

# Volunteer Strategy

Land Search & Rescue, New Zealand



**LANDSEARCH  
& RESCUE**

New Zealand | Rapa Taiwhenua

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# Executive Summary

LandSAR is committed to our volunteers. This strategy sets out our current 2021 - 2023 operating environment, our three key priorities and how we plan on achieving them. Priority One - broader and more flexible ways to volunteer includes providing attractive opportunities outside of traditional search and rescue that use the variety of skills and life experiences that volunteers bring. Making it easy to be a LandSAR volunteer helps ensure thriving volunteerism as set out in Priority Two. We want to ensure volunteer friendly practices across our organisation and provide support to our volunteers' families and employers. In to be better together (Priority Three) we look at ways to develop resources such as a National Volunteer Sustainability Manager role and exploring the sharing of our learnings with other SAR agencies. Lastly, we set out our Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), the method we will use to capture our successes and our work plan.

## Introduction

### About this document

#### Purpose

This document sets out New Zealand Land Search and Rescue (LandSAR) Volunteerism Strategy: Mahi Aroha – (our strategy). *Mahi aroha is the term that most closely translates to the concept of voluntary work. Mahi aroha is the unpaid activity performed out of sympathy and caring for others in accordance with the principles of tikanga to maintain mana and rangatiratanga, rather than for financial or personal reward. Mahi aroha is one aspect of tohu aroha – an expression that incorporates the spiritual and temporal aspects of volunteering. He tohu aroha is an expression or manifestation of love, sympathy or caring (Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Ministry of Social Development.2007)*

Our volunteer strategy outlines LandSAR's vision for volunteers and shows how volunteers contribute to the achievement of its mission and strategic goals. By developing our volunteer strategy provides a framework to build a strong and sustainable volunteering culture within LandSAR. This enables LandSAR to align the involvement of volunteers with its strategic direction. Our volunteer strategy communicates the ethos of volunteering with LandSAR. It outlines the goals for engaging, developing and supporting volunteers and how LandSAR will achieve these goals.

Having a volunteering strategy also raises the profile of volunteering and keeps visibility of the needs of volunteers in our ongoing strategic conversations. It enables LandSAR to respond to trends in volunteering, to identify future opportunities and to promote best practice in support of LandSAR volunteers. It further explains why a strong volunteering culture and an effective model for volunteerism are critical for effective land search and rescue services in New Zealand.

The document is divided into the following sections:

- **Our operating environment** – the changes were affecting volunteerism in New Zealand Land

Search and Rescue, and what this means for us in developing our strategy.

- **Priorities and key activities** – the three priorities we will advance in response to our changing environment. It includes the core volunteerism principles we have committed to, which will underpin everything we do. For each priority, we explain why it matters, what success will look like and the activities we will make towards achieving it over the next five years.

The terms volunteer, volunteering and volunteerism are used throughout this document.

- Volunteer and volunteering relate to work given of one's free will, not by employment, for the common good or benefit of others. Inherent in the term volunteering is the mutual benefit to individuals, organisations and communities.
- Volunteerism is the culture and practice of promoting, supporting and valuing volunteers and volunteering by an organisation.

### **How our Volunteerism Strategy will serve and strengthen our services and our communities**

This Volunteerism Strategy is the foundation for the work we will do to enable sustainable volunteerism. It sets out how, over the next five-years, we intend to recognise, respect and promote the contribution of volunteers, of their families and employers. It will provide a pathway to provide broader ways to volunteer and to encourage, maintain and strengthen volunteerism while building a new approach to community resilience. This strategy extends and builds on decades of community-based LandSAR volunteer history. The strategy has also been informed by what we learned since LandSAR Inc was established over a decade ago. Over this time, LandSAR has developed a number of strategies to support LandSAR volunteers, and these have included:

- Establishing roles to support volunteer – Group Support, Administration and Training.
- Flexible regional and local training courses.
- Streamlined reimbursement and payment processes.
- Support to reduce administrative workloads.
- Financial assistance (administration grants).
- Increased direct support resources (equipment).

### **How we developed our Volunteerism Strategy**

This strategy has been developed from a rich source of SAR and volunteer sector research, and internal research and evidence-informed by data and good practice standards for organisations with volunteers. We have also drawn on the expertise of our people to shape our approach to volunteerism so that it will work effectively for many years to come. The foundations for this strategy have been co-designed with many of our LandSAR people. It incorporates two key outputs from those processes:

- Volunteerism Principles that underpin everything we do as an organization.
- Volunteerism Outcome Areas that we will use to monitor our achievements.

