



International Civil Aviation Organization

**Second Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Regional Search and Rescue Task Force  
(APSAR/TF/2)**

Singapore, 27-30 January 2014

---

**Agenda Item 5: Asia/Pacific Regional SAR Plan**

**PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL SAR CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE AGREEMENT**  
(Presented by Singapore and United States of America)

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents a regional draft template for SAR Co-ordinating Committee Agreement for consideration by the APSAR Task Force

This paper relates to –

**Strategic Objectives:**

A: *Safety – Enhance global civil aviation safety*

**Global Plan Initiatives:**

Not Applicable

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 During the first session in February 2013, the APSAR Task Force identified several areas for enhancement of SAR capability and services and among several areas identified was a clearer guidance on the establishment of National SAR committees. Several States noted the value of a National SAR Co-ordinating Committees and the APSAR Task Force specifically requested assistance in creating a draft regional template with more details than currently provided in the IAMSAR Manual, Volume I. ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group's members from Singapore and the United States offered to assist.

**2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 IAMSAR Manual Volume I, Appendix J which contains sample terms of reference for a SAR Co-ordinating Committee provides excellent advice for those States which have experience with SAR Co-ordinating Committees but these sample terms of reference on the background, objectives, membership and procedures may be too general for those trying to establish or enhance basic SAR services. The proposed draft template for a SAR Co-ordinating Committee Agreement, with more details provided, would serve to provide more guidance for States which require assistance in establishing a national SAR coordinating body. The proposed draft template is set out in attachment 1 of this paper.

2.2 The JWG reviewed and supported the proposed draft template. The JWG agreed that this draft template would serve as a basis for further discussion at this APSAR Task Force which would provide its regional perspective. The JWG had requested that the output from the APSAR TF would then be submitted to the next JWG session for consideration as a proposed amendment to be incorporated into the IAMSAR Manual which would be published in 2016.

2.3 JWG recognized that this draft template would be of use to States in other regions and requested ICAO to facilitate the exchange of this type of information between ICAO regional offices to ensure harmonization around the world.

### **3. ACTION BY THE APSAR TASK FORCE**

3.1 The APSAR Task Force is invited:

- a) to adopt with amendments, if any, to improve the draft template set out in Attachment 1 with a view to submitting it through a Member State or the ICAO Asia-Pacific Regional Office to the next ICAO/IMO JWG for consideration as proposed amendment to be incorporated into the 2016 edition of the IAMSAR Manual.
- b) to request ICAO to promote the sharing and exchange of information on this draft template between ICAO regional offices to facilitate harmonization around the world.

.....

**Attachment A – Proposed Draft Template for NATIONAL SAR CO-ORDINATING  
COMMITTEE AGREEMENT**

**Sample National SAR Co-ordinating Committee Agreement  
[State name]  
National Search and Rescue Committee  
Interagency Agreement**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1** This Agreement provides for a national-level Committee to coordinate civil search and rescue (SAR) matters of interagency interest within [State name].

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC) is established as a standing interagency committee to oversee the National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) and to act as a coordinating forum for national SAR matters. [Note: If the National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) is created first, then this paragraph could read as: The [State] National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) is overseen by a standing interagency group which acts as a coordinating forum for national SAR matters. This group is now named the National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC).]

**3. SPONSORSHIP**

- 3.1** The [name of national agency] is the sponsor of the NSARC. The [name of national agency] shall:
- (i) designate an executive-level person to chair the NSARC, who shall report to the [Head or other title/designation, as appropriate] of [Department or Ministry name] via the [name of national agency]; and
  - (ii) appoint a Committee Secretary to ensure that the NSARC operates according to the policies and procedures contained in [name of relevant directives or other relevant legal instruments and/or policy documents].

**4. MEMBERSHIP, OBSERVERS AND ADVISORS**

- 4.1** The Member Agencies of the NSARC are as follows:  
 Ministry/Department of Homeland Security;  
 Ministry/Department of Defense;  
 Ministry/Department of Transportation;  
 Ministry/Department of Commerce;  
 Ministry/Department of Interior;  
 National Space Administration; and  
 Federal Communications Commission.  
 [add agencies such as ministries/departments of defence, transport, police, emergency services, medical etc.]
- 4.2** Each of these Member Agencies shall designate one representative by name or position to serve as its primary NSARC Representative, and another to serve as its Alternate NSARC Representative.

- 4.3** Each NSARC Member may [appoint or designate] any of its officials to serve as Advisors to its NSARC Representatives and to participate on its behalf in meetings of the NSARC, or of subsidiary groups or subcommittees of the NSARC.
- 4.4** Other persons may be invited by a NSARC Member with the approval of the Chairperson or of the NSARC to participate in any such meeting as government or non-government Observers on an ad hoc basis.

