



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG ATM Sub-Group

First Meeting (ATM SG1)  
(Cairo, Egypt, 09 - 12 June 2014)

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**Agenda Item 7: SAR Issues**

**SAR LETTER OF AGREEMENT**

*(Presented by Kingdom of Bahrain and United Arab Emirates)*

**SUMMARY**

This working paper proposes a SAR Letter of Agreement and the concept of attaching this SAR agreement as an Appendix to the operational LOA.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 2.

**REFERENCES**

- Annex 12 – Search and Rescue
- Doc 9731 (*IAMSAR*) Manual
- MIDANPIRG ATM/AIM/SAR Sub-Group 13 meeting report.
- MIDANPIRG/14 Report

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Annex 12, in its Chapter 3 – *Cooperation*, establishes that Contracting States shall coordinate their search and rescue organizations with those of the neighbouring States, subject to the conditions prescribed by their own authorities. Regional cooperation should be fostered by the States for an effective SAR system.

1.2 The MIDANPIRG Meeting, through its Recommendations, encouraged States to establish SAR agreements in order to enhance SAR services and coordinate efforts with other bodies providing or supporting SAR services.

1.3 The ICAO MID Regional Office has identified as a deficiency the lack of SAR agreements between neighbouring states, and classified the deficiency as priority A.

**2. DISCUSSIONS**

2.1 Doc 9731 - *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual* recommends that a contemporary SAR system should be developed from an operational perspective with a basic regional cooperation system between States, Territories and International Organizations concerned, without national border limits. Aeronautical and maritime services should consider regular joint sessions in order to foster consistency and regional co-operation of SAR operations in order to provide humanitarian aid.

2.2 Fundamental to this strategy is the fact that civil and military authorities, aeronautical and maritime agencies, communication providers, meteorological service, air traffic services (ATS) and aircraft operators, among others, combine efforts through bilateral and/or multi-lateral agreement to provide SAR service over a determined area.

2.3 In the MID Region it has been observed that Civil Aviation Authorities in some States are facing difficulties to comply with all above in Para 2.1 and Para 2.2 as this would require to be pursued through legislative/legal organizations in the concerned States.

2.4 In an effort to deal with such problem and overcome such high priority deficiency, Bahrain and UAE developed an idea for not involving legislative/legal authorities or agencies other than the Civil Aviation Authority. Accordingly a proposed model of SAR Agreement that reflects the role of the Air Traffic Services being only alerting units since all SAR activities will be conducted by other relevant authorities/agencies in the States concerned.

2.5 Bahrain and UAE Civil Aviation Authorities have signed the proposed SAR letter of agreement at **Appendix A** to this Working Paper, and attached it as Appendix F to the operational Letter of Agreement between Bahrain and Sheikh Zayed Centres.

2.6 Bahrain has provided the proposed SAR Letter of Agreement to all neighbouring States for consideration, comments and/or approval in order to proceed further and sign the agreement.

2.7 UAE has provided the proposed SAR Letter of Agreement to Bahrain and Oman and in the process of sending it to the other neighboring States for consideration, comments and/or approval in order to proceed further and sign the agreement.

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) consider Bahrain and UAE experience and encourage States to adopt similar measures ; and
- b) urge States to sign the SAR Agreement with their neighbors.

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## APPENDIX F

### AGREEMENT ON COOPERATION & COORDINATION FOR AERONAUTICAL SEARCH AND RESCUE

United Arab Emirates  
Air Navigation Services

Between

Kingdom of Bahrain  
Air Navigation Service

#### TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**SAR** : Search and Rescue

**ATS** : Air Traffic Service

**ANSP**: Air Navigation Service Provider

**Alerting post**: Any facility intended to serve as an intermediary between a person reporting an emergency and a Rescue Coordination Centre or rescue subcentre.

**Search and rescue region (SRR)**: an area of defined dimensions, associated with a rescue coordination centre, within which SAR services are provided.

