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ICAO EUR/NAT and ACAO SAR WORKSHOP 19-21 November 2025

MOU between SAR authority and
Accident Investigation authority (AIA)

Chair, IMO/ICAO Joint Working Group on SAR

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Unclassified;
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The Requirements

- **ICAO Annex 12 – SAR:**
 - 3.2.3 Contracting States shall ensure their SAR services cooperate with those responsible for investigating accidents...
 - 5.2 Procedures for RCCs during emergency phases shall:
 - Distress phase: 5.2.3 i) notify the appropriate accident investigation authorities
- **Maritime SAR Convention:** no specific requirement

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The Requirements

- **ICAO Annex 13 – Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation: no specific requirement on the AIA**
 - Chapter 4 *Notification* says two times as *Note 2*: Provision for the notification of a distress phase to the State of Registry by the RCC is contained in *Annex 12- Search and Rescue*.
 - 5.23 Participation of other States, *Note* - Any State that provides an operational base for field operations, or is involved in SAR or wreckage recovery..., may also be invited to appoint an accredited representative to participate in the investigation.

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Some History

ICAO Asia/Pacific SAR Working Group took action when investigations revealed conflicting procedures between SAR service and accident investigation authority for concurrent operations.

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Development of a Sample SAR-AIA MOU

- ICAO Asia/Pacific SAR WG (APSAR WG) developed initial draft MOU for its regional SAR plan.
- Member State of APSAR WG sought and received advice from ICAO/IMO JWG.
- ICAO Asia/Pacific published regional SAR plan with sample MOU as an appendix.
- ICAO/IMO JWG accepted APSAR member State proposal for sample MOU to be added to IAMSAR Manual Volume I.

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Current status of Sample SAR-AIA MOU

- Sample MOU between SAR-AIA in 2025 edition of IAMSAR Manual, Volume I, as Appendix P
- IAMSAR Manual Volume I, paragraph 5.2.16, introduces Appendix P
- ICAO Asia/Pacific regional SAR plan deleted its appendix on the sample MOU and now refers the reader to the IAMSAR Manual

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MOU between the SAR service and the AIA authority

- For situations where the RCC needs to conduct SAR operations at the same time as the AIA needs to conduct search and recovery operations.
- Sample MOU has three sections:
 1. Purpose
 2. General – lead agency role
 3. SAR and AIA Protocols – operational understandings

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MOU between the SAR service and the AIA authority

- The sample MOU has explanatory notes at the end to assist in developing the MOU itself. Key points include:
 - the agreement can be in the form of an MOU, agreement, arrangement or other instrument
 - example text can be modified as the authorities see appropriate
 - sample MOU is written with more of a focus on the aircraft accident investigation but can assist in development of similar arrangements with investigation of maritime craft incidents.

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Questions?

May we all have happy conclusions

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