



Agenda Item 3: Activities for the development of the air navigation systems/services
3.6 Search and Rescue (SAR)

**PROPOSAL FOR ADOPTION OF THE IAMSAR MANUAL AS THE NATIONAL SAR
MANUAL OF THE CENTRAL CARIBBEAN STATES/TERRITORIES**

(Presented by the Rapporteur of the C/CAR SAR Task Force)

SUMMARY

This working paper presents recommendations for States/Territories of the C/CAR to adopt the IAMSAR Manual as their National SAR Manual. These recommendations are mainly based on the issuance of ICAO – *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual* (IAMSAR) and on the initiatives of some States that have already succeeded in adopting the IAMSAR Manual as their National SAR Manual.

1. Background

1.1 Annex 12 indicates the main aspects and requirements of the SAR service, that States should provide at their Search and Rescue jurisdiction. Such requirements shall be in line with SAR maritime service aspects.

1.2 Doc 9731, *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual* (IAMSAR) was developed through the collaboration of ICAO and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), with the objective of providing guidance material to the States/Territories on the fulfillment of their humanitarian obligations and their engagements acquired as members of the International Civil Aviation Convention and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue. Another of the objectives when developing the IAMSAR Manual was to achieve a close co-operation among aeronautical and maritime SAR authorities and among neighbouring States/Territories.

1.3 When preparing Doc 9731, the experience and knowledge of aeronautical and maritime SAR officers at a world-wide level was used. The Manual was written bearing in mind the needs and duties of the developed and under development States, so that the best possible SAR services may be rendered based on the available resources. Therefore, the Manual is a valuable resource for civil aviation authorities and other SAR authorities, and should be conscientiously studied and used by all the States/Territories of the C/CAR area. The IAMSAR Manual provides a rich practical guidance on how to perform efficient SAR services through the SAR plan of the State.

1.4 Doc 9731 is composed by three volumes available in English, French and Spanish. Volume I, Organization and Management provides guidance mainly addressed to managers who have to establish and support the search and rescue services; Volume 2, Mission Co-ordination provides guidance for the personnel of the Rescue Co-ordination Centre, and Volume 3, Mobile Facilities, is aimed at training pilots, ship operators and SAR personnel is divided into the following four sections:

- Section 1, Overview. Describes the essential principles for conducting the SAR system;
- Section 2, Rendering assistance. Describes what the personnel performing search duties and rescue duties needs to know;
- Section 3, On-Scene co-ordination. Describes the knowledge needed by the co-ordinator on-scene;
- Section 4, On-Board Emergencies. Describes what the pilot or any other person with experience need to know in case of emergencies in order to activate the SAR system and the expectations of the SAR system.

2 Analysis

2.1 Search and Rescue (SAR) services imply duties of supervision in dangerous situations, communications, co-ordination and search and rescue, including the provision of medical advice, initial medical assistance or evacuation for medical reasons through the use of public and private resources, including co-operating aircraft and vessels and other vehicles and facilities.

2.2 The possibility of rendering timely and efficient SAR services whenever they are necessary requires a clear engagement of the States/Territories and that they may use all the available resources. The support of States/Territories to SAR operation reinforces the aviation safety level and also promotes tourism, economical development and a greater use of the aviation industry.

2.3 It is important that civil aviation authorities ensure that all their national territory and in the CAR Region have efficient SAR services. This requires that States/Territories, in a collective and independent manner, provide and support the SAR services through the implementation of an adequate SAR plan of the State, in order to respond to any emergency situation that may arise.

2.4 Addressing the civil aviation authorities responsible for the SAR service, the IAMSAR Manual points out the need for understanding the essential SAR elements, the SAR planning processes and the way to identify and to use all the available resources in order to economically improve the system. Not only does the infrastructure supporting the SAR services should be implemented (such as the communications one), but it also fully operational rescue co-ordination centres (RCC) should be established. The authority shall be clearly delegated at the RCC of the SAR Organization level so that operative decisions may be timely made at that level and in order to process any international co-ordination directly related with the RCCs of other States/Territories. Arrangements should be established among RCCs with regard to the efficient means that might be necessary to conduct the search duties and the rescue duties.