## **The intent for the Volunteerism Strategy**

We have a thriving and unified volunteer workforce that feels valued, safe and supported. Our volunteers come from all walks of life and can choose from a broad and flexible range of roles within the context of land-based search and rescue. Our volunteers will operate in ways tailored to the needs of communities, from different locations and with different time commitments, but all will use their skills and life experiences to serve and strengthen our communities and our organisation.

Volunteers will help ensure our organisation is deeply connected to New Zealand's communities, so we are turned to with confidence in times of need. We are Land Search and Rescue – Everywhere for Everyone.

## **Our Operating Environment**

New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc (LandSAR) is the national volunteer organisation which provides land search and rescue support services to the Coordinating Authorities (New Zealand Police and Rescue Coordination Centre NZ) to locate and recover lost, missing and injured people from all over New Zealand. LandSAR volunteers operate in suburban, urban, wilderness and rural areas including regional and forest parks, shorelines and caves.

LandSAR is a registered charitable entity with over 3,500 trained search and rescue volunteers who are members of 60 local groups covering the length and breadth of New Zealand. There are also specialist teams, such as LandSAR Search Dogs, LandSAR Caving, Alpine Cliff Rescue, CanyonSAR and RiverSAR that operate on a local or regional basis where there is a need for their particular skills. LandSAR volunteers have also developed a specialist capability to manage and search for known wanderers who suffer from cognitive impairments such as dementia and autism by utilising electronic tracking devices worn by the subject.

At this time the workforce is predominantly male, European/Pakeha, with the vast majority aged 40 or over. Over half volunteers surveyed have been with LandSAR for more than 5 years (61%), and most are in employment (82% employed or self-employed). With only a small percentage of its funding from government, substantial fundraising is undertaken by volunteers.

LandSAR is an incorporated society, overseen by a Board of Directors. A small National Support Office team of 14 dedicated paid staff provide support to volunteers and manage the organisation. It has a federated structure where each group is an independent entity with its own constitution. All groups are members of LandSAR New Zealand.

In 2018-19 LandSAR was involved in 320 Search and Rescue Operations (SAROPS) deploying 3,046 trained volunteers assisting 684 people whose lives were at risk, committing a combined 131,540 unpaid hours to Search and Rescue activities.

In 2019 -2020 LandSAR was involved in 297 Search and Rescue Operations (SAROPS) deploying 2,610 trained volunteers assisting 1086 people whose lives were at risk, committing a combined 104,678 unpaid hours to Search and Rescue activities.

## **Context and Purpose**

LandSAR is tightly focused on providing volunteers with the support, resources and training to safely deliver professional search and rescue (SAR) services across the whole of New Zealand. Its strength is its people; their skill and dedication.

LandSAR volunteers are fundamental to ensuring we provide a high level of service to our lead agencies and the communities we serve. Volunteers are motivated to join and remain when they are well-led when their families and employers feel they are making a difference, and are appreciated, recognised and supported. Our aim is that volunteers are motivated to serve their communities through their local LandSAR group and that their families and employers feel recognised and supported by us. By doing this, we will help provide Search and Rescue services to the lost missing and injured while building community resilience.

## **Key points**

We know New Zealand is one of the leading countries in the world for volunteer participation. However, we are beginning to see changes in volunteering workforce, its motivation and the type of volunteering being conducted.

We know that service to society, self-actualisation, need for power, emotional association, autonomy, self-development, confirming of self-image (I am a good person, or I contribute to the worthy cause, or I help others), social interaction, and the need for mutual support are all considered motivations for volunteering. However, other factors now need to be considered as they pose a particular risk to a model that relies on long-term skilled volunteers. Time, civic core, atomisation, micro and project-based, spontaneous, strains, demographic change, now all need to be considered when developing our long-term suitable strategy.

We know that our key challenge is maintaining a skilled workforce that is available at all times for SAROPs, that this requires long-term and regular commitment from a core of volunteers. Given the changes outlined in the Volunteering New Zealand 2019 report, the following recommendations were made:

- Develop a volunteer strategy, and
- Prioritise opportunities to enhance volunteer management.

## **LandSAR Volunteerism Strengths**

Overall there are many effective volunteer support practices evident in LandSAR already. These include:

- A committed, trained, professional volunteer workforce, contributing to communities all across New Zealand.
- The ethos of voluntary service (one of LandSAR's core values) being visible throughout the organisation and through inter-personal relationships.
- The National Support Office staff's focus is on supporting groups and members and

developing policy, systems and funding to ensure the sustainability of LandSAR.

