



# National Search And Rescue Committee

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Department of Defense  
Department of Interior  
Department of Commerce  
Department of Transportation  
Department of Homeland Security  
Federal Communications Commission  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

## MINUTES

Regular Session 3-07  
November 15, 2007  
U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters  
Washington, DC 20593-0001

The meeting convened with CAPT Chris Hall, USCG, as Acting Chair. CAPT Hall introduced himself as the new Chief, Office of Search and Rescue, Coast Guard Headquarters, and expressed his pleasure to be able to serve in this capacity.

CAPT Douglas Wisniewski, the Deputy for the NSARC Chair, RADM Justice, apologized for RADM Justice being unable to attend, and made favorable comments about NSARC's integrated effort and about the new National Response Framework being finalized by the Department of Homeland Security.

The Committee was informed that, due to job transfers, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has assigned Mr. Brian Throop to replace Mr. Mike McCormick (FAA) as the NSARC DOT Member, and that the Department of Interior (DOI) will be assigning a replacement for Ranger Dan Pontbriand (NPS) as the NSARC DOI Member.

The MINUTES of the last Regular Session of June 28, 2007, were approved.

### **1. Member Agency Reports.**

a. DOD. Mr. Dan Baumgartner (DOD/DPMO) reported that CDR John Ouellette, who had represented DOD with NSARC over the last few years, had been promoted to Commander and transferred to serve on the Chief, Naval Operations Staff;

- 1) DOD is developing a national policy for Personnel Recovery (PR); expect signature by the President soon. The new policy will apply to all Federal agencies;
- 2) DOD/DPMO is streamlining seven PR-related publications into four; DOD Directive 3002.11 is the principal publication on PR policy;
- 3) Discussed how the international use of the U.S. military for civil SAR and other humanitarian aid has improved views of the United States in many countries.

b. DOT. Mr. Brian Throop reported:

- 1) The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was currently conducting a Universal Safety Oversight Audit (USOAP) of the United States; checking for United States compliance with all ICAO requirements. Audit was going well; and
- 2) FAA is restructuring to centralize FAA SAR duties and to improve management of temporary flight restrictions (TRFs), especially for large, catastrophic events.

c. NASA. Mr. Dave Affens reported that NASA's \$37M budget for the Distress Alerting Satellite System (DASS) proof of concept was being scaled back; NASA SAR funding is back to a pre-DASS level. The Secretary added that other Agencies are now assuming responsibilities and costs for the DASS Demonstration and Evaluation phase.

d. DHS. The Secretary reported:

- 1) The Coast Guard search planning tool, SAROPS, has been fielded, is very successful, and will hopefully be approved for international use;
- 2) That 406 MHz direction-finding (DF) equipment aboard Coast Guard aircraft has been extremely successful; all Coast Guard aircraft are being equipped with 406 MHz DF as quickly as possible. Additionally, requirements have been established for 406 MHz DF for the Coast Guard R21 VHF/MF DSC communications system shore-based towers, as well as cutters and boats;
- 3) Amver: the Coast Guard reported that its worldwide ship reporting system, Amver, is averaging 200-300 lives saved annually; the Coast Guard recently developed a web-based request for Amver Surface Picture (SURPIC) for use by Rescue Coordination Centers (RCCs) worldwide. Amver Program is beginning to partner with other National and private ship reporting systems to increasing the number of participating ships available to divert for SAR; and
- 4) The Coast Guard is working with the State Department and other countries to develop SAR Plans for Antarctica, the Northwest Passage F(Arctic) and other remote areas where transits and tourism are growing.

e. DOC. LT Jeff Shoup reported:

- 1) The number of SARSAT rescues this year will likely exceed prior years;
- 2) Termination of satellite processing of 121.5 MHz alerts is only a little more than a year away (February 1, 2009);
- 3) Continued marketing to the general aviation community to switch to 406 MHz ELTs is starting to show accelerating results, with approximately 192K 406 MHz beacons registered;
- 4) The United States had hosted the 38<sup>th</sup> Closed and Open Cospas-Sarsat Council meetings and celebrated SARSAT's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with 32 countries represented;

- 5) Canada has offered to provide DASS equipment aboard the United States GPS satellites; and
- 6) DOC is still working with DOD on DASS requirements.

