



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

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

Regional Search and Rescue Seminar
"Coastal Search and Rescue and Mass Casualty Situations"
29 September – 02 October 2014, Split, Republic of Croatia

IRC-09-S



INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to RACVIAC 2014 Programme on 29th September - 2nd October 2014 the International and Regional Cooperation with focus on Euro-Atlantic Integration (IRC) Pillar carried out the Regional Search and Rescue Seminar "Coastal Search and Rescue and Mass Casualty Situations".

The activity is part of RACVIAC Regional Search and Rescue project. This Seminar represents a continuation of a series of activities organized on this topic and is a result of close cooperation between RACVIAC and the Tactical Air Command of the Kingdom of Denmark.

The initial event was held in May 2011 in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, followed by a project development conference held in RACVIAC in November 2012, the Basic SAR Course held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 2013 and the SAR Mission

Coordinator Course held in the Tara Mountain in the Republic of Serbia in September 2013.

The seminar brought together 44 professionals from 9 countries (AL, BA, HR, MK, ME, RS, RO and TR) as well as the Kingdom of Denmark. The participants were civilian or military officials at decision-making levels and experts representing relevant national institutions dealing with SAR issues.

ORGANIZATION

The Regional Search and Rescue Seminar “Coastal Search and Rescue and Mass Casualty Situations” was organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation in close cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia - The Croatian Coast Guard and was supported by the Tactical Air Command of the Kingdom of Denmark.



RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation



Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia

The Seminar took place in Split, Republic of Croatia, on 29th September - 2nd October 2014 in the Army Hall. It lasted three days, two of which were of a more theoretical nature whereas one day was devoted to the practical part of the Seminar. The practical part consisted of the SAR Demonstration performed by the Croatian Coast Guard and the study visit of the SAR related medical premises and equipment. These practical activities turned out to be a highly inspiring part of the Seminar.

The sessions included the official opening and closing of the Seminar and presentations by speakers/experts on SAR topics as well as discussions and question and answer sessions. During the sessions several very good discussions were held. The work of the session moderators, BrigGen Zdravko Jakop, LtCol Robert Malezanski and LtCol Ove Urup-Madsen provided impetus to the sessions, initiating discussions on different aspects of the topic as such.



The aim of the Regional Search and Rescue Seminar was to continue the positive RACVIAC practices designed to support the countries in the field of search and rescue.

Due to an emergency situation and the human casualties caused by the floods in several countries of the region during May 2014, the Regional Search and Rescue Seminar „Winter Search and Rescue, Cold Exposure and Hypothermia", that was scheduled to be held from 20-22 May 2014 in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, had to be postponed. Given the importance of the subject which had to be discussed during the postponed event, the activity was merged with this Seminar.

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Regional Search and Rescue Seminar was to inform, educate and inspire through discussions the designated SAR responsible persons from different national institutions, selected to direct and coordinate SAR operations, especially with regards to coastal SAR and mass casualties situations.



The objectives were:

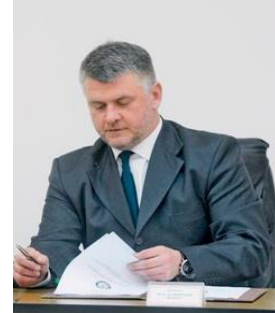
- To specify the role and responsibilities of the involved SAR mission staff members in order to enable them to deal with coastal emergency situations with mass casualties;
- To present examples of best practices needed to manage coastal emergencies and mass casualty situations; and
- to inspire the generating of contingency plans for the management of efficient and cost effective response and rescue.

SUMMARY

A set of presentations constituted the two focal points of this Seminar.

At the outset, the moderator, BrigGen Zdravko Jakop welcomed all the participants and speakers and then gave the floor to RACVIAC Director Ambassador Branimir Mandić to address the audience with his opening remarks.

RACVIAC Director Ambassador Branimir Mandić noted that this regional Seminar is part of the RACVIAC Regional Search and Rescue project and a continuation of a series of activities organized on this topic. “Unfortunate cases that have occurred so far due to heavy floods teach us that the prevention of loss of human lives and reduction of consequences could be possible through the implementation of prevention practices before disasters occur and afterwards, through well-planned, fast,



Ambassador Branimir Mandić

efficient and professional intervention. This suggests that education, prevention and treatment are very important as well, just as the technology needed to cope with disasters, which is a matter of preparedness and application. However, we also need cross- border contingency plans and provisions to ensure a rapid and efficient response. Bureaucracy must be crossed out in situations that pose a threat. We are all “ambassadors” who have the responsibility of Search and Rescue development. That is why we need to start from our own level and spread the knowledge to the next. Moreover, we need to challenge our own national/state systems where we see room for improvement, because politicians do not necessarily know everything about search and rescue. I think that the situation on the terrain requires action in a more effective and responsible way. We are all witnesses of what can happen when floods occur that continually affect the region. This should spur us to cooperate closer in order to be more active and more prepared against these threats” said RACVIAC Director Ambassador Mandić.