- The Group Support Officers advise on governance, systems, and membership management. Feedback from those interviewed is that staff are capable, supportive and approachable.
- The approach of providing information, encouraging conversations and sharing examples of good practice rather than 'telling' enables groups to recognise challenges and generate local solutions.
- The structured and collaborative approach for assessing the state of each group's personal resources and capability using the Group Support Tool. This enables LandSAR to tie resourcing to operational needs.
- The consultative approach is taken in the development of the Member Support Policy and Code of Conduct. These provide a framework for reinforcing and developing a culture of safety and respect.
- Competency-based training matrix enables assessment of competencies without needing to attend training for demonstrated competencies.
- Good relationships with Police and SAR organisations, including practices such as having a representative from other SAR organisations on committees (e.g. Coastguard in LandSAR Wanaka).
- The strong ownership and community connections within groups.

## Key Challenges

Key challenges to LandSAR volunteer workforce, which need to be considered include:

**The mismatch between LandSAR requirements and trends in volunteering** New Zealand and international trends show a shift to episodic and shorter-term volunteering, especially in younger age groups. With substantial ongoing training required for all operational roles, LandSAR needs volunteers who will make an ongoing commitment and be readily available at short notice.

Organisations that are successful in recruiting and retaining younger volunteers have feeder programmes and also recognise the competence and contribution of younger members (e.g. Surf Life Saving New Zealand and Scouts). With only 23% of female members, work is required to identify why this disparity continues and how to address it.

LandSAR has over 70% of its membership over 40. The risk of a shift to episodic and short-term volunteering in younger age groups could be a risk when looking at engaging a younger volunteer workforce. Given the ageing population, there will be a need to address the upcoming disparity in the medium term. That is considering this recommendation; international research has found that 10-15% of volunteers accounted for around 50% of all volunteer hours. This research goes onto say that younger volunteers were found to be more likely to devote fewer hours to volunteer work (15 to 34-

year-olds devoting half as much time to older age groups). Accepting that this can be influenced by societal norms – teenagers are already busy; elderly is influenced by age-related medical conditions. This study went on to find that volunteering was very much also influenced by the stage of life the volunteer was at. Often younger are more likely to volunteer. This needs to consider if LandSAR looks at adopting a successful feeder programme like other organisations including how it will engage and what it expects of the younger member.

**Federated structure and independence** LandSAR's federated structure has created a culture of independence within groups. Some groups take this as being autonomous and are not reflected in other SAR organisations. This misunderstanding puts these organisations at risk of non-compliance with New Zealand Law and undermines consistency and quality. Every group is required to meet reporting and governance requirements. This increases the disparity between the time spent on administration and training in relation to the time spent on SAROPS. This is a demotivator for volunteers. It appears that within committees, there is variable understanding of, and skills in, governance, finance and leadership.

Unfortunately, the additional administration imposed by compliance becomes a de-motivator for volunteers. A study into dropping out of volunteering found that for many volunteers, dropping out was extremely difficult. That the reason was due to the mismatch between actual experience versus and the expected experience. This misalignment can result in volunteers dropping out in order to preserve their positive self-feeling. To understand the nature of volunteers' dropout and perseverance, close attention needs to be paid to the processes of self-regulation in the context of the specific relations between the volunteers and the organization. The need for groups to meet reporting and governance is the demotivator, as this is not what they volunteered for. Additional pressure also comes onto the volunteer when the skill sets to achieve these administration and governance requirements don't exist within the group.

**Data and information quality on Volunteers** If indicators in the current membership demographics continue, it will create a succession risk. The current average age is 49 and will only increase in the coming years as the age of the population increases. Doubling the number of over 65's by the year 2037. Minimal data is collected on individual members leaving gaps in the organisation's ability to analyse workforce data and plan appropriately for the future.

**Diversity and LandSAR demographics** With only 27% female and 87% European, work will need to be done to broaden the appeal to female and culturally diverse volunteers. This is not to say the female is not volunteering, more women than men responded to the Rena disaster in 2012, and SLSNZ has 43.3% female. Diversity is an issue for all of SAR, with LandSAR at 87% European, Coastguard 89% and SLSNZ at 90%. Awareness and need to engage different communities will need to be part of any strategy, especially in the already competitive area of volunteer workforce recruitment. This needs to be considered for funding/sponsorship, as many organisations require some form of diversity metric in order to support.

**Funding** LandSAR receives government funding for only 20% of the cost of providing a national land Search and Rescue capability from NZSAR and the New Zealand Police. This limits funds available for investment in improving organisational systems and the support of groups.

