

16 MAY 2016

Paul Kelly
fyi-request-3836-7bd1deb1@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Paul Kelly

Official Information Act request - request for all communications between the SAR Secretariat and people involved in the Wills search

I refer to your request dated 3 April 2016, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982, with the request:

“Could you please provide me with all the communications to and from the SAR Secretariat that relate to the search for Mrs Wills.”

The following documents fall within the scope of your request and are enclosed:

- E-mail from Ian Wills dated 22 March 2016
- Email from Dave Comber dated 14 March 2016 @ 1.53pm
- Email from Dave Comber dated 14 March 2016 @ 2.51pm
- Email from Duncan Ferner dated 14 March 2016
- Email from Dave Comber dated 11 March 2016 @ 8.52pm
- Email from Dave Comber dated 11 March 2016 @ 8.31pm
- NZLandSAR Report titled: “Coroner’s Inquest – Fiona Wills” dated 4 March 2016
- Letter from Ross Gordon dated 8 March 2016
- Email from Pete Corbett dated 1 March 2016, with attached paper “Trends in not located persons, undated
- Email from Ian Wills dated 29 February 2016, with attached press release titled: “Fiona Wills Inquest 8th to 11th March 2016
- Email from Duncan Ferner dated 25 February 2016
- Email from William Nicholson dated 23 February 2016
- Email from Pete Corbett dated 22 February 2016
- Email from Mike Hill dated 22 February 2016
- Email from Duncan Ferner dated 22 February 2016 @ 3.12pm
- Email from Duncan Ferner dated 22 February 2016 @ 3.29pm
- Email from Duncan Ferner dated 22 February 2016 @ 4.02pm
- Email from Duncan Ferner dated 22 February 2016 @ 4.30pm
- Email from Geoffrey Logan dated 22 February 2016
- Email from Joanne Holden dated 22 February 2016

Certain information is being withheld in reliance on section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act to make a complaint about the withholding of information to the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nick Brown
General Manager Aviation & Maritime
for CHIEF EXECUTIVE

From: Ian Wills
To: Ian Wills
Subject: Thank you from the Wills family
Date: Tuesday, 22 March 2016 8:21:06 p.m.

Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Kind Regards,
Ian Wills

E: [Redacted]
M: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

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RELEASSED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

From: Dave Comber
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: RE: Fiona Wills
Date: Monday, 14 March 2016 2:51:19 p.m.

Yes ☺

From: Duncan Ferner [mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz]
Sent: 14 March, 2016 2:25 PM
To: Dave Comber
Subject: RE: Fiona Wills

Thanks Dave,

I've been sorting through pages of unread emails – almost done.

It's a shame that parts of this have devolved to what seems to be a personal level.

Are you interested in the conference?

Dunc

From: Dave Comber [REDACTED] withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act
Sent: Monday, 14 March 2016 1:53 p.m.
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: Fiona Wills

Hi Duncan,

You will have seen my notes re the last day of the subject inquest.

You might be interested to know that Brian Burgess from Gisborne was there every day recording the proceedings. He offered me his "18 pages" of notes up to the final day. I did not take him up on it but note that he has obviously been feeding PK who has commented on their forum.

I understand that the Skip Stoffel criticism of Pete Corbett's letter was presented to the Coroner, who refused to accept it.

I trust that you had a relaxing time off.

Want someone to carry your bags to the ANZSAR conference?

Cheers,

Dave

Disclaimer:

This email is only intended to be read by the named recipient. It may contain information which is confidential, proprietary or the subject of legal privilege. If you are not the intended recipient you must delete this email and may not use any information contained in it. Legal privilege is not waived because you have read this email.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail

From: Duncan Ferner
To: Dave Comber
Subject: RE: Fiona Wills
Date: 14 March 2016 14:24:00

Thanks Dave,

I've been sorting through pages of unread emails – almost done.

It's a shame that parts of this have devolved to what seems to be a personal level.

Are you interested in the conference?

Dunc

From: Dave Comber [REDACTED] withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act
Sent: Monday, 14 March 2016 1:53 p.m.
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: Fiona Wills

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Cheers,

Dave

From: Dave Comber [REDACTED] withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: Fiona Wills
Date: Monday, 14 March 2016 1:52:50 p.m.

Hi Duncan,

You will have seen my notes re the last day of the subject inquest.

You might be interested to know that Brian Burgess from Gisborne was there every day recording the proceedings. He offered me his "18 pages" of notes up to the final day. I did not take him up on it but note that he has obviously been feeding PK who has commented on their forum.

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Cheers,

Dave

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

From: Dave Comber [REDACTED] withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: Fiona Wills Coronial Inquiry Friday,
Date: 11 March 2016 8:52:53 p.m. Fiona
Attachments: Wills Inquest.msg
Wills inquest - Corbett report.pdf
Ltr. to Ross Gordon - SARINZ.pdf

Hi Duncan,

Carl will probably have told you that I was going to the subject court on its last day to hear Ross Gordon's evidence. I wanted to get a feel for the potential fallout and as background to the risk register addition I'm drafting.

I came away with the impression that the Coroner did not place very much importance on Ross's criticism of the search. He (the Coroner) repeatedly mentioned that the bodies which would make determinations on proper practices, training and processes are the Consultive Committee and the SAR Council.

Attached is the email I sent to Bill Nicholson and Pete Corbett simply fyi about what I have said to them. They asked for feedback as neither could be there.

Also attached are Pete Corbett's report and comment solicited from Skip Scoffel by Ross Gordon. Forwarded in case you have not seen them. Bit concerning that international comment is solicited regarding our practices and processes. Not much cause for concern over great harm in this instance but potential???

Cheers,

Dave

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

4 March 2016



Coroner's Inquest – Fiona Wills

My full name is Peter John Corbett; I am currently the Training and Development Manager for New Zealand Land Search and Rescue.

I am a former NZ Police Detective with several years' experience holding a Search and Rescue (SAR) portfolio whilst being a member of the Southland Alpine Cliff Rescue (ACR) team and Upper Clutha Police SAR Squad.

I am also a former SAR tutor and Programme Manager for the Search and Rescue Institute New Zealand (SARINZ) with responsibilities for search management and leadership training.

I have been asked by Senior Sergeant Luke Shadbolt of the Napier Police to comment on the following aspects of the SARINZ report dated 22 December 2015 as they pertain to the Fiona Wills inquest:

- International best practice
- Probability of detection (expressed as a percentile)

I will also be commenting on the graph in that report indicating a perceived rise in un-located subjects due to a change in training delivery.

International best practice

The SARINZ report contains many references to international best practice in the context of land search and rescue – this is a nebulous notion and to suggest New Zealand is not following international best practice is incorrect.

Having attended search and rescue conferences in North America, Canada and Croatia I am unaware of any single piece of doctrine that stipulates or prescribes international best practice for the search for individuals in a terrestrial environment.

The international search and rescue community does not have a unified or collective voice about what constitutes best practice – there is no comparable entity such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) that sets norms and standards and promotes and monitors their implementation to achieve its purpose of global health for all people.

What is frequently touted as being international best practice, particularly by training providers, is the content and materials of training packages or courses which are often licenced and subject to intellectual property. There are however many examples throughout the western world of these various training packages that demonstrate a clear divergence of thinking around what best practice

actually means, particularly in the areas of search management and search planning. Consequently to promote the idea that there is global agreement about what constitutes best practice, internationally or otherwise is misleading.