## **2. Working Group Reports.**

- a. R&D Working Group. Mr. Affens and Mr. Roy Dreibelbis reported:
  - 1) In addition to the expected United States DASS space segment, the Russian GLONASS and European Union Galileo programs may launch Mid Earth Orbit (MEO) SAR satellites (Note: Galileo SAR equipment may be provided by China); DOD will be a large user of the MEO SAR system;
  - 2) USAF approval is being sought to equip the GPS Block III-B satellites with operational DASS capability; and
  - 3) The R&D Working Group wants to develop a SAR tool to help identify “areas of high probability” for searches over land using radar, 3D display, historical weather and other data; work is being coordinated among NASA, USAF, Civil Air Patrol, Ames Research Center (developer of NASA’s World Wind mapping), etc.
- b. The Mass Rescue Working Group. Mr. Dann Karlson reported that a successful cruise ship exercise had been conducted in August, 2007, in St Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, to test the ability to account for evacuated passengers (Ranger Greg Lawler proposed that the National Park Service should be invited to participate in such exercises).
- c. 121.5 MHz Phase-out Working Group. Mr. Al Knox reported:
  - 1) The 121.5 MHz Phase-out Work Group has not been able to official meet in person, but has continued its work through electronic correspondence.
  - 2) 09-12 May 07: MRO Working Group members met with beacon manufacturers during the Annual NOAA sponsored Beacon Manufacturers Workshop. The Working Group discussed issues associated with possible beacon buy back and or discount purchase programs as well as proper disposal of 121.5 MHz beacons. Several manufacturers are offering discounts on the purchase of new beacons if purchaser trades in an old beacon.
  - 3) Jun 07: a joint NOAA, USCG team conducted education and outreach at the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association Fly-In held in Fredrick, MD. During this event members presented 121.5 alert termination data, false alert mitigation and 406 MHz registration data to general aviation pilots and aviation enthusiasts.
  - 4) 22-29 Jul 07: a joint NOAA, USAF, USCG team conducted 121.5 MHz phase out education and outreach at the Experimental Aircraft Associations annual AirVenture 2007 in Oshkosh, WI. During this period, as part of the International Federal partnership, members presented 121.5 MHz alert termination data as well as ELT and PLB carriage data to the world’s largest gathering of general aviation pilots and aviation enthusiasts. This year more than 625,000 people attended; for the team at the SARSAT booth, the overriding topic of discussion was the termination of 121.5 MHz alert processing. For the fifth year in a row the partnership was inundated with questions regarding the termination of satellite process and carriage requirement questions.

- 5) 04-06 Nov 07: Working Group members conducted education and outreach at the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association Expo 2007 in Hartford, CT. During this event members presented 121.5 MHz alert termination data, false alert mitigation and 406 MHz registration data to general aviation pilots and aviation enthusiasts.
- 6) Working Group members continue to work issues associated with DOD transition to 406 MHz. This includes ensuring that proper coding, registration and installation instructions are inserted into appropriate Service level and below instructions and regulations. 02-03 Aug 07: Working Group members conducted a series of inland 121.5 MHz detection field trails in southern Virginia. In support of the ongoing specification development being conducted by RTCM SC-110 MEB Subcommittee, these field trails were designed to collect data on homing signal detection ranges versus power output. Working Group members continue to support ongoing specification update efforts being conducted by both Radio Technical Committee Maritime (RTCM) and Radio Technical Committee Aviation (RTCA). Both Special Committees are in the final stages of publishing updated specification for both PLBs and ELTs.
- 7) For the last several months members of the working group have been working in coordination with the NTSB regarding FAA carriage requirements in the General Aviation community. The result of that collaboration was NTSB Recommendation A-07-51.

### **3. Task Force Reports.**

- a. USOAP Task Force. Mr. Dann Karlson reported:
  - 1) Two ICAO auditors would be visiting the Coast Guard after the NSARC committee meeting regarding the United States National SAR program (no major issues foreseen).
  - 2) Procedures for implementation of ICAO decisions and United States internal audit processes may need to be improved.
  - 3) The United States would have a chance to react to initial findings before the final ICAO report on the U.S. is finalized.
- b. NSARC Agreement, NSP, NSS and Policy and Procedures Manual. The Secretary, Mr. Tom Terry and Mr. Al Knox reported:
  - 1) The signed National SAR Plan and NSARC Agreement have been posted on the NSARC website ([www.uscg.mil/nsarc](http://www.uscg.mil/nsarc)).
  - 2) Extensive information had been collected from various agencies for updating the National SAR Supplement (NSS) to the IAMSAR Manual; Mr. Dan Lemon was assisting the Secretary with the NSS rewrite.
  - 3) That some important areas where new policy guidance is needed and is being developed include: SAR associated with the National Response Plan/National Response Framework (being called catastrophic incident SAR (CIS)), especially during the first 72 hours; use of grids to communicate locations; and rescue of pets, service animals, and farm animals.
  - 4) Outreach to state and local governments on is required concerning georeferencing; the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is updating its maps and helping to fund this outreach.

- 5) Three geo-referencing systems will be used so that the aviation and ground SAR personnel can work together during catastrophic incident SAR consistent with the new national SAR policy; these systems are: 1) latitude-longitude; 2) the U.S. National Grid (USNG); and 3) the Global Area Reference System (GARS);
- 6) Georeferencing training is available for these grid systems; and various Agency and specialized Addendums may be developed for the NSS, including a CIS Addendum.

