



NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL

Thirty-ninth meeting of the Australian National Search and Rescue Council

14-16 October 2015
Brisbane, QLD



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Executive summary

The 39th annual meeting of the National Search and Rescue Council (NATSAR) was held in Brisbane, 14 – 16 October 2015, hosted by the Queensland Police Service. Thirty-two representatives were in attendance from the ten Search and Rescue (SAR) Authorities that make up Australia's national SAR system, including the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), the Australian Defence Force and the eight State, Territory and Federal Police Services. Observers from the New Zealand SAR Council, New Zealand Police and the National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee also attended the meeting. Queensland Police Commissioner, Ian Stewart formally opened the annual meeting.

Each SAR authority provided a review of SAR operations within their respective jurisdictions from the previous financial year, July 2014 – June 2015, reporting on notable SAR incidents, capabilities, training, SAR technologies, future developments and SAR incident statistics. This year incorporated a common set of reporting statistics to assist in developing a national view of SAR related activity in Australia. These reports provided the Council an important opportunity to identify common national SAR trends and facilitate the continued development of consistent SAR operations and procedures across jurisdictions. It also provided the opportunity to learn from shared experiences and note any issues that required further discussion.

This year's meeting also focused on the Council's strategic direction and priorities for the next two years. The Secretariat initiated a review of the Council's performance in conjunction with the Business Plan and Strategic Outlook, which formed a Performance Report to measure the Council's achievements against objectives committed to in the previous financial year.

In addition to annual Council business, a review of the Inter Government Agreement and NATSAR Manuals were initiated to align them with the proposed national SAR arrangements relating to the operational coordination procedure for land SAR incidents.

The Council hosted a number of guest speakers to present on recent initiatives affecting the Australian SAR system representing the Australian and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA), the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and RPS APASA. The presenters discussed the standardisation of SAR training and qualifications, developments in weather applications relevant to SAR and an update on the eLearning package for the drift modelling program SARMAP.

Key strategic outcomes that arose from the meeting included:

- a) Agreed to the Land SAR Coordination Working Group's proposed '*operational coordination procedure for land SAR incidents*' and for it to be incorporated into the National SAR Manual as an appendix with additional supporting amendments to relevant sections to support the proposal. It was also agreed to provide a formal letter recommending adoption of the Land SAR Coordination outcomes from the Chair to Police Commissioners and the Commander of Joint Operations (ADF) for formal comment and consideration.
- b) Agreed to establish a SAR Training Working Group with representatives from ANZPAA, AMSA, Queensland Police and the Australian Federal Police to further consider and develop a more holistic approach to national SAR training. It was

further agreed to communicate to Commissioners the value of maintaining the Advanced Diploma course for Police SAR personnel into the future, noting that it facilitates consistent and credible SAR capability on a national level.

- c) Agreed to establish a SAR Technology Working Group and maintain a standing agenda item at Council meetings for the ongoing evaluation of current technologies used in SAR and emerging technologies for the future. The Working Group will consist of Council members that are also Directing Staff for the National Police SAR Managers Course, in order to use the Course as a “test bed” and mechanism to evaluate potential technologies.
- d) Agreed to endorse the concept of the disaster response related protocol as outlined in the *‘Australian Police SAR Coordination Disaster Response Activation Plan’*. It was determined that the NATSAR Council does not have a role in the management of this plan but agreed to write to Police Commissioners and ANZPAA in regards progressing through the appropriate government mechanisms.

The Australian Search and Rescue Award 2015 was presented during the annual meeting program. AMSA CEO, Mick Kinley, presented the award to eight crew members from the New South Wales Volunteer Marine Rescue of Port Stephens for an incident that occurred in Fame Cove during 2015. The Council also hosted, Dr David Griffiths, Principal Dental Officer, Darling Downs Hospital & Health Service, as guest speaker to address the Australian SAR Award attendees.

The 40th meeting will be hosted by Western Australia Police in 2016.

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List of attendees

Representatives of NATSAR Council Member Organisations

Attendee name	Position	Organisation
John Young	NATSAR Council Chair General Manager, AMSA SAR	AMSA
Alan Lloyd	SAR Operations Manager	AMSA
Christine Macmillan	SAR System Engagement & Policy Manager	AMSA
Julian Mitchell	SAR Resources & Training Manager	AMSA
Louise Proctor	NATSAR Council Secretariat	AMSA
Lucena Deakin	NATSAR Council Secretariat	AMSA
Mark Hutchings	Detective Superintendent	NSW Police Marine Area Command
Paul Farquharson	Senior Sergeant	NSW Police Marine Area Command
Darren Wood	A/Inspector	NSW Police Force
Brenton Charlton	Inspector	NSW Police Force
Michael Smith	Senior Sergeant	NSW Police Force
John Todor	Superintendent	VIC Police
Barry Gibson	Senior Sergeant	VIC Search and Rescue Squad
Mark Arneil	Inspector	VIC Water Police
Mark O'Rourke	Senior Sergeant	VIC Police
Anthony Fioravanti	Superintendent	SA Police
Paul Kolesnikowicz	Senior Sergeant	SA Police
Dean Maloney	Commander	NT Police
Meacham King	Sergeant	NT Police
Tony Aldred	Captain	Australian Defence Force
Charles Huxtable	Captain	Australian Defence Force
James Frost	Flight Lieutenant	Australian Defence Force (RAAF)

Lee Renshaw	Inspector	TAS Police
Jim Whitehead	Senior Sergeant	QLD Water Police
Mick Wear	Sergeant	WA Police
David Bachi	Commander	Australian Federal Police
Steven Collins	Superintendent	Australian Federal Police
Steve Cooke	Senior Sergeant	Australian Federal Police

Observers

Carl Van Der Meulen	Secretariat	NZ Search and Rescue Council
Jo Holden	Sergeant	NZ Police
Darryl Wright	Chair	National Volunteer Marine SAR Council

Presenter/Attendee	Position, Organisation	Presentation topic
Ian Stewart	Commissioner, QLD Police Service	Official Opening
Sasha Zigic	Manager, RPS APASA	SARMAP and eLearning package
Amy Mehrton	Education Policy Advisor, ANZPAA	SAR Qualifications and ANZPPA
Neal Moodie	National Manager for Marine Weather Services, Bureau of Meteorology	Weather and SAR

Formal opening

Commissioner Ian Stewart of Queensland Police Service formally declared the 39th annual meeting of the National Search and Rescue (NATSAR) Council open and expressed Queensland's great pleasure in hosting the meeting for 2015. Commissioner Stewart emphasised the growing expectations on search and rescue (SAR) in Australia and the importance of a collaborative approach to facilitate an effective and efficient national system. Commissioner Stewart also discussed the growing impact of external influences on SAR, more specifically the complex field of emerging technology and the increasing number of people venturing into the remote outdoors in both the marine and land environments. Commissioner Stewart also provided the opening address for the Australian SAR Awards Dinner.