**Search and rescue services**: the performance of distress monitoring, communication, co-ordination and search and rescue functions, including provision of medical advice, initial medical assistance, or medical evacuation, through the use of public and private resources, including co-operating aircraft, vessels and other craft and installations.

**Rescue coordination centre (RCC)**: a unit responsible for promoting efficient organization of search and rescue services and for coordinating the conduct of search and rescue operations within a search and rescue region.

#### Article I. AGREEMENT

1.1 Pursuant to the Standards and Recommended Practices of Annex 12 to the Convention on the International Civil Aviation for The Facilitation of Search For Aircraft in Distress And Rescue of Survivors of Aircraft accident, the Sheikh Zayed Air Navigation Centre of United Arab Emirates and Area Control Centre of Civil Aviation affairs Of Kingdom of Bahrain hereby agree to mutually coordinate and assist each other, as provided for in their respective Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs).

1.2 This Operational Letter of Agreement supplements the relevant ICAO documents and shall be equally binding on both parties concerned. Any amendments to this Agreement shall be made only with the concurrence of both parties concerned.





## Article II. SCOPE OF AGREEMENT

2.1 Both Air Navigation Service Providers hereby agree that they shall:

- i) Promptly exchange SAR alerting information concerning a distress situation or a potential distress situation.
- ii) Coordinate with and assist national SAR agencies to the extent possible.
- iii) Assist each other, to the extent possible, in coordinating SAR Operations in their respective SRRs.
- iv) Coordinate with respective national RCC for participation in SAR activities when assistance requested by other states.

## Article III. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE ANSPs:

The following procedures are agreed upon:

### 3.1 INITIATION FOR SAR ACTION

3.1.1 The responsibility for declaring an emergency phase and initiating local action rests with ATS Units.

3.1.2 ATS Units shall coordinate with their local RCC :

- a) When the accident position is known, action shall be initiated by the RCC in whose SRR the accident is located.
- b) When the accident position is not known, SAR alerting action shall be initiated by:
  - i) The ANSP first becoming aware of an aircraft needing assistance.
  - ii) The ANSP in whose area of responsibility the aircraft was operating when the last radio contact was made.
  - iii) The ANSP in whose area of responsibility the aircraft was preceding to if the last radio contact was made on the common SRR boundary.





### 3.2 CONTROL RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SAR MISSION

3.2.1 Each RCC will be responsible for their respective Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs)

3.2.2 Joint operation shall be coordinated with each contracting state ANSP

### 3.3 LIAISON DURING A SAR MISSION

3.3.1 During the course of a SAR mission, the ANSP concerned shall maintain close liaison in order to ensure the smooth and successful execution of the SAR mission. The RCC in charge of the mission shall periodically keep the ANSP informed of the number of SAR Units engaged in the SAR mission, areas to be searched, action taken to date and the decision to suspend or terminate the SAR mission.

## Article IV. POINT OF CONTACT

### Sheikh Zayed Air Navigation Centre of United Arab Emirates

AFTN Address: OMAEYCYX  
Phone Number: +97125996969  
Fax Number: +97125996850  
E-Mail: [atc@szc.gcaa.ae](mailto:atc@szc.gcaa.ae)

### Civil Aviation Authority

AFTN Address: OBBIYCYX  
Phone Number: +97317329969  
Fax Number: +97317329949  
E-Mail: [Bahrainsar@mot.gov.bh](mailto:Bahrainsar@mot.gov.bh)

## Article V. VALIDITY

5.1 This Agreement becomes effective upon the date the signatures of the authorized representatives of both parties concerned have been affixed, and will remain valid unless modified by mutual agreement. This agreement may be terminated at any time by mutual consent or by either party upon giving 90 days notice in writing.







FOR

**Air Navigation Services  
General Civil Aviation Authority AND  
United Arab Emirates**

**Ahmed Al Jallaf  
Assistant Director General  
Air Navigation Services**

Date: 22 May 2014

  


FOR

**Air Navigation Directorate  
Civil aviation affair  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Ali Ahmed Mohammed  
Director Air Navigation  
Civil Aviation Affairs**

Date: 25/5/2014

  