## **5. NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE PLAN PARTICIPATION**

- 5.1** Member Agencies of NSARC are, by virtue of their membership, also Participants of the National Search and Rescue Plan of [State name].

## **6. OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1** The objectives of the NSARC are as follows:
- (a) To recommend implementation strategies and actions that ensure that the [State] meets domestic needs and international commitments to provide effective civil SAR services;
  - (b) To hold sole responsibility for the provisions of the NSP;
  - (c) To serve as the primary coordinating forum within the national government for the conduct and support of civil SAR operations in accordance with the NSP, and for all matters relating to national civil SAR policies and positions;
  - (d) To administer the National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual for interagency guidance on implementing the NSP;
  - (e) To ensure compatibility between the NSP and the National [Disaster] Response Plan (NRP) so that the implementation of the NSP whether independently or concurrently with the NRP during an incident of national significance will proceed smoothly and successfully;
  - (f) To promote research and development, improve regulations, standards and procedures, develop new technologies and conduct educational efforts and training to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of distress alerting and other civil SAR services, and to reduce the associated risks;
  - (g) To coordinate the civil SAR efforts of the NSARC Member Agencies with other national and international government, private, and volunteer organizations;
  - (h) To promote the effective use of all available resources for civil SAR;
  - (i) To foster the use of SAR agreements and other arrangements and plans to improve cooperation and mutual support among the various national and international civil SAR agencies;
  - (j) To promote close cooperation among civilian and military authorities and organisations for provision of effective civil SAR services;

- (k) To promote initiatives to assist citizens of [State name] to avoid or cope with the aftermath and distress resulting from emergencies that require SAR services;
- (l) To consider, as appropriate, contingency plans for use of SAR resources in emergencies other than civil SAR.

## 7. PROCEDURES

- 7.1** The following procedures shall be followed in conducting the business of the NSARC:
- (a) The NSARC shall schedule regular meetings on at least a [quarterly] basis.
  - (b) The Chairperson or any Member Agency via its NSARC Representative may call a special meeting when necessary.
  - (c) The meetings shall be properly documented by the Secretary. Decisions of the NSARC shall normally be made by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be reached by a majority vote at a regular meeting of the NSARC, or by an informal poll of the NSARC Members by the Secretary with the results properly documented.
  - (d) The Chairperson is authorized to represent directly the views, actions, recommendations and decisions of the NSARC, or otherwise act on behalf of the NSARC, by correspondence or other means, except that correspondence from the NSARC is for the [Secretary of Homeland Security] [Transportation] shall be made via the [name of NSARC sponsor national agency].
  - (e) The procedure for including a non-member national Agency in the NSARC as a Member Agency and NSP Participant shall be as follows:
    - i) If the NSARC decides that it would be beneficial to include a non-member national Agency in the NSARC, the Chairperson will extend a written invitation to that Agency, with a request for that Agency's written acceptance within [60] days and upon that national Agency's acceptance, that national Agency shall become a Member Agency with effect from the date specified in the written invitation; and
    - ii) If a non-member national Agency applies to be included in the NSARC as a Member Agency and NSP Participant, the Chairperson will notify each Member Agency, via the Member Agency's Executive Secretary or an officer designated to receive such notification. If no Member Agency objects within [60] days, the applicant Agency will from the date of expiry of the 60 days become a NSARC Member Agency and a NSP Participant. Such notifications, designations, and objections must be in writing.
  - (f) Termination of an agency's an Agency's NSARC membership shall automatically terminate its status as an NSP Participant; such termination

shall be accomplished by the Agency's written notification to the other Member Agencies at least six months in advance.

- (g) Policy issues or plans that require the attention or approval of the authorized signatories of this Agreement such as the adoption of [the NSP or amendments to the NSP], will be submitted by the Chairperson with recommendations for action. The views of all of the NSARC Members shall be included in such submissions.
- (h) Nothing in this Agreement shall obligate the Member Agencies to comply with decisions of the NSARC.

## **8. ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENT, RENEWAL AND TERMINATION**

**8.1** This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of the first NSARC meeting following the completion of the signatures by the authorised signatories of all of the Member Agencies.

**8.2** Based on a unanimous vote of the NSARC, any proposed amendment(s) to this Agreement or to the NSP must be adopted by one of the following means:

- (a) The Chair will notify each Member Agency, via the Member Agency's Executive Secretary or an individual designated to receive such notification, of the proposed amendment(s). If no Member Agency objects within [60] days, the amendment(s) will be considered adopted. Such notifications, designations, and objections must be in writing.
- (b) The amendment(s) shall be adopted by mutual written agreement of all Member Agencies.

**8.3** This Agreement shall be automatically renewed on 1 January [year] and every five years thereafter unless superseded by a new arrangement or terminated.

**[Agency names and names and designations of authorised signatories and dates]**