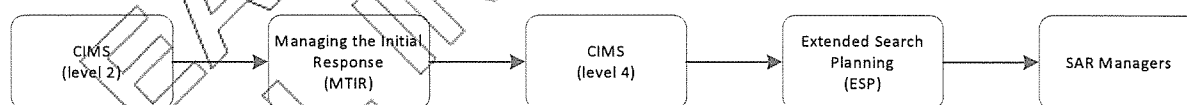
So what has New Zealand done over the years to develop and implement acceptable standards for the conduct of a land search operation?

In the mid to late 1990s the Emergency Response International (ERI) licenced Managing Land Search Operations (MLSO) course was introduced to NZ Police and LandSAR volunteers – marketed at the time as being the search management standard in 9 other countries in the world including North America, Canada, United Kingdom and Sweden (amongst others).

This training eventually morphed into a 5 day course covering most pre-operational, operational and post operational matters including the initial response and extended or formal search planning phases. The training materials were comprised of a 540 page text book and a suite of about 1700 PowerPoint slides and North American table top scenario based exercises. It is interesting to note that typically during the course delivery the text book would be referred to on fewer than half a dozen times and only a very small proportion of the slides were ever used – the remainder of the course being supplanted with local content.

In about 2009, following feedback from both Police and LandSAR the 5 day MLSO course was partitioned into a 3 day Managing the Initial Response (MTIR) course and a recently developed 3 day Extended Search Planning (ESP) course which bridges the learning gap between MTIR and the 10 day Search Managers course which is now a requirement for all Police SAR Incident Controllers.

The flow chart below shows the training pathways for Police Incident Controllers and other land search and rescue incident management team (IMT) personnel:



In recent years a set of land Search and Rescue (SAR) Response Guidelines have been developed and approved by both Coordinating Authorities (NZ Police and RCCNZ) and LandSAR, and these are hosted by the New Zealand SAR Secretariat (NZSAR) on its website for all practitioners to use. The guidelines contain suggested actions for a typical land search operation which need to be tailored to meet the unique needs of any particular search operation. The guidelines also underpin the continuing development and enhancement of search management training and are reviewed regularly to promote a continuously improving improvement. The development and maintenance of these guidelines by Coordinating Authorities in collaboration with partner agencies ensures that whatever is considered to be standard operating procedure or best practice in this country is driven and determined by operational outcomes and not training inputs.

As regards the integrity of MLSO as a search management standard in this country New Zealand has diverged in some areas from the original content but that's with the luxury of being a compact

community with a single jurisdiction able to sit back and observe what the rest of the world has been doing so as to adopt and adapt the various methodologies and processes that work best here given the global diversity of operational parameters such as terrain, topography, demographics, recreational trends and other SAR vulnerabilities and resource availability.

Having said that the essence of MLSO remains – with the most significant difference being the way in which we evaluate search effort or ascertain probability of detection which is discussed next.

Probability of detection (%)

Since the mid to late 1990s land search personnel have been taught to use Probability of Detection (POD), expressed as a percentile (%), to evaluate the effectiveness of a search assignment or task.

Typically the field team was asked, among other things, how many search objects they would have found if there were 10 such objects in their search area. If the answer was 6, then the POD was 6/10 or 60%. This figure along with other information gleaned during the team debrief process was used to inform or support a number of mission critical decisions such as where to search next, what resources to deploy or when to suspend the search operation – so a very important part of the extended search planning process.

It had become apparent over that time however that many, if not most search managers, both Police and volunteer, struggled to correctly apply the principles of operations research, or search theory as it is known, here in New Zealand during a live search and rescue operation – and indeed this is the experience in many other countries as well including parts of the US and UK. This branch of the applied sciences was after all born out of a need to mitigate the U boat threat to allied shipping in the Bay of Biscay during WWII and was predicated upon two key factors – the largely homogenous nature of the ocean and an immobile target – as soon as the submarine's screws start turning and it is no longer under the influence of tide, current or wind alone, then the theory goes out the window. So applying this science in a very non-homogenous terrestrial environment with mobile targets was never going to be easy.

In 2014 during the pilot of the 10 day SAR Managers course for Police Incident Controllers it was decided by the Police to dispense with the mathematics and with POD% as a way of expressing or evaluating search effort. Collectively they had lost confidence in this rather subjective process and wanted to find a far more simplistic and intuitive way of determining how well an area had been searched.

Inspector Joe Green from Police National Headquarters made the following points in a report on the subject:

- There is considerable doubt as to the validity of probability of detection as a mathematical equation.
- This is exacerbated when the math equation is used to determine some sort of "probability of success" - the % that a search is likely to have been successful (if the object were in the area). This type of flawed math, described as "highly doubtful statistically" with an outcome of questionable validity in the land search environment, has the potential to put Police, as a SAR coordinating authority at risk.

- Given these factors, I recommend that NZ Police as a SAR coordinating authority do not support the inclusion of 'probability of detection' as a mathematical equation in the Formal Search Planning Guidelines.

At the time another senior and experienced Police SAR Coordinator from Canterbury was quoted as saying:

"I would rather explain to a Coroner why I didn't use POS, than why I had used it but had not done it properly. I think it's going to be pretty easy to demolish the maths and methodology used in POS in [the] Coroner's Court. The best way to explain what has been searched and to track search effort is GPS lines and using several tactics and multiple searches in high probability areas.

The other view we have is that POD should not be expressed as a percentage. As you know, if you debrief four team members it's quite common to get figures ranging between 25% and 90% for the same area. Better to have them describe their search in words and explain where they believe needs to be searched again."

NZ Police acknowledges that 'search theory' using the maths does have validity within a marine environment.

Towards the end of 2014 a combined NZ Police and LandSAR working group developed a search effort evaluation process to replace POD% – the primary tool driving the process being a revamped field team debriefing form.

Some of the more significant features of the search effort evaluation process which result in a far more qualitative assessment include:

- The process encourages the use of 'free recall' – an investigative interviewing technique that promotes more complete, accurate and reliable information to be obtained
- There is a stronger emphasis on the factors affecting detectability and coverage
- Search effort evaluation is measured or expressed using a likelihood rating of high, medium, low or 'not searched' for each component part of the search area or segment – providing the opportunity to identify and evaluate sub areas within the total area – together with the rationale for assigning the various ratings.

At the end of the team debrief the person conducting the interview comments on the effectiveness of the search effort, summarises the more pertinent information such as gaps in coverage and makes recommendations for future search planning.

Attached to the debrief form are such things as the team tasking sheet and maps of the area with GPS tracks and other detailed information (such as clues found, hazards identified, sub segments etc.).

The new process also encourages teams to take photographs of the general area in addition to other snaps of clues found which are also attached to the debrief sheet. Making this pictorial information available to the search planners enhances their situational awareness and assists with the options analysis and decision making.

To summarise – this new process seeks to extract more accurate and detailed information from a team as to how well the team searched the assigned segment. This system allows team members to objectively describe how well they searched their segment and what further search effort may be required in that segment.

An integral part of this system is the expression of search effort using likelihood descriptors, which is seen as a far more intuitive way of expressing search effort.

The new system articulates field teams search efforts in a more pragmatic way which makes the information more usable to search managers and more easily understood by other parties like families, Coroners, media and Police managers.

