

# LandSAR needs bush dog team

LandSAR is trying to get a bush dog team in the Wanaka area. "We already have six avalanche dogs at different stages of training, but we'd love to introduce a number of bush wilderness dog teams too," LandSAR dogs' team leader Matt Gunn (pictured right) said. "We're looking within the organisation first, but we're also looking for anybody with the appropriate skills. They'd need to be able to manage themselves well in the bush and ideally they wouldn't already have a dog. We'd rather help them find the right dog from one of our known breeders."

LandSAR held its AGM last week. An increasing number of callouts for Wanaka's LandSAR teams, including eight fatalities,

has been "pretty demanding at times, but we've coped really well," chairman Roy Bailey said. "It's been a pretty bad year for fatalities."

SAR coordinator, Sergeant Aaron Nicholson said there had been 44 operations over the last year, an increase of eight over the previous year and 14 up from 2009-2010.

Responding to their increased workload Roy said, "We've focused our training over this last year on up-skilling our team leaders, so they're more confident and competent. We operate four different rescue teams: alpine cliff rescue, sub-alpine, swift water and marine."

*See sunspots for details*

