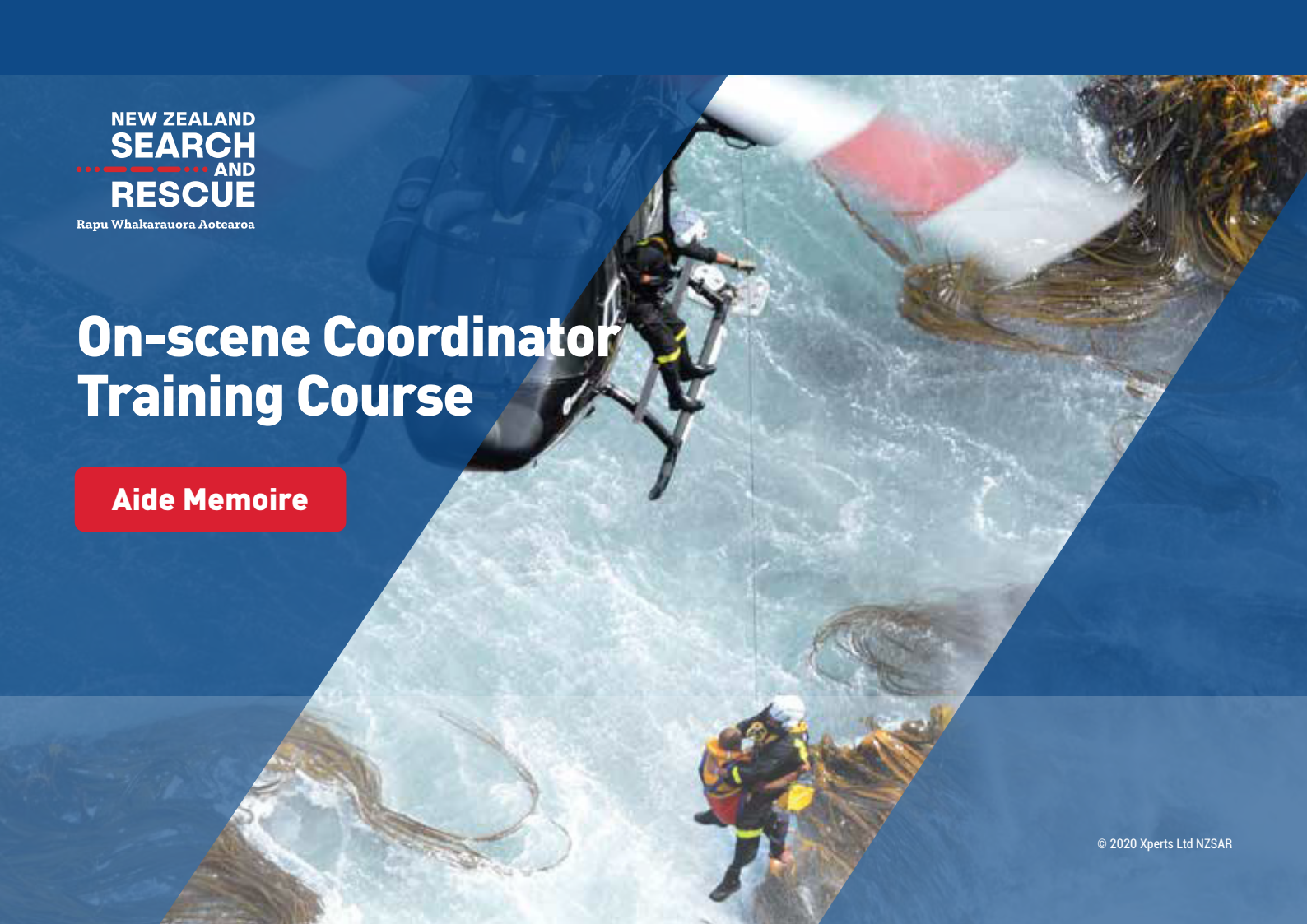


NEW ZEALAND
SEARCH
AND
RESCUE

Rapu Whakaruora Aotearoa

On-scene Coordinator Training Course

Aide Memoire





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Roles and responsibilities

An On-scene Coordinator (OSC) is a competent person appointed by, and responsible to, the Coordinating Authority for the coordination of a search and/or rescue within a specified area and within the extent of the delegated authority.

An OSC can be called on in situations such as:

- ▶ When more than one asset is used.
- ▶ Several different search locations.
- ▶ Communication difficulties.
- ▶ Complex asset tasking (Mass Rescue); and
- ▶ Whenever the Coordinating Authority deems it necessary.
 - RCCNZ are the Coordinating Authority for Cat II incidents. All major maritime and aviation search and rescue missions within New Zealand's search and rescue region; land-based missions arising from someone activating a distress beacon.
 - NZ Police are the Coordinating Authority for Cat I incidents. Close to shore marine searches (nominally within 12 miles of the coast), including land searches, underground searches, river, lake and inland waterway searches.

OSC do not work alone – an OSC can work with Police or RCCNZ and be part of a local Incident Management Team.