Session 1: Administration

Name of Session

Welcome and Apologies

Working paper(s)

Nil

Objective

To discuss and confirm the administrative aspects of the Council meeting, including introductions and apologies; venue administration; and official announcement of the recipients of the 2015 Australian SAR Award.

Discussion points and outcomes

Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Inspector Simon O'Rourke from WA Police.

Welcome

The Chair of the National Search and Rescue Council, John Young, welcomed everyone to the 39th convening of the NATSAR Council meeting. The Chair reflected on the impressive level of representation which included both marine and land SAR practitioners and program managers. John Young also emphasised the importance of members using this opportunity to share knowledge and lessons learnt further enabling the Council to work together to deliver an efficient and effective SAR service to the wider Australian community.

Due to the number of new attendees, a round table introduction was completed. Captain Tony Aldred from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) announced his last meeting with the NATSAR Council and introduced Captain Charles Huxtable as the new ADF representative.

The winners of the Australian Search and Rescue Award 2015 were also announced in the opening of the meeting. The announcement included a summary of this year's process in which the Council considered four nominations. The Council voted to proudly recognise the eight crew members of the Volunteer Marine Rescue from Port Stephens for their bravery in the rescue of two people in Fame Cove during severe weather conditions, April 2015.

The Chair expressed appreciation to the Queensland Police Service for hosting the 39th annual NATSAR Council meeting and closed the first session covering the administration aspect of the meeting.

Actions

Nil

Session 2: NATSAR Council Meeting Agenda

Name of session

Order of business and any other items

Working paper

WP 2-1-1 NATSAR Council Annual Meeting Agenda 2015

Objective

To confirm the agenda for this year's annual meeting and include any additional items proposed by Council members.

Discussion points and outcomes

The Chair gave a brief overview of the agenda, making particular mention of the Council's strategic direction and priorities for the next two years, including the work on the SAR arrangements relating to the 'operational coordination procedure for the transfer of land SAR incidents'.

The following two items were added to the meeting agenda, which related to the existing agenda item on Mobile Technology:

1. A presentation demonstrating the use of Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV's) to recover an aircraft that had crashed into waters off Tasmania's south-east coast (TAS).
2. A presentation illustrating a new search and rescue tool currently being trialled in QLD, which assists to establish a person's location through their mobile phone GPS position (QLD).

Actions

Nil

Session 3: SAR Operations Reports

Name of session

SAR Authority Reports
National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee
AMSA SAR Operations
International SAR Operations and Liaison

Working paper(s)

WP 3-1-1 to WP 3-1-9	State SAR Authority Operations Reports
WP 3-2-1	National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee Report
WP 3-3-1	AMSA SAR Operations Report

Objective

For each SAR Authority and observer organisation to provide the NATSAR Council with an annual review of key highlights from the previous financial year July 2014 – June 2015, in order to share knowledge, recognise national SAR trends, identify where lessons learnt can be applied across jurisdictions, and note any issues that require further discussion.

To further discuss the collection of consistent statistical information to develop a comprehensive national SAR activity picture for Australia.

Discussion points

Each SAR authority provided a brief summary of their respective SAR operations report. Full reports can be read for further information on the NATSAR Council website (natsar.amsa.gov.au).

Emerging Trends

The following noteworthy topics or common trends were identified across jurisdiction reports:

Topics/Trends	Comments
Reporting statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified issues with jurisdictions recording the additional information required in SAR statistics reports. This was generally attributed to the current collection methods.
Emerging technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPAS/UAV's used in response to incidents in the land environment and currently undergoing trials within the marine environment Marine Rescue APP/ logon logoff APP (NSW) Radio Over Internet Protocol (ROIP) (Action 1) Social media for missing person incidents (SA) The use of mobile phone GPS locators to reduce search areas for missing persons (QLD) The use of Google earth in sharing locations (NT) SARWEB (AMSA)
Emergency Service Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency involvement in SAR coordination
Structural changes to the organisation of SAR within jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified linkages between search and rescue and broader state emergency service arrangements, including the reorganisation of volunteer organisations (NSW, TAS, SA, VIC)
Enhancing operational SAR capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of NT Police aircraft – supply drop door, homing device and VHF communications (NT) Procurement/commissioning of vessels and equipment (TAS) (Action 2)
Operational Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue management – flight and duty periods (SAR related helicopter services within Australia)
Causative factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dementia, Alzheimer's, autistic children sufferers and suicidal persons Cyclones and other disasters Shark attacks Human factors - lack of preparedness; failure to properly study and understand weather patterns and tides; minimal navigational knowledge Mechanical failure / Overdue vessels / Vessels in distress / Collisions and Lack of fuel Accidents – slipping, falling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to wear/inadequate Personal Floating Device's (PFD's) • Increase in adventure based activities in the remote outdoors
Multi-agency activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved in multi-agency training exercises and SAREX's • VMR SAR coordination training weekend program (NSW) • AMSA involvement in training across jurisdictions • Volunteer agencies participation • AMSA's involvement in indigenous programs
Support provided to volunteer agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New system for volunteers to assist in improving the reporting of marine incident statistics (NSW) • Working with volunteers in developing community safety awareness in the recreational environment (TAS)
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Diploma for SAR
Utilising technology for SAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MapInfo ○ ARCMAP ○ MapSAR ○ SARWEB ○ SARMAP ○ PoSAR • Electronic SAR mapping incident systems • Applications for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Log-on / log off applications – voyage plans / vessels can be monitored in real time • Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)
Safety Programs and Community Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torres Strait Marine Safety Program (AMSA) • "Think B4 you Trek" (joint venture between NSW Police Force and National Parks and Wildlife Services) • "Snow Safe" Program (VIC Police) • "Splashfest" during water safety week (NT Police) • Targeted media presentations for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fishing Australia production to target people who head into the remote bush area for fishing or day walking and what they can do to assist in making it easier for emergency services to find and rescue them should it be needed (joint venture between

	<p>NSW Police Force, AMSA and Fishing Australia)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of PLB's when venturing into remote areas • Multi-lingual DVD and public awareness programme to address the safety of rock fisherman (NSW Safer Coastal Waters Committee) • Lecturers/presentations at industry groups, government bodies and volunteer organisations • Delivery of training to volunteers across multiple disciplines • Using PLBs when kayaking (VIC)
Enhanced state safety compliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coroner recommendation into the compulsory wearing of lifejackets for rock fishermen (NSW) • Attempt to regulate the need for prospectors to produce a PLB when granted a prospectors licence (WA) • State Coroner push for fit for purpose vessels/sea worthiness (VIC)
Use of social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook and/or Twitter to locate missing persons (SA) • Tool for communicating safety initiatives
Increase in incidents involving tourists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock fisherman (NSW) • Bushwalking and driving adventures (TAS)

Reporting Statistics

As agreed at the 38th NATSAR Council meeting, this year's SAR Authority Operations Reports incorporated a common set of reporting criteria to assist in developing a national view of statistics that represent the Australian SAR system. In discussing the effectiveness of the new reporting template, several jurisdictions experienced difficulty in collating the additional statistics, primarily due to the inability to modify their existing databases to incorporate the new criteria.

