

AGREEMENT

ON COOPERATION ON AERONAUTICAL

AND MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE

IN THE ARCTIC

The Government of Canada, the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark, the Government of the Republic of Finland, the Government of Iceland, the Government of the Kingdom of Norway, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden, and the Government of the United States of America, hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”,

Taking into account the relevant provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,

Being Parties to the 1979 International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, hereinafter referred to as “the SAR Convention”, and the 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation, hereinafter referred to as “the Chicago Convention”,

Noting the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual, hereinafter referred to as “the IAMSAR Manual”,

Recalling the 1996 Ottawa Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council,

Highlighting the 2009 Tromsø Declaration on the occasion of the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council, which approved the establishment of a task force to develop and complete negotiation of an international instrument on cooperation on search and rescue operations in the Arctic,

Conscious of the challenges posed by harsh Arctic conditions on search and rescue operations and the vital importance of providing rapid assistance to persons in distress in such conditions,

Mindful of the increase in aeronautical and maritime traffic and other human activity in the Arctic, including activity of Arctic residents and of people coming to the Arctic,

Recognizing the great importance of cooperation among the Parties in conducting search and rescue operations,

Emphasizing the usefulness of exchanging information and experience in the field of search and rescue and of conducting joint training and exercises,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Terms and Definitions

1. For purposes of this Agreement, the terms and definitions contained in Chapter 1 of the Annex to the SAR Convention and in Chapter 1 of Annex 12 to the Chicago Convention shall apply.
2. For purposes of this Agreement, “territory of a Party” shall mean the land area of a State, its internal waters and its territorial sea, including the airspace above those areas.

Article 2

Objective of this Agreement

The objective of this Agreement is to strengthen aeronautical and maritime search and rescue cooperation and coordination in the Arctic.

Article 3

Scope of Application of this Agreement

1. The delimitations of the aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions relevant to this Agreement are specified in paragraph 1 of the Annex to this Agreement. The area in which each Party shall apply this Agreement is set forth in paragraph 2 of the Annex to this Agreement.
2. The delimitation of search and rescue regions is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitation of any boundary between States or their sovereignty, sovereign rights or jurisdiction.
3. Each Party shall promote the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescue capability within its area as set forth in paragraph 2 of the Annex to this Agreement.

Article 4

Competent Authorities of the Parties

1. The Competent Authorities of the Parties are specified in Appendix I to this Agreement.
2. Each Party shall promptly inform the other Parties in writing through diplomatic channels of any changes regarding its Competent Authorities.

Article 5

Agencies Responsible for Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue

1. The agencies responsible for aeronautical and maritime search and rescue, hereinafter referred to as “search and rescue agencies”, are specified in Appendix II to this Agreement.
2. Each Party, through its Competent Authorities, shall promptly inform the other Parties of any changes regarding its search and rescue agency or agencies.

Article 6

Rescue Coordination Centers

1. The list of aeronautical and/or maritime rescue coordination centers, hereinafter referred to as “RCCs”, of the Parties for the purposes of this Agreement is contained in Appendix III to this Agreement.
2. Each Party, through its Competent Authorities, shall promptly inform the other Parties of any changes regarding its RCCs.

Article 7

Conduct of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Operations

1. The SAR Convention and the Chicago Convention shall be used as the basis for conducting search and rescue operations under this Agreement.
2. The IAMSAR Manual provides additional guidelines for implementing this Agreement.
3. Without prejudice to paragraph 1 of this Article, the Parties shall conduct aeronautical and maritime search and rescue operations pursuant to this Agreement consistent with the following:
 - (a) search and rescue operations conducted pursuant to this Agreement in the territory of a Party shall be carried out consistent with the laws and regulations of that Party;
 - (b) if a search and rescue agency and/or RCC of a Party receives information that any person is, or appears to be, in distress, that Party shall take urgent steps to ensure that the necessary assistance is provided;
 - (c) any Party having reason to believe that a person, a vessel or other craft or aircraft is in a state of emergency in the area of another Party as set forth in paragraph 2 of the Annex shall forward as soon as possible all available information to the Party or Parties concerned;
 - (d) the search and rescue agency and/or RCC of a Party that has received information concerning a situation provided for in subparagraph (b) of this paragraph may request assistance from the other Parties;