2.5 Aeronautical SAR authorities shall know the tasks to be carried out and receive the adequate support. In view that some operative and support duties for Aeronautical SAR services frequently depend on other authorities different to those of civil aviation, including military and maritime authorities, co-operation and co-ordination procedures must exist with such authorities. They are essential for the success of co-operation arrangements at a national and international level, and for the use of all the available resources. Established processes in order to assess and improve the SAR services are also needed.

2.6 A process firmly fostering the IAMSAR Manual is the co-ordination and improvement of the SAR services through the SAR Committees. SAR Committees may be national or with the intervention of authorities of multiple States/Territories. Many States/Territories have national SAR Committees or similar agencies which have proved to be very efficient; they have also been considered as essential. These Committees should be sponsored by the Governments, with the participation of diverse representative organizations providing or supporting SAR services and that may include governmental, private and commercial organizations. Some States/Territories, for instance the Eastern Caribbean, the Central Caribbean and Central America, co-operate in subregional SAR Committees and they are having good results.

2.7 Normally, a Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) provides the service in each SAR Region (SRR). One of the main duties of RCCs is to receive alerts on danger situations, information on aircraft which arrival was expected, information on medical emergencies, etc., and to be prepared to co-ordinate a timely and adequate emergency response. This implies the development and the performance of detailed operation plans in any emergency scenario that might arise within each respective SRR.

2.8 RCCs shall count with all the necessary equipment for SAR communications and provide assistance to the search plans and a to the rescue plans. RCC personnel shall be fully trained in all the subjects included in the IAMSAR Manual, Volume 2 and previously, have the qualification and certification to perform the assigned SAR duties. Likewise, it is essential that all the RCC personnel has sufficient knowledge of English written and oral communication.

2.9 Normally, the actual search operations and rescue operations are in charge of designated means named Search and Rescue Unit (SRU), which counts with special equipment and trained staff to perform SAR operations. Notwithstanding, the managerial staff or the RCC staff are occasionally also involved in the performance of actual search operations and rescue operations; and therefore all the SAR personnel of the State in charge of means shall be suitably trained on these tasks in order to provide an adequate service when necessary.

2.10 In accordance with the CAR/SAM Air Navigation Plan (ANP), the States should count with aircraft, vessels for multiple missions or other vehicles which official missions include SAR services. RCCs shall be familiarized with their duties, situation and with how to contact those means at any time. The vessels reporting systems such as the AMVER world-wide safety system, sponsored by the United States Coast Guard, should be used if applicable in order to help identifying and locating the vessels on the high seas that are willing to provide assistance to persons in dangerous situations. In this way, they should establish plans, agreements, and supporting funding, as necessary, to ensure that any SAR situation may be processed quickly and adequately.

2.11 It is legitimate that all the States/Territories of the C/CAR area be Parties of the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue. Recently, the Annex to this Convention was updated in order to facilitate to the Parties the fulfillment of their obligations in accordance with the Convention addressing matters of particular interest for the aeronautical authorities such as:

- Co-ordination between maritime and aeronautical services to ensure efficient and effective SAR services;
- The possibility of combining aeronautical and maritime RCCs or to carry out a close co-ordination among aeronautical and maritime RCCs when they are independent; and
- The uniformity among the aeronautical and maritime SAR Regions.

2.12 Apart from stressing out the valuable support that aeronautical and maritime authorities may mutually provide themselves, the value of SAR co-operation among neighbouring States/Territories, joining efforts through a SAR Agreement, so that they may render SAR services in a regional as well as a national basis and to use the utmost available resources for SAR operations, is pointed out.

2.13 The SAR Convention directly supports ICAO SAR objectives, and in the same way as the IAMSAR Manual is a product of the co-operation between ICAO and the IMO. Annex 12 of the Chicago Convention was reviewed in order to harmonize it in the international environment and with IMO's SAR Convention. Civil aviation authorities should collaborate with the maritime authorities of their respective States/Territories in order to support the ratification of the SAR Convention by the States/Territories that have not yet done so.

