

# MINUTES

Meeting details			
<b>Meeting title:</b>	Marine Search and Rescue Project Working Group Meeting: <b>Risk and Capability</b>		
<b>Meeting date:</b>	Thursday, 6 October 2016	<b>Time:</b>	1830hrs
<b>Location:</b>	Teleconference		

Attendees	Title/Business area
Wes Oswin	Manager, Marine Search and Rescue Office
Adrian Mnew	Deputy Director, Maritime Safety Victoria, Transport Safety Victoria
Matt Semmens	Flotilla Commander, Coast Guard (Carrum)
Marcus Grinblat	Coast Guard
Bruce Murray	Treasurer, Southern Peninsula Rescue Squad
Ben Penrose	Acting Sergeant, Victoria Water Police
Stuart Laing	Project Coordinator, Emergency Management Victoria

Apologies	Title/Business area
David Taylor	Coast Guard
Rick Cooper	Secretary, Volunteer Marine Rescue - Mornington
Mike Turner	Volunteer Marine Rescue - Mornington
Damian Bould	Apollo Bay Ocean Rescue

# MINUTES

Item	Subject	Time	Speaker/Action
1.	Opening/apologies	5 min	Wes Oswin
2.	Office of Marine Search and Rescue <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Update on progress</li></ul>	10 min	Wes Oswin
3.	Terms of Reference <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Discuss Terms of Reference</li></ul>	10 min	Discussion
4.	Meeting Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Meeting locations and times</li></ul>	5 min	Discussion
5.	Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop working plan</li></ul>	20 min	Discussion
6.	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Summary of actions from this meeting</li></ul>	5 min	Wes Oswin
7.	Next scheduled meeting - <b>TBC</b>		

## 1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members and apologies noted.

## 2. Office of Marine Search and Rescue – Progress update

Wes Oswin provided a progress update.

### Finance and Insurance

This has been a key priority for the MSAR Office to date with tight time lines. A sustainable funding model coupled with a robust insurance scheme is a priority for the MSAR Office to deliver.

### MSAR Service Provider Survey

A lot of work has gone into collating and analysing the information provided to the MSAR Office by providers and has been extremely useful in establishing a benchmark to determine a reasonable operating budget going into the future. This budget considers:

- the actual cost to run MSAR units and
- current budget pressures providers are experiencing

The information has been collated into spreadsheets and we will be referring to these within this Project Working Group at future meetings.

### AGREED ACTION:

- Once finalised, the MSAR Office will share these spreadsheets to Project Working Group members.

## **2a) Insurance Options**

The MSAR Office has been continuing to work with the VMIA with a view of establishing a centralised “end-to-end” insurance scheme for the MSAR sector to include cover for MSAR buildings and content, vessels, vehicles, public liability and professional indemnity.

Up until tonight, the MSAR Office has been looking at relatively small legal issues we may need to overcome but we are getting very close to being able to submit briefs to Ministers for an insurance scheme. The VMIA has been in consultation with the Department of Treasury and Finance and they have reached an in-principle agreement to the insurance scheme that is being proposed. Although it is definitely not yet finalised and set in concrete, it appears to be quite promising that the Minister for Finance will request that the VMIA form an insurance scheme for the MSAR sector.

In all likelihood, the MSAR Office will be submitting ministerial briefs early next week and then hopefully writing to all MSAR service providers in the coming weeks outlining what’s proposed.

### **AGREED ACTION:**

- **The MSAR Office will provide communications to the Project Working Group members in the coming weeks once a proposed agreement with the VMIA has been reached.**

## **2b) Background information into funding options**

The MSAR Office has been collating and analysing the survey data.

The Office has identified that another government department is planning to release a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) that consider the fees associated with recreational boat registration and licensing fees.

The MSAR Office is attempting to get a “placeholder” in the RIS for Marine Search and Rescue. A RIS is a government requirement so if this levy is considered in the future as a means to sustainably fund our sector, we need to follow this process.

Thank you to Adrian Jacobs’ area at EMV for their current and ongoing efforts in this space.

