

2nd Black Sea Search and Rescue (SAR) Conference
Odessa, Ukraine, 23-24 November 2005

DRAFT MINUTES

The Conference was opened by Capt. Boltruchuk, Head of MRCC (Odessa). In his introduction he welcomed the participants and all the guests and briefly updated all presented with the actual situation in the Black Sea.

After that he reviewed the Agenda to be approved. Turkey announced on two presentations. This was followed by the introduction of each delegation. IMO consultants were introduced in due order. Capt. Boltruchuk reminded that tomorrow first half of day will be devoted to the visit to the training centre of the Odessa National Maritime Academy (ONMA). This was accepted and agreed by all delegations.

Turkish delegation made a proposal to hold the 3rd Conference in Istanbul. Also Capt. Boltruchuk noted that in accordance with Ankara Agreement article 9 [... shall meet as necessary and at least one a year...] and consider the proposal of clockwise agreed in the 1st Black Sea SAR Conference the next conference will be held in 2006. It was agreed to be held in Russian Federation.

It was decided further on that Capt. Boltruchuk will act as the chairman of the Conference and followed the Procedure.

Agenda Item 1.

In his report by Mr. Hallberg briefed the participations on the history of IMO involvement into the development of SAR activities in the Black Sea. He particularly noted that IMO is ready to provide consultancy and expertise where it is necessary, but it does not mean that IMO will tell exactly what to do. It may tell how to do. He concluded by stating that the Black Sea cooperation is well on the way and that future IMO involvement must be carefully valued.

Agenda item 2.

In his report Mr. Tkachuk presented the information on GMDSS development in Ukraine in the developments of coastal part of GMDSS in the Crimea peninsula area (Ai-Petri Mountain). He informed that it is planned to establish one single Center (MRCC in Odessa) which will receive information from A1 region (Crimea) and includes A2 region (Odessa). This is helped to be adhered in 2006. There are also plans to spread these activities in the Ukraine part of Azov area and Kerch strait.

During discussion Mr. Ralf Aspenberg recalled for the electronic copy of the presentation as well all other materials of the Conference, preferably on CD. This was supported by all delegates.

Bulgaria informed that in July 2005 there where SAR Conference in Varna. The reporter proposed to extend the terms of reference of the WG established in Constanza in 2004 in order find solution on how to integrate the existing SAR systems in the Black Sea.

Ukraine (Capt. Repetei) stated that as a member of the inspection of the object presented by Mr. Tkachuk he may confirm that this system allows to obtain stable signal from the ships and objects in the area not only in the distress regime, but in the regime of regular radio connection.

Delegation of Turkey proposed to establish a format of conference report and document submission in order to have the documents ready in advance and enable more fruitful cooperation and work during the future conferences. Turkey proposed that each country submit their papers to the host country according to this format at least one month before the meeting. Host country should post the papers at its MRCC web-site. Turkey also announced a presentation on the Cospas-Sarsat implementation in Turkey. Turkey is ready to share their Cospas-Sarsat System experience with all Black Sea countries.

Chairman proposed to make comments on the Ukrainian initiation in A1 GMDSS area.

Russia informed that there are no plans to initiate anything new in the regions A1 and A2 of Russian feet.

Agenda Item 3.

After break Mr. Wynn asked delegates to make short report on the status of aero means in their countries.

Ukraine (Capt. Repetei) concerned that aviation has a leading role in SAR operation. However, in Ukraine this problem is not resolved.

Russia (Novorossiysk) agreed that helicopters are needed in the Black Sea SAR operations.

Romania confirmed the necessity of helicopters to cover the Black Sea. Problem which was under consideration at 1st Black Sea SAR Conference being a solution with minimum charge.

Turkey informed that, Turkish SAR facilities for aviational purposes are being used at present in Turkish SAR region. The "Helicopter idea" will be presented to the High Level Authorities in Turkey.

Bulgaria fully supports the proposal.

Establishing of Working Group

Chairman proposed to nominate members for the WG. Romania informed that two computer and English literate persons are enough and proposed representative from Constanza. Chairman nominated the person who will act in the WG as follows:

- Ukraine: Capt. Viktor Komilov (MRCC, Odessa);
Ukraine: Mr. Roman Bashtanyy (State Department of Maritime and Inland Water Transport, Odessa);
- Ukraine: Ms. Marina Elizarova (Morcom, Odessa);
- Romania: Mr. Paul Neicu (Romanian Naval Authority / MRCC, Constanza);
- Turkey: Capt. I. Hakki Gedikoglu (Head of MSRCC, Ankara);
- Turkey: Capt. Mehmet Guler (MSRCC, Ankara).

