



International Civil Aviation Organization

**Search and Rescue (SAR) Meeting for the North American, Caribbean and South American Regions (SAR/NAM/CAR/SAM)**

(Puntarenas, Costa Rica, 18 to 22 May 2009)

SAR/NAM/CAR/SAM WP/08

07/04/09

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**Agenda Item 3: Cooperation Agreements for SAR Service and COSPAS-SARSAT**

**STATUS OF SAR AGREEMENTS IN THE NAM/CAR/SAM REGIONS**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

**Summary**

This working paper presents the status of SAR agreements and the aspects the latter must contain 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)
- Report of the CAR/SAM/3 RAN Meeting.

**1. Background**

1.1 Annex 12, in its Chapter 3 – *Cooperation*, establishes that 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 Moreover, the latest version published of the IAMSAR, Doc 9731, Appendix I, presents a sample agreement so that the States may establish co-operation agreements among the aeronautical and maritime authorities. The sample is shown in **Appendix A**, and the status of SAR agreements of CAR/SAM States reported to ICAO is included in **Appendix B** to this working paper.

1.3 The CAR/SAM/3 RAN Meeting, through its Recommendation 6/12, encouraged States to establish SAR agreements in order to enhance SAR services and coordinate efforts with other bodies providing or supporting SAR services.

## 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 national border limits. 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 to this strategy is the fact 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 bilateral and/or multi-lateral agreement to provide SAR service over a determined area.

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

2.4 RCCs should be authorized to request and provide the necessary aid at the request of other RCCs, even of 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 their territory, and to agree upon the necessary measures with the respective customs, immigration and other authorities in order to facilitate said entry. The States should adopt concrete co-operation provisions in order to provide SAR service from other locations in order to fulfill the requirements of sufficient air coverage of the relevant regions.

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

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

- general information on SAR organizations;
- clearance level 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.

2.7 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;
- SAR facilities directories;
- lists of available special SAR services;
- scope of SAR coordination, research, testing and technical assistance.

2.8 Air traffic services (ATS) routes in the NAM/CAR/SAM Regions go through shared civil/military airspaces, including over high seas, which emphasizes the need for effective coordination between civil and military activities in order to safeguard of civil aviation operation safety. To achieve an effective SAR management, it is crucial to ratify and/or establish bilateral and/or multilateral agreements, and the activation of SAR Coordination Committees (SCCs) in order to add enhancements to the regional SAR system.

### 3. **Suggested action**

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

- a) present an up-to-date report of their SAR co-operation agreements, in accordance with Appendix B to this working paper; and
- b) review and/or 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 Appendix A to this working paper.

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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]

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**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*];

**APPENDIX B / APÉNDICE B**  
**STATUS OF SAR LETTERS OF AGREEMENT IN CAR/SAM REGIONS**  
**ESTADO SOBRE CARTAS DE ACUERDO SAR EN LAS REGIONES CAR/SAM**

RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
Antillas Neerlandesas/ Netherlands Antilles	Colombia			X	
	EEUU/SA			X	
	Jamaica			X	
	Haití			X	
	Rep. Dominicana/ Dominican Rep.			X	
	Venezuela			X	
Argentina	Bolivia			X	
	Brasil/Brazil			X	
	Chile	X			
	Paraguay			X	
	South Africa			X	
	United Kingdom			X	
	Uruguay			X	
Bolivia	Argentina			X	
	Brasil/Brazil	X			
	Chile	X			
	Paraguay	X			
	Perú			X	

RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
Brasil/Brazil	Argentina			X	
	Bolivia	X			
	Colombia	X			
	Guyana			X	
	Guyana Francesa/ French Guyana			X	
	Paraguay			X	
	Peru			X	
	Suriname	--	--	--	
	Uruguay	--	--	--	
	Venezuela			X	
Chile	Argentina	X			
	Bolivia	X			
	Perú	X			
Colombia	Antillas Neerlandesas/ Netherlands Antilles			X	
	Brasil/Brazil	X			
	Ecuador	X			
	Jamaica	--	--	--	
	Panamá	--	--	--	
	Perú	X			
	Venezuela	X			
	COCESNA			X	

RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
Cuba	Haití				
	Jamaica				
	México				
	USA				
	COCESNA				
Ecuador	Colombia	X			
	Perú	--	--	--	
	COCESNA			X	
EEUU/USA	Antillas Neerlandesas/ Netherlands Antilles			X	
	México			X	
	Cuba			X	
	Haití			X	
	Rep. Dom/ Dominican Rep.			X	
	Trinidad & Tobago			X	
	Venezuela			X	
Guyana	Brasil/Brazil			X	
	Suriname	--	--	--	
	Trinidad & Tobago			X	
	Venezuela	--	--	--	



RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
Guayana Francesa/French Guiana	Brasil/Brazil			X	
	Suriname	--	--	--	
	Trinidad & Tobago	--	--	--	
	Senegal (AFI)	X			
Haiti	Cuba				
	Jamaica				
	Antillas Neerlandesas /Netherlands Antilles				
	Republica Dominicana				
	USA				
Jamaica	Antillas Neerlandesas/ Netherlands Antilles				
	Colombia				
	Cuba				
	Haiti				
	Panama				
	COCESNA				
México	Cuba				
	USA				
	COCESNA				

RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
Panamá	Colombia	--	--	--	
	Jamaica	--	--	--	
	COCESNA			<b>X</b>	
Paraguay	Argentina			<b>X</b>	
	Bolivia	<b>X</b>			
	Brasil/Brazil			<b>X</b>	
Perú	Bolivia			<b>X</b>	
	Brasil/Brazil			<b>X</b>	
	Chile	<b>X</b>			
	Colombia			<b>X</b>	
	Ecuador	--	--	--	
Rep. Dom/Dominican Rep.	Antillas Neerlandesas/ Netherlands Antilles			<b>X</b>	-Acuerdos con diversas agencias SAR nacionales e internacionales
	Haití	<b>X</b>			-Agreements with national and international SAR Agencies
	USA			<b>X</b>	
Suriname	Brasil/Brazil	--	--	--	
	Guyana	--	--	--	
	Guyana Francesa/ French Guiana	--	--	--	
	Trinidad & Tobago	--	--	--	

RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
Trinidad & Tobago  (Barbados, Antigua & Barbuda, France, St. Lucia and United Kingdom)	Guyana			X	-Acuerdos entre los Estados del Caribe del Este.
	Guyana Francesa/ French Guiana				
	USA (New York, San Juan)			X	-Agreements between Eastern Caribbean States
	Venezuela			X	
Uruguay	Argentina			X	
	Brasil/Brazil	--	--	--	
Venezuela	Antillas Neerlandesas/ Netherlands Antilles			X	
	Bolivia	X			
	Brasil/Brazil			X	
	Colombia	X			
	Guyana	--	--	--	
	Panama	X			
	Trinidad & Tobago			X	
Central America /RCC Centroamérica (COCESNA -Belice, Costa Rica., El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua)	Colombia	X			-Acuerdos entre todos los Estados Centroamericanos, y entre el RCC CA con USCG y Sistema ANVER
	Cuba				
	Ecuador				-Agreements between All Central American States; and between the RCC CA with USCG and ANVER System
	Jamaica				
	México				

RCC from State / RCC del Estado	Estado / State.	Status of LOAs / Estado de LOAs			Remarks / Observaciones /
		Draft Borrador/	Final	Signed Firmada/	
	Panamá	X			

- END/FIN -