



AREC.info is the newsletter of Amateur Radio Emergency Communications, the public service arm of the New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters. AREC.info is published most months (except January).



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Cover: Matchil du Plessis ZL4AH at his first AREC callout. Read more in his article in this issue.



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AREC Regional Managers



A lot has happened in AEC this year. A highlight for me has been the appointment of our three paid Regional Managers. Steve Main (North), Simon Osborne (Central) and Lindsey Ross (South) are here to support you, our volunteers. If you have any questions, need support, or want to learn about anything that is going on in AEC, please reach out to them (their details are on the previous page).

The latest appointment is **Steve Main** to the RM North position. Steve, a long time Ham, has a passion for emergency communications and has spent the last nine years as a lecturer at Gisborne's Eastern Institute of Technology. He has been instrumental in increasing the Amateur Radio population in the area through running a series of successful Ham Cram sessions.

I want to say a big "thank you" to **Andy Brill** who has been our RM North until Steve started. Those of you who have dealt with Andy will know of the work he has done to support AEC over a number of years, including leading the Auckland Emergency Management relationship and coordinating a string of practical training sessions for AEC members. I am pleased that Andy will continue to work with AEC at a local and national level, continuing to share his skills and experience with us.



Acknowledging our Volunteers

While we have a small paid team, everything at the front line is undertaken by volunteers and I want to pass my appreciation on to all of you and acknowledge what you do.

We have been fortunate in the last few years to receive funding from NZ SAR. This has allowed us to build a small paid team focussed on building an organisation that attracts, supports, and retains our volunteers. With the NZ SAR funding, we have also been able to supply members with branded polos shirts and personal protective equipment. This has really helped build our brand in the community, and particularly with agencies in the SAR sector who have historically often seen us as part of the group we are working with.

This photo is of Ryan Warner ZL1RKW, taken by Steve Jepson ZL2SJ while the pair were making repairs to the National System at Wharite Peak recently.

Thank you to our committed team of volunteers who show up and help us deliver services to the community. And a thank you to NZ SAR who are investing in AEC to help us build an organisation for the future.

Here are a couple of links to articles that have included AEC that you might find of interest:

- [Emergency radio volunteers heard, but rarely seen | Volunteering Auckland](#)
- [An exercise in partnership | New Zealand Police](#)

Finally, I want to thank everyone for their hard work this year. AEC's success depends on you, our volunteers who are ready, willing and able when the balloon goes up. Have a great Christmas with your families.

Until next month, stay safe.

Don, ZL2TYR

Chief Executive Officer, AEC



AREC, Perspectives from a newcomer ...

Matchil du Plessis is a new member of AREC and shares the experience of attending his first operation. It all started with a message from Daniel ZL4DE “We have an operation at Mavora Lakes. I’ll warm up the van, you in?”

While eating dinner, going to the gym, and relaxing at the TV were all activities I had planned for the evening, I definitely did not expect to find myself driving two hours up New Zealand roads to a remote lake on a chilly winter night. Only 20 minutes after receiving a text that two children had gone missing at Mavora Lakes camping grounds, I was driving the long trek up from Invercargill. I guess when you are dealing with rescuing human lives a day’s notice is a luxury.

Having only attended two AREC (Amateur Radio Emergency Communications) training events before, saying I was jumping into the deep end with my first real operation would be an understatement. Thankfully AREC member Daniel (ZL4DE), someone who had completed countless Search and Rescue operations before, was there to manage and stress about all the important things while I could just sit by the radios and do the easy stuff.



“Sergeant? Team 2 found some interesting marks in the sand.”

As busy as taking calls, logging calls, and trying my hardest to stay awake through the night was, the operation was an incredible experience in letting me observe how a SAR operation functions. The professionalism and dedication the teams displayed at the Mavora Lakes Operation left me speechless. Never have I seen so many different teams and organisations come together for a common goal, as mostly volunteers on the long weekend no less. There were rescue chopper pilots, police officers, emergency responders, LandSAR teams, and of course us two AREC personnel all bringing their A game from the moment the sun fell till far past sun rise. All to ensure that a family we have never met before, goes home with just as many family members as they arrived with.

