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SAR.6/Circ.21  
18 October 2002

## **AREA SEARCH AND RESCUE PLANS**

### **Notification of an Arrangement for Co-operation between New Zealand Search and Rescue Services and French Maritime Search and Rescue Services in New Caledonia in accordance with paragraph 2.1.4 of the Annex to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979, as amended**

#### **Notification by France and New Zealand**

1 The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization has the honour to transmit herewith the text of an Arrangement for Co-operation on Maritime Search and Rescue concluded between the Governments of France and New Zealand and submitted in accordance with paragraph 2.1.4 of the Annex to the 1979 SAR Convention, as amended.

2 The Secretary-General would be grateful if steps could be taken to bring this information to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

**Arrangement For Cooperation**  
**between**  
**New Zealand Search and Rescue**  
**Services**  
**and**  
**French Maritime Search and Rescue**  
**Services**  
**in New Caledonia**

The Director of Civil Aviation, New Zealand, and Le Delege du Gouvernement, Haut-Commissaire de la Republique francaise en Nouvelle-Caledonie (hereafter together referred to as "the Signatories"),

**RECOGNISING** the importance of co-operation in aviation and maritime search and rescue and the need to ensure expeditious and effective search and rescue services, and

**NOTING** the relevant provisions of the standards and recommended practices contained in the Annex to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue 1979, the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea 1974, and Article 98 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982,

Subject to the legislation of each Signatory, have made the following Arrangements:

## **1. TERMINOLOGY**

In this Arrangement:

SAR is the abbreviation for Search and Rescue;  
RCC is the abbreviation for Rescue Coordination Centre;  
MRCC is the abbreviation for Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre;  
SRR is the abbreviation for Search and Rescue Region; and  
SMC is the abbreviation for Search and Rescue Mission Co-ordinator.

## **2. IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES**

For New Zealand: The Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand.

For France: National Maritime SAR Co-ordination: the Prime Minister (Secretariat general de la mer – Organisme SECMAR).

French Authority responsible for maritime SAR in New Caledonia: le Delege du Gouvernement, Haut-Commissaire de la Republique en Nouvelle-Calédonie.

French Authority in charge of maritime SAR operations around New Caledonia: le Commandant de la Marine et de l'Aeronautique Navale en Nouvelle Caledonie.

The RCCs of the Signatory involved by this Arrangement will be:

For New Zealand: RCC New Zealand

For France (New Caledonia): MRCC Noumea

## **3. SCOPE OF THE ARRANGEMENT**

The RCCs of both Signatories will:

- 3.1 promptly and regularly exchange SAR information concerning an actual or a potential distress situation;
- 3.2 assist each other, to the extent possible, in conducting SAR missions in their respective SRRs and across their common SRR boundaries;
- 3.3 take appropriate measures for the use of facilities in each other's SRRs while engaged on a SAR mission;
- 3.4 exchange information on current SAR resources available, to ensure

mutual knowledge of each other's SAR capabilities;

- 3.5 conduct communications checks with each other at least once per calendar month to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of SAR communication links;
- 3.6 conduct periodic SAR exercises to test their ability to conduct a SAR response across their common SRR boundary;
- 3.7 without prejudicing the ownership of intellectual property and copyright, exchange SAR operational and procedural documents to help promote mutual understanding and common procedures; and
- 3.8 arrange periodic liaison or exchange visits by personnel from each RCC.

#### **4. SEARCH AND RESCUE REGION (SRR) BOUNDARIES**

According to the conclusions of the Tokyo SAR Conference 1986 and the Seoul Conference 1997, the common boundary of the New Zealand SRR and the maritime French (New Caledonia) SRR is delineated by the following coordinates:

26S 163E; 26S 174E; and 25S 174E.

#### **5. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE RCCs**

The following procedures will be followed:

##### **5.1 Determination of the Responsible RCC**

The RCC responsible for initiating SAR action will be determined as follows:

5.1.1 When the position of the vessel in distress needing assistance is known, action will be initiated by the RCC in whose SRR the vessel is located.

5.1.2 When the position of the vessel is unknown, SAR action will be initiated by the RCC which first becomes aware that the vessel may need assistance. The RCC initiating a SAR operation will retain responsibility for overall SAR co-ordination until the Responsible RCC, if different, takes over. The Responsible RCC will be either:

5.1.2.1 The RCC in whose SRR the vessel was operating when the last contact was made; or

5.1.2.2 The RCC into whose SRR the vessel was proceeding if the last contact was made on the common SRR boundary.

##### **5.2 Transferring SAR Coordination Responsibility**

When a transfer of responsibility for overall SAR co-ordination is to take place, either from the subsequent establishment of the vessel's position or movement, or because an RCC other than the one initiating the action is more favourably placed to assume control of the mission by reason of better communications, proximity to the search area, more readily available SAR units or facilities, or any other reasons, the following procedures will be adopted:

5.2.1 Direct discussions or communications will be conducted between the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinators (SMCs) from the RCCs concerned to determine the best course of action.

- 5.2.2 If it is agreed by both SMCs that a transfer of responsibility is appropriate for the whole mission or part thereof, full details of the previous actions taken will be exchanged.
- 5.2.3 The initiating RCC will retain responsibility until the accepting RCC advises the initiating RCC that it has assumed responsibility for overall SAR co-ordination, or part thereof.