#### **4. Presentations.**

- a. Inland SAR Addendum to the National SAR Supplement. Mr. Knox stated that an NSS Inland SAR Addendum similar to the Coast Guard Addendum is being developed to support international requirements, provide guidance on jurisdictional issues, address Federal SAR assistance and relevant agreements, provide for updated search and rescue planning and operations, etc.
- b. FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Role.
  - 1) Mr. Dean Scott provided a US&R brief that included the following points: The 28 sponsoring agencies, mainly large fire departments, each are prepared to field a US&R Task Force to respond to collapsed structure scenarios where persons need to be rescued. These Task Forces are geographically spread throughout the U.S., consist of either 28 persons or of 70 plus persons for heavy SAR, are equipped with a FEMA-funded equipment cache, and are transported on large aircraft and ground transport vehicles. FEMA's Task Forces do not do swift water rescue, because swift water rescue requires a rapid local response.
  - 2) FEMA uses Incident Support Teams to help with initial incident assessments and to facilitate FEMA involvement and Plans to ensure that all interested parties know which Task Force will be deployed next. The two Task Forces have contracts with the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance for international response. US&R is the only response function for which FEMA is responsible and its response readiness had greatly improved since Katrina.

#### **5. Relevant Meetings and Activities.**

- a. National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR).
  - 1) Mr. Dan Hourihan reported that NASAR is working with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) on a national mutual aid system that DHS will fund.
  - 2) NASAR also serves on the Special Operations Committee of the National Sheriff's Association to help improve the connection between SAR with law enforcement; and that NASAR next annual conference will be in Colorado Springs in June; Mr. Cole Brown will be planning and coordinating a States SAR Coordinator's meeting in association with that conference.
- b. National and International Activities: Mr. Richard Button (USCG) reported on several international items which have a range of US involvement:
  - 1) The DPMO delegation is now at the *NATO SAR Panel* in Germany. This semiannual forum allows strong interplay of NATO SAR and civil SAR. Participants include the 26 NATO member States as well as the 23 Partnership for Peace countries.

- 2) *SAR Workshop for Croatia* being held now, organized by combatant command EUCOM, and supported by 2 CGHQ SAR Program and Aviation Forces experts. Croatia has been aggressive in reaching out to the US, and USCG in particular, and presents a unique opportunity for assisting a developing State which in fact is quite advanced in its focus to improve its SAR capabilities.
  - 3) *ICAO-IMO Joint Working Group on SAR* met in Reunion, Africa (French island in Indian Ocean) September 2007. The USCG and USAF/COL Hudson were 2 of the total of 16 SAR experts for this annual session. Recommendations from this Working Group are acted upon at senior levels within ICAO and IMO. France hosted and intentionally scheduled the JWG to follow an African-wide SAR conference which was the culmination of its 5 year effort to advance SAR operational and policy matters throughout Africa. This initiative provides many leads for possible US follow-up.
  - 4) *Joint SAR Conference (Oct 07)* organized by DPMO held in Washington, DC, brought together a wide range of civil and combat SAR experts.
  - 5) Upcoming events include:
    - a) 26-30 Nov 07: *Pacific Island Nations SAR Workshop* being organized by USCG 14<sup>th</sup> District/JRCC Honolulu, 3 other countries (Australia, New Zealand and French Polynesia) plus a regional authority (Secretariat for the Pacific Community) which is funding it. We will work with PACOM Combatant Command to see if this may be a future joint effort similar to those sponsored by SOUTHCOM for the Caribbean.
    - b) Feb 07 meeting of the *Directors General of the Caribbean* organized by ICAO and with the FAA led U.S. delegation. Key objective is to improve the Caribbean-wide Mass Casualty Incident/MRO Plan based on lessons learned by USCG and Dominican Republic SAR officials in response to Tropical Storm Noel.
    - c) Japan Coast Guard-sponsored *International SAR Workshop* week of December 3 with the theme of regional SAR systems to expand capability and capacity worldwide. USCG Joint Rescue Sub-center San Juan Puerto Rico will be key US representative.
- c. Radio Technical Commission for Maritime: (RTCM)
- 1) Captain Jack Fuechsel, reported that the RTCM Special Committee 110 on Emergency Beacons is nearing completion of its work on improving performance of Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) in two areas. One is improvement in the standard for testing the 406 MHz signal which is received by Cospas-Sarsat satellites and the 121.5 MHz homing signal. The second area of PLB performance being considered is the reliability of position determination in beacons equipped with GPS processors ("location protocol" beacons).
  - 2) Special Committee 110 at the December meeting will start work on revision of the EPIRB standard and is also going to consider performance standards for GPS processors in VHF handheld radios.
  - 3) RTCM 2008, RTCM's annual Assembly Meeting and Conference will be held May 4-9, 2007, at the Catamaran Hotel in San Diego, CA.