- (e) the Party to whom a request for assistance is submitted shall promptly decide on and inform the requesting Party whether or not it is in a position to render the assistance requested and shall promptly indicate the scope and the terms of the assistance that can be rendered;
- (f) the Parties shall ensure that assistance be provided to any person in distress. They shall do so regardless of the nationality or status of such a person or the circumstances in which that person is found; and
- (g) a Party shall promptly provide all relevant information regarding the search and rescue of any person to the consular or diplomatic authorities concerned.

Article 8

Request to Enter the Territory of a Party for Purposes of Search and Rescue Operations

1. A Party requesting permission to enter the territory of a Party or Parties for search and rescue purposes, including for refueling, shall send its request to a search and rescue agency and/or RCC of the relevant Party or Parties.
2. The Party receiving such a request shall immediately confirm such receipt. The receiving Party, through its RCCs, shall advise as soon as possible as to whether entry into its territory has been permitted and the conditions, if any, under which the mission may be undertaken.
3. The Party receiving such a request, as well as any Party through whose territory permission to transit is needed, shall apply, in accordance with its law and international obligations, the most expeditious border crossing procedure possible.

Article 9

Cooperation Among the Parties

1. The Parties shall enhance cooperation among themselves in matters relevant to this Agreement.
2. The Parties shall exchange information that may serve to improve the effectiveness of search and rescue operations. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - (a) communication details;
 - (b) information about search and rescue facilities;
 - (c) lists of available airfields and ports and their refueling and resupply capabilities;
 - (d) knowledge of fueling, supply and medical facilities; and

(e) information useful for training search and rescue personnel.

3. The Parties shall promote mutual search and rescue cooperation by giving due consideration to collaborative efforts including, but not limited to:

- (a) exchange of experience;
- (b) sharing of real-time meteorological and oceanographic observations, analyses, forecasts, and warnings;
- (c) arranging exchanges of visits between search and rescue personnel;
- (d) carrying out joint search and rescue exercises and training;
- (e) using ship reporting systems for search and rescue purposes;
- (f) sharing information systems, search and rescue procedures, techniques, equipment, and facilities;
- (g) providing services in support of search and rescue operations;
- (h) sharing national positions on search and rescue issues of mutual interest within the scope of this Agreement;
- (i) supporting and implementing joint research and development initiatives aimed, *inter alia*, at reducing search time, improving rescue effectiveness, and minimizing risk to search and rescue personnel; and
- (j) conducting regular communications checks and exercises, including the use of alternative means of communications for handling communication overloads during major search and rescue operations.

4. When conducting joint exercises, the Parties should apply the principles of this Agreement to the extent possible.

Article 10

Meetings of the Parties

The Parties shall meet on a regular basis in order to consider and resolve issues regarding practical cooperation. At these meetings they should consider issues including but not limited to:

- (a) reciprocal visits by search and rescue experts;
- (b) conducting joint search and rescue exercises and training;

- (c) possible participation of search and rescue experts as observers at national search and rescue exercises of any other Party;
- (d) preparation of proposals for the development of cooperation under this Agreement;
- (e) planning, development, and use of communication systems;
- (f) mechanisms to review and, where necessary, improve the application of international guidelines to issues concerning search and rescue in the Arctic; and
- (g) review of relevant guidance on Arctic meteorological services.

Article 11

Joint Review of Search and Rescue Operations

After a major joint search and rescue operation, the search and rescue agencies of the Parties may conduct a joint review of the operation led by the Party that coordinated the operation.

Article 12

Funding

1. Unless otherwise agreed, each Party shall bear its own costs deriving from its implementation of this Agreement.
2. Implementation of this Agreement shall be subject to the availability of relevant resources.

Article 13

Annex

The Annex to this Agreement forms an integral part of this Agreement. All references to this Agreement are understood to include the Annex.

Article 14

Amendments

1. This Agreement may be amended by written agreement of all the Parties.
2. An amendment shall enter into force 120 days after the date on which the depositary has received the last written notification through diplomatic channels that the Parties have completed the internal procedures required for its entry into force.

