



NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL

Forty-sixth meeting of the Australian National Search and Rescue Council

26 - 28 October 2022

Victoria Police Centre,
Melbourne, Victoria



Figure 1 & 2: Victoria Police assets in response to the 2022 floods.

Figure 3: Victoria Police vessel.

“The mission of the National Search and Rescue Council is to develop and maintain an effective, efficient and integrated national search and rescue system that meets international obligations and domestic requirements”



Executive Summary

The 46th meeting of the National Search and Rescue (NATSAR) Council was held at the Victoria Police Centre from the 26 - 28 October 2022, hosted by Victoria Police. Acting Deputy Commissioner Wayne Newman, Victoria Police formally opened the meeting, which was chaired by Mark Morrow, Executive Director Response of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

This was the first in-person meeting of the Council since 2019 and was attended by 29 delegates from the 10 SAR authorities who are responsible for the Australian SAR system, which covers more than 53 million square kilometres. The SAR authorities represent each of the eight state and territory police forces, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and AMSA. Observers from the National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee and our trans-Tasman partners New Zealand Search and Rescue Council (NZ SAR Council), NZ Police and also attended the meeting.

The meeting focused on the strategic direction of the Council through a facilitated session and agreed on a need for the Council to conduct an environmental scan for the national SAR system. This will be a key priority for the Council in 2023 to forecast strategic issues and risks likely to impact SAR in Australia and inform future planning and governance.

The meeting also discussed standing agenda items including national training and jurisdictional updates. The Australian Electronic Night Search Guidance was finalised for incorporation into the next edition of the NATSAR Manual.

The SAR Data Working Group reported progress on standardising SAR metadata categories and definitions for the national annual collection. The definitions were endorsed for implementation for the next reporting period. This critical piece of work combined with the impending environmental scan, will enable insights to inform future capability and capacity of SAR in Australia.

Overall, the meeting produced 56 outcomes and 30 actions that will be jointly progressed over the next 12-24 months.

Each year the Council recognises outstanding contributions to search and rescue through the Australian SAR Awards Program. The national awards event was held at the Marvel Stadium in Melbourne where AMSA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mick Kinley presented the 11 recipients with their national awards on behalf of the Council from three award categories; professional SAR, non-professional SAR and long-standing contributions to SAR.



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List of Attendees

AMSA Staff		
Mick Kinley	Chief Executive Officer	AMSA
Mark Morrow	Executive Director, Response (Chair)	AMSA
Kevin McEvoy	Manager, AMSA Response Centre	AMSA
Jim Fryday	Duty Manager, AMSA Response Centre	AMSA
Mike Wytcherley	Principal Advisor, Assets and Capability	AMSA
Peter McDonell	Advisor, Asset Management	AMSA
Lucena Deakin	NATSAR Council Secretariat	AMSA
Janet Hughes	NATSAR Council Secretariat	AMSA
Mark Semmler	NATSAR Council Secretariat	AMSA
NATSAR Council Members		
Chris Ambroz	Squadron Leader	Australian Defence Force
Matthew Reynolds	Detective Inspector	Australian Federal Police
Anthony Barry	Sergeant	Australian Federal Police
Tony Brazzill	Inspector	New South Wales Police
Ryan Spong	Sergeant, Search & Rescue Coordinator, Marine Area Command	New South Wales Police
Mick Smith	Operations Coordinator Rescue & Bomb Disposal	New South Wales Police
Chris Raeburn	A/Sergeant	Northern Territory Police
Ray Brownhill	Inspector	Queensland Police
Tony Nelson	Search and Rescue Coordinator & Training Officer	Queensland Police
Craig Wall	Superintendent, Officer in Charge Special Tasks and Rescue Group	South Australia Police
Joshua Heinze	Senior Sergeant, Office in Charge, Water Response Section	South Australia Police
David Wiss	Inspector, Marine and Rescue Services	Tasmania Police
Bernard Peters	Sergeant	Tasmania Police
Wayne Newman	A/g Assistant Commissioner	Victoria Police
Greg Barras	A/g Superintendent	Victoria Police
Vick Velthus	A/g Inspector	Victoria Police
Gregory Paul	Search and Rescue Squad	Victoria Police
Chris Pine	Senior Sergeant	Victoria Police
Frank Pisani	Senior Sergeant	Victoria Police
Steve Scott	Emergency Operations Unit	Western Australia Police

Meeting Agenda

DAY 1 WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2022

Topic	Speaker
Commencement Lunch (Optional)	
Formal Opening	VIC Police, Ass. Commissioner
Session 1: Welcome and introduction	Chair
1.1 Welcome and apologies	Chair
1.2 Administration	Secretariat
Session 2: NATSAR Council Meeting Agenda	Chair
2.1 Order of business and any other items	Chair
2.2 Announcement of National SAR Award winners	Secretariat
Session 3: SAR Operations	
3.1 National Review of SAR Activity and Performance	Secretariat/All
- SAR Authority Reports (incident statistics)	
3.2 Observer Reports	
- National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee Report	NVMSARC
- New Zealand SAR updates	NZSAR Secretariat
Session 3: SAR Operations cont.	
Day 1 wrap up	Chair

DAY 2 THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2022

Topic	Speaker
Recap of day one	Chair
Session 4: National SAR Arrangements and Strategic Developments	All
4.1 National Coordination Arrangements	
- Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) Review 2022	Secretariat
- Complex Maritime Emergencies Framework Update	AMSA
4.2 Regulation impacting SAR	
- SAR Communications and Regulation	AMSA
- ICAO Reciprocal Aviation SAR System Audit	AMSA
- Standards Australia and Electronic Visual Distress Signals (EVDS)	Secretariat
4.3 SAR Response to high-risk groups	
- 'Safe and Found' initiative presentation	WA Police
- Lost Person Behaviour database	QLD Police
4.4 National SAR Data Collection	
- SAR Data Working Group report	AMSA
- SAR Survivor Questionnaire	AMSA
4.5 SAR Training	
- National SAR Managers Course report	Jim Whitehead
- QLD RTO position for National SAR Training	QLD Police
4.6 Presentations of National SAR relevance	
- VIC Aircraft Tasking Model	VIC Police
- MV Everest Case Study	AMSA/AAD
- Portland Bay Case Study	AMSA
Session 5: Strategic Thinking Session	Facilitator
5.1 Council Planning and Development	
5.2 National SAR Arrangement impacts and the IGA	
- Cross border interoperability	
- Application of aviation assets	
- Decision framework and cost	
5.3 National Training (NATSARMC)	
Day 2 wrap up	Chair

