



International Civil Aviation Organization

**Thirteenth Meeting of the APANPIRG
ATS/AIS/SAR Sub-Group (ATS/AIS/SAR/SG/13)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 23-27 June 2003

Agenda Item 4: Consider problems and make specific recommendations concerning the provision of ATS/AIS/SAR in the Asia Pacific Region

ANNEX 12 - SEARCH AND RESCUE

(Presented by the United States)

SUMMARY

This working paper provides background on the ICAO Air Navigation Commission proposal to amend Annex 12 – Search and Rescue. This amendment would be of interest to all Asia and Pacific States.

REFERENCES

1. Convention on International Civil Aviation, Annex 12 - Search and Rescue
2. Air Navigation Commission Task No. ATM-0202: Harmonization of aeronautical and maritime SAR services
3. ICAO letter to States dated 25 April 2003 on Proposal for the amendment of Annex 12

1. Background

1.1 While Annex 12 has been updated in numerous relatively minor ways, it is basically the same now as when it initially entered into force on 1 March 1951. However, general search and rescue (SAR) concepts and principles have matured substantially since 1951. ANC Task No. ATM-0202 recognized the need to improve Annex 12 and also align it, to the extent practicable, with the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) *International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue*.

1.2 The proposed amendment to Annex 12 was based on a review by the ICAO-IMO Joint SAR Working Group, a cooperative forum between ICAO and IMO. The Working Group is tasked to consider SAR matters that relate to the harmonization of aeronautical and maritime SAR procedures and techniques. This Group was responsible for development of the three-volume *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual*, which is well established around the world. The membership of the Working Group consists of eight aeronautical and eight maritime SAR experts. Advisers and observers also participate in its meetings. SAR experts from several Asia/Pacific States participate in this forum.

2.0 Discussion

2.1 The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) cleared the proposed amendment to Annex 12 which has been transmitted under ICAO letter dated 25 April 2003 to States and appropriate international organizations for comments. It was been requested that comments reach Montreal by 15 August 2003. The ANC will consider the comments and then issue the final text of an amended Annex 12. Documentation forwarding the proposed amendment to Annex 12 also includes the rationale for the amendments. Great care was exercised in blending the advice of the Working Group of SAR experts with the need to respect the integrity of the set of ICAO Annexes and to promulgate SAR procedures directly relevant and responsive to aviation emergency needs.

2.2 The following is a partial list of considerations used to amend Annex 12:

- Retain the aeronautical character of the current Annex while increasing emphasis on co-operation and harmonisation with maritime services to enable SAR services to be more effective
- Provide for an optional regional approach to establishment of SAR services based on cooperation among neighboring States
- Better describe the purpose and objectives of establishing SAR regions

2.3 The United States is in full agreement with the proposed amended Annex 12, supports its adoption, and encourages other States to consider doing so as well. These amendments will make a substantial contribution toward improving aeronautical SAR services and provide needed updates to the Annex.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the above information.

3.2 Asia/Pacific States are encouraged to fully support the proposed amendment to Annex 12 transmitted under ICAO letter dated 25 April 2003 to States.

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