

NATIONAL SEARCH & RESCUE MANUAL

2022 Edition



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority



Published by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) on behalf of the Australian National Search and Rescue Council

Written and amended by Senior Sergeant Jim Whitehead, Queensland Police Service.

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Foreword

Search and Rescue (SAR) is the search for and provision of lifesaving assistance to people in distress and imminent danger of loss of life. Australian SAR arrangements are intended to complement other emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) in circumstances where those services are unable to operate effectively. Such circumstances could include, for example, remote area operations, rescues at sea, and the need for specialist SAR facilities not normally available to emergency services.

Depending upon the extent and complexity of the incident and on the available staff and facilities, SAR may take many forms in response to a distress situation. Unless the action is indivisible from that of safeguarding life, a SAR operation does not, however, include salvage or the saving of property.

The Australian search and rescue region covers the Australian continent and large areas of the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans as well the Australian Antarctic territories. This is an area of about 52.8 million square kilometres, or about one tenth of the earth's surface. Dedicated SAR assets are limited in Australia and other government, private and commercial assets may be diverted from their primary function by charter, arrangement and request.

In practice, many SAR operations are conducted jointly by Commonwealth and State / Territory authorities. It is, therefore, essential that the available resources and operational techniques are standardised and coordinated across the Australian region.

All SAR authorities in Australia: Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Australian Defence Force and State, Territory and Federal Police must be able to act cooperatively.

In 2017, the Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers responsible for search and rescue response in Australia updated the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on National Search and Rescue Response Arrangements. The IGA (Appendix A of this Manual) confirmed the National Search and Rescue Council's role as the national coordinating body for search and rescue procedures with a function, among others, of sponsoring this National Search and Rescue Manual.

Documenting standardised techniques and procedures, the National Search and Rescue manual enables SAR authorities to cooperate and coordinate to best effect. By establishing and standardising procedures, the manual seeks to promote effective saving of lives.

Mark Morrow

Chairman

National Search Rescue Council

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

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Canberra ACT 2601

Introduction

This National Search and Rescue Manual is the result of the recent merger of the aviation, maritime and land search and rescue (SAR) manuals and is the standard reference document for use by all Australian SAR authorities. It is promulgated by the National SAR Council operating under direction from relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers. The Manual promulgates SAR coordination procedures for SAR operations conducted within Australia and the Australian SAR Region (SRR).

The manual is consistent with the relevant International Conventions to which Australia is a party and is supplemented by various legal, informative and instructional documents used within, and between, organisations concerned with search and rescue. It has been developed with due regard to the International Aviation and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR).

The National SAR Manual meets the requirements of international conventions for an Australian Search and Rescue Plan, and includes material covering:

- a) Abbreviations, terminology and definitions relevant to SAR practitioners
- b) The elements and functions of the Australian SAR system
- c) Details of communications, assets and procedures for coordination
- d) SAR planning and techniques including worksheets

The National Search and Rescue Manual acts as a set of procedures and guidelines in providing a search and rescue response within Australia. It is understood that the knowledge and experience of officers can extend beyond what is covered within this manual and therefore initiative should be used accordingly in search and rescue operations. It is however, necessary to follow the guidelines outlined within this manual as closely related to the circumstances presented and keep all relevant parties well informed throughout the process. Officers should be prepared to justify their actions if necessary. When developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) at the organisational level, care should be taken to ensure that procedures are written consistent with the National SAR Manual. Should an SOP be identified that may be of benefit to the wider SAR community, it is recommended that the issue be raised with the National SAR Council so that inclusion of the procedure into the National SAR Manual can be considered.

This manual is under continual review and will be updated as necessary. The National SAR Manual is promulgated online for the use of all search and rescue practitioners. The Internet version is the controlled document and is the latest version of this manual. The online version should always be referred to as it contains the most up to date information.

Suggestions and questions regarding this Manual should be forwarded to:

The Secretariat of the National SAR Council

Australian Maritime Safety Authority
GPO Box 2181
Canberra ACT 2601

Defence Letter of Promulgation

UNCLASSIFIED



CHIEF OF JOINT OPERATIONS

Headquarters Joint Operations Command

AM3290753

Mr Toby Stone

Chairman, National Search and Rescue Council
Australian Maritime Safety Authority


Dear Mr Stone,

ADF ENDORSEMENT OF THE NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE MANUAL

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has a long and proud history of conducting Search and Rescue (SAR) operations in support of the civil community. Through our long-running involvement with the National SAR Council, we are fortunate to have developed highly effective relationships with both the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, and the State and Territory police forces. As a previous Commander of [then] Border Protection Command, I have witnessed first-hand the expertise and dedication of Australian SAR professionals under the most challenging circumstances.

The SAR mission is one of utmost importance to the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the ADF. As their Operational Commander I remain committed to the provision of military support if and when it is required. I commend you on the continued success of the National SAR Council and on the proficient realisation of the National SAR Plan. Further, I recognise the high quality of the National SAR (NATSAR) Manual and the important role it plays in coordinating inter-departmental operations. The NATSAR Manual is an authoritative instruction on SAR best practice, and as such I have directed that it be accepted by the ADF as the standard procedural guide for the conduct of ADF SAR operations.

Yours sincerely,


DL Johnston, AM
Vice Admiral, RAN
Chief of Joint Operations

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AC

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21 December 2017

Table of Contents

Foreword	1
National Library Registration	2
Introduction	3
Defence Letter of Promulgation	4
Table of Contents	5
Index	21
Acronyms and Abbreviations	27
Glossary	34
Volume 1 - Search and Rescue Administration	
Chapter 1 SAR System Organisation	43
1.1 Organisation	43
Global SAR System Organisation	43
National and Regional SAR System Organisation	43
Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)	44
State and Territory Governments.....	45
Australian Defence Force Responsibilities – Military SAR.....	46
Headquarters Joint Operations Command.....	46
Airservices Australia	46
Other Commonwealth Agencies/Authorities	47
Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).....	47
Emergency Management Australia (EMA)	47
Maritime Border Command	47
Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)	47
Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).....	47
Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA)	47
Volunteer Organisations.....	48
Commercial and Private Organisations	48
1.2 SAR Coordination.....	48
Overview.....	48
Alerting Post	48
Determination of SAR Authority Responsible for Overall Coordination	49
Initial Response.....	49
SAR Authority Best Placed to Coordinate.....	49
Effective Consultation and Coordination	50
Cooperation with Foreign Rescue Coordination Centres	50

Transfer of Coordination	51
Requesting JRCC Australia Assistance	54
1.3 Requesting State / Territory SAR Authority Assistance	55
Requests for Defence Assistance (DACC)	55
Defence Requests for Civil Assistance	55
1.4 Australian Search and Rescue Region	55
1.5 SRR Coordinates	57
1.6 Australian States and Land Search Area	57
Chapter 2 SAR Management	59
2.1 Overview	59
SAR Authority Responsibilities	59
Forward Command Post	60
RCC/Field Search Headquarters (FSH) Staff	61
Search and Rescue Roles	62
2.2 Search and Rescue Resources	65
Overview	65
Personnel	66
Dropmasters, Dispatchers and Observers	66
Rescue Preparation	67
2.3 Public Relations	67
Overview	67
Operations involving two or more SAR Authorities	67
Public Relations Officers (PRO's)/Media Officers (MO)	68
Press Releases	68
Requesting Public Assistance	69
Liaison with Relatives	69
Notification of Next of Kin	69
Casualties	70
2.4 Other Emergency Assistance and Services available from JRCC Australia	70
General	70
Maritime Safety Information	70
Unlawful Acts	71
Chapter 3 Training and Exercises	72
3.1 Requirements for SAR Training	72
Training	72
Who to Train	72

Requirement for Training	72
3.2 National Training Framework	72
Qualifications.....	72
Public Safety Training Package; Police Training Package	73
AMSA Training	73
The National Search and Rescue Manager’s Course	73
State/Territory SAR Authority Training	73
3.3 Search and Rescue Exercises	74
3.4 Training of Search and Rescue Assets	74
Land SAR Training	74
Search and Rescue Crew Training.....	74
Dropmaster and Dispatchers.....	75
Air Observer Training.....	75
Aviation Search and Rescue Assets (SRA).....	75
First Aid Training.....	75
Map Reading and Navigation	75
Radio Operating Procedures	76
Field craft.....	76
Observation Skills	76
Observation Skills-Day	76
Team and Individual Skills	77
Searchers	78
Search Team Leaders/On-Scene Commanders	78
3.5 Photographic Records.....	79
3.6 Liaison Visits	79

Volume 2 - Search and Rescue Operations

Chapter 1 Communications	80
1.1 Aviation and Maritime.....	80
Overview.....	80
1.2 Distress and Emergency Signals	80
Maritime Radio Alarm Signal.....	80
Radiotelephone Distress Signal	81
Radiotelephone Urgency Signal.....	81
Radiotelephone Safety Signal	81
Radiotelephony Distress/Emergency Frequencies.....	81
GMDSS Distress, Urgency, Safety and Calling Frequencies.....	81