DAY 3 FRIDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2022

Topic	Speaker
Recap of day two	Chair
Session 6: National Capability & Technology	
6.1 SAR Technology Working Group Report	SA Police
6.2 Dive Working Group update	NSW Police
6.3 Aircraft Electronic Night Search Guidance	AMSA
Session 7: Public Engagement and SAR Profile	Secretariat
7.1 National Safety Engagement and SAR Prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land SAR Stakeholder Engagement - Collective approach to messaging for the maritime and aviation community 	
7.2 Council Governance & Future Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Thinking Session overview - NATSAR Council Business Plan and Council risk - Proposed amendments to NATSAR Manual - NATSAR Council action table 	
7.3 Format of Council meeting and Council management	
Session 8: Any other business	Chair
Session 9: Wrap up & Meeting closure	Chair

46th NATSAR Council Annual Meeting Outcomes

A summary of the agreed notes and actions from the 45th NATSAR Council annual meeting is provided below. Police Commissioners are informed of the most significant outcomes and the Council is provided with a full meeting report for review and feedback before it is made publicly available on the NATSAR Council website at <https://www.amsa.gov.au/national-search-and-rescue-council>.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
<u>Session 3: SAR Operations</u>		
3.1 National Review of SAR Activity and Performance	Reviewed the Council's achievements against the 2021/22 Business Plan objectives, as well as national trends and themes identified from the jurisdictional SAR Activity Reports. Discussed the usefulness of the analysis conducted on the SAR Activity Reports for a national perspective of SAR activity and agreed to continue this process in future to highlight important trends and issues requiring national attention.	<i>Action 1: Secretariat to continue the facilitation of an annual national SAR performance and activity analysis.</i>
	Discussed the NATSAR Council Performance Report, which summarises the Council's achievements against the Business Plan objectives during the 2021/22 FY period. This included an update of the key action items from the previous NATSAR Council meeting and the progress made against significant NATSAR initiatives. Agreed for the Secretariat to incorporate key initiatives and discussions from the annual meeting into the Performance Report and recirculate to Council following the meeting for final endorsement and inclusion within the Commissioner letter of outcomes.	<i>Action 2: Secretariat to incorporate key points from the annual meeting into the 2021/22 Performance Report for inclusion within the Commissioner letter of outcomes.</i>

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
	<p>Discussed important national trends identified in the Analysis of SAR Activity paper. Highlighted the growing consideration and use of uncrewed search assets in SAR operations. Noted the continued impact of COVID 19 on SAR training, industry engagements and on safety programs and community awareness campaigns with current trends to online channels to promote safety. Additionally, many jurisdictions reported on the impacts of natural disaster responses (both flood and bushfire), resulting in multiagency and multi-jurisdictional SAR responses. Members endorsed the analysis for inclusion within the annual meeting report.</p>	<p><i>Action 3: Secretariat to include the Analysis of SAR Activity within the annual meeting report.</i></p>
	<p>Noted the value of meaningful and consistent national data, as presented in the NZ SAR annual reports, and discussed the possible benefits for the Council in having similar data presentation, to increase the Council's profile as part of the strategic objectives. Although the National Data Working Group is working towards the standardisation of national SAR data, the Council confirmed quality data is a key barrier to producing such material. Agreed for members to determine how the Data Working Group members can support the Council's need to deliver more measurable achievements.</p>	<p><i>Action 4: Members to consider how our national SAR data can deliver more measurable achievements and move towards formalised reporting.</i></p>
	<p>Supported the continuation for the Secretariat to circulate the NATSAR Council Performance Report to Police Commissioners / Chief of Joint Operations with the Statement of Meeting Outcomes from NATSAR 46. The letter will highlight the Council's strategic issues and developments to Police Commissioners for future planning purposes.</p>	<p><i>Action 7: Secretariat to include the Performance Report and Statement of Meeting Outcomes within the letter of outcomes to Police Commissioners / equivalent.</i></p>

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
<p>3.2 Observer Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee Report - New Zealand SAR updates 	<p>Noted previous interest in developing a communications item to reach a wider audience to promote SAR more holistically as a collective industry, similar to the annual report and environmental scan produced by New Zealand. Noted the level of resources required to produce these documents, and its dependency on data to support the promotion of the NZ SAR system and the benefits in increasing the profile of the Council. Confirmed member interest for the Council to move towards more formalised reporting similar to NZSAR, although agreed the need for a broader review of the impacting factors such as reporting data in a multi-jurisdictional, federated arrangement and the challenge of including volunteer data.</p>	
	<p>Noted the risk and challenges of the National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee (NVMSARC) in decreasing numbers of volunteers nationwide due to the ageing baby boomer population, as the predominant volunteer age group. Confirmed this poses significant challenges for future capability planning for the NATSAR Council and agreed for this to be reported to the Police Commissioners as a key risk to the national SAR system.</p>	<p><i>Action 5: Chair to communicate to Commissioners, the risk of decreasing numbers of volunteers nationwide on the national SAR system.</i></p>
	<p>Discussed the benefit of having the NVMSARC as the volunteer representatives on the Council with observer status. Highlighted a gap in representation from the Volunteer state emergency services to cover updates within the land emergency services sector particularly where the SAR Authorities are seeing the cross-over of responsibility and work. Noted increasing work as a result of natural disasters in recent years. Agreed for the Council to determine the most</p>	<p><i>Action 6: Members to suggest appropriate national volunteer groups within the land emergency services sector for potential NATSAR representation.</i></p>

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
	appropriate national group to approach for potential NATSAR representation in future.	
<u>Session 4: National SAR Arrangements and Strategic Developments</u>		
4.1 National Coordination Arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) Review 2022 - Complex Maritime Emergencies Framework Update 	Noted the 2022 biennial IGA review process and confirmed the Council's unanimous position submitted ahead of the annual meeting that the IGA reflects current arrangements, and therefore does not require amendment.	
	Council members discussed the out of session review process and noted most delegates' decision is made from a jurisdictional perspective and although there is no immediate need for amendment to address any discrepancies in the agreement and in practice there is opportunity to conduct a broader review of the national SAR arrangements in a Council setting. This would encourage members to identify gaps, areas for improvement and forward planning alongside discussions of national risks, challenges, and geopolitical trends. This was referred to the Strategic Thinking Session to consider the national SAR arrangements alongside future strategic issues likely to impact SAR in Australia.	
	Noted paper (WP 4.1.2) submitted by AMSA, regarding progress made on the national capability for Complex Maritime Emergencies (CMEs) and the proposed future plan, including both national CME and Crisis Appreciation and Strategic Planning (CASP) methodology workshops, the published Complex Maritime Emergency Management Planning Handbook and CME training workshops.	

