



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG Air Traffic Management Sub-Group

Third Meeting (ATM SG/3)  
(Cairo, Egypt, 22 – 25 May 2017)

---

**Agenda Item 3: Global and Regional Developments related to ATM and SAR**

**UPDATE ON SAR ACTIVITIES AT GLOBAL LEVEL**

*(Presented by the Secretariat)*

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents a summary of the activities undertaken at global level to support the implementation of more efficient SAR services worldwide. It covers the outcome of the Global Aircraft Distress and Safety Standard (GADSS) and other endeavours.

**REFERENCES**

- GADSS Document
- ICAO/IMO JWG Reports

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The paper provides a summary update on SAR related activities. There are currently various threads of work relating to SAR in ICAO. Those pertain to amendments of ICAO provisions, regional support activities and the development of the GADSS concept.

**2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 **Annex 12 Amendments** - The joint ICAO/International Maritime Organization established a number of proposed amendments on some Annex 12 recommendations. They will be proposed for consideration of the Air Navigation Commission, but will become applicable at the latest in November 2020.

2.2 **Regional Support** - Support to regional initiative remains one of the cornerstones of ICAO support to SAR, the most recent being the high level summit that took place in Lomé, Togo, 10-12 April 2017. SAR remains identified as an area in which progress is necessary, and the need for regional coordination is well recognized.

2.3 **COSPAS-SARSAT Non Responsive Search and Rescue Points of Contact (SPOC)**. During the previous report, it was highlighted that the number of non-responsive was a concern to ICAO. COSPAS-SARSAT conducts regular checks to ensure that the designated points of contact can actually be reached using the contact details provided by each State. The issue still stands, though it should be noted that most of the non-responsive SPOC are located in Africa.

2.4 **Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS)** – The overall objective of GADSS is to ensure timely detection of an aircraft in distress, to ensure tracking of an aircraft in distress, to increase the efficiency of SAR operations, and to ensure timely retrieval of flight recorder data when the accident has occurred. The development of the GADSS concept has given birth to various threads of work that have reached different level of achievement.

2.5 The GADSS advisory group is a group of experts from airspace users, air navigation service providers, international organizations, States, supported by the Secretariat, developed the GADSS concept of operations. The conops details a concept of operation that will drive the production of Standards and recommended practices, along with that of a number of specific ICAO documents.

2.5.1 Annex 6 and 11 amendments: Annex 6 was amended previously as was reported during the previous meeting. The new provisions entail a new responsibility for operators to track their aircraft every 15 minutes when the ANSP cannot provide accurate position information at smaller time intervals. Annex 11 was not amended at this stage although it should be noted that the new provisions will generate new information of relevance to the timing of such phases as INCERFA/DETRESFA/ALERFA.

2.5.2 There are distinct moments in GADSS: Normal operations, abnormal operations where the aircraft operate in conditions, that, if left uncorrected would lead to a catastrophic event, the distress phase, and the accident itself, where efforts to assist survivors are combined with efforts to begin the investigation in the earnest, with the retrieval of flight data recorders (FDR).

2.5.3 Normal tracking: A circular related to normal aircraft tracking was drafted to provide guidance to aircraft operators. It details how to track the aircraft, the circumstances under which normal tracking applies, and the moment when conditions stop to be normal (although that moment is not specifically defined). The circular is now in the process of being published.

2.5.4 Aircraft distress tracking (ADT): A manual is currently being drafted that will contain guidance on how to track an aircraft in distress, on when the situation evolves from a normal situation to an abnormal and later distress situation. The guidance will also contain guidance on flight data recording. The expected completion date for that guidance is end of 2017.

2.6 Further work related to GADSS is beginning. The Conops is being adopted, and that adoption will pave the way for potential new provisions to deliver what is detailed in the conops. Numerous questions remain, such as, for example, the best way to ensure that contact information is better shared among members of the aviation community engaged in a situation with a distress component.

2.7 **Joint Working Group on SAR.** The ICAO/IMO JWG on SAR will meet in October 2017 in New Zealand and as was reported last year, continues to look at updates to guidance material for Annex 12 (IAMSAR). The group will also be looking at drafting the next amendment of Annex 12 for consideration by the ANC to include recommendations from the High Level Safety Conference 2015 and lessons learned from past accidents e.g. AF447 & MH370 amongst other elements. The amendments will be finalized and proposed to various panels such the Air traffic Management Operation Panel (ATMOPSP) before being submitted to the Air navigation commission (ANC).

2.8 **Civil/Military Cooperation.** The bulk of ICAO provisions related to civil military is currently located in the *Civil/Military Cooperation in Air Traffic Management (Circ 330)*. A group of experts has worked to amend its content, and a specific portion of the proposed new manual will be dedicated to SAR in the context of civil military cooperation. The amount of guidance, in terms of volume, might not be significant. It is however, very significant and makes sense since military assets regularly participate to SAR efforts, and because SAR operations can be undertaken in military airspaces.

### 3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to encourage States to take into consideration the latest developments related to SAR during their planning process.