



# NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL

# Business Plan

2020-2022



# Purpose

The purpose of this business plan is to define the priorities and actions for the years 2020-2022 to achieve the Council’s strategic objectives, as per the framework below. The actions highlighted in this Business Plan are the actions agreed by the National Search and Rescue (NatSAR) Council to execute the strategy.

Below are the three strategic objectives that the Council has agreed are the priority for 2020-2022:

1. Represent the SAR community as the Centre of Excellence (COE) for SAR.
2. Facilitate effective coordination of SAR operations between SAR authorities.
3. Promote SAR prevention in Australia.

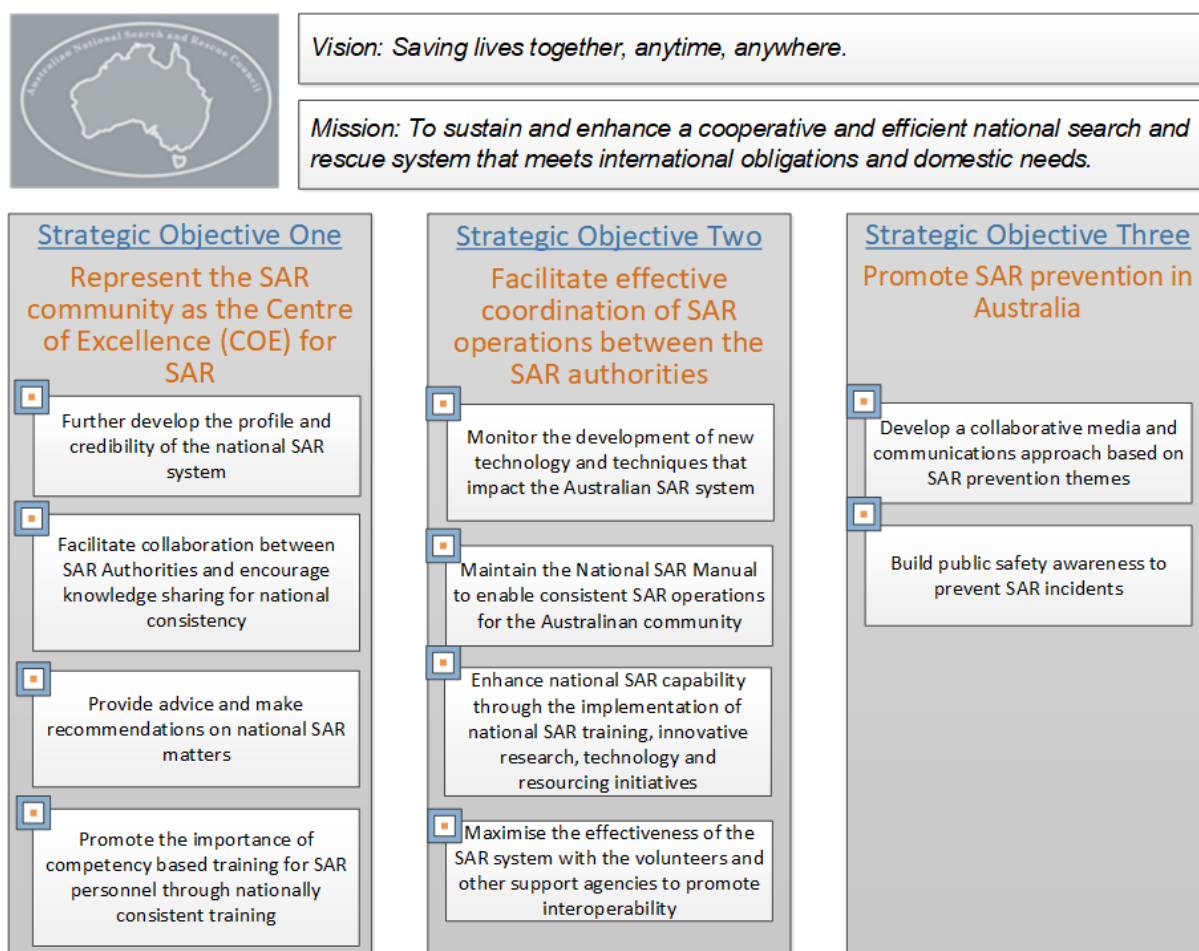


Figure 1. Strategic objectives at a glance

# 1. Represent the SAR Community as the Centre of Excellence (COE) for SAR

As the cooperative national body that is responsible for SAR arrangements in Australia, the NatSAR Council aims to be a centre of excellence that can effectively represent the Australian community on all SAR matters. This includes setting the strategic direction of SAR in Australia and encouraging best practise standards to deliver consistent and efficient services across the country. We will continue to promote the value and performance of the national SAR system to state, territory and commonwealth government decision makers whose continued support allows the Council to deliver important SAR initiatives that save thousands of lives every year.