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	Further noted the Portland Bay case study, which had several characteristics of a CME and it confirms Australia's exposure to CME risk.	
	Noted extensive work being undertaken on CMEs on an international scale, particularly concerning cruise ships and noting Australia's extensive SAR region (one tenth of the world's surface) extending down to Antarctica, agreed this as a significant national risk for Council to consider within its broader environmental scan for future response planning.	<i>Action 12: Secretariat to include the national risk of Complex Maritime Emergencies within the environmental scan scope.</i>
	Agreed for members to circulate and share the CME paper and associated doctrine through their jurisdictional Emergency Management Committees for information and opportunities to provide input/feedback.	<i>Action 13: Members to share Complex Maritime Emergencies documents through their jurisdictions Emergency Management Committees for information, input/feedback.</i>
<p>4.2 Regulation impacting SAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICAO Reciprocal Aviation SAR System Audit 	Noted Australia and New Zealand's arrangement to conduct an Aviation SAR System audit as a reciprocal arrangement in preparation for the ICAO audit scheduled in 2023. Agreed for Scott Constable, AMSA to keep the Council informed on the milestones and findings of the audit for any policy changes required at a national level.	<i>Action 31: AMSA to keep the NATSAR Council abreast of updates of the audit for potential national application.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standards Australia and Electronic Visual Distress Signals (EVDS) 	Noted the paper submitted by the Secretariat regarding a request by Standards Australia for NATSAR Council response on the proposal for revision of Australian Standard AS 2092:2004, Pyrotechnic marine distress flares and signals for carriage by pleasure craft. This proposal would allow the carriage of Electronic Visual Distress	

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	<p>Signals (EVDS) instead of pyrotechnic flares for night-time use but not daylight smoke flares.</p>	
	<p>Noted the NATSAR Council's historical position on EVDS from the 44th NATSAR Council annual meeting that "there was not enough evidence to suggest that EVDS operate or replicate the same standard as pyrotechnic flares and therefore could not endorse them as a suitable replacement". The AMSA position has been communicated to the Australian and NZ Safe Boating Education Group (ANZSBEG).</p>	
	<p>Confirmed a consistent view across jurisdictions and agreed that the following points would be communicated to Standards Australia in the NATSAR Council response from the Chair, by the first week of November 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. While the NATSAR Council is not opposed to a review of AS 2092, all NATSAR representatives supported the national regulator's position on EVDS, which is explained at: https://www.amsa.gov.au/about/regulations-and-standards/22018-electronic-visual-distress-signals-evds b. The Council opposes the adoption of the US Coast Guard or Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services (RTCM) EVDS standards. This would conflict with AMSA's official safety directions in Marine Order 2/2018, which are mandated to comply with the International Maritime Organization's COLREGs. It is essential to resolve this issue before any changes are made to AS 2092 as the standard is referenced in 	<p><i>Action 8: Chair to send a formal response to Standards Australia outlining its shared position and response to the revised proposal of Australian Standard AS 2092:2004.</i></p> <p><i>Action 9: Kevin McEvoy, AMSA, to represent the Council's view on the Standards Review Project Committee for Australian Standard AS 2092:2004.</i></p>

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	<p>the Marine Order and numerous NSCVs (National Standards for Commercial Vessels) and could compromise Australia's international obligations. The US and Canada are the only IMO members that have allowed EVDS for recreational vessels and their non-compliance with IMO requirements are contested within IMO.</p> <p>c. Agreed for the Manager, AMSA Response Centre to represent the Council's view on the Standards Review Project Committee to ensure the regulators and SAR Authorities are represented, particularly noting the risks to SAR personnel and SAR operations.</p> <p>d. Agreed that the NATSAR Council Chair will write to Standards Australia outlining its concerns about the current AS 2092 review proposal, including insufficient luminosity and the apparent incompatibility of EVDS with night vision equipment. This potentially risks a false sense of security by those who might rely on EVDS, especially since they are not internationally recognised distress signals and may not be recognised by crews of commercial ships in the vicinity.</p> <p>e. The Council noted that regulatory changes relating to flares are imminent in several jurisdictions, but the changes have not been discussed with the relevant SAR authorities. Therefore, the Council requests the 13-page proposal document regarding AS 2092 from Standards Australia should be revised to correct errors and ensure the NATSAR concerns are considered within the proposal. An updated project proposal should then be re-issued to all stakeholders from Standards Australia to ensure</p>	

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	<p>the project to revise AS 2092 sets out the concerns expressed in the letter to Standards Australia by the Chair of NATSAR.</p> <p>f. Whilst the Council acknowledged there are benefits in moving to EVDS in the future, it must be done with consideration to maintaining the same levels of visibility and associated safety as that offered under pyrotechnic devices. Agreed the Council is more than willing to work with manufacturers/authorities in the development of EVDS which will attain that standard.</p>	
<p>4.3 SAR Response to high-risk groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Safe and Found' initiative presentation 	<p>Confirmed that dementia/cognitive decline, mental health, and other high-risk groups involving those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was a key theme across most jurisdictions for land SAR. Noted the joint awareness and safety programmes currently underway with jurisdictions and third-party organisations such as, Medic Alert, Alzheimer's Australia, Dementia Australia, and Autism Swim.</p> <p>Discussed how the Council addresses nationally consistent issues/risks such as responses to incidents involving high risk groups and agreed the need for nationally consistent responses where possible.</p> <p>Noted WA Police's presentation on the 'Safe and Found' safety initiative as a state-led response to address the increasing incidents involving persons with dementia, autism, and cognitive impairments. Members endorsed 'Safe and Found' as a successful initiative to target this high risk group where the database is managed by Medic Alert and Police access the database for SAR.</p>	

