



Welcome

SITREP — the training newsletter

Welcome to another edition of SITREP — the last for 2013

We have yet again negotiated another year volunteering many hundreds of hours to provide invaluable support services to our communities to save lives and reduce suffering. The 2012/13 NZSAR Annual Report indicates that collectively the SAR community saved 162 lives averting \$550 million in social costs to the country and rescuing a further 724 and assisting 1,173 people. This is obviously a significant piece of work and one which LandSAR can rightly be proud to be part of.

However this does come at a cost in terms of the sacrifices each and every one of you make by taking time out of your lives—away from family and friends, away from work and recreational activities—to attain operational capability and respond when required. So with Christmas fast approaching it's a good time to reflect on the 12 months just gone, relax with families and friends and recharge batteries in preparation for the New Year.

You will see that this edition of the newsletter has undergone a facelift which should not only look different but should also indicate a fresh approach to the way we communicate news and other important or interesting information to our membership—particularly as regards training and other operational issues.

We want this newsletter to be relevant and readable but above all a newsletter for the members by the members—so to achieve that we are asking for two things:

- Ideas about what to include or maybe exclude in future editions
- Contributions from members including interesting and/or humorous stories or case studies illustrating lessons learnt

You can email your ideas or articles to me at:

pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz

And finally, from everyone here at the National Office a huge thanks for your time, energy, effort, patience and comradeship during the past 12 months. We sincerely wish you and your families all the very best over the festive period.

Stay Safe —Kia Kaha

PETE CORBETT, Group Support Manager
SITREP Editor

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ALAN THOMPSON — STANDING BY

Pete Corbett



As most people know being part of a voluntary organisation can take up a huge amount of valuable time often at the detriment of their own personal lives—which seems to be OK for most folk as it satisfies an intrinsic human need to give something back to their communities.

However every so often someone comes along who makes an even greater contribution on a national

level to assist the whole organisation. Alan Thompson from Wellington has been one such individual who has been involved in many national projects over the years of operational significance including the development of the ipstar* programme, collation and analysis of the quarterly reporting data, resource tracking and eTexting guidelines, SMSG and many more—all on a purely voluntary basis whilst still an active operational member of the Wellington Group and a committee member—and involved in other community projects including a local save the kiwi project.