SA sought clarification on the meaning of the term '*number of persons recovered alive*', as it is currently defined:

Number of persons recovered alive

(The number of persons who have been recovered alive as a result of a SAR operation and who are alive at the time of rescue)

The issue was raised due to the increasing number of incidents involving lost persons with dementia in SA and whether these incidents should be recorded as 'rescued' or 'assisted'. Currently, SA activates a search and rescue response when persons suffering from mental health are reported missing and therefore, it was suggested this category may benefit from being better defined to distinguish between 'lives rescued' and 'lives assisted'.

It was agreed that the development of the collection method for national SAR statistics would be further discussed throughout the year to determine whether a multi-tiered system should be adopted to represent a clear and consistent set of national statistics (**Action 3**).

Number of SAR Incidents

Overall, the majority of jurisdictions experienced an increase in SAR incidents with WA, NSW and VIC experiencing more significant rises. In a few jurisdictions, this was reported to be the result of changing reporting mechanisms and a reclassification of incidents rather than an overall increase in workload.

- In 2014, WA experienced the highest number of major marine SAR responses since 2004.
- NSW experienced a significant increase in marine incidents as a result of the mobile phone application adopted by NSW Marine Rescue units used by volunteers to easily access and record vessel information and more accurately report incidents.
- VIC has seen a 70% increase in SAR responses since the last FY, due to SAR now being notified for the majority of "high risk" missing person incidents in the state.

AMSA noted the increased number of incidents occurring on the Larapinta Trail in the Northern Territory and suggested future safety-related messaging to emphasise the importance of carrying the appropriate communication devices and attempting two-way communications before activating a distress beacon.

SAR Authorities reported on a range of causative factors with the most common trend identified with incidents involving persons with mental health such as Dementia, Alzheimer's, Autism and persons with depression and suicidal tendencies. Particular concern was noted by SA, as incidents involving mental health represented approximately 48% of land searches. Social media has continued to be a beneficial tool in assisting to locate missing persons in SA.

Other causative factors cited included the lack of trip preparedness and local knowledge, shark attacks, human error and failure to carry the correct safety equipment. Jurisdictions continued to address these factors through safety programs and community awareness campaigns. Some jurisdictions have attempted to increase safety compliance, such as the coronial recommendation for the compulsory wearing of Personal Floatation Devices for rock fisherman (NSW), a push for sea-worthy vessel assessments (VIC) and the Police request for the mandatory requirement of gold prospector's to have a PLB when granted a license (WA).

AMSA noted jurisdictions' request for key safety and beacon messages, particularly in the land environment i.e. two-way communications and distress beacons (PLBs). This was raised noting Tasmania's recent increase in guided hut-based bushwalking tracks that have attracted higher levels of tourism to the remote outdoors (**Action 4**).

Safety Programs and Community Awareness

- The Safer Coastal Waters Committee in NSW was represented at a recent coronial hearing, which resulted in a recommendation for the compulsory wearing of lifejackets for rock fisherman. This initiative has been put before the government and will undergo a public consultation before a decision is made. In addition, a multi lingual DVD and public awareness programme was initiated to educate rock fishermen from various ethnic backgrounds on the potential risks and the appropriate safety measures to be taken when rock fishing.
- NSW Police Force continue to encourage the bush trekking safety initiative "Think B4 you Trek" through social media. This initiative promotes the benefit of planning ahead and assisting emergency services in the event of an emergency in the land environment.
- The "Snow Safe" program in Victoria was successfully implemented in the 2015 snow season.
- AMSA's Torres Strait Marine Safety Program (TSMP) saw the provision of three key initiatives including, the delivery of 1000 lifejackets to school age children in remote communities, training programs and the placement of two Torres Strait Islanders on a Marine Operations Integrated Rating course. AMSA also commenced the Pilot Maritime Safety Education Project in the Tiwi Islands as part of the Northern Territory Indigenous Marine Safety Initiative (NTIMSI).

International SAR Operations and Liaison

New Zealand and Australia have maintained observer status within each country's reciprocal SAR Councils for many years. This relationship serves to strengthen the SAR systems of both countries and also the broader Pacific region in which Australia and New Zealand play a leading role on many joint initiatives.

Representing the Secretariat of the New Zealand SAR Council, Carl Van Der Meulen provided a presentation on the Council's role within the NZ SAR system and its structure. It was noted that the NZ SAR Council structure and role had undergone a governance review, resulting in eight recommendations for improvement. The topics discussed included, incident statistics – explaining the three tiered system adopted in recording SAR incidents (people assisted, people rescued, lives saved); the completion of a risk matrix consisting of 9

risks; strategic elements of the Council; the START learning modules available on the [NZ SAR Council website](#); government expectation of mass rescue operations; and the recently developed Data Store Project, which included the preparation of a data standard for the SAR sector (**Action 5**).

Outcomes

- *No outcomes were recorded*

Actions

- 1) WA to provide Secretariat with the paper describing VHF ROIP capability currently being used by WA Police (**WA**).
- 2) Secretariat to engage with TAS Police regarding the new CASA regulations (**Secretariat, TAS**).
- 3) Continue the discussion regarding the need to differentiate the definition between 'lives assisted' and 'lives saved' outlined in the SAR Authority reporting templates and whether the Council should move towards adopting a multi-tiered criteria to best depict incident statistics in finer detail to distinguish areas of concern (**All**).
- 4) Secretariat to engage with State and Territory Police jurisdictions to identify opportunities to communicate key safety messages using agreed beacon messages developed by the Secretariat (**Secretariat, All**).
- 5) Secretariat to circulate the eight recommendations that resulted from the NZ SAR Council governance review for members' information and for continued consideration in the future development of the Australian NATSAR Council (**Secretariat**).