There is no compulsion for a person to accept the role of OSC if asked. If you feel that you are not suited or able to fulfill the OSC role, then say so. Inform the SMC/IC of the fact and reasons. Another OSC will be chosen.

Acceptance of the role implies that you have the necessary skills and support to carry out the OSC role.

An On-scene Coordinator (OSC) is a competent person appointed by, and responsible to, the Coordinating Authority for the coordination of a search and/or rescue within a specified area and within the extent of the delegated authority.



The responsibilities of OSCs

As a trained OSC you could potentially be the OSC of any type of incident.

Duties the Coordinating Authority may assign depend on the incident needs and the qualifications an OSC has.

For example the OSC may be briefed to:

Coordinate operations of all SAR facilities on-scene.

Receive the SAP or plan the SAROP if no plan is available.

Establish and maintain communications with the search resources.

Coordinate on-scene communications.

Monitor the performance of other search units.

Ensure operations are conducted safely.

Make periodic sitreps.

Maintain a detailed record of operations.

Advise IC to release facilities no longer required.

Report the number and names of survivors, and on which facility, to the IC/OSC.

Request additional assistance if necessary.

Inform SMC/IC of on-scene weather and sea conditions.

Receive, record and evaluate information such as sightings from search resources.

Develop a rescue plan in conjunction with the SMC/IC/OSC.

Debrief all resources on completion of task to assist with POD.

Inform SMC/IC/OSC of areas searched and track spacings used.

To assume operational coordination of the SAR response on-scene on behalf of the SMC/Incident Controller and within the delegated authority.

Establish an ICP and IMT.

Provide local knowledge of SAR expertise and resources available in the area.

Receive and/or develop and implement the search action plan from the SMC/Incident Controller.

Establish communications between IC and OSC.

Establish and maintain communications with all assigned search assets.

Develop method of logging all actions and communications.

Provide regular SITREPs to IC/OSC as per Search Action Plan.

Keep IC advised of any changes to Search Action Plan.

Brief incoming OSC in the case of extended searches.

There are different contexts for the use of an OSC such as:

- ▶ Multiple On-Scene Coordinators at different locations.
- ▶ An On-Scene Coordinator appointed by an On-Scene Coordinator.

Some incidents may require a subject matter expert working alongside you to give specialist advice. For example, land, marine, aviation, caving, alpine.

When two or more SAR units are working together on the same mission, there is sometimes an advantage if one person is assigned to coordinate the activities of all participating units.

Coordination tasks related to assets:

- ▶ Confirm all asset utilisation with IC and obtain the asset number.
- ▶ Maintain a register of all tasked assets including all activity – departure times, tasking, POB, return times, etc.
- ▶ Prepare and provide an asset task briefing, normally verbally, but followed if possible by a written briefing.
- ▶ Note that personnel should be given all relevant details of the distress and all instructions for the SAR operation.
- ▶ Monitor the performance of all search assets.
- ▶ Stand down and fully debrief all assets at conclusion of search.

Field intelligence is very useful as it can:

- ▶ Provide information on local conditions, weather, etc.
- ▶ Provide local knowledge of any SAR expertise and resources available in region.
- ▶ Evaluate any local intelligence received.
- ▶ Ensure safety plans are in place for all field assets.
- ▶ Monitor health and safety of all assets.
- ▶ In conjunction with IC develop the rescue plan.
- ▶ Ensure all assets have safely returned to base after completion of task or conclusion of SAROP.

When two or more SAR units are working together on the same mission, there is sometimes an advantage if one person is assigned to coordinate the activities of all participating units.



Briefing

Brief using SMART(S)

Ground

Situation

Mission

Execution

Administration

Command and Communication

Safety

Good briefing techniques

- ▶ Write the key points down in advance.
- ▶ Choose a briefing space with minimal distractions.
- ▶ Face to face is best – if outside do not have the audience facing the sun.
- ▶ Maintain eye contact with the audience.
- ▶ Be clear and calm.
- ▶ Repeat the key objectives.

Sufficient and efficient!



Briefing and the IMT

- ▶ The OSC introduces the situation and team.
- ▶ Operations explains operation to date.
- ▶ Planning outlines the evidential base for decision making so far and what next, expected progression of incident.
- ▶ Logistics discusses resource management, gives an account of the sourcing of people and equipment to execute the plan.
- ▶ Communications outlines the communications plan and the parameters.
Note: Communication with media is through or with specific authority from the Incident Controller. Remember you are working for the Incident Controller, which may not be the organisation you work for.

Communication with next of kin is the responsibility of the Incident Controller.

Notification to next of kin of deceased persons is a Police responsibility.

Responsibilities summary

- ▶ The Incident Controller through the Coordinating Authority has total control.
- ▶ The IC will decide when to appoint an OSC.
- ▶ The OSC works within the responsibility that is delegated to them.
- ▶ There may be several different OSCs operating at different locations.

Communication with next of kin is the responsibility of the Incident Controller.

Notification to next of kin of deceased persons is a Police responsibility.