Article 15

Amendment Procedure for the Annex

1. Notwithstanding Article 14 of this Agreement, any two Parties with adjacent search and rescue regions may by mutual agreement amend information contained in paragraph 1 of the Annex to this Agreement setting forth the delimitation between those regions. Such amendment shall enter into force 120 days after the date on which the depositary has received confirmation through diplomatic channels from both Parties that such mutual agreement has entered into force.
2. Notwithstanding Article 14 of this Agreement, any Party may amend that portion of paragraph 2 of the Annex to this Agreement that does not affect the area of any other Party and shall notify the depositary of any such amendment through diplomatic channels. Such amendment shall enter into force 120 days after the date of such notification.

Article 16

Relationship with Other Agreements

With the exception of paragraph 1 of the Annex to this Agreement, the provisions of this Agreement shall not affect the rights and obligations of Parties under agreements between them which are in force on the date of the entry into force of this Agreement.

Article 17

Settlement of Disputes

The Parties shall resolve any disputes concerning the application or interpretation of this Agreement through direct negotiations.

Article 18

Non-Parties

Any Party to this Agreement may, where appropriate, seek cooperation with States not party to this Agreement that may be able to contribute to the conduct of search and rescue operations, consistent with existing international agreements.

Article 19

Provisional Application, Entry into Force and Withdrawal

1. This Agreement may be applied provisionally by any signatory that provides a written statement to the depositary of its intention to do so. Any such signatory shall apply this Agreement provisionally from the date of its statement or from such other date as indicated in its statement.

ANNEX

Scope of Application of this Agreement

1. The search and rescue regions relevant to this Agreement are delimited as follows:¹

Canada – Denmark

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of Canada and Denmark shall be delimited by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 58°30'00"N, 043°00'00"W;
- 58°30'00"N, 050°00'00"W;
- 63°00'00"N, 055°40'00"W;
- 65°00'00"N, 057°45'00"W;
- 76°00'00"N, 076°00'00"W;
- 78°00'00"N, 075°00'00"W;
- 82°00'00"N, 060°00'00"W; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

Canada – United States of America

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of Canada and the United States of America shall be delimited by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 48°20'00"N, 145°00'00"W;
- 54°40'00"N, 140°00'00"W;
- 54°40'00"N, 136°00'00"W;
- 54°00'00"N, 136°00'00"W;
- 54°13'00"N, 134°57'00"W;
- 54°39'27"N, 132°41'00"W;
- 54°42'30"N, 130°36'30"W; and
- North along the land border to the Beaufort Sea and thence to the North Pole.

¹ The coordinates in this Annex use the World Geodetic System 1984 ("WGS 84"). All coordinates are connected by geodetic lines. The North Pole refers to the Geographic North Pole, located at 90 degrees North latitude, and the Arctic Circle refers to 66°33'44"N latitude.

Denmark – Iceland

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of Denmark and Iceland shall be delimited by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 58°30'00"N, 043°00'00"W;
- 63°30'00"N, 039°00'00"W;
- 70°00'00"N, 020°00'00"W;
- 73°00'00"N, 020°00'00"W; and
- 73°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W.

Denmark – Norway

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of Denmark and Norway shall be delimited by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 73°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

Finland – Norway

The land border between Finland and Norway shall be the limit of their respective search and rescue regions.

Finland – Sweden

The land border between Finland and Sweden shall be the limit of their respective search and rescue regions.

Finland – Russian Federation

The land border between Finland and the Russian Federation shall be the limit of their respective search and rescue regions.

Iceland – Norway

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of Iceland and Norway shall be delimited by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 66°33'44"N, 000°00'00"E/W; and
- 73°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W.

Norway – Sweden

The land border between Norway and Sweden shall be the limit of their respective search and rescue regions.