Minister Merlino today announced a support package for all emergency service volunteers and it would appear that the MSAR Office has secured an allocation of \$800K through that announcement. The MSAR Office will certainly be working closely with the team that administers the program with a view to trying to secure that funding for prioritised strategic items associated with the Reform with the agreement of the MSAR providers. There is certainly opportunities for us to fund our insurance scheme for perhaps a year or two out of that money as well as other priorities which might be money for training, essential equipment and so on. More information to follow on this funding as it comes to hand.

## **2c) Stakeholder consultation**

The MSAR Office has been consulting with the Boating Industry Association (BIA), Victorian Recreational Fishing (VRFish), Australian Sailing, the Ocean Racing Club of Australia (to name a few) to ascertain their opinion on the reform, as well as opportunities that might be available to help fund MSAR.

## **2d) Interim MSAR arrangements**

The MSAR Office is almost ready to release the interim arrangements as they are still being finalised, however it was noticed that some of the details contained in the document weren't quite right.

For example, there were some references to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) General Safety Requirements (GSR) standard for Class 2D and 2E vessels. In consultation with Transport Safety Victoria, the MSAR Office is of the opinion that this standard is not appropriate for marine search and rescue in Victoria

Further, the MSAR Office believes that accepting the GSR as a vessel standard for inland and sheltered water MSAR vessels would be a backwards step and potentially compromise safety.

The MSAR Office will propose, through the interim arrangements, that we keep the national standard of commercial vessel requirements for Class 2C, 2D and 2E as the minimum standard for MSAR vessels in Victoria.

The MSAR Office will be putting this recommendation to members of this Project Working Group and the Reform Implementation Board to seek approval for this to be the MSAR standard rather than the GSR.

Interpretation of the AMSA Exemption 24 requirements were also incorrect and this is being updated.

### **AGREED ACTION:**

- **The MSAR Office will endeavour to re-circulate the interim MSAR arrangements to all Project Working Groups next week.**

## **2e) Risk assessments**

In consultation with Victoria Water Police and assistance from MSAR service providers, the MSAR Office has finalised the risk assessments that were tabled at the last Working Group.

Since then, we have been geospatially mapping those risk assessments. We now have marine incident data for the past 10 years which is now overlaid across a map of Victoria.

We have also mapped the various ranges of MSAR service providers along the Victorian coast in terms of severe, moderate and fair conditions. We also have some polygons of what we consider to be the principal recreational activity in those areas.

These maps will be particularly useful when the Risk and Capability Project Group analyses the current capabilities and identifies where our gaps are. This will form a prioritised vessel replacement program and where our assets should be located; both in the bay and along the coast.

Our GIS consultant has almost finalised these maps and should be returned to the MSAR Office later this week.

## **2f) National Volunteer Marine Search and Rescue Committee meeting**

We attended the National Volunteer Marine Search and Rescue Committee meeting in Sydney.

Key points of interest happening on the Committee:

- the Committee has decided to write to the CEO of AMSA to get exemption from not only the proposed levies but all fees and charges associated with the National System for all MSAR service providers

- the Committee is also exploring an opportunity to get a proportion of the national fuel levy in particular, fuel excise in association with marine recreational and commercial fuel (if 0.1% of excise from marine sector was allocated to MSAR it would equate to a quantum of about \$20M per annum)
- the Committee is also seeking observer status on the Australian and New Zealand Safe Boating Education Group (ANZSBEG) as the committee believes that the volunteer MSAR service providers can play a larger role in terms of boating safety and education for recreational boaters.

### ***2g) Marine Distress Emergency Monitoring System (MDEMS)***

Kordia, in conjunction with TSV, held a consultation session on Sunday 25 September 2016. This was attended by members of Coast Guard, independent units, as well as other stakeholders from the department. The MSAR Office also attended.

Kordia provided an update of the project which is expected to go live mid-December 2016.

Two key projects groups are being formed to address some minor technical issues associated with this project as well as the development of some policies and procedures that need to be put in place to support the system.

This body of work is being coordinated by TSV and assistance will be provided by the MSAR Office and Victoria Water Police.

