



## **Conference on Search and Rescue**

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

**WP/5 – Draft SAR Interministerial Order  
(Original text in the French language)**

INTERMINISTERIAL ORDER N° \_\_\_\_\_  
**Respecting the Organization and Operation of Peacetime Search and  
Rescue Services (SAR) for Aircraft and Ships in Distress**

Considering Decree N° \_\_\_\_\_

**ARTICLE 1. PURPOSE**

1.1. The purpose of this Order is to clarify the provisions of Decree N° \_\_\_\_\_ and define the responsibilities of organizations involved in aircraft search and rescue operations in peacetime.

**ARTICLE 2. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS**

2.1. For the purposes of this Order, an aircraft or a ship is considered to be in distress if the craft and its occupants are facing, or are presumed to be facing, serious and/or imminent danger for which they require immediate assistance.

2.2. The international acronym SAR covers all responsibility, activities or resources used in the search and rescue of aircraft and ships in distress. The following definitions shall apply:

- **Rescue Coordination Centre** (international acronym: RCC): A unit responsible for promoting effective organization of search and rescue services and for coordinating the conduct of operations within a search and rescue region (international acronym: SRR);
- **Rescue Sub-Centre** (international acronym: RSC): A unit subordinate to a rescue coordination centre, created to complement the latter in accordance with the specific provisions established by the competent authorities;
- **Joint Search and Rescue Centre:** (international acronym: JRCC): A rescue coordination centre responsible for both aeronautical and maritime search and rescue incidents.
- **Alerting Post:** Any facility intended to serve as an intermediary between a person reporting an emergency and a rescue coordination centre.
- **Search and Rescue Unit:** A unit composed of trained personnel and provided with equipment suitable for the expeditious conduct of search and rescue operations.
- **Rescue:** An operation intended to provide persons in distress with initial, medical or other care.

### **ARTICLE 3. AREAS OF JURISDICTION**

3.1. Areas in which the State of \_\_\_\_\_ *[State adopting this Order]* assumes responsibility for SAR operations are determined through international and regional air or sea navigation agreements recognized by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) or the International Maritime Organization (IMO), as well as through inter-State agreements.

3.2. The delineation of these areas appears in international and regional plans published by these organizations as well as in official aeronautical and maritime information publications.

3.3. Arrangements between states as well as special provisions may provide for responses by the State's SAR resources beyond these established areas of jurisdiction. The same applies to responses by foreign SAR resources in these areas.

3.4. International agreements may also provide for temporary or permanent delegation of responsibility for the coordination of SAR missions in specific areas of SRRs.

### **ARTICLE 4. GENERAL POLICY**

4.1. In peacetime, the Ministry of \_\_\_\_\_ *[to be specified for the State adopting this Order; for example: Civil Aviation and Merchant Marine.]* shall be responsible for developing, in cooperation with the Ministry of *[to be specified for the State adopting this Order; for example: Interior, Defense]*, the general policy governing the search and rescue of aircraft and ships in distress on the territory of \_\_\_\_\_ *[State adopting this Order]* and in areas in which \_\_\_\_\_ *[State adopting this Order]* has accepted to assume responsibility for search and rescue activities. To that end, it shall head the National Search and Rescue Coordination Committee, and have a permanent study and coordination department attached to \_\_\_\_\_ *[generally, for Aviation: National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency]*.

### **ARTICLE 5. ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL SAR COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

The Committee is constituted as follows:

*[To be defined according to the specific conditions of the State adopting this Order. For example, the provisions that follow are those adopted in an African State:*

- *Head of the Search and Rescue Study and Coordination Department [the terms "Office" or "Section" may also be used]*
- *Commander of the [Joint] Search and Rescue Coordination Centre;*
- *A representative of the Ministry responsible for Civil Aviation;*
- *A representative of the Ministry responsible for the Merchant Marine;*
- *Two representatives of the Ministry responsible for Defense (Air Force and Navy);*
- *A representative of the Ministry responsible for Territorial Administration;*
- *A representative of the Ministry responsible for Health;*
- *A representative of the Ministry responsible for Civil Protection;*
- *Representative(s) of other Ministries and organizations concerned.]*

5.1. The Committee meets once a year in an ordinary session convened by its Chairperson, and in a special session upon the request of one or several of its members.

5.2. Occasionally, and depending on the topics under discussion, other stakeholders may be invited to participate in some Committee meetings as observers.

5.3. The Committee's administrative services shall be provided by \_\_\_\_\_  
[generally, for Aviation: the National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency].

5.4. The Committee's operating budget shall be assumed by [generally, for Aviation: the National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency].

## **ARTICLE 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAR STUDY AND COORDINATION DEPARTMENT**

6.1. Under the authority of \_\_\_\_\_ [generally, for Aviation: the National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency], the Search and Rescue Study and Coordination Department [the terms "Office" or "Section" may also be used], shall, in cooperation with other competent government departments and agencies, discharge the following duties:

- preparing general policy and organization decisions;
- providing administrative services to the National Search and Rescue Coordination Committee;
- maintaining relations with international organizations, foreign search and rescue organizations and national agencies;
- developing search and rescue procedures and regulations, including procedures for the alerting service;
- developing training programs;
- preparing exercises;
- preparing an annual search and rescue draft budget;
- participating in equipment studies and programs;
- harmonizing search and rescue operational plans with other response plans;
- reviewing post-operation reports, managing the quality control program and keeping of statistics.