The new process has been integrated into all relevant training activities and has become a mandatory topic on all field and Incident Management Team refreshers.

Trends in not located persons

The SARINZ report includes some data and associated analysis around missing persons being 'not located'.

Both the data and the subsequent analysis are incorrect.

The best available information can be sourced directly from the relevant Police and RCCNZ records which constitute official statistics on this matter.

An analysis of this information clearly shows that the numbers of 'not located persons' are variable, with no obvious trend at all.

The following table shows details from the NZSAR datastore for land based SAR incidents over the last five years with 'casualty not located' for Category 1 searches only.

| | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Category 1 | 941 | 958 | 979 | 907 | 901 | 4686 |
| Cat 1-Not Located | 11 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 19 | 84 |
| Cat 1 with LandSAR | 3 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 14 |

On the table above:

- Blue rows show the total number of Category 1 land based incidents
- Orange rows show how many of those incidents include 'casualty not located'
- Yellow rows show how many of those incidents had LandSAR support

It is worth noting that NZSAR believe the number of incidents listing 'people not located' is over-reported as some Police SAR Coordinators will list a person as not located when a SAROP actually shows there was no one at risk.

NZSAR is currently carrying out two projects to address this issue: the data standard project, and the fatalities study.

Peer review

This report has been peer reviewed by the land search and rescue practitioners:

- **Sergeant Phil Simmonds** - Coordinator Search and Rescue/Disaster Victim Identification, Canterbury
- **Sergeant Sean Judd** - Coordinator Search and Rescue/Disaster Victim Identification, West Coast
- **Sergeant Jo Holden** - Training & Development Coordinator; Search and Rescue/Disaster Victim Identification, NZ Police National Headquarters
- **Snr Constable Barry Shepherd** - Coordinator Search and Rescue/Disaster Victim Identification, Taupo
- **Dr Keith Morfett** – Hokitika LandSAR & SAR tutor
- **Nick Coyne** – Gisborne LandSAR & SAR tutor
- **Nick Engleback** – Wellington LandSAR
- **Tony Groome** – Palmerston North LandSAR & SAR tutor
- **Ian Newman** – LandSAR Group Support Officer & former SAR tutor

Report prepared and submitted by:


Peter J Corbett

Training and Development Manager
New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc.



Emergency Response International

319 Olive Street, Cashmere, Washington 98815

Ph: (509) 782-4832 Fax: (509) 293-6725

E-mail addresses: skip@eri-online.com brett@eri-online.com

Web: eri-online.com

8 March, 2016

Ross Gordon
Search and Rescue Institute New Zealand (SARINZ)
15 Jackson Street
Methven 8353
New Zealand

Dear Mr. Gordon:

Thank you for the note and quick update on the inquest for Fiona Wills. I read with great interest the Coroner's Inquest Report submitted on 4 March, 2016 by a Peter J. Corbett. I am incredulous as to how someone with the background, training and purported experience held by Mr. Corbett in the field of SAR could have such an incorrect and totally misguided opinion about the discipline and science of modern search. Based on his statements and opinions expressed in that report, it is obvious that Mr. Corbett is very much not aware of current best practice related to search planning and management. In addition, it is clear that he is not familiar with current research, experiments or detailed training in this discipline.

I acknowledge and respect sincerely the Peer Review practitioners who took the time and effort to read through and try to evaluate the Coroner's Inquest report that Mr. Peter J. Corbett submitted on the 4th of March, 2016. As with all those involved with SAR, I do not question motivation or superfluous intent. After forty years of intense involvement with SAR personnel at every level in many countries around the world, I have to ask the question, "*Is what I am reading, experiencing on-scene or being questioned about correct, up-to-date and in the best interest of the person in distress?*" Those questions have changed my perspective over the years. It also solidified my philosophy that lack of knowledge about correct information is not an excuse in today's fast pace emergency response. Those at the point of the spear must have the knowledge and protocols that truly make the difference!

Emergency Response International (ERI) is currently under contract with the National Association for Search and Rescue in the U.S. for the consolidation, update and rewrite of the current Managing Land Search Operations Textbook into a national standard. NASAR's current membership includes individuals, agencies, companies, SAR teams, state and provincial coordinators as well as manufacturers of search and rescue equipment and gear. The membership is represented throughout the U.S. and Canada as well as a host of other countries. The goal of this effort is to bring the most current, scientifically sound and best practices into one standard text and training program for land SAR. The goal is to ultimately translate that work into multiple languages.

On page 2 of his report, Mr. Corbett makes mention of the metamorphosis that occurred with the New Zealand version of the MLSO (Managing Land Search Operations course). While the MLSO Textbook and other training materials were primarily designed and produced to fill the need here in the U.S.,

numerous other countries have produced versions, translations and/or renditions of the material with permission. There have never been provisions about explicit requirements for course content; only suggested guidelines. Iceland translated the entire book and is now using it to train both police and volunteers. They regularly come back to us for updates as they also do in Sweden. There is another version of the MLSO Textbook and training program in the UK. At this writing to my knowledge, there is no other textbook or training package that deals with land search that is as widely disseminated or used throughout the world. That was one of the critical factors that precipitated the contract with NASAR.

Also, Mr. Corbett would have us believe that because New Zealand is a compact community with a single jurisdiction that it can pick and choose what is right scientifically and mathematically and what will work best there because of global diversity in operational parameters. This is all because of terrain, topography, demographics and things like recreational trends and resources. "The most significant difference in search being the way that New Zealand SAR personnel evaluate search effort or ascertain probability of detection." The rough analogy to this would be that people involved in New Zealand SAR should not use Smart Phones because they don't understand quantum mechanics or electron tunneling. The mathematical formula and numbers used to create these devices are simply too complex to understand and therefore the devices should not be used.

In the first paragraph under **Probability of Detection** on page 3, Mr. Corbett describes a procedure for determining probability of detection (POD) by asking searchers in the field for an opinion about how well or likely they would have spotted search targets on their sortie. This practice/procedure was curtailed as of 2006 as a direct result of research and field experiments conducted all across the U.S. by Robert Koester and a host of other Phd researchers. *A Simple Guide to Conducting Ground Search and Rescue Detection Experiments* by R. J. Koester, N Guerra, J R Frost, D C Cooper. Washington D C: US Dept of Homeland Security, US Coast Guard Office of Search and Rescue (G-RPR); 2006. The transition not to use the verbal detection assessment was slow to begin with, but really began to pick up momentum when Koester again completed other studies in 2013 and 2014.

The official results of these studies were released in the Journal of Wilderness and Environmental Medicine under the title: "Use of the Visual Range of Detection to Estimate Effective Sweep Width for Land Search and Rescue Based On 10 Detection Experiments in North America" All of these experiments and research efforts thoroughly proved that searchers are not capable of determining how effective they were or anything close to an accurate probability of detection factor.

On page 3, Mr. Corbett makes reference to Operations Research and the World War II work of Koopman (U.S.) and Blackett (UK) in developing the concept of "effective sweep width" to determine probability of detection. Not sure what the source of Mr. Corbett's reference was, but it certainly isn't the one I'm familiar with and have read; in particular the part about immobile submarine targets and the theory going out the window. The U.S. Navy uses what is called a two-sided search problem and uses it all the time in searching for nuclear submarines. This is a classic example of someone referencing studies or research with which they are totally unfamiliar.

