

Employer Information for Land Search & Rescue Volunteers



We value our volunteers' employers

Land Search & Rescue acknowledges the huge commitment made by the employers 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 & rescue community. You are part of the Land Search & Rescue team.

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

Training

Land Search and Rescue provides extensive training to our volunteers. It is unlikely that training should impact on an employee's work. It normally occurs in the evening or at weekends.

Land Search and Rescue does acknowledge that some of its volunteers may work in the evenings or at the weekend and consequently you may receive requests to schedule their work to allow them to attend training events. However, training is provided throughout the year, and there may be other opportunities for your employee to attend the same training at a more convenient time for their work.

Call outs/Search and rescue operations (SAROPs)

Call outs or search and rescue operations can occur at any time.

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 you may be under-staffed or the volunteer's absence may have an impact on your business. We understand there may be times that your employee cannot be released and this is your right.

However, to establish a clear expectation between employer and employee, we thoroughly recommend making a formal commitment or agreement with your employee of when, for how long and under what circumstances that they can be released. Land Search and Rescue is able to provide advice on drafting an agreement.

Also, you should be aware that SAROPs can be physically and mentally draining. When an employee returns to work, they may be fatigued. Please bear this in mind.

We take safety very seriously, and there may be occasions, especially when there are long driving times involved, that we may not release a volunteer immediately. This is to allow them rest before travelling. In these cases the volunteer's involvement in the SAROP may be over, but they are required to rest before travelling home or to work.

"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.

"A world class and professional service. Thank you for the generosity, kindness and care provided by the wonderful volunteers at LandSAR, and for keeping us safe in the outdoors."

Quote from a donor.

"I no longer go where I might need you but, my grandchildren do."

"It comforts me to know that you will be there whenever they may need you"

Quote from a member of the public.

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All employers are also encouraged to join the Land Search & Rescue Valued Employer Programme.

This provides recognition in return for a formal volunteer agreement.

To find out more visit the web address at the bottom of this page or ask your employee to request more information.

Supporting your employee

You may notice if things are not quite right with your employee after they have been 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 whānau, team or group about it. Failing that, Land Search and Rescue has a Member Assistance Programme available to all members 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 or National Health, Safety and Wellbeing Officer. Their contact details can be found online at landsar.org.nz.

What's in it for you?

We cannot perform the services we do without our volunteers' employers' support. You are a critical part of the search and rescue infrastructure.

We would like to be more forthcoming in our tangible benefits for you however we have limited resources.

We are able to provide the following benefits of employing a Land Search and Rescue volunteer:

- Employees receive **training** in a variety of new skills, including first aid. This training and the team work they experience, provide them transferable skills and capability which are of benefit outside of the search and rescue environment and applicable across all walks of life.
- Volunteering for Land Search and Rescue provides its volunteers with additional **confidence, self-worth and individual fulfilment** through work/life diversity. These are beneficial to the volunteer's employer.
- Communities are proud of the volunteer emergency services, and Land Search and Rescue is well regarded across the country. Businesses that support their local communities and volunteer organisations are able to physically demonstrate their **social responsibility**.
- Demonstrating social responsibility is not only beneficial in terms of generating support and loyalty among a customer base, but also provides an **edge in the recruitment market**. It shows that you give back to a community and makes you a more attractive employer.
- Employees forge strong, enduring relationships with their Land Search and Rescue colleagues locally, and regionally. These relationships are exceedingly loyal and their Land Search and Rescue colleagues may **favour a business** that employs other volunteers over one that does not.

