



Centre for security cooperation

## **Conference on Regional Search and Rescue**

**Dates** 12-14 November 2012

**Venue(s)** RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation

**Background** The event is a follow-up activity to the Conference on Search and Rescue, held in Belgrade in May 2011 and co-organized by RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia.

Search and rescue (SAR) refers to the search for and provision of aid to the citizens who are in distress or imminent danger. The general field of search and rescue includes many specific sub-fields, mostly based upon the terrain considerations. These include mountain rescue, ground search and rescue, including the use of search and rescue dogs, urban search and rescue, combat search and rescue on a battlefield and air-sea rescue over water. Search and rescue services, especially aeronautical ones, are organized to respond to persons who seem to be in distress and in need of help. Nowadays, in order to ensure successful aeronautical search and rescue operations, close coordination and cooperation among countries has become mandatory.

Once the national resources are identified and structured, the cross border SAR agreements in accordance with international recommendations can be established. In order to optimize efforts needed, it is recommended to attempt a regional development in order to share and overcome various issues. Training and exercise opportunities are also available in the international SAR community making it possible to accelerate this process.

RACVIAC has recognized the importance of efficient SAR structures, national and regional alike, as one of the security issues that should be further discussed and explored. In that regard, this conference will bring together regional representatives with the knowledge of and experience in supporting the SAR capacity building in the SEE countries, thus providing a broad platform for the exchange of information and best practices.

**Purpose & Objectives** The purpose of the conference is to encourage further development of regional cooperation on Search and Rescue issues and to promote enhancement of the existing national SAR structures through the exchange of information and sharing of available training opportunities and relevant SAR exercises.

The objectives are:

- a) To explore national points of views on the SAR in order to launch a comprehensive regional SAR development process/project;
- b) To identify and list the potential needs of the countries (e.g. education and exercise);
- c) To present the Baltic Sea area, as an illustrative example of a SAR cooperation model;
- d) To encourage and develop possible regional and national border cooperation on the SAR development through the SAR working groups;
- e) To consider the possibility of a common agreement which would support aeronautical cross border cooperation among the defence/army institutions;
- f) To initiate the establishment of a regional search and rescue functional network in the SEE 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;
- g) To present the COSPAS SARSAT satellite based rescue system and the benefits of "User State" membership;
- h) To discuss the roles of governmental institutions and the involvement of non-government organizations in SAR activities and their coordination.

**Participants** The conference will include participants from each of the signatory countries of the RACVIAC Agreement, civilian or military officials at decision-making levels and experts representing relevant national institutions dealing with SAR issues from: Defence/Armed forces, National RCC authorities, National Directorates for Protection and Search, Civil Aviation Authorities, Ministries of the Interior, Civil Emergency Management Authorities, etc. Representatives of other MAG countries and relevant international organizations, NGOs and the media will be invited.

**Methodology** The conference will last for two days and will comprise lectures and discussions. The working language will be English.

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