At the bottom of Page 3, an Inspector Joe Green from Police National Headquarters, New Zealand is quoted by Mr. Corbett from a report that the Inspector had written. This is a quote from a highly flawed police paper that not only drew the wrong conclusion, but obviously pointed out a lack of understanding about the use of search theory and the components of the formula. Another senior and experienced Police SAR Coordinator is quoted by Mr. Corbett as saying that POD should not be expressed as a

percentage. This statement is entirely based on a lack of knowledge of how "sweep width" and the resulting probability of detection is determined in the formula used in search theory. It is *"better to have them describe their search in words and explain where they believe needs to be searched again."* How do we draw conclusions, comparisons and values from adjectives, particularly from one operational period to another? Now we are putting values on communicative skills, not where the subject is!

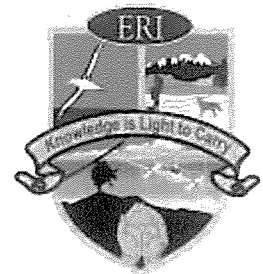
Finally Ross, I am particularly intrigued by the statement made on Page 4 of the report by Mr. Corbett *"New Zealand Police acknowledges that "Search Theory" using the "MATH" does have validity with the marine environment."* Let me see if I understand this correctly? The math, the numbers, the formula, all the research does apply in the marine environment, on the moon, in space, but it doesn't apply in the land environment on earth. Guesses at POD are bad and that is true. However, it has now been shown conclusively that it is possible to get an objective POD with proper protocols and procedures.

Sincerely,



Robert "Skip" Stoffel
President, Emergency Response International
319 Olive Street
Cashmere, Washington 98815

509-782-4832
skip@eri-online.com
Web: eri-online.com



*Specialists in Search and Rescue, Survival, and Preparedness
World Wide Services in Consulting, Training, and Publishing*

From: Dave Comber [REDACTED]
To: william.nicholson@police.govt.nz; Pete Corbett
Subject: Fiona Wills Inquest

withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act

Hi Guys.

Interesting morning, RG was in the chair answering questions from Coroner and others all morning. The Skip Stoffel letter was not referred to at all. Not sure if it was tabled yesterday and dealt with.

Main focus of Coroner's questioning was where was the documentation from the search RG conducted, did he prepare an IAP and was CIMS followed. This was followed up pretty brutally by Sgt Gregg MacKlow who hammered away at the fact RG criticised the original IMT but did not follow his own recommendations. Phrase "do as I say, not what I do" was used. RG squirmed and was extremely evasive to all of these questions from both Gregg and the Coroner. He held that he was only a "Technical Adviser" and not part of either of the 2 IMTs set up. (One LandSAR, the other family.) He held that LandSAR were responsible for paper work and he did not have any of it. LandSAR maintained they gave it all, with maps etc, to RG.

At one stage RG tried to berate LandSAR, the Police and SAR Council for not following his mlso processes to the letter but the Coroner firmly shut him down on this. He was told that the correct entities to have this discussion with were the Consultive Committee and the Council. Coroner will not be commenting in his report regarding the use of % POD or other assessment tools.

I came away with the impression RG did not do himself any favours. He was full of excuses (only a volunteer, extremely emotional time, had no time to prepare, had no support from LandSAR in that he asked for GSO help but refused, LandSAR people poorly trained, no time to instruct searchers etc, etc, etc)

Bottom line question was "did the management of the search influence the outcome?" I think there will be criticism of the fact that they did not call on resources from Taupo, Palmerston North, Gisborne etc early in the search to revisit the high probability areas but that will be about all.

Coroner's timeline is recommendations and any adverse comment passed to affected parties late April for submissions/comment and findings released June/July.

Doesn't sound much for a full morning – there was a lot of flannelling, repetition and evasion. Coroner seemed to be pretty switched on.

Cheers,

Dave

From: [Carl Van Der Meulen](#)
To: [Duncan Ferner](#)
Subject: FW: Wills Inquest - SARINZ report
Date: 02 March 2016 13:22:35
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[Wills report.docx](#)

fyi

From: Pete Corbett [mailto:pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz]
Sent: Wednesday, 2 March 2016 1:08 p.m.
To: Luke Shadbolt; Jo Holden; Steve Caldwell
Cc: Carl Van Der Meulen
Subject: Wills Inquest - SARINZ report

Hi Luke, Jo and Steve

The first iteration of my rebuttal report attached for your consideration – please use track changes for any suggested changes particularly as regards the format.

I have tried to stay out of the weeds and kept it fairly general to prevent Ross getting hung up on the detail – hopefully it's sufficient to rebut the main issues.

With your permission I would also like to disseminate to a few others who were involved in the delivery of MLSO as a form of peer review before presenting it to the Coroner.

Steve – please feel free to send to Rex to cover off on any internal concerns.

Cheers

Pete Corbett

Training & Development Manager

New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc

Mobile 021 877 529

PO-Box 271, Picton, 7250



Donate Now: Visit www.landsar.org.nz – every Dollar helps this charity



29 February 2016



Coroner's Inquest – Fiona Wills

My full name is Peter John Corbett; I am currently the Training and Development Manager for New Zealand Land Search and Rescue.

I am a former NZ Police Detective with several years' experience holding a Search and Rescue (SAR) portfolio whilst being a member of the Southland Alpine Cliff Rescue (ACR) team and Upper Clutha Police SAR Squad.

I am also a former SAR tutor and Programme Manager for the Search and Rescue Institute New Zealand (SARINZ) with responsibilities for search management and leadership training.

I have been asked by Senior Sergeant Luke Shadbolt of the Napier Police to comment on the following aspects of the SARINZ report dated 22 December 2015 as they pertain to the Fiona Wills inquest:

- Probability of Detection (POD) expressed as a percentile
- International best practice

I will also be commenting on the graph in that report indicating a perceived rise in un-located subjects due to a change in training delivery.

International best practice

The SARINZ report contains many references to international best practice in the context of land search and rescue – this is a nebulous notion and to suggest New Zealand is not following international best practice is incorrect.

Having attended search and rescue conferences in North America, Canada and Croatia I am unaware of any single piece of doctrine that stipulates or prescribes international best practice for the search for individuals in a terrestrial environment.

The international search and rescue community does not have a unified or collective voice about what constitutes best practice – there is no comparable entity such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) that sets norms and standards and promotes and monitors their implementation to achieve its purpose of global health for all people.

What is frequently touted as being international best practice, particularly by training providers, is the content and materials of training packages or courses which are often licenced and subject to intellectual property. There are however many examples throughout the western world of these

various training packages that demonstrate a clear divergence of thinking around what best practice actually means, particularly in the areas of search management and search planning. Consequently to promote the idea that there is global agreement about what constitutes best practice, internationally or otherwise is misleading.

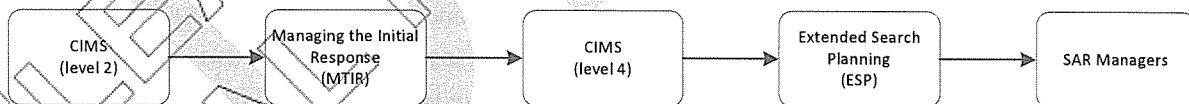
So what has New Zealand done over the years to develop and implement acceptable standards for the conduct of a land search operation?