Even after hours of no clues, hints, or leads I was taking calls at 3am from teams. Teams risking their safety and comfort out in the cold, rainy, pitch-black night who kept going since they knew there was a job to do. As day broke even more teams from around the Southern region arrived to continue the search that the daylight was now accelerating. All of which meant Daniel was suddenly tasked to manage and organise the arriving teams through our search teams tracking software, SARTrack in absence of an IMT. I was watching all of it unfold sitting in the front of the AREC van slipping printed maps into sealed plastic bags for the LandSAR teams.

Into Sunday morning with the absence of any leads my own hope that the missing children would ever be found was beginning to falter. We were close to going home and getting relieved with fresh AREC members to continue the search when I took a scratchy, barely intelligible radio call from the far north team. Recognizing the call involved the team finding something important I passed the radio to Daniel as he understands the static ridden messages better than I do. He could make out that the lost children were found alive and well! The location was relayed and soon after the helicopter soared above us on its way to make the long-awaited extraction.

The Police sergeant was notified and it was revealed that the hard work and dedication from 50+ personnel was not in vain. When the sergeant broke the news, the prior grieving family started shedding tears of joy and calling up who I am sure is every contact they had on their mobile phone. Once the helicopter landed with the 2 children in surprisingly good spirits the parents rushed to embrace them in a hug after being separated for an entire nineteen hours. Seeing such joy from deathly worried parents made the entire sleepless night worth it to me, and I am sure everyone else.

“I would like to thank all involved for giving up your time to rescue these 2 children here though last night and today. They likely would still be out there lost in the bush without your combined efforts.”

- Sergeant Terry Wood

The operation left me better trained, with huge respect for everyone involved, and a story I can share with my now AREC interested younger brother. While I am well aware that not all operations are as impressive or have a happy ending, the feeling of relief I had that day will stick with me for life and will fuel my interest in all future SAR operations.

Signing off,
ZL4AH (Matchil du Plessis)

2023 Canterbury Avalanche SAREX

Blair Kenton ZL3TOY



On a cool crisp Saturday morning 5th August, Don 3DMC and Blair 3TOY met up at the B05 Clubrooms at 0700 to get the Christchurch AREC Daihatsu van out ready for the 90min drive to the location of the 2023 Canterbury Avalanche SAREx.

The first Avalanche SAREx held since 2016, the staging area was in the Craigieburn Range at Texas Flat about half way up the Mt Cheeseman skifield road.

An almost full Canterbury ACR squad turned out and were split into 4 teams, they were joined by two Mountain Rescue dog teams and Ski Patrol teams from Mt Cheeseman Skifield, Porter Heights Skifield and Mt Hutt Skifield.

All of whom were put in place and evacuated by a team of 3 Helicopters from the district including the Mt Hutt 500, Independent Helicopters Ecureuil (Squirrel) and the Air Rescue H145.

A cool dark morning turned into a stunning sunny day for us on the flat but cloud and wind gave the teams searching the Tarn Basin site plenty of realism. Two live avalanche victims on the surface of the slope and 3 buried "CPR dummies" were found, triaged and evacuated between then 0900 start and 1300 finish. A debrief was held at the St Andrews Lodge, Castle Hill Village between 1400 & 1600. Plenty of warming soups, breads, cakes and tea/coffee were on hand to satisfy (and warm) all those present.

Comms proved to be effective albeit busy with everyone, including the Helo pilots, operating ESX39 simplex. All of the Ski Patrol teams also had short range commercial UHF comms links for intra/inter team chat. We were with IMT at Texas Flat where the Helo LZ was marked out, comms to the Daihatsu was somewhat better than the IMT Hts leading them to ask a few questions.



Most of the traffic was between the "Spotter/Controller" situated on a high ridge overlooking the "avalanche area" and his comms to the IMT were perfect.

In the end I asked Anna (organiser) to ask her teams to all face down the basin (toward us) when communicating with IMT/Pilots as everyone was either wearing their HT on a chest pocket, under the jacket (horizontal) or in their pack with just the speaker/mic available. This made a significant improvement to received radio traffic at the IMT. The basics eh.

All in a great day out for the participating teams and Christchurch AREC, it gave us some good exposure to a SAR Group we don't normally work with.

Marlborough Clued up Kids

Greg Barton ZL2GBX

Some months ago, Gary Spence from Civil Defence contacted AREC to see if we could supply enough operators for a week, 2.5 hours each morning and afternoon session, to answer telephones in support of Clued-up Kids from the 6th to the 10th of November.

