


Irish Aviation Authority The Times Building 11–12 D’Olier Street Dublin 2, Ireland www.iaa.ie	Údarás Eitlíochta na hÉireann Foirgneamh na hAmanna 11–12 Sráid D’Olier Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire	AERONAUTICAL NOTICE No. O.76 ISSUE 3 DATE 01.06.2022	
Safety Regulation Division	Rannán na Rialachán Sábháilteachta		

THE CONDUCT OF SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) OPERATIONS IN IRELAND

DIRECTION

The Irish Aviation Authority, in pursuance of Article 7 of the Irish Aviation Authority (Operations) Order, 2006 (S.I. No. 61 of 2006), (hereinafter referred to as “the Order”), hereby directs as follows:

A permission issued to an operator by the Authority in accordance with the Order for the conduct of Search & Rescue (SAR) operations using civil aircraft in the State shall be known as a ‘National SAR Approval’.


Such permission shall be issued subject to the following requirements:

1) The applicant shall:

- a) be the holder of a valid Air Operator Certificate (AOC), including relevant Specific Approvals (SPAs) as may be necessary, issued by the Authority in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 of 5 October 2012 (as amended);
- b) have documented SAR operational procedures acceptable to the Authority;
- c) comply with any operational conditions and limitations as specified by the Authority on the National SAR Approval document;
- d) be subject to such system as the Authority shall establish to analyse findings of non-compliance with the accepted SAR operational procedures for their safety significance; and
- e) comply with the ‘National SAR Rules’, as appended to this Direction.

Aeronautical Notice O.76 Issue 2 is hereby withdrawn.

**Aviation Regulator / CEO Designate
Irish Aviation Authority**


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Appendix 1 to


Aeronautical Notice Operations (A.N.O.) 76

Search and Rescue Rules

(‘National SAR Rules’)

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1 SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The provision of Search and Rescue (SAR) flights by civil aviation operators is a vital element of the State's integrated SAR system as determined by the National SAR Plan (NSP) published by the Department of Transport (DoT).


The National SAR Plan. The NSP details the key components of the national SAR system, namely the maritime, aeronautical, and land SAR domains. It also outlines the roles played by DoT, the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG), an Garda Síochána (AGS), the National SAR committee, and the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) (Safety Regulation Division (SRD) and Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP)).

A SAR operational flight has been defined in the NSP as a flight operating under a SAR Approval when tasked by the SAR tasking agency. The purpose of these flights is to locate, recover, and deliver to a place of safety, persons in distress, potential distress, or missing. SAR flights are conducted on behalf of the State 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). Such SAR missions are specifically tasked by the IRCG over seas, lakes, waterways and rivers, coastal and remote areas including mountains, caves, and islands.


Pursuant to Section 14 of the Irish Aviation Authority Act, 1993 the IAA has been assigned responsibility for the regulation and oversight of civil aviation in the State.

1.1 Regulatory, guidance and policy references

Regulation; Statutory Instrument or Aeronautical Notice		Link to Regulation
(EU) 2018/1139	The Basic Regulation (referenced as the EASA REGULATION in this document)	Regulations EASA (europa.eu) or EU law - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
(EU) 965/2012	Air Operations	Regulations EASA (europa.eu) or EU law - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
(EU) 1178/2011	Aircrew	Regulations EASA (europa.eu) or EU law - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
(EU) 923/2012	SERA	Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012
ICAO Doc 9966	'Manual for the Oversight of Fatigue Management Approaches' and associated guidance provided in the ICAO 'Fatigue Management Guide for Helicopter Operators'	
Act No. 29 of 1993	Irish Aviation Authority Act, 1993	Publications (iaa.ie)
S.I. No. 324 of 1996	Airworthiness of Aircraft Order	Publications (iaa.ie)


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S.I. No. 333 of 2000	Personnel Licensing Order	Publications (iaa.ie)
S.I. No. 61 of 2006	The Operations Order	Publications (iaa.ie)
Aeronautical Notice A.108	Airworthiness Certification for Aircraft whilst carrying out Search and Rescue Operations	Publications (iaa.ie)
Aeronautical Notice O.58	Flight Time Limitations and Rest Requirements (FTL) for crew members undertaking helicopter Commercial Air Transport (CAT) Operations and declared Commercial Specialised Operations (SPO) and Non-Commercial Operations with Complex Motor-Powered Helicopters (Part-NCC)	Publications (iaa.ie)
Aeronautical Notice O.76	The conduct of Search and Rescue (SAR) operations in Ireland	Publications (iaa.ie)
Aeronautical Notice No. P.23	Pilot Licensing Requirements for Search and Rescue	Publications (iaa.ie)
IAMSAR Manuals	International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manuals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume I, Organization and Management, discusses the global SAR system concept, establishment and improvement of national and regional SAR systems and co-operation with neighbouring States to provide effective and economical SAR services. • Volume II, Mission Coordination, assists personnel who plan and co-ordinate SAR operations and exercises. • Volume III, Mobile Facilities, is intended to be carried aboard rescue units, aircraft and vessels to help with performance of a search, rescue or on-scene co-ordinator function, and with aspects of SAR that pertain to their own emergencies 	
National SAR Plan	National SAR Plan published in 2019 and subsequent updates	Gov.ie

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Note: Please consult Regulations | EASA (europa.eu) or EU law - EUR-Lex (europa.eu) for latest revisions of EU Regulations.

