

SAR Convention

International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979
2006 Edition



SAR CONVENTION

SAR CONVENTION

SAR CONVENTION

IMO



INTERNATIONAL

Documents

AVA

ORGANIZATION Hub

Provided by IHS

No reproduction or networking permitted without license from IHS

Full document details: IMO IB955E 2006

Licensee=SONGA OFFSHORE PTY LTD /5975059001, User=sam, albert

Not for Resale, 07/15/2014 08:32:46 MDT

SAR Convention

International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979
As amended by resolutions MSC.70(69) and MSC.155(78)

2006 edition



INTERNATIONAL
MARITIME
ORGANIZATION

London, 2006

Documents

Provided by IHS
No reproduction or networking permitted without license from IHS

Licensee=SONGA OFFSHORE PTY LTD /5975059002; User=sam, albert
Not for Resale, 07/15/2014 08:32:46 MDT

First published in 1979 by the
INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION
4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR

Second edition, 2000

Third edition, 2006

Printed in the United Kingdom by MPG Books, Bodmin

1 2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3

ISBN-13: 978-92-801-4228-0

ISBN-10: 92-801-4228-3

IMO PUBLICATION

Sales number: IB955E

Copyright © International Maritime Organization 2006

All rights reserved.

*No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form
or by any means without prior permission in writing
from the International Maritime Organization.*

NOTE: The name of the Organization as it appears in this publication was changed to "International Maritime Organization" by virtue of amendments to the Organization's Convention which entered into force on 22 May 1982.

Foreword

The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) was adopted by an international conference held in Hamburg, Germany, in April 1979. As its title implies, this Convention is designed to improve existing arrangements and provide a framework for carrying out search and rescue operations following accidents at sea. Although many countries have their own established plans for such emergencies, this was the first time international procedures had been adopted. The Convention entered into force in 1985.

Because the Convention imposes considerable obligations on Parties, such as setting up the required shore installations, the ratification process of the Convention has been slow. It was generally agreed that one of the reasons for the slow pace of implementation was problems with some provisions of the SAR Convention itself and that these could best be overcome by amending the Convention.

The Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR) was therefore requested to revise the annex to the Convention. A draft text was prepared and was approved by the sixty-eighth session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) in May 1997, and was then adopted by resolution MSC.70(69) at the sixty-ninth session in May 1998. The revised Convention entered into force on 1 January 2000. It clarifies the responsibilities of Governments and puts greater emphasis on the regional approach and co-ordination between maritime and aeronautical SAR operations.

The 2000 revision applies to the annex of the Convention only. The terms and definitions contained in chapter 1 have been updated and chapter 2, which deals with organization and co-ordination, has been re-drafted to make the responsibilities of Governments clearer. Other chapters in the revised SAR Convention address co-operation between States (chapter 3) and operating procedures (chapter 4, which incorporates the previous chapters 4 (Preparatory measures) and 5 (Operating procedures)). The original chapter 6 (Ship reporting systems) has been updated and renumbered as chapter 5.

The current publication contains the text of the revised SAR Convention as it has been further amended by resolution MSC.155(78), which was adopted in May 2004 and entered into force on 1 July 2006.

Foreword

The 1979 SAR Conference resolutions are included without changes because they are part of the Final Act of the Conference itself, although most of them are either implemented or out of date.

Contents

International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979

Articles	1
<i>Annex (as amended by MSC.70(69) and MSC.155(78))</i>	
Chapter 1 – Terms and definitions	6
Chapter 2 – Organization and co-ordination	7
Chapter 3 – Co-operation between States	10
Chapter 4 – Operating procedures	12
Chapter 5 – Ship reporting systems	16

Resolutions adopted by the 1979 SAR Conference

Resolution 1 – Arrangements for provision and co-ordination of search and rescue services	19
Resolution 2 – Cost to ships of participation in ship reporting systems	20
Resolution 3 – Need for an internationally agreed format and procedures for ship reporting systems	20
Resolution 4 – Search and rescue manuals	23
Resolution 5 – Frequencies for maritime search and rescue	24
Resolution 6 – Development of a global maritime distress and safety system	24
Resolution 7 – Harmonization of search and rescue services with maritime meteorological services	25
Resolution 8 – Promotion of technical co-operation	26

International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979

THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION,

NOTING the great importance attached in several conventions to the rendering of assistance to persons in distress at sea and to the establishment by every coastal State of adequate and effective arrangements for coast watching and for search and rescue services,

HAVING CONSIDERED Recommendation 40 adopted by the International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea, 1960, which recognizes the desirability of co-ordinating activities regarding safety on and over the sea among a number of inter-governmental organizations,

DESIRING to develop and promote these activities by establishing an international maritime search and rescue plan responsible to the needs of maritime traffic for the rescue of persons in distress at sea,

WISHING to promote co-operation among search and rescue organizations around the world and among those participating in search and rescue operations at sea,

HAVE AGREED as follows:

Article I

General obligations under the Convention

The Parties undertake to adopt all legislative or other appropriate measures necessary to give full effect to the Convention and its annex, which is an integral part of the Convention. Unless expressly provided otherwise, a reference to the Convention constitutes at the same time a reference to its annex.