Marlborough Clued-up Kids is a collaborative interactive safety programme that developed from within the Marlborough Child Safety Group and is based on the 'Clued-up Kids' project developed in Scotland in 2001.

Children learn by doing. The programme consists of real-life role plays which are arranged in the form of an interactive course organised and delivered by community safety agencies. Topics include rail, fire, cyber and dog safety, as well as emergency first aid, water safety and mind well-being.

The event is designed for children who are becoming more independent and having to cope more on their own.

Council's Civil Defence, Nautical and Coastal, and Road Safety sections had a presence alongside other agencies including KiwiRail, FENZ, Police, Maataa waka (Social Services and Animal Control), Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand, St John and AREC.

The Civil Defence Command Vehicle was on site to house the communications systems and was where the AREC volunteers were set up.

The Brayshaw Park Committee and Riverside Railways, Vintage Car Club and Vintage Farm Machinery stage the event, providing the setting for the real-life simulations. Clued-Up Kids has been held at Brayshaw Park since 2006.



The kids were mostly years 5 and 6 and in one exercise were given a scenario of a worker fallen out of a tree while using a chainsaw. All the kids had to make a “111” call and were asked by the “operator” which service they required and were then switched through.

This is where AREC came in, as we were manning the respective emergency agency telephones and through a scripted set of questions, asked the callers the address of the incident, contact details etc. In the case of the “ambulance” calls, details of the patient’s injuries, whether they were conscious and breathing, and their age were requested and given. Callers were then advised to stay with the patient, the ambulance was on its way.

In the case of calls to “fire”, the exact location and nature of the fire was obtained, and callers were asked if everyone on site was accounted for before being asked to wait at the assembly point as the brigade were on their way.

Last year more than 600 children went through the programme, and the other half of local primary schools came this year.

AREC were manning the phones for nine sessions over the week, often with multiple calls coming in simultaneously as classes cycled around the various exercises.



In all, our AREC volunteers handled approximately 800 phone calls which proved a very rewarding and successful exercise with a few laughs along the way.

Left - AREC member Helen Harris (ZL2HH) taking an “ambulance” call in the comms vehicle.

Other AREC members who volunteered and manned the phones were: Don Laing ZL3DN, Greg Barton ZL2GBX, Paul Rennie ZL2RE, Link Teale ZL2CLT, Bill Cousins ZL2AYZ, Rob Carter ZL2IW, Ron Harris ZL2BDD, Kaye Hannagan ZL2KU.

New Auckland Comms Van attends first callout!

Andy Brill ZL1COP, Branch 29 AREC Group Leader

The New Auckland AREC and North Shore Branch comms van had its first outing on a live SAREX on 8 October during a search for a missing person in West Auckland.

The van is a joint enterprise between North Shore Radio Club and Auckland AREC, who recently pooled resources to purchase an ex-TVNZ outside broadcast vehicle for conversion to a radio comms platform. The van will be used for both AREC operations and Branch activities such as POTA activations, Field Day stations etc.

The van is a Mercedes Benz Sprinter equipped with a pneumatic tower, onboard generator and extensive equipment racks. We are still in the process of removing the TV transmission equipment wiring and replacing it with amateur and emergency services communications gear. Although the equipment racks are still a little bare, we managed to install sufficient equipment to allow the van to respond to a call from Auckland Police to support a search for a person missing in the Westgate area for two weeks.

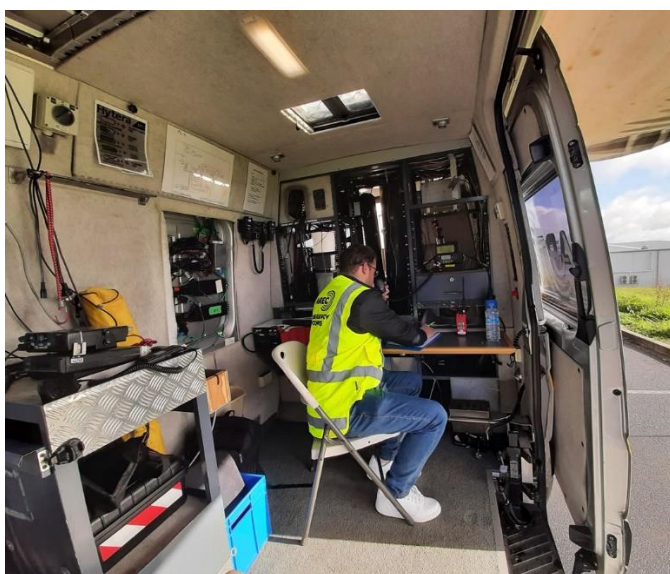


Above: Before (left) and after, The van in its new AREC livery, with the pneumatic tower and 12GHz TV link equipment still on the roof.