Please consult Publications (iaa.ie) for latest revisions of National regulations and Aeronautical Notices.


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1.2 Terminology and abbreviations


All terminology and abbreviations used in this document.

(a) Terminology


AGS (An Garda Síochána)	As the police and security service for the State of Ireland, An Garda Síochána is responsible for land-based search and rescue and the coordination of searches and investigations for missing persons
Acceptable Means of Compliance	Means non-binding standards adopted by the Agency to illustrate means to establish compliance with the EASA Regulation and its Implementing Rules
Aeronautical Notice	Aeronautical Notices contain essential information of an administrative or technical nature and serve as a means of notifying Directions made by the Irish Aviation Authority
Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC)	The Irish Aviation Authority, Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP), operates two ARCCs. The main ARCC is based at the Shannon Air Traffic Control Centre and the Aeronautical Rescue Sub Centre at the Dublin Air Traffic Control Centre
Air Operations	Regulation (EU) No 965/2012
Aircrew	Regulation (EU) No 1178/2011
DoT	Department of Transport
Emergency Services	‘Emergency Services’ means any organisation performing a role in response to an emergency that the IRCG may task an On-Duty CG Aircraft to support, including but not limited to the principal emergency services, the principal response agencies and their contractors
Flight Following	Flight following means a system for providing the position of a helicopter to a person or organisation at a location remote from the helicopter at frequent and regular intervals by means other than voice communication thereby ensuring that the position of the helicopter is known throughout the flight

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Hostile environment	<p>'Hostile environment' means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. an area in which: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. a safe forced landing cannot be accomplished because the surface is inadequate; or ii. the helicopter occupants cannot be adequately protected from the elements; or iii. search and rescue response/capability are not provided consistent with anticipated exposure; or iv. there is an unacceptable risk of endangering persons or property on the ground; b. in any case, the following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. for overwater operations, the open sea area north of 45 N and south of 45 S, unless any part is designated as non-hostile by the responsible authority of the State in which the operations take place; and ii. (ii) those parts of a congested area without adequate safe forced landing areas; (ref: Air Operations)
Instrument Flight Rules (IFR)	Rules governing the procedures for conducting instrument flight. Also, a term used by pilots and controllers to indicate type of flight plan (ref: NSP)
Joint rescue coordination centre (JRCC)	A rescue coordination centre responsible for both aeronautical and maritime search and rescue incidents and operations (ref: NSP)
Major Emergency	Cannot be dealt with using normal resources. Multi-agency response to an event that stretches resources to the limit (ref: NSP)
Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre MRCC	Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre responsible for promoting efficient organization of SAR services and for coordinating the conduct of SAR operations within a SAR region. In Ireland the MRCC is based in Dublin and it co-ordinates SAR services with the sub centres (RCCs) and the ARCC
Marine ambulance response team (MART)	<p>Health Service Executive (HSE) provided 'mission ready' marine ambulance response team who are trained and qualified to embark on ships via helicopter. This service is provided to the IRCG in accordance with an SLA between the IRCG and the HSE.</p> <p>The purpose of the team is to provide experienced, well-equipped, and self-sufficient pre-hospital care providers to a range of major emergencies or other incidents, if requested</p>

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Marine incident response groups (MIRG)	Dublin Fire Brigade (DFB) provided a 'mission ready' specially trained team of firefighters who are trained and qualified to embark on ships via helicopter. This service is provided to the IRCG in accordance with an SLA between the IRCG and DFB. The purpose of the team is to provide experienced, specially equipped and self-sufficient firefighters to assist with firefighting or other incidents on board ship
Non-hostile environment	'Non-hostile environment' means an environment in which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a safe forced landing can be accomplished; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the helicopter occupants can be protected from the elements; and ii. search and rescue response/capability is provided consistent with the anticipated exposure. b. In any case, those parts of a congested area with adequate safe forced landing areas shall be considered non-hostile; (ref: Air Operations)
Operator	A person, organisation or enterprise engaged in or offering to engage in an aircraft operation (ref: NSP) Any legal or natural person, operating or proposing to operate one or more aircraft or one or more aerodromes (ref: The EASA Regulation)
Operations Manual (OM) (AOC)	The OM should contain at least the following information, where applicable, as relevant for the area and type of operation: OM Part A (OMA) - General/Basic OM Part B (OMB) - Aircraft Operating Matters - Type Related OM Part C (OMC) - Route/Role/Area and Aerodrome/Operating Site Instructions and Information OM Part D (OMD) - Training
Principal Response agencies (PRA)	The principal response agencies are the agencies designated by the government to respond to Major Emergencies, that is, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authorities
Rescue coordination centre (RCC)	A unit responsible for promoting efficient organisation of SAR services and for coordinating the conduct of SAR operations within a SAR region (ref: NSP)


