



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

## International and Regional Cooperation with focus on Euro-Atlantic Integration Pillar

### **“Basic Aeronautical Search and Rescue (SAR) Course”**

**02-04 April 2017**

*Rakitje, Republic of Croatia*

#### **Introduction**

On 02-04 April 2017 the “Basic Aeronautical Search and Rescue (SAR) Course” was held in Rakitje, Republic of Croatia. The Course was organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation in partnership with the National Protection and Rescue Directorate (NPRD) of the Republic of Croatia.

The Course was a continuation of earlier efforts in this direction conducted over the course of the preceding years by RACVIAC, and was intended as a capacity building endeavour for a new generation of experts involved in the subject of search and rescue.

The purpose of the Course was to bring together SAR professionals from the SEE region and encourage further development of regional cooperation on various Search and Rescue topics. Furthermore, this Course served as an opportunity to promote the enhancement of the existing national SAR structures through the exchange of information and sharing of available training opportunities and relevant exercises related to SAR.



*First day of the Course, RACVIAC, 3 April 2017*

RACVIAC recognizes the importance of efficient SAR structures, national and regional alike, as a type of security question that should be further discussed and explored. In that regard, this event brought together regional representatives with the knowledge of and experience in supporting SAR capacity building in the SEE countries.

The “Basic Aeronautical Search and Rescue (SAR) Course” was designed based on the best international practices and delivered by the Joint Aviation Authorities Training Organization (JAATO).

The objective of the Course was to increase the capacities of the relevant public institutions in civil emergency response as well as to further enhance the cooperation among analogue institutions in South East Europe. More specifically, the activity focused on the ways how to explore the concrete needs of each participating SAR institution related to aeronautical search and rescue situations, in order to launch comprehensive regional SAR development actions.

The Course was attended by forty-six participants from the Republic of Albania (2), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1), Republic of Croatia (32), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*(1), Republic of Serbia (2), Republic of Slovenia (2), Romania (1) Kosovo\*\*(1) and RACVIAC staff (4).



Mr. Brian Brophy of the Joint Aviation Authorities Training Organization (JAATO)

The Course brought together more than 40 representatives from RACVIAC Members, Associate Members and other participants, comprising civilian and military personnel of the relevant institutions from South East Europe dealing with Search and Rescue activities: defence/Armed forces, national RCC authorities, national directorates for protection and search, civil aviation authorities, ministries of the interior, civil emergency management authorities, etc.

## Execution

The Course lectures were delivered by Mr. Brian Brophy, SAR expert pilot with over 20 years of professional experience and a representative of the Joint Aviation Authorities Training Organization (JAATO).



Opening session (from centre to right and left): Ambassador Haydar Berk, BrigGen Gordana Garašić, Mr. Davor Spevec, Mr. Brian Brophy and Ms. Ana Ezhova Krzhaloska

During the Opening part of the activity RACVIAC Director, Ambassador Haydar Berk, said that *“this activity will be utilized to explore potential future steps in the field of Search and Rescue in SEE and initiate the establishment of a regional Search and Rescue Functional Network with the aim to enhance mutual assistance among Search and Rescue services and optimize the use of Search and Rescue resources in case of disasters. The close regional and wider cooperation among the SEE countries through dialogue and various forms of coordination is a strong response to today’s challenges to international security and defence policy, leading to building of confidence and security among the countries”*, emphasized Ambassador Berk.

\* Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

\*\* This Designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

Speaking on behalf of the NPRD Mr. Davor Spevec, Head of Sector at the State Information and Communication System of Protection and Rescue, underlined that *“next to quality cooperation, continuous education and training is also an important guideline for building a successful aeronautical Search and Rescue system for which NPRD, according to the recommendations of the International airline legislations, is trying to establish an education system which will cover all levels of system coordination and their associated functions with appropriate dedicated courses.”*

Based on the assessment of the current situation and the constant need for capacity building and improvements in the specific fields of expertise (Search, Rescue and Protection), RACVIAC and NPRD have committed themselves to develop a set of tailor-made activities that will address certain issues in this direction, as part of wider cooperation in the SEE region in monitoring and implementation of civil emergency measures. This activity was the first in a row of similar activities that will be implemented in the next few years.

During the SAR Course, Mr. Brophy elaborated on the notion of Search and Rescue, referring to the search for and provision of aid to the citizens who are in an emergency situation and imminent danger. In order to ensure successful Search and Rescue (SAR) operations, close cooperation among different institutions is crucial. Institutions that are dealing with SAR activities need to focus their efforts on identifying and listing the potential needs of their respective countries (e.g., education, exercise, coordination), and encourage and develop possible regional and cross-border cooperation through SAR operations.



*Group photo*

The Course lasted two full working days and was comprised of lectures, presentations and discussions. The SAR expert from JAATO presented best international practices and gave a short briefing, “The Origins of Search and Rescue”, following the philosophy of Search and Rescue and main international SAR conventions and laws. In addition, participants had a chance to learn about international SAR boundaries and areas of responsibility as well as to elaborate on SAR manuals.

Participants also discussed national SAR plans, systems and procedures while sharing their expertise concerning the responsibilities and duties of a senior SAR manager. Mr. Brophy raised the question regarding the importance of Operational Control of SAR and Rescue Coordination Centres that play a crucial role in any emergency situation from initial search procedures to rescue planning for the future (followed by concrete, real examples from the field). At the end of the second day the participants had an opportunity to find out more about the latest versions of SAR satellites and radio distress beacons and see a short documentary on SAR agencies, facilities and assets and aircraft ditching and ditching assistance.