Despite considerable fundraising efforts across LandSAR, volunteers are required to supply most of their own outdoor clothing and gear required in SAR. In small rural areas, volunteers are often also members of other SAR services, such as Fire and Emergency, who provide more resources and reimbursements for volunteers. An additional \$2.6 to 3.5 million per annum would be required for LandSAR to provide full protective clothing and gear for 3,000 active operational volunteers.

However, LandSAR continues not to be funded from central government for equipment; this is not the same for like-minded volunteer organisations like FENZ. This creates a barrier to volunteering, makes us uncompetitive in attracting a volunteer workforce. Especially as not everyone can afford the outlay (\$3K to \$6K) to purchase equipment needed to go into the field.

**Awards** The LandSAR national awards programme reflect high expectations and the historical patterns of long service, approximately 40% of LandSAR volunteers have over 5 years' service. Unfortunately, there is disparity across groups in how people are nominated for LandSAR' awards or recognised at a group level. As part of a review of this programme Volunteering New Zealand outlined the following opportunities.

- Development of awards to recognise milestone and contributions of newer volunteers,
- Share stories of volunteer contributions via social media, and
- Continuation of social activities to build group spirit.

## **Volunteerism Principles**

Our operating environment highlights the importance of continuing to value volunteers and recognise their unique contributions. We need to strengthen our leadership and connections with our volunteers across all roles in the organisation, provide broader and more flexible ways for people to volunteer and increase tailored support. To succeed, our strategy will require the commitment and effort of all our people and be reflected in all our systems, processes and behaviours. To support this, we are committed to the following principles co-designed with our SAR Sector partners, volunteers and employees. These will guide the decisions and actions of LandSAR, which we will be held accountable too.

Volunteers are the centre of the SAR sector and we recognise...

### Our volunteers

- Bring their place, environment, culture and experience with them
- Feel welcome and valued
- Are celebrated for their unique contribution
- Are here by choice!

### Our sector

- Builds an environment that enables volunteerism
- Is inclusive and collaborative
- Supports wellbeing
- Encourages transferability between agencies



### Our SAR agencies

- Are responsive to the volunteers
- Are responsive to communities
- Make it easy to volunteer
- Have open and honest communication
- Value professional standards

### Our communities

- Are all unique
- Thrive through collaboration
- Shape our volunteer and community engagement

## Priorities and Key Activities

This strategy gives effect to our Volunteerism Principles and is comprised of three priorities,

1. Broader and more flexible ways to volunteer.
2. Thriving volunteerism.
3. Better together.

The Volunteerism Strategy will also inform the development of our national support staff operating model so that our structure, roles and functions support its delivery.

### Priority One: Broader and more flexible ways to volunteer.

This priority is about drawing on the different skills, life experiences and time commitments our volunteers can offer. It is also about broadening the ways people from all walks of life can volunteer for us, beyond wilderness search and rescue. This could include new dedicated voluntary roles for SAR work, such as:

- Communications and information technology,
- Fundraising and community engagement,
- Safer walking including WanderSearch activities and management,
- Administrative and logistical roles.

This is intended to spread the effort and allow individual volunteers to better manage their time and commitment. Such roles do not necessarily require the same level of time commitment, physical fitness and training as our traditional volunteer search and rescue roles. These roles could be undertaken by a wider variety of people within our communities who don't want to take part in active field-based search and rescue.

Some roles could also be performed remotely, including by people with specific technical expertise (for example, in information technology), or by people who want to retain a connection to a community they no longer live in.

LandSAR is committed to increasing diversity at all levels of the organisation, including engaging more women in governance, management, leadership and SAR operational roles.

Research demonstrates that diverse groups are more productive and capable of reaching more creative solutions to complex problems. Employing people from different backgrounds, with different life experiences, learning styles, cultures and gender enriches our work environment and may add to our situational awareness during search and rescue operations.

LandSAR is much more effective when we reflect the communities we serve. Language and cultural barriers are minimised when our people are multilingual and culturally diverse. People are more likely to trust us when they can identify with us, and potentially speed up the search and rescue operation.

<p>Why does this matter?</p>	<p>The changing face of search and rescue, the New Zealand demographic, its effect on volunteering and our mandate to support the NZ Police and RCCNZ means we need to broaden our skills, and we can do this partly by being more flexible in the ways people can volunteer for us. This will make it easier and more attractive for people to volunteer, and increase the variety of people who are able to offer their time and skills to LandSAR.</p>
<p>What does success look like?</p>	<p>There are enough skilled, motivated and supported volunteers engaged with our organisation in every community we serve.</p> <p>LandSAR Groups are connected with their diverse communities.</p> <p>We have a whole-of-organisation volunteerism model that provides roles and progression pathways. These reflect local LandSAR Group needs and respect volunteers' choices and time. This includes broader and more flexible volunteer roles to enable more people to contribute.</p> <p>We have a more diverse volunteer workforce.</p> <p>All our people feel recognised, understand the value of volunteers and work in a unified workforce.</p> <p>We have volunteers from all walks of life, contributing different skills and experiences to a wide variety of roles.</p> <p>We have an engaged and inclusive workforce environment.</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion will shape a culture that enables everyone to feel they can bring their whole self to LandSAR. This will create a unified organisation and a shared identity. It will also help to build a workforce with the broad skills needed</p>