In the mid to late 1990s the Emergency Response International (ERI) licenced Managing Land Search Operations (MLSO) course was introduced to NZ Police and LandSAR volunteers – marketed at the time as being the search management standard in 9 other countries in the world including North America, Canada, United Kingdom and Sweden (amongst others).

This training eventually morphed into a 5 day course covering off on most pre-operational, operational and post operational matters including the initial response and extended or formal search planning phases. The training materials were comprised of a [pages] text book and a suite of 1700 PowerPoint slides and North American table top scenario based exercises. It is interesting to note that typically during the course delivery the text book would be referred to on fewer than half a dozen times and only a very small proportion of the slides were ever used – the remainder of the course being supplemented with local content.

In about 2009, following feedback from both Police and LandSAR the 5 day MLSO course was partitioned off into a 3 day Managing the Initial Response (MTIR) course and a recently developed 3 day Extended Search Planning (ESP) course which bridges the learning gap between MTIR and the 10 day Search Managers course which is now a requirement for all Police SAR Incident Controllers.

The flow chart below shows the training pathways for Police Incident Controllers and other land search and rescue incident management team (IMT) personnel:



In recent years a set of land Search and Rescue (SAR) Response Guidelines have been developed and accepted by both Coordinating Authorities (NZ Police and RCCNZ) and LandSAR and these are hosted by the New Zealand SAR Secretariat (NZSAR) on their website for all practitioners to use. The guidelines contain suggested actions for a typical land search operation which need to be tailored to meet the unique needs of any particular search operation. The guidelines also underpin the continuing development and enhancement of search management training and are reviewed regularly to promote a continuously improving improvement.

As regards the integrity of MLSO as a search management standard in this country New Zealand has diverged in some areas from the original content but that's with the luxury of being a compact community with a single jurisdiction able to sit back and observe what the rest of the world has been doing so as to adopt and adapt the various methodologies and processes that work best here given

the global diversity of operational parameters such as terrain, topography, demographics, recreational trends and other SAR vulnerabilities and resource availability.

Having said that the essence of MLSO remains – with the most significant difference being the way in which we evaluate search effort or ascertain probability of detection which is discussed next.

Probability of detection (%)

Since the mid to late 1990s land search personnel have been taught to use Probability of Detection (POD), expressed as a percentile (%), to evaluate the effectiveness of a search assignment or task.

Typically the field team was asked, among other things, how many search objects they would have found if there were 10 such objects in their search area. If the answer was 6, then the POD was 6/10 or 60%. This figure along with other information gleaned during the team debrief process was used to inform or support a number of mission critical decisions such as where to search next, what resources to deploy or when to suspend the search operation – so a very important part of the extended search planning process.

It had become apparent over that time however that many, if not most search managers, both Police and volunteer, struggled to correctly apply the principles of operations research, or search theory as it is known, here in New Zealand during a live search and rescue operation – and indeed this is the experience in many other countries as well including parts of the US and UK. This branch of the applied sciences was after all born out of a need to mitigate the U boat threat to allied shipping in the Bay of Biscay during WWII and was predicated upon two key factors – the largely homogenous nature of the ocean and an immobile target – as soon as the submarine's screws start turning and it is no longer under the influence of tide, current or wind alone, then the theory goes out the window. So applying this science in a very non-homogenous terrestrial environment with mobile targets was never going to be easy.

In 2014 during the pilot of the 10 day SAR Managers course for Police Incident Controllers it was decided by the Police to dispense with the mathematics and dispense with POD% as a way of expressing or evaluating search effort. Collectively they had lost confidence in this rather subjective process and wanted to find a far more simplistic and intuitive way of determining how well an area had been searched.

Inspector Joe Green from Police National Headquarters made the following points in a report on the subject:

- There is considerable doubt as to the validity of probability of detection as a mathematical equation.
- This is exacerbated when the math equation is used to determine some sort of "probability of success" - the % that a search is likely to have been successful (if the object were in the area). This type of flawed math, described as "highly doubtful statistically" with an outcome of questionable validity in the land search environment, has the potential to put Police, as a SAR coordinating authority at risk.
- Given these factors, I recommend that NZ Police as a SAR coordinating authority do not support the inclusion of 'probability of detection' as a mathematical equation in the Formal Search Planning Guidelines.

At the time another senior and experienced Police SAR Coordinator from Canterbury was quoted as saying:

"I would rather explain to a Coroner why I didn't use POS, than why I had used it but had not done it properly. I think it's going to be pretty easy to demolish the maths and methodology used in POS in [the] Coroner's Court. The best way to explain what has been searched and to track search effort is GPS lines and using several tactics and multiple searches in high probability areas.

The other view we have is that POD should not be expressed as a percentage. As you know, if you debrief four team members it's quite common to get figures ranging between 25% and 90% for the same area. Better to have them describe their search in words and explain where they believe needs to be searched again."

The NZ Police do acknowledge that 'search theory' using the maths does have validity within a marine environment.

Towards the end of 2014 a combined NZ Police and LandSAR working-group developed a search effort evaluation process to replace POD% - the primary tool driving the process being a revamped field team debriefing form.

Some of the more significant features of the search effort evaluation process include:

- The process encourages the use of 'free recall' – an investigative interviewing technique that promotes more complete, accurate and reliable information to be obtained
- There is a stronger emphasis on the factors affecting detectability and coverage
- Search effort evaluation is measured or expressed using a likelihood rating of high, medium, low or 'not searched' for each component part of the search area or segment – providing the opportunity to identify and evaluate sub areas within the total area – together with the rationale for assigning the various ratings

At the end of the team debrief the person conducting the interview comments on the effectiveness of the search effort, summarises the more pertinent information such as gaps in coverage and makes recommendations for future search planning.

Attached to the debrief form are such things as the team tasking sheet and maps of the area with GPS tracks and other detailed information (such as clues found, hazards identified, sub segments etc.).

The new process also encourages teams to take photographs of the general area in addition to other snaps of clues found which are also attached to the debrief sheet. Making this pictorial information available to the search planners enhances their situational awareness and assists with the options analysis and decision making.

To summarise – this new process seeks to extract more accurate and detailed information from a team as to how well the team searched the assigned segment. This system allows team members to

objectively describe how well they searched their segment and what further search effort may be required in that segment.

An integral part of this system is the expression of search effort using likelihood descriptors, which is seen as a far more intuitive way of expressing search effort.

The new system articulates field teams search efforts in a more pragmatic way which will make the information more usable to search managers and more easily understood by other parties like families, Coroners, media and Police managers.

The new process has been integrated into all relevant training activities and has become a mandatory topic on all field and Incident Management Team refreshers.

Trends in not located persons

The SARINZ report includes some data and associated analysis around missing persons being 'not located'.

The source of that data and the subsequent analysis is incorrect.

The best available information can be sourced directly from the relevant Police and RCCNZ records which constitute official statistics on this matter.

An analysis of this information clearly shows that the numbers of 'not located persons' are variable, with no obvious trend at all.