- d. Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. Captain Fuechsel, GMDSS Task Force Director, reported that the following were highlights of the Task Force meeting held during the NMEA Annual Assembly in Amelia Island, Florida, on October 19, 2007:
- 1) Established an ad hoc group to review FCC procedures for management of the required annual inspection of GMDSS equipped ships and to review Coast Guard radio safety requirements for small fishing vessels.
  - 2) IMO Maritime Safety Committee had approved the Coast Guard's offer to operate an interim International Data Exchange (IDE) to enable the Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system.
  - 3) Approved a Task Force response to the FCC Notice of Inquiry on the Task Force's Petition to the FCC to improve management of MMSI numbers used for marine radios with Digital Selective Calling (DSC) and the Automatic Identification System (AIS).
  - 4) The next Task Force meeting will be held on January 9, 2008, in Arlington, VA, at the RTCM Headquarters. The follow-on meeting will be on Thursday May 8, 2008, during the RTCM Annual Meeting in San Diego, California.
- e. Civil Air Patrol (CAP). Dr. Paul Schuda (CAP) reported CAP was credited with saving 105 lives in FY07.
- 1) CAP has been involved in several high profile SAR missions, most notably the Fosset search and the recent F-15 crash in MO. During the Fossett search CAP personnel from 8 states flew over 1,770 hours and contributed more than 17,000 man hours in support of that mission.
  - 2) CAP also flew the ARCHER hyperspectral imaging system in many high probability areas. The Fossett case brought home the point that pilots must file flight plans. If Mr. Fossett had filed a flight plan, the search area would be narrowed considerably.
  - 3) ARCHER was also used in support of the recent F-15 crash in Missouri. Not only did ARCHER provide overhead imagery for the incident commanders, but also provided a further opportunity to test the system's effectiveness in locating smaller wreckage parts and other targets on the ground. Crews overflew the area at the normal operating altitude of 2,500 feet AGL, which would essentially pick up targets 1 meter square or greater. They also flew additional sorties between 1,000 and 1,500 AGL to try to identify smaller targets. In-flight results were not successful due to the extensive foliage in the area, but our National Technology Center staff is reviewing the data again this week to see how much more we can learn from this mission.
  - 4) NTSB encourages groups to arrange tours of the reconstructed TWA flight 800 at its facility near Leesburg, VA, offers about 24 courses annually (see its website) on many topics, including topics such as investigating and fatigue factors.
- f. C-PORT. Captain Terry Hill (C-PORT Chairman) reported that C-PORT is a national trade association representing the interest of small businesses engaged in commercial marine assistance towing and salvage. The marine assistance towing industry was created by public law in the 1980's and resulted in saving Coast Guard resources by relegating non-emergency functions to the private sector.

- 1) C-Port members handle about 120,000 assistance cases annually, freeing the Coast Guard for higher priority work.
- 2) Questions may be directed to Captain Terry, Hill at [potomactowing@comcast.net](mailto:potomactowing@comcast.net) or (703) 670-0080.

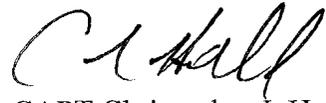
6. **Future Meetings**. The Committee scheduled its next General Session for February 21, 2008.

Respectfully submitted:



Rick Button  
Secretary

Approved:



CAPT Christopher J. Hall  
Acting Chair, National SAR  
Committee

Date:

JAN 10 2008

Encl: Attendance List

ATTENDANCE

NSARC REGULAR SESSION III-07  
NOVEMBER 15, 2007

NAME	AGENCY
CAPT CHRIS HALL	USCG
MR. DAN BAUMGARTNER	OSD
MR. BRIAN THROOP	FAA
LT BRIAN HOCKIN	OSD
MR. DANN KARLSON	USCG
MR. RICHARD BUTTON	USCG
MR. GREG LAWLER	NPS
MR. DEAN SCOTT	FEMA/US&R
DR. PAUL SCHUDA	CAP
MR. DAN LEMON	CSC
MR. DAN HOURIHAN	NASAR
MR. ALLAN KNOX	AFRCC
MR. ROY DREIBELBIS	CSC/NASA
LCDR KATHY NILES	USCG
CAPT JACK FUECHSEL	GMDSS
MR. TOM TERRY	HQMC IPI
MR. DAVE AFFENS	NASA
MS FIONA MORGAN	C-PORT
MR. TERRY HILL	C-PORT
MR. CHRIS TANTILLO	USCG
MR. COLE BROWN	NASA
WILLIE FOSTER	USCG

ENCLOSURE (1)