Ukraine (Capt. Tykhonov) informed on new developments of two-seated helicopter suited for SAR operations. Maritime Administration is now negotiating on further adjustment of the existing model. At present time Ukraine uses means available of Extraordinary Affairs and Ministry of Defense.

The Conference recommended that Ukraine should take the initiative to organize high level meeting between responsible ministries in all Black Sea countries to organize a SAR helicopter service in the Black Sea. IMO should be invited to give advice to the project.

Agenda Item 6.

IMO: Mr. Wynn revoked two decisions of previous Conference and proposed countries to update Conference on this issue.

Turkey provides comprehensive information on current achievements for MSRCC which will cover the full area stipulated in the Ankara agreement. Within the scope of Cospas-Sarsat System, Turkey has established on MCC (Mission Control Centre) and four RCC (Rescue Coordination Center) units and gained IOC (Initial Operational Capability) on 6 October 2005. In this respect, Turkey has constituted its National EPIRB, ELT and PLB database provides information in a format compatible with the MCC and RCC Units. It is convenient for SAR planning and saves time for operations. 550 EPIRB and 210 ELT were registered by MSRCC Ankara. Turkey is ready to share this information with all Black Sea countries.

Ukraine (Mr. Tkachuk) reported that in Ukraine there is the Data Base of Ukrainian Ships since 1998. In cooperation with Administration of Communication every other ship under Ukrainian flag can obtain permission without inspecting of radio equipment. Also it is available for port authorities. So it is possible to know number of crew members. It may be used VIA internet.

Georgia Since 2001 Georgian GEOREP system is obligatory for each ship entering Georgian zone of responsibility and should report to the MRCC. It allows to identify the location of each ship and use it in the SAR operation. There is also at MRCC database about contacts related all ships under Georgian flag which could be useful during SAR operations for other MRCCs.

Russia. There were not technical changes in Russian zone of responsibility. They use searching system "Victoria". Unfortunately, it is only for Russian ships as no foreign ships participated in it because of payments. However, it was significantly help to all Black Sea countries and Ru ships. RU (Novorossiysk) coordinates with Ukraine and Turkey . Fax and phone facilities used. E-mail is not viable. Companies do not will to operate. AIS is operational only in Novorossiysk area.

Romania will integrate river information system (RIS) with VTMISS up to the end of 2006. Romania (Capt. Alexe) reminded that at the last SAR conference in Constanza was established two WGs which did not have any activity.

IMO: Mr. Hallberg informed on Long Range and Identification (LRIT) system and the recently developed IMO regulations. Each ship should have a satellite based system to be able to provide LRIT data. Ships only trading in SAR A1 area only need the AIS equipment. Victoria may be one of the LRIT system and may be opened for others interested areas. He informed that under HELCOM cooperation there is AIS database for the Baltic Sea area. One solution for the SAR area may be to approach the HELCOM Secretariat to Helsinki to seek advice for the similar solution for the Black Sea.

Turkey has to discuss this subject with their competent authorities.

Ukraine (Mr. Tkatchuk)IMD circles to inform IMO on its location. Ukraine has it on Inmarsat-C and D+. Twice a 24 hours ships are providing this. This system is closed (only for Maritime administration and ship owners).

Ukraine (Transas) will report on the HELCOM system leader on.

Chairman announced that WG may now start the work.

Agenda item 7.

Chairman addressed the delegation with proposal to make further remarks.

Ukraine proposes the following. Mr. Tkachuk stressed that there are only two systems situated. All other systems are situated on VTS. It's decided now to concentrate on information on MRCC. Ukraine is planning to equip all coastal systems with AIS and to deliver AIS information to all Black Sea countries. This was proposed to include into the conference decision.

At present time, coastal MRCC center (including Ai-Petri) covers significant part of Ukraine (II coastal AIS centers in Ukraine). Further plan is supposed by two ways: part on coastal GMDSS and part on VTS. Sometimes there are zone overlaps.