2182 kHz	81
4125, 6215, 8291, 12290 and 16420 kHz	82
121.5 MHz.....	82
156.8 MHz (Marine VHF Channel)	82
243 MHz.....	82
Safety Frequencies	82
1.3 Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)	82
1.4 Emergency Signalling Devices.....	83
Daylight Devices	83
Night-Vision Devices (NVDs) for aviation searching.....	83
RADAR/IFF/SSR.....	83
Radio and Distress Beacons.....	84
1.5 COSPAS-SARSAT Distress Beacon Detection System.....	84
Overview.....	84
Purpose.....	84
Satellites	85
Beacon Detection	85
Beacons.....	86
1.6 Other Types of Distress Alerting Devices	86
SPOT Personal Satellite Messenger device (SPOT).....	86
AIS-SART	87
Maritime Survivor Locating Systems. VHF DSC Maritime Survivor Locating Devices (MSLD).....	87
Thuraya Satellite Devices.....	87
1.7 SAR RADAR Transponder (SART)	88
Overview.....	88
1.8 Communications in Support of SAR Operations.....	88
Overview.....	88
SAR Frequencies	88
SAR Call Signs.....	89
1.9 Communications Facilities	89
Overview.....	89
Communications Capabilities Australian Defence Force Ships and Aircraft	90
Search and Rescue Visual Signals	91
Merchant Shipping and GMDSS	91
Limited Coast Radio Stations	91
Ship Stations	92

Fishing Vessels	92
Pleasure Craft	92
Volunteer Organisations.....	92
Communication Capabilities of State & Territory SAR Authorities	93
Communications Aircraft.....	93
Inmarsat Aero	93
1.10 Land Search Communications	94
Overview.....	94
1.11 Communications.....	95
1.12 Communications Officer	95
1.13 Communication Requirements.....	95
1.14 Headquarter Requirements.....	95
1.15 Telephone/Radio	95
1.16 Rear Net.....	95
1.17 Forward Net.....	96
1.18 Frequencies	96
1.19 Radios in general	97
1.20 Procedures and Practices	97
1.21 Other Methods of Communications.....	97
Chapter 2 Awareness and Initial Action.....	101
2.1 Awareness Introduction	101
2.2 Types of SAR Incidents.....	101
Maritime SAR Incident.....	101
Aviation SAR Incident	102
Land SAR Incident	102
2.3 Recording of Events.....	103
2.4 SAR Stages	103
2.5 Awareness and Initial Action Stages (Stage 1 and 2).....	104
Types of Notification Reports	104
Evaluation of Notification Reports	105
Information: SAR Incident Information	105
Advising States of Foreign Persons in Distress	108
2.6 Emergency Phases	108
Uncertainty Phase	109
Alert Phase.....	109
Distress Phase.....	110

2.7 Initial Action: Procedures of the Emergency Phases	110
Overview	110
Uncertainty Phase Initial Action	111
Alert Phase Procedures	112
Distress Phase Procedures	113
2.8 Intelligence Gathering and Assessment	114
Overview	114
Communication Checks	115
Intelligence gathering	116
Sighting and Hearing Reports	119
Coordination with the Police	121
Examination of Recorded Communications - Aircraft and vessels	121
Flight Path Analysis - Aircraft	121
Weather Analysis	122
Logistical Information	122
General Considerations for the SMC	122
Chapter 3 Search Planning and Evaluation	127
3.1 Aviation and Maritime Search Planning	127
Overview	127
3.2 Aviation and Maritime Search Planning Steps	127
Evaluating the Situation	128
Estimating the Distress Incident Location	128
Datum Considerations	129
Drift Considerations	129
3.3 Search Response Stages	130
Factors Affecting the Search Response Plan	130
3.4 Aviation and Maritime Basic Search Planning	133
Controlling Factors	133
Search Effort Expenditure Rate	134
Maximum Search Effort	134
Search Sequence	135
3.5 Aviation and Maritime Determination of Search Areas	136
Aviation and Maritime Planning	136
Possibility Area	136
Calculation of Circles of Probability	139
Probable Errors of Position	139

Search Radius (R)	140
Drift Error for Waterborne Targets	140
Currents	141
Leeway	144
Divergence	144
Calculating Leeway	144
Plotting Drift	145
Datum Plot.....	146
Drift Error (De).....	147
Search Area Based on Non-Moving Datum	147
Search Based on Moving Datum	148
Labelling the Datum	149
Consideration of Possible Courses of Action by the Captain of the Target.....	150
3.6 Coastal Search Planning.....	150
Search Area.....	150
Position Uncertainty.....	152
Track Line Overdue Incident.....	153
Recomputed Datum	154
Track Spacing	156
3.7 Land Search Planning.....	157
Overview.....	157
3.8 Incident Command	157
3.9 Situational Awareness	158
3.10 Conducting an Appreciation	159
Definition	159
Sequence	159
Phases.....	159
Aim.....	160
Limitations	160
Written Statement.....	160
Factors	160
Examination.....	160
3.11 Courses Open.....	161
Plan	161
Planning Principles.....	161
Keep it simple	162

Relate to the Aim.....	162
Logical deductions	162
Land Search Planning.....	162
Scenario-based Assessment	163
Factors Influencing Discovery.....	163
Analyse possible land strategies.....	164
Raise land search strategies	164
Identify priority land search area	164
Ongoing reassessment of land search.....	164
Search Urgency Assessment (SUA).....	165
3.12 Terrain Factors.....	165
3.13 Land Environments.....	166
Rainforest	166
Alpine Environment.....	168
Arid Environment.....	170
Mountain Environment	172
Dangerous Animals.....	177
Telephone Triangulation	178
Land Search Planning.....	179
Reflex Search	179
3.14 Formal Search (Land).....	180
Theoretical Search Strategy (Naismith’s Rule)	180
Statistical Strategy (Lost Person Behaviour).....	182
3.15 Subjective/Decision Point Strategy (Land)	184
Decision Points	185
3.16 Deductive Strategy (Land)	186
Using all four Formal Search Strategies.....	187
3.17 Recording of search areas (Land)	196
Behaviour of Lost People.....	203
Mass Casualty SAR Incidents	205
Urban SAR (USAR).....	206
Coordination.....	206
Initial Actions.....	207
Working under or within a MIR.....	207
MIR Liaison Officer	208
Field Search Headquarters	208

Searching	209
Land Search problems	210
Search Area Delineation	210
Tasking sheets.....	212
Briefings.....	212
Record Keeping.....	214
Passive Searching.....	216
Chapter 4 Search and Rescue Techniques.....	217
4.1 Aviation and Maritime Search Operations	217
Overview.....	217
4.2 General Guidelines for Searches	217
Stage One Search: Immediate response	217
Stage Two Search: Nominated Area Either Side of Track.....	218
Stage Three Search: Mathematically Derived Area.....	219
4.3 Aviation and Maritime Search Area Coverage	219
General	219
Sweep Width (W): Factors affecting Sweep Width	220
Track Spacing (S).....	225
Coverage Factor (C)	226
Aviation and Maritime Probability of Detection (POD).....	226
4.4 Navigation of SAR Assets (Aviation and Maritime)	228
4.5 Visual Search Patterns (Aviation and Maritime)	229
General	229
Parallel Track Search Pattern.....	230
Creeping Line Patterns	232
Track Line Search.....	232
Expanding Square Search	233
Sector Search.....	235
Aural Search by Surface Craft.....	237
Coastal Search (Islands and their Foreshores)	237
Contour Search by Aircraft	238
Mountainous or Rugged Terrain Searches	240
Line Abreast Helicopter Searches.....	241
Aviation and Maritime Search Considerations.....	241
4.6 Flare Searches.....	242
4.7 Electronic Searches.....	242

Distress Beacons.....	242
Maximum Radio Signal Range Calculations.....	245
Signal Heard, Signal Fade Plotting Method	245
De-tuning Method	246
Hill Shading	246
Locating a Signal from the Ground.....	246
Search by RADAR.....	247
Search by Infrared (IR) Devices.....	248
Night Vision Goggles.....	249
4.8 Aviation and Maritime SAR Asset Selection and Characteristics	249
Overview.....	249
Aviation Assets	250
Australian Defence Force Aviation Assets.....	252
Customs and Border Force Aircraft	253
Maritime Assets.....	253
Naval Vessels	254
Customs Vessels	254
Use of Merchant Shipping	254
Equipment for Marine Craft	254
Land Search Facilities.....	255
4.9 Aviation and Maritime Search Asset Allocation	255
Introduction.....	255
Aircraft Capability	255
Calculation of Search Time Required.....	256
Calculation of Search Time Available	256
Investigation Time	257
Effective Search Time	257
Comparison of Search Time Required and Time Available for Search Aircraft.....	258
Allocation Variations to Suit Particular Aircraft.....	259
Allocation Chart Presentation	260
4.10 SAR Crew Briefing	260
General	260
Search Briefing.....	261
Search Aircrew Briefing	262
Search Aircraft Operations	263
Communications Relay Aircraft	263

