



International Civil Aviation Organization

**Third Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Regional Search and Rescue Task Force
(APSAR/TF/3)**

Maldives, 25 – 29 January 2015

Agenda Item 7: Any Other Business

MALDIVES NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE SYSTEM

(Presented by the Maldives)

SUMMARY

This paper presents a short brief on the Maldives National Search and Rescue System.

It provides an outline on the Maldives Search and Rescue Region, cooperation between maritime and aeronautical SAR organizations, scope of the Coast Guard / MNDF, the existing Search and Rescue facilities including challenges, and ongoing works to improve the present Search and Rescue system.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper presents a short brief on the Maldives National Search and Rescue System.

1.2 It provides an outline on the Maldives Search and Rescue Region, cooperation between maritime and aeronautical SAR organizations, scope of the Coast Guard / MNDF, the existing Search and Rescue facilities including challenges, and ongoing works to improve the present Search and Rescue system.

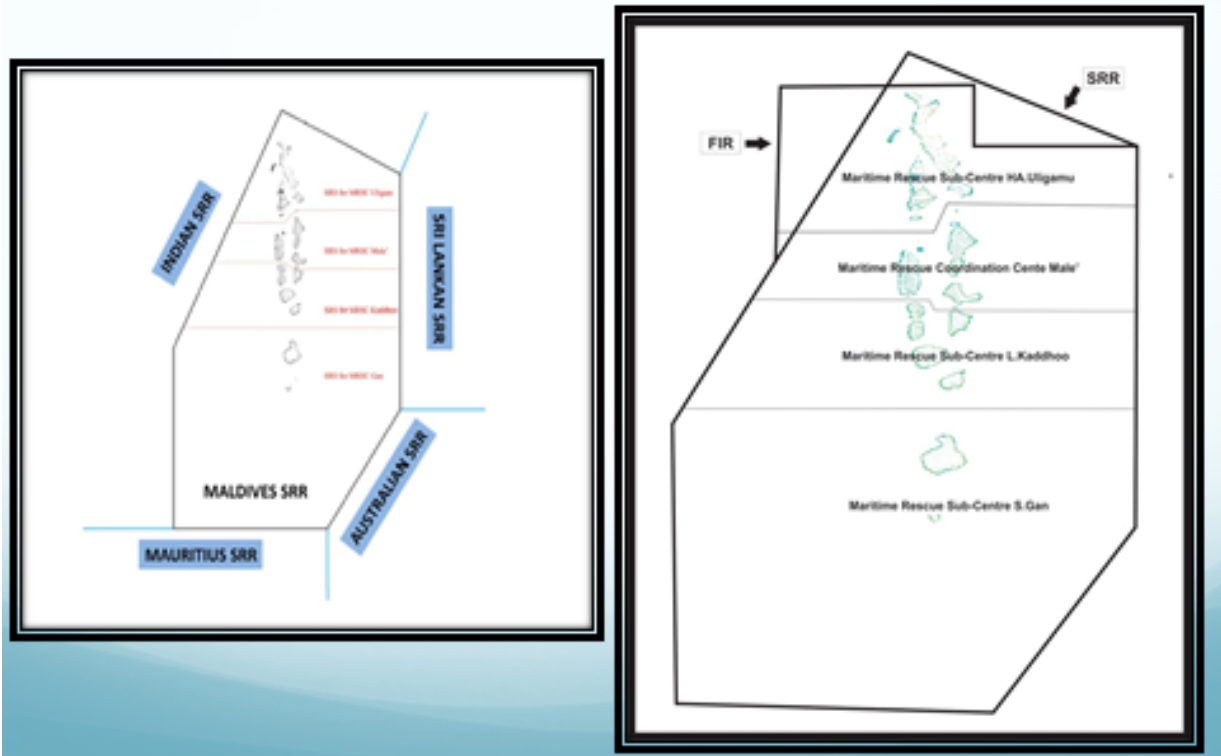
2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Maldives consists of 1192 small tropical islands that cross strategic shipping routes in the Indian Ocean. With a population of approximately 330,000, Maldives inhabits only 200 islands with more than 100 resort islands. Maldives has a richly diverse marine environment. With more territorial sea than land, marine resources have played a vital role in economic development. Tourism and fishing is the main drivers of economic growth.

2.2 The archipelago of islands are scattered across a wide area of Ocean. It encompasses a territory spreading over approximately one million square kilometers, making the country one of the world's most geographically dispersed country. Both Sea and Air transport methods are of great significance.

2.3 Maldives Coast Guard attends over 300 calls and assists more than 1000 lives at sea annually.

Maldivian SAR region



Maritime and Aeronautical SAR Organization

2.4 Transport Authority is the National SAR authority in the Maldives.

2.5 The National SAR plan is in the development stages. For the purpose of the SAR, the strategic guidelines for Search and Rescue is issued by the Transport Authority in consultation with National SAR Committee.

2.6 Coast Guard Commandant shall be considered the Maritime Search and Rescue Coordinator for the purpose of MSAR

Cooperation between Maritime and Aeronautical SAR Organization

2.7 The Maldives Civil Aviation Authority (MCAA) has established an agreement with the Ministry of Defence and National Security for the provision of SAR services, while the ATS provider remains responsible for the 'aeronautical rescue coordination centre (ARCC) and relaying distress information to the maritime (MRCC) for the latter to take over mission coordination and carry out the SAR services.

SAR Units

2.8 Dedicated SAR assets are limited in Maldives, other government, private and commercial assets are diverted from their primary function by charter, arrangement and on request

MEDECO and MEDIVEC

2.9 The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue 1979 requires parties to the Convention to provide (among other things) on request, medical advice, initial medical assistance and MEDEVACS. Maldives though not party to convention, through MRCC Maldives provides limited services in the Maldivian search and rescue region (SRR).

MOUs

- International
 - ✓ Australia 13th April 2006
 - ✓ Srilanka 25th June 2014
- Local
 - ✓ Maldives Civil Aviation Authority 21 October 2010
 - ✓ Maldives Ports Limited

RCCS

2.10 The Coast Guard upgraded its Search and Rescue Operations hub as the country's Maritime Rescue Coordination Center (MRCC Male') on 26 July 2012, 3 RCC's were established.

SAR Communication

| | ARCC | MRCC | RSCs |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Landline | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fax | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| VHF (DSC) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| MF/HF (DSC) | ✓ | ✓ | - |
| MF/HF | - | - | ✓ |
| IMARSAT C | - | ✓ | - |
| SafetyNet | ✗ | ✓ | |
| GMDSS distress receiving equipment | ✓ | - | - |
| | | | |

Note: Communication equipment needs to be upgraded

Training and Exercises

- Joint training and exercise with India and Sri Lanka Maritime forces
- Joint training with visiting ships
- Annual airport emergency exercise with MACL
- GMDSS operator training / Center for Maritime Studies
- SAR Courses / US Coast Guard mobile training / MNDF Coastguard Training School

Challenges

- No National SAR Plan
- SAR legislation
- Large SRR
- Limited resources/ response capability
- Training... Limited capacity
- Coordination issues ... language barrier
- No formal MOUs with adjacent ARCC

What is being done to improve SAR and Transport Safety

- Revising the present maritime safety regulation to cater for international SAR requirements.
- Introducing nationwide VHF DSC network by 2015.
- In the process of signing MOUs with Local Government Authorities, Police and NGOs.
- In the process of signing MOUs with IGMH and other regional hospitals in the country to enhance MEDICO Service.
- Enhancing MDA by introducing AIS and RADAR chain along the coastline

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

- 3.1 The meeting is invited to note the information contained in this paper.