

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Seventh Meeting of the APIRG Airspace and Aerodrome Operations Sub-Group
(AAO/SG7)

Nairobi, Kenya, 12 - 16 August 2024

Agenda Item 3: Achievements in Airspace and Aerodrome Operations**3B6. REPORT OF THE AFI INTERREGIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE
WORKSHOP AND SAR EXERCISE***(Presented by the Secretariat)*

SUMMARY
<p>Search and Rescue is the responsibility that is given to the State as stipulated in Article 25 of the Chicago Convention. The need to ensure a robust and efficient search and rescue system can only be realized through a coordinated effort by all stakeholders. This paper presents the outcome of the AFI interregional search and rescue workshop held in June 2024.</p> <p>Action by the meeting is in paragraph 3</p>
<p>REFERENCE(S):</p> <p>APIRG Reports ICAO Doc 7300 – The Chicago Convention Annex 12 – Search and Rescue ICAO Doc 9731 – IAMSAR Manual Annex 11 – Air Traffic Services DOC 4444 – PANS /ATM AFI Interregional SAR Workshop and SAREX 2024 report.</p>
<p>Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s):</p> <p>A- Safety B- Capacity and Efficiency</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

Annex 12 to the Convention sets forth the provisions applicable to the **establishment, maintenance and operation** of search and rescue (SAR) services by Contracting States in their territories and over the high seas.

1.1 In order to realize an effective search and rescue system in the region the African States signed a commitment in a high Level meeting held on 10-12 April 2017 in Lomé,

Togo. The commitment referred to as the Lomé declaration outlines an action plan for the region that would ensure an organised and harmonised SAR system in the African continent.

1.2 **APIRG 20 Conclusion 20/10** emphasised on the need for the States to conclude the signing of SAR Agreements in order to facilitate operational cooperation and efficiency when carrying out SAR.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Implementation of an efficient Search and Rescue system remain a challenge in the region. While efforts have been made through various forums to address the needed cooperation and coordination through the signing of SAR Agreements, this area remains as a difficult area to tackle.

2.2 In order to address an identified lack of interregional coordination in SAR in the ICAO regions, the three ICAO regions that neighbour through the Indian Ocean namely APAC, ESAF and MID held a joint interregional workshop in Seychelles in 2016. At this workshop, an action plan was developed that would be implemented by all the three regions. A decision was also made that a bi-annual workshop would be held to review the level of implementation as well as test the SAR system. While the next workshop was held in Oman in 2019, hosted by the MID Regional Office, due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic there has been no opportunity to hold a similar event in the last four years.

2.3 In order to meet the requirements of APIRG 22 Conclusion 22/09, APIRG 23 Conclusion 23/07, and APIRG 24 Decision 24/10, the AFI region held an interregional (ESAF –WACAF) SAR workshop in Luanda Angola on 17-21 June 2024 hosted by the Angolan Civil Aviation Authority, ANAC.

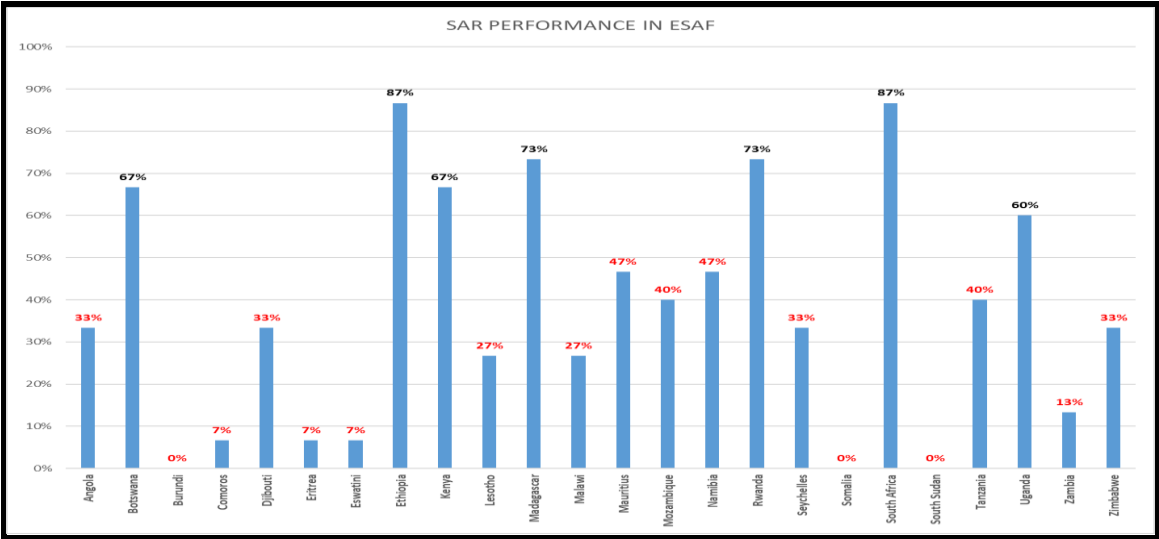
2.4 The workshop brought together 150 participants attended the workshop from 17 States and 3 international organisations. The participants were drawn from the Ministries of Transport, Ministries of Health, Mineral Resources organisations, Oil and Gas industry, Territorial Administration, National Defense, Former Combatants and Veterans of the Homeland, Interior, Social Action, Family and Promotion of Women, Maritime Agency, Navy, Air Force, Police, Fire Service, Medical Emergencies, Investigation and Prevention of Transport Accidents, Air Navigation Service Providers, air operators, local aviation clubs and search and rescue agencies.

