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Seventh Meeting of the Search and Rescue (SAR) Implementation Task Force of the North American, Central America and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG/SAR/TF/7)
Mexico City, Mexico, 3 to 7 August 2026

Agenda Item 4: Work Programme and Activities of the NACC/WG Search and Rescue Implementation Task Force (SAR)

**STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF
SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) SERVICES IN THE NAM/CAR REGIONS**
(Presented by the Rapporteur)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This Working Paper presents a regional assessment of the implementation status of search and rescue (SAR) services in the NAM/CAR Regions, including aspects related to the establishment of RCC/RSC, SAR operational agreements, personnel training, aeronautical-maritime SAR coordination, GADSS implementation, use of Autonomous Aircraft in Distress Tracking (ADT), SAREX exercises, and assessment of the Basic Building Blocks (BBB). It also identifies regional priorities and actions to strengthen the SAR capabilities of States and Territories.	
Action:	Suggested actions are included in Section 7
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	• Every Flight is Safe and Secure • Aviation is Environmentally Sustainable • Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All • No Country Left Behind • The International Civil Aviation Convention and Other Treaties, Laws and Regulations Address All Challenges • The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All
<i>References:</i>	• Convention on International Civil Aviation. • Annex 12 – Search and Rescue. • IAMSAR Manual Volumes I, II, and III. • Final Report NACC/WG/SAR/TF/5. • Working Paper “Priorities for the Provision of Search and Rescue Services in the NAM/CAR Regions”. • CAR/SAM Regional Air Navigation Plan. • ICAO GADSS Initiative.

1. Introduction

1.1 The provision of search and rescue services is an essential responsibility of Contracting States under Article 25 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and the provisions set forth in ICAO Annex 12.

1.2 The results presented at previous meetings of the NACC/WG/SAR/TF continue to demonstrate significant differences in the level of SAR implementation among the States of the NAM/CAR Regions, particularly regarding the organization of SAR services, the establishment of RCC/RSC, cooperation agreements, and the availability of specialized personnel.

1.3 In recent years, the implementation of the Global Aviation Distress and Safety System (GADSS), as well as the incorporation of capabilities related to ADT and LADR, have created new opportunities to improve the location of aircraft in distress and optimize SAR response times.

2. Regional Situation of SAR Services

2.1 Establishment of SAR Services

2.1.1 Various USOAP audit findings have shown that some States still face difficulties in fully complying with the requirements related to the establishment of SAR services, RCC/RSC, and SAR operational plans.

2.2 SAR Operational Plans

2.2.1 The existence of updated operational plans is a fundamental requirement to ensure an effective and coordinated response during actual SAR operations or training exercises. However, opportunities for improvement remain in updating and harmonizing these plans at the regional level.

2.3 Rescue Coordination Centers

2.3.1 The SAR/TF/5 meeting highlighted the importance of strengthening the operational capabilities of RCCs and RSCs, including infrastructure, procedures, communications, and trained personnel.

3. Regional Coordination and SAR agreements

3.1 Cooperation between neighboring states is one of the fundamental pillars for the success of search and rescue operations.

3.2 Experience gained in the CAR Region demonstrates that formalizing SAR agreements significantly improves operational coordination, facilitates information exchange, and allows for more efficient use of available resources.

3.3 The NAM/CAR Region continues to promote the signing and updating of operational SAR agreements, including coordination mechanisms between RCC, RSC, and maritime SAR organizations.

3.4 Aeronautical-Maritime SAR Coordination

3.4.1 SAR operations frequently involve civil aviation resources, armed forces, maritime authorities, and civil protection agencies. For this reason, it is essential to strengthen interoperability between aeronautical and maritime SAR systems.

4. Training, exercises and capacity building

4.1 The availability of adequately trained personnel remains one of the main regional needs identified.

4.2 Training programs should include:

- SAR coordination.
- RCC/RSC management.
- SAR mission planning.
- Use of GADSS technologies.
- Cospas-Sarsat procedures.
- Multinational coordination.
- Aeronautical emergency management.

4.3 SAR exercises (SAREX) are the most effective tool for evaluating procedures, validating operational plans, training personnel, and measuring coordination among participating organizations.

4.4 The NAM/CAR Region will continue to promote the periodic holding of national, binational, and regional exercises that incorporate scenarios related to ADT and the use of LADR.

5. GADSS, ADT and the evaluation of BBBs

5.1 The implementation of GADSS represents a significant evolution of global capabilities for locating and responding to aircraft in distress.

5.2 The correct use of Autonomous Aircraft in Distress Tracking (ADT) requires RCCs to maintain up-to-date procedures and for their focal points to be registered and active within the relevant systems.

5.3 Likewise, the evaluation of the SAR Basic Building Blocks (BBB) will allow objectively determine regional priorities for investment, technical assistance and international cooperation.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The States and Territories of the NAM/CAR Regions have demonstrated progress in the implementation of SAR services; however, challenges remain related to the establishment of RCC/RSC, SAR agreements, specialized personnel, and the updating of operational plans.

6.2 Regional cooperation continues to be the most effective mechanism for strengthening SAR capabilities and ensuring a coordinated response to aeronautical emergencies.

6.3 The effective implementation of GADSS, ADT, and LADR is emerging as a strategic priority for improving the location of aircraft in distress and increasing the efficiency of SAR operations.

6.4 The evaluation of BBB SAR will provide valuable information to guide future regional support and implementation projects.

7. Suggested actions

7.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information presented in this Working Paper;
- b) Support the strengthening of the Rescue Coordination Centres (RCC) and Rescue Subcentres (RSC) in the North American and Caribbean (NAM/CAR) Regions;
- c) Promote the signing and updating of operational SAR agreements between neighboring States and Territories;
- d) Promote regional SAR training programs;
- e) Promote the periodic organization of SAREX exercises with GADSS and ADT scenarios;
- f) Support the regional evaluation of the Basic Building Blocks (BBB) for SAR;
- g) Suggest any additional action that the Meeting deems appropriate.

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