



International Civil Aviation Organization

**Thirteenth Meeting of the APANPIRG
ATS/AIS/SAR Sub-group (ATS/AIS/SAR/SG/13)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 23-27 June 2003

Agenda Item 4: Consider problems and make specific recommendations concerning the provision of ATS/AIS/SAR in the Asia Pacific Region

SEARCH AND RESCUE AGREEMENTS

(Presented by the United States)

SUMMARY

This information paper provides a status of SAR agreements between U.S. and Asia Pacific States and support for a joint “aeronautical and maritime” SAR agreement, where appropriate.

1. Background

1.1 The *International Civil Aviation Convention, Annex 12 - Search and Rescue* and the *International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue* provide for States to enter into agreements with neighboring States regarding search and rescue (SAR) matters. The U.S. Coast Guard has authority to negotiate and conclude SAR agreements with other States regarding international civil SAR services in oceanic areas concerning aeronautical and maritime SAR. U.S. rescue coordination centers (RCCs) operated by the U.S. Coast Guard are responsible for aeronautical and maritime SAR.

2.0 Discussion

2.1 The United States seeks to conclude joint aeronautical and maritime SAR agreements, where appropriate. Experience has shown that such joint (combined) SAR agreements may initially require additional coordination between national aeronautical and maritime SAR authorities but lead to more effective use of all available resources, and to efficient use of limited government funding and people. The term “agreement” is typically used but other terms, such as “arrangement” or “memorandum of understanding”, are acceptable with the understanding that such agreements are normally viewed as nonbinding. Maritime SAR agreements also support aeronautical SAR since, for practical purposes, a downed aircraft at sea is essentially a maritime incident.

2.2 The U.S. aeronautical search and rescue region (SRR) associated with RCC Honolulu is adjacent to eight other SRRs identified in the Asia and Pacific Regions Air Navigation Plan: Fiji, French Polynesia, Indonesia, Japan, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines. Civil SAR agreements are in place between the U.S. and three of these States: Indonesia (1988), Japan (1986), and New Zealand (2003). The U.S. also has SAR agreements in place with the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and the People’s Republic of China.

2.3 The U.S. hopes to conclude future SAR agreements with additional States that have adjacent neighboring SRRs. This would include the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Fiji, and French Polynesia. The U.S.-New Zealand SAR “arrangement” is appended as an example of an “aeronautical and maritime” SAR agreement that could be used as a model by other States. U.S. agreements with

the Republic of Palau and New Zealand have been signed since the last meeting of this Sub-group and have been submitted electronically to the ICAO Asia/Pacific Regional Office.

2.4 Any comments that the Meeting or its participants may wish to provide to the U.S. for consideration in this work may be addressed to Mr. Dave Edwards at 202 267-1552 or dedwards@comdt.uscg.mil.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the above information.



**Arrangement
for cooperation between
The New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority
and the
The United States Coast Guard
concerning
Search and Rescue**

ARRANGEMENT
FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE NEW ZEALAND CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY
AND
THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
CONCERNING
SEARCH AND RESCUE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority and the United States Coast Guard, hereinafter referred to as the "Participants" of this Arrangement, recognize the benefits enjoyed from previous close cooperation with regard to search and rescue (SAR) operations in the Pacific, and further recognize that additional benefits may be enjoyed from the cooperative arrangements detailed herein.
- 1.2 The Participants identified above have been recognized by their respective Governments as having primary responsibility for coordinating and providing aeronautical and maritime SAR services within their respective aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions (SRRs) within the oceanic environment.
- 1.3 The Participants recognize the great importance of cooperation in aeronautical and maritime SAR, and in the provision of expeditious and effective SAR services to save lives and reduce suffering. The Participants also recognize the assumed responsibilities for SAR within the framework of the *International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979* and of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation, 1944*, with particular attention paid to Annex 12 (Search and Rescue) of the latter Convention, both Conventions as amended.
- 1.4 The Participants have reached the following understanding.

2. Objectives and Scope

- 2.1 This Arrangement establishes a framework for cooperation among the Participants in carrying out activities related to aeronautical and maritime SAR, and sets out their various responsibilities.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Either Participant, on receiving information of an aeronautical or maritime incident where any person is in distress within its SRRs, will take urgent measures to provide the most appropriate assistance, regardless of the nationality or status of such a person or the circumstances in which the person is found.

- 3.2 SAR operations should normally be carried out in accordance with the relevant SAR manuals and recommendations of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), including the *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual*, taking into account nationally accepted SAR procedures.
- 3.3 To ensure that SAR operations are conducted in an efficient and coordinated manner, the Participants should consult and cooperate with each other as necessary and appropriate, lending mutual assistance as capabilities allow. If primary responsibility for coordination of a SAR response or operation cannot be immediately ascertained, the rescue coordination centers (RCCs) concerned should consult with each other to resolve the responsibility.
- 3.4 For any SAR operation involving coordination between the Participants, the Participants will, through appropriate consultation, decide in each case which Participant will have primary responsibility for coordinating the SAR operation.
- 3.5 Entry of SAR units of one Participant onto or over the territory of the country of the other Participant to conduct SAR operations will, to the best of their ability, be expeditiously arranged between the New Zealand National RCC and RCC Honolulu.
- 3.6 Solely for the purpose of rendering emergency rescue assistance to persons, vessels, or aircraft in danger or distress, when the location is reasonably well known, SAR facilities of one Participant may immediately enter onto or over the territory of the other Participant, with notification of such entry made as soon as practicable.
- 3.7 To facilitate the coordination referred to in this Section, the Participants will, to the best of their ability, keep each other fully and promptly informed of all relevant SAR operations. They should develop appropriate procedures to provide for the most effective and efficient means of communication.

