



ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organization

Tenth Meeting of the ICAO Asia/Pacific Search and Rescue Workgroup (APSAR/WG/10)

Siem Reap, Cambodia, 27 – 30 May 2025

Agenda Item 2: Review Outcomes of Related Meetings

OUTCOMES OF THE ICAO/IMO JOINT WORKING GROUP ON SAR MEETING

(Presented by USA)

SUMMARY

This paper presents a brief overview of representative outcomes of the thirty-first meeting of the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on SAR held from 4 to 8 November 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The thirty-first meeting of the ICAO/International Maritime Organization (IMO) Joint Working Group on Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime SAR (JWG 31) was held in person in Dublin, Ireland from 4 to 8 November 2024.

1.2 The Asia/Pacific Search and Rescue (SAR) Workgroup is well represented by JWG members from Australia, China, New Zealand, Singapore and the United States and many States from Asia/Pacific provided observers who actively participate in the JWG meetings.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The ICAO/IMO JWG is a group of eight aeronautical SAR experts and eight maritime SAR experts who meet annually supported by the IMO and ICAO who each provide a secretariat. Strong effort is made to meet in States around the world to enable local inputs from nearby States. The Asia/Pacific region is represented by two aeronautical SAR experts, one each from Australia and Singapore; and, three maritime experts, one each from China, New Zealand and USA.

2.2 JWG 31 discussions and decisions included:

- a) reports on outcomes of ICAO and IMO from the viewpoint of their headquarters;
- b) proposed amendments to the IAMSAR Manual, such as naming convention for rescue coordination centres (RCCs);
- c) development of a strategic outlook for the global SAR operating environment; and
- d) assisting States in implementing improvements in SAR service, quality, capacity and capability and use of ICAO and IMO technical cooperation activities and IMO SAR Fund.

2.3 The IAMSAR Manual has a three-year cycle to consider amendments to its next edition. JWG 31 convened in the first year of that cycle and focused on introducing ideas and initial draft text for further discussion and refinement into final proposed amendments at JWG 32 and JWG 33 by 2026.

Discussions also included developing provisions regarding new search and rescue techniques and procedures, as well as ways to advance search and rescue around the world.

2.4 Outcomes from JWG 31 included:

- a) proposed IAMSAR Manual Volume I amendment:
 - RCCs should be named geographically, based on the name of cities or ports, or where there is only one RCC in a State, such an RCC could be named after that State. The type of RCC facility should be identified as ARCC (aeronautical rescue coordination centre), MRCC (maritime rescue coordination centre), or JRCC (joint rescue coordination centre), as appropriate. The format should be the type of facility followed by geographical name (city or port or State), e.g. MRCC Buenos Aires or JRCC Australia.; and
 - RSCs [rescue sub-centres] should be named using the same principle as RCCs.
- b) ICAO Annex 12 *Search and Rescue*, Ninth Edition, July 2024, has an amendment initiated by discussions within the APSAR/WG regarding approval to allow SAR units from an assisting State to enter the territory of the State of the RCC. The 2025 edition of IAMSAR Manual Volume 1, has background information and a template with a sample process for expeditious approval to allow entry of SAR units. The template outlines a national process for expeditious interagency decision making for SAR which could also be used for decisions on other matters involving more than one agency, such as cross-border transit matters, delivery of survivors to a place of safety, etc.
- c) the JWG initiated discussion on development of a strategic outlook for the global SAR operating environment, including State and industry SAR system initiatives, identification of new and emerging issues, global SAR system implementation status and SAR system data and trends.
- d) JWG 32 will convene from 3 to 7 November 2025 in Sydney, Australia. Its invitation letter should be sent out in late June 2025 and available on the IMO website as a circular letter or upon request. ICAO Montreal publishes an invitation as a memorandum which can be provided upon request.

2.5 The Pacific Search and Rescue Workshop (PACSAR) will meet 10 to 14 November 2025 in Fiji. The PACSAR Workshop meets once every two years with a focus on Pacific Island countries and territories. Its program has led to sustained improvement in SAR services across Oceania. ICAO and IMO each have a sub-regional office in Fiji. States are encouraged to attend. ICAO and IMO may be able to assist participants since each conducts technical cooperation activities for lesser developed SAR systems. ICAO/IMO JWG members are planning to participate in the PACSAR Workshop.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) encourage States to participate in ICAO/IMO JWG meetings and PACSAR Workshop; and
- c) discuss relevant matters as appropriate.

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