### ***2h) Boating Safety and Facilities Grant Program***

This program has recently opened and the MSAR Office is exploring options for the grant program. The MSAR Office wants to ensure that any supported applications align with the priorities of the reform. The MSAR Office and TSV will be meeting with the administrators of the program next week to try and quarantine MSAR funding in the program to ensure that it is directed towards prioritised requirements across the whole sector. The MSAR Office is trying to ensure that we can get as much of an allocation towards MSAR as we possibly can out of the program.

The MSAR Office asks that anyone making an application to liaise with the Office first to discuss the proposal.

## **3. Terms of Reference**

We confirmed with all members that they have received the Terms of Reference document.

The Terms of Reference have been currently set out in the Marine Search and Rescue Working Group (Risk and Capability) document overview.

MSAR Office has listed dot points in the document of what we believe to be the key elements of the work to be.

The MSAR Office is currently developing the document into a more detailed Terms of Reference and adding anything else that Group members feel necessary to include.

We read through the projected outcomes and key elements of the Terms of Reference with the Group.

The timeline for completion of this project (January 2017) is particularly tight but also achievable. Behind the scenes, the MSAR Office is doing quite a bit of the work in support of

this Project Working Group. The reason it's so tight is that this is central to the business case for funding to the government.

Wes acknowledged the importance of the volunteer MSAR sector to the success of this Reform.

Wes talked about an economy of scale that might be of advantage if we were to use the same procurement contract that Victoria Water Police is currently finalising for their vessels. The MSAR Office has already discussed that possibility with Victoria Water Police. Other benefits include interoperability amongst MSAR units, and with other emergency service providers.

We need to finalise a long-term vessel acquisition plan. In the past, there has been no strategic approach to asset allocations. In some cases in Victoria, MSAR providers have been largely left to their own devices and have been left with assets that were perhaps not suitable for MSAR purposes at all or inadequate for their particular location. We need to make sure that when an MSAR provider acquires a certain vessel that they also have the operational capability to crew, maintain, support and respond with that vessel.

Wes believed that one additional point should be added to the list of key elements of the work, namely the need to benchmark the current operational capability of the MSAR units across the state. The MSAR Office has completed an assessment of the vessels but what we don't have benchmarked is the state of readiness and the operational capability of our MSAR providers. In doing this, we will be able to identify and prioritise where we need to help build capacity in particular areas to support the risk of the area to which that particular unit is based.

- Comment from Adrian Mnew (TSV) – the idea of benchmarking operational capability to go with the asset/vessel capability is a really good idea as they both go hand-in-hand. Once these capabilities have been determined and agreed upon, the Training and Assessment Project Working Group can then determine the adequate training to achieve that.

Wes responded by suggesting that one way this may be achieved by perhaps a survey or internal audit that each MSAR provider could do and then perhaps be validated by the MSAR Office, TSV or Victoria Water Police or a combination of all three.

- Comment from Matt Semmens (Carrum Coast Guard) – good start, very comprehensive.
- Comment from Marcus Grinblat (Coast Guard) – sounds very good. Vessel acquisition plan isn't going to be easy. Not necessarily will one vessel suit all. Coast Guard have tried to standardise vessels in the past but came up with various problems. Needs to be looked into and come up with something as standard even though it won't necessarily be the same at every unit, but standardised for interoperability. Asset placement plan – Coast Guard has looked at replacing their vessels every 5 years or every 10 years at maximum.

Wes responded in saying that the MSAR Office expects that there will be three (3) to four (4) vessel types as a minimum, which could be extended to five (5) if we include an inland vessel. The MSAR Office will take a look at the Victoria Water Police vessel acquisition following their tender process and assess whether those vessels are appropriate for MSAR providers. Otherwise, the MSAR Office is happy to conduct its own procurement if necessary but there are a number of benefits if we jump on the back of the Victoria Water Police procurement process in terms of interoperability. New South Wales and South Australia MSAR providers have successfully been conducting 12-year replacements of vessels and trucks, and in terms of our proposed budget, this is what we anticipate for MSAR providers in Victoria, but this will be explored further after crunching some numbers and seeing where we land.

