



International Civil Aviation Organization
North American, Central American and Caribbean Office
**First Caribbean Working Group Meeting
(CAR/WG/1)**
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 21 to 23 June 2007

CAR/WG/1 - IP/12
13/06/07

Agenda Item 2: ATM Developments
2.5 Follow-up on the progress achieved in Search and Rescue

**OUTCOME FROM THE SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR)
INTERNATIONAL COURSE**
(Pachuca, Mexico, 14 to 19 May 2007)

(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This Information Paper presents outcome from the Search and Rescue (SAR) International Course with aspects related on what subjects should be considered to enhance SAR system in CAR Region.	
Strategic Objective A: Safety D: Efficiency	<i>A2 - Ensure the timely implementation of ICAO provisions by continuously monitoring the progress toward compliance by States.</i> <i>D: D2 - Study trends, coordinate planning and develop guidance for States that supports the sustainable development of international civil aviation.</i>
References:	<i>Annex 12</i> <i>Doc 9731, IAMSAR</i>

1. Background

1.1 NACC Office, in coordination with DGAC and Medicina Aeroespacial of Mexico, coordinated the Search and Rescue (SAR) International Course held in Pachuca, Mexico, 14 to 19 May 2007, and developed several presentations for the academic sessions. Additional Workshop sessions held after academic sessions related to SAR practical experience with the goal to share and enhance SAR performance management.

1.2 The goal of the Course was to reach some broad understanding of what subjects should be considered to enhance SAR regional system. The focus of the Course was directed towards the performance organization, coordination and quick response from SAR brigades of States.

2. Discussion

2.1 In accordance with Article 25 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), the Meeting noted that the provision of assistance to aircraft in distress is a responsibility of all ICAO Contracting States; therefore States as part of the Chicago Convention have the responsibility to rapidly and effectively respond to aircraft and persons in grave and imminent danger regardless of nationality, circumstance and location.

2.2 A common understanding was reached by participants on:

- the economic and social benefits that can be derived from an efficient SAR system;
- that optimal organisation, management and regulation of SAR services has a profound and positive effect on the cost and the efficiency of SAR service provision;
- that implementing efficient SAR funding mechanisms is essential to significantly improve the overall efficiency of SAR services in States and that funds are required to provide for, *inter alia*, fixed coordination facilities (including communication equipment), personnel (including training), life support equipment (including droppable supplies) and SAR unit operating costs (for both actual operations and training exercises); and,
- that States have broad array of appropriate equipment, specialist agencies and staff expertise to meet its obligations for the provision of effective SAR services but requires more workable organizational arrangements to optimise their SAR capacity.

2.3 The outcome of the discussions and recommendations during the academic sessions can be summarized as follows:

I) A SAR working group be formally assembled by States, with clarity of functions and responsibilities, and appoint a single point of contact for representation to government to work in association with international agencies, to commence strategising improvement activities of SAR planning and services and that it be tasked to:

- a) optimize the use of existing SAR equipment / facilities within a State / Region as a source of major cost-effectiveness improvements.
- b) avoid duplication between aviation and maritime SAR systems and between other SAR-participating agencies making efforts to harmonize aviation and maritime SAR policy, practices and procedures with a view, ultimately, to establishing a joint aviation / maritime SAR system and rescue coordination centre.
- c) Plan the allocation of sufficient resources, including satellite and electronic tools, for the further training of SAR coordinators and other operational staff to build and maintain reasonable SAR efficiency within State.
- d) Plan the allocation of funds for the organization of SAR exercises for the improvement of the system and reduction of lives lost in the conduct of live SAR.
- e) Draft letters of agreement between neighbouring and proximate States.

- f) Elevate SAR as a community service obligation.
- g) Develop SAR empowering documentation.
- h) Prescribe a robust regulatory framework and properly structure the SAR systems in the context of well ordered and competently enforced aviation regulations in conformity with ICAO Standards and Recommended practices.
- i) Explore all possible sources of funds for SAR activities, including air navigation charges.
- j) Explore the establishment of regional SAR systems, from both an operational and financial perspective.
- k) Explore the creation of a cooperative SAR funding mechanism at the regional level.
- l) Make a report to government by December 2007 in the form of a National SAR Improvement Plan.

II) In a short time, some activities are required to apply the following strategies to minimise the need for resources while seeking to maximise the effectiveness of the SAR services:

- a) conducting a comprehensive SAR needs assessment, based on sound principles of safety management and risk assessment;
- b) developing, updating and ratifying SAR agreements both between participating States and between neighbouring State SAR administrations;
- c) developing preventive SAR regulatory measures;
- d) arranging to use national assets on a shared basis;
- e) arranging for assumption of SAR responsibilities by suitably qualified staff on an incremental basis according to a pre-agreed schedule of functions and responsibilities;
- f) planning for the integration of National SAR services in an arrangement of Regional SAR provision whereby all participating States would contribute to and benefit from an enhanced, cost-effective service over the CAR Region;
- g) researching the viability of joint aviation/maritime SAR service provision and, in particular, the establishment of a joint rescue coordination centre;
- h) conducting an education and awareness campaign that will facilitate cooperation across cooperating disciplines and the general public; and
- i) encouraging the integration of volunteer organisations in an orderly, formalised, expert manner.

3. Suggested action

3.1 The Meeting is invited to take note of the information contained in this paper.