Top Cover Aircraft.....	264
Maritime Search Crews	264
Land Assets in Aircraft Search	265
4.11 SAR Crew Debriefing.....	266
Overview.....	266
4.12 Land Search Operations.....	266
Overview.....	266
4.13 Land Search Assets	267
Land Assets	267
Land Search using Maritime Assets	272
Land Search Considerations for Aviation Assets	272
Land Search Action Plan	274
General Search (Land SAR)	277
Contact Search (Land SAR)	278
4.14 Land Search Area Coverage	279
Land SAR Target Type	280
Land SAR Meteorological Visibility	280
Type of Terrain/Conditions.....	280
Land Search Speed.....	280
Cloud Cover and Sun Light.....	281
Land SAR First and Last Search Light	281
Land SAR Probability of Detection.....	282
Visual Horizon: Ankle Rule (Land SAR)	282
Area Swept (Land SAR)	283
Accuracy of Navigation by Land Search Teams	283
Land SAR Night Searching.....	284
Searching in Hazardous Areas	284
4.15 Land Search Patterns.....	285
Common Land Search Patterns	286
4.16 Clue Recognition and Interpretation.....	298
General Principles.....	298
4.17 Land Search Briefings	300
Preparation.....	300
Mattson Consensus	306
Chapter 5 Rescue Planning Operations	307
5.1 Rescue General.....	307

5.2 Medical Assistance	307
5.3 Aircraft Accidents	308
Health Hazards.....	308
5.4 Land Rescue.....	308
Avoidance of Danger	310
5.5 Maritime Rescue.....	310
Use of Rescue Boats and Vessels.....	311
Marking Targets.....	311
5.6 Rescue Assets	311
Use of Aircraft for Rescue.....	311
Use of Helicopters for Rescue	312
Use of Top Cover Aircraft with Rescue and MEDEVAC Helicopters	313
5.7 Supply Dropping and Delivery of Survival Equipment.....	313
Civil SAR Equipment.....	313
Supply Drop from Aircraft over Sea.....	313
Supply Drop from Helicopter over Sea	314
Supply Drop from Aircraft over Land.....	314
Chapter 6 Conclusion of SAR Operations.....	315
6.1 Conclusion General.....	315
6.2 Conclusion of a successful SAR operation	315
6.3 Suspension/termination of a search when the target is not found	315
6.4 Reopening a Suspended Search	317
6.5 Records and Reports.....	317
6.6 Incident Debriefs	317
Conducting the Debrief	318
Lesson for improvement	319
6.7 Case Studies.....	319
6.8 Peer Reviews	320
Chapter 7 Medical Factors	322
7.1 General	322
7.2 Time Frame for Survival (TFFS).....	322
7.3 Survivor Stress Factors	322
7.4 Survival Environment Factors.....	322
7.5 Hypothermia.....	323
7.6 Water Hypothermia.....	323
7.7 Wind Hypothermia	326

7.8 Wind Chill.....	326
7.9 Hypothermia Survivability	327
7.10 Wet-Chill Survivability	327
7.11 Water Immersion.....	328
7.12 Effects of Alcohol.....	329
7.13 Hyperthermia, Heat Stress and Dehydration	329
7.14 Heat Exhaustion.....	329
7.15 Heat Stroke	330
7.16 Hyperthermia Survivability.....	330
7.17 Terrain Factors.....	333
7.18 Seeking Medical Advice	334
Appendix A – Intergovernmental Agreement	335
Appendix B – National SAR Responsibilities	347
Appendix C – National Operational Procedure for Transfer of Coordination.....	351
Guidelines for Procedure to transfer coordination.....	352
State / Territory SAR Authority Points of Contact.....	353
Transfer of Coordination Information Exchange Requirements	354
Overview.....	354
Appendix D-1 Distress Emergency Signals	358
Overview.....	358
International Distress Signals	358
Search and Rescue Signals – Australian Area	358
Civil Air-Ground Code	359
International SAR Signals.....	359
Appendix D-2 Maritime SAR Recognition Code (MAREC)	361
Overview.....	361
Part 1 – Merchant Vessels	362
Complete example Merchant Ship	367
Part 2 – Small Craft	368
Appendix D-3 Plotting Symbols.....	378
Appendix D-4 Sighting and Hearing (SHR) Techniques	379
Listening Techniques	379
Open Questions	379
Closed Questions	379
Leading Questions	379
Instructions for Completing Sighting and Hearing Reports.....	380

Sighting and/or Hearing Report for Missing Aircraft.....	381
Sighting and Hearing Report – Generic	382
Sighting and/or Hearing Log	383
Appendix D-5 Tables and Graphs	384
Local Wind Current	384
Leeway Tables (kt)	384
Sweep Width Tables For Visual Search Over Water.....	384
Sweep Width Tables For Visual Search Over Land:	384
Probability of Detection.....	384
Local Wind Current	385
Leeway Tables.....	386
Taxonomy Class Definitions/Descriptions	387
Probability of Detection.....	395
Sweep Width Tables for Visual Search over Water	396
Weather Correction Factors for all Types of Search Facilities.....	397
Uncorrected Visual Sweep Widths for Merchant Ships (NM)	397
Uncorrected Sweep Widths for Fixed-Wing Aircraft (NM) at 500 ft and 1000 ft.....	398
Weather Correction Factors for all Types of Search Facilities.....	398
Uncorrected Sweep Widths for Fixed-Wing Aircraft (NM) at 1500 ft and 2000 ft.....	400
Weather Correction Factors for all Types of Search Facilities.....	401
Uncorrected Sweep Widths for Helicopters (NM) – Maritime 500 ft and 1000 ft.....	402
Weather correction factors for all types of search facilities	403
Uncorrected Sweep Widths for Helicopters (NM) - Maritime 1500 ft and 2000 ft	404
Weather correction factors for all types of search facilities	405
Fixed-wing Aircraft Search Facilities.....	406
Sweep Width Tables for Visual Search Over Land.....	407
Correction Factors – Vegetation and High Terrain.....	407
Appendix D-6 Probable Errors of Position	408
Probable Navigation Error of the Target (x)	408
Probable Navigation error of the Search Craft (y).....	409
Appendix D-7 Maritime and Aviation Worksheets.....	410
Overview.....	410
Worksheet 1: Maritime Planning	411
Worksheet 2 – Maritime Search by Aircraft.....	412
Worksheet 3 – Land Search by Aircraft	413
Worksheet 4 – Search Radius	414

Worksheet 5 – Sector Search	415
Worksheet 6 – Aircraft Allocation	416
Worksheet 7 – Asset Allocation.....	417
Worksheet 8 – Maritime Search by Vessel.....	418
Appendix D-8 Aircraft Accident Site Precautions	419
Safety Precautions and Procedures at Aircraft Accidents	419
Appendix D-9 Civil Aircraft Search and Rescue Assets (SRAs)	421
AMSA Aircraft Tier SRA Capability Definitions	421
Tier 1 SRAs	421
Opportunity Based SAR Services	422
Current Aircraft and Police Fixed-Wing Operators.....	423
Air Search Observer Programme	423
Air Search Equipment	423
Locations of Tier 1, 2 Assets	423
Appendix D-10 Coastal Datum Search and Rescue Planning.....	425
A Step-By-Step Guide for SAR Trained Personnel	425
Vessel Adrift.....	425
Step-By-Step Guide.....	426
Position Uncertainty	431
Step-By-Step Guide.....	431
Time Uncertainty	434
Step-By-Step Guide.....	435
Track Line Overdue	439
Step-By-Step Guide.....	440
Multiple Winds	447
Step-By-Step Guide.....	448
Multiple Current and Winds	450
Step-By-Step Guide.....	450
Overview.....	453
Appendix E-1 Search Urgency Assessment Form.....	454
Appendix E-2 Missing Person Questionnaire	456
Appendix E-3 Object Questionnaire	457
Appendix E-4 Land SAR Checklist	458
Appendix E-5 Lost Person Behaviour	462
Lost Person Behaviour	462
Lost Person Behaviour Definitions:	462

Appendix E-6 Land Search Planning Tables	477
Land Search Planning Tables	477
Land Search Area Quick Reference.....	477
Land Air Search Planning Table	478
Vegetation Correction Factor (Ve).....	478
Appendix E-7 Additions to Naismith’s Rule	480
Appendix E-8 Land SAR Probability of Detection (Land)	481
Appendix E-9 Mattson Consensus	486
Appendix E-10 Land Search Organisation Chart Example	487
Appendix E-11 Field Search Headquarters Layout Example	488
Appendix E-12 Search Communications Network Example	489
Appendix E-13 Clue Recognition	490
Appendix E-14 SAR Tasking Sheet Example	492
Appendix E-15 Search for Skeletal Remains	493
Bone Characteristics	494
Plant Growth on bones.....	497
Fungal Growth on bones	499
Predator Damage to bones	499
Appendix E-16 Peer Review Form Example	500
Appendix E-17 Body Flotation Information	502