The following table and underlying graph show details from the NZSAR datastore for land based SAR incidents over the last five years with 'casualty not located' for Category 1 searches only.

| | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Category 1 | 941 | 958 | 979 | 907 | 901 | 4686 |
| Cat 1 Not Located | 11 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 19 | 84 |
| Cat 1 with LandSAR | 3 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 14 |

On the table above:

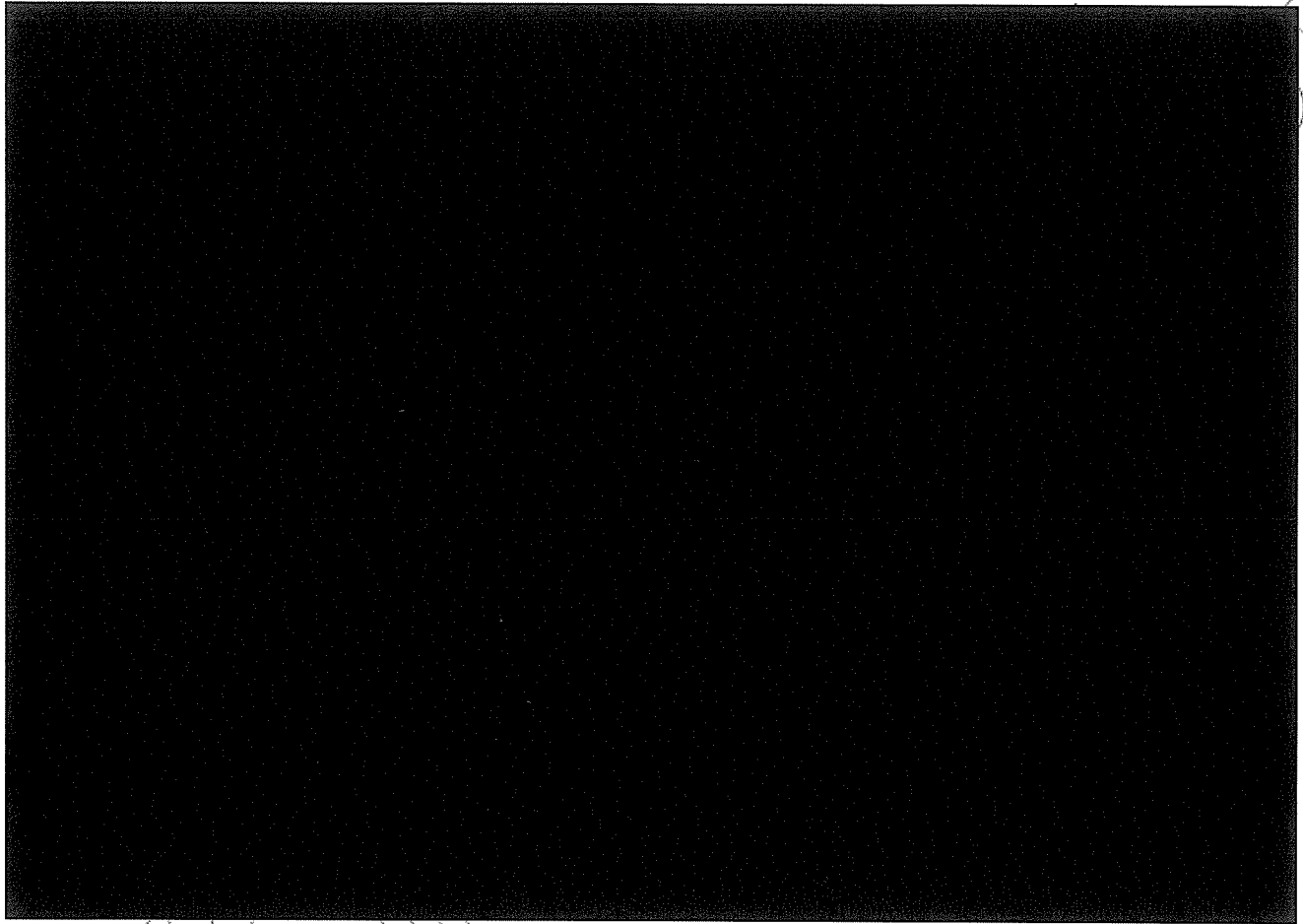
- Blue rows show the total number of Category 1 land based incidents
- Orange rows show how many of those incidents include 'casualty not located'
- Yellow rows show how many of those incidents had LandSAR support

It is worth noting that NZSAR believe the number of incidents listing 'people not located' is over-reported as some Police SAR Coordinators will list a person as not located when a SAROP actually shows there was no one at risk.

NZSAR are currently carrying out two projects to address this issue: the data standard project, and the fatalities study.

From: Ian Wills
To: Duncan_Ferner
Subject: Fiona Wills inquest - 8th - 11th March 2016
Date: 29 February 2016 17:11:13
Attachments: Fiona_Wills_Inquest_media_statement_(Final)-03_16.pdf

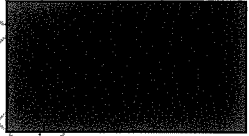
Duncan,



Kind Regards,

Ian Wills

E: [Redacted]
M: [Redacted]



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Fiona Wills Inquest - 8th to 11th March 2016

Media Statement

Our Mother, Fiona Wills, went missing after wandering from the family home at Te Pohue on the 9th December 2014. Despite extensive searching by Police, LandSAR volunteers, neighbours, family and friends, she was not found at the time and remains missing. Fiona suffered from advanced Alzheimer's.

The family would like to express our deep gratitude to everyone who assisted in the search for our Mother. The support both for the physical search and also the love and support that the family received at this time was truly humbling.

A memorial service was held for Fiona Wills on the 14th March 2015.

The Coronial Inquest into our Mother's disappearance is set to start in Hastings on the 8th March 2016.

When our Mother was not found by the official Police/LandSAR search or by extensive private search efforts, we contacted Ross Gordon from SARINZ (Search and Rescue Institute of New Zealand) to assist us in the search. SARINZ is New Zealand's international training centre of search and rescue excellence. Its purpose as a charity is to support all New Zealand search, rescue and emergency management agencies in their efforts to save lives.

SARINZ conducted a review of the official search and determined that we needed to complete another full search. This search was completed in late January 2015.

At the family's request, SARINZ prepared a report from their review of the official Police search. This report highlighted a number of deficiencies in the field search phase. A search involves many variables and there will never be a guarantee of finding the missing person. However, there are recognised best practice search methodologies supported by well researched science, that if used, will significantly increase the likelihood of finding a missing person. The family have decided to bring these deficiencies to the attention of the Coronial Inquest in the hope that the Coroner will make recommendations which, if implemented, will significantly improve future search and rescue practices.

The family wish to stress that neither the SARINZ report or the family, lay blame for the search deficiencies on any of the individual Police or LandSAR people who were involved in the search. These deficiencies appear to be New Zealand wide and amplified by training not being aligned with international best practice.

Our hope is that future search and rescue efforts will have a higher chance of safely returning lost loved ones to their families.

The Wills Family

Contact: Ian Wills



withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act

From: [Duncan Ferner](#)
To: [Dave Comber](#)
Subject: RE: Fiona Wills
Date: 14 March 2016 14:24:00

Thanks Dave,

I've been sorting through pages of unread emails – almost done.

It's a shame that parts of this have devolved to what seems to be a personal level.

Are you interested in the conference?

Dunc

From: Dave Comber [REDACTED] withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act
Sent: Monday, 14 March 2016 1:53 p.m.
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: Fiona Wills

Hi Duncan,

You will have seen my notes re the last day of the subject inquest.