Session 4: National SAR System Arrangements

Name of session

NATSAR Council Strategic Outlook and Business Plan review in conjunction with Council Performance Report

Land SAR Coordination Working Group

IGA Review

National Aviation Capability Arrangements

Working paper(s)

WP 4-1-1 Strategic Outlook

WP 4-1-2 Business Plan

WP 4-1-3 NATSAR Council Performance Report

WP 4-1-4 SAR Coordination Activation Plan

WP 4-2-1 Summary of Working Group Outcomes

WP 4-2-2 Terms of Reference

WP 4-2-3 National operations procedure for transfer of coordination for land SAR incidents

WP 4-2-4 Working Group NATSAR Manual amendments

WP 4-2-5 The involvement of non SAR agencies in SAR coordination

WP 4-3-1 Proposed IGA updates with Land SAR Coordination amendments

WP 4-4-1 National Airborne SAR Capability

Objective

To review and discuss the national SAR system arrangements, including documents and Working Group outcomes that contribute to the role and strategic position of the NATSAR Council.

Discussion points and outcomes

Business Plan and Strategic Outlook review in conjunction with Council Performance Report

The Secretariat led a review of the NATSAR Council Performance Report that was prepared against the Council's Strategic Outlook and Business Plan. This report was an outcome from

the previous meeting (NATSAR 38) with the aim to provide an account of the Council's key achievements against the strategic objectives during the last financial year.

Council members stated that a 12 month performance review contributes to lifting the profile of the Council and is a useful mechanism for seeking assistance and support for future initiatives and can be used for briefing senior executives. The report provides a measurable representation of achievements and also provides a clear understanding of the role and position of the Council within the national SAR arrangement.

The Secretariat also provided updated versions of the Business Plan and Strategic Outlook in accordance with comments and feedback provided from the previous meeting. These documents facilitate alignment of the Council work program with the strategic challenges providing a framework to monitor and demonstrate the Council's contribution towards the improvement of Australia's national SAR system.

In terms of the Council's strategic documents (Performance Report, Strategic Outlook and Business Plan), the following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed to continue preparing an annual NATSAR Council Performance Report of the Council's achievements against the NATSAR Council Business Plan and Strategic Outlook and communicate this to Commissioners following each annual meeting. The report will also be made available on the Council website (**Action 6**).
- Noted that this year's NATSAR Council Performance Report is predominately limited to the Secretariat's perspective on the progress of action completed. In the future, a report template will be distributed for jurisdictions to provide input prior to annual meetings, to incorporate the wider achievements of the Council. This would include an update on the National SAR Police Managers Course (**Action 7**).
- Agreed the need to continue building and promoting the profile of the Council with the inclusion of the NATSAR Council Performance Report in the letter of outcomes to each State/Territory Police Commissioner, to provide visibility of the achievements from the previous fiscal year.
- Agreed the need to reference the Strategic Outlook and Business Plan where appropriate in the Performance Report, to ensure they are interlinked and remain relevant.
- Noted the suggestion to review similar international Councils to compare strategic documentation and identify areas of development.
- Agreed to publish the NATSAR Council Strategic Outlook 2015 – to reflect the current role of the Council and the strategic direction for the next 5 years (**Action 8**).
- Agreed to update the NATSAR Council Business Plan based on agreed activities during the 2015 annual meeting and any other suggestions provided to the Secretariat (**Action 8**).

Australian Police SAR Coordination Disaster Response Activation Plan

The AFP submitted a proposal to establish a National Police SAR Coordination Activation Plan to assist in deploying suitably qualified and experienced personnel to offshore disaster incidents. The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed to endorse the concept of the disaster response related protocol as outlined in the 'Australian Police SAR Coordinator Disaster Response Activation Plan', noting that the National SAR Council does not have a role in the management of this plan.
- Agreed to write to Police Commissioners and ANZPAA in regards determining the appropriate mechanism to progress the plan, recommending that it should be considered for incorporation into established mechanisms consistent with state and international and emergency management arrangements (**Action 9**).
- Agreed to support the AFPs recommendations with an alteration of Recommendation 4 to ensure that the activation process established is consistent with existing national and international emergency management arrangements (**Action 10**). *Proposed wording:*

Recommendation 4) The activation process is established consistent with international and domestic emergency arrangements.

- Agreed that each state and territory jurisdiction will provide AFP with a point of contact for further engagement to progress the plan (**Action 11**).

More information of the SAR Coordination Activation Plan can be read in **WP 4-1-4**.

Land SAR Coordination Working Group

As an outcome from the 38th NATSAR Council meeting, the Council agreed to establish a Land SAR Coordination Working Group to develop appropriate information exchange and an operational coordination procedure for the transfer of coordination for land SAR incidents – relating to those that are initially alerted to AMSA via distress alerting devices in their role as an International Alerting Post.

Co-chaired by AMSA and Queensland Police, the Working Group commenced in June 2015 comprising of nominated representatives from AMSA and each of the State/Territory SAR Authorities. A key outcome of the Working Group, in line with the Terms of Reference, was the development of the '*National operational procedure for transfer of coordination for land SAR incidents*' (**WP 4-2-1**). This was developed in conjunction with proposed amendments to the NATSAR Manual (**WP 4-2-4**) and Inter Governmental Agreement on National SAR Arrangements (IGA) (**WP 4-3-1**), which would implement the new procedure in national documents.

Prior to NATSAR 39, each jurisdiction provided confirmation of in-principle support for the Working Group outcomes, with the intention to commence internal consultation processes with respective executives and commands in order to provide an agreed position at the 39th NATSAR Council meeting. The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed with the intent to provide a formal letter recommending adoption of the Land SAR Coordination Outcomes from the Chair to Commissioners (Police), Commander Joint Operations (ADF) and Chief Executive Officer (AMSA) for formal comment and consideration (**Action 12**).
- Agreed to the '*National operational procedure for transfer of coordination for land SAR incidents*' and for it to be incorporated into the National SAR Manual as an appendix with additional supporting amendments to relevant sections to support the proposal.

- Agreed that the subsequent implementation process would be planned and progressed through the continuation of the Land SAR Coordination Working Group with the intention for the national procedure to be operational by 1 July 2016, noting the potential requirement for ongoing work in regards training, testing of operational procedures and communications **(Action 13)**.
- Agreed to the six suggested amendments to the IGA to provide clarity to the document, noting that there is no specific requirement to amend the IGA to facilitate the outcomes of the Working Group.
- Agreed to accept the proposed restructure of the Inter-governmental Agreement on National Search and Rescue Response Arrangements (IGA, 2012), and initiate the respective internal consultation processes through the jurisdictions with the intention to provide an update at the first NATSAR Council teleconference, March 2015. This also incorporates the six proposed IGA changes in support of the Land SAR Coordination. The revised IGA will then be reviewed through the Australia and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) and to the Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management (SCPEM) for signature during 2016.
- Agreed that AMSA will collaborate with NSW Police to provide a summary to the NSW Coroner of the progress made by the National SAR Council on this subject **(Action 14)**.

