

Information for Land Search & Rescue Volunteers' Whānau



Training

Land Search and Rescue provides extensive training to our volunteers, irrespective of their role. This enables them to respond appropriately to search and rescue operations, to assist those in need and to manage the circumstances in which they might find themselves. However, more importantly for you, the training also includes managing their own safety.

Training is normally predictable. Your local group will train regularly throughout the year, normally once every fortnight or once a month.

Also, weekend training is provided. Initially, your volunteer may need to attend more training, maybe a handful of weekends in the first couple of years. Our training programmes are published annually, so your volunteer should be able to plan around your whānau commitments. Weekend training may involve overnight stays.

Training should be at no cost to our volunteers.

We value our volunteers' whānau

Land Search and Rescue acknowledges the huge commitment made by the whānau of our volunteers.

Without your support, many of our volunteers would be unable to dedicate their time. As such, we would like to consider you as part of the wider search and rescue community. You are part of the Land Search and Rescue team.

We have pulled together some information for you to help explain your volunteer's involvement in Land Search and Rescue

Call outs/Search and rescue operations

Call outs or search and rescue operations (SAROPs) can occur at any time, and sometimes at the most inconvenient time for you. They can interrupt meal times, whānau events, weekends and other times when you had made plans to be together. Your volunteer may receive a message at any time of day or night requesting them to respond to a missing, lost or injured person. Your volunteer may be able to give you an indication of how long they will be on a SAROP when they deploy, however please be aware that sometimes circumstances may change and they may be away longer.

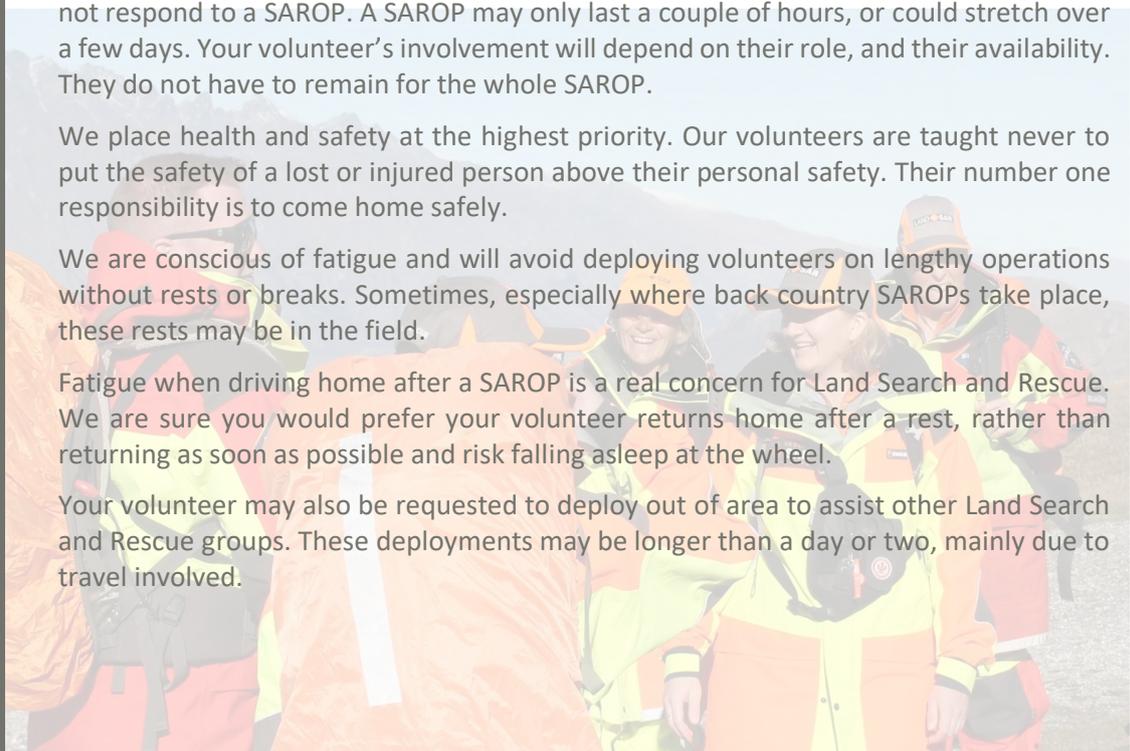
We recognise that your whānau are a priority for you. For important events or occasions, if you are away on holiday or it is just too much, your volunteer can request to be taken off call or simply respond that they are unavailable. It is a good idea to agree amongst yourselves the parameters for when your volunteer may not be able to respond. If your volunteer is tired or fatigued due to work or lack of rest, or have had a drink, they should not respond to a SAROP. A SAROP may only last a couple of hours, or could stretch over a few days. Your volunteer's involvement will depend on their role, and their availability. They do not have to remain for the whole SAROP.