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SAR	<p>The all-weather activity of responding to tasking related to locating and recovering persons in distress, potential distress or missing, delivering them to a place of safety and recovering to an operational base.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Search An operation normally managed by the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC), Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) or Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) using available personnel, facilities and equipment to locate persons in distress. ▪ Rescue An operation to retrieve persons in distress, provide for their initial medical or other needs and deliver them to a place of safety (ref: NSP)
SAR crew	The members of crew required to operate a helicopter on a SAR flight, e.g., flight crew – commander/co-pilot, SAR technical crew members – winch operator (W/O) / winchman (W/M); or that combination stated in the company operations manual (ref: NSP)
SAR flight	Generic term for a flight conducted under a SAR Approval e.g. SAR operational flight or SAR training flight (ref: NSP)
SAR flight crew	Flight crew – commander/co-pilot (ref: NSP)
SAR operating base	An aerodrome at which the SAR crew and the SAR helicopter are normally on stand-by for SAR operations (ref: NSP)
SAR Operating Site (on scene)	The position of the survivor(s) or a site selected by the commander for the purpose of conducting a rescue (ref: NSP)
SAR operational flight	<p>A flight by a helicopter operating under a SAR Approval when tasked by the SAR tasking agency, the purpose of which is to locate and deliver to a place of safety persons in distress and recover to base.</p> <p>Procedures for the control and management of the tasking process are to be established and maintained with the SAR tasking agency (ref: NSP)</p> <p>Refer to section 3.2 for a description of SAR operational flight types</p>

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SAR passenger	A SAR passenger is defined as a person other than SAR crew carried during a SAR flight whose function is relevant to the task, who is one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist rescue or life-saving personnel; • Medical personnel; • An ill or injured person and other persons involved; • Survivors/casualties; • Ground/maritime emergency service personnel; and • Other persons as may be approved by the IAA (ref: NSP)
SAR Supplement	SAR operations manual
SAR Training Flight	A flight conducted for the purpose of training a SAR crew. This includes initial, recurrent and additional SAR training as defined by the operator (ref: NSP)
SAR tasking agency	A place where the launch and co-ordination or control of the SAR service takes place, e.g., Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre, MRCC, RCC or a JRCC
SAR TC	SAR technical crew members – winch operator/winchman; or that combination stated in the company operations manual (ref: NSP)
Secondary SAR asset	A SAR asset (helicopter) tasked by the tasking agency to support a primary SAR asset. Support provided by fixed wing is called ‘Top cover’
Tasking	A request to launch a SAR asset in accordance with the operational SAR stakeholder’s published procedures (ref: NSP)
Top cover	Aerial assets normally fixed-wing, used for communication relay, on-scene command, casualty location, foreign translation, dropping of live-saving articles, SAR support or chase aircraft (ref: NSP)
Suitable accommodation	Means for the purpose of standby, split duty and rest, a separate room for each crew member located in a quiet environment and equipped with a bed, which is sufficiently ventilated, has a device for regulating temperature and light intensity, and access to food and drink (AN O.58)
Visual flight rules (VFR)	Rules governing procedures for conducting flight under visual meteorological conditions. In addition, used by pilots and controllers to indicate type of flight plan (ref: NSP)

Note: Please refer to Air Operations Part-DEF for definitions used in Air Operations


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(b) Abbreviations

ADS-B	Automatic Dependent Surveillance–Broadcast
AGS	An Garda Síochána
ANSP	Air Navigation Service Provider
AOC	Air Operator Certification
ARCC	Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATPL	Airline Transport Pilot Licence
ATS	Air Traffic Services
CPL	Commercial Pilot Licence
CAT	Commercial Air Transport
CRM	Crew Resource Management
CVR	Cockpit Voice Recorder
DG	Dangerous Goods
DoT	Department of Transport
EASA	European Union Aviation Safety Agency
EFB	Electronic Flight Bag
EU	European Union
FC	Flight Crew
FCL	Flight Crew Licencing
FSTD	Flight Simulation Training Device
FTL	Flight and Duty Time Limitations and Rest requirements
(H)	Helicopter
HEMS	Helicopter Emergency Medical Service
HESLO	Helicopter External Sling Load Operations
IAA	Irish Aviation Authority
IAMSAR	International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IDE	Instruments, Data and Equipment
IFR	Instrument Flight Rules
IMC	Instrument Meteorological Conditions
IRCG	Irish Coast Guard
JRCC	Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre
LPC	Licence Proficiency Check
LVO	Low Visibility Operations
MART	Marine Ambulance Response Team
MED	Medical
MIRG	Marine Incident Response Group
MRCC	Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre
NSP	National SAR Plan
NVIS	Night Vision Imaging System
OPC	Operator Proficiency Check
PIC	Pilot-In-Command
PRA	Principle Response Agencies

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RCC	Rescue Co-ordination Centre
SAR	Search and Rescue
S.I.	(Irish) Statutory Instrument
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea
SRD	(IAA) Safety and Regulatory Department
TC	Technical Crew
TCE	Technical Crew Examiner
TCI	Technical Crew Instructor
VFR	Visual Flight Rules
VMC	Visual Meteorological Conditions

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2 SECTION 2 – NATIONAL SAR APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Aeronautical Notice O.76

Aeronautical Notice O.76 directs that an applicant for a National SAR Approval shall:

- a) be the holder of a valid Air Operator Certificate (AOC), including relevant Specific Approvals (SPAs) as may be necessary, issued by the IAA in accordance with Air Operations;
- b) comply with the Search and Rescue Rules as set out in this appendix and any other operational conditions and limitations as specified by the Authority on the National SAR Approval document; and
- c) be subject to the system determined by the IAA to analyse findings of non-compliance with the accepted SAR operational procedures for their safety significance. This system shall be as set out in ARO.GEN.350.