	<p>in our new organisation and enable us to work more effectively with New Zealand's diverse communities</p> <p>LandSAR is a commitment to work with Māori as Tangata Whenua. We will build strong and productive relationships with iwi and Māori that contribute to a safer environment for Māori and for all New Zealand communities.</p>
<p>Key changes.</p>	<p>Broaden the ways people can contribute when volunteering for LandSAR. Provide attractive opportunities outside of traditional search and rescue that use the variety of skills and life experiences that volunteers bring.</p> <p>Design roles for volunteers with busy lives, by offering flexibility and choice as to how, and how much, they volunteer. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teams using their existing skills for incidents, such as WanderSearch or Urban search and rescue operations.</li> <li>• Corporate volunteers who utilize paid leave and skills from their work roles, such as communications and IT.</li> <li>• Community volunteers supporting families of LandSAR volunteers with activities, such as childcare, travel to and from search and rescue operations.</li> <li>• Spontaneous volunteers who assist in less skilled search and rescue tasks.</li> <li>• Episodic volunteers who assist seasonally, such as in tourist areas.</li> </ul> <p>Grow a shared identity and an inclusive culture that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes a supportive environment.</li> <li>• Recognises and values the importance of our diverse workforce.</li> <li>• Takes a proactive approach to foster the strength of NZ Police and volunteers operating and training together.</li> </ul> <p>Core to the success of our Volunteerism Strategy is to broaden the range of people who volunteer and to build a culture where volunteers and volunteerism are valued, and volunteers are provided with similar recognition to career personnel.</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion support this by strengthening our ability to attract and retain a more diverse volunteer workforce reflective of the diverse communities we serve and to create visible career pathways that support the development of our volunteers.</p> <p>The Volunteerism Strategy also identifies the critical role of leaders in fostering a volunteerism culture and capability. This will be supported by Diversity and Inclusion focus on growing behaviours that equip leaders to strengthen their</p>

	<p>connection with volunteers, help ensure volunteers' views are heard and shape a respectful and inclusive culture.</p> <p>Our volunteers are part of the fabric of their community and are therefore a vital link to understanding community strengths, risks and needs and to help build community resilience. We will support our volunteers to engage with iwi and Māori in their local communities by building cultural competence to engage with Tangata Whenua. This will enable volunteers to partner with iwi as community leaders and as significant and growing land and forest owners, and through culturally tailored engagement and risk reduction programmes. It will also make it more attractive for Māori to volunteer with us.</p> <p>YSAR Feeder Programme Support. To support the recruitment of Younger volunteers into local groups, LandSAR will support the curriculum developed by YSAR and its alignment to LandSAR Field Team members competencies. Thereby allowing LandSAR groups the confidence in the educations and training gained by the YSAR trainees. LandSAR will award the Field Team member competency to those students who have successfully completed the entire 3-year YSAR programme. The programme has been reviewed and outcomes analysed against the competency, with LandSAR Training delivering key components of the curriculum, i.e., first aid, search methods, tracking skills and SARTrack.</p>
Key activities	<p>Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a volunteer workforce strategy with metrics to track progress.</li> <li>• Establish information required for workforce planning and develop a 10-year workforce plan.</li> <li>• Conduct a census to establish robust baseline data for workforce planning.</li> <li>• Improve the national database and collection of information on volunteers.</li> <li>• Aggregate information from the Group Assessment Tool to assess operational and succession needs across New Zealand.</li> </ul> <p>Strategic Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop recruitment tools and resources to increase consistency</li> <li>• Develop selection criteria and standards for core roles.</li> <li>• Collect data on turnover and reasons for an exit for workforce planning.</li> <li>• Develop recruitment and informational resources to assist groups with recruitment.</li> <li>• Create volunteer role pathways (including specialist disciplines) to create transparency around progression.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit to specific roles and expertise (e.g. Group treasurer, Secretary, Governance, Management, Communications, Field teams, Technology, etc.) based on workforce needs analysis.</li> <li>Use workforce planning and targeted recruitment to increase volunteer participation of women, Maori and other underrepresented groups (in line with the diversity strategy).</li> <li>Look to the recruitment of couples, thereby increasing the social aspect of SAR.</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a diversity strategy as part of workforce planning with a roll-out process to build understanding of the need for and benefits of diversity, i.e. Women in SAR, engaging with Iwi, Youth/Feeder programs, engaging with other Ethnicities.</li> <li>Follow up with volunteers who leave within 3 years to assess the impact of the current culture.</li> </ul> <p>Induction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop induction policy and supporting resources for groups, utilising good practices and resources already developed by individual groups</li> </ul>
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## Priority Two: Thriving volunteerism

