



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANISATION  
WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICAN OFFICE

**First Meeting of Directors General of Civil Aviation**  
(Abuja, 19-21 March 2002)

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**Agenda Item 1: Strategies for elimination of deficiencies in the AFI Region**

**SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) IN AFRICA**

(Presented by the AFCAC Secretariat)

<b>SUMMARY</b>
This working paper presents the future AFCAC technical cooperation programme in the field of Search and Rescue
<b>REFERENCES</b>
APIRG/13 Report International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR) Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation
<b>APPENDICES</b>
AFCAC Resolution S16-7 List of States which have expressed the wish to participate in the programme APIRG/13 Conclusion 13/56

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Recent air strategies have sorely reminded the African aviation community how it was essential to have efficient search and rescue (SAR) systems in Africa.

1.2 In fact, the implementation of an efficient search and rescue system is an ICAO Contracting States' responsibility in compliance with the provisions of Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

1.3 Yet, there are many shortcomings in that area in most African States.

1.4 In the light of the foregoing, AFCAC undertook to implement a large scale project and upgrade search and rescue services in Africa.

**2. EXISTING DEFICIENCIES**

2.1 The deficiencies identified in various reports and at ICAO meetings in SAR area concern

mainly the following aspects:

- Obsolete and ill-adapted character of the regulatory framework;
- deficient structures and organization of SAR services;
- limited human and material resources;
- lack of or very limited number of exercises.

### **3. AFCAC SAR PROJECT**

#### **3.1 Structure of the Project**

3.1.1 In the face of this alarming situation and given the lives which could be saved through the implementation of more efficient SAR systems in Africa, AFCAC wishes to initiate action in three phases as follows:

1. Evaluation of deficiencies in SAR systems in Africa.
2. Processing legal and organizational aspects of future search and rescue systems in Africa.
3. Implementation of these systems, including the possible purchase of equipment.

3.1.2 The funding of the two first phases of this project was already the object of a pledge by one donor, with whom a Memorandum of Understanding was expected to be signed in the near future.

3.1.3 The evaluation would relate to :

- current regulations (national regulations and international agreements);
- SAR services structures and organization;
- Means available (material, human and financial);
- the assessment of possible exercises or situations of real crises.

3.1.4 The evaluation methodology would lean on :

- ICAO reports (States' visits, meetings);
- The dispatching of a questionnaire to the SAR Coordinator in each State and SAR region (SRR);
- States' visit.

3.1.5 Following the findings of this evaluation, an action plan will be implemented. This action plan, subject to adaptation to specific requirements highlighted through the evaluation, would comprise several phases as follows:

- Updating of the regulatory framework;

- Upgrading the organizational structures;
- Training/validation of local expertise;
- Organizing exercises;
- Staging one workshop/study on the financing modes of SAR activities, notably within the framework of a subregional approach;
- Evaluation of actions and achievements.

### 3.2 Operating Methodology

3.2.1 In order to achieve a better efficiency, it is planned to proceed by groups of States. In this regard, 6 areas were established to cover the whole continent, based on technical criteria (grouping FIR and/or SRR).

3.2.2 The areas were established as follows:

- Area 1 :** Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone
- Area 2 :** Burundi, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, Sudan, Tanzania, Seychelles, Rwanda, Somalia, Djibouti
- Area 3 :** Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon
- Area 4 :** Mauritius, Madagascar, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Comoros
- Area 5 :** Angola, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sao Tome, Equatorial Guinea, Zambia, Malawi
- Area 6 :** Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Arab Saharawi Republic, Tunisia.

3.2.3 In its first phase, the project should cover areas 1 and 2. A questionnaire will be sent to participating States which will receive the visit of a SAR expert to evaluate with the local administration the main SAR deficiencies. Unless otherwise specified by the evaluated State, the findings of the evaluation will be considered confidential, and will not be released. The evaluated State, AFCAC, ICAO and the evaluation team only will receive such findings, and, subject to the evaluated State's agreement, the donor State.

3.2.4 The evaluation mission should last about one week.

3.2.5 After the evaluation mission, SAR experts will assist States in upgrading their regulatory framework and/or structures and organization of SAR services, should it be found necessary given the results of the evaluation.

3.2.6 Apart from these assistance missions, training sessions will be organized in African training institutions.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Search and Rescue systems are deficient in many areas in the AFI Region. Yet, it is incumbent upon ICAO Contracting States to implement such systems on the basis of their commitment under Article 25 and the provisions of Annex 12 to the Chicago Convention.

4.2 In close cooperation with ICAO, AFCAC wishes to launch a project aimed at upgrading SAR systems in Africa. This project was recommended by the 16<sup>th</sup> AFCAC Plenary Session under Resolution S16-7 (see **Appendix 1**) and endorsed by APIRG/13 Meeting under Recommendation 13/56 (See **Appendix 3**).

4.3 States were informed that this project may start by the end of 2001. To-date, 24 States expressed the wish to participate in the programme (See list in **Appendix 2**).

#### 5. ACTION SUGGESTED

5.1 The Meeting is invited to :

1. note the information provided in paragraphs 1-4 of this working paper;
  2. support ICAO and AFCAC in their efforts aimed at enhancing SAR services in Africa in compliance with international standards on the matter.
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**APPENDIX 1****RESOLUTION S16 -7 : SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES IN AFRICA****THE COMMISSION:**

**CONSIDERING** the responsibility of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Contracting States in the field of Search and Rescue (SAR) in accordance with Article 25 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago, 1944);

**CONSIDERING** the shortcomings existing in the AFI Region in the Search and Rescue field;

**CONSIDERING** the lack of human and financial resources in many African States and their difficulty to comply with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices, and especially the provisions of Annex 12 to the Chicago Convention relating to SAR services;

**RECOGNIZING** the fundamental role of search and rescue services in the civil aviation safety chain, both globally and regionally;

**INVITES** African States to reaffirm their commitment to meet their responsibilities under international law with regard to search and rescue;

**INSTRUCTS** the Bureau to :

- a) continue the implementation of the AFCAC SAR technical cooperation programme;
- b) present a working paper on SAR services at the 13th APIRG meeting; and
- c) work, through appropriate means, towards the improvement of SAR services in Africa, in close cooperation with ICAO; and

**INVITES** African States to participate in the AFCAC SAR technical cooperation programme.

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**APPENDIX 2**

**List of States which have expressed the wish to participate in the programme  
As of 15 January 2002**

Botswana  
Burkina Faso  
Cameroon  
Congo  
Cote d'Ivoire  
Eritrea  
Ethiopia  
Gambia  
Ghana  
Guinea  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Malawi  
Mali  
Mauritania  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Uganda  
Senegal  
Seychelles  
Sudan  
Tanzania  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

**APPENDIX 3****EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF APIRG****CONCLUSION 13/56: AFCAC SAR PROJECT INITIATED BY AFCAC**

**IT IS CONCLUDED THAT STATES, IN COOPERATION WITH ICAO, BE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT INITIATED BY AFCAC FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES IN THE AFI REGION.**