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## **Media Statement**

### **Funding boost for Search and Rescue**

Search and Rescue in New Zealand will receive an additional \$8.4 million over the next two years, beginning on 1 July, Transport Minister Annette King announced at the New Zealand Search and Rescue Council Awards in Wellington tonight.

This nearly doubles the amount the search and rescue sector receives through direct government funding.

“This extra funding will help Search and Rescue boost its level of equipment, sustainability and capacity for co-ordinating large and difficult incidents,” Ms King said.

“It will also mean more opportunities for training and joint exercises to improve interagency co-operation and understanding.”

The volunteer sector of Search and Rescue will receive \$2.7 million per year of the funding, enabling the organisation’s approximately 9000 volunteers to plan more strategically for responses to future incidents.

Ms King also announced that, following the two-year funding announced today, long-term funding for the sector will become available through the Land Transport Management Amendment Bill, due to be passed before July.

The Bill will allow fuel excise paid by recreational boaties to be used to fund search and rescue, boating safety education and maritime safety services that benefit the boating community.

“This provides more co-ordinated and certain funding of these services into the future, greater stability for the voluntary sector of search and rescue and more robust support for boating safety,” Ms King said.