You might be interested to know that Brian Burgess from Gisborne was there every day recording the proceedings. He offered me his "18 pages" of notes up to the final day. I did not take him up on it but note that he has obviously been feeding PK who has commented on their forum.

I understand that the Skip Stoffel criticism of Pete Corbett's letter was presented to the Coroner, who refused to accept it.

I trust that you had a relaxing time off.

Want someone to carry your bags to the **ANZSAR conference**?

Cheers,

Dave

From: Pete Corbett
To: [Duncan Ferner](#)
Cc: [Steve Caldwell](#)
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Tuesday, 1 March 2016 4:30:19 p.m.
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[Trends in not located persons.docx](#)

Hi Duncan

I am currently preparing a report for the Coroner addressing some of the issues raised in the SARINZ report – one of those being the incorrect data and analysis of not located persons.

Given that I am relying solely on your data from underlying email I attach a draft of the relevant part of the report for checking – assuming we are able to reproduce. I have taken the liberty of focussing only on Cat 1 and kept the dialogue to a minimum.

For your consideration.

Cheers

Pete Corbett

Training & Development Manager

New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc
 Mobile 021 877 529
 PO Box 271, Picton, 7250



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From: LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff) [<mailto:Geoffrey.Logan@police.govt.nz>]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 15:58
To: [Duncan Ferner](#); [roscoet@xtra.co.nz](#); [Steve Caldwell](#); [HOLDEN, Joanne \(Jo\)](#)
Cc: [mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz](#); [Pete Corbett](#)
Subject: RE: Information about 'persons not located'

Thanks Duncan

I also note that there may be cases where the "Not Located" statistic may refer to a person who is known to have gone missing at a specific location, is certainly dead, but is not recoverable (recent instances are people in vessels, people in crevasses, and people in fast flowing rivers with boulders/strainers preventing recovery).

Regards

Geoff Logan

Inspector | Manager: National Security/Border Security | New Zealand Police | P O Box 3017 | Wellington 6011
 ☎ +64 4 4749439 | Extn: 44039 | 📠 +64 4 498 7406 | 📞 021 192 1760/04 979 4939 | ✉ geoffrey.logan@police.govt.nz

From: Duncan Ferner
To: Dave COMBER [REDACTED] Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.
Subject: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Thursday, 25 February 2016 12:46:00 p.m.

Hi Dave

Copy of my email below as discussed.

Dunc

Hi Team,

The SARINZ report dated 22 December 2015 for the Fiona Mills Coronial Enquiry included some data and associated analysis around missing persons being 'not located'.

Regrettably the information contained in that document is incorrect along with its associated analysis.

The best available information is below. It is drawn directly from the relevant Police and RCCNZ records. All records in our datastore come from Police and RCCNZ, hence are official statistics.

It clearly shows that the numbers are variable, with no obvious trend at all. The claims in the report about the quality of SAR training are erroneous.

The following are details from the NZSAR Datastore for land based SAR incidents over the last five years with 'casualty not located'.

| | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | Grand Total |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Category 1 | 941 | 958 | 979 | 907 | 901 | 4686 |
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| Cat 1 Not Located | 11 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 19 | 84 |
| Cat 2 Not Located | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Total Not Located | 12 | 27 | 19 | 14 | 21 | 93 |
| Cat 1 with LandSAR | 3 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 14 |
| Cat 2 with LandSAR | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Total with LandSAR | 3 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 17 |

On the table above:

- Blue rows show the total number of land based incidents by category.
- Red rows show how many of those incidents include 'casualty not located', again broken down by category.
- Yellow rows show how many of those incidents had LandSAR support, again broken down by category.

Of note are the nine category 2 incidents listing 'casualty not located'. All of these actually have duplicated records, as they all were cat 2 incidents where RCC had police support. Only the police records include 'casualty not located' figures, the RCC records do not. The associated category 2 records from the RCCNZ daily reports are briefly summarised below:

- *Beacon in boat in driveway*
- *Beacon in rubbish truck*
- *Beacon alert from Cessna. Extensive aerial search of route and possible landing strips before confirmation that Cessna is operating normally*
- *Beacon in tip*

- *Beacon thrown onto a roof*
- *Beacon in old car on a farm*
- *17 year old beacon in a shed*
- *Unregistered beacon alert. Hunters at GPS location of the alert denied activating their beacon*
- *Stolen pack including beacon left next to a river*

So - all nine of the Category 2 records listing 'casualty not located' are incorrectly coded. None of these incidents have any not-located persons at risk.

We also believe that some Police SAR Coordinators may record a 'person not located' whenever they carry out a SAROP, even if the investigation shows there was never a person to locate. The data standard project will assist to reduce or eliminate these instances in the future.

The fatalities study will include an analysis of all the records in the data store that include 'casualty not located'. This will give us a better idea of how many incidents genuinely conclude/suspend with people known to be missing.

Regards

Duncan

Duncan Ferner
Secretariat Manager

New Zealand Search and Rescue Council

DDI (04) 439 9045 Mob (021) 249 0463 d.ferner@transport.govt.nz

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RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

From: [NICHOLSON, William](#)
To: [Duncan Ferner](#)
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Tuesday, 23 February 2016 8:06:03 a.m.

Thanks Duncan

From: Duncan Ferner [mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:29 p.m.
To: NICHOLSON, William <William.Nicholson@police.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Information about 'persons not located'

Hi Bill,

Jo said you were attending the Fiona Mills inquest? If so – this is FYI.

Dunc

From: Duncan Ferner
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:12 p.m.
To: [REDACTED] Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); Jo Holden (joanne.holden@police.govt.nz); Geoff Logan, NZ Police
Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)
Subject: Information about 'persons not located'

Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

Hi Team,

The SARINZ report dated 22 December 2015 for the Fiona Mills Coronial Enquiry included some data and associated analysis around missing persons being 'not located'.

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Duncan

Duncan Ferner
Secretariat Manager

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OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

From: [Duncan Ferner](#)
To: [Pete Corbett](#)
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 4:30:00 p.m.
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Hi Pete,

I got no 'bounce' emails. Glad you got it though.

No – not waiting on anything

Dunc

From: Pete Corbett [mailto:pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 4:08 p.m.
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: RE: Information about 'persons not located'

Hi Duncan

Thanks for this – confirms my own analysis – but I never received your original email meaning we have a connectivity issue.

You haven't sent me other messages recently and you're still waiting for a reply??

Cheers

Pete Corbett

Training & Development Manager
New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc
Mobile 021 877 529
PO Box 271, Picton, 7250



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From: LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff) [mailto:Geoffrey.Logan@police.govt.nz]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 15:58
To: Duncan Ferner; [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell; HOLDEN, Joanne (Jo)
Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett
Subject: RE: Information about 'persons not located'

Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

Thanks Duncan

I also note that there may be cases where the "Not Located" statistic may refer to a person who is known to have gone missing at a specific location, is certainly dead, but is not recoverable (recent instances are people in vessels, people in crevasses, and people in fast flowing rivers with boulders/strainers preventing recovery).