Index

121.5 MHz.....	82	Aviation Assets.....	250
156.8 MHz (Marine VHF Channel 16).....	82	Aviation and Marine Basic Search Planning	133
2182 kHz.....	81	Aviation and Marine Determination of Search Areas.....	136
243 MHz.....	82	Aviation and Marine Planning	133
4125, 6215, 8291, 12290 and 16420 kHz	82	Aviation and Maritime Probability of Detection (POD).....	226
Accepting Coordination for a Component of the SAR Event from another SAR Authority.....	52	Aviation and Maritime Search Planning Steps	127
Accuracy of Navigation by Land Search Teams	283	Aviation and Maritime Communications.....	80
Actions by JRCC Australia	116	Aviation and Maritime SAR Asset Selection and Characteristics	249
Additional considerations for Search Dogs	270	Aviation and Maritime Search Area Coverage..	219
Advising States of Foreign Persons in Distress .	108	Aviation and Maritime Search Asset Allocation	255
Air Observer Training.....	75	Aviation and Maritime Search Considerations	241
Air Wings/State and Community provided aerial assets Communications	93	Aviation and Maritime Search Operations	217
Air, Marine or Land Incident Information	106	Aviation and Maritime Search Planning	127
Aircraft Accidents	308	Aviation Capability.....	54
Aircraft Capability.....	255	Aviation SAR Incident	102
Aircraft Incidents	132	Aviation Search and Rescue Units (SRU)	75
Airservices Australia	46	Avoidance of Danger	310
AIS-SART	87	Awareness and Initial Action	101
Alert Phase.....	109	Awareness and Initial Action Stages (Stage 1 and 2).....	104
Alert Phase Procedures	112	Awareness Introduction	101
Alert Phase Transition	113	Barrier	289
Alerting Post	48	Beacon Detection	85
All Other Requests for Defence SAR Assistance.	55	Beacon Search Procedures	244
Allocation Chart Presentation	260	Beacon Transmission Characteristics	243
Allocation Variations to Suit Particular Aircraft	259	Beacon Types.....	243
Allocator/Planner	64	Beacons.....	86
Alpine Environment.....	168	Behaviour of Lost People.....	203
Area Swept	283	Bone Characteristics	494
Arid Environment	170	Briefing Officer.....	64
Assessing Reports	120	Briefings	54, 212
Assistant SAR Mission Coordinator (A/SMC) Responsibilities and Duties.....	64	Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).....	47
Aural Location of Beacons	245	Calculated Search Area.....	278
Aural Search by Surface Craft.....	237	Calculating Leeway	144
Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)	47	Calculation of Circles of Probability.....	139
Australian Defence Force Aviation Assets.....	252	Calculation of Search Time Available.....	256
Control of ADF Aircraft	252	Calculation of Search Time Required.....	256
Australian Defence Force Responsibilities – Military SAR	46	Case Studies.....	319
Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) ...	44	Casualties.....	70
Australian Search and Rescue Region	55	Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA)	47
Australian States and Land Search Area.....	57	Civil SAR Equipment.....	313
Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).....	47	Cloud Cover.....	223
Available Search Asset Factors	125	Cloud Cover and Sun Light.....	281

Clue Recognition and Interpretation.....	298	Creeping Line Ahead.....	292
Clue Time Sequence	299	Creeping Line Patterns.....	232
Clues or Messages	299	Currents	141
Coastal Search (Islands and their Foreshores) .	237	Customs and Border Force Aircraft	253
Coastal Search Planning	150	Customs Vessels	254
Command/Communications Caravans.....	93	Dangerous Animals.....	177
Commercial and Private Organisations	48	Datum Considerations	129
Common Land Search Patterns	286	Datum Plot.....	146
Communication Capabilities of State & Territory		Day and Night Factors.....	224
SAR Authorities.....	93	Daylight Devices.....	83
Communication Checks	115	Daylight Factor.....	123
Communication Checks for Marine Craft	115	Decision Points.....	185
Communication Requirements.....	95	Deductive Strategy	186
Communication Search	111	Defence Requests for Civil Assistance	55
Communications.....	92	De-tuning Method	246
Communications Aircraft.....	93	Distress Alerts	104
Communications Capabilities Australian Defence		Distress and Emergency Signals.....	80
Force Ships and Aircraft.....	90	Distress Beacons	242
Communications Checks for Aircraft.....	115	Distress Phase.....	110
Communications Facilities.....	89	Distress Phase Procedures.....	113
Communications in Support of SAR Operations.	88	Distress Phase Transition.....	112
Communications Officer.....	95	Divergence	144
Communications Relay Aircraft	263	Drift Compensation	241
Comparison of Search Time Required and Time		Drift Considerations.....	129
Available for Search Aircraft.....	258	Drift Error (De).....	147
Composition of Contact Search Teams	278	Drift Error for Waterborne Targets.....	140
Conclusion General.....	315	Dropmaster and Dispatchers.....	75
Conclusion of a successful SAR operation	315	Dropmasters, Dispatchers and Observers	66
Conclusion of SAR Operations	315	Echelon Pattern	296
Conducting an Appreciation	159	Effective Consultation and Coordination.....	50
Conducting the Debrief	318	Effective Search Time	257
Consideration of Possible Courses of Action by		Effects of Alcohol	329
the Captain of the Distress Craft	150	Electronic Searches.....	242
Considerations for Aviation Assets.....	272	Emergency Management Australia (EMA)	47
Contact Search.....	278	Emergency Phases	108
Contact Search Considerations.....	278	Emergency Signalling Devices.....	83
Contour Search by Aircraft	238	Equipment for Marine Craft	254
Contour Search by foot.....	294	Estimating the Distress Incident Location	128
Control of ADF Aircraft	252	Evaluating the Situation.....	128
Controlling Factors	133	Evaluation of Notification Reports	105
Cooperation with Foreign Rescue Coordination		Evidentiary Searches.....	214
Centres.....	50	Examination of Recorded Communications -	
Coordination.....	206	Aircraft and vessels.....	121
Coordination Principles with Foreign RCCs	50	Execution Factors.....	213
Coordination with the Police.....	121	Expanding Square	294
COSPAS-SARSAT		Expanding Square Search	233
MEOSAR.....	84	Explanatory terms.....	269
COSPAS-SARSAT Distress Beacon Detection		Factors Affecting the Search Response Plan ...	130
System	84	Fast/Reconnaissance Search	276
Courses Open	161	Fatigue Factor	222
Coverage Factor (C)	226	Field craft	76
Crashed Aircraft Communication Checks	116	Field Search Headquarters.....	208

First Aid Training.....	75	Intelligence Officer	64
First and last search light.....	123	International Distress Frequencies - Guarded by Royal Australian Naval Ships.....	90
First Search Light/Last Search Light.....	224	Interviewing Witnesses.....	120
Fishing Vessels	92	Introduction	255
Flare Searches.....	242	Investigation Time	257
Flight Path Analysis - Aircraft.....	121	Irregularly Shaped Areas.....	241
Forensic Searching.....	175	JRCC Responsibilities	44
Formal Search.....	180	Labelling the Datum.....	149
Forward Command Post.....	60	Land Assets	267
Forward Net.....	96	Land Assets in Aircraft Search	265
Frequencies	96	Land Environments.....	166
Fungal Growth on bones	499	Land Operations	
General	70	General Search Method	277
General - Communication Checks	115	Land SAR Additional Aircraft.....	274
General Considerations	157	Land SAR First and Last Search Light	281
General Considerations for the SMC.....	122	Land SAR Incident	102
General Guidelines for Searches	217	Land SAR Meteorological Visibility	280
General Search	277	Land SAR Night Searching.....	284
General Time Factors.....	123	Land SAR Probability of Detection.....	282
Geographical Coordinates	261	Land SAR Resources.....	175
Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).....	82	Land SAR Target Type	280
Global SAR System Organisation	43	Land SAR Training	74
GMDSS Distress, Urgency, Safety and Calling Frequencies	81	Land Search Action Plan	274
Good Search Conditions	156	Land Search and Rescue Units (SRU)	272
Guidance in Support of Transferring Coordination of a Component of a SAR Operation	52	Land Search Area Coverage	279
Headquarter Requirements.....	95	Land Search Assets	267
Headquarters Joint Operations Command.....	46	Land Search Briefings.....	300
Health Hazards	308	Land Search Communications	94
Health Hazards - Aircraft Accidents.....	116	Land Search Considerations for Aviation Assets	272
Heat Exhaustion.....	329	Land Search Facilities.....	255
Heat Stroke	330	Land Search Helicopters	274
Hill Shading	246	Land Search Operations.....	266
Hyperthermia Survivability.....	330	Land Search Patterns	285
Hyperthermia, Heat Stress and Dehydration ...	329	Land Search Planning.....	162, 179
Hypothermia.....	323	Land Search Private aircraft.....	274
Hypothermia Survivability	327	Land Search problems	210
Immediate Response	275	Land Search Seaplanes	274
Incident Command	157	Land Search Speed.....	280
Incident Debriefs	317	Land Search using Maritime Assets	272
Information: SAR Incident Information	105	Landmarks.....	262
Initial Action: Procedures of the Emergency Phases.....	110	Leeway	144
Initial Actions	207	Lesson for improvement.....	319
Initial Response	49	Liaison Officer	65
Initial Search Procedures	131	Liaison Visits.....	79
Inmarsat Aero	93	Liaison with Relatives	69
Insufficient Search Time	259	Limited Coast Radio Stations	91
Intelligence gathering.....	116	Line Abreast Helicopter Searches.....	241
Intelligence Gathering and Assessment	114	Lines of Communications - NAVY	91
		Local Wind Current	143
		Localised Emergency Assistance to Save Life	55