Involvement of non SAR agencies in SAR coordination

QLD submitted a paper regarding non SAR agencies undertaking the coordination role of SAR incidents. It was identified the predominant scenario for which this occurs is “medical evacuation/recovery” when the initial call for assistance is routed through ambulance or fire/emergency rather than SAR. The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Acknowledged the issue raised of non SAR agencies undertaking the coordination role of SAR incidents.
- Confirmed that as outlined in the IGA and National Land Search Operations Manual (NLSOM), land SAR coordination is primarily the responsibility of the State/Territory Police as the nominated SAR Authority, with other government and community groups acting in support.
- Noted that, in some instances, the triple zero system routes missing persons that require medical assistance or rescuing to the Ambulance services or Fire and Rescue Services, which means these incidents are not alerted to the State/Territory Police and recognised as a SAR.
- Agreed to communicate to State/Territory Police Commissioners the key points raised during the discussion at the 2015 annual meeting in regards the involvement of non SAR agencies in SAR coordination activity. It was specifically noted that some jurisdictions, such as Queensland, were experiencing this more than other jurisdictions as it relates to operations and command and control.

IGA Review

At the 38th NATSAR Council meeting it was agreed, a regular IGA review would be conducted by the Secretariat to ensure the IGA remained accurate and correctly reflected the national SAR arrangements. This year's review identified that no particular amendments were required in relation to its content but a structural change was recommended to provide clarity to the documents' purpose and content. The suggested IGA amendments are available as an attachment to **WP 4-2-4** to be considered by the Council and the respective jurisdictions. The intention is to confirm these changes at the first NATSAR teleconference and to progress for signature in 2016. The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed to accept the proposed restructure of the Inter-governmental Agreement on National Search and Rescue Response Arrangements (IGA, 2012), and initiate the respective internal consultation processes through the jurisdictions with the intention to provide an update at the first NATSAR Council teleconference, March 2015. This also incorporates the six proposed IGA changes in support of the Land SAR Coordination. The revised IGA will then be reviewed through the Australia and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) and the Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management (SCPEM), for signature during 2016.
- It was agreed to update the IGA to include the land SAR working group outcomes.

National aviation capability arrangements

AMSA submitted a paper that outlined the current and future developments of the national airborne SAR capability offered through AMSA. This paper aimed to encourage the sharing of assets and knowledge, particularly in consideration of the land SAR coordination arrangements underway. Topics included AMSA's aviation capability and SAR helicopter assets as well as information regarding the CASA review of aviation regulations and standards. AMSA also suggested there may be an opportunity to standardise SAR stores through AMSA on a national level.

Actions

- 6) Secretariat to finalise the NATSAR Council Performance Report template based on feedback and discussions from the 39th NATSAR Council meeting and continue preparing the report for future meetings, which will be communicated to the Police Commissioners following each annual meeting (**Secretariat**).
- 7) Distribute the Performance Report to members along with the SAR Activity Report July 2016 for members to include their input, with the objective of developing a holistic view of Council performance over the 12 months prior to the NATSAR Council annual meeting (**Secretariat, All**).
- 8) Secretariat to update the Strategic Outlook and Business Plan according to the discussion at the 39th NATSAR Council meeting and identify opportunities of linkages between documents including the Council Performance Report to ensure consistency and relevance (**Secretariat, All**).

- 9) Secretariat to send a letter to each State/Territory Police Commissioner and ANZPAA in regards determining the appropriate mechanism to progress the SAR Coordination Activation Plan, recommending that it should be considered for incorporation into established mechanisms consistent with state and international emergency management arrangements **(Secretariat, AFP)**.
- 10) AFP to update Recommendation 4 of the SAR Coordination Activation Plan paper (WP 4-1-4) as discussed **(AFP)**.
- 11) Each State and Territory to provide a relevant point of contact to the AFP to assist in the management and coordination of the member data-base for the intended SAR Coordination Activation Plan **(AFP, All)**.
- 12) Secretariat to provide a formal letter recommending adoption of the Land SAR Coordination Outcomes from the Chair to Commissioners (Police), Commander Joint Operations (ADF) and Chief Executive Officer (AMSA) for formal comment and consideration **(Secretariat)**.
- 13) Secretariat to develop a template to record names and dates of planned SAR exercises to be uploaded on the NATSAR Council website for jurisdictions to provide information **(Secretariat)**.
- 14) AMSA to collaborate with NSW Police to provide an update to the NSW Coroner on the progress made by the land SAR coordination Working Group **(Secretariat)**.

Session 5: National SAR Capability

Name of session

SARMAP Working Group

Weather and Search and Rescue

Mobile Technology

Lost Person Behaviour

Training and Education

Medevac transfer coordination arrangements

Working paper(s)

WP 5-3-1 Use of GPS Data in SAR Incidents

WP 5-4-1 Study into the location of deceased victims of violent crime

WP 5-5-1 New SAR Qualifications

WP 5-5-2 National SAR Training

WP 5-6-1 Medevac transfer coordination arrangements paper

Objective

To review and discuss arrangements and outcomes of initiatives that aim to enhance the national SAR capability for Australia.

Discussion points and outcomes

SARMAP Working Group

Sasha Zigic (RPS APASA) provided an update on the second convening of the SAR Model Analysis Program (SARMAP) Working Group, which was held prior to the National SAR Manager's Course in July 2015. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an update of the key developments achieved in the 12 months since the previous meeting, with particular focus on the online eLearning package as the first attempt at implementing a SAR operational tool into an eLearning package.

The SARMAP eLearning package was developed to assist jurisdictions to maintain currency in the SARMAP application. AMSA and RPS APASA have been working closely to develop the three hour online course. The course is designed to be completed at the user's own pace with the choice of a 'guided', 'unguided' or 'hands off and watch' formats. The nine module program is intended to be hosted on the AMSA website, under the AMSA Learning Portal and can be accessed externally.

The Chair acknowledged the value of the SARMAP Working Group as a collaborative initiative that focuses on delivering a product that contributes to the effectiveness of the national SAR system. The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed to the continuation of the SARMAP Working Group, noting the benefits for users of the RPS APASA maritime drift planning product (SARMAP). The Working Group ensures a consistent approach to procedures in regards training, operational use and support. The Working Group also sets the future development priorities of SARMAP in line with the collective users' requirements.
- Noted the extensive work by AMSA and RPS APASA to develop an e-learning package for SARMAP, which offers those previously trained in SARMAP an online tool to maintain currency of their skills and knowledge of the program that might otherwise not be exercised on a regular basis.
- Agreed to incorporate training in the use of the e-learning package in to the National Police SAR Manager's course, offering Police an additional training tool to assist in maintaining currency in the use of SARMAP.
- Agreed that the Secretariat will continue to work with the Directing Staff of the National Police SAR Manager's course to determine an appropriate time to hold the annual SARMAP Working Group meeting.