Below: On site during the first live SAROP

Bottom left: Kieran ZL1GER communicating with field teams during the SAROP.

Bottom Right: LandSAR and AREC members at the operation briefing.



2023 Auckland SAREX

By David Wilkins ZL1MR

The annual Auckland SAREX was planned for September 2023 at Atiu Creek Regional Park near Wellsford on the Kaipara Harbour. The goal was to test new IMT members, introduce new POLSAR members to various aspects of a larger search, and to test the functionality of the new Police Repeaters ESB57 & ESB58 plus the new linking repeater. The new LandSAR repeater was set up on ESB60 to be a link with the lost party.

The park had originally been a 340ha farm acquired in 1951 by the Chatelanat family who had developed the property into a successful sheep and cattle farm with numerous forestry blocks in the less farmable areas. In 2006 the current owners gifted the park to the people of Auckland as a Regional Park, the largest land gift since Cornwall Park in Greenlane (home of 'No Tree Hill') was gifted in 1901 by John Logan Campbell.

Since 2006 the farm continued to be run as an operating business with walkways and campgrounds added. Multiple horse riding and mountain biking trails also run across the property giving plenty of opportunity for Aucklanders to get outside an exercise. In addition, several of the farm houses were available for rent to visitors. The largest site was the main homestead called Courtyard house. This is where the SARBase HQ was located.



The site with its mix of open farmland, hillside areas, and different types of forestry blocks presented many opportunities for an interesting SAREX scenario. The senior Police SAR management certainly took advantage of the site with a more interesting set of scenarios that at the previous SAREX held here in 2015.

The scenario was that a male and three children had gone missing in the park. The male subject had an interest in a nocturnal species of gecko and to ensure he could observe the creatures had set up 6x fly campsites across the park.

All this information had to be gleaned by LandSAR staff searching one of the rentable cottages on the farm. He had not updated his whereabouts with related parties and had therefore been reported missing along with the three children.

SARBase (IMT) set up in a garage at Courtyard house. The search started late Thursday with a Police only search and a mixed IMT team learning the ropes. AREC was not planned to be on site however the author arrived Thursday to fix any technical radio or network problems that might arise that would otherwise detract from the SAREX learning outcomes.

It soon became evident that COMMS to the four PolSAR teams in the field was difficult to manage as the IMT members were trying to focus on managing a search whilst also trying to communicate with the teams.

Lesson number one was therefore learned that an IMT must have an AREC component attached whenever it is set up. As ZL1MR was a spare wheel/resource, he was soon dragged in to carry out a basic comms function to allow IMT to focus on gathering and processing intelligence, planning, and directing operations. To ensure a degree of realism, COMMS was operated as a bare minimum resource as if a spare Police person was filling in the role.

Friday morning LandSAR and AREC members started to arrive. Several of the AREC were asked to arrive earlier than planned as it was clear COMMS needed to be ahead of the game, not running a catch up as teams were deployed.

The AREC systems were set up in what had been the house laundry. A bit echoey but tolerable.

To reduce loading on the Police data modem the ZL1MR Cellular router was set up with an 18Ahr LiFePO4 battery outside connected to the COMMS network via a long network cable. All logging was made into the SARTrack data server in NZ. The IMT was running a local server with intermittent connection to the NZ server at times however all data logging by AREC appeared to be in synch as the SAREX progressed.



Above Left: View of Courtyard House with the linking repeater in the foreground beside the concrete helicopter landing pad.

Above Right: The Courtyard area was quite congested at times with private vehicles and Police vans. Antenna behind the white utes.

Below: AREC Comms and SARTrack computer systems, Richard ZL1BNQ operating. Both operators were using headsets via a control box. Also note the Codan HF CP to the left used for testing HF ALE links from the SAREX to both Christchurch and Auckland base stations.