We place health and safety at the highest priority. Our volunteers are taught never to put the safety of a lost or injured person above their personal safety. Their number one responsibility is to come home safely.

We are conscious of fatigue and will avoid deploying volunteers on lengthy operations without rests or breaks. Sometimes, especially where back country SAROPs take place, these rests may be in the field.

Fatigue when driving home after a SAROP is a real concern for Land Search and Rescue. We are sure you would prefer your volunteer returns home after a rest, rather than returning as soon as possible and risk falling asleep at the wheel.

Your volunteer may also be requested to deploy out of area to assist other Land Search and Rescue groups. These deployments may be longer than a day or two, mainly due to travel involved.



"A fantastic and selfless job based on volunteers who take time out of being with their family and friends to help, search and rescue".

Quote from a member of the public.

Whānau emergency point of contact

Training events, search and rescue exercises, or search and rescue operations often take place in areas where there is no mobile phone coverage.

You may need to get in touch with your volunteer. This can be difficult at times.

Try contacting the following if you are unable to get through to your volunteer in an emergency.

Point of contact

Your first point of contact should be your Land Search and Rescue group whānau point of contact:

Telephone Number:

Failing that, try calling your Land Search and Rescue Group Support Officer:

Telephone Number:

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Supporting your volunteer

Training can be time consuming, especially during your volunteer's early search and rescue career. Supporting your volunteer to attend training is key to giving them the skills they need to keep themselves and others safe. However, we also acknowledge that there are times when your volunteer cannot be spared at home. There will always be other opportunities to attend a course.

Your volunteer may be tired after training or an operation. It is physically and mentally exhausting irrespective of their role, and they may need time to recover. They might need an extra nap, or to go to bed early the next day. Being understanding that they might be a bit more tired than usual is a small way to show your support.

Everyone is different, some volunteers may wish to talk about their search and rescue experiences, and others may not want to share. There are some details that cannot be shared. Please try to respect this.

Finally, you know your volunteer better than anyone. You may notice if things are not quite right after being involved in an operation. Feeling different after involvement in an operation is a normal response. Try talking about it, but be mindful they may not want to. If things do not improve, suggest that they talk to their team or group about it. Failing that, Land Search and Rescue has a Member Assistance Programme available to all volunteers that is free of charge.

You can request help on behalf of your volunteer by contacting your local Land Search and Rescue Group Support Officer (details to the left) or call Member Assistance Programme on **0800 284 678** 24hr, 7 days a week. You should tell them you are calling on behalf of a Land Search and Rescue volunteer, provide their name and the group to which they belong.

Support for you

Your volunteer's group will recruit from the local community and you may know other group volunteers or their whānau. This is a great way to provide each other with support. You may wish to create a social media group for whānau to share your experiences and request and offer advice.

Your group may request funds from Land Search and Rescue to hold whānau days to recognise and thank you for your support. They are an opportunity to meet other volunteers and their whānau.

Being part of the Land Search and Rescue team means you become part of a New Zealand-wide network of volunteers and their whānau, all with similar experiences and a shared pride in the contribution that our volunteers make.



Lastly, and only if your volunteer is responding to a call out, contact the police.

If you require to urgently contact your volunteer you can call 111.

If it is less urgent, you should call 105.

Inform the operator that your volunteer is part of an ongoing search and rescue operation (you will need to know roughly where the operation is occurring) and they are out of contact. Tell them you have a whānau emergency and need to get a message to your volunteer. Ask that the message be passed to the Police search and rescue incident controller.