Weather and Search and Rescue

Neal Moodie from the Bureau of Meteorology provided an update on the weather related aspects of search and rescue and noted the progress made to better integrate weather into the SARMAP program over the last 12 months.

The recent effort has focused on the development of a Marine Knowledge Centre concept for seafarers via a mobile platform. The mobile website incorporates marine weather education, weather radars over coastal areas, general weather forecasts and warnings. This site will provide an easy and accessible means for marine weather features.

Mobile Technology

The use of GPS data in SAR

QLD submitted a paper suggesting a standard approach/guideline to GPS metadata usage in SAR, citing there were currently no standards outlined within the NATSAR Manuals for the appropriate use or handling metadata information. The following outcome was discussed and agreed:

- Agreed for the Council to provide feedback to Jim Whitehead (QLD Police) in regards the development of a set of standards/policy in the correct use and storage of GPS data with the intention to include a recommended standard practice in the National SAR Manual and Land SAR Operations Manual (**Action 15**).

Emerging Technologies

The Council acknowledged the growing use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) in search and rescue operations by NSW, SA and AFP in both the land and marine environment. This eventuated to more in-depth discussions on emerging technologies in SAR and their ability to change the way that SAR response is carried out. The following emerging technologies were discussed and/or presented upon:

- TAS gave a presentation, of a recent incident that required the use of a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROVs) in the search for an aircraft that crashed into waters off

Tasmania's south-east coast. The use of ROV's within the marine environment showcased the increased capability available by these technologies to recover objects underwater, resulting in better evidence collection and incident closure.

- QLD presented on a SAR tool currently under trial, to assist in locating lost persons via an automated text message. The application provides SAR Authorities the ability to send a text message to the missing person's mobile phone, which includes a message with a link that once pressed will provide SAR Authorities with a location/position to determine a search area. This data can also be forwarded as a direction finder tool to search parties.
- AMSA gave a brief update on the SARWEB program currently available to Council members.

Due to the growing impact of SAR technology, the following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed to establish a SAR Technology Working Group and maintain a standing agenda item at Council meetings for the ongoing evaluation of current technologies used in SAR and emerging technologies for the future. The Working Group will consist of Council members that are also Directing Staff for the National Police SAR Managers Course, in order to use the Course as a "test bed" and mechanism to evaluate potential technologies **(Action 16 & 17)**.
- Agreed that under John Todor's (VIC) leadership, the Council representatives already on the established national Remote Piloted Aviation Systems (RPAS) Working Group, coordinated by the Police, would represent jurisdictions' search and rescue interests and provide an update on progress and developments at each annual NATSAR Council meeting **(Action 18)**.

Lost Person Behaviour

Incidents involving Alzheimer's and dementia sufferers

AFP gave a brief update on the progress made through the study of incidents involving persons with dementia. This included the development of a paper to outline a standard approach to responding to incidents involving Lost Person Behaviour, particularly persons with dementia and Alzheimer's. A grant has been submitted to Alzheimer's Australia to participate in an international study to assist with this research. The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed that AFP would continue to progress the development of a standardised approach to responding to incidents involving lost person behaviour, based on guidance from Robert Koester and other international good practice. The intention is to progress the related documentation through a review and consultation process with NATSAR Council members and if approved be submitted for inclusion in the NATSAR Manual **(Action 19)**.

The location of deceased victims of violent crimes

QLD submitted a paper regarding the progress made of the ongoing study into the location of deceased victims of violent crimes. An outcome of this study is to develop an integrated national database of statistics to identify trends and/or behaviours of offenders of violent

crimes for SAR Authorities to assist in determining potential search areas based on empirical evidence associated with these trends.

The project has completed its first stage of a Literature review, with the assistance of the James Cook University. The review identified existing studies and data regarding the location and disposal of homicide victims. A decade of related data has already been collected from QLD and ACT that will be analysed as part of the study's next stage, which will focus on developing the analysis methodology.

The Council supported the ongoing progress and continuation of the study and agreed to the following outcomes, with the intention for updates to be given at future meetings:

- Agreed that jurisdictions would continue to support the research study initiated by QLD Police in regards the 'location of deceased victims of violent crime', which was previously corresponded to Commissioners from the NATSAR Council in early 2015 **(Action 20)**.
- Agreed to jurisdictions continuing to contribute statistical data to the International Search and Rescue Incident Database (ISRID) to enable the identification of trends for the behaviour of lost persons.

Training and Education

As agreed at NATSAR 38, Council members focusing on Police Training and Education explored the opportunities available for sector wide SAR training. Amy Mehrton from the Australian and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) presented to assist in the Council's understanding of the current implications related to Australian Police Education and Training on SAR and the potential future opportunities available.

ANZPAA

To provide members with some context, a summary of the training options available for Australian Police was given. Particular emphasis was made on the recent request from Police Commissioner's to investigate alternative options to Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). ANZPAA researched the options and associated issues with removing the RTO component and as a result of their findings the Police Commissioners decided to retain both training systems nationally. The two systems currently available are discussed below:

- Police Training Package (POL TP) – The POL TP houses the policing specific nationally recognised qualifications, including the *Diploma of Police Search and Rescue Management* and the *Advanced Diploma of Police Search and Rescue Coordination*. There are currently five states still operating Registered Training Organisations, which are required to deliver these qualifications. The POL TP has recently been reviewed and endorsed to ensure all qualifications are current and fit-for-purpose.
- Police Practice Standards Model (PPSM) – Where states do not require an RTO but rather deliver internal 'fit for purpose' training, which is aligned to ANZPAA Education and Training Guidelines. For SAR, this is the *ANZPAA Education and Training Guidelines for Police Search and Rescue*. The Australia New Zealand Council of Police Professionalisation (ANZCoPP) is responsible for the PPSM and is currently exploring the transition from Education and Training Guidelines to Practice

Standards, with a supporting quality management system, and the potential for a Registration/Certification system.

New SAR Qualifications

QLD submitted a report (**WP 5-5-1**) regarding the SAR Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses offered through the National SAR Police Managers Course that had undergone a review process through ANZPAA. The review resulted in the rewriting of both the Diploma and Advanced Diploma through a Working Group hosted by ANZPAA, to develop a fit-for-purpose product that met police training needs.