Note: *The holding of a valid AOC issued by the IAA in accordance with the EASA Regulation demonstrates the operator has developed adequate processes for management of all aspects of its operations including safety risk management and safety assurance systems. It also provides that the IAA will have an oversight role in the initial and continuing airworthiness of the aircraft utilised.*

The documented SAR operational procedures and any conditions and limitations as specified by the IAA on the National SAR Approval document and in this appendix will be dependent on the individual operator's proposed scope of operation and associated training and checking programmes.

2.2 Specific approvals

The applicant for a National SAR Approval shall hold an Air Operator Certificate with the relevant Specific Approvals (SPAs), issued by the IAA, as follows:

- a) In every case, a Helicopter Emergency Medical Services Operations (HEMS) in accordance with Air Operations – Part-SPA Subpart J: Helicopter emergency medical services operation.
- b) In the following cases, where the operator requires the use of certain equipment while conducting SAR operations, the following Specific Approvals shall be held:
 - 1) Where a type B Electronic Flight Bag is being used by the operator, a Use of Type B Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) Applications in accordance with Air Operations – Part-SPA Subpart M: Electronic Flight bags (EFB).
 - 2) Where Night Vision Imaging Systems (NVIS) are being used by the operator, a NVIS approval in accordance with Air Operations – Part-SPA Subpart H: Helicopter operations with night vision imaging systems.

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Note: *Specific minima for NVIS operations when conducted on SAR flights will be specified in the operator’s operations manual SAR supplement.*

3 SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL SAR APPROVAL

3.1 General

IRCG operations may require the use of SAR assets for purposes other than SAR. SAR operational flights do not include the provision of other civil aviation activities such as Commercial Air Transport (CAT) (e.g., air ambulance and HEMS etc.) or Commercial SPO activities (e.g., aerial photography, maintenance check flights, pollution control, fisheries protection, marine surveillance etc.) which are all aviation activities which must be conducted in accordance with the EASA regulations.

3.2 SAR operational flight types

A SAR operational flight must be tasked by the IRCG and may be conducted for any of the following reasons:


- a) Search and Rescue operations including recoveries, at sea;
- b) Rescue or medical transfers to/from offshore islands;
- c) Cliff and coastal searches, inland waterways, mountain searches, rescues and recoveries; and/or
- d) Where access to and extraction of the casualty is not safe by an ambulance crew or emergency services.
- e) Provision of ‘top cover’ (fixed wing), a ‘secondary SAR asset’ (helicopter) in support of a primary SAR asset on any operational SAR mission.
- f) Delivering and attaching emergency location beacons to maritime casualties.
- g) Transporting Naval, Garda, MART or MIRG personnel, as part of a SAR operation.
- h) Transportation of emergency service personnel as an element of a SAR operation.
- i) Assisting aircraft in distress.
- j) Assisting other principle response agencies (PRA) in the event of a major emergency or environmental events including, flood, fire, snow or other weather related event.

Note: *Any SAR mission includes casualty transfer to a place of safety such as a hospital and subsequent return to base during a SAR operational flight as defined above.*

4 SECTION 4 – EXEMPTIONS

The conduct of SAR operations may require exemption(s) from the specific requirements of aviation legislation. These exemption(s) may be granted by the IAA, providing the operator applies for such exemption(s) and presents a satisfactory safety case, including but not limited to;

- a) A detailed risk assessment of the specific operations for which exemptions are sought;
- b) The associated operations manual SAR supplement procedures, including specified minima; and
- c) Details of route design e.g. acceptable navigation data sources and operating minima (including minimum heights) for any operator pre-defined routes.

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5 SECTION 5 – OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Operations manual – general

- 5.1.1 Procedures for the conduct and supervision of SAR operations must be established in a supplement to the AOC operations manuals named the SAR supplement. This SAR supplement shall contain instructions and information necessary for operational personnel to perform their SAR duties and it may cross reference other parts of the operations manuals as appropriate.
- 5.1.2 The operator shall ensure a record is maintained to differentiate mission types.
- 5.1.3 The SAR supplement and operations manuals shall describe the management and supervision of SAR flights and the procedures used for the initiation, continuation, termination, and diversion of a SAR operational flight.
- 5.1.4 The SAR supplement and operations manuals shall describe the organisational management structure for flight and technical crew.
- 5.1.5 The content of the operations manuals and SAR supplement shall be acceptable to the IAA.
- 5.1.6 Every flight shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the operations manuals and the SAR supplement.


Note: *The structure of the operations manuals shall be in accordance with Air Operations AMC3 ORO.MLR.100 and the SAR supplement will be in accordance with the format in Annex A.*

5.2 Helicopter performance requirements

Recognising the need to make every reasonable effort to minimise the period during which there would be risk to the helicopter occupants and/or persons on the surface in the event of failure of a power unit:

5.2.1 SAR operational flight

- 5.2.1.1** Helicopters conducting operations to/from a heliport at a hospital that is located in a hostile congested environment are to be operated in accordance with Performance Class 1 standards laid down in Air Operations Annex IV ‘Part-CAT’;
- 5.2.1.2** Helicopter operations to/from a SAR operating site located in hostile/non hostile environment, should, as far as possible, be operated in accordance with Performance Class 2 standards laid down in Air Operations Annex IV ‘Part-CAT’. Operations in Performance class 2 without an assured safe forced landing are

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permitted on the assessment of the commander that the aviation risk to third parties, the crew, and the aircraft such that it is proportionate to the task.