Locating a Beacon Signal Source by Homing Devices.....	245	Observation Skills-Day	76
Locating a Signal from the Ground	246	On Scene Coordinator.....	65
Logistical Information	122	Operations involving two or more SAR Authorities	67
Longshore Current.....	142	Organisation	43
Map Reading and Navigation	75	Other Commonwealth Agencies/Authorities	47
Maritime Radio Alarm Signal.....	80	Other Emergency Assistance and Services available from JRCC Australia	70
Maritime Assets.....	253	Other Methods of Communications.....	97
Maritime Border Command	47	Other Types of Distress Alerting Devices.....	86
Maritime Safety Information.....	70	Over Sufficiency of Search Time	259
Maritime SAR Incident.....	101	Overall.....	48
Maritime Search Crews	264	Overview	48, 59, 65, 67
Marking Targets.....	311	Parachute Drift.....	132
Mass Casualty SAR Incidents	205	Parallel Sweep (Multiple Teams)	291
Mattson Consensus	306	Parallel Sweep (Single Team).....	291
Maximum Radio Signal Range Calculations.....	245	Parallel Track Pattern Multi-Unit.....	231
Maximum Search Effort.....	134	Parallel Track Pattern Single Unit	231
Medical Assistance	307	Parallel Track Search Pattern.....	230
Medical Assistance to Vessels at Sea	45	Passive Searching.....	216
Medical Factors	322	Peer Reviews.....	320
Merchant Shipping and GMDSS	91	Person in Water	156
Meteorological Visibility	221	Person Overboard Incident Information	107
MIR Liaison Officer	208	Personnel	66
Miscellaneous Factors	224	Phase Transition	112
Missing person.....	107	Photographic Records.....	79
Modification for the Allocation of Areas to Search Assets Other than Aircraft.....	150	Plant Growth on bones	497
Modification of Areas Incorporating De and Increased Safety Factors.....	150	Pleasure Craft	92
Modification of the Probability Area.....	149	Plotting Drift	145
Modification Resulting from a Shortage of Search Aircraft.....	150	Point and Flank	288
Modification Suggested by Intelligence Information.....	149	Poor Search Conditions	156
Mountain Considerations	172	Position of the Sun.....	223
Mountain Environment	172	Position Uncertainty	152
Mountain Environment Search Strategies	173	Possibility Area.....	136
Mountainous or Rugged Terrain Searches	240	Possible Location of a Distressed Target	131
National and Regional SAR System Organisation	43	Predator Damage to bones.....	499
National Training Framework.....	72	Preparation - Land search briefings.....	300
Naval Vessels	254	Press Releases.....	68
Navigation of SAR Assets (Aviation and Maritime)	228	Probable Errors of Position.....	139
Night Factor	123	Procedures and Practices	97
Night Time Multi-Asset Searches	241	Provision for Entry of Foreign Aircraft during SAR Operations	50
Night-Vision Devices.....	83	Public Relations.....	67
Night Vision Goggles.....	249	Public Relations Officers (PRO's)/Media Officers (MO).....	68
Notification by Airservices Australia	104	Purpose	84
Notification of Next of Kin	69	Purposeful Meandering	289
Objects/evidence.....	108	Qualifications.....	72
Observation Skills	76	RADAR/IFF/SSR	83
		Radio and Distress Beacons.....	84
		Radio Operating Procedures.....	76
		Radios in general	97

Radiotelephony Distress/Emergency Frequencies	81	Search Aircraft Operations	263
Rainforest	166	Search Aircraft Speed	222
RCC/Field Search Headquarters (FSH) Staff.....	61	Search Aircrew Briefing	262
Rear Net.....	95	Search and Rescue Crew Training.....	74
Reasons for Transfer of Coordination	50	Search and Rescue Exercises	74
Recomputed Datum	154	Search and Rescue Resources.....	65
Record Keeping.....	214	Search and Rescue Roles	62
Recorder/Logger.....	64	Search and Rescue Techniques.....	217
Recording of Events.....	103	Search and Rescue Visual Signals	91
Recording of search areas	196	Search Area.....	150, 299
Records and Reports	317	Search Area Based on Non-Moving Datum	147
Reflex Search	179, 276	Search Area Delineation	210
Reopening a Suspended Search	317	Search Area Description	261
Requesting JRCC Australia Assistance	54	Search Based on Moving Datum.....	148
Requesting Public Assistance	69	Search Briefing.....	261
Requesting State / Territory SAR Authority		Search by Infrared (IR) Devices.....	248
Assistance	55	Search by RADAR	247
Requests for Assistance from Foreign RCCs	51	Search Dog Capabilities	268
Requests for Defence Assistance (DACC)	55	Search Dog teams in Australia	271
Requirement for Training	72	Search Effort Expenditure Rate	134
Requirements for SAR Training	72	Search Pattern Abbreviations.....	262
Rescue Assets	311	Search Pattern Conclusion.....	298
Rescue at Sea.....	310	Search Planning and Evaluation.....	127
Rescue General.....	307	Search Radius (R)	140
Rescue on Land.....	308	Search Response Stages	130
Rescue Planner	64	Search Sequence.....	135
Rescue Planning Operations.....	307	Search Strategies for Land SAR.....	275
Rescue Preparation	67	Search Team Leaders/On-Scene Commanders .	78
Responsibilities as Air Search Coordinator.....	54	Searchers	78
Rip Current.....	143	Searchers or Clue Seekers	299
Risks v Gain Factors	126	Searching	209
River Current	142	Searching in Hazardous Areas	284
RTF Distress Signal.....	82	Sector Search	235
RTF Safety Signal.....	82	Sector Search Pattern for a Vessel	236
RTF Urgency Signal	82	Seeking Medical Advice	334
Safety Frequencies	82	Ship Stations	92
SAR Authority Best Placed to Coordinate.....	49	Sighting and Hearing Reports	119
SAR Authority Responsibilities	59	Signal Heard, Signal Fade Plotting Method	245
SAR Call Signs.....	89	Single File Search	287
SAR Coordination.....	48	Situational Awareness	158
SAR Crew Briefing.....	260	Specific factors of LPB that may affect search	
SAR Crew Debriefing.....	266	planning:	203
SAR Frequencies	88	SPOT Personal Satellite Messenger device (SPOT)	
SAR Management	59	86
SAR Mission Coordinator (SMC)	62	Square Search	290
SAR RADAR Transponder (SART)	88	SRR Coordinates.....	57
SAR Stages	103	Stage One Search: Immediate response.....	217
SAR System Organisation	43	Stage Three Search: Mathematically Derived Area	
Satellites	85	219
Sea Current.....	141	Stage Two Search: Nominated Area Either Side of	
Search Aircraft Height	222	Track	218
		State and Territory Governments.....	45

State Emergency Services (SES).....	267	Training and Exercises	72
State/Territory Police Responsibilities	45	Transfer of Coordination	51
State/Territory SAR Authority Training	73	Transfer of Coordination after Suspension of SAR Action.....	53
Statistical Strategy (Lost Person Behaviour).....	182	Transferring Overall Coordination	51
Subject Matter Expertise and Advice	54	Type of Aviation and Maritime Target.....	221
Subjective/Decision Point Strategy	184	Type of Terrain/Conditions.....	280
Sufficient Search Time for Search Aircraft.....	258	Type of Terrain/Conditions of the Sea.....	221
Supply Drop from Aircraft over Land.....	314	Types of Notification Reports	104
Supply Drop from Aircraft over Sea.....	313	Types of SAR Incidents.....	101
Supply Drop from Helicopter over Sea.....	314	Uncertainty Phase.....	109
Supply Dropping and Delivery of Survival Equipment	313	Uncertainty Phase Initial Action	111
Surf Current	143	Uncorrected Sweep Widths for Fixed-Wing Aircraft (NM) at 500 ft and 1000 ft.....	398
Survival Environment Factors.....	322	Universal Grid Reference	261
Survival Equipment Factors	126	Unlawful Acts.....	71
Survivor.....	87	Urban SAR (USAR).....	206
Survivor Stress Factors	322	Urban Search Patterns.....	296
Suspension/termination of a search when the target is not found.....	315	Urban searching.....	173
Sweep Width (W): Factors affecting Sweep Width	220	Urgency of Response	122
Sweep Width Calculations (W)	225	Use of Aircraft for Rescue	311
Swell/Wave Current	143	Use of Helicopters for Rescue.....	312
Target or Clue Generator.....	299	Use of Merchant Shipping	254
Tasking Search Dog teams	271	Use of Rescue Boats and Vessels.....	311
Tasking sheets	212	Use of Top Cover Aircraft with Rescue and MEDEVAC Helicopters	313
Tasks of Contact Search Teams	278	Using all four Formal Search Strategies.....	187
Team and Individual Skills	77	Using Search Dog capability for SAR.....	270
Telephone Triangulation	178	Vehicle Search Patterns	295
Telephone/Radio	95	Visual Horizon: Ankle Rule (Land SAR).....	282
Terrain Factors.....	125, 165, 333	Visual Search Patterns (Aviation and Maritime).....	229
Theoretical Search Strategy (Naismith's Rule) .	180	Volunteer Organisations.....	48, 92
Thuraya Satellite Devices.....	87	Water Hypothermia.....	323
Tidal Streams	141	Water Immersion.....	328
Time Frame for Survival (TFFS)	322	Weather Analysis	122
Top Cover Aircraft.....	264	Weather/Oceanographic Factors	124
Track Line.....	261	Wet-Chill Survivability.....	327
Track Line Overdue Incident.....	153	Who to Train	72
Track Line Search.....	232	Wind Chill.....	326
Track Spacing (S).....	225	Wind Hypothermia	326
Track Sweep.....	287	Working under or within a MIR	207
Training	72		