Two computers were utilised, one connected to the Tait TM9300 base set for capturing SARTrack positions

and the other for typing in messages and managing the Operations Log. A tablet running the 'Huge Digital Clock' app was positioned in view of the operators (should we introduce an eye test for AREC operators if we need such large clocks?).

A portable Codan Control Point (CP) was also used to exercise remote access to the Auckland and Christchurch Codan Envoy X2 base station Radio Frequency Units (RFU). A local HF station was provided by ZL1MR using his Codan 2110 20W back pack into a portable ALE capable broadband antenna. Conditions were dodgy at times due to solar activity but communication was possible at all times. The use of voltage tolerant MikroTik routers for the VPN connection made it easy to operate the local CP system off a single wall-wart or battery connection.

A second TM9300 and computer were set up on ESB60 to support the lost party (only used by the SAREX organisers). The search ran quite effectively with lots of lessons learned and skill sets refined.

The search tasks utilised 6x possible fly campsites. This ensured all teams would get the chance to use a range of search and tracking methods, to all find something, and to then process a site.

As with most SAREX only a couple of teams would ever actually find a lost party but use was made of the basket stretcher and mule unit, low angle rope skills, and various simulated first aid and medical skills when the missing parties were finally located.

AREC antennae were set up using speaker stands and aluminium pole sets. Conveniently the cables ran through the vent installed for the drier that was no longer installed.

The Linking repeater was set up on the front lawn of Courtyard House next to the helicopter landing pad. Both repeaters were several km away so the system was simply tested for effectiveness.

For some reason we failed to check if we could send a Position Request from SARBase through the linked repeater network to see if any timing issues raised their ugly head. Other AREC SAREX will have to make a point of exercising this feature.

The LandSAR teams camped out Friday night and PolSAR teams camped out Thursday night with most Police field team members spending two nights out.

All teams appeared to have a great time. All returned to base for a debrief Saturday afternoon followed by a meal and drinks Saturday night.

Sunday AREC packed up and departed by mid-morning with LandSAR and PolSAR team members running through several workshop sessions on supporting Police DVI ops as well as Low Angle rope work. Additional Lesson learned: Ensure Police and LandSAR repeaters are clearly labelled on the outside of the cases with their default ESB channel ID. The Auckland Police sets were only labelled by ZL1MR after the initial repeater deployment. This meant that the wrong repeater was initially taken out as part of the initial setup requiring IMT to change their plan and briefing materials to suit.

All in all, a useful three-day SAREX. Thanks to the local Police SAR Sergeant Scott and his senior support team for running an effective and entertaining SAREX. We all learned something.



Southland AREC moves into the future!

By Daniel Erickson ZL4DE

Southland AREC is now better equipped with having access to its very own Starlink connection. Thanks to Group Leader Brendan ZL4BDS for donating his Starlink equipment to the Southland Group. Brendan recently managed to obtain the Starlink hardware when the price was going at a heavily discounted rate by retailers.

Recently AREC assisted Southland LandSAR, by providing communications support at a training camp that LandSAR held for their new volunteers at a scenic reserve near the popular coastal village Omaui. This was the perfect opportunity to put the new Starlink connection through its paces. Speeds we were receiving were 260MBps down, & approx. 20MBps up.

Thanks to Phil ZL2RO who hosts the NZSIP VOIP network, AREC were able to demonstrate making telephone calls from their Communications Vehicle and contact the Incident Management Team who were operating at the Invercargill Police Station.

Data, Voice & Video is where the future of AREC is heading, having satellite communication is another tool to add to the toolbox. Utilising this equipment will be a game changer, supporting applications like Sartrack and having instant communications will enable AREC to send and receive reliable messages in real time providing a vital link between the incident ground and the discussion makers during future Search & Rescue operations.