This priority is about building a model for volunteerism across our entire organisation that improves decision making and makes it easier to attract and support volunteers, their families and their employers.

Why does this matter?	LandSAR volunteers are fundamental to ensuring we provide a high level of service to all communities. Volunteers are motivated to join and remain when they are well-led when their families and employers feel they are making a difference, and are appreciated, recognised and supported.
What does success look like?	<p>Volunteerism is embedded in our organisation's way of doing things so that it is easy to be a volunteer and volunteering thrives.</p> <p>Our leaders, employees and support personnel understand and appreciate the role of volunteers in our organisation's success, have a strengthened role in supporting volunteers and work closely with them.</p> <p>We champion and demonstrate our commitment to volunteering and volunteerism, and its value to our organisation, to our communities and to individual volunteers.</p>

	<p>Volunteers, their families and employers feel appreciated and recognised for their contribution and feel properly supported.</p> <p>Our people regardless of the role, are proactively supported in their safety, health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Volunteer-friendly practices exist across the organisation.</p> <p>Volunteers have a close connection with their leaders, are engaged with the organisation and have a voice in decisions that affect them. They contribute and receive ongoing support that respects their individuality and meets the community's search and rescue needs.</p> <p>The organisation undertakes research, monitors, reviews and strives to continually improve how it supports volunteers and community-based volunteerism.</p> <p>We have a strong profile and good reputation for our approach to supporting volunteers and volunteerism in the volunteer land-based search and rescue sector.</p>
Key changes.	<p>Develop a modular service delivery model and engagement approach that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes and leverages off volunteers' broad skill sets</li> <li>• Accommodates volunteer contributions beyond core operations</li> <li>• Recognizes that volunteers may be suited to more than one role within the organization over time and that volunteering takes different forms.</li> </ul> <p>Provide support for volunteers, with volunteer-orientated systems, processes and practices tailored to local needs. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A level of support, such as training, based on the LandSAR Groups profile.</li> <li>• Providing support to employers, families and volunteers to recognise and emphasise the value of their contribution.</li> <li>• Dedicated resource, such as administration to support volunteers, based on their specific needs and particularly in locations where volunteer numbers are under pressure.</li> <li>• Stronger safety, health and wellbeing support.</li> <li>• Capability development to assist all personnel to work more effectively with volunteers.</li> <li>• A leadership framework and system that recognises the variety of skills and experience of our volunteers.</li> </ul>
Key activities	Recognition and Retention:

- Develop awards/approaches to recognise milestones and contribution of volunteers.
- Develop a recognition programme for families and employers of LandSAR volunteers.
- Share stories of volunteer contribution via social media.
- Continue with social activities after SAROPs or during slow operational periods to build group spirit (4WD, Caving, Tramping, etc.).
- Encourage alliances/regions to get other groups involved in SAROPs quickly – more involvement across group boundaries.
- Build social connections to the core volunteers within the Group (inclusiveness, break down cliques).
- Develop an internal group mentoring and coaching programme (during training and SAROp's and across regional/group boundaries).

#### Health and Safety:

- Use volunteer best practice stories to promote the value of Health and Safety processes.
- Contract in 24/7 professional trauma support services.
- Develop and incorporate a structured post-incident trauma, and emotional debrief process. Provide team leaders with training so that support is available in all regions and in areas of high activity.

#### Leadership:

- Profile and promote effective leaders across LandSAR
- Provide professional development on managing and leading volunteers
- Negotiate the ongoing attendance at the Police SAR Managers Course
- Develop a young leaders programme to assist in the retention and engagement of younger members.