## **ARTICLE 7. ORGANIZATION OF SAR OPERATIONS**

7.1. When SAR operations are initiated, it is incumbent on the [Joint] Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) to delineate the likely accident area in accordance with relevant international agreements. Search areas are determined based on the likely accident area.

7.2. SAR operations shall be conducted under the following conditions:

- In all cases, the Ministry of \_\_\_\_\_ [to be specified for the particular State adopting this Order; for example, the Ministry of Defense], through the Joint

Rescue Coordination Centre, shall be responsible for the general command of operations.

- \_\_\_\_\_ *[to be specified for the particular State adopting this Order; for example, the Air Force]*, shall be responsible for the conduct of air operations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ *[to be specified for the particular State adopting this Order; for example, the Navy]*, shall be responsible for the conduct of maritime operations.
- In all cases, the Ministry of \_\_\_\_\_ *[to be specified for the particular State adopting this Order; for example, the State representative in each administrative unit]*, shall oversee ground operations, in cooperation with the *[Joint]* Rescue Coordination Centre.

7.3. The JRCC is responsible for coordinating air movements over the area (prevention of collisions).

7.4. The organization of rescue operations in the event of accidents occurring at a port or at a civil or military aerodrome, or in the surrounding areas, is subject to special organization.

7.5. Procedures are established in order to facilitate cooperation between search and rescue services and accident investigation services.

## **ARTICLE 8. SAR RESPONSE RESOURCES**

8.1. The air and naval resources available to the JRCC are held on standby, based on their characteristics, equipment, ownership and mission-suitability constraints. However, previously identified State or private aircraft and ships on which the JRCC may only occasionally call upon are not placed on standby for its purposes.

8.2. The JRCC has trained search and rescue personnel as well as the appropriate equipment.

## **ARTICLE 9. PREPARATORY MEASURES**

### Response Procedures

9.1. Detailed procedures are established for the general coordination of operations by the JRCC.

9.2. These procedures notably include provisions related to the following:

- the use of information on alerts and the determination of search areas;
- methods to be applied in the conduct of operations (or exercises);
- measures to be taken to rescue and evacuate victims;
- the implementation of available systems and means of communication;
- the suspension, resumption or termination of operations;
- the preparation and distribution of post-operation reports.

### Training, Exercises

9.3. Crews shall receive special training on search and rescue as well as the airdrop of survival and signalling equipment.

9.4. The SAR Study and Coordination Department [*the terms “Office” or “Section” may also be used*] shall organize annual full-scale exercises involving several government departments, upon the advice of the National Search and Rescue Coordination Committee.

### SAR Point of Contact

9.5. The SAR Study and Coordination Department [*the terms “Office” or “Section” may also be used*] shall forward the SAR point of contact (international acronym: SPOC) to the Cospas-Sarsat Secretariat of \_\_\_\_\_ [*State adopting this Order*] for the reception of Cospas-Sarsat alert messages.

### [Point of contact for the registration of 406 MHz beacons]

*If the State chooses not to use the international Cospas-Sarsat 406MHz (IBRD) beacons database, it is recommended that the following paragraph be added:*

9.6. The SAR Study and Coordination Department [*the terms “Office” or “Section” may also be used*] shall forward the SAR point of contact to the Cospas-Sarsat Secretariat for the national beacon registry of \_\_\_\_\_ [*State adopting this Order*].

## **ARTICLE 10. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

10.1. Operational search and rescue procedures are established in accordance with recommended international norms and practices, under the responsibility of \_\_\_\_\_ [*generally, for Aviation: the National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency*], and approved by the SAR National Coordination Committee.

## **ARTICLE 11. POST-OPERATION REPORTS**

11.1. At the end of an operation, the units deployed shall prepare and submit a report of their responses to the JRCC Director of Operations, in accordance with established guidelines.

11.2. Based on the documents received, the JRCC Director of Operations shall prepare a general report, to be submitted to the SAR Study and Coordination Department [*or “Office” or “Section”*].

11.3. The National SAR Coordination Committee shall subsequently critically examine the report’s comments and lessons learned from the operation.

11.4. The \_\_\_\_\_ [*generally, for Aviation: National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency*] shall distribute the final post-operation/ exercise report to all organizations and departments concerned.

11.5. Where operations are called off following a fruitless search, the JRCC shall, within seventy-two hours, send a written notice thereof to \_\_\_\_\_ [*generally, for Aviation: National Civil Aviation Directorate or Agency*].

## **ARTICLE 12. FINAL PROVISIONS**

12.1. The Ministers of \_\_\_\_\_ [*to be specified for the particular State adopting this Order; for example: the Minister of Transport, Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of Defense, Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, and the Minister of the Economy and Finance*] are each responsible, under their respective jurisdictions, for applying this order, which will be recorded and published in the Official Gazette in French.

Done at \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_