



International Civil Aviation Organization

**AFI PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP
SIXTEENTH MEETING (APIRG/16)
(Kigali, Rwanda 19-23 November 2007)**

Agenda Item 3: Global and Inter-Regional Activities

3.2: Global Aviation Safety

**Conclusions of the Search and Rescue (SAR) Conference in AFI Region,
St. Denis, La Réunion, 3-7 September 2007**

(Presented by the ICAO and AFCAC Secretariat)

Summary

This working paper presents the conclusions of the search and rescue (SAR) Conference held in Saint Denis de La Réunion (France) from 3 to 7 September 2007. It invites the Africa – Indian Ocean Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG) to endorse the conclusions directed to ICAO, AFCAC and AFI States and to adopt them as APIRG Conclusions . It further invites APIRG to take direct action on one of the SAR Conference conclusions by establishing an APIRG SAR Sub-Group.

Action by APIRG is at Paragraph 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and the Government of France signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2002 with a view to improving Search and rescue (SAR) services in African States.

Since 2002, a number of technical cooperation activities have been implemented in Africa, under the leadership of ICAO and AFCAC.

From 3 to 7 September 2007, a SAR conference was held in Saint Denis de La Réunion. This Conference reviewed and adopted a set of template SAR documentation that has then been posted on the ICAO/AFCAC SAR Project website (www.icao.int/SARAfrica). The following States / Organizations were represented at the Conference:

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|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. AFCAC | 4. ASECNA/EAMAC | 7. Benin |
| 2. Algeria | 5. Australia | 8. Burundi |
| 3. ASECNA | 6. Belgium | 9. Cameroon |

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| 10. Canada | 20. Ghana | 31. Sao Tomé e Príncipe |
| 11. Cape Verde | 21. ICAO | 32. Senegal |
| 12. Chad | 22. IMO | 33. Seychelles |
| 13. Comoros | 23. Kenya | 34. South Africa |
| 14. Congo | 24. Libya | 35. Sweden |
| 15. Côte d'Ivoire | 25. Madagascar | 36. Tanzania |
| 16. East African
Community | 26. Malawi | 37. UEMOA |
| 17. EMS Satcom | 27. Mali | 38. Uganda |
| 18. France | 28. Morocco | 39. United Kingdom |
| 19. Gabon | 29. Nigeria | 40. US Coast Guard |
| | 30. Norway | 41. Zambia |

The set of documentation adopted by the conference comprises a draft:

- SAR Bill;
- SAR Presidential Decree;
- SAR Plan;
- Inter-ministerial SAR Decree;
- Agreement between the Ministries in charge of Civil Aviation and Defence;
- terms of reference for a SAR Coordinating Committee;
- International SAR Agreement;
- International SAR Agreement (Case of several States within a single SRR);
- Regulation on the carriage of Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT);
- Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) Operations Manual;
- SAREX Manual.

2. SAR CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS

The SAR Conference held in Saint Denis de La Réunion adopted conclusions, which are reproduced at appendix one.

2.1. Establishment of an Africa – Indian Ocean Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG) SAR Sub-Group

Conclusion 12 reads as follows:

“The Conference [...] 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 ;”

The ICAO/AFCAC SAR Project comprises a SAR training component, from which more than 120 persons benefited. Furthermore, SAR working groups were established in the framework of the Project, with a view to drafting various technical SAR documents.

Therefore, the ICAO/AFCAC SAR Project has contributed to the development and enhancement of African expertise in the SAR field. Consequently, it is expected that an APIRG SAR Sub-Group would efficiently address AFI SAR deficiencies, while offering to African SAR experts an opportunity to regularly exchange on specific AFI SAR issues.

This Conference conclusion is supported by the ICAO and AFCAC Secretariats.

2.2. Conclusions directed to ICAO and AFCAC

The Conference also adopted conclusions directed to ICAO and AFCAC. Conclusions 5, 6, 8, 9 and 13 read as follows :

- “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 ;”
- “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 ;”
- “13. recommended that similar meetings be regularly organized to follow up the evolution of SAR matters in the AFI Region ;”

Such conclusions are direct invitations for ICAO and AFCAC to take specific actions. It is suggested in paragraph 3 (action to be taken) that APIRG endorse these conclusions, and transmit them to ICAO and AFCAC for action.

2.3. Conclusions directed to AFI States

The Conference also adopted a number of conclusions addressed to AFI States. These are conclusions 1, 2, 4, 7, 10 and 11, which read as follows:

- “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 ;”
- “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 ;”

- “7. concluded that States, which have not yet done so, should, as a priority, establish permanent SAR structures within national civil aviation authorities ;”
- “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 ;”

It is suggested that APIRG endorse the above conclusions and adopt them as APIRG Recommendations to AFI States.

3. Action by APIRG:

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- Note the information presented in this working paper ;
- Request that ICAO and AFCAC ensure that the conclusions of the SAR Conference of Saint Denis de la Réunion will be taken into account in the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa ;
- Consider the ICAO/AFCAC SAR Conference proposal to establish an APIRG SAR Sub-Group ; and
- Endorse the conclusions of the SAR Conference (Saint Denis de La Réunion, 3 – 7 September 2007) presented in paragraph 2.2 and 2.3 and adopt them as APIRG Recommendations.



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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