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	<p>Agreed for delegates to consider their jurisdictional needs to implement 'Safe and Found' as a national safety initiative of the Council, noting that some jurisdictions already have dedicated community safety programs in place, such as 'Getting home safely' and other joint programs targeting communities with dementia, autism and cognitive decline.</p>	<p><i>Action 10: Members to consider their jurisdictional needs to implement 'Safe and Found' as a national safety initiative of the Council.</i></p>
<p>- Lost Person Behaviour database</p>	<p>Noted the positive results produced by the Lost Person Behaviour (LPB) database, in developing LPB profiles and guidance within the NATSAR Manual, including the most recent profiles attributed to First Nations peoples and drug affected people. The Council agreed its continued support for the LPB database and associated work, noting jurisdictional data and input is required in order to progress this project.</p>	<p><i>Action 11: Members to continue providing valuable data to the Lost Person Behaviour Database.</i></p>
<p>Noted the completion into the study of 'Unlocated Victims of Violent Crime' resulting from homicide (otherwise known as dead person behaviour project). Noted the significant outcomes produced from the study that will inform inclusions within the NATSAR Manual. The methodology was successfully applied in 5 cases resulting in located victims, with an additional 4 undiscovered cases still before the courts.</p>		
<p>4.4 National SAR Data Collection</p>	<p>Noted the need for meaningful and consistent national data, as presented in the NZ SAR annual reports.</p>	
	<p>Noted the progress of the SAR Data Working Group which presented a full set of standardised metadata elements and definitions to</p>	

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<p>- SAR Data Working Group report</p>	<p>Council. This will improve the availability of the national SAR data collection for analysis and decision-making.</p>	
	<p>Discussed the standardised metadata definitions proposed on the basis that the working group will continue to meet to implement the definitions for national annual collection, workshop incidents that identify gaps within the methodology for ongoing development of the definitions. The working group will report to Council on any implications or challenges arising, noting the existing discrepancies in data regarding lives assisted.</p>	
	<p>Further noted a national SAR database remains an aspirational goal for the working group but is not a viable priority for the Council in the short-term as several barriers exist that will require significant resources to address. These include, database management and maintenance, security and privacy complications, IT infrastructure, etc.</p>	<p><i>Action 17: Data Working Group Chair to lead the implementation of the standardised metadata definitions for national annual collection.</i></p>
<p>- SAR Survivor Questionnaire</p>	<p>Noted the paper submitted by AMSA highlighting the lack of a National SAR Survivor Questionnaire that is available for use across several environments and jurisdictions. Further noted AMSA's SAR Survivor Questionnaire has not been updated since 2012 and confirmed this as an opportunity for the Council to support a review and develop a Questionnaire suitable for national use so its data can be utilised for SAR authorities to validate and review multiple aspects of the SAR response.</p>	
	<p>Confirmed the questionnaire captures key information relating to a survivor and the actions taken whilst awaiting rescue. Information</p>	

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	<p>included in the questionnaire relates to environment conditions, the performance and use of emergency equipment, and SAR asset sightings and response.</p>	<p><i>Action 18: AMSA to lead a review into developing an updated SAR Survivor Questionnaire.</i></p>
	<p>The Council supported the development of an updated SAR Survivor Questionnaire and agreed there is scope for the Data Working Group to be involved in the analysis of information and data.</p>	<p><i>Action 19: AMSA to utilise its membership on the SAR Data Working Group to consider how SAR Survivor Questionnaire data and analysis can be incorporated into reporting.</i></p>
<p>4.5 SAR Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National SAR Managers Course report - QLD RTO position for National SAR Training 	<p>Noted the NATSAR Managers Course Director’s report submitted to the Council as a comprehensive review of the 2022 course. Confirmed this is the first year that the course was Directed by consultant, Jim Whitehead following his retirement from the QLD Police.</p>	
	<p>Noted this year’s course had the largest number of participants with 25 students and 14 Directing Staff (DS) members. Confirmed this was as a direct response to the backlog of students as a result of COVID cancellations.</p>	
	<p>Discussed the importance of the course in providing police with nationally consistent training with some jurisdictions having the Advanced Diploma incorporated within their tenure and/or promotions process. Confirmed AMSA and ADF involvement within the course is primarily from an SME perspective as both agencies have specific in-house training, which is tailored to the different operational environments from the police.</p>	

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	<p>Noted the continued succession planning efforts of the Directing Staff (DS) members, which has been a priority of the NATSAR Council since 2021 and discussed the recommendation of the DS to establish a dedicated working group to review future options for national SAR training. The following outcomes were agreed to support this recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Noted the QLD Police’s position to continue supporting the course assessment and delivery under its RTO, although noted the requirement for the assessment to be conducted by the QLD State SAR Training Coordinator in order to protect its RTO status and ensure continuity. b. Discussed the ASQA requirement for the RTO to ensure continual improvement of course material and agreed annual reviews should be conducted by the Directing Staff members as part of the course preparation. c. Noted the QLD RTO arrangement was initially based on a temporary arrangement and is heavily dependent on the QLD SAR Coordinator role. Agreed the need for the Council to consider more sustainable options for the course management in future which sees a shared responsibility of work amongst the jurisdictions. d. Noted AMSA’s commitment in supporting the delivery of the course and its continued financial contributions. Agreed the proposed approach to streamline some of the administrative processes such as travel arrangements, to align with individual 	<p><i>Action 12: Secretariat to establish a National SAR Training Working Group to develop an approach to share the management of the NATSAR Managers Course and explore in detail, more sustainable options for the course in future.</i></p> <p><i>Action 13: Delegates to nominate suitable members from each jurisdiction for the National SAR Training Working Group.</i></p>

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	<p>organisational travel policies as per normal travel business approaches.</p> <p>e. Agreed the establishment of a dedicated working group (aligned to the agreed working group approach of it being time-limited, as opposed to ongoing) to develop an approach to share the management of the NATSAR Managers Course and explore in detail, more sustainable options for the course in future including, course management and content currency. Delegates to nominate suitable members from each jurisdiction to represent their jurisdiction on the working group.</p>	
<p><u>Session 5: Strategic Thinking Session</u></p>		
<p>5.1 Council Planning and Development</p>	<p>The Council initiated a strategic thinking session (session 5) on Thursday, 27th October facilitated by Murray Kear, a former NSW emergency management executive. The session examined the need to forecast future strategic issues likely to impact SAR in Australia so the Council can plan accordingly. The session also conducted a SWOT analysis where jurisdictions assessed the skillsets required for each NATSAR representative, in order to meet the Council objectives.</p>	
<p>5.2 National SAR Arrangements impacts and the IGA</p>	<p>New Zealand SAR Secretariat shared a suite of strategic planning documents, including their Annual Report, which provides a national perspective of search and rescue and promotes their work to government. Succinct statements of key outcomes and service costs are combined with clear graphics illustrating performance trends. The Council agreed further risk planning is needed to enhance the Australian SAR system and should be combined with the Council's</p>	