Norway – Russian Federation

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of Norway and the Russian Federation shall be delimited by the land border between Norway and the Russian Federation and then by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 69°47'41.42"N, 030°49'03.55"E;
- 69°58'45.49"N, 031°06'15.58"E;
- 70°05'58.84"N, 031°26'41.28"E;
- 70°07'15.20"N, 031°30'19.43"E;
- 70°11'51.68"N, 031°46'33.57"E;
- 70°16'28.95"N, 032°04'23.00"E;
- 72°27'51.00"N, 035°00'00.00"E; and
- Thence to the North Pole.

Russian Federation – United States of America

The aeronautical and maritime search and rescue regions of the Russian Federation and the United States of America shall be delimited by a continuous line connecting the following coordinates:

- 50°05'00"N, 159°00'00"E;
- 54°00'00"N, 169°00'00"E;
- 54°49'00"N, 170°12'00"E;
- 60°00'00"N, 180°00'00"E/W;
- 64°03'00"N, 172°12'00"W;
- 65°00'00"N, 168°58'24"W; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

2. Each Party shall apply this Agreement in the following areas as encompassed by a continuous line, respectively:

Canada

- From the North Pole south to 82°00'00"N, 060°00'00"W;
- 78°00'00"N, 075°00'00"W;
- 76°00'00"N, 076°00'00"W;
- 65°00'00"N, 057°45'00"W;
- 63°00'00"N, 055°40'00"W;
- To the point where it intersects 60°00'00"N latitude;
- West along 60°00'00"N latitude until it intersects with land border between Canada and the United States of America;
- North along the land border to the Beaufort Sea; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

Denmark

- From the North Pole south to 82°00'00"N, 060°00'00"W;
- 78°00'00"N, 075°00'00"W;
- 76°00'00"N, 076°00'00"W;
- 65°00'00"N, 057°45'00"W;
- 63°00'00"N, 055°40'00"W;
- 58°30'00"N, 050°00'00"W;
- 58°30'00"N, 043°00'00"W;
- 63°30'00"N, 039°00'00"W;
- 70°00'00"N, 020°00'00"W;
- 73°00'00"N, 020°00'00"W;
- 73°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

Finland

- From the tripoint at which the land borders of Finland, Norway and Sweden meet, south along the land border between Finland and Sweden to the point at which that border intersects the Arctic Circle;
- East along the Arctic Circle to the point at which the Arctic Circle intersects the land border between Finland and the Russian Federation;
- North along the land border between Finland and the Russian Federation to the tripoint at which the land borders of Finland, Norway and the Russian Federation meet; and
- Thence to the tripoint at which the land borders of Finland, Norway and Sweden meet.

Iceland

- From 73°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W west to 73°00'00"N, 020°00'00"W;
- 70°00'00"N, 020°00'00"W;
- 63°30'00"N, 039°00'00"W;
- 58°30'00"N, 043°00'00"W;
- 58°30'00"N, 030°00'00"W;
- 61°00'00"N, 030°00'00"W;
- 61°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W; and
- Thence north to 73°00'00"N, 000°00'00"E/W.

Norway

- From the North Pole south to 66°33'44"N, 000°00'00"E/W;
- East along the Arctic Circle to the point at which the Arctic Circle intersects the land border between Sweden and Norway;
- North along the land border between Sweden and Norway to the tripoint at which the land borders of Sweden, Norway and Finland meet;
- East along the land border between Finland and Norway to the tripoint at which the land borders of Finland, Norway and the Russian Federation meet;
- North along the land border to the Barents Sea;
- 69°47'41.42"N, 030°49'03.55"E;
- 69°58'45.49"N, 031°06'15.58"E;
- 70°05'58.84"N, 031°26'41.28"E;
- 70°07'15.20"N, 031°30'19.43"E;
- 70°11'51.68"N, 031°46'33.57"E;
- 70°16'28.95"N, 032°04'23.00"E;
- 72°27'51.00"N, 035°00'00.00"E; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