The two courses are now positioned under the Police Training Package, where the Police have coordination of its content and purpose. The new SAR courses are expected to commence in 2016 where a course 'Teach-out' period will initiate with a cut-off date in mid-2016. In terms of changes that will apply to the National SAR Managers Course, it was confirmed the majority of teaching components will remain the same with some changes made to the assessment process and follow up documentation.

National SAR Training

AMSA submitted a supplementary report (**WP5-5-2**), advocating a standardised Advanced Diploma in search and rescue. Currently, AMSA, AFP and QLD RTOs deliver similar courses that relate to SAR qualifications.

Noting **WP5-5-1**, AMSA proposed that with the assistance of ANZPAA, a working group be developed to identify opportunities to harmonise the delivery of an Advanced Diploma in SAR with the suggestion to develop a standardised training and assessment delivery strategy for the Australian SAR system.

The following outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Recognised the Australian and New Zealand Council of Police Professionalisation (ANZCoPP) as the most relevant channel to address education in the policing environment.
- Agreed to establish a SAR Training Working Group comprising of representatives from AMSA, ANZPAA, QLD and AFP to address a holistic approach to national SAR training for the future (**Action 21**).
- Agreed to communicate to Commissioners the value of maintaining the Advanced Diploma course for Police SAR personnel into the future, noting that it facilitates consistent and credible SAR capability on a national level.
- Agreed for jurisdictions to provide the names of SAR related training courses to the Secretariat in order to develop a complete picture that provides a holistic account on a national level of current training activity, which can then be used to inform future developments in SAR training (**Action 22**).

National SAR Managers Course Update

The National SAR Managers Course Director, Mick Wear (WA) gave a brief update on the 2015 course progress, noting that all jurisdictions were represented as either directing staff or students with the exception of NZ.

Due to the increasing material covered within the Police Managers Course, Directing Staff proposed to extend the course by one day. The follow outcomes were discussed and agreed:

- Agreed that the extension of the Course by one day would need to be agreed upon by the Council, considering the cost implications involved for student and directing staff travel and associated course costs.
- Agreed for the Directing Staff to develop a course cost breakdown that identifies the additional costs involved in extending the course, to be discussed during the next teleconference in 2016 (**Action 23**).
- Confirmed that the 2016 course will occur from 1 – 12 August, 2016.

The Council thanked Sergeant Mick Wear for his time and efforts serving as the 2015 National SAR Managers Course Director and welcomed Sergeant Meacham King (NT Police) to the role for 2016.

Medevac transfer coordination arrangements

AMSA submitted a report regarding the medical evacuation arrangements currently being undertaken between AMSA and the NSW and QLD Health and Ambulance Services. This included a proposed workflow diagram for Council members to review and consider.

- Noted the Medical Evacuation Arrangements currently being undertaken between AMSA and the NSW and QLD Health and Ambulance Services (**WP 5-6-1**).
- Noted the proposed medical evacuation workflow diagram (Attachment 1 to WP 5-6-1) and agreed for Council members to consider the diagram and the potential roles of State SAR Authorities out of session, and provide any additional information regards the best way to liaise into respective state medical arrangements (**Action 24**).

Actions

- 15) NATSAR Council members to provide feedback to Jim Whitehead (QLD Police) in regards the development of standards/policy in the correct use and storage of GPS data with the intention to eventually include a standard practise recommendation in the National SAR Manual and Land SAR Operations Manual **(All)**.
- 16) Establish a SAR Technology Working Group under NSW Police leadership and include an Emerging Technologies standing agenda item at future Council meetings **(Secretariat, NSW)**.
- 17) Directing Staff and SAR Technology Working Group to utilise the National SAR Police Managers Course to evaluate potential SAR technologies from an operational perspective and review this new approach at the next NATSAR annual meeting **(NATSARMC Directing Staff)**.
- 18) Under John Todor's (VIC) leadership, Council members already on the established national Remote Piloted Aviation Systems (RPAS) Working Group, coordinated by the Police, to represent jurisdictions' search and rescue interests and provide an update on progress and developments at each annual NATSAR Council meeting **(All)**.
- 19) AFP to continue to progress the development of a standardised approach to responding to incidents involving lost person behaviour, based on guidance from Robert Koester and other international good practise **(AFP)**.
- 20) QLD to continue the study into the location of deceased victims of violent crimes and to keep Council members abreast of any progress made **(QLD)**.
- 21) Secretariat to facilitate the SAR Training Working Group comprising of representatives from AMSA, ANZPAA, QLD and AFP, to consider a more holistic approach to national SAR training for the future **(Secretariat)**.
- 22) Jurisdictions to provide the names of SAR related training courses to the Secretariat in order to develop a complete picture that provides an account on a national level of current training activity, which can then be used to inform future developments in SAR training **(Jurisdictions)**.
- 23) Develop a course cost breakdown that outlines the additional costs associated with extending the National SAR Managers Course by one week day. This is scheduled to be considered at the next teleconference in 2016 **(NATSARMC Directing Staff)**.
- 24) NATSAR Council members to review the Medevac Transfer paper and proposed workflow diagram and provide feedback and/or suggestions on its content to AMSA. Also, members are requested to provide any additional information regards the best way to liaison into respective state medical arrangements **(All)**.

Session 6: National SAR Manuals

Name of session

Manual amendments

NATSAR Manual and Land SAR Operations Manual

Working paper

- | | |
|----------|---|
| WP 6-1-1 | NATSAR Manual amendments schedule |
| WP 6-1-2 | National Land Search Operations Manual amendments paper |
| WP 6-2-1 | NATSAR Manual and Land SAR Manual Restructure |

Objective

To consider the proposed amendments to the National SAR Manual and Land SAR Operations Manual; and discuss the proposal relating to the future format of the two manuals.

Discussion points and outcomes

Manual amendments

- Reviewed the summary of amendments proposed for the NATSAR Manual and National Land Search Operations Manual, submitted by the QLD and AMSA, and agreed for them to be distributed and uploaded on the NATSAR Council website for further review and comment, before finalising and incorporating them into the next edition (**Action 25**).
- Confirmed that all NATSAR Manual final amendments will be considered for inclusion in both manuals where appropriate (**Actions 26**).
- Agreed to take a review period of the additional proposed amendments (ADF, AMSA) to both the National SAR Manual and the Land SAR Operations Manual, with the intention for jurisdictions to provide feedback to the Secretariat prior to being discussed and published during 2016.

NATSAR Manual and Land Search Operations Manual Restructure

AMSA submitted a paper seeking agreement from the Council to conduct a formal review of the NATSAR Manual and Land Search Operations Manual. The intention is to ensure the documents are consistent, integrated in content and useable in structure.