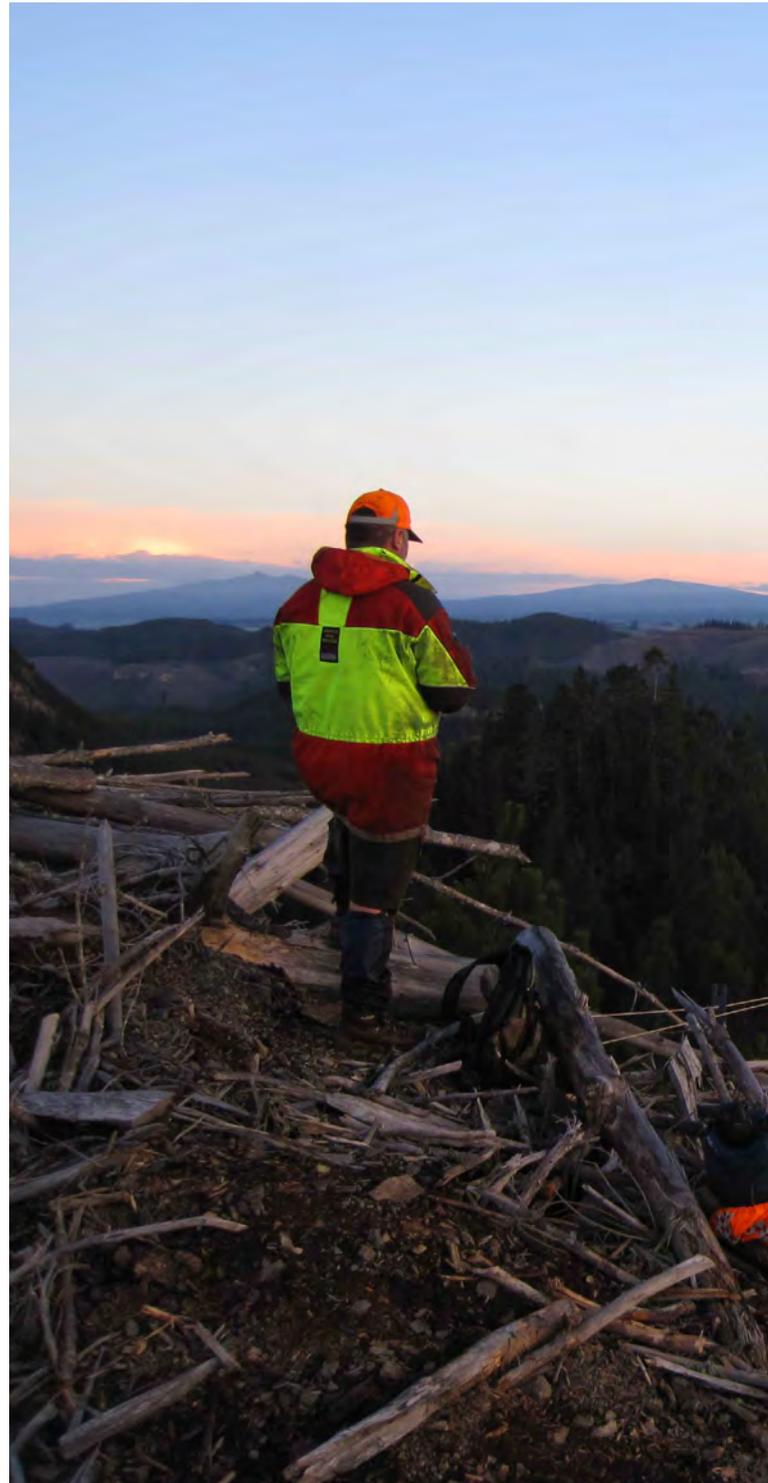
ipstar* is probably the best example of Alan's work in which he not only built the units but negotiated a sponsorship arrangement (saving LandSAR and Police many thousands of dollars a year), wrote the operations manuals and spent many hundreds of hours providing invaluable technical support. Recently he spent a couple of days in Canterbury field trialing a unit to ensure it was working properly whilst undertaking some communication planning at sites that have either been problematic in the past or likely to be used for future forward staging area locations— again on a voluntary basis.

However there does come a time when all of this extra work begins to take its toll and sensible people recognise the need to pull back and focus on other important parts of their lives—and so it is with Alan.

So this is an opportunity to acknowledge the good work done by Alan, thank him for all of his efforts and wish him well for all future endeavors— thanks mate.

The obvious question of course when someone like Alan steps aside is who is going to replace him, particularly as regards the ipstar* programme – so this is how it is going to work moving forward:

- Sponsorship liaison with Farmside— John Woolf.
- Technical support— Farmside technicians (contacts to be advised in due course).
- Stakeholder & relationship management— where and how the units are deployed and utilized— Group Support Officers around the country.



LANDSAR BIO — JOHN WOOLF

“



I am pleased to be part of the LandSAR organisation which provides New Zealanders with such an essential service. Makes me feel like I am contributing to something worthwhile.

As communications coordinator, my job is to ensure that when the SAR teams are taking part in a search and rescue operation, they are equipped with a suitable number of radios

which are operating correctly and fitted with the appropriate channels to allow communication with the other groups involved in the rescue. This responsibility extends to the LandSAR portable repeaters and to looking at future technology such as satellite trackers, which will allow greatly improve the safety of SAR teams in the field.

I have worked in the radio industry all my life particularly with VHF and UHF networks, latterly as product manager for Telecom's Fleetlink, a nationwide trunked mobile network which provided communications to the trucking, courier and security industries.

