



SAR Conference (Saint Denis de La Réunion, 3 – 7 September 2007)

Conclusions

The Conference:

1. recalled that the provision of SAR services, compliant with international standards and recommended practices, is an obligation of ICAO contracting States;
2. recalled that the correction of many SAR deficiencies in the AFI region requires stronger political support from States;
3. highlighted the importance of the outcome of the ICAO / AFCAC SAR technical cooperation project, and thanked the Government of France for its financial support to the project;
4. noted that some SAR remedial actions are complex by nature. This, for example, is the case with respect to the implementation of a SAR funding mechanism or the adoption of high level organisational texts, such as a SAR Bill or SAR Presidential Decree. Other corrective actions, however, require little financial investment and are simpler to address. For example, signing international SAR agreements, developing operational SAR procedures or organizing exercises without deployment of SAR units can be achieved without significant financial outlay and these shortcomings should be addressed by States as soon as practicable;
5. noted the success of the Project to date but highlighted the need to keep up the momentum of the Project as it neared conclusion. Furthermore, in order to build on the Project's achievements, the Conference felt there was now an urgent need to find a way to continue the SAR development activities of ICAO and AFCAC in the region;
6. highlighted the importance of the role of ICAO Regional Offices and, at the same time, the crucial need to reinforce regional SAR human resources. In particular, the Conference emphasised the importance of appointing a SAR expert in the AFI Regional Offices;

7. concluded that States, which have not yet done so, should, as a priority, establish permanent SAR structures within national civil aviation authorities;
 8. suggested that key performance indicators be developed by ICAO and AFCAC in the SAR field which would support AFCAC and ICAO in their efforts to keep track of the progress made by States;
 9. concluded that ICAO and AFCAC should seek new financial sources in order to fund technical assistance in the SAR field in the AFI Region;
 10. recognized the crucial role of training in SAR. It acknowledged with appreciation the decision of some African aeronautical schools to include SAR in their regular training curricula. The Conference strongly recommended that States dedicate budgets to SAR training. It further recommends that States make use of African aeronautical schools to train their staff in the SAR field;
 11. invited States to consider temporary secondment of high level SAR experts to ICAO or AFCAC to build on the achievements of the ICAO/AFCAC SAR Project;
 12. noted that during APIRG ATS/AIS/SAR sub-group meetings, SAR issues appeared not to have progressed in line with developments in ATS and AIS. Therefore, the Conference recommended the establishment of a specific SAR sub-group;
 13. recommended that similar meetings be regularly organized to follow up the evolution of SAR matters in the AFI Region;
 14. recognized that Economic Regional Communities may play a positive role in facilitating regionally coordinated SAR organizations, harmonized SAR regulations and other cost-effective aspects that benefit from economies of scale;
 15. noted with great interest the presentation of live SAR operations and recommended that these types of exchanges be regularly organized, with a view to facilitating the development and sharing of SAR Best Practise;
 16. expressed its gratitude to the Host State, France, and to the Regional Council of La Réunion for the excellence of the facilities and the outstanding hospitality extended to delegates.
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