



Debrief

AUGUST 2010



PO Box 720, Kerikeri
Email: info@fnsar.org.nz

The Monthly Newsletter of
Far North Search & Rescue
<http://www.fnsar.org.nz>

Next Training

Bains Revisited

September 19th

Where Totara North
When Sunday 19th September
What High POD search in area of interest

Bring: Daypack

Details to follow.

Next Meeting 7:30pm Wednesday 1st September Kerikeri

At Proctor Library on Cobham Rd. Meeting room to left of main library doors.

New Member Pre-meeting Training Starts 7pm

October Training ANNUAL SAREX Taupo Bay

8th, 9th, 10th October.

Callouts:

STANDBY: August 8th 2 kayakers Waipoua Forest

Received a phone call from Cliff at 1500Hrs asking FNSAR to go on Standby for 2 missing kayakers in the Waipoua forest. The 2 men had simply told their wives it would take 31/2 hrs travel to get to their destination without actually telling them where that was.

Naturally when they failed to return home, no-one knew where they were and Police Intel had to work overtime to get their location.

One of their vehicles was finally located at the top of the Waipoua forest, not that far from the end of the old Coach Road. Eventually the 2nd vehicle was located some distance away through the connecting waterways of the Waipoua catchment area. While this info was being relayed over the phone, a helicopter located the men and a paramedic was being winched down to ascertain the condition of one of them. So FNSAR were stood down, saving a late afternoon romp down some swollen muddy Waipoua river.

Gotta love those 'copters. – Roger.

CALLOUT: July 31st 86yo Male Dargaville

At 2200hrs on Saturday as most of us were settling down to watch the AB's thump the Aussies again, FNSAR were put on standby for a 86yr old farmer (dementia sufferer) missing in the Omana area.

Thirteen members met at 0700hrs at Grants before setting off on a 1 hour 45min drive to Dargaville.

CONTACTS *Pres:* Ian Ruddell 407 7932; *Sec:* Marilyn Buckley 407 4299; *Training:* Sue Field 407 8636

Many thanks to our supporters: **Kerikeri Outdoor Shop, Kerikeri & Stirling Sports, Waipapa**

Debrief

AUGUST 2010

Newsletter of Far North Search & Rescue

Also online at: <http://www.fnsar.org.nz>

Northland LSAR and Police had searched through to 0100Hrs and Eagle One flew over the area using FLIR and night goggles but to no avail.

FNSAR arrived at around 0845 at the HQ which was the Northland caravan set up on the side of the road directly beneath the side of a steep hill where Hughie the Farmer had gone missing. A pack cover, easily visible from HQ, marked PLS and a scrubby area immediately to the west was identified as the first area of high probability that the FNSAR would be deployed to. Local farmers supplied a variety of 4x4 vehicles with searchers clinging on for dear life as the procession made its way up the steep incline to the drop off point, all looking slightly reminiscent of a scene from Mad Max.

At this point the radio crackled to life with a very excited Grant "Don't Call me Eagle Eye" Conaghan having spotted some movement in the bush from his high vantage point.

This coincided with the arrival of the NEST helicopter and a race was soon on to cover the 800m to the LP. Finally the very athletic Ted hopped out of the landed chopper to confirm that it was indeed the Hughie we were looking for and he was soon whisked away to Whangarei hospital to have a variety of cuts and bruises seen to.

Hughie has indeed a lot to be thankful that a sharp pair of eyes had spotted him as inclement weather was due and it would have probably been a couple of days before we would have been searching that distance from the IPP, a great result for all involved. –Roger.

Last Training

Comms & GPS

Aug 8th, Matauri Bay

Intended to be a good hands-on session with the 'new' GPS units and also get some airtime experience for the newer members.

84 ice-block sticks were identified with a unique code number, and occasionally a SitRep or clue to report in and spread out over an area of paddocks. Small teams of two were then to be 'driven' from Operations in order to locate the aforementioned waypoints by using a variety of location techniques including waypoint projection and GOTO's whilst swapping between different datums and radio channels.

That was the plan...

Torrential rain on the day between laying out the course, and the exercise meant writing off some waypoints due to now being submerged in streams. That was a minor inconvenience.

Then, a last-minute computer glitch saw Operations unable to access the required mapping software, and following a short, hectic period of rapidly manually calculating locations of, and required bearings/distances for seven teams who were moving far too fast, early lunch was called to give time for a rethink.

Once fed, the teams were once again despatched with allocated waypoints to find – and it was left up to them to devise their own route and technique to collect their marks. It would appear, however, that by luck or judgement one team seemed to unerringly home in on most (actually, I think it was all) of the chocolate bars!!

That all said, it was really heartening to hear the confidence of people increase over the radio as the day progressed – unfazed by such things as impromptu radio relays, and having to pull all the batteries out of their radios to retrieve hidden messages.

Thanks must go to Ron & Joy on Comms who were absolutely flat-tack during the early chaotic stages as teams reported in thick and fast, while Ops fired hastily scrawled instructions out the other way.

The powerpoint presentation is available in the members area on the website if anyone wants to revise.

Debrief

AUGUST 2010

Newsletter of Far North Search & Rescue
Also online at: <http://www.fnsar.org.nz>

MSC Training coming up

Outdoor First Aid - Revalidation. August 22nd. (Note you need to hold OFA as a pre-requisite)

Intermediate Bushcraft (BC2) – September 18th, 19th

Outdoor First Aid (FULL) – Two Days: 16th/17th October. Unit standards 424, 6400, 6401 & 6402

River Crossing – 16th October

Intermediate Abseil – Three days, over three weekends: Mid October and Early November

As outside courses, you need to be proactive with these, no-one will be asking you if you wish to attend.

Email Pauline at northland@mountainsafety.org.nz, and advise Sue.

Parting Shot(s)

Farewell to Murray who is heading over the trench for a couple of years. Look forward to having him knocking on the door when he gets back.

Thanks to Karen for taking on the role of processing the reports for LandSAR

Congratulations to the Team Leaders who have just received their certificates.

Requesting people to throw their hat into the ring for nominations at this years AGM, October 6th.

Cave SAREX: 3,4,5,th Sept, held at Waipu Caves. This is primarily caving, but there will be surface taskings as well. Contact Roger if interested in joining in (Note: this isn't our Annual SAREX – See below)

ANNUAL SAREX October 8th, 9th, 10th.

This is the annual regional SAREX with FNSAR, Police and Northland SAR.

This year it will be based at sunny, sleepy Taupo Bay. A 'must do' training for everyone please.

More details closer to the time.

That's it for this month.

Cheers!

Pete.