Outside of work my passion is sailing, having completed a six year circumnavigation of the globe in my yacht 'Beyond', returning to my home city of Wellington in 2011. There is something special about crossing an ocean, and sailing into a port of a country you have never visited before.

Radio communications are a big part of the cruising life, with the daily HF radio net being a highlight of the day, particularly when you are sailing solo. The daily net allows you to catch up with friends and plot where they are on the chart, to see if you are beating them or not, as well as receiving updated weather forecasts and helping with emergency situations, which do happen occasionally

”

John has been contracted to coordinate LandSAR's Radio Communication's programme.

OPERATIONAL FORMS & TEMPLATES

Pete Corbett

All of our operational forms and templates have been endorsed by both Coordinating Authorities and are now hosted by NZSAR on their website—

<http://searchandrescuecouncil.org.nz/Resources/NZSAR-Forms>

You will note that the land specific forms remain largely unchanged, and are formatted as pdf documents with interactive fields—so you can either type directly into the document before saving them, or you can print them out as hard copies.

The forms will be maintained by a SAR Forms and Templates Management Group which will meet annually to review the forms and make any necessary changes. LandSAR is represented on this Group by Pete Corbett along with others from RCCNZ, Police, Coastguard and NZSAR.

These forms will be used in all training activities and their use is encouraged throughout all SAR agencies. They are however living documents so if you want to suggest any changes email Phil Burgess from NZSAR at:

p.burgess@transport.govt.nz



LANDSAR TRAINING SUPPORT BUDGET GUIDELINES 2013—2014

Pete Corbett

The training year September 2013 —August 2014 has significantly higher levels of funding support than previous years thanks to the Outdoor Safety Committee (OSC) of the Lottery Grants Board. This means we can offer support for all forms of training in an effort to make this activity free to all members.

The training budgets however remain tight against predicted demand as outlined in the 2014 National Training Calendar so the following Training Support Budget Guidelines have been developed.

TYPE	DETAILS	ALLOWABLE SUPPORT
CORE TRAINING For all TPP courses	For all TPP courses LandSAR will pay for food and accommodation as required. TPP will pay for the venue. All delivery costs including flights, meals and accommodation for the tutors are paid for by TPP.	\$45 per person per day for both food and accommodation. \$30 per person per day (this is where the accommodation is included in the venue costs and paid for by TPP).
REFRESHER & CONTINUATION (all other training delivered outside the TPP Programme)	One day events—these are generally delivered on a Group or district basis—LandSAR will provide support in the form of meals and venue costs. Two day events—delivered on either a Group, district or region basis LandSAR will provide the same level of support as for a TPP core course including any venue costs. LandSAR pays for the delivery costs of all refresher and continuation training activities.	\$20 per person per day for food \$200 per day for venue hire (if required). \$45 per person per day for both food and accommodation. \$30 per person per day for food only (this is where the cost of accommodation is included in the venue costs—or it is a field based course where accommodation is not required.) \$200 per day for venue hire (if necessary).
TRAVEL SUPPORT	LandSAR will provide travel support as per the current travel policy for all training events and activities. Car pooling is encouraged to reduce these costs.	.60c per km up to a maximum of \$300 per event. The approved expense claim forms must be used—emailed directly to office@landsar.org.nz within 1 month of the event.

LANDSAR TRAINING SUPPORT BUDGET GUIDELINES 2013—2014

Important points to note:

Given the limitation on training support funds it is vitally important that everyone involved in the coordination of training is aware of the following points:

- **The Group Support Officers (GSOs) have delegated authority to approve costs against the training budget.** This means they must first approve all training costs before they are incurred ensuring they comply with the training budget guidelines as outlined on the previous page.
- **All invoices raised or claims submitted must go back to the GSO for approval and coding.** The GSO will then forward these to the national office for payment on the **20th** of the following month.
- **The above costs are maximum amounts allowed for training support** They are not targets to be met so we should try in all instances to keep training costs to a minimum. The more we spend on support the less we have available for delivery.
- **LandSAR will only pay for LandSAR people** Other organisations have to meet support costs for their own personnel.

