



Agenda Item 3: Co-operation agreements of the SAR service, AMVER and COSPAS-SARSAT in the CAR Region
3.2 SAR Agreements

ASPECTS TO BE CONTAINED IN THE SAR AGREEMENTS

(Presented by the Secretariat)

Summary

This working paper presents a summary of the aspects that should be contained in the SAR agreements so that the States may develop and/or update their respective SAR national and international co-operation agreements.

References:

- Annex 12 – Search and Rescue
- International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR – Doc.9731)

1. Background

1.1 Annex 12, in its Chapter 3 – Cooperation, establishes that the contracting States shall coordinate their search and rescue organizations with those of the neighbouring States, subject to the conditions prescribed by their own authorities. Regional cooperation should be fostered by the States for an effective SAR system.

1.2 On the other hand, the latest version published of the IAMSAR, Doc 9731, Appendix I, presents an agreement model so that the States may reach a co-operation agreement among the aeronautical and maritime authorities. The model is shown in the **Appendix** to this working paper

2 Analysis

2.1 Doc 9731, International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual recommends that a contemporary SAR system should be developed from an operational perspective with a basic regional cooperation system between States, Territories and International Organizations concerned, without borderlines limit. Aeronautical and maritime services should consider regular joint sessions in order to foster consistency and regional co-operation of SAR operations in order to provide humanitarian aid.

2.2 Fundamental for this strategy is that civil and military authorities, aeronautical and maritime agencies, communication providers, meteorological service, air traffic services (ATS) and aircraft operators, among others, combine efforts through multi-lateral agreement to provide SAR service over a determined area.

2.3 With the modern communication capacity and the international nature of civil aviation operations, communication resources of the States may be improved. The advantage that an RCC may be able to coordinate with ATC, AIS and MET facilities offers considerable economical savings regarding localization, equipment, special and personal communication network, which ensures an easy operational coordination with SAR units.

2.4 RCCs should be authorized to request and render the necessary aid at the request of other RCCs, even from aircraft, ships, personnel or equipment. Likewise, these RCCs should be authorized to grant the necessary clearance for the entry of aircraft, ships, personnel or equipment in its territory, as well as for agreeing upon the necessary means with the respective customs, immigration and other authorities in order to facilitate entry. The States should adopt concrete co-operation provisions in order to provide SAR service from other places in order to fulfill the requirements of an insufficient air coverage of the relevant regions.

2.5 For this to be effectively managed, it is very important to ratify and/or set forth bilateral and multilateral agreements, as well the establishment and effective functioning of SAR coordinating committees (SCCs) in order to introduce improvements to the regional SAR system.

2.6 In view of the characteristics of the CAR Region, States and Territories have adopted effort co-operation and coordination measures through the activation of the Central Caribbean SAR Committee (C/CAR SAR/COMM), Eastern Caribbean SAR Committee (E/CAR SAR/COMM) and the SAR Committee for Central America (COBUSA). Some States have formed their own National SAR Committee.

2.7 In spite of the agreements reached, it is necessary that States continue working in a regional SAR system harmonized through co-operation agreements with the neighbouring States on the entry conditions of SAR brigades of a State in the territory of another State. Agreements should foresee facilities for the entrance of SAR brigades with a minimum of formalities to the place where an aviation accident occurs for the sake of the rescue of the accident survivors.

2.8 The basic issues that SAR agreements should include are the following :

- general information on SAR organizations;
- level clearance so that an RCC may allow SAR units to enter territorial areas;
- establishment of common procedures;
- pooling of facilities, when appropriate;
- cooperation on international SAR projects of common interest;
- liaison visits; and
- joint training exercises.

2.9 More comprehensive agreements might also include:

- identification of SAR areas;
- information on RCCs and SAR communications;
- agreements to exchange SAR information;
- procedures for requesting and providing SAR assistance;
- directories of SAR facilities;
- lists of special SAR services available;
- scope of SAR coordination, research, testing and technical assistance.