IMO: Mr. Hallberg noted that initially AIS was developed in Sweden (to get a way between Stockholm and Helsinki). AIS on shore is different to AIS on ship. He showed a short video on how AIS data are used in Sweden for SAR operations (about Gotteberg).

Romania announced that all Romanian coastal region will be covered by AIS system until the end of 2006.

Turkish delegation reported that AIS will be operational in the near future for all Turkish coasts. However, AIS tracking is already operational in the Turkish Straits in combination with the VTS system.

Ukraine (Mr. Tkatchuk) announced AI region faced Ukraine with the problem of mistaken programming of ship AIS systems. This is dually reported to controlling authorities. This causes significant problems and the violators are not responsible. This information is available and maybe submitted for the use of controlling bodies in Ukraine.

Presentation of Mr. Wynn: Training activity, SAR training fund.

Sweden: Mr. Aspenberg: Updated with Swedish involvements and the Black Sea. Sweden has the second longest coast line in Europe. Mainly it's a shawl waters. He concluded with proposals to form a WG (SMA, countries, IMO), meet 4-5 time, discuss and reach consensus, sent proposals to SIDA and if approved, implement.

Maritime SAR in the Black Sea.

- 1) Fact finding. Identify.
- 2) Prepare detail proposal to SIDA.
- 3) Hold courses.

He also proposed tasks for WG. It was stressed that the instructors who obtained training will promote their experience further. Cost sharing scheme was proposed as well as course schedule.

Romania urges all delegations to express their opinion on this proposal.

Sweden: Mr. Aspenberg suggested whether or not to build a WG and where to meet.

Ukraine (Mr. Repetey) noted that courses on 2001-2002 were different to those proposed. Ukraine supports this idea.

Bulgaria informed that there is a training center in Varna on the basis of technical University.

Russia noted that search and rescue ships owned by private organizations don't all members will be in position to visit five week courses (especially to travel to Sweden). It was also noted that Mr. Ralph was approaching the Russian Ministry of Transport and obtained the results.

Sweden: Mr. Aspenberg repeated that SIDA was supposed to cover the rest of expenses.

Romania (Mr. Adrian Alexe) asked to specify the proposal and strategy of the project and further to perform IMO the training project.

Sweden: Mr. Aspenberg said that SIDA may accept min 12-15 persons. The budget is an issue to be discussed and a subject for approval.

Ukraine (Capt. Tykhonov) requested for the presentation and details. It's a subject to further discussion, the place and location for the training to be held.

Turkey reminded of their proposal which was announced last meeting about SAR training and new training improvements will be presented to the High Level Authorities. Turkey is ready for cooperation about trainings.

Romania: There is no need to identify the best location because there is TNA report for the Black Sea which might be used as a guidance.

Coffee break was followed by the report of Ukraine.

The reporter, Mr. Bondarenko, Director of the Transas Company, noticed that he's devoted 19 years of his life to the SAR during his work at BLASCO company at the section of radio and navigation. He briefly presented Transas experience in building AIS systems in the gulf of Finland, Bulgarian coastline and Latvia (July, 2005). Further, Mr. Bondarenko stressed that the project operated in Baltic region may be realized in the Black Sea area.

Agenda item 8.

Romania: Requested Georgia to address this agenda item to. On previous conference Georgia was the only country not taken relevant steps on ratifying the Ankara agreement.

Georgia: Was not ready to answer.

Russia: Appreciated Ukraine and Turkey connections on SAR operations. Eastern part (Georgia) may be contacted by phone or email.

Ukraine (Mr. Tkatchuk): Reminded that there is no agreement on division of zone of responsibility between countries in the Black Sea area, and proposed that conference decision should include URGE to countries to speed up (boost) the process of identifying zone of responsibility.

Chairman: Supported that the conference will help governments to resolve this problem.

Romania: Mentioned that until there is no uniform ratification of the agreement, there is no way to continue the work. The next plan should be to develop the Black Sea SAR action plan.

IMO: Mr. Hallberg noted that until agreement identified alternative arrangements for distress alert distribution and coordination should be put in place.

Turkey informed that the SAR zone of Turkey has been declared to the relevant parties and SAR operations are carried out within the declared area by SAR units of Turkey.

Ukraine (Mr. Tkatchuk): Noted that zone of responsibility and border are not the same nation. This should be in protocol.

Romania: Proposed to prepare the framework for the agreement between the Black Sea countries.