So just in relation to expense claims and invoices—some clarity:

- Groups can invoice us if they are providing training support services such as catering—use a tax invoice if GST registered.
- **Groups and or individuals can (and should) be reimbursed for training support costs if they have to pay for food and or accommodation and venue or any other GSO approved expense (whiteboard pens might be an example).** These costs can be claimed using the approved Expense Claim Form that can be downloaded from the website. Remember to attach your receipts (GST receipts preferably which means we can claim the GST back).

The above invoices and claim forms, pertaining directly to an approved training event, are submitted to your GSO for payment on the 20th of the following month.

Individuals can also claim travel costs including mileage using the approved Expense Claim Form.

But these claims are submitted directly to the National Office for payment on the 20th of the month following —complete the form electronically and email to office@landsar.org.nz



PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACONS

Pete Corbett



LandSAR Groups have been issued with two Fast Find 220 personal locator beacons (PLBs) from the 2013–2014 OSC allocation.

This initiative is part of a developing Safety Management System that encourages the carriage of PLBs by field teams—particularly those who have been deployed as part of an initial response where effective VHF or other communications have yet to be reliably established—or in other higher risk situations where environmental conditions may prevent the deployment of a VHF repeater and a level of communications redundancy is required for distress calling in the event of a mishap by the field team.

The National Office will be registering all of the LandSAR issued PLBs with Maritime New Zealand and as part of the allocation process. Contact information has been collected from the Groups which will be used by RCCNZ in the event of an activation to determine who has been issued with the PLB, where it has been deployed and under what circumstances, which will assist in determining the level and nature of the response.

Once registration has occurred the Group Administrator (for the PLBs) will receive an email confirming their contact information. It is important that this information is checked to ensure accuracy and kept on record so it can be reviewed periodically and amended as required. We suggest this is done annually as part of the audit process.

It is also important that Groups are able to account for the units—it is suggested you keep a log or a register recording who has been issued with them and under what circumstances. Each beacon has a serial number on the back label that can be used for this purpose.

It is envisaged that further allocations of PLBs will occur in future to accommodate a beacon per team when deemed necessary.



THE QUIZ

Pete Corbett

Last edition's question:

During the course of a search operation the Incident Controller (IC) or other members of the Incident Management Team (IMT) should take time out to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the search operation from a management perspective.

ERI International Inc (<http://www.eri-intl.com>) from North America has developed an 'incident health evaluation' checklist comprised of 12 key areas of incident management that should be critically examined to determine how well the incident is being managed.

Consider what those 12 key areas of incident management might be..?

Answer:

Incident "Health" Evaluation

- I have time to review this list.
- An atmosphere of positive urgency is being maintained.
- Clues and items found are being tracked and resolved.
- Staff are taking breaks and not working beyond scheduled shifts.
- Search efforts are focused on achieving established safety, investigative, confinement and search objectives.
- The identity, location and status of all incident personnel are known.
- Transportation, food, shelter and communications requirements for the next operational period are identified and are being addressed.
- Resources are being assigned promptly; unassigned personnel aren't wandering about the ICP.
- Teams returning from assignments are being debriefed promptly. Debriefing information is being recorded, and is being considered in developing future assignments and objectives.
- The family supports the search effort.
- Media coverage is positive and helpful.
- Rescue, medical and demobilization plans are ready for implementation.

This edition's question

It's coming up to Xmas so we are going to be easy on you—so the question is:

What are the two essential elements of a successful search?

These are two high level strategic aims and apply in every search situation, including looking for that missing set of keys or little Johnnie at the A&P show.