2.10 To achieve harmonization of agreements, the (Doc. 9731) IAMSAR Volume 1, Appendix I provides an outline format of SAR agreement between States.

3. **Suggested action**

3.1 States and Territories of the CAR Regions that have not yet done so are urged to:

- a) present and up-to-date report of their SAR co-operation agreements;
- b) establish agreements and bilateral and/or multilateral coordination actions with other States, Territories and international Organizations allowing the use of mechanisms and resources to improve SAR services, adopting the format of the Appendix to this working paper, if applicable; and
- c) submit to the ICAO NACC Office, by 30 August 2005, a report on the progress attained in this regard.

APPENDIX

Agreement on [Aeronautical and/or Maritime] Search and Rescue between
[name the Parties]

1 INTRODUCTION

Knowing the importance of co-operation in search and rescue (SAR), and of the provision of expeditious and effective SAR services;

Desiring to support the provisions of the [International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and/or the Convention on International Civil Aviation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)]; and

Seeking to provide an overall plan for SAR co-ordination, use of available resources, mutual assistance, and efforts to improve SAR services;

The Parties have agreed as follows:

2 EXTENT OF ASSISTANCE

The Parties agree to co-operate in the following areas:

- (a) Support each other by pooling SAR facilities as appropriate for operations within their respective search and rescue regions (SRRs);
- (b) Make, and respond to, requests for operational assistance between the designated rescue co-ordination centres (RCCs) or rescue sub-centres (RSCs) of the Parties as capabilities allow;
- (c) Develop procedures and communications appropriate for co-ordination among facilities of both Parties responding to the same distress incident, and for co-ordination between the RCCs or RSCs of the Parties;
- (d) Normally apply the guidance of the International Aeronautical and Maritime SAR Manuals regarding SAR operational procedures and communications;
- (e) Work to establish agreed procedures, which balance concerns for sovereignty and for saving lives, regarding entry of various types of SAR facilities into the territory of the other Party, solely for a search or a rescue operation; and
- (f) Enter into other collaborative SAR efforts which may include:
 - mutual visits by SAR personnel of the Parties;
 - joint training or exercises;
 - co-operation in development of SAR procedures, techniques, equipment, or facilities;
 - exchange of pertinent SAR or communications information; and
 - establishment of one or more SAR committees to provide a means for ongoing co-operation in improving SAR effectiveness.

3 SEARCH AND RESCUE REGIONS

Establishment of SRRs is intended only to effect an understanding concerning where each Party accepts primary responsibility for co-ordinating or providing SAR services. SRRs of the Parties shall be separated by lines connecting points as follows: [appropriate co-ordinate points describing applicable lines]

4 TERMS OF AGREEMENT

Each Party will:

- (a) Keep information readily available on availability of any SAR facilities or other resources which may be needed for implementing this Agreement.
- (b) Keep each other fully and promptly informed of all SAR operations of mutual interest, or which may involve use of facilities of the other Party;
- (c) Authorize its RCC(s) to request assistance via the RCC(s) of the other Party, and to provide all pertinent information on the distress situation and the scope of assistance needed;
- (d) Authorize its RCC(s) to promptly respond to a request for assistance from an RCC of the other Party;
- (e) Authorize its RCC(s) to promptly arrange, or arrange in advance, with other national authorities for territorial entry of SAR facilities of the other Party (including overflight or landing of SAR aircraft, and similar accommodation of surface (land or water) SAR units) as circumstances dictate for fuelling, medical, or other appropriate and available operational support, or in response to a request to the RCC of the other Party for assistance of those facilities which would involve territorial entry;
- (f) Normally fund its own activities in relation to this Agreement unless otherwise arranged by the Parties in advance, and, in any event, will not allow a matter of reimbursement of cost to delay response to persons in distress.

5 GENERAL PROVISIONS

This Agreement:

shall enter into force . . . [*provisions as appropriate*].

may be amended . . . [*provisions as appropriate*]; and

may be terminated or superseded . . . [*provisions as appropriate*];