To achieve this within a cooperative SAR system we must have effective means of collaboration and information sharing to ensure that all state, territory and commonwealth SAR agencies are speaking with one authoritative voice. This is particularly important in Australia because we operate as a federated nation with 10 SAR authorities and hundreds of supporting agencies from volunteers, state emergency services and contracted SAR assets. This means the SAR community has a reliable and proficient voice representing their best interests.

	Priorities	Core Business		Improvement Initiatives
1.1	Further develop the profile and credibility of the national SAR system.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the suite of strategic documents as part of the Council's governance structure.</li> <li>Review the IGA as per the two-year review cycle to ensure it clearly reflects the current national SAR arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore different options for hosting the Australian SAR Award event to attract broader government and community interest.</li> <li>Formalise an annual strategic thinking session to inform strategic issues and guidance.</li> <li>Determine jurisdictional commitment to a national SAR data collection approach.</li> <li>If agreed, develop such an approach.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspond regularly with senior external stakeholders (e.g. Police Commissioners) via formal channels.</li> <li>Promote the strength of the collaborative SAR system during post-incident media coverage, particularly for joint agency SAR operations.</li> <li>Represent the NatSAR Council at national SAR forums and engage with the wider SAR community e.g. Australia and New Zealand SAR Conference.</li> <li>Host the annual Australian SAR Award event with invitees from across the hosting state's SAR sector.</li> </ul>	

	Priorities	Core Business		Improvement Initiatives
1.2	Facilitate collaboration between SAR Authorities and encourage knowledge sharing for national consistency.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a new NatSAR members' area portal to facilitate more effective and efficient collaboration and information sharing.</li> <li>Deliver the annual meeting cycle to facilitate regular engagement and sharing between NatSAR Council members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further promote collaboration with NZSAR regarding shared interests such as MRO, SAR Awards, SAR training, etc.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive sharing and collaboration relating to SAR information, emerging technologies, safety programs, SAR media etc.</li> </ul>	
1.3	Provide advice and make recommendations on national SAR matters.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to enquiries that come in via the NatSAR Council Secretariat relating to the national SAR system.</li> <li>Provide briefings and input to coronial and other government inquiries as required.</li> <li>Contribute SAR expertise to the Complex Maritime Emergency workshops to ensure an effective coordination framework for complex emergencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the Council's position on initiatives that impact SAR in Australia (VMS data sharing, RPAS, Crash Alerting Device).</li> <li>Apply outcomes of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements to the national SAR framework.</li> <li>Provide advice to ANZSBEG on the current use of flares, to inform decisions around their future carriage and use.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22		
1.4	Promote the importance of competency based training for SAR personnel through nationally consistent training.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare correspondence related to the National Police SAR Managers Course, including a letter of appreciation to commissioners for their support and emphasise the value of the national training approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in the NZSAR's National SAR Course upon request to identify development opportunities for both NZ and Australia.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collate figures on the National Police SAR Managers Course, to effectively communicate training outcomes in correspondence with commissioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver jurisdictional based training where there is additional backlog of students wanting to complete the national course.</li> </ul>

	Priorities	Core Business		Improvement Initiatives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually review the course content and structure and report to Council to ensure national consistency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options around remote training opportunities to ensure continuity of national SAR capability during COVID restrictions.</li> <li>• Determine how Council will monitor the longer term impact of remote training on SAR.</li> </ul>

## 2. Facilitate effective coordination of SAR operations between the SAR authorities

Joint SAR operations between the 10 SAR authorities and multiple emergency response operations are common in Australia due to the cooperative nature of our national SAR arrangements. The intention of this objective is ensure that multiple agencies can work seamlessly together during a joint operation. What this really means for our community is that when people venture into the remote outdoors – whether by land, sea or air – and find themselves in distress, they will receive a consistent SAR response no matter where they are located and at any time.