FINDING PLBs WITHOUT HELICOPTERS

Mike Ambrose

Personal Locator Beacons are a great safety advancement for backcountry users. Sales and registration figures show that this technology is being adopted by recreationists in rapidly increasing numbers. Buyers are keen to have the peace of mind, provided by the promise of fairly instantaneous rescue, should they get into difficulty.

In the event of a beacon being activated a 406MHz distress signal is relayed almost immediately to the Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) in Wellington, via a high orbit geostationary SAR satellite. In the following period of time (the length of which depends on where satellites are in the sky at the time) low orbit satellites then indicate which part of the globe the signal has come from. For those users who spent the extra money to buy a GPS enabled PLB, their location will be narrowed even further by the transmission of their co-ordinates with the distress signal. Standard procedure at this point is for the RCC to deploy a helicopter that can get to the vicinity of the distress signal quickly and then zero in on its exact location, using on board equipment that can home on the local 121.5MHz signal that PLBs also transmit.

But what happens if the helicopter can't get there? Flying in the New Zealand mountains is governed by VFR (Visual Flight Rules) which basically say that pilots must be able to see the ground, any obstructions and other aircraft when flying. Helicopters are not permitted to fly into clouds—particularly when in proximity to the ground. With our mountain weather being what it is, we have had, and can expect to continue to have, instances where helicopters cannot get close to an activated PLB (or ELT—the aviation equivalent).

For a non-GPS enabled PLB, satellites will only be able to indicate a location with a 5 kilometre degree of accuracy—in a large tract of backcountry this may only limit the possible location to an area of approximately 8,000 hectares! Even for GPS encoded signals, normal 120 metre accuracy will leave a search area of up to 5 hectares (or more if steep terrain or other obstructions reduce the quality of the GPS fix).

As most SAR team members will know, it can be difficult to locate a missing party in even a relatively small area like this (think 10 rugby fields) when dense bush, bluffs or steep gullies are involved. Being able to utilise the 121.5 MHz PLB signal on the ground gives search parties a significant advantage—saving resources and time that could be critical if the party in distress is injured.

LandSAR has purchased, and is deploying, 10 sets of handheld direction finding (DF) receivers that can indicate the bearing and strength of 121.5MHz distress signals. Each set consists of two receivers, as the ability to triangulate directional signals from two separate vantage points is the quickest way of narrowing down a search area. The DF gear will be hosted by groups based in close proximity to mountainous terrain (as, not surprisingly, mountains are magnets for non-flyable weather and also have the greatest concentrations of beacon activations). The intent is also to space the locations of the DF gear so that reasonable coverage is provided, in the event that it ever needs to be deployed to less likely incident sites. Groups hosting the gear carry an obligation for training operators and for those operators to be available to travel to wherever the use of the receivers is required in future (this includes being able to operate safely in any terrain type that could be encountered in the area that coverage is provided for). To date sets have been distributed to Fiordland, Wanaka, Mt Cook, Fox Glacier, Christchurch and Taupo. Decisions on the location of a further set for the Upper South Island and three more sets for the North Island will be communicated shortly. A Best Practice Guide, for the most effective use of the equipment, is being compiled by LandSAR as a supplement to the manufacturer's operating instructions.



SOUTH ISLAND ALPINE SAREX— CARNAGE ON THE ANNETTE

Mike Ambrose

In early November Alpine and Cliff Rescue (ACR) Teams from across the South Island got together at Mt Cook for a two day alpine SAREX. 24 ACR team members participated in a scenario that centred around locating and evacuating four victims of a scenic helicopter flight crash in the high mountains.

“That’s easy!” you might say, “just send another couple of helicopters” except the simulated weather conditions for the SAREX were fast deteriorating, and once teams were landed somewhere near the crash site, the clouds rolled in and it was deemed that no further helicopter assistance would be available for the duration of the exercise. With 1500 metres of altitude to lose and many kilometres of glaciated terrain to cross to get the patients off the mountain, the task ahead was considerable. The ACR teams pooled their resources and got to work on manoeuvring four stretchers through a protracted series of high angle snow lowers, traverses, sledge hauls, vertical drops and raises using pulley systems.

