



# Department of Defense

## DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 3003.01  
January 20, 2006

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USD(P)

SUBJECT: DoD Support to Civil Search and Rescue (SAR)

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 2310.2, "Personnel Recovery," December 22, 2000
  - (b) National Response Plan, December 1, 2004<sup>1</sup>
  - (c) National Search and Rescue Plan, January 1, 1999<sup>2</sup>
  - (d) International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual, January 1, 1999, as amended<sup>3</sup>
  - (e) through (j), see enclosure 1

### 1. PURPOSE

This Directive establishes policy and assigns responsibilities under references (a) through (d) and the National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (reference (e)) for DoD civil search and rescue (SAR) activities.

### 2. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities in the Department of Defense (hereafter referred to as the "DoD Components").

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.dhs.gov/interweb/assetlibrary/NRPbaseplan.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-o/g-opr/nsarc/nsp.htm>

<sup>3</sup> This Manual can be purchased from the International Maritime Organization, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR, United Kingdom or International Civil Aviation Organization, 999 University Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 5H7

### 3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Distress. A person, craft, or vehicle threatened by grave and imminent danger that requires immediate assistance.

3.2. Civil Search and Rescue (civil SAR). Search operations, rescue operations, and associated civilian services provided to assist persons and property in potential or actual distress in a non-hostile environment.

3.3. Rescue. An operation to retrieve persons in distress, provide for their initial medical or other needs, and deliver them to a place of safety.

3.4. Search. An operation normally coordinated by a Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) or rescue sub-center, using available personnel and facilities to locate persons in distress.

### 4. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

4.1. DoD personnel provide assistance to persons, ships, and aircraft in distress under U.S. and international law and applicable regulations; e.g., 1958 Convention on the High Seas, article 12 (reference (f)).

4.2. The Department of Defense shall support domestic civil authorities providing civil SAR service to the fullest extent practicable on a non-interference basis with primary military duties according to applicable national directives, plans, guidelines, and agreements; under the authority of and consistent with the provisions of reference (c); and on a reimbursable basis according to the Economy Act (reference (g)) or the Stafford Act (reference (h)). To ensure a coordinated DoD response, all civil SAR operations conducted in support of domestic civil authorities following a Presidential declaration of a disaster or emergency according to reference (h) or in response to incidents designated as "Incidents of National Significance" by the Secretary of Homeland Security will be according to the reference (b) procedure which states "All requests for assistance from the Federal Coordinating Officer will be coordinated through the Defense Coordinating Officer at the Joint Field Office and submitted for consideration by the Secretary of Defense."

4.3. The Department of Defense, consistent with its capabilities and legal authority under applicable law and regulation, shall support foreign civil authorities performing civil SAR operations in territory and international waters beyond recognized U.S. aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions (SRRs).

4.4. Civil SAR standards and procedures identified in references (c) through (e) shall be followed to the maximum extent possible when supporting civil SAR activities consistent with applicable law and regulation.

4.5. International and interagency civil SAR terms and definitions provided in references (d) and (e) shall be used when conducting or supporting civil SAR operations. These terms may differ from some similar terms and definitions used for other DoD missions as provided in Joint Publication 1-02 (reference (i)).

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (ASD(ISA)), under the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)), is the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense and USD(P) on civil SAR and will coordinate domestic civil SAR policy with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense (ASD(HD)) as appropriate and has designated the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Affairs (DASD(POW/MPA)) the Office of Primary Responsibility for DoD support to civil SAR. In this capacity, the DASD(POW/MPA) shall:

5.1.1. Provide policy oversight for DoD support to civil SAR.

5.1.2. Represent the Department of Defense on the National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC) and at relevant interagency and international forums on civil SAR matters.

5.1.3. Chair a DoD Civil SAR Working Group for coordinating NSARC initiatives affecting the Department of Defense.

5.1.4. Oversee the negotiation and coordination of international civil SAR agreements involving the DoD Components and coordinate with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the DoD General Counsel, the Department of State Assistant Legal Advisor for Treaty Affairs, and the Commandant, United States Coast Guard (USCG), on such agreements.