5.2.1.3 The SAR operating site must be large enough to provide adequate clearance from all obstructions. For night operations, the site must be illuminated (from the ground or from the helicopter) to enable the site and any obstructions to be identified.

5.2.1.4 Equivalent procedures must be laid down for Night Vision Imaging System (NVIS) operations if applicable.

5.2.2 SAR training flight

5.2.2.1 Helicopters conducting training flights to/from a heliport at a hospital that is located in a hostile congested environment are to be operated in accordance with Performance Class 1 standards laid down in Air Operations Annex IV 'Part-CAT';

5.2.2.2 Helicopter operations to/from a training site located in a hostile environment, should, as far as possible, be operated in accordance with Performance Class 2 standards laid down in Air Operations Annex IV 'Part-CAT'; and Operations in Performance class 2 without an assured safe forced landing are only permitted:

- a) For brief periods during take-off and landing.
- b) Subject to appropriate operator procedures, (acceptable to the IAA) to minimize the exposure period whilst permitting realistic training.
- c) Subject to a risk assessment by the operator.

***Note:** Except for SAR operations at a SAR operating site, the SAR training crew shall ensure that the helicopter shall be capable of sustaining a critical engine failure with the remaining engine(s) at the appropriate power setting without hazard to the suspended person(s)/cargo, third parties or property.*

5.2.2.3 The SAR operating site must be large enough to provide adequate clearance from all obstructions. For night operations, the site must be illuminated (from the ground or from the helicopter) to enable the site and any obstructions to be identified. Equivalent procedures must be laid down for Night Vision Imaging System (NVIS) operations if applicable.


5.3 SAR flight crew

5.3.1 Minimum experience

The SAR supplement shall contain specific criteria for the selection of SAR crew and shall detail the minimum experience and recency levels for all SAR crew.

5.3.2 Additional requirements

In addition to the requirements of Air Operations Part-ORO, Subparts FC, the following shall apply to SAR operations.

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5.3.2.1 SAR flight-crew qualifications:

- a) Each member of the flight crew shall hold an appropriate Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (ATPL)(H) (if applicable) or Commercial Pilot's Licence (CPL)(H) including an appropriate instrument rating.
- b) The flight-crew shall successfully complete the operator's initial and recurrent SAR training and checking programmes.

5.3.2.2 Experience

- a) The minimum experience level for commanders conducting SAR flights shall not be less than 1,000 hours as pilot-in-command (PIC)/pilot-in-command under-supervision (PIC U/S) of helicopters. The commander must additionally have 500 hours' operating experience in helicopters gained in a SAR operational environment similar to the intended operation.
- b) Commanders engaged in night operations shall have 20 hours' VFR at night as PIC.

5.4 SAR technical crew (TC)

5.4.1 Minimum experience

The SAR supplement shall contain specific criteria for the selection of SAR TC and shall detail the minimum experience and recency levels for all SAR TC.

5.4.1 Additional requirements


In addition to the requirements of Air Operations Part-ORO, Subparts TC, the following shall apply to SAR operations.

5.4.1.1 SAR tech crew qualifications:

- a) are at least 18 years of age;
- b) Hold a valid Class 2 medical certificate issued in accordance with Aircrew, specifically Part-MED and have been assessed as physically and mentally fit to perform their duties and discharge their responsibilities safely. Prior to being assigned to SAR duties, or before being re-assigned following a decrease in medical fitness, SAR TC must be assessed in accordance with Aircrew, Part-MED.
- c) have successfully completed the operator's initial and recurrent SAR training and checking programme based on the requirements outlined in Section 6 paragraph 6.3 (SAR technical crew training and checking) of this document.

5.4.1.1 Experience

A TC member may be accredited for elements of the above training requirements based on previous SAR experience in a similar operating environment, as documented in the operations manual.

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5.5 Flight time limitations and rest requirements (FTL) approval

- 5.5.1 The operator shall establish and maintain an FTL scheme with a maximum flight duty period of 12 hours, with the total duty time not exceeding 14 hours, in accordance with the provision of Aeronautical Notice O.58. This FTL scheme should be approved by the IAA.
- 5.5.2 The FTL scheme may be subject to variation (e.g. 24-hour roster) where an operator has developed an approved, performance-based approach that requires the operator to implement a Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS), taking account of the guidance provided by ICAO Doc 9966 'Manual for the Oversight of Fatigue Management Approaches' and associated guidance provided in the ICAO 'Fatigue Management Guide for Helicopter Operators'.
- 5.5.3 The variation in place for the existing SAR operator at time of publication of these SAR Rules shall remain in place until revoked or amended.
- 5.5.4 In the event of a new National SAR Approval being granted (e.g. in the event of award of new contract by the State) 5.5.1 and 5.5.2 apply. The IAA will have regard to any supporting evidence from comparable operations in other jurisdictions in assessing any case for a limited period variation in advance of the implementation of a FRMS.


