



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**The Twenty-Second Meeting of the APANPIRG ATM/AIS/SAR Sub-Group  
(ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/22)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 25 – 29 June 2012

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**Agenda Item 5: Provision of ATM/AIS/SAR in the Asia/Pacific Region, including associated  
CNS matters**

**IMPROVING SAR CAPABILITY IN THE ASIA/PACIFIC REGION**

(Presented by Australia)

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents a proposal to enhance and improve Regional SAR capability through the establishment of an Asia/Pacific Regional SAR Workgroup.

This paper relates to –

**Strategic Objectives:**

*A: Safety – Enhance global civil aviation safety*

**Global Plan Initiatives:**

Nil

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21-WP24 (27 June - 01 July 2011, Bangkok) noted that APANPIRG/21 (6 - 10 September 2010, Bangkok) had no specific discussion in relation to SAR matters and thus there were no conclusions related to SAR at this meeting. WP24 also noted that the lack of discussion at APANPIRG/21 related to SAR matters probably reflects that there is no specific APANPIRG body that looks at Regional SAR issues and invited the ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21 Meeting to consider ways to enhance and improve SAR capability in the Region.

1.2 As a measure towards addressing this, Australia proposes the establishment of an Asia/Pacific Regional SAR Workgroup reporting to the ATM/AIS/SAR/SG.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### SAR in the Asia/Pacific Region

2.1 The aviation and maritime transport systems and all who participate within them operate with the expectation that, if ever it is required, an efficient and reliable SAR system will immediately deliver the best possible response to promptly locate and rescue survivors.

2.2 The ability for SAR services to meet the expectations of the aviation and maritime transport systems together with the obligations accepted by States under the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) is a challenge facing all States.

2.3 Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation is dedicated to ensuring there is cooperation between neighbouring States for the delivery of the global SAR service and, together with the Recommended Practices contained within it, an entire section (Chapter 3 Cooperation) is assigned to this.

2.4 Aligned with the previously noted aviation and maritime Conventions, ICAO and IMO (International Maritime Organization) jointly promote the goal of harmonizing international aviation and maritime SAR services. Annex 12 is supplemented by the joint ICAO/IMO publication the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual, which encourages States to develop and improve their SAR services, cooperate with neighbouring States and consider their SAR services to be part of a global system. ICAO and IMO also encourage States towards the establishment of Joint Rescue Coordination Centres (JRCCs) with aviation and maritime SAR coordinators working together in the same location.

2.5 Cooperation between, and collaboration with, neighbouring and regional RCCs is essential to ensure that the best possible SAR response is provided to persons in distress regardless of State boundaries. This not only includes such measures as the activation of SAR assets to provide a response across regional boundaries, but also includes preparatory measures including the sharing of SAR expertise, knowledge and experience amongst neighbouring and regional SAR Coordination personnel.

2.6 The published ICAO SAR Capability Matrix Table (ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21 Appendix D to the Report on Agenda Item 6) illustrated Regional gaps in Annex 12 requirements and highlights that work is required to improve this situation. One particular area of concern and challenge in this Region is oceanic SAR capability. Considering that the Asia/Pacific Region has responsibility to provide a SAR service over vast oceanic areas, including three of the world's five oceans, combined with identified gaps for States with oceanic SAR responsibility, cooperation and collaboration between neighbouring and regional RCCs is essential.

### SAR Workgroup

2.7 Taking all of the preceding into account and noting the comments from ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21-WP24 (27 June - 01 July 2011, Bangkok) regarding there being no specific APANPIRG body that looks at Regional SAR issues, Australia proposes the establishment of an Asia/Pacific Regional SAR Workgroup (APSAR/WG) which reports to the ATM/AIS/SAR/SG.

2.8 The purpose of the APSAR/WG would be to promote the enhancement and improvement of Regional SAR capability, address Regional SAR issues, promote SAR best practice, make recommendations for improvements and raise the profile of SAR issues within APANPIRG.

2.9 It is proposed that membership of the APSAR/WG be open to States and administrations that have the responsibility for the provision of SAR services and facilities within the Asia/Pacific Region, SAR related international organizations, ICAO and IMO. APSAR/WG members would be expected to serve as individual SAR experts for the benefit of the Region and not as State representatives. The APSAR/WG may also invite participants from outside the Region or from organizations that can contribute to the Workgroup, for example military organizations that can facilitate SAR operations.

2.10 Note that it is not proposed that the APSAR/WG duplicate the work of the ICAO/IMO SAR Joint Working Group (JWG), however it may monitor outcomes from JWG that require further promotion within the Asia/Pacific Region.

2.11 It is suggested that the APSAR/WG meet every two years with the frequency of meetings adjusted if required dependent on the number of issues identified that need to be addressed.

2.12 A suggested draft Terms of Reference for the proposed Workgroup are in **Appendix 1** for consideration by the Meeting.

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

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) consider the information contained in this paper;
- b) recommend to APANPIRG the adoption of a conclusion in support of the establishment of an Asia/Pacific Regional SAR Workgroup (APSAR/WG);
- c) seek nominations for initial appointment to the proposed APSAR/WG; and
- d) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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## **Appendix 1: Draft Terms of Reference**

### **Asia/Pacific Search and Rescue Workgroup (APSAR/WG)**

#### Objective

1 In collaboration with affected stakeholders and in close cooperation with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the objective of the Asia/Pacific Search and Rescue Workgroup is to promote the enhancement and improvement of SAR facilities and services within the Asia/Pacific Region and adjacent regions, in accordance with:

- a) Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation; and
- b) the International Aeronautical and Maritime SAR Manual (IAMSAR).

#### Tasks

2 To meet its objectives, the Workgroup shall:

- a) review the current status of SAR preparedness of Asia and Pacific Region States;
- b) review State SAR Arrangements for commonality with those of neighbouring States to facilitate SAR coordination and cooperation across regional boundaries;
- c) monitor outcomes from APANPIRG ATM/AIS/SAR/SG, other ICAO Region SAR groups, ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group (JWG) and related forums for issues that may affect the APAC Region;
- d) analyse contingency procedures in use in other ICAO Regions, and cooperate with other groups which are involved with similar work in adjacent airspaces, in order to achieve harmonized inter-regional solutions;
- e) identify areas where SAR planning and preparedness requires improvement in terms of compliance with Annex 12, the IAMSAR Manual and accepted best practice;
- f) make recommendations for improvement of SAR systems;
- g) plan and review an international SAREX between Workgroup meetings in areas within the Asia/Pacific region that require priority; and
- h) organize seminars and workshops associated with Workgroup meetings to educate, update and transfer information about SAR facilities and best practices.

3 The Workgroup is expected to meet on a biennial (once every two years) basis.

#### Reporting

4 The APSAR/WG reports to the ATM Sub-group of APANPIRG. A line of communication will be provided to the IMO on APSAR/WG outcomes.

#### Membership

5 The membership of the APSAR/WG is open to States and administrations that have the responsibility for the provision of SAR services and facilities within the Asia/Pacific, SAR related international organizations, IMO and ICAO. The membership is also open to participants from outside the Asia/Pacific or organizations that can contribute to APSAR/WG by invitation from APSAR/WG (such as military organizations that can facilitate SAR operations).

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