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	broader strategic review of the national SAR system and inform changes to the Council's strategic documents (Business Plan, IGA, Charter).	
	Discussed the benefits for the Council to conduct an environmental scan, similar to NZ, to highlight a broad range of foreseeable risks, including; climate change, proliferation of Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SENDs) devices, mental health, ageing demographics, decreasing volunteer availability nation-wide, large geographical extent (one tenth of the earth's surface), sustainability of funding for SAR assets and the likely risk of a Complex Maritime Emergency.	<i>Action 14: Secretariat to facilitate the AMSA-led environmental scan on behalf of the NATSAR Council, to be funded by AMSA.</i>
	Noted that the Council is reviewing its structure to face new challenges. This will require commitment from Commissioners nationally, alongside ongoing pressure of general policing, to ensure the development of a national SAR framework can meet Australia's future needs.	
	Agreed to maintain the existing IGA, noting the commitment of the Council to conduct an environmental scan. The scan aims to highlight potential amendment of the IGA to provide a more strategic focus and promote confidence by Police executives and Government (both jurisdictionally and nationally) that SAR in Australia is strategically planning its activities to comprehensively manage risk.	
	Agreed that the Chair will write to the Police Commissioners to report the outcomes of the IGA biennial review. Police Commissioners are invited to brief their respective Ministers (signatories) of the Council's	<i>Action 15: Chair to write to the Police Commissioners and equivalents to report on the outcomes of the IGA biennial review and</i>

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	<p>decision for the current IGA to remain in place whilst the Council reviews its broader national SAR arrangements through an Environmental Scan. The Council will then consider how the outcomes of this scan can be appropriately reflected within the national SAR arrangements and NATSAR Council governance framework.</p>	<p><i>invite them to brief their respective Ministers (signatories) of the Council's decision for the current IGA to remain in place whilst the Council reviews its broader national SAR arrangements through an Environmental Scan.</i></p>
<p><u>Session 6: National Capability & Technology</u></p>		
<p>6.1 SAR Technology Working Group Report</p>	<p>Noted the SAR Technology Working Group was Chaired by SA (Rob Gregory) and convened for its sixth year since it was established in 2016. Noted the group has had almost 2 years of inactivity as a result of competing priorities and restrictions posed by COVID 19. The meeting reviewed the Terms of Reference and discussed and reviewed several new and emerging technologies that may impact Australian SAR operations including, Lifeseeker, POLSAR, the Lost Person behaviour doctrine project, FURUNO and ADF RPAS developments.</p>	
	<p>Members agreed the need for Council to form nationally consistent positions, where necessary, on useful technologies for potential use and progression at a jurisdictional level.</p>	
	<p>Noted updates regarding the National Police Remotely Piloted Aviation Systems (RPAS) Working Group, advancements to the SARMAP platform and Bureau of Meteorology website, implementation of Iridium into the AMSA Response Centre, capability and equipment updates from AMSA and distress beacon developments.</p>	

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	<p>Noted the progress of the working group in delivering the Council's objective in monitoring the development of new technology and techniques that impact the Australian SAR system to facilitate effective coordination of SAR operations between the SAR authorities. Supported the ongoing work and continuation of the SAR Technology Working Group in 2023, proceeding the NATSAR Managers Course, noting the overlap in knowledge and operational input.</p>	<p><i>Action 21: SAR Technology Working Group to lead the delivery of the group's action plan into 2023, in the lead up to the next annual meeting ahead of the National SAR Managers Course (NATSARMC).</i></p>
<p>6.2 Dive Working Group update</p>	<p>Noted the progress update provided by the Dive Working Group Chair, Ray Busby regarding the work to identify where within the NATSAR Manual the Dive Working Group can contribute standardised dive specific information that will assist SAR operations. For instance, terminology and principles relevant to the application of dive in SAR.</p>	
	<p>Confirmed that Jim Whitehead is working closely with the Dive Working Group to identify the level of information suitable for the NATSAR Manual. Agreed for the working group to meet again in the new year to discuss Jim's recommendations and discuss relevant information for contribution that will be of national benefit.</p>	<p><i>Action 20: Dive Working Group Chair and Secretariat to arrange the next Dive Working Group meeting in early 2023 to progress its action plan.</i></p>
	<p>Discussed the paper submitted by AMSA, proposing guidance and amendments to the NATSAR Manual for SAR coordinators regarding electronic night search by aircraft and noted this guidance</p>	

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
6.3 Aircraft Electronic Night Search Guidance	has been in development since 2018 where the technique was initially presented by Cobham.	
	Endorsed the proposed inclusion of night circle search guidance outlined in WP 6.3, Attachment 1 within the next edition (Feb 2023) of the NATSAR Manual, including the proposed consequential amendments in Attachment 2.	
<u>Session 7: Public Engagement and SAR Profile</u>		
7.1 National Safety Engagement and SAR Prevention	Agreed that the environmental scan should inform the direction and prioritisation of Public Engagement and SAR Prevention, noting the Council addresses national issues with nationally consistent programs and initiatives such as the Lost Person Behaviour database and 'Safe and Found'.	<i>Action 16: Secretariat to facilitate further discussions regarding the NATSAR Council's approach to address public engagement and SAR prevention following the completion of the environmental scan.</i>
7.2 Council Governance & Future Development - Proposed amendments to NATSAR Manual	Discussed the NATSAR Manual amendments as submitted during previous 12 months in the lead up to the annual meeting. Summarised the key amendments including new/updated appendices on guidance resulting from the LPB annual review and annual review conducted through the NATSAR Managers Course(NATSARMC).	
	Noted the Secretariat conducts a subject matter vetting/review process before submission to Council to ensure their relevance. Members endorsed the amendments presented within the amendments schedule for publishing within the Feb 2023 NATSAR Manual edition.	<i>Action 22: Secretariat to implement the agreed NATSAR Manual amendments, including the night circle search guidance and associated attachments within the next edition of the</i>