4. SAR Regions

- 4.1 The aeronautical SRRs of New Zealand and the United States of America are separated geographically by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates: 05° 00' S, 171° 00' W; and 05° 00' S, 157° 00' W; the maritime SRRs of the countries of the Participants are also separated by the same line.
- 4.2 The establishment of SRRs is intended only to effect an understanding concerning the regions within which a Participant accepts primary responsibility for coordinating SAR operations.
- 4.3 The delimitation of SRRs is not related to and will not prejudice the boundaries between countries.

5. Rescue Coordination Centers

- 5.1 The primary operational points of contact under this Arrangement are the internationally recognized RCCs of the Participants, i.e., the New Zealand National RCC and RCC Honolulu. Participants will, to the best of their ability, keep each other informed about their RCCs and associated SRRs, and provide any

information which might be useful, in order to expedite and improve coordination.

- 5.2 The primary method for coordination of SAR activity will be via RCCs referred to in paragraph 5.1. This Arrangement is not intended, however, to preclude any appropriate direct communication that may be considered necessary between any SAR facility or other organizational element of the Participants, when speed of reaction requires it and time is of the essence, or other similar circumstances dictate.
- 5.3 Any transfer of SAR mission coordination responsibilities between the RCCs should be handled by consultation between the RCCs.

6. Cooperation

- 6.1 The subordinate elements of the Participants may provide for further coordination and cooperation by the establishment of appropriate operational arrangements and procedures consistent with this Arrangement.
- 6.2 In addition to that related to specific SAR cases, Participants should exchange information that may serve to improve the effectiveness of SAR operations. This information may include, but not be limited to: communication details; information about SAR facilities; descriptions of available airfields; knowledge of fuelling and medical facilities; and information useful for training SAR personnel.
- 6.3 The Participants will promote mutual SAR cooperation by collaborative efforts including, but not limited to:
- 6.3.1 arranging exchange visits between SAR personnel;
 - 6.3.2 carrying out joint SAR exercises and training;
 - 6.3.3 using ship reporting systems for SAR purposes;
 - 6.3.4 developing SAR procedures, techniques, equipment, facilities, and information systems;
 - 6.3.5 providing services in support of SAR operations, such as the use of aircraft landing fields, fuelling and medical facilities;
 - 6.3.6 coordinating, as appropriate, national positions on international SAR issues of mutual interest;
 - 6.3.7 supporting and conducting joint research and development initiatives aimed at reducing search time, improving rescue effectiveness, and minimizing risk to SAR personnel; and
 - 6.3.8 conducting regular communications checks and exercises, including the use of alternative means of communications that would be used to handle communication overloads during major SAR operations.

7. Finances

- 7.1 Unless otherwise determined by the Participants, each Participant will fund its own expenses for activities pertinent to this Arrangement.

7.2 The provisions of this Arrangement are contingent upon the availability of SAR personnel, facilities and funding.

8. Application of this Arrangement

8.1 This Arrangement is not intended to create binding obligations under international law.

8.2 Nothing in this Arrangement is intended to affect in any way rights and duties based on international agreements or other arrangements pertaining to the Participants or their respective Governments.

8.3 Any dispute regarding the interpretation or implementation of this Arrangement, or of any associated arrangements, will be resolved by consultation among the Participants and will not be referred to an international body or third party for settlement.

9. Amendment

9.1 This Arrangement may be amended only with the written consent of both Participants.

10. Duration, Withdrawal and Termination

10.1 This Arrangement will enter into immediate effect, for an indefinite period, upon signature by the Participants.

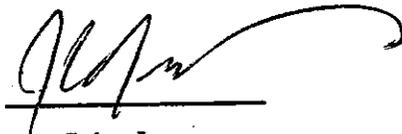
10.2 Either Participant may withdraw from the Arrangement by giving not less than six (6) months notice in writing to the other Participant.

10.3 This Arrangement may be terminated with the mutual written consent of the Participants or by any superseding arrangement.

10.4 Termination of this Arrangement will not affect SAR operations in progress at the time of termination unless otherwise determined to by the Participants involved.

Louey Huff
Signed at ~~Christchurch~~ on
16 April 2003

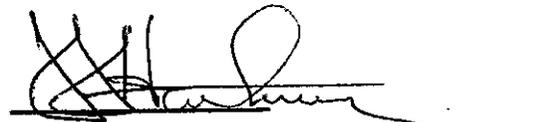
For the
Civil Aviation Authority
of New Zealand



John Jones
Director

Signed at Washington, DC on
April 9, 2003

For the
United States Coast Guard



Jeffrey Hathaway
Assistant Commandant,
Operations Policy