Commodore Marin Stošić

In the opening part the host of the Seminar, Commodore Marin Stošić, Commander of the Coast Guard of the Republic of Croatia, addressed the participants. He expressed his gratitude for the joint efforts invested in the execution of the Seminar and said that the Coast Guard would gladly contribute to this important event. He stated that the Coast Guard is ready to perform a coastal SAR demonstration to closely and practically show the execution of a coastal search and rescue.

The working part of the Seminar consisted of presentations on several topics. During the course of the Seminar the speakers covered such topics as "Volunteer Maritime and Coastal Rescue" (LtCDR B. T. Madsen (DK)), "Cold weather rescue equipment and operational considerations when working in extreme



conditions" (Sgt Bo Sørensen (DK)), a presentation on the 2014 Rescue Operations in Serbia – Command, Coordination and Communication (LTC Miroslav Zečević (RS)), "COSPAS Sarsat status of the new MEOSAR Satellite system and program updates" (LtCol Ove Urup-Madsen (DK)), "Aviation Accidents and Search and Rescue – Case Study" (Mr Drago Radić (BA)) and "Cold Exposure and Hypothermia" (Dr Benedict Kjærgaard (DK)). These presentations were very rich in content and embodied the key outputs of the speakers' learning process.

The theoretical part of the Seminar was followed by a practical demonstration of search and rescue at sea conducted and performed by the Croatian Coast Guard. For this purpose boats and a military helicopter were used. The responsible staff was trained in how to search for a person / puppet that was submerged and lost in the water. The search operation was coordinated and a combined exercise in water/see and air was held. This coordinated operation resulted in finding and rescuing the person/puppet which was then treated by medical staff in boats. This was a very interesting practical experience for all participants who saw how a process of search and rescue on the sea looks like in practice.



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CLOSING REMARKS

In his closing remarks RACVIAC Deputy Director Brigadier General Zdravko Jakop thanked the Coastal Guard of the Republic of Croatia for hosting this Regional Seminar and complimented it for the wonderful arrangements made for the SAR Demonstration. He also thanked the Tactical Air Command of the Kingdom of Denmark for its strong commitment to the implementation of the Regional Search and Rescue Project.

In the light of the specific objectives of this three-day Regional Seminar this event proved to be quite successful. This is due to the fact that it had a very-well designed agenda with an interesting topic, which included SAR presentations and an SAR demonstration. The Seminar had a competent line up of lecturers and excellent support from the Coastal Guard of the Republic of Croatia and the Tactical Air Command of the Kingdom of Denmark. These combined factors guaranteed that there would be no omissions in the realization of this Seminar which provides a sound basis for further development of this area in RACVIAC countries.

It was concluded that the objectives of this Regional Seminar were achieved. The role and responsibilities of the involved SAR mission staff were specified in order to enable them to deal with coastal emergency mass casualties situations. Also, examples of best practices needed to manage coastal emergencies and mass casualty situations were presented.

The presentations in this Regional Seminar, especially those of the experts from our SEE Region demonstrated that there is a need for closer cooperation between countries on concrete topics of Search and Rescue in the future. This means that the responsible institutions in the field of Search and Rescue have marked a notable development, but that there is still more work to be done.

The SAR Demonstration performed by the Croatian Coast Guard and the study visit of the SAR related medical premises and equipment were very inspiring and useful for the Seminar participants. It was concluded that in the future we should think further about organizing SAR events that will be followed by a more practical part, such as a thematic exercise.



The legislative and institutional framework on Search and Rescue should be amended and improved in terms of facilitating and increasing the efficiency of all competent entities in the system, including volunteers as a SAR concept.

There is a need for broader participation of all subjects which comprise a Search and Rescue field, especially of the civil sector which is not sufficiently included in this field and so-called SAR by volunteers.

The political will and commitment is crucial in supporting the measures and activities in terms of creating better legal, financial and institutional conditions to actors involved in Search and Rescue.

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