The Council achieves this by developing national procedures that all SAR agencies follow during an incident; progressing national technology, capability and training initiatives that enable interoperability between SAR Authorities and rescue agencies (including volunteers) across our eight jurisdictions. Running joint exercises within and between jurisdictions is an important part of testing our capability to respond to scenarios that have been identified as key risks.

	Priorities	Core Business		Improvement Initiatives
2.1	Monitor the development of new technology and techniques that impact the Australian SAR system.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual meeting of the SAR Technology Working Group to keep abreast of emerging technologies and advancements for effective coordination of SAR operations.</li> <li>Annual review of SARMAP to identify possible developments in national drift modelling capability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a national position on the various uses of RPAS in SAR for the future and continually refine as new information and capability evolves.</li> <li>Progress the development of night circle search techniques for SMC's for inclusion within the National SAR Manual.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend industry events to scope emerging technologies to grow industry knowledge.</li> <li>Facilitate presenters at NatSAR meetings to discuss technology advancements and techniques applicable to SAR.</li> </ul>	
2.2	Maintain the National SAR Manual to enable consistent SAR operations for the Australian community.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the annual cycle of manual amendments for Council review and approval.</li> <li>Continually review areas not presently included in the National SAR Manual, including e.g. Mass Rescue Operations, oil and gas facilities, MEDEVACs and tracking device developments.</li> </ul>	

	Priorities	Core Business		Improvement Initiatives
		Year 2 2021/22		
2.3	Enhance national SAR capability through the implementation of nationally consistent training, innovative research and resourcing initiatives.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and provide state based, multi-agency and cross-jurisdictional training and exercise opportunities when available.</li> <li>Explore the possible use of fisheries vessel management system data for SAR operations.</li> <li>Contribute to national research and development projects for search and rescue application such as the lost person database and the dementia 'getting home safely' project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further develop the jurisdictional annual Activity Report to include capability updates with the intention to use this information to build a national capability snapshot.</li> <li>Promote joint jurisdictional incident debriefs to identify opportunities for enhanced incident coordination.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual meeting of the SAR Dive Working Group to benchmark and standardise SAR dive capabilities across Australia.</li> <li>Facilitate presenters at NatSAR meetings to discuss capability initiatives and legislative changes applicable to SAR.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute agreed guidance for first-on-scene volunteers, as developed by the SAR Dive Working Group.</li> </ul>
2.4	Maximise effectiveness of the SAR system with the volunteer and other support agencies to promote interoperability.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation of National Volunteer Marine SAR Committee on National SAR Council as an observer.</li> <li>Invite guest speakers and presenters from SAR support agencies to the annual meeting to promote engagement and collaboration across the SAR system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance engagement and collaboration with jurisdictional support agencies to gain better understating of state arrangements to gain a more holistic view of national capability.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct and participate in joint training activities and SAREX's with volunteer and emergency service agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate channels for increased collaboration with emerging volunteer agencies.</li> </ul>

### 3. Promote SAR prevention in Australia

The key to saving lives is to prevent search and rescue incidents before they occur. The Council believes that the key to achieving this is an educated and well-informed community, who has a good understanding of their environment and effective safety preparation. The challenge in Australia is that we have an adventurous population who like to explore the remote outdoors. On top of that, we have a strong tourism culture who travel to Australia for these types of unique experiences with a limited understanding of our harsh climate and challenging terrain.

To address this, the Council will collaborate with other government and partner agencies to deliver targeted safety education campaigns to high-risk groups. We will build awareness of personal responsibility through collective and consistent messaging based on safety themes and regulatory requirements where applicable.

	Priorities	Core Business		Improvement Initiatives
3.1	Develop a collaborative media and communications approach based on SAR prevention themes.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse previous incidents and annual activity reports to identify causative factors that will inform targeted safety campaigns and messaging.</li> <li>Collaborate with government and partner safety agencies through national safety forums to leverage complementary campaigns.</li> <li>Share safety education/engagement content for use on agency websites, social media and onward sharing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote joint jurisdictional incident debriefs to build case studies for engagement purposes.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to target high risk groups, such as international tourists, to promote safety.</li> </ul>
3.2	Build public safety awareness to prevent SAR incidents.	Year 1 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share case studies of notable incidents, trends and observations at public events to promote safety awareness and effective safety practices.</li> <li>Support and endorse public safety campaigns lead by partner agencies in the SAR community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase police presence in land SAR engagement initiatives.</li> <li>Promote SAR prevention at industry conferences and industry events.</li> </ul>
		Year 2 2021/22		