The length of the task dictated that the teams spend a night camped at high altitude. Actual weather conditions, which had included cold winds and poor visibility during the day, cleared as the camp was pitched and everyone enjoyed one of the clearest and stillest nights imaginable in the mountains.

The realities of the work that ACR teams are preparing for were brought home on the morning of Day 2, when the Mt Cook SAR team had to be hastily plucked from the SAREX to respond to a Swedish extreme skier who had suffered a fatal fall on Aoraki/Mt Cook itself. The exercise continued with the ‘patients’, including LandSAR CEO, Harry Maher and Morgan Foundation trustee, Jo Morgan eventually being delivered to safety. The Morgan Foundation generously supports ACR teams throughout NZ and Jo (who is a keen climber herself) commented on how impressed she was with the skills of team members and how well looked after she felt during the exercise.

The ACR team members themselves rated the SAREX as both valuable and enjoyable and particularly appreciated the opportunity to work alongside, and compare skills with, colleagues from other locations. LandSAR has a programme to run alpine SAREXs annually, alternating between the North and South Islands.



GROUP TRAINING OFFICER FORUMS

Karen Walker

Earlier this year we held a series of Group Training Officer (GTO) forums throughout the country which were devised primarily to attain a common understanding of what the role of GTO entails and how it interfaces with other roles at a Regional and National level.

A large part of these forums was given over to the discussion and brainstorming of training; marketing, promotion, coordination and the registration process as a whole.

We received some fantastic feedback about the training process, examples of which are given below:

- It encourages ownership/responsibility per member (individual buy-in).
- Visibility of and access to calendar with all courses (nationwide) in one location.
- Existence of a simple process.
- Organised timeframes are in place to ‘health check’ the uptake of courses.
- Electronic registration

We received several suggestions on how to improve the registration process which we took on board and were able to act on some of these almost immediately so that the results will be seen this coming year;

- Training calendar access on homepage—there is now a link to the Training Calendar on the welcome page of the website.
- Post course information to GTOs – we now send out course completion documentation from TPP direct to GTOs to disseminate to attendees, ensuring visibility of the course workbook and certificate of completion.
- Use of Facebook—we will use the Facebook page to enhance the marketing and promotion of courses and to promote the training calendar.
- Registration confirmation to GSOs and GTOs—The 2014 process will ensure that the GTO receives a copy of the registration as soon as it is made. We distributed a GTO list to course providers and they have undertaken to copy the GTO in on registration confirmations.
- Time frame/health check—the calendar has been formulated using Microsoft Outlook which enables us to receive an automated reminder 8 weeks out from the date of the course to trigger the health check process.

There was some great discussion around the tables at these forums and it was awesome to see such committed and capable champions of training all coming together with one common purpose—to improve the training process and ensure that our members are fit for purpose, motivated and capable. **Thanks to all involved.**

NATIONAL TRAINING CALENDAR 2014

Pete Corbett & Karen Walker



The training calendar is now loaded on to the **website**—so get in early to register your training needs.

An important part of the annual operational audit process that the GSOs conducted recently using the Group Planning Tool (GPT) was the training needs analysis which identified the training required by the Groups to maintain target operational capability and capacity to provide the level of land search and rescue services required by the Police and others in the community—in other words to remain a fit for purpose organisation.

From the information gathered in the GPT's Region training plans were formulated and now after a short period of consultation with all Groups the National Training Calendar 2014 has been developed and published on the LandSAR website.

The courses scheduled for the first quarter of next year are as outlined in the adjacent calendar.

Individual training plans

This is a great opportunity for individual members to sit down with their Group Training Officers or other senior members to identify skill and knowledge gaps and from that to develop a personalized training plan for the year ahead based on not only the national calendar but also other training opportunities offered at a Group or Regional level. The probationary and operational team member competencies could or perhaps should provide the basis for this conversation.