Implementation status

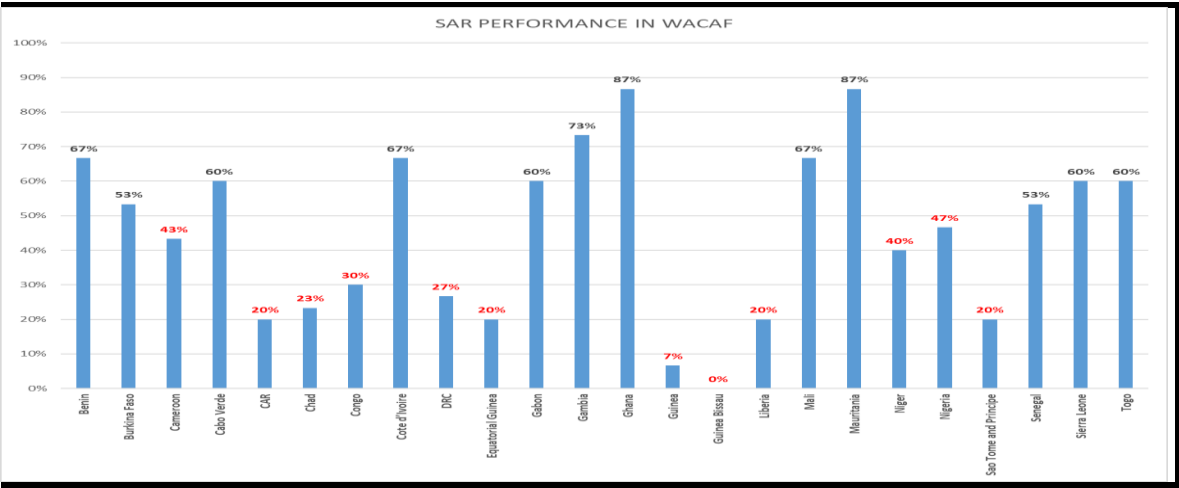
2.5 The workshop noted that the implementation status remain low as indicated in the Tables

below;

ESAF States



WACAF States



Overall Implementation Level

TARGET PERFORMANCE	LEVELS OF	NUMBER OF ESAF STATES	NUMBER OF WACAF STATES	OVERALL STATES	AFI	% OF SAR EI IN AFI
SAR EI ≤ 50%		17	12	29		60.4%
50% < SAR EI ≤ 75%		5	10	15		31.2%
75% < SAR EI ≤ 90%		2	2	4		8.3%
SAR EI > 90%		0	0	0		0.0%

Challenges and Opportunity

2.6 The workshop noted the main challenges faced by the region in implementation of SAR and the available opportunity that can be used for support to improve as captured in the Table below;

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
Inappropriate national SAR organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APIRG, AUC, RECs (ECOWAS, EAC, ECAC, SADC etc.) (institutional commitment) • AFI SAR TET, ICAO, IMO, AFCAC, industry partnerships. (Technical) • AFI Plan, ISG, AfDB etc. (funding) • Implementation of SWIM (technology) • Emerging technologies (e-learning, virtual courses, webinars, enhanced information sharing, use of RPAS for SAR operations etc.)
Relatively low inter states SAR agreements	
Inappropriate civil/military cooperation	
Under staffing at regulatory and provider levels	
insufficient training for SAR personnel (oversight & operational)	
Irregular SAREX at State and regional levels	
Lack or inappropriate operational procedures	
Limited access to funds	
Limited impact of regional projects and initiatives	
Lack of effective information sharing on SAR	

SAR Workshop Recommendations

2.7 The identifying the main challenges in the implementation of SAR faced by the AFI States and other stakeholders developed the following recommendations;

- Promote inter-ministerial meetings to sensitize governments on the importance of the SAR system in the States and on the significant activities;
- senior authorities ensure the establishment of a legal framework for a sustainable and adequate financing mechanism for SAR systems and services;
- Consider support from ICAO and AFCAC to help States obtain funding from regional economic communities (ECOWAS, EAC, ECAC, SADEC)
- The need to drive political will and buy in of our political leaders and regional bodies such as Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Union (AU), and East African Community (EAC).
- Encourage States to develop and implement training programs and plans for capacity building of SAR personnel, including those involved in the supervision of SAR services;
- Plan and organize training seminars for the benefit of national public and private organizations that support the SAR system.
- States are encouraged to conduct SAR exercises for the RCC/RSC in order to determine the state's preparedness.

- h) Encourage RCC/RSCs to regularly plan, organize exercises for the training of their staff and SRUs, and organize joint exercises with other RCCs/RSCs and other SRUs.
- i) Establish a database for maintaining ELTs, EPIRBs, PLBs and distress beacons at 406 MHz;
- j) Raise awareness among operators and users of these beacons and conduct awareness measures on how to avoid false alert transmissions.

SAREX

2.8 The workshop concluded with a FULL SCALE search and rescue exercise (SAREX) conducted by the State of Angola which gave an opportunity to the participants to experience the involvement of all stakeholder coordination in a SAR event.

2.9 The full details of the workshop outcome is in the report attached as **Appendix A**

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information in this working paper;
- b) encourage States to expedite the signing of SAR Agreements, and
- c) Encourage States to take opportunity of the available resources in the region to support the implementation of the national level.

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