Article II

Other treaties and interpretation

(1) Nothing in the Convention shall prejudice the codification and development of the law of the sea by the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea convened pursuant to resolution 2750(XXV) of the General Assembly of the United Nations nor the present or future claims and legal views of any State concerning the law of the sea and the nature and extent of coastal and flag State jurisdiction.

(2) No provision of the Convention shall be construed as prejudicing obligations or rights of vessels provided for in other international instruments.

Article III

Amendments

(1) The Convention may be amended by either of the procedures specified in paragraphs (2) and (3) hereinafter.

(2) Amendment after consideration within the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (hereinafter referred to as the "Organization"):

- (a) Any amendment proposed by a Party and transmitted to the Secretary-General of the Organization (hereinafter referred to as the Secretary-General), or any amendment deemed necessary by "the Secretary-General" as a result of an amendment to a corresponding provision of annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, shall be circulated to all Members of the Organization and all Parties at least six months prior to its consideration by the Maritime Safety Committee of the Organization.
- (b) Parties, whether or not Members of the Organization, shall be entitled to participate in the proceedings of the Maritime Safety Committee for the consideration and adoption of amendments.
- (c) Amendments shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the Parties present and voting in the Maritime Safety Committee on condition that at least one third of the Parties shall be present at the time of adoption of the amendment.
- (d) Amendments adopted in accordance with subparagraph (c) shall be communicated by the Secretary-General to all Parties for acceptance.
- (e) An amendment to an article or to paragraphs 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10, 3.1.2 or 3.1.3 of the annex shall be deemed to have been accepted on the date on which the Secretary-General has received an instrument of acceptance from two thirds of the Parties.
- (f) An amendment to the annex other than to paragraphs 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10, 3.1.2 or 3.1.3 shall be deemed to have been accepted at the end of one year from the date on which it is communicated to the Parties for acceptance. However, if within such period of one year more than one third of the Parties notify the Secretary-General that they object to the amendment, it shall be deemed not to have been accepted.

- (g) An amendment to an article or to paragraphs 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10, 3.1.2 or 3.1.3 of the annex shall enter into force:
 - (i) with respect to those Parties which have accepted it, six months after the date on which it is deemed to have been accepted;
 - (ii) with respect to those Parties which accept it after the condition mentioned in subparagraph (e) has been met and before the amendment enters into force, on the date of entry into force of the amendment;
 - (ii) with respect to those Parties which accept it after the date on which the amendment enters into force, 30 days after the deposit of an instrument of acceptance.
 - (h) An amendment to the annex other than to paragraphs 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10, 3.1.2 or 3.1.3 shall enter into force with respect to all Parties, except those which have objected to the amendment under subparagraph (f) and which have not withdrawn such objections, six months after the date on which it is deemed to have been accepted. However, before the date set for entry into force, any Party may give notice to the Secretary-General that it exempts itself from giving effect to that amendment for a period not longer than one year from the date of its entry into force, or for such longer period as may be determined by a two-thirds majority of the Parties present and voting in the Maritime Safety Committee at the time of the adoption of the amendment.
- (3) Amendment by a conference:
- (a) Upon the request of a Party concurred in by at least one third of the Parties, the Organization shall convene a conference of Parties to consider amendments to the Convention. Proposed amendments shall be circulated by the Secretary-General to all Parties at least six months prior to their consideration by the conference.
 - (b) Amendments shall be adopted by such a conference by a two-thirds majority of the Parties present and voting, on condition that at least one third of the Parties shall be present at the time of adoption of the amendment. Amendments so adopted shall be communicated by the Secretary-General to all Parties for acceptance.
 - (c) Unless the conference decides otherwise, the amendment shall be deemed to have been accepted and shall enter into force in accordance with the procedures specified in subparagraphs (2)(e), (2)(f), (2)(g), and 2(h) respectively, provided that reference in subparagraph (2)(h) to the Maritime Safety Committee expanded in accordance with subparagraph (2)(b) shall be taken to mean reference to the conference.

(4) Any declaration of acceptance of, or objection to, an amendment or any notice given under subparagraph (2)(h) shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary-General who shall inform all Parties of any such submission and the date of its receipt.

(5) The Secretary-General shall inform States of any amendments which enter into force, together with the date on which each such amendment enters into force.

Article IV

Signature, ratification, acceptance, approval and accession

(1) The Convention shall remain open for signature at the Headquarters of the Organization from 1 November 1979 until 31 October 1980 and shall thereafter remain open for accession. States may become Parties to the Convention by:

- (a) signature without reservation as to ratification, acceptance or approval; or
- (b) signature subject to ratification, acceptance or approval, followed by ratification, acceptance or approval; or
- (c) accession.

(2) Ratification, acceptance, approval or accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument to that effect with the Secretary-General.

(3) The Secretary-General shall inform States of any signature or of the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession and the date of its deposit.

Article V

Entry into force

(1) The Convention shall enter into force 12 months after the date on which 15 States have become Parties to it in accordance with article IV.

(2) Entry into force for States which ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Convention in accordance with article IV after the condition prescribed in paragraph (1) has been met and before the Convention enters into force, shall be on the date of entry into force of the Convention.

(3) Entry into force for States which ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Convention after the date on which the Convention enters into force shall be 30 days after the date of deposit of an instrument in accordance with article IV.

(4) Any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession deposited after the date of entry into force of an amendment to the Convention in accordance with article III shall apply to the Convention, as