INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Second Meeting of the Africa-Indian Ocean Aviation System Planning and Implementation Group

Livingstone, Zambia, 2 - 6 november 2026

Agenda item 4: Implementation of safety and air navigation goals, targets and indicators, including priorities set in the Regional Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Plans

Cooperative Search and Rescue Implementation in the Dakar Search and Rescue Region (SRR)

(Presented by Senegal)

SUMMARY
The purpose of this paper is to inform the AASPG/2 meeting of the SAR cooperation initiative by the States of the Dakar Search and Rescue Region (SRR) through the outcome of the first Dakar SRR coordination meeting (SRR/1) and to propose extending this coordination approach to other SRRs in the AFI region. **Action required by the meeting is presented in paragraph 3.**
References: • Annex 12 to the Chicago Convention • Doc 9731, IAMSAR
Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s): • Every flight is safe and secure • Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In accordance with the provisions of Annex 12 to the Chicago Convention on Search and Rescue (SAR) and Doc 9731 (IAMSAR), the effective organization of SAR services requires close and harmonized coordination between neighboring States sharing the same Search and Rescue Region.

1.2. The eighth meeting of the AASPG Airspace and Aerodrome Operations Sub-Group (AAO/SG8), held in Dakar, Senegal, from July 14 to 18, 2025, expressed concern regarding the low rate of signed agreements between States and formulated recommendations on organizing coordination meetings between States of the same SRR as well as between neighboring SRRs.

1.3. At the initiative of Senegal and with the technical and institutional support of the ICAO WACAF Office, the first coordination meeting of the States of the Dakar SRR was held in Somone, Senegal, from August 25 to 28, 2026. It brought together civil aviation authorities and officials from Rescue Coordination Centres (RCC) and Rescue Sub-Centres (RSC) of the Dakar SRR States (Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, and

Senegal). Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) of Senegal, namely ASECNA, AIBD SA, and the Accident Investigation and Analysis Bureau of Senegal (BEA), also participated in the meeting.

2. DISCUSSION

OUTCOME OF THE MEETING

2.1. The Dakar SRR coordination meeting adopted a formal framework for cooperation among Member States. This framework focuses on six (6) main pillars identified by the participants, namely:

- High-level cooperation
- Strengthening operational coordination
- Improving SAR oversight
- Enhancing human resources and capacity building
- Coordinated SAR exercises (SAREX)
- Communication and information sharing

2.2. Each cooperation pillar has been broken down into specific actions with defined timelines and responsible entities. All these actions are recorded in the Cooperation Roadmap adopted during the meeting.

2.3. In addition, the following six (6) decisions were made to govern the operation and governance of SAR cooperation among States within the Dakar SRR:

Decision	Key Provisions and Outcomes
Decision 1/1: Adoption of the SAR Cooperation Framework	•Adoption of the SAR Cooperation Framework as the reference document governing operational cooperation among Dakar SRR States. •Immediate dissemination and promotion among competent authorities and SAR centres.
Decision 1/2: Adoption of the Roadmap	•Adoption of the sub-regional roadmap translating the priority areas of the cooperation framework into concrete actions. • Establishment of Technical Working Groups (TWGs) for implementing targeted actions in the roadmap. • Continuous monitoring by the Secretariat and review at each ordinary coordination meeting.
Decision 1/3: Establishment of the SRR Secretariat	• Establishment of a permanent Secretariat for continuous monitoring of planned activities. • Biennial composition on a rotational basis (3 Member States). • Responsibilities: meeting preparation, maintaining the regional directory, consolidating feedback/lessons learned, and monitoring the

	roadmap.
Decision 1/4: Rotating Schedule of Meetings	• Establishment of annual ordinary in-person meetings hosted on a rotational basis by Member States. • Confirmation of the exact venue and dates at least 6 months in advance by the host State.
Decision 1/5: Designation of SAR Focal Points	• Official designation in each Member State of two (2) SAR focal points (permanent Counterparts). • Communication of focal points' contact details to the Secretariat.
Decision 1/6: Signature of Operational Agreements and Protocols	• Call for concluding operational Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between respective RCCs/RSCs. • Signing of bilateral SAR agreements with all neighboring States as necessary.

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE DAKAR SRR STATES

1.4. The meeting noted that the effective provision of SAR services and the implementation of the adopted roadmap are hindered by two major challenges. The first is the funding of SAR services: SAR activities generally depend on limited and irregular national budget allocations, spread across several ministries and agencies, without a dedicated and predictable budget line. This limits the operational capacity of RCCs/RSCs, the availability of search and rescue units, training and the conduct of SAR exercises.

1.5. The second challenge is the signing of SAR agreements. As already noted by the AAO/SG8 meeting, few SAR agreements have been signed between the States of the Dakar SRR, mainly due to lengthy internal approval processes involving several ministries, uncertainty as to the competent signatory authority and the lack of follow-up of draft agreements. As a result, operational coordination between RCCs/RSCs relies largely on informal arrangements.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1. The meeting is invited to:

a) note the information provided in this paper;

b) encourage the Member States of the Dakar SRR to pursue the effective implementation of the adopted decisions and actions contained in the roadmap; and

c) encourage similar approaches within other Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) in the AFI region to foster cooperative and effective SAR implementation.