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
A	Area or search area
ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
ACFT	Aircraft
AFTN	Aeronautical fixed telecommunications network
ADF	Australian Defence Force
ADFLO	Australian Defence Force Liaison Officer
AGL	Above Ground Level
AIP	Aeronautical Information Publication
ALRS	Admiralty List of Radio Signals
AIS	Automatic Identification System
AIS-SART	AIS Search and Rescue Transmitter
AM	Amplitude modulation
AMVER	Automated Mutual-assistance Vessel Rescue
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
AMSL	Above Mean Sea Level
A/SMC	Assistant Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator
ASH	Actual Search Hours
ASRK	Air Sea Rescue Kit (RAAF)
ATA	Actual time of arrival
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATD	actual time of departure
ATS	Air Traffic Services
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
AUMCC	Australian Mission Control Centre
AULUTE	Australian Local User Terminal East
C	Coverage Factor
CAO	Civil Aviation Order
CAR	Civil Aviation Regulations
CASR	Civil Aviation Safety Regulations
C/C	Cabin cruiser
CES	Coast Earth Station (Inmarsat) see also LES
CRS	Coast radio station
CSP	Commence Search Point
CSS	Coordinator surface search (maritime)
CTAF	Common Traffic Advisory Frequency

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
D	Datum
D	Diameter
DACC	Defence Aid to the Civil Community
De	Total drift error
DCJOPS	Deputy Chief Joint Operations
DCS	Defence Communications Station
DF	Direction finding
DR	Dead-reckoning
DGPS	Differential GPS
DSC	Digital selective calling
dwt	Dead weight tonnes
E	East longitude
E	Total probable error of position
EGC	Enhanced Group Call
ELR	Extra-long range aircraft
ELT	Emergency locator transmitter
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EPIRB	Emergency position indicating radio beacon
ERSA	En Route Supplement Australia
ETA	Estimated time of arrival
ETD	Estimate time of departure
FCP	Forward Command Post
FFB	Forward Field Base
F/V	Fishing vessel
Fig	Figure
FIR	Flight information region
FLIR	Forward looking infrared
FM	Frequency modulation
FSH	Field Search Headquarters
Ff	Fatigue Factor
Fs	Safety Factor
Ft	Feet
Fw	Weather Factor
GHz	Gigahertz
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GNSS	Global Navigation Satellite System

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
GPS	Global positioning system
GS	Ground speed
gt	Gross tonnes
h	Hours
HDG	Heading
HPA	Hectopascals
HEL-H	Heavy helicopter
HEL-L	Light helicopter
HEL-M	Medium helicopter
HF	High frequency
HQAC	Headquarters Air Command (Air Force)
HQJOC	Headquarters Joint Operations Command
I/B	Inboard motor
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IERCC	International Emergency Response Coordination Centre
IFER	In Flight Emergency Response
IFR	Instrument Flight Rules
IGA	The Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) on National Search and Rescue Response Arrangements
IMO	International Maritime Organization
Inmarsat Ltd	International Maritime Satellite Organisation – formally the international Maritime Satellite Organisation
INS	Inertial Navigation System
INTERCO	International Code of SIGNALS
IPP	Initial Planning Point
JCC	Joint Control Centre (ADF)
JRCC	Joint (aeronautical and maritime) Rescue Coordination Centre
JOSS	Joint Operations Support Staff
KHz	Kilohertz
Km	Kilometre (1000 metres)
Kph	Kilometres per hour
kt	knot (nautical mile per hour)
L or l	Length
LCRS	Limited Coast Radio Station
LED	Light Emitting Diode
LES	Land Earth Station (Inmarsat) synonymous with CES
LHQ	Land Headquarters (Army)

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
LKP	Last Known Position
LPB	Lost Person Behaviour
LRG	Long range
LO	Liaison officer
LUT	Local user terminal
LW	Leeway
m	Metres
M	Degrees magnetic
MAREC	Maritime SAR recognition code
MASTREP	Modernised Australian Ship Tracking and Reporting System
MAYDAY	When repeated three times, this forms the distress call. Any subsequent messages including self-identification, position, nature of distress and other useful information, forms the <i>distress message</i> .
MAX	Maximum
MBC	Maritime Border Command
MBZ	Mandatory Broadcast Zone
MCC	Mission Control Centre
MCS	Maritime Communications Station
MEDEVAC	Medical evacuation
MF	Medium frequency
MIN	Minimum
MHQ	Maritime Headquarters (Navy)
MHz	Mega Hertz
MMSI	Maritime mobile service identity
MPD	Miles per day
MP	Missing Person
MPP	Most probable position
MRG	Medium range
MSC	Marine supply container (RAAF)
MSI	Maritime safety information
MSLD	Maritime Survivor Locating Devices
MSLS	Maritime Survivor Locating Systems
M/V	Motor Vessel
MTS	Mean track spacing (sector search)
n	Number of required track spacings
N	North Latitude
N	Number of searchers

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
NAVAREA X	Navigational warning area X(ten)
NAVTEX	Is not provided in Australia
NBDP	Narrow-Band Direct Printing
NM	Nautical mile
NOTAM	Notice to airmen
NOK	Next of Kin
NVD	Night Vision Devices
NVG	Night Vision Goggles
O/B	Outboard motor
OSC	On-scene coordinator
P	Pacing (Land Search speed)
PAW	Police Air Wing
P/C	Pleasure craft
PIW	Person in water
PLB	Personal locator beacon
PLS	Position Last Seen
POA	Probability of Area
POB	Persons on board
POD	Probability of detection
POM	Period of Mobility
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PR	Public relations
R	Radius
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RADAR	Radio detection and ranging
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RA-Aus	Recreational Aviation Australia
RB	Rescue boat
RC	River current
RCC	Rescue Coordination Centre (Local)
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
ROW	Rest of the World
RPAS	Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (also known as drones, UAVs)
RV	Rescue Vessel
S	Track spacing
S	South latitude

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
SART	Search and Rescue Radar Transponder. Also known as 'Survival Craft Radar Transponder' or 'Radar Transponder'
SF	Signal Fade
SH	Signal Heard
S/V	Sailing vessel
SafetyNET	Communications service provided via Inmarsat-C for promulgation of maritime safety information, including shore-to-shore relays of distress alerts and communications for search and rescue coordination
SAR	Search and rescue
SAREX	Search and Rescue Exercise
SART	Search and Rescue Radar Transponder. Also known as a survival craft radar transponder or radar transponder
SC	Sea current
SDB	SAR Datum Buoys
SECURITE	The safety signal 'SECURITE' indicates that the station is about to transmit a message concerning the safety of navigation or providing an important meteorological warning. The safety message is preceded by the word 'SECURITE' spoken three times.
SEND	Satellite Emergency Notification Device
SES	State Emergency Service
SH	Search Headquarters
SITREP	Situation report
SMC	Search and rescue mission coordinator
SOLAS	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SOS	Internationally recognized signal of distress, made by any method of signalling
SP	Splash point
SPOC	Search and rescue point of contact
SRA	Search and Rescue Asset (Aircraft, vessel, search team)
SRG	Short range
SRR	Search and rescue region
SRS	Single raft system
STOL	Short Takeoff and Landing
SURPIC	Surface picture
T	Time
T	Degrees True
T	Search time available
TAS	True air speed
TC	Tidal current

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Meaning
TCA	Time of closest approach
TELEX	Teletype
TFFS	Time Frame for Survival
TL	Team Leader
TWC	Total water current
u	Wind speed
UHF	Ultra-high frequency
ULR	Ultra-long range
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue (Collapsed Buildings)
UTC	Coordinated universal time
v	Speed of search object
V	SAR unit ground speed or aircraft true air speed
V	Velocity
Ve	Vegetation Correction Factor
VFR	Visual flight rules
VHF	Very high frequency
VLR	Very long range
VMC	Visual meteorological conditions
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
VTs	Vessel Tracking System
w	Width
W	Corrected Sweep Width
W	West longitude
W/C	Wind current
W/V	Wind velocity
Wu	Uncorrected sweep width
Wx	Weather Factor
X	Search target position error
Y	Search unit position error