5.6 SAR operating minima

- a) The operator shall specify the minima appropriate to SAR operational and training flights.
- b) Operations below standard regulatory requirements require an exemption that may be granted by the IAA, providing the operator applies for such exemption(s) and presents a satisfactory safety case.
- c) The accuracy of navigation shall be in accordance with airspace requirements.
- d) Planning minima for Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flights and flights operated in instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) shall be conducted in accordance with specified company minima.
- e) Offshore en-route let-down below the IFR minimum altitude shall be conducted in accordance with company procedures.
- f) Commander's discretion shall only be permitted if procedures are published in the operator's SAR supplement and are appropriate to the SAR task and environment. The procedures shall be dependent on the aircraft equipment status, the recurrent training status of the SAR crew and the urgency of the task.

5.7 Flight following

The operator shall use a monitored flight following system for SAR operations from the time the helicopter departs until it arrives at its final destination. A flight following system may consist of any of the following or similar items:

- a) Satellite tracking;
- b) ATC tracking and information;
- c) ADS-B tracking and display.

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5.8 Fuel policy

The operator shall establish a fuel policy for SAR operations which will be approved by the IAA.

5.9 Refuelling with passengers on board

The operations manuals shall include procedures for refuelling and de-fuelling with SAR passengers on board.

5.10 Helicopter SAR role and medical equipment

- a) The installation of equipment, including SAR role equipment and medical equipment, should be in accordance with the provisions of the EASA Regulation and the applicable regulations for Airworthiness.
- b) Any required maintenance on installed equipment should be performed in accordance with the approved instructions for continued airworthiness where such data is issued.
- c) Maintenance on installed equipment should be performed by organisations holding the appropriate maintenance approval.
- d) The operator should ensure that procedures are established for the maintenance and use of portable equipment on board, including role equipment and carry-on safety equipment, as appropriate.

5.11 Helicopter communication equipment

5.11.1 General

Helicopters conducting SAR operational flights shall be equipped with communications equipment (in addition to that required by Air Operations PART-CAT Subpart D Section 2 (IDE.H)) capable of conducting two-way communication with the organisation for which SAR is being provided and communicating with ground/maritime emergency service personnel.

5.11.2 Rescue call sign


In order to distinguish a SAR helicopter from general traffic, a specific alphanumeric call sign shall be used by SAR helicopters. The call sign shall include the prefix "**Rescue**" followed by a three-digit numeric identifier specific to the base of operation (e.g. 'Rescue helicopter 100').

5.12 Helicopter equipment and requirements for offshore operations

The operator should ensure that SAR helicopters being operated offshore shall be equipped for SAR operations in a hostile environment.

5.13 SAR operating base facilities

- a) If crew members are required to be on stand-by with a reaction time of 45 minutes or less, dedicated suitable accommodation and catering facilities should be provided at, or close to, each operating base.
- b) At each operating base, the crew shall be provided access to:

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- 1) cloud base and visibility indicating and recording systems;
 - 2) facilities for obtaining current and forecast weather information; and
 - 3) satisfactory communications with the appropriate IRCG Rescue Co-ordination Centre/Rescue Co-ordination Sub Centre (RCC/RSC) and ATS unit and other agencies.
- c) Satisfactory facilities shall be available for the planning of all tasks.

5.14 SAR flights at certificated and licensed aerodromes out of normal operating hours

A SAR Operator shall establish procedures with an aerodrome operator at a certificated or licenced aerodrome so as to permit SAR operations to operate to/from that aerodrome out of normal operating hours, taking into account ATS, airspace classification, impact on other airspace users, Rescue and Fire Fighting Service, insurance & liability, helicopter performance, departure and approach paths, aerodrome operating minima and obstacle clearance etc.

5.15 SAR flights at unlicensed aerodromes, airfields and all other sites

Notwithstanding the requirement to land at a SAR operating site without the landowners permission, whenever possible the operator should establish procedures for SAR flights to operate to/from unlicensed aerodromes, airfields and all other operating sites, listed in the operators landing site directory, taking into account landowner permission, ATS, airspace classification, impact on other airspace users, Rescue and Fire Fighting Service, insurance and liability, helicopter performance, departure and approach paths, aerodrome operating minima, obstacle clearance etc.

5.16 Passenger safety

An operator shall establish:

- a) Procedures to ensure the safety of all SAR passengers (see 1.2 Terminology and abbreviations for definition of SAR passenger).
- b) Method for the carriage of SAR passengers.
- c) Procedures to ensure that, whenever it is reasonably practicable, all SAR passengers are secured in an approved seat or stretcher. Where this is not possible an operator shall establish an alternative procedure, which shall be acceptable to the IAA.

5.17 Briefing of SAR passengers


An operator shall establish procedures to ensure that, where practicable, all passengers are adequately briefed prior to a flight (reference Section 7.1).

6 SECTION 6 – TRAINING AND CHECKING

6.1 Training and checking programme for SAR crew (flight and technical crew)

6.1.1 General

The operator shall establish a training and checking programme approved by the IAA, that shall include, as a minimum, the applicable elements of Air Operations Subparts ORO.FC and ORO.TC.