#### Training:

- Provide blended learning by developing interactive eLearning modules for theory and assessment to increase accessibility and reduce the time required by volunteers and assessor.
- Develop a repository for sharing training activities developed by groups.
- Implement a learning management system and platform.
- Share stories about groups using the competency matrix well and the benefits this provides.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue encouraging joint training across groups to facilitate cooperation and assistance with searches in adjoining areas.</li> <li>• Support groups with few SAROPs to provide interesting field-based training to maintain competency and connection with LandSAR.</li> </ul> <p>Public Profile of volunteers and their contribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise a range of media to publicise stories of LandSAR volunteers.</li> <li>• Set a realistic expectation about our people and variety of roles – <i>we not all bushmen</i>.</li> <li>• Place stories of individual volunteers and group achievements on the website and showcase diversity to attract more diverse volunteers.</li> <li>• Make greater utilisation of LandSAR Facebook page with more stories and videos of individual volunteers, rescues and groups.</li> <li>• Generate more stories and links to stories about LandSAR volunteers and groups on social media and the internet.</li> <li>• Groups to share links to stories in their local media with the rest of LandSAR.</li> </ul> <p>Internal Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresh the website to make navigation easier.</li> <li>• Create a mechanism for raising private or serious concerns within LandSAR.</li> <li>• Continue to assist member in engaging with the website.</li> </ul>
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### Priority Three: Better together

This priority is about unifying the organisation through a culture of mutual respect among all of our people. This can be achieved by appreciating that our capability can only be sustained by valuing and strengthening the connections between volunteers, lead agencies (NZ Police and RCCNZ), other SAR Agencies, and between volunteers, their communities and national support staff. It highlights the importance of all of our people working effectively together and all perspectives and voices being heard, so we are collectively responsive to the risks and needs of our communities.

Why does this matter?	<p>By embracing differences and strengths, we will have greater collaboration between Groups and lead agencies. This will provide a stronger service for our communities and improve community resilience.</p> <p>By working together more effectively to support, encourage, maintain and strengthen volunteerism, we will be better able to meet the challenges we face and adapt to our changing environment.</p>
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	<p>Our volunteers are a vital link to our communities. A strong volunteer base helps us understand community risks, needs and strengths, and identify and provide appropriate search and rescue services.</p> <p>By training and supporting volunteers to be leaders, we also contribute to stronger and more resilient communities.</p> <p>As community first response members, our volunteers share responsibility with the community for other emergency scenarios. This will help create safer communities and build community resilience.</p> <p>A more connected organisation will increase opportunities for our volunteers to share insights and experiences. This helps improve our services and also supports a stronger and more adaptable workforce.</p>
<p>What does success look like?</p>	<p>LandSAR Groups are aware of their strengths, risks and needs, and this informs the services they provide locally. LandSAR Groups benefit from the support of a national organisation and regional alliances, particularly in search and rescue operations, and the skills and experience that volunteers gain through being involved in LandSAR.</p> <p>Volunteers' perspectives are integrated into our planning and decision making.</p> <p>Volunteers and national support staff are well connected, understand each other's needs and interests and support each other.</p>
<p>Key changes.</p>	<p>Strengthen our networks and connections with our diverse communities through interactive digital and offline communications that are a regular part of the way we work and recognise the characteristics of each community and our partnership with them.</p> <p>Identify and develop partnerships that meet the needs of our communities, with a national policy that ensures consistency and quality in the way we partner, as well as flexible models for local partnering with lead agencies (especially NZ Police).</p> <p>Strengthen our connections with each other, through effective engagement that shares and harnesses the range of knowledge, experience and capability available across LandSAR and the wider search and rescue sector.</p>
<p>Key activities</p>	<p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop governance, leadership and volunteer management toolkits to support groups.</li> <li>• Develop an induction process for new group committee members.</li> <li>• Begin conversations across LandSAR on the benefits and opportunities</li> </ul>

	<p>for alliances amongst groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop incentives to encourage alliances to align with SAROPS activity.</li> </ul> <p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities to develop and share resources with other SARs groups, AREC, Coastguard NZ and SLSNZ.</li> <li>• CE to continue with visits to Groups and Newsletters.</li> <li>• Develop a programme of National Manager's visits to strengthen engagement with the groups that are less connected.</li> <li>• Develop a leadership programme to build a culture of connection across LandSAR.</li> </ul> <p>Resourcing of Volunteer Management and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a National Volunteer Sustainability Manager role with a focus on implementing this strategy.</li> <li>• Develop a best practice repository for resources developed by groups.</li> <li>• Develop volunteer management resources for leaders.</li> <li>• Assess the viability of finding volunteers or part-time staff for group administrating.</li> <li>• Explore ways to provide consistently branded affordable clothing and gear.</li> <li>• Establish a repository for effective fundraising and event ideas and resources.</li> </ul>
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## Key Performance Indicators

We will monitor our success against the volunteerism key performance indicators:

- **Commitment to Volunteers.** The organisation consults with and includes volunteers in its planning and decisions.
- **Safety, Health and Wellbeing.** Volunteers' safety, health and wellbeing are proactively supported and equitably resourced.
- **Attraction, Selection and Recruitment.** There are enough skilled and motivated volunteers who reflect their communities and meet their needs, now and into the future.
- **Leadership and Management.** Leaders and managers actively demonstrate the organisation's commitment to volunteers and community-based volunteerism.
- **Support and Development.** Volunteers receive ongoing development and support in a manner that respects their individuality and meets community search and rescue needs.
- **Volunteer Recognition.** Volunteers, their employers and families feel appreciated, recognised

and supported.

