

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
**Fourth Meeting of the APIRG Airspace and Aerodrome Operations Sub-Group
(AAO/SG4), Virtual Meeting, 16 to 18 August 2021**
Agenda Item 3 Planning and Implementation
Agenda Item 3.1: Airspace (Safety, Capacity and Efficiency) projects.
**STATUS OF SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN THE
AFI REGION**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY
<p>This paper provide the status of implementation status of the African- Indian Ocean (AFI) Region Search and Rescue (SAR) system.</p> <p>The paper also provides an update of the implementation status of the recommendations and action plan from the SAR workshops held at Shalala in 2019 and virtually in 2020.</p> <p>Action required from the meeting is per Paragraph 3</p>
<p>REFERENCE(S):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APIRG 23 Report • Summary of Discussion of the Interregional SAR workshop, Shalala 2019 • Summary of Discussion of the AFI SAR workshop, 2020. • AFI Plan Steering Committee Reports • The revised Abuja Safety Targets incorporating AFI ANS Performance Indicators
<p>APPENDICES</p> <p>Status reports on the action plans from the workshops: Shalala, 2019 and virtual 2020 Outcome of the AFI SAR Workshop, November 2020</p>
<p>Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s): A: Safety – Enhance Global Civil Aviation Safety</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In 2016, ICAO held the first interregional Search and Rescue (SAR) workshop in Seychelles. The workshop attended by members from three ICAO regions, African- Indian Ocean (AFI) Region , Asia and Pacific Region (APAC), and the Middle east region (MID). The workshop resolved to hold regular interregional workshops to address across region SAR challenges.

1.2 The second ICAO interregional workshop was held in 2019 in Shalala, Oman. The Oman workshop revisited the list of actions formulated in Seychelles and recommended follow-up action for the States.

1.3 As a follow-up to the Shalala workshop, the AFI Region held a virtual workshop on 8-9 October and 12 November 2020.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The AFI region held a virtual workshop on 8-9 October and 12 November 2020 to assist the region build capacity at the State level. The workshop reviewed the implementation status of the action plans from two interregional SAR workshops held in 2016 and 2019. The workshop also considered the recommendations from the revised Abuja Safety Targets related to SAR and the implementation of the AFI Plan project.

2.2 The AFI SAR workshop 2020 formulated a number of actions to enable the AFI States improve the implementation process; States were required to provide feedback by 31 December 2020. The recommendations from the workshop are attached as an action plan to this WP.

2.2.1 The SAR project team have completed the development of the first draft of the AFI SAR Plan. This plan is expected to provide guidance to the AFI States in the alignment of the National SAR plans to the regional plan.

2.2.2 The workshop adopted the following templates:

- i.) National SAR Plan
- ii.) Standard Operating Procedure
- iii.) SAR Agreement
- iv.) Minimum requirements for RCC
- v.) SAR Activity Report

2.2.3 The AFI States are called upon to expedite the implementation of key elements of the SAR systems as recommended by the APIRG and highlighted by the workshop in the action plan.

2.2.4 The AFI States which are not participating in Distress Satellite Aided Tracking are called upon to do so. Also recommended is for the States to nominate participants to the planned seminar on Distress Satellite Aided Tracker to be held virtually on 15-16 September 2021.

2.3 Major challenges experienced by the States in implementation of the SAR action plan include:

- i.) The inadequate expertise of SAR experts at State level;

- ii.) The inability of the SAR TET to conduct SAR missions due to travel restrictions resulting from COVID 19 effects;
- iii.) Ownership and delineation of responsibility of the various SAR agencies in States;
- iv.) Funding and allocation of resources for effective SAR organisation;
- v.) Absence of legally established and functioning SAR Mission Coordination body at state level;
- vi.) Absence of national interagency SAR forum;
- vii.) Unavailability or unsigned SAR Agreements, especially inter FIR agreements;
- viii.) Lack of robust civil/military cooperation regime for effective SAR organisation; and
- ix.) Lack of SAR Exercises.

2.4 APIRG 23 noted the slow implementation rate and formulated the following Conclusion;

APIRG/23 Conclusion 23/07: Appointment of State SAR Points of Contact and submission of National SAR Plans

That, in order to expedite the implementation of key SAR elements and ensure an effective coordination of SAR in the region:

- a) *States, which have not yet done so, to nominate SAR Points of Contact (SPOC) and communicate the nominees to the ICAO Regional Offices as a matter of urgency;*
- b) *States establish National SAR Coordinating Committees and ensure implementation of the SAR improvements;*
- c) *States, that have not already done so, complete and submit National SAR Plans to their ICAO Regional office by 31 March 2021; and*
- d) *The ICAO Regional Offices coordinate the development of a harmonized AFI Regional SAR plan.*

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information provided in this working paper;
- b) Urge the AFI States that have not done so to nominate SPOC and forward the names to ICAO RO;
- c) Urge the AFI States to attend the GADSS seminar to be held on 15-16 September 2021;
- d) Urge AFI States to establish National SAR Coordinating Committees and ensure implementation of the SAR improvements; and
- e) Urge the States and other stakeholders to review the draft AFI SAR Plan and provide feedback to the project by 30 September 2021.

-----End-----