Glossary

Term	Definition
Aircraft Coordinator (ACO)	A person who coordinates the involvement of multiple aircraft in SAR operations.
Aeronautical drift (Da)	Drift caused by bailout trajectory or aircraft gliding distance.
Aeronautical position	Initial position of a distressed aircraft at the time of re-entry, engine failure, aircrew ejection or bailout.
Aircraft glide	Maximum ground distance an aircraft could cover during descent.
Alert Phase	A situation wherein apprehension exists as to the safety of an aircraft or marine vessel, and of the persons on board.
Alerting Post	Any facility intended to serve as an intermediary between a person reporting an emergency and a rescue coordination centre or rescue sub-centre.
ARGOS	A satellite-based location and data collection system.
Awareness Range	Distance at which a search scanner can first detect something different from its surroundings but not yet recognise it.
Awareness Stage	A period during which the SAR system becomes aware of an actual or potential incident.
Captain	Master of a ship or pilot-in-command of an aircraft, commanding officer of a warship or an operator of any other vessel.
Checksum Digit	A digit that is appended to a numeric data element and used to verify its accuracy. Checksum digits are computed by adding the digits of the data element.
Coast Earth Station (CES)	Maritime name for an Inmarsat shore-based station linking ship earth stations with terrestrial communications networks.
Conclusion Stage	A period during a SAR incident when SAR facilities return to their regular location and prepare for another mission.
Coordination	The bringing together of organisations and elements to ensure effective search and rescue response. One SAR authority must always have overall coordination responsibility and other organisations are to cooperate with this agency to produce the best response possible within available resources.
Coordinated Search Pattern	Multi-unit pattern using vessel(s) and aircraft.
Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)	International term for time at the prime meridian.
COSPAS-SARSAT System	An international satellite system designed to provide distress alert and location data from 406MHz distress beacon signals.
Course	The intended horizontal direction of travel of a craft.
Coverage Factor (C)	For parallel sweep searches, Coverage Factor (C) is computed as the ratio of sweep width (W) to track spacing (S). $C = W/S$.
Craft	Any air or sea-surface vehicle, or submersible of any kind or size.
Datum	A geographic point, line, or area used as a reference in search planning.
Datum Area	Area where it is estimated that the search object is most likely to be located.
Datum Line	A line, such as the distressed target's intended track line or a line of bearing, which defines the centre of the area where it is estimated that the search object is most likely to be located.

Term	Definition
Datum Point	A point, such as a reported or estimated position, at the centre of the area where it is estimated that the search object is most likely to be located.
Dead Reckoning (DR)	Determination of position of a target by adding to the last fix the target's course and speed for a given time.
Digital Selective Calling (DSC)	A technique using digital codes which enables a radio station to establish contact with, and transfer information to, another station or group of stations.
Direction of Current	Direction toward which a current is flowing. Also called set.
Direction of Waves, Well or Seas	Direction from which the waves, swells, or seas are moving.
Direction of Wind	Direction from which the wind is blowing.
Distress Phase	A situation wherein there is reasonable certainty that a vessel/aircraft, or person, is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance.
Ditching	The forced landing of an aircraft on water.
Drift	The movement of a search object caused by environmental forces.
Drift Error (De)	See Total drift error.
Emergency Phase	Emergency phases are based on the level of concern for the safety of persons or target that may be in danger. The three levels of emergency are classified as Uncertainty, Alert, and Distress.
Enhanced Group Call (EGC) System	The international broadcast of coordinated Maritime Safety Information and Search and Rescue related information, to a defined geographical area using a recognized mobile satellite service.
False Alarm	Distress alert initiated for other than an appropriate test, by communications equipment intended for alerting, when no distress situation actually exists.
False Alert	Distress alert received from any source, including communications equipment intended for alerting, when no distress situation actually exists, and a notification of distress should not have resulted.
Fetch	The distance over which the wind blows in a constant direction, without obstruction.
Field Search Coordinator	Term for SMC who coordinates land searches only.
Field Search Headquarters	Land equivalent of a RCC
First RCC	RCC affiliated with the shore station that first acknowledges a distress alert, and which will accept responsibility for all subsequent SAR coordination unless and until coordination is transferred to another RCC.
Fix	A geographical position determined by visual reference to the surface, referencing to one or more radio navigation aids, celestial plotting, or other navigation device.
Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR)	An imaging system, mounted on board surface vessels or aircraft, designed to detect thermal energy (heat) emitted by targets and convert it into a visual display.
General Communications	Operational and public correspondence traffic other than distress, urgency and safety messages, transmitted or received by radio.
Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)	A global communications service based upon automated systems, both satellite-based and terrestrial, to provide distress alerting and promulgation of maritime safety information for mariners.
Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS)	Worldwide position and time determination system that includes one or more satellite constellations and receivers.

Term	Definition
Great Circle Route	The shortest course between two points on the surface of a sphere. It lies in a plane that intersects the sphere's centre.
Ground Speed (GS)	The speed an aircraft is making relative to the earth's surface.
Heading	The horizontal direction in degrees magnetic in which a target is pointed.
Hypothermia	Abnormal lowering of internal body temperature (heat loss) from exposure to cold air, wind or water.
Indicated Air Speed (IAS)	The aircraft speed shown on the air speed indicator gauge. IAS corrected for instrument error and atmospheric density equals true air speed.
Initial Position Error (X)	The estimated probable error of the initially reported position of a SAR incident.
Inmarsat Ltd	Formally the International Maritime Satellite Organisation
International Iridium SafetyCast Service	The coordinated broadcast and automatic reception of Maritime Safety Information and Search and Rescue related information via the Enhanced Group Call system, using the English language.
International Maritime Satellite Organisation (Inmarsat)	A system of geostationary satellites for worldwide mobile communications services, and which support the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System and other emergency communications systems.
Instrument Flight Rules (IFR)	Rules governing the procedures for conducting instrument flight. Also a term used by pilots and controllers to indicate type of flight plan.
Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC)	Meteorological conditions expressed in terms of visibility, distance from cloud, and ceiling less than the minima specified for visual meteorological conditions.
Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC)	A rescue coordination centre responsible for both aeronautical and maritime search and rescue incidents.
Knot (kt)	A unit of speed equal to one nautical mile per hour.
Last Known Position (LKP)	The Last Known Position is a term used in search planning to indicate the last known location of the person, marine craft or aircraft the target of a search and /or rescue mission. It is also known by its acronym LKP. The LKP may be a boat ramp where a small craft was launched, a reporting point or navigation aid where an aircraft last reported its position or the location where it can be confirmed a person was last sighted e.g., at the start of a walking track. The Last Known Position differs from the other term used in marine search planning of Splash Point or SP.
Leeway (LW)	The movement of a search object through water caused by winds blowing against exposed surfaces.
Land Earth Station (LES)	Land Earth Station (Inmarsat) – synonymous with CES
Local User Terminal (LUT)	An earth receiving station that receives beacon signals relayed by COSPAS-SARSAT satellites, processes them to determine the location of the beacons, and forwards the signals.
Maritime Safety Information (MSI)	Navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages broadcast to ships.
MAYDAY	The distress signal “MAYDAY” is used to indicate that a target or person is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance. It has precedence over all other communications. The distress message is preceded by the word MAYDAY spoken three times. The word is pronounced 'Mayday' from the French m'aider (help me). Any subsequent messages including self-

Term	Definition
	identification, position, nature of distress and other useful information, forms the distress message.
MEDEVAC	Evacuation of a person for medical reasons.
Meteorological Visibility	The maximum range at which a large object, such as landmasses or mountains, can be seen. Also referred to as Meteorological Range.
Mission Control Centre (MCC)	Part of the Cospas-Sarsat system that accepts alert messages from the local user terminal(s) and other mission control centres to distribute to the appropriate rescue coordination centres or other search and rescue points of contact.
Narrow-Band Direct Printing (NBDP)	Automated telegraphy, as used by the NAVTEX system and telex-over-radio.
NAVAREA	A geographical sea area established for the purpose of coordinating the broadcast of navigational warnings. The term NAVAREA followed by a roman numeral may be used to identify a particular geographical sea area.
NAVTEX	Telegraphy system for transmission of maritime safety information, navigation and meteorological warnings and urgent information to ships. NAVTEX is not provided in Australia - see SafetyNet .
On-scene	The search area or the actual distress site.
On-scene Coordinator (OSC)	A person designated to coordinate search and rescue operations within a specified area
On-scene Endurance	The amount of time a facility may spend at the scene engaged in search and rescue activities.
Overall Coordination	The responsibility of the SAR authority to prosecute a SAR operation for a given target in accordance with Volume 1, Chapter 1, section 1.2, Appendix B or the SAR authority best placed to coordinate efforts of the response agencies that may become involved in a SAR action.
Overdue	A situation where a target has failed to arrive at its intended destination when expected and remains missing.
PAN-PAN	The international radiotelephony urgency signal. When repeated three times, indicates uncertainty or alert, followed by nature of urgency. The urgency signal "PAN PAN" is used to indicate that the calling station has a very urgent message to transmit covering the safety of a ship, aircraft or person. It has precedence over all other communications, except distress traffic. The urgency message is preceded by the words 'PAN PAN' spoken three times. The words are pronounced 'Pan pan' from the French panne (a breakdown).
Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)	Personal radio distress beacon for alerting and transmitting homing signals.
Pilot-in-command	The pilot responsible for the operation and safety of the aircraft during flight time.
Planning Stage	A period during a SAR incident when an effective plan of operations is developed.
Position	A geographical location normally expressed in degrees and minutes of latitude and longitude.
Positioning	Process of determining a position that can serve as a geographical reference for conducting a search.
Possibility Area	(1) The smallest area containing all possible survivor or search object locations. (2) For a scenario, the possibility area is the smallest area containing all possible survivor or search object locations that are consistent with the facts and assumptions used to form the scenario.