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
		<i>NATSAR Manual, scheduled for publishing in Feb 2023.</i>
<p>- NATSAR Council action table</p>	<p>Noted the Action Plan Table presented by the Secretariat tracks progress against all NATSAR Council actions and confirmed the key actions/initiatives have been addressed throughout the annual meeting agenda. Agreed for the Secretariat to update the action table in accordance with outcomes from the 46th annual meeting and close of completed actions as presented within WP 7.2.3.</p>	<p><i>Action 23: Secretariat to update the action table in accordance with outcomes from the 46th annual meeting and close of completed actions.</i></p>
<p>7.3 Format of Council meeting and Council management</p>	<p>Discussed the benefit of jurisdictions having a consistent approach in reporting the key outcomes of the annual meeting back through their respective hierarchy and agreed for the Secretariat to circulate key points from the strategic thinking session for briefing purposes. This will be ahead of the circulation of the Statement of Meeting Outcomes and annual meeting report.</p> <p>Agreed for the Statement of Meeting Outcomes to be circulated to members for review in November 2022 for inclusion within the Letter of outcomes to Police Commissioners/equivalent, which will be sent before the Christmas break. Confirmed a more comprehensive Annual Meeting Report will be circulated to members in the new year with the aim to publish the document following the first Teleconference scheduled in February 2023.</p> <p>Confirmed the next NATSAR Council annual meeting is scheduled to occur in Hobart, Tasmania, hosted by Tasmania Police. Agreed for the Chair to write to Police Commissioner/equivalent to request</p>	<p><i>Action 23: Secretariat to circulate key points from the strategic thinking session for briefing purposes.</i></p> <p><i>Action 24: Secretariat to circulate the Statement of Meeting Outcomes to members for review for inclusion within the Letter of outcomes to Police Commissioners/equivalent.</i></p> <p><i>Action 25: Secretariat to draft the Annual Meeting Report and circulate to members with the aim to publish the document on the NATSAR Council website.</i></p> <p><i>Action 26: Chair to write to Police Commissioners/equivalent to request release from duty for the 47th annual meeting.</i></p>

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
	release from duty for the annual meeting within the letter of invitation as per previous years.	<i>Action 27: TAS Police and Secretariat to liaise on the hosting requirements and arrangements for the 47th annual meeting.</i>

Analysis of National Search and Rescue Activity

Each jurisdiction presented a report on SAR Activity within their state/territory. Below is a summary of key points and trends from these reports, providing a national view of SAR activity.

Trends	Comments
Causative factors	<p>The following continue to impact SAR across the majority of jurisdictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia/cognitive decline, mental health and related risk factors, including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) • Despondency/suicide/self-harm incidents • Mental health patients leaving hospital before being discharged. Notable delay between people leaving and report being made to police. • Increase in adventure-based activities e.g. bushwalking, kayaking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ lack of preparedness, including limited knowledge of the area, weather, tides; limited safety equipment; no back up plan ○ reliance on electronic navigation and location devices ○ mountain bike parks, where the requirement for SAR assistance is proportionately very high • Breakdown/mechanical failure/lack of fuel, limited knowledge of vessel maintenance, boating and navigation • Overdue vessels • Collisions • Illegal smuggling, alcohol and drugs • Small children leaving their residence or getting lost in public places <p>New causative factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoax distress alerts (radio) • Natural disasters (bush fires, flooding)
Enhancing operational SAR capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remotely Piloted Aviation Systems (RPAS) continue to develop, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ significant increase in RPAS assets, with FLIR and thermal imagery capability and line dropping capability trials underway ○ continued training of RPAS operators ○ ADF acquired Global Hawk RPAS long range search capability, including the use of IR camera on a drone • The introduction of new and upgraded assets continues, contributing to, and building on, SAR systems across jurisdictions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ x 2 EC 135 helicopters with NVG and FLIR capability (QLD) • Development of a Land SAR mobile phone app to assist SMCs and Police Commanders in the initial stages of a land search (WA) • Acquisition of 7.4m Jet Boats for shallow water SAR operations (WA) • Decrease in Search Coordinator capability due to course cancellations during COVID

Trends	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative efforts in NSW to provide a response asset on Lord Howe Island • AFP are implementing a part-time team to support the current SAR Team across a 2-year transitional period to allow sufficient training • Increase in opportunity SAR panel aircraft and 85 trained Air Search Observers (AMSA) • Commenced monitoring of GMDSS to develop capability to monitor MSI and SAR related broadcasts via Iridium • Increased involvement with volunteer groups and use of volunteer capability, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ QLD Remote Area Tracking (QRAT) • Specialised training to support SAR capability within the jurisdictions (AFP, NT)
<p>Collaboration with other national and international SAR agencies</p>	<p>Floods, bushfires, and COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 and the NSW/VIC bushfires has required multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency responses • In other areas, cross jurisdiction and cross agency collaboration in SAR system development has been limited due to COVID-19 restrictions <p>Other matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing cooperation between agencies, including volunteer agencies • Collaboration between AMSA and the Indian Ocean Rim Association to deliver a SAR desktop exercises to the eastern and western zones of the Indian Ocean • JRCC implementation of the Global Maritime Distress Safety System (GMDSS) • Ongoing engagements with COSPAS SARSAT to integrate system changes and procedures for ELT distress tracking for aircraft inflight • ICAO and reciprocal audit arrangement between NZ and Australia • ADF joint SAREX and training with US military
<p>Safety Programs, Community Awareness and Social Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 impacted stakeholder engagement • Digital communication & social media continue to be a useful mechanism for safety education messaging • Shared/common messaging continues to be developed at a state level (stakeholder groups and advisory committees) and national (ANZSBEG) • Jurisdictions continue to develop programs promoting safety of persons with dementia or autism, to minimise requirements for SAR responses, including Safe and found WA, Getting home safely QLD) • Excellent media and education opportunities have arisen from lengthy SAR incidents, promoting beacon registration and prior preparation messages to the public • Ongoing engagement with outdoor recreational community/stakeholders with messaging, media releases and updating