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The SAR training and checking programmes shall include at least the following:

- a) All operator operations manuals, including the operator SAR supplement;
- b) Crew composition and individual crew member responsibilities;
- c) Crew Resource Management, Threat and Error Management, and Fatigue Risk Management training that is specific to the SAR operating environment;
- d) Emergency and Safety equipment training and checking that is focussed upon the actual equipment carried or fitted;
- e) Water entry and sea survival training, including operation of all associated equipment;

6.2 SAR flight crew training and checking

6.2.1 Training

6.2.1.1 The flight crew shall satisfy Aircrew Part-FCL and Air Operations Annex III (Part-ORO) Subpart FC training requirements.

6.2.1.2 The operator shall ensure that all SAR flight crew are trained and checked in all specialisations of the SAR role. This training and checking shall include the use of suitable Flight Simulation Training Devices (FSTDs), capable of simulating SAR specialisations.


6.2.1.3 The SAR flight crew shall also undertake training in relation to SAR specific disciplines including the following additional items:

- a) meteorological training concentrating on the understanding and interpretation of available weather information in the SAR operating environment;
- b) preparing the helicopter and specialist role equipment for subsequent SAR departure;
- c) practice of SAR departures (relevant to the scope of operations);
- d) the assessment from the air of the suitability of SAR operating sites;
- e) the medical effects air transport may have on the patient/survivor; and
- f) liaison and training with the IRCG, other emergency services, declared resources and ATS units.

6.2.2 Checking

6.2.2.1 The flight crew shall satisfy Aircrew Part-FCL and Air Operations Annex III (Part-ORO) Subpart C checking requirements with the following additional items:

6.2.2.2 IMC proficiency and VMC proficiency day and/or night checks as appropriate including the landing and take-off profiles likely to be used at SAR operating sites, aerodromes and airports.

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6.2.2.3 Operator proficiency and line checks with special emphasis on the following:

- a) local area meteorology;
- b) SAR flight planning;
- c) SAR departures;
- d) search patterns;
- e) homing exercises;
- f) hoisting – normal and emergency procedures;
- g) the selection from the air of SAR operating sites to include land-based and water-based rescue situations including vessels, offshore installations, mountain and cliff situations etc.;
- h) simulated low-level flight in poor weather;
- i) operations into hospital and operating sites;
- j) poor weather recovery procedures, including the use of follow on navigation and use of sensors;
- k) mountain flying techniques where appropriate; and
- l) NVIS Operations.

6.2.2.4 Prior to operating, a SAR flight crew member shall undergo a SAR proficiency check to verify proficiency in their specific roles.

6.2.2.5 All SAR flight crew checks, tests and recency shall be conducted and recorded in accordance with the operator’s documented procedures.

6.3 SAR technical crew training and checking

6.3.1 Training

6.3.1.1 SAR TC members should be trained and checked in accordance with the requirements of Air Operations Part-ORO Subpart TC and appropriate to the roles of the crew member. SAR TC crew should also be trained and checked in the following additional disciplines:

6.3.1.2 Navigation (map reading, navigation aid principles and use):


- a) mission planning, including range and endurance;
- b) in-flight navigation and use of navigation equipment;
- c) meteorological considerations; and
- d) search patterns.

6.3.1.3 Operation of radio equipment:

- a) radio communication technique and terminology;
- b) civil, military, maritime and distress frequencies; and
- c) use of helicopter communication equipment as required in the role.

6.3.1.4 Operation of specialist SAR equipment:

- a) use of search and sensor equipment fitted to the helicopter, including during homing exercises and operations;

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- b) use and deployment of air droppable life rafts; and
- c) NVIS operations, where applicable.

6.3.1.5 Use of on-board medical equipment:

- a) safety of crew members, SAR passengers including casualties when equipment is in use; and;
- b) handling of clinical waste and human remains.

6.3.1.6 Preparing the helicopter and specialist medical equipment for subsequent SAR departure:

- a) pre-flight equipment and systems check;
- b) decontamination; and
- c) securing of the cabin.

6.3.1.7 Cockpit familiarisation, aircraft systems, instrument interpretation, warnings, advisories, and use of normal and emergency checklists as required.

6.3.1.8 Location and operation of normal and emergency systems and equipment.

6.3.1.9 Crew resource management and co-ordination, including:

- a) emphasis on importance of airmanship; and
- b) communication with flight crew, particularly the roles of TC members during all phases of flight.

6.3.1.10 Practice of response to SAR call-outs.


6.3.1.11 Conducting refuelling/defueling and rotors-running refuelling (as applicable).

6.3.1.12 SAR operating site selection and use:

- a) site reconnaissance;
- b) identification of hazards associated with specific operating sites, including mountains, cliffs, offshore installations and vessels, as applicable;
- c) recognition of meteorological conditions associated with specific sites; and
- d) landing and take-off at confined areas.

6.3.1.13 Techniques for handling SAR passengers:

- a) briefing of passengers;
- b) carriage of specialist rescue personnel and their equipment, including animals;
- c) seating and distribution of passengers and any associated equipment with implications to helicopter mass and balance;
- d) effect of the movement of personnel on the centre of gravity and mass during hoisting operations;
- e) effect of the movement of personnel on performance during normal and emergency flight conditions; and
- f) storage of articles and equipment carried by passengers in the cabin.

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6.3.1.14 Techniques for handling patients/survivors and medical training/checking should be in accordance with the standard required by the IRCG.

6.3.1.15 Marshalling signals:

- a) voice marshalling technique and terminology.