Left: Cordless Phone connected to the NZSIP network



Right: Matchil ZL4AH setting up the Starlink Dish

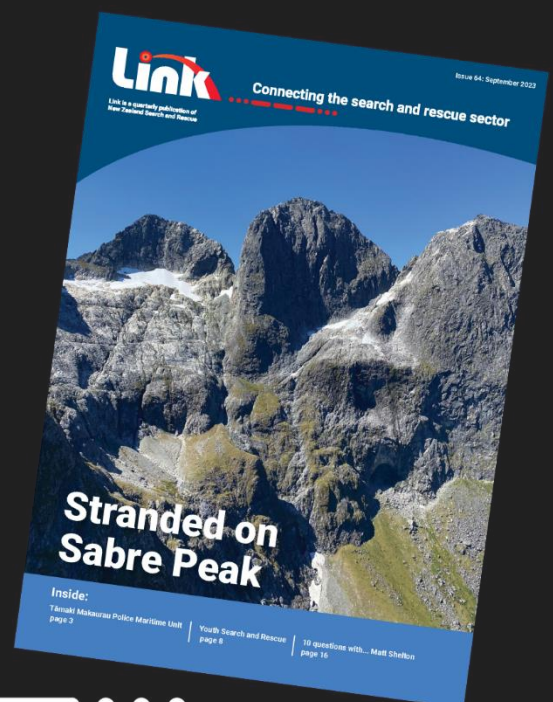
The latest issue of Link magazine is
available online now!

Stories, news and statistics from
across the search and rescue sector

nzsar.govt.nz/link

**NEW ZEALAND
SEARCH AND RESCUE**

Rapu Whakarauora Aotearoa ● ● ● — — — ● ● ●



Keeping properties safe in summer heat

David Wilkins ZL1MR, AREC HSW Advisor, shares some tips as summer approaches.

Meteorologists are predicting higher temperatures, reduced rainfall and windier El Niño weather patterns this summer that are likely to affect the east coast of both islands.

To help prepare for the hotter, drier weather, and the increased risk of fire that could impact our club buildings, or your personal properties, you can run a club working bee, or just do some spring cleaning around the house, and implement these preventive actions:

- Keep the grass short, particularly around structures. I know you probably don't like lawnmowing but long dry grass burns real easy.
- Move any flammable materials away from structures.
- Secure or remove loose items that could be damaged or cause damage in high wind. We've all seen pictures of flying trampolines, any thing else?
- Clear out gutters so that hot embers can't lodge themselves there, if the local forest or your neighbours place catches fire you don't want a ready supply of tinder in your gutters!
- Ensure HVAC systems and generators are serviced. The condenser grilles should be brushed down and the unit washed at least once per year, especially if you use it for cooling in the summer.
- Remove all waste and dispose of it accordingly. Less stuff around the place to catch fire or blow across the neighbourhood.

Group Leaders - AREC Activity Reporting

It is important that your groups time and effort volunteering for AREC is recognised

SAR Operations – most cases Cat 1 Police events

To be reported to the Police SAR Incident Controller within 5 days of the search taking place.

AREC Activity Reports

To be used for reporting all activity. involvement with SAR operations, Meetings, Training, Community Events etc. This information provides AREC National with visibility of your activity across New Zealand in one place. We also provide NZSAR a quarterly report on your non-SAROP activity.

AREC Activity Reporting form

- You can log the activities either by an internet browser on your pc/laptop or mobile phone.
- Please take the time to report the good work you are doing.
- Any questions or if you need the activity reporting password contact.

Lindsey Ross, RMStH@arec.nz, 021 116 1686

How are you going this week?

AREC can now provide free access to professional and confidential advice and support through EAP Services. You can contact EAP via 0800 327 669 or <https://www.eapservices.co.nz/request-an-appointment/> to request a confidential appointment.

Hi Everyone,

Briefings – make sure you all understand the plan!

When we head off on an AREC activity we need to clearly understand where we are going, why we are there, and how we are going to do our work. If we don't do this in a systematic way we will forget certain vital elements and will at some point stuff things up.

Checklists

Pilots use checklists when operating their aircraft. What do we do? Do you have a checklist of things that you must take when heading out on deployment? Believe me, there's nothing worse than heading off for a multi-day activity to realise that you've left your toothbrush behind!

So how about using one of your AREC training nights to put your collective heads together and draft a couple of checklists that you can all use.

One could cover what equipment you need to take. For example, no point in having batteries if you don't also take a charger to keep them topped up so they are ready to go as soon as the power drops out.

Another would be what you need to take as your personal kit. Sleeping bag, toiletries (include make up if you're so inclined – don't forget the suntan lotion), sleeping bag, clothing items, eating utensils, food/snacks, and so on.