Russian Federation

- From the North Pole south to 72°27'51.00"N, 035°00'00.00"E;
- 70°16'28.95"N, 032°04'23.00"E;
- 70°11'51.68"N, 031°46'33.57"E;
- 70°07'15.20"N, 031°30'19.43"E;
- 70°05'58.84"N, 031°26'41.28"E;
- 69°58'45.49"N, 031°06'15.58"E;
- 69°47'41.42"N, 030°49'03.55"E south to the point at which that meridian meets the land border between the Russian Federation and Norway;
- South along the land border between the Russian Federation and Norway to the tripoint at which the land borders of the Russian Federation, Finland and Norway meet;
- South along the land border between the Russian Federation and Finland to the point at which that border intersects the Arctic Circle;
- East along the Arctic Circle until the Arctic Circle intersects the 180°00'00"E/W meridian;
- 50°05'00"N, 159°00'00"E;
- 54°00'00"N, 169°00'00"E;
- 54°49'00"N, 170°12'00"E;
- 60°00'00"N, 180°00'00"E/W;
- 64°03'00"N, 172°12'00"W;
- 65°00'00"N, 168°58'24"W; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

Sweden

- From the tripoint at which the land borders of Sweden, Norway and Finland meet;
- South along the land border between Sweden and Norway to the point at which that border intersects the Arctic Circle;
- East along the Arctic Circle to the point at which the Arctic Circle intersects the land border between Sweden and Finland; and
- Thence North along the land border between Sweden and Finland to the tripoint at which the land borders of Sweden, Norway and Finland meet.

United States of America

- From the North Pole south to 65°00'00"N, 168°58'24"W;
- 64°03'00"N, 172°12'00"W;
- 60°00'00"N, 180°00'00"E/W;
- 54°49'00"N, 170°12'00"E;
- 54°00'00"N, 169°00'00"E;
- 50°05'00"N, 159°00'00"E;
- 50°05'00"N, 143°40'00"W;
- 54°40'00"N, 140°00'00"W;
- 54°40'00"N, 136°00'00"W;
- 54°00'00"N, 136°00'00"W;
- 54°13'00"N, 134°57'00"W;
- 54°39'27"N, 132°41'00"W;
- 54°42'30"N, 130°36'30"W;
- North along the land border to the Beaufort Sea; and
- Thence north to the North Pole.

APPENDIX I

Competent Authorities

The Competent Authorities of the Parties are:

Canada – Minister of National Defence;

Denmark – Danish Maritime Authority;

Finland – Ministry of the Interior; Finnish Transport Safety Agency;

Iceland – Ministry of the Interior;

Norway – Ministry of Justice and the Police;

Russian Federation – Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation; Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defense, Emergency and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters;

Sweden – Swedish Maritime Administration; and

United States of America – United States Coast Guard.

APPENDIX II

Search and Rescue Agencies

The search and rescue agencies of the Parties are:

Canada – Canadian Forces; Canadian Coast Guard;

Denmark – Danish Maritime Authority, Danish Transport Authority, Ministry of Fisheries – Faroe Islands;

Finland – Finnish Border Guard;

Iceland – Icelandic Coast Guard;

Norway – Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, Northern Norway (JRCC NN Bodø);

Russian Federation – Federal Air Transport Agency; Federal Agency for Marine and River Transport;

Sweden – Swedish Maritime Administration; and

United States of America – United States Coast Guard; United States Department of Defense.

APPENDIX III

Rescue Coordination Centers

The rescue coordination centers of the Parties are:

Canada – Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, Trenton;

Denmark – Maritime Rescue Coordination Center Grønnedal (MRCC Grønnedal);
Rescue Coordination Center Søndrestrøm/Kangerlussuaq (RCC Søndrestrøm); Maritime
Rescue and Coordination Center Torshavn (MRCC Torshavn);

Finland – Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre Turku (MRCC Turku); Aeronautical
Rescue Coordination Centre Finland (ARCC Finland);

Iceland – Joint Rescue Coordination Center Iceland (JRCC Iceland);

Norway – Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, Northern Norway (JRCC NN Bodø);

Russian Federation – State Maritime Rescue Coordination Center (SMRCC); Main
Aviation Coordination Center for Search and Rescue (MACC);

Sweden – Joint Rescue Coordination Center Gothenburg (JRCC Gothenburg); and

United States of America – Joint Rescue Coordination Center Juneau (JRCC Juneau);
Aviation Rescue Coordination Center Elmendorf (ARCC Elmendorf).