5.1.5. Review Combatant Command security cooperation strategies and plans to ensure consistency in civil SAR activities as they pertain to the Commands' regional objectives and priorities, and to ensure consistency with DoD security cooperation guidance and relevant U.S. obligations and policies.

5.1.6. Coordinate with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other Heads of the DoD Components, as appropriate, to develop DoD civil SAR doctrine, guidance, or other implementing measures pertinent to the policies and guidance provided in this Directive.

5.2. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, under the USD(P), shall:

5.2.1. Provide advice and coordination to the ASD(ISA) regarding domestic civil SAR policies, as appropriate.

5.2.2. Provide recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding Defense Support to Civil Authorities described in paragraph 4.3.

5.3. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Networks and Information Integration shall:

5.3.1. Designate a representative to the NSARC's Research and Development (R&D) Working Group to facilitate close coordination with the DASD(POW/MPA) on NSARC R&D Working Group initiatives.

5.3.2. Provide technical advice and other assistance to the DASD(POW/MPA), as appropriate, in efforts to assist the Military Departments, to support NSARC R&D Working Group initiatives within the Department of Defense's responsibility or improve DoD support to civil SAR in coordination with the ASD(HD).

5.3.3. When possible, support civil agencies' efforts to improve communications systems, information management, location, identification, search planning, rescue operations, equipment, procedures, and technologies for civil SAR. Oversee the development of a DoD registration database repository and coding scheme for upgrading to 406 MHz emergency locator beacons.

5.4. The General Counsel of the Department of Defense shall:

5.4.1. Review all international civil SAR agreements involving the Secretary of Defense or any DoD Component, including those the Combatant Commanders propose.

5.4.2. Maintain the central repository (including an index updated at least once per year) for all international agreements and accompanying legal and fiscal memoranda when required, which are coordinated, negotiated, or concluded by DoD personnel, in accordance with DoD Directive 5530.3 (reference (j)).

5.5. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall coordinate with other services to develop and maintain a registration database repository and coding scheme for upgrading to 406 MHz emergency locator beacons to ensure interoperability.

5.6. The Secretary of the Air Force shall:

5.6.1. Designate an aeronautical civil SAR expert to provide operational advice to the NSARC. This individual shall work in close coordination with the designated representative of the DASD(POW/MPA).

5.6.2. Designate an aeronautical civil SAR expert to serve at the invitation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as a member of the Joint Search and Rescue Working Group that ICAO and the International Maritime Organization sponsor jointly.

5.6.3. Serve as the U.S. Search and Rescue Coordinator for the provision of civil SAR services in the area associated with the internationally recognized U.S. aeronautical SRRs corresponding to the continental United States, other than Alaska, in accordance with the guidance provided in references (c) through (e).

5.6.4. Continue to fund and operate a fully functional RCC to promote efficient organization of SAR services and to coordinate the conduct of civil SAR operations within the U.S. aeronautical SRRs corresponding to the 48 contiguous States, in accordance with relevant guidance provided in references (c) through (e).

5.6.5. Continue to provide appropriate instructor staff for the National Search and Rescue School for resident and field training in the areas of aeronautical and land SAR.

5.7. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall:

5.7.1. Review Combatant Command international civil SAR agreements and coordinate them through the DASD(POW/MPA).

5.7.2. Support the Military Departments in coordinating, developing, and maintaining a registration database repository and coding scheme for upgrading to 406 MHz emergency locator beacons.

5.8. The Commanders of the Combatant Commands

5.8.1. Consistent with legal authority and on a non-interference with primary military duties basis, shall:

5.8.1.1. Conduct civil SAR operations and effect any international security cooperation activities that pertain to civil SAR, consistent with the scope of functional and geographic responsibilities, expertise, capabilities, and legal authority, and in a manner consistent with section 4. of this Directive and references (c) through (e).