Regards

Geoff Logan

Inspector | Manager: National Security/Border Security | New Zealand Police | P O Box 3017 | Wellington 6011

☎ +64 4 4749439 | Extn: 44039 | 📠 +64 4 498 7406 | 📞 021 192 1760/04 979 4939 | ✉ geoffrey.logan@police.govt.nz

Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

From: Duncan Ferner [<mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz>]**Sent:** Monday, 22 February 2016 15:12**To:** [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); HOLDEN, Joanne (Jo); LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff)**Cc:** mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)**Subject:** Information about 'persons not located'

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From: Duncan Ferner [mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz]

Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 15:12

To: [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); HOLDEN, Joanne (Jo); LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff)

Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)

Subject: Information about 'persons not located'

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From: [Duncan Ferner](#)
To: [NICHOLSON, William](#)
Subject: FW: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:28:00 p.m.

Hi Bill,

Jo said you were attending the Fiona Mills inquest? If so – this is FYI.

Dunc

From: Duncan Ferner

Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:12 p.m.

To: [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); Jo Holden (joanne.holden@police.govt.nz); Geoff Logan, NZ Police

Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)

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From: [Pete Corbett](#)
To: [Duncan Ferner](#)
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 4:08:44 p.m.
Attachments: [image004.png](#)

Hi Duncan

Thanks for this – confirms my own analysis – but I never received your original email meaning we have a connectivity issue.

You haven't sent me other messages recently and you're still waiting for a reply??

Cheers

Pete Corbett

Training & Development Manager
New Zealand Land Search and Rescue Inc
Mobile 021 877 529
PO Box 271, Picton, 7250



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From: LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff) [<mailto:Geoffrey.Logan@police.govt.nz>]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 15:58
To: Duncan Ferner; [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell; HOLDEN, Joanne (Jo)
Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett
Subject: RE: Information about 'persons not located'

Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

Thanks Duncan

I also note that there may be cases where the "Not Located" statistic may refer to a person who is known to have gone missing at a specific location, is certainly dead, but is not recoverable (recent instances are people in vessels, people in crevasses, and people in fast flowing rivers with boulders/strainers preventing recovery).

Regards

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Inspector | Manager: National Security/Border Security | New Zealand Police | P O Box 3017 | Wellington 6011
☎ +64 4 4749439 | Extn: 44039 | 📠 +64 4 498 7406 | 📞 021 192 1760/04 979 4939 | ✉ geoffrey.logan@police.govt.nz

From: Duncan Ferner [<mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz>]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 15:12
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From: [Duncan Ferner](#)
To: [LOGAN, Geoffrey \(Geoff\)](#)
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 4:01:00 p.m.

Yes absolutely (for land only though). The fatalities study will help us understand all this in much greater detail.

Dunc

From: LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff) [mailto:Geoffrey.Logan@police.govt.nz]

Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:58 p.m.

To: Duncan Ferner; [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); HOLDEN, Joanne (Jo)

Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)

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RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

From: Mike Hill
To: Duncan Ferner
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:38:04 p.m.

Thank you for the clarification.

More 'dirty politics' ??

Mike

Mike Hill | Manager
Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) & Safety Services
Maritime New Zealand *No te rere moana Aotearoa*
T +64 04 577 8031 | F +64 04 577 8041 | M +64 27 801 1556 | W maritimenz.govt.nz

From: Duncan Ferner [mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:12 p.m.
To: [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); Jo Holden (joanne.holden@police.govt.nz); Geoff Logan
Cc: Mike Hill; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)
Subject: Information about 'persons not located'

Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

Hi Team,

The SARINZ report dated 22 December 2015 for the Fiona Mills Coronial Enquiry included some data and associated analysis around missing persons being 'not located'.

Regrettably the information contained in that document is incorrect along with its associated analysis.

The best available information is below. It is drawn directly from the relevant Police and RCCNZ records. All records in our datastore come from Police and RCCNZ, hence are official statistics.

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The following are details from the NZSAR Datastore for land based SAR incidents over the last five years with 'casualty not located'.

| | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | Grand Total |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Category 1 | 941 | 958 | 979 | 907 | 901 | 4686 |
| Category 2 | 116 | 124 | 148 | 169 | 213 | 770 |
| Grand Total | 1057 | 1082 | 1127 | 1076 | 1114 | 5456 |
| Cat 1 Not Located | 11 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 19 | 84 |
| Cat 2 Not Located | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Total Not Located | 12 | 27 | 19 | 14 | 21 | 93 |
| Cat 1 with LandSAR | 3 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 14 |
| Cat 2 with LandSAR | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Total with LandSAR | 3 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 17 |

On the table above:

- Blue rows show the total number of land based incidents by category.
- Red rows show how many of those incidents include 'casualty not located', again broken down by category.
- Yellow rows show how many of those incidents had LandSAR support, again broken down by category.

Of note are the nine category 2 incidents listing 'casualty not located'. All of these actually have duplicated records, as they all were cat 2 incidents where RCC had police support. Only the police records include 'casualty not located' figures, the RCC records do not. The associated category 2 records from the RCCNZ daily reports are briefly summarised below:

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So - all nine of the Category 2 records listing 'casualty not located' are incorrectly coded. None of these incidents have any not-located persons at risk.

We also believe that some Police SAR Coordinators may record a 'person not located' whenever they carry out a SAROP, even if the investigation shows there was never a person to locate. The data standard project will assist to reduce or eliminate these instances in the future.

The fatalities study will include an analysis of all the records in the data store that include 'casualty not located'. This will give us a better idea of how many incidents genuinely conclude/suspend with people known to be missing.

Regards

Duncan

Duncan Ferner
Secretariat Manager
New Zealand Search and Rescue Council
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www.nzsar.org.nz www.adventuresmart.org.nz www.beacons.org.nz

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From: [Duncan Ferner](#)
To: [NICHOLSON, William](#)
Subject: FW: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:28:00 p.m.

Hi Bill,

Jo said you were attending the Fiona Mills inquest? If so – this is FYI.

Dunc

From: Duncan Ferner

Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:12 p.m.

To: [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); Jo Holden (joanne.holden@police.govt.nz); Geoff Logan, NZ Police

Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)

Subject: Information about 'persons not located'

Hi Team,

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and Rescue

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From: [HOLDEN, Joanne \(Jo\)](#)
To: [Duncan Ferner](#)
Subject: RE: Information about "persons not located"
Date: Monday, 22 February 2016 3:17:55 p.m.

Thanks. Very different than the figures in the SARINZ report...

Sergeant Jo Holden

Training & Development Coordinator: Search and Rescue/Disaster Victim Identification.
NZ Police National Headquarters | P.O. Box 3017 | Wellington 6011 ☎ +64 4 470 7313 |
☎ 021 190 1806 |
✉: joanne.holden@police.govt.nz



Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

From: Duncan Ferner [<mailto:d.ferner@transport.govt.nz>]

Sent: Monday, 22 February 2016 15:12

To: [REDACTED]; Steve Caldwell (ceo@landsar.org.nz); HOLDEN, Joanne (Jo); LOGAN, Geoffrey (Geoff)

Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; Pete Corbett (pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)

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To: [REDACTED]; [Steve Caldwell \(ceo@landsar.org.nz\)](mailto:steve.caldwell@landsar.org.nz); [Jo Holden \(joanne.holden@police.govt.nz\)](mailto:joanne.holden@police.govt.nz); [Geoff Logan, NZ Police](mailto:geoff.logan@police.govt.nz)
Cc: mike.hill@maritimenz.govt.nz; [Pete Corbett \(pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz\)](mailto:pete.corbett@landsar.org.nz)
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