### **5.3 SAR Missions in Adjacent SRR**

- 5.3.1 When it becomes necessary for an RCC to deploy SAR units into the SRR of the other Signatory, the SMC will, in addition to deploying such units for the mission, simultaneously advise the adjacent RCC by written message, providing the following information:
  - 5.3.1.1 SAR mission identification;
  - 5.3.1.2 SAR unit's identification and type;
  - 5.3.1.3 Callsign or name;
  - 5.3.1.4 Point of departure, route, and destination;
  - 5.3.1.5 Assigned search task;
  - 5.3.1.6 Number of persons on board;
  - 5.3.1.7 Communications frequencies in use;
  - 5.3.1.8 Relevant equipment carried;
  - 5.3.1.9 Range and Endurance; and
  - 5.3.1.10 Plans for return to base after SAR tasks
- 5.3.2 The SMC at the counterpart RCC will, on receipt, send an acknowledgment to the initiating RCC and indicate the conditions, if any, under which the intended mission is to be undertaken. All possible assistance will be rendered to enable the SAR mission to be carried out successfully.
- 5.3.3 SAR units of one Signatory will not enter restricted airspace or territory of the other Signatory until approval is received from the appropriate RCC.

### **5.4 Promulgation of Search Areas**

When the responsible RCC has been determined in accordance with paragraph 5.1, that RCC will determine the area of probability and establish the search area(s). The responsible RCC will, with the advice and assistance of the adjacent RCC, where appropriate, arrange the promulgation of a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) defining the search area(s) and any associated Restricted or Danger area(s) within their respective SRR, and will issue any necessary Maritime Safety Information (MSI) safety message(s) to shipping.

### **5.5 Liaison During a SAR Mission**

During the course of a SAR mission, the RCCs concerned will maintain close liaison in order to ensure the smooth and successful execution of the SAR mission. The RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination will keep the adjacent RCC informed at regular intervals of the number of SAR units involved in the mission, areas to be searched, actions taken to date, and the decision to suspend or terminate the SAR mission. This notification will take the form of situations reports (SITREPs) at least daily or at any time of significant change to the situation. Direct discussion between the SMCs of both RCCs should be undertaken whenever necessary.

## **6. USE OF OTHER SIGNATORY'S SAR UNITS AND FACILITIES**

- 6.1** SAR units assigned by one Signatory to the RCC of the other Signatory which is responsible for overall co-ordination of a SAR mission will be placed under the direction of the relevant SMC for the period of their assignment, with the exception of military aircraft, ships or personnel which will remain under the command of the military headquarters of their State. As far as direct communications are possible, the RCC will send directly to the SAR unit all instructions and information relative to the operation and the mission requested. The SAR unit will report directly to the RCC.
- 6.2** The RCC of the Signatory requesting assistance in the form of SAR units or facilities of the other Signatory will provide all pertinent details of the type and scope of the assistance or facilities required.
- 6.3** The requesting RCC will provide a full briefing, directly to each SAR unit that has been made available, on the scope of its mission before the units arrive in the area of the SAR operation.
- 6.4** A SAR unit of one Signatory participating in a SAR operation that is being coordinated by the RCC of the other Signatory will, without special request, be authorized to enter into or over the territorial sea of the other Signatory. The assisting SAR unit will notify the responsible RCC with the time and position of its entry into or over the territorial sea.
- 6.5** A SAR unit of one Signatory participating in a SAR operation that is being coordinated by the RCC of the other Signatory will be authorized to call into appropriate ports or aerodromes of the other Signatory. The RCC of this Signatory will make necessary arrangements with public services and other bodies to facilitate this call and will transmit any useful information to the SAR unit involved.

## **7. SAR OPERATIONAL EXPENSES**

Following a SAR operation involving SAR units of both Signatories, expenses incurred by the SAR units of each Signatories are the responsibility of the country of each Signatory according to their national arrangements.

## **8. RECOVERY OF SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT**

Recovery of re-useable supplies and survival equipment will be arranged between the respective RCCs. When practicable, recovered items will be returned to their owners

unless other arrangements for their disposal are mutually determined in specific instances.

**9. AMENDMENTS**

This Arrangement may be amended by mutual decision of the Signatories by exchange of letters.

**10. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES**

Any disputes between the Signatories arising out of the interpretation or implementation of this Arrangement will be settled amicably by consultation between the Signatories.

**11. COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION**

This Arrangement will come into effect on signature by both Signatories.

This Arrangement may be terminated at any time by mutual consent or by either Signatory upon giving the other Signatory ninety (90) days notice in writing.

In accordance with the provisions of the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization will be notified of this Arrangement.

This Arrangement has been drafted in English and French, each version being equally authentic.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective Governments, conclude this Arrangement.

Signed at: *Lower Hutt* .....  
On: *22 MAY 2002* .....

Signed at: *Nouméa*, .....  
On: *07 août 2002* .....

By: *[Signature]* .....  
Director of Civil Aviation,  
of New Zealand

By: .....  
Le Delege du Gouvernement  
Haut-Commissaire de la  
Republique française en Nouvelle-Caledonie

Signed in the presence of Mrs Cécile HILLYER,  
Consul general of New Zealand

*[Signature]*