

# The Role of a GSO

So, you've heard the rumour that there's now a few more Group Support Officers (GSO's) out there and you're wondering why. What do those GSO's do? And more importantly what can they do for you and your group?

## Let us start with the 'Why?'

Have you ever been to a group or committee meeting where someone comes up with a bright idea? After some discussion, the group decides it's an idea worth progressing. And then the chair asks; "So who's going to work on that/do something about that?" ..... Silence and chirping crickets follow.

Or have you attended a group AGM where it's reached that stage of the meeting to elect the officers, only to again hear that eerie silence.

Well you guessed it; you just found the 'why?'

GSO's exist to support your group with their bright ideas, and help lighten the load on committee members, if you want us to. To be crystal clear we cannot take on committee roles for your group, but we can assist to lessen the time commitment. The aim is to make committee roles achievable alongside life's other priorities.

Below is a list of ways you may wish to engage with or utilise your GSO. We say may because it's completely up to you. Many groups have members who ably and happily carry out the roles or tasks outlined below. If this is that case for your group; fantastic! We're happy to leave you to it, just give us a call if we can help.

This list should be considered a starting point, if you would like assistance with something that's not included please let us know.

## Safety Management and Group Competency Support

- Administrative assistance for group competency assessors
- Incident reporting and investigation

## Group Administration

- New member police vetting
- Signing up new members or deactivating retired/in-active members
- Sorting ID cards
- Help with admin grant invoices

## Training Planning

- Training calendar development using the info given via GPT's
- Arranging additional courses during year
- Course cancellation and postponement actions

## Training Delivery Support: for both national and local group training

- Course promotion
- Course logistics: food and venues
- Management of registrations
- Processing mileage and other course expense claims
- Course Point of Contact (POC)

### **Group Governance Support**

- Assisting new group office holders with learning their roles
- Supporting group planning and succession planning
- Support for mediating disagreements and disputes within groups

### **Intergroup and National Communication**

- Attending debriefs, SAREX's and meetings, assisting to disseminate learning and successes that could be useful to other groups
- Assisting with the facilitation or formation of regional or intergroup alliances and training
- Collecting group issues, success stories and general feedback for informing LandSAR management and national governance
- Keeping groups informed of SAR news and relevant information from around the country
- Police and other agency liaison

### **Member Wellbeing/ Trauma Support**

- Working with groups and teams to ensure that members are well looked after following challenging operations (a range of appropriate support options are currently being developed)
- Assistance with access to ongoing wellbeing support

### **Local Fundraising Support**

- Assistance with local funding applications and promotional activities

### **Equipment Support**

- Provisioning of new equipment
- Equipment management systems
- Advice, including IT systems support
- Map ordering

### **Performance Reporting**

- SARdonyx data collation and entry

Group Support Officers are regionally based to give us good geographic coverage and put someone in your neck of the woods. Each GSO has a number of groups which they will be the primary contact for, but we do work as a team supported by the wider LandSAR staff group.

GSO's come from a variety of backgrounds and there is strength in this diversity. Some are SAR members, some are logistical geniuses, some are IT wizards, and others will be better placed to answer your technical questions. All have a strong belief in the vision and purpose of LandSAR.

As a first port of call direct your enquiries to your local GSO, if they can't help, they will know where to access help for you. We look forward to assisting you soon.

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