2.14 It is advisable that States/Territories of the C/CAR area take all the necessary actions, as indicated in the **Appendix** to this Working Paper, in order to ensure and improve the availability of Aeronautical SAR services in the C/CAR.

3. Conclusion

3.1 States/Territories should intensify improvements to the maritime SAR services in order to ensure that aircraft and persons in danger in the sea may receive help when the need arises; to this end, it is also necessary that States/Territories that have not yet done so agree to become Parties of the SAR Convention.

3.2 Most of the CAR States/Territories have not yet developed a National SAR Manual, and others who have already developed it, have not incorporated the maritime part; when adopting the IAMSAR Manual as their National SAR Manual, they will no longer have to do it.

3.3 Adopting ICAO Doc 9731, *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual*, the process of integration and harmonization of SAR services would be more feasible, in view that this process is referenced in the Manual.

3.4 SAR Officers of the Central Caribbean States/Territories would save a substantial time and work: instead of firstly harmonizing and integrating the National Plans with the Regional Plans, and then the latter with the Global Plan, everything would be done at the same time when adopting Doc 9731 as their National SAR Manual.

3.5 When adopting the IAMSAR Manual as their National Manual, the C/CAR States/Territories would end with a “harmonized CAR SAR System”, which is the objective of ICAO and the IMO, when developing that Manual.

4 Suggested action

4. The Meeting is invited to support the following actions:

- a) note the information presented in this Working paper; and
- b) States and Territories of the Central Caribbean that have not yet done so:
 - develop the corresponding legislation and SAR plans;
 - develop an action plan in order to intensify improvements to the aeronautical and maritime SAR services considering the SAR recommendations pointed out in the Appendix to this Working paper;
 - adopt, if possible, Doc 9731, *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual*, for national and regional search and rescue services; and
 - foster the collaboration between national aeronautical and maritime SAR authorities, with military authorities or with other possible sources of national SAR assistance and with the neighbouring States/Territories.

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APPENDIX

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CENTRAL CARIBBEAN TO IMPROVE THE SAR SERVICE

- Include the aeronautical SAR authorities in the legislation and in the high level national SAR plans and establish provisions supporting these authorities as necessary;
- Close collaboration with the national maritime SAR authorities, with the military authorities or with any other possible source of SAR assistance, in a national basis as well as with neighbouring States through national and international SAR agreements, provided such agreements may provide a firm basis and an adequate engagement of improving SAR services in order to establish and use the national and regional SAR Committees that may help to:
 - coordinate the efforts of the bodies providing or rendering support to the SAR services;
 - identify and use all the available resources in order to respond to SAR mass victims;
 - prepare SAR policies, procedures and standards; and
 - continuously collaborate in order to find ways and means to improve the SAR services.
- Ensure that a well-established communications network exists, taking into consideration the technologies commonly used by aircraft and by the RCC's in order to receive alerts in danger situations, voice or data of an aircraft by ground or satellite systems that may commonly be used to that end and thence to be able to acknowledge receipt of the alert and coordinate the SAR response;
- Ensure that civil aviation authorities agree with the corresponding national maritime authorities to urge vessels to voluntarily participate in the AMVER system, in view that its efficiency is directly related with the number of vessels participating in the system;
- Establish that the search and rescue regions count with complete staff and equipment to carry out in a competent manner the obligations of an internationally-recognised RCC, as stated in the *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual*, with sufficient authority and capacity to directly coordinate the SAR response with the RCC of the neighbouring States;
- Harmonize the delimitation of the aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions and establish Joint (aeronautical and maritime) rescue coordination Centres (JRCC);
- Ensure the continuous availability of enough personnel to process any aeronautical SAR emergency that might arise, whether it is big or small, on ground or on the sea within the C/CAR area, and to ensure that this personnel be adequately trained before assuming his/her duties;
- Ensure that all the aerodromes have efficient plans and arrangements to process mass victims cases, including the corresponding medical assistance. Aerodromes located near water extensions should count with efficient plans and arrangements to process incidents implying aircraft on water;

- Adhere to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979, considering that this will help improving the co-operation for search and rescue among neighbouring States, the co-ordination between aeronautical and maritime search and rescue services, and the response capacity to take care of persons and aircraft in danger on the sea.

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