5.8.1.2. Ensure personnel assigned to operational or security cooperation duties possess the information and training they need to exercise their responsibilities in a manner consistent with section 4. of this Directive and references (c) through (e) and (j).

5.8.1.3. Review security cooperation strategies and plans to ensure consistency in civil SAR activities as they pertain to the Commands' regional objectives and priorities, and to ensure consistency with DoD security cooperation guidance and relevant U.S. obligations and policies.

5.8.1.4. When performing civil SAR functions such as training, exercises, and liaison with other nations, coordinate activities when possible with Headquarters, USCG, Office of Search and Rescue, to help ensure consistency with U.S. obligations under international agreements to which the United States is a party; compliance with reference (d) and other international guidance relevant to implementing such agreements; and compatibility with USCG international civil SAR objectives and activities.

5.8.1.5. Be knowledgeable of civil SAR responsibilities assigned to other U.S. and foreign civil and military authorities to ensure Combatant Command civil SAR agreements support, and do not supplant, their authorities.

5.8.1.6. Ensure security cooperation plans properly account for any existing or planned civil SAR agreements, and for relevant results of past international security cooperation activities (e.g., SAR training or exercises).

5.8.2. Consistent with applicable authorities, may:

5.8.2.1. Support civil SAR operations of other countries in territory and international waters beyond recognized U.S. aeronautical and maritime SRRs within their respective geographic areas of responsibility.

5.8.2.2. Negotiate and conclude, as appropriate, civil SAR agreements with military counterparts of other nations within their respective geographic areas of responsibility when such agreements:

5.8.2.2.1. Provide a mutual humanitarian benefit for all parties.

5.8.2.2.2. Are fully consistent with the civil SAR functional responsibilities described for the Department of Defense in reference (c), which varies geographically, and with the responsibilities of any other party to the agreement.

5.8.2.2.3. Are fully consistent with relevant provisions of references (c) through (e), and are coordinated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the DoD General Counsel; Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office; and the Office of Search and Rescue, Headquarters, USCG.

5.8.2.2.4. Are fully consistent with any other treaties or agreements to which the U.S. Government or its agencies are party including those that pertain to civil SAR.

5.8.3. Provide copies of any concluded international agreements to the DoD General Counsel and the Department of State Assistant Legal Advisor for Treaty Affairs, according to reference (j).

5.8.4. Shall not accept roles as SAR Coordinator or RCC for civil SAR operations in SRRs where other nations or U.S. agencies are the responsible party. They may support civil SAR operations in such areas when:

5.8.4.1. A recognized civil SAR authority requests assistance; or,

5.8.4.2. A DoD command or organization becomes aware of a distress situation to which no other suitable facilities are responding, or where other available civil SAR services appear to be inadequate.

5.8.5. Involve the Command's USCG Liaison Officer and existing USCG protocols in planning and executing their civil SAR-related activities within the Command's area of responsibility, as appropriate.

5.9. The Commander, United States Pacific Command, shall serve as the U.S. Search and Rescue Coordinator for the provision of civil SAR services in the area associated with the internationally recognized U.S. aeronautical SRR corresponding to Alaska according to relevant guidance of references (c) through (e).

5.10. The Commandant, United States Coast Guard, through the USCG Liaison Officer in each Combatant Command, shall advise the affected Combatant Command on civil SAR standards and procedures as established in references (c) through (e).

## 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.

  
Gordon England 1-20-06

Enclosures – 1

E1. References, continued

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES, continued

- (e) National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual, May 2000, as amended<sup>4</sup>
- (f) 1958 Convention on the High Seas, article 12
- (g) Sections 1535 and 1536 of title 31, United States Code, “The Economy Act”
- (h) Section 5121 of title 42, United States Code, “The Stafford Act”
- (i) Joint Publication 1-02, “Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition
- (j) DoD Directive 5530.3, “International Agreements,” June 11, 1987

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<sup>4</sup><http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-o/g-opr/nsarc/nsrsupp.pdf>