- **Community Involvement.** Effective local relationships exist through volunteer presence in the community.
- **Volunteer Roles.** Volunteer roles and progression pathways reflect community needs and respect volunteer choice.
- **Quality Management and Continuous Improvement.** The organisation monitors, reviews and strives to continually improve how it supports volunteers and community-based volunteerism.

## Appendix A: Supporting Strategies

This Volunteerism Strategy is supported by a suite of related strategies, which will help advance the key shifts we need to make to deliver on the strategy

Strategy	How this supports the Volunteerism Strategy
<p>Land Search and Rescue New Zealand 2025 Strategy.</p> <p>LandSAR strategy 2025 shows how we intend to achieve our purpose of providing SAR services to the lost, missing and injured.</p>	<p>LandSAR strategy 2025 shows how we intend to achieve our purpose of providing SAR services to the lost, missing and injured. Within this we have identified the critical success factors we need to achieve in order to realize our purpose and vision. These critical success factors and associated strategic initiatives form the basis of our strategy and include:</p> <p>Strong and Sustainable Relationships – Collaboration and mutual support</p> <p>LandSAR’s Relationships and partnerships enhance its reputation and influence within the national and international SAR sectors and the wider New Zealand society. Through efficient working relationships, we can continue to meet the needs of the SAR sector, our lead agencies and the lost, missing and injured.</p> <p>Well Supported and Engaged Groups and Specialist Teams - Sustainability</p> <p>Sufficient capacity exists within LandSAR NZ to consistently meet the requirements of the coordinating agencies. We embrace the responsibility of providing safe and effective environments for LandSAR members by making our support and training meaningful. We provide our groups with the solutions they need in a positive and supportive manner.</p> <p>Service and Organisational Quality - Fit for Purpose</p> <p>LandSAR’s workforce is sustainable and has the necessary skills, knowledge and equipment to carry out their SAR responsibilities safely and competently every time. Through greater search and rescue experiences, we empower pioneering change for the SAR sector, LandSAR groups and staff/members.</p> <p>Financial Sustainability - Membership and stakeholder value</p> <p>We will diversify and grow our income/funding in order to return value to our membership, stakeholders and the public of New Zealand.</p>
<p>Diversity and Inclusion (<i>work in progress</i>)</p> <p>Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy intends to shape a culture that enables everyone to feel they can bring their whole self to work. This will help to create a unified</p>	<p>Core to the success of our Volunteerism Strategy is to broaden the range of people who volunteer and to build a culture where volunteers and volunteerism are valued and volunteers are provided with recognition.</p> <p>The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports this by strengthening our ability to attract and retain a more diverse volunteer workforce reflective of the diverse communities we serve and to create visible career pathways that support the development of our volunteers.</p> <p>The Volunteerism Strategy also identifies the critical role of leaders in fostering a volunteerism culture and capability. This will be supported by the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy’s focus on growing behaviours that equip leaders to</p>

<p>organisation and a shared identity. It will also help to build a workforce with the broad skills needed in LandSAR and enable us to work more effectively with New Zealand's diverse communities.</p>	<p>strengthen their connection with volunteers, help ensure volunteers' views are heard and shape a respectful and inclusive culture.</p>
<p>Māori Outcomes Programme (<i>work in progress</i>)</p> <p>This programme reflects our commitment to work with Māori as tangata whenua. It sets out how we will build strong and productive relationships with iwi and Māori that contribute to a safer environment for Māori and for all New Zealand communities.</p>	<p>Our volunteers are part of the fabric of their community and are therefore a vital link to understanding community strengths, risks and needs and to help build community resilience.</p> <p>The Māori Outcomes Programme will support our volunteers to engage with iwi and Māori in their local communities by building cultural competence to engage with tangata whenua. This will enable volunteers to partner with iwi as community leaders and as significant and land and forest owners, and reduce the risk of harm from becoming, lost, missing or injured for Māori through culturally tailored engagement and risk reduction programmes. It will also make it more attractive for Māori to volunteer with us.</p>