Agenda item 9. Communication / Alerting facilities. False alert. November, 2004 - November, 2005, 44 false alerts were detected in Turkey.

Chairman: Informed that Odessa MSCC sometimes obtains hundred false alerts. It's quite costly to contact all ship owners. In some South Africa countries there are charges for false alert up to 5,000 USD.

Romania: Stressed that last conference agreed to continue using 16 VHF channel as it's prescribed by IMO regulations.

Russia: June 2004 -June 2205 - 156 false alerts. All investigated.

INMARSAT-C - 1 signal (human factor)

406 MHz - 42 cases (mostly during transportation)

2187.5 MHz- 13 cases (human mistakes)

70 channel - 17 cases (human mistakes)

121.5 MHz - 71 cases during summer 2005

PSC inspectors visited ship violators and made prescriptions and deficiencies to support Ukraine proposal to make sanctions.

Georgia: 46 cases (90% EPIRP) all cases were investigated and reported to shipowners and Cospas-Sarsat system.

Huge amounts tell that measures should be taken to ship owners

Romania: 24 alerts. Statistics might be more precise but no data at the moment. Some alerts are even from Constanza itself.

Bulgaria: Presented a presentation. 45 alerts,

Ukraine: Current year - 90 alerts - COSPAS

70 channel - 20 alerts. This makes difficulties for the MSCC. In this respect, it was proposed that the port state should inform the flag state in order to charge the crew (change diploma or something else)

Ukraine: Further stressed that sanctions should be taken only when there were no right procedure on deleting the alert.

Bulgaria: Asked to precise weather flag state should be informed.

Ukraine (Mr. Tkatchuk): Stressed that flag state must be informed as sometimes there are no port calls of ships to their own port.

Ukraine (Capt. Tykhonov): Black Sea is a closed area so it is advisable to establish a data base on false alerts (not removed).

Turkey: It was requested that,; when the false alarm activated which should be cancelled according to the GMDSS rules, if this alert was not cancelled by the vessel, the flag state of the vessel should be informed by the relevant party and the PSC of the next port, if applicable, should be informed too.

IMO: Mr. Hallberg: Stressed that it's not only human factor and diploma issue. Equipment is not well as well. What may be done is to collect all this information precisely and submit this report to COMSAR in order to take appropriate steps.

Sweden: Mr. Aspenberg: Noticed that the problem is constant. Equipment is not user-friendly.

Chairman: Finalized the discussion that protocol should include more information and this will be addressed.

DAY TWO.

Day two was opened by Capt. Gorobets, Director of the State Department of Maritime and Inland Water Transport. Capt. Gorobets welcomed the participants and specify that Ukraine pays peculiar attention to the development of the SAR facilities. Recently opened Ai-Petri base proves this and Ukraine hoped to have next year a fully operational SAR system in Kiev. On behalf of Maritime Administration of Ukraine Capt. Gorobets thanked the delegates.

After that, Mr. Wynn made short notice that he will prepare the conclusion of the Conference stating the strong need of Black Sea area in helicopter coverage and will submit it to the relevant authorities of the Black Sea and IMO for actions to be taken.

Romania (Capt. Alexe) agree the SMA's proposal to nominate the person to attend the working group meeting in Istanbul.

The brochures and electronic supports of presentation regarding SAR facilities under Romanian Naval Authority and Romanian training centers (CERONAV) facilities have been distributed to all participants.

Russian Federation proposed to hold the 3rd Conference in 2006 in Georgia due to the fact that inn 2007 there will be the 10th anniversary of the MRCC service and Russian Federation would like to link the celebration of this event with the 4th Black Sea SAR Conference. All delegations supported this proposal. It was decided that next Black Sea SAR Conference will be hosted in Georgia.

After that delegation of Turkey presented a detailed report on Cospas-Sarsat system: the 30 minutes video film, power-point presentation and information on the system in Turkey.

Bulgaria presented a brief power-point presentation about VTMIS of Bulgaria, GMDSS facilities and Distress Alerts signals detected data.

Proposal from the Swedish Maritime Administration, Department of International projects

SMA proposes that a working group on "SAR training courses (SMC and OSC) for the Black Sea countries" be established.

First meeting is proposed to take place in Istanbul in January 2006 for one or two days. The meeting will be arranged by financed SMA.

Each participant country is kindly asked to consider this proposal and submit its decision together with name of contact person and contact information.