Term	Definition
Primary Swell	The swell system having the greatest height from trough to crest.
Probability Area	The area in which a missing target and/or survivors are most likely to be found taking into account possible errors in the navigation of the missing target and of the search craft.
Probability of Detection (POD)	The probability of the search object being detected, assuming it was in the areas that were searched. POD is a function of coverage factor, sensor, search conditions and the accuracy with which the search facility navigates its assigned search pattern. Measures sensor effectiveness under the prevailing search conditions.
Recognized Mobile Satellite Service	Any service which operates through a satellite system and is recognised by IMO for use in the GMDSS.
Rescue	An operation to retrieve persons in distress, provide for their initial medical or other needs, and deliver them to a place of safety.
Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC)	The centre from which a SAR incident is controlled and coordinated. The Centre is known by various terms such as the Rescue Coordination Centre, Major Incident Room, Operations Room, Base Station or Field Search Headquarters. For the purposes of this manual these centres will be known generically as the Rescue Coordination Centre or RCC.
Rhumb Line	A line of constant bearing that cuts meridians at the same angle. It is a straight line between two points on a Mercator projection chart.
SafetyNET	Communications service provided via Inmarsat-C for promulgation of maritime safety information, including shore-to-ship relays of distress alerts and communications for search and rescue coordination.
SAR Datum Buoy	Droppable floating beacon used to determine actual sea current, or to serve as a location reference.
Scenario	A consistent set of known facts and assumptions describing what may have happened to the survivors and/or target.
Sea	Condition of the surface resulting from waves and swells.
Sea Current (SC)	The residual current when currents caused by tides and local winds are subtracted from local current. It is the main, large-scale flow of ocean waters.
Search	An operation, normally coordinated by a rescue coordination centre, using available personnel and facilities to locate persons in distress.
Search and Rescue Asset (SRA)	An aircraft, vessel of search team with equipment suitable for the expeditious conduct of search and rescue operations.
Search and Rescue Authority	The authority within an Administration with overall responsibility for establishing and providing SAR services and ensuring that planning for those services is properly coordinated. The national SAR authority in Australia is the Australian Maritime Safety Authority with each of the States and Territories Polices services and the Department of Defence being the SAR Authorities within their jurisdictions. In Australia, the SAR Authority takes on the roles of the SAR Coordinator as described in the IAMSAR Manual.
Search Action Plan	Message, normally developed by the SMC, for passing instructions to SAR facilities and agencies participating in a SAR mission.
Search and Rescue Briefing Officer	An officer appointed, usually by the SMC, to brief departing SAR facilities and debrief returning SAR facilities.
Search and Rescue Case	Any potential or actual distress about which a facility opens a documentary file, whether or not SAR resources are dispatched.

Term	Definition
Search and Rescue Coordinating Communications	Communications necessary for the coordination of facilities participating in a search and rescue operation.
Search and Rescue Facility	Any mobile resource, including designated search and rescue units, used to conduct search and rescue operations. The terms unit and asset maybe interchangeable with facility.
Search and Rescue Incident	Any situation requiring notification and alerting of the SAR system and which may require SAR operations.
Search and Rescue Liaison Officer	An officer assigned to promote coordination during a SAR mission.
Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC)	The suitably trained or qualified official temporarily assigned to coordinate a response to an actual or apparent distress situation. In Australia, the acronym SARMC is also used in some jurisdictions. Throughout this manual, the terms SMC and SARMC are synonymous. Some jurisdictions also use the term A/SARMC to describe the SMC's assistants.
Search and Rescue Plan	A general term used to describe documents which exist at all levels of the national and international search and rescue structure to describe goals, arrangements, and procedures which support the provision of search and rescue services.
Search and Rescue Point of Contact (SPOC)	Rescue coordination centres and other established and recognised national points of contact that can accept responsibility to receive COSPAS-SARSAT alert data to enable the rescue of persons in distress.
Search and Rescue Region (SRR)	An area of defined dimensions, associated with the national rescue coordination centre (JRCC Australia), within which search and rescue services are provided.
Search and Rescue Service	The performance of distress monitoring, communication, coordination and search and rescue functions, including provision of medical advice, initial medical assistance, or medical evacuation, through the use of public and private resources, including cooperating aircraft, vessels and other craft and installations.
Search and Rescue Stage	Typical steps in the orderly progression of SAR missions. These are normally Awareness, Initial Action, Planning, Operations, and Mission Conclusion.
Search Area	The area determined by the search planner to be searched. This area may be subdivided into search sub-areas for the purpose of assigning specific responsibilities to the available search facilities.
Search Endurance (T)	The amount of "productive" search time available at the scene also known as Available Search Hours (ASH). This figure is usually taken to be 85% of the on-scene endurance, leaving a 15% allowance for investigating sightings and navigating turns at the ends of search legs.
Search Facility Position Error (Y)	Probable error in a search target's position, based on its navigational capabilities.
Search Object	A ship, aircraft, or other target missing or in distress or survivors or related search objects or evidence for which a search is being conducted.
Search Pattern	A procedure assigned to an SRA for searching a specified area.
Search Radius	The actual search radius used to plan the search and to assign search facilities. It is usually based on adjustments to the optimal search radius that are needed for operational reasons.
Secondary Swells	Swell systems of less height than the primary swell.

Term	Definition
SECURITE	The safety signal 'SECURITÉ' indicates that the station is about to transmit a message concerning the safety of navigation or providing an important meteorological warning. The safety message is preceded by the word "SECURITE" spoken three times. The word is pronounced 'See-cure-e-tay' from the French sécurité.
SEND	SEND Satellite Emergency Notification Device. Mobile, personal distress alerting device that functions outside the COSPAS-SARSAT System (for example SPOT, Thuraya SatSleeve). SENDs use different satellite communication constellations eg. Iridium, Global star or Thuraya. Distress alert messages are received by the IERCC in Houston and relayed to the RCC as required.
Sensors	Human senses (sight, hearing, touch, etc.), those of specially trained animals (such as dogs), or electronic devices used to detect the object of a search.
Set	Direction towards which a current flows
Situation Report (SITREP)	Reports, from the OSC to the SMC or the SMC to interested agencies, to keep them informed of on-scene conditions and mission progress.
Splash Point	A term used in maritime search planning to indicate a known point of distress. Also referred to by its acronym SP.
SOS	Internationally recognised signal of distress, made by any method of signalling.
Surface Drift	Vector sum of total water current and leeway. Sometimes called Total Drift.
Surface Picture (SURPIC)	A list or graphic display from a ship reporting system of information about vessels in the vicinity of a distress situation that may be called upon to render assistance.
Surface Position	The position of the search object on the earth's surface at the time of initial distress, or its first contact with the earth's surface.
Sweep Width (W)	A measure of the effectiveness with which a particular sensor can detect a particular object under specific environmental conditions.
Swell	Condition of the surface caused by a distant wind system. The individual swell appears to be regular and smooth with considerable distance between rounded crests.
Swell Direction	The direction from which a swell is moving. The direction toward which a swell is moving is called the down swell direction.
Swell Face	The side of the swell toward the observer. The backside is the side away from the observer. These definitions apply regardless of the direction of swell movement.
Swell Velocity	Velocity with which the swells advance with relation to a fixed reference point, measured in knots.
Time of Closest Approach (TCA)	Time during a satellite pass when the satellite is closest to a signal source.
Total Drift Error (De)	Sum of the individual drift errors from the time of the incident until datum. Used when determining Total Probable Error (E).
Total Probable Error (E)	The estimated error in the datum position. It is the square root of the sum of the squares of the total drift error, initial position error, and search facility position error.
Total Water Current (TWC)	The vector sum of currents affecting search objects.
Track Spacing (S)	The distance between adjacent parallel search tracks.
Triage	The process of sorting survivors according to medical condition and assigning them priorities for emergency care, treatment, and evacuation.

Term	Definition
True Air Speed (TAS)	The speed an aircraft is travelling through the air mass. TAS corrected for wind equals ground speed.
Uncertainty Phase	A situation wherein uncertainty exists as to the safety of an aircraft or a marine vessel, and of the persons on board.
Unreported	A situation where a target has failed to report its location or status when expected and remains missing.
Vector	A graphic representation of a physical quantity or measurement, such as wind velocity, having both magnitude and direction.
Visual Flight Rules (VFR)	Rules governing procedures for conducting flight under visual meteorological conditions. In addition, used by pilots and controllers to indicate type of flight plan.
Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC)	Meteorological conditions expressed in terms of visibility, distance from cloud, and ceiling equal to or better than specified minima.
Wave (or Chop)	The condition of the surface caused by local wind and characterised by irregularity, short distance between crests, whitecaps, and breaking motion.
Wind-Corrected Heading	The actual heading an aircraft is required to fly to make good an intended course.
Wind Current (WC)	The water current generated by wind acting upon the surface of water over a period of time.

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