- Comment from Bruce Murray (SPRS) – all sounds pretty good. On vessel replacement, we were looking at possibly 10-years with SPRS vessels but not looking at replacement but a refurbishment. Seen it done on a police boat in Western Australia, same sort of vessel, and their refurbishment came up like a brand new boat.

Wes responded that the MSAR Office will certainly explore the refurbishment option.

- Comment from Ben Penrose (Victoria Water Police) – Vessel tender process, at the point of evaluating all tenders submitted, a few trials have been conducted, so announcement of successful tender isn't far off. Standardised fleet – Victoria Water Police has gone away from the one size fits all which is common across emergency services, recognised that regardless of what you're doing there's always difference in areas or jobs you get. We're looking at four (4) classes of vessels from small 6-metre or less runabout type boats through to twin-engine trail-able workhorses, into 8 to 12-metre RHIBS, then to offshore and in-water boats. Their replacement will be a rolling 10-year program. Engine refurbishments – 1,000 hours on outboards. Option for this Project Working Group to either adopt or modify the Victoria Water Police procurement and replacement program or even scrap it and start from scratch. It would be a good starting point and save a lot of time for the fleets across Victoria and would suit a large portion of the MSAR fleet. Risk profiling – when it comes to looking at capability, sometime it can be a bit of a touchy subject, especially if it's your area that we're talking and making decisions about. Ben wanted to highlight to everyone that there are a lot of variables that go into that and when we sat down and did the profiling, it was very hard to capture all the variables and at some point we had to make a decision and draw a line in the sand and give it a classification. This is all open to debate as it is all subjective so far. Now that it's all been geospatially mapped, everyone should be pretty happy with the results that come out.

Wes appreciated Ben comments and concurred with Ben's comments.

#### **4. Meeting Administration**

Wes spoke about the administration of this project group in terms of meetings. The MSAR Office is aware that weekends are precious to members of the group and equally, weeknights can also be precious given the nature of members work and family commitments.

With this in mind, however, there is a need for this Project Working Group to have a workshop because we've already prepared a bit of draft material, such as the geospatial maps and operating budgets requiring validation, and we need to prioritise other things. As there is a lot of paperwork for this Project Working Group to review, it would be best if our next meeting was face-to-face. Following the face-to-face workshop, the MSAR Office, TSV and Victoria Water Police will have some work to do offline and will be able to provide updates to members by teleconference and email in between face-to-face meetings. The MSAR Office is also hoping to secure some project assistance from Russell Rees for this Project Working Group but this is yet to be finalised.

The Training and Assessment Project Working Group are scheduled to meet for their first face-to-face workshop on a Sunday morning in October (date to be determined), held at Life Saving Victoria's facilities in Port Melbourne. Wes made the suggestion of putting on a central lunch on the same day and have this Project Working Group (Risk and Capability) meet in the afternoon.

The members of the group were in agreeance of Wes' suggestion to meet on the Sunday afternoon at about 1:00pm following the Training and Assessment Project Working Group's

workshop (date to be determined). Wes advised the Project Working Group that for those who may not be able to attend in person, teleconference and/or videoconference facilities will be available and any documents that will be discussed during the workshop will be sent to those people beforehand to review and discuss on the day.

**AGREED ACTIONS:**

- **Meeting invitations will be sent out to Project Working Group members by the MSAR Office once a date is determined.**
- **MSAR Office will send out to Project Working Group members the draft material for review and discussion at workshop.**

Wes asked the Group to treat the information contained within the draft material as strictly confidential and not be distributed outside of the Project Working Group.

**5. General Business**

No general business items from members.

**6. Next meeting**

Next meeting to be held on a Sunday afternoon in October 2016 in Port Melbourne – exact date and time to be advised.

No	Action to be taken	Assigned to	Due date	Status (as at meeting)
1.	MSAR Office will set a date and send out invitations to Group members for face-to-face workshop	MSAR Office	14/10/2016	<b>In progress</b>
2.	MSAR Office will circulate all draft material for review and discussion at face-to-face workshop	MSAR Office	14/10/2016	<b>In progress</b>
3.	MSAR Office will re-circulate the interim MSAR arrangements to all Project Working Groups	MSAR Office	14/10/2016	<b>In progress</b>