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SAR.6/Circ.56
2 May 2017

AREA SEARCH AND RESCUE PLANS

Notification of an Arrangement in accordance with paragraph 2.1.5 of the annex to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979, as amended

Notification by New Zealand

1 The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization has the honour to transmit herewith the text of the *Arrangement between the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga and the Government of New Zealand for the Co-ordination of Search and Rescue Services*, submitted in accordance with paragraph 2.1.5 of the annex to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979, as amended, as set out in the annex.

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

ANNEX

ARRANGEMENT

between

the GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

and

the GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND

for

the CO-ORDINATION

OF SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES

The Government of The Kingdom of Tonga and the Government of New Zealand,

RECOGNISING the importance of co-operation in aviation and maritime search and rescue and the need for ensuring expeditious and effective search and rescue services,

NOTING the relevant provisions of the standards and recommended practices contained in Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation 1944, and the chapters of the Annex to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue 1979, and the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea 1974,

subject to the legislation of each Party, have made the following arrangements:

1 IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

The Maritime Safety Authority of New Zealand and the Ministry of Civil Aviation of the Government of Tonga are the national search and rescue (SAR) agencies, which implement these arrangements.

2. SCOPE OF THE ARRANGEMENTS

Both Parties, through their respective rescue co-ordination centres (RCCs), will:

- 2.1 promptly and regularly exchange SAR information concerning an actual or potential distress situation;
- 2.2 assist each other, to the extent possible, in conducting SAR missions in their respective search and rescue regions and across their common search and rescue region boundaries;
- 2.3 take appropriate measures for the entry of SAR units into the Tonga Sector of the Auckland Oceanic FIR and for the use of facilities in Tonga while engaged on a SAR mission;
- 2.4 exchange information on current SAR resources available, to ensure mutual knowledge of each other's SAR capabilities;
- 2.5 conduct tests with each other at least once per calendar month to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of SAR communication links;
- 2.6 conduct regular SAR exercises to test their ability to effect a joint search and rescue operation within the Tonga Sector of the Auckland Oceanic FIR;
- 2.7 without prejudicing the ownership of intellectual property and copyright, exchange SAR operations and procedures manuals with



ongoing amendments, and form documents, to develop procedures and practices as nearly common as possible.

3. STANDARD RESCUE CO-ORDINATION CENTRE OPERATING PROCEDURES

3.1. Determination of responsible RCC


While the responsibility for declaring an aviation emergency phase and initiating local action rests with the relevant aviation authority or, in the case of a marine emergency, with the relevant maritime SAR authority, the responsibility for initiating all subsequent SAR actions rests with the RCC. The RCC responsible for initiating SAR action will be determined as follows:

- 3.1.1 When the position of an aircraft or ship needing assistance in distress is known, the action will be initiated by the RCC in whose search and rescue area the aircraft or ship is located.
- 3.1.2 When the position of the aircraft or ship is unknown, action will be initiated by the RCC which first becomes aware that the aircraft or ship may need assistance. The RCC initiating a SAR mission will remain in charge of the mission until the RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination takes over.
- 3.1.3 The RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination outside the territorial waters of Tonga will be RCC New Zealand.

3.2 Transferring overall responsibility

When a transfer of responsibility for overall SAR co-ordination is to take place, either from subsequent establishment of the aircraft's or ship's position or movement, or because an RCC other than the one initiating the SAR mission is more favourably placed to assume overall SAR co-ordination (because of better communications, proximity to the search area, more readily available SAR units or facilities, or any other reason), direct communications will be conducted between the SAR mission co-ordinators concerned to determine the best course of action. If it is decided that a transfer of responsibility is appropriate for the whole mission or part thereof:

- 3.2.1 full details of action taken up to that time will be exchanged; and
- 3.2.2 the initiating RCC will retain responsibility until the accepting RCC advises the initiating RCC that it has assumed responsibility for overall SAR co-ordination.



3.3 Entry procedures for SAR units into Tonga or New Zealand

3.3.1 Each Party will recognise the established interest of any other State whose aircraft or ship is the subject of a SAR mission and will permit without delay the entry of SAR units of the other State into its Sector of the Auckland Oceanic FIR to render assistance.

3.3.2 When it becomes necessary for an RCC to deploy SAR units into the Tonga Sector of the Auckland Oceanic FIR, the SAR mission co-ordinator of the RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination will immediately deploy such units for the mission. Simultaneously the counterpart RCC will be advised by written message providing the following information:

3.3.2.1 mission identification;

3.3.2.2 SAR unit identification and type;

3.3.2.3 callsign or name;

3.3.2.4 point of departure, route and destination;

3.3.2.5 assigned task;

3.3.2.6 persons on board;

3.3.2.7 communications frequencies to be used;

3.3.2.8 SAR equipment carried;

3.3.2.9 patrol time;

3.3.2.10 range and endurance; and

3.3.2.11 recovery plan.

3.3.3 The SAR mission co-ordinator at the counterpart RCC will acknowledge receipt to the RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination and indicate the conditions, if any, under which the intended mission is to be undertaken. The counterpart RCC will render all assistance necessary to ensure the success of the mission.

3.4 Promulgation of search areas

When the RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination has been determined in accordance with paragraph 3.1, the RCC will determine the area of probability and establish the search area(s). The



responsible RCC and the counterpart RCC will, if appropriate, arrange for promulgation of a NOTAM defining the search area(s) and any associated Restricted or Danger area(s) within their respective search and rescue areas, and will issue any necessary safety message(s) to shipping.

3.5 Liaison during a SAR mission

During the course of a SAR mission RCCs will maintain close liaison to ensure the smooth and successful execution of the mission. The RCC responsible for overall SAR co-ordination will inform the counterpart RCC at regular intervals of the number of SAR units involved in the mission, areas to be searched, actions taken to date, and decisions to suspend or terminate the mission. Notification will take the form of situation reports (SITREPS) at least daily or at any time of significant change to the situation. Direct communication between the SAR mission co-ordinators should be conducted whenever necessary.

4. USE OF OTHER PARTY'S FACILITIES BY SAR UNITS

- 4.1** SAR units assigned by one Party to the RCC of the other Party which is responsible for overall co-ordination of a SAR mission will be placed under the direction of the relevant SAR mission co-ordinator for the period of their assignment, except that military aircraft, ships, or personnel will remain under the control of the military/police headquarters of their State.
- 4.2** The RCC of the Party requesting assistance in the form of SAR units or facilities of the other Party will provide all pertinent details of the type and scope of the assistance or facilities required.
- 4.3** 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 unit enters the requesting RCC's search and rescue region. If it is necessary for such SAR units to land at an airfield or make use of other facilities of the Party of the requesting RCC in the course of its assigned mission, the requesting RCC will make all necessary arrangements to facilitate provision of services to the SAR unit.

5. SAR OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

Each Party will be responsible for expenses incurred by its own SAR units deployed during a SAR mission.

6. 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.



7. **AMENDMENTS**

These arrangements may be amended by mutual decision of the parties by exchange of letters.

8. **ENTRY INTO EFFECT**

These arrangements will come into effect on signature by both Parties.

9. **TERMINATION**

Either Party, upon giving the other Party ninety (90) days notice in writing, may terminate these arrangements at any time by mutual consent.

Signed at WAIKINGTON
On 17 June 2005

For the Maritime Safety Authority
of New Zealand

Signed at NUKUALOFA
On 7th June 2005

For the Government
of Tonga