Trends	Comments
	<p>of online advice for prevention of, and reaction to, emergency situations. Key areas of focus include high risk groups and areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning of a new media centre within the AMSA Response Centre to broadcast live and pre-recorded interviews to media outlets, including key safety messaging • Natural disaster safety education targeting caution around flood waters • QLD state agencies collaboration on the Torres Strait Marine Safety Program (Maritime Safety QLD, Torres Strait Regional Authority and National Maritime Safety Authority PNG) • Continued alcohol and drug testing (Operation Riversafe, SA) • Promotion in the use of marine radios to prevent unnecessary calls through the 000 service
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 students attended the 2022 NATSAR Managers Course • Once COVID restrictions eased, state SAR training commenced in QLD, NT, AFP, ADF (Military SAR Coordinator Course) NSW, VIC • ARC inhouse training (SMC training and ARC Advanced Course) • Joint SAREXs (AMSA, NSW, SA, TAS, QLD) • Regional SAREX and COMMEX (Indian Ocean) • RPAS training continues • Enhancement of the POLSAR mapping program for Land SAR operators and coordinators (NSW) • Specialised training including, coxswain course, MEDII, Master, Marine SAR training, Alpine SAR / Operator skills training, Remote area operations and canyon courses, Field Search Controller course, diving courses/training, CAVEX, Swift water • Joint police and volunteer training
Utilising technology for SAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPAS use in SAR is expanding as confidence in their ability and capability increases, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ geospatial mapping, searching for anomalies in the land environment, visual and FLIR tasks ○ development of RPAS for water operations, both SAR and investigative ○ exploration of SAR stores delivery system ○ long range RPAS capability • AMSA launch of Response Centre’s Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) services. Iridium GMDSS services will provide mariners and shore authorities with an alternative or additional satellite provider for distress alerting and dissemination of marine safety information • JPR cell has increased discussion with JRCC to facilitate ongoing chat functionality via Microsoft Teams • Ongoing reviews of the Lifeseeker Systems – a single piece of hardware that attaches to the outside of an airframe (helicopter/fixed

Trends	Comments
	<p>wing) and utilises mobile telecommunication frequency bandwidths to pinpoint a single mobile phone in a rural environment (QLD, SA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing development of a Land SAR Mobile Phone App – Land Search Controllers App (WA)
<p>Coronial Recommendation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronial recommendations reported from the jurisdictions focused on the use of lifejackets and importance of crotch straps, homicide as an outcome of a SAR fatality, helicopter crash with fatalities as a result of pilot spatial disorientation and man overboard fatality on a bulk carrier due to alcohol consumption.

2022 Australian Search and Rescue Awards

The NATSAR Australian Search and Rescue Awards are presented by the NATSAR Council in recognition of outstanding contribution to search and rescue within the Australian region.

This year's awards recognise 11 recipients who were instrumental in saving the lives of many people, conducting dangerous operations or contributing to search and rescue over their extended careers. The 2022 Australian Search and Rescue award recipients across the three award categories are:

Professional Search and Rescue Award

Recipients: Australian Federal Police Search and Rescue Unit, Senior Constable Paul Yates, Senior Constable Peter Ibbott and Sergeant Andrew Craig.

On 4 July 2021, the AFP Search and Rescue (SAR) Unit was alerted to an incident at Mt Gudgenby in Namadgi National Park, ACT involving a group of lost trail runners.

The AFP SAR team conducted a selfless on foot rescue mission with support of SES members, when helicopter access was not possible due to the deteriorating weather conditions. The rescue team trekked 4.5km with an ascent of 660m elevation and encountered very steep and arduous terrain. They were forced at times onto their hands and knees in thick vegetation and exposed ice-covered rocky outcrops, in sub-zero conditions, strong winds and snow flurries above 1300 metres.

The rescue team located the runners at approximately 1.40am the following morning on an exposed granite outcrop. The runners were huddled in bushes within a rock fissure, all showing signs of hypothermia. Once female member was treated by the rescue team for a suspected ankle fracture, which she sustained after slipping on thick ice.

The steep descent and icy conditions limited the team's ability to move the injured women to a shielded area, so a temporary shelter was erected around her, while a team member provided body warmth. As overnight conditions continued to deteriorate, early signs of hypothermia amongst some of the SES members were observed by the AFP SAR members who sacrificed their own personal cold weather equipment to prevent further deterioration.

At first light on July 5, a paramedic helicopter winched all three runners from a nearby rock face. The rescue team then began a 3-hour descent back to the FSHQ, where SAR operations concluded at 11:30am.

This extensive mission took over 18 hours with a trek of more than 9km through arduous mountainous terrain, a 1200m change in elevation in sub-zero conditions and temperatures below -15 degrees (wind chill) overnight. The AFP SAR team showed exceptional professionalism during the incident as they placed themselves at significant risk of injury or loss of life in order to save the lives of three people that may have not survived if the on-foot mission had not occurred.

Professional Commendation Award

Recipients: NSW Police Rescue Officers and Paramedics, Sergeant Dallas Atkinson, Senior Constable Casson Levy & Senior Constable Stephen Booth and NSW Ambulance Paramedic Specialists David Ipsen & Jen Campbell.

On 4 April 2022, the NAZIR family (father, mother, 15-year-old daughter, 14-year-old son & 9-year-old son) were hiking on the Wentworth Pass track when they were hit by a major rockfall in the Valley of the Waters, Blue Mountains National Park (Wentworth Falls).

The father and two sons were struck by boulders and pushed off the track, down an almost-vertical embankment. Tragically the father and the 9-year-old son were killed. The 14-year-old boy sustained significant injuries, including fractured femur, pelvic injuries, and fractured ribs with collapsed lung. The mother remained on the track but had suffered significant head trauma and was non-responsive. The 15-year-old daughter was unharmed and alerted authorities via the triple zero service.

Police and Ambulance officers were tasked to respond to the incident. An initial ground response team set off on foot from Conservation Hut at Wentworth Falls, with three police rescue officers (Atkinson, Levy, Booth and two Intensive Care Special Operations paramedics (Atkinson, Levy, Booth, Ipsen and Campbell) arriving at the scene about an hour after the rock fall. Many large boulders (up to one cubic metre each) were strewn across the site, with more large boulders and fallen trees visible above, presenting an imminent risk to the rescue team from further rock fall.

Inserting a helicopter presented too great a risk of debris falling on the injured and rescue crew. During the next 2½ hours the team located, treated and extricated the severely injured 14-year-old boy and his mother. Both survivors were moved to a safer location where a helicopter extraction could occur, away from potential rock falls. Several large trees had to be felled to enable winch extraction. A successful helicopter winch was performed just before last light. The rescue team conducted a retrieval of the two deceased from the incident area to the cleared site into the night where further rock fall occurred. By daylight several very large boulders were found at incident site, indicating the significant risk the rescue team had taken to ensure the rescue of the two survivors but also the successful recovery of the deceased family members.