Response Leaders – what do you need to do?

In order to deliver the planned outcomes for our 'client' organisations we need to collect information then transfer it to our team members in a coherent manner. That way we know the where, the what, and the how that we are setting out to achieve.

The standard tool used has various names but they all substantially traverse the same topics and fall in to the category of Operations Orders (Ops Orders). Typical acronyms are: SMEAC, GSMEAC(CQ), ISPEAQ, and others. Feel free to Google what's out there.

The key is to be relatively consistent. This means that not only do you get your thoughts in order before giving the briefing, everyone receiving the brief understands the order and what will be coming next. That way they can take notes in a logical order, noting any questions as they go, and if required can also brief their own teams using the same core information.

GSMEACCQ

In my experience the most useful option is GSMEACCQ. The acronym is easy to remember, and includes Q for Questions at the end – no interruptions allowed as the briefing is being delivered.

G Ground – this is the area in which the activity will be taking place. This sets out the physical boundaries of the activity. Most important when figuring out where a repeater should be placed.

S Situation – why are we setting out on the activity, what is the context and support information relevant to the activity. For a SAROP/SAREX usually includes details of the subject, the LKP, known times, inquiries currently underway, areas already searched, etc. For an AREC only activity this would include details of the 'client', their planned activity and in general terms how AREC is going to assist.

M Mission – a very military way of putting it but it should be a single sentence or two describing what is the ultimate goal of the activity. Examples can include 'To assist in the location and recovery of Joe Bloggs'; or 'To provide safety radio communications for the pony club trail ride'. The traditional delivery of the mission statement is for the briefer to say the statement once, to pause and let it sink in, then to repeat the Mission statement a second time. This is critical to ensure the listeners fully understand the ultimate goal.

E Execution – how are we going to deliver the outcome. When the Incident Controller (IC) delivers their briefing they may be talking in general terms how the bigger picture is to be executed. As the AREC Response Leader you need to listen to what the mission and overall execution plan is, then figure out AREC's role so you and your team can create a plan for AREC to execute. For example your plan may consist of several steps: Step 1 may be identify optimal locations for repeaters, Step 2 may be to set up

one or more base radios, a generator and power distribution, and so on. The 'Execution' section will ensure most HSW aspects are included as part of what we do.

A Administration – this topic covers the background aspects of what will be happening. Examples include: transport arrangements, where the comms room and IMT will be located, location of sleeping and eating areas, who is supplying food and water, where the toilets are located, hygiene requirements, and so on.

C Command – who is in charge and who their back up person(s) is. In the military this is critical as death of the commander is a real possibility when the bullets are flying. It is less important in an AREC context though who knows when a medical event may strike any of us down. Every Response Leader must define a hierarchy of who is backing up whom to ensure there can be no chance of arguments occurring about who is in charge.

C Communications – in the main briefing by the IC this will include IMT phone numbers as well as radio repeater and simplex channels to be used. At the AREC level these elements will also be included but could also include an AREC only simplex channel, and ensure team member contact details are all listed on the Event Personnel Log Sheet.

Q Questions? – This is where the questions and clarifications are resolved. This means that those receiving the briefing should have a small notebook and a pen/pencil at hand and write down any issues that need clarification so that when Questions are invited they can succinctly and clearly ask for an answer.

Summary

We must have structure and clarity when carrying out our AREC activities. If we provide a well thought out briefing the chances of errors are minimised, Health and Safety matters are clarified and included, and the success of the activity is better assured.

There can and will be variations in how a briefing is delivered and received. However, you will only be successful if you practice writing up briefings in a structured format and then practice delivering them to each other in a confident manner.

So, at your next AREC training session why not collectively write up a briefing around a topic that you are familiar with as if you are collectively the Team Response Leader. To ensure some context this could be modelled on the last significant activity the Group did be it a SAREX, a SAROP, a car club rally, a cross-country horse trek, or what?

Contact me if you need any information about AREC HSW services via HSW@arec.nz.

David Wilkins ZL1MR
AREC Health & Safety Advisor



AREC members have a duty of care so we must not place ourselves or others at risk in regard to Hazards. We must always plan what we are about to do.

If any change takes place regarding People, Equipment, Environment, or Process/Task (PEEP) then we need to:

STOP – THINK – PLAN – COMMUNICATE – ACT