6.3.1.16 Hoist operations:

- a) helicopter performance, single engine performance and actions in the event of loss of one engine in the hover;
- b) use of Auto-Hover Trim;
- c) operation of the hoist systems;
- d) pre-flight and post-flight checks of the hoist systems;
- e) recording of hoist cycles;
- f) hoist defect recording (in co-operation with the commander) and reporting;
- g) safety of persons on board when operating with door open;
- h) use of harnesses and strops;
- i) voice and visual communications during hoisting; and
- j) hoisting over land, water, cliffs, vessels, and life rafts including:
 - 1) single and double lifts;
 - 2) hypothermic casualty lifts;
 - 3) stretcher lifts;
 - 4) use of hi-line;
 - 5) deployment of marine emergency pumps and equipment;
 - 6) day and night hoisting procedures; and
 - 7) hoist malfunctions and associated actions.


6.3.2 The hazards to the crew of rotors-running helicopters including loading and unloading of passengers.

6.3.3 Checking

6.3.3.1 SAR TC members should be checked in accordance with the requirements of Air Operations Part-ORO Subpart TC appropriate to the roles of the TC crew member.

6.3.3.2 SAR TC should be required to undergo SAR specific line-checks, recurrent training and checking with special emphasis on the following items:

- a) local area meteorology;
- b) SAR flight planning;
- c) SAR departures;
- d) navigation (map reading, navigation aid principles and use);
- e) search patterns;
- f) hoisting – normal and emergency procedures;
- g) the selection from the air of SAR operating sites to include land-based and water-based rescue situations including vessels, offshore installations, mountain and cliff situations etc;

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- h) operation of specialist SAR equipment;
- i) use of on-board medical equipment
- j) operations into local hospital sites;
- k) poor weather recovery procedures; including the use of follow on navigation and use of sensors;
- l) HESLO techniques where appropriate; and
- m) NVIS Operations.

6.3.3.3 Prior to operating, a SAR TC member shall undergo a check to verify proficiency in their specific role.

6.3.3.4 All crew checks, tests and recency shall be conducted and recorded in accordance with the operator’s documented procedures.

6.4 SAR technical crew (TC) instructors and examiners

6.4.1 General


Operators should establish appropriate in-company standards for SAR TC nominated to perform instructor and examiner duties. These standards should include at least:

- a) the prerequisite experience to become an instructor and/or examiner;
- b) privileges and conditions of instructors and examiners;
- c) the training course syllabus, including:
 - 1) instructional techniques including training and checking delivery;
 - 2) CRM assessment and facilitation; and
 - 3) SAR role and helicopter type specific training.

A documented assessment of competence for the specific role of the instructor or examiner.

6.4.2 TC instructor (TCI) / TC Examiner (TCE) minimum experience and currency requirements:

- a) A TCI/TCE should have at least 3 years’ experience and a minimum of 300 hours experience in an operational SAR TC role (winch operator or winch man) before he/she can either instruct or examine in that role;
- b) Exemptions to this requirement, with an associated risk assessment may be granted by the Authority if there is a requirement to introduce a new type;
- c) A TCE should be a TCI and have a minimum of 50 hours SAR instructional experience;
- d) A TCI/TCE should be assessed in their role at least every three years; and
- e) In the event of absence from training or checking duties for more than one year, a TCI or TCE should be assessed in the role prior to recommencing instructional or examining duties, providing they have continued to operate as an active SAR TC member.

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7 SECTION 7 - ADDITIONAL BRIEFING AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR SAR PASSENGERS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL

7.1 SAR passenger briefing


Where possible and relevant, SAR passengers are to be briefed on the following prior to flight:

- a) Familiarisation with the helicopter type(s) operated;
- b) Entry and exit under normal and emergency conditions for self and patients;
- c) Use of seatbelts;
- d) The securing and storage of and the use of the relevant on-board specialist medical equipment;
- e) The need for the commander's approval prior to use of specialised equipment;
- f) Method of supervision of other medical staff;
- g) The use of helicopter intercommunication systems;
- h) Location and use of on-board fire extinguishers; and
- i) Use of personal safety equipment.

7.2 Emergency service personnel training and competency

The operator should establish with the IRCG inter-agency operating and training procedures for emergency service personnel including IRCG teams, National Ambulance Service personnel, hospital security staff and any other emergency service organisations/agencies who may be providing personnel and assets for SAR taskings. The operator should provide information to the IRCG and emergency service personnel as appropriate in relation to:

- a) two-way radio communication procedures with helicopters;
- b) the selection of suitable SAR operating sites for SAR flights;
- c) the physical danger areas of helicopters in flight and on the ground;
- d) crowd control in respect of helicopter operations; and
- e) the evacuation of helicopter occupants following an on-site helicopter accident.

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ANNEX A - SAR OPERATIONS MANUAL SUPPLEMENT FORMAT

0. Administration and control of operations manual
1. Organisation and responsibilities
2. Operational control and supervision
3. Management system
4. Crew composition
5. Qualification requirements
6. Crew health precautions
7. Flight time limitations
8. Operations procedures
9. Dangerous goods and weapons
10. Security
11. Handling, notifying, and reporting accidents, incidents and occurrences, and using the CVR recording
12. Rules of the air
13. Leasing
14. SAR Procedures

Note: SAR supplement may signpost to appropriate procedures in the AOC operations manual to avoid duplication and reduce the possibility of conflicting information.