Evacuation planning

Consider:

- ▶ The method of rescue and what you are going to do with those rescued once the search object has been located.
- ▶ If an aerial search at sea is being undertaken, a rescue vessel with surface to air communications should be stationed in the centre of the search area ready to respond to any sighting by the aircraft.
- ▶ Planning needs to include where and how survivors are taken to a place of safety.
- ▶ Survivors may require hospital treatment ASAP and an ambulance may be required to meet survivors upon arrival.
- ▶ SAR personnel must ensure that, after rescue, survivors are not left alone, particularly if injured, or showing signs of hypothermia, or either physical or mental exhaustion.

Selecting the method of transport of survivors to medical facilities

- ▶ Consider the condition of survivors.
- ▶ Capability of the rescue facility to reach the survivors in the shortest possible time.
- ▶ Medical training, qualifications and operational capabilities of the personnel.





Search performance management

- ▶ An On-scene Coordinator is responsible for measuring the performance of assets under his/her control.
- ▶ A SAR plan must be established, approved and implemented before any performance can be measured.

Based on the parameters given, you

1. Develop a SAR plan.
2. Implement that SAR plan.
3. Monitor the effectiveness of your assets.
4. Evaluate and amend your SAR plan.
5. Report about your plan to the I/C/SMC.

Debriefing assets

In your debriefing cover:

- ▶ Search area covered.
- ▶ Search methods used.
- ▶ POD.
- ▶ Issues relating to search method.
- ▶ Gut feeling from asset (all members?).
- ▶ Clues located.
- ▶ Objective vs subjective.

An On-scene Coordinator is responsible for measuring the performance of assets under his/her control.

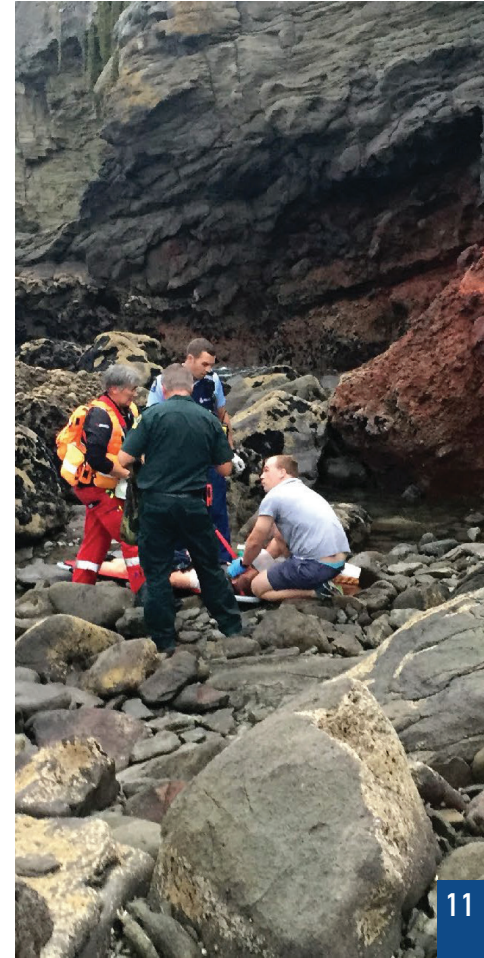
Debriefing process

Conduct as soon as possible:

- ▶ Where they have been.
- ▶ What they have done.
- ▶ How well they did it.
- ▶ What they did not do.
- ▶ Any unexpected hazards.
- ▶ What they think happened to the subject.
- ▶ Debriefing is done to collect intelligence and must occur at the conclusion of each tasking.

Gather up documentation for filing

- ▶ Sitreps.
- ▶ Debriefing notes.
- ▶ Summary of search plan compliance and result.





Search suspension, termination

- ▶ An On-scene Coordinator cannot suspend or terminate a search – that is the role of the SMC/IC.
- ▶ In Police (Cat I incidents) approval for suspension is given by Area or District Commanders.
- ▶ The suspension decision is not made in isolation.
- ▶ All planning personnel, SAR Authority management, specialist advisers and OSC should have an input into the suspension decision.
- ▶ Suspension may include a limited continuous search, scaling down.
- ▶ A thorough case review occurs before final suspension.
- ▶ If significant new information is received, re-opening the search will be considered.

All planning personnel, SAR Authority management, specialist advisers and OSC should have an input into the suspension decision.

RCCNZ SOPs (Cat II incidents)

The Search Management Controller at RCCNZ can only recommend suspension.

Approval is given by:

- ▶ The Director of Maritime New Zealand for maritime incidents; and
- ▶ The Director of the Civil Aviation Authority for aviation incidents.

In Police (Cat I incidents)

- ▶ Approval for suspension is given by Area or District Commanders.

Relatives will be informed 24 hours prior to suspension that suspension will occur if no new information comes to hand within that period.



The OSC task is completed when

- ▶ The IC authorises stand down.
- ▶ All assets are stood down and have returned safely to their base.
- ▶ Documentation is completed.



