



RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation

Conference on Regional Search and Rescue

**Venue: RACVIAC - Centre for security cooperation
12 - 14 November 2012**

IRC-01-CF

EXTERNAL REPORT

Background

The Conference was a follow-up activity to the event on Search and Rescue (SAR) 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. Hence, RACVIAC recognized the need of building confidence and the importance of efficient SAR structures, national and regional alike, as one of the security issues that should be further discussed and explored. In this context, the conference brought 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

The conference was a fact-finding event aimed at encouraging further development of regional cooperation on Search and Rescue issues and promoting enhancement of the existing national SAR structures through the exchange of information and sharing of available training opportunities and relevant SAR exercises.

Acknowledgements

RACVIAC would like to extend its gratitude to the Tactical Air Command of the Kingdom of Denmark for all its support and assistance in bringing this important event to fruition.

Venue and participation

The Conference was held in RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation from 12 to 14 November 2012. The event gathered a total of 41 participants from RACVIAC MAG countries, civilian or military officials at decision-making levels and experts representing relevant national institutions dealing with SAR issues from: Defence/Armed Forces, National Civil Aviation Authorities (CAA), National Directorates for Protection and Search, Ministries of the Interior, Civil Emergency Management Authorities, etc.



Group photo

Programme

Mr Milan Janicijevic, acting RACVIAC IRC Pillar Programme Manager, the event moderator, welcomed the audience and kindly opened the Conference, giving the introductory remarks.

The RACVIAC Director, Ambassador Branimir Mandic, delivered the opening remarks. Ambassador Mandic expressed his sincere pleasure to have the opportunity to open this important event dedicated to an extremely motivating and challenging subject matter. He stressed that different training and fact-finding events such as this one were very important tools in the international SAR community, making it possible to support and accelerate this process, and therefore RACVIAC had recognized the importance of efficient SAR structures, national and regional alike, as one of the security issues that should be further promoted and explored. He continued that the potential future steps should be done aimed at encouraging further development of regional cooperation on Search and Rescue issues and promoting the enhancement of the existing national SAR structures.



From right to left: BG Jakop, Amb Mandić, Amb Weber, Mr Mikac and Mr Janicijevic

On behalf of the Kingdom of Denmark, H.E. Ambassador Mr Bo Eric Weber made the opening remarks and gave an inspiring welcome address that attached an outstanding value to the event and assured us that RACVIAC was on the right path in promoting confidence building among the SEE countries. Ambassador Weber said he was grateful to RACVIAC for the support it provided in fostering practical cooperation in the field of search and rescue as a platform for security cooperation in the region, designed to support the countries in reaching their common goals.

On behalf of Croatia, Mr Robert Mikac, PhD, the Head of Sector for Civil Protection and the Commander of the Croatian Civil

Protection delivered a presentation on the system and organization of Search and Rescue in Croatia. Mr Mikac outlined the system capabilities, their role in the national system and highlighted the need for consolidating and connecting the existing resources and capabilities, as appropriate with regard to the needs of the citizens.

Following the welcome addresses, the event participants had the privilege to listen to the first presentation delivered by Maj Ove Urup Madsen, Head of International Cooperation from the Tactical Air Command Denmark on the National Rescue Council Joining the SAR Structure. Maj Urup Madsen covered the following topics: SAR conventions, political aspects, national rescue council, operational working group, international regulations and SAR agreements and the COSPAS SARSAT, Satellite Based Rescue System. He stressed:

- That the role of the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) was crucial and its coordination was the key;
- SAR organization/governmental responsibility;
- SAR objective to minimize the time from the call about a disaster to a medical facility;
- International relations and SAR events and joint training;
- COSPAS SARSAT.



Maj Ove Urup Madsen

The event proceeded with the presentation entitled “Low Cost, Highly Effective Coastal and River Rescue Assets”, delivered by Mr Remmi Edelbo Pedersen, the Head of Danish Coastal Rescue Service & European Regional Group Coordinator, IMRF. The presentation was designed to explain the Danish case of establishing a coastal rescue service as an example of a low cost service with an increased efficiency in organizing rescue

services. He highlighted some of the most important issues such as the fact that the equipment should be designed according to the nature of a specific country and the ability of the RCC to provide the task directly during the search and rescue mission.