You then need to mark this training on your calendar and in your diaries, set those dates aside and register for the scheduled courses by clicking on the links in the calendar—do it early.

Course coordination

For those Groups who put their hands up to host courses during the year, your respective GSO should be knocking on your door shortly to assist with the coordination process – this will entail:

- Finding and booking a suitable venue.
- Arranging any catering and or accommodation needs.
- Developing a marketing and promotion strategy to ensure sufficient participants.
- Agreeing on costs as per the training support budget guidelines.

For those scheduled events which do not currently have a host then the GSOs will be scouting around looking for suitable locations that are generally central to where the students will be travelling from.

The courses scheduled for the first quarter of next year are as follows:

ID #	Course	Location	Date
T1401	MTIR Managing the Initial Response	Westpac Hub (Christchurch)	14/2/2014
T1402	FA First Aid Refresher	Dunedin	15/2/2014
T1403	TCS Tracking Core Skills	Canterbury	15/2/2014
T1404	FA First Aid Refresher	Whakatane	16/2/2014
T1405	SARL SAR Leadership	Hamilton	21/2/2014
T1406	FA First Aid Refresher	Marlborough	22/2/2014
T1408	ST Search Techniques	Horowhenua	22/2/2014
T1409	FA First Aid Refresher	Canterbury (Oxford)	23/2/2014
T1410	FA First Aid Refresher	N Otago	23/2/2014
T1411	FA First Aid - 2 DAY	Canterbury	1/3/2014
T1412	CIMS4 Multi Agency	Canterbury (Christchurch)	1/3/2014
T1413	ST Search Techniques	West Coast	1/3/2014
T1414	FR Field Refresher	Rakaia	2/3/2014
T1415	FR Field Refresher	Waikato	8/3/2014
T1419	FR Field Refresher	Catlins	8/3/2014
T1420	ST Search Techniques	Tasman Bays	8/3/2014
T1421	TCS Tracking Core Skills	Palmerston North	8/3/2014
T1422	IMTEX IMTEX	Whakatane	15/3/2014
T1423	CIMS4 Multi Agency	Canterbury	15/3/2014
T1424	TWE Tracking in the Wilderness Environment (Trefoil Park)	Far North	15/3/2014
T1425	FA First Aid Refresher	Southland	16/3/2014
T1426	FR Field Refresher	West Coast (Westport)	16/3/2014
T1427	SARL SAR Leadership	Eastern (NI)	21/3/2014
T1429	SWA Swift Water Awareness	Taihape	22/3/2014
T1430	TCS Tracking Core Skills	Thames	22/3/2014
T1431	MTIR Managing the Initial Response	Catlins	28/3/2014
T1434	OTI Operational Tracking Introduction	N Island	29/3/2014
T1435	FR Field Refresher	Tasman Bays	29/3/2014
T1436	CIMS4 Multi Agency	Wairarapa	29/3/2014
T1437	ST Search Techniques	Taupo	29/3/2014
T1438	MTIR Managing the Initial Response	Wanaka	4/4/2014
T1439	ST Search Techniques	Canterbury (Rakaia)	5/4/2014
T1440	TCS Tracking Core Skills	Tasman Bays	5/4/2014
T1442	FR Field Refresher	Clutha	6/4/2014
T1443	SARL SAR Leadership	Motueka	11/4/2014
T1444	FA First Aid Refresher	Paeroa	12/4/2014
T1441	FA First Aid Refresher	West Coast	12/4/2014
T1445	FR Field Refresher	Wellington	12/4/2014
T1447	ST Search Techniques	Dunedin	12/4/2014
T1448	ST Search Techniques	Rotorua	12/4/2014
T1449	FA First Aid Refresher	Northland	13/4/2014
T1450	FR Field Refresher	S Westland	13/4/2014
T1452	FR Field Refresher	Tasman Bays	27/4/2014