Non-Professional Search and Rescue Award

Recipient: Maxime Jond

On 2 January, 2022, local Princetown Police were alerted to an incident where a group of tourists were swimming in the Gellibrand River, where it flows into ocean on the Shipwreck Coast, VIC. It was reported that two males were washed into a strong current and taken out to sea in rough conditions. A by-stander, Maxime Jond, was out for a beach stroll with his partner, when he was approached by the distraught group (speaking broken English) indicating people had been washed out in the current.

Maxime grabbed the group's inflatable beach lounge and swam out towards one of the men in trouble, who was closest and still visible from shore. The second person was not visible to Maxime nor was he aware there was a second person in the water.

When Maxime reached the first man, they used the inflatable to keep afloat, however, were unable to fight the current back to shore, instead were pushed 1km further out to sea. The local Police and ambulance were dispatched, including 2 helicopters, the first being a local pilot/owner of 12 Apostle Helicopters, assisted by a co-worker pilot also trained in surf rescue. The second helicopter tasked was a paramedic helicopter.

The first helicopter landed on the beach to pick up a police officer to assist with the air rescue. A rescuer was lowered down to the water to assist the man who was face down, by keeping his head above water while he made his way to the other two people clinging on to the inflatable couch to keep them afloat.

At this point in time, the helicopter pilot could see they were struggling against the current, making it impossible for them to get back to the shore unassisted. Thinking quickly, he manoeuvred the helicopter to the seaside of the inflatable in a successful attempt to use the downdraft of the helicopter to push them toward the beach where responders were able to get them out of the water and to higher ground. Once on the beach, CPR was performed on the unconscious man. Tragically the man was pronounced deceased. The survivor was taken for further medical examinations at a nearby hospital with a minor injury and Jond escaped with no injury.

Maxime Jond did not hesitate to risk his own safety to save the life of a stranger. The immediate action performed by a by-stander enabled the course of a professional SAR operation to occur. If it wasn't for Maxime's selfless act of bravery and quick-thinking to use the inflatable lounge as a floatation device, the rescue outcome may have been very different. Although one life was tragically lost, Maxime Jond's extraordinary effort prevented the loss of another.

Long-standing Contribution to Search and Rescue

Recipient: Jim Whitehead

For 42 years, Jim Whitehead has been a dedicated police officer within the QLD Police Service. During this time, he has successfully coordinated thousands of search and rescue (SAR) missions across QLD, other states and territories, and neighbouring countries, saving many lives. For the past 17 years, Jim has held the only fulltime role for SAR in Australia as the QLD State SAR Coordinator and Training Officer and has represented QLD as the official delegate of the National SAR Council.

Jim has demonstrated an expert knowledge of SAR procedures, implementing legislation and procedural changes within Australia, which have been identified and incorporated worldwide. Jim has provided expert peer reviews for Coroners in several Australian jurisdictions and although retired from the police force, continues to provide this service in a professional capacity through his personal consulting company.

Jim has been the only officer available to train thousands of police to be SAR Coordinators across Australia, enabling them with an Advanced Diploma/Diploma in SAR Management. He was involved in a dedicated working group to rewrite the course material for the SAR diplomas. He also has trained many SES personnel in SAR. Jim is renowned for making training enjoyable and has provided quality internal and external courses to police nationwide.

Jim recently retired from the QLD Police Service and was recognised for his 17 years of contribution to the Australian SAR system by the National SAR Council (NATSAR) Chair, highlighting initiatives Jim was highly involved in:

- Work dedicated to establishing and managing the National Database on Lost Person Behaviour—an initiative that contributed to the development of operational guidance within the NATSAR Manual and has been successfully applied in locating many missing persons across Australia.
- Extended service as Director and Assessor of the annual NATSAR Managers Course (NATSARMC) which contributes to maintaining a consistent and cohesive approach to coordination of SAR response operations across Australia.
- Commitment to the ongoing development of the National SAR Manual. The manual, now registered with the National Library of Australia, continues to be the keystone to the delivery of Australia's SAR service by providing common guidance for SAR practitioners in search and rescue operations and techniques. Jim took the lead in re-writing the manual.

Jim is a very well respected SAR professional and trainer who makes himself available 24 hours a day, every day, to provide assistance and advice for all search and rescue missions conducted. Jim is passionate about saving lives and has been a fundamental role within the national SAR system for the past 17 years and therefore worthy of national recognition.

Long-standing Contribution to Search and Rescue Commendation –

Recipient: Constable Dean Wotherspoon

For nearly 25 years Constable Dean Wotherspoon has been a member of the Tasmania Police Search and Rescue (SAR) squad, saving the lives of many people, conducting dangerous operations, and contributing to Australian SAR over the bulk of his policing career.

Constable Wotherspoon is one of the most, if not most, experienced search and rescue operatives in Tasmania, whether this be in a marine, land or an underground environment, and is relied on to instruct, direct or assess on all relevant search and rescue courses, as well as being part of the Western Search and Rescue management team.

Dean's primary role within Tasmania Police is a Forensic Officer and he performs the search and rescue position on a part-time basis, which has seen him contribute hundreds, if not thousands of hours of his own time to ensure he remains contemporary in equipment, procedures and techniques. Dean is also one of the state's most experienced Rope Access and Rescue Trainer/ Assessors (RARTA) as well as holding a Certificate 4 in Vertical Rescue, a Certificate III in Public Safety for Vertical Rescue.

Constable Wotherspoon has taken on the role of both local and state-wide instruction and last year ran a state-wide training course for police SAR members, which involved a complete re-write of the training manual and Standard Operating Procedures.

In recognition of his experience, he has represented Tasmania Police on multi-agency Vertical Rescue workshops and been senior instructor on numerous Vertical Rescue courses with other Tasmanian Emergency Service responders.

Constable Wotherspoon has been a Search Mission Controller since 2002 and successfully completed the National Police SAR Managers Course in 2004. Since 2002 he has successfully completed innumerable missions in all facets of search and rescue, committing to every mission fully, regardless of size, complexity, or resource intensity.

Throughout his career in search and rescue, Constable Wotherspoon has received many personal letters of appreciation for his commitment and contribution.

The 2022 Australian SAR Awards Media Release can be viewed here:

https://media.amsa.gov.au/media-release/australias-search-and-rescue-heroes-honoured?_ga=2.131176719.1839429348.1674513954-1054626525.1649715797