The Council agreed to examine the scope for rationalising the National SAR Manual and the Land SAR Operations Manual through a Working Group in order to remove the duplication and inconsistencies between the two manuals, with the intention to discuss further at the first teleconference for 2016 (**Action 27**).

Actions

- 25) To confirm and upload proposed manual amendments on the NATSAR Council website within the member's area for Council review and approval (**Secretariat**).
- 26) Approved NATSAR Manual amendments to be incorporated into the 2016 NATSAR Manual edition and to ensure that amendments are aligned in both manuals where appropriate (**Secretariat**).
- 27) Secretariat to facilitate the NATSAR Manual Review Working Group co-chaired by AMSA and QLD in order to remove the duplication and inconsistencies between the two manuals (**All**).

Session 7: Council Administration & Development

Name of session

NATSAR Council action table
Emerging Technologies Log
Risk Register
NATSAR Council Charter
National Engagement Update
Format of Council meeting

Working paper(s)

WP 7-1-1 Action Table
WP 7-1-2 DF Equipment List

Objective

To address any administration matters that enable the Council to continue operating effectively and to determine the next meeting arrangements.

Discussion points and outcomes

NATSAR Council Charter

- Proposed by the Secretariat, it was agreed to develop a NATSAR Council Charter to describe in detail how the Council operates, including key business processes such as membership, amendments to the National SAR Manual, the Australian SAR

Award etc. The Charter will be presented in draft at the next teleconference in March 2016 for discussion and further development (**Action 28**).

- Confirmed the process of SAR Award nominations noting that once the Award recipients have been announced during the NATSAR Council annual meeting, the following year's nominations will be open for submission. The Secretariat encouraged all members to communicate this through their respective media channels in an attempt to broaden the profile of the SAR award and provide a wide spectrum of nominations.
- Noted the potential membership proposal by the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) in the near future.

National Engagement Update

Australian SAR Consultative Forum

Once a year AMSA meets with the Australian SAR Consultative Forum to engage with industries that have a vested interest in the national SAR service. The ACF comprises of organisations that represent recreational outdoor activity groups and commercial entities in the aviation, land and marine environments. The ACF is a fundamental link for its members and AMSA to engage about key safety messages, current activities and topical issues occurring within the greater Australian community.

In response to a question raised by the scouting community at the last ACF meeting, AMSA undertook to seek a response from the NATSAR Council in regards the cost of being rescued.

The Council agreed to the following response:

*A search and rescue terminates at the point that the person in distress is in a position of safety. At that point, depending whether medical assistance is required, the associated costs will be contingent to the State/Territory ambulance service arrangements. The NATSAR Council recommends for people who are heading into the remote outdoors to research or ask State/Territory SAR Authorities on their current arrangements as they vary between the jurisdictions (**Action 29**).*

Australian and NZ Safe Boating Education Group (ANZSBEG)

AMSA attends the ANZSBEG meeting on a 6 monthly basis to discuss relevant safe boating education topics and initiatives on a national basis. AMSA noted that any relevant topics to the Council will be circulated with the key beacon safety messaging requested in Action 4.

Format of Council meeting

- Agreed for future meetings to move towards a paper free meeting with the exception of the agenda and attendees list.
- Agreed to take a review of the next annual meeting's starting times to ensure that flight times are available and practical for its location, noting the difficulty of some jurisdictions to coordinate flights to attend the meeting opening without requiring an extra night of accommodation.
- Agreed for a standing agenda item to include a formal photo opportunity on day one of the Council meeting (**Action 30**).

Next Annual NATSAR Council Meeting

- Confirmed that October is a suitable time to host the annual NATSAR Council meeting as it allows time to make progress on the action items before the end of the year.
- Noted the request for future meetings to include a guest speaker/presenter with relevant coronial experience to provide a better understanding of their work and how it is related to SAR.
- Agreed for WA to host the next NATSAR Council meeting, bypassing the AFP who will reclaim hosting responsibilities in 2017, noting the previous four Council meetings have been held on the east coast with the desire to create a more even spread of meetings between the east and west coast jurisdictions.
- Agreed to write a formal letter to WA Police on a proposal to bring forward their hosting role of the NATSAR Council annual meeting to 2016 (**Action 31**).
- Agreed that the letter of outcomes is a beneficial means of broadening the profile of the Council and its core business and therefore agreed to continue this process of sending a letter from the NATSAR Council Chair to each Commissioner and the equivalent at ADF, highlighting the key strategic outcomes of the meeting and emphasising the important role of the Council and the contribution of its members (**Action 32**).

Actions

- 28) To develop a NATSAR Council Charter that describes the key functions of the NATSAR Council, to be presented in draft at the next teleconference in March 2016 for discussion and further development (**Secretariat, All**).
- 29) AMSA to communicate to ACF members at the next ACF convening, the NATSAR Council's agreed response regarding the cost of SAR to the end user (**AMSA**).
- 30) Secretariat to include a photograph opportunity as a standing agenda item on day one of future NATSAR Council meetings (**Secretariat**).
- 31) To write a letter to the WA Police Commissioner from the NATSAR Council Chair, on a proposal to bring forward their hosting role of the NATSAR Council annual meeting to 2016 (**Secretariat**).
- 32) Send a letter to commissioners highlighting the strategic outcomes of the meeting and expressing appreciation to each Council member representative by name for their attendance and contribution to the meeting (**Secretariat**).

Session 8: Any Other Business

Name of session

Nil

Working paper(s)

Nil

Objective

To address any other business tabled for review and discussion by the NATSAR Council.

Discussion points and outcomes

The topics discussed under Any Other Business have been allocated under their specified session topic.

National Search and Rescue Award

The 2015 National Search and Rescue Award was presented at the annual NATSAR Council dinner on Thursday 15th November during the annual conference. The 2015 awardees were the eight crew members of the Volunteer Marine Rescue of Port Stephens, Michael Smith, Rob Johnson, Richard Pizzuto, Barney Pinney, Laurie Nolan, Barbara Cole, Peter Merlino and Paul Sullivan.

The eight crew members were recognised for their outstanding seamanship and bravery during a rescue of two people from a yacht in cyclonic weather conditions at Fame Cove on 21 April 2015.

Nominations for the 2016 Australian Search and Rescue Award are now open until 30 June 2016 and can be made by completing the official nomination form (available on the NATSAR Council website www.natsar.amsa.gov.au) and forwarding to:

Secretariat
National SAR Council
GPO Box 2181
Canberra City ACT 2601
nationalSARcouncil@amsa.gov.au