Working session

The last speaker on the first working day was Mr Janusz Maziarz, the Head of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Gdynia, Poland. His presentation entitled “The Baltic Sea SAR Cooperation”, as seen from the Polish perspective, provided the audience with some of the SAR experiences and findings which proved important for a successful SAR mission: exchange of information, provision, when requested, of assistance to other RCCs, including assistance/ support in the form of aircraft, vessels, or equipment, cooperation and communication assistance and support during planning and realization and making arrangements for entering territorial waters during SAR mission, without time consuming restrictions of administration laws, rules and regulations.

The first day was closed with a visit to the Air Force Base “Lučko”. During the visit the participants got an insight into the Croatian Army and National Protection and Rescue Directorate capabilities and capacities through practical presentations. The participants were informed about the SAR missions, equipment, limitations, examples and future challenges.



Visit to the Air Force Base “Lučko”

The second working day started with a presentation by Maj Major Per Horsholm, the Head of Joint Rescue Coordination Centre as part of the Navy Preparations Centre in Aarhus, Denmark. The focus of his presentation was command and control, enhanced communication and responsibilities as well as the necessary education and training qualifications.

Mr Jerry Nardi, PhD, Senior Scientist in TECHNO Sciences (USA) gave a presentation on the Cooperative Rescue Coordination System based on the COSPAS SARSAT Network. In his SAR system satellite based search and rescue presentation, Dr. Nardi covered the following topics: SARSAT Mission Control Centre, Local User Terminals, Rescue Coordination Centre Systems and Beacons.

Commander Dell’Olio Pantaleo, the Director of Italian Mission Control Centre (ITMCC) and Chief WO Michele D’Arcangelo delivered a combined presentation on the COSPAS SARSAT operational aspects and the statistics, training and exercise opportunities. They highlighted the mission statement and objective of the system in order to define the components (beacons, ground and space segments, users) involved and then explained how the system contributed to reducing the delays in the provision of distress alerts to the SAR services. They also underlined that by reducing the time of locating the distress alert we can increase the probability of saving the lives of persons in distress. The last part of the presentation was dedicated to the evolution of the COSPAS-SARSAT System, whereby participants learned about the future of the Programme and the fact

that the ITMCC would participate in the Demonstration and Evaluation Phase of the new system.



Working session

The next speaker, Maj Ove Urup Madsen, Head of International Cooperation from the Tactical Air Command Denmark, gave a presentation entitled "The Rescue Council Operational Working Group (RCOWG)". The presentation outlined the importance and meaning of the Rescue Council Operational Working Group and provided information on how to improve search and rescue capabilities in order to minimize the time from distress alert to hospital. In order to reach the SAR capacities and capabilities according to international agreements and standards, a series of steps should be taken and addressed in cooperation with the neighbouring countries when possible. Several countries in the region face the same challenges.

The event was closed with the session "National Challenges and Perspectives on SAR". National plans and programmes on search and rescue were outlined in the presentations given by the national representatives. Respective national delegates, namely LtCol József CSÓSZ (HU), LtCol Luftim Hoxha (AL), LtCol Janko Petrušić (BA), Maj Dragan Pavlovski (MK), Mr Nikola Breberić (HR), LtCol Zoran Ivanovski (ME) and Maj Milorad Jeremić (RS) presented their SAR overviews on the organization, structure and capabilities of SAR systems in their countries. This session pointed the following common SAR issues and requirements:

- There is a need for coordination and procedures aimed at specific regional SAR tasks;

- Establishment of national SAR Councils;
- Training programmes and training for all participants involved in SAR;
- SAR Agreements are needed: national and those with the neighbour countries.

Conference closing remarks

The Conference was a success. The aim of this fact-finding conference was to open and promote further development of national and 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 Agenda objectives were fully accomplished.

With reference to the discussions and national points of view expressed during the Conference, the following points were made:

- In the period to come RACVIAC should formulate and propose a Strategy paper as a suggestion on the way forward;
- This Strategy paper should address the overall purposes and goals of a series of specified events for the years 2013 and 2014;
- The Strategy paper should propose drafting of certain SAR Agreements. Subsequently, based on national possibilities, these cross-border agreements should be regionally or bilaterally made between the nations;
- In order to meet international standards and agreements, SAR education and training programmes are needed;
- Defining available SAR resources and integrating them into a cooperative network;
- Improvement of the national interagency cooperation;
- The participants recommended that RACVIAC-supported events on search and rescue should be continued in the following years as well.

Compiled by: Milan Janicijevic, IRC Pillar